

INCREASE IN M&A DEALS CREATING JOBS IN SPAIN - URÍA MENÉNDEZ

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Law firms see an increase in instructions relating to human resources management and codes of conduct for employees as legal cases related to layoffs decline

Though Spain's unemployment rate remains high, more jobs are being created, partly due to an increase in corporate transactions, according to Sergio Ponce, labour partner at Uría Menéndez in Madrid.

"The M&A recovery has spawned a re-emergence of work that law firms had bid farewell to during the crisis," Ponce says, citing law firms' work advising companies on how to improve their human resources management, as well as an increase in instructions relating to the development of internal codes of conduct for employees.

Fewer layoffs

While Spain's emergence from the global economic crisis has led to a reduction in the number of legal cases related to layoffs, Ponce says that, as a result of the latest round of legislative reforms, the need for companies to carry out such restructuring is no longer exclusively linked to the crisis and a desire to stave off economic losses. Instead, organisations are now looking to restructure in

order to adapt to a changing, and ever more demanding, market. Ponce says: "We think this line of work – that is, adapting jobs and workforces to the circumstances – is something that we will continue to see."

More flexible working

Ponce says that the matters most commonly occupying labour lawyers at present are labour litigation, both individual and collective, as well as work relating to both contract termination and workers' demands for their rights to be respected via trade unions and collective contracts. Ponce adds that he is optimistic about the short-term future of Spain's labour market. "The trend in terms of hiring and labour conditions will continue to evolve towards a more flexible system and one in which we think collective negotiation will play an essential role, particularly in performance and results-related pay rises," he says.