

JOSEF ALKATOUT
HEAD OF FAMILY LAW, COUNSEL, PHD, LL.M.

ENGLISH, FRENCH, GERMAN

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EXPERTISE

Josef Alkatout heads our Family Law Department. He advises and represents our clients in negotiations and legal proceedings in court.

His expertise encompasses marriage and cohabitation, legal separation and divorce, child protection, family-related criminal proceedings, adoption, and same-sex parentage law.

He also engages in matrimonial planning, notably for the drafting and negotiation of international prenuptial agreements, and assists our clients in emergency separation situations, such as child abductions, parental rights conflicts, sequestration and freezing orders.

PRACTICE AREAS

Family

Marriage & cohabitation · Legal separation & divorce · Children · Family law proceedings in criminal matters · Protection of adults

EXPERIENCES

- Since 2020: Head of Family Law and Counsel at Borel & Barbey
- Since 2010: Lecturer in Law in Swiss and foreign Universities
- 2020: Visiting researcher, Harvard University, Boston, United States
- 2017-2019: Associate at a law Firm specialised in family law, Geneva
- 2015-2017: Trainee lawyer at a law Firm specialised in family law, Geneva
- 2010-2014: Legal advisor in a multinational company, London & Geneva

EDUCATION

- 2020: New York Bar
- 2020: Master of Laws (LL.M.), Columbia University, New York, United States, Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar Prize
- 2017: Geneva Bar
- 2015: Certificate of Advanced Studies in Legal Professions, University of Geneva
- 2014: PhD in Law, University of Göttingen, Germany
- 2009: Master of Law (MLaw), Universities of Geneva and Helsinki
- 2008: Bachelor in International Relations, University of Geneva



RECOGNITIONS —————

- Since 2024 : Chambers & Partners - Family/Matrimonial
- 2020 : Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar Prize, University of Columbia

MEMBERSHIPS —————

- Geneva Bar Association (ODAGE)
- Swiss Bar Association (FSA)
- International Academy of Family Lawyers (IAFL)

PUBLICATIONS —————

2025:

- “Name Change | New Parliamentary Developments and a Reminder for Cohabiting Couples”, October 2025
- “Divorce : votre entreprise en danger?”, Entreprise romande, 04 July 2025 (interview by Steven Kakon, with Julia Henninger and Karim Messali)
- “Grands-parents: aucun droit”, echo Magazine, 09 April 2025
- “Un droit de visite pour les grands-parents?”, Tribune de Genève, 19 March 2025
- “Family Laws and Regulations Switzerland 2025”, The International Comparative Legal Guides, 2025

2024:

- “Legal 500: Family Law Comparative Guide”, Legal 500, 2024
- “Le Tribunal fédéral redéfinit le concubinage”, Tribune de Genève, 30 August 2024
- “Moins d’enfants enlevés grâce au TF”, Tribune de Genève, 11 July 2024
- “Médiation plutôt que juge de divorce?”, Tribune de Genève, 07 May 2024

2023:

- “Le Tribunal fédéral défend l’homoparentalité”, Tribune de Genève, 18 October 2023
- “Tribunal fédéral : il n’y a que deux sexes”, Tribune de Genève, 03 October 2023
- “Les frais d’avocat ne sont plus déductibles fiscalement”, Le Temps, 09 January 2023

2022:

- “Le « mariage pour tous » entre en vigueur : quels changements financiers ?”, Le Temps, 01 July 2022

2021:

- “Evolution dans le droit de l’entretien : quelles conséquences ?”, Bilan, Focus Femmes Modernes, 29 September 2021, p.14
- “Le contrat de mariage et ses limites”, Le Temps, 06 September 2021
- “Le Tribunal fédéral redéfinit l’homoparentalité”, Le Temps, 29 June 2021
- “Tour de vis sur les contributions d’entretien après divorce”, Le Temps, 29 April 2021
- “Le mariage perd de son importance – même en droit de la famille”, Bilan, Focus droit 2021, 30 March 2021
- “Comment divorcer en tant qu’entrepreneur ?”, Bilan, Focus Business Guide 2021, 23 February 2021, p. 017



- “Mit einem Vertrag zur besseren Ehe – Neben der Wahl des Güterstands können Ehegatten zahlreiche weitere Abkommen schliessen”, NZZ, 22 February 2021
- “Les contributions d’entretien d’enfant en voie de changement”, Le Temps, 29 January 2021

2020:

- “Artwork has no « average price » – how Switzerland’s Supreme Court evaluates a divorcing couple’s collection of paintings”, Art Law Magazine, December 2020

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS —————

2024:

- “La rentrée scolaire, une période où les enlèvements d’enfants par un parent sont en hausse”, interview, RTS, La Matinale, 13 September 2024