

**The Swiss LegalTech
(r)evolution**

**Legal and tax: the winning recipe
of Loyens & Loeff**

**ZICC, the Swiss gateway
to cross-border disputes resolution**

Bratschi: «Listening is the key to success»

Managing partner Sandra De Vito discusses the firm's approach to legal tech,
sustainability compliance and the future of (female) legal leadership

Claudia La Via



Leadership is a matter of competences

Female leadership and the legal market. As we conclude a month dedicated globally to celebrating women, reflection becomes essential: how has women's presence in the legal sector evolved? The reality isn't black or white, but rather a spectrum of continually changing shades.

It's a time for evaluation and finding new balances, a time to move beyond mere gender quotas and focus on skills and competences. Switzerland, with its pragmatic approach, is clearly signaling progress in this direction. This vision is vividly articulated in our interview with **Sandra De Vito**, managing partner at Bratschi and the first woman to lead a full-service Swiss law firm. She emphasizes that genuine progress in gender equality requires open dialogue, the recognition of diverse career paths, and a broader understanding of success. Her approach highlights that inclusive leadership must genuinely value diverse perspectives and qualities.

The diversity and unique qualities characterizing Switzerland also enhance its legal attractiveness, supporting its global leadership role. This is why experts and professionals positively support the proposal to establish an International Commercial Court that would operate directly in English, serving as a hub for international disputes or simply offering a neutral language, distinct from those spoken in Switzerland's various cantons. In this context, the Zurich International Commercial Court (ZICC), set to open in 2027, represents an important opportunity for Switzerland to strengthen its position as a global center for cross-border dispute resolution. **Anne Catherine Hahn** and **Peter Reichart** explain how ZICC will allow international businesses to benefit from Switzerland's solid civil-law tradition, English-language proceedings, and profound expertise across various industries. This initiative positions Switzerland to effectively respond to increasing international competition and reinforces that leadership can be built on competence, professionalism, and a deep understanding of the market.

These thoughts resonate with **Beat Baumgartner**, managing partner of Loyens & Loeff Switzerland, who stresses the importance of combining local expertise with global integration to enhance Switzerland's attractiveness for international businesses. The firm's holistic approach to legal and tax advisory tackles critical challenges such as evolving tax regulations and geopolitical uncertainties, further cementing Switzerland's position as a strategic international business center.

In this issue of *MAG CH*, you'll find additional compelling insights, including a focus on LegalTech, a sector in which Switzerland is holding its own globally, showcasing promising growth perspectives and innovative solutions already available on the market. Happy reading! 📖

2025 EVENTS CALENDAR

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, 15/05/2025
- The Latin American Lawyer Women Awards São Paulo, 21/05/2025
- 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 Naples, 03/07/2025

SEPTEMBER

- LC Energy Day Milan, 11/09/2025
- The LatAm Energy & Infrastructure Awards São Paulo, 11/09/2025
- Legalcommunity Labour Awards Milan, 18/09/2025
- Iberian Lawyer Forty Under 40 Awards Madrid, 25/09/2025

OCTOBER

- Inhousecommunity Days Milan, 1-3/10/2025
- Legalcommunity Real Estate Awards Milan, 09/10/2025
- Inhousecommunity Awards Italia Milan, 16/10/2025
- Legalcommunity Marketing Awards Milan, 20/10/2025
- Inhousecommunity Day Switzerland Zurich, 23/10/2025
- Legalcommunity Litigation Awards Milano, 28/10/2025

NOVEMBER

- Iberian Lawyer Inhousecommunity Day Madrid, 06/11/2025
- Iberian Lawyer Gold Awards Madrid, 06/11/2025
- FinancecommunityWEEK Milan, 10-13/11/2025
- Financecommunity Awards Milan, 13/11/2025
- LegalcommunityMENA Awards Riyadh, 20/11/2025

2026 EVENTS CALENDAR

JANUARY

- Legalcommunity Energy Awards Milan, 29/01/2026

FEBRUARY

- Legalcommunity Finance Awards Milan, 2026
- Iberian Lawyer Sustainability Summit - Spain Madrid, 2026
- Iberian Lawyer Labour Awards Madrid, 2026

MARCH

- Iberian Lawyer Inspiralaw Madrid, 2026
- Financecommunity Fintech Awards Milan, 2026
- Legalcommunity IP&TMT Awards Milan, 2026
- LC Sustainability Summit Milan, 2026
- LC Sustainability Awards Milan, 2026

LEGEND

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

ITALY

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FINANCE		
Research Period from	01/12/23	DOWNLOAD SUBMISSION ↓
Research Period to	30/11/24	
Deadline Submission	11/10/2024*	
Report Publication	Feb-25	

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

IP&TMT		
Research Period from	01/01/24	DOWNLOAD SUBMISSION ↓
Research Period to	31/12/24	
Deadline Submission	08/11/2024*	
Report Publication	Apr-25	

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TAX		
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Research Period to	31/01/25	
Deadline Submission	06/12/2024*	
Report Publication	Apr-25	

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FORTY UNDER 40		
Research Period from	01/01/24	DOWNLOAD SUBMISSION ↓
Research Period to	31/12/24	
Deadline Submission	28/02/2025	
Report Publication		

CORPORATE		
Research Period from	01/04/24	DOWNLOAD SUBMISSION ↓
Research Period to	31/03/25	
Deadline Submission	07/03/2025*	
Report Publication	Jul-25	

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

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

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

LITIGATION		
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Deadline Submission	30/05/2025	
Report Publication	Nov-25	

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

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SPAIN AND PORTUGAL

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Deadline Submission	20/09/2024*	
Report Publication	Apr-25	

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

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ENERGY & INFRASTRUCTURE		
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Research Period to	31/03/25	
Deadline Submission	17/01/2025*	
Report Publication	Jul-25	

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SWITZERLAND

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SWITZERLAND		
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Deadline Submission	15/11/2024	
Report Publication	Jun-25	

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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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path to the stars is
taking shape

On the Move



APPOINTMENTS

Jasprit Sahnsi is DKSH's new General Counsel

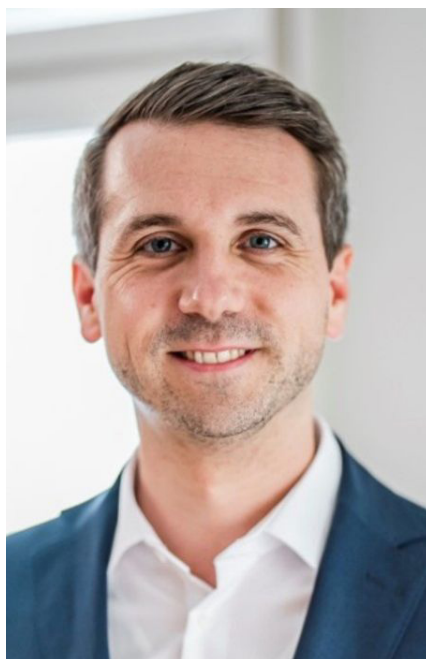
Jasprit Sahnsi (pictured) is the new General Counsel at DKSH, a publicly listed holding company headquartered in Switzerland but operating across 36 markets between Asia Pacific, Europe, and North America. A member of the ACC Board of Directors with over 20 years of experience working in private practice, private equity and publicly listed companies, Sahnsi brings a versatile approach capable of bolstering the company's legal core across many different areas. She comes from Selecta Group, a KKR portfolio company, where she spent almost 7 years, starting in 2018 as a Group General Counsel ad interim, then

progressing as the Group's Deputy General Counsel, the Deputy General Counsel and internal audit leader, and culminating with her role as Group General Counsel. Amongst her previous experiences, 9 years at Gategroup, where she started as a Manager Legal Counsel in Zurich, leading the company's largest disposal as well as co-leading its second largest acquisition at the time. She then worked as Manager Legal Counsel in Singapore, to eventually become Gategroup's Senior Legal Counsel, holding responsibility for legal matters spanning a wide plethora of sectors across Western Europe, South Africa and Middle East.

NEW PARTNER

Advoro, Thomas Nagel promoted to partnership

Advoro Zurich bolsters its partnership lineup with the promotion of former senior associate **Thomas Nagel** (pictured), a specialist in the fields of financial services, fintech, and financial market law. Here is a brief recap of his expertise. Thomas Nagel's profile combines experience in financial markets, corporate and general commercial law with a specific, sectorial focus to anti-money laundering regulation matters. As a lecturer, he holds courses in compliance and corporate governance at the Swiss Distance-Learning University of Applied Sciences (FFHS). Moreover, Nagel often advises companies in the financial sector about regulatory issues in connection with authorisation and enforcement proceedings before authorities and self-regulatory organisations, with the drafting of agreements and with strategic decisions.





APPOINTMENTS

NKF bolsters tax practice with a new partner and two new counsel

Niederer Kraft Frey (NKF) announced the appointment of **Morgan Boëffard** as partner. Moreover, the firm welcomed tax specialists **Tabea Lorenz** and **Marc Vogelsang** as new counsels. A specialist in both domestic and international taxation, Morgan Boëffard, advises in particular UHNWI on all tax aspects of their private and business activities and corporations on a wide range of tax matters. His activity's main focus lays on M&A, private equity transactions, corporate reorganisations and management participation plans. Tabea Lorenz' expertise spans tax litigation, tax procedures, and criminal tax law. An Assistant Professor of tax law at the University of St. Gallen (HSG), Lorenz advises UHNWI, family offices, and corporations on complex tax matters, including contentious proceedings and strategic tax planning. Joining from EY, Marc Vogelsang is a specialist in tax advice for private and public M&A transactions, with a particular focus on private equity and real estate matters. He advises on corporate reorganizations and tax planning as well as tax litigation and VAT. Vogelsang is also a regular author of articles in professional journals and a speaker on tax law topics.

MOVES

Laïla Rochat joins Schellenberg Wittmer as partner

On March 1st 2025, Swiss and international tax law specialist **Laïla Rochat** (pictured) joined Schellenberg Wittmer as a partner from EY to bolster the firm's Geneva-based Tax group. A Swiss-certified tax-expert, attorney at-law Laïla Rochat advises both businesses and individuals in a wide range of matters, including complex transactions, restructurings, tax disputes, intricate financing structures, and corporate tax planning. Moreover, she often provides tailored guidance on tax and estate planning for private clients. Amongst her academic achievements, a Bachelor in Law and a Master in Economic Law, both obtained from the University of Geneva.





