

Balla e Ciapponi
International Law Firm



Balla, Ciapponi & Partners
Italian and EU Law

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In 2001, attorneys Paolo Balla and Marco Ciapponi established the law firm of Balla & Ciapponi in Rome.

Their goal was to provide their Clients with legal services comparable to those offered by the most reputable European law firms.

The original practice areas have expanded since Mr. Balla and Mr. Ciapponi first established the firm. The office has pursued, in the course of the years and with respect to the single professional competences, a greater integration with the other economic and social segments. This growth has been spurred by European integration as well as a global economy.

Balla & Ciapponi's clients come to expect the high level of service that is a result of a strong commitment to finding an effective solution specifically adapted to the client's specific needs and tailored to the client's industry.

In the following pages, we will show, in greater detail, the services rendered by the firm and our approach to resolving our clients' issues. Please note, however, that we are always happy to look over and respond to your specific requests and particular needs and requirements.





Firm Profile

The Office

In addition to the founding partners, the law firm of Balla & Ciapponi is comprised of senior lawyers and associates.

Additionally, the Firm engages many highly specialized consultants who collaborate with the firm in their various areas of expertise.

The firm operates out of its offices in Rome and has a nationwide client base. In addition to the head office in Rome, Balla & Ciapponi operates in conjunction with strategic partnerships throughout the country.

Since 2007 the firm has established a presence in the United States, operating from its office located in downtown Chicago.

Service Philosophy

Pursuant to the firm's "Integrated Legal Service" model, both individual and institutional clients can benefit from complete operative support that will meet all their needs. All our clients can count on the expertise of highly specialized professionals with deep knowledge of and vast experience in their respective sectors. Specialized professionals are able to deliver their work-product quickly and efficiently, resulting in:

- quality service;
- cost optimization.

Integrated professional services

Following the demands relative to the expanding economy, the firm integrated its services and expanded upon its existing services to provide the maximum benefits to its clients. Recognizing the demands of the global economy, the firm also advises clients engaged in commercial transactions in developing countries.





Client and Lawyer

Balla & Ciapponi offers their clients continuous and even counsel that results in greater integration of the client's needs to the services we provide. Thus we are able to offer personalized professional services adapted to the individual client's needs each and every time.

This integrated consultancy relationship allows for quick turn-around time for answers to our client's questions, and also maximizes the client's return on investment in legal services.

Expansion of Legal Services.

Today Balla & Ciapponi offers a wide range of legal services that extend and compliment its original practice in the areas of civil and corporate law. We now represent our clients in the areas of international law, intellectual property law, and legal issues in the emerging fields of technology. We have also moved into the field of criminal law, particularly the areas of white-collar crime.

The firm also offers a wide range of consulting services in the following areas:

