



The Law Society
of England and Wales

Take a global view

Join the Law Society's International Division



international
opportunities



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About the International Division

The International Division is a service provided by the Law Society to help its members develop their international business and build global relationships and profile.

Why join?

This service provides law firms and legal practitioners with the contacts, tools and information they need to do business internationally. Globalisation has generated many exciting opportunities for lawyers and law firms, but establishing contacts, obtaining market intelligence and developing the ability to promote yourself abroad are necessary to convert this potential into success. This is where the International Division can help. The International Division is designed to supplement and support your international strategy and provides practical help and assistance to progress the development of your legal business in the international marketplace.

Our members

The International Division caters for firms and businesses of all sizes, areas of specialisation and geographical focus and location. Although many large City-based firms are members, we have also attracted members from smaller, specialist practices with a particular international focus. We have members from all over the world, all of whom are interested in developing their business and their skills in an international context.

The International Division signed up its hundredth corporate member in June 2009. The continued growth and diversification of our membership body underlines the importance law firms place on developing their international practices, even during a global recession, as firms of all sizes become increasingly interested and aware of the benefits of raising their international profile.

“Allen & Overy is a member of a wide range of bars, law societies and legal organisations around the world. No other organisation which we belong to offers a more comprehensive service in relation to developments in the global market for legal services and the evolution of the legal environment in jurisdictions around the world where we do business. The International Division offers a unique service which we greatly value”

Stephen Denyer, Global Markets Partner, Allen & Overy LLP





Highlights from 2009

Where did we go?

In 2009 we ran trade missions to Nigeria, Ukraine, Qatar and China. We also took a delegation of lawyers to the International Bar Association conference in Madrid and arranged a variety of networking opportunities and informative roundtables in addition to the standard conference programme. Trade missions are an excellent way of gaining in-depth market intelligence and making key contacts. We also held seminars in Boston and New York targeting US companies and law firms doing business in the UK. Seminars were co-organised with local lawyers in Turkey and in Croatia where we worked with the Croatian Bar Association on a seminar exploring the opportunities and challenges offered by European Union accession.

International training programmes

In 2009 the Commercial Lawyers' Training Programme, originally held in Dubai only, was rolled out in Abu Dhabi and Doha. The course covers corporate, commercial and finance law, and professional skills training. Following the success of this initiative we also launched a pilot training scheme in Moscow which covered similar topics.

Networking and events in the UK

In 2009 we were conscious of the budgetary constraints which faced many of our members and therefore much of our activity focused on providing cost-effective and targeted networking events and seminars to help our members reach the right contacts and to provide insights into key markets and topics.

The new membership year began with our International Marketplace conference. Lawyers travelled to London from over 25 different jurisdictions to participate in the conference and over 400 people came to our first anniversary party. We discussed topics including the global economic outlook for 2009 and the opportunities provided by key emerging markets, as well as looking at the business development tools and techniques which are fundamental to doing business across borders. The 2009/10 conference will develop these themes and consider future excellence and innovation in international legal practice and business.

We followed up on the success of our 2008 inward trade mission of Indian lawyers with a UK-India legal practice conference in London and additional activities in Birmingham and Manchester. This initiative enabled firms from the UK and India to forge new and stronger business alliances whilst also finding out more about the opportunities available in their respective countries.

In 2009 we also hosted inward visits by Nigerian and Chinese lawyers with programmes which included meetings in London, Liverpool and Bristol.

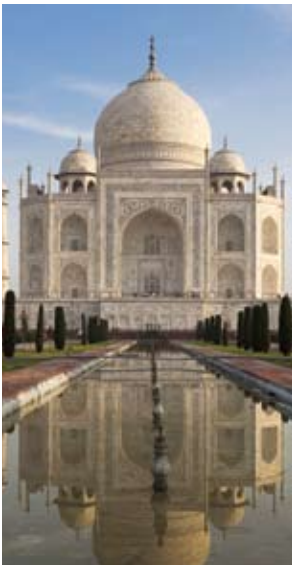


The Law Society
of England and Wales

“We have found our membership of the International Division invaluable. In our first few months of membership the International Division facilitated our meeting a number of Indian firms, from which we were able to identify referral contacts. This saved us a huge amount of research and due diligence time, which we would have otherwise had to undertake.”

