Ode to joy

Faced with stronger competition from international giants, our third Euro Elite report finds the independent law firm holding its own throughout the continent

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Illustrator HARRY MILBURN

The good times are back in Europe – at least for now – making growth the word on every managing partner's lips. According to the International Monetary Fund, last year's European recovery was an 'engine of global trade and economic growth'. Across the EU27, annual GDP grew between 1.5% and 5% – the biggest figures being recorded among the smallest member states that experienced a severe post-crisis downturn, including Ireland and some CEE countries.

The corollary? Bullish stock markets and buoyant initial public offerings with Mergermarket data showing that European M&A hit a post-crisis high of $929.3bn across 7,235 deals in 2017 – Europe's resurgence has unleashed a wealth of corporate dealmaking ambition.

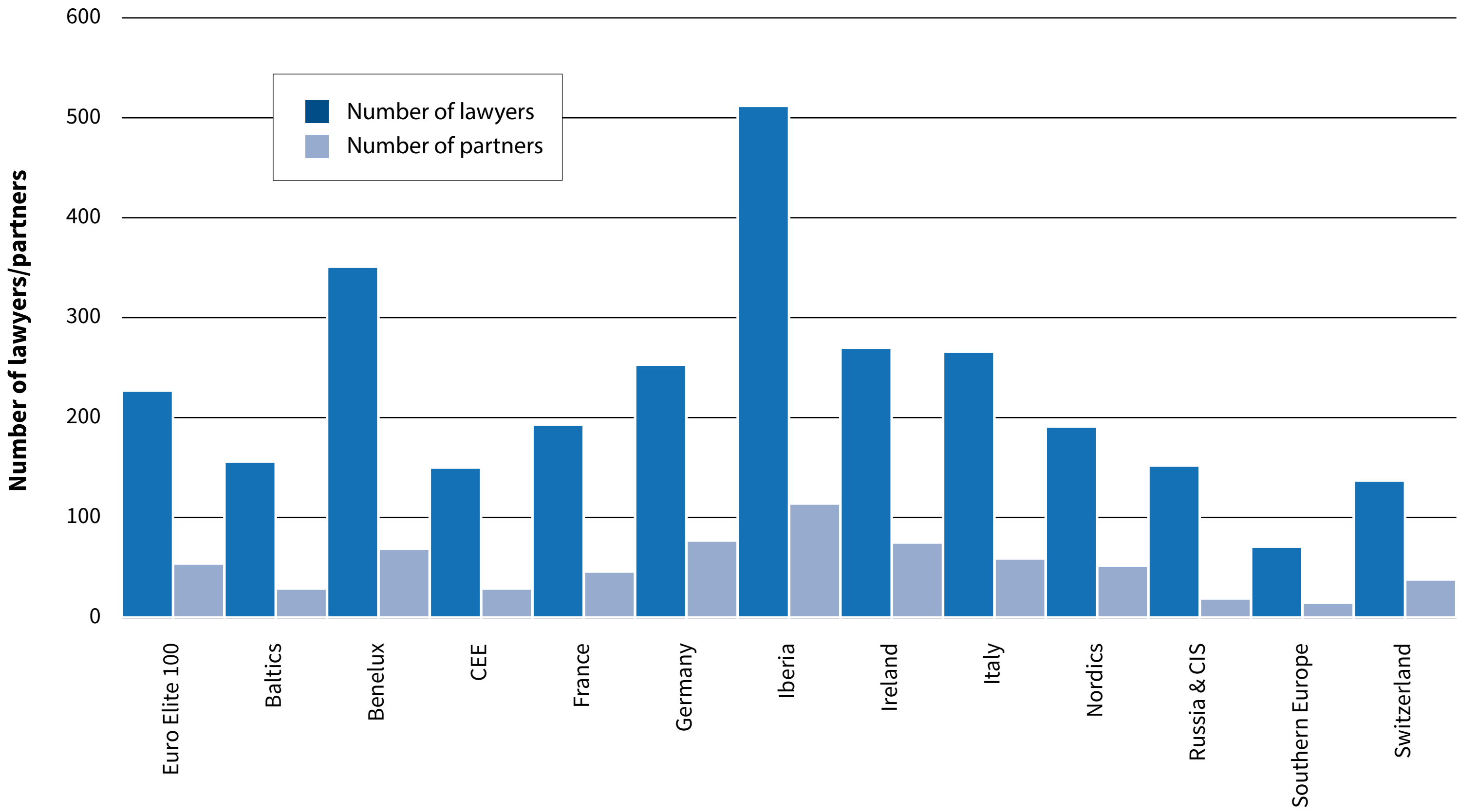
This, our third annual Euro Elite report – which identifies 100 leading firms in around 40 European jurisdictions, using a methodology that blends size, reach and quality across key product lines – shows independent law firms have certainly harnessed the benign conditions. However, continued pressure from international players in the largest EU economies keeps on driving many leading independents to seek growth elsewhere. 'It's very competitive. There's an oversupply of lawyers, law firms and legal services,' says Alexander Ritvay, managing partner of Noerr, Germany's largest independent. Noerr's total revenues for 2017 increased by 8% to €222.6m. But as its German revenues grew by 7% to €203.4m, in CEE they swelled 12% to €19.2m.

