



LEGAL MANAGEMENT

“By continuously investing in cutting-edge technologies and fostering a culture of innovation, White & Case Germany remains committed to delivering exceptional value and services to its clients in an evolving legal and technological landscape”

Karsten Wöckener

Head of Germany and Partner in the Global Capital Markets Practice. Karsten advises issuers and investment banks on corporate finance matters as well as regulatory capital transactions.

His focus is on equity and debt capital markets. Karsten frequently advises on investment grade, cross-over and high yield bonds, (pre-IPO) convertibles and exchangeables and other hybrid instruments as well as IPOs and rights issues. He also advises on secured bond and private placement transactions, including Schuldscheine, structured notes, exchange traded products and trade finance products across asset classes.

Karsten also advises issuers and banks on the establishment and update of debt issuance, commercial paper and structured note programmes.

Karsten represents several fintech, insurtech and startup companies in connection with their market entry and rounds of financing. This includes the launch of digital platforms, the use of distributed ledger technology (e.g. blockchain) regarding the issuance of securities as well as strategic considerations and the use of new technologies in corporate financing. He regularly advises various associations on “Digital Corporate Finance” matters.

As the Head of White & Case in Germany, how do you envision the firm's strategic growth in the German legal market over the next five years? What key areas or sectors are you focusing on to drive this growth?

At White & Case, we are excited to celebrate our 25th anniversary in Germany in 2025, marking a quarter-century of commitment and success in the region. Our vision for the next five years is centered around dynamic growth across key areas such as corporate finance, restructuring, and litigation.

Corporate finance remains a major growth driver, supported by our comprehensive approach that spans the full spectrum of corporate finance. Our strong US team based in Frankfurt enhances our capabilities in both debt and equity transactions, particularly in high-yield bonds, investment-grade bonds, and equity transactions.

Restructuring and insolvency administration are pivotal to our strategy, constituting a significant

portion of our revenue and legal workforce in Germany. Our recent successes highlight our well-integrated and highly effective restructuring practice, enabling us to handle significant international mandates.

Our litigation practice is renowned for its strength in the German market, particularly with our robust arbitration team and specialized commercial litigation group. We are well-positioned to support strategically important mass proceedings from Germany, a testament to our expertise and the trust our clients place in us.

Looking ahead, we see substantial opportunities in the tech sector and energy transition. Our market-leading practices in energy and infrastructure, led by experts in Düsseldorf, Berlin, and Hamburg, are particularly advantageous for our corporate finance efforts.

Our diversified practice areas ensure a balanced and resilient growth trajectory. We have dissolved location-based management in favor of a unified German market approach, aligning with our global strategic vision and allowing us to contribute significantly to the firm's international objectives.

We are open to opportunistic expansion in areas like private equity, corporate M&A, and infrastructure.

In summary, our strategic growth in Germany over the next five years will focus on leveraging our strengths in corporate finance, restructuring, and litigation while exploring new opportunities in emerging sectors. Our commitment to building strong client relationships and integrating our global network will remain at the core of our strategy.

The legal industry has seen significant movement of talent between firms. How does White & Case Germany approach talent acquisition and retention to ensure a stable and motivated team?

We prioritize talent acquisition and retention by fostering a supportive and sustainable work environment tailored to the professional and personal needs of our employees. Our commitment to a comprehensive strategy for attracting and retaining talent encompasses health and wellness programs, family-friendly initiatives, and proactive engagement with upcoming legal professionals. This approach guarantees that we continue to be an attractive workplace, fostering a motivated and stable team prepared to excel in the legal market of 2025 and beyond.

We invest in future legal talent through structured programs for students, early



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careers, and young professionals. Our strategy includes personal connections, targeted university outreach, and authentic insights into our firm culture. We engage with moot courts, student associations, and legal career fairs to build long-term relationships. Our “keep-in-touch” approach allows us to re-engage high-potential talent, offering early exposure to legal work, mentorship, and networking opportunities. Employee and alumni referrals further strengthen our talent pipeline, ensuring a steady influx of individuals who align with our values.

Emphasizing health and well-being, we offer benefits such as free fitness classes, e.g. yoga, Pilates and meditation as well as company-funded supplementary health insurance for comprehensive check-ups. Employees have access to an external Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for family, financial, or personal challenges, mental health awareness courses, and ongoing support. Our Wellpass membership provides access to over 10,000 fitness and yoga studios, swimming pools, and training facilities across Germany and Austria.

