

THE LAWYER

Market Reports



SALEABLE

THE GLOBAL 200: REAL ESTATE

2017

GLOBAL 200: REAL ESTATE 2017

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GLOBAL 200: REAL ESTATE 2017

Methodology

The Global 200: Real Estate report measures the size of firms' real estate practice area groups using three metrics. The first is the absolute (not full time equivalent) number of partners in the real estate practice area group as submitted to *The Lawyer* by firms in the form of an online questionnaire completed in February and March 2017. If this metric was not submitted, *The Lawyer* uses the number of partners in the real estate practice area group as submitted as part of last year's UK 200 survey. Firms that did not submit the number of partners in their real estate practice area group in either survey have been excluded from the number of real estate partners according to *The Lawyer*'s Global 200 research conducted in 2016. As part of this research *The Lawyer* tracked the location and practice area of every partner in the world's largest 200 law firms ranked by revenue. The second and third metrics are the number of lawyers and partners who spent at least 50 per cent of their time on real estate matters in the most recent full financial year.

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STRATEGIC POWERHOUSE

With \$450 billion in capital waiting for investment, growing client appetite for global deals, not to mention Trump and Brexit, real estate has shifted from a practice area to a powerful and core focus at many of the world's top firms, *The Lawyer's* first Global 200: Real Estate data shows

“Even this month at Mipim, the world's largest property market jamboree, the mood was upbeat. Buoyant even despite all of the geopolitical, economic and social uncertainty destabilising the globe. Assembled among of real estate specialists generally agreed that the signs are good.

In particular, the prospects for international real estate investment with pots of cash to open up opportunities is a welcome news, not least for the real estate sector at the world's largest law firms.

“People were definitely more upbeat at Mipim,” Nabarro senior partner Cláudio Carvalho. “The high net worths are looking at London, the Hong Kong investors are saying they still believe in London. That said, the next wave of capital will be outside the UK, it will be international.”

In the context of the global legal market, the significance of this upbeat sentiment and Carvalho's horizon-spotting comment is hard to overstate. While for many big firms brick and mortar-related real estate as a practice area has long been a central part of the business, for a growing number real estate as a sector is increasingly core.

The distinction is worth making, not least because of the impact it is very visibly having on law firm recruitment. The shift has had a major impact on global firms' real estate strategy with key areas such as private equity, tax and finance taking centre stage. The hiring patterns of US firms in London over the past few years is the clearest evidence of this.

In short, as real estate has become one of the world's most significant asset classes the biggest law firms have moved with it. As a result, the sector is now at the heart of some of the most significant developments in the legal market worldwide.

Real estate hot spots

The ongoing shift in the international property legal market from practice area to sector goes to the heart of this *The Lawyer's* first-ever global real estate report.

For the first time we have surveyed the biggest and most significant law firm real estate practices around the world, quizzing them about the hottest areas of their practice, global property market trends, and the impact on their strategies of developments such as a looming Brexit, the arrival of President Trump and the wave of European elections.

The starting point for this report is last year's Global 200 report. This tracked every one of the almost 65,000 partners in

“People were definitely more upbeat at Mipim. The HNWs are still looking at London, the Hong Kong investors say they still believe in London. That said, the next wave of capital will be outside the UK, it will be international”

Cláudio Carvalho

the current group of the world's largest firms ranked by revenue.

The new real estate report has updated its headcount data and delved deeper than ever before into the drivers, deals and strategies behind the top real estate practices.

Several firms can justly lay claim to a global real estate practice based on headcount. The rapidly expanding Dentons now has the largest real estate practice in the world with a total of 352 real estate partners and some 1,200 lawyers who spend more than 50 per cent of their time on real estate-related matters.

