

The International organization that aims to provide premium cross-border legal services



INITIATIVE
Lawyer Cristina Ghica founded the International Association of Boutique Law Firms

When they call to the members of the International Association of Boutique Law Firms, clients - operating anywhere in the world - are guaranteed to receive quality legal services. **Marian Floranescu** was convinced of this.

Created by lawyer Cristina Ghica, International Association of Boutique Law Firms (IABLF) offers those interested the chance to work with top lawyers from all over the world. This was made possible through the setting-up of an interconnected network - based on legal knowledge and associates - made up exclusively of boutique law firms. They keep in touch actively through regular communication and offer each other mutual benefits. Besides, IABLF promotes a networking philosophy based on the question "How can I help?" and not "What can I get?"

In the context of difficult economic times, complicated by technological changes and globalization, it is only natural for the economy and, as a consequence, for the legal services industry as well to have to adapt to a world which is profoundly different from what it was ten years ago. In this highly competitive environment, where uncertainty is the only available certainty, the need for law firms that innovate and stand out is more important than ever before. Today's clients need efficiency and transparency and they are increasingly better at knowing how to get them.

International Association of Boutique Law Firms was born out of Cristina Ghica's commitment to provide her law firm's clients with the best legal representation; she is Managing Partner at Ghica Boutique Law Firm and has shown excellent flair in the development of her business. With a remarkable background supported by her experience gathered from years of work at top multinationals - Volksbank, Anchor Group and Argo Capital Management Property - that have inspired her excellent business conduct, Cristina Ghica saw an opportunity and developed it to the benefit

FOTO: ZOLTAN LORENCZ

of her clients and partners: the setting up of an organization which develops a networking and cross-promotion platform for member law firms on international legal topics.

IABLF strengthens the benefits of boutique law firms. Operating with the clear objective of growing and sharing its advantages with boutique law firms from all over the world, IABLF will certainly help them develop and provide an extra opportunity to compete with internationally recognized law firms.

IABLF consolidates the benefits of boutique law firms which are their sole beneficiaries: clients have the opportunity to work with experienced attorneys from all corners of the world, at reasonable fees; the frequent problem of over-qualification is no longer an issue; business relations are stable and long-lasting and they are not subject to momentary changes; the contact with the client is direct, without intermediaries; there is no bureaucracy, like it happens so often with big law firms.

International Association of Boutique Law Firms targets boutique law firms from all over the world and provides a secured communication platform which works as a framework for establishing contacts and sharing information among IABLF members. This forum has been created to help exchange business ideas and legal approaches to difficult, complex legal matters. Thus, both IABLF members and their clients are sure to have access to the highest level of knowledge, experience and reputation adapted to the local reality. Any IABLF member can enjoy the advantages of a global presence in all law fields, without the sacrifice of time and money.

IABLF offers each member a profile where it may provide detailed information about its boutique law firm plus the possibility to upload press releases with the latest news. Through their profiles, members access the communication platform designed for the forums dedicated to various legal issues encountered in international law systems.

What does IABLF membership mean? Particular attention is given to the selection criteria for new members. Cristina Ghica explains: “IABLF is not an organization that any lawyer or law firm may join by simply paying a fee: the qualifications of each potential member are carefully revised and only those law firms with the most solid knowledge, experience and reputation are invited to join. Each member has credentials comparable or superior to those of the best full-service law-firms and the screening process considers the reputation, the international classifications and the client references.”

Current and future IABLF members are boutique law firms from all over the world specialized in the following fields: banking and finance, society & business law; litigations and alternative dispute resolution; energy & natural resources; tax law and taxes; labor law; insurance; industrial and intellectual property; IT, telecom and media; mergers and acquisitions; public-private partnerships and public procurement; real estate and construction.

At present, IABLF has five members and aims at reaching at least 30 by the end of the year through sustained efforts and intense promotion campaigns both in Romania and abroad.

Some of the law firms that have chosen to be members of IABLF are long-term partners of Ghica Boutique Law Firm: Boddy Mathews Solicitors from the United Kingdom, for instance. Kate Matthews, Senior Co-founding Partner and Director of Boddy Mathews Solicitors was the key to

the success of some large international projects as early as 2009. She states about the IABLF: “We are delighted to work together to develop IABLF. I am convinced that in the shortest time this association shall become a prosperous network of boutique law firms with similar interests, which supports its members in their positive ascent on international markets.”

Boutique law firms from France, Spain, Italy and the United States are now in the pre-accession stage. Cristina Ghica explains: “Although we knew that this organization is a project with great international potential development, we were surprised to see the positive reaction. This is first due to the fact that we have reached the point where many companies have become aware that it is harder and harder to find attorneys who are only specialized in a few fields of law, are well prepared and have international experience. IABLF responds to a real need of bringing added value to clients.

IABLF networking. By the end of this year, IABLF will organize a launching event in London at the Law Society of England and Wales; current and potential members as well as top players of the industry, local and international law firms and managers of legal departments from multinational companies will be invited; they will share their business experience as well as strategies and models aimed at creating growth in the current circumstances of the Romanian and global economy. Face to face talks between moderators and speakers about legal issues from international law systems, the permanent interaction with the participating IABLF members, the analysis of case studies and organization of keynote sessions will definitely lead to the fulfilment of the IABLF’s objective: to facilitate international dialogue between boutique law firms and to actively strengthen the common interests of IABLF through sustainable projects which support the interests of clients and business partners. As we were saying, IABLF’s motto is networking. ■

Further information about the IABLF may be found on www.iablf.org and on the association’s LinkedIn and Facebook accounts.



FOTO FACEBOOK

Kate Matthews is one of the first IABLF members and a trusted partner of Ghica Boutique Law Firm.