



Federal Competition Authority, Austria

**„The Value of International and
Regional Cooperation“**

**Director General Theodor Thanner
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The Value of Cooperation I

➤ Quote **Mario Monti**, *former Commissioner for competition*:

“ Indeed, I believe that effective bilateral cooperation has become an essential feature of competition law enforcement in the world of today.”

The Value of Cooperation II

- Globalisation
- Communication
- Transparency vs. Confidentiality

Globalisation

- Competition law and enforcement is a global issue
- Not limited by geographical borders
- Economies are interconnected (e.g. financial crises)
- Well informed business community

Communication

- Exchange of information, best practices, know-how flow
- Awareness of activities in other authorities (e.g. sector investigations, court proceedings etc.)
- Elaboration and promotion of common positions
- Learning from each others experiences

Transparency vs. Confidentiality

- Full transparency works well in merger cases
- Confidentiality constraints in non-merger cases
- **Solution:** well-dosed transparency with respect for business secrets

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International and Regional Networks I

- European Competition Network (ECN)
- International Competition Network (ICN)
- Marchfeld Competition Forum (MCF)
- European Competition Authorities (ECA)
- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
- Baltic Competition Conference

International and Regional Networks II

- BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, China)
- Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)
- Council of Antimonopoly Policy (ICAP)
- Cooperation agreements of the EU with 3rd countries
- International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)
- World Trade Organisation (WTO)
- Nordic Competition Authorities
- Central European Competition Initiative (CECI)

Example BRIC Competition Conference I

- Cooperation since 2006
- Semiformal organisation
- Objectives:
 - economic issues
 - financial recovery
 - food and energy security
- Development:

BRIC countries have to promote principles of competition policy as an important measure within their economic progress

Example BRIC Competition Conference II

➤ BRIC and competition, *Strategy paper*.

“The Heads of the competition authorities of BRIC recognize that **strong and effective enforcement of their respective competition laws is impossible without expanding cooperation** and, where applicable, coordination between their competition policies. They also see the **necessity of exchanging opinions on different aspects of competition policy and enforcement through four-way dialogue and within international events.**”

Example BRIC Competition Conference III

- Quote **Igor Shuvalov**, *1st deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation*:

“ Encouragement of competition is and will be the key direction of our economic policy, the most important factor of modernisation of our economy. And we know that competition needs a defense - a defense against not only private monopolies, but from the monopolistic efforts from the state itself. **Finally almost a half of earth population is behind us. And development of competition is the main term for growth of its prosperity.**”

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Example Marchfeld Competition Forum I

- Initiated by the Czech and Austrian Competition Authority
- Founded: 01.07.2008 in Schlosshof, Austria
- Members: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, DG Competition
- Exchange of information, best practices, know-how flow
- Defining common positions

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Example Marchfeld Competition Forum II

- **Merger Information Platform:** unique feature of the Marchfeld Regional Cooperation
- Electronic database for exchange of information on mergers and concentrations
- Daily updates by members of the MCF
- **Benefits:**
 - Valuable tool for case handlers in their daily work
 - Overview of developments in the markets
 - Statistics

Conclusions

- **Competition law is becoming more international**
- **Cooperation based on partnership should be strengthened**
- **Emphasis should be put on regional cooperation, being a best practice to enhance efficiency**

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Thank you for your attention!

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