



## Competitive Edge

Keeping you up to date on Competition and EU law developments in Europe and beyond

### In Focus

#### An Australian Competition Christmas: With a snow flurry of pre-Xmas activity, who's been on the naughty and nice list?

In this article we explore the significant changes in Australian competition law brought about by the Commonwealth Government's pre-election commitments. We outline the newly introduced mandatory merger clearance laws and an ex ante digital platform competition regime. This transformative Merger Bill brings a mandatory and suspensory regime to the existing merger control provisions. Furthermore, the digital competition regime is designed to keep in check the market power of big tech platforms, foster competition, and reduce barriers to entry. We assess who may find themselves on the 'naughty' or 'nice' list this year, as these reforms set the stage for businesses, consumers, and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission. Read more to gain insights into the complexities of these new laws and their potential implications for your company.

[Read the full story](#)



#### Teresa Ribera's mission for competition

Teresa Ribera's recent appointment as Executive Vice-President for a Clean, Just and Competitive Transition has sparked discussions on the future of the EU's competition policy.

Her extensive responsibilities raise the question whether she will have sufficient time and energy to actively support and develop competition policy.

Ribera has outlined her plans, which are aligned with Commission President Ursula von der Leyen's objectives and take on board suggestions from the Draghi report.

Read the article to find out more about her strategic plans and potential impact on EU competition law.

[Read the full story](#)



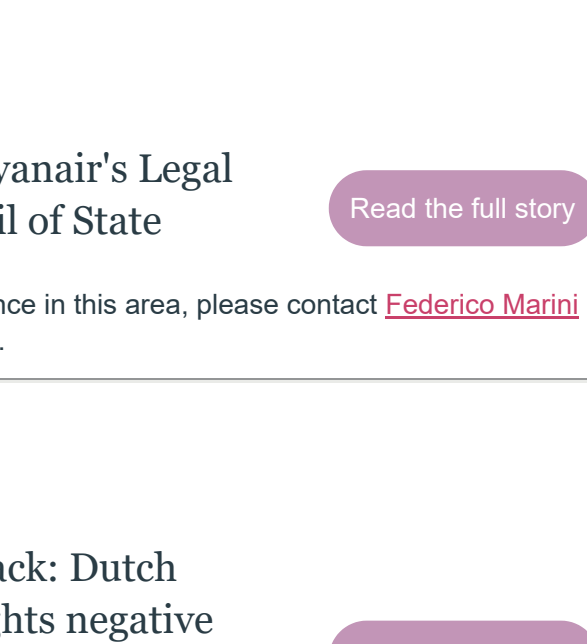
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**Anne Federle**  
Partner, Brussels  
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#### Dawn Raid Game

A free and engaging way to test your preparedness for a surprise investigation by Competition Authorities



Put your dawn raid readiness to the test with our Competition [Dawn Raid Game](#). This free online tool simulates a real-time inspection by competition authorities, placing you in the shoes of an in-house lawyer during a dawn raid.

In 15-20 minutes you can enhance your understanding, apply your knowledge, and discover crucial insights about handling investigations. Part of our award-winning competition compliance toolkit, this game underscores our commitment to innovative, client-oriented technology, enhancing our Comprehensive Compliance & Investigations offering.

The Game is available in [English](#), [Finnish](#), [French](#) and [Japanese](#).

[Find out more and play the game here >>](#)

### Updates from our jurisdictions

#### Belgium

##### Belgian Billiard Saga: Lessons for Tenders and Sports Federations

[Read the full story](#)

If you need more information or further guidance in this area, please contact [Baptist Vleeshouwers](#) and [David Wouters](#).

#### Denmark

##### The Danish Supreme Court and the European Commission set an important precedent on the interpretation of the VBER

[Read the full story](#)

If you need more information or further guidance in this area, please contact [Morten Nissen](#) or [Stefan Birkic](#).

#### Finland

##### Finland is liberalising its alcohol and gambling markets

[Read the full story](#)

If you need more information or further guidance in this area, please contact [Maria Karpathakis](#).

