

ADVOCACY WORKING GROUP

2015-2018 Work Plan

MISSION

The mission of the Advocacy Working Group (AWG) is to undertake projects, to develop practical tools and guidance, and to facilitate experience-sharing among ICN member agencies, in order to improve the effectiveness of ICN members in advocating the dissemination of competition principles and to promote the development of a competition culture within society.

Advocacy reinforces the value of competition by educating citizens, businesses and policy-makers. In addition to supporting the efforts of competition agencies in tackling private anti-competitive behaviour, advocacy is an important tool in addressing public restrictions to competition. Competition advocacy in this context refers to those activities conducted by the competition agency, that are related to the promotion of a competitive environment by means of non-enforcement mechanisms, mainly through its relationships with other governmental entities and by increasing public awareness in regard to the benefits of competition.

ORGANISATION

The AWG has 63 ICN member agencies from 61 jurisdictions and 64 non-governmental advisors (NGAs).

The AWG is co-chaired by the Italian Competition Authority, the Mexican Federal Economic Competition Commission and the Swedish Competition Authority.

LONG TERM GOALS

In order to fulfill its mission, the AWG will seek to:

- Provide a forum for ICN members to share their experiences and practices in the area of competition advocacy;
- Provide practical tools and guidance in order to improve the effectiveness of members' advocacy activities;
- Promote the use of the ICN's existing work products and tools in the area of competition advocacy.

2015-2018 STRATEGIC PLANS

Over the next three years, the AWG will guide its work program based on the following considerations.

Goal 1: Providing a forum for ICN members to share their experiences and practices in the area of competition advocacy.

The AWG will continue to offer experience-sharing teleseminars on an ad-hoc basis and to organise workshops on topics of interest to its members. These activities will provide input for new work to be undertaken in the future.

In addition, the AWG will also consider developing initiatives with other international organizations and non-governmental organizations. In particular, the AWG and the World Bank will continue to explore opportunities to jointly work in the field of competition advocacy, and the AWG will seek initiatives to promote the contributions made by ICN members to the Competition Advocacy Contest.

To better achieve Goal 1, the AWG will build up an ICN Library of Competition Advocacy, which will pool all or most of AWG current resources, work-products and materials and integrate them in a way that it will enhance the possibility of experience sharing and maximize its value, given the great diversity and creativity across competition agency advocacy initiatives. Therefore, the Library is intended to be a leading resource for ICN members looking for advocacy ideas and support.

Goal 2: Providing practical tools and guidance in order to improve the effectiveness of members' advocacy activities.

Launching the Market Studies Project

In 2015-2018 the AWG will consider the existing AWG work products on market studies to explore how the ICN guidance developed in this area has been used by ICN members and consider whether the [2012 Market Studies Good Practice Handbook](#) and the [Market Studies Information Store](#) can be updated and expanded. The format of the Information Store could be revised to make it more user-friendly. It is hoped that the Project will provide an opportunity to share the experience of ICN members with market studies experience in particular sectors. This may assist ICN members with: sharing ideas about market issues, and identifying issues for study, approaches to particular market problems and other ICN members who may assist/advise them further.

Continuing the development of the Benefits Project

The Benefits Project seeks to provide ICN members with knowledge, strategies and arguments for explaining the benefits of competition in support of their competition advocacy efforts toward government and non-government stakeholders. In 2015-2018, the AWG will continue to develop an online resource platform that includes existing case studies (whether prepared by competition agencies or by international organizations) highlighting the benefits of competition to consumers and the economy.

Implementing the Competition Assessment Project

In 2015-2018 the AWG will focus on the implementation of the Recommended Practices on competition assessment adopted at the ICN Marrakech Annual Conference and its Framework on competition assessment regimes, adopted at the ICN Sydney Annual Conference, through various awareness initiatives.

Implementing the Competition Culture Project

In 2015-2018 the AWG will attend to the dissemination of the findings of the Competition Culture Project Report, adopted at the ICN Sydney Annual Conference, which provides guidance to members on how to approach key constituents in promoting a culture of competition (Government, Judiciary, legal community, business community, members of the public, media, academia).

