

FOOTBALL CRAZY

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Iberia is home to some of the biggest professional football clubs in the world and consequently, the sports industry is generating significant work for the region's law firms



The sport and leisure industries have long been rich sources of work for law firms in Spain and Portugal. It's hardly surprising when you consider that Iberia boasts a proud sporting tradition and is home to some of the most prominent professional football clubs in the world. Consequently, lawyers in Iberia have significant opportunities to advise on high profile, and often lucrative, deals in these sectors. While summer can be one of the quieter times of the year for many lawyers, those involved in advising on football player transfers

often find the months of July and August extremely hectic as football clubs look to complete signings ahead of the closure of the transfer window. Portuguese law firm **Morais Leitão** – which is renowned for its work on some of the biggest transfers in world football and includes **Cristiano Ronaldo** among its clients – recently advised Portugal forward **João Félix** on his €126 million move from Benfica to Atlético Madrid. Upon completion, Félix's move became the fifth most expensive transfer in football history. Meanwhile, another Portuguese law firm **Vieira Advogados** recently advised blockchain technology company **Kick Soccer Coin** on a sponsorship deal with Spanish football club **Deportivo Leganés**. Betting on football is a popular pastime and there was a notable deal in the gambling sector recently with **Garrigues** advised **Cirsa Gaming Corporation** on the acquisition of a 50 per cent stake in Spanish retail betting company **Sportium**. Another recent sport and leisure-related transaction saw **Pérez-Llorca** advising sport centre manager **Forus** on the acquisition of six sports centres – in Gijón, Badajoz, Córdoba, Sevilla, Jaén and Cádiz – from **Santagadea**.

Morais Leitão advises João Félix on €126m Atlético Madrid transfer

Morais Leitão advised Portugal forward João Félix on his €126 million move from Benfica to Atlético Madrid in the fifth most expensive transfer in football history.

The 19-year-old player has signed a seven-year contract with the club.

Félix (pictured on the right) made his Benfica first team debut in August 2018 in a league game against Boavista. He scored his first goal for the club in the following match against Sporting Lisbon.

During his first season in the top-flight, Félix played 43 games, scored 20 goals and contributed 11 assists. He also made his Champions League debut during the group stage match against AEK Athens.

Later in the season, he scored a hat-trick in a 4-2 win against Eintracht Frankfurt in the Europa League.

He made his debut for the Portugal national team in the UEFA Nations League match against Switzerland.

The **Morais Leitão** team advising on the transfer was led by partner **Paulo Rendeiro** (pictured on the left).

Practice area: Sport

The deal: Portugal forward João Félix's move from Benfica to Atlético Madrid

Firm: **Morais Leitão**

Lead partners: **Paulo Rendeiro**

Value: €126 million

Kick Soccer Coin advised by Vieira Advogados on Deportivo Leganés sponsorship Braga-based Vieira Advogados advised blockchain technology company Kick Soccer Coin on a sponsorship

deal with Spanish football club Deportivo Leganés.

The deal means the Kick Soccer Coin logo will appear on the sleeve of Club Deportivo Leganés' official shirts.

Kick Soccer Coin is a cryptocurrency that fans can use to purchase football merchandise.

The Vieira Advogados team advising Kick Soccer Coin was led by managing partner Nuno da Silva Vieira (pictured).

Practice area: Commercial

The deal: Kick Soccer Coin's sponsorship deal with Spanish football club Deportivo Leganés

Firm: Vieira Advogados

Lead partners: **Nuno da Silva Vieira**

Cirsa instructs Garrigues on €70m Sportium deal

Garrigues advised Cirsa Gaming Corporation on the acquisition of a 50 per cent stake in Spanish retail betting company Sportium.

The stake – which was valued at €70 million – was acquired from GVC Holdings.

The Garrigues team included partner Alex Pujol (pictured) and senior associate Alejandra Álvarez Úcar.

Practice area: M&A

The deal: Cirsa Gaming Corporation's acquisition of a 50 per cent stake in Sportium

Firm: Garrigues

Lead partners: **Alex Pujol**

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