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UK property remains a key asset class for new fund structures

By Ashley Le Feuvre

Ashley Le Feuvre, Senior Manager of Volaw's Funds and SPV Group describes why UK property is still a focus for new investment funds and structures.

The world's financial markets remain difficult to predict and there continues to be a great deal of uncertainty and nervousness among investors and asset managers alike. Serious concerns remain over global growth and the volatile position in Europe generally, with the ongoing risk of sovereign and corporate debt defaults. This means that, for asset managers and fund promoters, maintaining positive returns is challenging and while there is certainly value to be found, investors are very reticent and managers of funds investing in traditional asset classes are finding it difficult to raise additional investment.

UK property is still a focus for new investment funds and structures

Investors seek stability and safety for their cash and one area of investment that has proved attractive over the last eighteen months is the UK commercial property market and despite a slightly less certain outlook for 2012 due to the continued economic uncertainty, it continues to be a consistently popular offering.

Investors with free cash available for investment, particularly those based in the Middle East, are attracted to the UK market where the commercial sector has shown rental stability and fund structures are able to deliver impressive IRR, combined with regular flows of income that far exceed the returns available on cash deposits, or other more risk-averse investment products.

Investing in real estate via a property fund or structure provides investors with the certainty of an indirect ownership interest in tangible assets, in the form of bricks and mortar but without the responsibilities of managing a property or dealing with tenants and service providers. Indeed, it also provides a conduit to participating in the ownership of highly attractive commercial properties that would ordinarily be beyond the reach of most individual investors.

While high value, commercial property has provided the main focus for structures and transactions administered by Volaw, we have also been involved in, among others, the establishment and operation of fund structures investing in smaller value, regional commercial opportunities and a sophisticated investor fund that will invest in the London prime residential property market, where valuations have defied the generally flat market across the UK and continued to rise.

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Jersey provides an ideal location for promoters and asset managers to locate vehicles to access the UK property market. Jersey has a wide range of structuring options available for funds with a continually evolving regulatory regime. The government of Jersey is committed to the growth of the financial services industry and there is great co-operation between industry, government and the regulator to ensure that Jersey remains adaptable and competitive.

A good example of this evolution is the Jersey Private Placement Fund, announced by the Jersey Financial Services Commission on 26 January 2012. A Private Placement Fund must be closed-ended with participation offered to no more than 50 potential investors, who must be either professional or sophisticated investors as defined in the Private Placement Fund Guide.

Volaw sees great potential for interest in the use of Private Placement Funds in real estate structures and also for private equity funds and alternative investment funds of a more specialist nature. Private Placement Funds may also benefit from a fast-track process of authorisation in Jersey based upon a self-certification procedure, where authorisation should take no more than three business days. An interesting point to note is that the EU Alternative Investment Fund Manager's Directive anticipates the continuation of the private placement regime for EU professional until at least 2018.

Jersey can assist a promoter in marketing their offering by providing a domicile of real substance in which to locate their funds. Jersey offers tax neutrality, has fifty years of experience with funds and benefits from political, fiscal and economic stability which, given the current global turmoil, should be a source of comfort to promoters and investors alike.

Jersey has also retained its position as the highest rated offshore international finance centre and enhanced its global reputation, according to the latest Global Financial Centres Index (GFCI) released on 26 September 2011. Jersey is recognised by the International Monetary Fund as being in the 'top division' of international finance centres.

There is a robust, technical infrastructure available to Jersey based fund structures, with access to a wide choice of high quality functionaries and service providers. These factors, combined with the Island's highly developed legislative and regulatory framework, which has been subject to positive scrutiny by IOSCO and the IMF among others, serve to demonstrate to fund investors that there exists a framework of exceptional corporate governance to safeguard their interests.

Ashley is a Senior Manager in the Funds/SPV Group and is responsible for the relationship management and administration of Volaw's conventional corporate clients, including special purpose vehicles and investment funds. Prior to joining Volaw in February 2010 Ashley was employed by Maples Finance Jersey Limited where he worked on a variety of investment fund transactions, providing fiduciary services to private equity funds, hedge funds, multi-manager funds, emerging market funds and unit trusts and co-ordinated Channel Island Stock Exchange Listing Services. Ashley had previously worked for Gartmore Fund Managers International Limited in Jersey as Head of Client Services, having joined them in May 1991. As Head of Client Services, Ashley was responsible for servicing the clients of 21 mutual funds, with more than 25,000 shareholders located in over 100 jurisdictions. Ashley is a former committee member of the Jersey Funds Association.

