

## **Summary**

This dissertation considers aspects of current EU competition policy and additional provisions of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) relevant for competition in the financial services sector.

Traditionally, in the insurance world it has often been claimed that due to its special features the insurance industry should be distinguished from other sectors of the economy with regard to the application of EU competition rules. Chapter 1 discusses whether the distinctiveness of the insurance business is still a relevant and convincing justification for the reduced scope of EU competition law. Traditional arguments that have been used to depict insurance as a unique industry are discussed by identifying elements of analogy between insurance and banking. The analysis takes also into account the ongoing process of convergence between insurance and banking services.

Besides the set of competition law rules, EU law has other provisions that are relevant for competition in financial services sector such as the rules on free movement of services and capital, which remain at the core of the ongoing harmonization process of the financial services. Such a process aims at facilitating the provision of insurance and banking services and creating more efficient and competitive markets. Also, the enhancement of the financial soundness of insurers and banks and the overall stability of financial markets is an additional goal.

The effectiveness of the harmonization measures at enhancing competition in the sectors of insurance and banking is analyzed in Chapters 3

and 4. Initially, Chapter 3 assesses the competitive behavior in the non-life insurance sector in Italy during the period 1998 - 2013. The level of competition is assessed by applying a relatively new measure of competition - the Boone indicator, which captures the effect of competition on the performance of firms. Afterwards, the analysis focuses on another relevant aspect for competition in insurance markets – its interplay with the financial soundness.

A similar analysis follows in Chapter 4, but this time the focus is on the Italian banking sector. The Boone indicator is applied to gauge competition in this market during the period 2006-2014, and alike empirical strategy is employed to provide new evidence on the bank competition - soundness nexus. Lastly, Chapter 5 discusses the main findings, depicts potential future research and concludes.