

# US law firms in Europe

Recommended firms (European offices)	No. of lawyers in Europe	The story of their expansion
<b>Outright successes</b>		
Latham & Watkins (Barcelona, Brussels, Frankfurt, Hamburg, London, Madrid, Milan, Moscow, Munich, Paris)	<b>430</b>	Unequivocally recognised for its excellence throughout Europe. Came into London in 1990 full steam ahead and established itself as the go-to US firm for high yield work. Exploded into continental Europe in 2001 in Frankfurt and Hamburg to great acclaim and, most recently, in Barcelona and Madrid with an ex-Cuatrecasas partner at the helm. Unapologetically ambitious, yet it still maintains one of the most inclusive, transparent cultures in the market.
White & Case (Berlin, Bratislava, Brussels, Budapest, Dresden, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Helsinki, Istanbul, London, Milan, Moscow, Munich, Paris, Prague, Stockholm, Warsaw)	<b>700+</b>	In Europe for nearly 80 years and continues to flourish as one of the fastest-growing US firms in London by revenue. Has embraced innovative management, client care and HR practices. The London office has also re-organised itself internally to mirror its banking clients, going against traditional law firm models of practice area organisation. First US firm in London to take on trainees. Also very strong in the central and eastern Europe countries.
<b>The US statesman in Europe</b>		
Cleary Gottlieb (Brussels, Cologne, Frankfurt, London, Milan, Moscow, Paris and Rome)	<b>420</b>	Utterly committed to Europe and embedded root and branch. In Paris since 1949 where it assisted in the development of the Marshall Plan. Now the "elder statesman" in Brussels, it was there in the early days of the European Union. Cleary's European strategy is to be one of the top firms in its carefully chosen markets. And it is. Almost 50 per cent of its lawyers are in Europe, the majority of them non-Americans.
<b>M&amp;A powerhouse</b>		
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher and Flom (Brussels, Frankfurt, London, Moscow, Munich, Paris, Vienna)	<b>250</b>	Fuelling its growth in Europe by scouring the competition for talent and eschewing mergers, Skadden is already a mighty force. Its European strategy is driven by its M&A practice and leveraged off its US client base. It has, however, also had significant successes with European clients such as Arcelor and Daimler-Chrysler. Partner Bruce Buck's chairmanship of Chelsea FC now sees the firm gaining Russian clients.
<b>Bringing Wall Street to Europe</b>		
Sullivan & Cromwell (Frankfurt, London, Paris)	<b>110</b>	Premium Wall Street firm, its European strategy is totally driven by its clients, 50 per cent of which are non-US. And what clients they are. By benchmarking its services against the likes of Goldman Sachs and McKinsey, the firm ensures it maintains legal skills at the highest level and "client care sans pareil". Traditionally strong in international securities, its strategy propelled it into the European M&A league tables in 2005, breaking the dominance of the UK magic circle.
<b>Wave-makers</b>		
Kirkland & Ellis (London, Munich)	<b>100+</b>	Followed its US private equity clients into Europe in 2000 and began to expand its indigenous practice. Broke into the German market in Munich in 2005 with private equity star Volker Kullman from Clifford Chance. Made headlines in 2006 with its aggressive recruitment of key private equity partners from Linklaters and SJ Berwin. Has just closed a lucrative deal for Terra Firma, a former SJ Berwin client. Its commitment to the London market is shown by the fact that it now takes on trainees into this office.
<b>The marrying kind</b>		
Dechert (Brussels, London, Luxembourg, Munich, Paris)	<b>200+</b>	Seemingly fully recovered from a rocky start after the 2000 merger with Titmuss Sainer & Webb, its recent figures have shown a 30 per cent growth in the past two years. This now puts it into the top 10 most profitable US firms in London last year. Branched out into Munich and Luxembourg post-merger and expanded its Brussels and Paris offices with partners from now defunct law firm Coudert. Adopts innovative approaches to CSR and lawyer remuneration.
Mayer, Brown, Rowe & Maw (Berlin, Brussels, Cologne, Frankfurt, London, Paris)	<b>570</b>	After the 2001 mergers with Lambert & Lee and Gaedertz in France and Germany and the 2002 London merger with Rowe & Maw, it is one of the fastest growing US firms in London. It recently formed alliances in Spain, Italy and eastern Europe. In 2006, Europe generated 25 per cent of the firm's turnover. Recently completed a strategic review that sets out aggressive targets to grow London's corporate and finance practices.
Reed Smith, Richards Butler (Birmingham, London, Munich, Paris and Piraeus)	<b>340</b>	Relatively unknown US firm that exported its "aggressive" US growth strategy to Europe in the 2007 Richards Butler merger. Is reporting a smooth bedding down and meeting of budgetary targets, with an eye to move into the upper mid-market ranks in London, as well as to enhance the Paris and Munich offices.
<b>Newcomers</b>		
Cohen, Milstein, Hausfeld & Toll (London)	<b>4</b>	This leading US class action plaintiff law firm opened its first European office in London in May, provoking heated debate in the UK legal fraternity as to whether the UK has the appetite for this style of litigation. Anticipating a rash of claims arising from the EC's encouragement of private enforcement actions, the firm has opened with two senior competition lawyers, including the former senior director of enforcement at the OFT, to focus in the short term on cartel and securities cases.
Heller Ehrman (London)	<b>16</b>	After building its US platform and carefully observing the do's and don'ts of US firms in Europe, it made the jump into London in March 2007. It is carefully cultivating its core practices, particularly in the corporate technology and hospitality industries. Has already completed its first initial public offering on the London Stock Exchange for Autonomy, with another one in the pipeline.
<b>Market drivers</b>		
Sidley Austin (Brussels, Frankfurt, Geneva, London)	<b>150</b>	One of the top 10 most profitable US firms in London. Its steady growth in Europe is fuelled by structured finance and securitisation work in London and a new office in Frankfurt (opened in 2006). This very focused practice does competition work in Brussels and has a strong niche WTO practice in Geneva. In 2006, it broke unconventional ground in the covered bonds market, transplanting European technology into the US. It was the only firm to act for the issuers, representing Washington Mutual Bank in September 2006 and Bank of America shortly thereafter in April 2007.
<b>Sure-footed</b>		
LeBoeuf, Lamb, Greene & MacRae (Brussels, London, Paris)	<b>150+</b>	The Europe operation continues to grow in its focus industries of energy and insurance. London is particularly strong through astute lateral hires at partner level to now number 35, including several leaders in their field. Turnover has grown steadily to £35.9m. A focused and steady strategy from 1995 is paying off.
<b>Left-fielders</b>		
Greenberg Traurig (Amsterdam, Zurich)	<b>70</b>	A firm run on corporate lines with "shareholders", not partners, and a powerful CEO - "businessmen who practise law". With offices in Amsterdam and Zurich only, it has a close alliance with Olswang in London, with which it shares "cultural similarities" and a focus on TMT (technology, media and telecoms), corporate, litigation and real estate. Self-promoting innovators and entrepreneurs, the firm is expanding its Amsterdam office through its "management chaos" theory. Highly averse to mergers, it is growing at a rate to make competitors' eyes water. Equally eye-watering is the money the firm has had to pay out to settle claims against "rogue" partners.