Potential Future Topics

Over the next three years, building on insights from the above projects and input by ICN members and mindful of potential overlap with other activities within the ICN or OECD, the AWG will explore new topics and issues, the opportunity to update existing Work Products as well as the potential for new guidance work.

Goal 3: Promoting the familiarity with and use of AWG work products in the area of competition advocacy.

In line with its Mission and long-term Work Plan, the AWG will also promote familiarity with and use of the AWG work products. The AWG will primarily focus on specific work products, such as the Advocacy Toolkit, the Recommended Practices on Competition Assessment and the Competition Culture Report. Specific initiatives to this end will include:

- Promoting the existing work products (with a focus on the most recent ones) in the context of teleseminars and/or workshops;
- Liaising with the ICN Advocacy and Implementation Network (AIN), responsible for the Advocacy and Implementation Support Program (AISUP);
- Promoting broader member and NGA involvement in the AWG activities; and,
- Improving the AWG's web-based tools and re-organising the AWG section of the ICN website.

2015-2016 PROJECTS

Pursuant to its Mission and long-term Work Plan, during 2015-2016 the AWG will pursue the following:

1. NEW & ONGOING WORK

Project 1 – Updating the existing AWG Market Studies Work (“Market Studies Project”)

- Objective: The Project will seek to update and revamp the existing AWG work-products on market studies and increase their dissemination among ICN members so that they can be more effectively used as a resource for authorities that have recently started conducting market studies, or are considering introducing market studies in their toolkit.
- The Market Studies Project 2015-2016. The AWG will update the [Market Studies Information Store](#), in terms of content and format. The Information Store, which was created with the aim of facilitating the sharing of knowledge and best practice on market studies, contains details of market studies conducted by ICN members. The Project will seek new entries and updates of existing information on an annual basis with a view to expand the number of participating jurisdictions and covered sectors. The AWG will also work on the format to make the Information Store more user-friendly. In 2015-2016, the AWG will also start exploring the scope for a potential revision of the [2012 Market Studies Good Practice Handbook](#).
- Responsible co-chairs: Swedish Competition Authority.

Project 2 - Explaining the Benefits of Competition (“Benefits Project”)

- Objective. The Benefits Project seeks to provide ICN members with knowledge, strategies and arguments for explaining the benefits of competition in support of their competition advocacy efforts toward government and non-governmental stakeholders.
- The Benefits Project 2015-2016. In 2014 the AWG completed the first section of the [online interactive platform](#) dedicated to "Explaining the Benefits of Competition to the Government and the Legislator", uploaded on a dedicated page of the ICN website. In 2015-2016 the AWG will work on the new section of the Benefits Project: “Explaining the Benefits of Competition to Business”, targeted to the business community including small and medium enterprises (SMEs), also with a view to spreading competition culture among undertakings and promoting antitrust compliance. The web-based toolbox, integrated within the Advocacy Toolkit, provides members with examples of messages and arguments, documents and case studies regarding the benefits of competition to assist them in their advocacy effort.
- Responsible co-chairs: Italian Competition Authority and Mexican Federal Economic Competition Commission.

Project 3 Competition Advocacy Contest Project (“Contest Project”)

- Objective: The Contest Project aims to raise awareness of the key role of competition agencies in promoting competition and showcase their successful advocacy stories.
- The Contest Project in 2014-2015: In 2014 the ICN and the World Bank Group launched the [2014 Competition Advocacy Contest](#) after the successful [2013 edition](#) carried out by the World Bank. The general topic of the 2014 edition is “Inclusive growth for shared prosperity” with the following sub-themes: “Promoting pro-competitive reforms that foster growth and reduce inequality”; “Promoting awareness of competition benefits in a time of crisis”; “Promoting cooperation with relevant public bodies in order to balance other public interests with competition goals”. This represents a useful opportunity to collect relevant information about advocacy experiences of the ICN members. The top three applicants will be invited to present their stories at an ICN-World Bank Group event and be featured in a joint publication.
- The Contest Project in 2015-2016: the AWG and the World Bank will work on a joint publication describing the winning stories and organise an event to present them. Based on an assessment of the experience of this first edition of the Contest, the AWG will consider the potential for the organization of future joint editions. Moreover, the AWG will seek opportunities within the ICN to promote the submissions made for the 2014 Contest.
- Responsible co-chairs: Italian Competition Authority

Project 4 – Fourth Advocacy Workshop

- The AWG will consider whether to hold a Workshop in 2016.
- Project leaders: the AWG co-chairs.

