Report of Study Group on Business Alliances

Japan has been recently facing significant changes in the social and economic environment such as the progress of the digital economy and IoT (Internet of Things), rapid population aging, population and labor decline, and market shrink. To respond to these changes, each enterprise is addressing various issues for further business efficiency and innovation. Because of the advantages of promptness in business operation and cost saving, business alliances are widely used as one of business strategy methods to tackle these issues.

Conventionally, for pursuing business efficiency, etc., business alliances have been implemented mainly among enterprises in the same trade or in transactional relationships. In recent years, such sorts of business alliances have been more promoted because of changes in the social and economic environment. In addition, business alliances across sectors or industries have also been frequently employed, for pursuing new values such as solving social agendas emerging around cities, traffics and so forth under matured society or economy, and creating new businesses. In this way, business alliances play an important role when enterprises seek more efficiency in their businesses.

In these circumstances, the Japan Fair Trade Commission set up the "Study Group on Business Alliances" (Chair: Akira Negishi, Project Professor, Social Systems Innovation Center, Kobe University) in the Competition Policy Research Center (Director: Yosuke Okada, Professor, Faculty of Economics, Hitotsubashi University). The Study Group held nine meetings since December in 2018 to discuss various issues concerning the Antimonopoly Act and business alliances.

The CPRC hereby publishes a report of the Study Group based on its discussion.

*Every announcement is tentative translation. Please refer to the original text written in Japanese for more details.
*The full translation of the report will be posted later.