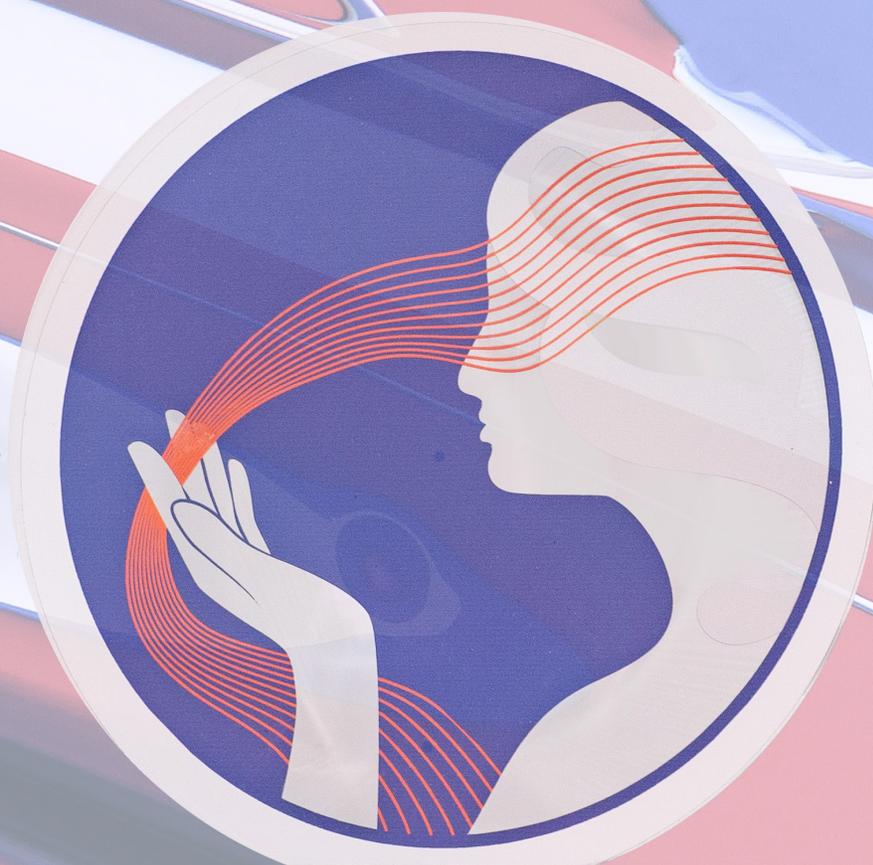


THE WOMEN IN LAW INITIATIVE INTRODUCES

# JUSTITIA AWARDS 2022



JUSTITIA AWARD 2022



# EDITORIAL

## Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to the Justitia Awards 2022! The Women in Law Initiative is proud to present the most outstanding women in legal professions of this year. When we invited nominations after the last International Conference on Contemporary Issues for Women in Legal Professions, we did not expect to receive so many nominations from around the globe, which have introduced us to the highest caliber of women in all legal professions. It was hard to reduce the impressive nominations down to shortlists in the three categories, and even more difficult to pick the laureates of the year. Our Laureates Selection Committee had to go through more than 100 nominations and the choices were not

easy because so many of the fantastic nominees would have deserved an award. As President of the Woman in Law Initiative and as Secretary General of the Justitia Awards our sincere thanks go to the Members of the Laureates' Selection Committee for their diligent work.

Now let's celebrate the best of the best in the three categories. Please save the date for our next International Conference on Contemporary Issues for Women in Law which will take place in Vienna from September 14-16, 2023. We look forward to welcoming you all to Vienna.

Yours truly,



Dr. Alix Frank-Thomasser  
President of Women in Law

Prof. Franz J. Heidinger  
Secretary General of the Justitia Awards



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The Women in Law Initiative

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The Women in Law Initiative



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# INTRODUCING THE WOMEN IN LAW INITIATIVE

## ALIX FRANK-THOMASSER

### PRESIDENT OF THE WOMEN IN LAW INITIATIVE

**T**he Women in Law Initiative (WiL), based in Central Europe, is organized through the Austrian NPO Women in Law– Frauen im Recht (an association under Austrian law). I am Dr. Alix Frank-Thomasser, attorney-at-law and President of WiL, which I founded inter alia together with Prof. Franz J. Heidinger and Jasmin Malekpour-Augustin in Spring 2018. Women in Law strives to connect women (and male allies) in all fields of law and offers them a platform to discuss contemporary issues, learn from each other, and network across industry sectors and borders. We endeavor to open previously closed doors for women, improve the situation for women in the legal professions, and strengthen female leadership. We connect not only practitioners but also researchers and scholars, from law students to retired lawyers. Together with the members of our Academic Advisory Board we are constantly researching how to better the situation for women in law. Together with Prof. Franz J. Heidinger we have designed a Women in Law University Course which is regularly of-

ferred at the University of Vienna (Juridicum) and at the Vienna University of Economics and Business (WU Wien) and was also offered at the University of Graz. We wish to accelerate women’s legal careers not only by offering an outstanding networking platform but also specifically by providing tailored education on the relevant issues.

The Women in Law Initiative has gained wide acceptance and operates under the patronage of UNESCO. We are thankful for the great support of our many sponsors and partners.

In September 2021 we hosted our second international conference (virtually), which was attended by 200 distinguished participants and speakers from all over the world. It provided female legal professionals with a variety of tools and tips on how to successfully manage a career in law.

The Third International Women in Law Conference is taking place on September 15-17, 2022 in Vienna, Austria. With our Justitia Awards, we honor outstanding female legal professionals from around the globe.



# SELECTING THE LAUREATES

## FRANZ J. HEIDINGER

SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE JUSTITIA AWARDS AND MALE ALLY

The Justitia Awards honor out-standing female laureates of all legal professions in one of three categories:

### CATEGORY 1

#### International Leaders / Lifetime Award

This category celebrates the most talented and impactful women in the legal professions and recognizes their achievements and contributions to society. The nominees should be “the” outstanding woman of the year, demonstrating excellence as the most innovative and groundbreaking lifetime achievers.

### CATEGORY 2

#### Academia

The nominee should have made a significant impact, delivered qualitatively and/or quantitatively measurable tangible results relative to the invested resources, and influenced demonstrable changes in attitudes, beliefs and practices towards gender equality in legal professions.

### CATEGORY 3

#### Young Achievers / Game Changers / Pioneers

The nominee is a game-changer who has made an impact in the promotion of innovative approaches resulting in opportunities for Women in Law, or a young legal professional who has shattered the glass ceiling in her field. This includes new ways of working when “business as usual” has failed and innovative “out-of-the-box” solutions have succeeded. She has demonstrated innovation in terms of the topics covered, the methodology employed, the channels used to create opportunities and/or other aspects.

