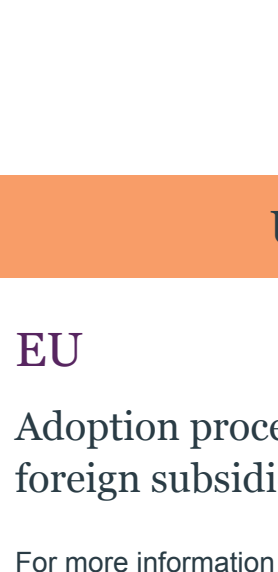




Competitive Edge

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

In Focus



Pauline Kuipers
Partner, The Hague
[Contact](#)

The new competition regime for distribution in the EU: Opportunities for the decade ahead

The new Vertical Block Exemption Regulation (VBER) provides for a general exemption from competition rules for all types of distribution agreements. On 10 May 2022 the EU Commission published the final version of the VBER and its accompanying Guidelines. The new rules enter into force on 1 June 2022.

Our experts [Pauline Kuipers](#), [Ariane Le Strat](#) and [Joerg Witting](#) have distilled the main changes of the new regime for you in this article. It not only highlights where businesses will need to adjust their distribution agreements to comply with the new rules and/or benefit from new exemptions, but also indicates where the Commission provides more room for a commercially flexible and tailored approach to the current challenges in omnichannel distribution structures.

[Read the full story](#)

Updates from our jurisdictions

EU

Adoption process for new EU rules to tackle foreign subsidies enters final stage

[Read the full story](#)

For more information contact [Hein Hobbelen](#), [Samuel Berneman](#), [Francine Cunningham](#) or [Chloe Birkett](#)

Australia

Camping out for approval – ACCC publishes statement of issues regarding proposed THL acquisition of Apollo

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For more information contact [Thomas Jones](#), [Matthew Boyvaird](#) or [Patrick Cordwell](#)

Belgium

Up in smoke - Belgian Competition Authority (BCA) imposes EUR 36 million in fines on four major cigarette manufacturers for engaging in an information sharing cartel

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For more information contact [Hein Hobbelen](#) or [Baptist Vleeshouwers](#)

Denmark

Beyond the boiling point – Companies and employees fined for coordinating prices for servicing natural gas furnaces

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For more information contact [Morten Nissen](#) or [Alexander Brøchner](#)

Finland

The Finnish Competition and Consumer Authority proposes changes to the merger notification process

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For more information contact [Maria Karpathakis](#) or [Katia Duncker](#)

France

Cofepp has been fined 7 million euros for acquiring control of Marie Bizard Wine & Spirits without previously notifying the transaction or awaiting the decision

[Read the full story](#)

French Competition Authority applies for the first time the “failing firm” exception to authorize a merger without commitment despite competition concerns

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For more information contact [Thomas Oster](#) or [Claire Burlin](#)

Hungary

Omnibus Directive Strengthens Consumer Protection Rights

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For more information contact [Dániel Arányi](#), [Gábor Kutai](#) or [Rebeka Szopkó](#)

Italy

When reaching land is too expensive: Italian ferry company fined for excessive pricing

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For more information contact [Federico Marini Balestra](#), [Lucia Antonazzi](#), [Irene Minio](#) or [Chiara Horgan](#).

Netherlands

Dutch competition watchdog ACM continues scrutiny of in-app payment services

[Read the full story](#)

For more information contact [Pauline Kuipers](#), [Joost van Roosmalen](#) or [Daniëlle van de Vijver](#)

Poland

Car importers change their practices as a result of a Polish Competition Authority investigation into repair practices in the automotive sector

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For more information contact [Marcin Alberski](#) or [Stanisław Szymanek](#)

Spain

The CNMC confirms its position on the marketing conditions of football broadcasting rights

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For more information contact [Candela Sofés](#)

UK

The new UK competition law regime for vertical supply chain agreements – The VABEO

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For more information contact [Saskia King](#), [Ariane Le Strat](#) or [Amena Charles](#).

