

LEADING

SPECIAL EDITION

LAW FIRMS

IN GREECE

THE PERSONS | THE HISTORY | THE NEXT DAY

LAWYER

BOUSSIAS
media

IOANNIS SARAkinOS, MR.
Founder & Managing Partner at Sarakinos Law

At Sarakinos Law, We Strive to Be Diverse and Continuously Evolve

Sarakinos Law specializes in supporting businesses and public entities in public procurement procedures and ensures their compliance with all regulatory obligations, focusing on a holistic approach to the provision of legal services.

You have established a long and successful track record in public procurement/tender law, offering holistic legal services and contributing significantly in shaping relevant case law. What does your holistic legal services entail?

From its establishment, our practice has had the honor and the privilege of representing both domestic and international businesses, as well as public entities across all types of public procurement procedures (works, supplies, services). We provide all necessary services for the preparation tenders documents, submission of offers, award contract signing and execution, while representing our clients both in and out-of-court.

Our holistic legal and in general advisory services in the area of public procurement are based on the principle of offering a "one-stop-shop service" to our clients. This includes evaluating the appropriate procurement procedure, implementing it, preparing the necessary documentation, submitting offers, executing contracts, and representing them in judicial or extra-judicial matters. For every tender, we create fully customized documents such as checklists on actions, documents and deadlines, ensuring our clients are informed in the clearest way possible about the tender's requirements.

How does your expertise in public procurement law align with your other, very important and prominent, specialization in regulatory compliance for businesses and public entities? What has enabled you to successfully combine two different yet, in many ways, interdependent fields of law?

Specialization is an often misunderstood and, erroneously for me, narrowly defined term. The fact that a law office specializes in one area of law does not preclude it from excelling in other, diverse or related, areas of law. This, of course, requires broad knowledge, flexibility and a constant willingness for research. At Sarakinos Law, the selection of our team members is based on whether candidates possess these skills.

Regarding your question, traditional approach on areas of law emphasize a strict division between private and public law. Yet, in the modern Greek market, the co-existence, overlap and inter-dependence of these areas is evident, at least on a practical level. Our experience and specialization in public law, from public procurement/tender law and administrative procedures of every kind to regulatory compliance of public entities on GDPR, whistleblowing, harassment in workplace, internal auditing etc., enhanced by our constant engagement with public entities through our training/educational seminars, offers us a multi-faceted view and in-depth knowledge of the public sector, which we



naturally deploy in the provision of legal services to our private clients, either businesses and/or natural persons, in their interactions with public authorities. Moreover, our experience and specialization in regulatory compliance for both businesses and public entities, gives us access to tools and the know-how that benefit our clients (public authorities & companies) when implementing their legal obligations.

A fundamental tool of our flexibility lies in our philosophy under which we operate and handle our cases. At Sarakinos Law, we strive not to remain static but, on the contrary, to embrace diversity and continuous evolution. Our practice's philosophy is rooted in combining dedication and deep focus on our fields with the readiness to explore every useful extension of it - a state often described as "flow of states". This approach keeps our practice in a constant state of intellectual awareness and in a pursuit of new goals and opportunities for our clients. Specifically, to begin with, we view the subject matter of the cases we handle as an opportunity to identify new legal fields and areas of interest to focus on and develop.

Once we identify these legal areas, we assess whether our experience allows us to pursue them, whether they excite us (not just appeal to us) and whether they have practical value for the market and our existing clientele. The third and final element of our approach is determining whether the new legal fields and areas challenges the boundaries of our knowledge and skills. We are aiming at discovering legal fields and areas that push us to evolve and improve, expanding our thinking and horizons with the view to provide better service to our clients in meeting all of their needs comprehensively. For instance, our longstanding representation of businesses and public entities in various matters of commercial and public law led us, in 2018, in front of the opportunity to specialize in public procurement law, having achieved significant success since.

A key activity of your practice involves conducting training/educational seminars on your areas of expertise. Could you tell us a little more about it and how these training/educational seminars help you evolve?

Indeed, our presentations in the context of training/educational seminars to businesses and public entities, focusing on every aspect of their regulatory compliance and public procurement/tender law, have been a significant aspect of our practice. To date, we have had the honor and privilege of being trusted upon and delivered over 200 hours of presentations on those areas of law, training numerous executives, elected officials, and key-holders in applying the law and maintaining a constant connection to the current regulatory framework.

In the field of public procurement, we provide practical analysis of laws and regulations applicable to the necessary actions/decisions for the publication of a tender, submission of an offer as well as the award and execution phase of a public tender. Recently, the attendance in our training/educational seminars of businesses from specific sectors of the economy, such as water and defense (known as “formerly excluded areas” under public procurement law), led us to focus on these critical and unique sectors, to strengthen our practice’s team and to already undertake the legal support, representation and training of notable, in these particular fields, businesses.

