

The CNMC fines the company I.C.O.N. €1 million and bans it from participating in public contracts for five months

- The company specialises in selling wholesale hairdressing and cosmetic products and retail sales through its website.
- Between 2010 and 2024, it carried out multiple anti-competitive practices related to price fixing and enforcing commercial conditions when reselling its products.
- They acted in a particularly serious manner, using control mechanisms and threats against distributors who failed to adhere to the fixed prices.
- This is the CNMC's second decision in which it directly sets the scope and duration of the ban on contracting with the public sector.

Madrid, 12 January 2026 - The Spanish National Markets and Competition Commission (CNMC) fines I.C.O.N. Europe, S. L. (I.C.O.N.) €1.2 million for restricting competition in the market for professional hairdressing products between 2010 and 2024 ([S/0015/23](#)).

Sanctioned practices

I.C.O.N. fixed resale pricing in its distribution network for professional hairdressing products:

- In the wholesale sector in the Canary Islands and the Balearic Islands (2010-2024), by including clauses in distribution agreements that required them to respect the retail prices set by I.C.O.N. for hairdressing salons in their territory.
- In the retail sector, at least for online sales, throughout the country (2017-2023), by requiring retailers to apply the retail prices (RRP) set by the company, using recurring communications of mandatory RRP rates.

Additionally, the company set and demanded that its retail distributors comply with the following commercial conditions:

- Strict limits on how much discount they could offer, including promotions and campaigns.
- A ban on selling I.C.O.N. products on marketplaces such as Amazon, restricting sales to their own websites or physical stores.
- A ban on offering discount coupons or running promotions not authorised by I.C.O.N.

The company put in place a system to check and monitor its retailers' websites to make sure these rules were followed. It could spot any price or discount deviations and demand they be fixed immediately. There was also proof of threats and retaliation against those who broke the rules.

I.C.O.N also promoted coordinated responses among distributors to the CNMC's requests for information.

Despite forbidding its distributors from selling on Amazon, I.C.O.N. sold its own products on that platform through an intermediary company (Transparency Quality, S.L.). This was concealed from both its distribution network and the CNMC during the inspection.

Overall strategy and impacts

I.C.O.N sought to maintain absolute control of its distributors' prices and commercial conditions by ruling out any possibility of competition between distributors of the same brand.

Its policy involved setting uniform, high retail prices, thereby harming consumers and hindering the entry and expansion of new distribution formats or more efficient channels.

Sanctions and measures

Upon investigation, the CNMC has fined I.C.O.N €1,197,907 for two violations of Article 1 of Act 15/2007, of 3 July, on the Defence of Competition (LDC):

- €637,907 for actions relating to its wholesale distributors in the Canary Islands and the Balearic Islands.
- €560,000 for actions relating to its retail distributors, at least online, at the national level.

Furthermore, the decision bars the company from contracting with the public sector, throughout the national territory, in relation to any type of supply of hair care products (wholesale and online retail) for five months.

This is the second time that the CNMC has directly set the scope and duration of a procurement ban, following the EÓLICA DEL ALFOZ decision ([S/0011/23](#)).

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- [S/0015/23 ICON](#)

- [Press release](#) (12/12/2023): The CNMC initiates disciplinary proceedings against I.C.O.N. Europe SL for possible competition-restricting practices.