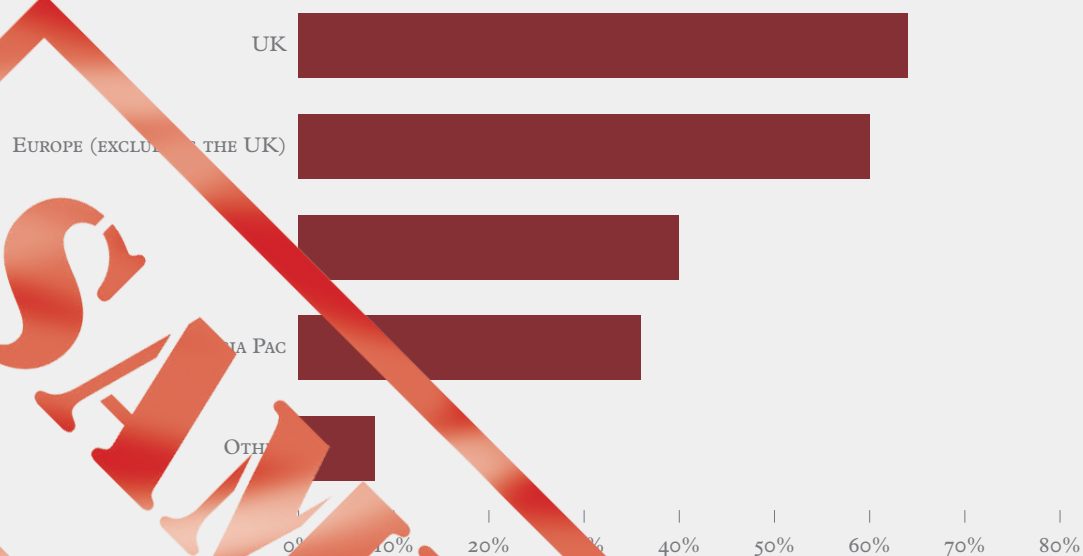
What is notable, however, is that for a firm that has much of its origins and current leadership based in the United States, its relatively small in headcount terms in North America.

By far the biggest portion of Dentons' real estate partners are in the Asia-Pacific region, with 213 partners at least 100 of whom are thought to be based in the generally under-served jurisdiction of China.

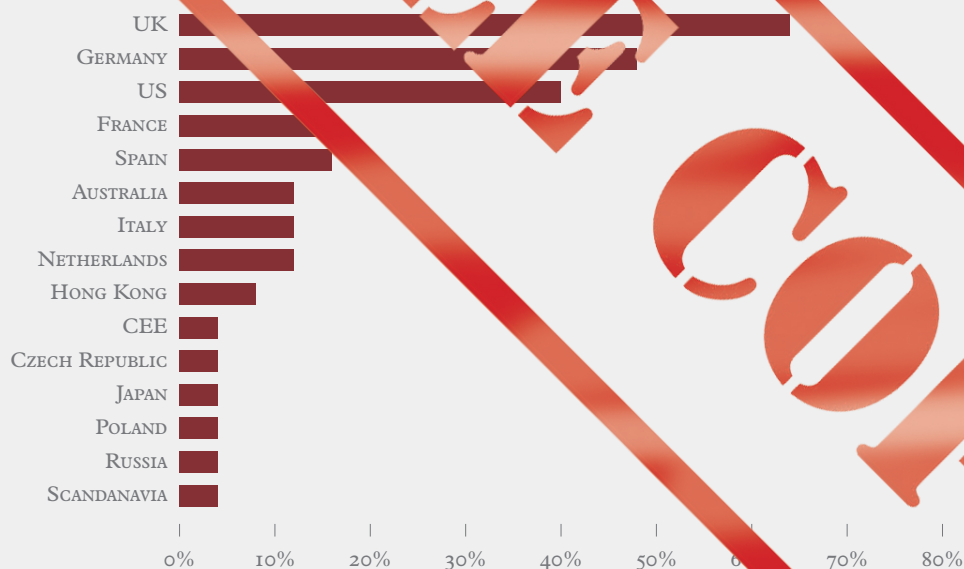
DLA Piper, second place in the ranking, has 171 partners in its core group globally but 220 working on real estate-related mandates and a total of 700 lawyers. The firm claims to have real estate capability in virtually every one of its offices worldwide, blanket coverage that is a neat reflection of how deeply embedded real estate is at the firm.

“We've just added offices in Chile and Mexico [via a cooperation agreement with Bahamondez, Alvarez & Zegers in Santiago, Chile and a combination with Mexico City's

Where are you currently seeing most activity from your clients for real estate matters by region?
(Respondents could select more than one region)



Where are you currently seeing most activity from your clients for real estate matters by country?
(Respondents could select more than one country)



WHAT GCs WANT

Results from the Global 200: Real Estate show that the growing influence of the GC in companies is creating a demand for smaller and all-inclusive panels of external advisers

In recent years, both anecdotal and specific evidence has emerged to suggest that when it comes to major clients' external legal providers panels, the selection of travel is overwhelmingly one way – smaller.

Earlier this month the UK Government confirmed that it had cut its Crown Commercial Service panel, which includes property work, from 30 firms to 17.

