

SIMONT BRAUN

DIGITAL FINANCE

The digital impact on the financial sector is undeniable. New players with a mobile, tech and online approach are entering the market with innovative business models.

Traditional financial institutions are feeling the heat of disruption and prepare their existing structures for the digital age. While Incumbents have an established client base and often hold regulatory clearance, they must keep pace in this rapidly transforming environment. FinTech players, on the other hand, must learn to navigate this highly regulated market.

For some years now, Brussels-based law firm Simont Braun has had a dedicated **Digital Finance Team** which has been the first of its kind on the Belgian market. The team gathers renowned tech and financial law experts and combines financial law with ICT and data protection regulations. It is deeply integrated into the Belgian Financial Services & FinTech ecosystem and very well-connected with regulators, the academic world, and the service providers on the ground in both Belgium and abroad. Our Digital Finance Team is also a perfect match for foreign institutions looking for guidance on the Belgian market.

Most projects require a cross-practice legal analysis: financial regulation, IT contracting and licensing, client contractual relationships, outsourcing, data privacy & security, etc. Our multidisciplinary Digital Finance Team has in-depth knowledge of these matters and provides comprehensive, streamlined and tailored legal solutions to all our clients, be they seasoned experts in their field or start-ups on the edge of an innovative breakthrough.

Our practical expertise keeps adapting to the ever-changing FinTech market and includes impact analysis of regulations, license acquiring, drafting and negotiating agreements, as well as dispute resolution.

'Simont Braun, and especially the team of Catherine Houssa, are the fintech specialists in Belgium. They provide excellent legal advice and support for everything fintech related.' (IFLR 1000 Client Feedback 2019)

OUR SERVICES INCLUDE

- **Navigating the regulatory landscape:** assistance in negotiations with regulators; advising on the requirement of licenses; the distribution schemes; etc.
- **Assistance throughout the sales process:** analysis of consumer and data protection laws and other compliance requirements; drafting and negotiating licensing and distribution agreements; etc.
- **Mitigating risks in the digital environment:** drafting and negotiating contracts with IT and service providers; assistance in relation to data profiling and analytics; information security requirements; protection of digital assets and innovative business models; etc.

SOME OF OUR RECENT PROJECTS

- Advising **payment service & e-money providers** on regulatory matters, such as license applications, implementation of new regulations, marketing and AML/KYC client onboarding procedures.
- Setting up **crowdfunding platforms** as well as the first alternative consumer lending platform in Belgium.
- Assisting **InsurTech start-ups** with the roll-out of different disruptive services.
- Supporting **foreign digital banks** in launching new credit and payment products in Belgium.
- Regularly assisting **local and European robo-advisors** in the set-up of their business model.
- Assisting world leading **(digital) money remitters** and local **e-invoicing platforms**.
- Exploring the boundaries of cutting-edge **business models in light of IP/ICT regulations and cybersecurity**.
- Assisting data-driven FinTechs and InsurTechs in the set-up of innovative yet **GDPR-compliant** business models

OUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE FINTECH COMMUNITY

- Co-founder of [FinTech Belgium](#).
- Organising and hosting events for the FinTech community as well as in the financial sector at large.
- Multiple speaking engagements on digital payments, crowdfunding, cybersecurity, Blockchain, robotisation of finance, AI, etc.
- Regularly publishing articles in scientific journals and in the national and international press on digital finance.
- Actively participating in several associations such as the [European Society for Banking and Finance Law](#) (AEDBF/EVBFR).

DIGITAL FINANCE TEAM

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Simont Braun is a Belgian leading independent law firm, offering high-end expertise to national and international clients in all areas of business law: Corporate M&A, Banking & Finance, Intellectual Property, IT, Data Protection, Commercial and Contract law, Real Estate and Construction, Public and Administrative law, Tax Law and Labour law. Simont Braun also has in-depth experience in dispute resolution (including arbitration, mediation and financial criminal law).