

«A role on constant evolution»

Interview with Xavier Schops

A diverse
legal perspective

IBA Report

The legal profession's
global impact

MLL's recipe: a multidisciplinary
mindset and strong team spirit

Katharina Lasota Heller
The advocate of cryptocurrencies






In times of great challenges, the strategic role of the legal profession remains key

We live in times of significant social, economic, and geopolitical challenges: from the conflicts affecting Europe and the Middle East to the major environmental issues that highlight the need to rethink how we live and the legacy we wish to leave for future generations. Adding to this are the severe inequalities in well-being, economic status, and even rights, which pervade our increasingly inequitable and less welfare-oriented society. In this context, the legal profession can have a substantial impact on the economic and social well-being of nations. This impact was recently estimated by the International Bar Association (IBA) at 1.6 trillion dollars, about 1.7% of the global GDP. The report further explains that the work of the legal profession helps define the framework in which the rule of law can operate most effectively, stimulating social impact and triggering the progress of democracies and the development of societies. The report structures this impact based on five areas of the United Nations' sustainable development goals: peace, justice, and strong institutions; equality and inclusion; educational training; environmental sustainability; and health and well-being.

Beyond the evidence shown in the IBA Report, it remains certain that today the legal profession plays an increasingly key role both in society and across all sectors of the economy. It is a sector made up of committed and often visionary professionals capable of recognizing the context in which they operate and adding value beyond merely satisfying their clients.

Switzerland is confirmed as a country rich in stories of excellence, where the work of lawyers is a virtuous mix of tradition and innovation, balancing a local approach with a global perspective. In this issue, we interviewed two professionals from two law firms that well represent the current approach to the profession in this country. With Kilian Schärli, we discussed MLL Legal - one of the largest commercial law firms in Switzerland with 155 lawyers in 4 offices in Switzerland and 2 offices abroad, in London and Madrid - his vision of the market, and a pragmatic approach to the profession that remains focused on innovation and the continuous changes required while never losing sight of "well-being." As Kilian Schärli states, to work well, one must live well in the work environment. Thus, it is essential to start with people, place them at the center, and build a proper work-life balance, an approach often distant from the legal profession.

The conversation with Katharina Lasota Heller, on the other hand, gave us the portrait of a determined and visionary professional who demonstrates - through actions - that gender and equality narratives are themselves discriminatory because what matters is action, not labeling. As the founder of LEXcellence, she demonstrates this concretely, starting with investing in women. The firm currently has eight employees, six of whom are women, and she (a woman) is the managing partner. Lasota Heller, moreover, is not Swiss but decided to practice in this country. This confirms another trend we have reported in this issue of MAG: Switzerland is increasingly becoming a multicultural ecosystem where lawyers from various backgrounds choose to operate, driven by a dynamic context of constant openness and interaction with "the others".

What is certain, and confirmed by all the stories collected so far, is that the legal profession is profoundly changing today while remaining true to itself. Companies increasingly need professionals capable of interpreting the continuous changes in the world and bringing vision and solutions to the ongoing challenges they face. Xavier Schops, Chief Legal Officer and Head of mergers and acquisitions at medmix and a member of the board of directors at ACC Europe, also confirmed this, highlighting the importance of associations in this sector. Associations not only create valuable connections for the profession but also provide unparalleled opportunities for professional growth and training in legal and transversal sectors with a multidisciplinary approach. And not to forget the soft skills, today more than ever essential for any profession, especially the legal one, where listening ability, effective communication, and problem-solving remain strategic. 

2024 EVENTS CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

- LC Energy Day Milan, 12/09/2024
- The Latin American Lawyer Women Awards São Paulo, 12/09/2024
- Legalcommunity Labour Awards Milan, 19/09/2024
- Iberian Lawyer Forty Under 40 Awards Madrid, 26/09/2024

OCTOBER

- Inhousecommunity Days Rome, 02-04/10/2024
- Legalcommunity Real Estate Awards Milan, 10/10/2024
- Inhousecommunity Awards Italia Milan, 17/10/2024
- Legalcommunity Marketing Awards Milan, 21/10/2024
- Inhousecommunity Days Switzerland Zurich, 24-25/10/2024
- Legalcommunity Litigation Awards Milano, 29/10/2024

NOVEMBER

- Iberian Lawyer Inhousecommunity Day Madrid, 05/11/2024
- Iberian Lawyer Gold Awards Madrid, 05/11/2024
- Financecommunity Week Milan, 11-15/11/2024
- Financecommunity Awards Milan, 14/11/2024
- LegalcommunityMENA Awards Riyadh, 21/11/2024

DECEMBER

- The LatAm Energy & Infrastructure Awards São Paulo, 11/12/2024

LEGEND

- Legalcommunity / LegalcommunityCH
- LegalcommunityMENA
- LegalcommunityWEEK
- Inhousecommunity
- Iberian Lawyer
- The Latin American Lawyer
- Financecommunity / FinancecommunityWEEK
- Foodcommunity
- LC

2025 EVENTS CALENDAR

JANUARY

- Legalcommunity Energy Awards Milan, 30/01/2025

FEBRUARY

- Legalcommunity Finance Awards Milan, 13/02/2025
- Iberian Lawyer Sustainability Summit - Spain Madrid, 27/02/2025
- Iberian Lawyer Labour Awards Madrid, 27/02/2025

MARCH

- Iberian Lawyer Inspiralaw Madrid, 06/03/2025
- Financecommunity Fintech Awards Milan, 13/03/2025
- Legalcommunity IP&TMT Awards Milan, 20/03/2025
- LC Sustainability Summit Milan, 25/03/2025
- LC Sustainability Awards Milan, 25/03/2025

APRIL

- LC Inspiralaw Italia Milan, 01/04/2025
- Legalcommunity Tax Awards Milan, 03/04/2025

MAY

- LegalcommunityCH Awards Zurich, 08/05/2025
- Legalcommunity Forty under 40 Awards Milan, 22/05/2025
- Iberian Lawyer Legaltech Day Madrid, 29/05/2025
- Iberian Lawyer IP&TMT Awards Madrid, 29/05/2025

JUNE

- Legalcommunity Week Milan, 09-13/06/2025
- Legalcommunity Corporate Awards Milan, 11/06/2025
- Rock the Law Milan, 12/06/2025
- Iberian Lawyer Energy Day Madrid, 19/06/2025
- Iberian Lawyer Energy Awards Madrid, 19/06/2025

JULY

- Italian Awards Rome, 03/07/2025

ITALY

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ENERGY & INFRASTRUCTURE		DOWNLOAD SUBMISSION ↓
Research Period from	01/11/23	
Research Period to	31/10/24	
Deadline Submission	13/09/2024*	
Report Publication	Feb-25	

*It will be possible to integrate with subsequent deals within Friday 22 November 2024

FINANCE		DOWNLOAD SUBMISSION ↓
Research Period from	01/12/23	
Research Period to	30/11/24	
Deadline Submission	27/09/2024*	
Report Publication	Feb-25	

*It will be possible to integrate with subsequent deals within Friday 13 December 2024

IP&TMT		DOWNLOAD SUBMISSION ↓
Research Period from	01/01/24	
Research Period to	31/12/24	
Deadline Submission	18/10/2024*	
Report Publication	Apr-25	

*It will be possible to integrate with subsequent deals within Friday 17 January 2025

TAX		DOWNLOAD SUBMISSION ↓
Research Period from	01/02/24	
Research Period to	31/01/25	
Deadline Submission	08/11/2024*	
Report Publication	Apr-25	

*It will be possible to integrate with subsequent deals within Friday 14 March 2025

CORPORATE		DOWNLOAD SUBMISSION ↓
Research Period from	01/04/24	
Research Period to	31/03/25	
Deadline Submission	17/01/2025*	
Report Publication	Jul-25	

*It will be possible to integrate with subsequent deals within Friday 18 April 2025

LABOUR		
Research Period from	01/04/24	
Research Period to	31/03/25	
Deadline Submission	18/04/2025	
Report Publication	Oct-25	

REAL ESTATE		
Research Period from	01/07/24	
Research Period to	30/04/25	
Deadline Submission	16/05/2025	
Report Publication	Nov-25	

INHOUSECOMMUNITY		
Research Period from	01/07/24	
Research Period to	30/06/25	
Deadline Submission	23/05/2025	
Report Publication	Nov-25	

LITIGATION		
Research Period from	01/04/24	
Research Period to	31/03/25	
Deadline Submission	30/05/2025	
Report Publication	Nov-25	

FINANCECOMMUNITY		
Research Period from	24/08/24	
Research Period to	31/08/25	
Deadline Submission	27/06/2025	
Report Publication	Dec-25	

*It will be possible to integrate with subsequent deals within Friday 29 August 2025

SPAIN AND PORTUGAL

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LABOUR		DOWNLOAD SUBMISSION ↓
Research Period from	01/12/23	
Research Period to	30/11/24	
Deadline Submission	20/09/2024*	
Report Publication	Apr-25	

*It will be possible to integrate with subsequent deals within Friday 13 December 2024

IP&TMT		DOWNLOAD SUBMISSION ↓
Research Period from	01/03/24	
Research Period to	28/02/25	
Deadline Submission	15/11/2024*	
Report Publication	Jun-25	

*It will be possible to integrate with subsequent deals within Friday 14 March 2025

ENERGY & INFRASTRUCTURE		DOWNLOAD SUBMISSION ↓
Research Period from	01/04/24	
Research Period to	31/03/25	
Deadline Submission	17/01/2025*	
Report Publication	Jul-25	

*It will be possible to integrate with subsequent deals within Friday 18 April 2025

SWITZERLAND

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SWITZERLAND		DOWNLOAD SUBMISSION ↓
Research Period from	01/01/24	
Research Period to	31/12/24	
Deadline Submission	15/11/2024	
Report Publication	Jun-25	

*It will be possible to integrate with subsequent deals within Friday 14 March 2025

MENA

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MENA		
Research Period from	01/05/24	
Research Period to	30/04/24	
Deadline Submission	27/06/2025	
Report Publication	Jan-26	

LATAM

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ENERGY & INFRASTRUCTURE		
Research Period from	01/05/24	
Research Period to	30/04/25	
Deadline Submission	30/05/2025	
Report Publication	Jan-26	

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SPECIAL

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On the Move



FIRM EXPANSION

Schellenberg Wittmer welcomes new partner Chuffart-Finsterwald

Schellenberg Wittmer has announced the addition of **Stéphanie Chuffart-Finsterwald** as a new partner, effective September 1, 2024. Chuffart-Finsterwald will head the life sciences, intellectual property, and ICT practices in Geneva. She brings extensive experience in R&D, compliance, IP strategy, data protection, and dispute resolution. Her expertise is expected to significantly enhance the firm's capabilities in these areas, reinforcing Schellenberg Wittmer's commitment to providing top-tier legal services.

EXECUTIVE MOVES

Wolfgang Wienand appointed as Lonza's new Ceo

Lonza Group has named **Wolfgang Wienand** as its new Ceo, effective July 1, 2024. Wienand, previously the vice president of strategy and business development at Evonik, brings a wealth of experience in strategic leadership and corporate development. His appointment is part of Lonza's efforts to drive innovation and growth within the life sciences sector. Wienand's leadership is anticipated to steer Lonza towards new heights in the industry.



IN-HOUSE

Roberto Cerratti joins Ceresio Investors group

Roberto Cerratti has been appointed as the Head of Investment services Switzerland at Ceresio Investors group. With over a century of history, Ceresio Investors is a prominent Swiss financial group. Cerratti's extensive background in investment management and financial services is expected to significantly enhance the group's investment strategies and client services, demonstrating Ceresio Investors' dedication to strengthening its leadership team and expanding its market presence.

NEW PARTNERS

MLL Legal expands with three new partners and two associates



MLL Legal has bolstered its Lausanne office by adding three new partners and two associates. This expansion reflects MLL Legal's commitment to enhancing its capabilities and presence in the region. The new team brings diverse expertise across various legal domains, reinforcing the firm's position as a leading legal service provider. This strategic move aims to support MLL Legal's continued growth and ability to meet clients' evolving needs. The new partners include **Philippe Vladimir Boss**, an expert in economic criminal law and commercial litigation; **Hélène Weidmann**, specializing in M&A and corporate law; and **Thierry Amy**, focused on civil and administrative litigation as well as banking and finance regulatory law. The new associates, **Olivier Perriard** and **Sandrine Hochstrasser**, bring additional strength in banking and finance law and intellectual property law, respectively.



INTERNATIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Birgit Sambeth designated to the ICSID panel of conciliators

Birgit Sambeth has been appointed to the ICSID Panel of conciliators.

