

Press Release: Withers' rapid commercial group expansion continues with recruitment of high-profile project finance partner

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Withers has today announced the appointment of Denis Petkovic as a partner in the firm and head of its international finance and projects practice.

Denis joins from Pillsbury where he was a partner and head of the European and Middle East practices, London office leader of the financial practice and a co-leader of the Energy team. Prior to his role at Pillsbury, Denis was a partner and a member of the International Committee at Chadbourne & Parke primarily concentrating on project finance and emerging markets transactions. He has a particular focus on Central and Eastern Europe, with extensive expertise in the energy sector.

Admitted in England and Wales, New South Wales, Australia and Hong Kong, Denis has worked with a range of international clients from lenders, developers and investors in project finance transactions to multi-lateral global agencies (including the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development ("EBRD") and the International Finance Corporation).

Joining alongside Denis will be Morana Vucinic, also from Pillsbury. Morana is a New York qualified lawyer who has previously also worked for the Croatian Ministry of Finance and EBRD. Morana holds an LLM from Harvard Law School where she studied as a Ron Brown Fellow.

This is another significant step in the development of the Withers international corporate and finance offering. Only last month, the firm announced the hire of a six-strong corporate tax and dispute resolution team from Eversheds in Milan, including partners Riccardo Buizza, Luigi Macioce and four associates. Withers has a burgeoning Central and Eastern Europe practice, having worked on a range of high-value transactions in the region this year such as the \$270m merger between gold-mining giants KazakhGold and Russia's PolyusGold.

Anthony Indaimo, Chairman and Head of the International Commercial Group at Withers, comments: "Working for a truly international and entrepreneurial client base, we are experiencing an increasing demand for international finance and projects services, particularly in the emerging markets such as Eastern Europe and Asia. Denis' expertise, experience and language skills will complement our team perfectly and will prove invaluable to clients with interests in emerging markets."

Denis Petkovic adds:

"I am delighted to be joining Withers with whom I have worked for a number of years and where I have a number of friends. Their international corporate and finance practice has been growing rapidly over the last few years, as has their global footprint. The firm has a clear strategic direction, building from its business in London and the East Coast of the USA, and has been growing in all its markets in recent years. I am keen to assist in their further international plans. Moreover, the amount of finance and projects work flowing from their entrepreneurial and institutional client base in emerging markets, such as Eastern Europe and Asia, is impressive, as demonstrated by their work on KazakhGold.

"This is an important time for private capital in commercial transactions given the current financial crisis and I look forward to working with their dynamic client base as it continues to expand into international finance and projects transactions."

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