Revenues were equally robust at Hengeler Mueller. 'Compared to the key London players, we are fairly small,' says Christof Jäckle, corporate partner at the firm. 'We want to stay small and focused on transactions.' Topping an impressive 2017 deal list, Hengeler advised The Linde Group in its $45.5bn merger with Praxair – the largest European deal completed last year across all sectors. Gleiss Lutz also continues to be busy, advising Volkswagen and Audi on the emissions scandal and cartel investigations. 'After two record years in ▶

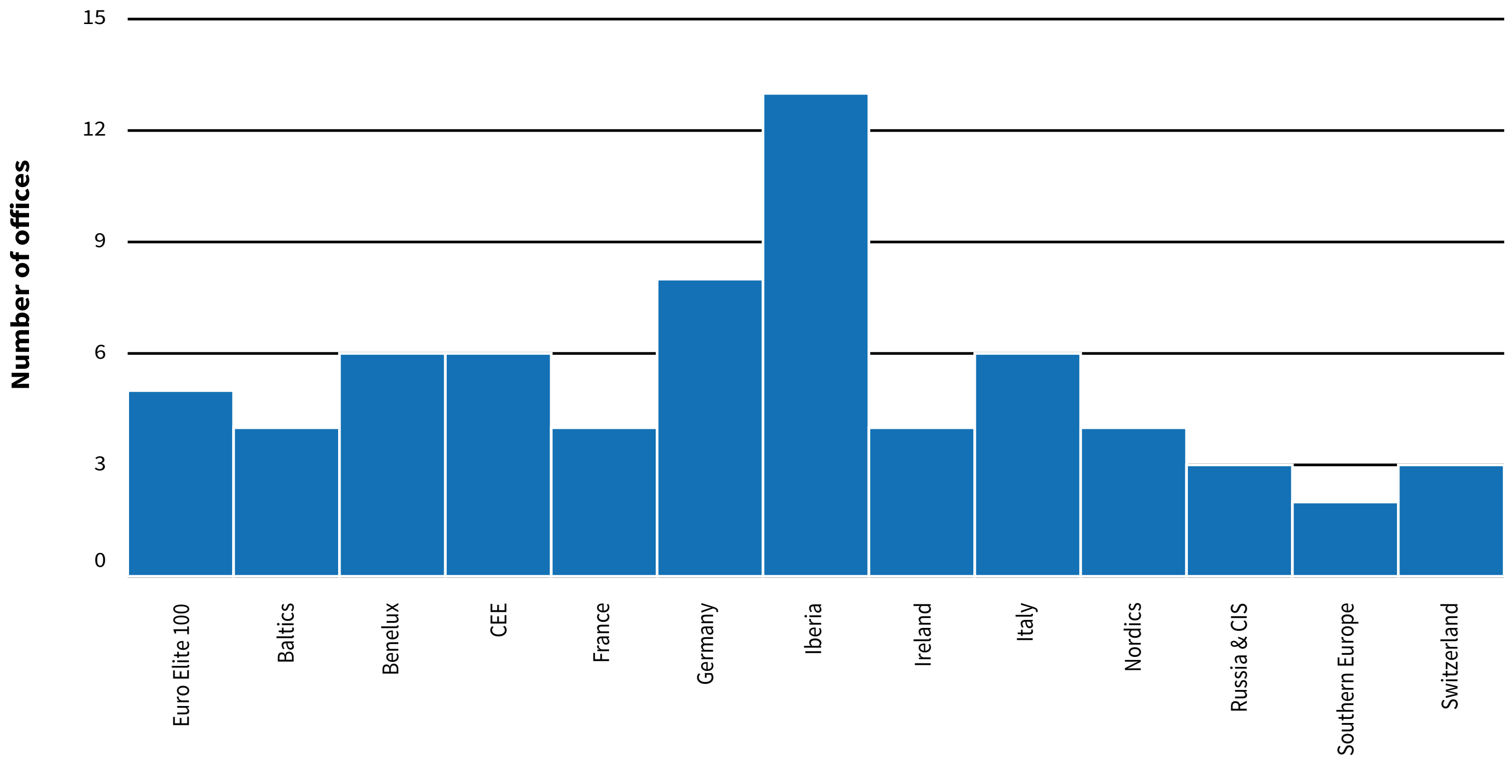
'There's an oversupply of lawyers, law firms and legal services.'

Alexander Ritvay, Noerr

THE EURO ELITE AVERAGE LAWYERS/PARTNERS PER REGION



THE EURO ELITE AVERAGE NUMBER OF OFFICES PER REGION



a row, we are already ahead of last year,' says partner Christian Arnold.

While Jäckle acknowledges Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer as its key domestic competitor, every top German independent anticipates some future squeeze from Latham & Watkins and Kirkland & Ellis as the ambitious duo take further strides into the local market, strategically hiring M&A partners from them as well as from local Magic Circle offices. There is a competitive environment, agrees Alexander Schwarz, co-managing partner of Gleiss, especially as the battle for talent is also coming from 'outside the traditional legal field' – notably from start-ups (see 'Market overview: Germany', page 84).

