

# URÍA MENÉNDEZ REMAINS TOP BRAND IN SPAIN, WHILE MLGTS LEADS IN PORTUGAL

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**Methodology:** General counsel at 60 leading companies in Spain and Portugal – who were members of the Iberian Lawyer In-house & Compliance Club – were asked the following three questions: 1) Which five law firms first come to mind? 2) Which three law firms do you think most highly of? 3) Which three law firms are you likely to consider for major deals/litigation? The first firm mentioned in question one is awarded five points, the second four points, the third three points and so on. With regard to questions two and three, the first firm mentioned in response to each question is given three points, the second two points and the third one point. The points awarded to each firm are added together and then firms are given a ranking according to the points they receive – the more points a firm has, the higher its ranking.

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## Survey of in-house lawyers at leading Iberian companies also shows that Cuatrecasas has strengthened its brand in both Spain and Portugal

Uria Menéndez has retained its position as the leading law firm brand in Spain, while MLGTS has taken over from PLMJ as the top brand in Portugal, according to Iberian Lawyer's annual brand survey.

In-house lawyers at leading companies in Spain and Portugal were surveyed to find out which were the best law firm brands in both countries. The power of the brand is calculated using a methodology commonly employed by legal researchers and consultants worldwide. Survey participants are asked three questions: Which five law firms first come to mind? Which three law firms do you think most highly of? And, which three law firms are you likely to consider for major deals/litigation?

Uria Menéndez was the highest scoring firm in Spain in all three areas, meaning that not only is it 'front of mind' with a significant number of in-house lawyers – meaning the name is easily recalled – but it is also held in high esteem and considered to be the best firm for the biggest deals and major litigation. Participants in the study praised Uria Menéndez for having the "best-trained" lawyers. Similarly, MLGTS was the leading Portuguese firm in all three categories. While it was the leading firm by a relatively narrow margin in terms of being 'front of mind' with in-house lawyers, it was the top firm by a long way in terms of the esteem in which it is held and its suitability for major deals and big-ticket litigation. In particular, study participants highlighted MLGTS' ability to provide a "quality and fast response" as well as its "dynamic and friendly professionals who are always on hand to assist with any emergency".

The most significant change in the rankings for Spain in the last year saw Cuatrecasas Gonçalves Pereira taking over from Garrigues as the second-placed firm. Though Garrigues outscored Cuatrecasas among in-house lawyers when it came to its reputation for handling big deals and major litigation, Cuatrecasas triumphed by a fairly large margin with regard to being 'front of mind' with in-house lawyers. Cuatrecasas also narrowly outscored Garrigues when participants in the study were asked which firm they thought more highly of; in particular, participants noted the high quality of Cuatrecasas' litigation partners.

In addition to climbing the rankings in Spain, Cuatrecasas' brand in Portugal has also been enhanced and is now ranked fourth, up from fifth last year. Its improvement was largely due to its strong reputation among in-house lawyers for handling big deals and high-profile litigation.

Clifford Chance – which was acclaimed by study participants for its international reach – maintained its place as the fourth-ranked law firm in Spain, just ahead of Linklaters, which climbed two places to fifth. The strengthening of Linklaters' brand was largely attributable to its record on big-ticket work, though the fact that the firm is held in high esteem by in-house lawyers was also a factor – the firm was praised for its multijurisdictional capability as well as for its highly qualified teams "who are easy to work with". However, it was not all good news for Linklaters as its brand slipped down the rankings in Portugal to eighth place, down from last year's fourth position. Other firms to climb the rankings in Spain included DLA Piper and Freshfields. DLA

Spain's top law firm brands		
2016 Rank	2015 Rank	Firm
1	1	Uria Menéndez
2	3	Cuatrecasas
3	2	Garrigues
4	4	Clifford Chance
5	7	Linklaters
6	11	DLA Piper
7	5	Baker & McKenzie
8	6	Pérez-Llorca
9	10	Freshfields
10	8	Gómez-Acebo & Pombo
11	15=	Allen & Overy
12	15=	Herbert Smith Freehills
13	–	Jones Day
14	9	CMS Albiñana
15	19	GMQ Abogados
16	–	Bird & Bird
17	–	DAC
18	18	Ashurst
19	12	Hogan Lovells
20	–	Clyde & Co

Piper rose from 11th to sixth position partly due to what appears to be a growing reputation for handling major deals/litigation – study participants also acclaimed the firm's multijurisdictional expertise. Meanwhile, Freshfields climbed from tenth place to ninth, with the fact that it is 'front of mind' with many in-house lawyers being a significant factor.

### New entrants

There were a number of firms who were ranked in the top 20 law firm brands in Spain that were not ranked last year. They included Jones Day and Bird & Bird – Jones Day has a good reputation for major deals and litigation, while Bird & Bird scored well in terms of being 'front of mind' with in-house lawyers.

Firms climbing the rankings in Portugal included Uría Menéndez, which moved up from seventh to fifth position. In addition to being highly esteemed by in-house lawyers, the firm has a name that is easily recalled. There were two firms in Portugal appearing in the top ten rankings that did not appear last year – Telles de Abreu and Serra Lopes, Cortes Martins Advogados (SLCM). Telles de Abreu performed well in terms of being 'front of mind' with in-house lawyers, while its reputation for working on major deals and litigation has also been enhanced. Meanwhile, SLCM is held in high esteem and is seen as a good option for big deals/litigation – in-house lawyers highlighted the firm's highly effective and dedicated teams.

Portugal's top law firm brands		
2016 Rank	2015 Rank	Firm
1	3	MLGTS
2	1	PLMJ
3	2	VdA
4	5	Cuatrecasas
5	7	Uría Menéndez
6	n/a	Telles De Abreu
7	n/a	SLCM
8	4	Linklaters
9	6	Abreu Advogados
10	9	Miranda