



# london overview



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## MCGUIREWOODS: LONDON

McGuireWoods is a 900-lawyer firm with offices in 18 locations worldwide, including Brussels; London; New York; Washington, D.C.; Los Angeles; and Chicago.

The London office operates as McGuireWoods London LLP (formerly Grundberg Mocatta Rakison LLP). It is a City-based office that distinguishes itself from its London competitors by offering a partner-led service and international focus.

The London office deals with large and complex transactions, whilst offering a more personal approach – consistent teams serving clients on a continuing basis; an emphasis on in-depth quality; and in particular, a dedication to devising solutions to meet clients’ business objectives.

Our London lawyers have substantial experience in international and domestic corporate and business law, corporate finance, private equity, banking, property, employment law, litigation, dispute resolution, and in advising private clients – enhanced by a strong tax department focused on private and corporate tax matters.

## PRACTICE AREAS

- Corporate, Securities & Financial Services
- Litigation & Dispute Resolution
- Employment
- Tax, Structuring & Private Client
- Insolvency
- Property
- Competition

## Corporate, Securities & Financial Services

The firm is regarded for its work in the areas of corporate finance and securities (AIM listings, IPOs and placings), private equity and venture capital, bank financing and mergers and acquisitions. We provide a broad range of services for corporate and business clients, including intellectual property, information technology, outsourcing distribution, licensing and franchising, corporate tax, employment, EU and competition law. The firm has experience dealing with managing projects and coordinating transactions involving other advisers such as accountants, actuaries and environmental specialists, as well as through our well-established contacts with foreign lawyers in international transactions.

## Litigation & Dispute Resolution

The firm’s litigation and dispute resolution services relate to disputes, including arbitration over commercial contracts, shareholder and complex high value cross-border disputes, including freezing order remedies and global asset trace and seizure, international trade, intellectual property, product liability, insurance and reinsurance, property, landlord and tenant, building and construction, professional negligence, employment and private client.

The depth of our experience, varied jurisdictional practices and linguistic skills enable us to offer clients clear guidance through court processes and ADR procedures, together with strategic advice on achieving client’s desired outcomes.

## Employment

Employment law is an expanding and increasingly complex area, affecting every aspect of the employment relationship from recruitment to termination and beyond. Significant changes under European Union and domestic laws have introduced new concepts to English law, requiring constant change in the workplace. The London employment team reinforces McGuireWoods’ proven track record of dealing with cross-border interests, transactions and disputes, providing high quality, quick, reliable and commercial English employment law advice.

The team has substantial experience acting for employers and workers equally, dealing with all aspects of contentious (in the High Court, County Courts and Employment Tribunals) and non-contentious, including tax-related advice, representing companies and partnerships, employees and consultants. The employment team works closely with the corporate group assisting in commercial transactions, as well as with the tax department in offering taxation advice for employers and employees.

## Tax, Structuring & Private Client

The London office is adviser to private client entrepreneurs from both the corporate and private perspective, including private clients and their trusts, domestically and internationally, particularly relating to non-domiciliaries. Our advice includes estate and dynasty planning, the creation and administration of trusts, foundations and personal holding companies. We also advise on the creation and operation of non-profit and charitable foundations and on helping clients establish family offices.



On the personal side, we advise on prenuptial and postnuptial agreements, assist in all aspects of marital dissolutions, prepare wills, and assist in the administration of UK and multijurisdictional estates.

Our structuring team can advise on international corporate structures for closely held multijurisdictional businesses, particularly for holding structures and international royalty schemes.

The London tax team advises on personal tax planning, international tax, planning for arriving in and leaving the UK, HM Revenue & Customs negotiations, inheritance tax, capital gains tax, business structuring in the UK, taxation of owner-managed businesses, corporate taxation and property taxation. We also help individuals optimise their tax positions with regard to residence and domiciles.

### **Insolvency**

The London insolvency team is a cross-departmental practice group drawn from the office's corporate, litigation, employment and property departments. The team enjoys excellent relations with a range of accountancy and insolvency practices, not only in London, but also in Continental Europe and other parts of the world outside the United States.

