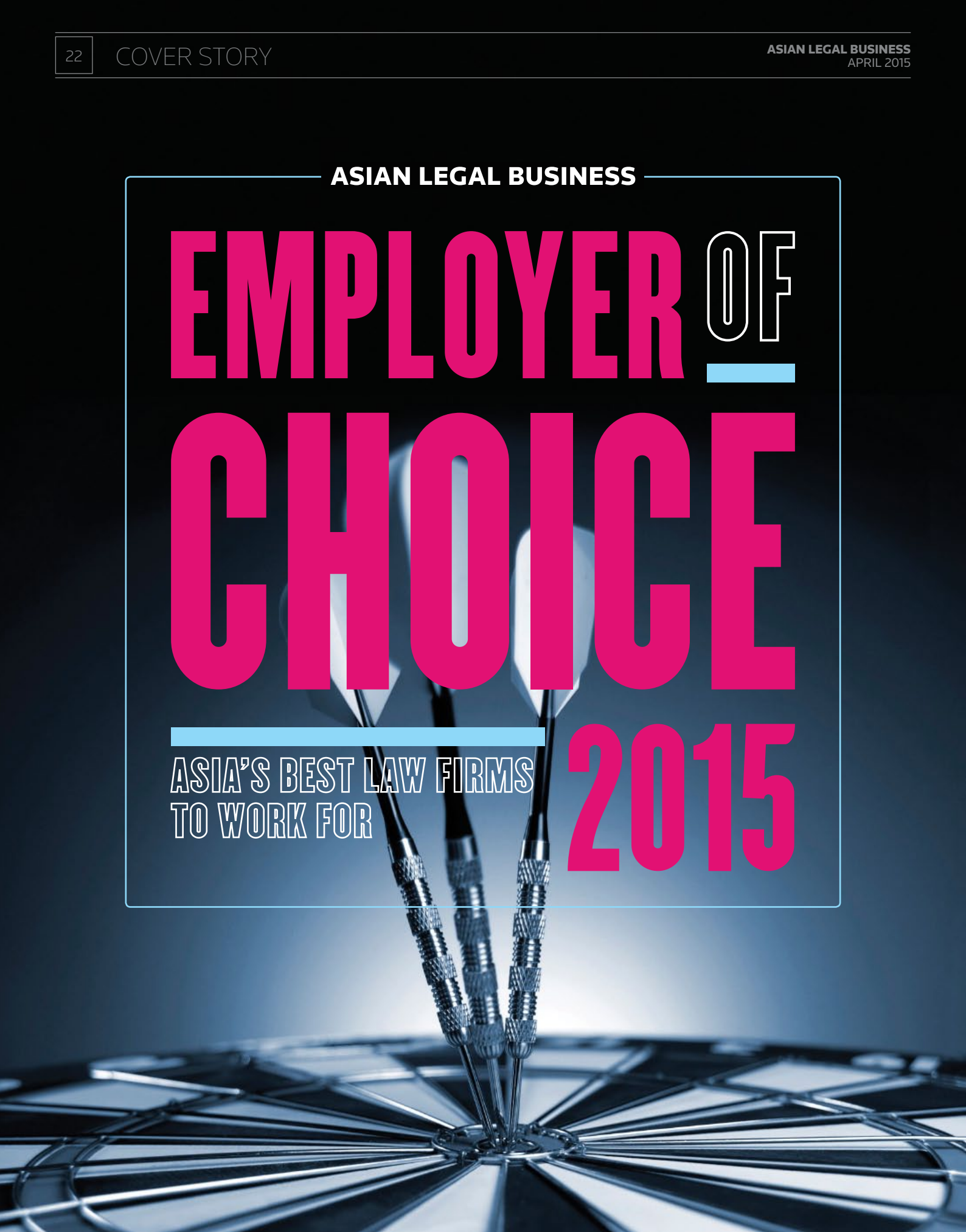


ASIAN LEGAL BUSINESS

A close-up photograph of three darts hitting the bullseye of a dartboard. The darts are silver with black barrels and are positioned vertically, with their tips pointing towards the center of the board. The dartboard has a grid of segments, and the bullseye is the central point where all three darts have landed. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue.

