



Francesco G. Sanna

Partner

Milan
+39.02.3030.2936

francesco.sanna@klgates.com

OVERVIEW

Francesco Sanna is a partner and head of the firm's Real Estate practice in Italy. He focuses his practice on real estate investment and development, as well as in drafting and negotiating the relevant contracts. He is widely recognised for structuring complex real estate development transactions and providing strategic advice on core and value-added real estate transactions.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Prior to joining K&L Gates, Francisco was a partner at another international law firm in Milan.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Recognised by *Chambers Europe* for Real Estate in Italy, 2019-2026
- Recognised by *The Legal 500 EMEA* in Italy
 - Leading Partner, Real Estate and Construction, 2019-2025
 - Recommended Lawyer, Dispute Resolution, 2025
- Recognised in *The Best Lawyers in Italy™* for Real Estate Law, 2025
- Ranked by *MilanoFinanza* in the "Best Lawyers and Best Corporate Firms 2021" as a "Best Lawyer" for Real Estate and "Selected Lawyer" for Investment Funds and Real Estate

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- 13 January 2026, during RE ITALY WINTER FORUM 2026, Francesco Sanna was interviewed on the topic of the current real estate investment situation in Italy.
- 13 June 2025, during the RE Italy event organized by Monitorimmobiliare, Francesco Sanna interviewed Allen Chiltern, Global Head of Real Estate Capital Formation at Schroders Capital, on the event's main topics: Hotels, Student Housing, and Data Centers. [Click here](#) for the video recording of the interview.

- 4 June 2025, during the webinar “Real Estate Investment Strategies: Opportunities and Challenges for International Investors in Italy,” organised by the American Chamber of Commerce in Italy, Francesco Sanna participated as speaker.
- 26 May 2025, during a conference jointly organised by K&L Gates and BLegal, Francesco Sanna participated as moderator of the panel "Sardinia: Unlocking the Potential. New Frontiers in Investment in Hospitality, Infrastructure and Nautical Tourism." [Click here](#) for the video recording of the interview.
- 20 February 2025, during an event organised by K&L Gates, Francesco Sanna participated as a speaker on the panel "[Hospitality and Leisure: The Experiential Side of Real Estate.](#)"
- 18 June 2024, during an event organised by JLL, Francesco Sanna participated in the panel “Exploring Italian Office Occupants Trends.”
- 12 June 2024, during the [RE ITALY Meeting](#) organised by Monitorimmobiliare, Francesco Sanna participated as moderator of the panel “Senior housing, nursing homes, spas: new opportunities for investors.”
- 29 January 2024, during a K&L Gates webinar, Francesco Sanna participated in “Current Trends in US Real Estate Transactions.”
- 25 January 2024, during the RE ITALY Meeting organised by Monitorimmobiliare, Francesco Sanna participated as moderator of the panel “Hospitality: from social infrastructure to luxury.” [Click here](#) for the video recording of the event.
- 21 June 2023, during the RE ITALY Meeting organised by Monitorimmobiliare, Francesco Sanna participated as moderator of the panel “Real estate against inflation.” [Click here](#) for the video recording of the event.
- 22 June 2022, during the RE ITALY Meeting organised by Monitorimmobiliare, Francesco Sanna participated as moderator of the panel “Urban regeneration: the future of real estate.” [Click here](#) for the video recording of the event.
- 9 June 2021, during the RE ITALY Meeting organised by Monitorimmobiliare, Francesco Sanna participated as moderator of the panel “New areas for real estate investment.” [Click here](#) for the video recording of the event.
- 29 October 2020, during the RE ITALY Meeting organised by Monitorimmobiliare, Francesco Sanna participated as moderator of the panel "The numbers of the market" and discussed the trends of the real estate market in 2020. [Click here](#) for the video recording of the event.