MOVES

**KD Pharma's new Global General Counsel:
"Kees" Van Ophem**

As of February 2025, **Cornelis "Kees" Van Ophem** (pictured) joined KD Pharma Group's management team as their new Global General Counsel & Secretary to the Board. Alongside these new responsibilities, he continues as Chairman of the Supervisory Board at ipQuants AG. Van Ophem's previous experiences include nearly a decade as Executive Vice President and Global General Counsel at Fresenius Medical Care (2015–2024), as well as leadership roles at Leica, where he served as General Counsel & VP and President of Leica

Microsystems Schweiz (2010–2015). Bioggio-based KD Pharma group comprises the omonymous KD Pharma, as well as KD Biopharma, KD Nutra, KD Phyto, and KD LabService, a vertically integrated organization that provides products and services to the pharmaceutical, biotech, and nutrition sectors.

NEW PARTNERSHIP

**Loyens & Loeff's
appoints Daniel Dedeyan**

Loyens & Loeff hired Daniel Dedeyan (pictured) as a new partner. The addition is set to bolster the firm's Banking & Finance practice. Dedeyan moves to Loyens & Loeff from a counsel position at Walder Wyss. A specialist in financial markets law and capital markets transactions,

Daniel Dedeyan advises across a wide plethora of legal areas, including insurance, sustainable finance, trade and foundation law. Beyond his legal practice, Dedeyan is the Dean and a Professor at Kalaidos Law School, as well as the Rector and a Professor at Zurich Law School, and a PD at the University of Zurich. He's also an active academic author.





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INFORMATION



EVENTS



INTELLIGENCE



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On the web



The legal engine of Swiss finance

Switzerland's legal market continues to play a central role in enabling complex financial transactions and strategic corporate developments. In recent months, leading law firms have advised on deals that reflect the shifting priorities of clients across sectors — from banking and asset management to fintech and luxury goods. These operations reveal how legal advisors are not just closing deals, but actively shaping the frameworks that support long-term growth, integration, and innovation.

One key example is Homburger's work with UBS on the merger of its pension foundations with those of Credit Suisse — a milestone in the post-acquisition integration process. The deal harmonizes access to benefits for thousands of plan members and signals UBS's steady progress in consolidating the two banking giants. In another major transaction, Walder Wyss advised J. Safra Sarasin Group on its acquisition of a majority stake in Saxo Bank. The cross-border deal, which preserves Saxo's operational independence, strengthens Sarasin's position in digital wealth management and underscores the growing role of regulatory foresight in structuring such acquisitions.

In capital markets, **Niederer Kraft Frey** assisted EFG International with a CHF 340 million dual-tranche bond issuance — the second of its kind within a year — supporting the bank's funding strategy and demonstrating the continuing demand for structured debt instruments. Meanwhile, **Advestra** advised Breitling on the acquisition of Gallet, a historic watchmaker founded in 1446. The move marks another step in Breitling's strategy of building a portfolio of heritage brands with renewed market potential. Across these diverse sectors, a common thread emerges: the influence of legal advisors with deep industry expertise and the ability to navigate complexity under pressure. As the Swiss market evolves, legal counsel remains a strategic asset — not just for compliance or execution, but for shaping the future of business.



Homburger with UBS on pension foundations mergers

Homburger advised UBS through successful closing of the pension foundations mergers, in connection with the integration of Credit Suisse. In December 2024, UBS put another building block within the integration of Credit Suisse, closing the mergers of the vested benefits foundations (Pillar 2 – FZG) of UBS and Credit Suisse as well as of the Pillar 3a foundations of UBS and Credit Suisse. The operations in question entail that all beneficiaries of the foundations have equal access to the service offerings of UBS. The Homburger team advising on the mergers included **Andreas Müller** (pictured), **Francesco Bernasconi** and **Thierry Burckhardt** (all corporate / M&A) as well as **Peter Müller** (tax / pensions).

PRACTICE AREA

Banking & Finance

DEAL

UBS -

LAW FIRM

Homburger

HEAD PARTNER

Andreas Müller

VALUE

Not disclosed



Walder Wyss with J. Safra Sarasin on majority acquisition in Saxo

Walder Wyss advised J. Safra Sarasin Group on its acquisition of approximately 70% of Saxo Bank A/S. Saxo Bank will continue to operate as a standalone entity. Its founder and CEO, Kim Fournais, will retain approximately 28% ownership. The transaction is subject to standard regulatory and other approvals, including Finma and Dfsa. With USD 118 billion in client assets, Saxo Bank is a Danish FinTech bank for investors, traders, and institutional (BaaS) partners. The bank provides an online trading platform connecting investors and traders to global financial markets.

Headquartered in Basel, the J. Safra Sarasin Group is a private bank specialising in wealth and asset management. The group holds USD 247 billion in client assets.

Walder Wyss advised J. Safra Sarasin Group as lead counsel in the transaction on contractual and regulatory matters. Partner **Patrick W. Vogel** (banking and corporate/M&A, pictured) led the firm's team on the matter, working alongside managing associate Laurent Schmidt (banking and corporate/M&A), senior associate Anaëlle Genoud (banking & finance), associate Dzeneta Hrustic (banking and corporate/M&A), and counsel Gion Giger (antitrust and competition).

PRACTICE AREA

Banking & Finance

DEAL

J. Safra Sarasin Group

LAW FIRM

Walder Wyss

HEAD PARTNER

Patrick W. Vogel

VALUE

Not disclosed



Advestra with Breitling on Gallet acquisition

Advestra advised Breitling on the acquisition of historic Swiss watchmaker Gallet. Founded in 1884 by Léon Breitling, the homonymous company started as a small watches shop in Saint-Imier, eventually moving to La Chaux-de-Fonds, the watchmaking capital of Switzerland, and of the world. In connection with the transaction, Breitling completed the acquisition of Gallet, marking the brand's second addition of a notable watchmaker, after the 2023 purchase of Universal Genève. Founded in 1446 as a watch-trading business, Gallet soon turned into a manufacturer of high-performance chronographs for aviation, motorsport, and professional use. The brand will now position as a luxury, entry-level sibling to Breitling. The Advestra corporate and M&A team working on the deal included **Beda Kaufmann** (pictured), **Fabian Wild**, **Anna Capaul** and **Roland Truffer**.

PRACTICE AREA

Deal & Transactions

DEAL

Gallet

LAW FIRM

Advestra

HEAD PARTNER

Beda Kaufmann, Fabian Wild, Anna Capaul and Roland Truffer

VALUE

Not disclosed



NKF with EFG International on bond issuance

Niederer Kraft Frey (NKF) advised Swiss global private banking group EFG International in connection with EFG Bank's offering and issuance of dual-tranche senior unsecured bonds. EFG Bank successfully closed the issuance of CHF 340 dual-tranche domestic senior unsecured bonds, listed on SIX Swiss Exchange and expected to be included in the domestic segment of the Swiss Bond Index (SBI). The first tranche amounts to CHF 175 million with a 3-year maturity, carrying a fixed annual coupon of 1.13 percent. The second tranche is CHF 165 million with 6-year maturity and a fixed coupon of 1.45 percent. Deutsche Bank AG London Branch, acting through Deutsche Bank AG Zurich Branch and UBS Investment Bank worked on the transaction as joint lead managers.

This operation follows EFG Bank's successful inaugural placement and issuance in June 2024 of CHF 370 million dual-tranche senior unsecured bonds, which included a CHF 230 million tranche with a 3-year maturity and a CHF 140 million tranche with a 6-year maturity.

Capital markets partner **Daniel Bono** (pictured) led the NKF team on the matter, working alongside partner **Philippe Weber**, senior associate **Giulia Ghezzi** and associate **Manuel Hirlinger** (all capital markets).

PRACTICE AREA

Capital markets

DEAL

EFG International

LAW FIRM

NKF

HEAD PARTNER

Daniel Bono - Philippe Weber

VALUE

340 CHF



LEGALCOMMUNITYGERMANY

The first 100% digital portal in English addressed to the German legal market.
It focuses on both lawfirms and inhouse legal departments

LEGAL MARKET IN GERMANY

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A professional portrait of Sandra De Vito, a woman with dark, wavy hair and glasses, wearing a black blazer over a white collared shirt. She is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is dark and out of focus. The entire image is framed by a thin orange border.

Bratschi: «Listening is the key to success»

Managing partner Sandra De Vito discusses the firm's approach to legal tech, sustainability compliance and the future of (female) legal leadership

by claudia la via

Founded in 2008 through the merger of three historic Swiss law firms, Bratschi has grown into one of Switzerland's most prominent legal practices. With seven offices across the country, the firm provides expertise in business, tax and public law. Since June 2021, **Sandra De Vito** has led the firm, becoming the first woman to head a full-service Swiss law firm. With over 25 years of experience in civil litigation and arbitration, she has acted as chairperson, sole arbitrator, and counsel in more than 100 arbitrations, including ICC, Swiss Rules, VIAC, and ad hoc proceedings. Under her leadership, Bratschi continues to expand while maintaining strong local connections. "Our seven offices are staffed by people who know the specific region and its unique characteristics", says De Vito. "We attach great importance to maintaining close local ties with our clients and authorities, speaking their language, and understanding the environment in which they operate".

With AI-driven legal tools rapidly advancing, how is Bratschi balancing innovation with the personalized, high-caliber legal services clients expect?

In 2023, we implemented a directive for AI usage with a traffic light system that guides employees on permitted, restricted, and cautious AI activities. This structured approach allows us to leverage AI while ensuring compliance with ethical and professional standards. We continuously evaluate new tools through our bratschiACADEMY.

However, in strategic consulting, we don't see AI as a replacement for lawyers. Legal problems require interpretation, judgment, and human insight—things that cannot yet be automated. Legal advice is built on trust, and trust remains a human interaction. Clients rely on experienced professionals to not only analyze the facts but also assess risks and provide tailored advice.

There is also the question of educating the next generation of lawyers...

