

NOTA DE PRENSA

The CNMC launches a Study on the efficiency of regulation and effective competition among universities in Spain, starting with a Public Consultation phase

- The study will analyze the Spanish university system from the principles of efficient economic regulation perspective and its adaptation to the global environment of increasing competition among universities.

Madrid, 15 June 2016 - The National Commission for Markets and Competition (CNMC) starts a study on regulation and competition among universities in Spain. The first phase starts with a [Public consultation](#) which is expected to gather inputs from operators, experts and various related university agents.

The 2015 CNMC Action Plan, in its strategic action 6.2, already contained a commitment to conduct market studies on the Spanish education system in the medium-term. Within the education system, the universities constitute a particularly important field of study from the point of view of efficient regulation, since they decisively contribute to the development of human capital in Spain, as well as to the country competitiveness as a whole. In principle, there are arguments for both public intervention, and for safeguarding the beneficial effects of competition – such as to better attract and generate innovation, knowledge, talent and entrepreneurship-; all these vectors can boost competition throughout the economy. This raises the interest of the CNMC as the institution responsible for ensuring the promotion of competition and the efficient economic regulation.

The current context is particularly suitable to address a study on the Spanish university system, given certain phenomena arising on a global level. The most prominent universities on an international level are engaged in a "*race to excellence*" to attract students and better trained teachers, so that they can improve their academic and research results, the relationship between companies and universities, and the access of graduates to the labor market. This phenomenon of competition in terms of quality, brand image and reputation, is complemented by other aspects such as greater specialization and differentiation.

The aim of the study is to see how the Spanish university system adapts to this global paradigm and what role has the current regulation of the university system in Spain. To that end, a systematic analysis on the barriers to access and exercise this activity, and its justification under the principles of necessity and proportionality, will be conducted. This analysis is particularly pertinent after the reforms undertaken under the "*Bologna process*", which constituted an effort of convergence and harmonization within the European partners, with the aim of improving the quality and competitiveness of universities.

Many experts have pointed out that one of the main reasons why the Spanish university system fails to be at a top level internationally speaking is the lack of incentives for efficiency and competition among universities. The CNMC, whose knowledge makes it best suited to promote competition and efficient economic regulation, can and should contribute to this debate with its analysis and recommendations.

For this purpose, the Public Consultation launched by the CNMC raises a number of questions about the university system in Spain. In the Public Consultation there are included both general questions about the university teaching and research, and more specific aspects related to competition, efficiency and the current model.

To ensure an orderly and transparent contribution of ideas, those interested in participating may submit their comments via the CNMC web until 25 July, 2016. The submitted contributions to the raised questions could be published and they will be taken into account to elaborate the study.

Once this first phase of Public Consultation is finished, the CNMC could consider to meet or to send requests for information to experts and stakeholders.

After the study, the CNMC will publish the conclusions and recommendations aimed at facilitating an efficient regulation of the university system to the benefit of public interest.

The CNMC, under the provisions of the first paragraph of Article 5 of Law 3/2013, of June 4, on the Creation of the National Commission for Markets and Competition, has among its functions to promote effective competition in the markets by, among others, the elaboration of studies and market investigations from a competition point of view, as well as by conducting general reports on economic sectors, where appropriate, with proposals for liberalization, deregulation or regulatory amendment.

[Respond to the consultation](#)