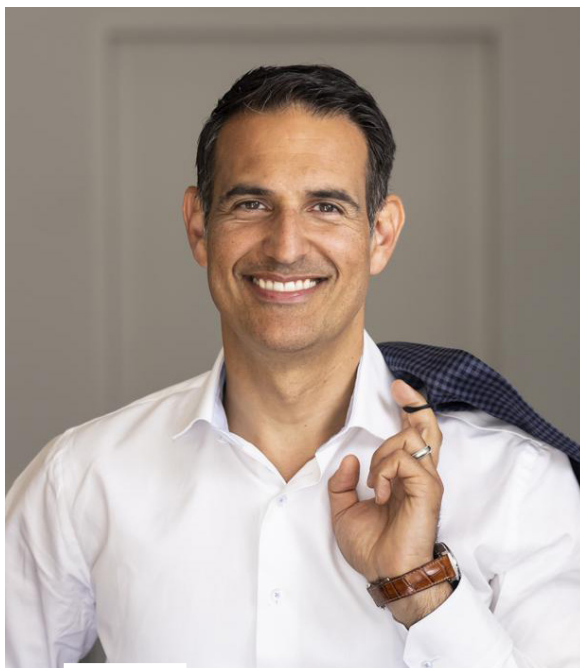
Known for her extensive experience in international dispute resolution and arbitration, Sambeth's appointment is expected to bring significant expertise to the ICSID panel. This designation underscores her standing as a leading figure in the field and is poised to enhance the panel's effectiveness in handling complex international disputes.

On the web



Cross-border mergers and technological advancements are key trend in legal transactions

The legal sector has played a crucial role in facilitating recent significant activities across various industries, showcasing its contribution to driving corporate growth and innovation. A prominent trend is the emphasis on cross-border mergers to enhance global capabilities, exemplified by Homburger's guidance on the Kpmg Switzerland and Uk merger. Strengthening digital and financial services is another focus, with Altenburger advising Smg's acquisition of moneyland.ch to enhance digital finance portfolios. Technological advancements are highlighted by Walder Wyss's advice to Windyty on acquiring a stake in Meteoblue for real time weather data services. Strategic industry sales, such as Nkf's counsel on the Rosen Group sale, and healthcare sector expansions, like Walder Wyss's advice on Klar's acquisition of Bühlmann Laboratories, show ongoing consolidation and growth. Finally, Kellerhals Carrard support to Libattion on its recent financing round, highlights the importance of legal support in green energy transactions. These deals underscore the legal sector's dynamic role in enabling corporate growth, technological advancement, and strategic industry consolidation.



KARIM MAIZAR



NORBERT SCHENK

Kellerhals Carrard with Libattion on its financing round

Kellerhals Carrard advised Libattion on its recent Eur 14 million series A financing round led by A&G Energy Transition tech fund together with Spanish automotive components manufacturer Teknia, the portuguese fund HCapital New Ideas II and Swiss energy utility company Ebl. Based in Zurich, Libattion offers stationary energy storage solutions from upcycled electric vehicle batteries. It is known for its algorithms and power control systems that extend the service life of upcycled batteries, ensuring their performance matches that of new batteries.

Kellerhals Carrard's team was lead by corporate/VC partner Karim Maizar and co-lead by corporate/VC senior associate Norbert Schenk (pictured right) and also included Lisa Schmid (corporate/VC).

PRACTICE AREA

Banking & Finance

DEAL

Libattion financing round

LAW FIRM

Kellerhals Carrard

HEAD PARTNERS

Karim Maizar and Norbert Schenk

VALUE

Eur 14 million



THIERRY THORMANN



RALPH IMOBERDORF



CÉLINE SPAHN

Altenburger advised Smg in its acquisition of Moneyland.ch

Altenburger acted as legal advisor to Smg Swiss marketplace group, Switzerland's digital hub for marketplaces such as homegate.ch, immoScout24.ch, autoScout24.ch, Ricardo, FinanceScout.ch and more, in its acquisition of moneyland.ch. The team consisted of **Thierry Thormann**, **Ralph Imoberdorf** and **Céline Spahn** (all M&A) and further included **Luzius Cavelti** (tax) and **Kristin Arve** (dispute resolution).

PRACTICE AREA

Corporate & Digital Law

DEAL

Acquisition of moneyland.ch

LAW FIRM

Altenburger

HEAD PARTNERS

Thierry Thormann, Ralph Imoberdorf, Céline Spahn

VALUE

Not disclosed



STEFANO CODONI

Walder Wyss Advises Windyty on acquisition of majority stake in Meteoblue

Walder Wyss has advised Windyty on acquiring a majority stake in Meteoblue, marking a significant merger in the weather forecasting industry. This acquisition enhances Windyty's offerings with Meteoblue's strong presence in global B2B and B2G markets. The combined forces of Windyty and Meteoblue aim to set new standards in weather forecasting and data visualization, benefiting users and stakeholders worldwide. The Walder Wyss team included partner M&A/IP Stefano Codoni, managing associate **Valerio Caccia**, partner **Maurus Winzap** (tax), and senior associate **Martina Madonna-Quadri**.

PRACTICE AREA

Corporate & Technology Transactions

DEAL

Acquisition of Stake in meteoblue

LAW FIRM

Walder Wyss

HEAD PARTNERS

Stefano Codoni, Valerio Caccia, Maurus Winzap, Martina Madonna-Quadri

VALUE

Not disclosed



ANDREAS CASUTT



DANIELA SCHMUCKI



ALEXANDER GÖBEL

Nkf with Herman Rosen on Rosen group sale

Niederer Kraft Frey (Nkf) has successfully advised Herman Rosen on the sale of a portion of the Rosen group to Partners group, as well as Mr. Rosen's subsequent re-investment. The Nkf team was led by corporate/M&A partner **Andreas Casutt**, tax partner **Daniela Schmucki**, and corporate/M&A associate **Alexander Göbel**, with support from associate Sabrina Gysi, junior associate Camille Stucker, and IP partner Janine Reudt-Demont. The Rosen group, with over 4,000 employees, specializes in inspection and integrity management services for energy transmission pipelines. Partners group manages USD 147 billion in assets with a global team of over 1,900 professionals.

PRACTICE AREA

Corporate Transactions

DEAL

Sale of Rosen group

LAW FIRM

Niederer Kraft Frey

HEAD PARTNERS

Andreas Casutt, Daniela Schmucki, Alexander Göbel

VALUE

Not disclosed



ALEX NIKITINE



DARIO GALLI

Walder Wyss advises Klar on Bühlmann's all shares acquisition

Walder Wyss has provided legal counsel to Klar on the acquisition of all shares of Bühlmann laboratories. Located in Schönenbuch near Basel, Bühlmann has been developing and marketing in-vitro diagnostics and distributing third-party molecular diagnostics products since 1976. The Walder Wyss team was led by Corporate/M&A partner **Alex Nikitine** and managing associate **Dario Galli**, with significant contributions from partners Maurus Winzap (tax) and Thomas Müller (banking & finance), among others.

Vischer advised Roland P. Bühlmann and Marie-Thérèse Bühlmann on legal and tax matters. The Vischer team was led by Corporate/M&A partner **Robert Bernet** and included partners **Peter Kühn, Marc Ph. Prinz, Christian Wyss**, and **Tobias F. Rohner**.

PRACTICE AREA

Corporate M&A

DEAL

Acquisition of Bühlmann laboratories

LAW FIRMS

Walder Wyss / Vischer

HEAD PARTNERS

Alex Nikitine and Dario Galli (Walder Wyss) - Robert Bernet (Vischer)

VALUE

Not disclosed



DANIEL HASLER

Homburger advised Kpmg Switzerland on its merger with Kpmg Uk

Kpmg Switzerland and Kpmg Uk announced that their respective partnerships had voted overwhelmingly in favor of merging their partnerships, creating a new Usd 4.4 billion business, working across audit, tax and legal, and advisory. Homburger acted as legal counsel to Kpmg Switzerland on the transaction.

Both firms enter the merger from positions of strength as growing, profitable businesses in their respective home markets and have a long and strong history of working together for multinational clients. With a wider geographic coverage, the new firm will be able to expand its service and sector expertise complementing the already deep local market understanding for its national and international clients.

The Homburger team was led by **Daniel Hasler** (corporate / M&A) and included **Thierry Burckhardt**, **Marc Abplanalp**, **Paula Delissen**, **Marilena Balthasar**, **Norina Tröhler** (all corporate / M&A), **Richard Stäuber**, **Erik Habich** (both competition), and **Stefan Oesterhelt** (tax).

PRACTICE AREA

Corporate M&A

DEAL

Kpmg Switzerland and Kpmg UK merger

LAW FIRM

Homburger

HEAD PARTNER

Daniel Hasler

VALUE

Not disclosed



LC Publishing Group

lcpublishinggroup.com



INFORMATION



EVENTS



INTELLIGENCE



PUBLICATIONS

LC publishing Group provides 100% digital information - with a business angle - on the legal, finance and food markets in Italy and is the largest legal publisher across southern Europe and Latin America after the acquisition of the majority share in Iberian Legal group.



LC Publishing Group S.p.A.
Operational office: Via Savona 100 | 20144 Milan
Registered office: Via Tolstoi 10 | 20146 Milan
Phone: + 39 02 36 72 76 59



A portrait of Kilian Schärli, a man with short brown hair and a light beard, wearing a dark blue suit jacket over a white shirt. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

MLL's recipe: a multidisciplinary mindset and a strong team spirit

The firm managing partner, Kilian Schärli, shares insights on innovation, challenges in the legal sector, and the firm's commitment to technology and work-life balance

by claudia la via

In the shifting landscape of Swiss law, MLL Legal is carving out a niche for itself as an innovator. With over 150 lawyers, the firm prides itself on fostering a dynamic atmosphere that encourages creativity and adaptability. Leading this transformation is **Kilian Schärli**, the firm managing partner, whose leadership has been instrumental in driving the firm's progress. "Our dynamic atmosphere, driven by a young and visionary leadership team, fosters creativity and adaptability, enabling us to anticipate and respond to the evolving needs of our clients", Schärli explains. Under his guidance, MLL Legal has embraced advanced technologies and placed a strong emphasis on sustainability and a supportive work environment, setting a new standard in the Swiss legal market.

You call yourself "The Swiss firm of the future". Why?

We have successfully completed a generational change within our partnership, which has become younger and more diverse in recent years. At MLL Legal, our more than 150 lawyers are continuously innovating and striving for improvement in everything we do. We embrace new ideas and technologies, combining our wealth of expertise with creative thinking and diligence. With our hands-on approach, we implement viable solutions for the most complex legal challenges. Our team is intrinsically motivated to always be at the cutting edge of technology, in Switzerland and cross-border. We have our own legal tech team and invest significantly in new technologies, in particular AI-supported legal tools and databases.

How do you concretely put this vision in practice?

We are a fully integrated firm with an interdisciplinary mindset and a strong team spirit. Our lawyers focus on the areas they feel passionate about, with an emphasis on understanding our clients' businesses, industries, and markets. Diversity and plurality of thought are firmly engraved in our firm's culture. We prioritize sustainability in our operations and cultivate a fun and engaging work environment for our team. Open-minded and progressive, MLL

Legal is committed to redefining the future of legal services in Switzerland.

Can you share more about the firm's efforts to foster a positive work environment?

At MLL Legal, we believe that our employees are the core assets of the firm. We can only deliver legal excellence to our clients if our employees are fully committed and happy to work here. To foster this commitment and happiness, we prioritize a supportive and inclusive work environment that values every team member. As part of this commitment, every two years we organize a European firm outing, taking the entire firm to a vibrant city within Europe. This weekend getaway is a chance for us to bond, relax, and enjoy time together outside of the office, strengthening our team spirit and ensuring that everyone feels appreciated and valued. By investing in our employees' well-being and creating opportunities for connection and enjoyment, we ensure that MLL Legal remains a dynamic, innovative, and enjoyable place to work.



«We embrace new ideas and technologies, combining our wealth of expertise with creative thinking and diligence»

How would you describe your firm using three adjectives?

Innovative, agile, and client-focused.

You are mainly focused on technology, especially blockchain. What are the main challenges today for clients in these sectors?

Clients in technology sectors, particularly those focused on blockchain, face several significant



challenges today. Regulatory uncertainty is a major issue, as navigating the evolving regulatory landscape can be complex. Different jurisdictions have varying regulations, which can affect compliance and operational strategies for blockchain-based businesses. Additionally, security concerns are paramount. Ensuring the security of blockchain networks and protecting against cyber threats is crucial. Clients must address vulnerabilities and implement robust security measures to safeguard their assets and data. Scalability issues also present challenges. Blockchain technology often faces scalability challenges, impacting transaction speeds and efficiency. Clients need to find solutions that allow for growth and increased transaction volumes without compromising performance.

