

Freshfields spin-off to open in Berlin

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Blomstein (Credit: Blomstein)

One counsel and three principal associates from Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer's Berlin office will leave the firm to start their own boutique in the city.

Anna Huttenlauch, Max Klasse, Roland Stein and Pascal Friton will open Blomstein this April.

The team have worked together in the antitrust and competition group in Berlin for 10 years and have decided the time is right to strike out on their own.

"We have been working together in an excellent team for many years, so we decided it would make sense to create our own entity and continue doing so," Anna Huttenlauch, 37, told *GCR*. "We are looking forward to the flexibility of a small, more agile firm and we believe that clients will appreciate this as well," she said.

Huttenlauch has worked extensively on cartel and merger cases for Freshfields. She advised Anheuser-Busch InBev in cartel proceedings before the German competition authority in which the company was the leniency applicant.

Huttenlauch also worked with InBev on a resale price maintenance case between producers and German supermarkets. She has also worked extensively with Axel Springer advising the company on its joint venture with Funke Mediengruppe and the sale of TV listings magazines from Axel Springer to Funke. Huttenlauch also advised Coty on its €11 billion merger with Procter & Gamble and while on secondment in London worked on BT's acquisition of EE.

Fellow competition lawyer Max Klasse, 40, has extensive state aid experience and worked on Honeywell's merger with Federal-Mogul. He also advised on a cross-border joint venture between seven energy transmission companies in Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

He has represented Deutsche Post in various state aid cases still pending before the European courts. He is also representing the German government in a case before the European Court of Justice.

"We want to set a clear focus on regulatory advice and consider Berlin the best place for doing so," Huttenlauch said.

"Blomstein aims to fill the gap that large international firms open up by focusing increasingly on international transactions," Huttenlauch said.

Huttenlauch and Klasse will be joined by two colleagues from the trade and regulatory team: Roland Stein, 37, and Pascal Friton, 36. The two bring expertise in procurement, trade, sanctions and market regulations and have advised both Siemens and Airbus.

Stein and Friton both worked under Hans-Joachim Priess. Priess, who leads the trade teams, will retire in May and won't be replaced. The decision provided the catalyst for the creation of the new firm.

Three associate-level lawyers will join the firm, all from Freshfield's Berlin office.

Thomas Lübbig, partner at Freshfields in Berlin said, “This is a nice opportunity for Roland, Anna, Max and Pascal. We are proud to have such entrepreneurial associates and wish them every success with Blomstein and in developing their practice.”

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