Ashley Le Feuvre

GGI member firm
Volaw Trust & Corporate Services Ltd.
Law Firm, Corporate Finance,
International Trust & Estate Planning
Jersey, Channel Islands
Ashley Le Feuvre
Senior Manager Funds/SPV Group
T: +44 1534 500 417
E: alefeuvre@volaw.com
W: www.volaw.com

Volaw has many years broad experience with property structures and we can provide a full range of administration and fiduciary services to all types of Jersey fund, including Private Placement Funds. Our specialist investment funds team prides itself on its flexible and pro-active approach, and works closely with a fund's promoter and advisers throughout the fund establishment process. Volaw is fully regulated by the Jersey Financial Services Commission to undertake fund service business and our funds team work closely with lawyers from Voisin, who provide valuable support to our clients and the work we do. For further information about establishing investment funds and on our administration services, please contact Ashley Le Feuvre (alefeuvre@volaw.com) or Trevor Norman (tnorman@volaw.com) of Volaw's Funds and SPV Group.

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A look to the Netherlands

Rental prices for commercial premises still dropping: keep your rental period short

By Joost Donkersloot

Due to the global financial crisis, rental prices for commercial real estate continue to drop in the Netherlands. This is caused by the continuing escalation in the rate of vacancy in commercial real estate, which rose to a percentage of about 15% last year. The trend is unlikely to change in the short term, in part, because of the political vacuum. Tenants are consequently recommended to keep rental periods short, because Dutch legislation does not provide legal procedure for adjusting the rental price within the rental term. If the rented business real estate is not retail space, there is no procedure for adjusting the rental price at all, however, because of the enormous amount of vacant premises, there is ample opportunity for negotiation on the rental price at the end of the rental period. In addition, the term of the rental can be determined freely – even for an indefinite period - so that the rate of rental payable ends on termination, although the possibilities in this respect are far more restricted in the case of retail space to protect tenants. The minimum for the first term is five years, with subsequent terms of five years or as many years as would make the total rental period ten years. It should be noted that during the first rental term, there is no legal procedure for adjusting the rate of rental payable, which is for a minimum term of five years. There is one exception and that is retail space, where the initial rental term is two years. Apart from a (short) set rental period, there is almost no protection for the tenant and with falling rental prices, this begs the question of whether it might potentially become a problem. Perhaps not. Suffice it to say, that landlords/investors in real estate are recommended to act correspondingly to counter this risk.

Commercial premises still dropping in the Netherlands: keep your rental period short

Joost Donkersloot

GGI member firm
TeekensKarstens advocaten notarissen
Law firm
Leiden, the Netherlands
Mr Joost Donkersloot
T: +31 71 535 80 50
E: donkersloot@tk.nl
W: www.tk.nl

TeekensKarstens lawyers notaries is the largest legal services provider in the area called "Rijnland", centrally located between Amsterdam and The Hague and Utrecht, and just fifteen minutes from Amsterdam Schiphol Airport. From its offices in Leiden and Alphen aan den Rijn over fifty lawyers and (candidate) notaries operate and provide full service to mainly large and medium enterprises, (semi-) public sector and individuals. Hailing from the Netherlands and beyond.

Joost Donkersloot is based at TK in Leiden, where he holds the position of senior attorney at law in the practice group real estate, and he is also a member of the GGI Real Estate Practice Group. His core focus within real estate is rental law and administrative law. In addition, he is specialised in the leisure business. He is also a member of TK DACH, the German desk, and consequently participates in GGI's German-speaking chapter. At the last German-speaking chapter, he even entertained the guests by playing several songs of German's most popular performer, Herbert Grönemeyer.

The Greek real estate market in the context of Memoranda I & II

By Vassiliki Tsigarida

The solvency crisis in Greece has undoubtedly affected the local real estate market, but at the same time, opportunities are emerging and measures being taken which favour landlords.

On the one hand, real estate transactions continue to stagnate due to the mistrust of Greek and foreign investors, coupled with the banks' reluctance to grant residential property loans, factors which have resulted in an alarming number of over 200,000 unsold properties.

On the other hand, investment opportunities at truly competitive prices are arising for the acquisition of high-end holiday homes located in areas of natural beauty, (e.g. on the islands of the Cyclades) or where there is a high level of commercial interest (e.g. along the central avenues of Athens).