EDUCATION

- Law Degree, Catholic University of the Sacred Heart of Milan

ADMISSIONS

- Milan Bar

LANGUAGES

- English
- Italian

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP POWERED BY HUB

- 23 June 2022, RE ITALY June 2022: Urban Regeneration, The Future of Real Estate
- 8 August 2017, Update: Italian Parliament approves the new National Merger Filing Thresholds
- 29 March 2017, The Italian Council of State Provides Welcome Clarifications Regarding the Standard of Proof That the Italian Competition Authority Must Discharge
- 22 February 2017, OECD: Italy Should Approve its Proposed Competition Legislation ‘Swiftly’, Including the Reform of the National Merger Filing Thresholds
- 23 January 2017, Italy Implements EU Directive on Damages for Breaches of Competition Law
- 16 November 2016, Italy to Implement EU Directive on Damages for Breaches of Competition Law

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

- Real Estate Litigation Guide 2025, *Law and Practice*, Italy chapter, Chambers and Partners
- Co-author of the article "Project Finance in Italy after art.37 bis of Merloni ter law – first application appraisal" published in the review "Impiantistica Italiana" - October 2000.
- “Energy efficiency certificates in recent Authority legislation” *Ambiente & Sicurezza* review (Sole 24 Ore), 2003
- “The start-up of energy green certificate market”, *Ambiente & Sicurezza* Review (Sole 24 Ore), 2003
- Author of the Italian chapter on PPP and PFI of the *The Projects & Construction Review*.

NEWS & EVENTS

- 25 March 2026, K&L Gates Recognised in 2026 Edition of *The Legal 500 EMEA*
- 19 March 2026, K&L Gates Ranked in Chambers Guides Across European Regions
- 10 February 2026, K&L Gates Advised Lonati Group in Sale of Milan Shopping Center to VIA Outlets
- 29 July 2025, K&L Gates Assists Bayerische Landesbank With Real Estate Refinancing for Vehicle Owned by Swiss Real Estate Investor
- 26 March 2025, K&L Gates Recognised in 2025 Edition of *The Legal 500 EMEA*

- 20 March 2025, K&L Gates Ranked in Chambers Guides Across European Regions
- 19 March 2025, K&L Gates Advises Crea.re Group in Acquisition of the Galleria Subalpina in Turin
- 10 March 2025, K&L Gates Advises Invel on €111.2 Million Bond Issue to Finance Redevelopment of Hotel Majestic in Rome
- 20 February 2025, Hospitality and Leisure: The Experiential Side of Real Estate
- 27 March 2024, K&L Gates Recognised in 2024 Edition of *The Legal 500 EMEA*
- 14 March 2024, K&L Gates Ranked in 2024 *Chambers Europe Guide*
- 22 June 2023, Nearly 50 K&L Gates Lawyers Throughout Europe Recognized in 2024 Best Lawyers, Ones to Watch Editions
- 16 March 2023, K&L Gates Recognized in 2023 *Chambers Europe Guide*
- 17 March 2022, K&L Gates Recognized in 2022 Chambers Europe Guide
- 25 March 2021, K&L Gates Recognized in 2021 Chambers Europe Guide
- 26 May 2016, K&L Gates, Lawyers Earn Honors in Chambers Global, Regional Guides
- 6 May 2015, K&L Gates, Lawyers Recognized as Leaders in Chambers Global Guides

AREAS OF FOCUS

- Real Estate
- Construction and Infrastructure

INDUSTRIES

- Consumer Goods and Services
- Logistics and Warehousing
- Resort, Hospitality, and Leisure
- Transportation and Logistics

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

Office and Retail

- Assistance to an Italian industrial group, owner of a 44,000 square meter shopping center on the outskirts of Milan, Italy, in its sale to a Dutch operator specializing in the management of premium outlet destinations.

