

McKenna Long launches Brussels practice

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McKenna Long & Aldridge LLP has launched a competition practice in its Brussels office.

Competition specialist **Flavia Distefano** will head the practice, which officially opened 7 January. She joined McKenna Long in Brussels last week, and is the first fully dedicated competition partner in Europe.

"I am very excited to have the opportunity to launch the firm's EC competition practice," says Distefano. "I was attracted to the firm by its strong reputation in EU regulatory and international corporate practices, as well as its multinational client base. This is an excellent platform from which to build a European competition practice, and it is my goal to establish the practice as equally renowned. I also look forward to working with my colleagues in the US, in order to develop our antitrust services to clients on both sides of the Atlantic."

Philip Bartz heads McKenna Long's US antitrust team in Washington. "I am very pleased that Flavia has joined us," says Bartz. "An increasing number of US competition investigations have cross-boarder, specifically European, elements to them. Flavia's expertise and familiarity with European competition law makes her a significant component in furthering our worldwide antitrust practice." Distefano has practiced in Brussels for over 12 years. Before joining McKenna Long she worked for seven years, until 2005, at WilmerHale, and went on to spend two years as counsel at O'Melveny & Myers. She has represented multinational companies in a number of high profile cases before the European Commission and Italy's Antitrust Authority, including phase II merger cases and major cartel proceedings. Distefano also has experience litigating before the European courts in Luxembourg and is presently representing several companies before the Court of First Instance against recent commission cartel decisions.

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