

Roberto Podda

Partner

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OVERVIEW

Roberto Podda is a partner in the firm's Labor, Employment, and Workplace Safety practice and leads the practice in Italy. He focuses on labor and employment matters with broad experience representing multinational companies and large Italian groups, particularly in the hotel and tourism, steel, automotive, pharmaceutical, fashion and luxury, and new technologies industries.

Roberto gained experience in assisting clients in all aspects of Italian labor law, including restructuring and reorganization of companies' workforce, codes of conducts and company policies, incentive plans and MBOs, individual and collective dismissals, trade union relationships, collective agreements at a company level, Italian TUPE, employment agreements and agreements with free-lance consultants, non-competition and stability covenants, agency agreements, expatriates and national and international secondment, privacy and data protection. Support in due diligence activities and labor litigation are an integral part of Roberto's practice.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Prior to joining the firm, Roberto was a Partner of another law firm in Milan.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Recognised by *Chambers Europe* for Employment in Italy, 2026
- Recognised by *The Legal 500 EMEA* as a Recommended Lawyer for Employment in Italy, 2020-2026
- Recognised by *The Best Lawyers in Italy*™ for Litigation, 2025
- Ranked by *Leaders League* for Labor & Employment - Litigation and Labor & Employment - Advisory (2022)

PROFESSIONAL / CIVIC ACTIVITIES

- Member, Association of the Italian Employment Lawyers (AGI)
- Member, European Employment Lawyers Association (EELA)

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SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- Moderator, “HR Coffee Talks: EU Pay Transparency Directive,” March 2026
- Co-organizer of the event “Sardinia: Unlocking Potential” organized by K&L Gates Milan, 26 May 2025
- Moderator, “HR Coffee Talks: Disability management,” Monitorimmobiliare, March 2025
- Moderator, “HR Coffee Talks: Corporate Investigations,” October 2024
- Moderator, "HR Coffee Talks: Employees Retention Mechanisms,” June 2024
- Speaker at the national meeting of the YourGroup - Italian Fractional Managers Association in June 2023 (“Recent Legislation on Whistleblowing”)
- Speaker at the Mid-Year Conference of the New Jersey Bar Association in November 2013 (“The Italian Job: a look at employers' and workers' rights in Italy and the United States”)
- Speaker at the Associazione Italiana Giuristi d'Impresa conference in May 2014 (“The relationship between in-house and external legal counsel in the international environment”)
- Speaker at Grande Stevens conference in June 2015 (“The reform of the Italian labour law”)
- Speaker at “Il Sole 24 Ore” conference in Ferrara, December 2015 (“The reform of the Italian labour law”)
- Author of “Reforming of the Italian labour market: the road to flexibility” in ELA Briefing, July 2015
- Speaker at “Il Sole 24 Ore” conference in Padua, March 2016 (“The reform of the Italian labour law”)
- Speaker at “Il Sole 24 Ore” conference in Lecco, March 2016 (“The reform of the Italian labour law”)
- Speaker at “Il Sole 24 Ore” conference in S. M. Capua Vetere - November 2016 (“The rite Fornero: “check-up” after four years entry into force"
- Author of “Absences and dismissal due to poor performance”, in Guida al Lavoro, n. 46/2016
- Speaker at K&L Gates' webinar – March 2017 (“International Best Practices for protecting against unfair competition”)
- Speaker at K&L Gates' webinar – June 2017 (“EU Political Climate: employment law insights for global companies”)
- Speaker at K6L Gates conference in Milano - May 2018 (“Work on digital platforms”)

EDUCATION

- J.D., University of Milan Law School (Italy), 1998

ADMISSIONS

- Milan Bar

LANGUAGES

- English
- Italian

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP *POWERED BY HUB*

- 4 November 2026, Unlawful Dismissals: Constitutional Court Removes the Six-Month Cap for Employees Hired Before 7 March 2015 by Small-Sized Employers
- 21 September 2026, New EU Rules on the Coordination of Social Security: Implications for Secondments Abroad
- 8 April 2026, Smart Working: New Rules and Sanctions for Italian Employers Effective As of 7 April 2026
- 20 February 2026, AI News: Italy Sets the Rules for AI in the Workplace
- 2026, Global Employer Guide
- 1 December 2025, Employer Protection Against the Safety Responsibilities of Workers With Overseas Activities—Part 1
- 1 December 2025, Employer Protection Against the Safety Responsibilities of Workers With Overseas Activities—Part 2
- 1 December 2025, Employer Protection Against the Safety Responsibilities of Workers With Overseas Activities—Part 3
- September 2025, Scanning the Horizon: A European Employment Legislation Update
- 24 July 2025, Unlawful Dismissals: What Changes for Small Companies in Italy After Decision No. 118 of 21 July 2025
- April 2025, DEI in Europe: What Are the Legal Requirements?
- December 2024, Recruiting in Europe 101
- 1 October 2024, Laws, Guidance, and Recommendations: What to Consider When Using AI to Hire Employees in Italy
- June 2024, Internal Investigations in Cases of Harassment
- 30 May 2024, Digital Nomad Visa
- 8 June 2023, Whistleblowing: Upcoming Obligations for Companies