**Christopher Seaton, Chair of the International Committee,
Burgess Salmon LLP**

We also developed a series of International Division seminars and roundtables designed to highlight the growing opportunities that the dynamic emerging economies present for business, trade and the legal profession. Examples include:



- A ‘Think China in Yorkshire’ seminar held in Sheffield with a focus on Intellectual Property (IP) developments
- A roundtable on the business opportunities in Kazakhstan
- A networking reception with Brazilian lawyers and businesses
- An event to mark the launch of our market report on Ukraine and to highlight the business development opportunities which exist in this market
- A Latin America networking breakfast with presentations from Mexican, Argentine and Brazilian lawyers on their legal services markets
- Africa fighting the downturn: opportunities and challenges for lawyers in an emerging continent.

We did not neglect more established markets. We held an event focussing on the impact of proposed French legal services reforms, organised a UK-Spanish Comparative Law conference in London and also hosted a networking lunch and series of seminars for a delegation of senior Japanese lawyers.

Communications - new developments

Over the past year we have experimented with different ways of communicating and networking. We have embraced the world of social media by building our networks through LinkedIn and keeping people up-to-date with our activities via our Twitter account. We have also established a monthly informal networking event called *First Wednesdays* - these take place on the first Wednesday of every month and are designed to introduce International Division members to their fellow members and to the team behind the International Division in a relaxed and informal setting.



Consultancy and business development opportunities

Services offered to our members included:

- Introductory meetings with new corporate members - to learn more about their businesses and feed this into our plans and priorities
- Advice and support throughout the membership year including regular catch-ups
- Business consultancy advice - examples in 2009 included detailed consultations on firm market expansion plans in India, the Gulf and Africa
- The opportunity to meet lawyers and in-house counsel visiting the UK
- Speaking opportunities - recent examples of speaking slots provided for members include an opportunity for a European law expert to speak at a conference in Croatia; a civil litigation speaking opportunity in London; a speaking opportunity in India for a tax lawyer; a speaking opportunity for an IP practitioner to a group of senior Japanese lawyers; speaking opportunities for lawyers to discuss cross-border legal work from an Italian perspective
- The opportunity to host lawyers and influential officials at meetings, seminars and other events, e.g. from China, India, the US, France, Korea, the Netherlands and Italy
- The opportunity to get involved with working groups and committees such as our Islamic finance group and our sectoral initiatives
- 2009 saw the Law Society step in to help law firms run internship and secondment programmes that were threatened by new immigration rules by launching a scheme for migrant lawyers under Tier 5 of the points-based system. Firms which were not headquartered in the UK but did have an International Division corporate membership were able to access this scheme and the advice and support on offer.

“We have been delighted by the help and support of the International Division of the Law Society. It is an excellent resource which has been particularly useful for us, as a specialist firm, in developing our international business and creating opportunities which otherwise might never have existed”

Hugh Gardner, Partner, Marriott Harrison



The Law Society
of England and Wales

Discounts

In addition to the minimum 10-20% discount that our members receive on International Division events, last year our members benefited from discounts on our CPD training schemes in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Doha and Moscow. We also secured special deals for our members on conferences around the world (The 2nd Annual Corporate Legal Counsel Forum in Dubai, the joint IBA/AIJA conference held in Berlin entitled: 'Advising Private Enterprises in a Globalising World', the LAWASIA conference in Vietnam) as well as a 10% discount on advertising in 'The Law Society's Directory of Solicitors and Barristers 2008/09' and a discount on sponsorship packages at the Romanian British Expo event in London.



Brussels: our services for solicitors and firms

The Law Societies' Joint Brussels office monitors developments and represents the profession in negotiations with the European institutions. They also offer a range of business services for International Division members including conferencing and hot-desking facilities, advice, study visits and placement opportunities. Examples of ways they have worked with Division members and the services they have provided in 2009 include:

International Division delegation to Brussels

A number of International Division member law firms joined chief executive Des Hudson on a delegation to Brussels. Following a discussion on key issues affecting the profession, including financial services reform, collective redress and the review of anti-money laundering provisions, the group attended a dinner with leading UK Members of the European Parliament and learned more on how to engage in the EU legislative process on behalf of clients.