Other recent panel changes include the Office of Land Security in February 2016, the Central Housing Investment Consortium in June 2016, Taylor Wimpey in December 2016 and British Land (data from Lawyer Market Intelligence).

In the questionnaire for the Global 200: Real Estate report we asked firms whether they believed that their international real estate clients were increasingly favouring global firms with a reduced number of firms. The results confirmed the trend towards smaller panels.

Almost a third (30 per cent) of firms said they agreed strongly with this statement. Another 41 per cent said they agreed slightly. In total almost three-quarters of all respondents had seen panels reduce in size.

Just 4 per cent disagreed strongly with the statement with another 11 per cent disagreeing slightly, a total of just 15 per cent. The remaining 15 per cent said they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Rise of the GC and its affect on panels

The results appear to confirm that a growing number of major real estate clients prefer to work with firms that have the resources to handle the majority of work in-house. Interviews with senior lawyers for this report back up these findings.

The head of Hogan Lovells' global group Jackie Newstead says a growing number of clients are more likely to have half a dozen or so firms on their panel rather than the 30 to 50 that they might have had in the past.

"The context for this trend is the rise of the general counsel within organisations," says Newstead, "while one of the key drivers is the issue of control. GCs are more risk aware so if they have too large a panel there's an inherent risk because the external legal spend becomes more difficult to control. Also it becomes more difficult for them to get preferential pricing. So we do hear quite a bit that in return for being on a panel the client expects a decent rate, and in return we can generally expect a decent amount of work."

Longstanding Gibson Dunn & Crutcher partner Alan Samson, who co-chairs the firm's real estate group and heads the European real estate private equity team and was previously



GCs are more risk aware and if they have too large a panel there's an inherent risk because external legal spend becomes more difficult to control"

Jackie Newstead

partner at Newstar, agrees with Newstead. One of Samson's long-standing clients is Marriott, which he represented on the acquisition of the Grosvenor House Hotel, its joint venture with Whitbread for 46 UK hotels and on the acquisition of the Shelbourne Hotel in Dublin following the Le Meridien receivership (a Gibson Dunn team also represented Marriott on its mammoth \$1.5 billion merger with Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide).

Samson says Marriott does not have formal panels but will instruct "partner firms", turning to Gibson Dunn in particular for big-ticket deals, including corporate acquisitions where the firm understands its asset class.

Of the trend for smaller panels Samson says: "Most big corporates want panels that are smaller and more focused because they get better bang for their buck. They want to concentrate their legal spend on a smaller number of firms."

Jose 'Pepe' Larroque, who chairs the global real estate practice group at Baker McKenzie, also agrees with the statement, adding that it is a major and continuing strategic aim of the firm to win places on panels.

"We've been creating services to be able to service clients globally," confirms Larroque. "That's part of our strategy. We use our global footprint to support clients and have the ability to offer cost savings, best practice, and uniformity. It is how we've responded to this trend. We felt clients wanted a uniform approach and now you're seeing they're creating smaller panels. It's a good approach because you sometimes find a mix of firms involved and while some are great, some are less so. Smaller panels create uniformity."

THE BREADTH WINNERS

Firms report a major shift in clients' real estate interests from single domestic assets to cross-border portfolio deals, a trend that calls for a rethink of service provision

One insight to emerge from the research for this report is the growing number of pan-European real estate deals, a trend that has obvious implications for the strategy of any firm that aims to service clients on these matters.

We asked firms whether they believed pan-European portfolio transactions were becoming increasingly popular.

The biggest proportion, 88 per cent, of the firms that responded said they agreed slightly with this statement. Another 33 per cent said they agreed strongly, making a total of 81 per cent of all respondents.

Just 4 per cent disagreed slightly with the statement, and no respondents disagreed strongly. The remaining 11 per cent said they either did not agree or disagree (11 per cent) or did not know.

The results overwhelmingly confirm a shift in major clients' interests in the real estate market, from primarily approaching it with a focus on single, domestic assets to increasingly looking for portfolio deals. The strategic implication for the world's largest real estate practices is that this trend underlines the need for firms to be able to demonstrate strength in depth in the key jurisdictions.

Freshfields

Most real estate partners interviewed for this report say that chief among all of the European jurisdictions outside of the UK currently is Germany. Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer is among those firms that agreed strongly with the statement, adding: "We have been particularly busy working across borders on pan-European transactions."