2. DISSEMINATION, IMPLEMENTATION AND OUTREACH

Project 5 – Dissemination, implementation and outreach (“Implementation Project”)

- Objective: To promote familiarity, implementation, and use of AWG work products and initiatives to facilitate experience sharing within the group and inclusiveness of ICN members and NGAs
- The Implementation Project in 2015-2016: the AWG will:
 - continue to carry out initiatives to develop the awareness of the Recommended Practices on Competition Assessment approved at the 2014 Annual Conference in Marrakech, as

complemented with the Framework of competition assessment regimes adopted at the 2015 Sydney Annual Conference;

- disseminate the findings of the Competition Culture Report approved at the 2015 ICN Annual Conference in Sydney, as a tool to promote the sharing of experiences and initiatives that ICN members have taken in the past or are about to develop in this area;
- organise teleseminars and other initiatives to promote the successful stories of the 2014 Competition Advocacy Contest and the related joint publication;
- reach out to new or less active members and NGAs in order to promote broader involvement in the AWG activities; and,
- improve the AWG's web-based tools and re-organise its section of the ICN website to allow for a greater visibility of the AWG work products. This will include a reconsideration of the way that all past and current AWG work, resources and projects, can be integrated and enriched with new inputs from ICN members in one single database (a “Library of Competition Advocacy”) in a dedicated section of the ICN website. In particular, in 2015-2016 the AWG will develop a configuration for the Library, identifying the structures and the building blocks of the Library. The aim of this is to create a platform where members are encouraged to inform others directly of their advocacy work and get value from the experience sharing. In 2016-2017, the AWG will start developing the Library based on the agreed configuration.

Project Leaders: the AWG co-chairs

ANNEX 1: PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

PROJECT 1

Title	Updating the existing AWG Market Studies Work
Description	The AWG will update the Market Studies Information Store, in terms of content and format. The Information Store, which was created with the aim of facilitating the sharing of knowledge and best practice on market studies, contains details of market studies conducted by ICN members. The Project will seek new entries and updates of existing information on an annual basis with a view to expand the number of participating jurisdictions and covered sectors.
Outcome/output	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update the <u>Market Studies Information Store</u>, in terms of content and format (more user-friendly) - Identify areas of the <u>2012 Market Studies Good Practice Handbook</u> to be revised or added
Key Dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>June 2015</u>: call for volunteers to set up a reference group - <u>July-October 2015</u>: review current work-product, define approach & strategy for collecting inputs from ICN members, establish updated web format for final work product. - <u>October – December 2015</u>: collection of materials - <u>January - February 2016</u>: develop the final work product - <u>March 2016</u>: presentation of the final work product to the AWG - <u>April 2016</u>: presentation of the work product at Annual Conference April 26-29, 2016 in Singapore
Entities/Persons Responsible	<u>Responsible Co-chairs</u> : Swedish Competition Authority
Assessment of multi-year project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>2015-2017</u>: Update Information Store on a continuous basis - <u>2015-2017 road-testing of work product</u> - <u>2016-2017</u>: update of the <u>2012 Market Studies Good Practice Handbook</u>
Promotion and Implementation	- see Project 4
Implementation timing	See above
Evaluation	<p>Success indicators can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - number of visits to dedicated subpage on ICN AWG webpage - number of additional agencies included in the Information Store - degree of update of the Information Store