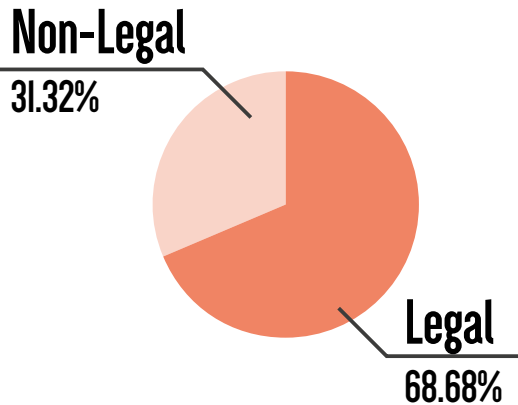
Yes, and this is a complex issue. The challenge is not only how young lawyers learn to use AI but also how they develop the expertise to critically review AI-generated results. Legal knowledge is built over years of experience and application. If AI accelerates certain processes, there is a risk that young professionals will miss out on



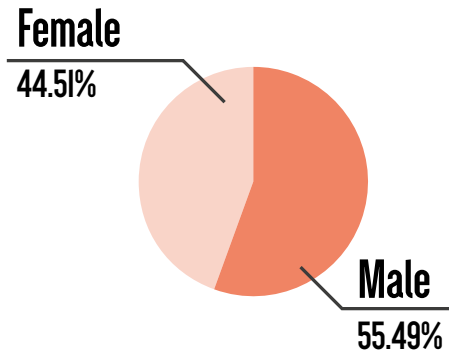
SANDRA DE VITO

Bratschi diversity in numbers

Percentage of legal and non-legal employees

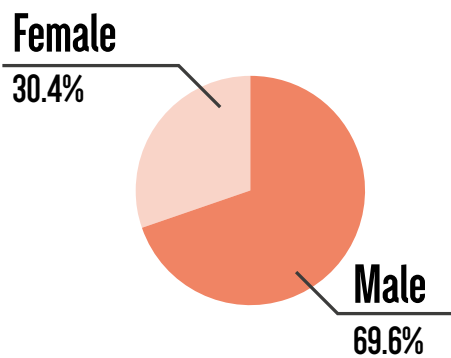


Overall gender distribution

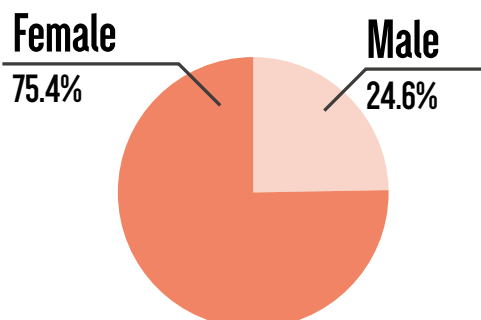


Gender distribution within each category

Legal employees



Non-legal employees



fundamental learning steps, weakening their ability to assess the accuracy and relevance of AI-driven legal analysis.

This is a topic I've started discussing with universities and colleagues. We need to ensure that we train future lawyers to be analytical thinkers, capable of both using AI efficiently and challenging its results when necessary.

As companies face increasing Esg compliance demands, how is Bratschi helping clients navigate these challenges? And how is the firm incorporating sustainability principles internally?

We see ourselves not just as legal advisors but as entrepreneurs who understand our clients' challenges firsthand. That's why we have taken an active approach to Esg. Inspired by Emmi, a leader in the dairy industry, we have appointed sustainability managers at all seven Bratschi locations. Their role is to evaluate our environmental impact and propose improvements that align with sustainable practices.

This group meets regularly to exchange insights and formulate measures that are implemented firm-wide. At the end of each year, we publish a sustainability report summarizing our progress and setting future goals. This internal approach helps us better understand the Esg challenges our clients face.

On the social responsibility side, we also



THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF BRATSCHI TOGETHER WITH MARCO TEMPEST GUEST SPEAKER OF THE FIRM'S CLIENT EVENT IN SPRING 2024

prioritize employee well-being. In 2024, we introduced resilience workshops to help our employees manage stress and maintain a healthy work-life balance.

The legal industry has made strides in female leadership, yet challenges remain. What factors still hold women back in top legal roles, and what should law firms do to ensure real progress?

I am often asked this question, and my perspective has evolved over time. Fifteen years ago, I would have said that structural barriers needed to be removed. Five years ago, I believed that passion, dedication, and a supportive environment were enough. Today, I see that the key is ensuring women are valued for all their qualities—rational, emotional, and even sentimental. These attributes make us who we are and should be respected in leadership roles. There is no single measure that will create change. We need ongoing dialogue, openness

«We need ongoing dialogue, openness to different career paths, and recognition that success looks different for everyone»

to different career paths, and recognition that success looks different for everyone. A person's perspective should not be dismissed just because it is in the minority. We must listen to our younger colleagues—both women and men—take them seriously, and act on their insights.

Talking about “insights”...can you share insights into a recent case, deal or legal success that exemplifies Bratschi’s strengths?

One example is our work in the hotel industry, where we handle major transactions across Switzerland. Recently, we advised the German HR Group on a long-term lease agreement for the five-star Hotel Seehof in Davos. We also supported the redevelopment of a historic 19th-century building into a luxury Marriott hotel operated by Arabella Hospitality SE.

In arbitration, we secured a favorable award in an investment dispute against the Republic of Kosovo, administered by ICSID in Washington, DC. Additionally, we acted as counsel to UBS Switzerland in connection with a CHF 400 million term and revolving credit facility agreement with Sonova Holding AG.

Given your expertise in arbitration, what are the biggest shifts affecting dispute resolution today?

Fortunately, there are no radical shifts in arbitration, but efficiency and cost reduction remain key areas of focus. AI has the potential to improve certain aspects, such as document analysis, but arbitration will always require human judgment.

I am also proud to be involved in the establishment of the Zurich International

Commercial Court (ZICC). This initiative will allow international commercial disputes to be heard in English before Zurich’s specialized commercial judges. Similar initiatives are emerging worldwide, and they play a crucial role in strengthening the rule of law in an international context.

Beyond legal expertise, what is the one defining quality that sets Bratschi apart from other top Swiss law firms?

We place great importance on mutual appreciation. The way people interact within the firm is crucial. A positive, supportive work culture drives performance, commitment, and job satisfaction. Our work is high-pressure and comes with significant responsibility, so the environment we create matters.

For example, with our bratschiCAMPUS, in cooperation di miaEngiadina - which offers coworking spaces in the mountain Swiss region of Engiadina -, we offer employees a third workspace in the mountains, allowing them to work and engage in sports. We also support their development as entrepreneurs, organize sports events through our bratschiSPORTS team, and foster a culture of open dialogue—both internally and with clients. At the end of the day, listening is the key to success. For sure it is our key. 



SANDRA DE VITO ON STAGE DURING THE BRATSCHI CLIENTS EVENT IN ZURICH IN SPRING 2024



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The Swiss LegalTech (r)evolution

As AI gains ground, the legal profession in Switzerland faces a turning point in tech adoption, trust, and transformation. While experts explain what's on the plate, *MAG CH* selected some startups to watch

by claudia la via

Switzerland's legal industry is slowly warming up to digital transformation. While legal tech adoption is no longer rare, it's still uneven—and often hesitant. The rise of generative AI has pushed the conversation forward, but the shift is far from complete.

Stefano Perucchi, president of the Swiss LegalTech Association (SLTA), has been watching the landscape evolve firsthand. “The ecosystem is maturing, but we're not there yet,” he says. “We estimate there are around 90 legal tech companies in Switzerland. More than half of lawyers report using legal tech tools in some way—but there's still resistance to fully committing to specific technologies.”

Founded to connect and guide stakeholders across the legal sector, the SLTA operates as a neutral platform. Its mission: lead the transformation of the legal industry, promote innovative technologies, build a collaborative ecosystem, and expand access to justice.

CAUTIOUS ADOPTION, CULTURAL GAPS

According to the SLTA's latest survey, over 50% of legal professionals in Switzerland are using tech solutions to digitize services, boost efficiency, or improve client experience. Yet the pace remains cautious. “In-house legal teams are more receptive because they work with broader company systems like SAP or Salesforce,” Perucchi explains. “Law firms, by contrast, are often slower to adopt. GenAI has sparked huge interest—but what we see now is more reluctance in choosing which tool to trust, rather than whether to use tech at all.”

David Rosenthal, partner at **Vischer** and a specialist in AI and data privacy, shares this sense of hesitation—but his focus is on compliance.

“Switzerland has stricter professional secrecy rules than many other countries. A lot of foreign legal tech solutions don't meet these standards, so they really shouldn't be used with client data”, he says.

Frustrated with the lack of reliable options, Rosenthal helped his firm build its own internal tool: **Red Ink**. Based on a large language model (LLM), the system supports contract drafting,



STEFANO PERRUCHI

legal writing, and research—while keeping sensitive information protected. “It's simple and inexpensive. We made it available for free, and now other firms are using it too,” he notes.

HOMEGROWN SOLUTIONS ON THE RISE

Other firms are also turning inward to build their own tools. At MLL Legal, the firm has developed proprietary legal tech features focused on document management, client collaboration, and internal workflows. The move reflects a growing belief that off-the-shelf products may not be ready—or compliant—enough for Swiss standards. “Some providers exaggerate what their tools can do,” says Rosenthal. “And lawyers are understandably skeptical”.

«More than half of lawyers report using legal tech tools in some way—but there's still resistance to fully committing to specific technologies»

STEFANO PERRUCHI



DAVID ROSENTHAL

«Switzerland has stricter professional secrecy rules than many other countries. A lot of foreign legal tech solutions don't meet these standards, so they really shouldn't be used with client data»

DAVID ROSENTHAL


TRENDS TO WATCH IN 2025

Still, interest in legal tech is growing. Perucchi expects the next year to bring more sophisticated applications of generative AI across the profession. "We'll likely see more tools for strategy development, pattern detection in litigation data, and even training simulations for hearings. One of the more hopeful areas is using AI to improve access to justice—for example, supporting people with disabilities."

The SLTA is also looking ahead. The association is currently building a member test platform to encourage collaboration, collecting new survey data to map trends, and preparing

LegalInnovation 26, a flagship event for the community—alongside partnerships with local and international events.

LOOKING FURTHER AHEAD

Beyond the immediate future, Perucchi sees the legal industry being reshaped by global technological shifts—especially Artificial intelligence and Quantum computing. "The next five years will be decisive. AI investment is expected to pass one trillion dollars globally by 2025. We're moving toward a fundamental change in how work is done. Then there's Quantum computing—a technology that could crack modern encryption systems in seconds. That changes the stakes entirely", he says. 