The Justitia Laureates’ Selection Committee has reviewed each nomination for the Justitia Awards, short-listed the finalists and selected the laureates of the categories for the Justitia Awards 2022. **Meet the Selection Committee on the following pages!**

► [Click this link for the Video of the Award Ceremony](#)

# LAUREATES' SELECTION COMMITTEE

The Justitia Laureates' Selection Committee has reviewed each nomination for the Justitia Awards, shortlisted the finalists and selected the laureates of the categories for the Justitia Awards 2022.

**1. Marisa Sandra Aizenberg | Lawyer, Teacher, Researcher and Consultant**

Justitia Awards 2021 Laureate. Graduated from Buenos Aires University (UBA) with a specialization in Health Law. Founder and Academic Director of the Health Observatory of the School of Law at UBA. First woman in Argentina to lead legal and ethical studies in digital health.

**2. Brigitte Bierlein | First female Federal Chancellor of Austria**

Justitia Awards 2020 Laureate. Former Vice-President of the Constitutional Court and President of the Constitutional Court. Brigitte Bierlein was the Federal Chancellor of the Republic of Austria from 3 June 2019 to 7 January 2020, the first woman in Austria's history to hold this office.

**3. Christina Blacklaws | CEO of Blacklaws Consulting, Author, Speaker and Lecturer**

Justitia Awards 2020 Laureate. Former President of The Law Society of England & Wales. Runs her own consultancy business „Blacklaws Consulting“. Award-winning published author, speaker, lecturer and frequent media commentator. Developed a lead program focused on women in leadership positions in the legal field.

**4. Michaela Clicque | Legal Counsel in UEFA's headquarters**

Justitia Awards 2020 Laureate. Former Player's Status lawyer, currently legal counsel for the Statutory and Regulatory Unit at UEFA's headquarters, taking the lead in all regulatory-related matters. Jointly with FIFA, she provides legal advice on the revision process of the statutes of the national associations affiliated to UEFA.

**5. Jarpa Dawuni | Associate Professor of Political Science at Howard University, Washington DC**

Justitia Awards 2020 Laureate. She is a qualified Barrister-at-Law before the Ghana Superior Courts of Judicature and holds a Doctorate in Political Science from Georgia State University. Launched the Institute for African Women in Law. In 2016, she received the President Obama White House Presidential Award for her service on the Board of ARA-W.

**6. Lukas Flener | Partner at Fellner Wratzfeld & Partner Rechtsanwälte**

Speaker at the Women in Law Conference 2021 and 2022. Over 20 years of experience in advising clients on complex antitrust matters as well as M&A and real estate transactions with focus on owner-managed and family businesses. Worked for the Austrian Cartel Court and international law firms in Vienna, Brussels and London.

**7. Alix Frank-Thomasser | Senior Partner of Alix Frank Rechtsanwälte GmbH and Founder of the Women in Law Initiative**

Lawyer, author, and co-founder of Euréseau. Member of the Managing Board of the Viennese Bar, Austria, and a member of the Austrian Delegation to the CCBE. Chair of the CCBE CSR Committee. Holds the Golden Honor for services to the Republic of Austria.



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**8. Susanne Kals | Professor, Winner of the 2000 FWF "START-Preis"**

Justitia Award 2021 Laureate. Professor of business law at the University of Economics and Business in Vienna. Founder of the the „Austrian Supervisory Board Day“ (Aufsichtsratstag) and the „Austrian Family Business Day“ (Familienunternehmertag).

10



**9. Omnia Gadalla | Lawyer and Lecturer**

Founder and initiator of the „Her Honor Setting The Bar Initiative“ combating discrimination against Egyptian women in the legal industry. Filed cases against the President, Minister of Justice and the head of the state council. Teaching assistant in the Faculty of Law at Shari'a, Al-Azhar University and mentor to female students.

11



**10. Andrew Leck | CEO at MSI Global Alliance**

Coordinates the strategy set by the Board of Directors of MSI, a leading global association of independent legal and accounting firms. Several years of experience at firms such as EY and ACCA in leadership positions.

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**11. Elisabeth Zoi Lendway | Contracts Manager at Airbus Defence and Space GmbH in Germany**

Justitia Award 2021 Laureate. Mentor to young professionals who are seeking their own career path in the aerospace sector. Actively takes care of and advocates for children on the Autism-Spectrum. Earned an Academic Program Certificate in Nuclear Politics.

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**12. Ilse Reiter-Zatloukal | Researcher and Author**

Justitia Awards 2020 Laureate. Researcher at the Department for Legal and Constitutional History of the Law Faculty at the University of Vienna. Holds one of the highest posts as Vice-Chair of the Senate of the University of Vienna. Publisher of the book „Lawyers 1938“ about Jewish lawyers during the Nazi regime.

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**13. Carmen Thornton | Lawyer and Partner at Thornton & Kautz Rechtsanwälte**

Justitia Awards 2020 Laureate. One of the first lawyers in Austria to use social media for marketing, acquisition and PR with over 17,000 followers on Instagram. Columnist, speaker and partner of the Veuve Clicquot Bold Business Women Network.

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**14. Nida Usman Chaudhary | Author, Activist and Teacher**

Justitia Award 2021 Laureate. Holds an LL.B. Hons and an LL.M. from the University of London. Writes for national and international publications. Advises on gender and children's rights and teaches corporate law from a business and human rights perspective. Founder of the Women in Law Initiative in Pakistan.

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**15. Rupert Wolff | President of the Austrian Bar Association (ÖRAK)**

Lawyer, certified court interpreter for the Italian language. More than 30 years of experience in the legal field; he practices law in Austria and Italy. President of the Austrian Bar since 2011. He holds the Grand Honour for Services to the Republic of Austria.

**16. Raffaella Zillner | Lawyer, Specialist in Information Law and Media Law**

Currently working as general secretary at the Austrian Association for Betting and Gambling. Member of the Austrian Lawyer's Association Committee, where she stands up for gender equality in various legal industries.



## EREN KESKIN

### FIGHTING TIRELESSLY FOR A MORE EQUAL WORLD

**E**ren Keskin is a Kurdish lawyer and human rights activist. For more than thirty years, she has fought for fundamental rights and freedoms in Turkey, especially for women and the LGBTI+ community. She graduated from the Law Faculty of the University of Istanbul and has worked as a lawyer since 1984. Eren Keskin defines herself as someone who is against racism, militarism, capitalism, homophobia, and transphobia. She would prefer to be known as a lawyer and human rights defender.

In her early days of her career as a lawyer, she became a member of the Human Rights Association (IHD - İnsan Hakları Derneği), the first non-governmental organization established after the military coup in Turkey of 1980. Currently, she is the IHD's co-chair. Eren Keskin is one of the founding members of the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey, one of the most prominent human rights organizations in Turkey focused on the rehabilitation and treatment of torture survivors. She is also one of the founders of the Foundation for Society and

Legal Studies (Toplum ve Hukuk Araştırmaları Vakfı-TOHAV), which investigates and monitors human rights violations in Turkey.

