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In the antitrust bar, generational strength matters. On both sides of the Atlantic and indeed elsewhere, leaders of competition groups look at their rivals and their own practices and judge how strong their group will be – not in a year, but in a decade, when perhaps they will be attempting to chip out of a bunker or navigate some snow-packed slope. That is to say: young talent is crucial to the health of any competition group, and the more first-chair work they get as young lawyers, the brighter the future becomes.

With that in mind, *GCR* is proud to present the 2015 edition of the 40 under 40, our listing of 40 young antitrust practitioners from around the world. As with our previous four editions, this year's listing profiles young antitrust minds who have taken on leading roles within their firms, whether serving as one of the primary junior partners behind big-name rainmakers or, in some cases, as a central figure in a competition group. This year's list includes lawyers and barristers practising in countries around the globe.

In many parts of the world, international competition law enforcement has existed through generations. While major cross-border mergers and investigations may have been novel in decades past, young lawyers practising today know no other reality. Globalisation has transformed the practice just as it has transformed economy and industry.

The 40 under 40 entrants truly span the globe, from the “usual suspect” jurisdictions of the United States, the United Kingdom and Brussels, to Ukraine, Japan, Turkey and China. But suffice to say that most of the young lawyers included in the survey received at least part of their antitrust education in one of the global hubs of antitrust law.

Now in his third and final 40 under 40, Gönenç Gürkaynak, of ELİG in Istanbul, studied law at Harvard University and trained under Ian Forrester, a former White & Case partner who now sits on the bench of the European General Court. Having spent three years as an enforcer at Japan's Fair Trade Commission, new entrant Kentaro Hirayama, from Morrison & Foerster, spent time as a visiting associate at Slaughter and May

in London. And Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co partner Naval Chopra trained and practised as a lawyer in London before taking on competition law matters in New Delhi.

But it's the work these lawyers have done in their home jurisdictions that has earned them a place in this year's 40 under 40. Indeed, all of the nominated lawyers have worked on major mergers, cartel investigations and dominance cases – sometimes helping to usher in their country's competition law enforcement regime. Igor Svechkar, a partner at Asters in Kiev, practises at the firm where he started his career 16 years ago, and over that time he has seen his business grow alongside Ukrainian competition law.

This year, for the first time, the 40 under 40 includes two new sections highlighting the blossoming careers of young lawyers working in-house on the competition teams inside companies and within antitrust enforcement agencies around the world. Each section includes young lawyers and economists, each of whom has taken on senior-level duties inside their companies or agencies.

Our enforcers hail from the United States, the United Kingdom, Chile, Denmark and Mexico. Each brings a different skill set to bear on a varied collection of job duties. After eight years inside the agency, Carlos Mena has done everything in Mexican enforcement, from leading the enforcer's cartels unit to directing its interactions with outside agencies as head of the institutional relation and international affairs division. He is now chief prosecutor within Cofece, and he's only 36. Meanwhile, Sheldon Mills has made a precipitous climb through the ranks of the UK's former Office of Fair Trading to now head the mergers unit at the Competition and Markets Authority. And Javier Tapia oversees it all in Chile; he's a judge on the country's competition tribunal.

Meanwhile, our eight featured in-house lawyers lead competition groups from some of the world's largest and most dynamic companies – including three from a company embroiled, seemingly constantly, in antitrust controversy: Google.



Niall Collins

Age:
Position:
Firm:
City:

36
Partner
Mason Hayes & Curran
Dublin

Tell us about your work history

I trained at Arthur Cox in Dublin before spending some great years with the competition teams at Ashurst and Latham & Watkins in London. After a stint in-house at Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane, I returned to Ireland in January 2011 and now head up the competition practice at Mason Hayes & Curran.

Why did you choose to practise competition law?

I enjoyed competition law as an undergraduate, but even more so as a postgraduate under the late Dan Goyder. Dan combined remarkable intelligence with an innate ability to encourage. He could make the complex appear simple, non-academic and applicable to the “real world”. This always made for interesting lectures, which were worth missing the occasional college rugby game for!

Who in competition was your mentor/who inspires you?

Ever since I called him out of the blue a few days after graduating from Cambridge, Roger Finbow, former head of corporate and competition at Ashurst, has been my mentor and great friend.

What trends are developing in your jurisdiction?

Changes made to the Irish merger control thresholds towards the back end of 2014 mean that many more transactions are now falling within the local net. Small companies that never considered merger control are now having to grapple with the new regime, and that has brought its own challenges for clients, their legal advisers and, I’m

assuming, the Irish Competition Commission. Notwithstanding the uptick in the volume of notifications, the mergers team at the Irish Commission has continued to be pragmatic and proactive in fulfilling its statutory duty.

What advice would you give to those starting out in competition law?

Read the cases and stay current, get comfortable on your economics and spend time learning how deals are put together from a corporate perspective. Most importantly, understand what your client is ideally trying to achieve commercially.

What firm do you admire from afar?

There are a number of options here and it is difficult to single out one firm. However, I have followed the growth of Gilbert + Tobin in Australia for some time and I do like the way they go about things.

Aside from competition law, what do you enjoy doing?

Having competed in a few World Triathlon Championships at Olympic and Half-Ironman distances when I was a tad younger, I spend time trying to convince myself that racing again is a realistic option, although we’ll see how that goes! I have also been known to get “lost” on Irish country roads on my bike at the weekend and rarely need any excuse to attend horseracing meetings in Ireland and beyond. Above all, I love spending time with my beautiful (and patient) wife and our two daughters.