

A photograph of a dense forest with tall, thin trees and green foliage. A bright light source, likely the sun, is visible on the left side, creating a lens flare effect. A thick, light blue curved line starts from the bottom left and sweeps upwards towards the right, partially framing the title text.

# 2024 TrustLaw Index of Pro Bono



Thomson Reuters  
Foundation

| **TrustLaw**



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# FOREWORD

Welcome to the 2024 TrustLaw Index of Pro Bono, the Thomson Reuters Foundation’s global benchmark report mapping the scale and trends of the pro bono legal sector around the world. This sixth iteration of the report marks an important milestone, as we celebrate 10 years since the first Index was launched in 2014.

This year’s edition comes at a critical moment. Around the world, a multitude of threats to our environment, our human rights, and our economies are playing out through diminishing civic space and destabilising democracies, driving an urgent and increased need for legal protections. And lawyers are rising to these global challenges: the 2024 Index tells a story of continued commitment to pro bono, with nearly 100,000 lawyers across 123 countries donating, on average, a full working week of their time and expertise to non-profits, social enterprises, small businesses, journalists and newsrooms in need.

As we mark the Index’s 10-year anniversary, we have taken the opportunity to reflect. The Index has grown significantly in size and reach since its launch in 2014, and we now see more than half of lawyers worldwide from firms reporting to the Index engaged in some form of pro bono work. The positive impact of investing in pro bono remains clear—bringing formality to pro bono and establishing incentives for lawyers to do more of this vital work drives engagement. We have seen changes, such as growing attention to certain causes (immigration and refugee rights, LGBTQ+ rights and climate change); the growing formalisation of pro bono, especially in emerging markets; and increasing attention to the ‘business case’ for pro bono. We have also seen consistent threads, such as a commitment to access to justice.

But there is still much work to be done. An estimated two-thirds of the world’s population has unmet justice needs and laws are increasingly being weaponised to silence critical voices, limit freedoms and erode human rights. Tackling this requires a global movement to truly understand the scale of need and deploy legal interventions to protect civil society, not unravel it. This is the power of the Index of Pro Bono: by providing global benchmarks on pro bono participation, the Thomson Reuters Foundation empowers the legal community with knowledge to expand support for civil society organisations, social enterprises and independent media, making the law more accessible to those who need it most.

Crucially, the findings in this report not only shine a light on the value of pro bono to those who receive it, but also the benefits of this practice to the lawyers and law firms that implement it. However, a decade of data tells us that, despite having reached a peak during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, pro bono hours and engagement appear to have generally stagnated over the last few years. While a number of factors may be influencing this plateau, including market forces and evolving pro bono needs and priorities, among others, one thing is clear: the legal sector will need to galvanize and scale its pro bono work to help tackle the growing humanitarian, environmental and democratic challenges the world is facing. If history is any indication, we are confident lawyers will rise to the occasion, and we look forward to working together to protect free, fair and informed societies.

We give immense thanks to all the firms, from Argentina to the United Arab Emirates, that took the time to submit the necessary data, without which this Index would not exist. None of this would have been possible without the tremendous dedication of our legal members.



Special thanks to Ashurst, Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner, Freshfields, Gowling WLG, Kingsley Napley, Mishcon de Reya, Norton Rose Fulbright, Reed Smith and Simmons & Simmons for their generous financial contributions, which, in part helped make this Index possible. We also want to thank the Thomson Reuters Labs team, who generously donated their time and expertise to help ensure the data and analysis we present are of the highest quality.

We hope this report will continue to serve as a reference and inspiration for all manner of legal teams that offer pro bono assistance worldwide. We thank you for your continuing support and input as we strive to create a world where pro bono can continue to grow, increasing access to law for vulnerable people and communities, and helping to drive change where it is most critically needed.

Carolina Henriquez-Schmitz  
Director, TrustLaw





## ABOUT THOMSON REUTERS FOUNDATION

The [Thomson Reuters Foundation](#) is the corporate foundation of Thomson Reuters, the global news and information services company. As an independent charity, registered in the UK and the USA, we leverage our media, legal and data-driven expertise to strengthen independent journalism, enable access to the law and promote responsible business. Through news, media development, free legal assistance and data intelligence, we aim to build free, fair and informed societies.

TrustLaw, an initiative of the Thomson Reuters Foundation, is the world's largest pro bono legal network. Working with leading law firms and corporate legal teams, we facilitate free legal support, ground-breaking legal research, and resources for non-profits and social enterprises in over 190 countries. By advancing the practice of pro bono worldwide, TrustLaw aims to increase access to law to strengthen civil society and drive change.

If you are a lawyer interested in getting involved with pro bono or you are a non-profit or social enterprise in need of legal support, you can find out more about the service [here](#) and join [TrustLaw](#) for free.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2024 TrustLaw Index of Pro Bono marks the 10th anniversary since the Index was first launched in 2014. Compiled with data received from **209 law firms in 123 jurisdictions, representing nearly 100,000 lawyers**, it provides in-depth insights into the evolving global pro bono landscape.

The responding firms provided more than **3.5 million hours of pro bono**, with lawyers dedicating an average of **35.6 hours** over the year, compared with an average of 32 hours in 2022. This is higher than the average working week in the OECD. Globally, 57 percent of lawyers engaged in pro bono and 43 percent of lawyers at firms that participated in the Index dedicated ten or more hours of their time to pro bono work.

The state of pro bono varies region to region, but overall we continue to see a strong commitment to pro bono, with a heartening rebound in average hours from 2022 from 32

to 35.6 hours. We see the sustained influence and benefits of adopting pro bono policies, committees, coordinator roles and other forms of pro bono infrastructure. Incentives that encourage lawyers to do more pro bono, from setting targets to counting pro bono hours to fee earning targets, continue to play an influential role as well.

This year, we delve into pro bono teams, staffing, relationships between pro bono and other corporate social responsibility teams within firms and pro bono budgets—with evident benefits to senior level oversight of pro bono and dedicated resources (financial and otherwise) to help the practice grow. We are pleased to find that many firms are tracking their pro bono impact and there is growing attention to factoring diversity into pro bono programmes.

Overall, the findings present a rich picture of pro bono around the globe.

## THE TRUSTLAW INDEX OF PRO BONO AT 10 YEARS

The 2024 Index of Pro Bono marks the 10th anniversary of the survey, which was first launched in 2014. To mark the occasion, this year’s report includes a dedicated section looking back over a decade of global pro bono trends.

We see that, having reached a high-water mark during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, lawyers’ average pro bono hours and engagement per year have risen from 2022 levels but not yet returned to levels seen in 2020. We highlight factors that may be influencing average hours and engagement over the years, including market forces, the ebb and flow of pro bono need, and changes in Index survey participation over time.

Over time, we can chart the rising influence of the so-called “business case” for pro bono. While desire to support the community remains at the top of the list for why firms do pro bono, we see a notable rise in other motivations, especially in relation to staff (training and skills development and retention) and clients (marketing and alignment with client interest).

To nurture a robust pro bono programme, we can derive lessons from what works over the years. In particular, we see the sustained positive influence of formalised pro bono infrastructure and incentives on hours, particularly in Large and Medium-sized Firms whose larger size tends to benefit from more cohesive coordination. As ever, the right mix of infrastructure and incentives will be particular to each team, but at an aggregated level and over time, we know doing something is better than nothing, and certain interventions (e.g. counting pro bono hours to billable targets) tend to be associated with higher hours than others.

Finally, access to justice continues to top of the list of firms’ priorities for pro bono—it has been a stalwart since the first Index in 2014 and it is expected this will continue. However, over the years, it is notable to see the focus of firms’ other pro bono efforts shifting, from early attention to certain areas like development and microfinance and education, to growing emphasis on immigration, refugee and asylum matters, climate and environment and LGBTQ+ rights—no doubt these trends reflect rising global attention, threats and shifting needs for pro bono support.

## 2024 KEY FINDINGS

### PRO BONO AND FIRM SIZE

Firms that participate in the Index are classified as Large, Medium-sized and Small, based on the number of fee earners in each category. We see that lawyers at Large Firms tend to do more pro bono compared to Small and Medium-sized Firms. This year, lawyers in Large Firms averaged **36.3 hours**, while those in Medium-sized and Small Firms averaged **16.8 hours** and **15.9 hours**, respectively.

In addition to looking across all fee earners, we also look specifically at partner engagement levels because we know this can be an important factor for pro bono adoption within firms. Partners at Large Firms averaged 21 hours of pro bono, whereas partners in Medium-sized and Small Firms averaged 8 and 9.1 hours of pro bono, respectively.

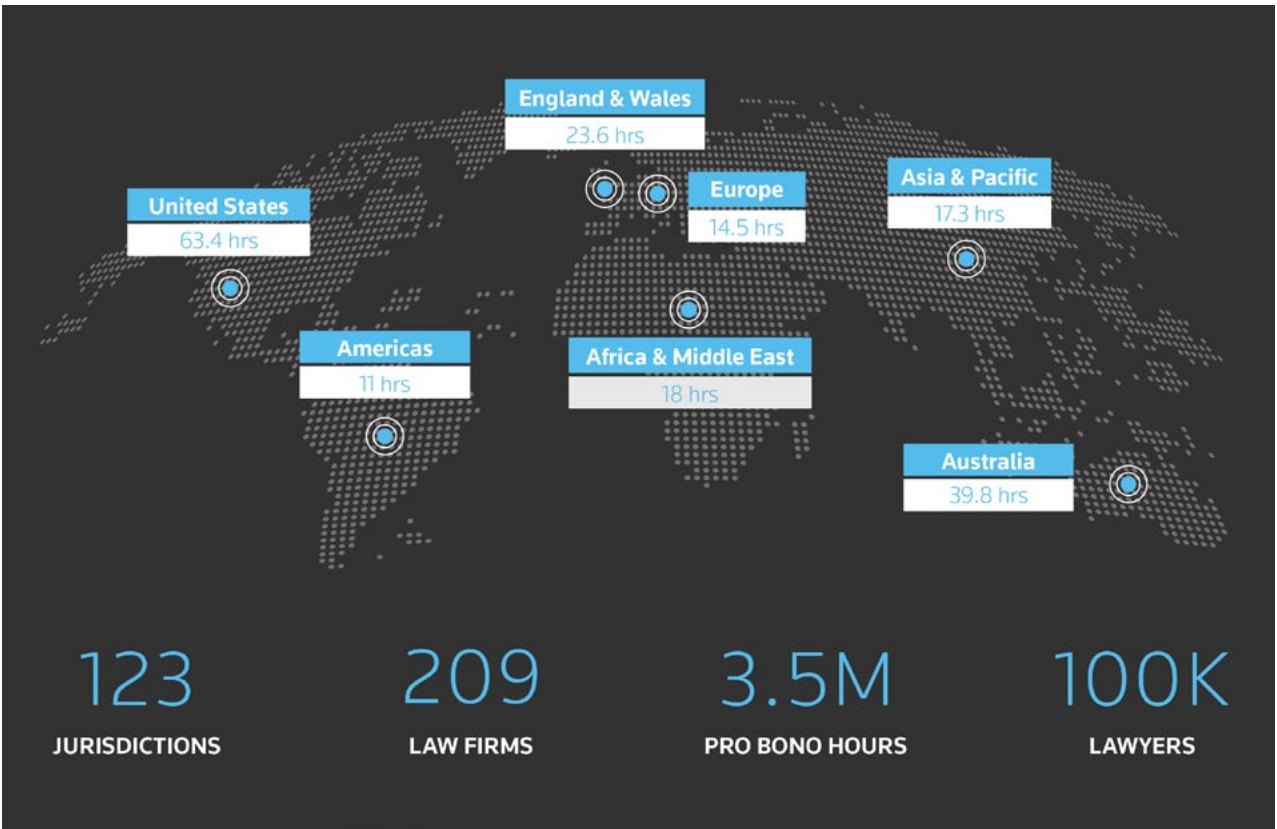
### WHY FIRMS DO PRO BONO

As in prior years, we sought to understand why firms do pro bono. Of the responding firms, 93 percent reported a **desire to support the community** as the primary reason for engaging in pro bono, which is consistent with the findings in prior Indexes. Interestingly, however, we see growing emphasis on other factors, with staff training and retention, and alignment with client interests and marketing all rising—which may reflect growing attention to the so-called “business case” for pro bono and market or client demands to show commitment to pro bono.

### PRO BONO CLIENTS, FOCUS AREAS AND SOURCES OF MATTERS

Pro bono needs vary around the globe and, in the Index, we seek to understand where firms are focusing attention when engaging in pro bono work, the main recipients of pro bono and where pro bono matters are coming from.

