FINANCIER WORLDWIDE

POWER PLAYERS

DISTINGUISHED ADVISERS

2026

Private Equity

2026



PROFILED:

HAMESH KHATKAR

Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP



WILLKIE FARR & GALLAGHER LLP

This article first appeared in 'POWER PLAYERS: Private Equity 2026 – Distinguished Advisers' (November 2026).

© 2026 Financier Worldwide Ltd. All rights reserved.
Permission to use this reprint has been granted by the publisher.

FINANCIER WORLDWIDE

POWER PLAYERS

DISTINGUISHED ADVISERS

2026

Private Equity



HAMESH KHATKAR

Partner

Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP

London, UK

T: +44 (0)20 3580 4705

E: hkhatkar@willkie.com

★ 2026

PERSONAL BIOGRAPHY

Hamesh Khatkar advises the world's leading private equity (PE) and sovereign wealth funds on public and private cross-border M&A transactions, including acquisitions, disposals, joint ventures, minority investments, carve-outs, continuation vehicle transactions and equity plans. He leads high-profile and complex deals spanning technology, sports, services, real estate and digital infrastructure. He has been named to The Lawyer Hot 100 2026, recognising him as one of the leading dealmakers in PE and real estate M&A globally, was previously named a 'rising star' by Mergerlinks and is recognised as a Key Lawyer by the Legal 500 UK (2027) for high-value private equity transactions.

WILLKIE

WILLKIE FARR & GALLAGHER LLP



HAMESH KHATKAR
Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP

Q&A WITH HAMESH KHATKAR

What qualities and values do you believe are essential for building strong, trusting relationships with clients?

◆ I believe that clients trust lawyers who know their business. If you understand their commercial focus, it becomes much easier to give valuable advice compared to somebody who is advising on a transaction in isolation. Steering a client on what they should consider given the deal profile, and bringing in the right people, also tends to build more confidence that time and resource is being focused in the right areas. Bringing market experience is also important as clients are also looking for somebody who can advise which points may or may not be worth fighting for, and give a clear recommendation based on that experience, rather than a generic list of options.

How do you stay ahead in your field? Are there any emerging trends or innovations you are particularly excited about in your area of expertise?

◆ Staying ahead in M&A needs an understanding of what factors are driving deals rather than a focus on legal developments in isolation. I spend a meaningful amount of time talking to my clients about what they are focusing on and their challenges, as the best advice tends to be given in that context. It is also important to stay on top of wider market activity, including my client's peers and competitors. On the innovation side, the most topical example is what artificial intelligence (AI) will mean for deal execution on both the client and adviser side. It is already changing how quickly diligence is completed and how documents and other materials are summarised. Used properly, it should continue to free up time from process-heavy workstreams and allow more focus on the value-add points that call for experience, which should mean better outcomes and higher productivity for everyone involved.



HAMESH KHATKAR
Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP

Looking ahead, what are your predictions for this area of the market? What key developments are on the horizon?

The European PE and real estate M&A markets feel well positioned for an uptick in deal activity. Although geopolitical uncertainty and higher interest rates have created challenges and valuation gaps, there is a significant amount of available capital to be deployed, and we are already seeing momentum build with a continued increase in deal activity. AI is also affecting the wider deal landscape with software as a service business, for example, facing challenges, while businesses successfully embedding AI are more likely to command premium valuations. In real estate, data centres and digital infrastructure remain particularly active sectors, driven by the relentless demand for AI computing capacity, while industrial and logistics and hospitality continue to attract strong interest. Commercial office space demand has been concentrated in high-quality developments in global financial hubs, but we think will otherwise continue to be challenged by post-pandemic headwinds. We also anticipate greater deal structure complexity as sponsors continue to find additional ways to access liquidity.

"ALTHOUGH GEOPOLITICAL UNCERTAINTY AND HIGHER INTEREST RATES HAVE CREATED CHALLENGES AND VALUATION GAPS, THERE IS A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF AVAILABLE CAPITAL TO BE DEPLOYED."



HAMESH KHATKAR
Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP

REPRESENTATIVE ENGAGEMENTS

- Advised Ares on the sale of its interests in McLaren Formula 1 team and McLaren Automotive to Mumtalakat.
- Advised Partners Group on the sale of Global Blue to Shift4, valuing Global Blue at around $2.5bn.
- Advised GIC on its joint venture with Blackstone relating to Hotel Investment Partners, a leading owner of 72 resort hotels in southern Europe.
- Advised GIC on its £694m acquisition of a 75 percent stake in the majority of Paddington Central assets from British Land.
- Advised GIC in connection with its participation in the €4.4bn consortium acquiring a 55 percent stake in the real estate assets of AccorHotels.
- Advised Silver Lake Partners on its £2.2bn take-private of the Zoopla group and on subsequent acquisitions of Confused.com in the UK, Rastreator.com in Spain and Le Lynx.fr in France.
- Advised Silver Lake Partners-backed Oak View Group on the acquisition of multiple event spaces in London.

Enjoyed this article?
Join our community for free to access more expert insights.
Join Now - It's Free