You are also co-head of the industry groups Blockchain Technologies and MLLStart!. What is the focus of these groups?

Industry groups in law firms specialize in providing tailored legal services to specific sectors or industries. The industry group Blockchain Technologies specializes in providing tailored legal advice and support for clients involved in blockchain and cryptocurrency sectors. We participate in relevant conferences around the world, attend training sessions (not only on legal topics), and join relevant client events. Especially in this group, we experience all the ups and downs of the sector. The MLLStart! team is familiar with the legal challenges startups face at all stages of their development.

What are the most important projects in the pipeline for MLL in 2024?

Recently, we announced the strategic strengthening of our Lausanne office, which is a significant development for us. Another important deal was our collaboration with Logol for our new IT core platform. Our new core IT infrastructure at MLL Legal is built on Microsoft, and we rely on M365, Dynamics, Business Central, HRMS, and Power BI combined with Copilot for our law firm management, reporting and finance operations. This integrated approach allows us to leverage Microsoft's robust suite of solutions to effectively manage our legal services, financial processes, and overall business operations.

MLL in numbers

MLL dates back to 1885. The law firm has grown both organically and by means of strategic mergers, the latest of which took place on 1st July 2021 between Meyerlustenberger Lachenal and Froriep and today comes the name MLL.

Here are some important facts about the firm:

- **Offices location:** Zurich, Geneva, Zug, Lausanne, London, Madrid
- **Employees:** 270 - (152 women)
- **Numbers of partners:** 54
- **Areas of activities:**

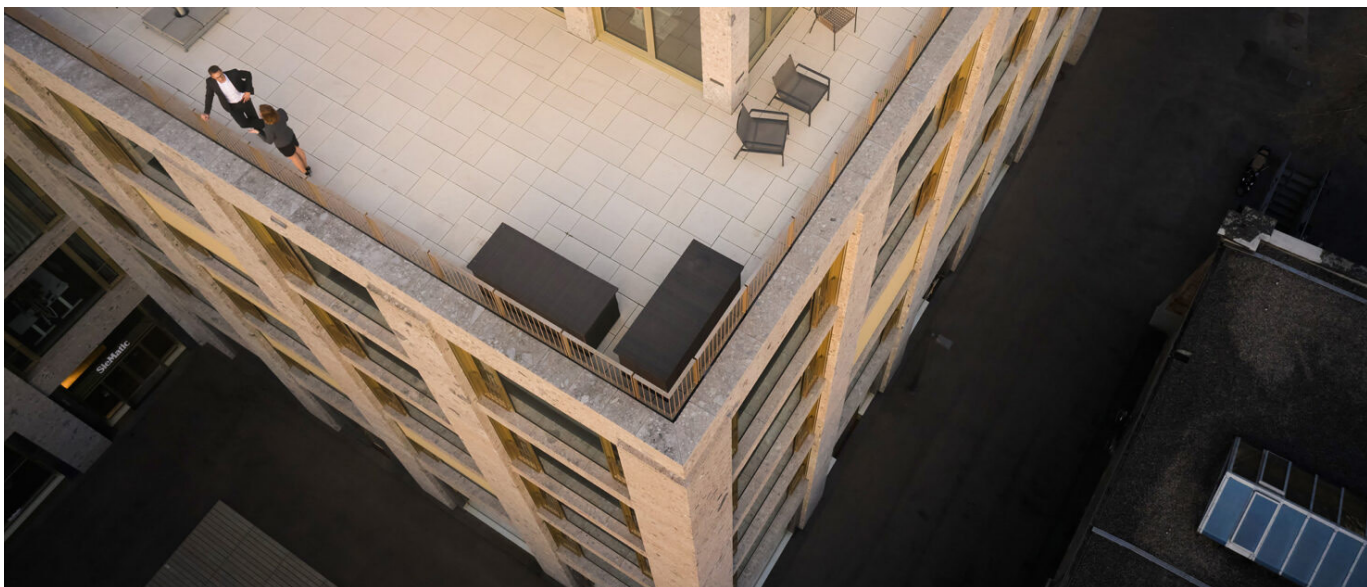
Practice Areas: Aviation, aerospace and shipping, banking & finance, capital markets, charity & mission-driven organizations, competition, corporate M&A, dispute resolution, employment law & social security, environmental social governance, insolvency & restructuring, intellectual property, iCT & digital, private clients, product regulation & compliance, real estate & construction, regulatory / fintech / DLT, sport, media & entertainment, tax.

Industry Groups: Arts & culture, blockchain technologies, digital, technology & telecommunication, financial services, insurance, investigations & compliance, life sciences & healthcare, private clients, real estate, retail & luxury, sustainable economy.

From your perspective, what could be the positive aspects and the challenges of corporate adoption of blockchain?

Corporate adoption of blockchain has several positive aspects and challenges. On the positive side, blockchain can enhance transparency and traceability, providing a transparent and immutable ledger that improves accountability and traceability in supply chains, financial transactions, and data management. It also increases efficiency and reduces costs by automating processes and eliminating intermediaries, which streamlines operations, reduces paperwork, and lowers transaction costs. Furthermore, blockchain improves security due to its decentralized and cryptographic nature, making data more

resistant to tampering and cyberattacks. However, there are challenges as well. Regulatory and compliance issues are significant, as the regulatory environment for blockchain is still evolving, and compliance with varying international laws can be complex. Scalability and performance challenges also arise, as many blockchain networks struggle to handle large volumes of transactions quickly and efficiently. Ensuring scalability without compromising the network's integrity and speed is crucial. Additionally, integrating blockchain technology into existing corporate systems and processes can be difficult, requiring significant investment in new infrastructure, employee training, and potential re-engineering of business processes.



«It is exciting to experience how AI is revolutionizing the legal field»

How have clients' needs changed lately? What do they expect when they get in touch with MLL?

Clients nowadays expect law firms to provide holistic solutions, efficient service delivery, transparent costs, industry-specific expertise, effective communication, and integration of technology to meet their legal needs effectively and promptly.

Additionally, clients expect partner involvement, accessibility, and they value a positive and enjoyable experience when collaborating with law firms.

This task may sound challenging, but with a deep understanding of clients and transparent communication, it becomes a rewarding endeavor.

How would you describe the Swiss legal ecosystem today?

Switzerland's legal ecosystem today combines tradition, innovation, and global connections. It enjoys hosting many global companies that appreciate Switzerland's reliable and well-regarded legal system.

This system sustains a strong legal profession and enables international business deals, arbitration, and legal innovation. Large international law firms have not yet extensively established themselves in Switzerland, underscoring the distinctive nature of the Swiss legal market. More legal market consolidation is likely, with law firms either growing to invest in modern technology or focusing as boutique firms to serve niche markets.

What are the main trends arising in the legal profession from your opinion?

The main trends arising in the legal profession from my perspective include increased adoption of technology, such as AI, machine learning, and

blockchain, which streamline tasks like contract review, legal research, and case management.

Remote work has also become more prevalent, accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic, leading to the rise of remote legal services.

There is a growing emphasis on cybersecurity to protect against data breaches and cyberattacks, with firms investing in advanced security measures and protocols.

Alternative legal service providers (ALSPs) are gaining prominence by offering specialized legal services at competitive rates, driving traditional law firms to rethink their business models and service offerings. Additionally, there is a growing emphasis on providing personalized and client-centric legal services, leveraging technology to offer better communication, transparency, and tailored solutions to meet clients' specific needs.

The legal profession is also increasingly prioritizing diversity and inclusion, with




«We can only deliver legal excellence to our clients if our employees are fully committed and happy to work here. To foster this commitment and happiness, we prioritize a supportive and inclusive work environment that values every team member»

firms implementing policies and initiatives to promote a more diverse and inclusive workforce. Sustainability and corporate social responsibility (CSR) are also becoming more important, with firms adopting environmentally friendly practices and engaging in pro bono work to contribute positively to society. Lastly, globalization of legal services is driving the need for lawyers to be knowledgeable

about various legal systems and cross-border regulations, and there is a growing recognition of the importance of work-life balance in the legal profession, with firms implementing policies to support mental health and well-being.

Would you consider the rise of Artificial intelligence an opportunity or a threat in this field?

The rise of artificial intelligence (AI) in the legal field presents significant opportunities for enhancing productivity and judgment. By embracing AI responsibly, we expect that a significant part of the groundwork legal work will disappear and be replaced by AI. This change will allow legal professionals to concentrate more on strategic and complex parts of their work, ultimately providing more value to clients. AI will not eliminate lawyers. However, lawyers who do not embrace AI are likely to face challenges in the near future. I am personally very optimistic about the responsible usage of AI in the legal field. Living in this era allows us to witness and benefit from these transformative changes. It is exciting to experience how AI is revolutionizing the legal field. 





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«A role on constant evolution»

Xavier Schops, Chief legal officer and head of mergers and acquisitions at medmix and a member of the board of directors at ACC Europe, explores the disruptive changes in the in-house profession and the importance of sharing best practises with an open mindset

by claudia la via

In the intricate landscape of legal counsel within the medical sector, **Xavier Schops** stands out as a seasoned expert with a distinguished career. Currently serving as the Chief legal officer and head of mergers and acquisitions at medmix group, Schops brings a wealth of experience from his previous roles at Sonova, PPG Industries, and Mondelez International. His tenure at these prominent companies has equipped him with a robust understanding of the legal complexities and strategic opportunities within the healthcare and industrial sectors. medmix, a Swiss-listed company, emerged from a strategic spin-off of the Sulzer Group, positioning itself as a leader in high-precision delivery devices and fluid mixing systems across healthcare, beauty, and industrial applications. "Most sectors we operate in are subject to a robust regulatory framework, notably in areas of healthcare compliance, product conception and design, as well as routes to market. Our client base is consolidating, bringing specific challenges and strategic opportunities," notes Schops, highlighting the dual nature of regulatory challenges and growth prospects the company faces.

As Schops delves into the nuances of his role and the broader legal landscape, his insights provide a comprehensive view of the evolving responsibilities of legal counsel, the peculiarities of the Swiss legal market, and the future trends shaping the industry. His active involvement in the Association of Corporate Counsel (ACC) further underscores his commitment to advancing the profession and fostering a global network of legal experts, as he shares with MAG.

You are also involved in M&A within the company: what are the most interesting prospects for the sector and for your company at the moment?

Since last November I have been heading the M&A activities beyond my Chief legal officer role. medmix has a robust track record of acquiring businesses globally. Today, our company is composed of businesses acquired in the last two decades, and we have built a diverse portfolio of products addressing a wide range of healthcare, consumer, and industrial needs. Growth is a journey, and we enjoy a broad set

«In my view, the Swiss legal market is unique, in particular for in-house lawyers, due to the impressive mix of Swiss champions, being homegrown companies operating globally while keeping strong roots, as well as a very solid slate of international companies»

of exciting prospects, ranging from disruptive technologies, adjacent segments, and the use of our current technologies in new sectors to addressing emerging needs. Beyond traditional acquisitions of established businesses to solidify and expand our product offering, we see prospects in partnerships, joint ventures, early-stage investments, and technology plays.

How is the role of the general counsel changing today? What skills are required, and what are the main developments in this profession from your perspective?

The role of the general counsel is on a constant evolution, with an ever-expanding role beyond the "pure" legal aspects, more and more frequently covering compliance, government affairs, regulatory, governance, and risk management, among others. Those evolutions make the role increasingly exciting and complex. This requires legal professionals to constantly challenge themselves, avidly explore new developments, and further their global mindset.

What are, from your point of view, the peculiarities of the Swiss legal market?

«The role of the general counsel is on a constant evolution, with an ever-expanding role beyond the “pure” legal aspects, more and more frequently covering compliance, government affairs, regulatory, governance, and risk management, among others»

In my view, the Swiss legal market is unique, in particular for in-house lawyers, due to the impressive mix of Swiss champions, being homegrown companies operating globally while keeping strong roots, as well as a very solid slate of international companies having made Switzerland their home for, typically, their Europe, Middle East, and Africa operations.

What are your daily tasks in your role as legal counsel?

There is nothing like a boring day! A typical day will comprise a mix of interactions with team members in Switzerland or abroad, reviewing key legal matters, from key contract negotiations with suppliers and customers, to how to best defend Medmix' interests, particularly relative to our strong intellectual property portfolio. I also typically exchange with other members of the executive committee on strategic matters and prepare for board meetings. Compliance is a cornerstone, and I often work on our programs and policies alongside the Chief compliance officer. Additionally, I liaise with my M&A and strategy colleagues on targets and current expansion projects. Frequent dealings with segment leaders are essential to ensure that the team is focusing on what is core to our business colleagues.