DEEPIUDGE

DeepJudge addresses a fundamental challenge faced by law firms, corporations, banks, insurance providers, and consultancies—the efficient retrieval and reuse of legal knowledge buried within extensive document databases. Professionals frequently find themselves asking questions such as, "Have we done this before?"

or "Is there a useful precedent or template available?" Traditionally, obtaining answers relied heavily on personal memory or inefficient company-wide email queries.

DeepJudge revolutionizes this process by connecting users directly to their organization's "knowledge vault." Its core product, Knowledge Search, provides intuitive access to a comprehensive range of legal documents, including contracts, clauses, templates, and memos. Integrating seamlessly with existing document management systems, the solution leverages

advanced, award-winning artificial intelligence technology to deeply comprehend document content, regardless of format or complexity.

Unlike conventional keyword-based searches, DeepJudge enables legal professionals to search naturally using their own language. This intuitive approach eliminates the struggle of guessing exact keywords, substantially improving the speed and accuracy of information retrieval. By delivering precise, relevant results effortlessly, DeepJudge significantly enhances productivity, efficiency, and knowledge management within legal and corporate settings.

Recently, DeepJudge raised \$9.3 million in funding, underscoring market confidence and supporting further expansion of their innovative solutions.



DYDON

Founded in 2016 by Dr. Hans-Peter Güllich, DYDON AI is a Swiss startup delivering transparent and adaptable AI solutions, with a focus on Fintech, RegTech, and sustainability compliance. Its platform leverages advanced language models (including LLMs and Retrieval-Augmented Generation) to extract relevant data from complex documents, helping organizations streamline compliance tasks and generate legally sound sustainability disclosures.

At the core of DYDON AI's offering is TAXO TOOL, a solution developed in collaboration with the Association of German Public Banks (VÖB) and its subsidiary VÖB-Service GmbH. TAXO TOOL digitizes more than 40,000 pages of the EU Taxonomy Regulation, transforming the process into an intuitive, AI-powered workflow. It reduces the time, effort, and uncertainty associated with sustainability reporting, making regulatory compliance more accessible and efficient for financial institutions and corporations.

The tool has received multiple accolades, including the Innovation Award at the Global Sustainable Digital Finance Forum (University of Zurich and Stanford University, 2022) and recognition as the Best Taxonomy Data Solution for ESG (2022, 2023). Most recently, it earned the "Finance Durable et Solidaire" label from Finance Innovation in September 2024.

DYDON AI continues to expand its product suite with tools aimed at secure document analysis and regulatory mapping, reinforcing its mission to make compliance smarter, faster, and more transparent.



AEQUITEC

Aequitec is transforming corporate secretarial processes with a unique legal operating system designed specifically for general counsels and CFOs. Positioned within the expansive \$24 billion corporate secretarial market, Aequitec helps businesses avoid costly errors through its advanced legal workflow engine, setting it apart from traditional cap table management tools.

Unlike typical spreadsheet-based solutions, Aequitec operates as a sophisticated share settlement system, seamlessly integrating into the capital markets' infrastructure. Currently, the company successfully onboards approximately two mid-tier enterprises per month, showcasing its growing traction and market validation.

Aequitec's core strength lies in automating complex corporate actions and workflows, significantly streamlining processes such as company incorporation, capital increases, share transfers, deletions, and splits. It also efficiently manages dividend payments, employee share ownership schemes, and sophisticated financial reporting tasks like tax and IFRS 2 calculations. Through its robust legal foundation and automation capabilities, Aequitec ensures accuracy, compliance, and operational efficiency, providing significant value to clients navigating intricate corporate legal requirements.



ARBITRI

Arbitri specializes in advanced blockchain-based dispute resolution mechanisms and secure crypto asset management solutions. Its innovative offerings primarily address two critical market needs: dispute resolution for smart contracts and secure storage solutions for cryptocurrency private keys.

Arbitri's first initiative provides a robust dispute resolution framework specifically tailored for smart contracts, including decentralized exchanges and blockchain-based trade arrangements. This solution enables users to integrate Arbitri as an authoritative third-party decision-maker to arbitrate technical disputes. It offers two arbitration forms: expert determination (conventional arbitration) and traditional arbitration aligned with the New York Convention. Arbitri acts as an escrow agent, securely holding assets during disputes, and ensures enforceability and securitization of arbitration outcomes.

The second significant service offered by Arbitri addresses the increasingly urgent issue of crypto asset succession and secure private key storage. Arbitri employs multisignature smart contracts, collaboratively managed by a Swiss notary and specialized crypto-security companies, offering holders a resilient solution to safely distribute and retrieve private keys in cases of loss or succession.

Arbitri's innovative approach uniquely positions it to support enhanced trust and security in the rapidly evolving blockchain and cryptocurrency sectors.

getyourlawyer.ch

GETYOURLAWYER

GetYourLawyer simplifies the process of connecting clients with qualified legal professionals through its intuitive online marketplace. The platform serves individuals and businesses by providing efficient, transparent, and personalized access to legal services across various areas of expertise.

GetYourLawyer streamlines legal assistance by enabling users to describe their specific legal issues directly on the platform. Lawyers matching the user's criteria respond with clear offers, allowing clients to easily compare and select the best legal counsel suited to their needs and budget. The platform emphasizes transparency, enabling clients to make informed decisions based on expertise, cost, and user reviews.

Recently, GetYourLawyer underwent a significant ownership change, reflecting its growing value and impact within Switzerland's legal tech sector. This transition positions GetYourLawyer for further growth and expansion, enhancing its ability to deliver effective, digitally-driven legal solutions.

By significantly reducing the complexity and uncertainty traditionally associated with hiring lawyers, GetYourLawyer empowers users to access legal services seamlessly, promoting fairness, accessibility, and efficiency in the Swiss legal marketplace.

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The tough game of compliance

Christian Haitz, Head Legal & Compliance of Gryphon Invest, shares insights on tackling legal complexity across gaming and real estate, the rise of AI, and why today's GC need more than just legal expertise

by claudia la via

Spanning sectors from vibrant gaming halls to extensive real estate holdings, Gryphon Invest is at the heart of Europe's most dynamic and highly regulated industries. From managing over 230 casinos and arcades and more than 100 sports betting venues to running sophisticated online gaming platforms and a diverse real estate portfolio, Gryphon's operations demand exceptional legal foresight and strategic compliance. **Christian Haitz**, Head Legal & Compliance stands at the forefront of navigating these complex landscapes. Leveraging extensive international experience and deep expertise in intellectual property law, Haitz is reshaping the traditional role of corporate counsel. "Today's general counsel are certainly strategic advisors", Haitz asserts, underscoring the transformative evolution of legal leadership. MAG CH spoke with him about the complexities of compliance across borders, the strategic integration of ESG factors, and the profound impact of technological advances—especially AI—on Gryphon's multinational operations.

Gryphon operates across highly regulated industries like gaming and real estate. What are the most significant legal challenges your team faces?

Gaming is heavily regulated and becoming even stricter internationally, focusing increasingly on player protection and social responsibility. We closely monitor developments to advise local entities, management, and the board strategically.

«What we observe, particularly with the shift from land-based casinos to online gaming, is a continual tightening of regulations»



THE GRYPHON GROUP CURRENTLY OPERATES MORE THAN 230 LAND-BASED CASINOS

How do you balance regulatory compliance while ensuring Gryphon remains competitive?

We have established our Legal, Compliance and Regulatory function to serve as a knowledge body to access and exchange certain developments and strategic adjustments in close collaboration with our local legal, compliance and regulatory functions. By that we are not only able to safeguard that the indispensable rules to which we need to adhere to are respected, but also to provide strategic options to address changes in regulation across the jurisdiction in which we operate. One of the formats we have created to exchange this is the quarterly Legal & Compliance roundtable in which we discuss present and forthcoming local developments.

Are there emerging risks or legal trends shaping the gaming and real estate industries in Europe?

What we observe, particularly with the shift from land-based casinos to online gaming, is a continual tightening of regulations. My previous experience in the tobacco industry shows clear parallels—just as counterfeit cigarettes emerged as a significant issue, illegal online gaming offerings are now increasingly prevalent. Online gaming platforms require less technical knowledge and smaller investments, which unfortunately attracts illicit operators, negatively impacting the industry's reputation. On the other hand, the real estate sector remains largely driven by macroeconomic factors, although global political and geostrategic developments must also be carefully monitored.

Sustainability considerations are central today. How does Gryphon integrate Esg compliance into gaming and real estate operations?

In gaming, our focus is primarily on social and governance aspects—protecting players through effective policies. Environmentally, we invest in clean energy solutions like solar panels aiming at zero-emission casinos. That goes in hand with our target to upgrade our real estate portfolio to an industry-leading level.

Technology is disrupting many industries. How is Gryphon leveraging legal innovation?

«In gaming, our focus is primarily on social and governance aspects—protecting players through effective policies»

The shift towards online casinos is the prevailing trend, introducing innovations such as cryptocurrency transactions, which challenge existing regulatory frameworks. Regulators continually struggle to define clear legal boundaries in this evolving environment. At Gryphon, we proactively explore AI-driven solutions primarily aimed at enhancing player protection, ensuring we remain at the forefront of legal and technological developments.

With the rise of AI in gaming, what are key legal and ethical concerns?

Protecting personal data is paramount. While general GDPR compliance forms the baseline, we must also navigate additional industry-specific



THE GROUP IS ALSO A LEADING MANUFACTURER OF CASINO FIXTURES AND FURNITURE.



CHRISTIAN HAITZ

regulatory requirements. AI applications require continuous vigilance to ensure that data subjects' interests remain safeguarded at all times, addressing both ethical and legal complexities.

Gryphon operates across Europe. What are the key challenges of managing compliance internationally?

Jurisdictions differ significantly in regulatory maturity, presenting ongoing challenges in compliance management across multiple regions. We constantly exchange insights among our local teams to anticipate regulatory changes proactively. Achieving a unified internal compliance framework, informed by diverse local experiences, is crucial for operational consistency and strategic adaptability.

Is Europe moving toward regulatory harmonization, or do you anticipate continued fragmentation?

Despite numerous sector-specific regulations at the Eu level, gaming remains noticeably fragmented. There have been limited efforts at harmonization, primarily through bilateral initiatives, such as the player data treaty between Switzerland and Liechtenstein. However, broader regulatory alignment still appears distant.

How has the role of General Counsel evolved recently, especially internationally?

