Ireland: New Competition and Consumer Protection Bill merges Consumer Agency and Competition Authority

On 31 March 2014, a new Competition and Consumer Protection Bill was published by the Irish Government.

The draft legislation has three main components:

- Merge the National Consumer Agency and Competition Authority and deliver improvements in competition law;
- Regulate certain practices in the grocery goods sector aimed at ensuring balance and fairness between the various players in the sector – suppliers, retailers and consumers;
- Update and modernise the law on media mergers to take account of international best practice and technological developments.

Welcoming the publication of the Bill, Isolde Goggin, Chairperson of the Competition Authority and Chair-designate of the new organisation, said, ‘The creation of the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission serves the needs of consumers in Ireland by creating a new organisation with robust powers in the enforcement of both competition and consumer law. Anti-competitive practices are damaging to both consumers and the wider economy. The ultimate aim of the new body will be to ensure open and competitive markets where consumers are protected and empowered and businesses actively compete.’

See full text of the Bill and explanatory documents and press release.