Eren Keskin co-founded the project „Legal Aid for the Victims of Rape and Sexual Harassment in Custody” to combat official state-based sexual violence against women and transgender women in custody. Throughout her many years of fighting for human rights, she has faced threats and even physical attacks. Eren was ostracized from her profession by the Istanbul Bar Association for one year in 2003 for using the term ‘Kurdistan’ in one of her newspaper columns. She is cooperating with feminist female doctors to be a pioneer when it comes to the „importance of the psychological report” in the documentation of sexual torture. Eren Keskin has won various international awards such as the Human Rights Award of Amnesty International (2000), the Aachen Peace Award (2004), the Theodor-Haecker Award of the Eeslingen Municipality (2005), the Helsinki Civil Society Award

*“The Republic of Turkey has extremely discriminatory practices against women. Our achievements in domestic law, the signed UN conventions and the European Conventions are being violated. The Istanbul Convention of the Council of Europe has been terminated. The state discourse constantly legitimates violence. I chose to work in this field because of the inequality that women face in the legal system, politics and in all areas of life.”*

(2018) and the Martin Ennals Award (2019). She has also received awards from Kurdish Pen, Pir Sultan Abdal Association and Modern Lawyers Association in Turkey which recognize the progress she drives in human and women’s rights.

If she could travel back in time, Eren Keskin would tell her younger self „to wonder more” and „question more”.

## DUBRAVKA ŠIMONVIĆ

### TAKING A STANCE AGAINST DISCRIMINATION AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

**D**r Dubravka Šimonović is a Croatian legal professional and an international expert in human rights law. She holds a Master's degree and a PhD in family law from the University of Zagreb. Throughout her career she has contributed greatly to the evolution of international human rights law. She initiated the Femicide Watch as a tool for the prevention of gender-related killings of women, established different modalities for the establishment of femicide watches, and on 1 August 2015 was appointed United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women. Dubravka has held various teaching positions during her career; she was a visiting Professor in Practice at the Centre for Women, Peace and Security of the London School of Economics and has been teaching at the Women's Human Rights Training Institute established by the Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation since 2010.

*„Today we still have discriminatory laws and practices*

*and gender-based violence against women. The Women in Law Initiative is empowering women in the legal profession to become a human rights instrument established at an international level to combat and eliminate discrimination and GBVAW at a national level.”*

Dubravka has also held countless functions at international level, chaired several Council of Europe Sessions, as well as the Council of Europe Task Force to Combat Violence against Women, was a Chairperson of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, Vice-Chair of the UNGASS, Project coordinator of UNIFEM and Croatia on the implementation of CEDAW in Central and Eastern Europe. Dubravka is a member of several different organisations such as the National Commission against Trafficking in Persons, the National Bioethics Commission, the National Council on the Rights of the Child, the Steering Committee of the Center



*“Equal opportunities for women in legal professions are prerequisite for achieving a substantive equality for women in all areas of life.”*

for Human Rights, the National Commission on the Roma, the Gender Equality Coordinator, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Committee for Gender Equality and she is a founding member of the National Committee for Equality of Women. Dubravka says that chairing the Task Force that proposed elaboration of the new convention on violence against women, initiating the Femicide Watch for prevention of gender-related killings of women, and establishing the EDVAW Platform for Independent Expert Mechanisms on Discrimination and Violence against Women as a network of UN and regional women's human rights are her biggest accomplishments.

If she could travel back in time, Dubravka Šimonović would tell her younger self “to study and focus more on international human rights, the law on discrimination against women, and feminist history.”



## MIRELLA VISSER

### INSPIRING WOMEN TO TAKE A SEAT AT THE TABLE AND REGAIN THEIR POWER

**M**irella Visser is the founder of the Dutch Centre for Inclusive Leadership, an advocate and leader of women's organisations promoting equal representation of women in decision-making positions in the public as well as the private sector. As a board member of the Centre, Mirella is also an acclaimed author and speaker on topics such as women and leadership. She wants to encourage women to take up a leading role in society with her slogan #DareToChair. Mirella has been recognized as a thought leader, distinguished author on women and leadership issues, and was nominated for the title 'European of the Year 2007' for promoting the professional progress of women in the Netherlands and Europe. She is a Vice Chair on the Supervisory Board of Media Pensioen Diensten MPD, Hilversum, NL, Chair of the Board of Trustees of the KNCV Tuberculosis Foundation, she holds membership in the Environmental Council Schiphol (ORS), the European Integration Committee Advisory Council on International Affairs (AIV), is a jury

member of the "Managementbook of the Year 2022" award, a Board Member at the Alumni Association Law at VU University (i.o.), the founder and President of Stichting PUSH (a citizens working group), a strategic advisor of Nederlandse Vrouwen Raad (the Dutch Women's Council consisting of over 50 women's organisations with a reach of 1 million women) and also chair and initiator of several annual conferences for female board members in finance.

*„Civil society organisations like the Women in Law Initiative play a vital role in promoting women's participation and influencing government to improve legal instruments to obtain true gender equality.“*

Mirella Visser is a managing director of the Centre for Inclusive Leadership. Mirella Was nominated for "Campaigner of the Year 2007" for promoting the professional progress of women in the

*“Equal representation of women at all levels of the law profession, including the judicial, is a prerequisite for a fair and inclusive society, in which all members are duly represented and feel respected and valued.“*

Netherlands and Europe (by European Voice) and published her book *De Zijderoute naar de Top* in which she writes about female leadership. Her book was nominated for the title of "Managementbook of the Year 2010". She was the first woman on the board and the first female chairperson on the board.

If she could go back in time, Mirella would tell her younger self "Remember that if you are not at the table, you are on the menu. Never doubt yourself or let yourself be put down. Be open and respectful, but firm in your professional attitude. Strive for the best from a place of conviction and empathy. Your contribution to the world matters. never forget that!"



## MARIA BERGER

### A TRUE INSPIRATION AND TRAILBLAZER IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION

**M**aria Berger is an Austrian lawyer and politician. As a young lawyer at the University of Innsbruck, she was among the first people to publish on issues regarding gender equality, which continued to be one of her main points of interest during all the stages of her professional career. She first studied English and Romance languages and literature at the University of Salzburg and then decided to continue her higher education by studying law and economics at the University of Innsbruck from 1975 onwards, where she graduated with a doctorate in law in 1979.