'There is a choice: clients have known this for a long time. Some prefer internationals, some prefer independents.' Didier Martin, Bredin Prat

THE REGIONAL PICTURE

'Italy is back,' proclaims Rosario Zaccà, managing partner of Gianni, Origoni, Grippo, Cappelli & Partners (GOP), which saw revenues up by 6% to €132m last year (see 'And yet it moves', page 100). With few big Italian M&A deals, GOP has directed more effort in dispute resolution: boosted by procedural and legal changes, it has flourished. However, Stefano Simontacchi, co-managing partner at BonelliErede, can point to a 12% revenue increase in 2017 fuelled by his firm's African expansion. 'We have selected countries with a potential for growth and without too many international firms already there,' he says. 'In Egypt and Ethiopia, we were among the first movers. Our strategy is to become the leading international law firm in the Mediterranean Basin and North Africa. In Dubai, we are the only firm looking specifically for cross-border work with Africa.'

An equivalent picture emerges in Spain (see 'Market overview: Iberia', page 92) but directed towards a different continent. At Garrigues, Europe's largest independent, 2017 revenues moved ahead by nearly 2%. 'Our international expansion has been one of the key factors,' says executive chair Fernando Vives Ruiz, adding that 'billings from Latin America have risen more than 26%'. When Garrigues announced 11 promotions to equity partner last November, notably five of them were outside Spain.

More concerned until recently about increasing European market share through its network partners – Chiomenti in Italy, Gide Loyrette Nouel in France and Gleiss in Germany – Cuatrecasas managing partner, Francisco Martínez Maroto, now shares the Vives vision: 'Latin American markets are the natural area of expansion for us.'

Luis de Carlos, managing partner at Uría Menéndez, also echoes the theme. '2017 was a very good year,' he says. 'Revenue was up 6% – the fifth consecutive year of growth. All our offices and practices are doing well.' A key factor has been Uría's 30% stake in Philippi Prietocarrizosa Ferrero DU & Uría (PPU): joint offices in Chile, Colombia and Peru have delivered double-digit annual

'We are the first Portuguese firm to go over €50m in revenues; we would have never done this without internationalisation.'
João Vieira de Almeida, VdA

growth and 'PPU accounts for around 10% of revenue', he says.

Meanwhile, João Vieira de Almeida, managing partner of VdA, comments: 'We are the first Portuguese firm to go over €50m in annual revenues; we would have never done this without the internationalisation that took place in the last three years.' VdA has developed a spread of offices across Lusophone Africa and beyond. 'Our growth rate is quite remarkable: increasing turnover by a double-digit percentage three years in a row,' adds PLMJ managing partner, Luís Miguel Pais Antunes, who has followed a similar path.

Despite rich pickings for some firms in Africa and Latin America, most independents still focus exclusively on their domestic markets when serving national and international clients.

Although Gide has a longstanding presence in several Francophone markets, they have not been engines of growth to the same degree. Among its 14 offices in 13 countries, France still drives most of Gide's revenue. Real growth last year was notably the French firm's best since the crisis.

Among Dutch firms, De Brauw Blackstone Westbroek also had a good year, with litigation and M&A performing strongly, according to corporate partner, Harm-Jan de Kluiver. Although there is continued pressure from international firms 'the established Dutch law firms are holding their own', he says, pointing to 'more interest from companies wanting to set up in Amsterdam due to Brexit'. At Stibbe, managing partner Derk Lemstra says: 'There is always a steady stream of M&A work, and we have seen a significant increase in cross-border litigation and strong growth in regulatory work.'

Cross-border M&A has been very active, as have litigation, regulatory and competition, according to Didier Martin, managing partner of Bredin Prat, an exclusively French transactional firm. 'There is a choice: clients have known this for a long time,' he says. 'Some prefer internationals, some prefer independents.' He points to several international firms reducing their French footprint. 'Some are too large for their share of the market,' he notes. 'France has been late in reforming. There's real confidence in the behaviour of the government, but the behaviour of lawyers is not always related to confidence: lawyers are often called in at moments of crisis.'

Scandinavian firms comprise a quarter of The Euro Elite Top 100. 'It has become more competitive for several years – primarily domestic competition. We don't have the international firms present, but they do pitch for high-end matters,' says Arne Møllin Ottosen, managing partner at Denmark's Kromann Reumert. 'We've seen significant pick-up in the M&A market, also capital markets and joint ventures. In the last five years, we have set record after record.'

But at Roschier, managing partner Fredrik Rydin says: 'It is highly competitive at the top end of the market. In Sweden, we have seen active pressure from leading international firms, especially in M&A.' Litigation, he adds, has been flat out, with transactional work also very active.

Daniel Hochstrasser, senior partner of Bär & Karrer in Switzerland, confirms that his firm also had 'an excellent year, busy across the board: lots of investigations, arbitrations and deal activity in the media, financial and tech sectors'. Homburger managing partner Daniel Daeniker adds: 'M&A transaction activity has been at a high, which you only see at the top of a cycle. We haven't seen this kind of boom since 2007. The big question everybody asks: is this an end-of-cycle frenzy or just sustained economic growth fuelled by low interest rates?'

In Dublin, the Irish independents have certainly been frenetic. 'It is very busy – really flat out,' says Brian O'Gorman, managing partner at Arthur Cox. 'Tech, pharma and real estate have been particularly strong.' Michael Jackson, managing partner of Matheson says: 'We had record growth in 2017 and in the first half of 2018; we've had a very strong start across all sectors.' Telling the same story, A&L Goodbody's managing partner Julian Yarr adds: 'Last year, we increased headcount by 6-7%; as this year kicked off, we increased it by another 7%.' Sectors he identifies include energy, 'notably renewables; we've seen a lot of private equity investment'.