**Access to justice** continues to be the top priority across all firms at 65 percent, followed by immigration, refugees and asylum at 44 percent, and human rights at 37 percent. This is not surprising given the growing reality and risk of displacement, driven by conflict, climate change and other factors, and the need for legal support to defend human rights in the face of growing repression and backsliding on rights in many parts of the world. Other areas of pro





bono focus include women’s rights, LGBTQ+ rights, and environment, climate and biodiversity. This year, for the first time, we asked about ethnic/minority rights and racial justice, and nearly a quarter of firms reported prioritising this area.

Firms also told us access to justice was the top *new or growing* area of focus for the next 12 to 24 months (40 percent), followed by environment, climate and biodiversity (35 percent), and women’s rights (25 percent).

**Registered charities and non-profits** continue to be the most common pro bono clients among law firms, with 86 percent of firms offering pro bono services to these recipients, followed by social enterprises at 69 percent and individuals in need at 67 percent. For the first time, we asked about support for small businesses, as well as journalists and newsrooms and found that 54 percent offer pro bono to small businesses and 20 percent to journalists or newsrooms.

Firms most commonly offer pro bono clients legal research (87 percent) and corporate/commercial advice (84 percent). Large Firms are much more likely to support strategic litigation on a pro bono basis, compared to Small and Medium-sized Firms—not surprising, given the time and resources typically involved in mounting such actions.

Most firms source pro bono clients and matters through direct approaches (74 percent), legal clinics (58 percent), clearinghouses (54 percent) and local law societies or bar associations (52 percent). Large Firms are more likely to engage with legal clinics and clearinghouses, whereas Medium-sized and Small Firms tend to work more with local law societies and bar associations. We have seen a meaningful rise in legal clinics as a source of pro bono (up 14 percent).

PRO BONO INFRASTRUCTURE

Dedicated structures and resources are near industry standard for pro bono and help support its growth. We see that **88 percent of firms had pro bono infrastructure** (whether pro bono policies, a pro bono committee, pro bono coordinators, or some combination of those).

Policies

The adoption of a pro bono policy is increasingly common and, indeed, in this year’s Index **71 percent of firms reported having a pro bono policy**, up from 64 percent in 2022. Policies are more common among Large and Medium-sized Firms, at rates of 97 and 79 percent, respectively, compared with 37 percent of Small Firms. Fee earners at firms with a pro bono policy recorded 43 percent more average pro bono hours than fee earners at firms without a policy.

Committees

Pro bono committees also continue to be a commonly deployed, effective structure in firms. Overall, 57 percent of firms report having a pro bono committee, similar to 59 percent in 2022. Large and Medium-sized Firms more frequently use pro bono committees (76 and 83 percent, respectively) compared to Small Firms (28 percent). The presence of a pro bono committee also correlates with higher average pro bono hours. Lawyers at firms with a pro bono committee average 26 percent more pro bono hours compared to those without a committee.

Coordinators

A significant percentage of firms (83 percent) designate a person with primary responsibility to coordinate the firm’s day-to-day pro bono legal work. **Firms with a designated person coordinating the firm’s day-to-day pro bono work average almost three times more pro bono than firms without pro bono coordinator**—36.2 hours of pro bono per fee earner, while firms without such a person do 13.9 hours.

PRO BONO ROLES AND TEAMS

Dedicated pro bono staff

Building on the 2022 Index, we delved into the resources invested in firms’ pro bono staffing and teams, as well as exploring the relationship between pro bono and other CSR (or similar) teams and pro bono budgets.

Globally, **72 percent of responding firms had at least one person employed full time or part time in their pro bono practice**, up from 61 percent in 2022. Firms reported an average of 2.2 full-time employees and 1.5 part-time employees engaged in their pro bono practice. As we

would expect, there is considerable variation among firms ranging from firms with nil or one pro bono employee to a team of 22 mostly full-time pro bono staff.

There is a correlation between having a pro bono employee and the level of pro bono performed, with firms that hired at least one pro bono employee recording 20 percent more pro bono hours than those that did not. However, there is variation in the effect by firm size with the relationship being most pronounced for Large Firms: **Large Firms that hire a pro bono employee do more than five times the average pro bono hours of firms without one.**

Around half of firms (52 percent) reported that a partner was the most senior individual in charge of pro bono within the firm, with the next most common senior person being a director or counsel. We considered the seniority of individuals responsible for pro bono work within the firm to explore if designating that responsibility to someone more senior (such as a partner, head, director or counsel) impacts average hours and levels of engagement in pro bono. **We find that firms that put people with more senior roles in charge of pro bono report nearly three times the average pro bono hours of firms that give this responsibility to people in less senior roles.**

Pro bono and CSR

This year, we aimed to explore the relationship between pro bono and other corporate social responsibility (CSR) and similar initiatives. Of firms that have such a programme, 45 percent reported that their pro bono and CSR programmes are managed separately, while 26 percent are managed jointly (the remaining did not specify). The data signals that **firms with a dedicated pro bono programme performed 42 percent more pro bono hours than firms with jointly managed programmes.**

Pro bono budgets

26 percent of firms reported that they have a pro bono budget above \$100,000 USD and 31 percent have budgets over \$50,000. Large Firms are most likely to have larger budgets. On the other end, Medium-sized and Small Firms most commonly report more modest budgets between \$1,000 and \$10,000. Pro bono budgets are growing or holding steady, with half of firms responding that their budget is larger than it was two years ago and 46 percent having the same budget.

**Firms that allocate a pro bono budget of \$50,000 or more had more than three times higher average pro bono hours** than their counterparts with lower budgets. In this way, budget allocations correlate to higher pro bono engagement, making the financial investment seemingly well worth the return.

INCENTIVISING AND REWARDING PRO BONO

Incentives

Firms use various incentives including financial compensation, appraisals and setting targets to encourage lawyers to participate in pro bono work. The findings show that 80 percent of firms include pro bono work in their appraisal processes. This correlates with the number of pro bono hours worked by lawyers, where **firms that factor pro bono into their appraisal processes perform almost twice the hours** of firms that do not.

The responses show that 57 percent of firms consider pro bono work in their compensation decisions (for non-partners). **Firms that factor pro bono activities into their compensation decisions also do almost twice the hours** of those that do not.

Targets

Pro bono targets, whether mandated by regulatory bodies or established as formal requirements by the firms themselves, impact the overall number of pro bono hours worked. In 2024, 42 percent of responding firms overall reported having a pro bono target. **Firms that adopt targets, whether mandatory or aspirational, reported 46 percent higher hours than firms without targets**, and lawyers at firms with mandatory targets average 26 percent more pro bono hours than those with aspirational targets.

This is the first year we are publishing data on average pro bono targets. Our survey findings indicate that the average global annual pro bono target is 30 hours, and the median pro bono target adopted by firms globally is 25 hours.



DIVERSITY IN PRO BONO

We asked firms if they have a formal diversity commitment in relation to their pro bono work.

Overall, **33 percent of firms reported having a formal pro bono diversity commitment.**, up from 27 percent in 2022. Of those, 29 percent of firms reported that their diversity commitments take the form of support for organisations addressing issues affecting diverse communities, while 22 percent of firms indicated that they prioritise staffing pro bono matters with a diverse team of lawyers. Only 6 percent indicated that they prioritise building a diverse talent pipeline to fill pro bono roles as part of their diversity commitment.

Regionally, firms in Australia reported the highest diversity commitments at 55 percent, followed by the Americas at 47 percent, while Africa and the Middle East had noteworthy diversity commitments at 38 percent. Firms in the United States reported lower diversity commitments, from 40 percent in 2022 to 36 percent in this year’s Index.

PRO BONO IMPACT

For the first time, we explored how firms track and measure the impact of their pro bono work. We see **74 percent of firms measure or track their pro bono results or impact.**

For firms that track impact, we asked *what* they measure or track. The top three metrics were: the number of pro bono hours worked (70 percent), the number of clients served (62 percent) and the number of pro bono matters handled (62 percent). There is **still more focus on quantitative numbers (e.g. hours) when tracking impact**, but a sizable number of firms are also tracking qualitative metrics such as client feedback, community impact, outcome of matters and lawyer engagement.

Firms are prioritising using impact data to demonstrate value provided to the community, to communicate that impact, to evaluate staff performance and to identify areas for improvement in pro bono practice. In terms of communicating pro bono impact, the top three avenues used by firms are internal newsletters and blog posts (78 percent), published impact stories on websites and updates on social media (67 percent), and awards nominations (61 percent).

METHODOLOGY

The TrustLaw Index of Pro Bono is a global survey that examines the practice of pro bono and the extent of pro bono legal services provided by legal teams across the globe. The Index offers a benchmark to understand and track the global scope and evolving nature of pro bono services. Moreover, it equips law firms with the necessary resources and strategies to cultivate robust and impactful pro bono practices.

The Index has evolved over the years in response to the needs of the sector and to strengthen its methodology. In recent years, we have delved more deeply into areas of growing interest, such as pro bono staffing, pro bono and diversity, and pro bono impact tracking, while keeping other questions in the survey constant to allow for comparison over time.

DATA COLLECTION

The survey is based on a global, non-representative sample of 209 law firms and in-house legal teams<sup>1</sup> in 123 jurisdictions. The firms’ sizes, areas of specialisation and levels of pro bono work varied. Of the firms surveyed, 173 provided comprehensive numerical information on pro bono hours. Although we met the participation threshold target set for the survey, participation was slightly lower relative to 2022. In particular, we saw fewer Medium-sized and Small Firms participating, as they cited capacity constraints that limited their ability to consistently track and report their pro bono work.

The study uses a mixed methods research approach combining quantitative and qualitative research techniques. A self-administered online survey was used to collect the data.

The 2024 Index survey was launched on 8 February 2024 and was open to submissions until June 2024. The pro

bono landscape has changed significantly since the inception of the Index in 2014. Based on various sources of feedback, including meetings, feedback forms and direct feedback from participants in the last Index survey, changes were made, including the refining of questions on pro bono diversity commitments and pro bono staffing, and the addition of questions on how firms track, measure, deliver and communicate their pro bono impact.

Law firms from diverse backgrounds contributed to the Index data set, reflecting the global landscape of legal pro bono work. To ensure meaningful analysis, submissions adhered to specific guidelines on key indicators such as what qualifies as pro bono work and definitions of fee earners and clients as outlined in the Index submission guidelines accessible [here](#). These indicators take into account regional variances in pro bono, ultimately ensuring a unified and comparable approach to the gathered data.

The metrics used to calculate the level of a firm’s pro bono engagement over the 12-month, self-selected period are:

- The average number of hours of pro bono per fee earner
- The percentage of fee earners at a firm performing ten or more hours of pro bono

For purposes of the Index, Qualifying Pro Bono must meet the three criteria below:

- **Qualifying Work:** legal advice, assistance, representation and research, as well as drafting agreements, policy documents or legislative instruments—as long as it is done without financial return. In this report, we refer to it simply as “pro bono”. It is distinct from legal aid, which usually refers to state-funded legal advice or representation for individuals who are unable to afford legal services.

<sup>1</sup> When we refer to firms throughout, this includes the small number of in-house teams who also contributed to the survey.



- **Qualifying Fee Earner:** any legal professional who performs fee-earning work for clients. In this report we use the terms “fee earner” and “lawyer” interchangeably. Fee earner is a category that includes students and trainees, law clerks, paralegals and other valued pro bono contributors within law firms. We use the plain language term “lawyer” for readability, especially in our executive summary, and as a stand-in for this wider range of professionals who support pro bono.
- **Qualifying Clients:** people of limited means or organisations with a societal, environmental, humanitarian, cultural or community focus, as validated by the law firm, referral organisations or pro bono organisations.

You will find additional guidelines that set out the criteria under which we define pro bono work and personnel [here](#).

In addition, the firms shared qualitative information on:

- **Why they do pro bono:** the reasons behind the firm’s pro bono practice.
- **Pro bono focus areas:** whether firms prefer to work with certain types of pro bono clients and on certain types of pro bono matters.
- **Pro bono infrastructure and practice:** who firms have hired in their practice, what responsibilities these personnel have and whether firms utilise pro bono policies such as pro bono eligibility criteria or oversight of pro bono by partners.
- **Incentivising and rewarding pro bono:** their implementation of pro bono targets and consideration of pro bono in performance appraisals and in awarding compensation.
- **Diversity:** if firms have a formal diversity commitment relating to their pro bono work and the forms and factors that commitment includes.
- **Pro bono impact:** how firms track, measure and communicate their pro bono impact.

## DATA ANALYSIS

### QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

This shows where and to what extent pro bono work was performed by lawyers. The quantitative questions asked were:

- number of Qualifying Fee Earners as of 31 December 2023
- total Qualifying Pro Bono hours
- number of Qualifying Fee Earners who recorded ten or more hours of Qualifying Pro Bono time
- number of Qualifying Fee Earners who recorded any time on Qualifying Pro Bono matters

After analysis, the output from this data was the average number of hours of pro bono per fee earner and the percentage of fee earners doing ten or more hours of pro bono in the 12-month, self-selected period. This data was then disaggregated by region and jurisdiction.