Reforming competition policy: ready for lift-off

[Read the full story](#)

For more information contact [Saskia King](#) and [Chloe Birkett](#)

Podcasts, webinars & events



Competitive Edge The Podcast

Episode 6: Horizontal Block Exemption Regulations

In this 12-minute episode, competition lawyer [Samuel Berneman](#) (Associate, Brussels) and [Chloe Birkett](#) (Trainee, London) discuss the key developments on the eagerly awaited review and evaluation of the horizontal block exemption regulation, and the updated draft guidelines. The podcast covers sustainability, information exchange, and updates to the chapter on standardisation.

[Click here to listen to the podcast >>](#)



Webinar

Will the Data Act unlock value in the EU data economy? (U.S. timezones)

Tuesday 24 May | 10:00 PDT / 13:00 EDT

The European Commission's Data Act proposal was presented earlier this year. The proposal is part of the 'Shaping Europe's Digital Future' strategy and will be an important building block for the digital economy in Europe. The Regulation sets common basic rules on who can use and access data across all economic sectors. It aims to create a Single Market for data in which this valuable resource is more accessible and can be shared without legal obstacles among European businesses and the public sector. Join Bird & Bird's EU Regulatory & Public Affairs team for a presentation of the key elements of this far-reaching legislative proposal. Legal experts from our firm will also look at the Data Act's interplay with competition and data protection law.

[Register for the event here >>](#)



Annual Conference on European Media Law 2022

2-3 June 2022
Hybrid: Trier + Online

The aim of this conference is to keep media law practitioners up-to-date by providing an overview of the latest policy developments, legislative initiatives and case law in this field. On June 3, our Competition & EU partner [Anne Federle](#) will present on digital advertising and data use from a competition law perspective.

[Find out more >>](#)



Local VBER seminar - Finland

7 June | 09:30 - 11:00 EEST
Helsinki

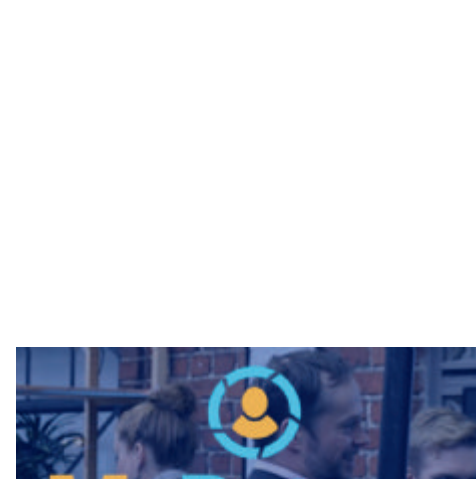
The new Vertical Block Exemption Regulation: changes in regulating distribution agreements

Uudistettu vertikaalinen ryhmäpoikkeusasetus – mikä muuttuu jakelusopimusten sääntelyssä?

The European Commission recently published the new Vertical Block Exemption Regulation and accompanying Guidelines due to come into force on 1 June 2022. The new regulation aims to help companies to better evaluate the compatibility of their distribution agreements with the competition rules.

In this seminar our specialists [Katia Duncker](#), [Jori Tainale](#) and [Maria Karpathakis](#) will delve into the key changes affecting distribution agreements, focusing especially on the benefits of safe harbour. The seminar will be held in Finnish in our Bird & Bird office in Helsinki.

[See the invitation \(in Finnish\) and register here >>](#)



Local VBER webinar - the Netherlands

14 June | 3.30 – 4.30 CET
Online

The new Vertical Block Exemption Regulation: changes in regulating distribution agreements

Ook voor onze Nederlandstalige cliënten organiseren wij een Webinar over de wijzigingen in de VBER. Dit Webinar is onderdeel van een serie Webinars georganiseerd door onze Retail & Consumer groep. De aankomende wijzigingen zijn niet alleen relevant voor ondernemingen in de Retail & Consumer sector maar uiteraard ook veel breder, voor alle ondernemingen die distributieovereenkomsten sluiten.

In this webinar on the new Vertical Block Exemption Regulation and accompanying Guidelines, our specialists [Pauline Kuipers](#), [Janneke Kohlen](#) en [Tjalda Beetsma](#) will delve into the key changes affecting distribution agreements, focusing especially on the benefits of safe harbour. The online webinar will be broadcasted in Dutch.