- 30 January 2023, PEOs–The European Perspective
- July 2022, The EU Whistleblowing Directive: Time to Prepare
- 27 January 2022, Italian Fight to Gender Equality
- 18 January 2022, New Legislation Regarding COVID-19 and Access to Workplace
- 11 November 2021, Green Pass Decree - Q&A
- 12 May 2021, Remote Working Abroad – What Employers Need to Know
- 1 June 2020, COVID-19: Return to Work Europe
- 1 April 2020, COVID-19: COVID-19 and the Cura Italia Decree
- 24 March 2020, COVID-19: Italian Public Schemes and Social Measures During COVID-19 Emergency
- March 2020, COVID-19: How is COVID-19 Affecting your European Business?
- 12 March 2020, COVID-19: Tools for Italian Employers in Facing the Emergency
- 17 October 2019, Key Labour Law Developments in EMEA
- 13 June 2019, Do Employers Now Need to Measure Daily Working Hours of All Workers?
- 8 August 2017, Update: Italian Parliament approves the new National Merger Filing Thresholds
- 29 March 2017, The Italian Council of State Provides Welcome Clarifications Regarding the Standard of Proof That the Italian Competition Authority Must Discharge
- 22 February 2017, OECD: Italy Should Approve its Proposed Competition Legislation 'Swiftly', Including the Reform of the National Merger Filing Thresholds
- 23 January 2017, Italy Implements EU Directive on Damages for Breaches of Competition Law
- 10 January 2017, Innovative Judgment Regarding Individual Dismissal Due to Objectively Justified Reasons—Absence on Holidays and Authorised Time Off Can Lead to Dismissal
- 16 November 2016, Italy to Implement EU Directive on Damages for Breaches of Competition Law

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

- "Whistleblowing, business groups and reporting channel sharing," *Il Sole 24 Ore* (Italy), 20 February 2024
- "Whistleblowing: a first handbook for businesses," *HR On Line*, 2 February 2023
- "Economic dismissals: what does the law say?" *LHH "Vox!"* 10 December 2022

NEWS & EVENTS

- 19 March 2026, K&L Gates Ranked in Chambers Guides Across European Regions

- 10 March 2025, K&L Gates Advises Invel on €111.2 Million Bond Issue to Finance Redevelopment of Hotel Majestic in Rome
- 22 June 2023, Nearly 50 K&L Gates Lawyers Throughout Europe Recognized in 2024 Best Lawyers, Ones to Watch Editions
- 20 March 2023, K&L Gates Advises ARRI Group on Acquisition of Professional Lighting Provider Claypaky
- 27 April 2021, Workplace Restructuring in COVID Times
- 5 October 2016, K&L Gates Boosts Labor and Employment Practice with Milan Partner Addition

OTHER MEDIA MENTIONS

- Quoted, "In the legacy of the pandemic, restructuring and smart working," *Il Sole 24 Ore* (Italy), 16 May 2022
- Quoted, "Super green pass at work: mandatory for over 50s," *Il Sole 24 Ore* (Italy), 14 February 2022

AREAS OF FOCUS

- Labor, Employment, and Workplace Safety
- Contract Workers

INDUSTRIES

- Consumer Goods and Services
- Life Sciences
- Manufacturing
- Resort, Hospitality, and Leisure

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

- Assisted an independent real estate investment and asset manager in financing a €111.2 million bond issue for the development and redevelopment of the former Hotel Majestic in Rome. The 87-room property will be managed by Starwood Hotels and repositioned as the five-star Baccarat Hotel Rome.

Automotive

- Advised a NASDAQ-listed world leader in the B2B distribution of spare parts for cars and industrial vehicles in the aftermarket in connection with the acquisition of a leading Italian distributor and its subsidiaries active in Eastern Europe.

Consumer

- Assisted a Italian company part of an industrial group active in the heavy & civil engineering construction industry in the acquisition of 80% of one of the main European players in the visual merchandising and window display sector for some of the main international brands in the fashion industry, which is also present in the strategic markets of China and the United States through two subsidiaries.
- Assistance to a holding of an Italian family, in the acquisition of 80% of the investments of one of the main European players in the visual merchandising and window display sector for some of the main international brands in the fashion world, which is also present in the strategic markets of China and the United States through two subsidiaries. The transaction aims to guarantee to the company a future of growth, to strategically expand the Group's business sectors both in Italy and abroad.

