



ICN Advocacy Working Group

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.

ORGANIZATION

The AWG has 72 ICN member agencies from 71 jurisdictions and 132 non-governmental advisors (NGAs).

The AWG is co-chaired by the Competition and Consumer Commission of Singapore, the Hong Kong Competition Commission and the Norwegian Competition Authority.

2019-2022 LONG TERM STRATEGIC GOALS

Over the planning period 2017-2020, the AWG guide its work program based on the following strategic goals:

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

Advocacy Working Group

2019-2020 Annual Work Plan

The Advocacy Working Group will in the period 2019-2020 have the following main activities in its work to achieve its mission and strategic goals.

Strategic goal	2019-2020 Work Plan activities	Status for 2019-2020 plan
A. Forum for sharing experiences	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Webinars and member calls 2. ICN/World Bank Advocacy Contest 3. Plenary and break-out sessions at the ICN Annual Conference 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
B. Provide practical tools and guidance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Competition Assessment Project 2. Advocacy and Digital Markets 	<p>Prioritized, building on previous work</p> <p>Prioritized, building on previous work</p> <p>Prioritized, building on previous work</p>
C. Promote the use of work products and tools	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update and promote the use of the Market Studies Information Store 2. Dissemination, implementation and outreach (“Implementation Project”) 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

A1. Webinars and member calls

The AWG will arrange a series of regular webinars and members calls, which will focus on the AWG prioritized and ongoing work (see B1, B2 and C1 in table above) of relevance for a diverse range of ICN members, and allow members to share brief summaries of successful advocacy stories.

By encouraging members to share experiences of advocacy efforts, for example typical challenges faced and the different tools and methods used to overcome these challenges - and by extension, the relevant AWG work product that can be of assistance in these efforts – the webinar and members calls series will take a holistic approach to the implementation of AWG work product as a whole.

An additional strategy is to promote the work products through the ICN’s established platforms, namely the website, and each agency’s websites, as well as social media platforms. This will allow the work products to reach a wider audience that would otherwise be rather difficult to track.

Title	Webinars and member calls
Description and output	Webinars on prioritized AWG workflows and members calls with updates on AWG work as well as members sharing recent 'success stories' on advocacy
Output achieved	Member updates, awareness, exchange of experience and member engagement
Relation to strategic goals	Goal A (Forum sharing experiences and practices) but also B (Provide practical tools and guidance) and C (Promote work products and tools)
Assessment of Timing	Regular members calls and topical webinars related to B1, B2 and B3 respectively
Entities/Persons Responsible	Rotation by co-chairs
Implementation	N/A
Evaluation	
Other comment(s)	The webinars and members calls will also be part of reaching strategic goal C "Promote the use of work products and tools", and the "Implementation Project" described below under C2.

A2. Plenary and break-out sessions at ICN Annual Conference

The AWG will plan break-out and plenary sessions at the ICN Annual Conference with a view to fulfilling its mission and strategic goals.

The AWG will work to ensure that the sessions assigned to the AWG at the Annual Conference are linked to prioritized work products or work-streams. In this manner, we ensure that the efforts of the AWG are coherent and efficient, even if they are carried out at different stages or moments in time.

Accordingly, the main pillars for break-out and plenary sessions will be the main AWG projects for 2018-2019: Advocacy Strategy, Competition Assessment and Advocacy and Digital Markets.

Title	Plenary and break-out sessions at ICN Annual Conference
Description and output	Plenary and break-out sessions at ICN Annual Conference
Output achieved	
Relation to strategic goals	Goal A (Forum sharing experiences and practices) but also B (Provide practical tools and guidance) and C (Promote work products and tools)
Assessment of Timing	May 2020
Entities/Persons Responsible	Jointly by co-chairs
Implementation	N/A
Evaluation	
Other comment(s)	The AWG plenary and break-out sessions will also be part of reaching strategic goal C "Promote the use of work products and tools", and the "Implementation Project" described below under C2.

A3. ICN/World Bank Advocacy Contest

This contest aims to highlight the key role competition agencies play in promoting competition through showcasing their advocacy success stories. This project has attracted the attention of both younger and experienced agencies and has positioned itself as an important incentive to promote advocacy actions throughout the world.

Following the success of the four joint editions between 2014 and 2019, the AWG and the World Bank will work on the organization of the next joint edition, including the definition of the general theme and categories, and the selection of the Contest Judges, with a view to attracting new participants among ICN members and increasing the opportunity of experience sharing.

As in previous editions, the winning agencies will receive awards during an Award Ceremony at the ICN Annual Conference.

Title	ICN/World Bank Advocacy Contest
Description and output	Promote advocacy actions by showcasing advocacy success stories
Output achieved	Showcase of advocacy success stories
Relation to strategic goals	Goal A (Forum for sharing experiences)
Assessment of Timing	Submission of advocacy stories by competition agencies: October 2019-January 2020 Review by Contest Judges: February-April 2020 Present awards: At 2020 ICN Annual Conference
Entities/Persons Responsible	Italian Competition Authority and World Bank Group
Implementation	
Evaluation	
Other comment(s)	



International
Competition
Network

B2. Competition Assessment

Competition assessment is a key tool in promoting a competition-friendly legal environment and a decisive factor in building a strong competition culture. In this regard, the AWG has in 2018/19 focused particularly on approaches to *ex officio* identification of candidates for competition assessment. This is reflected in this being the topic for the December 2018 AWG Teleseminar, one of the issues explored at the AWG Workshop in Kyiv as well as one of the break-outs at the 2019 ICN Annual Conference. Combined with member input from these events and new and updated OECD material, the experiences presented at these events will be used to update previous work by the AWG in this area, i.e. *Recommended Practices on Competition Assessment* (2014) and *Framework of Competition Assessment Regimes* (2015).