To support our employees' families, we partner with daycare centers and offer financial subsidies for childcare. We provide organizational support through an external family service provider, offering advice and placement assistance for childcare and eldercare services. Our benefits package includes a company pension plan, accident insurance, term life insurance, and a parental leave policy supplementing the first six weeks for new parents.

With the evolving regulatory landscape in Germany and the EU, how is White & Case Germany adapting its practices to stay ahead? Could you share examples of how the firm has proactively addressed recent regulatory challenges?

The Firm is committed to staying ahead of the evolving regulatory landscape in Germany and the EU by proactively adapting our practices and leveraging our global expertise. Our approach involves closely monitoring regulatory developments, engaging with regulatory bodies, and continuously updating our advisory services to ensure our clients remain compliant and well-informed.

One key area where we have proactively addressed regulatory challenges is in data protection and privacy. With the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and its ongoing implications, we have advised numerous clients on compliance strategies, data breach response plans, and cross-border data transfer issues. Our alerts and detailed analyses on GDPR developments help clients navigate complex regulatory requirements effectively.

We see a lot of our clients using AI tools with increasing regularity and starting to encounter the challenges of complying with AI regulatory laws – notably in the form of the EU AI Act. To help them navigate a complex and fragmented global AI regulatory environment, White & Case launched two tools: **AI Watch**, a global tracker which monitors the status of AI regulations in

30+ jurisdictions; and the **EU AI Act Handbook**, which provides a pragmatic approach to risk management and offers actionable guidance and insights to this complex new regime. Both resources are updated on a regular basis to help clients stay abreast of key legislative developments in the fast-moving space of artificial intelligence.

In the area of financial regulation, our team has been instrumental in guiding clients through the implications of the EU's Markets in Financial Instruments Directive II (MiFID II) and the European Market Infrastructure Regulation (EMIR). We have provided comprehensive support on compliance, reporting obligations, and the implementation of new regulatory frameworks. Our expertise ensures that clients are well-prepared for audits and inspections by regulatory authorities.

Additionally, our firm has been at the forefront of advising on regulatory changes related to sustainability and ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) criteria. With the EU's Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation (SFDR) and the Taxonomy Regulation coming into effect, we have assisted clients in understanding and integrating these requirements into their business operations.

Our proactive guidance helps clients align with regulatory expectations and leverage sustainability as a competitive advantage.

Our commitment to staying ahead of regulatory changes is exemplified by our regular publications and alerts available on our website (www.whitecase.com). These resources provide timely updates and in-depth analyses on a wide range of regulatory topics, ensuring that our clients have access to the latest information and best practices.

We navigate the evolving regulatory landscape by maintaining a forward-looking approach, staying well-informed, and offering proactive and strategic advice. Our dedication to providing expert guidance and timely updates equips our clients to confidently manage regulatory challenges and seize opportunities.

In an era where technology is rapidly transforming the legal profession, how is White & Case Germany integrating innovative solutions to enhance client service and operational efficiency?

Our clients and the quality of our services are at the core of our Innovation & AI endeavors. We focus on fostering a culture of innovation. Our lawyers are excited about using best-in-class



technologies and applying them adequately to deliver value to our clients.

We are identifying and developing new ways of working, utilizing emerging technologies, and being generally innovative in finding solutions for our clients' challenges. We have established processes to identify both the needs in our practice groups and the opportunities offered by innovative tools in the market. We also have resources available to tailor solutions to clients' requirements.

This approach is supported by teams of technologists, data scientists, project managers, and knowledge professionals. It ensures the safe integration of new technical solutions, effective safeguards against risks associated with the use of AI in legal services, and alignment with client expectations.

White & Case has a long-standing history of adopting and onboarding new legal technology solutions to assist our lawyers with their day-to-day work. Over the past 18 months, White & Case successfully onboarded a variety of new technology solutions. These include Generative AI ("GenAI") capabilities, such as eDiscovery, document review, and research platforms embedding GenAI. In addition, we continuously update our broad set of legal tech tools for effective due diligence, advanced document analytics,

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precise translations, high-quality mass litigation, efficient contract automation, and time-saving matter management.

With innovation becoming a priority for our lawyers, we see increasing interest and demand from both our clients and our lawyers to access state-of-the-art legal and AI technology. We are in continuous dialogue with our clients on solutions and implement different approaches, including clients working in our technology environments and vice versa, as well as connecting the two spheres with automated data bridges.

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