The team advises clients on the following aspects of insolvency: refinancing, corporate restructuring, administration, insolvency litigation, debt recovery and enforcement, insolvent and solvent liquidations, bankruptcies, administrative and LPA receiverships, directors' disqualification proceedings, individual and company voluntary arrangements, business and asset sales by insolvent companies, directors' duties, landlord and tenant and preferences and transactions at an undervalue.

### **Property**

The firm's property team handles all aspects of property law, including residential and commercial transactions of all sizes, representing investors and developers as well as corporate and private clients, institutional investors and pension funds. We also handle property finance, property litigation (commercial and residential), contractual disputes (domestic and cross border), as well as property aspects related to corporate transactions and insolvency.

### **Competition**

The London competition law team is also a cross-departmental practice group drawn from the office's corporate and litigation departments. The team works closely with the firm's Brussels office on EU competition matters focusing on Articles 81 and 82 of the EC Treaty. In addition, where antitrust advice is required in a range of international and cross-border transactions outside

the United States, we work with the network of international legal contacts that we have established over several years.

An increasing number of transactions, commercial agreements and business arrangements have become subject to a whole host of competition and antitrust regulation. In the UK, this includes not only dealing with the Office of Fair Trading, but also includes considering the EU regulations, and in the case of utilities, the requirements of government appointed regulators.

We advise clients on merger control (including notification thresholds and obligations to notify transactions), licensing and distribution agreements and arrangements (including particularly prohibition on agreements that restrict competition), intellectual property, restrictive practices (including re-sale price maintenance), abuse of dominance, cartels, compliance procedures (including undertaking audits), and assist from a litigation perspective in connection therewith.

### **Cross-border**

Most lawyers in the London office have knowledge and experience of at least one jurisdiction outside the UK. In addition to qualifications as English solicitors, a number of our lawyers are qualified in China, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, New Zealand, Norway, the Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and various U.S. jurisdictions.

Professionals in the office speak 27 languages including English, Bosnian, Croatian, Danish, Finnish, French, Georgian, German, Gujarati, Hindi, Irish, Italian, Japanese, Kazakh, Kiswahili, Latvian, Mandarin, Montenegrin, Norwegian, Punjabi, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Swedish, Ukrainian, Urdu and Uzbek.

With the firm's membership of Lex Mundi and the London office's membership of OASIS, we have access to co-counsel in more than 100 countries.

Our attorneys firmwide are working on projects or cases in more than 60 countries. We have clients actively forming, investing in, acquiring, operating or selling businesses throughout the world. In the last five years, we have advised on transactions involving enterprises in every country in Europe and more than a dozen countries in Africa, Asia, Australia and the Americas.

Our clients benefit from decades of experience from our London lawyers and solicitors in all of these areas. In addition, our London lawyers have regionally focused experience assisting clients with their business in the Nordic countries, Russia and Eurasia, Eastern Europe, China, Africa and the Middle East, Spain, Portugal, South America and India.

We also assist in tax efficient cross-border structuring of multijurisdictional businesses and of intellectual property licensing operations.



## **Nordic**

For more than 30 years, our London lawyers have been at the forefront of the London legal scene when it comes to advising clients from Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark and Iceland, or clients from outside the Nordic region wanting to undertake business there.

Over the last decade, the team has grown rapidly and today consists of lawyers and tax advisors all of whom focus primarily on cross-border legal work, within our corporate and commercial, employment, litigation, private client, property or tax departments. In addition, we regularly advise on restructuring issues and generation planning in relation to family owned businesses.

## **Russia & Eurasia**

We have senior London professionals who have been active for a generation or more in multinational firms – engaged in legal services in Russia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Georgia, Latvia, Estonia, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyz Republic, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan, as well as the other newly independent states (NIS).

Several of our senior solicitors and lawyers have lived and worked in Russia and Central Asia as regional managing partners in global firms and practice groups.

We have developed contacts and associations throughout the region in the legal, accountancy, banking, finance and business communities, as well as in governmental and regulatory agencies. We have served clients throughout the volatile transition of the legal systems throughout the former Soviet Union and its successor countries. Each of our Russian and CIS lawyers has established themselves as scholars in both high quality Western and regional educational institutions.