Education

- The Italian branch of an independent college grounded in the liberal arts retained our labor team to review the whole range of employment agreements and to renew fixed-term employment agreements to make them compliant with the Italian labor law. Assistance even included (i) termination of certain employment agreements; (ii) review of commercial agreements executed by the client; (iii) management of privacy and data protection topics.

Healthcare

- Assistance to the client a U.S. Pharmaceutical company, in different activities including: (i) reorganization of the Italian company's organizational chart; (ii) implementing changes of level and positions to a number of employees; (iii) assignment of employees to different tasks; (iv) management of individual redundancies; (v) new distribution of powers amongst executives and directors and drafting of relevant minutes of the Board of Directors' meetings.
- Assisted a U.S. cosmetic company in reviewing various service agreements with service providers and outsourcers, and in the contractual arrangements on labor clauses to protect the client.

Hospitality

- Assisted an Italian group leader in the tourism and hospitality sector in restructuring its workforce at a global level.
- Assisted the owner of an Italian hotel group based in Rome in a transfer of business having as object a luxury hotel in downtown Rome.

Industrial

- Assisted a U.S. global leader in energy-efficient air treatment and climate solutions in the reorganization of its Italian operations, including individual dismissals due to redundancies and relevant settlement agreements with the employees involved.

Logistics

- Assisted an Italian leader in exhibition shipments and logistics in labor law issues arising in relation to a service agreement taken over by the client, including hiring of employees from the old employer, management

of the information and consultation procedure with the trade unions, management of the strikes on behalf of the employer.

- Assisted an Italian leader in exhibition shipments and logistics in non adverse legal assistance regarding the implementation of GDPR and data protection implications.
- Assisted a healthcare logistics company in the drafting of a settlement and separation agreement with a top manager and relevant negotiation.

Manufacturing

- Assisted an Italian steel company in the process of renewal and execution of a collective agreement at a company level, including management of trade union relationships and negotiation with works council.
- Assisted an Italian steel company in labor law issues, redundancy management, trade union relationships, and labor litigation.
- Assisted a leading Italian manufacturer of hydraulic coupling technology in the closing down of an Italian plant, including the collective dismissal procedure.
- Assisted the Italian branch of a Japanese glass-manufacturing company in non-adverse labour law issues.

Mining & Metals

- Assisted an Italian company active in the field of the zoo technical food, in the following issues: (i) transfer of the company's registered office from Verona to Bologna and relevant triggering of the procedure for the transfer of the Italian employees; (ii) drafting letter of transfer of employees; (iii) triggering and management of disciplinary procedures against the employees refusing transfer; (iv) disciplinary dismissals of employees refusing transfer; (v) drafting employment agreements for new workforce.

Sport

- Assisted an Italian foundation in labor law matters related to a network of companies established for the purpose of launching the challenge and participating in the XXXVI America's Cup (2018–2019).

Technology

- Assistance to a U.S. provider of cloud-based business automation technology, in different activities: (i) management of employees' redundancies; (ii) drafting of MBOs and bonus plans for employees; (iii) individual dismissals due to objectively justified reasons and (iv) execution of the relevant settlement agreements with the dismissed employees.
- Assisted a technology company operating in the grocery delivery, in the drafting of agreement with self-employees and in the review of labor legal framework for workers operating through the digital platform.
- Assisting a company in a labor litigation regarding a claim raised by an employee due to alleged work-related stress and having as object the relevant compensation for damages.
- Assisted the Italian branch of an international company active in the 3D printing sector in implementing its organizational chart, the drafting of employment agreements, and agreements with freelance consultants.

- Assisted a French global engineering group in the management of employment-related issues, such as: (i) information and consultation procedure with the trade unions; (ii) terms and conditions of employment of the employees to be transferred, including drafting of employment agreements containing non-competition covenants, stability covenants and incentives schemes; (iii) negotiation and drafting of clauses of the Business Transfer Agreement connected with employment aspects, including the relevant representations and warranties and indemnification clauses; (iv) post-closing assistance regarding the integration of the newly acquired employees in the organization; (v) management of trade union relationships and kick-off for renewal of collective agreements at a company level.
- Assisted a a leading British telco analytics solution provider in disciplinary procedure and dismissal due to bad performance of a top manager.
- Assisted a leading digital platform company for the life science supply chain in implementing the GDPR for its Italian operations and the rules to save employees' data in Italy.

TMT

- Represented the client, a technology company operating for the financial industry, in the procedure for the individual dismissal of a top manager.