# EMPLOYER OF CHOICE ASIA'S BEST LAW FIRMS TO WORK FOR 2015

## METHODOLOGY

The ALB Employer of Choice Rankings were compiled taking into account responses from thousands of law firm employees across Asia, ranging from managing partners to support staff, as well as our own market knowledge.

The survey was open in the months of February and March, and law firms have been ranked on the basis of job satisfaction, remuneration, work-life balance, career prospects, mentorship, job security and other aspects, with respondents being asked to submit their inputs/responses anonymously to help maintain fairness and objectivity. Law firms have been listed in alphabetical order.

One number sums up how lawyers across Asia feel about the firms they work for – 97 percent. That is the proportion of the nearly 3,000 respondents to ALB’s Employer of Choice survey for 2015 who either profess to being “extremely satisfied” or “satisfied with their jobs, the highest figure since ALB began conducting this survey. When asked to describe the reasons behind their job satisfaction, respondents offer a variety of perspectives. “The firm has a very supportive environment, where the entire team works together, encouraging young associates to take an active role and produce work that then receives constructive feedback from the seniors,” says an associate in South Korea. “The management is very keen to hear the associates’ concerns and is very responsive.” Meanwhile, an associate in Indonesia praises the “reasonable amount of work which lets me focus on every task I am given, and a great working environment which enables clear communication between employees, resulting in cooperation between one another. The balance of work and fun also reduces pressure and stress.” Adds an associate in India: “Seniors and peers are very helpful. It makes for a very good learning environment.”

When it comes to salaries, though, the reaction is slightly less euphoric. About 37 percent of respondents feel their earnings are in line with the market, and only about 56 percent consider themselves better paid than their peers elsewhere in the industry. One associate in Malaysia reckons it is an “estimated 7-8 percent below peers in Malaysia in terms of basic salary, with a maximum cap for non-partners, irrespective of salary. Additionally, the medical benefits are low and narrow.” Says an associate in South Korea: “Compared to the people working in the same field, my job appears to be more demanding and the amount of work needed to be done every day is more, with relatively less salary.” But a partner in the same country believes that salary numbers

shouldn’t be the only yardstick. “One of our competitors is known to pay better,” they say. “But while the general compensation structure of the firm may lower in terms of figures, this does not take into account the fringe benefits.”

Salary structure and overall salary transparency at firms, however, is lauded, with more than 91 percent of respondents terming it either “excellent” or “good.” An associate at a law firm in Indonesia sums it up: “The office maintains a no-favoritism principles when leveraging remuneration, and remuneration is given based on performance,” they say. “We have twice-a-year evaluations of our performance and are given feedback on what we excel in and what we are not developing.” Notes an associate in India: “Standard payment brackets across the board ensure employees feel they are getting their due as per preset policies, and not as per the whims of some.”

Equally, opportunities for training and professional development are highly regarded, with more than half the respondents terming them “very good.” However, lawyers believe that there is always scope for improvement in this regard. “Secondments to clients and the offices of foreign law firm offices should be permitted and encouraged to help lawyers build their network and industry experience,” says an associate in Malaysia. “The reason that secondments don’t take place is due to fear of ‘losing’ employees. Becoming a better employer is surely a better method of retaining talent as opposed to limiting employees ability to experience a different environment.” Similarly, a partner in India calls for “more training opportunities for everybody that can help in the overall growth of their professional careers. It can be for improvements in their technical skills as well as soft skills like communications, interactions with clients and so on.”

