

PRESS RELEASE**Subject: Investigation of the HCC into price increases and output restrictions in healthcare materials and other products**

This week, the Hellenic Competition Commission (HCC) has sent requests for information to a large number of companies active in the production, import and marketing of healthcare products, in particular surgical masks and disposable gloves, as well as other products such as antiseptic wipes and antiseptic solutions.

This action was deemed necessary following numerous consumer complaints and media reports regarding, on the one hand, significant price increases of the products in question observed at a number of retail outlets, and shortcomings of these products, on the other, which are likely to stem from business practices in the distribution chain that may fall under the provisions of Law 3959/2011. There is also a need for data collection and database compilation to better plan the measures that eventually may need to be taken in the future to address the impact of any eventual anti-competitive practices, should the investigations already in course and the measures taken by other public bodies do not produce the desired results.

The HCC reiterates, as in its previous [recent announcements](#), that in the current situation in which the country is being afflicted by the coronavirus pandemic, the HCC will continue to intervene, wherever and whenever necessary, within its powers of finding any violations of the provisions of Law 3959/2011 and Articles 101 and 102 TFEU and will severely punish any infringements, in seamless, direct and continuous cooperation with the General Secretariat of Commerce and Consumer Protection, as well as with other public authorities. In this respect, the Commission has decided to investigate whether the conditions required for launching an *ex officio* investigation and taking enforcement measures within its powers are in place with respect to increases in the retail prices of healthcare materials.

Doing this by sending thousands of questionnaires via an online programme and swiftly analyzing the data collected through data analytics tools to decide further action is an innovative way adopted by the HCC for conducting its investigations (and the first time to date) and may be extended to also other sectors and product markets that show signs of unjustified price hikes and anticompetitive output restrictions in the near future.

Businesses are required to respond to the HCC's queries within 10 days by completing a special online questionnaire form according to the instructions in the related video <https://youtu.be/1FVladH4krk>