#### Hungary

##### Consumer Protection Highlights - What's Changing as 2024 Wraps Up?

[Read the full story](#)

If you need more information or further guidance in this area, please contact [Gábor Kutai](#) or [Kinga Kálmán](#).

#### Italy

##### Joint Italian-Irish dawn raid: Ryanair's Legal Wings Clipped by Italian Council of State

[Read the full story](#)

If you need more information or further guidance in this area, please contact [Federico Marini Ralestra](#), [Lucia Antonazzi](#) and [Chiara Horgan](#).

#### Netherlands

##### Railway competition back on track: Dutch railway operator successfully fights negative railway capacity allocation decision

[Read the full story](#)

If you need more information or further guidance in this area, please contact [Janneke Köhnen](#) or [Quirin Mohr](#).

#### Poland

##### Antitrust enforcement in labour markets

[Read the full story](#)

If you need more information or further guidance in this area, please contact [Szymon Golebiowski](#).

#### UK

##### Loyalty Pays: CMA Confirms Genuine Savings for Supermarket Loyalty Scheme Members and Issues New Guidance on Consumer Law Compliance

[Read the full story](#)

If you need more information or further guidance in this area, please contact [Dr Saskia King](#), [Robert Turner](#), [Amy Cole](#) or [Flora McCarthy](#).

##### Modernising the UK Media Mergers Regime

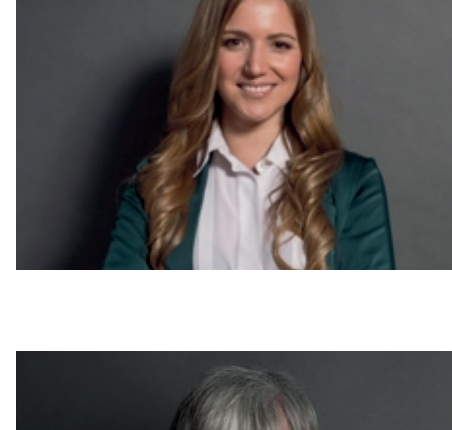
[Read the full story](#)

If you need more information or further guidance in this area, please contact [Andrew Cox](#), [Dr Saskia King](#) or [Aleonor Trollett](#).

Visit our **EU Foreign Subsidies Regulation (FSR) webpage** One firm. Your firm.

Trying to navigate the complexities of the FSR? Allow our competition experts to guide you through this evolving regulation, ensuring compliance, helping you avoid penalties, and dealing with notifications in practice, so you can confidently focus on growing your business. [Visit our EU Foreign Subsidies Regulation \(FSR\) webpage >>](#)

### Events and webinars



#### ASCOLA Book launch event

##### The Conceptual Structure of EU Competition Law: Restrictive Agreements

13 January 2025 | Online

ASCOLA - Academic Society for Competition Law, has invited our London-based partner Dr Saskia King to join their upcoming seminar, where the following distinguished speakers will discuss Csongor István Nagy's new book, *The Conceptual Structure of EU Competition Law: Restrictive Agreements*.

- **Csongor István Nagy**, Professor in Commercial Law at the University of Galway and Research Professor at the HUN-REN Center for Social Sciences (author)
- **Dr. Saskia King**, Partner, Bird & Bird, London
- **Iannis Kokkoris**, Professor of Competition Law and Economics, Queen Mary University
- **Giorgio Monti**, Professor of Competition Law, Tilburg University
- **Laura Zoboli**, Co-Director of ASCOLA Central Europe Chapter (moderator)

[The book is available Open Access here >>](#)

[Join the online event via Teams here >>](#)



#### Conference

##### Generative AI for Automotive 2025

11 - 13 February | Munich, Germany

On 12 February our Brussels-based Regulatory & Public Affairs advisor [Paolo Sascidelli](#) will be participating in a panel discussion at the IQ Automotive's *Generative AI for Automotive 2025* event.

The panelists will help the audience gain an understanding of the AI Act and its practical implications, with a particular emphasis on the automotive sector. They will also explore the areas where the EU AI Act might be inhibiting innovation, evaluate how the industry is complying, and identify the potential avenues where the AI Act could foster innovation.