This year, as in 2022, we used a simple average approach to calculate regional and country-level average pro bono hours, the average percentage of lawyers that performed ten or more hours of pro bono and the average percentage of lawyers that performed any pro bono work. Prior to 2022, the regional and country calculations (not global) were completed as an average of firm averages. This methodological change allows for a clearer picture of average pro bono hours among individual lawyers and helps to avoid giving outsized weight to the pro bono contributions of some firms over others.

**Note of Correction:** In completing the 10-year look back this year, we identified an underlying data error in our 2020 Index which resulted in some erroneous figures such as global average hours and engagement in that year. We have provided updated data analysis on the 2020 page of our Index of Pro Bono microsite, and all the figures presented in this report in relation to 2020 are correct.

### QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

Data was collected from 24 questions (up from 23 in 2022) with answers that were a mix of yes or no, multiple choice, open-ended and numerical.

We removed certain questions relating to COVID-19 as an area of focus and its impact on pro bono programmes. We also refined/streamlined some questions. The qualitative data submissions were anonymised and aggregated, then used to identify key industry trends and issues at a global, regional and jurisdictional level.

### GLOBAL ANALYSIS

The first section of the Index provides a global analysis of pro bono practices by assessing the size, pro bono clients, focus areas, infrastructure and incentives of participating law firms. This analysis focuses on the law firm size irrespective of the jurisdiction in which it operates. The underlying hypothesis is that pro bono lawyers encounter similar challenges in the practice of pro bono regardless of their firm’s location. By adopting successful pro bono techniques from elsewhere, firms can enhance their own pro bono initiatives.

### REGIONAL AND COUNTRY-LEVEL ANALYSIS

We acknowledge the significance of social, regulatory and economic factors on the local context and the impact this may have on the volume and nature of pro bono work performed by firms. With this in mind, we have provided background context alongside our data analysis on the factors influencing pro bono for countries where more than four law firms submitted their data.

Where possible, we provide comparisons to the 2022 data relating to average pro bono hours at the regional and country level. We do not include comparisons where we are not confident in the comparability of the responding sample between 2022 and 2024.

The Index divides responding firms into three groups based on headcount:

- **Small Firms:** Firms that have a total headcount of less than 50 fee earners

- **Medium-sized Firms:** Firms that have 50 – 199 fee earners
- **Large Firms:** Firms that have 200+ fee earners

The Index uses the number of fee earners as a simple way to gauge a firm’s size, resources and capabilities. This categorization helps the Index assess how a firm’s resources influence its level of pro bono engagement and how firms of different sizes allocate resources to pro bono work.

### DATA QUALITY ASSURANCE

The participating firms submitted data on their pro bono practice for a 12-month period in a self-administered survey. As with prior Indexes, we used a three-tier process to ensure data quality:

- Before analysis, the law firms were supplied with a copy of their submitted data to confirm the accuracy of the data.
- The data set was then checked for missing data and outliers by the Index project team.
- After the preliminary review by the team, the data was reviewed for outliers by a professional data scientist.

The data was then analysed by the data scientist and was later audited (by a separate specialist) to flag any anomalies. Where appropriate and possible, anomalies identified at various stages were addressed by referral to the submitting firms for correction and resubmission.

To see the questions that comprised the Index Survey, see [here](#). The submissions guidance are available [here](#), and FAQs are available [here](#).





# A DECADE OF THE TRUSTLAW INDEX OF PRO BONO

When the first edition of the TrustLaw Index of Pro Bono launched in 2014, it was an ambitious idea. We aimed to map pro bono around the world and harness the power of data to track trends, surface good practice and offer benchmarks for pro bono. We first published the Index on an annual basis, (2014, 2015 and 2016), followed by a brief hiatus before returning as a biennial survey (2020, 2022 and 2024).

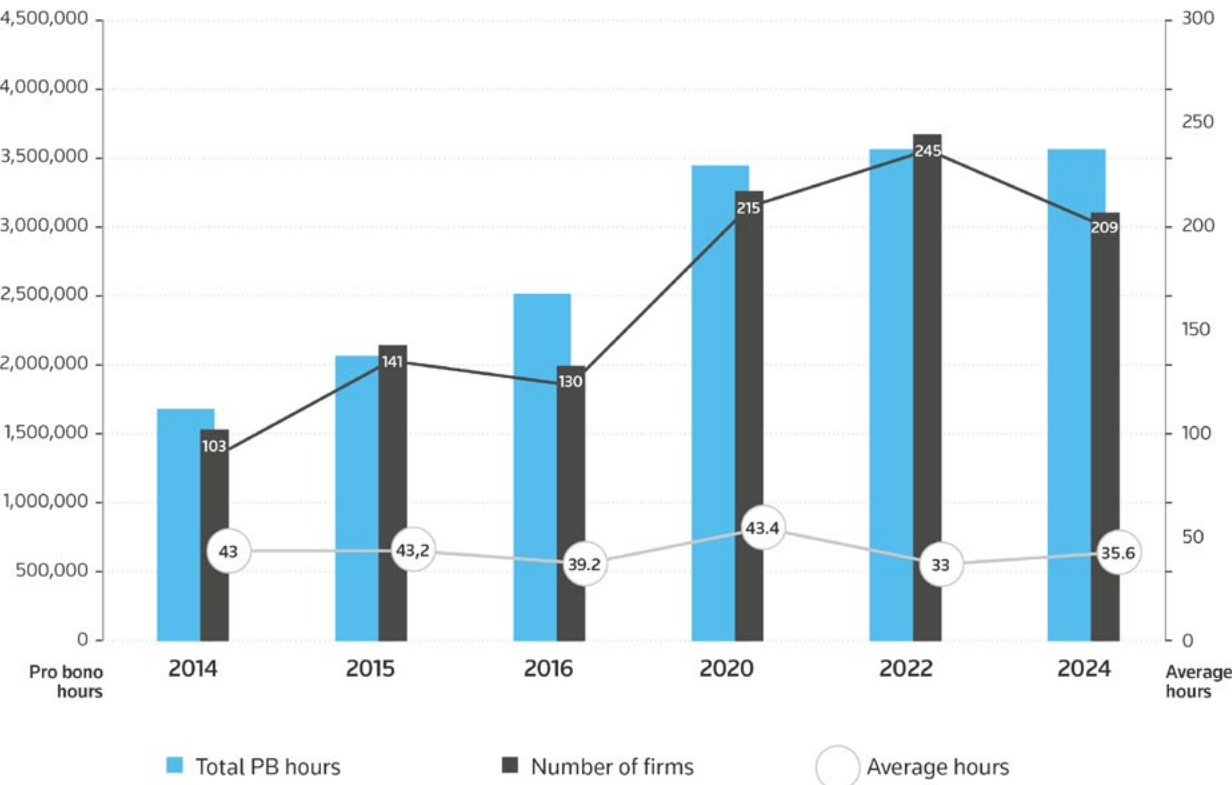
In 2014, 103 firms covering 36,000 lawyers with offices across 69 countries participated in the survey. Since then, the **number of firms participating has more than doubled** to 209 and **number of lawyers has nearly tripled** to 100,000 across 123 countries and jurisdictions. Much

of this growth is due to the expanding reach of the survey to new markets outside of the largest pro bono markets in the US, UK (England & Wales) and Australia. The biggest gains have been in Asia and the Pacific (where participation more than doubled) and in the Americas (nearly tripled).

## ARE WE HITTING A PLATEAU?

This year lawyers provided an average of 35.6 hours of pro bono over the year. Globally, 57 percent of lawyers engaged in pro bono and 43 percent of lawyers dedicated ten or more hours of their time to pro bono work in the year.

## PRO BONO OVER THE YEARS





However, following a banner year in 2020 and **despite a recovery in average hours from 2022, we have not returned the high-water mark we saw in 2020** (43.4 hours on average per lawyer).<sup>2</sup> Similarly, the percentage of lawyers doing any or more than 10 hours of pro bono has largely held steady at 43 percent and not returned to the figures reported in 2020 (46 percent). Among partners, we see a similar trend, with average partner hours since we began reporting this metric in 2020 remaining largely constant, with a slight dip this year.

What is behind this trend? On one hand, **over time we have seen relatively consistent average pro bono hours even as the survey participation has expanded**—which is positive. Since 2014, the number of participating firms has doubled and lawyers represented has tripled, with particularly strong growth in Asia-Pacific and the Americas. While newer entrants typically start with more modest engagement levels, to some extent this has the effect of balancing against growth in engagement and hours in more established practices.

However, we also know **pro bono is influenced by broader market forces**. Many firms are navigating growing competitive pressures from cost-conscious clients, new market entrants, and emerging technologies. If pro bono is viewed only as a “nice to have”, it can be seen as less of a priority alongside billable pressures—though, our view is that this is shortsighted given the rising business benefits of pro bono.

Meanwhile, **the need for pro bono continues to grow**, driven by threats to civic space, human rights, the climate crisis and a persistent justice gap. Legal tech, AI and innovation offer promising opportunities to expand access to justice and create more efficient pro bono delivery models, but the unmet need is expansive, and unlikely to be addressed only through such efficiencies. As we look ahead to the next ten years, it will be crucial for the legal sector to galvanise and for lawyers to commit their valuable time as well if we are to rise to the need.

RISE OF THE BUSINESS CASE FOR PRO BONO

Since 2015, we have asked firms why they do pro bono. The most common answer has remained remarkably consistent over the years—that is, a desire to support the community. It indicates that a deep, abiding sense of community and service is at the heart of why many lawyers and firms do pro bono.

However, we have also seen rising attention to other motivations, especially in relation to staff (training and skills development and retention) and clients (marketing and alignment with client interest). This is not surprising given the trend in recent years that has seen the legal sector becoming more competitive and business minded.

**The importance of training and skill development has increased over time, from 45 percent in 2015 to 73 percent in 2024**, suggesting that pro bono is increasingly seen as a valuable opportunity for professional growth and skill enhancement. We have also seen emphasis on staff retention more than double from 23 percent in 2015 to 47 percent in 2024. This trend indicates that firms may be leveraging pro bono opportunities to engage and retain employees, recognising the role of meaningful work in job satisfaction and retention.<sup>3</sup>

**The importance placed on marketing has more than doubled**, from 22 percent in 2015 to 45 percent in 2024, suggesting firms are increasingly viewing pro bono work as a strategic tool to enhance their brand and public image. In a broader trend, **alignment with client interest as a reason for doing pro bono has grown** from 25 percent in 2015 to 34 percent in 2024, though the trend line has varied somewhat over the years.

We expect this area to continue to grow as we see in-house teams pushing the pro bono agenda by incorporating pro bono into tenders for legal work and seeking more opportunities to partner with their panel firms directly on pro bono projects.<sup>4</sup>

WHAT WORKS FOR GROWING PRO BONO

Over the years, we have seen a **modest but meaningful growth in formalisation of pro bono** within firms.

The percentage of firms that report at least one or more element of pro bono infrastructure has increased from 78 percent in 2014 to 88 percent in 2024, and across all categories of infrastructure that we measure such as:

- **Pro bono policies:** percentage of firms with pro bono policies rose from 64 percent in 2015 to 71 percent in 2024.<sup>5</sup>
- **Pro bono committees:** percentage of firms with pro bono committees rose from 52 percent in 2014 to 57 percent in 2024.
- **Pro bono coordinators:** percentage of firms with pro bono coordinators rose from 78 percent in 2014 to 83 percent in 2024.

Over the years we see a trend in which law firms with pro bono infrastructure report higher average hours per fee earner compared to those without such infrastructure.<sup>6</sup> This suggests that having such infrastructure helps to encourage more pro bono work. This is especially true for Medium-sized and Large Firms who benefit most.

Perhaps even more influential is the **key role of incentives in encouraging individual lawyers to do pro bono**.

Over the years, there has been a **significant increase in the percentage of law firms with pro bono targets**, rising from 21 percent of firms in 2014 to 42 percent, in 2024. This indicates a growing recognition of the value of setting pro bono goals to encourage participation. Over time, law firms with pro bono targets tend to report higher average pro bono hours compared to those without targets. Firms with mandatory targets are consistently associated with higher average hours than aspirational targets (typically by a difference of 30 percent or more).

Interestingly, **as more firms have adopted targets, the trend has been to set aspirational rather than mandatory targets, even though mandatory targets are associated with higher hours**. Since 2014, the overall

number of firms adopting targets has doubled but the balance has shifted from 55 percent mandatory to 45 percent aspirational in 2014, to 24 percent mandatory to 76 percent aspirational in 2024.

