

3. In Ukraine income is quite unevenly distributed so that these average measures may not be very meaningful. Similarly, great regional differences exist between different regions inside Ukraine. Ukraine had high levels of inflation several years ago. The Ukrainian Hryvna has remained much more stable in recent 4-5 years at 5.3 -5.4 per dollar.

4. A great deal of interest has arisen in recent years on the potential for marketing on the Internet. While the jury is still out on this medium's ultimate potential, sales so far have been limited, although a large potential may exist. Larger segment of the population in Ukraine is still not "connected". Internet may serve purposes other than direct sales.

5. Within the Commonwealth of Independent States, Ukraine will continue to limit integration to economic issues, although even here Kyiv will continue to run into three problems with Russia. First, Russia will continue to apply pressure upon Ukraine to join the CIS Customs and CIS Payments Unions, to both of which Kyiv is unlikely to agree. Ukraine will also remain an associate member of the CIS Economic Union (just as it is likely to remain only an associate member of the CIS). Second, although Ukraine and Russia have normalized their energy relations, problems will remain. Ukraine and Russia will continue to search for alternative suppliers and alternative supply routes. In the case of Ukraine, this means developing Ukraine's strategic alliance with Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan (both oil and gas producers) and Georgia (as an energy route to the Black Sea and the Odesa oil terminal). In the Russian case, this means strengthening relations with Belarus (whose energy sector is already de facto under Russian control). Third, Russia will continue to utilize economic pressure in pursuit of its strategic agenda in Crimea (pressure such as the unilateral September 1996 imposition of import taxes solely on Ukrainian goods, and refusal to provide components for Ukrainian military exports that would allow Kyiv to become a major arms exporter and serious competitor to Russia).

COMPETITION POLICY IN GLOBALIZATION PROCESSES OF WORLD TRADE

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Competition:... 6. Ecology. The struggle between individuals of the same or different species for food, space, light, etc., when these are inadequate to supply the needs of all.

Collins English Dictionary (Millennium Edition), 1999

1. Competition policy provides opportunities for civil society to mobilise and intervene in defence of consumer rights. Consumer groups can:

- informally monitor compliance with the standards which have been set;
- monitor the truthfulness of advertising;
- examine the safety of products;
- engage with the private sector, using the legal requirements as a minimum benchmark;
- make submissions to regulators;
- where dialogue with the private sector interests in question fails, they can run test cases in court.

2. At the same time, civil society (and consumer groups in particular) can foster the political will to pursue a process that stimulates an understanding of how a properly-conceived competition policy works in the interests of all.

Quite apart from intellectual property considerations, globalisation brings a new dimension to competition policy. Abuse is not confined within national borders. International cartelization and similar abuse, and other forms of corruption, can impact seriously on international trade, and there is a growing realisation of the need for international guidelines for the control of anti-competitive conduct. These abusive practices do not impact simply on final consumer goods, but also on "input goods" such as steel, fertiliser and energy.

3. Countries with weak domestic institutions are particularly vulnerable to cross-border restrictive trade practices and international business conspiracies. Integration into the global economy may increase competition, but it does not necessarily ensure it. Cartels, vertical restraints (agreements between sellers and buyers), exclusive dealerships and controls over domestic imports can effectively block people from receiving the development benefits which globalisation should bring. Concern over these vulnerabilities lie at the heart of some of the protests against globalisation presently taking place around the world.

4. The problem, too, is a growing one as privatisation continues to place more and more previously publicly-owned assets into private hands, thus paving the way for increased levels of international mergers and acquisitions. As the public barriers to competition are removed the private barriers must, correspondingly, be addressed - and the more so with the growth of globalisation.