

# The top 20 lawyers in Portugal for 2024

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*Iberian Lawyer* presents the top legal minds defining  
the Portuguese legal landscape in 2024

PAULA GOMES FREIRE

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by glória paiva

It is not easy to choose only 20 most prominent leaders in such a dynamic and expanding market as the Portuguese legal one at the moment.

While large international firms are establishing roots in the country, traditional major player continue to grow, and boutique law firms, highly specialized in new areas emerging every day in society and law, are multiplying. Innovation is gaining more space, as well as practice areas like TMC (technology, media, and communications), intellectual property, and even space law, which are emerging strongly. However, corporate law, public law, and other classic areas are not left behind and continue to expand in parallel.

This ranking of 20 names, curated by *Iberian Lawyer* after careful consideration, aims to highlight leaders from the most thriving sectors of the Portuguese legal market who have stood out in 2024. It is important to note that this is not a *league table*, based just on transactions, but rather a comprehensive framework based on news and available data, and on the following four criteria: track record, leadership, popularity, and career.

**Track record** refers to the main activities of which these professionals have successfully handled the legal direction in the last 12 months. In other words, their ability as rainmakers to generate substantial amounts of business within the law firm. From large operations that have changed the Portuguese footprint abroad to partnerships, projects and disputes.

**Leadership**, whether as the head of a law firm or a team, this criterion highlights their work and quality. The success of their organisation, the implementation of technology, or beneficial transformations for the firms or profession were all considered. We also valued the commitment to increased innovation or inclusion in the legal market.

**Popularity** refers to the prestige that the selected lawyers have earned during the year. Visibility has transformed these already remarkable professionals into authoritative and recognised “influencers” and trend setters.

And, last but not least, their **career**. A successful career path is the thread that connects all these lawyers listed below.

Furthermore, the key figures profiled below are grouped into four categories: **undisputed leaders, consolidators, rainmakers, and expansion drivers**.

**Undisputed leaders** are individuals who have demonstrated exceptional leadership and made a profound impact on the legal sector, both in Portugal and internationally. These professionals have not only led major transactions but have also set the standard for the entire industry.

**Consolidators** have played a key role in strengthening their firms. With strategic foresight and adaptability, they have implemented changes that foster growth and fortify their firms' positions amid new challenges in the legal market.

**Rainmakers** are outstanding business and/or revenue generators. With a strong track record, distinguished careers, and broad market recognition, these professionals are essential in driving their firms' growth and expansion.

**Expansion drivers** are those who have experienced significant career growth or have led a notable expansion of their firm over the past year. They are not only solidifying their presence in the market but also driving their firms' growth, positioning them to explore new opportunities.

To follow the protagonists of the year:

## LEGENDA:

TRACK RECORD



LEADERSHIP



POPULARITY



CAREER



# UNDISPUTED LEADERS

Lawyers who demonstrated exceptional leadership and made a profound impact on the legal sector in 2024



Managing partner at Vieira de Almeida since 2022, **Paula Gomes Freire** leads the biggest firm in revenue value in Portugal: in 2023, VdA registered €77.8 million of total revenue, a 4% growth from 2022. Under her leadership, in 2024, VdA was also distinguished as the most innovative law firm in Portugal and 14th in Europe, according to the *Financial Times'* ranking. A partner in the banking & finance practice, she has led several significant transactions, both in Portugal and abroad, boasting an inspiring leadership within the law firm and in her work field.

**NEW**

**Paula Gomes Freire**  
VIEIRA DE ALMEIDA

The managing partner at Morais Leitão since June 2024 specializes in corporate and M&A, capital markets, and finance law. This year, the firm stood out in the number of transactions in the areas of M&A, private equity, venture capital, and asset acquisitions: until November, Morais Leitão completed 30 deals with a total value of €797.66 million. Krupenski himself has been involved in several cross-border transactions and privatizations, and has had an important role in the firm's strategy in the past four years, when he acted as the firm's COO. Under his guidance, Morais Leitão, now with nearly 500 people across Europe, Africa, and Asia, continues to expand.