The role of general counsel has significantly

expanded, becoming more strategically influential within companies. Opinions vary regarding whether general counsel should formally join executive management teams. Personally, I see considerable advantages in doing so—having "skin in the game" enhances credibility, accountability, and strategic impact, provided neutrality is maintained when necessary.

What skills are crucial today for in-house legal teams?

Legal expertise alone is no longer sufficient. Today's in-house teams require robust business acumen, including financial literacy, strong interpersonal and communication skills, and the ability to manage stress effectively. Initiatives such as those offered by the ACC emphasize these critical competencies and mental health awareness.

Is Switzerland adapting well to global regulatory trends or maintaining a distinct legal framework?

Switzerland strategically balances adaptation to global trends with its distinct legal independence, benefiting from flexible bilateral agreements with the Eu. This approach offers competitive advantages, enabling Switzerland to swiftly respond to global regulatory and geopolitical developments.

What advice would you give legal professionals aspiring to work in complex, multinational industries?

Legal professionals should prioritize developing comprehensive legal, commercial, and technical skills, combined with genuine interest and accountability for their industries. Understanding the full operational picture of the business is essential to effectively manage complex multinational legal landscapes.

What's an underestimated legal trend you believe will soon become significant?

AI represents a profound and underestimated legal trend. Today's AI technology, rapidly evolving, is just a preliminary version of future developments. Though naturally cautious, lawyers who embrace AI proactively will better navigate forthcoming challenges and opportunities. 📖



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Legal and tax: the winning recipe of Loyens & Loeff

Managing partner Beat Baumgartner discusses how the firm's holistic services, combined with local expertise and global insights, navigate clients through complex regulatory landscapes and growth opportunities

by claudia la via

An integrated approach to legal and tax advisory is the key element that helps Loyens & Loeff to stand out among Europe's most renowned law firm. With a robust presence across key markets including the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Belgium, and Switzerland, as well as offices in major financial centers like New York, London, Paris, and Tokyo, the firm combines local expertise with a global outlook to support clients in navigating complex cross-border matters. "Looking ahead, our key challenges include fostering deeper collaboration across all areas, continuing our growth with a strong emphasis on transactions and tax, and effectively implementing the firm's European strategy", says **Beat Baumgartner**, managing partner of Loyens & Loeff's Switzerland and a member of the firm's global executive committee. Baumgartner, renowned for his extensive expertise in Swiss and international tax law, particularly advising multinational corporations and private equity funds, has been pivotal in steering the firm's strategic growth in the country.

You have been leading Loyens & Loeff Switzerland for several years and are a member of the firm's executive committee. What has been your experience in this leadership role, and what have been the most significant milestones or challenges so far?

Leading Loyens & Loeff Switzerland and being part of the Executive Committee of our global firm has been a rewarding experience and a journey of growth. It has allowed me to contribute to the firm's strategic direction and growth while working together with very talented professionals. Among our significant milestones has been the steady expansion of our Swiss office, growing to nine partners and forty fee earners within a mature market in just ten years. In 2025, we further strengthened our capabilities by welcoming new partners Dominique Meili in tax and Daniel Dedeyan in banking and finance. Additionally, implementing organizational changes within our global firm—such as a new Executive Committee structure that integrates representatives from our home markets, sectors, and firm focus areas—has been pivotal.

The firm is known for its integrated approach to legal and tax services. How does this model give the firm a competitive edge in Switzerland, particularly compared to other international law firms?

I strongly believe in the integrated law and tax services we offer. This approach enables us to provide holistic solutions that effectively combine legal, tax, and regulatory perspectives. Clients benefit from increased efficiency and superior coordination, as our lawyers and tax experts collaborate closely, minimizing drafting rounds and significantly improving the time to market. Furthermore, our combined legal and tax expertise allows us to deliver highly specialized, tailored advice, especially in cross-border contexts. Our integrated structure also empowers us to swiftly adapt to regulatory changes and market trends, providing agility essential in today's dynamic environment.

«In 2025, we further strengthened our capabilities by welcoming new partners Dominique Meili in tax and Daniel Dedeyan in banking and finance»



THE ZURICH OFFICE OF LOYENS & LOEFF.

You are both deeply embedded in the Swiss market and part of a global network. How do you balance these “local and global” aspects, and what advantages does this bring to your clients?

Our firm uniquely balances local expertise with global reach. With over 1,500 professionals across our four home markets and key international offices, we are deeply connected within the Swiss business community and maintain close ties with industry associations and regulatory authorities. Most of our Swiss team members are locally qualified, bringing substantial domestic and international expertise in areas such as corporate law, M&A, tax, banking, finance, and dispute resolution. Our global integration allows us to stay ahead of significant international developments, such as EU regulations or OECD initiatives, and effectively advise our clients through a comprehensive, unbiased approach. This integrated model ensures that our clients

receive solutions uniquely tailored to complex cross-border issues.

Switzerland remains a global financial hub with evolving regulatory frameworks. What are the major legal and tax challenges facing multinational corporations, private equity funds, and high-net-worth individuals today? Switzerland's position as a financial center

«Our global integration allows us to stay ahead of significant international developments and effectively advise our clients through a comprehensive, unbiased approach»

brings significant opportunities but also complex legal and tax challenges. Key among these is the OECD Global Minimum Tax (Pillar 2), notably the implementation of the Qualified Domestic Minimum Top-up Tax (QDMTT) effective from January 2024, and the Income Inclusion Rule (IIR) from January 2025. Multinational enterprises must carefully monitor their Swiss tax positions to navigate new compliance obligations effectively. Additionally, the current market environment—with valuation gaps, interest rate volatility, inflation, and geopolitical uncertainties—continues to impact M&A transactions significantly. Private equity funds face increased scrutiny around acquisition structuring, particularly concerning dividend withholding tax and treaty shopping concerns. High-net-worth individuals face planning uncertainties related to the Juso initiative proposing a substantial inheritance tax. Our firm's integrated expertise is well-positioned to guide clients through these intricate challenges.

Your expertise lies in tax law, particularly for multinational enterprises and private equity funds. How is the recent implementation of the Qualified Domestic Minimum Top-up Tax (QDMTT) impacting businesses in Switzerland, and how is Loyens & Loeff advising clients?

The introduction of QDMTT has increased the effective tax rate for multinational enterprises operating in Swiss cantons with traditionally lower corporate income taxes, such as Zug. Despite this change, Switzerland remains an attractive business destination, as evidenced by over 20 inbound reorganization projects we've successfully advised in the past year alone. We actively assist clients in understanding their QDMTT obligations and Pillar 2 compliance requirements, ensuring optimal outcomes under the new tax regime.

How does the Swiss office collaborate with other jurisdictions within the firm to handle complex cross-border matters? Could you share an example?

Collaboration across jurisdictions is essential for complex transactions. A recent example is our advisory role in the sale of a majority stake

«Switzerland's attractiveness stems from political and economic stability, strategic central location in Europe, robust legal frameworks, favorable tax policies, and a highly skilled workforce»

in the Swiss-based Redslim Group to Astorg Private Equity in January 2025. Our Swiss team, led by Fabian Sutter and Nicolas Wehrli, provided comprehensive tax and legal counsel, working closely with our Luxembourg and Dutch colleagues who advised on management reinvestment aspects.

What do you think makes Switzerland an attractive jurisdiction for international businesses and investors, and how does Loyens & Loeff contribute to facilitating their legal operations in the country?

Switzerland's attractiveness stems from political and economic stability, strategic central location in Europe, robust legal frameworks, favorable tax policies, and a highly skilled workforce. Its advanced infrastructure and strong commitment to innovation further cement its position as an international business hub. At Loyens & Loeff, we support clients through comprehensive, integrated legal and tax advisory services, facilitating their establishment and growth in Switzerland through tailored, efficient solutions aligned with their strategic goals. 🇨🇭



ZICC, the Swiss gateway to cross-border disputes resolution

With English-language proceedings and international jurisdiction clauses, Switzerland could strengthen its position as a global hub

by flavio caci

There's a before and after quality to the recent revision of the Swiss Civil Code of procedure. In particular, two big dowels within such revision are capable of initiating a domino effect of new avenues. The first, quite a practical one, is the possibility for Cantonal Courts to hold proceedings in English. The second, a tad more articulate, is the opportunity for contracting parties of any nationality – one of them coming from outside of Switzerland – to specify in a jurisdiction clause that a particular Swiss cantonal commercial court should handle any disputes arising out of their contract, acting as an international entity.

The reason why the combination of these two elements carries a certain legal weight is because it finally flicks the switch on Switzerland internationalizing its commercial courts offering, allowing businesses from around the World to exploit the Country's tradition in dispute resolution.

BUILDING AN ALTERNATIVE

While the revision came into force on January 1st 2025, the project of a Swiss International Commercial Court holds on to deeper roots. Rolling back time for a moment, we do know that the Zurich Bar Association (ZAV) got to work on internationalizing the Zurich Commercial Court offering in 2018. "At the time, there was a sense of an increasing competition for the resolution of international commercial disputes in many countries", recalls **Peter Reichart**, partner at Wartmann Merker and a member of the ZAV. "This competition was not limited to arbitration, but was extending to litigation in state courts as well. There are initiatives all over the World to attract international disputes by establishing this kind of specialised international commercial courts, so there was a sense that Switzerland had to follow and establish its own international commercial court".



THE HIGHER COURT OF ZURICH, THE INTENDED LOCATION FOR HOSTING ZICC



«This will be one of Switzerland's contributions: making business practice easier in Europe and get disputes resolved quickly »

Peter Reichart

Now that the project has turned into concrete reality, in order to better understand its characteristics we need to first define what the court is not.

Clearing the field from any competition with arbitration as a whole is a fundamental step in this regard. Unlike international arbitral tribunals, commercial courts conduct proceedings based on national civil procedure rules in accordance with local usages. In other words, not only they do belong to different leagues, they're also playing a different sport, under different rules.

Being deeply rooted in the Swiss civil law tradition further defines the ZICC's nature as an alternative solution rather than a competitor. "One of the reasons why we think this project is interesting is precisely because it's an alternative

to the common law model. Dispute resolution in the civil law tradition is appealing to many parties both in and outside of Switzerland," explains **Anne Catherine Hahn**, partner at Wartmann Merker and a ZAV member. "The goal is to not turn it into a hybrid between litigation and arbitration. Arbitration has its resonator and will keep its established practices more common law-inspired, whereas for the Commercial Court, the idea to make it attractive is, in turn, keeping it quite close to what it is". Reichart agrees: "It's not the goal to form some sort of a state led arbitration".