For independents across the CEE region, the turnaround is also in full swing. 'The Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia… are all in a very strong recovery mode,' says Erik Steger, managing partner at Wolf Theiss. 'The notable exception is Poland because it never had a shrinking economy.' With several international firms having retrenched or pulled out, there has been some dividend for those with a long-term commitment to the region. ''We are committed to stay in the region; there are more referrals from international firms coming to us after some of them left the CEE, which strengthens our position,' says Michael Lagler, managing partner at Schoenherr.

'We're on a growth path,' says Wolf Theiss's Steger. 'We'll get stronger offices and more people – 5% to 10% over the next two years.' Kinstellar's senior partner Jason Mogg agrees: 'Our revenue in 2017 was only up 6%; I would expect it to be more like 10-15% this year.' He also expects an uptick in fee rates 'because of business levels' pointing to an increase in M&A, strong activity in the healthcare and automotive sectors, and increased private equity investment. Schoenherr's Lagler says that he has no plans to increase lawyer headcount. He sees the strongest competition from Wolf Theiss and CMS, which is also regionally structured across CEE from Vienna.

Full steam ahead for Europe's top independent firms – at least for now. LB

MARKET OVERVIEW: GERMANY

Despite riding out a surprisingly competitive general election that threatened to disrupt the fruitful status quo, 2017 marked another year of growth for the German economy. GDP grew 2.2% compared to 1.9% and the year ended with an unemployment rate of 3.8%, though the country's longstanding trade surplus fell for the first time since 2009 as domestic demand drew in more imports for the export-orientated economy. All the while the impending arrival of Brexit is met with equal parts indifference and anticipation.

Unsurprisingly, this all bodes well for elite German independents, which continue to be strong in the face of domestic and foreign competition. Corporate and capital markets continue to be active areas and the independents have managed to secure a string of lucrative mandates throughout the year.

'The main threat will be from legal tech in the long term.'
Christof Jäckle, Hengeler Mueller

Hengeler Mueller advised PSA Group on the acquisition of GM's Opel/Vauxhall in a transaction valued at €1.3bn. Characteristically, the automotive industry continues to be a strong driver of client activity in Germany, with Gleiss Lutz advising Volkswagen and Audi's supervisory boards throughout last year as the car manufacturers dealt with the legal fallout of the environmental clampdown on diesel-powered vehicles. Meanwhile, Bernt Paudtke, M&A and venture capital partner at GÖRG, believes the 'lack of funding culture' in venture capital has undergone a change of mentality.

Such fertile ground attracts attention from abroad, which so far German independents have been able to resist. However, Magic Circle players such as Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer and Linklaters continue to make their presence felt. The cost structure of setting up offices often places a squeeze on profit margins for foreign firms in Germany, however Alexander Schwarz, co-managing partner at Gleiss Lutz, rightly points out that players such as Freshfields are still 'clearly profitable' in Germany.

Frankfurt remains the focal point for UK and American firms for the medium term. New arrivals regularly emerge, with players like Greenberg Traurig joining more established American counterparts such as Latham & Watkins, which continue to expand and take talent from rival firms. In April, Covington & Burling opened a new office in Frankfurt – the firm's third office in Europe – with a six-partner team from independent Heymann & Partner, which closed up shop after 12 years. The closing of Heymann reflects how the independent model proves sustainable for players in the top three, while domestic mid-tier and boutique firms prove vulnerable.

However, foreign competition is nothing new to German firms, and many partners claim imminent technological change, rather than international pressure, is the defining challenge facing independents. With investment in technology increasingly demanded, independents will have to match the investing power of leading internationals.

'The main threat will be from legal tech in the long term,' claims Hengeler's Christof Jäckle, as German firms also face the pressure to continue recruiting talent against competition from start-ups and players outside the traditional domains of law.

But stability and economic abundance define the market in the major European country that has tilted most dramatically back in favour of local firms.

Thomas Alan

MARKET OVERVIEW: FRANCE

French independents have proven far more vulnerable to international pressure than their counterparts in Germany, with many domestic firms being absorbed by international players during the 1990s. However, compared to a couple of years ago when a tumultuous general election and sullen economy threatened domestic stability, as well as EU membership, there are many reasons to be optimistic in the Francosphere.

Emmanuel Macron has proved a stabilising influence, ushering long-awaited political reform that could prove lucrative for domestic players. 'New laws may see more anti-corruption work,' notes Bredin Prat managing partner Didier Martin, who argues the political climate is conducive to success for French independents. Legislative change in France, such as the new French foreign corrupt practices law, may see the domestic legal market broaden into more regulatory and white-collar contentious practices.

The Paris legal scene is still dominated by standout individuals, a culture that lends itself to acquisitive interest from international firms.

Bredin Prat posted €115.5m in revenue for 2017, and can boast that widening its coverage beyond its traditional corporate work has seen the firm perform well against local rivals such as Darrois Villey Maillot Brochier and Gide Loyrette Nouel. A new entrant into the Euro Elite this year is the 80-lawyer outfit Veil Jourde, a firm with a strong background in disputes, white-collar crime and public law matters, which has taken particular advantage of a more complex regulatory environment.