When it comes to opportunities to receive mentoring, nearly 94 percent of the respondents are satisfied at the very least. “We have one-on-one formal mentoring program for

all junior associates, easy, informal mentorships for midlevel and senior associates, and lots of support for women,” says an associate at an international firm in Hong Kong. But it’s not the same across all firms. “The responsibility of ensuring you receive the right mentoring really rests on the mentee,” says an associate in India. “Although one can get really lucky at times when working with the right senior who can adequately provide feedback, encourage and get involved.” Similarly, nearly 60 percent of the respondents believe the path to partnership in their law firm is “very transparent.” And more than 81 percent say that their firm is “very collaborative.” “The firm’s organization is extremely collaborative, and all staff are free to initiate collaboration, subject to the interest, ability, and availability of others,” says a respondent from Taiwan.

As for work-life balance, more than 91 percent find it adequate at the very least. “While it is well known that lawyers have long hours at work, our firm has a policy of encouraging the lawyers to leave the office by 9PM at the latest,” says an associate in Indonesia. And more than 60 percent of the lawyers feel “extremely valued” by their firm. “I was recently chosen to do a six-month secondment at a reputed international law firm,” says a counsel in India. “This was a very expensive investment for the firm and I felt really valued. Also, recently I was provided an opportunity to speak at an International panel discussion in Hong Kong.”

That said, high marks don’t always mean there’s no room for improvement. Even respondents that are happy and satisfied in their current roles feel there are areas where firms can do better. The list includes gender equality, fair evaluations of job performance, and more investments in resources, particularly staff. But generally respondents are happy where they are: More than 80 percent would “definitely” or “probably” see themselves in the same firm in five years’ time, while three-quarters would “wholeheartedly” recommend it to a friend. **ALB**

## CHINA

AllBright Law Offices  
 Chance Bridge Partners  
 Global Law Office  
 Guangda Law Firm  
 Han Kun Law Offices  
 Hengdu Law Offices  
 Jilin Gongcheng Law Firm  
 JunHe  
 Solton & Partners  
 Sunshine Law Firm

In China, the job satisfaction rate stands at more than 98 percent. For nearly two-thirds of the respondents, remuneration is at least above market standard, and more than 93 percent believe the salary structure and transparency is "good" or "excellent." More than 97 percent appreciate the opportunities for training and professional development at their firm and an almost equally proportion positively rate opportunities to receive mentoring. Transparency when it comes to the path to partnership, and collaboration within the team also receive high accolades and work-life balance stands at "excellent" or "good" for about 94 percent of respondents. Additionally, with 71 percent feeling "extremely valued" in the firm and an 87 percent job security rating, it is no surprise that 83 percent see themselves "definitely" or "probably" at the same firm in five years' time.

Among the ranked firms, respondents from **AllBright Law Offices**, respondents count "teamwork, strong sense of professionalism of colleagues and recognition of clients" as the firm's strong points. At **Global Law Office**, a partner praises the "supportive team, sharing culture, and nice, family-like atmosphere." A partner at **Guangda Law Firm** lauds the "work atmosphere and collaboration between teams and within the firm." According to an of counsel at **Han Kun Law Offices**, "the people of our firm are all very nice and the management is quite proactive." For an associate at **Jilin Gongcheng Law Firm**, the draw is the "competitive salaries for the region, an impressive promotion system, and flexible, employee-friendly working hours." **JunHe** is hailed by a partner as "a wonderful law firm providing excellent opportunities for lawyers to grow." An associate at **Solton & Partners**

says that the "work environment is very good, my colleagues are likely my friends, and the partners are very hands-on. Overall, it provides a good platform." And for a counsel at **Sunshine Law Firm**, "the senior lawyers and the dedicated team create a great atmosphere."