**Treating pro bono work the same as billable work for hours target purposes is a proven motivator for pro bono**—in 2024, we see that firms that do so do twice the pro bono of those who do not—16 versus 31.5 average hours- and this finding is consistent over the years. Overall, the number of firms adopting this practice has risen slightly from 63 percent in 2014, to 68 percent in 2024. Most firms continue to implement such programmes by treating all pro bono hours in the same way as fee-earning work, and the percentage of firms doing so has slowly increased from 43 percent in 2015 to 52 percent in 2024.

The practice of **factoring pro bono in annual review and/or compensation decisions is becoming more common, and these incentives are consistently associated with higher hours**.

- The proportion of firms reporting that pro bono factored in their appraisal/performance review process for lawyers rose from 66 percent in 2014 to 80 percent in 2024. Meanwhile, we see a consistently positive relationship with hours (around double)- in 2024, the difference is 40.7 hours at firms that do this, versus 19 hours at firms that do not factor it.
- Similarly, the proportion of firms that factored pro bono in compensation decisions rose from 49 percent in 2014 to 57 percent in 2024. Here too, we see a consistent positive relationship to hours: For example, in 2024 the differential was 17.4 versus 29.7 hours.

AT THE HEART OF PRO BONO—ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Each year, we ask what firms are prioritising as their areas of focus for pro bono. We have seen **consistent focus on access to justice** over the last decade, a finding that transcends firm size and geography and can be

<sup>2</sup> Please see our note on the hours originally reported in 2020 under Methodology.  
<sup>3</sup> <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/help-your-employees-find-purpose-or-watch-them-leave>  
<sup>4</sup> <https://www.nationalprobonocentre.org.uk/project/in-house-pro-bono-pledge/> and [https://www.probonoinst.org/media\\_release/2023-in-house-pro-bono-on-the-rise/](https://www.probonoinst.org/media_release/2023-in-house-pro-bono-on-the-rise/)

<sup>5</sup> We first asked about pro bono policies in 2015.  
<sup>6</sup> With the exception of 2024, largely owing to a cohort of submissions this year from exceptionally high-performing small firms who are doing very high hours without formal structures.



understood in the context of a persistent justice gap facing much of the world, with an estimated two-thirds of people still experiencing unmet justice needs.

Over this time, we have also seen:

- a **meaningful increase in focus on immigration, refugees and asylum**, with a significant jump in focus in 2016 and a consistent rise since 2016—from 28 percent in 2014 to 44 percent in 2024.
- a **gradual but steady rise in attention to LGBTQ+ rights**—from 9 percent in 2014 to 27 percent in 2024.
- an overall upward trend—with some ups and downs—of focus on environment, climate and biodiversity, from 25 percent in 2014 to 30 percent in 2024, though perhaps not as significant an increase as we might have expected given rising public awareness of the biodiversity and climate crisis.
- a reduced focus on economic development and microfinance (now at 19 percent, from 44 percent in 2014 and a high of 52 percent in 2016), and education, training and employment (23 percent, from 34 percent in 2014 and a high of 46 percent in 2016) which were among the most selected areas of focus of pro bono when the Index launched.

Over the years, we have seen no material change in the types of clients receiving pro bono. Charities, non-profits, social enterprises and individuals in need have

continued to be the most common recipients of pro bono services. In 2024, we offered two new categories for small businesses/start-ups and journalists in need/small news organisations, both of which are receiving considerable attention (previously captured by the category “other”, which dropped significantly this year).

Across a decade of the Index, we see a nuanced portrait of the global pro bono ecosystem. The trend in average hours and engagement has been relatively steady but not marked by year-on-year growth. The sector has been evolving and formalising, with growing numbers of survey entrants from markets in Latin America, Africa and Asia—the growing global reach of pro bono is certainly to be celebrated. The rising importance of pro bono for client and employee recruitment and retention is notable, and one to watch in years to come.

Over time, we see a responsive pro bono sector—offering sustained commitment to a range of pro bono clients and causes, together with growing focus on areas like immigration, refugee and migration, LGBTQ+ rights and climate and environment as these concerns have risen on the global agenda. Law firms shifted their pro bono priorities to meet the needs of the most vulnerable communities over the decade, and we hope this need-driven approach to pro bono will continue.

We also see, time and again, that formalising pro bono is beneficial—whether through infrastructure or incentives or both—and there are proven approaches to galvanise growth in pro bono and meet the challenge of unmet legal needs around the globe in the decade ahead.

## 2024 GLOBAL FINDINGS



# PRO BONO AND FIRM SIZE

The Index tracks the relationship between the number of fee earners, including partners, and the amount of pro bono work done by the firm. Our aim is to understand if, and to what extent, the size of a firm impacts the strength and success of its pro bono practice.

The 209 firms that submitted data for the 2024 Index were classified according to size and comprised:

- Small Firms (less than 50 fee earners)
- Medium-sized Firms (50 – 199 fee earners)
- Large Firms (200 or more fee earners)

Globally, **lawyers dedicated an average of 35.6 hours per year to pro bono** and 43 percent of lawyers dedicated ten or more hours of their time to pro bono work in 2024, an increase from 38 percent in 2022 and a promising signal of a strong legal community that is engaged in pro bono at all levels.

However, over time we have seen that lawyers at Large Firms tend to do more pro bono than those at Medium-sized and Small Firms. The trend continued this year, with fee earners in Large Firms averaging 36.3 hours, followed by Medium-sized Firms at 16.8 hours, and Small Firms at 15.9 hours. Compared to 2022, this is up slightly from 32.5 hours for Large Firms and down slightly from 19.7 hours for Medium-sized firms and 20.3 hours for Small Firms. On pro bono participation, Large Firms also lead the way, with 43 percent of fee earners at Large Firms doing 10 or more hours of pro bono, followed by 37 percent at Medium-sized Firms and 37 percent at Small Firms.

Partner engagement can be a critical driver for pro bono adoption within firms. Globally, partners averaged 20.3 hours of pro bono, which is a dip from 26.7 hours in 2022. Just over half—53 percent—of partners at responding firms did any pro bono and 34 percent did 10 or more hours of pro bono (on par with 52 and 33 percent, respectively, in 2022).

In Large Firms, partners averaged 21 hours of pro bono. In Medium-sized and Small Firms, this figure was halved, with an average of 8 and 9.1 hours per partner, respectively. In Large Firms, 34 percent of partners did 10+ hours of pro bono, on par with 35 percent in 2022. In Medium-sized Firms, the trend is up slightly: Our data shows 29 percent of partners doing 10+ hours of pro bono

(from 22 percent in 2022) and 44 percent doing any pro bono (from 41 percent in 2022). In Small Firms, we see 21 percent of partners doing 10+ hours of pro bono and 31 percent doing any pro bono. This is a drop from 2022, when we saw an unusually high 56 percent of partners in Small Firms reporting into the Index that they did any pro bono and 48 percent performing more than 10 hours.

## SIZE OF FIRMS AND AVERAGE NUMBER OF PRO BONO HOURS



*\*Average hours per lawyer (all fee earners, including partners)*



# WHY FIRMS DO PRO BONO

We see pro bono as a crucial tool in tackling humanity’s most pressing challenges and ensuring access to the law where it is needed most. Effective pro bono efforts blend lawyers’ willingness, skills and capabilities to undertake pro bono work with a dedication to developing and sustaining a robust pro bono culture.

Each year, we ask firms why they do pro bono. As in prior years, **desire to support the community** is the main reason, according to **93 percent** of responding firms (down from 96 percent in 2022).

Interestingly, the figures in every other category have risen since 2022 (and, indeed there has been an overall rise since the start of the Index). Pro bono continues to be seen as a capacity-building tool for lawyers, with **training and skill development** as the second most common reason why firms engage in pro bono (73 percent, up from 67 percent in 2022). **Staff retention** is the third most common reason, with 47 percent of responding firms selecting this (up from 38 percent in 2022), followed by alignment with client interests (45 percent, compared with 38 percent in 2022) and marketing (34 percent, compared with 31 percent in 2022).

## WHY DO FIRMS DO PRO BONO



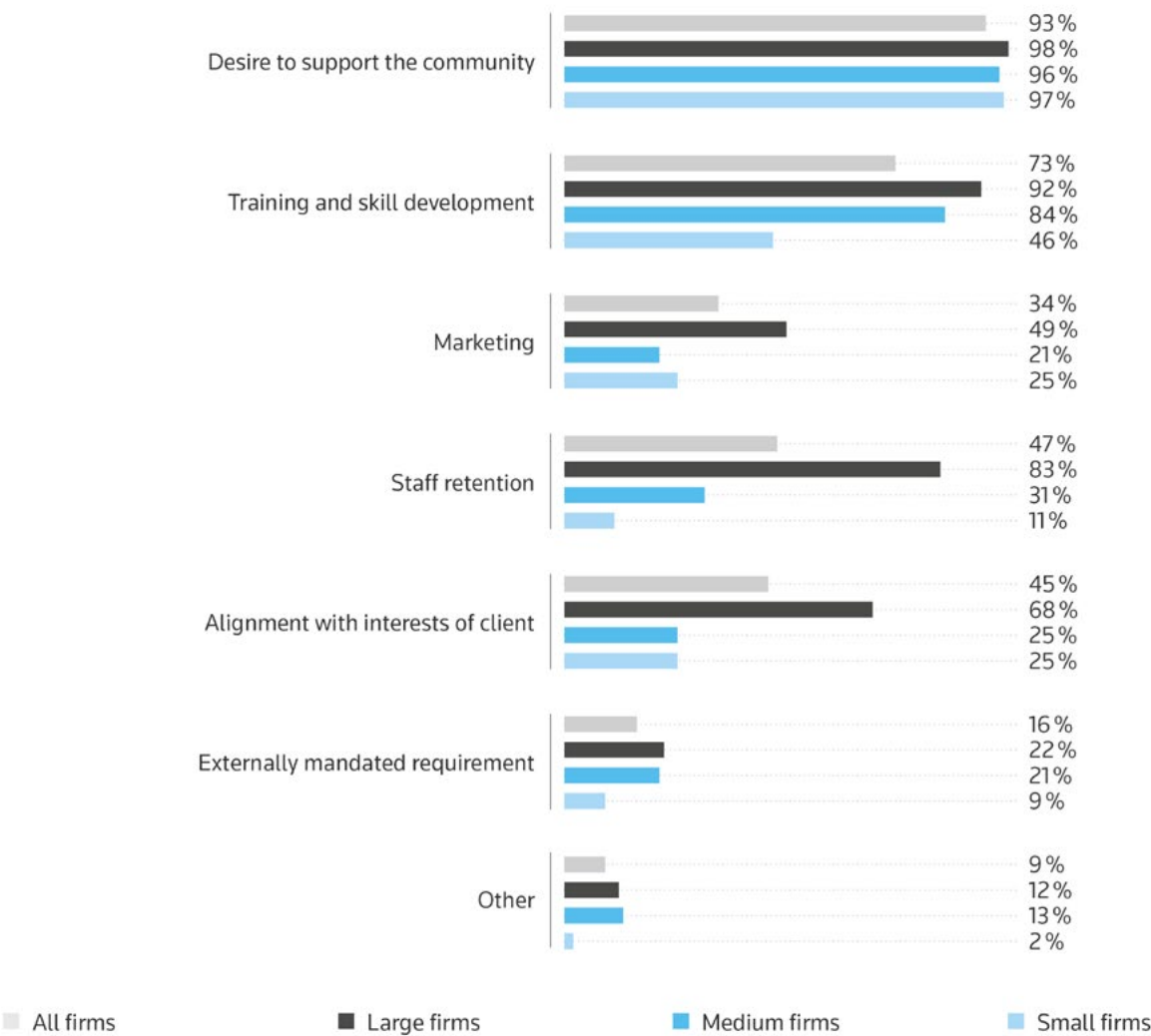
\* Q.2. Why does your firm do pro bono?

As noted above, the rise in other reasons for doing pro bono likely reflects growing attention to the “business case” for pro bono and the multifaceted benefits of doing pro bono at the individual, organisational and societal

levels. It may also reflect growing demand from clients to see meaningful commitment to pro bono from their panel firms and to offer opportunities for their in-house teams to partner on pro bono projects.

## WHY FIRMS DO PRO BONO

OVERALL/GLOBAL BY FIRM SIZE



\* Q.2. Why does your firm do pro bono?



# PRO BONO FOCUS AREAS, CLIENTS AND SOURCES OF PRO BONO MATTERS

## WHAT CAUSES ARE FIRMS FOCUSED ON?

Each year we ask firms to describe their current focus areas for pro bono. They can select up to five focus areas that best capture their pro bono activities during the reporting period. In 2024, for the first time, we asked a question about expected new areas of strategic focus or growth over the next 12 to 24 months (discussed below).

**Access to justice** remains the top priority for firms, with 65 percent selecting it as a current area of focus. It was the top priority across all sizes of firms.