- Assisted an Italian closed-end reserved real estate alternative investment fund and investors belonging to an investment management company group owned by US and Hungarian shareholders in connection with the acquisition of a portfolio including 13 supermarkets in Lombardy, Piedmont and Lazio.
- Assisted a US investment company in selling a prestigious property in Milan (Via Broletto, 16) to a German real estate investment manager. The property, acquired and redeveloped by the selling company, has been awarded LEED Platinum and BREEAM certification and is leased entirely to leading companies.
- Assisting a US global investment manager in the sale of an office building located in Milan, Corso di Porta Vigentina No. 9, to an international insurance group. The transaction involved the complete redevelopment and renovation of the property by the seller, taking into account the specific needs of the buyer.
- Acted on behalf of a real estate fund managed by a fund of funds in connection with the acquisition of a real estate complex located in Milan, Via Ceresio.
- Assistance to a Real Estate Fund Management Company in connection with the acquisition, by a fund managed by it, of a real estate complex composed of 6 buildings for office use destination, located in Rome, at Via Laurentina 449.
- Assistance to a primary Italian asset manager in connection with the acquisition by one of the real estate fund managed by it of an area located in the municipality of San Donato Milanese, destined to be developed through the realisation of a real estate complex for office use that will become the new headquarter of a global player in the oil and gas sector.
- Acting on behalf of an Italian real estate investment fund, in connection with the sale to an English real estate fund, managed by a fund of funds, of a real estate complex for office use located in Milan, Via Gattamelata no. 34.
- Assistance to an Australian multinational group operating in the infrastructure sector A in the project for the redevelopment of the entire south-east Milanese area, named Santa Giulia. The client will complete the construction of two buildings and the annexed parking lots will be leased to an Italian multinational oilfield services company.
- Assisted a US global real estate investment company, as investor of an Italian real estate fund managed by a British management company operating in Italy in the negotiation for the lease of an iconic skyscraper in Milan to primary international operators as tenant.
- Acting on behalf of an international real estate investment fund, in the purchase of an entire real estate complex located in Via Morimondo no.13/15/17, Milan, subject to the verification of some conditions precedent.
- Assistance to an Italian real estate investment company in the acquisition of a 17,000 sq. m. building called "Palazzo Gran Torino", located in the center of Turin, from an investment fund managed by a leading real estate asset manager. K&L Gates assisted the client by handling relations with the fund and co-investors, corporate and contractual aspects, real estate, regulatory and tax issues.

- Advised one of the largest US real estate asset managers in connection with the acquisition by a SICAF of a portion of a building in Rome, Via del Corso, for retail use.
- Advice to an Italian vehicle fully participated by an Italian wealth management advisor, acting as principal, in connection with the negotiation with a local contractor of the contract for the development of an area located in the municipality of Fiumicino, of a real estate complex for retail use destined to be transferred to a real estate fund.
- Acting on behalf of the real estate investment fund controlled by a Swiss multinational investment bank and financial services company, in the purchase of high street retail complex in Turin from a real estate investment fund controlled by a global investment bank.

Logistics

- Assisted a global real estate investor and Australian fund manager in acquiring two industrial/logistics assets in Lombardy for a total consideration of €51 million.
- Assisting a US real estate investment management company in the acquisition of a distribution hub for logistics use, located in Verona, Italy. The commercial distribution hub has an area of 128,000 sq. m and is strategically located connecting northern and southern Europe and has obtained DGNB Platinum level sustainability certification.
- Assisting a US global investment manager in the acquisition of two logistics complexes in northeastern Italy (Verona and Mantua) through a closed-end real estate alternative investment fund. This completes the two-year acquisition of a larger portfolio of logistics space consisting of six buildings, totaling about 96,000 sq. m.
- Advised a US alternative investment manager, in the definition and negotiation of an important transaction aimed to the requalification of two real estate complex for logistic use near Milan.
- Assisted a leading US real estate asset manager in the acquisition of two real estate complexes for logistic use, respectively located in the municipality of Nogara (Verona) and the municipality of Lazzate (MB).
- Advised an investment management firm in connection with the acquisition, by a SICAF managed by an adviser to the fund and entirely participated by the fund, of a real estate complex for logistical use, located in the Municipality of Broni (PV).
- Legal assistance to a primary US real estate investment manager in the purchase of two real estate complexes for logistic use located in the Municipalities of Arluno (MI) and Caorso (PC). K&L legal assistance regarding this matter is still ongoing.
- Assistance to a leading German real estate investment management company, in the sale of a logistics asset in Liscate (MI,) occupied by global market leader in the logistics industry, to a French asset manager.
- Acting on behalf of a real estate fund, in connection with the acquisition from a leading US real estate investment manager, of a real estate complex for logistic use, located in the municipality of Truccazzano (MI), by a company which operates in the real estate and construction sector.

- Assisting an Australian real estate investor and fund manager in the acquisition of an industrial and logistics portfolio in Vittuone (MI). The transaction is part of a wider European development plan that our client has completed by finalizing the acquisition of six industrial and logistic assets for a value of €126.1 million and a total area of approximately 190 sq. m. in four countries (Germany, Italy, Netherlands and UK).
- Assisted a leading real estate asset manager in the negotiation and execution of a preliminary framework agreement for the acquisition of a portfolio of 10 assets previously leased to a leading express delivery company, in the context of same framework, assistance to the final acquisition of two logistics assets by means of a notarial transfer deed.

