Over the past three decades, the model of the independent competition authority has been embraced by governments and parliaments around the world. Yet, despite pressure to adopt this organisational model, not all emerging and developing economies with a competition law have established an independent competition authority. Moreover, in many of the countries that have formally adopted the model, the actual creation and operation of the independent authority has been postponed, in some cases by more than ten years. Building on a new dataset and a paper co-authored with Philip Kessler, this talk addresses the question of why politicians in some emerging and developing economies have been hesitant to (formally and actually) adopt the model of the independent authority in the field of competition policy. In particular, we investigate to what extent having a more interventionist political-economic system drives the non-adoption and delayed adoption of the model. We seek to offer insights into both the formal and actual adoption of independent authorities, and the variation in enforcement of competition law.

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