PROJECT 2

Title	Explaining the Benefits of Competition
Description	In 2015-2016 the AWG will work on the new section of the Benefits Project: “Explaining the Benefits of Competition to Business”, targeted to the business community including small and medium enterprises (SMEs), also with a view to spreading competition culture among undertakings and promoting antitrust compliance. The web-based toolbox, integrated within the Advocacy Toolkit, provides members with examples of messages and arguments, documents and case studies regarding the benefits of competition to assist them in their advocacy effort.
Outcome/output	A section of the <u>Benefits Project Online Resources</u> devoted to “ <i>Explaining the Benefits of Competition to Business</i> ”
Key Dates/Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>June 2015</u>: Announcement of the launch of the platform (currently including the section on Government and legislator) - <u>June-September 2015</u>: stocktaking of the existing ICN materials on this topics, definition of approach & strategy for collecting inputs from ICN members, drafting of a brief issues paper - <u>September 2015</u>: circulation of the issues paper and call for contributions to the section - <u>October – December 2015</u>: collection of materials from ICN members - <u>January - February 2016</u>: elaboration of the collected material according to the structure of the platform - <u>March 2016</u>: presentation of the online page devoted to “<i>Explaining the Benefits of Competition to Business</i>” to the AWG and call for final comments - <u>April 2016</u>: presentation of the work product at Annual Conference April 26-29, 2016 in Singapore
Entities/Persons Responsible	<u>Responsible Co-chairs</u> : Italian Competition Authority and Mexican Federal Economic Competition Commission
Assessment of multi-year project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>2015-2016</u>: road-testing of the section on “<i>Explaining the Benefits of Competition to Government</i>” released in March 2015 - <u>2016-2017</u>: road-testing of the section on “<i>Explaining the Benefits of Competition to Business</i>” that will be released in March 2016 - <u>2015-2017</u>: presentation of final products; dissemination and promotion activities; ongoing update of the online resource
Promotion and Implementation	See Project 4
Implementation timing	See above
Evaluation	<p>Success indicators can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Level of participation by members and NGAs in the elaboration of the work product and in dissemination activities that will follow

	- number of visits to dedicated subpage on ICN AWG webpage
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PROJECT 3

Title	ICN–World Bank Group Competition Advocacy Contest 2014
Description	In 2015-2016 the AWG and the World Bank will consider the potential for the organization of future joint editions and promote the submissions made for the previous Contests
Outcome/output	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joint ICN - World Bank Group publication related to the 2014 Competition Advocacy Contest - Organisation of the 2015 Contest
Key Dates/Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>June 2015</u>: the award ceremony in Washington - <u>July 2015</u>: preparation/launch of the joint publication - <u>June – September 2015</u>: planning for the 2015 Contest (selection of the theme, evaluation panel members, evaluation criteria, etc.) based on a self assessment of the 2014 Contest - <u>October 2015</u>: launch of the 2015 Contest - <u>October – December 2015</u>: collecting applications from ICN members - <u>January – February 2016</u>: Evaluation of applications - <u>March 2016</u>: announcement of winning stories
Entities/Persons Responsible	- <u>Responsible Co-chairs</u> : Italian Competition Authority
Assessment of multi-year project	- Carry out a self-assessment to ensure that future editions of the Contest will keep high level of participation and interest from ICN members (themes, format etc.)
Promotion and Implementation	See Project 4
Implementation timing	See above
Evaluation	<p>Success indicators can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Level of participation of ICN members in the Contest - Quality of the submissions - Level of participation in teleseminar based on the Contest (see below)

