



# Global In-house Market Report and Salary Guide

**2025-2026**



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# Introduction



MRA Search is a boutique international legal search firm. We work with a broad variety of corporates, from listed multinationals to start-up and growth businesses, building their legal functions at all levels of seniority, as well as the vast majority of the leading US and UK law firms, placing associates and partners.

Launched in 2009, we have grown to around 60 consultants with offices in Dubai, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt, Hong Kong, London, Melbourne, Munich, New York, Singapore and Sydney, and designated international teams recruiting across Europe, the Middle East, Asia, the USA and offshore.

MRA Search is a business that cares about its people. We are genuinely committed to the careers of the candidates we work with, and client service is at the heart of everything we do.

We proudly work in partnership with our clients, building long term relationships so we can add much more to a recruitment process than simply providing CVs. We do the same with candidates to be able to truly represent them in the market and advise them fully on their career goals.

## Our In-house team

Our in-house team operates at the very top of the market. We have built a reputation for delivering excellence to our clients across financial services and commerce and industry (from start-ups through to FTSEs), growing their legal, governance and compliance teams globally.

We regularly advise clients on their long-term recruitment strategy, from hiring their first in-house lawyer and building out a legal function, to senior hires including General Counsel at both group and regional level.

We have a strong foothold internationally, with in-house specialist recruiters across each of our offices in London, Hong Kong and Germany.

We couple this with an ability to run searches in jurisdictions where we do not have an on-the-ground presence, ensuring that we can offer a seamless service to clients, helping grow their legal functions globally.

In this guide we focus on the in-house legal recruitment market, current trends and challenges, as well as providing an insight into current in-house salary structures.

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# Market update UK



## **How does the UK market look, and how much activity has there been recently? Has anything significant changed over the last year (2025)?**

The current market for in-house legal positions is a mixed picture, and that was the case for most of 2025. The market is neither super busy, nor very slow, but instead sits somewhere in the middle. Periodically, we experience short spikes of activity in job flow for 3-6 weeks as an example, and then it will quieten down again. For those looking to move within or into the in-house legal market, it can be a frustrating time. This has been particularly noticeable at the senior end, at which level there has been very little movement. Due to companies restructuring and budget restraints, we are seeing businesses seeking more junior candidates in General Counsel positions, meaning there is a pool of experienced candidates without a home to go to. Across the board, whilst some will obviously get lucky from a timing perspective, for many the search can be a prolonged one, requiring both patience and persistence. The jobs will always come around, but it can sometimes take a fair length of time to secure the right position. Looking at sectors and/or skillsets in most demand, we are continuing to see companies seeking commercial contracts/technology lawyers, across multiple sectors. Approximately 35% of the placements we made in 2025 were of lawyers with this skillset. On top of this, the allied specialist skillset of data privacy has continued to be one that is regularly sought. Other areas of demand over the last year included corporate (in various guises, from corporate real estate to corporate governance) and finance, particularly leveraged finance. Less frequently but still coming up from time to time have been practice areas such as real estate, litigation and competition.

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# Contact us

If you would like to discuss the contents of this report or the UK in-house market in more detail, please do not hesitate to get in touch with our team.



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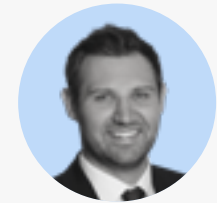


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# In-house salary overview Europe



(Base) salary data below is based on our candidate database, recent instructions and searches from Q4/2024 to Q1/2026, and numerous client and candidate conversations and interviews.

We have set out approximate salary ranges for in-house counsel. The main differentiators for in-house salaries in Europe are (i) industry sector, and (ii) location/region. All European legal markets have their own dynamics and salaries vary from country to country. In this guide, we focus on Switzerland, Germany and the BeNeLux region. Of course, we are happy to provide further information on salary structures in other regions (Nordics, CEE, Southern Europe, France) upon request.

We have kept the levels intentionally broad. This reflects the reality of the market – salaries are not specifically pinned to a class year in the same way as they are in private practice. PQE tends to be more of an approximate guide to the required level of experience than it is in private practice. As you'd expect, within the ranges we have provided, there are lots of variables affecting where you fall within that range. As well as industry sector, these can also include the size and maturity of the company, the type of work, and the other elements of the remuneration package. We are very happy to discuss remuneration packages and provide bespoke guidance on what is and isn't a realistic expectation.

As regards bonus, again, this can really vary. As a very rough guide, across the European market in its entirety, a bonus in the region of 10-20% is what you'd expect to see most commonly. However, bonuses can in some instances be in single figures (or in a minority of cases, zero – not every company has a bonus). Equally, it is not at all unusual to see bonuses higher than this, or sometimes

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# Contact us

If you would like to discuss the contents of this report or the European in-house market in more detail, please do not hesitate to get in touch with our team.

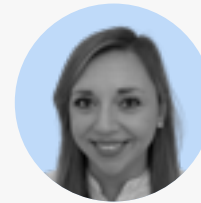


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# In-house salary overview Hong Kong



## Commerce and Industry

Role level	Salary range in HKD (base salary)
Entry level/newly-qualified in-house positions	350,000 to 650,000
Legal Counsel	650,000 to 1,000,000
Senior Legal Counsel	840,000 to 1,440,000
Head of Legal/Legal Director	1,200,000 to 2,000,000
General Counsel	≥1,900,000

## Financial Services / Professional Services

Role level	Salary range in HKD (base salary)
Entry level/newly-qualified in-house positions	400,000 to 765,000
Legal Counsel	700,000 to 1,500,000
Senior Legal Counsel	1,200,000 to 1,900,000
Head of Legal/Legal Director	1,320,000 to 2,300,000
General Counsel	>2,300,000

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# Contact us

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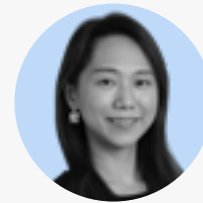


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