[More information on the event here >>](#)



#### Conference

##### Competition Next Gen Summit 2025

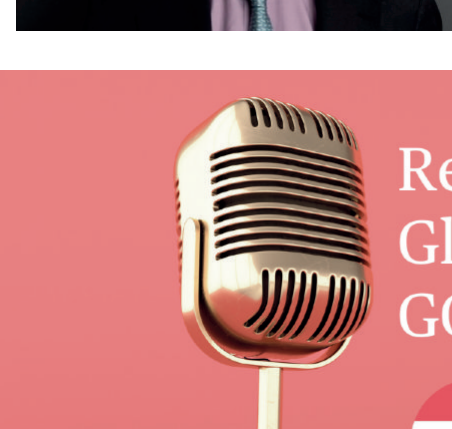
12 - 14 February | Dublin, Ireland

This event, organised by Thought Leaders 4 Competition, brings together the rising stars of European Competition Law & Litigation to forge networks, discuss experiences and build their own personal brand.

[Talda Beetstra](#), Senior Associate in our The Hague and Amsterdam offices, will lead the workshop **'Exploring Developments in Foreign Subsidies Regulation'** on 13 February.

[More information on the event here >>](#)

### Bird & Bird news and publications

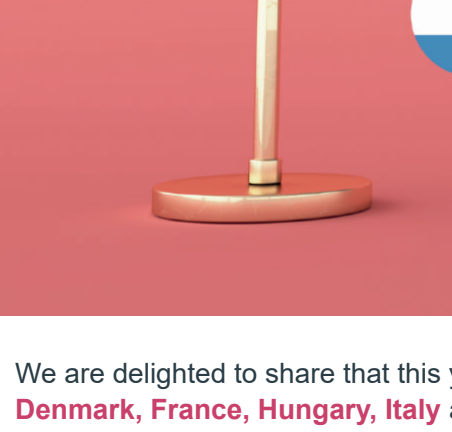


#### Partner appointed as Non-Governmental Advisor to the Dutch Competition Authority

Three partners from Bird & Bird's International Competition Law Group now hold esteemed Non-Governmental Advisor (NGA) roles within key European Competition and Consumer Authorities. The latest one, [Pauline Kuipers](#), has recently been appointed as NGA by The Netherlands Authority for Consumers and Markets (ACM), thanks to her profound expertise in competition law and understanding of the authority's focal areas: the digital economy, the sustainability transition, and energy markets in transition. She will begin her three-year mandate on 1 January 2025.

Similarly, [Morten Nissen](#) and [José Rivas](#) continue to serve as NGAs to the Danish Competition and Consumer Authority and the Spanish Competition Authority respectively.

[Read the ACM announcement here >>](#)

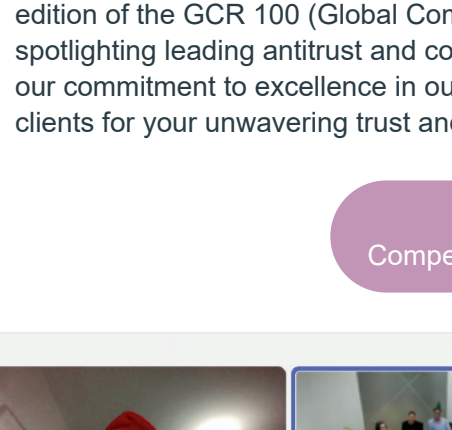


#### Irish CCPC Mergers Breakfast Meeting

##### International perspectives on merger review

12 December | Dublin, Ireland

On 12 December [Dr. Saskia King](#) was invited to provide her international perspective on merger review at the Irish Competition and Consumer Protection Commission's (CCPC) *Mergers Breakfast* meeting for competition lawyers and economists. The panel discussed the CCPC's planned update of its merger guidelines, international (including UK) developments and the changing landscape for merger control decision-making practice.



#### Antitrust enforcement in labour markets

Senior Associate [Szymon Golebiowski](#) presented on one of the latest hot topics in competition law - antitrust enforcement in labour markets - at the 16th Competition Law Congress in Warsaw on 28 November 2024.