Co-working, Social, and Student Housing

- Assisted the leader of a consortium of entrepreneurs in the acquisition of a historical asset in Turin from a fund managed by an asset management company and underwritten by an alternative asset manager.
- Assisted a US-based company that develops and invests in Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) and other contemporary housing formats, in acquiring development areas in Padua and Milan (Lambruschini area) earmarked for the construction of student residences.
- Assistance to a leading independent alternative asset management platform in Italy in connection with the financing of a complex development project involving the construction of, among other things, a social-health facility intended for the care and welfare of the elderly and social housing-both located in the Marche region, in Pesaro.
- Assisted a German multinational financial services company in negotiating with a US commercial real estate company that provides shared workspaces for technology startups for the lease of an entire building in Milan, Via Turati.
- Assisted a privately owned global real estate investment, development, and management firm, and a global real estate investment manager, in negotiations with an American commercial real estate company that provides shared workspaces for technology startups for the lease and procedure of renovation of an entire building in Milan, Via Mazzini.
- Assisted a pan-European developer active in the construction of student accommodations, in the development of a student residence in the center of Bologna, in the 'Bolognina' district. The property will be ready to host students in the summer of 2022.
- Assisted a leading Italian asset management company in connection with the development of a wide area located in Rome for the realization of a residential real estate complex, which includes both residential units under the "social housing" and residential units to be sold or rented in the free market.
- Assistance to a pan-European developer active in the construction of student accommodations in the sale of a student housing development to a global investment manager. The area is located near the University of Turin and will be object of a refurbishment of a former industrial site.

- Assisting a multinational oil and gas company in an arbitration against a well-known multinational plastic manufacturer in connection with certain expansion and maintenance works of a polyurethane production plant.
- Assisting a multinational company operating in the oil and gas sector against a leading European refinery operator in an arbitration concerning refinery refurbishment and maintenance works.

Hospitality

- Assisted an independent real estate investment and asset manager in financing a €111.2 million bond issue for the development and redevelopment of the former Hotel Majestic in Rome. The 87-room property will be managed by Starwood Hotels and repositioned as the five-star Baccarat Hotel Rome.
- Assisted a luxury resort located in Sardinia, Municipality of Golfo Aranci, in its development process.
- Assistance to a Belgian construction company in connection with the process of redevelopment of a luxury hotel, located in Rome, near Piazza della Repubblica.
- Assistance to a primary US real estate investment manager in the acquisition of a hotel located in Milan, piazza Luigi di Savoia.
- Assistance in favour of a company fully specialized and committed in design and construction of fit out works, in relation to the redevelopment of a luxury hotel, located in Rome close to Villa Borghese. Our assistance includes the advice and addressing, on the contractor side, of all ordinary matters that can typically arise out during the construction of the works on site.

Energy and Infrastructure

- Owner's counsel in relation to a joint venture for the realisation of a 30 MWh gas fuelled co-generation plant in Central Italy (San Salvo – near Chieti) ancillary to one of the biggest glass-production factories in Europe.
- Assisting a multinational company operating in the oil and gas sector in multiple disputes against the subcontractors of a single order for the expansion of a refinery.

Project Finance

- Assistance to the sponsors' counsel in the pre-awarding phase in a PFI project for the realization of the new Treviso Hospital.
- Assistance to a leading international developer in a complex PFI transaction—in connection with the revision of the project, tender and service contracts signed in the context of the concession given to the public administration of Treviso—with the project financing system—for the construction of the “Cittadella Sanitaria”, part of the Treviso Hospital, to a special purpose vehicle formed by the above-mentioned operator, leading investors, and financial companies.

Mixed Use

- Advised one of the world's leading asset managers, acting on behalf of a real estate investment fund managed by a German investment fund regulated under the German Investment Act, of a real estate asset located in Milan, Via Vittor Pisani n.19.
- Assisted a US privately owned global real estate investment, development, and management firm in the acquisition and development of the mixed-used “Città del Sole” area in Rome, Italy.
- Assistance to an Italian real estate investor in connection with the refurbishment and commercialization of the building of new acquisition located in Milan, Via San Raffaele 1 on the corner of Piazza Duomo, with mixed retail and office use.