According to Ning Zhu, managing partner of **Chance Bridge Partners**, the firm's approach to acquiring and retaining the



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best talent differs from other firms in the market in three ways. "The first is precise positioning: Chance Bridge Partners is committed to providing comprehensive legal advice to its clients. This makes us different from other law firms and is key to attracting highly skilled employees who take pride in their work," she says. "Second is international insight: Our clients have different cultural backgrounds so

we embrace different ways of thinking and looking at things. This allows us to bring in people with different backgrounds and perspectives. And third, there is team building. We are committed to making sure that our everyone on our team, especially our younger lawyers, are given opportunities to grow as lawyers and feel like they are part of the Chance Bridge family."

Similarly, there is a two-fold secret to en-



sureing happy, engaged employees, according to Zhu. "First, there needs to be a team with exceptional professional abilities. This ensures that our employees are constantly gaining skills and experience. It also helps keep them enthusiastic about their work and opportunities," she says. "Second, a normative management system with humanized implementation. This allows us to ensure that our firm can work in an efficient, orga-

nized and professional manner while still giving our employees sufficient flexibility."

**Hengdu Law Offices** has "a very sophisticated operation and remuneration system, which motivates employees to participate in their work with all their hearts," says managing partner Jiang Fengtao. "What Hengdu has been offering is not only a job, but also a way to create the bright future."

Jiang adds: "Hengdu encourages each

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single employee to develop his own features and expertise, cares about the employees' needs, offers guidance for their career development, and helps them to pursue social value."

## HONG KONG

Baker & McKenzie

Clyde & Co

Deacons

Paul Hastings

Skadden, Arps, Slate,  
Meagher & Flom

Job satisfaction levels run in Hong Kong (96 percent) and it comes on the back of solid professional development (93 percent) and mentoring (89 percent) opportunities. While the path to partnership is only "somewhat transparent" for the majority, 70 percent find their firm "very collaborative" nearly 93 percent consider the work-life balance at their firms as "good" or "excellent." More than half feel "extremely valued" by their firms, and 74 percent consider their jobs secure.

At the Hong Kong office of **Baker & McKenzie**, a partner points out that "good recognition, career prospects, guidance and

training provide a relatively free-hand working environment focused more on substance rather than form." A counsel at **Clyde & Co** lauds the "very professional colleagues and good opportunities for advancement; [and] good quality of work projects." At **Deacons**, an associate notes that the "working environment encourages interaction, the partners are supportive and the colleagues are friendly." Meanwhile, a partner at **Paul Hastings** praises the "great place to work, top notch clients requiring sophisticated work, motivated colleagues, and good collegial atmosphere." And a consultant at **Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom** notes the "good pay, great co-workers and good exposure to the most challenging deals."

## INDIA

Amarchand & Mangaldas &  
Suresh A Shroff & Co  
(Mumbai Region)

Anand and Anand

Khaitan & Co.

Trilegal

With a 97 percent job satisfaction in rate, it is a pretty good time to work as a lawyer with one of India's commercial law firms. While salaries remain stable – about half the re-

spondents say they are paid in line with the market – but opportunities for training and professional development are appreciated by about 93 percent of the respondents, with the corresponding figure for mentoring opportunities being about 88 percent. The path to partnership could be more transparent, say our respondents, but nearly 72 percent of the respondents consider their firm to be "very collaborative." More than 86 percent like the work-life balance in their firm, and nearly half say they feel "extremely valued." With two-thirds com feeling secure in their jobs, it is not surprising that 64 percent would recommend their firm "wholeheartedly."

"Very transparent, great values, great people, best clients, mutual respect and integrity, the best law firm in India, good work-life balance" is how a partner at the **Mumbai offices of Amarchand & Mangaldas & Suresh A Shroff & Co** describes their firm. For an associate at **Khaitan & Co.**, "our firm provides opportunity to all members to excel in what area of law one practices. There is a great scope of growth for an individual within the firm." And at **Trilegal**, an associate says that "there is a work-life balance to a large extent, there is recognition of work, and it is an excellent environment to work in. The firm has been everything I had hoped for."