Globally, the next two top priorities were immigration, **refugees and asylum** (44 percent), and **human rights** (37 percent). This is not surprising given the growing reality and risk of displacement, driven by conflict, climate change and other factors, as well as the broad need for legal support to defend human rights in the face of growing repression and backsliding on rights in many parts of the world.

Other areas of pro bono focus include **women's rights** (30 percent); **environment, climate, and biodiversity** (30 percent); and **LGBTQ+ rights** (27 percent). This year we offered an option to select ethnic/minority rights and racial justice as a separate focus area: almost a quarter of firms (24 percent) said they are prioritising this area.<sup>7</sup>

Firms of different sizes expressed slightly different priorities. In particular, Large Firms and Medium-sized Firms placed most emphasis on access to justice (74 and 71 percent, respectively) and immigration, refugees

and asylum (64 percent and 46 percent, respectively). Next, Large Firms prioritised LGBTQ+ rights (41 percent), while Medium-sized Firms selected the broad category of human rights (38 percent). Small Firms prioritised access to justice (46 percent), human rights (32 percent) and environment, climate and biodiversity (30 percent).

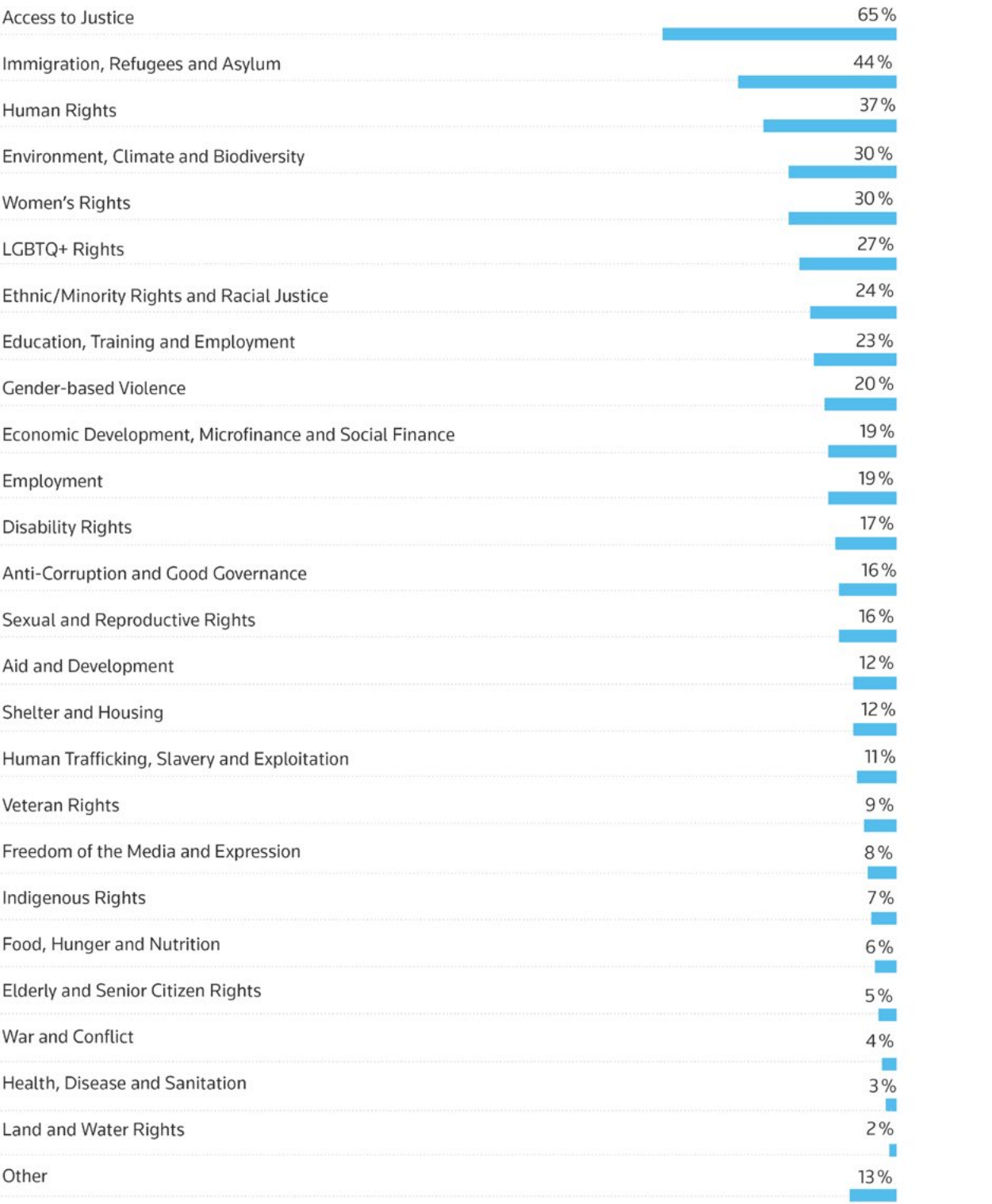
## LOOKING AHEAD

For the first time, we asked firms about new areas of strategic focus or growth in pro bono for the next 12 to 24 months. Firms told us **access to justice** would be a new or growing area of focus in that period (40 percent), followed by **environment, climate and biodiversity** (35 percent), and **women's rights** (25 percent).

The data indicates that Small and Large Firms plan to prioritise access to justice, at 30 percent and 44 percent, respectively, of each cohort selecting this as their most common area of growth. In contrast, Medium-sized Firms most commonly intended to focus on the environment, climate and biodiversity, at 54 percent.

## PRO BONO FOCUS AREAS

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDING FIRMS WHO INDICATED THEY OFFER PRO BONO SERVICES IN SUPPORT OF THE FOLLOWING SECTORS

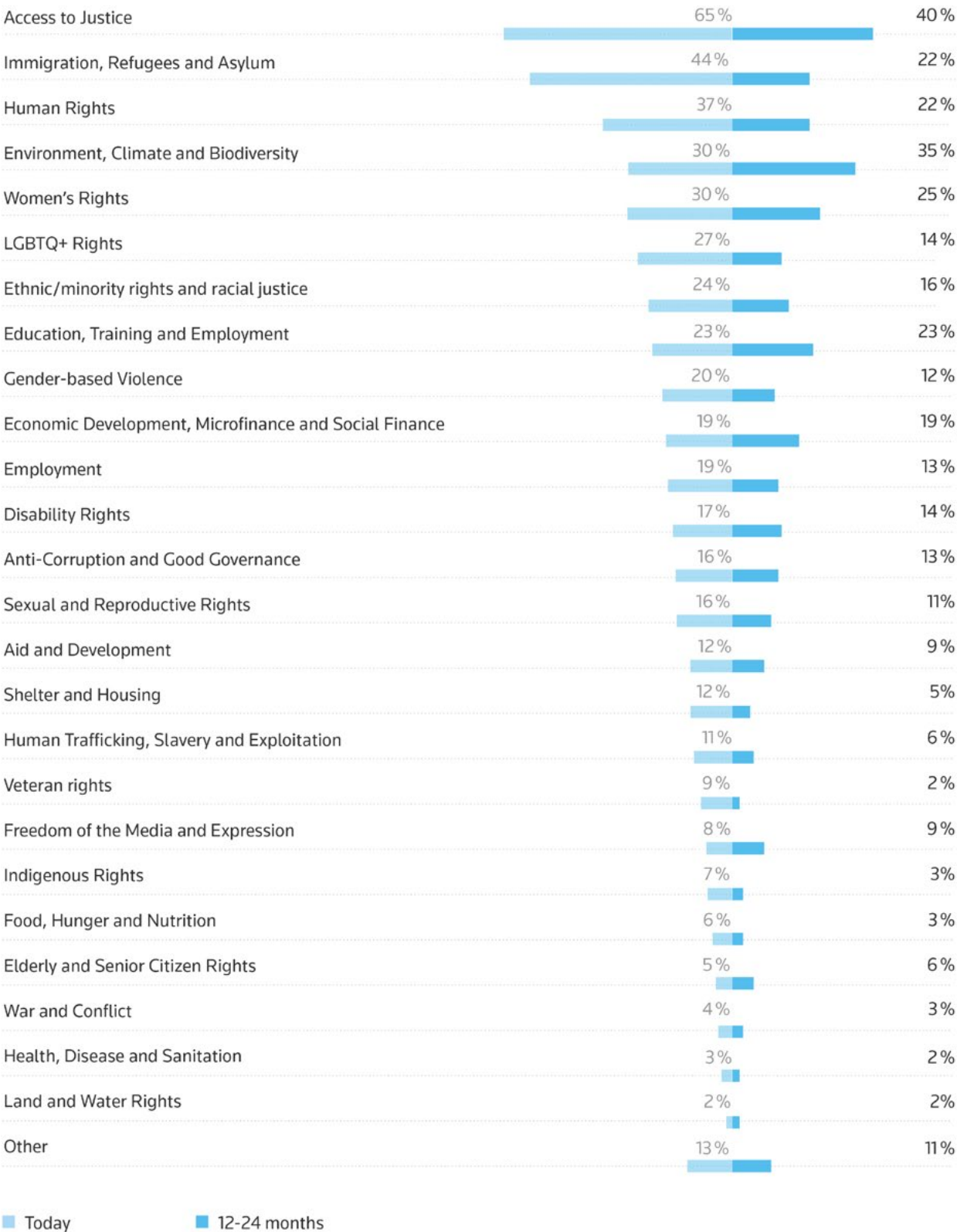


<sup>7</sup> Note: This year we updated the pre-select list of areas of focus to remove COVID-19 and add racial justice and veteran rights, along with minor editorial amends. Because the pre-select list of options was adjusted slightly this year, we do not offer a direct comparison to 2022. However, in our 10-year analysis we reflect on broader trends in the areas of focus that have grown (or dropped off) over the longer term, offering a more reliable reflection of the trends we see.

\* Q.13 Please select your firm's top 4 % bono priorities or strategic areas of focus 30 % over the last 12 months (please select a maximum of five)



## NEW AREAS OF STRATEGIC FOCUS FOR THE NEXT 2 YEARS



\* Q.14. Please indicate if your firm will have any new areas of strategic focus or growth over the next 12 to 24 months. (multiselect question, maximum of five).

## TYPES OF PRO BONO WORK, CLIENTS AND ELIGIBILITY

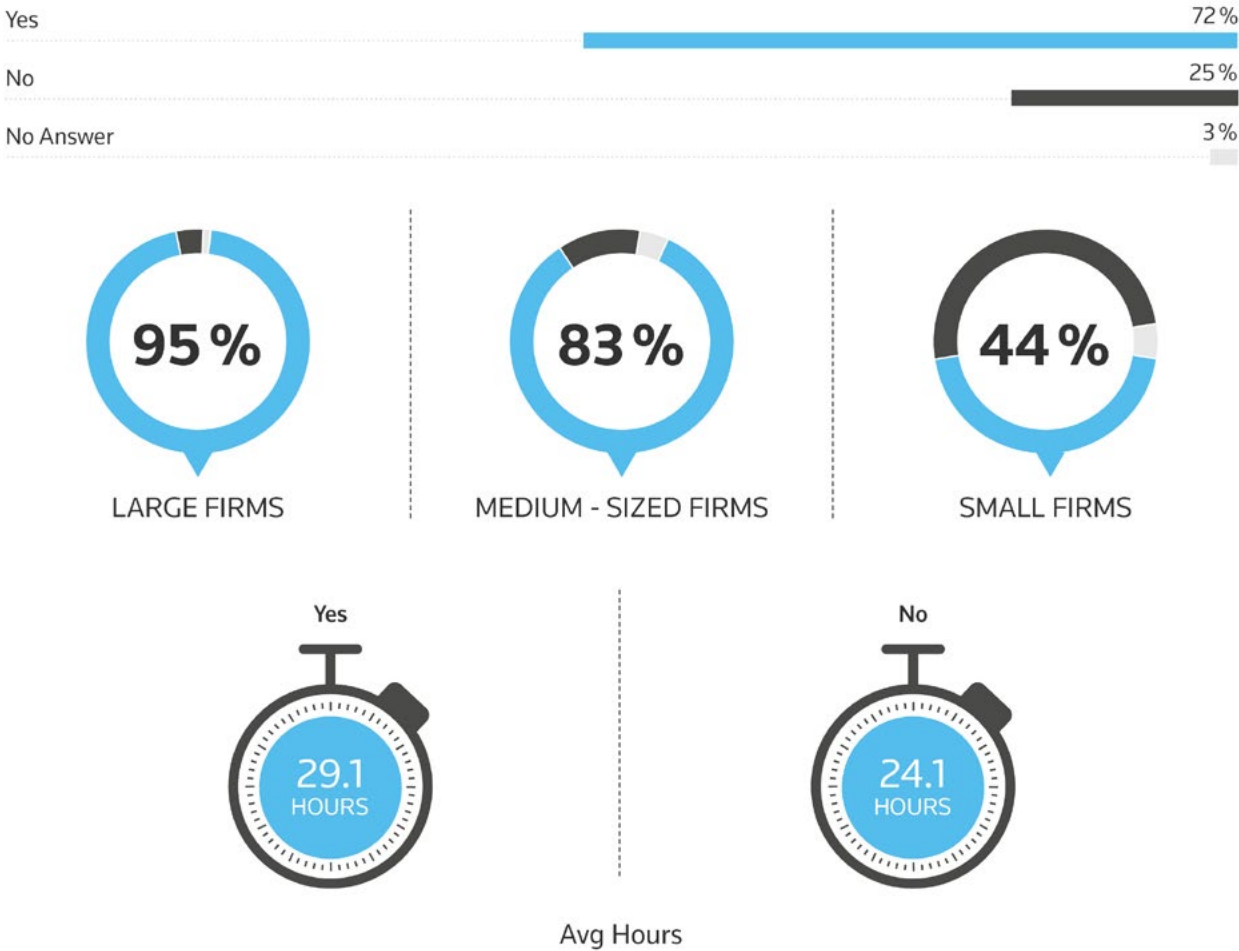
### Pro bono clients and eligibility criteria

Eligibility criteria can be helpful to set a consistent standard for the types of clients or matters a firm will support. Of the responding firms, 72 percent told us they have a formal process for determining eligibility, a slight increase from 67 percent in 2022. Eligibility processes are more common among Large and Medium-sized Firms (95 and 83 percent, respectively) than among Small Firms (44 percent).