Maria Berger has served as a member of three of the major institutions of the European Union. She was a member of the European Parliament, the Council of Ministers and the EU Court of Justice. Maria Berger became a member of the European Parliament on 11 November 1996 and was subsequently also a member of the European Convention from 2002 to 2003, and the Austria Convention from 30 June 2003 to

27 August 2004. Maria Berger has also held several political functions in the Austrian Social Democratic Party: She held the role of Federal Chairwoman of the Young Generation of the SPÖ from 1984 to 1987, she was a Member of the Municipal Council of the City of Perg from 1997 to 2009, Deputy Chairperson of the SPÖ Section in Brussels from 1994 to 1997, Head of Delegation of SPÖ MEPs, acted as Deputy Club Chairperson of the Social Democratic Parliamentary Group - Club of Social Democratic MEPs to the National Council, was a member of the Federal Council and European Parliament from 11 December 2008 to 7 June 2009, and the PES Coordinator in the Legal Affairs Committee. From 2008 to 2009 she succeeded Caspar Einem as the President of the Federation of Social Democratic Academics, Intellectuals and Artists. Maria Berger lists the following three achievements as the ones she is most proud of: Judge at the EU Court of Justice, Federal Minister of Justice and a Member of the European Parliament and its Legal Affairs Committee.

*“As a female student during the 70s I personally experienced discrimination and encouragement at the same time. Ending the former and to fostering the latter became a lifelong commitment and has not yet been accomplished. That is why organizations such as the Women in Law Initiative are so important.”*

Maria Berger also serves as a visiting professor at the Institute for European Law at the University of Vienna where she takes all of her experiences and practical knowledge of the European Court of Justice and teaches them to law students. Maria especially inspires the female law students who view her as an incredible role model.

If she could go back in time, Maria Berger would tell her younger self “Don’t get trapped in „typical“ female corners which still exist in all legal professions”.

## KATHARINA LEHMAYER

### PAVING THE WAY FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF WOMEN IN LAW

**K**atharina Lehmayr started her career as a judge for family affairs at a District Court in Vienna in 1990. Her work continued in Upper Austria as the first female president at the Regional Court, after which she became Austria's first female president at the Court of Appeal in Linz. In 2021, her path brought her back to Vienna, this time to the Court of Appeal, where she – once again – became the first female president. Katharina Lehmayr has always gone out of her way to try to encourage women to take on senior tasks and acts as an incredible role model in doing so.

Katharina graduated from Fadingerstrasse grammar school in Linz and studied law at the University of Vienna from 1981 to 1986. During this time she also gained her first practical experience working as a student assistant at the Institute for Public Law at the University of Vienna. From 1990 to 1999 she held the position of a judge at District Court Döbling, after which she moved to the Regional Court Linz, where her focus lay mainly on family cases.

From 2006 to 2008, Katharina Lehmayr was a judge at Higher Regional Court Linz and then she assumed the position of Vice President of Regional Court Linz and even took on the role of President until November 2016. Katharina became President of Higher Regional Court Linz in 2016, which marked a memorable moment in history since that made her the first ever President of a Higher Regional Court in Austria. Before that, Katharina was the first President of a Court under the jurisdiction of Higher Regional Court Linz.

In 2021, she was designated to succeed Gerhard Jelinek as President of Higher Regional Court Vienna. Katharina Lehmayr's career is surely guaranteed a place in the history books since she courageously assumes positions that have never been occupied by women and paves the way for more women to follow in her footsteps. Since 1 March 2013 Katharina has been a member of the University Council of the Johannes Kepler University in Linz, which she views as an exceptionally interesting task and an important commitment to society.



*“Throughout my career, different points of view have been an enrichment for every organisation – not only in the legal sector. Furthermore, I believe gender equality to be highly important for any team. Women still tend to be more self-critical and more hesitant than men – unfortunately! As a result, their skills and potential often remain hidden. Women also underestimate the importance of networking. For all these reasons, the work of WIL is as important as ever.”*

If she could travel back in time, Katharina Lehmayr would give her younger self the following advice: “Yes, you can! Whatever you do with enthusiasm will be successful. Yes, you can! Try it, it is okay to make mistakes, you don't have to be perfect!”

# MARCELLA PRUNBAUER-GLASER

## SHATTERING THE GLASS CEILING AND INSPIRING OTHER WOMEN TO DO THE SAME



*“Equal chances for female lawyers and lived diversity in real professional life as opposed to appraised formally existing legal theoretical concepts is key to the future of democratic society and the rule of law. That is why it is so important to tirelessly point out the important role of female lawyers in order to improve social reality and close gaps – as does the Women in Law Initiative.”*

**M**arcella Prunbauer-Glaser, a partner at Prunbauer Rechtsanwälte, started her career as an international business lawyer over three decades ago. Marcella was the first Austrian female lawyer to achieve direct admission to the Bar in two different jurisdictions (Austria and New York) – Marcella is especially proud of achieving this milestone in her career and calls it one of her top 3 accomplishments. She pierced glass ceilings with high Bar functions in the EU and in Austria, in which she promotes the important role of female lawyers.

Marcella Prunbauer-Glaser studied law at the University of Vienna and gained practical experience during her studies while working in the department of civil law. After finishing her PhD in Law at the University of Vienna, she also completed her Master of Comparative Jurisprudence (M.C.J.) at New York University and was admitted to the New York Bar in 1983 and the Vienna Bar in 1987. Over the years, Marcella Prunbauer-Glaser has held an impressive number of

positions in several different European and Austrian organisations. She was the head of the Austrian Delegation to the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) for 10 years, Vice President of the CCBE from 2010 to 2011 and President of the organisation in 2012. She is very proud of having held this position since she was unanimously voted the second female President, despite coming from a very small EU member state. Since 2013, Marcella Prunbauer-Glaser has been a member of the Independent Transparency Senate and was a member of the Council of the European Law Institute (ELI) from 2012 to 2016. Marcella has been a Vice President of the reputed “Österreichischer Juristentag” (Austrian Jurist Forum) since 2014 and was recently elected the first female President of the forum. However, Marcella’s CV does not stop there: she has also been working as a lecturer at different institutions since 1995 (such as the University of Applied Sciences in Wiener Neustadt and the Vienna University of Business and Eco-

nomics). Since 2005, she has been a valued lecturer at the Austrian Academy for Lawyers (AWAK).

If Marcella Prunbauer-Glaser could go back in time, she would give her younger self the following piece of advice: “Be maximum you, live your dreams notwithstanding obstacles, keep pushing to shatter glass ceilings if necessary and with the assistance of role models and (male) allies”.



# ZLATA ĐURĐEVIĆ

## FIGHTING FOR INDEPENDENCE BY FIGHTING AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Zlata Đurđević is a professor of criminal procedure, human rights and international and European criminal law at the University of Zagreb. She is dedicated to raising awareness and fighting against patriarchal structures, prejudice, gender inequalities, sexism and other forms of gender-based discrimination in academia, the judiciary and Croatian society. She has published extensively in the fields of human rights, international and European criminal law, criminal procedural law and criminal law. Zlata has been cited by the European Court of Human Rights and has acted as an expert witness in the UNCITRAL and ICSID arbitrations. She is the recipient of several international awards, among them the EU Marie Curie FP7, the Chevening Scholarship, Fulbright Visiting Scholar, German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and Austrian Exchange Service (OAD). She has conducted research at the University of Augsburg (Germany), “Karl-Franzens” University of Graz (Austria), and the Max Planck Institute (Germany). Zlata Đurđević was a visiting professor at UC Berkeley, School of Law and initiated the regulation against sexual ha-

arrassment and gender discrimination of students at the law faculty of the University of Zagreb.

