

## Netherlands

28 November 2025

### Elite

Kees Schillemans heads up the Dutch antitrust team at **A&O SHEARMAN**, who is joined by fellow partner Pieter Huizing, one counsel and 14 associates. The team advised RTL Group on the sale of its local unit to DPG Media, which was sent to Phase II by the Netherlands Authority for Consumers and Markets (ACM) based on media plurality concerns. The firm also secured European Commission clearance for Korean Air's merger with Asiana Airlines in 2024, subject to commitments including route access and divestment of Asiana's cargo business. Additionally, the team represented Foresco in the ACM's Phase II investigation into its purchases of DWP and Vierhouten under a novel theory of harm relating to roll-up acquisitions. The firm also advised KPN on its purchase of Open Tower Company, obtaining Phase I approval with remedies in a precedent-setting case. In litigation, A&O Shearman continues to act for Samsung in its appeal against a €39.9 million fine for alleged online price influence, one of the ACM's largest competition penalties.

Jolling de Pree chairs the competition group at **DE BRAUW BLACKSTONE WESTBROEK**, which counts seven partners, two counsel and 30 associates. The firm is lead counsel to PACCAR/DAF in Europe's largest Trucks cartel follow-on litigation, coordinating strategies across more than 20 jurisdictions. The firm also advised Just Eat Takeaway.com on Prosus's €4.1 billion public offer, and guided FrieslandCampina through its proposed combination with Belgian cooperative Milcobel, the latter of which received a European Commission review. Other notable work includes representing TomTom in complaints against Google, and counselling Booking.com on high-stakes regulatory matters, including litigation that prompted a significant European Court of Justice ruling on platform market definition.

**FRESHFIELDS'** antitrust practice in the Netherlands is co-chaired by Winfred Knibbeler and Paul van den Berg. Amongst recent matters, the firm represents Apple in six high-profile challenges before the EU General Court against decisions under the Digital Markets Act. The firm also counselled Viterro on its \$34 billion combination with Bunge, which secured clearances in over 40 jurisdictions. Elsewhere, the firm acted for Permira and Blackstone on the €14 billion take-private of Adevinta, cleared unconditionally across multiple jurisdictions. In the media sector, Freshfields advised Talpa as a third party in the *RTL Netherlands/DPG Media* merger, approved by the ACM with novel behavioural commitments. The firm continues to represent ABB in

Dutch follow-on litigation over the EU power cables cartel, with jurisdictional questions now before the ECJ.

Rein Wesseling and Jeroen Kortmann co-chair the competition practice at **STIBBE**, accompanied by three additional partners, two counsel and over 20 associates. Stibbe advises Viatris in a high-profile European Commission case targeting Teva's alleged abuse of dominance over Copaxone, which resulted in a €462.6 million fine in October 2024. The firm also acts as global coordinating counsel to dsm-Firmenich in a worldwide fragrance cartel investigation spanning the EU, UK, US and Switzerland. Additionally, the team represents Apple in an ACM probe into App Store conditions alongside a Dutch opt-out class action. In cartel litigation, Stibbe continues to defend British American Tobacco in appeals against an €82 million fine for alleged information exchanges. Stibbe also represents Rabobank before the EU General Court in its challenge to a €26.6 million fine over Euro-denominated bonds, with key questions now before the ECJ.

## Highly recommended

Competition and regulatory boutique **BRINKHOF** counts on the expertise of partners Pepijn van Ginneken, Jan Pot and Quinten Kroes, who work with nine associates. The firm defends Google in a major damages claim alleging abuse of dominance in online advertising, and continues to act for the same company in follow-on claims arising from the European Commission's *Shopping* decision, which involve multiple claim vehicles and cross-border issues. The firm also acts for Heineken in Dutch follow-on litigation relating to the EU Trucks cartel, covering damages across 18 member states. In addition, Brinkhof advises FedEx in similar claims related to the Trucks and Air Cargo cartels, navigating multi-jurisdictional legal challenges.

Bas Braeken heads up the antitrust practice at **BUREAU BRANDEIS**, with support from four associates. The firm represents TicketSwap in its appeal against the ACM's decision to bind Ticketmaster's commitments in an abuse of dominance case on mobile ticket resales. Bureau Brandeis also secured unconditional clearance for Vierhouten and De With Pallets after an in-depth review of their acquisition by Foresco, which introduced a novel roll-up theory of harm. Elsewhere, the firm successfully defended leading virtual tour operators in ACM enforcement proceedings, where penalty orders were suspended and later revoked.

The Dutch competition practice at **GERADIN PARTNERS** comprises two partners, one counsel and four associates, steered by Ruben Elkerbout. Geradin Partners represents 34 European news media companies in a €2.1 billion follow-on damages claim against Google for alleged ad tech abuses, with the first phase nearing completion and a jurisdiction hearing scheduled for December 2025. The team also acts for Stichting Massaschade & Consument in a lawsuit against Sony over alleged anticompetitive practices relating to the PlayStation Store. In another matter, the firm helped Foresco win unconditional approval in Phase II in February 2025 for its purchases of DWP and Vierhouten.