You also hold an important position in ACC, the global association of corporate counsels, where you serve on the board of directors for Europe. In your view, what is the value of this type of association for its members?

I consider it essential for corporate lawyers to be involved in and contribute to the promotion of our profession, to build and maintain a robust professional network. Associations like ACC offer such opportunities not only to connect professionals but also provide unique opportunities for continuing education on both legal and soft skills. Thanks to its global reach and its coverage across multiple industries, it encourages benchmarking, sharing of best practices, and nurturing of strong professional connections. I can only encourage in-house lawyers to join and be active in such professional associations. It has personally offered me a lot over the years.

How is legal regulation in the life science market today in Switzerland, and what are the peculiarities and differences compared to the rest of Europe and the world?

I consider the opportunities in life science in Switzerland to be truly unique. The fact that Switzerland champions and nurtures innovators has created an amazing number of very innovative companies in the pharma and life science sectors, leveraging a solid network of top-tier universities in the science sectors but also the presence of Swiss leaders in the pharma and medical devices sectors. All of that takes place in a highly international context. This creates a broad range of professional opportunities for lawyers in that space.

What do you seek in a law firm you would like to partner with?

Partnership is the keyword for me. A partner in a law firm shall, above all, be a partner to their clients. This requires having gained a robust understanding of their clients' ways of working, business, strengths, and weaknesses. That would allow the law firm to go beyond "what the law says" and come up with actionable solutions for their clients. I envision the partnership as the firm offering another perspective to their clients, including facilitating connections with other clients for benchmarking purposes, obviously

«Associations like ACC offer such opportunities not only to connect professionals but also provide unique opportunities for continuing education on both legal and soft skills»

while respecting utmost confidentiality. In other words, beyond robust legal business-minded advice, I seek in a law firm a lasting and trusted partnership.

What are the main trends you see in your sector?

We are operating in diverse sectors, in healthcare and beyond. The main trends include the demand for safe and easy-to-use instruments in dental and surgery procedures, secured injections in the drug delivery space, but also increased customization features in the consumer and industrial space. The underlying trend is also the seamless and secured global sourcing for our clients, and the use of environmentally minded products. The need for a trusted relationship is growing further, as we become increasingly involved in the upstream determination and design of our clients' products.

Do you foresee any significant changes in the sector and in the role of legal counsel over the next five years?

Artificial intelligence will substantially accelerate and ease the access to relevant aggregated data, making research for legal background, case law, and applicable rules easier. This will drive a power shift to lawyers that are data agile and understand how to best leverage technology but also rely on multiple sources as well as on their own judgment and knowledge. This may also challenge each of us to become even more relevant in our advice as data becomes a more universal commodity. ■



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KATHARINA LASOTA HELLER'S

The advocate of cryptocurrencies

A combination of hard work, integrity, and the courage to take bold steps. Katharina Lasota Heller's journey from Poland to Switzerland, leading legal innovation with LEXcellence

by claudia la via

In a highly competitive and, in many ways, male-dominated market, advancing one's career and achieving personal goals is almost never simple. It is not easy if you are a foreigner and do not have a strong network behind you that recognizes and sponsors your work. Yet, **Katharina Lasota Heller's** story proves otherwise. It confirms how desire and passion, but above all, competence can become a driving force. Specifically, it was this passion and competence that brought her from a small village in Poland to Switzerland, where she founded LEXcellence, a firm that today provides excellence and legal services in various fields, starting with the world of cryptocurrencies, in which Heller is an expert. "Growing up in a small town in communist Poland, I was profoundly influenced by the ideals of justice, fairness, economic development, and new business models", Heller shares reflecting on her career. She has been practicing as a lawyer in Canton Zug in Switzerland since 2009 and is also a member of the District Bar Association in Warsaw. She has many years of experience in international law firms, including DLA Piper, CMS Cameron McKenna and White & Case, as well as at an

«Our team is built on mutual trust and support, always being there for each other. Additionally, we prioritize continuous education to stay ahead in our field»



«By consistently delivering high-quality work, I earned the respect and recognition needed to lead effectively»

international company from the internet industry – Naspers – where she managed the global legal compliance programme, dealt with legal issues in many countries and jurisdictions around the world, and represented the company in the Naspers Group in front of various bodies and organisations, in particular the European Union. Lasota Heller actively promotes the interests of Central and Eastern European businesses in Switzerland, the European Union and other countries. She is also Co-Chair of the Regulatory Working

Group of Crypto Valley Association, whose goals are to define and advocate optimal regulations and policy framework for the ecosystem, identify and consolidate best practices and provide a platform for its members to promote a continuous exchange of information with experts, institutions, and authorities. “Despite the restrictions of my environment, I dreamed of an international career where I could make a significant impact. The drive to contribute to a fairer world and to stand up for the underprivileged has always been my motivation”.

How did your education shape your career path?

My education was crucial in shaping my career path. I sought out opportunities to study at prestigious and international institutions, such as Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Max-Planck-Institute in Munich, McGeorge School of Law in California, and the University of Zurich. I was also fortunate that Naspers, where I worked as an in-house lawyer, sponsored postgraduate courses in e-commerce at Harvard Business School. This provided me with a global perspective and a deep understanding of various legal systems. My studies ignited a passion for international law and the disrupted economy.



What core values and principles guide your practice at EXcellence, and how do you ensure these are upheld within your team?

At LEXCELLENCE, we are guided by core values of genuine interest in our clients' businesses, understanding their unique needs, delivering the highest quality of work, and maintaining transparent pricing. To uphold these values, I ensure our team shares my passion for working, researching, and asking questions. We employ the "two pairs of eyes" principle to maintain accuracy and quality. Our team is built on mutual trust and support, always being there for each other. Additionally, we prioritize continuous education to stay ahead in our field.

LEXcellence has a diverse range of specializations. How do you balance and integrate these different legal services to provide comprehensive solutions to your clients?

At LEXCELLENCE our diverse specializations in technology law, employment, immigration law, corporate law, and general commercial law allow us to offer holistic solutions to our clients. We manage this integration seamlessly by hands on approach, fostering a collaborative environment where our experts from various fields work closely together. This ensures that we address the majority of our clients' legal and regulatory challenges effectively. We do have a very proactive approach. Our team's commitment to continuous learning and mutual support also plays a crucial role in maintaining this balance.

Can you discuss a recent significant case or project your firm handled and what made it particularly challenging or rewarding?

One of our significant projects involved convincing FINMA that no banking or other licenses were required for a specific crypto asset exchange. This was particularly rewarding as it required detailed regulatory analysis and writing a no-action letter for NFTs project our client wanted to issue. Another challenging yet rewarding case was winning before the Tribunal Federal in a child kidnapping case, helping a father reclaim his daughter. Additionally, we successfully represented an employee dismissed without notice for not properly wearing a Covid mask, highlighting our dedication to diverse and complex legal issues.

«Switzerland is practical; if someone is making money, the country encourages them to do so here, but within the confines of the law. This ensures that cryptocurrency businesses operate under clear, consistent regulations»**What are your growth expectations for LEXcellence in the next five years, and how do you plan to achieve them amidst the evolving legal landscape?**

In the next five years, we expect to expand LEXcellence by adding five additional lawyers, including a tax specialist. We plan to promote new partners from within our existing team, ensuring continuity and a deep understanding of our firm's culture and values. Additionally, we are closely monitoring advancements in Artificial intelligence within the legal profession and intend to leverage these technologies to benefit our clients, enhancing efficiency and accuracy in our services. This strategic growth will help us adapt and thrive in the evolving legal landscape.

As a managing partner and a woman in a leadership position, what unique challenges have you faced, and how have you overcome them?

As a managing partner, being both a woman and not grown up in Switzerland posed unique challenges. Initially, I was not always taken seriously. I lacked the network. However, my unwavering belief in my mission and commitment to excellence helped me overcome these obstacles. By consistently delivering high-quality work, I earned the respect and recognition needed to lead effectively. Additionally, I am proud to share that LEXcellence has been awarded Top Law Firm in Switzerland by Statista for the second time, reflecting our dedication and success.

What advice would you give to young female lawyers aspiring to leadership roles within their firms or the company they work for?

Believe in yourself and your abilities. If you aspire to have your own firm, take the leap and do it. Keep working diligently, be smart and honest in all your endeavors. Embrace risk rather than avoiding it. Success comes from a combination of hard work, integrity, and the courage to take bold steps. Trust in your vision and persist through challenges.

Your involvement in the crypto ecosystem is notable. How do you see the relationship between cryptocurrency and traditional legal frameworks evolving in Switzerland?

Switzerland's technology-neutral approach to cryptocurrency is fantastic: "same business, same risk." I really appreciate this pragmatic attitude. Switzerland is practical; if someone is making money, the country encourages them to do so here, but within the confines of the law. This ensures that cryptocurrency businesses operate under clear, consistent regulations, fostering innovation while maintaining legal integrity. This balance will continue to strengthen the relationship between cryptocurrency and traditional legal frameworks in Switzerland.

Switzerland is known for its progressive stance on blockchain and crypto. What opportunities do you foresee for the legal sector within this rapidly growing industry?


Switzerland's progressive and technology-neutral approach to blockchain and crypto offers significant opportunities for the legal sector. As more stable companies trust in Switzerland's pragmatic regulatory environment, there is an increasing demand for legal expertise in compliance, regulatory guidance, and business structuring.

This environment fosters innovation while ensuring legal integrity, allowing lawyers to play a crucial role in advising and supporting the growth of crypto and blockchain companies within a robust legal framework.

What regulatory developments do you anticipate in the near future for blockchain and cryptocurrency in Switzerland, and how is LEXcellence preparing to address these changes?

In the near future, we anticipate significant regulatory developments in Switzerland concerning DAOs, DeFi, AML, AI, DORA, and MiCA in the EU, particularly issues related to reverse solicitation under MiCA that might affect Switzerland.

At LEXcellence, we continuously educate ourselves and publish insights on these topics.

Additionally, my involvement as co-chair of the Regulatory Working Group of the Crypto Valley Association helps us stay ahead of these changes, ensuring we provide up-to-date and comprehensive legal advice to our clients. 





The new Era of digital health

**How Switzerland's regulatory and IP frameworks
foster the growth of tech-pharma startups
in a transforming healthcare landscape**

by claudia la via

Switzerland is rapidly transforming into a global hub for tech-pharma innovation, attracting a myriad of startups and established pharmaceutical giants alike. The country's strategic location, combined with a robust regulatory framework and a tradition of excellence in both pharmaceuticals and technology, creates a fertile ground for new ventures aiming to revolutionize healthcare. As these companies navigate the intricate legal landscape, from regulatory compliance to intellectual property protection, they are reshaping the future of medicine and digital health in unprecedented ways.

THE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Swissmedic, the Swiss Agency for Therapeutic Products, plays a crucial role in regulating pharmaceuticals and medical devices, ensuring they meet stringent safety, efficacy, and quality standards. For tech-pharma startups, navigating Swissmedic's regulatory requirements is essential for market entry.

Swissmedic offers streamlined approval pathways for innovative therapies, particularly those addressing unmet medical needs. Fast-track procedures expedite the approval process, making it feasible for startups to bring products to market swiftly. The emphasis on efficiency without compromising safety is crucial for startups, which often operate on limited timelines and budgets.

Also conducting clinical trials in Switzerland requires approval from Swissmedic and local ethics committees. The Swiss Human Research Act (HRA) and the Ordinance on Clinical Trials in Human Research (ClinO) provide the regulatory framework, ensuring high standards of participant protection and data integrity. These regulations not only safeguard participants but also bolster the credibility and reliability of clinical trial outcomes.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY PROTECTION AND PATENTS

Intellectual property protection is vital for tech-pharma startups to safeguard their innovations. Switzerland's robust intellectual property regime supports and protects pharmaceutical innovation

through comprehensive patent laws.

The Swiss Federal Institute of Intellectual Property (IPI) handles patent applications, offering protection for up to 20 years. This allows startups to secure their innovations and attract investment, ensuring they can capitalize on their research and development efforts. The clarity and reliability of the patent system are significant draws for innovators in the tech-pharma sector. Strong enforcement mechanisms ensure patent holders can defend their rights against infringement, crucial for companies investing heavily in R&D. Effective enforcement reduces the risk of intellectual property theft and provides a secure environment for innovation. Switzerland's alignment with international IP standards, such as the European Patent Convention (EPC), facilitates global patent protection, beneficial for startups aiming to expand their market reach. This alignment ensures that Swiss patents are recognized and enforceable across multiple jurisdictions, providing a broader scope of protection.