According to Pravin Anand, managing partner of **Anand and Anand**, lawyers confess that although quality, volume and challenge of navigating cutting edge intellectual property issues makes the firm a destination of choice, the reason they stay and return

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- 为公司和私人客户提供全方位的法律服务。
- 我们始终如一为客户提供优质、高效和定制的法律服务，帮助我们的客户实现他们的目标。
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- \*知识产权
- \*公司商业
- \*刑事诉讼业务





from sabbaticals is the trust reposed in them by the senior partnership towards their individual matters. “Younger associates at the firm feel especially enthused with the prospects and freedom to work on intellectual property issues in fields as diverse as pharmaceuticals and arts & antiquities,” he

says. “I also believe that entrusting younger members with a degree of ownership, allowing them to freely ideate and bring their own solutions to the table, is the key to making the journey of the employee with the firm more meaningful. The culture of collaboration through easy and relaxed interpersonal

relationships, as well as an accessible and responsive senior partnership, has quickly risen to become a key factor of employee satisfaction at the firm. Moreover, employees also cite their ability to retain their individuality as a reason they would recommend the firm to others.”



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 **TRILEGAL**



## INDONESIA

Assegaf Hamzah & Partners  
Budidjaja & Associates  
Hanafiah Ponggawa & Partners

Job satisfaction levels of 91 percent in Indonesia come on the back of opportunities for training and professional development (96 percent) and to receive mentoring. And while the path to partnership is not very transparent for a significant chunk, more than 70 percent of respondents find their firm “very collaborative.” Knowledge management is also solid for more than 90 percent, and 89 percent appreciate the work life balance their firm offers. With nearly half the respondents feeling “extremely valued” and job security at more than 72 percent, it is no surprise that 83 percent “definitely” or “probably” see themselves in the same firm in five years’ time.

**Assegaf Hamzah & Partners** boasts a “good work environment, no boundaries between lawyers and non-lawyers, and easy going partners,” according to an associate. And an associate at **Hanafiah Ponggawa & Partners** says: “I love my working environment and the partners are very generous to all associates and staff. The workload is quite reasonable.”

At **Budidjaja & Associates**, principal and managing partner Tony Budidjaja says besides professional development activities, the firm engages the well-being of its employees by holding social activities at least once a week to help employees get to know each other in a more personal level, holding sporting activities at least once a week to keep employees stay in shape, holding other big events for employees and their family members to create a sense of belonging and family atmosphere within the firm. “Lawyers and staff members feel that they’re a part of a B&A family,” he says. “We all work together as a team to accomplish tasks. There is no stratum among lawyers and staff members, which makes us a very close-knit team working in a family environment.”

## JAPAN

Atsumi & Sakai

An underwhelming year for responses from Japan meant a small sample size, but it was the only country with a 100 percent job satisfaction rate among the respondents. Within this relatively small group, **Atsumi & Sakai** emerged as the runaway sole winner. “I am able to do a variety of challenging work in a relaxed atmosphere,” says a partner.

## KOREA

Bae, Kim & Lee  
Kim & Chang  
Yulchon

Outside of China, Korea provided the largest number of responses to the Employer of Choice survey, showing just how enthusiastic the country’s lawyers are, and how passionate they are about the firm they work for. Job satisfaction was at about 97 percent, and it was the only market where the majority of lawyers (74 percent) felt they were paid at above the market standard. Salary structure is also thought to be transparent (95 percent), as are opportunities for training and professional development (96 percent) and opportunities to receive mentoring in the firm (94 percent). Near 70 percent of the respondents believe that the path to partnership is very transparent, and nearly 85 percent believe the firm is very collaborative. Work-life balance is good or excellent for 93 percent, and nearly 70 percent feel “extremely valued” – to go with 75 percent job security. A whopping 82 percent would recommend their firm unreservedly.