Unfortunately, the current exorbitant tax payable on real estate – the number of relevant taxes and duties currently stands at around 40 – and the increased phenomenon of tenants failing to pay the agreed rent, cannot be ignored.

The solvency crisis in Greece has undoubtedly affected the local real estate market

Initiatives, such as law 4055/ 2012, enabling landlords to seek legal protection against non-paying tenants via a simple procedure, or the provisions of law 4047/ 2012, suspending foreclosures by banks for claims up to EUR 200,000 until 31.12.2012, are heading in the right direction, but are evidently not sufficient.

More drastic measures will be required to revive the real estate market, such as by boosting the banks' liquidity, promoting economic growth and rationalising property overtaxation.

Vassiliki Tsigarida

GGI member firm
ASnetwork
Outsourcing services
Athens Greece
Vassiliki Tsigarida
Attorney at law
T: +30 211 4804432
E: vtsigarida@asnetwork.gr
W: www.asnetwork.gr

ASnetwork (comprising of Accounting Solutions S.A. and Audit Services S.A.) provides a full range of accounting, payroll-administration, tax and legal consulting services. ASnetwork employs more than 90 highly-qualified tax consultants, accountants and lawyers, who add value to our clients' businesses through a proactive approach of the issues identified. In the area of real estate property ASnetwork provides specialized tax services and also undertakes due diligence projects with property (ownership titles, encumbrances, lease agreements) and environmental (photovoltaics' licensing) aspects.

Vassiliki Tsigarida is a lawyer (assistant manager) with ASnetwork (and more specifically Accounting Solutions S.A.) since 2011. Previously, she worked for 6 years, as a legal consultant of PricewaterhouseCoopers S.A. and for 3 years as a freelance lawyer. She is a graduate of Athens Law School and Ruprecht-Karls Universitaet Heidelberg with a Master degree (LLM) in capital-market law. She was admitted in the Piraeus Bar Association in 2003 and ever since she practices law mainly in the following areas: Corporate, civil (estate property), labor, social security and immigration.

Pension funds hungry for higher returns in emerging markets

By Sergio Guerrero Rosas

Foreigners investing in Latin American real estate, hungry for higher returns in emerging markets, are frequently backed by the equity of international pension funds.

In Mexico, President Felipe Calderon has tried to start investment in infrastructure by cutting red tape and pushing pension funds to invest in roads, bridges, and other construction projects.

To achieve this goal, regulators have recently cleared the way for those billions of dollars-worth of pension funds to be placed into a new security in a move that should reassure outside investors.

According to Mexican tax laws foreign pension funds are exempt from income tax on interest and capital gains where there is no income tax of that kind in its country of origin; and very importantly, pension funds avoid permanent establishment status.

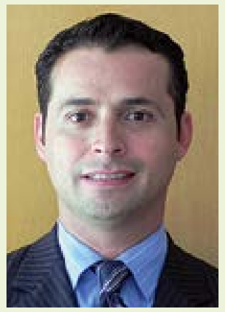
Unlike the stock market, retail real estate yields are stable, and the investment is in land and bricks that are not only insured but appreciate in value over time. Retail real estate is an excellent risk-free investment.

Foreign investment in Mexican REITs is an ever-changing market, evolving from year to year, with exciting development projects taking place in Campeche, Nayarit and Cancun, for example.

And as continual attempts are made to attract the foreign investor, so more opportunities arise, making Mexican real estate a very interesting prospect at this time.

Currently the permanent establishment exemption of foreign pension funds is perhaps the most eye-catching area, but this is likely to become just one of many such fascinating investment options over the coming decade.

Mexican real estate as a very interesting prospect at this time



Sergio Guerrero Rosas

GGI member firm
Guerrero y Santana, S.C.
Financial Audit & Accountancy Services,
Tax Consulting, Management Consulting,
Corporate Finance, Law Firm
Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico
Sergio Guerrero
E: sguerrero@guerrerosantana.com.mx
W: www.guerrerosantana.com.mx

Guerrero y Santana is a Boutique Firm founded in January 2003 by a group Tax, Consulting, Financial and Legal professionals that pursued to create a firm offering a complete service, with the objective of offering specialized advisory services to companies and individuals. At Guerrero y Santana, S.C. the experience, dynamism and professionalism of their partners converge in order to offer their clients the highest level of quality in the services provided, achieving optimal results in each of its specialized advisory services.