[Please contact one of our specialists if you'd like to join us!](#)



MyData 2022 Conference: Catalysing fair data solutions

21 - 22 June
Helsinki

MyData 2022 will bring together stakeholders representing Business, Legal, Tech and Social perspectives, which are all equally important for accelerating the human-centric policies and approaches to personal data. Our Legal Director [Saskia King](#) will present on *Data protection and Competition law*, while Principal Regulatory Counsel [Feyo Sickinghe](#) will focus on the *DGA (Data Governance Act) and the DA (Data Act)* in a session co-led with Francesco Vogelezang, Policy Analyst at the Open Future Foundation.

[Find out more >>](#)



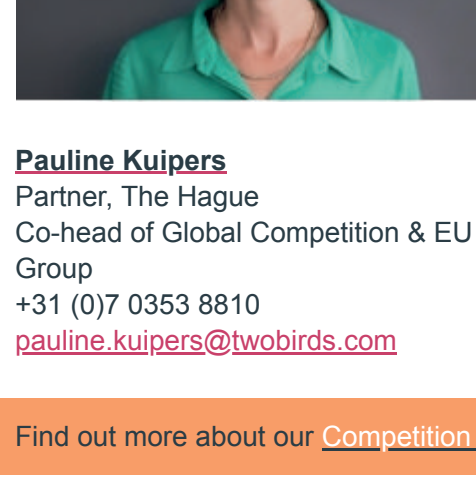
EU Competition Law Summer School 2022

Monday 8 - Friday 12 August 2022
Downing College, Cambridge, UK

Competition & EU partners [Peter Willis](#) and [Anne Federle](#) will present at the Informa Connect EU Competition Law Summer School, covering the topics of mergers and hard core cartels.

[Find out more >>](#)

Bird & Bird news and publications

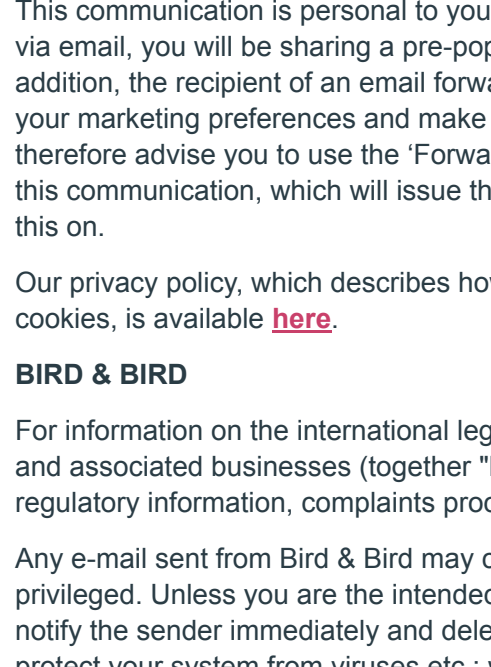


HR Data Essentials: Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Monitoring Guide

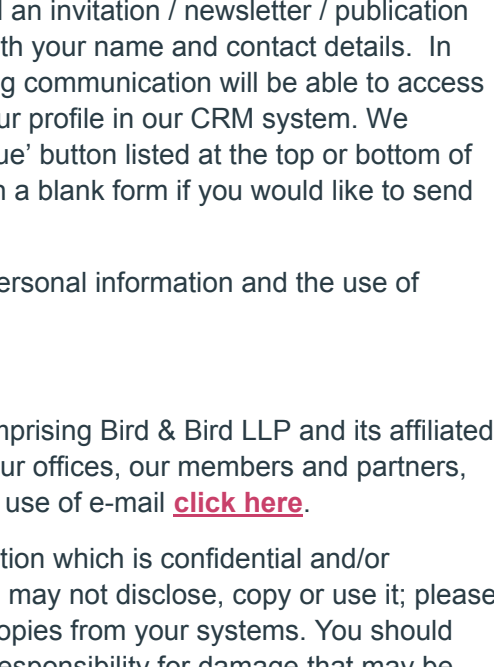
Our International HR Services team has produced an EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity) comparative chart, providing you with guidance on collecting and processing EDI data lawfully.

[Find out more and download the guide here >>](#)

Contacts



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