BUILDING ON A STRONG FOUNDATION

The ZICC is set to operate within the historic Zurich Courthouse, a venue that has long been the home of the city's Commercial Court. This choice of location is more than a matter of convenience: it's a visual clue to the fact that the ZICC does not reinvent Swiss commercial litigation but rather expands its operational reach to the international playground. "The ZICC will build on an established tradition of efficient dispute resolution in the civil law tradition," says Hahn. "What is core to this offering is the quality and efficiency of the existing Commercial Court". That quality and efficiency holds on to certain key characteristics. First, how the proceedings are carried-on from the very beginning.

The Zurich Commercial Court, and therefore its international counterpart, holds settlement hearings right after the first exchange of written submissions - the typical time range being six to nine months after the commencement of proceedings. At this hearing, a delegation of the Court made out of one professional judge from the Zurich High Court as well as an industry expert acting as commercial judge, provides a preliminary assessment of the parties' legal positions, and consequently moderates settlement discussions. "They don't just ask the parties to settle," Reichart explains. "They offer a very deep analysis of the case. Based on that, they will initiate settlement discussions between the parties, and their success rate in reaching settlements at this early point is extremely high". Now, if you're a practitioner coming from a



«The ZICC will build on an established tradition of efficient dispute resolution in the civil law tradition. What is core to this offering is the quality and efficiency of the existing Commercial Court »

Anne Catherine Hahn

common law jurisdiction, this type of early involvement from judges may sound a bit unusual. On the other hand, for a business involved in a litigation case handled by the ZICC, cruising toward a fast resolution sounds perfect.

Moreover, another “business perk” of this configuration is the involvement of industry experts as part of the decision taking body. As a matter of fact, internationalising the court’s offering entails making the depth and expertise of Switzerland’s business ecosystem accessible to companies worldwide. “There is always that commercial perspective”, Hahn notes. “The industry experts cover really a broad range: manufacturing, automotive, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, pharmaceuticals, then of course the financial

sector, banks and insurance.”

Thanks to this peculiar configuration, when a business chooses the ZICC, it automatically ends up embracing the wider geopolitical and economic context of Switzerland as a warrantee. In that sense, the Country’s reputation as a multilingual neutral country in the middle of Europe is a fundamental asset. “Switzerland has a lot of cross-border connections for any industry,” adds Hahn. “There is a high degree of comparative law and respect for foreign law, as well as respect for foreigners: people like to come here”.

BOOSTING EUROPE’S LEGAL INFRASTRUCTURE

With the Lugano Convention as a background, the ZICC’s decisions will be easily enforceable across all Member States of the European Union, as well as in Norway and Iceland.

“Enforcing a judgement in Europe under the Lugano Convention or the Brussels Convention is far easier than to go through the works of enforcing an arbitral award under the New York Convention”, explains Peter Reichart. “This will be one of Switzerland’s contributions: making business practice easier in Europe and get disputes resolved quickly”.

2027 is around the corner, and is going to mark the ZICC’s official starting gun.

In that regard, the Country couldn’t choose a better moment to expand its European reach. A few weeks ago, Mario Draghi followed up on his 2024 report “on the future of European competitiveness”, addressing the European Parliament with a speech that went immediately viral. The former ECB President described a European economy in urgent need to be supported while facing a plethora of technological and geopolitical challenges. While aware that lawyers may play only a small role in such a large-scale economic initiative, Anne-Catherine Hahn sees the ZICC as a meaningful contribution: “I do really believe that making available a system where European companies can come to a resolution of business dispute within a short time, at reasonable cost, and with the involvement of industry experts, is a major element of this general idea. I really believe the quality of institutions is important”.

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The Dubai connection

A growing legal footprint in the Emirates: why Swiss law firms are planting roots in the Gulf embedding themselves into the region's legal and business ecosystems

In the shimmering deserts of the United Arab Emirates, a quiet but significant shift is taking place in the world of international legal practice. Swiss law firms—once firmly anchored in Zurich, Geneva, and Lugano—are increasingly establishing a presence in the Persian Gulf, particularly in the booming metropolises of Dubai and Abu Dhabi. From boutique consultancies to globally active practices, this trend reveals much more than opportunistic expansion: it underscores an evolving strategic relationship between Switzerland and the UAE. The foundation for this legal migration was laid decades ago. Switzerland officially recognized the United Arab Emirates in 1971, just after its founding, and by 1976 had opened a trade office in Abu Dhabi. That office would later become a fully operational embassy by 1982. In 1987, a Swiss consulate opened in Dubai, growing into an important diplomatic and commercial hub. These were not mere formalities—they marked the start of a dynamic relationship built on trade, investment, and legal cooperation. Since then, a number of key bilateral agreements have deepened this partnership. A 1998 Investment Protection Agreement laid

a strong foundation for cross-border business. The Double Taxation Agreement, signed in 2011, made it easier for Swiss companies and individuals to operate in the UAE without facing fiscal penalties on both ends. And in 2014, Switzerland—as part of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA)—signed a comprehensive Free Trade Agreement with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), of which the UAE is a key member.

WHY DUBAI? WHY NOW?

There's no question that the UAE has made itself attractive to international firms—Swiss ones included. Once largely dependent on oil revenues, the country has embarked on a bold strategy of diversification. Dubai and Abu Dhabi now serve as regional hubs for finance, logistics, real estate, digital technology, and tourism. This shift has created increasing demand for sophisticated legal services—particularly those related to cross-border structuring, compliance, arbitration, and wealth management. Equally significant is the emergence of legal zones such as the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) and the Abu Dhabi Global Market



(ADGM)—jurisdictions governed by English common law rather than local Sharia-based legal systems. These zones offer a familiar environment for Swiss lawyers trained in civil or common law systems, opening the door to more robust legal cooperation and regulatory clarity for international clients. Strategically located between Europe, Asia, and Africa, the UAE also acts as a global pivot point. For Swiss firms with clients operating internationally, a presence in Dubai or Abu Dhabi is no longer optional—it's a competitive advantage.

SWISS FIRMS ON THE GROUND

A number of Swiss firms are not just establishing branch offices in the UAE—they're embedding themselves into the region's legal and business ecosystems. Swiss Group is perhaps the most prominent example. With fully staffed offices in both Dubai and Abu Dhabi, the firm offers legal consulting, corporate structuring, immigration advice, and accounting services for Swiss and European clients. Their team of multilingual professionals provides a "one-stop-shop" tailored to foreign investors navigating the complexities of Gulf regulation. Bonnard Lawson, a long-established Swiss firm with international offices, has built a strong Dubai presence too. Their lawyers focus on commercial transactions, dispute resolution, private client advisory, and international tax planning. With team members who speak French, English, Arabic, and Italian, the firm leverages its Swiss roots while fully integrating into the local business landscape.

Eptalex, structured as a Swiss verein, has been operating in Dubai since 2009 under the name MEG Legal Services. With offices in both Dubai and Abu Dhabi, the firm offers services ranging from litigation and arbitration to M&A and regulatory advice, catering to clients across Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. Then there's Nützi & Partner AG, a Swiss firm with a specialized affiliate, NH Partners FZCO, in Dubai. Closely linked with their Zug-based team, they provide legal and tax advice to international entrepreneurs and corporates operating in both jurisdictions. Fischer Legal Consulting takes a boutique approach, focusing on tailored legal and strategic support for companies and individuals relocating to or investing in the UAE. From company formation to banking and residency services, their work spans both continents.

THE FUTURE OF A LEGAL AXIS

This movement eastward isn't just a trend—it's becoming a defining feature of Swiss legal internationalism. The UAE's mix of opportunity, legal modernization, and international accessibility mirrors many of the same values that Swiss firms themselves embody: neutrality, discretion, and excellence in cross-border affairs.

As more Swiss lawyers continue to advise clients who operate globally, "The Dubai Connection" looks set to deepen, not fade. For the Swiss legal community, the Gulf is no longer a curiosity—it's the next frontier. ■



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FOREIGN PERSPECTIVES



GIUSEPPE VELLUTO, GIUSEPPE DE SIMONE

GOP Identity

Gianni & Origoni closes another year of growth, renews its partnership and compensation committee. At the helm, the duo Velluto-De Simone, who, along with senior partner and founder Francesco Gianni, sit on the management committee. Focus on people, careers and internationalization

by nicola di molfetta

The latest development at the firm has been the transition in the role of co-managing partner between lawyers **Antonio Auricchio** and **Giuseppe De Simone**. A handover that was planned and scheduled in July 2023, when the firm also renewed its executive committee. Giuseppe De Simone, born in 1976, joins **Giuseppe Velluto**, born in 1970. Gianni & Origoni (GOP) will have, for at least the next three years, its first millennial leadership duo at the helm, which, together with senior partner and co-founder Francesco Gianni, forms the management committee and participates in the executive committee.

Both Velluto and De Simone have climbed the organizational hierarchy of the professional association, advancing step by step. They both served as office partners, the former for the Milan office, the latter for Rome. Both were also part of the executive committee as elected members and today hold this position by right as co-managing partners. "I was also the recruiting partner", recalls De Simone, whom MAG met along with Velluto at the Piazza Belgioioso office in Milan. People will be a recurring theme in this discussion. After all, people are the most important asset of a law firm, the factor that determines its development and success.

Regarding this, 2024 has also been a year of growth for the firm, as confirmed by the data. "We recorded a revenue increase of 9%", says Velluto. "Which means we are at about 188 million euros". A performance driven by the corporate M&A area, but not only that.

Mergers and acquisitions are certainly the driving force of the organization. The *Mergermarket* observatory recorded 65 announced transactions over the year, with a total value of approximately 10.5 billion dollars, marking a 39.5% increase. Among these, just to mention a few, are the assistance to Ita Airways in its transition to Lufthansa and support for KKR in its entry into Enilive and the acquisition of TIM's network. The firm is there, present in key operations. A trend that 2025 seems to be confirming. Again, just as an example, it is worth mentioning the role that Gianni & Origoni plays in one of the most interesting cases in the so-called banking sector reshuffle, advising MPS in the takeover bid for Mediobanca.

