

Organizer

THE
EUROPEAN CIRCUIT

CROSS-BORDER LAW IN ACTION

SPORT, SANCTIONS & BEYOND

11 JUNE 2026 | UNIVERSITAIRE STICHTING, BRUSSELS

There has never been a more exciting time to launch or develop a career in cross-border practice. The European Circuit is delighted to announce that the President of the Nederlandstalige Orde van Advocaten bij de Balie te Brussel, the Flemish-language section of the Brussels Bar, has kindly agreed to co-host this event, followed by a drinks reception. Clearly Brussels is a crucial hub for European and international law, so the European Circuit partners with a rich diversity of lawyers and academics to discuss the fascinating opportunities for practitioners who think outside the box!

Speakers include:

Gordon Nardell KC, Twenty Essex, London / Alphalex-Avocats, Brussels

Dorothee Vermeiren, Clifford Chance LLP, Brussels

Julie Goffin, Avocat, Barreau de Bruxelles & Conseil, ICC

Paul McGarry SC, Law Library, Ireland **Benoit Keane**, Benoit Keane Legal, Belgium

Antoine De Spiegeleir, European University Institute in Florence

Professor Catherine Barnard, University of Cambridge

James Ogilvie, UEFA Head of European Affairs

Professor Daniel Sarmiento, Eunity Legal, EULawLive, Universidad Complutense

Adrian Berry KC, Garden Court Chambers, London

Dr Alexandra von Westernhagen, Keystone Law, Brussels

Nicolas Vermeulen, Linklaters LLP Brussels & Vice Chairman, Vlaams Pleitgenootschap **Pierce O'Meara**, Gide Loyrette Nouel **Siofra Collins**, CJEU

REGISTRATION IS AT 13:45 FOR A 14:00 START

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Evanna Fruithof practiced as a barrister in London from 1985 until her 1990 move to Brussels, where she worked in DG Competition, European Commission, specifically the then brand new Merger Task Force, for two years. From 1992 to 1994, Evanna worked as a Competition lawyer for Freshfields Solicitors, in both London and Brussels. She also spent a couple of years as Deputy Director and Events Manager of an influential Brussels EU political think-tank. Evanna was invited to establish the Bar Council's Brussels Office in 1999 as its Consultant Director, in which role she has represented the Bar ever since. She runs the Bar's European Committee and was a founding member and a key driver behind the Bar's several Working Groups advising on Brexit and its aftermath. Evanna represents the Bar on the UK Domestic Advisory Group under the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement. Evanna is a Bencher of the Middle Temple and a member of its International Committee. She is a trustee of the Temple Church Trust. She is also Deputy Chair of the Brussels branch of the Institute of International and European Affairs, Ireland's leading international affairs think tank.

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Gordon Nardell KC practises at Twenty Essex in London and Singapore, and Alphalex-Avocats in Brussels. He is a member of the English and Irish Bars and a foreign member of the Dutch Brussels Bar. He specialises in international arbitration and cross-border litigation, often appearing in cases involving State entities and complex issues at the intersection of commercial, EU and human rights law. Gordon acts as co-counsel with advocates in other European jurisdictions and also accepts appointments as arbitrator and mediator. Gordon formerly served as Leader of the European Circuit and Chair of the (English) Bar Council's European Committee. He is a regular contributor to journals and training events on EU law and related topics.

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Dorothee Vermeiren is a partner and head of the Brussels office Litigation and Dispute Resolution practice at Clifford Chance. With a strong track record in banking litigation and restructurings and insolvencies, Dorothee also has a strong expertise in commercial arbitration and competition litigation. She specialises, inter alia, in compliance with regulatory, anti-corruption and sanctions legislation, and advises on internal and external investigations. She also acts as an arbitrator herself. She is a guest lecturer at the KULeuven on pleading skills and is frequently invited to conferences as a guest speaker. She is a member of CEPANI & C-SAR & a member of the ICC Commission on Arbitration & ADR.



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Paul McGarry SC was Chair of the Bar of Ireland from July 2016 to July 2018. He was President of Arbitration Ireland from 2022 to 2024. He was called to the Bar in 1996 and appointed a Senior Counsel in 2010. He has been a member of the Bar of England & Wales since 2012 and joined the Bar of Northern Ireland in 2019. He is also an associate at 6 Pump Court Chambers in London. His practice is primarily in public, commercial and European law. He is a former head of the Irish delegation to the Council of European Bars, a member of the Implementation Group of Ireland for Law, and Deputy Leader of the European Circuit. He is a Bencher of King's Inns and a Master of the Bench at Middle Temple.



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Benoît Keane is an Irish lawyer based in Brussels specialising in EU law. He regularly represents sports organisations before the EU Court of Justice, European Commission as well as Court of Arbitration for Sport. He has been at the forefront of major developments in EU law and sport, notably the representation of UEFA in the Superleague case and FIFA in the pending Football Agents case. Benoît read law at University College Cork and obtained a master's degree in EU law at the College of Europe, Bruges. He is dual-qualified as a Solicitor and Avocat. He worked at international law firms in Brussels before setting up his own independent practice in 2012. He is ranked by Chambers for EU law. He is the Secretary of the Brussels Association of Irish Lawyers.

