

THE LAWYER

Gianni Origoni to open Hong Kong office

Italian firm Gianni Origoni Grippo Cappelli & Partners is in the process of launching a Hong Kong office, with the aim of building closer links with the Chinese market.

The office, which could be operational by the end of this year, will be Gianni Origoni's tenth office globally and its fifth outside Italy. The firm already has a presence in Abu Dhabi ([4 January 2010](#)), Brussels, London and New York.

Corporate partner Stefano Beghi is responsible for Gianni Origoni's China desk and will head up the Hong Kong office when it opens. The firm will only practise Italian law in Hong Kong, in the same way as it runs its other international offices.

Beghi has been spending an increasing amount of time in Hong Kong since spring this year to scope out the market. He said several years of examining the Chinese legal market had led Gianni Origoni to conclude that it was better to "cooperate rather than compete" with Chinese firms.

"Chinese investment into Europe and in Italy particularly seems to be ready to start, so being an Italian law firm we're particularly interested in assisting Chinese companies in doing business in Italy," Beghi said, adding that the size of the inbound transactions tended to be larger than outbound deals by Italians into China.

"Assisting the Chinese companies means being in a position to introduce our firm to them," Beghi said. "This happens most of the time through a Chinese lawyer."

He said Gianni Origoni had concluded that being in Hong Kong would put the firm in the best position to meet potential clients and build strong relationships with Chinese firms. In the past, the firm has worked alongside Chinese heavyweights including [King & Wood Mallesons \(KWM\)](#) and [Zhong Lun](#), and has had secondees in Italy from KWM.

Gianni Origoni is currently going through the regulatory hoops necessary to set up the office. Beghi said he hoped four or five lawyers would be based in Hong Kong once the office was up and running.

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