THE FIRM IN NUMBERS

1988

Year of founding (Rome, Milan, and New York)

490

Total professionals in Italy and abroad

58

Partners

165

Staff

11

Offices in Italy and abroad

5

New partners who joined the firm in the past year

188

Revenue in 2024

+ 9%

Revenue growth compared to the previous year

2024 ended with a 9% revenue growth, bringing total turnover to 188 million euros.

Precisely because it is a leading practice area, despite its strong market positioning, corporate M&A continues to be a sector in which the firm invests. In May 2024, the Milan office opened its doors to Massimo Tesei and a team of five professionals, including a partner, who arrived from the boutique Di Gravio Avvocati, a firm with significant influence in the industrial corporate and mid-market sector. "We have made a series of targeted additions", says De Simone, "bringing in profiles that are contributing to the development of practice areas where we have identified growth opportunities". Apart from M&A, much of the firm's effort has been directed toward tax and litigation.

In the tax and fiscal sector, the firm welcomed first Luca Dal Cerro, formerly of Legance, and then Professor Giulio Andreani, formerly of PwC TLS, along with a team of three professionals. In litigation, the firm brought in Cecilia Buresti with three colleagues, formerly of Norton Rose Fulbright, who are particularly active in insurance litigation. Most recently, Eviana Leung joined as counsel at the Hong Kong office.

The direction is towards strengthening the full-service nature of the firm, from which, De Simone emphasizes, "we cannot depart. Today, we have about forty professionals in administrative law, at least seventy in litigation, and forty in tax. We have also continued to grow in intellectual property and have focused on more niche areas with significant growth potential, such as the space economy and cybersecurity", where, since the arrival of partner Stefano Mele, the firm has developed high-level expertise.

The market demands and rewards firms capable of handling complex transactions, organizations that can ensure the same level of quality in support across all aspects of a deal. "The market adds De Simone demands a complete ability to respond. I specialize in banking & finance, but I often have to deal with tax, administrative, or regulatory issues. Clients expect a firm like ours to have the same level of competence in every area. Being full-service today means being able to respond efficiently to this type of need". "But this, adds Velluto, is also a goal we pursue

LATERAL HIRES

New professionals who joined the firm (January 2024 - January 2025):

- **Eviana Leung**, Counsel, Litigation, Hong Kong (February 2025)
- **Cecilia Buresti**, Partner + team of 3 Associates, Litigation & Arbitration, Milan (January 2025)
- **Giulio Andreani**, Partner + team of 3 Counsel, Tax, Milan (January 2025)
- **Amb. Vincenzo De Luca**, Of Counsel, Internationalization, Rome (January 2025)
- **Edoardo Brillante**, Counsel, Financial Markets Law, Milan (December 2024)
- **Massimo Tesei**, Partner + team of 5 professionals, including one partner (Carlo Mecella), M&A, Milan (May 2024)
- **Luca Dal Cerro**, Partner, Tax, Milan (January 2024)



On the verge of reaching 500. Over the past year, four partners, two counsels, and one of counsel have joined the firm

through internal growth. We are fully committed to enhancing our talents, and this for at least two reasons: first, because we want to consolidate and preserve the GOP identity; second, because the market must be assured of professionals with the highest technical standards”.

This is why, over the past two years, the firm has worked with great attention to reforming its partnership. “Today, we have fifty-eight equity partners and twenty-four non-equity partners”, states Velluto, “and the latter now have a very different status compared to before”. “In fact”, De

Simone interjects, “today, non-equity partners are professionals who possess the qualities needed to access equity. Our non-equity partnership is essentially an incubator for equity, meaning that at our firm, those who become non-equity partners are effectively on track to achieve equity within a period that can be estimated at approximately three years”.

And that is not all. The firm has decided to free itself from the constraints of the traditional “up or out” logic, which usually dictates that those who do not advance must leave. “Our vision is forward-looking. “Up or out’ is not a relevant concept anymore”, says Velluto. “We have differentiated career paths by creating alternatives to partnership, with the roles of senior counsel and of counsel. The goal is to enhance the unique strengths of each of our professionals”. “Professional excellence”, adds De Simone, “is a principle that Gianni & Origoni cannot



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TREND

REVENUE TREND

(Figures in million euros)

Year	Revenue (€ mln)
2024	188
2023	172
2022	160
2021	150

compromise on. The focus on people and talent has always been at the core and will shape the future, creating professionals with different characteristics, nurturing individual potential, and establishing conditions for growth opportunities. In other words, ensuring a better environment for everyone by valuing human capital, respecting individual inclinations, aptitudes, and potential”.

The definition of career paths is another key aspect of the excellence strategy pursued by the firm. Engaged, like all firms, in the so-called “war for talent”, Gianni & Origoni has raised salaries for junior lawyers. Today, a first-year associate

starts with a salary of 36,000 euros and can earn up to around 145,000 euros per year, plus bonuses, by the time they reach the highest level of seniority before transitioning to a counselship or partnership.

However, according to co-managing partners Velluto and De Simone, it is not just about money. “Employee retention”, says Velluto, “is also linked to offering perspectives, a project they can identify with, and above all, the firm's ability to demonstrate attention to their well-being”. More than focusing on smart working, attention is placed on work-life balance, training, and personal and professional growth. “We are lawyers. We have always done smart working, as we have always been used to working from anywhere and at any time”.

“We invest heavily in training for younger professionals”, De Simone points out, “supporting their professional growth through academic training programs, as well as training with our clients and partner firms. We try to involve younger colleagues in the firm's life and decision-making processes. We have established an associate committee to accelerate the institutionalization process of the firm and facilitate dialogue with younger colleagues in a two-way dynamic”.

Returning to the issue of salaries, De Simone states that “the trend is to increase compensation for younger professionals. The problem is that there are fewer and fewer aspiring lawyers. And among them, we need to attract the best. Salaries and economic prospects are one factor. Then there is the project, career path transparency, and the

CULTURAL OBJECTIVE

The First International Academy

In 2024, the firm launched the GOP International Academy, a training initiative sponsored by the Italian National Bar Council, the Higher School of Advocacy, the Law Society of England and Wales, and the Bar Council. Through this academy, the firm promotes legal culture. The initiative allows Italian lawyers and English solicitors to enhance their knowledge in international contexts and deepen their expertise in business law. The first edition of the GOP International Academy was held in London, featuring the course “*Business Law: new developments in theory and practice*”. The second edition will take place from July 21 to July 25, 2025..

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Taking Action Against Gender-Based Violence


SGOP Cares is the firm's initiative that brings together activities in support of the environment (GOP Cares Green), people (GOP Cares Social), and governance (GOP Cares Work), with the goal of promoting sustainable development. The firm's commitment to Diversity & Inclusion has received formal and significant recognition with the UNI 125:2022 certification for gender equality.

With the recent #UGUALEPERTUTTE initiative, Gianni & Origoni has taken a stand against gender-based violence by offering its professional expertise in a program aimed at providing information, training, and support. The project involves professionals actively engaging in high schools, leading educational and awareness campaigns for students.

focus on the individual. In other words, the GOP identity”.

Regarding careers and compensation, the most significant governance change in the past year has been the expansion of the mission and the composition of the compensation committee. The firm has created an independent body responsible for defining the remuneration of equity partners, non-equity partners, senior counsel, and of counsel. “It is a fully independent body”, says Velluto, “meaning that none of its eight members is, or can be, a member of the management or

executive committee”.

Additionally, De Simone explains, “it works twelve months a year. And this is crucial because it means that it monitors professionals throughout the year, tracks business performance continuously, and has the ability to intervene to improve progress and results as needed”. The compensation committee is also characterized by a diverse composition in terms of practice areas represented and generational background. 



A portrait of Marta González, a woman with long, straight blonde hair, smiling at the camera. She is wearing a white V-neck top and a gold chain necklace with a circular pendant. The background is a blurred, dark blue-grey.

FOREIGN PERSPECTIVES

Marta González: law and passion for healthcare

The newly appointed global co-head of the health sciences group and head of the health steering committee at Eversheds Sutherland Spain looks back on her career and the key learnings of her career

by julia gil

“Sport is my grounding cable”. So says **Marta González**, partner in Eversheds Sutherland's litigation and health sciences department and recently appointed global co-head of the health sciences group and head of Eversheds Sutherland Spain's health steering committee. And that's no cliché. She has been doing Muay Thai for a decade with one of the national coaches and technical director of the Spanish Kickboxing and Muay Thai Federation and it is not uncommon to see her on a Saturday at a boxing event. This training has undoubtedly helped her to deal with the challenges of her career: from combining her work in an office and in a company at the same time, to currently directing international teams in a sector as complex as health sciences.

A CLEAR VOCATION

This Madrid-born woman with Galician roots has made health law her specialty, becoming one of the key figures in advising companies in the pharmaceutical and health sector. “I was fortunate to combine my passion for law with my interest in healthcare, and that allowed me to find a niche where I really feel fulfilled.” And her trajectory is proof of that. Marta González worked as an in-house lawyer in the legal departments of pharmaceutical companies such as Glaxosmithkline (Spain) and Celgene International Sarl (Switzerland), in secondment. At this stage she was duplicating work, and when she finished with her responsibilities in the company, she started with the firm's issues. For her, it was a commitment to her professional career and her desire to become a partner. “There are moments that require you to make time where you don't have it.”

And if her adaptation to the business world was quick, her arrival in Switzerland was even quicker. Overnight, homeless and already married, she decided to move. However, this was not the only challenge. During her time at Celgene, she filled three vacancies at the same time. “These are decisions you have to make in a very fast way, but they are sacrifices you gladly make.”



«I was fortunate to combine my passion for law with my interest in healthcare»

Having been part of both worlds has given her a comprehensive and proactive view of the industry and what she defines as a “privileged perspective.” “From my in-house experience, I have learned the importance of finding practical and effective solutions that can be implemented quickly, considering the operational constraints and business objectives of pharmaceutical companies,” explains the partner. Unlike her work in law firms where the approach tends to be more theoretical or long-term, her experience as an in-house lawyer has enabled her to anticipate legal risks and align legal strategies with commercial objectives.