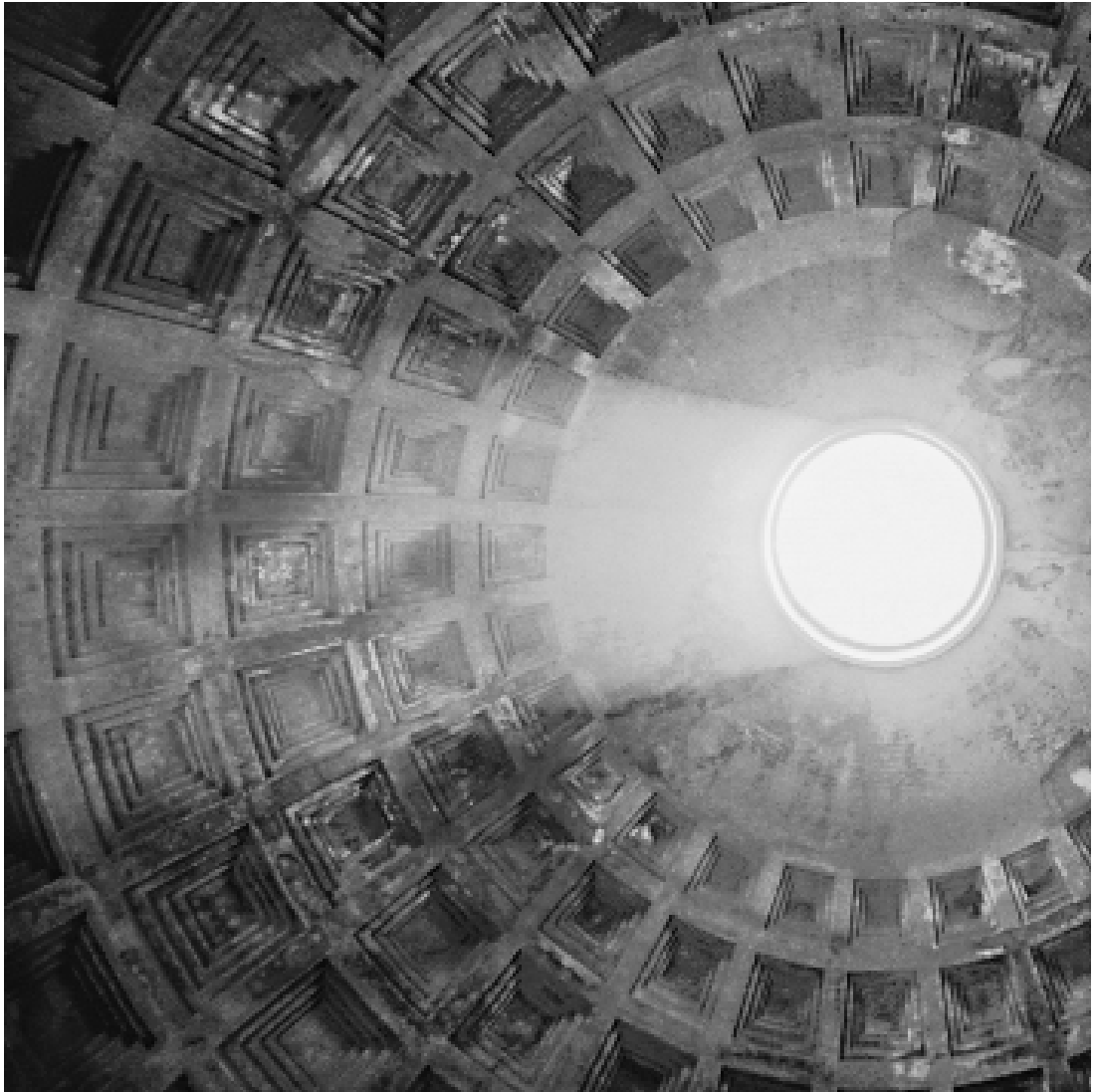
- Corporate strategy;
- Antitrust;
- International Tax Planning;
- Strategic Investments.

Alternative Dispute Resolution

At Balla & Ciapponi, we specialize in litigation. Nonetheless, we recognize that litigating is not always the fastest and most efficient way to resolve disputes.

Where time is of the essence, especially for businesses, we recommend and engage in alternative dispute resolution as well as any other legal service suitable for settlement.



