Illiberal Antitrust and the Rule of Law:

Protections for Friends and Probes for Foes?

Workshop programme

One-day workshop, Room 824, Cheng Yu Tung Tower, The University of Hong Kong, Monday 14 December 2026. Organised by Maciej Bernatt (Centre for Antitrust and Regulatory Studies, University of Warsaw) and Julian Nowag (The University of Hong Kong and Lund University). Supported by the Asian Institute of International Financial Law (AIIFL). Generously funded by the Faculty of Law, The University of Hong Kong. All times are Hong Kong time.

Each panel runs 60 minutes: three presentations of 10 minutes, about 5 minutes from each of the two commentators, who may address any of the papers, and 20 minutes of open discussion. The workshop is held under the Chatham House Rule.

08:25–08:55	Registration and coffee
08:55–09:00	**Welcome:** Maciej Bernatt and Julian Nowag
09:00–09:10	**Welcome:** Professor Hualing Fu, Dean, Faculty of Law, The University of Hong Kong (to be confirmed)
09:10–09:30	**Academic keynote** **Eleanor Fox** (New York University, joining virtually at 20:10 New York time on Sunday 13 December): *Democracy at Risk*
09:30–10:30	**Panel 1: Populism and authoritarian antitrust** **Moderator:** Maciej Bernatt **Commentators:** Maria Luisa Stasi (DMA Lab) and Christel Koop (King's College London) **Arthur Sadami** (Fundação Getulio Vargas, Brazil): *Authoritarian Antitrust: Unpacking the U.S. Experiences* **Umut Aydin** (Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile): *Counterforces to Populist Erosion? Exploring the Case of Competition Policy* **Luis Eugenio García-Huidobro Herrera** (Universidad de Chile): *Dismantling the Constitutional Architecture of Independent Regulatory Agencies in Mexico* *Comments and open discussion*
10:30–10:50	Coffee break
10:50–11:50	**Panel 2: Independence under pressure** **Moderator:** Julian Nowag **Commentators:** Zombor Berezvai (Corvinus University of Budapest) and Umut Aydin (Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile) **Christel Koop** (King's College London): *The Independence Paradox: Why Do Politicians Interfere in the Competition Authorities They Insulated?* **Ploykaew Porananond** (Chiang Mai University) and **Mel Marquis** (Monash University): *The Struggle to Achieve Independent Competition Authorities in the ASEAN Region* **Gosia Kozak** (Polish Academy of Sciences): *Regulating Media Markets: Independence and Inter-Agency Cooperation* *Comments and open discussion*

11:50–12:10	Coffee break
12:10–13:10	**Panel 3: Illiberal antitrust in Central Europe** **Moderator:** Alexander Burtscher (The University of Hong Kong) **Commentators:** Wendy Ng (University of Melbourne) and Mel Marquis (Monash University) **Zombor Berezvai** (Corvinus University of Budapest): *Consumer Welfare Effects of the GVH's Inaction and the Orbán Government's Anti-Competition Policy* **Hana Kovacikova** (Comenius University Bratislava): *From Institutional Resilience to Institutional Vulnerability: Competition Enforcement and Rule-of-Law Challenges in Slovakia, 2020–2026* **Maciej Bernatt** (University of Warsaw): *Restoring the Rule of Law* *Comments and open discussion*
13:10–14:05	Lunch
14:05–15:05	**Panel 4: Competition law and illiberalism in China and Thailand** **Moderator:** Maciej Bernatt **Commentators:** Sandra Marco Colino (The Chinese University of Hong Kong) and Yannis Katsoulacos (Athens University of Economics and Business, joining virtually) **Wendy Ng** (University of Melbourne): *Competition Law within Illiberalism: The Evolution of China's Competition Law* **Zhixue (Annie) Gao** (Jiangxi University of Finance and Economics): *Antitrust Enforcement Uncertainty in China: The Beneficial Effects of the 2022 AML Reforms* **Kanoknai Thawonphanit** (Thammasat University): *The Illiberal Turn of Thai Competition Law* *Comments and open discussion*
15:05–15:25	**Judicial keynote** **Judge Krystyna Kowalik-Bańczyk** (General Court of the European Union, joining virtually at 08:05 Brussels time): *Regulatory Tools for Protecting Democracy in the EU: Antitrust and Beyond?*
15:25–16:25	**Panel 5: Parliaments, civil society and the rule of law as counterweights** **Moderator:** Maciej Bernatt **Commentators:** Ninette Dodoo (Freshfields) and Hana Kovacikova (Comenius University Bratislava) **Maria Luisa Stasi** (DMA Lab): *The Role of Civil Society in Times of Politicised Antitrust Enforcement* **Julian Nowag** (The University of Hong Kong and Lund University): *Parliamentary Involvement in Competition Law* **Antonios Kouroutakis** (IE University, Madrid, joining virtually at 08:25 Madrid time): *Rule of Law and Competition: Governing Economic Power in the AI Era* *Comments and open discussion*
16:25–16:30	**Closing remarks:** Maciej Bernatt and Julian Nowag
18:30	**Speakers' dinner**