

# BÁRBARA SANJUÁN PARDO: "WHEN THE POSSIBILITY OF STARTING AT BITBASE CAME UP, I DID NOT HESITATE"

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**Iberian Lawyer interviews Bárbara Sanjuán Pardo, a lawyer specialized in International and Corporate Law who didn't hesitate when BitBase, a Spanish buy-and-sell bitcoins company, offered to have her in as its Legal director. Despite her youth, she is at 27 years old, the person in charge of thoroughly analyze the applicable regulations in order to provide BitBase's clients with all the Legal guarantees and to ensure the efficiency of their operations. Although she is totally aware of the lack of information and misinformation that surrounds the cryptocurrency world, she confesses to being a dreamer - a visionary, in our view- who believes that, as long as it keeps been progressively regulated, this sector will gain its well-deserved space in the market.**



"I was born in Alicante on 1st January 1994. I am the eldest of 3 siblings, and I live near the sea. When I was 18, I didn't know what to study, so I started Law at the University of Alicante. Little by little, I got the hang of it. At 23, in the middle of a personal crisis, I decided to apply for a scholarship in China, and they gave it to me! I came back refreshed and with very clear ideas. At the age of 24, I started a Master in International Business Law at the EAE Business School while I was working in London, and when I finished it, I returned to Alicante. For two years, I worked as an intern in the law firm of Francisco Daniel Ruiz, specializing in private and insurance Law, where I acquired many of the skills that I now have as a lawyer. He was my mentor, and thanks to the passion I developed for the profession, at the age of 25, I decided to study for a Master's Degree in Access to the Legal Profession at the International University of Valencia to finally become a lawyer. In 2020, with the aim of delving deeper into International Law, I applied for the position of Junior Lawyer for the firm GPC in Barcelona, a law firm specializing in International Law and foreigners. However, I was offered the

possibility of opening a branch of the brand in Alicante and adopting the position of principal lawyer in Alicante, a proposal that I accepted. Seven months later, the possibility of starting at BitBase came up, and I did not hesitate."

This young woman who presents herself is Bárbara Sanjuán Pardo, Legal director of BitBase, a Spanish start-up company (2017) based in Barcelona, whose online platform offers, among other services, options to buy and sell bitcoins.

**What does your work consist of in the day-to-day running of this company? What are the Legal issues linked to these transactions? And concerning the Legal framework in the Spanish system? What types of issues do you have to handle about Compliance?**

Spain is one of the European countries at the forefront of cryptocurrency regulation. The possibility of creating a public "digital euro" cryptocurrency to be issued by the Bank of Spain is currently being considered, as detailed in the initiative registered in Congress by the Socialist Party.

Exchanges, like everything else, have an obligation to demand Compliance with the different laws concerning Data Protection and Privacy, Prevention of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing, Anti-Fraud... among others.

My mission at BitBase is to thoroughly analyze the applicable regulations in order to provide our clients with all the legal guarantees and to ensure the efficiency of their operations.

Soon, companies offering services with cryptocurrencies will have to register with the Bank of Spain and will have to demonstrate the control systems and preventive measures adopted to prevent

money laundering and prove that they comply with the requirements established in the Law on the Regulation of Credit Institutions.

At the moment, my work is focused on preparing the documentation and supervising that the company complies with the regulations required by the Bank of Spain.

In addition, due to BitBase's expansion, we are closing franchise and ATM contracts throughout Spain.

**Until now, we have spoken of cryptocurrencies in a rather abstract, almost intangible way. Now, with the existence of physical ATMs, where it is now possible to operate with this type of currency, it has become a reality more "within reach". However, this type of investment still causes some misgivings in part of the population, perhaps due to a lack of information about its benefits. Do investors have all the Legal guarantees?**

At BitBase, we make sure it does. Our staff are experts in cryptocurrencies. We take care of informing and advising the customer so that they can learn about the many benefits of these transactions and operate with rigorous security.

The world of cryptocurrencies is still unknown to a large number of people. The fact that they are beginning to be regulated, together with the growth of information in this regard, will give citizens greater confidence in the security and benefits of these operations.