The other legal field in which we have conducted and continue to conduct a large number of training/educational seminars, i.e. regulatory compliance and the specific obligations deriving from it, such as internal audits, prevention of corruption - with special emphasis on money laundering (AML) and financing of terrorism (CFT), whistleblowing, employment law and violence and harassment within the workplace, has been the driving force of our practice’s other specialization, i.e. in the provision of compliance services. We take particular pride in the trust shown to us by numerous public entities and businesses which have entrusted us with the project of their compliance to Law 4990/2022 (on whistleblowers). In this framework, we provide complete compliance services, including on-going legal and consulting support, tools (by the provision of a specialized, web-based reporting platform) and training to their staff, accompanied by documents and policies fully customized and tailored to each clients profile and needs.



**Our team
provides
one stop
shop service
to our clients**

Undoubtedly, the socio-economical and technological advances have had a crucial impact on the public administration as well as businesses. Drawing from your office’s significant exposure and experience in business and public law, how do you evaluate these developments and how do you, as a legal practice, absorb potential negative impacts and how do you adapt to the new environment?

The constant change of the modern social, economic and investment environment as well as of the public administration, with multiple legislations and obligations, results in the subsequent alteration of our clients’ needs, forcing, both them and us, into continuous vigilance, training, upgrading and adjusting our services and infrastructure. It has been a well-known fact that the world politics and economy dictate, in a more decisive manner, the implementation of a compact, strict but, at the same time, more flexible compliance regulatory regime, both for the private as well as the public sector. For example, we’ve noticed an increasing trend in the issuance of regulations instead of directives for achieving direct and unified, by all member states, implementation of various legal obligations.

At the same time, I’d like to point out the influence of technology, the radical advancement of which provides valuable tools to the public sector as well as to businesses but, at the same time, poses many threats. Its most recent and truly special tool, the Artificial Intelligence, couldn’t leave the legal profession unaffected. Contrary to professions in sectors such as information technology, that are synonymous with the use of digital tools and bound to keep up with the relevant advances or even be at the forefront of them, legal services have, until recently, been viewed as rather alienated or even distanced

from the technological tools. However, reality itself has triggered an evolutionary shift in legal sector. Due to the use of digital tools for the provision of holistic legal services and/or the execution of procedural actions as well as the establishment and development of the, now extremely valuable, legal databases, technology has not only become necessary in our everyday work but also a valuable ally, to the point that no lawyer/legal practitioner can nowadays practice law without the assistance of such tools. Technology allows lawyers to by-pass bureaucracy and to focus on the core of their cases. Therefore, the present and the future of legal and consultation services seem to proceed along-side with technology. As for the question of whether technology is or could constitute a threat to the legal profession, our view is that the human factor, especially in the legal profession, is irreplaceable, since the in-depth understanding of the client’s needs, the reconstructive thinking and the mental – amongst others – flexibility that the provision of holistic and modern legal services requires, is and will remain impossible to be adequately and safely replaced by technology.



At Sarakinos Law, the continuous and in-depth research and information on the developments in the legislation, technological and business fields, our constant exposure to the market via the training/educational seminars we conduct, our multi-faceted clientele, consisting of both businesses as well as public bodies, but also our philosophy for constant scientific development, have allowed us to provide fully, always updated and tailor-made legal services to our clients. At the same time, we have already invested considerable financial assets and working hours into new technologies (specifically AI, Big Data, cloud computing and the Internet of Things/IoT). More specifically, we constantly upgrade our tech infrastructure, ensuring, this way, the most recent and safe, for the safety of our clients' data, IT equipment.

Furthermore, we are currently in the process of enriching the modules of the training/educational seminars we conduct regarding public tenders and compliance in the private and public sector, taking into consideration the influence that the new technologies have in these sectors as well as the legal and practically applicable ways that both private entities and public bodies can use them, with exceptional emphasis on real case studies and FAQs deriving from cases we've handled in the past. In this spectrum, since early 2024, and in collaboration with a specialized software development company, we hope to prepare a proposal for the creation of a risk – assessment tool, able to track and automatically report transactions in digital investment assets, such as cryptocurrencies, suspicious of money laundering and terrorism financing (AML/CFT) that can be used by businesses as well as government bodies and authorities.

Sarakinos Law

11, Alopekis Street, Kolonaki – Athens, Greece

T: (+30) 211 4106 546

W: sarakinoslaw.com