MAXIMILIAN GROTH, CEO AND CO-FOUNDER OF DECENTRIO

MARKET ACCESS AND COMPETITION

Switzerland's strategic location and developed infrastructure make it attractive for both startups and established pharmaceutical companies. However, market access is governed by several legal and regulatory considerations.

To sell pharmaceutical products in Switzerland, companies must obtain marketing authorization from Swissmedic, demonstrating that products meet high safety, efficacy, and quality standards. This requirement ensures that only the safest and most effective products reach consumers, maintaining public health standards.

The Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH) regulates drug pricing and reimbursement policies, ensuring fair and justifiable prices. Startups must navigate these policies to ensure their products are competitively priced and accessible, balancing profitability with public accessibility.

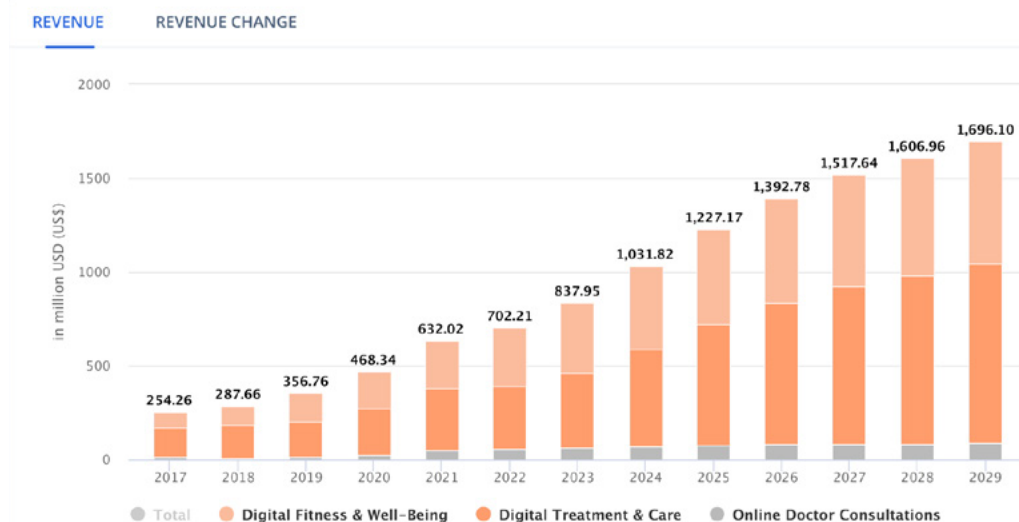
Moreover, Switzerland's competition law, enforced by the Swiss Competition Commission (COMCO), ensures fair competition. Companies must comply with these regulations to avoid anti-competitive practices and ensure a level playing field. This regulatory framework promotes innovation and prevents market monopolization, fostering a dynamic and competitive industry landscape.

THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF HEALTHCARE

Switzerland is entering a new digital era in healthcare, with initiatives like the Health2030 Strategy and Digisanté promoting digital health innovations. The electronic patient record (EPR) is a central pillar of this transformation, though its implementation has faced challenges due to the fragmented healthcare system.

Three key regions lead in digital health innovation: the Canton of Zurich, the Arc Lémanique region, and the Greater Basel Area. These regions host numerous digital health hubs, incubators, and scale-ups, positioning Switzerland as a prime market for healthcare startups.

An interesting example is Decentriq, a notable startup specializing in secure data collaboration using confidential computing technology. This innovation facilitates research and development while preserving patient privacy. Another prominent player is heyPatient, which offers a digital companion app designed to simplify healthcare interactions. The app improves outcomes and reduces costs through streamlined processes. Soignez-moi provides a digital solution for remote medical consultations, enhancing accessibility and reducing the burden on emergency departments.



Notes: Data was converted from local currencies using average exchange rates of the respective year.

Most recent update: Jun 2024

Source: Statista Market Insights

A MIX OF CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Tech-pharma startups face high compliance costs, complex regulatory requirements, and the need for robust intellectual property protection. These challenges necessitate significant legal and financial resources, which can be a barrier for smaller companies.

Despite these challenges, Switzerland offers numerous opportunities for tech-pharma startups. Government grants, tax incentives, and a supportive legal framework create an environment conducive to innovation. Collaborations with big pharma companies provide startups with resources and market access to scale their innovations.

Switzerland's tech-pharma sector is poised for significant growth, supported by a favorable legal and regulatory environment. As digital health continues to evolve, the integration of tech-pharma startups into this ecosystem will be crucial in driving forward the next wave of medical innovation. 



COLLABORATIONS WITH BIG PHARMA COMPANIES PROVIDE STARTUPS WITH RESOURCES AND MARKET ACCESS TO SCALE THEIR INNOVATIONS. (PICTURE FROM NOVARTIS REPORT)



NOVARTIS HEADQUARTERS IN BASEL



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A diverse legal perspective

Why professionals from Eastern Europe, France, Italy, Germany, and other countries have made Switzerland their professional home

Switzerland, known for its picturesque landscapes and high quality of life, has also emerged as a significant hub for the legal profession. A particularly notable aspect of the Swiss legal market is the substantial presence of foreign lawyers. Professionals from Eastern Europe, France, Italy, Germany, and other countries have made Switzerland their professional home, reflecting the country's multilingual, multicultural nature and its strategic position in Europe.

The Swiss legal system operates under a civil law tradition, characterized by comprehensive codes and statutes, distinct from the common law systems found in countries like the United States and the United Kingdom. This robust legal framework, combined with Switzerland's political stability and economic strength, makes the country an attractive destination for legal professionals from around the world.

THE STRENGTH OF A MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

Foreign lawyers are drawn to Switzerland for several reasons. The country's official languages - German, French, Italian, and Romansh - create a multilingual environment that appeals to lawyers from various linguistic backgrounds. This diversity enables them to serve clients in multiple languages, enhancing their professional opportunities. Switzerland's central location in Europe serves as a gateway to the European union while maintaining political neutrality, making it an appealing base for those interested in international and cross-border legal work.

Economic opportunities in Switzerland are abundant, particularly in fields such as banking, finance, arbitration, and international trade. The presence of numerous multinational corporations, financial institutions, and international organizations generates a high demand for legal services, creating ample opportunities for foreign lawyers. Moreover, the high standard of living, excellent healthcare, and strong education system in Switzerland make it an attractive destination for professionals and their families.

«I came to Switzerland by chance after my doctorate in Germany because of a job offer from the Swiss IPI in Berne. In 2007, I was headhunted by MLL, as there weren't that many IP lawyers with a German or rather Eu background in Switzerland at the time, and I am now happy to co-head our internationally established IP department»

Peter Schramm



PETER SCHRAMM

«Switzerland offers a unique blend of professional challenges and personal benefits. The international nature of the legal work here, coupled with the opportunity to engage with global clients and complex cross-border issues, makes it an incredibly stimulating place to practice law»

María Ferrando Ortolá



MARÍA FERRANDO ORTOLÁ

Many foreign lawyers work in international law firms or local firms, with international clients, bringing diverse legal perspectives and expertise to the Swiss legal market. Major Swiss law firms like Lenz & Staehelin and Bär & Karrer and MLL Legal often employ foreign lawyers to support their international practices. These firms have established foreign desks to cater to their international clientele, integrating foreign legal professionals into their teams and fostering a collaborative and diverse working environment.

Peter Schramm, a German lawyer and partner at MML Legal, shares his experience: "I came to Switzerland by chance after my doctorate in Germany because of a job offer from the Swiss IPI in Berne. In 2007, I was headhunted by MLL, which was a brave move as there weren't that many IP lawyers with a German or rather Eu background in Switzerland at the time. I have stayed with MLL ever since, which shows that I am very happy here, and now co-head of our top-tier IP department. What characterizes the work in the MLL IP team is our international orientation and cross-border advice. In addition, our clients and cases are comparable to those in large international law firms. However, the teams in our "little" - but economically big - Switzerland are naturally smaller, which is why you take on responsibility right from the start, even as a young lawyer, and have client contact with global corporations and successful medium-sized companies from all over the world".


Switzerland also stands out as a global hub for arbitration, attracting legal professionals specializing in international disputes. Entities like the Swiss Chambers' Arbitration Institution play a significant role in this sector, drawing lawyers from around the world to engage in high-profile arbitration cases.

María Ferrando Ortolá, lawyer, journalist and partner at Anaford, a law firm that was founded in Switzerland interviewed by *LegalCommunity.ch*, highlighted another facet of the Swiss legal environment: "Switzerland offers a unique blend of professional challenges and personal benefits. The international nature of the legal work here, coupled with the opportunity to engage with

global clients and complex cross-border issues, makes it an incredibly stimulating place to practice law”.

The integration of foreign lawyers into the Swiss legal market is facilitated by the Swiss Bar Association and regional bar associations, which help foreign professionals navigate the complexities of the Swiss legal system. Despite the attractive opportunities, the process of becoming a lawyer in Switzerland as a foreigner is complex. Foreign lawyers must be proficient in one of Switzerland's official languages and pass the Swiss bar exam. Additionally, non-Eu or EFTA nationals often need to obtain a master's degree in law from a Swiss university and fulfill other

prerequisites for admission to the bar. An interesting aspect is the simplified process for UK lawyers, who do not need to requalify to practice in Switzerland under certain conditions. This exception reflects the strong professional ties and mutual recognition between the Swiss and UK legal systems.

The presence of foreign lawyers enriches the Swiss legal community, bringing diverse perspectives and expertise that enhance the country's status as a global legal hub. As Switzerland continues to thrive, the impact of its diverse legal community will undoubtedly grow, cementing its position as an attractive destination for legal professionals worldwide. 





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A “sustainable” revolution

Exploring the first year of mandatory ESG reporting,
the role of law firms, and the push for a global framework
in Switzerland

Environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors have become critical components of corporate accountability and transparency. In 2022, Switzerland introduced mandatory non-financial reporting requirements for companies, following the lead of its neighboring EU countries but with a notable delay. With the transitional period concluding, 2024 marks a significant milestone as it is the first year Swiss companies will report on ESG matters concerning the financial year 2023. MAG decided to delve into the legal challenges companies face, with insights from leading law firms, in order to explore the active role of the legal sector in ESG engagement, the push for a global ESG legal framework, and the current state of ESG in Switzerland.

CORPORATE TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The 2022 regulation came into effect later than in many EU countries, which had already established similar requirements. The Swiss regulation aims to enhance corporate transparency and accountability, ensuring that companies disclose their impacts on the environment, society, and governance structures. The transitional period provided companies with a year to adapt to these new requirements. As mentioned, by 2024, companies are expected to report on their ESG performance for the financial year 2023. Key

regulatory requirements include detailed disclosures on environmental impacts, social responsibility initiatives, and governance practices. Companies must ensure the accuracy and completeness of their reports to meet regulatory standards and avoid potential legal repercussions.

Compliance with ESG reporting requirements presents numerous challenges for Swiss companies. One of the primary difficulties is the complexity of data collection and reporting. Companies must gather comprehensive data on their environmental, social, and governance impacts, which can be resource-intensive and time-consuming. Ensuring the accuracy of this data is crucial, as inaccuracies can lead to legal risks and damage to the company's reputation. Another significant challenge is meeting stakeholder expectations.

Investors, customers, and regulators increasingly demand transparency and accountability in ESG matters. Companies must balance these expectations with the practicalities of reporting, often requiring significant adjustments to their internal processes and systems.

That's why today many Swiss firms have recently launched their ESG desks. For example SW Legal has a dedicated ESG and Governance desk, through which it provides valuable insights into these challenges. According to SW Legal, companies must adopt a proactive approach to ESG compliance, integrating ESG considerations into their overall business strategy. This includes setting clear ESG goals, establishing robust data collection mechanisms, and regularly reviewing and updating



ESG policies. Isabelle Romy, instead, an environmental lawyer at Kellerhals Carrard, emphasizes the importance of environmental law compliance in ESG reporting. She highlights that companies must not only report on their environmental impacts but also demonstrate their commitment to mitigating negative effects and promoting sustainability. Failure to do so can result in legal liabilities and enforcement actions by regulatory authorities.

Legal firms play a pivotal role in ESG engagement, providing essential support and guidance to companies navigating the complex landscape of ESG compliance. The demand for a comprehensive global ESG framework has led to increased involvement of legal counsel in constructing such frameworks and guiding companies beyond mere reporting requirements. SW Legal, for instance, offers a range of services tailored to ESG and governance. These services include advising on regulatory compliance, assisting with ESG strategy development, and conducting ESG audits. By leveraging their expertise, legal firms help companies identify potential risks, develop effective mitigation strategies, and ensure compliance with evolving ESG regulations.