[Read a brief overview of the topics he discussed here >>](#)

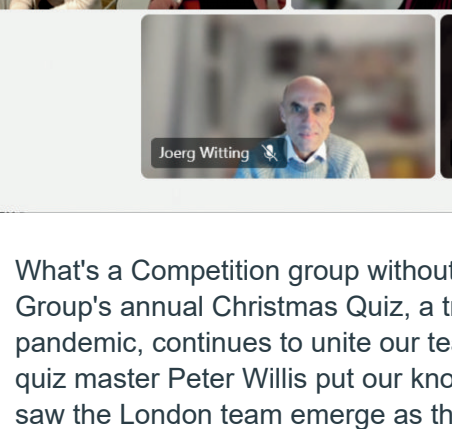


#### Belgium's FDI Screening Mechanism: 17 Months of Navigating the Blackbox

This article by [Baptist Vleeshouwers](#), [Claire De Neve](#) and [Paul Hermant](#) is a detailed analysis of Belgium's Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) screening mechanism 17 months after its implementation, highlighting its key features, the challenges faced, and lessons learned from its operation. It was published on the CELIS Blog, a forum for current debates on international investment control and economic security law and practice more broadly.

The CELIS Institute is an independent non-profit research enterprise dedicated to promoting better regulation of foreign investments in the context of security, public order, and competitiveness

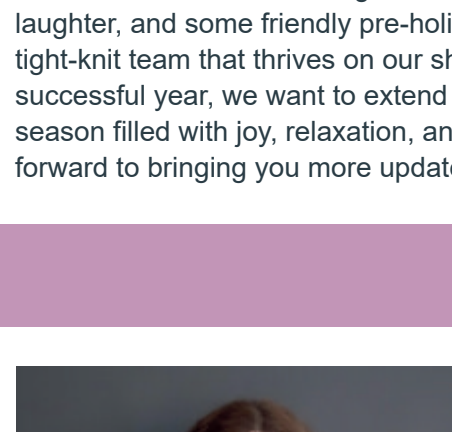
[Read the article here >>](#)



#### How reality catches up with ideals: application of the EU Deforestation Regulation postponed until end of 2025

This article by [Pauline Kuipers](#), [Sander Waggenmakers](#) and [Nicolas Carbonelle](#) discusses the postponement of the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) application date from 2024 to the end of 2025. This delay was prompted by concerns from stakeholders about the ability of companies to meet the regulation's requirements in time. Despite the delay, the fundamental objectives and substance of the law remain unchanged. The article provides an overview of the provisional agreement that led to this decision, the background of the EUDR, and the implications for companies needing to comply with the regulation.

[Read the article here >>](#)



#### Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch for Spain

Congratulations to [Candela Spóts Macaya](#), who has been listed once again in the 2025 edition of "Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch for Spain™" in the categories Competition / Antitrust Law and European Union Law.



#### Recognition in Chambers APAC 2025 guide

Congratulations to our Sydney-based Competition and Tech & Comms Regulatory expert [Thomas Jones](#) for his recognition in the Chambers APAC 2025 guide for TMT: Telecommunications.

Recommended by **Global Competition Review GCR 100 2025**

We are delighted to share that this year our Competition teams in [Brussels](#), [Australia](#), [Denmark](#), [France](#), [Hungary](#), [Italy](#) and [the Netherlands](#) have been recognised in the 25th edition of the GCR 100 (Global Competition Review). This guide is globally renowned for spotlighting leading antitrust and competition practices, and our inclusion is a testament to our commitment to excellence in our field. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our valued clients for your unwavering trust and support.

Visit our [Competition & EU Law Insights page](#)



What's a Competition group without some friendly rivalry? Our Bird & Bird Competition Group's annual Christmas Quiz, a tradition born five years ago amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, continues to unite our team in this busy pre-holiday period. As always, this year quiz master Peter Willis put our knowledge to the test with some challenging questions, which saw the London team emerge as this year's victors. It was a delightful time of bonding, laughter, and some friendly pre-holiday competition. We're more than just colleagues; we're a tight-knit team that thrives on our shared passion for competition law. As we close another successful year, we want to extend our warmest wishes to all our readers. Here's to a holiday season filled with joy, relaxation, and cherished moments with your loved ones! We look forward to bringing you more updates in the New Year!

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