**NEW**

**Martim Krupenski**  
MORAIS LEITÃO



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**Inês Sequeira Mendes**  
ABREU ADVOGADOS

Managing partner at Abreu Advogados for the past three years, **Inês Sequeira Mendes** has guided the firm to remarkable growth, with a 19% increase in revenue in 2023, reaching €49.7 million. The second woman to lead Abreu, Sequeira Mendes brings a bold, innovative and strategic vision. Examples of this quest for innovation are the Abreu “Knowledge Institute” and the recent partnership with Microsoft to use Copilot with AI. She is also committed to gender equality: in 2024, Abreu has surpassed the goal of having 40% of women in management positions.

Renowned for his expertise in advising on complex transactions both in Portugal and internationally, the PLMJ’s managing partner is also a partner in the banking and finance and capital markets practices. Under his leadership, PLMJ achieved two significant integrations in 2024: RRP Advogados and Sofia Galvão Advogados, which collectively brought 38 new lawyers to the firm, strengthening its real estate and urban planning teams. Additionally, PLMJ ranked second this year in terms of the most valuable deals across M&A, private equity, venture capital, and asset acquisitions, with 32 operations totaling €1.9 billion, until November 2024.



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**Bruno Ferreira**  
PLMJ



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**Nuno Sá Carvalho**  
CUATRECASAS

Managing partner at Cuatrecasas Portugal since 2022, **Nuno Sá Carvalho** leads high-value deals involving hotels, shopping centers, and offices, supported by the firm's 15-member real estate and town planning practice, which he founded. Under his leadership, Cuatrecasas ranked as the leading law firm in Portugal by transaction value in M&A, private equity, venture capital, and asset acquisitions in 2024, with 29 transactions totaling €1.8 billion, until November. Carvalho’s broad experience supports the firm’s expansion, having advised various government, public, and private institutions.

# CONSOLIDATORS

Lawyers who played a key role in strengthening their firms, fostering growth and fortifying their organizations' positions



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**José Luís Arnaut**  
CMS LEGAL

The managing partner at CMS Legal also serves on the executive committee of the firm, which is the sixth-largest European law firm. He leads the TMC, intellectual property, life sciences, and healthcare teams. In addition, Arnaut holds significant positions, including membership on the international advisory board of Goldman Sachs, chairman of Aeroportos de Portugal, and others. Under his leadership, CMS has seen significant growth in Portugal this year, with investments in Lusophone Africa and involvement in notable transactions, such as the acquisition of Bluecharge by Helexia Portugal.

Managing partner at Gómez-Acebo & Pombo since 2018, **Mafalda Barreto** is recognized as a top M&A and banking and finance practitioner, having led the main transactions of the Lisbon office. Gómez-Acebo & Pombo has achieved consistent organic growth in the last few years. Barreto also represents a leadership in gender equality: in the last months, the Lisbon office welcomed three distinguished female partners: **Filipa Cotta**, **Madalena Caldeira**, and **Ana Luísa Guimarães**, each a specialist in a vital sector — litigation and restructuring, labour law, and public law respectively.



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**Mafalda Barreto**  
GÓMEZ-ACEBO & POMBO



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**Marcos Sousa Monteiro**  
LINKLATERS

**NEW**

Country managing partner at Linklaters in Lisbon in 2023, **Marcos Sousa Monteiro** also leads the corporate practice, overseeing major transactions in recent years. Among these, the sale in 2022 that involved several banks and sellers transferring the Crow portfolio to a private equity fund, mostly owned by Davidson Kempner. With three transactions totaling 420 million, Linklaters Lisbon reached 5th place in the TTR ranking of legal advisors in private equity by total transaction value, up to November 2024.



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**Octávio Castelo Paulo**  
SRS LEGAL

**Octávio Castelo Paulo**, along with **César Sá Esteves**, have been the managing partners of SRS Legal since November 2023. Under their leadership, the firm achieved a revenue of €16.8 million in 2023, reflecting consistent growth in recent years. With over 25 years of experience in domestic and cross-border corporate transactions, he is recognized as a top-tier expert in his field and also heads the Angola Desk. In 2024, the firm played a key advisory role in major operations, such as advising Morningstar DBRS on assigning an investment rating to the Dragon Notes bond issue, a subsidiary of FC Porto SAD.