THE ROLE OF ACC AND LEGAL COUNSELS

The Association of Corporate Counsel (ACC) has been a driving force behind the

push for a global ESG legal framework. The ACC advocates for a unified approach to ESG compliance, emphasizing the need for consistency and coherence in ESG regulations across different jurisdictions. Legal counsel play a crucial role in this initiative, collaborating with regulatory bodies, industry groups, and companies to develop and implement global ESG standards. This involves drafting guidelines, facilitating stakeholder consultations, and providing expert legal opinions on emerging ESG issues. Current initiatives include the development of sector-specific ESG guidelines and the establishment of best practices for ESG reporting and compliance. Legal experts highlight the challenges of creating a global framework, such as reconciling differing regulatory requirements and addressing the unique ESG risks faced by different industries.

Switzerland's ESG landscape has evolved significantly since the introduction of mandatory reporting requirements. Companies are increasingly recognizing the importance of ESG factors in their operations and strategies. Many Swiss companies have already taken proactive steps to enhance their ESG performance, including setting ambitious sustainability goals and implementing comprehensive reporting frameworks. Success stories, such as those of companies that have effectively integrated ESG into their business models,

demonstrate the positive impact of ESG engagement. These companies have not only improved their environmental and social performance but also gained competitive advantages, such as increased investor confidence and enhanced brand reputation. However, challenges remain. Companies must continue to adapt to evolving regulations and stakeholder expectations. Ongoing support from legal firms and a strong commitment to ESG principles will be essential for companies to navigate these challenges and achieve long-term sustainability. 





The legal profession's global impact

The IBA's groundbreaking study shows how the law ecosystem can have a 1.6 trillion dollars influence on economics, society and environment as a whole

Legal professionals' work is core to the preservation and enhancement of peace, justice, and institutional strength. The International Bar Association (IBA) recently published a comprehensive study examining the socio-economic impact of the legal profession worldwide. The legal profession plays a crucial role in the socio-economic fabric, influencing everything from GDP to social justice and environmental sustainability.

ECONOMIC IMPACT IN DETAILS

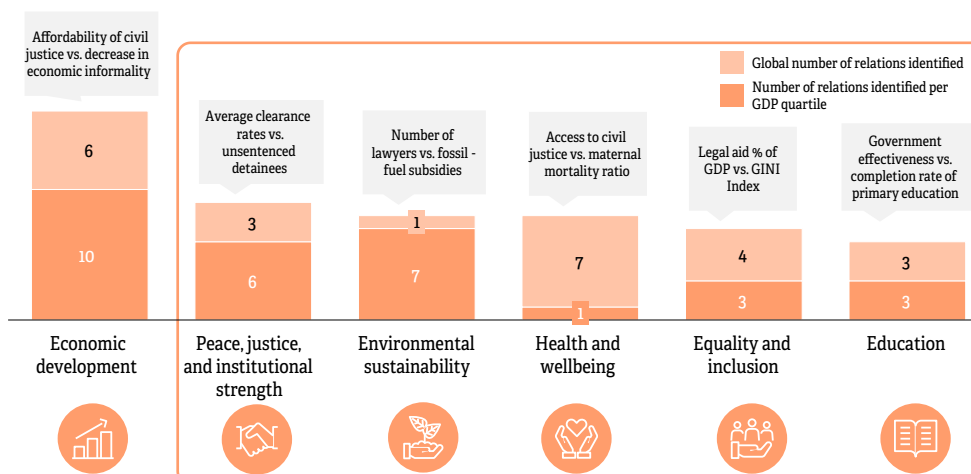
According to the IBA study, the legal profession contributes a staggering \$1.6 trillion annually to the global economy, accounting for 1.7% of global GDP. This impact extends to employment, with over 20 million legal professionals and an additional 14 million in related sectors. The legal profession's economic contribution is substantial, with \$1.6 trillion annually representing 1.7% of global Gdp. This economic impact is not only direct but also includes significant indirect contributions through related sectors and services. Legal professionals support a wide range of industries, ensuring smooth operations and legal compliance, which in turn drives economic growth. The IBA president Almudena Arpón de Mendiivil said the report's findings demonstrate the "true contribution" of the legal profession in sustaining the rule of law. "It shows how effective legal systems, supported by robust and independent legal professionals, can limit the overreach of governments, whilst also supporting

economic growth, promoting innovation and education, and combating inequality," she said.

SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

The legal profession is pivotal in promoting social justice, gender equity, and minority protection. Globally, legal professionals have been instrumental in advancing these causes. For instance, legal initiatives have led to significant advancements in gender equality and the protection of minority rights, reflecting the profession's broader social contributions. The work of legal professionals creates indirect social impact across many different areas. Legal professionals advocate for regulations that streamline judicial processes to make them more accessible to the population, support and represent the victims of human rights abuses, and create tools to protect those that report them. Their work also has an impact on health, education, and environmental sustainability thanks to their case representation and advocacy in relevant issues. The legal professionals' work as shapers and defenders of the Rule of Law – as part of the broader legal community - creates indirect economic impact through the creation of an environment of trust and certainty that is conducive to establishing business agreements, conducting transactions, and investing in innovation. It also helps formalize economic activities of individuals, providing reassurance that their rights and obligations will be respected.

Out of 54 relations identified, 38 relate to areas of social impact



Source: IBA report

«The report shows how effective legal systems, supported by robust and independent legal professionals, can limit the overreach of governments, whilst also supporting economic growth, promoting innovation and education, and combating inequality»

Almudena Arpón de Mendivil,
IBA president

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The legal profession also plays a significant role in promoting environmental sustainability. Lawyers contribute to drafting and implementing environmental policies, advising on international climate agreements, and representing parties in environmental litigation. The IBA study highlights that countries with strong rule of law frameworks tend to have better environmental outcomes. For example, better regulatory quality and legal frameworks are associated with lower pollution levels and increased adoption of renewable energy sources.

One notable case is the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) ruling that Switzerland failed to comply with its duties under the Convention on Human Rights concerning climate change. This decision underscores the legal profession's role in holding governments accountable for their environmental responsibilities and promoting climate justice.

This shows how the work of legal professionals is closely linked to the environmental sustainability agenda through their contributions

to policy making, representation of parties in environmentally related cases, advocacy efforts, or community work in the aftermath of disasters, as described in the cases above. However, this is the area where both legal professionals and the general public perceive a lower impact of the legal profession. This indicates an opportunity for actions addressed at improving awareness, intensifying the legal profession advocacy efforts in environmental matters, and playing a more relevant role in this area to enhance the profession's contribution to it.

ADVANCING HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

Legal professionals act as an enabler behind the evolution of healthcare policies and systems. For example, they directly contribute to the drafting of healthcare policies and legislation or help advance the development and enforcement of healthcare policies by representing impacted organizations or individuals in court. Many legal teams have helped structure the Food and Drug Administration and European Medicines Agency processes for drug approval, supporting the development of more effective and safer treatments. Complementary to this support, a significant number of legal professionals work alongside pharmaceutical and MedTech companies supporting the legal procedures related to the discovery and approval of novel therapies and diagnostics.

+13 YEARS IN LIFE EXPECTANCY

could be aided by greater
adherence to the **Rule of Law**

+1.4 BILLION PEOPLE WITH HEALTH COVERAGE

could be enabled by an
increase **regulatory quality**

RULE OF LAW AND INNOVATION

The IBA study correlates strong legal systems with better socio-economic outcomes. Countries with robust legal frameworks enjoy higher life expectancy, better education, and reduced inequality. Moreover, these countries attract more innovation and investment. A strong legal system supports substantial research and development activities, making these nations hubs for innovation.


Despite the strengths, the legal profession faces global threats, including autocratic movements and anti-globalization sentiments. These threats could undermine the Rule of Law, essential for economic and social stability. Legal professionals worldwide must remain vigilant to preserve high legal standards and continue to protect the rule of law against such challenges. "Our profession should take more action to educate the public about the rule of law, increasing awareness of its importance and its significant benefits, as well as denouncing examples of lawlessness", IBA's president concludes.

«Our profession should take more action to educate the public about the rule of law, increasing awareness of its importance and its significant benefits, as well as denouncing examples of lawlessness»

**Almudena Arpón de Mendiivil,
IBA president**

FUTURE OUTLOOK

Looking ahead, the legal profession is expected to emphasize education, legal literacy, and ethical standards. These developments are likely to further enhance the profession's socio-economic contributions globally. The future holds potential for even greater integration of legal services into the fabric of society, driving progress and stability. The IBA study underscores

the critical role of the legal profession in global and national contexts. Legal professionals worldwide exemplify the benefits of strong legal systems, with significant contributions to both the economy and social justice. As the legal profession evolves, its impact on the global socio-economic landscape is poised to grow, ensuring continued prosperity and stability. 

Global economic contribution of legal services % employment impact

Economic contribution (\$)	\$1.6 trillion
Percentage of Global GDP (%)	1.7%
Direct employment (millions)	20
Indirect employment (millions)	14

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LC PUBLISHING GROUP

5th EDITION

2 - 4 OCTOBER 2024

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#InhousecommunityDays

PROGRAM*

WEDNESDAY 2 OCTOBER
OPENING COCKTAIL

- 18:30 Check-In
- 19:00 **DIALOGUE**
Federico Bonaiuto, General Counsel, *Leonardo*
Francesco Gianni, Founding Partner, *Gianni & Origoni*
- 19:30 🍹 Cocktail & Music on the Terrace**

GIANNI & ORIGONI
Via delle Quattro Fontane, 20, Rome



** Event dedicated to in-house counsel lawyers upon registration. For info and registration helene.thiery@lcpublishinggroup.com

THURSDAY 3 OCTOBER

- 09:00 ☕ Check-In & Welcome Coffee
- 09:30 **GREETINGS**
- 09:40 **WELCOME MESSAGES**
- 10:00 **ROUNDTABLE I "TO INTERNALISE OR TO OUTSOURCE? THE CORE PRACTICES OF LEGAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENTS"**
- 11:15 ☕ Coffee Break
- 11:45 **ROUNDTABLE II "ACROSS JURISDICTIONS: HOW TO MANAGE AN INTERNATIONAL LEGAL TEAM"**
- 13:00 Q&A
- 13:15 🍴 Light Lunch
- 14:15 **ROUNDTABLE III "LEGAL DEPARTMENT BUDGET: HOW TO CONVINCE THE MANAGEMENT TO GIVE YOU MONEY"**
- 15:45 ☕ Coffee Break
- 16:15 **ROUNDTABLE IV "CRISIS MANAGEMENT: CHALLENGES OF CYBER INCIDENTS"**
- 17:45 Q&A
- 18:00 Closing Remarks

- 18:15 GC Cocktail



FIVERS 

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- 20:15 Dinner Party with DJ Set and Karaoke** - **VENUE TBD**



** Event dedicated to in-house counsel lawyers upon registration. For info and registration helene.thiery@lcpublishinggroup.com

FRIDAY 4 OCTOBER

- 09:00 ☕ Check-In & Welcome Coffee
- 09:30 **GREETINGS**
- 09:35 **ROUNDTABLE V "TECHNOLOGY FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION: IMPROVING TIMELINE AND EFFICIENCY"**
- 11:00 ☕ Coffee Break
- 11:30 **ROUNDTABLE VI "IN-HOUSE LEGAL REMUNERATIONS: THE NEW TRENDS OUT THERE"**
- 12:50 Q&A
- 13:00 🍴 Light Lunch

FOREIGN
PERSPECTIVES

ALICIA MUÑOZ LOMBARDÍA

The challenge of leadership: Santander's legal strategy for the future

The director of governance, regulation and legal advice for commercial and private banking at Banco Santander, Alicia Muñoz Lombardía, details the challenges they have faced, the criteria for selecting the law firms they work with and their vision of the future of the legal world

by julia gil

Banco Santander has been crowned as the European Union bank with the highest market capitalization, surpassing BNP Paribas. The entity chaired by Ana Botín has a market value, slightly above €70 billion, ahead of its French rival's €67.4 billion. But what is the legal department of Europe's number one bank like? Iberian Lawyer talks to **Alicia Muñoz Lombardía**, Director of Governance, Regulation and Legal Advisory for Commercial and Private Banking at Banco Santander, to get an insider's view.

What is the legal department of the largest bank by market capitalization in the European Union like?

We are a large group present in more than ten geographies and precisely this unique combination of local and global scale allows us to be among the most profitable banks in our markets. Each geography has its own legal team and the coordination that exists at the group level allows us to share best practices and collaborate in transnational operations. Specifically, in Santander Spain, the General Secretariat is divided into four areas: Governance, Regulation and Legal Advisory for

Commercial and Private Banking; Wholesale Banking, Recoveries, Insurance and Privacy; Litigation and Tax Advisory. We have a very experienced, business oriented and very diverse team, since not only lawyers work here, but also professionals from other fields such as technologists, sociologists or economists are needed to face the important challenges we face and a changing world.

