

Legal Insights to International Business in Spain

Reviewed by

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As interaction between Spain and the business communities of Europe and the world evolves, access to accurate legal and business information on Spain becomes more and more crucial. The personal interviews which constitute *Legal Insights to International Business in Spain* were carried out to raise key issues of concern for individuals seeking an understanding of business and legal practices as they occur in today's Spain. As the title of this resource implies, it presents an overview of what actually goes on, rather than simply reiterating the laws which govern these practices.

An interview technique is used almost exclusively to procure the information in this publication. While this allows for a very hands-on perception of the various firms and institutions covered, the repetitive nature of some of the interviews add unnecessary length without lending further clarification. The fact that similar questions are asked of the 34 different law firm representatives does, however, allow the reader to compare the firms and to develop a well-rounded view of business activities.

The way in which the three sections of the book are organized emphasizes the importance of practice as opposed to legal and business codes. In Section I, by far the longest, major international law firms in Spain are presented through interviews with members at several levels. Questions range from concerns such as the specificities of arbitration, banking and insurance, consumer protection, and labor law to more general issues confronting the international business community such as cultural differences and relationships between business and bureaucracy. The interviews elicit key information concerning domestic issues as well as matters

pertinent to international involvement in the Spanish market. Each firm presents its areas of expertise, which permits the reader to study and compare alternate approaches to similar business needs.

Section II, which is quite brief, touches on official legal and business institutions in Spain (Bank of Spain, notary public, judges, etc.). The interview method which was useful above for giving personal insights serves here to make the complexities of Spanish bureaucracy more accessible. One should not, however, expect these interviews to be comprehensive reports on the structure and function of the institutions represented.

Of the three sections, Section III, where the information is organized by topics, is by far the most valuable for an overview of the issues relevant to foreign interaction in Spain's business world. The sub-headings themselves ("Choosing a Lawyer", "Political Affiliation", "Regional Differences in Legal Environment" to name but a few) supply information concerning important areas of inquiry. Although the material has been gleaned from the other two sections and reprinted here, the juxtaposition of numerous responses permits readers to draw their own conclusions.

This publication is certainly far more than a directory to be consulted in search of legal representation in Spain. It fulfills its goal to give insights about the legal ramifications of doing business in Spain and goes beyond the legal to deal with underlying practices and world-views which are vital to a comprehension of Spain's business environment. The book is available from Explore Publications, Los Angeles, CA, ISBN: 0-9630929-0-1, 392 pages.