However, it is M&A that still provides the steady stream of activity in the jurisdiction, with Gide recently advising hotel investment and management business Algonquin Management Partners on its acquisition by Schroders, as well as acting for Zhejiang Semir Garment on its acquisition of the Kidiliz Group, a European leader in children's fashion.

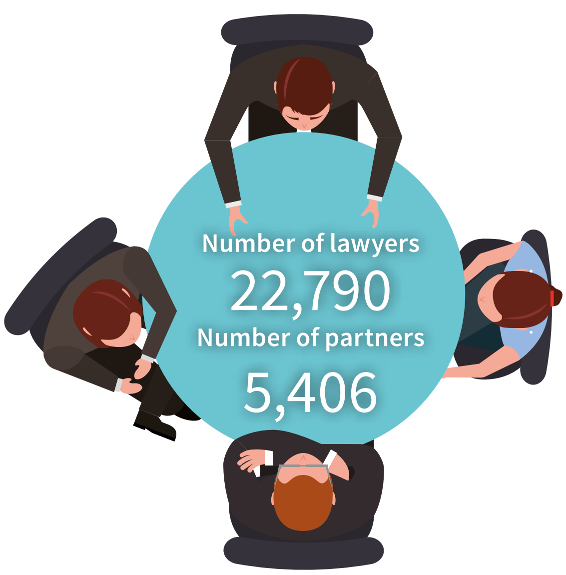
Meanwhile, the Paris legal scene is still dominated by standout individuals, a culture that lends itself to acquisitive interest from international firms. A ripening litigation market in France attracted US firm Hausfeld to Paris, which set up a new outpost in the capital with antitrust partner Laurent Geelhand at the helm.

Latham & Watkins has also been typically aggressive in the market, with the American firm securing a key mandate alongside Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton and Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer on the €15bn merger between French Alstom's and German Siemens' railway operations.

Many French independents claim foreign players are too large in proportion to their share of the market, but Magic Circle duo Clifford Chance and Linklaters can still claim to be the strongest among UK players in the jurisdiction.

Brexit, of course, provides both uncertainty and opportunity as Paris plots to poach global banks from London which – as in Frankfurt – may provide a boost for local players. With French independents being well accustomed to international competition, and widely welcomed reform on the horizon from a pro-business government, key domestic players remain steady, rather than steadfast in the face of international pressure.

Thomas Alan



THE EURO ELITE TOTALS

MARKET OVERVIEW: SWITZERLAND

Switzerland has not shared the recent exuberance of some smaller European countries, although the Swiss economy did not have the paralysis which preceded it either – instead progressing in a sedate fashion. 'One factor that's helpful to a certain extent is that the euro, compared to the Swiss franc, is now stronger than it was,' says Daniel Hochstrasser, senior partner at Bär & Karrer. Following the departure of M&A partner Till Spillmann, who joined Niederer Kraft Frey (NKF) last December, his firm is set to expand its dealmaking capacity with the imminent addition of a high-profile M&A team, including two prominent partners, in its Geneva office.

Homburger managing partner, Daniel Daeniker, points to more mid-market M&A activity and a surge in capital markets work. 'There's also been a glut of IPOs this year that has not been seen for many years. Sustained high-level M&A activity has been around for two years, but the frequency of bringing companies to the Swiss public markets is new. It's kept a lot of firms busy.' Nevertheless, Mergermarket data shows Homburger topping the table by deal value (volume) at $44.2bn (20) last year, followed by NKF - $31.8bn (9); Bär & Karrer – $13.4bn (29); and Walder Wyss – $2.6bn (47).

'The markets are still very good,' says NKF managing partner, Philippe Weber. 'We have a very good pipeline, especially equity capital markets, but also some sizeable M&A deals. What we do not see so much now are mega transactions.' Walder Wyss, which has recently become one of the largest Swiss law firms, tops the Mergermarket table by volume, although the average value of deals on which it advises is much smaller. Swiss law firm revenues typically grew between 5% and 10% last year, according to partner Hans Rudolf Trüeb. 'As long as the overall market grows robustly, the large Swiss firms tend to live and let live. But once the cycle ends, it will be a different picture,' he says.

Tax, regulatory work and investigations are also keeping many lawyers occupied. 'Investigations are very busy – domestic, from the US Department of Justice and elsewhere,' says Hochstrasser. Weber points to litigation and arbitration as 'continuing to be a very important part of our business: we have some very interesting white-collar and investigation work, not only criminal, but also in the regulation space'.

In February, Swiss regulator FINMA published guidelines on initial coin offerings (ICOs), a very active sector, particularly in Zug. Guy Vermeil, managing partner of Lenz & Staehelin says that his firm has been involved in an association 'to develop this business in Switzerland with standardised documentation. We are proactive in trying to become market leader in this area'.

Overall pricing is stable. 'Rather than pressure on rates,' says Daeniker, 'we sense an increased burden on the administrative front: electronic billing, complying with clients' billing rules in how you record time, your ability to staff and charge for junior lawyers. There is a lot of discussion going on, especially with our biggest clients.'

Dominic Carman

'As long as the overall market grows robustly, the large Swiss firms tend to live and let live. But once the cycle ends, it will be a different picture.'