**As this is a relatively recent and new topic, do you think there are enough lawyers in Spain specialized in this type of cryptocurrency investment matter?**

Law, like any other discipline, is changing and adapting to the needs of society. As it is such a new speciality, I do not know the number of professionals working in this sector, but I suppose it will grow as information increases and ordinary people become more familiar with this world.

**You specialize in International Law as well as in Corporate Legal advice. Was it clear to you from the outset that you would work as a Corporate lawyer?**

Not really. I became interested in this branch of Law in my last year of law school. I had the opportunity to complete my studies at the GDUFS in Guangzhou, China, and there I was able to look at Law from a broader perspective. In Guangzhou, I was fortunate to share experiences with young entrepreneurs with great and very interesting business ideas that sparked my interest in this field of Law.

After all, we live in a globalized world, where most business relations are international.

After my time in China, I decided to continue my training with the online Master's degree in International Business Law, which allowed me to combine my studies while working in London to improve my English. I have always liked to combine studies and work or internships so that I could apply the knowledge I was acquiring.

**What attracted you to this sector and BitBase?**

I have been interested in technology since I was a child.

Experts say that blockchain will mark a before and after in certain scenarios, such as commercial and financial relations, and even in our daily lives, just as fire, the wheel, electricity, and the internet did in their day. I like to keep myself informed, and cryptocurrencies caught my attention from the beginning. I spent a lot of time reading and researching as information was scarce, but I was surprised by the boom they were causing, and that was just the tip of the iceberg. So when the opportunity arose to work at BitBase, which have a great team in the centre of Barcelona, I didn't hesitate. Being an in-house lawyer for what started as a "start-up" is risky, to say the least, as well as exciting. Working with such professional and brilliant people enriches me and keeps me motivated.

Every day we face different challenges, we anticipate problems by coming up with multiple solutions, and we work against the clock to achieve our goals.

In just four years, they have set up 20 physical shops, more than 40 ATMs, launched their own token (BTBS Token), and it's only the beginning.

BitBase has exceeded all my expectations, and I am happy to be part of this team.

**The company plans to expand into Europe. Is this where your knowledge of International Law will be essential?**

New projects will be launched soon. The expansion will be worldwide, starting with Dubai, with whom we will sign a Master Franchise agreement in the coming weeks.

BitBase thinks and acts big. That's why you need to be up to date on all legal information. Knowledge of International Law is absolutely necessary.

**It seems you do enjoy travelling. In which countries have you lived, and which jurisdictions do you find "more complicated" from a Legal perspective?**

Travelling is one of my passions. Since I was a child, my family has made an effort to help my siblings and me get to know other customs, languages, gastronomy, landscapes, broaden our horizons, and be tolerant people.

When I was 20, in 2014, I felt the need to live an experience outside Spain, and for four months, I did a "work and travel" programme in Alderney, an island located in the English Channel. At 23, I moved to Canton, China, where I finished my degree and started learning the language. In 2019, at the age of 25, I decided to volunteer on "Gender Equality" in Bandung, Indonesia.

From my experiences abroad, I can conclude that the most difficult jurisdictions are those that lack, in a broad sense, respect for Human Rights. However, this is a subjective answer that I have based on the education I have received and the culture I have grown up in.

**Young, female and already in a remarkable professional position. Do you think it is possible to combine a successful career with other aspirations in life? What are your short, medium and long-term challenges for the future?**

Everything is possible with effort, organization and discipline. I am a dreamer and ambitious woman. At the moment, I am focused on my work. I would like to specialize in the cryptocurrency sector. It is a new niche market with great professional possibilities.

At BitBase, I have found a balance in my personal and professional life. I enjoy the day-to-day and set short-term goals, which keeps me motivated and helps me to grow both personally and professionally.

**Do you have any reading tips on the topic of cryptocurrencies?**

If you are a total stranger or beginner in the world of cryptocurrencies, I recommend "Cryptocurrencies for Dummies" by Victor Ronco, who offers a complete guide to discover what cryptocurrencies are and explains how the blockchain system is going to transform everything.

By Desiré Vidal

To read the full interview on issue number 107 click [here](#)