

Two new partners join KPMG Legal's leadership team



KPMG Legal Romania is expanding its Litigation & Dispute Resolution, Corporate and M&A practices by recruiting top lawyers Vlad Peligrad and Catalin Oroviceanu to join KPMG Legal's team as coordinating partners. Both formerly worked for Magic Circle firms.

KPMG Legal Romania is a growing practice, with a broad range of specialisms, building on KPMG's rich history and values and combining uncompromising legal acumen with innovation, team spirit and true passion for the legal profession. It is part of the KPMG Legal global network, whose strategy is to double its headcount in the next few years.

KPMG Legal Romania's leadership team has five partners led by **Laura Toncescu**, a lawyer with more than 20 years of experience in legal services and with a particular specialization in Financial Services. **Nicoleta Mihai** and **Sebastian Olteanu**, the existing coordinating partners, complete the firm's managing team, focused on strategizing the path to success for a team of 28 experienced senior lawyers.

Vlad Peligrad has more than 17 years of legal practice in international law firms, with broad experience and knowledge in litigation & arbitration, insolvency procedures, fraud investigations and crisis management. His expertise includes assisting and representing major international companies in all types of litigation – civil, tax, white collar, as well as international and domestic arbitration. He was the sole winner of the Litigation category for Romania in the Client Choice Awards 2016 and he has been ranked by Chambers Global and Legal500 in their Dispute Resolution sections, since 2015.

Vlad also has wide transactional experience in project finance, infrastructure and concessions/PPP projects as well as in bank lending and real estate finance transactions, accumulated both in Bucharest and New York.

He has a Ph.D. in law and completed his LL.M with The George Washington University Law School in Washington, D.C. He previously worked for the Bucharest office of Clifford Chance as head of its arbitration practice and the New York and Bucharest offices of Salans. Before joining Salans, Vlad was an associate with another Big 4 law firm.

"I am glad to join the KPMG Legal team and bring my expertise to the firm's well-established practice with the aim of developing a top team of litigators and offering our clients an integrated approach to their needs. Teaming up with highly-skilled tax and business advisers will ensure our clients some of the best advice and representation in their relations with the Romanian authorities and courts.

My vision is to offer our clients not only pure legal advice, but also clear strategic intelligence. Having KPMG's

professionals and expertise alongside will help us to be the strategic adviser our clients require, with clear understanding of the client's industry, business and needs, so that we can provide legal services which are tailored to better serve clients' interests. From this perspective, our aim is to develop the local footprint for litigation and arbitration for clients in all industries, especially for global corporate, local and international financial institutions", says Vlad.

Catalin Oroviceanu has more than 17 years of experience in both local and international law firms, as well as with a private equity fund active in Romania. Over several years, he has been involved in numerous M&A transactions in various industry sectors, representing buyers and sellers alike during due diligence processes and negotiation and closing of sale-purchase agreements, joint venture/shareholder agreements, and management agreements. Catalin has also carried out various restructuring processes (mergers and spin-offs) for both high-profile and local investors. He regularly publishes articles and has taught corporate law for 10 years at the Law School of the University of Bucharest. He holds an LLM (University College London, Faculty of Law) and a Ph.D. in law. He was, until recently, the head of legal for the Romania-based activity of Abris Capital Partners. Previously, he has worked for the Bucharest office of Clifford Chance, as well as for a law firm affiliated with another Big 4 company.

As Catalin explains: "I bring along diversified experience, gained not only in reputable law firms, but also at "ground level". I like to think that this gives me a unique advantage, as I'm able to view things not only from the perspective of the lawyer, but also from the commercial perspective of the client. People who have worked with me over time can probably say that I have a "no nonsense" and deal-making approach.

The Corporate and M&A practice environment is very competitive these days, with a significant number of law firms doing this type of work, pressure on fees and, at times, less focus on quality. My view is that KPMG Legal is well-equipped to successfully compete on this market. The affiliation with KPMG gives us the unique advantage of being able to offer a holistic approach and provide integrated services (advisory, tax and legal) to a high level of quality, which can only be beneficial for clients and their partners. The technological awareness and the approach to human resources of KPMG Legal (and KPMG in general) are other key points that, in the medium and long term, will be able to make a difference in this ever-changing landscape of legal services".

Laura Toncescu says: "At KPMG Legal Romania, we place trust, professionalism and legal excellence at the top of our priority list. In this context, I am very happy to welcome Vlad and Catalin to our team, and, given my experience in working with them in the past, I am confident that they will contribute with their professional and personal qualities to provide our clients with a service which is unique in the market".

René Schöb, *Head of Tax & Legal* adds: "Having Vlad and Catalin joining our team is a demonstration of our ambition to grow the legal practice and enlarge our footprint on the market by attracting very experienced and well-established professionals. We understand from our clients that they value combined advice which includes tax, legal and advisory since it shortens the project time and assures a harmonized outcome and conclusions in cross-functional projects. By continuing also our digitization of the practice, we will be well equipped for the future challenges of the legal market, which is increasingly faced by technological disruption."