Hans Rudolf Trüeb, Walder Wyss

MARKET OVERVIEW: IRELAND

The managing partners of Irish independents are optimistic, and with good reason. 'Ireland had the highest GDP growth in Europe for the fourth year in a row in 2017,' says Barry Devereux, managing partner at McCann FitzGerald. 'The 2018 projections are good. There's a high degree of confidence that things are going to remain positive for quite some time.' Julian Yarr, managing partner at A&L Goodbody, adds a note of caution: 'Of itself, a strong Irish economy doesn't necessarily drive the level of legal services activity that drives large corporate law firms, albeit that it does bring some opportunity.'

M&A was certainly busy in 2017. 'The transaction flow has been excellent,' says Matheson managing partner Michael Jackson. According to Mergermarket, the top firms by deal value (volume) were: Arthur Cox $11.02bn (34); A&L Goodbody $6.16bn (41), McCann $2.02bn (16); Matheson $1.91bn (22) and William Fry $1.38bn (36). Meanwhile, McCann advised Allied Irish on its €3bn IPO last May – the second largest in Europe in 2017.

'There were fewer marquee deals, but instead a strong flow across the mid-market and international M&A coming into Ireland,' says Brian O'Gorman, managing partner at Arthur Cox. Advising the Irish government on the Apple state aid case – over $13bn in taxes – William Fry was also involved in several construction IPOs. 'There's a lot of demand for office and residential space in Dublin,' says managing partner Bryan Bourke.

This resurgence is reflected by 'the number of cranes on the Dublin skyline', says Mark Thorne, managing partner at Dillon Eustace, which has been advising Tristan Capital Partners/SW3 Capital on the EXO development – set to be Dublin's tallest office building. 'Real estate: we are obsessed with it,' confirms Declan Black, managing partner at Mason Hayes & Curran (MHC).

> **'Ireland's data looks good, but there will be a price to be paid for Brexit. We're not paying it yet.'**
> Declan Black, Mason Hayes & Curran

Unlike other leading Irish firms, which reported strong 2017 revenue growth, typically in the 7-8% range, MHC revenues declined by 1% last year, down by €1m to €76m. Looking ahead, his concern is palpable.

'Ireland's data looks good, but beyond 2018, my dominant sentiment is one of uncertainty because there will be a price to be paid for Brexit,' he says. 'We're not paying it yet.'

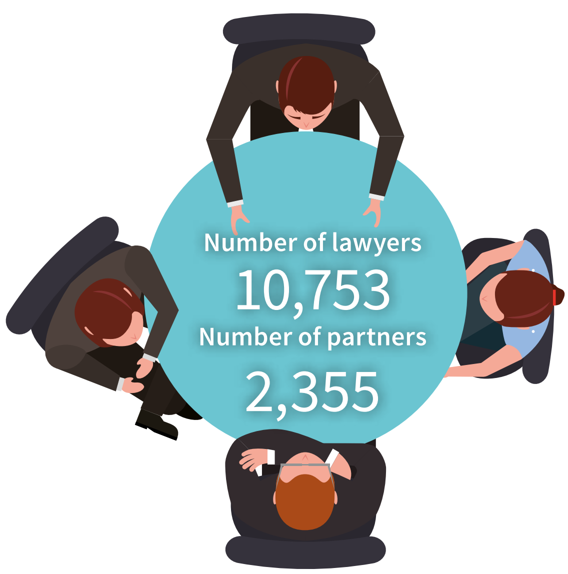
Yarr notes that A&L Goodbody 'increased rate rises last year for the first time in a long time – our realisation held up reasonably well, but we have found that the market has become a bit more normalised: there is more competition for the work.' The most recent arrival, in May, was DLA Piper which announced the opening of a Dublin office with the hire of William Fry corporate partner David Carthy. DLA follows Pinsent Masons, Simmons & Simmons, Lewis Silkin and Covington & Burling as the fifth international firm to open in Dublin since the Brexit vote.

But this is not preventing expansion. Bourke is anticipating a 4% to 5% headcount increase this year; McCann 'has recently made 13 lateral hires and now has 57 mixed-discipline staff in its project and digital business', akin to Allen & Overy's Peerpoint, according to Devereux; while Matheson appointed 15 new partners last year and 'a further eight this year', says Jackson.

Goodbody also continues to expand strongly, while Arthur Cox hired a three-partner funds team from William Fry last July: Tara O'Reilly, Ian Dillon and Cormac Commins. 'We look at growth strategically,' says O'Gorman. 'If you do that, the numbers look after themselves.'

Dominic Carman

THE EURO ELITE TOP 25 TOTALS



MARKET OVERVIEW: IBERIA

Spain's legal industry has had quite a year. In the space of a few weeks between October and November, it was shaken by Catalonia's unilateral declaration of independence and US giant Latham & Watkins launching its assault on the market with the hire of DLA Piper's senior partner Juan Picón.

While the first event and the following political unrest have understandably caught the eyes of the world far more than the latter, it is Latham's move that is bound to have the strongest impact on the local legal elite in the short term. Its previously low-profile, 20-strong local operation now counts one of the most renowned professionals in the country. The global partnership has set expansion in Spain as one of the priorities for 2018, with plans to grow headcount to 50 by the end of the year.

The local economy has weathered well repeated periods of political uncertainty to grow GDP by over 3% for three consecutive years. After a long-lasting financial crisis, foreign investors are back, sectors such as real estate, energy, infrastructure and life science buoyant.

