



→ Ciara Barbu-O'Connor

Associate

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Ciara Barbu-O'Connor is an associate in the Antitrust and Competition Practice Group in the firm's Brussels office.

Areas of Practice

Ciara is a member of the firm's EU Competition & Regulatory practice and advises on all aspects of European, UK and Belgian competition law, including mergers, cartels, abuse of dominance as well as State aid across all sectors and industries.

Her past experience includes work in the antitrust groups of other international law firms in Brussels and in the Directorate-General for competition of the European Commission where she worked on the transposition of the EU Directive for antitrust damages.

Ciara holds degrees from three European universities including an LLB from the University of Exeter (UK), two Master of Laws from Université Catholique de Louvain (BE) and Leiden University (NL), as well as a diploma in transnational law from Université de Genève (CH). She is fluent in French in addition to her native English.

Experience

Ciara's recent work includes:

- Advised Air France-KLM in securing the European Commission's approval for up to €4 billion in French State aid to recapitalise Air France to help it overcome the impact of the COVID-19 crisis and plan for the future.
- Advised a UK company on the CMA's cartel investigation into musical instruments alleging vertical online price restrictions between manufacturers and retailers
- Advised a Japanese electronics company on an internal audit and strategy on leniency
- Advised Czech energy company on merger filings in EU and other competition authorities
- Advised German telecommunications company on Belgian company law
- Advised German automotive corporation on Belgian telecommunications regulation and law

Articles

- Sheppard Mullin Brussels co-authored reports on the ex post evaluation of EU State aid rules for the European Commission

- State Aid and Private Enforcement: An Overview of EU and National Case Law
2020 Competition Case Law Digest, 04.07.2020
- Strength in numbers? Loan syndication and potential competition issues
Competition Law Insight, 03.29.2020
- *EU State Aid Control During COVID-19*, *Competition Law International*, Vol 16, No 1, October 2020, pp 21-30.
- Ciara writes quarterly comments on State aid case law and the Commission's decisional practice in the journal *Concurrences* since 2017 (together with EU officials).

Antitrust Law Blog Posts

- "Digital Platforms Face New EU Regulations," February 10, 2021
- "The European Commission Adopts White Paper on Foreign Subsidies – A Trend Towards Protectionism on a Global Level?" August 21, 2020
- "COVID-19 is Not a "Get Out of Jail Free Card" from EU Competition Law," March 24, 2020
- "COVID-19 Outbreak and Adjusted EU State Aid Control," March 23, 2020
- "Loan Syndication and EU Competition Law," December 17, 2018

Books

Remedies in EU Competition Law - Substance, Process and Policy: Chapter 6 "Remedies in State Aid"
07.09.2020

Podcasts & Webinars

Nota Bene Episode 112: How Europe is Filling Enforcement Gaps for Digital Gatekeepers with Robert Klotz and Ciara Barbu-O'Connor
02.10.2021

Practices

Antitrust and Competition

EU Competition and Regulatory

Antitrust Counseling and Compliance

International Counseling

Education

Master of Laws, Université Catholique of Louvain, 2018-2019

LL.M., Leiden University, 2016, *upper second class honours*

LL.B., University of Exeter, 2015, *upper second class honours*

Languages

Dutch

French

Spanish