

Dominican Republic Spearheading Improved Consumer Welfare in the Region

Seven years ago, the Dominican Republic enacted a law to promote and protect competition; which is expected to lead to increased economic efficiency in that country as well as to set an example for improved consumer welfare in the Caribbean.

"Semana de la Competencia" (Competition Week) was hosted by the National Commission for the Protection of Competition - Pro-Competencia from February 2nd - 5th, 2015 to mark the seventh anniversary of the enactment of "Ley General de Defensa de la Competencia No. 42-08" (competition Law No.42-08).

The week of activities were focused on improving the knowledge of economic agents, state institutions, academia and the general population on competition law with the aim of promoting a competitive business culture and publicizing the role of Competition Law in the economic efficiency of national productive sectors.

One of the highlights of the event was the inaugural National Competition Forum which comprised an audience of employers, government representatives, law firms, multilateral agencies and the general public. According to the President of Pro-Competencia, Michelle Cohen: "Putting competition in the Dominican Republic's agenda and raising awareness about it has won the support of citizens, productive sectors and government alike."

Compete Caribbean provided technical assistance in the application of Competition Law through two specialists assigned to Pro-Competencia. Both experts served as keynote speakers within Semana de Competencia and were able to provide insight on enabling factors for competition in the market, consumer benefits and reasons why the public should take interest in matters affecting competition.

On a more technical note, the specialists were also able to provide training to the Government's technical staff regarding competition policy, advocacy and case handling; plus they also engaged in training Supreme Court judges to ensure effective enforcement of the Competition Act. During this training session, a presentation on the role of economic analysis in the application Competition Law was delivered.

Subsequent to the success of Semana de Competencia, Compete Caribbean will continue to provide support to Pro-Competencia in its mandate to improve economic efficiency of goods and services through the promotion and advocacy of competition.