According to Sky Yang, partner at **Bae, Kim & Lee**, the firm believes that its people are its greatest assets. “BKL consistently strives to recruit top notch professionals

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for both entry level and experienced attorney positions," he says. "In addition to our competitive benefits packages BKL provides effective training, mentoring, and opportunities for professional development. Also, our transparent, ongoing performance evaluation system provides useful feedback for continuous improvement and helps to maintain high quality standards.

He adds that BKL offers a great work atmosphere by fostering mutual trust based on clear communication and transparency. "Our firm culture cultivates close relationships and our teams generally eat lunch together," Yang says. "There are clear expectations and ongoing coaching and mentoring. Furthermore, BKL encourages corporate social responsibility through diverse pro-bono

activities and our experts and employees make contributions in various regions of the country. Such valuable experiences make our members feel proud of our firm and our commitment to society."

Speaking about **Yulchon's** approach to acquiring and retaining the best talent, Doil Son, partner with the firm says that it places its foremost priority on recruiting, reward-



Bae, Kim & Lee LLC offers comprehensive services for businesses and investors in Korea. A firm of over 500 professionals, BKL is able to deliver swift, focused advice in every area of commercial interest for our multinational clientele.

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ing and retaining top talents. “Yulchon is the only law firm in Korea with a recruiting program specially targeting graduates of law schools located outside of the Seoul Metropolitan Area for the purpose of helping those law schools to increase their competitiveness as well as discovering the best talents from all parts of the country,” he says. “Yulchon also operates ‘Yulchon Academy,’ an in-house continuing education center that provides career development programs, language training programs, various professional and general liberal arts courses as well as short-term and long-term study abroad programs for Yulchon employees.”

According to Son, Yulchon’s founding philosophy, as signified in its firm name that literally translates to “law village,” underscores the collective value of talented individuals. “That philosophy is an integral part of the firm’s culture even to date,” he adds. “Yulchon members feel engaged through open communication by weekly internal newsletter sent by the chairman, annual firm-wide offsite activities, and periodic in-person gatherings by practice group.”

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Jong Hyun Park, senior attorney at **Kim & Chang** says that the belief that the lawyers work with the industry's top experts and partners instills pride and drives employee performance. "The firm also tries to bring talents from different backgrounds and allows them to work in an environment that endorses opposing ideas, and emphasizes both teamwork and the development of

each individual's potential," he says. "The belief that each employee could grow into the industry's top professional and earn the respect of clients through team work also keeps our employees engaged and committed in the work they do. Aside from their client work, attorneys are also given various opportunities for community services and industry discussions by participating in pro

bono activities."

Park adds the firm tries to make its workplace attractive to its attorneys by giving them new development opportunities and offering various training programs. "We believe that the best way to attract and retain the best talent is to maintain our status as the top firm and we do that by providing the best possible service to our clients," he says.

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- 2014 Litigation Law Firm of the Year - *ALB Korea Law Awards*
- 2002-2014 GCR 100: One of the Top Law Firms in the World in the Practice of Competition Law - *Global Competition Review*

Attorneys at Law  
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## MALAYSIA

Azmi & Associates

Tay & Partners

Wong & Partners

While job satisfaction is at 94 percent for respondents from Malaysia, one area that firms can work on their remuneration, with three-quarters believing their salary is at or below the market standard. Opportunities for professional development seem particularly good (93 percent, collaboration and knowledge management rate highly, while work-life balance is rated by 88 percent as “good” or better.

**Azmi & Associates** is lauded for providing “adequate space and [the right] environment for me to live my passion as commercial lawyer,” according to a counsel. An as-

sociate from **Tay & Partners** says the firm “practices work life balance: Despite the workload, employees are encouraged to pace themselves.” And at **Wong & Partners**, an associate praises the “great learning opportunities, great exposure to regional and international clientele, excellent working environment and well trained support staff.”

