

## THE YOUNG LAWYER IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

### TODAY WE CHAT WITH:

Pablo Vinageras, José Luis Martín and Cristina Hernández-Martí, members of the International Association of Young Lawyers (AIJA).



#### WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TODAY: THE PERSONAL OR CORPORATE BRAND IN AN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT?

**JLM**-In my opinion, both personal and corporate brand are essential elements that define every lawyer, although the specific weight of each one of them may probably vary depending on the environment in which each lawyer develops his professional career. In this sense, based on my personal experience, in a context of a small firm like the one in which I have been working so far, your own personal brand is an absolutely decisive factor, and I think that the values and principles that your personal brand may fail to convey will difficulty be integrated by the corporate brand associated to the firm in which you work.

have a value proposition that positions you as the most valuable lawyer and shows your competitive advantage.

**CHM**-Both must be together and require a common strategy that defines and heads them towards the client. The natural reaction of our prospect client, national or international, is to be skeptical about our service and demand the best results, and this is where our strategy defines us. Both will help us differentiate ourselves from other competitors, and both will help us break down any wall of mistrust through reputation and a positive image.

#### DO YOU CONSIDER DIGITAL STRATEGY AND POSITIONING ESSENTIAL?

**PV**- I understand that one's personal brand is an essential value of every lawyer in a homogeneous and competitive market like the current one. Nowadays, it is necessary for a lawyer to develop a consistent and appropriate branding policy to leave trail of its essence. "Your life is your message", Gandhi said. Everything communicates and generates personal brand, be it good or bad. Personal brand needs to go hand in hand with corporate brand, which will result in your own branding.

**PV**- Yes. In this digital age in which we are, it is also necessary to talk about digital identity. Technology is and will be changing the profession and the legal service provision in many ways. Social networks will allow you to forge your reputation, connect with people whose interests are similar to yours, find business opportunities and get in touch with people that can help you consolidate your network.

**CHM**- Absolutely. Today's world does not admit a technological disconnection. The firms of the future will be those that are already concerned about their digital strategy and are implementing it in their

daily activity, therefore allocating resources to support its clients by offering a modern service that is not anchored in the past. Immobility and fear that some firms experience is no longer admitted by the market, which demands "his/her Counsel" to have started the digital path in the same way that the firm's clients have done so.

**JLM**- Of course. We have reached a point in which denying the importance of digital strategy and positioning would be a worrying symptom of ignorance about the digital environment in which we, legal service providers, work. Definitely, it is essential to consolidate appropriate forms of digital presence in accordance with the present times.

#### WHAT CAN AIJA OFFER TO YOUNG LAWYERS?

**CHM**- AIJA offers the possibility to enjoy a wide range of useful resources for a lawyer's professional and personal development that can hardly be found in other associations. Fellowship, permanent concern for learning issues and the pursuit of continuous training that enables confidence in advising clients, together with a very powerful networking, brings AIJA's members to a superior level. And all this takes place in a friendly and fun environment.

Please find a copy of the full interview at [www.icab.cat/gaj](http://www.icab.cat/gaj), in the section 'Documents'.

# Speaker

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GAJ  
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THE VOICE OF THE BARCELONA YOUNG BAR ASSOCIATION



## Social Agenda

- > **TARONJA I LLIMONA AWARDS.** Online voting already open at [www.icab.cat/enquestagaj](http://www.icab.cat/enquestagaj)! Judge the judges and come to greet them at the gala award ceremony to be held on 13 November in the Auditorium of the Bar Association.
- > **10 December: GAJ Pre-Christmas After Work.** See you there!

## International Agenda

- > **EYBA is organizing a ski trip with young European lawyers in January 2016.** More information available soon in our webpage. Stay alert!



**LAST PLACES FOR THE 2ND EDITION OF THE MENTORING PROGRAMME:** Are you a young lawyer who is starting out in the practice of law? Take this unique opportunity to fully develop your potential. There's still time... Last available places!!

We want to hear the views of our members. If you have any proposal or suggestion, please send them by e-mail to [advocatsjoves@icab.cat](mailto:advocatsjoves@icab.cat)

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TIZIANA DI CIOMMO  
PRESIDENT OF THE  
BARCELONA YOUNG  
BAR ASSOCIATION



The Executive Committee of the Barcelona Young Bar Association ("BCN YBA"), which I have the honour to chair as President, was renewed a few weeks ago. Undoubtedly, my first lines shall be of appreciation to the former President and to the Executive Committee of the BCN YBA, for their invaluable work, and shall be also of gratitude to the President and to the Council of the Barcelona Bar Association, for their unconditional support.

Entering in media res, I imagine that many may be wondering what does the BCN YBA actually do? I will try to give a simple answer to such a complex question: its main purpose is to accompany the new and young members of the Barcelona Bar Association who are starting out in the practice of law. This profession is probably difficult and thorny, but, despite everything, it is fulfilling and rewarding, too.