A Freshfields team led by partner Alex Watt advised TPG Real Estate and its joint venture partner Ivanhoé Cambridge on one of the biggest deals of 2016, the sale and pre-sale refinancing of European logistics portfolio business P3 to Singapore sovereign wealth fund GIC (advised by Kirkland & Ellis) for €2.4bn.

Freshfields has just 22 partners in its core real estate group but thanks to its 2000 three-way merger (with Deringer Tessin Herrmann & Sedemund in Germany and Bruckhaus Westrick Heller Löber in Germany and Austria) it has one of the most significant German practices of all of the firms in the report. Continent-wide Freshfields has 11 real estate partners compared with 10 in the UK.

While the firm has no pretensions towards providing the full range of services in-house for all types of real estate clients, its strength in depth in key European centres (most obviously London and Germany) has resulted in it winning roles on some



These deals not only require significant project management skills but also strength in key jurisdictions, notably Germany, France and Spain but also Poland, Italy and some eastern European countries"

Jackie Newstead

of the biggest deals in the market for corporate investor clients.

Freshfields won its role on the P3 deal through a relatively new client TPG partly because of its European platform and also specifically thanks to Watt's role on the original deal when TPG bought into the platform from alternative investment firm Arcapita and began bolting on other assets.

"When it was time for the exit the game to us," says the firm's real estate group head Mark Wheelhouse. "We don't try to do all things to all people." Wheelhouse adds that while in practice, in terms real estate is relatively new to Freshfields, the firm is "open" on it as a sector, seeing it as a way of making sure that in other areas such as infrastructure and private equity it builds core client relationships.

"Real estate is certainly seen as one of the components of doing that," adds Wheelhouse. "But you have to be focused on making sure what you do is the right stuff. For us that primarily means acting for typical Freshfields investor-style clients in a real estate context."

Clifford Chance

Clifford Chance is particularly bold in its assertion of leading this emerging trend, stating that it is "uniquely placed to advise on large pan-European portfolio deals".

The firm's global head of real estate Jonathan Solomons

WORLD'S BIGGEST LANDLORD MAKES IT RAIN IN EUROPE

Data released by Private Equity Real Estate magazine (PERE) shows that the world's top 50 private equity real estate funds raised a combined \$271bn between 2011 and 2016.

The top 10 funds – all headquartered in North America – were responsible for almost a third of that figure. New York-based Blackstone Group retains its lead as the world's largest private equity real estate fund at \$53.8bn; over twice the size of its next closest rival, the State Street Real Estate Fund.

Recent activity on Blackstone's vast portfolio of hotel chains and prime office spaces has led to negotiations for a range of major law firms including leading legal adviser Simpson Thacher as well as magic circle firms Clifford Chance, Freshfields Bruckhaus Derringer and Allen & Overy.

According to research carried out by *The Lawyer*, Simpson Thacher advised Blackstone on real estate deals closing in 2016 worth over \$27bn including the \$6.5bn sale of a 25 per cent equity interest in Hilton Worldwide, the \$6bn acquisition of the subsequent sale of Strategic Hotels, and the \$8bn acquisition of BioMed Realty Trust. The BioMed deal was the biggest private equity buyout of a US public company in 2015 and represented the third time Simpson Thacher assisted Blackstone on acquisitions involving multi-billion-dollar public real estate companies

in a six-month period.

The major real estate funds traditionally instruct American law firms but they are increasingly using the magic circle and other European firms for work involving their European portfolios.

In 2016 Clifford Chance led on a complex transaction for Blackstone involving the acquisition of, and restructuring of credit rights over, four new residential developments through its subsidiary, FIDERE (the largest residential property REIT in Spain). The firm also assisted the world's third largest fund, Brookfield, on the acquisition of the Potsdamer Platz portfolio, which is made up of restaurants, prime office locations and retail spaces around Berlin.

Also in Europe, Freshfields advised Brookfield on the acquisition of London's Aldgate Tower for £346m and the disposal of the German hotel chain Interhotel for £785m while Blackstone made use of Allen & Overy's international network to assist it in acquiring a portfolio of logistics centres in Luxembourg, Germany, Belgium, Hungary and the UK.

Each PERE's Top 50 list in 2016 a fund needed to have raised over \$1bn in equity investment over the last five years. This has increased steadily over the past three years in line with investors increasing their exposure to real estate assets.

