

Special Report on the Centre for Business Law and Practice, University of Leeds

The Centre for Business Law and Practice is a leading research centre based at the University of Leeds in the United Kingdom. Bringing together over twenty experienced academics (almost half of which are full professors), this well-established centre has research expertise in a number of areas, including corporate and financial law, commercial and consumer law and, importantly, competition/antitrust law. The Centre, led by Professor Gerry McCormack, conducts doctrinal, theoretical and empirical research within its research areas. It disseminates its research outputs as widely as possible by publishing monographs, articles, and reports. It also hosts regular seminars and high profile conferences which engage with both the academic community, the legal profession, policy-makers and regulators. It has a large and diverse community of PhD students, who are supported by an annual PhD student conference and a ‘brown bag’ lunch seminar series at which they can present their own research.

Recently the Centre has taken active steps to develop its competition law expertise. In particular, in October 2013 both **Professor Pinar Akman** and **Associate Professor Peter Whelan** took up positions at the School of Law, with Professor Akman becoming the Deputy Director of the Centre (until September 2015).

Professor Akman has published her research in both renowned specialist competition law journals and generalist law journals and is the author of the research monograph *The Concept of Abuse in EU Competition Law: Law and Economic Approaches* (Hart Publishing, 2012). She has been involved in many externally funded research projects and was one of the eight investigators who applied for the second five-year funding of the ESRC Centre for Competition Policy in 2009 which obtained over £4 million. Some of the other work she has undertaken has been commissioned by, for example, the UK Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform, energywatch and the Irish Competition Authority. In 2015/16, Professor Akman provided consultancy to Google, Inc on the European Commission’s competition law investigation into Google’s practices in Europe. She is a Non-Governmental Advisor (NGA) to the International Competition Network’s (ICN) Unilateral Conduct Working Group for the UK and the Cartels Working Group for Turkey. Professor Akman is qualified to practice in Turkey.



Dr Whelan has a PhD in Law from the University of Cambridge and is a qualified Attorney-at-Law and member of the New York State Bar. He sits on the Editorial Boards of five journals and has published widely in specialist competition law journals (in the US and in Europe), as well as in generalist law journals (including Cambridge Law Journal, Oxford Journal of Legal Studies and Modern Law Review). Dr Whelan recently published a monograph with Oxford University Press on the criminalization of European cartel enforcement: *The Criminalization of European Cartel Enforcement*. He has presented oral evidence to the Commerce Committee of the New Zealand Parliament on their competition law, has advised the Finnish authorities on cartel criminalisation, and has provided training in competition law to a variety of judges from different levels of the Romanian judicial system. He is also a Non-Governmental Advisor to the International Competition Network. He is the Managing Editor of Oxford Competition Law, which is operated by Oxford Competition Law.

In 2015 two additional academics joined the Centre and boosted its competition law expertise. **Dr Konstantinos Stylianou** is a Lecturer in Competition Law and Regulation with a focus on high technology markets. Before joining Leeds, he was a Fellow at the Center for Technology and Society at FGV Direito Rio (Brazil) and worked and/or interned at the Council of Europe, the US Federal Communications Commission, the Berkman Center at Harvard, and the European Platform for Regulatory Authorities. Dr Stylianou has advised numerous Internet startup companies. His work and research have been supported among others by the Fulbright Foundation, the Onassis Foundation, the Koch Foundation and the National Scholarship Foundation. He sits on the Editorial Board of *World Competition*.

Dr Mihail Danov is an Associate Professor in Law. His research interests are in private international law and competition law. His monograph *Jurisdiction and Judgments in Relation to EU Competition Law Claims* was published in December 2010. In 2010-2012, he coordinated the successful completion of a funded research project (JLS/2009/JCIV/AG/0034- 30-CE-0350182/00-68) which resulted in a project book on Cross-Border EU Competition Law Actions (June 2013). At present, he is part of a research consortium working on a project (JUST/2013/JCIV/AG/4635) on Cross-Border Litigation in Europe. The latter project, which is coordinated by the University of Aberdeen, attracted over €730,000 in support from the European Commission Civil Justice programme.

In addition, there are currently three full-time PhD students at the Centre who conduct research in competition law. Another couple of students who will conduct doctoral research in competition law are set to arrive shortly. The competition law team also teaches an undergraduate module in competition law and postgraduate modules in international competition law and in the economic regulation of business.

The Centre's research interests in competition law are diverse. They include: the interface between legal and economic concepts underlying competition law and in particular Article 102 TFEU; the historical origins of EU competition law; the interplay between competition law and other areas, such as technology, consumer law, contract law and behavioural economics; competition and telecommunications; competition

and regulation; the Digital Single Market; private international law and competition law; the employment of imprisonment as a method of enforcing competition/antitrust law; all aspects of competition law enforcement; and international cooperation in competition law. The competition law team at Leeds is interested in developing research projects with international partners in those particular areas of competition law scholarship.

Examples of the recent competition law outputs of the Centre include: Akman, 'A Competition Law Assessment of Platform Most-Favoured-Customer Clauses' (2016) *Journal of Competition Law and Economics*, forthcoming; Danov, 'Global Competition Law Framework: A Private International Law Solution Needed' (2016) 12(1) *Journal of Private International Law* 77; Stylianou, 'Systemic Efficiencies in Competition Law: Evidence from the ICT Industry' (2016) 12(3) *Journal of Competition Law and Economics* 557; and Whelan, 'Beyond the Theoretical: Articulating Enforcement Strategies for Successful European Antitrust Criminalization' (2016) 81 *Antitrust Law Journal*, forthcoming.

The competition law team at the Centre organise an annual conference (in Leeds) on competition law. The first conference was held on 15 May 2015 and was entitled 'Contemporary Challenges in Competition Law'. It considered some of the cutting-edge, most difficult topics of competition law and its enforcement. These are issues that competition law and economics, as they stand, struggle to resolve. The keynote speech was delivered by Lord David Currie, Chairman of the Competition and Markets Authority. The second, and most recent, conference was entitled 'Competition and Regulation in Digital Markets' and was held on 9 September 2016. It brought together in a series of panels academics, industry representatives and government officials from multiple jurisdictions and provided an informative and thought-provoking insight into the most significant challenges for competition and regulation in online and digital markets. The keynote speech was delivered by Dr Andrea Coscelli, Acting Chief Executive, Competition and Markets Authority. The next conference is currently in the process of being organised and will take place in the autumn of 2017.

Dr Peter Whelan

Associate Professor in Law, University of Leeds; p.whelan@leeds.ac.uk