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**João Miranda de Sousa**  
GARRIGUES

**NEW**

Partner in charge of the Garrigues offices in Portugal, **João Miranda de Sousa** is also head of Garrigues' worldwide Intellectual Property practice. Sousa is a leading lawyer, both in advising and defending businesses in industrial property, copyright and related rights and unfair competition disputes. One of the biggest law firms in Europe, with more than 2,000 professionals, Garrigues has been gaining increasing relevance in the Portuguese market, taking part in complex deals and standing out in matters of tax, corporate, M&A and sustainability.

# RAINMAKERS

Lawyers with distinguished careers and recognition for their outstanding business and/or revenue generation skills



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**Diogo Perestrelo**  
PLMJ

With over 30 years of experience, **Diogo Perestrelo**, partner and co-head of the corporate M&A practice at PLMJ, is one of the most distinguished corporate and M&A lawyers in Portugal. According to TTR Data, as of November, he ranked first among individual dealmakers in terms of deal value, with six transactions totaling €999.80 million. Notably, he led operations like the sale of OYAK's 60% stake in Cimpor to Taiwan Cement in March. Perestrelo is admitted to practice law in both Portugal and Brazil.

NEW

Partner at Cuatrecasas Portugal, **Mariana Norton dos Reis**, is a prominent legal expert specializing in cross-border M&A transactions across various sectors. Practicing in both Portuguese and Spanish law, she has built a reputation for excellence. According to TTR Data, she ranked second among individual dealmakers in terms of deal value in 2024, with six transactions totaling €900 million, until November. She was part of the team that advised Partners Group on acquiring stakes in FairJourney Biologics. As the founder of Cuatrecasas' Women in Business program, she also advocates for gender diversity.



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**Mariana Norton dos Reis**  
CUATRECASAS

NEW





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Managing partner at DLA Piper in Portugal, **Nuno Azevedo Neves** is also head of the corporate M&A and finance and projects departments. With over 25 years' experience, he is one of the most experienced lawyers in the financial sector and is recognised for his remarkable track record of acting as lead partner on many major M&A transactions and cross-border deals and privatizations. Neves was ranked among the main dealmakers of 2024 according to TTR Data until November, being in charge of two relevant deals valued 326.2 million euros, including the acquisition of Vision-Box by Amadeus.

**NEW**

**Nuno Azevedo Neves**  
DLA PIPER IN PORTUGAL

The managing partner at CCA Law Firm, **Domingos Cruz** also leads corporate/M&A operations, providing legal support to domestic and foreign companies and startups. In 2024, Cruz was the dealmaker lawyer who handled the highest number of transactions in his area of practice in Portugal: until November, he was involved in 19 transactions, totaling €107.8 million, maintaining the top spot on this list, according to TTR Data. Cruz has steered the firm towards the adoption of emerging technologies and expansion into international markets, notably opening an office in Shanghai.



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**NEW**

**Domingos Cruz**  
CCA LAW FIRM



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**Magda Cocco**, partner at Vieira de Almeida, leads the Information, Communication and Technology practice, the Digital Frontiers practice, and the firm's aerospace sector. Recognized as one of Portugal's foremost TMT lawyers, she is a key figure in innovative technological projects and the electronic communications industry, with extensive experience spanning Europe and Africa. In 2024, Magda directed multidisciplinary teams on ICT and space sector projects, transactions, and legislative drafting, offering strategic guidance to governments, corporations, and regulatory entities.

**NEW**

**Magda Cocco**  
VIEIRA DE ALMEIDA

# EXPANSION DRIVERS

Lawyers who experienced significant career growth or led a notable expansion of their firm over the past year



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**Diogo Xavier da Cunha**  
MIRANDA & ASSOCIADOS

Managing partner at Miranda & Associados for nearly a decade, **Diogo Xavier da Cunha** has been steering the firm through a period of solid expansion. In 2024, Miranda relocated its Lisbon headquarters to the renowned ALLO Building, a move designed to meet the firm's current and future needs. The firm also refreshed its branding and logos for both Miranda and the Miranda Alliance, a key pillar of the firm's strategy, an international network of law firms operating across 16 jurisdictions in Africa and Asia. Miranda Alliance has been enhancing the firm's prominence on the international stage.