## PHILIPPINES

Quisumbing Torres

Romulo Mabanta Buenaventura  
Sayoc & De Los Angeles

SyCip Salazar Hernandez  
& Gatmaitan

The Philippines boasts a 100 percent job satisfaction rate, and more than half of

the respondents describe themselves as “extremely satisfied.” The lawyers are also well-paid, with three-quarters describing their pay as above the market standard. Nearly all the respondents say that they are happy with the opportunities for both professional development as well as receiving mentoring, along with the collaboration in their law firms. Firms generally value their employees and job security is high. More than 60 percent of the respondents “definitely” see themselves in the same firm in five years’ time.

According to an associate, **Quisumbing Torres** “empowers its associates to excel and develop professionally. The firm invests in a lot of support services for professional and business development.” At **Romulo Mabanta Buenaventura Sayoc & De Los Angeles**, “the firm continues to implement fair and honest policies regarding work and administration, which policies I’ve observed to be superior to the market,” says a partner. And at **SyCip Salazar Hernandez & Gatmaitan**, an associate says “the work is challenging and I have good colleagues.”

# SE ASIA LAW AWARDS 2015

28<sup>TH</sup> MAY  
SINGAPORE

## NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN

Asian Legal Business is proud to announce that the nominations for the 11<sup>th</sup> annual SE Asia Law Awards are now open.

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# SINGAPORE

Baker & McKenzie.Wong & Leow

Duane Morris & Selvam

Drew & Napier

RHTLaw Taylor Wessing

Rodyk & Davidson

In Singapore, one of Asia's more mature markets, job satisfaction generally still remains high, with only 6 percent describing themselves as less than satisfied with their work. Salaries are generally stable for the majority of respondents, and opportunities for training and professional development – as well as receiving mentoring – remain solid. While the path to partnership could be made clearer by some firms, more than 60 percent find their firms "very collaborative"

and work-life balance is considered "excellent" for almost a quarter. Nearly two-thirds of respondents consider themselves secure in their jobs and more than 60 percent "definitely" or "probably" see themselves in the same firm in five years' time.

At Baker & McKenzie.Wong & Leow, an associate praises the "good range of work, good training and support network, partners and senior associates willing to teach,

open door policy, little regimentation and nurturing environment." At Duane Morris & Selvam, "the environment is conducive and the staff are very friendly and accommodating towards the newcomers." A partner at RHTLaw Taylor Wessing says that "the infrastructure enables me to focus on my work, which is the end product that the client hugely appreciates." And an associate at Rodyk & Davidson praises "the good and fair



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Asian Legal Business 2008, 2009, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015

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bosses, relatively balanced working hours, and good working environment with helpful colleagues.”

Blossom Hing, a director at **Drew & Napier** says that the firm invests enormous energy and resources into training and mentoring. “Our senior lawyers, most of whom joined our firm as trainees, have a wealth of experience to impart and are personally committed to guiding our young lawyers and ensuring that they have successful careers,” she says. “We also take great care when selecting our trainees and have had wonderful and talented people join us. Our efforts have developed lawyers who are at the top of the profession and this has helped attract positive and passionate people to the firm.”

Speaking about the secret to engaged employees, Hing notes that the firm is strong because of its people. “We treat our people with respect and have a family culture with an ‘open door’ policy,” she adds. “People like to come to work when they feel they are part of a team.”

## TAIWAN

Winkler Partners

Taiwan, much like Japan, suffers from a small sample size, but within that, job sat-

isfaction is 100 percent salaries are above the market standard for about two-thirds, and work-life balance is good for close to 92 percent. **Winkler Partners** is the notable firm from there, with a counsel calling it “quite simply the healthiest, most enjoyable place I have ever worked. Since coming to work at Winkler Partners, friends and family have commented on how much happier and content I am.”

