

Intellectual property policy-making in an environment with a dual structured pharmaceutical industry (innovative and generic)

Participants were drawn from the IP policy community and included, among others, the Director of the Ministry of Health, the Director of the Israeli Medical Association (IMA), three members of Parliament, the four members of the inter-ministerial committee on IP, other senior government officials, Sick Funds, academics, technology transfer officers, representatives of research centres, patient federations, the legal community, and the media.

Presentations

Prof. Kaitin's presentation focused on the current global trends in the pharmaceutical industry, with particular emphasis on the future of product R&D, the future of generic companies and of the prospects of creating a robust research-based pharmaceutical and biotechnology sectors in Israel

Mr. Mitra focused on the patent debate in India during the last decade and in particular on the domestic processes leading to the adoption of pharmaceutical product patents in 2005. Following an overview of the political and economic developments in India over the past 40 years, Mr. Mitra turned to explain the decision of India to go through with the Third Patent Amendment of January 2005.

Interactive session

During the second part of the day participants took part in innovative interactive panels that are based on the electronic voting system (EVS) model. The EVS model allows each and every participant to take an active part in the panel discussions, according to the following process:

1. Panellists and participants are presented with a series of questions.
2. For each question, participants are asked to vote on, and express their views (for example if they agree or disagree with a certain statement). The panellists and the participants are able to view the overall votes on the screen.
3. Each panellist is then required to provide his/her view on the question that was presented to the panel (answers are limited to three minutes)
4. Once the panellists provide their views on the question, a second vote takes place.
5. The panellists and the audience can then see if the audience changed its views compared with the first vote.

The panels were chaired by Prof. Avi Israeli, Director of the Ministry of Health. The first panel focused on the issue of public-private partnerships via technology transfer. The second panel focused on the issue of IP policy making in a country with a dual structured pharmaceutical industry (innovative and generic). The final panel focused on the Israel's overall pharmaceutical IP policies.

All the panels were characterised by both a very intensive level of discussions and debate, and a high level of interest and involvements by the audience. This was the first time that such a diverse group of senior stakeholders had met and engaged in an open and frank discussion on the future of Israel's pharmaceutical and biotech industries, the desired long terms policies and the consequences of Israel's current policies.