National champions Garrigues, Cuatrecasas and Uría Menéndez have repeatedly featured in the top spots of the Euro Elite since our inaugural 2016 survey, also thanks to their growing Latin American operations.

'Since 2013 we have been on a clear path of recovery, all our offices and practices are doing well,' says Uría's managing partner Luis de Carlos. The best-regarded national player, his firm grew revenues 6% to €235.2m in 2017.

Garrigues' and Cuatrecasas' growth was more subdued at 2%, but they can still point to a successful year having turned over €357m and €247.8m respectively. 'Looking at our results, the political situation in Catalonia doesn't appear to have affected us,' says Fernando Vives Ruiz, executive chair of Garrigues, which remains Europe's largest and top-billing independent firm.

Such figures dwarf the performance of the main players in neighbouring Portugal. Morais Leitão, Galvão Teles, Soares da Silva & Associados, VdA and PLMJ all billed around €50m last year.

However, while Portugal's 'incredibly low' fees are likely to keep international firms away from its Atlantic shores for the foreseeable future – the only relevant exception being Linklaters' 2002 Lisbon launch – Latham is hardly the only global player plotting to grow on the other side of the peninsula, meaning competition is growing in an already mature market.

After years of retrenchment, there are plans for growth coming from London's Big Four. Allen & Overy moved into larger Madrid premises in February and aims to grow from 100 to 130 lawyers and from 14 to 18 partners over the next three to four years. Despite remaining much smaller than the local elite, 120-lawyer Linklaters is regarded as a strong competitor for top-end corporate and banking work.

But interest in Spain is also growing among the UK mid-tier. Pinsent Masons opened in Madrid in May 2017 with seven partners and has since grown to ten. Fieldfisher plans to follow suit shortly, its managing partner Michael Chissick describing the country as 'Europe's hidden gem'.

'The political situation in Catalonia doesn't appear to have affected us.'

Fernando Vives Ruiz, Garrigues

With Spanish firms traditionally growing organically, lateral hires have been a rare exception. A look at Picón's CV (which includes spells at Clifford Chance, legacy Squire Sanders & Dempsey as well as DLA) shows that international firms are pursuing a different strategy. Expect a busier lateral market as they grow their presence.

Spain's resurgent economy has built the success of a group of independent firms. Having made the country more appealing to international players, it also means that keeping their dominance will get more challenging.