How has this department grown in recent years, in terms of new hires?

After the merger with Banco Popular (ndr: Banco Santander acquired Banco Popular in 2017) a significant number of professionals joined the legal department and we have also been adapting the size of the department to the emerging needs, seeking a balance between internal advice and support from external firms to provide the best service to our clients.

What is the biggest challenge you have faced in recent years?

In the last four years, there have been a series of events that have tested the resilience of all organizations. During the pandemic, we stood by our clients with ICO-guaranteed financing



ALICIA MUÑOZ LOMBARDÍA

«More and better legal advice will be demanded»

«We have already gone beyond those times when everything was urgent, and matters were closed in the early hours of the morning as a rule»

programs, moratoriums and other measures that, with the appropriate legal support, allowed the flow of credit for business continuity and even investment financing. The invasion of Ukraine by Russia led to the application of sanctions and the development of social initiatives, such as the reception of Ukrainian refugees in the Financial City, for whom we deployed an intense public-private partnership. In the ESG field, financial institutions play an important role in channelling funds aimed at the transition to a low-carbon economy and, for this reason, Santander is developing innovative financial and non-financial solutions for individuals and companies, in which legal advice is key. Finally, the regulatory tsunami that has occurred in recent years adds greater complexity to our work and, now more than ever, continuous training is essential. And allow me, legal professionals must not only know the regulatory horizon, but also the geopolitical and economic environment, trends and emerging risks.

What are the skills you value most in in-house counsel recruitment processes?

In-house lawyers must have solid legal knowledge and a clear business orientation, as well as the ability to work in a team and,

above all, be very versatile. We cover all legal disciplines and seek a balance between specialization and generalist practice. The banking lawyer, moreover, operates in a highly regulated sector where not only the rules of law apply but also soft law, guidelines and recommendations that shape the supervisory expectations. And, not least, we look for professionals aligned with the bank's culture and values, and we promote an inclusive and diverse environment where everyone can develop their potential, recognizing achievements and using the lessons learned from failures to improve.



ALICIA MUÑOZ LOMBARDÍA

What criteria do you follow and what are the characteristics you value most when selecting the law firms you work with? What advice would you give to law firms that want to work with a bank as large as Santander?

Depending on the matter, we work with larger firms for mass litigation or specialized firms in the case of singular litigation. We especially value the availability of the partners, proximity, knowledge of the bank and the particularities of our business. Speed of response is important, with appropriate prioritization. Fortunately, we have already gone beyond those times when everything was urgent, and matters were closed in the early hours of the morning as a rule. In short, having a highly qualified team at all levels, with response times appropriate to the urgency and relevance of the matter and fees based on the complexity of the advice provided, are the critical points.

What services do you outsource most to law firms?

Fundamentally, we outsource litigation and singular operations where the counterparty has the support of an external law firm.

Is Santander's legal department using new technological tools and AI? And if so, in what aspects is it helping them?

In the General Secretariat of Santander Spain, we are immersed in an ambitious digital transformation project aimed at simplifying, optimizing and automating processes to reduce operational, repetitive and manual tasks, also reducing operational risk. Digitalization will free up time that can be devoted to more valuable functions. I would like to remind you that artificial intelligence is not a one-size-fits-all solution and requires a significant investment of resources. Therefore, it is necessary to identify use cases that involve a significant volume of data and documentation, that have an impact on the business and that allow standardization. Testing use cases and developing prompting, i.e. the ability to ask intelligent and creative questions, are critical in the new data economy. At Santander Spain's Legal Department, we are employing new technological tools for the mass management of trades and communications, lawsuits, for bastanteos and probate. Basically, efficiency will come from the use of AI in data

«We must be leaders, make proposals and explore opportunities»

mining and in the new process of validation and uploading of legal reports. Artificial Intelligence is not going to replace the lawyers, but will accompany them in their tasks, facilitating their execution.

What is your vision of the future of the legal world and professional services?

In my opinion, the legal profession has a great future, since in an uncertain and dystopian world with increasing legal risks, more and better legal advice will be demanded. As I said before, it is necessary to combine the hyper-specialization and global vision that our profession demands and the ability to relate concepts to evaluate all the legal implications of the issues raised. All this, with empathy, critical and analytical thinking, anticipating the needs that may arise in our respective fields. I am sure that new technologies will reshape the way in-house departments and law firms work and we must be open to reformulate consolidated approaches and embrace change, always in strict compliance with the law and the legal system. People management is another challenge, and we must be able to attract and retain talent; the professional practice is a very appropriate means for young lawyers to feel that they generate positive social impact and develop their purpose of promoting a fairer and more equitable society. And finally, a call to action: we must be leaders, make proposals and explore opportunities to contribute to the progress and growth of our clients. ■



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Highlights from the Legalcommunity Week 2024

From AI ethics to tax reforms: an overview
of this year's discussions held in Milan

From June 10 to 16, Milan hosted the eighth edition of the legalcommunity Week, an annual event that has become a cornerstone for the Italian and international legal community. With 32 events, 5500 attendees, 60 partners and supporters, and 200 expert speakers, this year's edition marked a significant milestone, showcasing the vibrancy and dynamism of the legal profession.

DAY I - JUNE 10

The opening day at the Principe di Savoia Hotel was dedicated to the theme of artificial intelligence with a conference titled "The Human Side of AI." After the greetings of LC Publishing Group CEO **Aldo Scaringella**, and welcome messages from **Emmanuel Conte**, Councillor for Budget and Real Estate of the Municipality of Milan, and **Antonino La Lumia**, President of the Milan Bar Association, the initial discussion focused on the "ethical shield" that legal affairs departments must prepare to protect themselves from AI-related risks. Speakers included **Valentina Ranno**, General Counsel and Head of Legal & Compliance at L'Oréal; **Marco Ditta**, Group Head Data & Artificial Intelligence Office at Intesa Sanpaolo; and **Gordon Abeiku Mensah**, Advisory Board Member of the Berkeley Center of Comparative Equality & Anti-discrimination Law and Partner at Diversitee. Moderating was **Andrea Lensi Orlandi**, New Law Partner at PwC TLS.



GC AND AI: AN ETHICAL SHIELD

A face-to-face discussion followed between **Riccardo Ceccarelli**, CEO and Founder of Mental Economy, and **Giovanni Stefanin**, Co-Managing Partner of PwC TLS. After a coffee break, a three-sided discussion on insurance, marketing, and legal sectors ensued. Representing them were **Diana Allegretti**, General Counsel of Zurich Italia; **Lucio Lamberti**, Full Professor of Marketing Analytics at

Politecnico di Milano; and **Umberto Baldi**, General Counsel of Snam. Moderating was **Paola Furiosi**, Head of IP at PwC TLS.



THREE APPROACHES TO AI ETHICS: INSURANCE, MARKETING AND LEGAL

The last segment of the opening conference, dedicated to the AI Act, was moderated by **Chiara Giannella**, Head of Data Practice at PwC TLS, and featured **Marco Boldini**, Global Head of Governmental Affairs and Italian CEO of Terrapay; **Emiliano Berti**, Head of MN Legal & Compliance at Nokia Europe and Chairman of the Board of Nokia Italy; and **Giusella Finocchiaro**, Lawyer and Professor of Internet Law at the University of Bologna. Closing remarks were given by **Nicola Di Molfetta**, Editor-in-Chief of *Legalcommunity* and *MAG*, and **Giovanni Stefanin**, Co-Managing Partner of PwC TLS.



AI ACT BETWEEN RESPONSIBILITY AND ETHICS

At 2 p.m., a panel titled "Soft Skills for Tomorrow's Business Lawyers" was introduced by **Elena Carpani**, partner of EY Slt and then moderated by **Ilaria Iaquina**, Editor-in-Chief of *Iberian Lawyer* and *The Latin American Lawyer*. Participants included **Dahir Ali**, Vice President and General Counsel for Asia Pacific at CNH Industrial; **Christian Busca**, Partner at EY SLT; **Giuseppe Catalano**, Board Secretary and Head of Corporate

Affairs at Assicurazioni Generali and President of AIGI; **Isabel Fernandes**, Group Legal Counsel at Grupo Visabeira; **Claudia Marmolejo**, Senior Managing Director, Institutional and Asset Owners Solution at IQ-EQ; **Carlos Menor**, Legal Director and Compliance Officer at Grupo Renault Iberia; and **Javier Ramirez**, VP Legal & Associate General Counsel Regions Litigation at HP and Head of Advocacy at ACC Europe.



ESSENTIAL SOFT SKILLS FOR FUTURE BUSINESS LAWYERS

Two panels, at 4 p.m., rounded out the first day's program at the Principe di Savoia. **Amanda Wood** and **Gabriel Monzon Cortarelli**, Attorneys with the U.S. firm Becker & Poliakoff, introduced a discussion focused on "Investment Opportunities in the United States by European Companies in the Year Marked by November's Presidential Election." In addition to Wood and Cortarelli, the panel discussion included **Barbara Benzoni**, Head of Legal International Mid-Downstream and Chemicals Activities at Eni, and **Umberto Simonelli**, Chief Legal & Corporate Affairs Officer and Secretary of the Board of Directors at Brembo. Moderating was **Giuseppe Salemm**, journalist of *Legalcommunity*.



USA ELECTION OUTLOOK AND WHY NOW IS THE BEST TIME TO EXPAND YOUR USA PRESENCE

Meanwhile, Inhousecommunity Manager **Michela Cannovale** moderated a panel discussion titled "Improving Companies' Allocation of Legal Costs Using a Data-Driven Approach." Participants included **Stefano Brogelli**, Legal, Regulatory and Compliance Director at Axpo Italia; **Gianluca Canessa**, Sales Manager at Wolters Kluwer; **Francesco Leggiadro**, Director of Legal, Corporate Affairs and Compliance at Ferservizi; **Concetta Leone**, Head of Legal at Cifa; **Jessica Meloni**, Head of Legal Italy and Ocean Europe at Ceva Logistics; and **Giuseppe Piscitelli**, Director of Legal and Corporate Affairs at Tirreno Power.



A DATA DRIVEN APPROACH FOR THE LEGAL SPEND ALLOCATION FOR LITIGATION AND CONSULTING SERVICES

The day ended with the General Counsel Cocktail at Gatti Pavesi Bianchi Ludovici, where the General Counsel Champions List 2023 was unveiled, and the Rooftop Party at CastaldiPartners.

DAY 2 - JUNE 11

The second day began with Breakfast on Finance at Gianni & Origoni, featuring Founding Partner **Francesco Gianni** and Nextalia SGR's CEO **Francesco Canzonieri**, moderated by Financecommunity Journalist **Eleonora Fraschini**. The focus then returned to the Principe di Savoia Hotel for a conference titled "The 2024 Tax Reform: Impacts on Corporate Groups and Wealth Managers," introduced by speeches from



BREAKFAST ON FINANCE

Guglielmo Maisto, Senior Partner of Maisto and Associates, and **Marco Osnato**, Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Chamber of Deputies.

The first session, "Corporate World and Cooperative Tax Compliance," featured **Alessandro Bucchieri**, Head of Tax Affairs of Enel Group Italy, and **Francesco Nardacchione**, Tax Director of Bolton Group. A panel discussion followed, moderated by **Nicola Di Molfetta**, with contributions from **Luana Foffo Ciucci**, Tax Group Director of Procter & Gamble; **Nicoletta Savini**, Group Head of Tax at TIM; **Gian Luca Tagliavini**, Tax Vice President of Barilla Group; and **Marco Valdonio**, Partner at Maisto and Associates.



After a coffee break, the second session, "Wealth Management and Tax Planning," was introduced by **Antonino La Lumia**, President of the Milan Bar Association. Dialogues included **Stefania Pedroni**, Head of Wealth Planning at Intesa Sanpaolo Private Banking, and **Manuela Soncini**, Head of Wealth Advisory at Unicredit Wealth Management and Private Banking; as well as **Francesco Centonze**, Professor of Criminal Law at Cattolica University and Founder of Centonze Associates, and **Giuseppe Melis**, Professor of Tax Law at Luiss Guido Carli University, moderated by **Marco Cerrato**, Partner at Maisto and Associates.



At 11 a.m., a dialogue on "Negotiation Strategies" moderated by **Mercedes Galan** journalist of *Iberian Lawyer*, featuring **Fatima Correia da Silva**, Chief Compliance Officer, General Counsel and DPO of Critical Techworks; **Eric Eck**, Principal & Founder of Guirbaden; **Christof Höfner**, Senior Legal Counsel of Zurich Insurance Company; and **John Rigau**, Vice President and General Counsel of PepsiCo West Europe.



