

The Working Group for Research on the Competition Issues in the Pharmaceutical Markets

The Working Group for Research on the Competition Issues in the Pharmaceutical Markets (hereinafter referred as the “Working Group”) was formed at the initiative of the Federal Antimonopoly Service (the FAS Russia) and the Italian Competition Authority in January 2012.

The key task of the Working Group is the elaboration of specific proposals on forming the competition environment in the pharmaceutical market and ensuring the availability of medicines to the consumers.

The Working Group determines the objectives of the Working Group, as follows:

1. By the exchange of experiences and approaches to enforcement of antimonopoly legislation in the pharmaceutical market;
2. By the coordination between the competition authorities-members of the Working Group when investigating violations of antimonopoly legislation.

The Working Group operates through consultations and exchange of non-confidential information among the members of the Working Group during and outside of the meetings, through organizing meetings with the relevant state authorities, businesses and other interested persons.

As at September 2017, 10 meetings of the Working Group were successfully held. The participants represented competition authorities and ministries of health of the BRICS countries, EU, CIS. Besides, the scientific community and large pharmaceutical companies took part.

During its existence, within the framework of the Working Group meetings the following topics were pointed out:

- the issues of the development of competition in the pharmaceutical market (the 1st meeting of the Working Group, September 13, 2012)
- methodology of defining of pharmaceutical market/market analysis (the 2nd meeting of the Working Group, March 21, 2013);
- stimulation of production of the pharmaceuticals and consumption of the produced medicines (the 3rd meeting of the Working Group, September 9, 2013);
- unfair competition practices of pharmaceutical companies (the 4th meeting of the Working Group, March 11, 2014);

- prospects of development of cooperation of the International Working Group together with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) regarding the organization of the sectorial base for pharmaceutical data (the 5th meeting of the Working Group, September 9, 2014);

- cooperation between Competition Authorities of the BRICS countries on competition issues of the pharmaceutical market, including unfair practices and methods to counter them (the 6th meeting of the Working Group, March 6, 2015);

- patent protection as one of the mechanisms for the protection of investment activities, compulsory licensing and permission of parallel imports of medicines (the 7th meeting of the Working Group, September 21, 2015);

- availability of antiretroviral drugs (ARVs) for HIV-infected and the possible ways to improve accessibility for people in need (the 8th meeting of the Working Group, March 24, 2016);

- regional and global particularities of the price formation on pharmaceutical markets (the 9th meeting of the Working Group, September 27, 2016);

- the peculiarities of correlation of antimonopoly legislation and patent protection rights of the pharmaceutical innovations (the 10th meeting of the Working Group, March 21, 2017);

The 11th meeting of the Working Group is to be held on September 21, 2017, within the framework of the international Event “Russian Competition Week”. The parties plan to discuss the problems of pricing in pharmaceutical markets, as well as the possibility of analyzing world prices for medicines.