PROJECT 5

Title	Dissemination, Implementation & Outreach
Description	Work to promote familiarity, implementation, and use of AWG work products and initiatives to facilitate experience sharing within the group
Outcome/output	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teleseminars and other initiatives to promote the familiarity with and use of the following work-products: the Framework for Competition Assessment Regimes (together with the 2013 Recommended Practices on Competition Assessment), the Competition Culture Project – Final Report, the Benefits Project Online Resource, all approved at the 2015 ICN Annual Conference in Sydney, and the Market Studies Information Stores - Teleseminars and other initiatives to promote the successful stories of the 2014 Competition Advocacy Contest and the related joint publication - Initiatives to reach out to new or less active members and NGAs in order to promote broader involvement in the AWG activities - Update and reorganisation of the AWG section of the ICN website: in particular, drafting a configuration for the ICN Library of Competition Advocacy which implies a reorganization of all the materials to make it a platform/database which facilitates experience sharing and dissemination - Consider possibilities to translate further work product into languages other than English.
Key Dates/Tasks	<p><u>Teleseminar initiatives:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 teleseminars throughout the 2015-2016 ICN year at appropriate dates, taking into account the AWG calendar and overall ICN calendar. <p><u>Updating and reorganising the AWG section of the ICN website</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>June- August 2015:</u> Update existing AWG materials on the ICN website, including documentation, contact information, broken links etc. - <u>August – September 2015:</u> Establish reference group for drafting configuration of new Library (involving relevant ICN members and Secretariat, and IT input for advice on technical possibilities and limitations). - <u>October – December 2015:</u> Draft configuration of the new Library - <u>January 2016:</u> presentation of the draft Library configuration to the AWG <p><u>Outreach initiatives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>June 2015:</u> Encourage new agencies to engage in the working group in introductory email to AWG members & NGAs. - Disseminate recordings of teleseminars to agencies unable to dial in live due to time differences. - Consider arranging member & NGA conference calls for the Asia-Pacific

	region
Entities/Persons Responsible	- The AWG co-chairs
Assessment of multi-year project	- In 2016-2017, the AWG will start developing the Library based on the agreed configuration
Promotion and Implementation	NA
Implementation timing	NA
Evaluation	<p>Success indicators can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Level of participation of Members during teleseminars/webinars - Number of visits to AWG webpage sections - Contribution to working group projects, such as the market studies information store, by Members that had previously not been actively involved in the working group.

ANNEX 2: PAST PROJECTS

Competition Culture Project

- [*Competition Culture Project Report \(2015\)*](#)

This report based on a survey of 49 ICN members sets out a definition of competition culture and presents the competition culture survey results around seven key constituencies: 1) The Government; 2) The Judiciary; 3) The Legal Community; 4) The Business Community; 5) Members of the Public; 6) The Media; 7) Academia.

Competition Assessment Project

- [*Recommended Practices on Competition Assessment \(2014\)*](#)

Competition assessment is a key tool in promoting a competition-friendly legal environment and a decisive factor in building a strong competition culture. The Recommended Practices are intended to provide guidance to competition agencies on the competition assessment process. The Practices address: (1) General Framework for Competition Assessment; (2) Creating an Enabling Environment for Competition Assessment; (3) Selecting Policies for Competition Assessment; (4) Conducting a Competition Assessment; (5) Evaluating the Likely Impact on Competition; (6) Delivering the Assessment.

This document is also available in [French](#), in [Spanish](#) and in [Arabic](#) version.

- [*Framework of Competition Assessment Regimes \(2015\)*](#)

The Framework of Competition Assessment Regimes is a complement to the 2014 ICN Recommended Practices on Competition Assessment. The Framework consists of tables setting out general features of competition assessment regimes, which ICN member agencies have completed in line with practices in their respective jurisdictions, and more detailed illustrations of competition assessment regimes provided by ICN members.

Market Studies Project

- [*Market Studies Good Practice Handbook \(2012\)*](#)

This Handbook highlights common approaches in conducting market studies and covers the different phases of such a study. It is intended that this Handbook should apply broadly to different permutations of market study used internationally.

- [*Report on the Road-Testing of the Draft Market Studies Good Practice Handbook \(2011\)*](#)

The road-testing of the Market Studies Good Practice Handbook which was developed for 2010 was conducted with the help of two instruments. A questionnaire was sent to all ICN member agencies requesting them to rank the good practices identified in this handbook. Also, a more detailed road-testing was conducted by individual members of the Advocacy Working Group. The Advocacy Working Group also road-tested the Market Studies Information Store to find out about usefulness and usage levels. A report of these road-testing exercises has been produced for the 10th Annual Conference in The Hague.

- [*Market Studies Information Store \(2010\)*](#)

The Market Studies Information Store provides an online reference source of market studies conducted within the last five years by 34 participating ICN member agencies. Its aim is to help with: identifying issues for study, the cross-fertilization of ideas about market issues, identifying approaches to particular market problems and identifying ICN members who may be able to assist/advise further on their experience of conducting market studies in particular sectors.