*„In a patriarchal society that pursues discriminatory practices at all levels, organizations such as Women in Law provide support and a platform for all women who do not consent to their gender-based professional and human subordination and degradation.”*

As the president of the working group for the Criminal Procedure Act (CPA), she drafted provisions that resulted in the alignment of the Croatian CPA with the highest international standards for the protection of victims of sexual violence. Zlata is a strong advocate for the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention).

If she could go back in time, Zlata Đurđević would tell her younger self “That we, as women, should not pretend that gender discrimi-

*“I do not accept discrimination against women, my female colleagues and myself. Equal opportunities for women in law have multiple positive effects for the protection of women’s rights in general and guarantee their effective implementation.”*

ination does not exist or that it does not concern us because we are advancing professionally. The more we advance in the professional hierarchy, the more independent and freer we become. Simultaneously we become more aware of the shackles that women are bound by because of their gender. We then either give up on the fight and settle for the most comfortable position in academia or step out of our comfort zone and fight for equal opportunities and gender discrimination. In the beginning, I missed this perspective.”

# MÁRIA PATAKYOVÁ

## BRAVELY AMPLIFYING THE VOICES OF THOSE WHO REMAIN UNHEARD

**M**ária Patakyová is a Slovak lawyer and university professor. She represents the Office of the Public Defender of Rights where she follows the objective to perform her function independently, impartially, apolitically and professionally. Her ambition is to amplify the voice of natural persons and legal entities so that it resonates in the work of public authorities. Mária Patakyová follows the principle that public power must be exercised in good faith, fairly, wisely and in line with its true purpose. Currently, she is a professor of commercial law development at the Department of Commercial and Economic Law. As a member of the Academy of European Private Lawyers, Pavia, Italy, she participates in the unification and harmonisation of European contract law and as a member of the Board of Directors of the European Company Law, International Association, Krakow, Poland, she is involved in reviewing and commenting on proposals in the area of European company law and contract law. Mária Patakyová participated in several study programmes abroad – Cardozo Law School in Buda-

pest (1990), European University Institute, Firenze (1995), the ABA/CEELI study programme in the USA (1996), the EU PHARE program on Competition Law in Spetses, Greece (1996), Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien, FOWI (1999, 2004, 2005), Cambridge University (2007), Helsinki University (2016), Indianapolis (2016). Mária Patakyová is a member of the European Model Company Act (EMCA) working group, where she represents the Slovak Republic and participates in the development of an alternative model for the regulation of companies under company law. Mária Patakyová was a chief researcher in a number of national and international and currently focuses on the issues of human rights and entrepreneurship under Corporate Social Responsibility and participates in the SMART project towards sustainable development in terms of company law under the EU's Horizon 2020 programme. Mária also achieved a breakthrough in the Constitutional Court's approach to the active legitimacy of the Public Defender of Rights and made the first entry of the Public Defender of Rights in Slovakia into proceedings



*“In the third millennium, society should accept, by broad consensus, that both law-making and its application must not be male dominated, as many of the ins and outs of this activity are particularly characteristic of the female part of the population. The above assessment is particularly relevant for Slovakia as a country that reveals the issue of gender equality through a relatively complex approach.”*

before the European Court of Human Rights.

Mária Patakyová would tell her younger self: “With a brave and fighting heart, resist the fortress but when the best wind blows, do not forget to set up the taut sails prudently.”



## ELISABETH HOLZLEITHNER

TEACHER NOT ONLY BY PROFESSION BUT BY VOCATION, INSPIRING HER STUDENTS EVERY DAY

**E**lisabeth Holzleithner is a Professor of Legal Philosophy and Legal Gender Studies and PI of the Research Platform GAIN. She served as head of the working group on equal treatment at the University of Vienna from 1994-2001 and has since drawn on her experiences of the hurdles women face in academic careers, incorporating her insights into her scientific work. Elisabeth tries to support female students and young academics whenever she can, especially regarding topics in the field of legal gender studies.

*“For too long, women were excluded from working in legal professions and their marginalization has lingered on. Promoting equal opportunities for women enables us to realize our full potential and make valuable contributions to law and jurisprudence.”*

Elisabeth’s research focuses on Legal Gender Studies and she is considered one of the leading

scholars in this field. Elisabeth Holzleithner is very passionate about her vocation, which is easily demonstrated by the numerous positions in the field of science management that she holds: Vice Program Director of Law at the University of Vienna (since 2012), Substitute Member of the Ethics Committee of the University of Vienna (since 2013), Member of the Arbitration Committee of the University of Veterinary Medicine Vienna (since 2011), Substitute Member of the Arbitration Committee at the University of Applied Arts Vienna (since 2010), Disciplinary Counsel at the Federal Ministry of Science and Research (2013-2017) and Member of the German Section of the International Association for Philosophy of Law and Social Philosophy. Elisabeth is the Head of the Working Group for Equal Treatment at the University of Vienna and head of the research platform “GAIN – Gender: Ambivalent In\_Visibilities”. She is an extremely dedicated professor who looks forward to every PhD that is completed under her supervision and is happy about every

*It is largely thanks to the commitment of women, together with male allies, that issues centering on gender equality have been able to gain a foothold in law and legal education. The Women in Law Initiative contributes significantly to this effort.”*

single prize her doctoral candidates receive for their work. Her dedication and enthusiasm flow into her lectures and seminars which is why she sparks such excitement in her students for Legal Gender Studies. She inspires her students to strive and fight for equality and justice in our society, not only on an academic and professional level but also on a personal one.

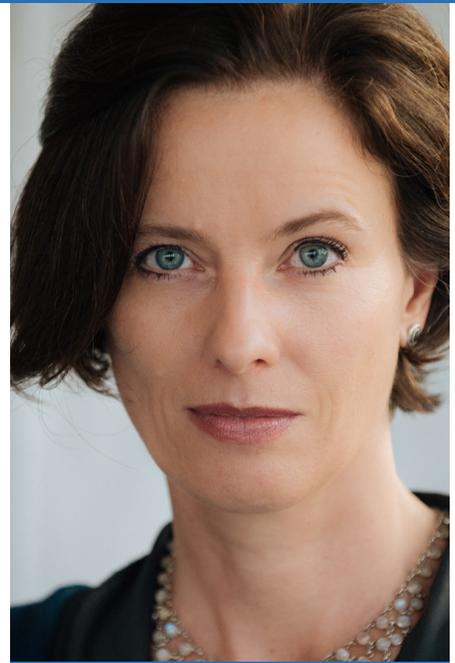
If she could go back in time, Elisabeth Holzleithner would tell her younger self that “Following your dreams is worth it, and it will work out. Sometimes people will test you by playing games with you - don’t let them derail you. And keep up your good spirits and humour.”