All this has put us in a position to navigate Western clients through the intricacies of these emerging legal systems; and Russian, Kazak and CIS clients through the peculiarities of the ever dynamic Western markets.

Our experience in this region includes mergers and acquisitions; private and public equity and debt finance; upstream natural resource extraction and development; fund development, management and regulation; project finance; restructurings; privatisations; tax; commercial regulatory and legislative matters; international litigation and arbitration; and intellectual property.

Of note is our extensive experience in the energy, oil, gas, mining, technology, communications, construction and real estate sectors.

## **Eastern Europe**

We have substantial experience advising generally on all matters in Eastern Europe, with excellent contacts within top local law firms, and detailed insider knowledge of cultural nuances required in association with our local counsel.

Through the office's membership of OASIS (a lawyers organisation specialising in Eastern European contacts), and now in association with McGuireWoods Consulting's office in Romania, the London office can undertake transactions and assist in project managing matters in Eastern Europe, and in particular, the following countries: Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Slovenia.

During the last five years, transactions have included joint ventures for Western companies in Eastern Europe involved in industries including tobacco, mining and property development; a Hungarian property development project; investment in Polish property; a number of Eastern European projects have listed on AIM in London, and there have also been abortive AIM listings, including a Hungarian gold mine and an Eastern European property fund; assisting a Croatian bank on English law security documents including registrations in Cyprus and the BVI; and involvement in a number of EBRDed infrastructure projects.

## **China**

The London office offers comprehensive advice on China related matters, both inward and outward bound. Unlike other firms that are prohibited from practising Chinese law, we offer local Chinese law advice and produce opinion letters in accordance with Chinese law. We have more than 300 Chinese-qualified lawyers throughout our associated offices in Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, Chengdu and Shijiazhuang.

With these resources and our own experience in Western regions, we offer unrivalled experience to clients wishing to do business in China, as well as to Chinese companies doing cross-border business. Areas of experience include real property, mergers and acquisitions, private equity and corporate investment, intellectual property (filings and enforcement of rights), tax, finance, the establishment of wholly foreign-owned entities, the creation of joint ventures, and the conduct of litigation and arbitration.

## **Africa & the Middle East**

Offering significant experience in Africa and the Middle East, we have represented clients before the courts and the financial authorities in Qatar and the UAE; and have worked extensively in the oil and gas, manufacturing and



financial sectors throughout the region. We have also advised a leading high-end retail brand on franchise and distribution agreements in Kuwait, UAE and Saudi Arabia.

In Africa, our experience is primarily in the financial and natural resources sectors in Sub-Saharan and southern Africa. In northern Africa, our work has focused primarily on the financial and real estate and resort development sectors. We have also worked closely with several African governments, advising on anti-corruption related matters.

### **Spain, Portugal & South America**

We are actively involved in close collaboration with other prestigious law firms in Spain, Portugal and Latin America in providing high quality multijurisdictional integrated advice for corporate and commercial, commercial litigation, real estate and private clients for these areas. We have particular experience in the sectors of financial institutions, retail, hotels, energy, family business, and governmental institutions.

Differences in the legal systems between these jurisdictions and the UK and the United States directly affecting our clients' interests are explained using terminology that our clients understand.

We have advised and are advising on property development in Brazil; carbon credits derived from rain forests in Brazil and the issue of Eurobonds; securitisation of financial services in Argentina; tax advice for expatriates in Uruguay; oil exploration in Guatemala (including listing on AIM); mining in Peru; and assisting in investment for expatriates in Spanish and Portuguese property.

### **Indian Sub-Continent & South Asia**

Our first-hand knowledge of the Indian market allows us to advise and assist both Indian and multinational corporations with the seamless provision of services needed to meet the legal requirements of businesses, financial institutions and private clients. We have acted as lawyers on various types of inward and outward transactions, in a variety of areas including mergers and acquisitions, stock exchange-related transactions and IPOs, commercial agreements, joint ventures, financing, corporate structuring, intellectual property, information technology, litigation, employment law, property and tax.