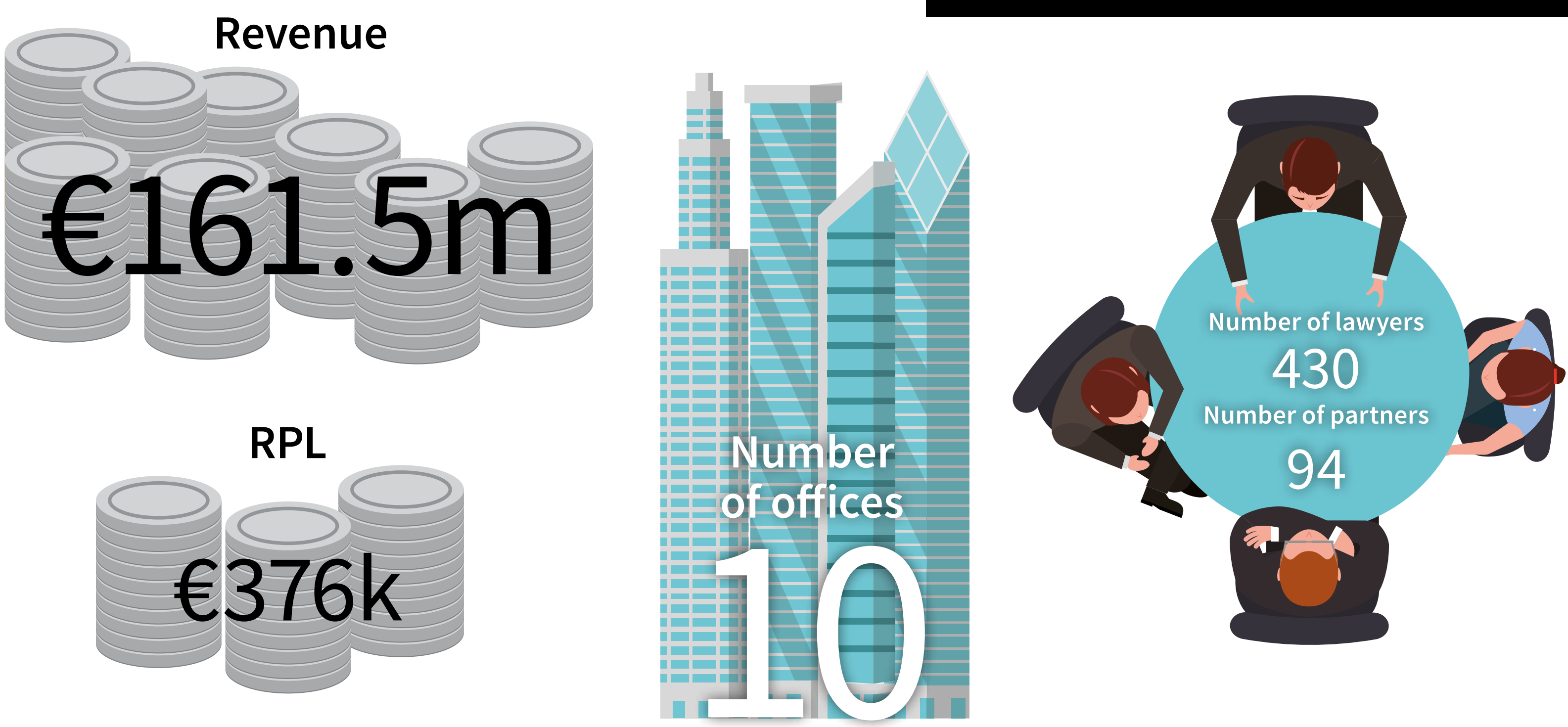
Marco Cillario

THE EURO ELITE TOP 25

Rank	Firm	Region	*The Legal 500* rank	Size rank	Lawyers	Partners	Recent partner promotions	Offices	Revenue
1	**Loyens & Loeff**	Benelux	5	3	862	216	5	12	€311.6m
2	**Garrigues**	Iberia	8	1	1427	302	11	32	€357.1m
3	**Uría Menéndez**	Iberia	6	4	588	131	4	17	€235.2m
4	**Cuatrecasas, Goncalves Pereira**	Iberia	9	2	897	213	11	27	€247.8m
5	**Noerr**	Germany	4	7	435	94	5	16	€222.6m
6	**Gide Loyrette Nouel**	France	12	5	520	111	2	14	€188m
7	**NautaDutilh**	Benelux	10	8	430	68	3	6	€175m*
8	**Wolf Theiss**	CEE	2	16	320	66	3	13	€65m
9	**Schoenherr**	CEE	3	21	295	42	2	14	€74m
10	**Stibbe**	Benelux	13	10	381	73	3	6	€148m
11	**Hengeler Mueller**	Germany	1	24	280	90	2	7	€272m*
12	**Gianni, Origoni, Grippo, Cappelli & Partners**	Italy	20	6	440	99	5	11	€132m
13	**Chiomenti**	Italy	14	16	322	61	3	8	€150m*
14	**Gleiss Lutz**	Germany	7	25	280	86	0	7	€195m
15	**De Brauw Blackstone Westbroek**	Benelux	23	11	380	64	3	7	€169m
16	**BonelliErede**	Italy	16	22	294	63	3	8	€158m*
17	**A&L Goodbody**	Ireland	27	13	366	91	7	6	€149m*
18	**Arthur Cox**	Ireland	27	14	350	100	3	5	€156m*
19	**McCann FitzGerald**	Ireland	29	12	369	77	10	4	€132m*
20	**William Fry**	Ireland	27	17	311	82	5	5	€96m*
21	**Kinstellar**	CEE	11	35	200	29	2	10	€35m*
22	**Egorov Puginsky Afanasiev & Partners**	Russia & CIS	19	28	262	35	0	6	€124.4m*
23	**Sorainen**	Baltics	15	32	219	32	4	4	€25.5m
24	**Matheson**	Ireland	27	23	282	86	7	5	€126m*
25	**Roschier**	Nordics	22	30	243	44	1	2	€94.6m

*Market estimate, not provided by firm

THE EURO ELITE TOP 25 AVERAGES



THE EURO ELITE METHODOLOGY

Legal Business' Euro Elite comprises independent law firms based in more than 40 European jurisdictions, rather than the local offices of international firms.

To compile the 100 firms featured in this report *Legal Business* analysed more than 150 of the largest law firms in Europe by the number of lawyers, as well as more than 150 of the top-ranking firms in the current edition of *The Legal 500 EMEA*. A combined score was given for the size of the firm and its *Legal 500* rankings, providing a qualitative as well as a quantitative analysis. The 100 firms with the highest combined score make The Euro Elite.

The 100 firms that appear in the main table (see pages 98-99) are listed in order of lawyer numbers within 12 regions: Baltics; Benelux; CEE; France; Germany; Iberia; Ireland; Italy; Nordics; Russia and CIS; Southern Europe; and Switzerland.

The firms in the top 25 (see table, page 94) are ranked according to their combined score for size and *Legal 500* rankings.

Scoring for *The Legal 500* EMEA rankings

Points were allocated for firms ranked in tiers 1-3 in tables featured in the 2018 edition of *The Legal 500 EMEA*. Top-tier rankings earned three points, second tier two and third one point.

Points were given for rankings in key strategic practice areas only: corporate/commercial; banking/finance; disputes; real estate; and tax. Corporate/M&A was given extra weighting, so rankings in this category earned a +50% points score. Therefore a top-tier ranking in M&A would score 4.5 points.

Jurisdiction weighting

Points scored for *The Legal 500 EMEA* rankings were adjusted depending on the size of the jurisdiction, according to the banding below. Jurisdictions in Band 3 received no mark-up on points, while rankings for countries in Band 1 scored a +75% mark-up. Scores in countries in Band 2 received a +50% mark-up. Those in Band 4 received a -25% mark down.

Band 1
Germany
Band 2
France, Italy, Spain
Band 3
Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey
Band 4
Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Iceland, Kosovo, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine

Therefore, for example, a tier-one ranking in Germany for M&A, real estate and banking would score a total of 18 points, while the same rankings in those practice areas in the Ukraine would receive seven points.