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The Kick-off Event of the Twinning Project Developing sound cooperation for free and effective competition!

On Thursday, 14 November, the kick-off of the Twinning Project under the slogan *Developing sound cooperation for free and effective competition!*, funded by the European Union, was held in Tirana.

This event was devoted to the dissemination of the ex-ante assessment as a strategic tool carried out by Competition Authorities, and the advantages of a proper fulfilment thereof by all the involved Public Institutions.

Jointly with the above-mentioned event, the Albanian Competition

Authority, the Beneficiary Country of the referred project, celebrated its 15th Anniversary.

The Twinning Project under the slogan *Developing sound cooperation for free and effective competition!* is targeted towards providing support and contributing to strengthening the administrative and institutional capacities of the Albanian Competition Authority, in order to ensure its mission to protect the free and effective competition in the market, based on legal framework in force and Union Acquis

This Project was launched last July 2019 by two Spanish partners: the Spanish National Commission for Markets and Competition (called in Spanish CNMC), as the peer institution providing technical assistance, and the International and Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies (FIIAPP), as the management unit of the project.

High representatives of the countries and institutions involved in the Twinning Project participated in the kick-off event. Ms. Juliana Latifi, Head of the Albanian Competition Authority, opened the meeting by leading a welcoming session and thanking all participants.

Likewise, H.E. Eduart Shalsi, Minister of State for the Entrepreneurship Protection, Ms. Vasilika Hysi, Deputy Speaker of Albanian Parliament, and Mr. Andrea Vera, Head of the Economic Session of the European Union Delegation to Albania, greeted and congratulated the Albanian Competition Authority, and wished a successful development of the Twinning Project.

Regarding the Spanish representatives, Ms. Eva Mendoza Giraldo, Chargée d'affaires at the Embassy of Spain, Mr. Josep Maria Guinart Solà, Counselor of the National Commission for Markets and Competition, Ms. Sonsoles Mories Álvarez, Director of the Unit for Economic Development and Environment of the International and Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies, expressed their satisfaction for being engaged through their institutions in a such challenging experience in Albania. They all agreed that this project will contribute to build new bridges between Albania and Spain.

The round table brought together different insights of the ex-ante analysis, through the participation of Mr. Juan Manuel Contreras Delgado de Cos, Head of Public Aids and Draft Regulation Unit, of the Advocacy Department of the CNMC, and two representatives of the Albanian Competition Authority, Ms. Diana Servishi, the General-Secretary, and Ms. Leida Matja, Member of the Competition Commission. The three speakers underlined the relevance of the ex-ante analysis by which Competition Authorities can exert a



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pre-emptive influence on regulatory and market policies. In addition, the ex-ante nature of this intervention facilitates the awareness of competition policy and efficient economic regulation principles at all levels of the public administration.

Finally, other relevant Albanian stakeholders intervened within the framework of another session of the event. Inter alia, representatives of the regulatory bodies, the Financial Supervisory Authority and business environment shared their experiences regarding the productive collaboration with the Albanian Competition Authority and wished further success to the implementation of this project as an important tool for strengthening the capacities of the Albanian Competition Authority.