Sergio Guerrero Rosas is the founder and managing partner of Guerrero y Santana, S.C. Twelve years of experience in the fields of tax consulting for Austrian, Italian, French and American companies have shaped his professional profile. He is fluent in Spanish and English. His preferred areas of practice include financial audit & accountancy services, tax consulting, management consulting, corporate finance, foreign trade and payroll services.

Sergio is a member of the GGI Latin American committee, as well as Latin American Chairman of the International Taxation Practice Group. He is also a member of the press committee of the Public Accountants School and holds some further board memberships.

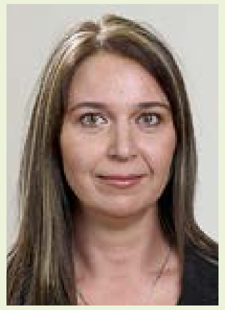
Innovative solutions on the Hungarian office market

By Dr. Zita Orbán

While the most recent Hungarian real estate market surveys testify to the fact that the effects of the protracted economic crisis are still impacting on the market, (although compared with the its lowest point in 2009, the office market index indicates that this market segment is slightly up), a new trend in Hungarian office development projects and office leasing is becoming evident. Some developers (especially those specialising in the construction of category "A" office buildings) are realising the benefits deriving from a suitable combination of professional project development and cost-efficiency, which can be offered to future tenants. The importance of applying modern environmental solutions and green technologies is essential in order to minimise a building's environmental footprint. By planning and constructing energy saving buildings – both in the residential and non-residential segments of the real estate market – apart from the environmental protection aspects, quantifiable cost-saving solutions can be offered to potential buyers or tenants of such "greenhouse" buildings which may, in the longer term, bring about a breakthrough in the Hungarian office market, which is currently still stagnating.

Applying for virtual offices and leasing instant offices also represent alternative solutions in the office market segment. The former offers a suitable device for meeting the special requirements of tenants aiming for a presence in high-prestige category A office buildings while at the same time reducing the additional costs (like equipment and labour costs) while the latter can be regarded as a more developed version of the former, where several combinations of tenant packages exist to serve individual tenant needs and wishes to the fullest extent. Seen overall, the Hungarian office market is endeavouring to compensate the negative impact of the protracted economic crisis by turning to new trends and innovative solutions.

New trends in Hungarian office development projects



Dr. Zita Orbán

GGI member firm
Kovács Réti Szegheő Attorneys at Law
Law Firm
Budapest, Hungary
Dr. Zita Orbán
T: +361 275 27 85
E: orban.zita@krs.hu
W: www.krs.hu

Kovács Réti Szegheő Attorneys at Law was established in 1992. It has been one of the first law offices in Hungary, which specialises particularly in the legal representation of business organisations and the application of the so-called business law and has been growing and expanding steadily ever since to become one of the largest Hungarian-owned law offices by now. One of the fields of the Law Firm's activity is real estate law, in the frame of which the Law Firm not only provides legal assistance in traditional real estate sale and purchase transactions, but also undertakes to handle complex legal tasks concerning real estates including legal tasks related to commercial real estates, industrial parks and Greenfield investments, further provides practical advice to clients on financial techniques and structures that apply to real estate transactions.

Dr. Zita Orbán, member of the GGI Real Estate Practice Group joined the Law Firm in 2000. Besides real estate law matters, she is engaged with corporate and commercial, employment, customs and M&A matters.

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ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Foreign Investment in U.S. Real Estate

By Doris S. Hsu

When non-U.S. persons invest in U.S. real estate, whether for occasional use as a vacation home or as rental property, tax planning needs to be part of the acquisition process as U.S. taxes can be significant and it is difficult to restructure existing U.S. real estate ownership without triggering U.S. income or gift tax.

For investments of U.S. real estate held over one year, the maximum federal income tax rate is currently 15% for individuals and 35% for corporations. Thus, from an income tax point of view, it is more efficient to hold the U.S. real estate directly in a client's individual name or through a passthrough entity such as a partnership. However, the U.S. imposes an estate tax (currently at 35%) on the value of real property located in the U.S. if held directly, through a partnership, or through a U.S. corporation. As a result, what is tax-efficient for income tax purposes is not so efficient for estate tax purposes.