Title	Competition Assessment
Description and output	New chapter on approaches and experiences with <i>ex officio</i> identification of candidates for competition assessment. Evaluation of implementation and use. Update of 2014/2015 Framework/Recommended Practices.
Output achieved	
Relation to strategic goals	Goal B (Provide practical tools and guidance)
Assessment of Timing	Topic break-out at 2020 ICN Annual. New chapter and update in 2019-2020.
Entities/Persons Responsible	Norwegian Competition Authority
Implementation	Questionnaire and input from AWG members
Evaluation	N/A
Other comment(s)	Will build on existing and updated OECD work products on competition assessment

B3. Advocacy and Digital Markets

Digital markets have grown significantly in recent years. The rapid growth of digital markets has significantly transformed markets' characteristics and their competitive dynamics. Digital markets often involve more complicated competition issues involving multi-sided markets, platform-based models and network effects. This has resulted in many competition authorities looking deeper into their current ways of assessing competition matters and whether such tools are suitable and sufficient to cope with the changing landscape. Related to this change is the need for competition agencies to review and revise their existing advocacy strategies to ensure that competition policy objectives are met.

In 2018-2019, the AWG gathered information on competition agencies' advocacy efforts in the digital markets, and the changes to the advocacy efforts made by competition agencies for the digital markets as compared to their traditional advocacy efforts. In particular, the information included the challenges faced by competition agencies in their advocacy efforts in the digital markets, changes to their advocacy strategies and approaches in comparison to ongoing advocacy efforts, and the methods used to monitor and assess their advocacy efforts in the digital markets. The AWG produced a summary report on the information gathered from 22 experiences of 16 competition authorities. In 2019-2020 The AWG will distil and integrate key findings/recommendations from the experiences collected into the relevant existing ICN Advocacy documents (e.g. guiding principles, recommended practices etc.).

Title	Advocacy and Digital Markets
Description and output	Distil and integrate key findings/recommendations from the information gathered on competition agencies' advocacy experiences in digital markets into the relevant ICN Advocacy documents
Output achieved	-
Relation to strategic goals	Goal B (Provide practical tools and guidance)
Assessment of Timing	Complete update of relevant documents: May 2020
Entities/Persons Responsible	Competition and Consumer Commission of Singapore
Implementation	Information from ICN members
Evaluation	N/A
Other comment(s)	Nil

C1. Update and promote the use of the Market Studies Information Store

The Information Store is a web-based catalogue of market studies carried out by member agencies, categorised by jurisdiction and sector. The aim is to identify ICN members' market studies experience in particular sectors, 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.

While the Information Store provides useful information such as the reason for the study, the duration, the outcomes, and a link to the market study report, it should be updated on a regular basis. In the coming year, the AWG plans to encourage some emerging, smaller agencies to participate in this project. In light of the rapid development of disruptive technology and digital economy worldwide, we also hope to include some market studies in those areas.

Title	Market Studies Information Store
Description and output	The Market Studies Information Store is an online catalogue of market studies carried out by member agencies
Output achieved	Updated information store as per 2018; over 100 new market studies added to the Information Store in the 2017-18 update
Relation to strategic goals	Goal C (Promote work products and tools)
Assessment of Timing	The updated information store will be implemented on the new ICN website
Entities/Persons Responsible	Hong Kong Competition Commission
Implementation	Information from ICN members
Evaluation	N/A
Other comment(s)	The AWG will continue the constructive dialogue with the OECD about synergies, complementarities and possible duplications between the groups' work-streams on market studies, especially in relation to the OECD project concerning the drafting of a manual on how to perform market studies.

C2. Dissemination, implementation and outreach (“Implementation Project”)

The AWG will continue to carry out initiatives to develop the awareness of the AWG products, including the Recommended Practices on Competition Assessment, the Market Studies Good Practice Handbook, the Benefits Platform and the Market Studies Guiding Principles. This will primarily be achieved by holding teleseminars.

Acknowledging that the discussion of hypothetical scenarios is a format that has been particularly appreciated by delegates at the 2016 and 2019 ICN Advocacy Workshop and the advocacy sessions at the 2017 and 2019 ICN Annual Conference, the AWG will explore the possibility to undertake these in virtual meetings.

In the regular member calls, the co-chairs will include an item on the agenda where members can present brief summaries of success advocacy stories.

Finally, the AWG and the World Bank will explore the possibility of a joint publication describing the winning stories of the previous editions and organize an event to present them.

Title	Implementation Project
Description and output	Enhance awareness of the AWG products
Output achieved	
Relation to strategic goals	Goal C (Promote work products and tools)
Assessment of Timing	Continuous
Entities/Persons Responsible	Jointly by co-chairs
Implementation	
Evaluation	
Other comment(s)	