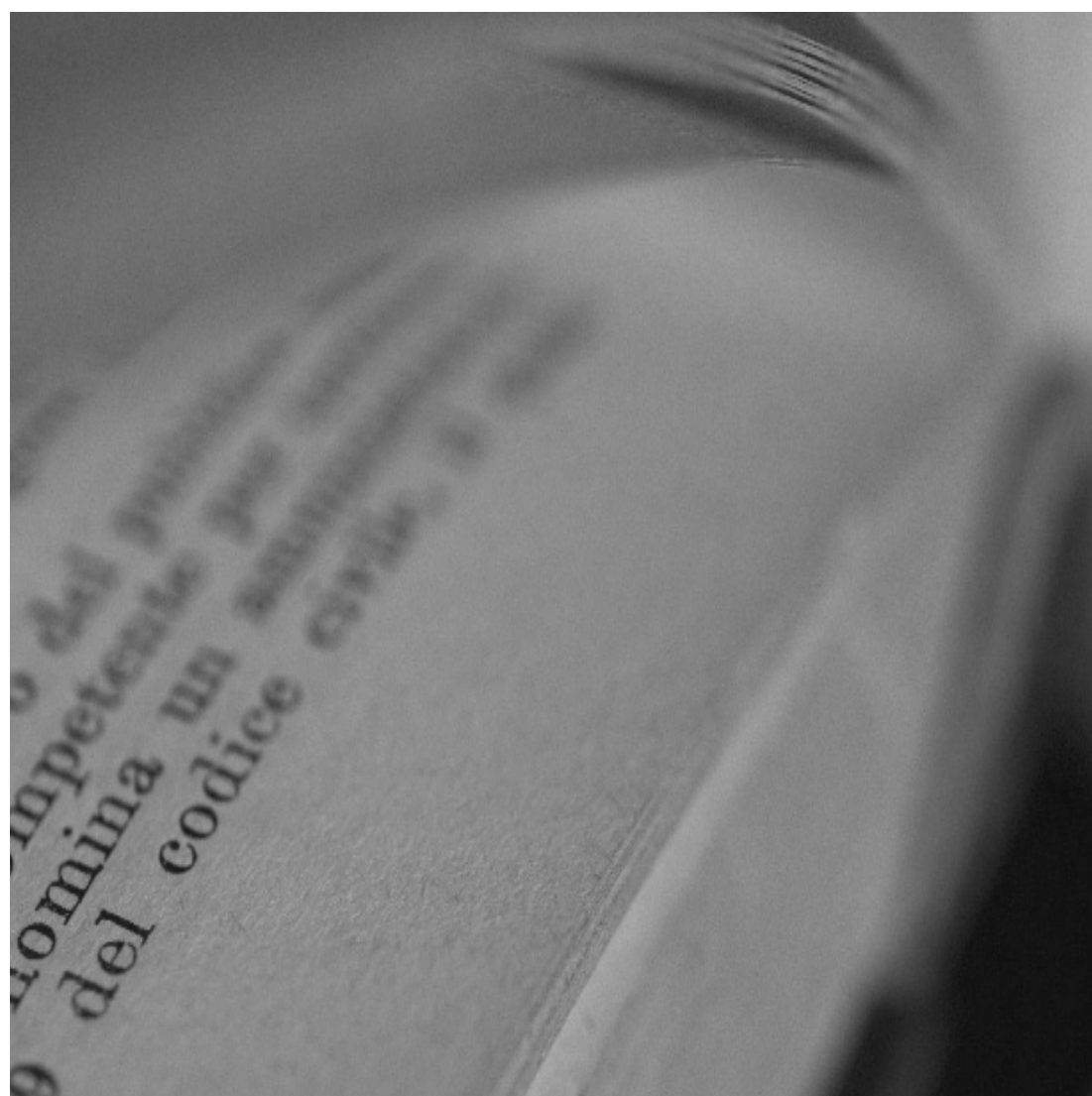


Details

Following is a more detailed description of the services, focusing on the following practice areas

- Civil, Business and Corporate law
- Intellectual Property rights
- International law
- Labor law
- White-collar crime
- Tax law





Civil, Business and Corporate Law

The firm's steady expertise in civil and business law extends to a multitude of business and industry sectors.

The following pages describe the areas of practice and the specific competences that the professionals of this firm perform in a full cooperation with the clients.





I. Business Law.

The firm, in addition to the commercial dispute, is engaged in the following related practice areas:

- valuation of companies and related business entities
- mergers and acquisitions
- reorganization and restructuring of business entities
- negotiation and renegotiation of debts
- join ventures
- franchising
- antitrust and competition law

II. Bankruptcy and Debt Recovery

The firm has particular expertise in debt recovery and bankruptcy for both business entities and individuals. In addition to assisting clients in related lawsuits, we are particularly effective in enforcement actions and composition with creditors.

Given the increase in commercial transactions within the European Union, Balla & Ciapponi has established strategic alliances with the finest European law firms in debt recovery actions throughout Europe.

In the international arena, we also collaborate with firms in the enforcement of foreign judgments in Italy.

III. Intestate Succession and Estate Planning

Intestate succession and estate planning is an important practice area for our firm.

We help families and businesses develop a solid asset protection strategy through traditional instruments, including trusts and the establishment of family foundations.

On this matter, we provide exacting attention to estate planning issues, such as wills, tax planning in Italy and abroad. We also provide advice and counsel to heirs and beneficiaries in the administration of the wills and estate planning documents.

Often, the firm directly assists the client in estate planning, management of administrative matters, investments and divestments, and the resolution of related tax obligations.

Because of our collective experience, the dedicated professionals of Balla & Ciapponi obtain significant results involving conflicts between heirs or between beneficiaries and in the interpretation and eventual execution of wills.

III. Family Law

The Office of Balla & Ciapponi comprises a number of lawyers specialized in family law. The lawyers lend their expertise to all family-law related matters, including litigation and negotiations.