«From my in-house experience, I have learned the importance of finding practical and effective solutions that can be implemented quickly»

THE INTERNATIONAL LEAP

Her arrival at Eversheds Sutherland was not without great stories either. “I got to know New York with a big case.” Barely a month after joining, he was already on Rockefeller Center's Beach 14 preparing a trial for one of the big pharma firms. “It was an American-style trial,” explains the partner, including simulations. This anecdote, which Gonzalez always likes to tell against, marked him. “The funny thing was that I didn't have to go, but a member of the team gave me the opportunity,” she explains. An opportunity that he took full advantage of and in which he was able to demonstrate that he could do everything he set his mind to. Since then, his trajectory in the firm has



continued to rise, and along the way he has had the key support of **Kiko Carrión**, partner in the litigation, intellectual property and health sciences department. “I had the luck of my life with him.” With his guidance, Gonzalez got the guidance he needed by learning from his experiences. “My infinite gratitude especially those moments of doubt when you lose faith in yourself and the other is the one who encourages you to continue,” the partner concludes emotionally.

A CHANGE OF PERSPECTIVE

The promotion came at a bittersweet moment. It coincided with the loss of his father; something that made him rethink many things and change his overall outlook on life. “You have to learn to manage your time very well and be smarter about managing your personal side,” he says. Professionally, the challenge is also great. “Growth is becoming an entrepreneur. Being a lawyer and being a technician is one thing, but being an entrepreneur is complicated,” González explains. As she admits, there are times when it is easy to lose confidence. “It happens to all of us. Your spirits fail you when things aren't going as well as you'd like.” But the key, she says, is not to fall into imposter syndrome and to surround yourself with a good team. “People you trust, who you lean on and who

«Sport is my grounding cable»

are involved. That's key.”

In this new role, which she herself defines as “the next milestone” she had set for herself in her professional career, her goal is: to position the firm internationally. “The challenge is to work with clients on a global level, with all the offices,” explains the partner. For her, managing at an international level is a challenge. Working with clients in different countries and coordinating global teams that bring benefits to the firm on a global level is no easy task. But if one thing is clear to her, it is that she will do it with the same passion that has guided her career. “My goal is to try to get it right.” And, with her track record, there is no doubt that she will succeed. 

MARTA GONZÁLEZ'S CAREER

- 2010** - Lawyer at Clemente, Jiménez y Ontiveros
- 2010** - Attorney at Law at Eversheds Lupicinio
- 2014-2015** - Part-time Lawyer at Glaxosmithkline
- 2015-2016** - Legal Advisor on Secondment at Celgene
- 2011-2015** - Associate Attorney at Eversheds Sutherland
- 2015-2018** - Senior Counsel at Eversheds Sutherland
- 2018-2019** - Legal Director at Eversheds Sutherland
- 2019-2020** - Counsel at Eversheds Sutherland
- 2021 - Present** - Partner at Eversheds Sutherland

Women in a Legal World

The synergy between education and innovation: a model for economic success

by valentina yane*



The legal profession, like all fields, is undergoing rapid transformation driven by technological advancements, economic shifts, and societal changes. In an era where Artificial intelligence (AI), automation, and digitalization are reshaping industries, staying at the forefront

of knowledge is essential. Continuous education and innovation are not merely advantages but necessities for professionals who aim to remain relevant and contribute meaningfully to their field. By 2030, WEF predicts a net gain of 78 million jobs despite 92 million losses due to technology. Yet only software developers rank among the most in-demand roles, underscoring the need for adaptability.

At Davos 2025, AI dominated discussions. UN chief António Guterres warned of its risks, urging global cooperation to prevent inequality. Pope Francis cautioned against AI's role in the crisis of truth, stressing ethical concerns. OpenAI's Sam Altman advocated for a balanced, iterative approach to AI

development with regulatory oversight.

Beyond AI, economic growth hinges on four key dimensions: innovation, inclusion, sustainability, and resilience. The WEF's Future of Growth Initiative, launched in 2024, urged leaders to recalibrate economic policies to align with these priorities. South Korea exemplifies how investment in innovation leads to economic success. In 1975, its per capita income was just a quarter of Spain's; today, it surpasses Spain's, largely due to substantial investments in research and development (R&D). South Korea allocates over 4.2% of its GDP to R&D, resulting in sustained productivity growth of 2–5% annually. In contrast, Spain's lower R&D investment has led to stagnation. Switzerland

provides another compelling case. Despite its small size and limited natural resources, it consistently ranks among the most competitive economies in the world, thanks to its strong commitment to innovation. Switzerland invests around 3.4% of its GDP in R&D and fosters close collaboration between universities, businesses, and government institutions. This ecosystem has allowed Swiss firms to maintain high productivity and global leadership in sectors like pharmaceuticals, finance, and precision engineering. The contrast between South Korea, Switzerland, and Spain underscores the essential role that sustained R&D investment and academic excellence play in driving economic growth and technological advancement.. Elite institutions are key drivers of innovation, attracting top talent and fostering strategic partnerships. Stanford and UC Berkeley played a pivotal role in shaping Silicon Valley, a region that might have otherwise remained primarily agricultural, lacking the entrepreneurial and technological boom that has come to define it today. Similarly, Harvard and MIT have played a pivotal role in anchoring Boston as a global epicenter for education and technology, thereby staving off industrial decline. Switzerland's global competitiveness is similarly rooted in its prestigious institutions, such as ETH

Zürich and EPFL Lausanne, which attract world-class researchers and forge valuable industry partnerships. Google's decision to establish a European software development center in Zürich—despite the high cost of living and harsh winters—demonstrates the strong pull of these universities in shaping technological landscapes and driving global innovation. In today's rapidly evolving world, continuous education and innovation are indispensable. Legal professionals, in particular, must embrace lifelong learning to keep pace with shifts in law, regulation, and technology. The legal field must move beyond its traditional reliance on precedent and adapt to broader societal changes. By cultivating a culture of ongoing education, innovation, and ethical leadership, lawyers can ensure they continue to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of justice and governance. Moreover, strong leadership is critical in guiding these transformations. Effective leaders must exhibit unwavering integrity, intellectual curiosity, and a commitment to excellence. As the legal profession evolves, leadership that is proactive, transparent, and inclusive will be essential. For example, increasing the presence of women in leadership roles strengthens decision-making processes by incorporating diverse perspectives and addressing a broader range of

societal concerns.

As technology reshapes the global landscape, collaboration, transparency, and ethical responsibility must be at the forefront. The future of AI and digital transformation must be grounded in international cooperation, education, and ethics. By ensuring equitable access to technological advancements and addressing potential risks proactively, we can rebuild trust in an ever-evolving world, harnessing technology as a force for positive and sustainable global development.

In conclusion, universities, continuous legal education, and strong leadership are foundational to progress in today's society. By fostering innovation, embracing lifelong learning, and ensuring inclusive and ethical governance, we can create a future that is not only technologically advanced but also just, responsible, and sustainable.

**President Women in a Legal World Young*

The Swiss (legal) path to the stars is taking shape

by riccardo loschi*



Analysing the draft Federal Law on Space Operations and its implications for space activities, contracts and dispute resolution

Over the past two years, Switzerland's regulatory framework for space

operations has developed rapidly. In April 2023, Switzerland revised its Space Policy, delineating its strategic priorities and corresponding areas of activity in the space sector. The updated Space Policy reaffirmed Switzerland's commitment to collaborating with all stakeholders at the international and European levels with the goal of protecting and promoting Swiss and Swiss-based space companies.

One year later, Switzerland joined the Artemis Accords, further confirming its desire to participate in space-related programs both within and beyond Europe while simultaneously reinforcing its position as an independent and reliable partner for space missions.

The latest development in

this direction is the release of the draft Federal Law on Space Operation (DSL) on 31 January 2025, which is currently undergoing public consultation. The consultation period runs until early May 2025. The draft will then be revised taking into consideration the comments and the bill will proceed to parliamentary review.

A GENERAL OVERVIEW

The primary objective of the bill is to establish a clear legal framework for commercial, governmental, and scientific space operations, ensuring Switzerland's compliance with international treaties while maintaining consistency with other European regulatory frameworks and regulations applicable to related sectors, such as aviation, telecommunications, and

defence (Art. 1-2, 7, 9, 29, 37, 51). In brief, the DSL aims to define space operations, space objects and space operators subject to the DSL and falling under Swiss jurisdiction (Art. 1-6); Regulate space operations, for example, by establishing requirements for authorising existing and new space operators and transferring authorisations (Art. 12-16, 19-22, 36-37); Introduce a liability regime for space operators and insurance requirements, particularly for high-risk operations (Art. 23-26, 46); Establish a national register for space objects and define the competences of the regulatory authority, which include (i) authorising and overseeing space operations (Art. 29-30, 39-42, 46); and (ii) cooperating with its foreign counterparts (Art. 48).

Importantly, the DSL also (i) requires the adoption of measures to minimise environmental impacts and ensure operational safety (e.g., deorbiting disposal plans, collisions avoidance mechanisms); and (ii) subjects space operators to (national) security clearances, as well as information and cooperation obligations.

“AUSSI PEU QUE POSSIBLE, MAIS AUTANT QUE NÉCESSAIRE”

The DSL is relatively concise and delegates regulatory powers to the Federal Council in various critical areas, ranging from authorization and insurance requirements, safety and environmental standards to the conclusion

of international agreements implementing the DSL. This regulatory approach preserves flexibility to adapt to rapidly evolving international and national guidelines, soft laws, and technical and operational requirements. While this approach is not unique to space law, it does place significant reliance on the Federal Council. To the author's knowledge, a draft ordinance is not yet available, but its contents will be critical in defining the concrete parameters and requirements for space operations and operators.

THE IMPACT OF A SPACE LAW ON CONTRACTS AND DISPUTES

With the continued growth of the Swiss space sector, the number of international contracts and disputes involving Switzerland and Swiss law is likely to increase. So far, international arbitration has been the preferred method for resolving complex disputes in the space sector and Swiss law is a widely chosen governing law for contracts involving cross-border operations.

The introduction of a Swiss space law would further enhance its attractiveness by providing a clearer and more predictable legal framework for space contracts. Well-defined obligations and liability regimes, conditions for obtaining and transferring authorizations and conducting space operations would offer even greater certainty for space companies seeking to allocate

risk and indemnification obligations through their Swiss-law-governed contracts. This legal clarity and predictability would also reduce uncertainties in case of disputes arising out of these contracts, making Switzerland and Swiss law a stronger alternative to jurisdictions that lack a structured space legal framework.

As the Swiss space regulatory framework continues to develop, it will become increasingly important to monitor its development and periodically assess its impact on contract drafting and dispute resolution strategies.

** Senior Associate at LALIVE
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