

# CRA: 40 Years of History (and Success)



*Rui Botica Santos, Managing Partner of CRA*

**Rui Botica Santos, Managing Partner of Coelho Ribeiro & Associates (CRA), highlights the solid and distinctive trajectory of one of the oldest law firms in Portugal, founded in 1986. With nearly four decades of activity, CRA has established itself through its specialization in corporate law and niche practice areas, combining experience, internal cohesion, and technological innovation to address the current challenges of the legal profession and meet the needs of its clients.**

Coelho Ribeiro & Associates (CRA) was founded in 1986, following the approval of the current law governing law firms, and was the seventh firm to be incorporated and registered under this legislation. Curiously, we are the “CR7” of law firms, and one of the oldest. This year, we celebrate 40 years of history.

Another distinctive aspect is the fact that we have always maintained the same name, even after the passing of our founding partner, Dr. Coelho Ribeiro. With due modesty, we can also say that in 1998 we were pioneers

in establishing the firm through a distinctive brand identity based on the initials CRA, which today strongly define who we are.

Our services are focused on what I generally describe as corporate law, with particular emphasis on niche areas such as the mining sector (regulatory matters), information technology, real estate, labour law, corporate law, and sports arbitration.

How is the CRA team structured, and what values guide your work?

The CRA team is made up of lawyers with different levels of experience and specialization, allowing for a complementary approach closely aligned with clients’ needs.

clients’ needs. We seek to combine the experience accumulated over decades with the energy of younger generations.

One characteristic that defines us is the fact that almost all of the partners began their careers here, having completed their traineeship at CRA. In a way, this is a home where we have grown professionally, which reinforces our sense of identity, continuity, and shared values. We place great importance on strong relationships within the team.

More than size, we value team cohesion and the way we work together. We have a relatively agile structure that facilitates internal communication and enables us to provide quick and effective responses.



How do you seek to distinguish yourselves in the legal sector? In your view, what are the main current challenges facing the profession, and how do you address them?

We seek to distinguish ourselves through the way we position ourselves and approach our clients' challenges. The word “problem” is not part of our vocabulary. We deal with challenges and always ensure care to resolve them from the perspective of the client's best interests.

The legal profession is currently facing significant challenges, particularly increasing competitiveness. Technology, especially artificial intelligence, is also transforming the practice of law. We see this evolution as an opportunity, integrating tools

that increase efficiency without relinquishing critical judgment. Artificial intelligence is a useful tool, but it still does not replace the lawyer's creativity in analysing and resolving matters.

Another important challenge is talent retention, which we address by fostering a collaborative environment and offering growth opportunities. At the same time, we seek to preserve the identity and values of the profession in a context of rapid change.

What are CRA's goals and ambitions for the future?

As for the future, our ambition is to strengthen specialization, deepen internationalization through partnerships,

and continue integrating technology in an intelligent and thoughtful manner. All of this without losing focus on what has always defined us: rigour, closeness, trust, availability, and ethics.

### Between Experience and Foresight: 40 Years of Legal Practice

# CRA

ENTRE A EXPERIÊNCIA E A ANTECIPAÇÃO  
40 ANOS DE ADVOCACIA