**Registered charities and non-profits** remain the most common recipients of pro bono services (86 percent) across firms of all sizes, reflecting an ongoing pro bono commitment to supporting the non-profit sector. **Social enterprises** and **individuals in need** also receive broad support (69 percent and 67 percent, respectively).<sup>8</sup> Under half of firms provide pro bono advice to government, intergovernmental and multilateral organisations (42 percent).

There has been growing interest in working with non-traditional clients, such as small businesses and start-ups (especially where founders come from or focus on serving traditionally marginalised or disadvantaged communities),

### FORMAL ELIGIBILITY PROCESS



\* Q.5. Do you have a formal process to determine whether a matter or client is eligible for pro bono?

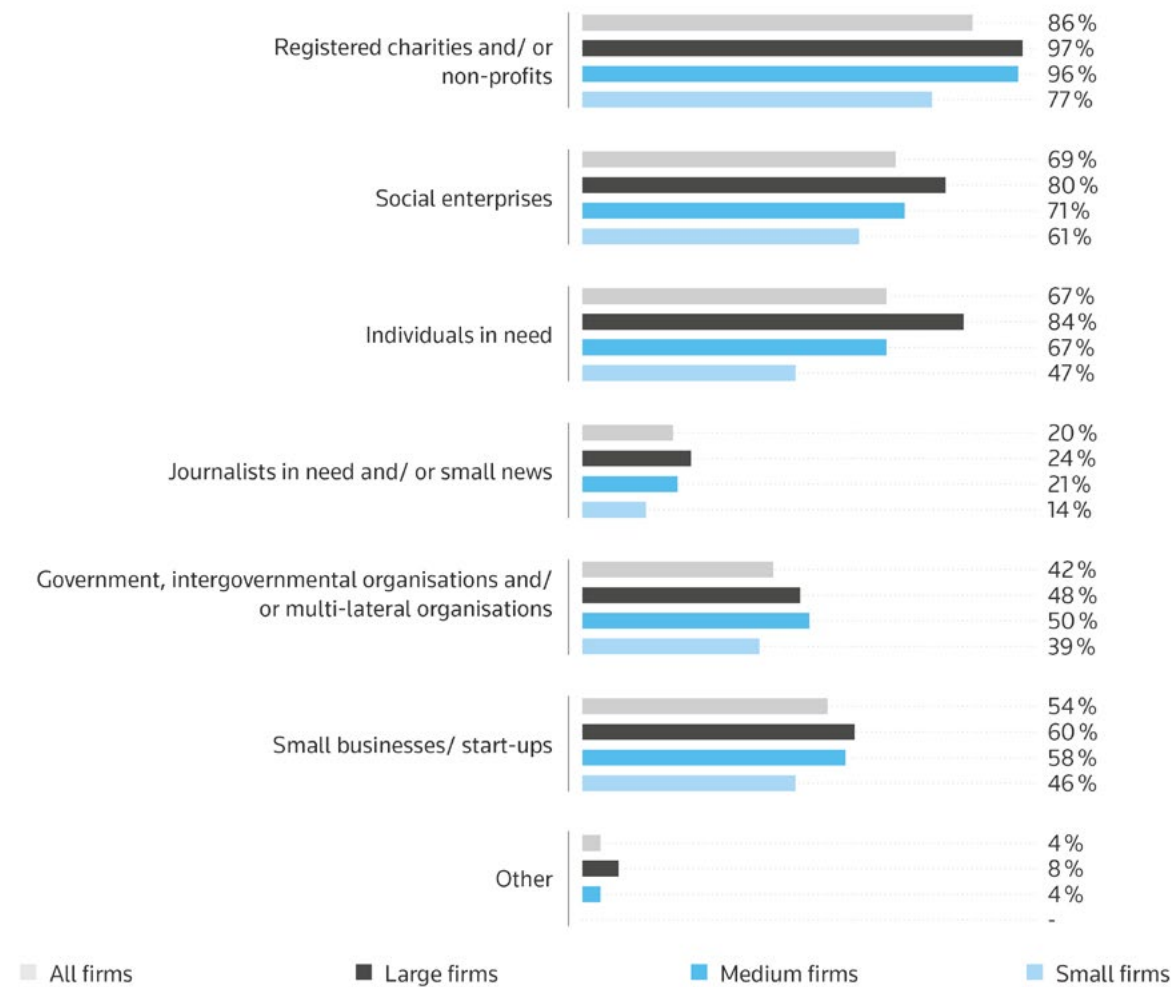
<sup>8</sup> Note: This year we updated the pre-select list of areas of focus to remove COVID-19 and add racial justice and veteran rights, along with minor editorial amends. Because the pre-select list of options was adjusted slightly this year, we do not offer a direct comparison to 2022. However, in our 10-year analysis we reflect on broader trends in the areas of focus that have grown (or dropped off) over the longer term, offering a more reliable reflection of the trends we see.



as well as journalists and public interest news providers, who are navigating increasingly challenging environments and threats to sustainability. The 2024 Index is the first time we have asked firms about these groups: A majority of responding firms (54 percent) said they work with **small businesses and/or start-ups**, and a sizable number (20 percent) work with **journalists and/or small news organisations**.

After charities and non-profits, Large Firms are more likely to work with all other categories of client than are Medium-sized and Small Firms. Large Firms support individuals in need and social enterprises at rates that are meaningfully higher than the global average across all sizes of firm. Large and Medium-sized Firms are also twice as likely as Small Firms to support small businesses as pro bono clients.

PRO BONO TYPES OF CLIENT



\* Q.10 Does your firm prefer to work with certain types of pro bono clients?

How pro bono is delivered

Firms deliver pro bono legal support in different ways. They most commonly offer pro bono legal research (87 percent), corporate/commercial advice to eligible organisations (84 percent), legal training and/or public legal education (65 percent), litigation or representation in legal proceedings (64 percent) and public interest litigation (50 percent).

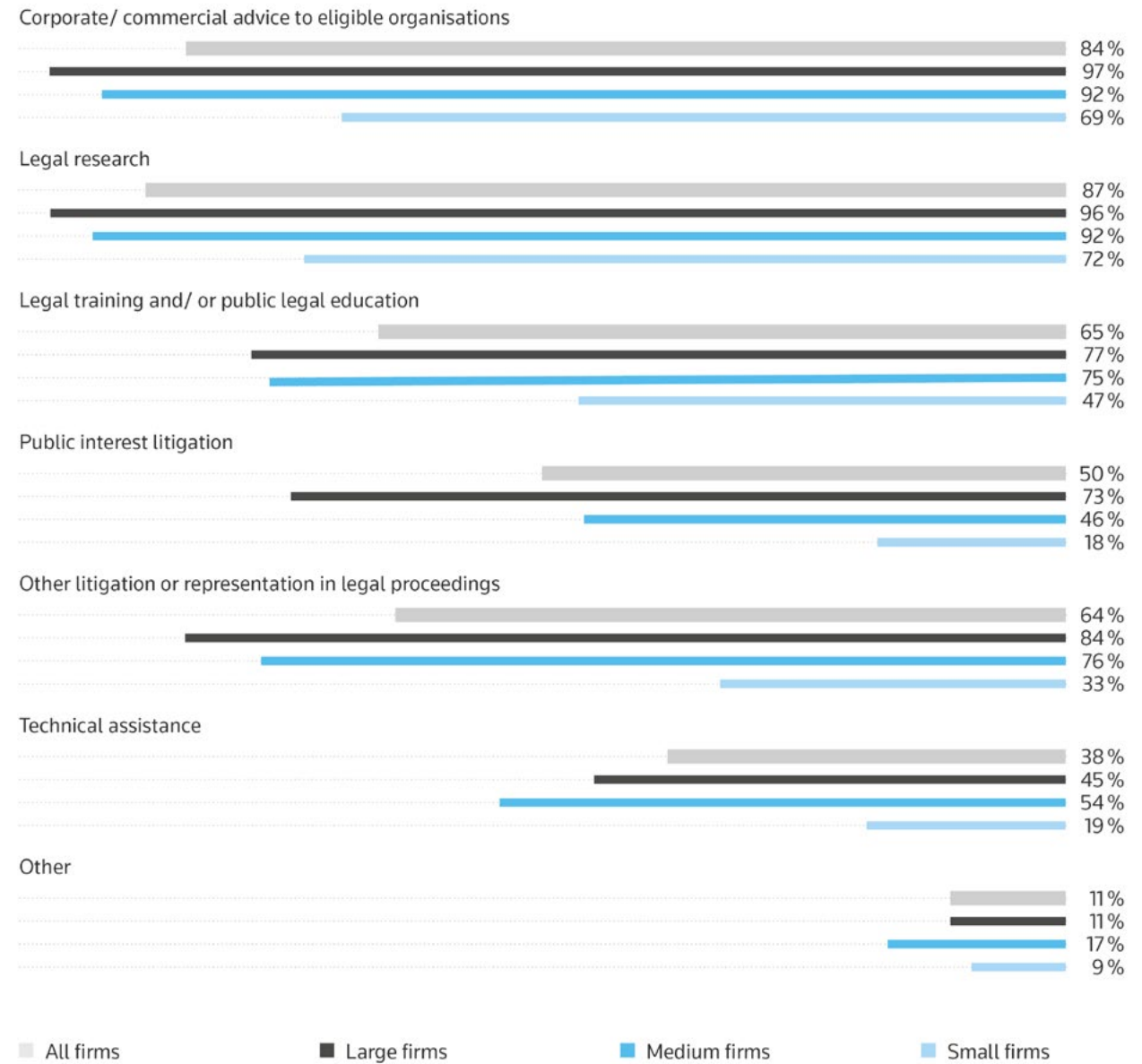
Nearly all Large and Medium-sized Firms offer corporate/commercial advice to eligible organisations (97 percent and 92 percent, respectively) and legal research (96 and 92 percent, respectively), as well as litigation or representation in legal proceedings (84 and 76 percent, respectively). Small Firms, by contrast, focus on legal research (72 percent), corporate/commercial advice to

eligible organisations (69 percent) and legal training and/or public legal education (47 percent).

Large Firms are far more likely than Medium-sized or Small Firms to support strategic litigation on a pro bono basis (71 percent, compared to 17 and 12 percent,

respectively), which is not surprising given the time and resources typically involved in mounting such actions.

MOST COMMON TYPES OF PRO BONO WORK



\* Q.11. How does your firm deliver pro bono?