Capital raised by private equity funds by region (all figures in \$bn)

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
ASIA-PACIFIC	7.54	7.87	15.68	20.02	16.17	20.02	12.65
CENTRAL/ EASTERN EUROPE	0.34	1.25	0.4	0.56	0.97	0.97	1.12
GLOBAL	10.63	19.46	25.28	35.56	27.47	42.67	35.56
LATIN AMERICA	1.65	4.84	5.07	2.15	2.24	2.24	2.24
MIDDLE EAST/AFRICA	0.36	1.26	0.99	0.18	3.83	0.17	0.97
NORTH AMERICA	33.5	32.51	40.83	47.4	47.4	51.44	31.07
PAN-EUROPE	0.59	1.74	3.99	4.9	17.0	12.96	6.11
WESTERN EUROPE	8.29	10.87	13.63	21.71	25.56	20.28	20.28
GRAND TOTAL	62.91	79.81	105.87	127.82	142.21	142.53	101.99

SOURCE: PEI

GOODWIN

THE LAWYER VIEW

In the aftermath of the collapse of Linklaters & Wood Malletson (LWM), the UK's largest ever law firm reorganisation, some winners emerged from the wreckage, among them US firm Goodwin, which has become significantly more prominent in the London legal market since launching in 2012.

Back then, the firm opened shop with a focus on real estate, one of its four strategic business units, along with private equity, financial institutions and technology, science, courtesy of former Asia first partner David Evans and Samantha Lake Coleman.

Jump forward five years and Goodwin has doubled its London office space after a series of hires, not just from LWM (aside from the team hire, it also brought in former KWM co-head of corporate Richard Overy in 2015 to launch Goodwin's private equity practice in the City), but also from Linklaters, Ashurst, Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling, notably private equity head Mark Soundy and tax partner Sarah Priestley.

But it is the KWM group that, from a real estate perspective, really stands out. The firm took on KWM investment funds head Michael Halford and five funds partners – Ed Hall, Laura Charkin, Shawn D'Aguiar, Patrick Deasy and Ajay Pathak. The group also included 15 associates and five trainees, the latter kick-starting Goodwin's first trainee programme in the UK. Goodwin now has more than 75 lawyers, around nine partners and more than 30 business services staff in the capital, with

real estate a core part of the offering.

In its submission to this report, Goodwin describes the underlying strategy for its real estate industry group as “a triple-pronged focus on raising real estate funds, deploying real estate capital through investment transactions across assets classes and exiting clients’ portfolios in the public markets”.

In conjunction with several of the world's largest real estate practices Goodwin claims to offer a “cradle-to-grave” service for investors, from raising capital and structuring funds to spend-side managing and then exiting funds.

Indeed, Minta Kay, the chair of the firm's real estate industry group, claims that “Goodwin has a far wider embrace of the real estate industry than other firms”.

Michael McQuinn, co-chair of Goodwin's REITs and real estate investment practice, adds: “By spreading our net wider, offering services to assist private and public capital investors, covering both equity and debt, we sit at the ground floor to see where the real money as capital is deployed because we understand the sponsor's business and investment plans.”

The firm confirms that a significant change in its strategy recently has been its expansion into Europe, a shift mainly driven by the desire of US clients to invest in European real estate markets. Along with the London launch in 2012, Goodwin also opened offices in Frankfurt and Paris in 2016. In less than a year in Frankfurt, Goodwin has grown its real estate team from three partners to a group of 14, while from its inception in July 2015, the Paris office now has 40 lawyers, of whom 10 are partners.

Kay told *The Lawyer* that there were no current plans to target any other European jurisdictions for an office launch.

Standout deals for Goodwin include representing MAA in its \$4bn acquisition of Post Properties, Inc. (NYSE: PPS). The resulting company has a combined total market capitalisation of \$15bn and equity market capitalisation of approximately \$11bn. The deal created one of the industry's largest public multi-family REITs by enterprise value, and the largest public multifamily REIT based on number of multifamily units.

London office co-head Samantha Lake ▶

REAL ESTATE AT A GLANCE

Head/s of real estate: Minta Kay, chair, real estate industry group

Sector group size: 156 lawyers; 52 partners

Practice group size: 135 lawyers; 49 partners

Partner regional breakdown:

US: 40

UK: 9

Europe: 11

Asia-Pacific: 0

Representative clients:

Nordic Real Estate Partners

GreenOak Real Estate

MAA

The Scion Group

Boston Garden Development Corporation

REAL ESTATE PARTNERS BY REGION



Minta Kay

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