

Member Spotlight: Veronique Dalli

## Blockchain, Beaches and the Beautiful Mediterranean



*Veronique Dalli is the founder and managing partner of Dalli Advocates a mid-sized multi-disciplinary law firm specialised in assisting companies and individuals in business-related matters with interdisciplinary services.*

*She was admitted to the Maltese bar in 2006, for the past 12 years she has defended her clients successfully both before the Constitutional Court and the Superior Courts in Malta as well as before the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.*

*Together with her team of professionals she actively assists foreign investors on legal issues relating to the setting up of business operations in Malta. She is specialised on the new blockchain and cryptocurrency legislation in Malta and is the Legal Counsel to the some of the Malta Regulatory Authorities and to one*

*of the main media houses in Malta. Veronique was a speaker at a number of international conferences on issues relating to company law, blockchain, token classifications, as well as regulatory license regimes.*

Just two years ago, Veronique Dalli was an advocate with one of Malta's leading law firms, working as defence counsel on criminal prosecutions in the Maltese court system and the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

Now, in 2018, she is managing partner of her own boutique firm, Dalli Advocates, with a broad remit of specialisms, including corporate and commercial law, litigation, intellectual property and as well as civil & family law.

This ambitious development was driven, in part, by her interest in technology and Malta's transformation into a hub for European blockchain innovation. Veronique saw an opportunity for a new law firm in Malta with the expertise to service this

new cutting edge economic sector; and so she set about creating it.

**"I think it was the will and drive to shape what I was doing."**

She says: "I think it was the will and drive to shape what I was doing, in a way that I could better assist my clients, while also exploring new spaces within the legal sphere. At the time (2015) there was the first talk of blockchain, and I thought I needed a new setup which would facilitate my existing work and give me the space that I required to venture into this new area."

There has been a concerted effort in Malta to position the island as a hub of expertise for distributed ledger technology (DLT), which is the basis of blockchain. To this end, they have adopted a three pillar approach to regulation, crafting a whole new set of rules regulating businesses employing DLT, but also the fundraising mechanisms used by

these businesses, known as Initial Coin Offerings (ICOs).

The Malta Digital Innovation Authority Act (MDIA), deals directly with DLT, while the Innovative Technology Arrangements and Services Act (ITAS), deals with the registration of technology service providers and the certification of technology. The Virtual Financial Assets Act (VFAA), sets out a framework for the regulation of ICOs, cryptocurrency exchanges and other related services.

Veronique now deals with many lawyers in technology hubs such as Switzerland, Hong Kong, New York, and L.A. who have clients considering projects in Malta. She likes the collaborative approach that the blockchain community seems to promote, and has recently joined Switzerland's Crypto Valley Association as a way of enhancing her firm's profile.

She says: "Anyone bringing their project to Malta can be assured that they are operating in a regulated framework, with an administration and government fully committed to DLT, blockchain and ICOs. We will not turn around one day and say we no longer accept ICOS, as has happened with other jurisdictions. We also have rigorous and thorough EU directives, which regulate both banking and financial services.

"Malta is very proud of its reputation; so our aim, first and foremost, is client and investor protection and market integrity. If you look at the island's track record, we have seen GDP growth of 6.6 per cent over the past five years. Around 20 per cent of the world's online gaming companies operate from Malta, and we have proven excellence in hosting and nurturing disruptive technology."

As Veronique's new practice continues to grow and strengthen, she has time to reflect on the

journey so far and the success she has achieved. She attributes much of it to hard work, ambition and a stated goal.

**"It would have been difficult if I had the persona that resists change, but you can't stay stagnant doing the same thing forever. That scares me."**

She says: "It would have been difficult if I had the persona that resists change, but you can't stay stagnant doing the same thing forever. That scares me. This is an attractive space and I'm working with great people, so it wasn't difficult at all. Setting up your own business, means you're moving away from a secure environment and hoping for the best. It comes with no guarantees, and there's no safety net, but that fact on its own makes you work harder to make sure that everything turns out well. It was an incentive."

The continued success of Dalli Associates will depend on servicing new international clients to the level expecting in a fast-moving high technology sector. Veronique believes open channels of communication, trust and integrity are key, as is a very quick turnaround of quality work.

**"You have to be efficient and you have to make sure that your time management is optimised."**

"Efficiency is of the essence, especially when you're dealing with clients who are flying in from Switzerland and will only be on the island for two

or three days. You have to be efficient and you have to make sure that your time management is optimised."

A unique selling point of Veronique's practice is its small size and her ability to know all clients on a first name basis. Her aim is to grow it slowly into a large boutique over the next five years, making sure the service levels are always excellent at each stage. She believes Malta has a great opportunity to become a global centre for blockchain-related industry and intends to be part of that.

While Veronique's ambitions are significant, she still appreciates living on a beautiful Mediterranean island and likes to leave work at the office to ensure she can enjoy her home properly, particularly during the summer.

She says: "I love water sports, particularly going out on jet skiing, weather permitting. I am an islander and I love the sea. I believe weekends are for recharging your batteries, and spending time with loved ones or family. It's my cardinal rule that Sundays are spent on the beach and there's no arguing about that, even in October."

Despite enjoying island life, she also loves to travel with her 19-year-old daughter who is currently studying law and aims to follow in her mother's footsteps. Whether that will be criminal law or something more technology-related is still yet to be decided, although it will most likely be in mainland Europe.

Veronique concludes: "We have Mediterranean weather and Mediterranean food with Anglo-Saxon administrative and company law; how is that for the best of both worlds? I think that is the unique selling point of Malta."

**DALLI ADVOCATES**  
LAW FIRM

## Veronique Dalli

IR Global's exclusive Commercial Litigation member in Malta

[dalliadvocates.com](http://dalliadvocates.com) | [veronique@dalliadvocates.com](mailto:veronique@dalliadvocates.com) | +356 27133681

Dalli Advocates is a multi-disciplinary Maltese law firm offering a broad diversity of legal services. The firm has a special focus on civil, family and criminal law litigation, and also boasts a wealth of experience in a wide spectrum of practice areas that include corporate and commercial law, human rights, press law, industrial and employment matters, and data protection.