# MAGDALENA PÖSCHL

## MAKING EQUALITY HER PROFESSIONAL FOCUS BY PRIORITIZING IT AT EVERY STEP

**M**agdalena Pöschl is a Professor of Public Law at the University of Vienna. She studied law at the University of Innsbruck and the University of Vienna. At the University of Innsbruck, she also worked as a research associate at the Department of Public Law and Political Science. Magdalena also completed her PhD at the University of Innsbruck and later went on to complete court internships at various courts in Innsbruck. In her habilitation treatise with the title "Gleichheit vor dem Gesetz" (Equality Before the Law), Magdalena Pöschl analyses the general principle of equality of treatment and aims to demonstrate its untapped potential in the system of the Austrian constitution. The Principality of Liechtenstein awards scientists with a special prize each year and in 2004, Magdalena won that prize for excellent work and research in her habilitation treatise. Magdalena received her Venia decendi for Constitutional Law and Administrative Law at the University of Innsbruck in 2004 and has been a full professor at the Institute of

Constitutional and Administrative Law at the University of Vienna since 2012, where she holds a chair as a full university professor of constitutional and administrative law. Magdalena Pöschl has made research into issues concerning equality a very important part of her academic career and is interested in how power functions, how to limit the power and how to prevent its abuse. The main research topics Magdalena focuses on include State Organisation, Human Rights, General Administrative Law, Migration Law, Trade Law, Research Law and Medical Law. Magdalena is a very dedicated and highly valued professor who regularly enjoys taking part in podcasts and expert discussions. Magdalena was the first corresponding member of the philosophical-historical class of the Austrian Academy of Science from 2010 to 2012 and has been a full member since 2012. She has also held memberships in the science staff at the Austrian Constitutional Court since 1998; from 2009 until 2013 she was a member of the Austrian Bioethics Commission and from



*"Equality is one of my main professional issues, thus it seems obvious for me to engage in improving the situation of women in law - from a theoretical as well as practical perspective. The Women in Law Initiative is an appropriate framework for shaping the public awareness on this topic."*

2011 until 2013 she was a substitute member on the Federal Communications Board. Magdalena Pöschl has been a member of the review committee for scholarship programs at the Austrian Academy of Science since 2011 and is especially proud of being a full member of the Academy since 2012. If she could go back in time, Magdalena Pöschl would tell her younger self „You will make it: There cannot be the slightest doubt about it.“

# LISA HESCHL

## CONTRIBUTING TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS ON A PRACTICAL AND ACADEMIC LEVEL

**L**isa Heschl is a senior scientist at the European Training and Research Centre on Human Rights and Democracy at the University of Graz (UNI-ETC). Her research focuses on the European migration and asylum policy and legislation, the extraterritorial application of international and European refugee and human rights law and its relation to European border policies from the perspective of the rights of women. Lisa has invested many years into expanding her legal expertise in the field of human rights law, especially focusing on refugee law and the law of asylum. Lisa Heschl has initiated and participated in international projects since 2011, all of them revolving around human rights and conducted in partnership with countless European Organisations. Some of the projects she has participated in are: “Fostering Human Rights Among European (External and Internal) Policies (FRAME)” and “Sports organizations matching social inclusion issues (SmatchS)”.

Lisa has published research in

her field and has conducted relevant studies, for example on the “Implementation of Selected OSCE Human Dimension Commitments in Austria”, and has delivered countless academic lectures at universities all around Europe on relevant topics such as “Human Security and Migration” and “Law and Politics of Exclusion – The EU and the Refugee Crisis in the Mediterranean”. Lisa Heschl uses her vast knowledge and expertise to provide high-quality education to her students at the University of Graz in the field of human rights law. Since 2015, Lisa has held the position of an ethics expert at the European Commission and is responsible for evaluating the ethical dimensions of EU research projects. She has also been a member of a monitoring committee that oversees the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities since 2017.

Her efforts have been recognized by multiple organisations. Lisa received the Marie-Curie Early Researcher Scholarship by the Eu-



*“Women, who are still underrepresented in different fields of legal professions, add important perspectives to different legal problems and questions. Initiatives like Women in Law shed light on the important contributions women make to the development of the legal system and doctrine.”*

ropean Commission in 2012 and the University of Graz has awarded her with the “BEST OF REWI” distinction and a researcher-award for her Heras+ project “Building a post-war justice system in Kosovo: The independence, impartiality, fairness and accountability of the internationalized judiciary”.

If Lisa Heschl could go back in time, she would tell her younger self to “Use all opportunities there are! Be open and think of law in a broader way. Connect with women in law and let yourself be inspired by their experiences”.



## TADALA CHINKWEZULE

### ADVOCATING FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AT ALL FRONTS

**T**adala Chinkwezule is a Malawian Lawyer and Notary Public. She holds a Master's degree in Human Rights and Democratisation in Africa, a Bachelor of Law Honours Degree, a Diploma in International Arbitration, and a Certificate in Corporate Governance and Entrepreneurship. She completed a Corporate Training Placement with ILFA through a secondment at Edwin Coe LLP and 3 Verulam Buildings in London.

Tadala has contributed extensively to several areas and in diverse roles. During her tenure as President of WLA, the organization was successful in key Malawian cases: the Constitutional electoral case, Covid 19 (Lockdown) case, Judicial Independence case and the Msundwe case, where the court granted governmental compensation for 18 women and girls for sexual harassment occasioned against them by police officers. A further order was the establishment of the Independent Police Complaints Commission under the Police Act of 2010. As Vice President of the Malawi Law Society, Tadala was instrumental in undertaking the final steps for ha-

ving the Legal Education and Legal Practitioners Act 2017 and the Party and Party Costs Regulations made operational by the Minister of Justice. On behalf of the Malawi Law Society, she facilitated a meeting of the Chief Justice of Malawi, the Minister of Justice and the Attorney General to ensure that the bottlenecks that were hindering the operationalization of the Act and regulations were resolved. The Act has significantly changed the legal practice landscape in Malawi compared to the previous Legal Practitioners and Legal Education Act of 1965, and has some best practices such as mandating lawyers to undertake continuous development courses to enhance their skills and expertise.

*„Organisations such as the Women in Law Initiative are vital platforms that put the spotlight on the achievements of women in law in acknowledgement of their efforts.“*

During her tenure as President of YALI, she led the Executive Committee and the organization in

*“Equal opportunities for women in the legal profession are important due to the biases that exist. My commitment to improving the situation of women in law stems from the fact that I have witnessed the great contributions of many women in law that remain uncelebrated.”*

the Malawi Votes Project in 2019, whose target was to reach 1,000 young people, however through teamwork, the project reached over 10,000 to raise awareness about the right to vote and ensuring peace.

