



Competition and European Law

Our Competition and European law practice reflects the diversity and increasing importance of competition and European law. We handle contentious and non-contentious competition and European law matters. In order to ensure the best possible service, we often work closely with other teams (predominantly the Commercial, Corporate & Finance, Tax and Labour & Employment departments) within our law firm or with our trusted corresponding law firms abroad.

OUR CLIENTS

Our commercial clients are active in a wide range of sectors, including pharmaceutical products, electronic payments, broadcasting and the media, port terminal and handling services, financial services (banking and insurance), collecting societies, food, chemicals and petrochemicals, cosmetics, tobacco, sugar, building materials, electrical and electronic equipment, home entertainment, the professions, motor vehicle distribution, etc. We also represent Belgian professional associations and federations. We work for public administrations, both at national and EU level.

OUR APPROACH

We believe that it is important to understand the industry sectors in which our clients operate. This is why we have **specific sector expertise** in our team: we have been advising leading companies in financial services, the food, chemical and other industries for the last 20 years. We believe in a **practical and business-oriented approach** to legal issues. When needed we suggest alternative dispute resolution or try to reach out of court settlements. We explore creative solutions and genuinely defend the best interests of our clients in a commercial and cost-effective way.

OUR TEAM

Our Competition and European law team is **led by Stefaan Raes**. He has previously been a lawyer at the Brussels bar (1981-1994), a judge in the Court of First Instance of Brussels (1994-1998), twice a judge in the Court of Appeal of Brussels (1998-2004 and 2013-2015), and President of the Competition Council (the Belgian Competition Authority, 2004-2013). In the Court of Appeal, he presided over the chamber having jurisdiction over cases of competition law, telecom law and energy law. Stefaan has a broad and longstanding experience in European and national competition law, both as a judge and as the President of the Belgian Competition Authority. Having served as a judge, and, before that, as a lawyer, he equally has a broad and longstanding experience in litigation, not only in competition law, but also in other areas of economic law, such as sector regulation, market practices and intellectual property rights, as well as in cases of civil liability. He joined the team in April 2015.

Our team members frequently speak at conferences and have written or co-authored numerous articles and books on competition and European law issues. They have **international experience** at an academic and/or professional level and are multilingual.

OUR SERVICES

Our range of services is global. We advise, draft and negotiate, and represent clients before Belgian courts and the Competition Authority or before the European Commission and the EU courts.

Our services include:

Litigation

Public procurement: assisting European institutions and agencies before the EU courts with their defence against applications for annulment and requests for interim orders in the field of public procurement

State aid: advising and representing professional associations in disputes regarding state aid allegations

Regulatory: assisting firms and European agencies with various regulatory issues before the EU courts

Anti-trust: assisting firms involved in infringement procedures in cases involving abuse of dominant position or restrictive practices

Private enforcement of competition law: assisting firms as plaintiffs or defendants in damages claims

Customs union: assisting the European Commission in custom cases before the General Court of the EU

Internal market: lodging complaints with the European Commission against Member States

IP and commercial practices: litigation in Belgian courts and regular preliminary references to the European Court of Justice

Audit

Auditing contractual agreements and commercial practices in the light of compliance with relevant European and national legislation, including issues of harmonisation of laws, the free movement of goods and services, public procurement, state aid, environmental law and institutional questions: this includes dealing with particular issues on unfair commercial practices, the regulation of the marketing of plant protection products and chemical products, cosmetics and biocides, etc.

Merger notifications

Assisting firms in filing merger notifications with the European Commission and with the Belgian Competition Authority.

Anti-trust

Training of executives in anti-trust inquiries and organising mock dawn raids.
Assisting in preparing a reply to a request for information during an anti-trust inquiry.

Public procurement

Assisting European institutions and agencies before the General Court of the EU in their defence against applications for annulment and requests for interim orders in the field of public procurement.

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PARTNER

- Stefaan Raes
- Vincent Mussche

WHAT OTHERS SAY ABOUT US

Liedekerke's "dynamic" Competition law practice is amongst the "Recommended" practices in Global Competition Review 100

GRC 100 - 2020

"The lawyers can be easily contacted and return calls quickly" says one client. Interviewees also report that Stefaan Raes "can give very useful insight on a file" and describe him as "responsive, pragmatic and available".

Chambers Europe - 2020

The team is praised for having "a strong track record in cases before the Belgian Competition Authority and DG COMP". Client referees reported that "The team has sufficient resources, excellent knowledge of the regulations and a lot of experience" and that "In addition to being very knowledgeable, the team's way of working is very hands-on and pragmatic. It listens to clients".

Legal 500 - 2020



CONTACT

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