One possibility is to obtain a term-life insurance for the amount of the anticipated estate tax liability, treating the policy premiums as part of the cost of ownership. Another possibility is to own the U.S. real estate through a U.S. corporation that is 100% owned by a non-U.S. corporation, accepting the fact that gains will be taxed at the higher corporate rate. However, for the structure to have economic substance, rents will need to be paid for the use of the U.S. real estate and the U.S. corporation will have annual tax filing obligations.

Doris S. Hsu

GGI member firm
The Ruchelman Law Firm
New York , NY, USA
Doris S. Hsu
T: +1 212-755-3333
E: hsu@ruchelaw.com
W: www.ruchelaw.com

The Ruchelman Law Firm is a full service U.S. law firm headquartered in New York City with an emphasis on cross-border transactions. It services clients from all continents. The Ruchelman Law Firm also maintains an office in Toronto, Canada. Further information is available at the website.

Doris S. Hsu has over 15 years of experience in advising clients on the U.S. income and gift/estate tax implications of their cross-border transactions. Ms. Hsu advises clients on their pre-U.S. tax residency planning and on IRS compliance and reporting once they become U.S. tax residents. She also advises on the termination of their U.S. tax residency, including expatriation. She regularly advises clients in the tax planning, implementation and IRS reporting of their cross-border business formation, acquisition, restructuring and joint ventures, utilizing applicable income tax treaties, whether they are non-U.S. persons investing in U.S. businesses or real estate or U.S. persons expanding overseas. Ms. Hsu is a frequent speaker at tax conferences on international tax topics.

THE RUCHELMAN LAW FIRM

Attorneys at Law

Hansen Sonderby & Co. and FPS Rechtsanwälte & Notare jointly advise:

Unlike movables, real estates are not transferable from one country to the other. Still there are quite a number of real property transfers with a border crossing backgrounds. Mentioned here as examples are real estate transactions in the context of M & A activities, the set-up of production facilities abroad, the purchase of vacation properties or enforcement upon foreign property. Hence, with regard to such activities there is a demand for legal cross-border know-how. GGI has a considerable number of specialists in this respective area of expertise. Dr. Reinhard Nacke has established the GGI Practice Group Real Estate, which brings together Real Estate experts from all over the world. The aim of the practice group is to first identify these specialists, make the collected know-how commonly usable for the members and to communicate the availability to our existing and potential clients. Besides comprehensive information published in form of the Real Estate handbook, the practice group informs briefly in this news flash on latest developments, trends, new legislations, and further Real Estate news. Stay informed by reading FYI – Real Estate News.

If you are interested in further information on the GGI Practice Group Real Estate, please contact Dr. Reinhard Nacke, Global Chairperson, nacke@fps-law.de, or Per Hansen, Global Vice Chairperson, ph@hsco-law.dk.

Significant changes in Austrian real estate taxation

A new real estate profit tax is levied on real estate transfers by individual persons

By Helmut Seitz

As from 1 April 2012, there has been a major legal change in the Austrian real estate market, with the profit derived from a real estate transaction by an individual person now subject to a new taxation system.

Formerly, real estate that was sold before 31 March 2012 was liable for taxation only if it had not been retained for a minimum period of ten or 15 years (depending on the expenses for refurbishment invested in the real estate). Prior to expiry of this term, the profit was taxed on the basis of what was known as a "speculation tax" at a rate of 50%. If the real estate was sold before 31 March 2012, providing it was held for the minimum retention period, the profit was completely tax exempt.

The new position is that pursuant to the Financial Stability Act 2012 ("Stabilitätsgesetz 2012"), a new real estate profit tax is levied on real estate transfers by individual persons. Profit derived from a real estate transaction is being taxed at a tax rate of 25%, irrespective of how long the property is held.

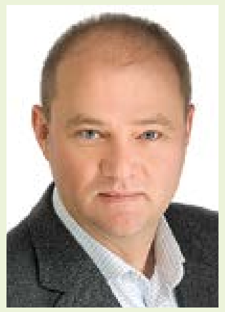
Exceptions may apply to real estate that is used continuously as a main residence from acquisition to sale for at least two years, or has been used as a main residence for five years within a period of ten years. Furthermore, profits from the sale of buildings that were built by the vendors themselves and have not been rented out, are tax exempt.

Special rules apply to real estate acquired before 1 April 2002 which, on expiry of the minimum retention period, was subsequently no longer liable for the former "speculation tax". These properties may be sold once and taxed at a special rate of 3.5%.