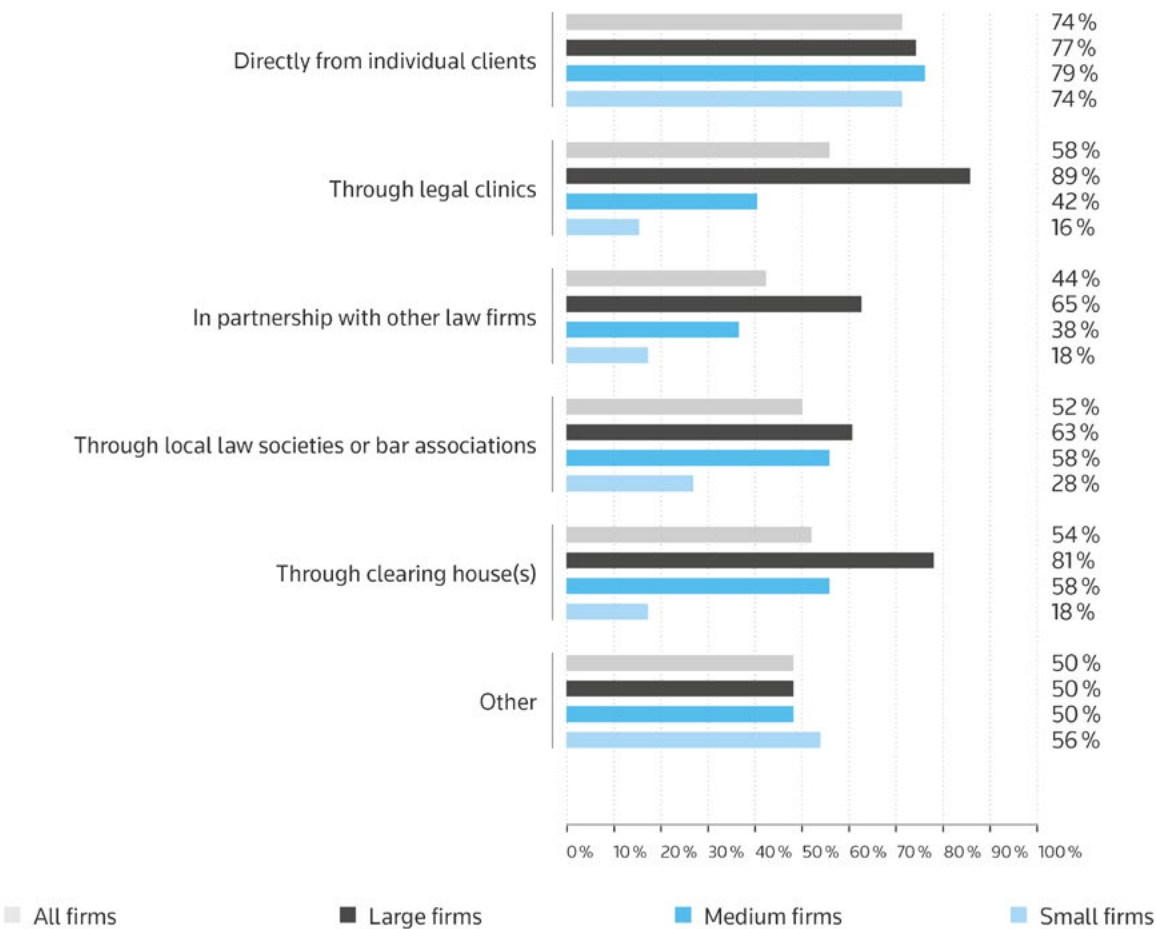
SOURCING PRO BONO MATTERS AND CLIENTS

Globally, most firms (74 percent) source pro bono clients or matters via direct approaches and individual clients, as well as from legal clinics (58 percent), clearinghouses (54 percent) and local law societies or bar associations (52 percent). Since 2022, we have seen a slight rise across all sources of pro bono but most significantly from legal clinics, from 44 to 58 percent.

Firms of all sizes source pro bono from individual clients at similarly high rates (77, 79 and 74 percent, from Large to Small), but Large Firms are more likely to also engage in pro bono through legal clinics (89 percent) and clearinghouses (81 percent), whereas Medium-sized and Small Firms are more likely to seek pro bono through local law societies or bar associations (58 percent and 28 percent, respectively). Medium-sized Firms also use clearinghouses (58 percent), but Small Firms are less likely to engage with clearinghouses as a source of pro bono (18 percent), which may be the result of budgetary limitations (as some, though not all, clearinghouses operate on a paid membership model).

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HOW FIRMS SOURCE PRO BONO WORK



\* Q.12 How does your firm source pro bono work?

PRO BONO INFRASTRUCTURE

Many firms establish systems and structures to enhance their pro bono work. Pro bono “infrastructure”, as we call it, can include:

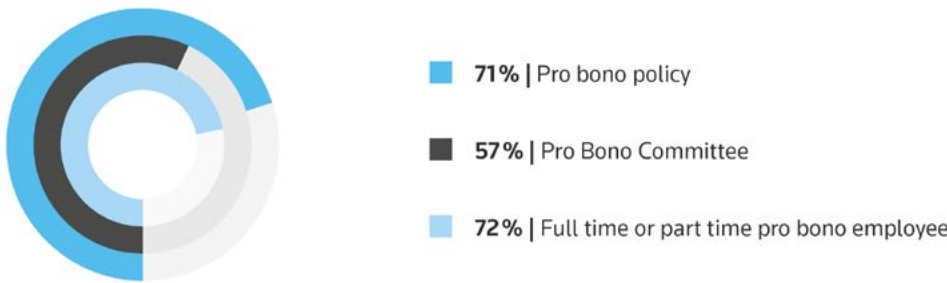
- ✓ **Pro bono policies:** internal policies designed to guide or set minimum standards for pro bono practices
- ✓ **Pro bono committee:** a body whose role is to evaluate potential pro bono matters and/or take the lead on pro bono policy and strategy issues
- ✓ **Pro bono coordinator(s):** a point person or team within a firm responsible to coordinate the firm’s day-to-day pro bono work.

The percentage of firms with some form of pro bono infrastructure remains steady at 88 percent across our global sample, compared to 89 percent in 2022 and 87 percent in 2020.

However, the presence of infrastructure varies across different firm sizes, as also highlighted in the 2022 Index. This year, 99 percent of Large Firms and 88 percent of Medium-sized Firms reported having at least one component of pro bono infrastructure, with 72 and 71 percent, respectively, having all three elements (i.e. staff, policies and committees). There has been a meaningful rise in the percentage of Medium-sized Firms with all three elements (69 percent), compared to 2022 (38 percent).

PRO BONO INFRASTRUCTURE

PERCENTAGE OF FIRMS WITH EACH ELEMENT OF PRO BONO INFRASTRUCTURE



PERCENTAGE OF FIRMS WITH ALL THREE OR ANY ELEMENT OF PRO BONO INFRASTRUCTURE



\* Q.3 Does your firm have a formal written pro bono policy in place?



Among Small Firms, it is common to have at least one element of pro bono infrastructure (74 percent) but remains less common to have all three elements (16 percent).

England & Wales (95 percent) and the United States (93 percent) have the highest number of firms with pro bono infrastructure. They also have the highest percentage of firms with all three elements of pro bono infrastructure. The United States continues to have the highest percentage of firms with all elements of pro bono infrastructure at 67 percent, followed by England & Wales at 66 percent (in 2022, these figures were 69 and 62 percent respectively). The high levels of pro bono infrastructure in these jurisdictions are consistent with their well-established and developed pro bono sectors.

Contrary to expectations, the 2024 data shows that fee earners at firms with at least one element of pro bono infrastructure performed an average of 27.3 hours of pro bono work, compared to 28.7 hours at firms without.<sup>9</sup> In 2022, fee earners at firms with pro bono infrastructure averaged 32.1 hours, versus 13.5 hours at firms without it. We see that 43 percent of fee earners at firms with at least one element of pro bono infrastructure performed 10 or more hours of pro bono, compared to 55 percent of fee earners at firms without any element of pro bono infrastructure.<sup>10</sup>

In firms where all elements of pro bono infrastructure are present, 45 percent of fee earners performed 10 or more hours of pro bono work, averaging 32.7 hours of pro bono annually. This aligns with the 2022 data, which showed 41 percent of fee earners at firms with complete pro bono infrastructure did 10 or more hours of pro bono work, averaging 32 hours of pro bono.

<sup>9</sup> The reason for this counterintuitive finding lies in the shrinking number of firms with no infrastructure. The relatively small number of firms that remain in this category are nearly all Small Firms who are highly engaged in pro bono, and it is likely that because of their small size they are still able to make meaningful contributions to pro bono without formalized infrastructure like committees, dedicated pro bono staff and policies.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

PRO BONO POLICIES

We first asked about pro bono policies in the 2015 Index, in which 64 percent of firms indicated they had some form of formal written policy. The result has increased, though not significantly, with 71 percent of responding firms indicating they have a policy in the 2024 Index. Of the firms that report having a formal pro bono policy, 97 percent are Large Firms, 79 percent are Medium-sized Firms and 37 percent are Small Firms.

The pro bono policies of responding firms cover various areas, including the declaration of the firm's attitude and intent towards pro bono (64 percent), eligibility criteria for pro bono clients (56 percent), the constitution and role of the pro bono committee (42 percent) and the role of the pro bono coordinator (36 percent).

IMPACT OF PRO BONO POLICIES

FIRMS WITH POLICY



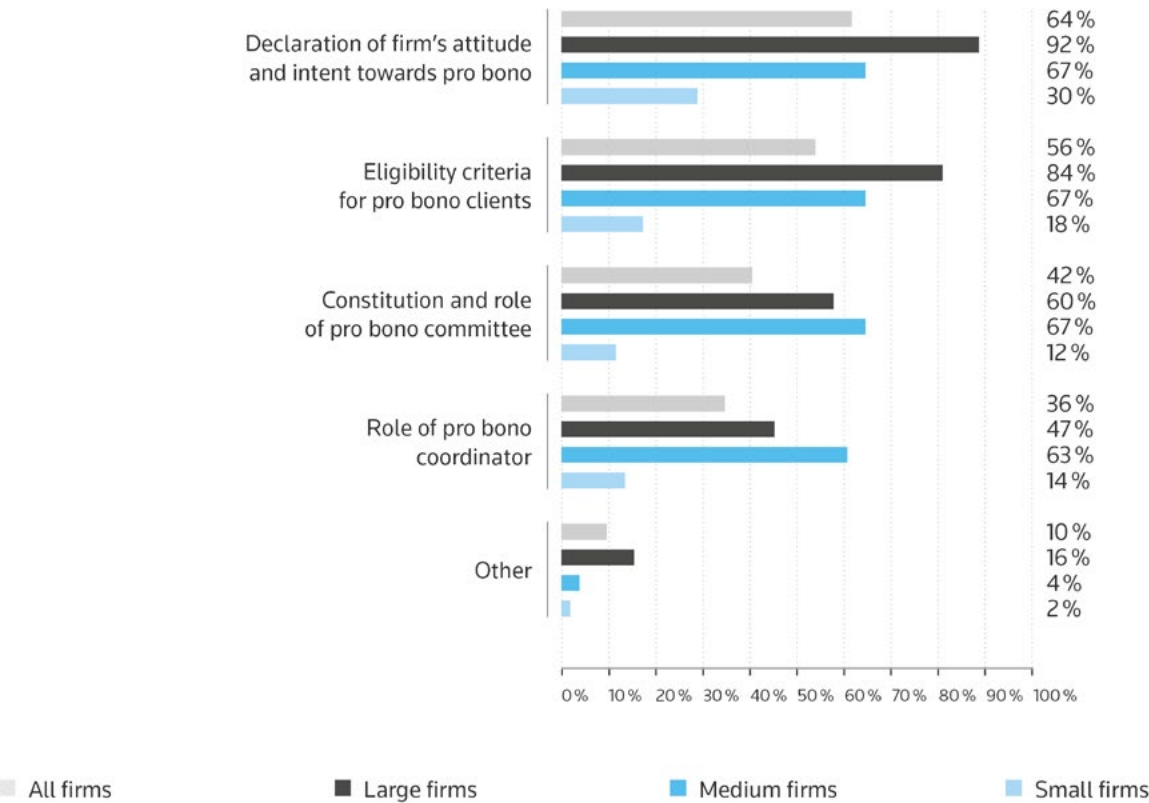
Average hours per fee earner

FIRMS WITH NO POLICY



Average hours per fee earner

WHAT DOES THE PRO BONO POLICY COVER?



\* Q.3 What does your policy cover?

PRACTICE INSIGHT: REINFORCING A CULTURE OF PRO BONO WITH TAILORED POLICIES

Udo Udoma & Belo-Osagie (Nigeria) has a relatively established pro bono practice, with 32 percent of their fee earners already engaged in pro bono in 2024. To help bolster their practice and offer more structure and strategic focus, they adopted a formal pro bono policy this year.

The policy outlines the firm's commitment to specific United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and identifies core pillars of pro bono practice (rigorous research, transactional proficiency and an unwavering dedication to the rule of law and access to justice). It also describes the firm's collaborations with pro bono organisations, identifies partners with supervisory oversight for pro bono activities,

outlines the meaning and scope of pro bono legal services, and explains the rules for onboarding pro bono assignments. The policy emphasises a need for social responsibility and impact and encourages participation from lawyers across the firm.

By outlining specific SDGs and areas of focus, the policy provides a framework for identifying and prioritising pro bono opportunities that align with the firm's values and expertise. For example, their commitment to SDGs 3, 9 and 10 (Good Health, Innovation and Reduced Inequality) led the firm to take up a pro bono matter advising a female-owned mental health organisation to protect the intellectual property in their digital mental health app. The policy aims to boost the firm's number of pro bono hours and volunteers, as well as the diversity of those volunteering.