The afternoon featured five discussion panels. **Eleonora Fraschini** moderated a private equity panel titled "The State of the Private Equity Industry in Italy," introduced by **Isabel Fernandes**, Group Legal Counsel of Grupo Visabeira and with **Ignazio Castiglioni**, Co-Founder and CEO of Hat SGR; **Matteo Ciria**, Partner & Managing Director of IGI Private Equity; **Massimo Di Terlizzi**, Co-Managing Partner of Pirola Pennuto Zei & Associati; **Ludovico Mantovani**, Founding Partner of Pirola Corporate Finance; and **Walter Ricciotti**, CEO and Co-Founder of Quadriovio Group.



A panel on cybercrime titled "Cybercrime: Trends and Responses" introduced by **Carlo Altomonte** of SDA Bocconi featured **Andrea Puccio**, Founding Partner of Puccio Penalisti Associati; **Andressa Back**, Legal and Corporate Affairs Director Italy at Metinvest Group; **Matteo Francesco Feraboli**, Group Senior Director Cybersecurity at Intesa



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Sanpaolo; **Eugenio Fusco**, Prosecutor at the Milan Public Prosecutor's Office; **Marzia Francisci**, General Counsel at the American Chamber of Commerce in Italy; **Luis Graca Rodrigues**, Regional Head of Legal Department Europe at Minsait (Indra); **Luca Nilo Livrieri**, Director Sales Engineering Southern Europe at CrowdStrike; and **Alessandro Piva**, Director of the Cybersecurity & Data Protection Observatory at the Politecnico di Milano.



CYBERCRIME: BUSINESS AND GEOPOLITICAL CHALLENGES REGISTER HERE EVENT

At 4 p.m., AI predictions were discussed by a panel titled "AI Trends: What to Expect in the Coming Months," including **Corrado Passera**, **Giovanna Dossena**, **Alessandro Profumo**, **Carlo Mammola**, **Ash Fontana** and **Barbara Cominelli**, moderated by **Luca Arnaboldi**, Managing Partner of Cernelutti Law Firm. Concurrently, **Marco De Bernardin** of Kroll gave a keynote speech titled "Strategies for Navigating Uncertainty."



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: WHAT TO EXPECT?

The day ended with a panel on "AI's Implications for Firms and Legal Departments," featuring **Stefania Cane**, Chief People and Legal Officer of MV Augusta; **Federico Dal Poz**, Chief Legal Officer of Amplifon Group; **Mohamed Elmogy**, General Counsel of Siemens Energy UAE; and **Marta Simoni**, Legal Counsel of Google Italy, moderated

by **Marco Berliri** of Hogan Lovells and **Lodovico Bianchi di Giulio** of BIP.



THE IMPACT OF AI WITHIN LAW FIRMS AND IN-HOUSE LEGAL DEPARTMENTS IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS

The evening featured a Women Leadership Cocktail at Baker McKenzie and a Midsummer Night's Dream Party at the Pavilion of Contemporary Art.

DAY 3 - JUNE 12

The Run The Law event saw participants engaging in a 6km non-competitive run along the Naviglio Grande. The fastest men were **Lorenzo Valota** of Castaldi Partners, **Christoph Ramler** of Unicredit, and **Emanuele Pomini** of Nardi e Roncelli. Among women, **Marina De Cesare** of Masciello Nannoni, **Silvia Comelli** of CC Legal, and **Emma Spiga** of Kryalos SGR led the race.

The morning conference at Principe di Savoia titled "Dispute Resolution in a Tech-Driven World" was introduced by AIGI General Council Member **Giovanni Cerutti**. The first session, "Innovations in Dispute Resolution," included **Alessandra Bini**, Senior Counsel and Trust & Compliance Officer Europe at IBM; **David Bloch**, Shareholder at Greenberg Traurig; **Ilario Giangrossi**, Partner at Grimaldi Alliance; **Zachary Calo**, Professor Hamad Bin Khalifa University (Qatar) and **Marcello Marinari**, Former Judge and Ombudsman. The



"SIMULATION & INTERACTIVE DEBRIEFING"

second panel, "Mediation and Arbitration: Best Practices," moderated by **Giuseppe De Palo**, included **Laura Furnaletto**, Senior Contract Negotiator at Maire; **Pietro Galizzi**, Head of Legal, Regulatory & Compliance Affairs at Eni Plenitude; **Christine Kang**, Partner at Hughes Hubbard & Reed; **Ralf Lindback**, Managing Counsel Dispute, Insurance and Trade Management at Marine Wartsila; and **Francesco Sciaudone** of Grimaldi Alliance.



PANEL DISCUSSION

At 11 a.m., a panel on "Post-M&A Complexities" was moderated by **Letizia Ceriani** and included **Silvia Baroffio**, Principal at Accuracy; **Simone Davini**, Head of Legal & Corporate Affairs at Crédit Agricole CIB Italy; **Giovanni Foti**, Partner at Accuracy; **Raffaele Legnani**, Managing Director and Head of HIG's Milan office; **Stefano Modenesi**, Partner at DLA Piper; and **Benedetta Volpi**, General Counsel at Nextalia SGR.



POST-M&A COMPLEXITIES: HOW TO SOLVE AND PREVENT THEM

In the afternoon, **Enrico Castaldi** of CastaldiPartners moderated a panel on "Fashion and Sustainability" featuring **Nicolas Burgener** of Audemars Piguet; **Fabrizio Caretta** of Dolce & Gabbana; **Luca Chiama** of Prada Group; **Anne-Manuelle Gaillet** of CastaldiPartners; **Alessia Oddone** of CastaldiPartners; **Claudia Ricchetti** of Ferragamo; and **Aur lie Souet** of Christian Louboutin.



FASHION AND SUSTAINABILITY

A concurrent panel on "New Trends in Real Estate Investments" included **Luca Di Nunzio** of AndPartners; **Matteo Minardi** of Ardian; **Roberto Schiavelli** of Dea Capital Real Estate SGR; **Igor Rizzetto** of Banca Finint; and **Davide Cattarin** of CBRE Valuation.



REAL ESTATE: NEW MARKET TRENDS AND THE INVESTMENT TOOLS TO ADDRESS THEM

At 4 p.m., two final panels of the day's program took place. The relationship between crime and AI was discussed in "AI and Crime: Challenges and Opportunities" by **Maurizio Bortolotto** of Gebbia Bortolotto Penalisti Associati; **Sara Citterio** of Trussardi; **Giorgio Martellino** of Avio; and **Claudia Ricchetti** of Ferragamo, moderated by **Michela Cannovale** of Inhousecommunity.



AI AND CRIMINAL LAW RISKS

A panel titled "Capital Market Opportunities for SMEs" was moderated by **Eleonora Frascini**, featuring **Stefano Bellavita** of Alantra Italy; **Marzio Ciani**, Senior Counsel at Legance; **Andrea Costantini**, Managing Partner and Chairman of Smart Capital; **Federico Girotto**, CEO of Masi Agricola; **Barbara Lunghi**, Head of Primary Markets Italy at Borsa Italiana; and **Diego Selva**, Head of Investment Banking at Banca Mediolanum.



IPOS AND SMEs

DAY 4 - JUNE 13

The final day of Legalcommunity Week at the Principe di Savoia included two major conferences. The first, focused on new trends in M&A, was introduced by **Federico Vermicelli** Partner of BonelliErede. featured panels moderated by **Letizia Ceriani** journalist of Financecommunity and **Giuseppe Salemmme**. The first panel, "Private

PRIVATE EQUITY FUNDS AS ALLIES OF THE ENTREPRENEUR
IN VALUE CREATION. ADD-ONS AND DELISTING

Equity and Capital Markets: Add-ons and Delisting," included **Paolo Cavaiani**, Vice President of L Catterton; **Elena Guizzetti**, Managing Associate of BonelliErede; **Michele Marocchino**, Managing Director of Lazard; **Francesca Peruzzi**, Managing Associate of BonelliErede; and **Martina Peterlini**, Junior Partner of Nextalia SGR. The second panel, "Foreign Investments by

Italian Companies," featured **Edoardo Disetti**, Legal Director and Head of M&A and Corporate Transactions at MSC Mediterranean Shipping Company; **Fabio Fazzari**, Financial Director at

ITALY BEYOND BORDERS: ACQUISITION OF FOREIGN TARGETS.
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Newlat Food; **Pietro Macchiarella**, Group M&A and Business Development at Illva Saronno Holding; and **André Vertullo Bernini**, Partner at Pinheiro Neto Advogados. The conference concluded with a dialogue titled "Strategic M&A Insights" between **Antonio Corda**, Legal Affairs, External Affairs & Corporate Communication Director of Vodafone Italia; **Isabel Fernandes**, Group Legal Counsel of Grupo Visabeira; and **Pasquale Leone**, Managing Associate of BonelliErede, introduced by **Francesco Anglani**, Partner of BonelliErede.

The second conference of the morning was titled "The Golden Age of Pharmaceutical Innovation," introduced by **Laura Orlando**, Italy Managing Partner, Joint Global Head of Intellectual Property EMEA and Co-Head of Life Sciences at Herbert Smith Freehills, and **Elena Paola Lanati**, CEO of Indicon. The first panel, "Early Stage Investments in Pharma," was moderated by **Ilaria Iaquinata** and featured **Francesco Cerruti**, General Director of Italian Tech Alliance; **Giovanni Rizzo**, Partner Biotech Fund of Indaco Venture Partners; **Augusto Santoro**, Partner and Head of the Italian Corporate Practice of Herbert Smith Freehills; and **Federica**



EARLY STAGE: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES



LATE STAGE: THE ROLE OF ITALY IN THE GLOBAL ARENA

Tadini, General Manager of G-Factor – Fondazione Golinelli. The second panel, "Corporate Governance in Pharma," featured **David Ingrassia**, Head of Group Corporate Governance at Zambon; **Fausto Massimo**, Legal, Compliance & Governance Head at Roche Italia; and **Alan Montgomery**, Partner, Co-Head Pharmaceuticals, Co-Head of India Practice at Herbert Smith Freehills, also moderated by **Ilaria Iaquinta**.

In parallel with the two morning conferences, a panel titled "Africa: New Approach Strategies, the Mattei Plan, and the Value of Finance" was held from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM. The session was introduced by **Massimo Zaurrini**, founder of Africa e Affari, and featured insightful contributions from **Eugenio Bettella**, founding partner of Bergs & More; **Diamana Diawara**, Director of Arbitration and ADR for Africa at ICC Paris; **Giuseppe Mistretta**, Director for Sub-Saharan Africa at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; **Rita Ricciardi**, founding partner of Bergs & More; and **Mahmoud Shaarawy**, Chief Legal & Compliance Officer at HSA Group.

AFRICA: NEW APPROACH STRATEGIES,
THE MATTEI PLAN AND THE VALUE OF FINANCE

In the afternoon, **Armando Simbari**, founder of Simbari Avvocati Penalisti, moderated a roundtable dedicated to governance, focusing on best practices in due diligence. The discussion included **Fabio Basile**, Professor of Criminal Law at Università degli Studi di Milano; **Adriano Peloso**, Country Counsel and Legal Director for

EMEA, Italy, Spain & Portugal at Lenovo, and Board Member of AIGI; **Ciro Santoriello**, Deputy Prosecutor at the Public Prosecutor's Office of Cuneo; **Domenico Santoro**, Judge for Preliminary Investigations at the Court of Milan; **Micaela Vescia**, Head of Corporate and Legal Affairs at Azienda Trasporti Milanese; and **Marcella Vulcano**, lawyer, president, advisor, and expert in prevention procedures.

G FOR GOVERNANCE. RULES OF GOOD PRACTICE
FOR THE DUE DILIGENCE ON CONTRACTORS AND PREVENTION
FROM ILLEGAL RECRUITMENT.

The evening culminated with the much-anticipated Rock The Law, the musical contest of Legalcommunity Week. Eleven bands, formed within law firms, banks, and companies, took to the stage at Magazzini Generali in Milan, performing covers of classic rock hits (and more). This year's winners, with their renditions of "Because The Night" by **Patti Smith** and "One Way Or Another" by **Blondie**, were Law Profile, a group consisting of **Massimiliano Mostardini**, **Andrea Vantini**, **Andrea Biglia**, and **Lorenza Corrao** from the Bird & Bird law firm.

Legalcommunity Week 2024 successfully combined professional discussions with engaging social events, reaffirming Milan's status as the capital of business law. The event provided invaluable insights and networking opportunities, highlighting the critical role of legal professionals in navigating contemporary challenges and innovations. The appointment is to next year's edition, set to take place from June 9 to 13, 2025. See you there! 🍷



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N 04 | July 2024

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