We provide legal assistance in the case of separation or divorce, as well in minor's protection and custody management.





Intellectual Property Rights

Today intellectual property rights protection is increasingly important.

I. Copyright

The use of original works, whether musical works, literary works, pictorial, graphic and sculptural works, motion pictures works, including the use of new technologies, has massively widened the number of consumers and, results in the necessity for authors to protect their rights.

The law firm of Balla & Ciapponi has always been involved in this specific area and is consistently called to advise clients on matters involving the transfer of authorial rights and the drafting of related contracts. Additionally, we can assist on all matters associated with the protection of new works and their commercial use.

In addition to authors, our clients include editors and software companies. We assist these individuals and entities in their relations with national and international public institutions, with cultural associations and with foundations for the acquisition and right to reproduce objects belonging to the artistic and archaeological patrimony.



I. Art and Cultural Property Law

Balla & Ciapponi has extensive experience in Art and Cultural Property Law.

For over twenty years, we have worked with individuals as well as cultural institutions in the protection and management of artistic patrimony. Our firm keeps clients updated on legal developments involving artistic items, including the possibility of their temporary or lasting transfer and the preservation and restoration of such pieces to assign to private or public collections.

The firm is involved in both advisory and litigation: counseling and advising clients on cases related to large artistic patrimonies. Balla & Ciapponi assists clients in ascertaining and defending the authenticity of artistic items and when necessary, the firm also litigates and seeks judicial remedies on behalf of its clients.



II. Intellectual Property.

Within our firm's corporate practice areas, Balla & Ciapponi provides advice and counsel relative to industrial intellectual property rights:

- Copyright protection;
- Examination of the qualifications of inventions in order to file the application with the patent authority;
- Analysis of the copyright or the patent prior registration;
- Verification of the novelty of the invention and examination of all the requirements to obtain the protection of the intellectual property rights under national and international law.

III. Information Technology Law.

The advancement of technology has greatly enlarged the possibilities originally associated with existing technologies thereby helping to develop new forms of communication.

For many years, the law firm of Balla & Ciapponi has experience in the legal aspects involving new technologies. On both a national and international level, the firm assists clients in all aspects related to intellectual property right protection, including advising on the associated contractual issues (transfer, licensing) the associated disputes, and advising on the management and protection of the corporations' know-how.

In addition, the firm can assist on the protection of data banks and on their commercial use.





International Law

International Trade and Foreign Investments are also prominent practice areas for Balla and Ciapponi.

Balla & Ciapponi's lawyers and specialized consultants are experts in the field of international trade and foreign investment, devoting a significant portion of their practice to these areas.

The firm, with its consultants, is uniquely positioned to advise foreign companies operating in Italy in the following areas: tax law, labor law, product liability and safety law, and environmental law.

The firm also assists Italian clients, interested in operating in foreign markets, to establish a presence in or transfer companies abroad. Balla & Ciapponi can assist Italian clients by offering an estimate on feasibility, based on the foreign laws in force.

Our U.S. office, based in Chicago, primarily assists Italian companies in their international trade activities.

From our U.S. office, we can assist clients in the followings matters:

- International Trade Law
- Customs Law
- Contracts
- Joint Ventures
- Foreign Investments
- Antitrust and Competition
- Recognition and enforcement of foreign judgments
- Laws and rules related to international business ventures
- Transfer, assignment and commercial use of intellectual property rights
Commercial and investment strategies in order to directly operate in the domestic and foreign markets
- Arbitration





Labor Law

Since its inception, the Firm has assisted clients with employment related matters.

