



European Commission EVP Ribera on innovation challenges at CRA Brussels Conference

At CRA's Annual Brussels Conference on 9 December 2025, Executive Vice President of the European Commission [Teresa Ribera](#) framed competition enforcement as intertwined with broader questions of democratic governance and economic security.

Her keynote address, delivered one year into her tenure as European Commissioner for Competition, outlined the Commission's work amid what she described as an era of 'turbulence.' As EVP Ribera acknowledged, the challenge lies in ensuring the enforcement protects fair competition without stifling the innovation Europe needs to remain globally competitive.

Reflecting on the past year, EVP Ribera stressed the importance of defending the rule of law in times marked by geopolitical tensions, environmental challenges, and the rise of artificial intelligence. She underlined the necessity of adapting competition rules and tools to meet these challenges and to reflect the realities of innovation-driven, fast-moving markets, while ensuring strong enforcement, even in turbulent times. Her speech addressed key topics shaping current competition policy debates.

Enforcing fair competition in digital markets

EVP Ribera highlighted that the role of competition in curbing excessive corporate power and preventing market dominance is particularly relevant in digital markets. While acknowledging the importance of digital companies in society today, she reaffirmed the Commission's commitment to enforcing its digital rulebook, including the Digital Markets Act, to safeguard European citizens' freedom of choice, data, children and mental health.

Addressing challenges posed by artificial intelligence (AI)

The speech touched upon the significant challenges posed by the rise of AI, with respect to the potential breaching of copyright rules as an example. In this context, EVP Ribera emphasized the Commission's determination to protect publishers and content creators from unfair trading practices and to secure fair competition in AI markets.

Modernizing EU Merger Guidelines for innovation and dynamic markets

EVP Ribera noted that, as a part of a forward-looking, innovation-oriented approach, the updated EU Merger Guidelines will clarify how to account for foreseeable market developments and introduce frameworks for analysing dynamic competition – including an ‘innovation shield’ for pro-innovative start-up deals – and assessing dynamic efficiencies that depend on today’s investments for future benefits.

EVP Ribera also discussed the Foreign Subsidies Regulation as a tool that can help safeguarding Europe’s economic security and stressed the importance of competition in ensuring fairness and affordability in sectors such as pharmaceuticals and housing. Finally, she pointed to competition policy’s success in accelerating the green transition by enabling faster investments in clean technologies through the Clean Industrial State Aid Framework and by offering guidance on sustainability agreements via the Commission’s first Informal Guidance Letter.

Looking ahead, EVP Ribera reaffirmed the Commission’s commitment to pushing for a competitive, innovative, fair, green and stable Europe.

CRA will continue to provide economic analysis and strategic guidance as these policies evolve.

[Watch the full keynote address here.](#)

Contact

Raphaël De Coninck

Vice President

Brussels

+32 2 627 1401

rdeconinck@crai.com



The conclusions set forth herein are based on independent research and publicly available material. The views expressed herein do not purport to reflect or represent the views of Charles River Associates or any of the organizations with which the author is affiliated. The author and Charles River Associates accept no duty of care or liability of any kind whatsoever to any party and no responsibility for damages, if any, suffered by any party as a result of decisions made or not made or actions taken or not taken based on this paper. If you have questions or require further information regarding this issue of *CRA Insights: Competition*, please contact the contributor or editor at Charles River Associates. This material may be considered advertising. Detailed information about Charles River Associates, a trade name of CRA International, Inc., is available at www.crai.com.

Copyright 2025 Charles River Associates