

EDITORIAL

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CHANGING WORLD

Competition policy and trade policy have traditionally been considered as two separate fields, with no or loose connections only. This has led governments to decide of their trade policies in isolation of their competition policies.

The fact is that trade policies have an ever increasing impact on the competitive situation in international markets and that they can very easily defeat the purposes of competition policies if uncoordinated with them. Today, the very restrictive business practices which competition policies are fighting are generated more and more by governments' trade arrangements such as export cartels or joint-ventures, export subsidies, orderly marketing arrangements, voluntary export restraints, quotas, and the like. Such trade policies restrict competition in the exporting countries, where they result in discrimination between exporters; they restrict competition in the importing countries, where the choice offered to buyers is restrained.

Bulk of the efforts devoted to maintain competitive markets have been aimed up to now at the restrictive practices devised by the enterprises themselves. A changing world requires now that these efforts be redirected against governmental trade policies which harm competition. Quite a challenge for competition policy.