

Editorial

Edurne Navarro Varona

Dear readers,

This quarter's issue of CLPD will be dealing with vertical restrictions and the ongoing review which is being carried out by the European Commission.

We have for this issue a number of recognized experts coming from different sectors of the market, who will give the reader a diverse and enriching point of view of the topics covered. Five articles are centred on studying vertical agreements in light of the current Vertical Block Exemption Regulation (VBER) and the Vertical Guidelines. Moreover, most of them comment on the new provisional vertical guidelines (the European Commission's draft, released on 9 July 2021) and explore the potential consequences. The text is, of course, yet to be modified and reviewed (after the public consultation); nonetheless, analysing it at this time gives this issue considerable added value and makes a timely contribution to the debate.

The subject of vertical agreements has generated much debate lately as the VBER is expiring in 2022, and the concerned actors have started trying to figure out how the future will evolve.

In this issue Marieke Scholz, Head of Unit at DG COMP, carries out a general review of the VBER, while

the economists from Compass Lexecon (Miguel de la Mano, Guillaume Duquesne and Thomas Bowman) provide a more economic analysis of the same text.

More specifically, Ana Raquel Lapresta Bienz contributes her views based on extensive expertise gained from private practice on selective distribution, and Vanessa Turner, Agustin Reyna and Nicolas Fafchamps from BEUC (the European Consumer Organisation) focus on parity, MFN and other retail clauses. Giving a more domestic perspective, we have the article from Thorsten Mäger and Stefanie Budde of Hengeler Mueller, which provides us with a German perspective and a focus on e-commerce.

Lastly, Cormac O'Daly, Virginia del Pozo, Marilena Nteve and Su Şimşek, from WilmerHale, complement the issue with a comprehensive summary of the European Commission's merger control developments throughout 2020: a thorough and interesting analysis.

All in all, this issue shows the *état de l'art* on the matters discussed, and will certainly be of interest to our readers. We hope you enjoy reading it!

Edurne Navarro Varona