**LOYENS & LOEFF**'s competition practice is led by Marc Wiggers, with the team comprising one partner, one counsel and 11 associates. The team counselled DPG on its proposed acquisition of RTL Nederland, which was sent to Phase II by the ACM. It also advised bol in an ongoing investigation by the ACM into alleged abuse of dominance through preferential treatment on its marketplace platform, a case that could reshape its business model. Acting for all Dutch healthcare insurers, the firm is pursuing an appeal against a ruling favouring Novartis over joint purchasing practices. In addition, the team counsels DIF and Virya Energy on their intended acquisition of joint control over VoltH2, which requires notification to the European Commission.

Partners Martijn van de Hel, Diederik Schrijvershof and Cyriel Ruers co-chair the antitrust team at **MAVERICK ADVOCATEN**, with support from nine associates. Maverick helped Klaas de Boer secure ACM approval for its sale to FincoEnergies, which was cleared in April 2025 subject to the sale of certain business units to GMB Group. The team also advised Zwanenberg on its planned acquisition of the Unox and Zwan brands from Unilever, which received a Phase II review. Elsewhere, Maverick obtained Phase I approval from the European Commission for Van Mossel's acquisitions of Nord-Ostsee Automobile and LöhrGruppe, marking the automotive group's largest transaction to date. The firm also represents 123inkt in litigation against Hewlett-Packard's selective distribution system.

The competition group at **PELS RIJCKEN & DROOGLEEVER FORTUIJN** is steered by Sebastiaan Cnossen, who works alongside three associates. The firm represents Mercedes-Benz Group in more than 65 cartel damages actions before the Dutch courts linked to the European Commission's Trucks decision. The team also advises the Dutch State in high-profile litigation and infringement proceedings over the award of a 10-year exclusive concession for the main railway network to NS, where all claims have been dismissed on the merits and appeals remain pending amid ongoing discussions with the European Commission. In addition, the firm acted for Heineken in a landmark preliminary ruling before the ECJ, with judgment rendered in February 2025 and the matter now returning to the Dutch Supreme Court.

## Recommended

Partners Frank Kroes and Frans Muller co-chair **BAKER MCKENZIE**'s Dutch competition practice, assisted by eight associates. The team advised APG Asset Management and TenneT on the formation of Althio, a joint venture with KPN that consolidated approximately 3,800 tower and rooftop sites in the Netherlands, obtaining conditional Phase I clearance from the ACM. It also serves as global antitrust counsel to Nouryon and advises Royal De Heus on a range of competition issues.

Pauline Kuipers leads **BIRD & BIRD**'s antitrust team from The Hague, with the team comprising three partners and five associates. The group represented Mastercard in proceedings before the Trade and Industry Appeals Tribunal concerning an ACM decision against Amex for infringing the EU Interchange Fee Regulation, with the

matter now before the ECJ following a referral for a preliminary ruling. The firm also advises Tempur Sealy on distribution agreements and defended the company in interim proceedings, securing dismissals of claims of vertical price maintenance. Elsewhere, the team secured Phase I clearance from the ACM for Royal A-ware's acquisition of Internationaal Transportbedrijf Dijco.

**CMS** fields a Dutch competition practice that includes four counsel and four associates, led by partner Edmon Oude Elferink. The firm advised Repsol on its merger with NEO Energy, obtaining unconditional Phase I clearance from the ACM. It also represents All Nippon Airways in follow-on damages proceedings before the Amsterdam courts stemming from the Air Cargo cartel, with claims worth more than €750 million. In addition, the firm assisted KWS Infra in establishing a joint venture in the concentrated road construction market, securing unconditional ACM clearance after successfully invoking failing firm arguments and influencing a revision of the authority's market definition.

Marc Kuijper and Bram Braat lead **DENTONS'** antitrust practice in Amsterdam, with support from eight associates. The firm represents the federation of Dutch transport companies and its members in a high-profile challenge to the Dutch State's award of a nine-year concession to NS covering 95% of national rail transport, with the Trade and Industry Appeals Tribunal referring critical questions on EU law to clarify market access rights. It also advised Battery Ventures on its acquisition of Ortec, coordinating global merger control and foreign investment reviews across 55 jurisdictions and obtaining early-phase approvals in Italy and Denmark.

**GREENBERG TRAURIG's** Dutch antitrust group is led by Robert Hardy, with support from two additional partners and one associate. The team advises Acuren on its proposed merger with NV5 to form a \$2 billion leader in testing, inspection, certification, and engineering services. The firm also assisted the shareholders of CCV Group in its sale to Fiserv, and Volkswagen Financial Services on the sale of PayByPhone to FLEETCOR Technologies.