The word profession comes from the Latin word *professio*, meaning "action or effect of professing". And I personally believe that, similarly to a religion, the legal profession can also be professed, as it absolves both the function of ensuring the effectiveness of the right of defence recognized in Article 24 of the Spanish Constitution and, at the same time, plays a significant role in shaping the regulatory systems, to the extent that it contributes to the generation of case law by the Courts of Justice.

As set forth by Article 1.6 of the Spanish Civil Code, "the case law will complement the legal system with the doctrine established by the Supreme Court". Indeed, in the time of Aristotle, the importance of the integrative function of the case law was already recognized, being defined as a "virtue involving the correct discussion of human affairs". And, in many cases, such common sense has led to the reconsideration of the regulatory system. However, the above not only requires to be a good professional. Also, you have to be, in Vulpiano's words, "homo bonus". Not to forget that, in order to achieve this double condition, the recognition of the nobility of respect to both ethical values and codes of ethics of the legal profession shall be the only constant.

That being said, I consider that it is specially at the beginning of this long process of professional and personal development where the BCN YBA must be present, acting as a cross shared space and as an interchange point able to provide the answer to different concerns by promoting the ongoing education, the involvement in the activities of the Bar Association and the participation in the civil society of this large group represented by young lawyers.

In short, the main objective of the Young Bar Association is to pave the way chosen by young lawyers and, to this end, the BCN YBA is not only aided by its Executive Committee, but it also counts, and prominently, with the active participation of its numerous members to whom we want to thank for their selfless dedication.

**Did you know that...**

in order to do business with colleagues from different cultures, it's advisable to previously learn the habits and culture of their country in order to avoid typical mistakes resulting from the ignorance of they culture. Some examples below:

- **JAPANESE:** it's advisable to show interest and take a moment to read over their business cards before putting them away; not doing so may be considered rude or ill-mannered.
- **ENGLISH/GERMAN:** always be on time not to give an impression of both lack of seriousness and respect.
- **USA:** avoid silences during the negotiation; be addressed to them in English; be direct in all your reasoning.
- **CHINESE:** the initial greeting is very important; if your speaker is accompanied by an interpreter, keep looking and addressing to the former.

## Role of the Barcelona Young Bar Association ("BCN YBA") within the European Young Bar Association ("EYBA")

For the past few years, the role of the BCN YBA within this European Association of young lawyers has been increasingly important: it has organized two EYBA conferences in Barcelona (2011 and 2013) and it has been chaired by two Presidents, **Amina Omar** (2011-2012) and, at present **Elisabeth Batista** (2015-2016).

This shows BCN YBA's clear interest in making its young lawyers participate in the conferences organized by the EYBA, and also at the international meetings. What is the added value of the EYBA? Meeting colleagues from around Europe and the world, and an advanced legal education. This Association organizes three annual conferences: the International Weekend, which always takes place in September, the Spring Conference, which will be organized in Belfast 7-10 of April 2016, and the Summer Conference & Annual General Meeting, which will take place in Düsseldorf next 23 -25 of June 2016.

The aims of the BCN YBA being part

of the current EYBA Board are the following:

1. To know the real situation of the European young lawyers once they have finished their law degree. This implies a comparative survey of all EYBA members (Young Bar Associations and also individual lawyers) in order to prepare a final report to be presented to the AGM in June 2016. Having received the information first-hand, then the corresponding measures will have to be taken in order to improve those aspects that may better the situation of the young lawyer.
2. To encourage the participation of the young lawyers of Barcelona in the activities organized by the EYBA, not only in its conferences, but also in its Newsletter. This Newsletter is a platform which allows to disseminate any legal amendments or the latest news that are of interest for the legal profession, among colleagues from all over Europe. For instance, in the Autumn Edition of 2015, three young lawyers from Barcelona contributed with their articles regarding the International Weekend (Alba Martí), the refugee

situation (Mariona Borràs) and the Law of International Legal Cooperation (Blanca Padrós). You can read them on the Bar Association website.

### Meeting colleagues from around Europe and the world, and an advanced legal education

3. The acquisition of sponsors for the EYBA is one of the most ambitious objectives of the BCN YBA. The funds received will be used to reduce the costs of the registrations fees, in order to encourage the participation of the young lawyers. This will undoubtedly imply very hard work. However, with tenacity and eagerness, the BCN YBA being part of the EYBA Board will try to successfully achieve the aforementioned objectives.



### "The Protagonist"

#### Elisabeth Batista

**Elisabeth Batista** is a young commercial lawyer, specialized in International Business Law and Director of the International Department of a law firm in Barcelona. She is a member of the Executive Committee of the Barcelona Young Bar Association ("BCN YBA") and, representing the Barcelona young lawyers, has held the presidency of the **European Young Bar Association** since June, 2015, an Association that represents young lawyers at the European level. Through Elisabeth Batista and the BCN YBA, the young lawyers of Barcelona will have the opportunity to experience the activities and benefits of the EYBA first hand and, specifically, to participate in its Newsletter and attend any meetings organized by the Association within Europe, together with other colleagues from around the world.

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