



WSGR BRUSSELS

Trusted Expertise in European Competition and European Privacy & Data Protection Law

Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati's Brussels office assists businesses with their most important competition and data protection law matters. Combining high-level government and distinguished private practice experience, as well as academic excellence, the firm's first European office embodies the idea of quality over quantity.

As part of an integrated global antitrust group that is widely recognized as one of the leading practices, our **European competition team** regularly represents clients in matters before the European Commission as well as the national competition authorities and courts in France, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

Our highly regarded **privacy and data protection practice** helps businesses of all sizes navigate the complex and ever-changing set of laws, regulations, and industry standards that govern the collection, storage, and use of personal data in the European Union, as well as around the world.

Our Competition Practice

The firm's European competition practice offers clients through every stage of their life cycle the full range of competition law services both at EU level and in the major Member States. In those jurisdictions where we do not have offices, our network of long-established relationships with leading local practices allows us to coordinate all aspects of our clients' competition law needs.

Our Brussels-based competition lawyers—many of whom trained in both European jurisdictions and the United States—have advised on some of the most complex cross-border transactions and investigations, representing blue chip clients such as Air France-KLM, BMW, Chevron, Dell, Dolby, Glencore, Google, Hitachi Chemical, K+S Aktiengesellschaft, Live Nation, Mylan, ÖBB and Spotify on the full spectrum of competition law issues, including the following:

Merger Control

The European competition team members, who work closely with their U.S. colleagues on parallel merger control reviews carried out by the European and the U.S. antitrust agencies, have significant experience advising clients under the EU Merger Regulation and the national merger control regimes in Europe's major jurisdictions. In addition to advising parties to the transaction, we counsel interested third parties, such as complainants, in merger reviews.

Cartel Investigations

Our attorneys have extensive experience advising clients at all stages of cartel investigations (including, most recently, representations in the EU's biofuels, capacitors, forex, and rail cargo investigations) until the adoption of a decision, and thereafter in the preparation of litigation and appearance at court. We also advise third parties such as trade associations and customers of alleged cartels with respect to investigations and litigation.

Horizontal and Vertical Agreements

Our Brussels-based lawyers regularly counsel clients on the application of Article 101 TFEU to complex horizontal and vertical commercial agreements, including joint ventures, strategic alliances, distribution agreements, pricing and licensing agreements, joint marketing agreements, and R&D agreements. We also assist in the preparation of self-assessments and advise on the operation of sophisticated information exchange systems between competitors.

Abuse of Dominance

We have extensive expertise in unilateral conduct issues under Article 102 TFEU. Our services have included counseling corporations that may be found to hold a dominant market position, defending targets of investigations by competition authorities, and representing complainants in such investigations. Furthermore, we frequently provide counseling in relation to potential Article 102 issues, such as the design and implementation of compliant rebate schemes.

State Aid

Our Brussels office assists clients from a range of industries on a variety of state aid matters, including the representation of state aid beneficiaries in their appeals against negative decisions issued by the European Commission before the European courts in Luxembourg. For example, we are currently representing BMW before the European General Court in relation to its appeal against the Commission's electric car state aid decision.

National Competition Laws

An integral feature of our European competition law capability is our role as an advisor on matters subject to review by the national competition authorities of France, Germany, and the UK. Furthermore, our attorneys coordinate the provision of competition law advice in other jurisdictions in cooperation with experienced local counsel, serving as sole client contacts and thereby offering a "one-stop shop" in major international transactions and investigations.

Litigation

Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati's strength in competition litigation rests on a sophisticated understanding of our client's businesses and technologies and our ability to execute creative and aggressive responses to the challenges they face. In addition to a successful track record in national civil law actions brought in the major Member States, our attorneys have significant experience in EU competition law cases litigated before the European courts in Luxembourg.

Our EU Privacy & Data Protection Practice

Our European privacy and data protection practice has unmatched experience in helping clients of all sizes—from start-ups to industry leaders—negotiate the shoals of global and European data protection law. With an insider's perspective on policy and enforcement culture, coupled with a real-world understanding of true litigation risk and industry practices, we provide an unparalleled combination of practical and policy experience.

With headquarters in Silicon Valley, our dynamic Brussels-based team has a strong focus on technology issues, but its expertise spans all business sectors, including finance, automobile, biotechnology, and health care. Thanks to a long-established network of experienced privacy counsels in more than 85 jurisdictions globally, including many EU countries, we offer a "one-stop shop" service for clients seeking to obtain consistent global or pan-EU advice.

We have unique expertise in setting up data protection compliance programs; assisting clients with sophisticated compliance issues; advising on data transfer strategies; handling complex multi-jurisdictional governmental investigations and cutting-edge, cross-border privacy litigation; and helping clients navigate the privacy policy landscape.

