

CHINESE CLIENTS' APPETITE FOR SPANISH DEALS INCREASING - ROCA JUNYENT

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Financial sector clients from China are establishing offices in Spain, while, in the agribusiness sector, Chinese clients are keen to acquire Spanish companies

The increasing appetite of Chinese clients for investment in Spain is a major trend at present and is creating a lot of work for law firms, says Jordi Casas, partner at Roca Junyent and co-chair of the firm's international team.

He adds that, while Roca Junyent's Chinese desk was originally created to cater for the needs of Spanish clients setting up industrial sites in China, more recently the firm has been advising Chinese clients on their investments in Spain, in what Casas describes as "an interesting shift".

He says: "Most of our Chinese clients in the finance sector are setting up their own representative offices and branches in Spain and tend to be rather low profile – conversely, in sectors such as agribusiness, most Chinese clients are opting to acquire Spanish companies."

In all other markets, Roca Junyent aims to go "hand in hand with a well-known local player, so that we can have the autonomy to decide the best possible option depending on our client's particular

needs", according to Casas.

With regard to Latin America, Casas says there has been a significant amount of work related to inbound investment and M&A deals as a result of the increasing appetite from Latin American companies to acquire assets in Spain. In the case of outbound work, most work has concerned contractual matters in relation to Spanish clients' efforts to develop strategic alliances in Latin America, particularly the infrastructure and hospitality sectors, Casas explains. Most inbound investment in Spain comes from Mexico and Colombia, while Colombia and Peru receive a great deal of Spanish investment, he adds.

Spanish clients desire to set up operations in the US is also creating work for law firms, according to Casas. Meanwhile, he adds that in Europe, work "remains steady", mainly in the areas of M&A and litigation.