"The meeting at the Society's Brussels office was a helpful summary of how we can all make better use of the Society's services and resources. It said much for the standing of the Brussels office that you were able to secure five MEPs for the dinner. It was most enjoyable and provided a good insight into the workings of the European Parliament."

Mills & Reeve



Bespoke firm visits

The Brussels office put together a bespoke visit programme for International Division members Russell Jones Walker in January 2009. Partners in the firm working in the employment, personal injury and criminal law field had a number of meetings with the European Commission in these areas followed by a dinner with key-decision makers, including a UK Member of the European Parliament.

EU Civil Justice Day 2009

October 2009 saw the fourth flagship conference to mark European Day of Civil Justice held by the Law Society. The conference showcased new legislative instruments designed to facilitate cross-border dispute resolution and also highlighted a number of key developments in the field of contract and commercial law and e-justice. A number of International Division firms took up the opportunity to be involved in the event and also benefited from a reduced conference rate.

Collective redress roundtable

Lawyers from three Division member firms attended a roundtable on collective redress held in conjunction with the Brussels office partners' bars and attended by the European Commission.

Secondments to the Brussels office

This year two Division member firms took advantage of the opportunity to place trainee solicitors on secondment to the Brussels office. This opportunity affords trainee solicitors the opportunity to broaden their horizons and return to their firm with key contacts and relevant EU know-how. Recruitment for the 2010-2011 secondments is underway.

EU legal policy work and representation

A number of International Division firms are involved with the Law Society's work on EU legislative proposals in the field of justice and home affairs. In 2008-09 Division member firms took part in a common law study visit programme for the European Commission organised by the Ministry of Justice.



International development and human rights

Our international development and human rights (IDHR) team is responsible for designing and implementing projects that support developing legal systems and professions abroad. The team also raise awareness of human rights international standards and conventions and lobby for better adherence to international law in practice. Over the past year the team have worked on projects and initiatives with International Division members. Examples of their activities include:

Human Rights Symposium

Co-organising a human rights symposium with the University of Essex - over 100 delegates attended the two day conference and many International Division members participated and benefited from a discount on the admission price.



The Law Society
of England and Wales



Tender opportunities

Working on the development of four international legal tender opportunities with Division members. The IDHR team are dedicated to providing services in bidding, supporting and securing tenders and contracts from the major international funding agencies. These contracts focus on good governance and human rights projects around the world and are delivered in partnership with a range of legal experts. They provide funding advice, project management, financial management, donor liaison and monitoring and evaluation skills.

Consultancy bids

The team sourced and made available to Division members a number of consultancy bids and opportunities including: a consultancy opportunity in the energy sector (Ukraine); a telecoms project (Africa); an airport project (Maldives); a Syria roads feasibility project; and the opportunity to work as an international consultant on court organisation in Moldova

World Bank - Doing Business 2010

International Division members were invited to participate in the World Bank/ IFC Doing Business 2010 report - law firms from around the world provided detailed information about the regulatory environment in their jurisdiction to enable analysis of the type of regulation most favourable to economic growth.

Commonwealth fellowship programme

The chief executive officers and directors from the Law Society of South Africa, the Law Society of Namibia, the Nigerian Bar Association and the East African Law Society met with several Division members whilst on a study tour as part of the Commonwealth fellowship programme, which was organised by the IDHR team.

Looking towards 2010...

Activities

We are planning to undertake market visits to a range of countries including Vietnam, Jersey, India, Japan, Korea, Nigeria, Ghana, Kazakhstan, Oman, Qatar, UAE, USA, France, China and Brazil. Participation in market visits can range from a five-day trade mission to the opportunity to attend a networking event, seminar or meeting with key regional influencers. Market visits are a useful way for firms of all sizes to promote themselves directly to potential business partners and clients whilst enabling the International Division team to gather market intelligence and develop useful contacts for the benefit of all International Division members.