The procedures associated with the legal transfer of real estate have also changed. Usually, the Austrian attorney or notary public will draft the sales contract, act as escrow agent for the purchase price and handle the registration with the land registry. Specialist attorneys are also prepared to handle the tax assessment in lieu of the tax authority, which considerably speeds up the transaction (i.e. several days instead of several months). Under the new situation, these specialist attorneys will handle the income tax assessment relating to the transaction as well.

Profit derived from a real estate transaction by a legal entity is still being taxed at the corporation income tax rate of 25%.

However, in summer 2012, the Austrian real estate market was still offering valuable real estate at inexpensive prices, with the exception of Vienna's 1st district, where extensive competition, minimum availability and high demand have let the prices skyrocket in recent years.



Helmut Seitz

GGI member firm
Hasberger_Seitz & Partner Rechtsanwälte GmbH
Law Firm
Vienna, Austria
Mag. Helmut Seitz
T: + 43 1 533 0 533
E: office@hsp-law.at
W: www.hsp-law.at

HASBERGER_SEITZ & PARTNER Rechtsanwälte GmbH is one of the leading internationally orientated law firms in Austria with its seat in Vienna. Since its foundation in September 1997 HSP has continued to grow. The strength of HSP lies inter alia others, in HSP flexibility of mind and dedication of time and its geographical and close cooperation with an international network and its fast, effective and committed performance.

The clients of HSP benefit from

- the high expertise of our team
- the exact, result-orientated performance
- and the cross-border approach taking into consideration the bigger international picture, but not neglecting national distinctions.

Mag. Helmut Seitz is working as partner of HSP in Vienna. His areas of expertise are Real Estate Law, Private Foundations and Mergers and Acquisitions.

Hasberger_Seitz & Partner
Rechtsanwälte

Legislation changes: Equity release on French properties

By Prof. Robert Anthony

One of the many consequences of the current financial crisis is the difficulty for individuals and companies to raise finance. Indeed, since 2008, banks have been tightening their lending criteria in many jurisdictions, including France, as a result of which, finding appropriate funding has become harder. The level of business turnover is under pressure, margins are lower, and there is greater competition from abroad, all of which factors are squeezing down business profits, with the consequence that business owners are finding it more difficult to guarantee their levels of income. For those looking to sell their businesses, they are hampered by fewer buyers. And in general, all incomes are under pressure, and yet the need for liquidity is ever greater. However, all is not lost. There are solutions!

Changes in wealth tax announced

The new president of France, François Hollande, will change legislation, notably in the area of fiscal matters, and return the current wealth tax schedule to that applying in 2010, and this will also be effective for the current year.

Last year, we signalled the need to refinance to avoid this eventuality, together with the need for protection from previous changes. The threshold risks are to be lowered to EUR 800,000 which will incur considerably more tax.

Equity release could offer a solution to the future changes in French tax legislation.

Security?

Many people shun the idea of debt, particularly those who grew up with the notion of only buying when the money is available. However, debt is frequently a useful tool when planning tax optimisation, especially given the various options available today, although admittedly, the degree of success can depend on the country of tax residency and in which country the assets are located.

A bank may more easily offer such 'equity release' schemes for larger properties valued at several million euros, since the margins on these operations make them worthwhile projects.

However, the amount lent by a bank will always depend on the nature of the security: a cash security can facilitate loans of 100% of the cash value, whereas only around 70% of government and corporate bonds can be lent, and about 60% of the value of equities. But whatever the nature of the security, the point is that this same security can be made to work for you again.

Prof. Robert Anthony

GGI member firm
Anthony & Cie
International Trust & Estate Planning, Tax Consulting
Sophia Antipolis, France
Prof. Robert Anthony
T: +33 4 93 65 32 23
E: robert@antco.com
W: www.antco.com

Anthony&Cie
Financial Planning

Anthony & Cie is an independent international family office, based on the French Riviera as well as located in Paris and in London. Since its creation in 1978, Anthony & Cie orchestrates financial, real-estate and tax advice as well as French legal advice. As an international practice, we manage cross-border strategies for international clients notably in association with Anthony & Co UK Ltd in London. We also bring our expertise to local clients who are both private individuals and professionals. Accordingly, we are at your disposal to propose you and your clients, an exclusive, efficient and close wealth management...

