

AN 'OUT-OF-THE-BOX'

Approach to Thinking

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he last decade is the one that has seen the most rapid reforms and developments in terms of regulatory and procedural compliance, transparency and digitalisation, both in Cyprus and globally," Andrea Antoniou (33) says excitedly. "The work of lawyers and service providers has changed significantly, requiring a great extent of care and diligence. I believe that I belong to the generation of lawyers that contributed to revolutionising the market and assisting traditional law firms to reinvent themselves in order to survive. What emerged from this challenging decade was how to turn challenges into opportunities and accept that uncertainty is part of the game." Antoniou describes a law degree as an open door, a ticket to the world, full of possibilities and endless spiritual stimulation. "A law degree is the foundation for a career, not only in law but across many industries. It is quite exciting that even after specialising a particular area, a legal professional can have so many diverse career options. The legal profession itself, being demanding and competitive, is not only challenging but also ideal for sharpening your mind and ensuring that an 'out-of-the-box' approach to thinking is adopted," she says. "The need for continuous education is what makes the profession an endless pool of knowledge." Her promotion to Head of the Corporate Department in 2017 was a personal turning point for her, she says, explaining how it transformed the level of

responsibility she felt and led her to understand the deeper meaning of being a leader. "The new challenges and responsibilities urged me to look at self-development and to focus primarily on how to manage a group of people effectively and deliver high-quality services. It led me to ultimately becoming a Partner of the firm in 2020," she adds proudly. "My priority is to deliver increasing value to the firm and to maintain the high quality of services and solutions. I have learned over time that, to achieve better results, you need to invest in your workforce, your team, your people. I believe that the decentralization of work enables leaders to better nurture their talented people and build stronger teams." Antoniou is another young lawyer who is experiencing the so-called Fourth Industrial Revolution as it develops. As she explains when asked about the digitalisation of the legal sector, there have already been considerable advances in servicing clients following digitalisation and the launch of various technological tools, which are now used by legal professionals. It is expected that this will gradually lead to the restructuring of the legal profession, improving the quality of services rendered to end-clients, providing time-efficiency, and enhancing the client-lawyer relationship. As technology extended rapidly to virtually every industry and profession, Cyprus' dated legal system came perilously close to being left behind but – better late than never – the politicians and lawmakers finally responded with reforms. "The 7th and 14th of July 2022 are arguably the most important dates for the legal system and the legal community of Cyprus, as the House of Representatives reached agreement on amending the Constitution," Antoniou says, and confirms her own belief that the ground now is solid enough to support any amendments that may be

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needed in the future. "Cyprus' legal system has been strengthened with mechanisms that will modernise the judicial body and improve the efficiency and quality of judicial proceedings and court decisions," she explains. "Most importantly, there will be specialisation amongst the judges while the separation of the Supreme and Appellate courts will also be based on specialty, a development that guarantees the system's efficiency, the quality of rulings and fast-track procedures. The legal community of Cyprus, the Cyprus Bar Association, the Ministry of Justice and the Justice Committee of the Parliament have worked closely for several years and cooperated on well-drafted legislation and on convincing the key stakeholders and the political parties of the imperative need to move forward with this historic development." Andrea Antoniou's professional persona has been shaped by her belief in the power of determination, optimism, integrity – both individual and collective – and in doing your best, always striving to surpass yourself. "Another quality is curiosity," she enthuses. "You can't create opportunities and success from a 'comfort zone' or based on old models. The world is constantly changing and curiosity helps us to strategically position ourselves, to become aware of the market's developments and its changing dynamics."

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