- [*Market Studies Project Report \(2009\)*](#)

This report analyses 37 ICN members' market studies experience and practices relating to the definition and purpose, powers to conduct studies, their selection, processes, and outcomes, and measurement of the studies' impact.

Competition Advocacy Experience Sharing Project

- [*Competition Advocacy Toolkit Part I \(2011\)*](#)

The AWG restored and updated the Competition Advocacy Toolkit which was developed in 2003, in order to facilitate the use of it. The AWG prepared a new part I focusing on the advocacy process and tools during 2010-2011. Part I is organized into four components: (1) identification of relevant competition advocacy issues; (2) engagement of key stakeholders; (3) implementation and monitoring of advocacy activity; (4) evaluating effectiveness of advocacy interventions.

- [*Competition Advocacy Toolkit \(Part II\) \(2012\)*](#)

The Second Part of the Competition Advocacy Toolkit is intended to follow up its first Part by focusing mainly on promotion mechanisms of competition advocacy messages, including such means as media relations and competition agency web-site. It has the same structure and mode of presentation as Part I and the numbering of Components of Part II continues from Part I.

Part II includes four chapters dedicated respectively to: 1) Promotion Mechanisms/Types of Competition Advocacy Messages; 2) Media Relations; 3) Extending the Reach of Competition Advocacy Web-Site; and 4) Research and Consultation.

- [*Report on Assessment of ICN Members' Requirements and Recommendations on Further ICN Work on Competition Advocacy \(2009\)*](#)

The AWG Review & Update Project, based on a survey of 32 ICN members, prepared a report to: (1) identify ICN members' experiences with competition advocacy; (2) assess the extent to which existing ICN advocacy work product is used by members; and (3) make recommendations for additional work in the area.

Project on Explaining the Benefits of Competition

- [*Web-based toolbox on practical guidance, on explaining the benefits of competition \(2015\)*](#)

The Benefits Project Online Resource seeks to provide ICN members with knowledge, strategies and arguments for explaining the benefits of competition to support their competition advocacy efforts with

government and non-government stakeholders, as well as in the evaluation of competition interventions.

- [*Descriptive Outline of the Chapter \(and Annex\) on Explaining the Benefit of Competition to Government and Legislators \(2013\)*](#)

This Chapter has the objective of setting out particular means and messages for competition agencies when approaching governmental and legislative bodies. It tackles a variety of situations and dimensions, including advocating the principles and benefits of competition, raising awareness of the importance of competition and competition-friendly policies, communicating the need for legislative or institutional reform. It draws on various means of communication, formal and informal, direct and indirect of communicating with government and legislators.

- [*The Benefits Project Interim Report \(2012\)*](#)

The first stage of the Benefits Project (2011-2012) included experience sharing teleseminars and a survey that sought to take stock of how agencies explain the benefits of competition and evaluate their competition interventions. This Interim report aimed to present the results of the Benefits Project for the 2011-2012 ICN year and to propose recommendations for AWG work in the 2012-2013 ICN year.

Other Work Products

- [*Advocacy and Competition Policy \(2002\)*](#)

The report presents a summary of the answers to the questionnaire among ICN members about their advocacy activities. It comprises four sections: 1) an introduction; 2) section setting out a conceptual framework for competition advocacy; 3) section presenting the results of the questionnaire and 4) conclusions.

- [*Report on Advocacy Case Studies: Telecommunications, Energy, Airlines, and the Legal Profession \(2003\)*](#)

This report includes submissions from 11 members describing advocacy efforts in four regulated sectors. Each chapter has an introductory section with an overview of the results of the country contributions and indicating the main sector-specific problems related with competition advocacy. After the introductory sections the full texts of the country contributions are included.

- [*Report on Advocacy Provisions \(2003\)*](#)

This report contains a collection of sample advocacy provisions from the laws and policies of 30 member jurisdictions.

- [*Toolkit for Effective Advocacy \(2003\)*](#)

An online toolkit identifies practical techniques on how to promote competition and enhance competition advocacy capabilities.