Professor Robert Anthony is the Principal Partner of Anthony & Cie (France on the Côte d'Azur and in Paris) and Co-Founder of Anthony & Co UK Ltd (in London). Prof. Anthony is a Professor of International Tax Law at the Thomas Jefferson School of Law in San Diego, California. He is a British Chartered Certified Accountant (UK) and Certified Financial Planner (France). He is also a member of the board 'Sophia Business Angels'. Within Geneva Group International, Robert Anthony chairs a practice group of "Private Equity and International Wealth Management". He is also a member of several associations, notably: ACCA (Association of Chartered Certified Accountants), CIP (Chambre des Indépendants du Patrimoine), CGPC (Conseil en Gestion de Patrimoine Certifié), IFA (International Fiscal Association), ITPA (International Tax Planning Association), etc. He also sits on the Committee of the Institute of Directors, Monaco. Prof. Anthony has over the years submitted large number of publications to various professional journals such as Accounting & Business, French Property News, FT Expat, International Tax Report, Investissement Conseils, l'agefi, Gestion de Fortune, La Tribune, Sunday Business Post, Taxation Practitioner, Tax Planning International, The Yacht report, Yachts... and many others. He also authored the book "International Fiscal Strategy" published by Monitor Press in London in March 1998.

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Contacts

Geneva Group International AG
Schaffhauserstrasse 550, P.O. Box 286,
8052 Zurich, Switzerland
T: +41 44 256 18 18
E: info@ggi.com
W: www.ggi.com
W: www.ggiforum.com

Responsible Editor
in charge of Real Estate Contents:
Dr. Reinhard Nacke
Chairman of the
GGI Real Estate Practice Group

GGI member firm
FPS Rechtsanwälte & Notare
Law Firm
Königsallee 60 C (KÖ-Höfe)
40212 Dusseldorf, Germany
T: +49 211 302 01 50
E: nacke@fps-law.de
W: www.fps-law.de

Disclaimer

FPS Real Estate river cruise: Russia in the focus

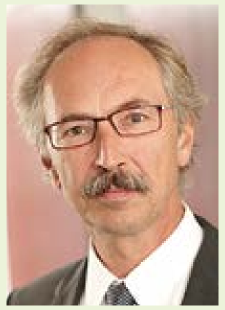
By Dr. Reinhard Nacke

The heavens must have looked fondly upon the recent Rhine River cruise hosted by the FPS office in Düsseldorf. After it had rained for most of the day, just at the right moment the sun came out as our cruise guests boarded the MS Maria Franziska where they were to spend some relaxing hours with their real estate colleagues and FPS attorneys.

Following the theme of last year's event, the real estate market in China, Russia was now the focus of the speeches. It was interesting for the attendees to learn that Russia and Ukraine offer many attractive investment opportunities beyond commercial real estate, for example in tourism and agriculture. According to Russian experts, margins of 20 per cent are not uncommon in agriculture. Interestingly, foreigners are able to legally acquire land used for agriculture even though direct purchase is not available for them. However, all speakers discouraged attendees from engaging in corrupt practices, which is still widespread across Russia and equally as cumbersome as the bureaucratic challenges.

One speaker informed the audience that it was possible to reap good rewards in Russia by offering sophisticated services in the real estate market. A representative of the well-known German architectural practice, Eller & Eller, reported on how it was able to not only realise large project developments of German companies in Russia, but also win Russian corporations as new clients for themselves.

As the sun slowly set, - not quite on the horizon, but behind Düsseldorf's impressive silhouette, - the guests had the opportunity to enjoy a sumptuous buffet and share lively exchanges with their fellow passengers from various areas of the real estate industry.



Dr. Reinhard Nacke

GGI member firm
FPS Rechtsanwälte & Notare
Law Firm
Dusseldorf, Germany
Dr. Reinhard Nacke
T: +49 211 302 01 50
E: nacke@fps-law.de
W: www.fps-law.de

FPS Rechtsanwälte und Notare is a fully independent German law firm with offices in Berlin, Dusseldorf, Frankfurt a. M. and Hamburg. FPS currently employs over 110 lawyers and notaries. One of the firm's core areas of expertise is the entire range of Real Estate Law.

Dr. Reinhard Nacke is World Chairman of the GGI Practice Group Real Estate and is working as partner of FPS in Dusseldorf. His practice areas are mainly Corporate, M&A, Real Estate and Tax Law, very often with an international background.

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