

**PRESS RELEASE**

Subject: **Dawn raids in the food sector**

In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Hellenic Competition Commission has carried out on the April 22nd, with the assistance of Prefecture Units, dawn raids at undertakings and associations of undertakings active throughout Greece in the food sector, and particularly in the production of citrus products. This action follows up previous investigative activities of the HCC in sensitive sectors of the economy, such as health products and food commodities.

The dawn raids were carried out following press releases regarding significant price increases of specific citrus products and/or restrictions of their distribution in the domestic market, both of which are being investigated under the provisions of Articles 1 and/or 2 of National Competition Law 3959/2011 and the equivalent articles 101 and 102 of TFEU.

It is noted that dawn raids are a preliminary action in case there are some indications of anti-competitive practices. Conducting such inspections does not however mean that the undertakings have engaged in an anti-competitive behavior, and nothing concerning the outcome of the investigation may be inferred from the fact that there has been a dawn raid.

The HCC continues to intervene, under the present circumstances that the country is being affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, wherever it is deemed necessary, as the authority responsible for implementing the provisions of Articles 1 and 2 of Law 3959/2011 and Articles 101 and 102 TFEU.

In its role as the guardian for the proper functioning of the free market in the national territory, the HCC would like to inform the public that, in exercising its competences, it will examine -as top priority- any relevant cases regarding anticompetitive practices for which it will be informed, by means of a complaint, a request for leniency from a cartel member, or other sources of information, and that, in the present special economic and social circumstances, it will impose the most severe administrative sanctions on the undertakings found liable for this anti-competitive conduct.