

Corporate promotions on the rise across LatAm

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Just under half of the Latin American promotions reported to Latin Lawyer last month involved corporate lawyers as regional GDP growth recovers.



Christiano Rehder, Joana Liu, Felipe Hanszmann, Edmundo Varas and Tomás Quirós Jimenez

In Brazil, Lefosse Advogados and Vieira Rezende Advogados both promoted corporate lawyers. Lefosse's Christiano Rehder, 35, who joined the firm in 2011, boosts the firm's corporate and capital markets practice. Rehder spent three years as in-house counsel at Swiss duty-free retailer Dufry before joining Lefosse.

At Vieira Rezende Advogados, Felipe Hanszmann, 35, made partner after 13 years at the firm. Alongside corporate matters, he also practises arbitration and litigation and has advised on regulatory matters before the Brazilian Securities and Exchange Commission. Vieira Rezende now lists 19 partners on its website.

Not all Brazilian promotions involved corporate attorneys last month. Lefosse also promoted a tax and wealth planning lawyer. Joana Liu, 38, who joined 13 years ago as an associate, focuses her practice on structuring compensation and planning foreign estate, succession and pre-immigration matters. Lefosse now counts 26 partners.

Three of May's 15 promotions were at Brazilian firms. Despite political uncertainty ahead of October's general elections, most local firms are bullish about the country's economic prospects and promotions have increased. In the first trimester of 2018, 14 Latin Lawyer 250-listed firms reported 56 partner promotions in Brazil. That compares to six firms making 21 promotions during the same period in 2017.

Firms in Spanish-speaking Latin America have also made corporate partner appointments. Chile's Morales & Besa promoted corporate lawyer Edmundo Varas, 39, to partner after 11 years as an associate. Since 2007, Varas has also been the firm's pro bono programme coordinator, earning him various internal awards for his efforts.

In Costa Rica, regional firm Central Law promoted Tomás Quirós Jimenez, 28, who is the youngest promotion in May's roundup. He brings experience leading complex transactions in the telecoms, hospitality and banking and finance sectors.



Lauren Bennett, Ralph Perez, Catalina Pinilla Lozano, Eamon Nolan and Juan Carlos Riesco

International firm Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP also strengthened its Latin American corporate practice by promoting two associates to counsel. Lauren Bennett, 35, was promoted in São Paulo along with Ralph Perez, 35, in Chicago.

Since the start of the year, 21% of the promotions reported by *Latin Lawyer* have been in corporate law. That figure stands at 25% for lateral hires. Last month, 40% of the promotions covered by *Latin Lawyer* involved corporate lawyers.

The IMF forecasts better GDP growth in 2018 for much of Latin America, with Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay all predicted to grow between 3.2% and 5.6%. This is significantly better than last year, when only Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay and Uruguay grew more than 3%. GDP growth is also more promising for the likes of Brazil and Ecuador, which were in recession as recently as 2016.

Promotions involving transactional law extended to banking and finance. Colombia's Dentons Cardenas & Cardenas appointed Catalina Pinilla Lozano, 38, as its newest banking and finance partner. Lozano joined the firm in 2009 as a senior associate. She also practises restructuring law.

At Linklaters' New York office, counsel Eamon Nolan, 38, was promoted to partner. His practice covers Latin American and US financing products, including project, fund, and acquisition transactions.

Two firms promoted disputes-focused lawyers in May. In Chile, Carey made Juan Carlos Riesco, 37, partner. He will now co-head the firm's litigation and arbitration practice alongside Gonzalo Fernández, Ricardo Revecó and Aldo Molinari. His legal know-how extends to antitrust and regulatory affairs.

CMS Law in Colombia also boasts a new disputes co-head. Carolina Arenas, who joined the firm in 2012, will help steer the practice, balancing it with her role as commercial head. She has been secretary of four arbitrations brought before the Centre of Arbitration and Conciliation at the Bogotá chamber of commerce. Her promotion is one of 47 new partner promotions made by CMS globally.

CMS also promoted four lawyers in Peru. Giancarlo Villafranqui boosts its energy and infrastructure practice; Paola Carbajal strengthens its environmental practice; Ramón Huapaya enhances its public law and regulated affairs practice; and Franco Soria bolsters its real estate area. All four partners will be based in Lima.