If she could travel back in time, Tadala Chinkwezule would tell her younger self to dare to dream, for dreams are for free and you can never lose if you aspire to achieve your goals. When she started law she wishes she had been told to enjoy the practice of law and accept that it is expansive; it is both challenging and fulfilling.

# APARNA MITTAL

## GIVING UP A CAREER TO FLOURISH IN HER LIFE PURPOSE OF HELPING OTHERS

**A**parna Mittal is an internationally recognised corporate lawyer with over 17 years of experience. Aparna aims to revolutionise India with her groundbreaking work on diversity, equity and inclusion through her own firm Samāna, a leading consultancy business focused on equality and inclusion for all segments of society, and with a specialization on gender and LGBTQ inclusion. In 2018 Aparna quit her high-profile job of over 13 years at the peak of her professional journey at a Tier 1 Indian law firm, where she was a lead partner working on Mergers & Acquisitions, Private Equity and Corporate Law, to set up Samāna as a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I) business focused on consultancy in India – this made her a first mover in this area in India.

Aparna was deeply aware of the prevailing inequities in India, especially those concerning marginalized communities such as women, transgender people, members of the LGBTQ+ community and other historically marginalised groups.

Over the past four years of her work at her consultancy Samāna

(Centre for Gender, Policy and Law), Aparna has been recognised as the leading consultant focused on equality and inclusion for all segments of society, and with a specialization on gender and LGBTQ inclusion. She has already advised over 100 entities across India, Asia, Europe, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Aparna Mittal is recognised as a thought leader in this field and is often invited to events by organisations such as the World Bank, British Deputy High Commission, UN Women, Thomson Reuters Foundation, International Bar Association, Dubai Expo 2020 to lead the conversation on aspects of equality, inclusion and workplace safety. Aparna has also been invited to join the first-ever Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion set up by the Federation of the Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), which comes as no surprise considering her remarkable impact and her inspirational decision to devote herself and her career to making the world a more equal place. Even though she eventually decided to leave the



*“Institutional barriers, intersectionality, deeply prevalent stereotypes and biases (both in the workplace and society at large) significantly hamper women lawyers’ access to equal opportunities of learning, exposure, growth and leadership. Concerted focus and action is required to make equality a constitutional right and a practical reality for women in law.”*

position, Aparna is very proud to say that she was one of the youngest women in the history of corporate India to be made partner of a Tier 1 leading law firm in India at the age of 31.

If she could travel back in time, Aparna Mittal would tell her younger self to become more of a risk taker and explore entrepreneurship earlier on in her professional life.

## MEHWISH MUHIB KAKAKHEL

### STEPPING UP FOR THE PEOPLE IN HER COMMUNITY AND RAISING HER VOICE AGAINST INEQUALITIES

**M**ehwish Muhib Kakakhel is an advocate in the High Court, a Partner at Kakakhel Law Associates and a member of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Lead Women In Law network. She is a practising lawyer who specialises in constitutional law, cybercrimes, family law and criminal law. She is the only cybercrimes expert in Pakistan with two master's degrees (LL.M. in Cyber Crimes and MS in Computer Science). By becoming a renowned practising lawyer in Peshawar, Mehwish Muhib Kakakhel has managed to break a prevailing stereotype in the city and has become a role model for women all over Pakistan to join the legal profession. Mehwish is a member of the special committee constituted under the Anti-Rape Act 2021 and also President of the female section of the Pakistan Jurists Association. Mehwish Muhib Kakakhel has truly made it her vocation to help people in need and she constantly proves her generosity and motivation, for example by providing free legal aid to women in shelter homes or delivering free legal awareness sessions

to the women in her community, at colleges, universities and also shelter homes. Mehwish has been a guest speaker at the United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime in Pakistan, where one of the topics she covered was the „Treatment of Sexual and Gender Based Violence Survivors by the Courts“. Mehwish always tries to take the initiative for others, for example by filing a petition in Peshawar High Court to fight the harassment of women in the workplace, which was decided in her favour, or another petition requesting governmental support for the rehabilitation and education of children at risk of poverty and homeless children.

During the coronavirus pandemic, Mehwish Muhib Kakakhel has also stepped up for the people in her community who are less fortunate: she filed several petitions in the Peshawar High Court in the hopes of reducing the rates of laboratory covid-19 tests or with the request to install incinerators at hospitals for hospital waste in order to make these care facilities safer. Mehwish's aim in life is to empower women, end gender-based violence



*“To encourage more women to raise their voices against injustice, the number of women represented in law needs to be increased. This is how we would see a GBV (gender-based violence) free society and I, being a woman in law, strive to let our women feel heard and represented.”*

and make the environment breathable for humankind.

If she could travel back in time, Mehwish would tell her younger self “Do not pay attention to the discouragements. If men can (become great litigators), you can too. Stay focussed. Be consistent. Follow your dream of becoming a successful lawyer. Read judgments daily. Your study should be relevant to your cases. Take as many as pro bono cases as you can. Do not stop learning.”



## DORA BERTRANDT

### RAISING HER VOICE FOR HER FELLOW COLLEAGUES AND SHAPING THE WORLD AROUND HER AT A YOUNG AGE

**D**ora Bertrandt is the founder of “Paragraphinnen”, an Austrian initiative that aims to support and inspire young women in law and especially targets female law students. Dora managed the difficult task of starting an initiative while still being a law student herself. “Paragraphinnen” is led by dedicated female lawyers with a focus on a more equal future in the legal profession which intends to present opportunities and challenges in the future professional life and share inspiring experiences of strong personalities who have already made a name for themselves in the legal profession. The initiative features a strong network of dedicated and competent lawyers and decision-makers from the legal industry. Dora has been active in the legal world for several years, especially in the LegalTech scene, where she has worked as a marketing and legal tech aficionado. She gained practical experience during internships at law firms in Austria and even completed an internship in the Netherlands. Dora has gained insight into different areas of

law such as corporate law, M&A and she currently focuses on media law, IT law and data protection law while working at the law firm Bisset. In June 2019, Dora Bertrandt was elected President of the Student Body that represents over 13,000 Students at the University of Vienna Faculty of Law and held that position until June 2021. As President, her responsibilities included the management and coordination of the entire team of student representatives. Dora also assumed the role of CFO during this time and advocated for student interests on behalf of her colleagues. Apart from her various professional and voluntary activities, Dora Bertrandt also takes part in events as a panelist and advocate for young professionals. In 2017, Dora received a partial scholarship from the Austrian integration fund and took part in a training programme that revolved around communication and leadership in Brussels, Belgium. In 2018, Dora took part in the European Forum Alpbach as a representative of the Austrian Integration Fund and the Austrian foreign ministry.

*„As a law student and former Student Body President for over 13,000 students, I have seen the motivation and faith in the professional future diminish with the years. Initiatives such as Women in Law are absolutely necessary to offer young women a positive perspective their professional career and guide them towards a bright future in the legal field.“*

Dora also completed a leadership training programme in the USA organised by the Generation Next Youth Leadership Initiative and the US Embassy in Vienna.

