

Zurich boutique hires from Lalive



Johannes Landbrecht

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Cosmo Sanderson

Zurich-based boutique Gabriel Arbitration has hired a former senior associate from Lalive who has worked on gas pricing arbitrations, among other cases.

Johannes Landbrecht, who is German, joins the boutique as of counsel after five years at Lalive, during which he spent time as a foreign visiting associate at Rajah & Tann in Singapore.

He has also worked as an associate at Jones Day in Frankfurt and Paris.

He is qualified as an attorney in Germany and as a barrister in England and Wales and lectures at the University of Zurich and the Swiss Arbitration Academy.

"Having gained in-depth experience in three big and renowned arbitration practices, I now want to work in a smaller setting and return to the German-speaking market", Landbrecht tells GAR.

He chose Gabriel Arbitration as "a very specialised arbitration firm with a truly international practice."

Gabriel Arbitration was founded in 2012 by Swiss lawyer **Simon Gabriel**, who had previously worked at CMS von Erlach Poncet in Zurich. In the five years since its creation, the boutique has handled cases worth US\$500,000 to US\$120 million. Gabriel says, "Our hiring strategy aims at gathering specialised and experienced arbitration experts, while maintaining a lean company structure. This will ensure that our clients get maximum personal attention from their chosen expert for reasonable costs."

In May another CMS lawyer, **Axel Buhr**, followed Gabriel to his new firm as its second partner.

Landbrecht's addition, along with the hire of **Nataša Hadžimanović** in 2016, means that the Zurich boutique now has four lawyers.

Gabriel says Landbrecht is "one of the great talents in international arbitration – certainly in Europe, maybe even on a global level."

As a German lawyer and English barrister, he "bridges the gap between the civil law and common law world which is of great value in arbitration," Gabriel adds.

Named as a future arbitration leader by Who's Who Legal, Landbrecht is described by clients as well organised, intelligent, hard-working and quick to react to opposition strategy.

In 2016 he worked on an ICC case for Turkish state pipeline company BOTAŞ, which was awarded a retroactive cut in oil prices charged by the National Iranian Gas Company worth several billion dollars. This is one of three multibillion-dollar gas pricing disputes he has worked on.

He has represented several Fortune 500 companies in arbitration proceedings under the rules of the ICC, LCIA and UNCITRAL and acted as a tribunal secretary.

Werner Jahnel, a partner at Lalive in Zurich, says, "Johannes is a real pleasure to work with, as a team player who takes initiative and has excellent judgment and strategic decision making skills."

Geneva-based partner **Matthias Scherer** says, "He has a sharp mind, and is a merciless sparring partner for discussing and testing legal and tactical concepts in live cases."

Paul Tan, a partner at Rajah & Tann in Singapore, says that Landbrecht demonstrated his "acute analytical abilities on complex cases" while at the firm, showing "impressive knowledge of the oil and gas industry in particular."

"He was able to work well with our team and brought important cross-cultural perspectives to the table," Tan says.