Counseling

We help companies craft creative and operational data compliance strategies to address sophisticated global or pan-EU issues and specific local requirements. Our attorneys help manage data at every step of the information life cycle and assist in setting up efficient information governance programs.

One of our areas of focus is helping clients determine and implement the most effective data transfer strategies, whether they involve approval of binding corporate rules (BCRs), cross-border privacy rules (CBPRs), certification to the EU-U.S. Privacy Shield, use of EU standard contractual clauses, or other data transfer solutions. In addition, we assist clients in reconciling the demands of EU data protection law with conflicting legal obligations such as e-discovery requirements.

Government Investigations & Inquiries

With unparalleled experience in the area, WSGR is uniquely positioned to assist companies facing the onslaught of government investigations that are often triggered by high-profile privacy incidents, novel business practices, and data breaches. We meet the challenges these multi-jurisdictional inquiries pose by drawing on our experience of handling and coordinating privacy investigations initiated by national Data Protection Authorities, the European Union Article 29 Working Party, and U.S. authorities (FTC, FCC, and U.S. state attorneys general).

Litigation

Our litigation team has obtained an unmatched series of precedent-setting victories in privacy and Internet law, stemming from our attorneys' routine handling of the most complex and cutting-edge privacy cases. With the ability to handle any privacy-related litigation, we have successfully defended our clients since the privacy litigation trend arose.

Transactional Privacy

Our team includes experienced and practical attorneys who advise clients on the privacy and data protection issues that arise in transactional matters. Our lawyers' transactional experience and understanding of prevailing norms enable us to provide legally sound advice while keeping our clients' business objectives in mind.

Policy Experience

We have unmatched relationships with data protection regulators in Europe, the EDPS, and the EU institutions. We are involved in privacy and data protection consultations for leading international organizations, including the Task Force on Privacy and the Protection of Personal Data of the ICC, the Council of Europe, and the OECD. Our Brussels-based lawyers have developed the [WSGR EU Data Protection Observatory](#) website to help companies navigate the new EU General Data Protection Regulation.



Our Brussels Senior Team Members



Dr. Michael Rosenthal

Managing Partner

Dr. Michael Rosenthal is the founder and head of Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati's first European office in Brussels. He advises in all areas of EU and German competition law and regularly represents clients on complex matters before the European Commission, the German competition authority, and the courts in Germany and Luxembourg. Michael is listed as a leading competition lawyer in the major legal directories, including *The International Who's Who of Competition Lawyers*, and is the co-author of the book Rosenthal/Thomas, *European Merger Control*.



Cédric Burton

Partner

Cédric Burton leads the EU privacy and data protection practice. With more than 10 years of experience, he advises clients on all facets of EU and global privacy and data protection laws. He helps clients define and implement operational compliance strategies to address sophisticated global issues and specific local requirements, including data transfer requirements. Cédric represents clients in multi-jurisdictional regulatory matters before data protection authorities, as well as in litigation. He also counsels on policy related-issues. Cédric is listed as a leading privacy lawyer in the major legal directories, including *Legal 500*.



Paul McGeown

Partner

Paul McGeown advises clients in a wide range of industries on all aspects of European competition law, with particular expertise in complex merger cases and industrial partnerships. With more than 20 years of experience in the field, he regularly represents clients in cases before the European Commission and the United Kingdom competition authorities. Paul has been listed among the top competition lawyers in several publications, including *The International Who's Who of Competition Lawyers*.



Götz Drauz

Senior Competition Counsel

Götz Drauz's practice is focused on EU and German competition law. He has represented companies in some of the most significant merger, conduct, and cartel investigations in Europe. Named an "elite" practitioner by *Global Competition Review*, Götz is recognized in all the principal directories as a leading competition lawyer. Prior to entering private practice, Götz served at the European Commission for 25 years, most recently as the Deputy Director-General for Competition and previously as the head of the Merger Task Force. In these roles, he managed and coordinated all of the EC's merger control activity for nearly a decade.



Dr. Christopher Kuner

Senior Privacy Counsel

With over 20 years' experience, Dr. Christopher Kuner is one of the most recognized experts in the field of European and international data protection and privacy compliance. He has represented clients in their dealings with the European Commission, the Article 29 Working Party, and European and national data protection authorities. As chairman of the ICC Task Force on Privacy and the Protection of Personal Data, Christopher led the negotiation of the alternative standard contractual clauses with the EU Commission in 2004 and 2010.



Mathieu Guillaumond

Of Counsel

Mathieu Guillaumond advises clients on the full range of European Union and French competition law issues before the European Commission, European courts, and national competition authorities. His experience includes merger regulation at both the European Union and national levels, state aid law, and advisory work on Article 101 TFEU, with a particular emphasis on national and international cartels, where he gained significant experience, advising clients in major investigations, including air cargo, car glass, flat glass, and capacitors.

W&GR Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati, LLP

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