The managing partner at Sérvulo & Associados, **Manuel Magalhães** specializes in the finance and governance department. Together with founding partner **José Manuel Sérvulo Correia**, the board plays a crucial role in shaping the firm's leadership and strategic direction. While Correia remains a cornerstone of the firm's legacy, Magalhães oversees its current operations and growth. This year marks Sérvulo's 25th anniversary, a milestone that coincides with the firm's continued expansion. Through initiatives like Sérvulo Latitude, the firm is strengthening alliances in strategic regions such as Lusophone Africa and Brazil.



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**Manuel Magalhães**  
SÉRVULO & ASSOCIADOS



**18**



**Nuno Cerejeira Namora**  
CEREJEIRA NAMORA MARINHO FALCÃO

Founding partner of Cerejeira Namora Marinho Falcão, **Nuno Cerejeira Namora** is specialized in labor law. He is one of the founders of the Law Academy, and is also connected to various professional, research, and educational associations and institutions. Cerejeira, a firm originally from Porto and frequently awarded for its work in public law, employment, and litigation, was involved in several significant transactions in the Portuguese legal market in the past year. Among them, the firm advised the Porto Municipality in negotiations with various trade unions representing the Municipality's workforce.

The newly appointed managing partner at Pérez-Llorca in Portugal since its opening in Portugal, **Gonçalo Capela Godinho** specializes in mergers and acquisitions in various sectors, particularly energy and infrastructure. In the past year, the firm has welcomed no fewer than 10 partners in Lisbon. With more than 20 years of experience in the Brazilian, Portuguese, UK and US markets, Godinho has been playing an important role at Pérez-Llorca's international project, being part of the firm's LatAm Desk as well, and participating in several international and cross-border projects.



**19**



**Gonçalo Capela Godinho**  
PÉREZ-LLORCA



**20**



**NEW**

**Ivone Rocha**  
TELLES

**Ivone Rocha**, partner at Telles and head of the environment and energy practices, is increasingly recognized as a leading specialist in the market. Over the past year, under her leadership, Telles' energy team has advised a range of stakeholders on energy, natural resources, public policies, governance and compliance matters. Ivone offers legal services to both public and private entities, with a particular focus on developing renewable energy projects. A recognized leader in her sectors, she also serves as president of the Sustainable Growth Platform.

## THE PROTAGONISTS OF 2024

### Indisputed leaders

1. Paula Gomes Freire - Vieira de Almeida **(NEW)**
2. Martim Krupenski - Morais Leitão **(NEW)**
3. Inês Sequeira Mendes - Abreu Advogados
4. Bruno Ferreira - PLMJ
5. Nuno Sá Carvalho - Cuatrecasas

### Consolidators

6. José Luís Arnaut - CMS Legal
7. Mafalda Barreto - Gómez-Acebo & Pombo
8. Marcos Sousa Monteiro - Linklaters **(NEW)**
9. Octávio Castelo Paulo - SRS Legal
10. João Miranda de Sousa - Garrigues **(NEW)**

### Rainmakers

11. Diogo Perestrelo - PLMJ **(NEW)**
12. Mariana Norton dos Reis - Cuatrecasas **(NEW)**
13. Nuno Azevedo Neves - DLA Piper **(NEW)**
14. Domingos Cruz - CCA Law Firm **(NEW)**
15. Magda Cocco - Vieira de Almeida **(NEW)**

### Expansion drivers

16. Diogo Xavier da Cunha - Miranda & Associados
17. Manuel Magalhães - Sérvulo & Associados
18. Nuno Cerejeira Namora - Cerejeira Namora Marinho Falcão
19. Gonçalo Capela Godinho - Pérez-Llorca
20. Ivone Rocha - Telles **(NEW)**