Daniella Strik and Lodewick Prompers co-lead the competition practice at **LINKLATERS**, who are joined by one additional partner, one counsel and nine associates. The team advised Silgan Holdings on its acquisition of sole control over Weener Plastics, obtaining unconditional merger clearances in the Netherlands, Germany and Poland through a coordinated multi-jurisdictional process. The firm also assisted ING with its 17.6% acquisition of Van Lanschot Kempen, and supported Waterland in its majority acquisition of X<sup>2</sup>O.

Firms	Head(s) of competition	Size	Clients
Elite			
A&O Shearman	Kees Schillemans	2 partners, 1 counsel, 14 associates	Korean Air, KLM, PostNL, RTL, Samsung, Delta Air Lines, Scania, Vattenfall, Heijmans, KPN

Firms	Head(s) of competition	Size	Clients
De Brauw Blackstone Westbroek	Jolling de Pree	7 partners, 2 counsel, 30 associates	AkzoNobel, Ahold Delhaize, Booking.com, FrieslandCampina, Just Eat Takeaway, PACCAR, Pon Holdings, Royal Philips, SHV Group, TomTom
Freshfields	Winfred Knibbeler, Paul van den Berg	4 partners, 10 associates	ABB, Apple, Blackstone, BCI, CPP Investments, Glencore, HP Inc, Meta, Viterra, VodafoneZiggo
Stibbe	Rein Wesseling, Jeroen Kortmann	5 partners, 2 counsel, 20 associates	dsm-Firmenich, Rabobank, UBS, Viatris, Apple, BAT, MAN, Sony, IVC Evidensia
Highly Recommended			
Brinkhof	Pepijn van Ginneken, Jan Pot, Quinten Kroes	3 partners, 9 associates	X, Heineken, Toshiba, Google, AB Inbev, Diageo, FedEx, Mosadex, Crédit Agricole, Global Steel Wire
Bureau Brandeis	Bas Braeken	1 partner, 4 associates	TicketSwap, TUI, IDH, Fastned, Vierhouten/de With Pallets, Transport Logistiek Nederland, Cellnex, Prijsvrij, Dé VakantieDiscounter, Pro Agent
Geradin Partners	Ruben Elkerbout	2 partners, 1 counsel, 4 associates	Litfin, Foresco, Tesla, KNVB, Corendon, Avebe, Eurostar, Greyfield Capital, L'Oréal, Coolblue
Loyens & Loeff	Marc Wiggers	1 partner, 1 counsel, 11 associates	DPG Media, bol, DIF, MSD, Meta, Equinor, Groupe Seb, TEVA, Santander, ENI
Maverick Advocaten	Martin van de Hel, Diederik Schrijvershof, Cyriel Ruers	3 partners, 9 associates	Klaas de Boer, Zwanenberg, Van Mossel, 123Inkt, Dutch Grand Prix, Oranjewoud and Strukton, PostNL, ABMD, Eneco, Glaspoort
Pels Rijcken & Droogleever Fortuijn	Sebastiaan Cnossen	3 associates	Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, Heineken, Westlake Chemical Corporation, Dutch Competition Authority (ACM), City of Amsterdam, Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate, UBS, Mercedes-Benz, Scandinavian Airlines, ArcelorMittal

Firms	Head(s) of competition	Size	Clients
Recommended			
Baker McKenzie	Frank Kroes, Frans Muller	2 partners, 8 associates	Accenture, Barclays, Sika, Nike, Shell, APG, Nouryon, Hunter Douglas, Axia Vegetable Seeds, Nordic Capital
Bird & Bird	Pauline Kuipers	3 partners, 5 associates	Odido Netherlands, Epson Europe, Tempur Sealy, PPG, Open Dutch Fiber, Mastercard, Blackboard International, Corbion, Nldigital, Salta
CMS	Edmon Oude Elferink	1 partner, 4 counsel, 4 associates	Coca-Cola Europacific Partners, All Nippon Airways, Tata Steel, McDonald's, Ahold Delhaize, Repsol, Pon, Daiichi Sankyo, Daikin, CitizenM
Dentons	Marc Kuijper, Bram Braat	2 partners, 8 associates	McCain, Japan Airlines, FMN, Itautec, Ultramar, Duisburger Hafen, Stichting De Glazen Lift, Daimler, Plus Supermarkten, Superunie
Greenberg Traurig	Robert Hardy	3 partners, 1 associate	Acuren, Allianz, CCV Group, HaskoningDHV, Lion Storage, MET Group, Neptune Energy, Sega Sammy, Volkswagen Financial Services
Linklaters	Daniella Strik, Lodewick Prompers	3 partners, 1 counsel, 9 associates	Silgan Holdings, ING Groep, Waterland Private Equity Investments, Bharti Airtel Limited, BP, Australian Super, Infracapital Partners, Goldman Sachs, Air France, ICAP Europe