## THAILAND

Baker & McKenzie  
Tilleke & Gibbins  
Weerawong Chinnavat  
& Peangpanor

In Thailand, job satisfaction is at more than 97 percent, with more than half calling themselves “extremely satisfied.” Nearly half of all Thai respondents are also paid above the market standard, and most are happy with the salary structure. Opportunities for training (92 percent) and mentoring (97 percent) are praised, although firms could work on making the path to partnership more transparent. Work-life balance is at “good” or better for 93 percent, more than half feel “extremely valued” in the firm, and three-

quarters are secure in their jobs; Thailand is not called the “Land of Smiles” for nothing.

Among the ranked firms, **Baker & McKenzie** boasts “good work, good boss, good colleagues and good benefits,” according to an associate. And at **Tilleke & Gibbins**, says an associate, “my firm has a good work-life balance that leads to strong relationships with partners and other colleagues and high productivity. Most importantly, the firm strongly supports the lawyers who want to enhance their training and education.”

Talking about **Weerawong Chinnavat & Peangpanor’s** approach to acquiring and retaining the best talent, Chinnavat Chinsangaram, executive partner, says that WC&P has a clear set of cultural values that differentiates it from other firms in the market. “We emphasize, among other factors, a politics free, transparent work environment without power plays, which motivates lawyers in terms of assignments, rewards and career path,” he says. Adding that happy, engaged employees require challenging work, appropriate recognition, fair rewards and a clear career path, he notes that “WC&P lawyers build their capabilities by being entrusted with challenging assignments, including some of the highest profile matters in the region. They are expected to perform to the highest level of their ability, with the confidence that their efforts will be recognized and rewarded fairly. Our lawyers also know the steps and performance required to proceed toward his or her own professional goals.”

## VIETNAM

LNT & Partners  
Phuoc & Partners  
Rajah & Tann LCT Lawyers

Job satisfaction is at a healthy 96 percent in Vietnam, with more than a quarter calling themselves “extremely satisfied.” Remuneration is at the market standard for just about half of the respondents, and most seem satisfied by the salary structure of their firms. Opportunities to receive mentoring in the firm is rated as generally satisfactory, as are opportunities for training and professional development, although nearly

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half the respondents consider the path to partnership as “somewhat transparent.” Work-life balance is “good” or “excellent” for 93 percent, with more than 56 percent feeling “extremely valued” and job security at 77 percent. More than three-quarters “definitely” or “probably” see themselves at the same firm in five years’ time.

Firms receiving high marks from their employees in Vietnam are **LNT & Partners**, which has “a perfect working environment for juniors like me, for the reason that associates and partners here are very open to sharing their know-how,” says a consultant. “Furthermore, I have the opportunity to be involved in practical matters, which rarely occurs in other law firms.” At **Phuoc & Partners** “I have the chance to do what I love, decide on what assignments I want to take, and most importantly, I have the support of my partners and co-workers,” according to one associate. And **Rajah & Tann LCT Lawyers**, a consultant says, provides a “competitive and professional environment with a variety of clients and a lot of challenges and opportunities to learn more.”

## THE BEST OF THE WORST

Feedback from some extremely dissatisfied respondents

*“The work-life balance is very poor... I am in the office from 8AM to midnight, but receive no appreciation. I am valued by the firm in the same way a slave owner appreciates his slaves... The only reason I think my job is somewhat secure is that no other fool would do this.” - From a local firm in Singapore*

*“Below market salary, poor quality of work, lack of team spirit, low morale amongst associates, bonus system changed mid-year without consultation...” - From an international firm in Hong Kong*

*“Partners tend to pigeonhole associates’ development, not allowing them to work*

*on a variety of work (as promised when they gave the offer). HR policies are the worst among major law firms.” - From a local firm in Hong Kong*

*“My work is not challenging enough, and my supervisor does not give any thoughts to my career progression. I feel underemployed.” - From an international firm in Vietnam*

*“Progression is uncertain, hours are bad and it is very political. Bonus is unfairly given depending on favoritism.... One way [my firm] could improve is by not sending random emails focusing on punctuality and dressing.” - From a local firm in Singapore*

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