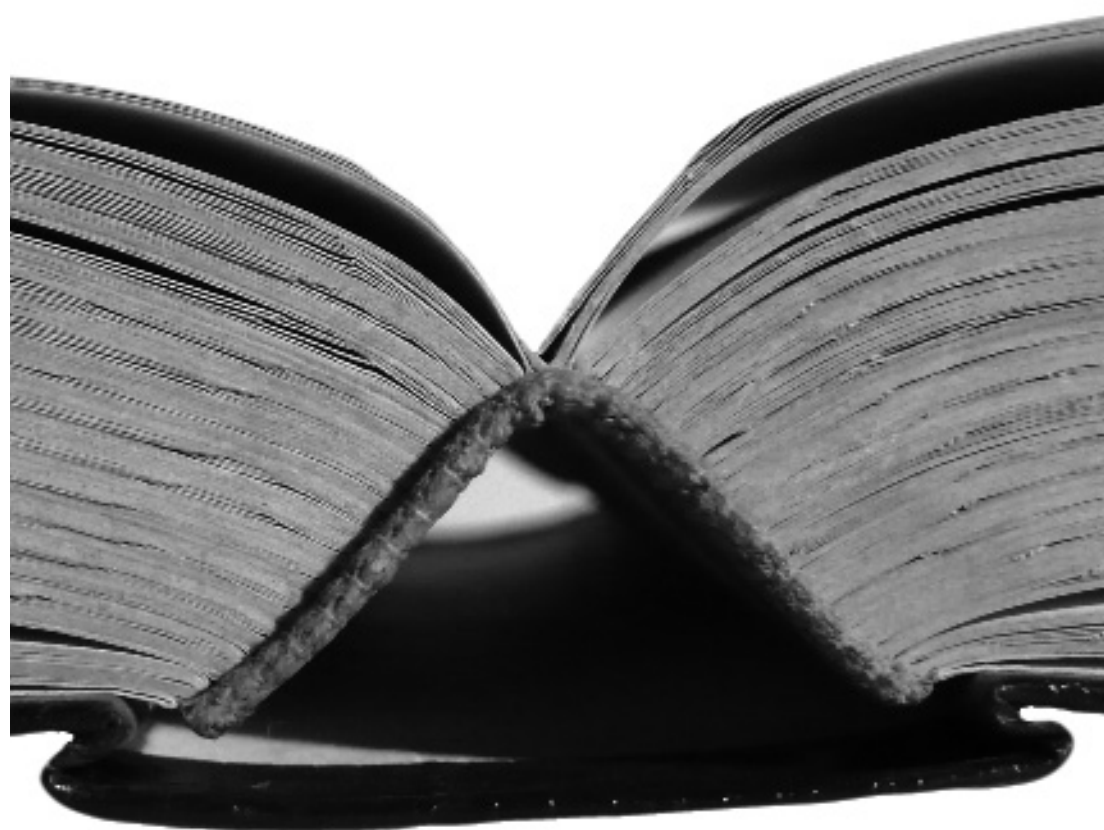
Clients often seek our professional's counsel in labor relations matters. Balla & Ciapponi provide diligent and thorough advice to prevent conflicts between management and labor.

When a lawsuit is inevitable, Balla & Ciapponi relies on specialized lawyers who are engaged to assist our clients in every phases of the trial, as well as guide bargaining agreements between management and labor.

Our lawyers represent corporate interests and the rights of employees against discrimination of sex, race, nationality, religion, age and handicap.

The firm assists our clients in disputes related to breach of contracts, unfair competition and occupational safety.





White-collar Crime

Motivated to guide and assist clients through all aspects of legal representation, Balla & Ciapponi has expanded its practice areas to include criminal law, with a particular focus on the issues associated with commercial activities.

In this area, the firm guarantees procedural expertise and counsel, especially in those matters that require deeper understanding of the criminal legal framework and the technical skill to successfully represent its clients in this area.

Our lawyers and foreign legal consultants are also specialized in matters relating to International Criminal Law, with particular emphasis in the treatment of international rogatory letters.

Balla & Ciapponi distinguishes itself for its experience and skill in the following areas:

- Corporate Criminal Law
- Tax Crimes
- Criminal Cyber Law, including offenses involving information technology
- Bankruptcy Crimes
- International Criminal Law
- Zoning Crimes
- Artistic Criminal Law
- Environment and Public Health Criminal Law





Tax Law

In the last several years our firm has enjoyed an exponential growth in tax related matters.

The need to coordinate business activity, the management of family assets with sound fiscal planning and the comparative analysis of taxation assumed a larger importance in the Firm's practice area.

The law office of Balla & Ciapponi, with the support of highly specialized Italian and foreign consultants, is equipped to provide complete tax and legal services in the followings areas:

- Company tax planning
- Double taxation
- Off Shore Companies
- Investments in EU and non EU European countries
- Transfer pricing
- Individual fiscal planning
- Fiscal residence
- Family Trusts
- Trust



AVGVSTI

ET IPSE VLTRO QVINQVIENS
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