In 2010 we will also attend the annual IBA conference taking place in Canada, as well as host inward delegations of lawyers from a number of countries.



Initiatives

- We will continue to run networking events, roundtables and information sessions tailored to our members' interests.
- In 2009 an international version of Lexcel was launched - the Law Society's practice management standard. We are working with the Lexcel team on the roll-out of this initiative and continue to develop products and services in response to our members' needs and priorities.
- The Brussels office will continue to work closely with International Division member firms to ensure they take full advantage of the services offered. They also intend to develop a number of online debates and seminars with leading decision makers.
- We will be working with regional and government agencies to produce a series of 'introduction to exporting legal services' events.
- We will further develop our sectoral focus: education, sports law, ICT, fashion, energy and renewables as well as continuing our work on Islamic finance.
- The IDHR team intends to offer Division members the opportunity to participate in workshops which will provide a useful introduction to bidding for projects and consultancy work.
- We will continue to expand our communications, and will be providing more market intelligence and sector analysis for our members.

Membership benefits and options

We offer a range of services catering to all individuals or organisations wishing to grow their international legal business and profile. All International Division members will receive member only communications containing information about key international opportunities as well as concessionary membership rates and discounts on a variety of products and services.

Corporate membership

Who for?

Key benefits:

For law firms and legal service providers in the UK and foreign law firms established in the UK. This level of membership provides your business with a range of services and support, offering practical advice, expertise and access to contacts to help you develop and deliver your international strategy.

- 20% reduction on International Division events and priority booking and selection
- Invitations to free networking events
- Access our conference and hot-desking facilities in Brussels and receive a 20% discount on the service
- Add your corporate profile to our membership directory - promote your expertise
- Add up to 10 names to this membership. Each of the named individuals can access the corporate benefits

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The Law Society
of England and Wales

- Take advantage of an introductory consultation meeting and advice and assistance throughout your membership year
- Advertise your events and initiatives on our website and through our member only emails
- Access sponsorship, speaking, placement and delegation hosting opportunities.

Price of annual membership: £500

Supercorporate membership

Who for?

This level of membership is aimed at the large firms in England and Wales with extensive international involvement.

Key additional benefits exclusive to International Division supercorporate members:

- In-depth bespoke consultancy services
- Add up to 100 names to this membership - each individual will be able to access the corporate membership benefits
- Participate in our annual roundtable consultation meeting - so we can develop products and services which support your business
- Priority access to select opportunities and additional sponsorship opportunities.

Due to the bespoke nature of this service we will only be able to accept up to 10 supercorporate members per membership year.

Price of annual membership: £5000

Affiliate corporate membership

Who for?

Law firms and legal service providers based outside the UK

Key benefits:

- A minimum 20% reduction on International Division networking events and priority booking and selection
- Invitations to free networking events
- Add your corporate profile to our membership directory - promote your expertise
- Add up to 5 names to this membership. Each of the named individuals can access the corporate benefits
- Advertise your events and initiatives on our website and through our member only emails
- Access sponsorship, speaking, and delegation hosting opportunities

Price of annual membership: £300



Corporate memberships for non-law firms

As a membership organisation which promotes the 'International Business of Law' we understand that there are organisations and businesses apart from law firms and legal service providers which contribute to the international legal landscape. This is why we offer trade associations, regional agencies, academic institutions, special interest groups and businesses, with an interest in international legal practice, the opportunity to join the International Division and build a relationship with us and our members.

Price range: £500 - £5000

Please contact us to discuss which package is right for your business.

Individual membership

Who for?

This level of membership is aimed at the individual looking to increase their international presence, make contacts and develop skills for international practice.

Key benefits:

- A minimum 10% reduction on International Division events
- Invitations to free networking events
- Upload your profile into our membership directory - promote yourself to an international audience.

Price of annual membership: £100*

*Residents of low income countries may be eligible for a discount on individual membership - see website for further details.

Prices correct at time of going to press: November 2009

How to join

Sign up online for individual membership at www.lawsociety.org.uk/international or e-mail internationaldivision@lawsociety.org.uk to enquire about corporate membership options.



international



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