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Antoine De Spiegeleir is a PhD researcher in the Department of Law of the European University Institute in Florence, an associate researcher at the UCLouvain Saint-Louis Bruxelles, and a regional leader of the Sabin Center's Global Network of Peer Reviewers on Climate Litigation. His research interests include climate change litigation, inter-state disputes, and the use of storytelling in legal practice. Prior to his PhD, Antoine studied law and philosophy in Brussels, Leuven, and Zurich, and obtained an LLM from Yale Law School.

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Professor Catherine Barnard, FBA, FLSW, FRSA is Professor of European law and fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge and Director of the Centre for European Legal Studies. She is a member of the European Commission funded European Labour Law Network and a Senior Fellow of the UK in a Changing Europe project. She has given evidence to numerous select committees on the legal issues connected with Brexit and is the author of *EU Employment Law*, *The Substantive Law of the EU: The Four Freedoms*, and *European Union Law*. She has her own podcast, and blogs on Brexit and related issues.



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James Ogilvie is based in the UEFA EU Representative Office in Brussels. He is responsible for overseeing UEFA's long-term partnership with European institutions, rooted in our joint commitment to protect and promote the European sports model.

This includes managing UEFA's institutional partnership agreements with both the European Union and the Council of Europe. James started his career in the European Commission and has previously worked as a strategic advisor on European affairs to corporations and NGOs. He holds an LLM in European Law from the College of Europe and has been involved in football at grassroots level all his life.

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Professor Daniel Sarmiento is Professor of EU Law at the University Complutense of Madrid, as well as Editor-in-Chief of EU Law Live and a lawyer in private practice. He was an advisor in the Spanish Supreme Court (2006-2007) and a legal secretary in the Court of Justice of the EU (2007-2015). He is the author of several books and over a hundred articles and book chapters on a variety of areas linked to EU Law, in particular institutional law, procedural law, internal market law and fundamental rights protection in Europe. In his private practice as a lawyer he has represented governments, EU Institutions, multinational corporations and NGOs in complex litigation before the Court of Justice and the General Court. Since 2024 he is the Vicepresident of the Spanish Association of European Law (AEDEUR), Spanish branch of FIDE.

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Adrian Berry KC practices across the field of public law, especially in British nationality, statelessness, immigration, EU law and after, international protection (refugee status, asylum), housing and accommodation, social assistance, and education. His most recent publications include *Fransman's British Nationality Law* and 'Asylum and Irregular Migration' in *British Legal Reform*. He is a member of the editorial board of *the Journal of Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Law*. Adrian is a Patron of the UK Immigration Law Practitioners' Association, Convenor of its Legislation Working Group, and its former Chair. He writes blogs on nationality, migration, citizenship law and free movement called *Cosmopolis*. Adrian acts for individuals, communities, NGOs, and international organisations. In addition to his casework, he assists with legislative policy work and amendment, and with strategic litigation. He is widely known for his contribution to debates on immigration and nationality law.

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Dr Alexandra von Westernhagen is a German and UK-qualified lawyer with a cross-border practice spanning Brussels, London, Berlin and work in and beyond Europe. Originally from West Berlin, she has lived and worked across seven jurisdictions and brings a strongly European perspective to her work. She is EU Regulatory Partner at Keystone Law where she focused EU and UK sustainability, digital and competition frameworks. She also runs her own practice (AvW Law) where she focuses on the broader societal impact of legal and technological developments, including the influence of digital platforms on democratic processes and the use of AI on learning and education. Alexandra teaches and speaks widely internationally, including at institutions such as MIT and ESCP, and regularly contributes to professional and academic discussions on the evolving role of lawyers in a rapidly changing environment. She is Vice Chair of the European Board of the Global Alliance of Impact Lawyers (GAIL), where she leads on initiatives such as upholding the rule of law and human rights in businesses.



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Nicolas Vermeulen is an associate in the Litigation, Arbitration & Investigations practice of Linklaters Brussels. He studied law at Ghent University and Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University and holds an LL.M. from the London School of Economics. Alongside his practice, Nicolas is active within the Brussels Bar, including as Vice-President of the Vlaams Pleitgenootschap bij de Balie te Brussel

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Pierce O'Meara is an Irish barrister and LLB graduate of Trinity College Dublin. Since 2023 he has worked as an associate in the EU Competition & International Trade team at the Brussels office of France's leading international law firm, Gide Loyrette Nouel. Pierce's practice encompasses a broad spectrum of antitrust and trade issues, including litigation before the European General Court, advising on anti-competitive complaints before EU and national authorities, and counselling European industry as part of anti-dumping investigations conducted by DG Trade. Pierce works with a diverse range of clients from across Europe in a number of sectors, particularly transport, agri-food and manufacturing.

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Síofra Collins was called to the Bar of Ireland in 2023. After completing her undergraduate degree at Trinity College Dublin, she obtained a Master's in European Union Law from Université de Paris II, Panthéon-Assas. Síofra gained experience working in the Competition and Anti-Trust department of Hogan Lovells, Paris and in the Litigation and International Arbitration department of Uría Menéndez, Madrid. Síofra began working at the Court of Justice of the European Union in 2023. She is currently a legal assistant at the CJEU.

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