If she could go back in time, Dora Bertrandt would tell her younger self “Don’t ever judge yourself compared to others. Instead, judge yourself based on what you know you’re capable of”.

## KATHARINA BISSET

### A TRUE INSPIRATION FOR OTHER WOMEN AND TRAILBLAZER IN THE LEGALTECH INDUSTRY

**K**atharina Bisset is an independent attorney in Vienna and co-founder and managing director of the legal tech companies Nerds of Law OG and NetzBeweis GmbH.

Her law firm's 'Rechtsanwaltskanzlei Bisset' main areas of expertise are IT law, IP law, data protection law and media law. Katharina's passion for all things IT related started very early: she learned programming while still in school, worked in IT support and even provided web design services on the side – it doesn't come as a surprise that she then decided to specialize in IT law during her law studies at the University in Vienna. Katharina Bisset also holds a Master's degree in "Business Process Engineering and Management" from Burgenland University of Applied Sciences and is in the middle of her PhD studies at the University of Vienna, where her main areas of focus are copyright law, commercial law and European law. Katharina gained a great amount of practical experience in various

different companies and organisations before deciding to start her own law firm: she worked at the University of Vienna, in the department of consumer protection of the Vienna Chamber of Labour during her law studies and then went on to work at large IT companies such as T-Systems Austria GesmbH and various renowned law firms like CMS Reich-Rohrwig Hainz Rechtsanwälte GmbH. As a lawyer, she spends her time working with her clients on the legal implications of digitalization. Katharina and her colleagues founded Nerds of Law OG to be able to support their clients with projects in the LegalTech industry; they offer LegalTech tools, publish books in their field of expertise and even record the "Nerds of Law" podcast. At NetzBeweis GmbH Katharina and her colleagues work on revolutionizing the preservation of evidence on the internet. In recent years, Katharina has also been working as a lecturer at the Universities of Applied Sciences (BFI) in Vienna, Wiener Neustadt and St



*"Instead of listening to people about what can't be done, for a change, just do it."*

Pölten. Her subjects include IP law, IT law, data protection law and e-commerce law. Katharina Bisset is data protection (CIPP-E), project management (PMA-D) and Professional for Requirements Engineering (CPRE) certified. Katharina's academic articles are frequently published by various websites and publishers, she is a book author, a lecturer at different organisations and even finds time to be a disciplinary council member of the Lower Austrian Bar. What her colleagues value immensely about Katharina Bisset is her passion for her vocation and her inspiring work ethic, as she is always on the lookout for ways to better herself.

If she could go back in time, Katharina Bisset would tell her younger self "Second time's the charm. Failure is sometimes just a testrun."

# JEANNETTE GORZALA

## DEVOTING HERSELF TO IMPROVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR FELLOW WOMEN IN LAW

**J**eannette Gorzala is Head of Corporate and M&A at Stadler Völkel attorneys, head of the legal and regulatory department at AI Austria, Austrian representative at the European AI Forum and a co-founder of DLT Austria - a company that aims to significantly contribute to evolving Austria into a leading country for Distributed Ledger Technologies. Jeanette is a highly renowned expert across Europe in this new field of technology. She also publishes academic articles, for example "Limitations and challenges of digitalization in the health care sector" and "Anti-money laundering update and the deployment of AI in AML solutions". Professionally and personally, Jeannette has devoted herself to improving opportunities for her fellow women in law. She passionately works on achieving this goal by supporting women in tech as well as female founders, and taking on the role of an advisor, mentor and partner on all levels.

Jeanette Gorzala has greatly contributed to shaping an AI ecosystem of sustainability, trust and inclusiveness in her position as head of legal and regulatory at AI Austria, an accomplishment that Jeannette herself calls one of her top 3 achievements. Jeanette also represented Austria at the European AI Forum which is "an initiative of national AI associations that aims to set the agenda on how AI is approached in Europe", and also works with the European Commission on crafting a European framework for trustworthy Artificial Intelligence in Europe.

„The Women in Law Initiative gives visibility to challenges and provides a platform for developing solutions and connecting female leaders and male supporters to foster change and improvement. I am proud to be a part of this action for a positive impact on the future of women in law.“

Jeannette frequently advises corporations, small and medium-sized enterprises and start-ups on domestic and cross-border transactions with a focus on technology-driven services and products. Furthermore, her expertise includes developing strategies and

digitally transforming business models, as well as assisting in the legal implementation of new products and services based on AI, blockchain and VR/AR.



*“I believe that in a true equal setting, gender should not matter. However, in order to achieve true equality, barriers and system deficiencies need to be torn down. Improving the current situation requires action.”*

If she could go back in time, Jeannette Gorzala would give her younger self the following advice: “When looking back on my beginnings, I would tell myself two things: (1) worry less; (2) hard work and devotion to excellence will be rewarded along your path. However, you need to stand up for yourself, make your work visible and proceed with courage along the way. If you do not believe in yourself, why should others?”

# SUSANNE STEIN-PRESSL

## PROMOTING GREATER DIVERSITY IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION

Companies structured with diversity in mind are more resilient. Manz Managing Director Susanne Stein-Pressl explains why the legal sector needs more diversity.

**T**here is still a glaring disparity between the number of young women who graduate with a law degree and those who remain in the profession after finishing their studies. This is why Manz supports initiatives designed to help improve the status quo in this area. “Creativity can only flourish in a diverse environment,” comments Susanne Stein-Pressl. Even today, women continue to come up against a glass ceiling, she adds. But Manz’s Managing Director sees a glimmer of hope. “The proportion of women in the public sector, and especially in the judiciary, has been on the increase over the past few years.”

In Stein-Pressl’s view, there is another important aspect: “Diversity isn’t an end in itself, it is one of our basic values. As the leading Austrian publisher in the legal segment, and as a major employer, Manz has a particular responsibility in this regard.” She values diversity because it serves as a catalyst for innovation and creativity: “If everyone thinks the same way, we just don’t have that diversity of opinions. And that’s unthinkable for a publishing house which was set up in 1848, at a time of revolution.” At Manz, diversity management is a key consideration at all levels of the company. “A high level of diversity brings about greater resilience, which has been extremely helpful during the coronavirus pandemic.”

*“Our goal is to support young women on their career paths in the legal professions.”*

Manz supports a number of initiatives, including the global Women in Law – Frauen im Recht association. It is also a partner of the Paragräphinnen

association, which stages events and workshops that enable young female Austrian lawyers and law students to network and compare notes with experienced and successful women working in the legal profession.



Photo: Severin Wurnig

# SAVE THE DATE - WOMEN IN LAW 2023

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September 14-16, 2023

University of Vienna, Austria

► [www.womeninlawconference.at](http://www.womeninlawconference.at)

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