



**Hellenic Competition Commission**

**Athens, July 28<sup>th</sup> 2020**

**Press Release**

**Subject: Decision on the ex-officio investigation in the furniture and professional equipment market, in order to determine whether there is an infringement of Article 1 of Law 3959/2011 (on the “Protection of Free Competition”) and/or Article 101 TFEU**

The Hellenic Competition Commission (HCC), in plenary, adopted a unanimous decision following the simplified Settlement Procedure according to article 25a of Law 3959/2011 and Decision no. 628/2016. According to the decision, the company “K. PAPANASTASIOU OFFICE FURNITURE SA” with registered name “Grammi Goitrou” obtained immunity from fines under the Greek leniency programme (Decision no. 526/2011, par. 47) and the company «MAR OFFICE FURNITURE MICHALIS PICHAS & SONS» was given a fine reduction according to the Settlement Procedure for the violation of article 1 of Law 3959/2011. The fine amounted to 29,013.59 euros.

The relevant HCC decision was issued according to the simplified Settlement Procedure, following the expression of interest by the parties involved and their consequent acceptance of the infringement found.

Based on the investigation and the acceptance of the infringement by the companies involved during the settlement procedure, it emerged that the companies PICHAS and PAPANASTASIOU agreed to cooperate in a public tender (announcement no. 06/2015) for the supply of equipment for the five-storey building of the University General Hospital in Ioannina, with a deadline for submission of tenders on 02.09.2015. According to the reasoning of the decision, this agreement restricts competition between the companies involved. In this case, the provision of Article 101 TFEU does not apply as there is no evidence of impact on inter – state EU trade.

PAPANASTASIOU substantially assisted the HCC in the investigation of the respective violation and was granted full immunity from fines under the leniency programme. By the same decision, the HCC reduced by 15% the amount of the fine imposed on PICHAS for its cooperation under the Settlement Procedure and the unconditional admission of its participation in the infringement.

It is noted that this is the second case in which all the companies involved applied for settlement at an early stage without having previously been served with a relevant Statement of Objections. Such early application of the settlement procedure increases procedural efficiency.