

HERBERT SMITH FREEHILLS HIRES SIX-STRONG ENERGY, INFRASTRUCTURE, COMPETITION AND REGULATORY TEAM FOR MILAN OFFICE

16 July 2019 | Milan
Firm news

Herbert Smith Freehills has hired market-leading energy and infrastructure practice headed by Partners Lorenzo Parola and Francesca Morra, who will join the firm's office in Milan along with a team of four associates.

The team will join Herbert Smith Freehills from Paul Hastings, where Lorenzo was Chairman of the firm's EU Energy and Infrastructure practice and Francesca Morra was a Partner in the Milan office.

Highly regarded in the Italian legal market, with experience leading on some of the most complex and *'first-of-a-kind'* transactions in the sector, Lorenzo is both admitted to the Italian Supreme Court and as a Solicitor of England and Wales. He advises infrastructure funds, utilities and oil majors in cross-border and domestic M&A transactions in the oil & gas, power, renewables, energy efficiency, with a strong focus on cutting-edge energy transition and energy technology matters.

He also has a substantial track-record on energy projects development and financing including: thermal and renewables plants, LNG terminals, gas storage and pipelines and merchant interconnector lines. He is an expert in physical and financial energy trading with unparalleled experience in long-term PPAs and tolling agreements, take-or-pay gas sales agreements also in the context of contentious price revisions, blockchain and smart contracts. He is regularly instructed, either as counsel or arbitrator, in the context of national and international arbitrations relating to gas sale agreements and in the construction sector.

Lorenzo is ranked as the No. 1 Energy, Infrastructure and M&A lawyer in Italy by international directories and, alongside with many other awards, has just been recognised, for the second year in a row, as '*M&A Lawyer of the Year*', by leading Italian legal magazine LegalCommunity.

Lauded as a '*Leading Individual*' by Legal 500 and shortlisted as Antitrust and Regulatory Lawyer of the Year for the LegalCommunity Energy Awards over the last years, Francesca has carved out a successful career, focusing on energy regulation and trading and competition law. She advises on contractual, regulatory and competition matters in particular in the energy sector. She has extensive knowledge of energy industry contracts and project development. She is recognised as one of the leading regulatory lawyers in the Italian energy market.

They will be joined by their team of four associates from Paul Hastings.

This is a significant hire for Herbert Smith Freehills, as Italy is the second largest energy market in Europe and, although mature, the Italian energy market is strong and growing significantly. The hire is also aligned with the overall aims of the European strategy.

The Firm's office in Milan, which will now include four Partners and one of Counsel, gives the Firm a unique offering in the Italian legal market and a truly market-leading Energy, Infrastructures and Life Sciences offering. We are able to provide clients with advice across a range of industries including: Corporate M&A, Projects, Competition, Regulation, IP, Public and Administrative Law, and Commercial Litigation.

Executive Partner and Global Head of Corporate Scott Cochrane, said: "*This is a natural expansion of our European platform and the new team will work alongside our broader European platform to further strengthen our integrated European energy team, which will benefit our clients - especially those who are active in several European markets. This new team will further enhance and strengthen our global offering for our clients, both domestic and from across our wider global network.*"

Commenting on the hires, Office Managing Partner Laura Orlando, said: "*Lorenzo is regarded as one of the best technical lawyers in the Energy market in Milan and the breadth of his sector knowledge is unrivalled. Together with Francesca and the team, this will give us not only energy sector capabilities, but also a Italian M&A, merger control and antitrust capability - as well as additional state aid and procurement capabilities. I look forward to working with them and welcoming them to our growing office in Milan.*"

Lorenzo added: "*It was a natural decision for me as an energy lawyer at this stage in my career to join Herbert Smith Freehills. HSF features the leading and global energy and infrastructure practice advising leading global industry clients in their most strategic transactions. Complementing global leading practices with local leading practices will set a model for international law firms wishing to succeed in the very competitive and highly sophisticated Italian legal services market. I feel honoured and I am looking forward to contributing to the growth and success of the Milan office.*"

Francesca said: *"I have worked with Lorenzo for many years and we have established a strong team, who continue to act on the most complex and landmark Italian transactions. I am excited at the prospect of joining Herbert Smith Freehills' office in Milan and growing our now unique and market-leading offering for clients in the Italian market and across the firm's global platform."*

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