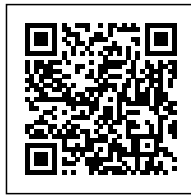


# SPECIAL: PARALEGALS, LOBBYING STRATEGISTS

*Posted on 18/05/2021*



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**Iberian Lawyer interviews Víctor García López (pictured), a Spanish Brussels-based consultant in the EU Regulatory and Public Affairs practice of Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer. A sort of paralegal whose team provides with in-house strategic policy advice to help clients shape legislation and administrative decisions in Brussels. As we could know, In-house Public Affairs departments in law firms are not yet significantly developed in Spain, unlike in companies or dedicated Public Affairs consultancies.**



**What is your role in the firm, what are your daily functions and how is your team made up?**

It is indeed not an easy task to explain what the role of an EU Regulatory and Public Affairs consultant is in a law firm. We are advisers who focus on the interface between Law, Politics and Business. What that means in practice is that helping clients manage their regulatory environment is the mainstay of our business. Much of our work relates to shaping draft European legislative measures. We analyse the potential effect of draft legislation on our clients' business activities and define threats, opportunities and strategic goals. In a very simple way, we provide consulting services within a law firm. Our team is relatively small for the number of matters we work on, integrated mainly by political scientists and lawyers with a strong international background.

**How does lobbying take place within a law firm, mainly for what purposes and in what type of cases?**

We work with our lawyers globally to share insights on the most complex legal challenges, be it on financial regulation, artificial intelligence, sustainability or Brexit. Since we work in a law firm, we also review legislative processes to explore the intention behind legislation/legislative provisions, particularly in the context of Litigation. Our objective is to help clients manage their regulatory environment and help them build a profile towards decision-makers by raising awareness of client's concerns in Brussels, Berlin and beyond. We cover a broad range of sectors, including technology, competition, tax, energy, environment, telecoms, transport and financial services.

**What is the added value of a law firm having a policy advice department in the European context?**

Combining our Public Affairs team's understanding of the European Political and Regulatory landscape with the firm's Legal expertise enable us to influence the legislative process to ensure that our clients' interests are represented. Apart from the Legal assistance that the lawyers provide, we devise and implement detailed campaigns encompassing both Legal and advocacy support. At

a time when politics is becoming more and more important, the added value of our department is to help clients anticipate forthcoming regulatory changes, define their position and approach relevant policymakers to help them secure a positive outcome.

**Do you think this role will soon be implemented in Spain?**

Spain is a country where the Public Affairs/Lobbying industry does nothing but grow. Institutional relations professionals have been working incredibly hard – since even before I was born – to promote a national regulatory capture for interest groups that will provide more Legal certainty and transparency. Although the public affairs world in Spain is very professionalised, dedicated in-house Public Affairs departments in law firms, unlike in companies, are nevertheless not yet very developed. Even though it is very difficult to determine when this public affairs consultant role will be incorporated into law firms operating in Spain, I expect this to happen rather sooner than later. In this way, law firms will be able to provide a fully-fledged service that will enable to contribute to a more transparent and open dialogue between industry and policymakers.

***By [Desiré Vidal Perea](#)***

To read the interview in full please download issue [N.104](#) here.