\* Q.5 Do you have a formal process to determine whether a matter or client is eligible for pro bono? (Yes/No answer)



Lawyers at firms with a pro bono policy performed 43 percent more average pro bono hours relative to firms without a policy: 30.3 hours, compared to 19.6 hours. This trend is consistent with the positive relationship between policies and hours we have seen across the years, though the gap is slightly less pronounced than in 2022, when lawyers at firms with a policy averaged 32.3 hours, compared to 12 hours at firms without a policy.

In terms of overall engagement, 43 percent of lawyers at firms with a formal pro bono policy performed 10 or more hours of pro bono work, compared to 50 percent of lawyers at firms without such a policy.<sup>11</sup>

In 2024, Medium-sized Firms with a pro bono policy reported an average of 19 hours of pro bono work per lawyer and 42 percent of lawyers at these firms performed 10 or more hours of pro bono work. This contrasts with Medium-sized Firms without a pro bono policy, where the average was just 4.9 hours and only 19 percent of lawyers performed 10 or more hours. Policies may be less impactful within Small Firms: Lawyers at Small Firms without a policy averaged 22 hours of pro bono, compared with 20.5 hours at firms that had a policy, though we do see 50 percent of lawyers at Small Firms with a pro bono policy recorded 10 or more hours of pro bono work, compared to 55 percent at firms without a pro bono policy.<sup>12</sup>

PRO BONO COMMITTEES

Unlike pro bono coordinators who are involved in the day-to-day management and coordination of pro bono matters (discussed below), pro bono committees tend to play a more oversight and advisory role in shaping a firm’s pro bono practice.

This year, 57 percent of firms reported having a pro bono committee (comparable to 59 percent in the 2022 Index). Among different firm sizes, 83 percent of Medium-sized Firms indicated they had a pro bono committee, followed by 76 percent of Large Firms and 28 percent of Small Firms. Of the firms that did not have a pro bono

committee, 70 percent did report having a designated pro bono coordinator, which indicates (as we see in practice) that some firms prefer to create dedicated pro bono roles/teams rather than establish committees.

The presence of a pro bono committee correlates with a slightly higher average number of pro bono hours, as in 2022, with firms with a committee reporting an average 30.7 hours of pro bono work per lawyer, compared to 23.7 hours at firms without a pro bono committee. In this year’s data, however, we do not see higher engagement in firms that have a committee, with 44 percent of lawyers at firms with a pro bono committee performing 10 or more hours of pro bono work, compared to 46 percent at firms without a committee.

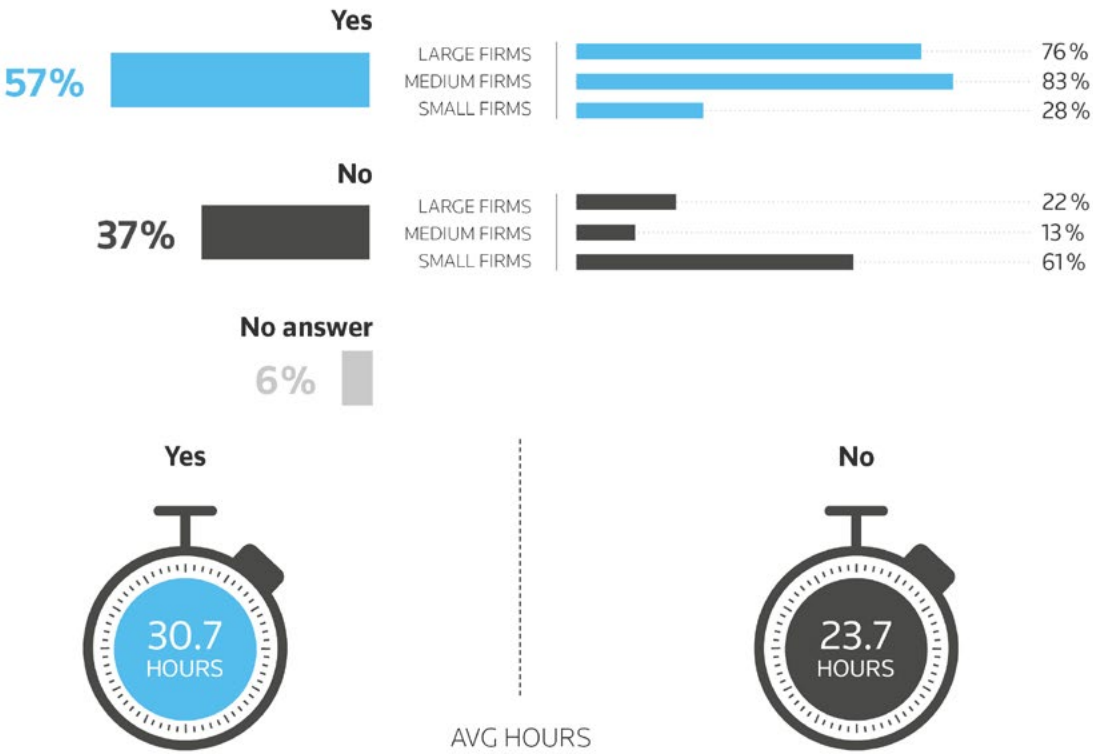
PRACTICE INSIGHT: A STRONGER STRUCTURE FOR A GROWING PRO BONO PRACTICE

*Marval O’Farrell Mairal (Argentina) restructured their pro bono team in 2022 to address two key challenges: encouraging more professionals to do pro bono and allowing firm-wide participation.*

*They hired a second full-time junior coordinator who supports the senior coordinator and the firm’s Pro Bono Program. The coordinators oversee the programme, identifying pro bono cases and matching them with suitable professionals.*

*The firm also created three subcommittees to support the work of their Pro Bono Committee. A new communications subcommittee organises internal communications about the pro bono programme, helping boost visibility of the firm’s pro bono work and celebrating the contributions of individual lawyers and teams. A new case expert subcommittee is comprised of seasoned lawyers with identified areas of expertise (e.g. tax, governance, etc.) who offer expert consultation to fellow lawyers and law students as they work on pro bono matters. This subcommittee has been instrumental in expanding participation in*

PRO BONO COMMITTEE



Q9-Does your firm have a pro bono committee?

*pro bono across the firm, especially among junior lawyers and students, allowing them to manage cases outside their main area of expertise. Finally, a new events subcommittee, made up of lawyers and non-lawyers from across the firm, identifies and develops trainings on high-demand topics to improve the quality of advice to pro bono clients.*

*The firm also appointed pro bono leads for each department. These individuals act as key points of contact with the pro bono coordinators. They gather feedback and seek to identify and address needs related to the pro bono programme, and to champion pro bono within their departments.*

*Overall, the new structure has resulted in a 10 percent total increase in pro bono hours from 2023 to 2024 and the firm has seen increased pro bono engagement at every level of the organisation from partners to paralegals.*

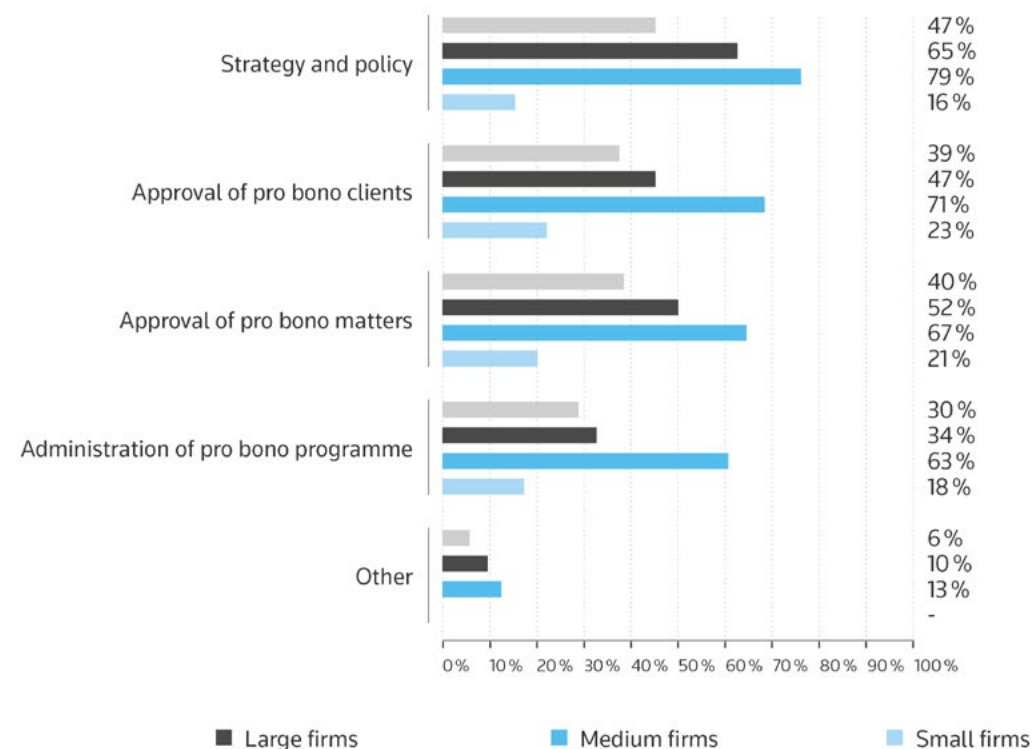
<sup>11</sup> As above, we note that the high rate of pro bono policies across the sector means the “no” sample is increasingly comprised of mostly Small and some Medium-sized Firms, many of which (especially Small Firms that choose to report) are highly active in pro bono despite not having formalised their pro bono infrastructure.

<sup>12</sup> The very high rates of adoption of pro bono policies among Large Firms mean the “no” sample is now too small to be representative of hours at Large Firms without such policies and, thus, we have not presented a relationship between hours/engagement and pro bono policy adoption this year for Large Firms.



## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRO BONO COMMITTEE

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDING FIRMS WHO INDICATED THAT THEIR PRO BONO COMMITTEE HAS THE FOLLOWING RESPONSIBILITIES



\* Q.9. Does your firm have a pro bono committee(s)?

## PRO BONO COORDINATORS

The final element we consider as part of “pro bono infrastructure” is whether firms have designated a pro bono coordinator to coordinate their firm’s day-to-day of pro bono. This can sometimes be a partner or associate with mostly fee-earning responsibilities who steps up to help coordinate the firm’s pro bono portfolio or it can be one or more dedicated pro bono professionals/employees hired to manage the pro bono of the firm. We delve more into dedicated pro bono professionals and pro bono team staffing in the next section.

A significant percentage of firms (83 percent) designate a person with primary responsibility to coordinate the firm’s day-to-day pro bono legal work, up from 77 percent in 2020<sup>13</sup> For many firms (49 percent), this person is also the most senior person in charge of pro bono (see below), whereas for 29 percent of firms responsibility for pro bono oversight and leadership is separate from day-to-day

management of the pro bono programme. Firms with a designated person coordinating the firm’s day-to-day pro bono work see fee earners average almost three times more pro bono than those without one—36.2 hours of pro bono compared to 13.9 hours.

This suggests that having a designated pro bono coordinator may contribute to more pro bono work being done. By firm size, the findings offer more nuance. In Large Firms, designating a pro bono coordinator correlated with nearly triple the average hours (36.7 hours versus 12.4 hours) compared to those without. Similarly, in Medium-sized Firms, lawyers at firms with a pro bono coordinator averaged significantly more average hours than those without (19.1 hours versus 11.8 hours). Conversely, for Small Firms the relationship is inverse with the influence of very small but highly engaged firms reporting this year: we find fee earners at Small Firms with no coordinator averaged 25.8 hours of pro bono compared to 12.6 hours at firms with a coordinator.

<sup>13</sup> Please note that we asked a different version of this question in 2022. For consistency, we compare to the last time we asked this question (as worded) in 2020.

## PRO BONO ROLES AND TEAMS

This year, we asked more pro bono staffing questions aimed at better understanding the impact of hiring employees into roles that are partly or fully dedicated to pro bono, as well as the impact that seniority of roles can have in influencing how effective a firm’s pro bono practice is. We also asked firms about how their pro bono and corporate social responsibility (or similar) teams interact and the amounts allocated to pro bono budgets.

### Pro bono employees

Globally, **72 percent of firms reported having at least one person employed full time or part time in their pro bono practice**, up from 61 percent in 2022. Firms reported an average of 2.2 full-time employees and 1.5 part-time

employees engaged in their pro bono practice. As we would expect, however, there is considerable variation among firms ranging from many who reported nil or one pro bono employee to larger teams of up to 22 mostly full-time pro bono staff.

The data shows a positive relationship between having a pro bono employee and the level of pro bono performed, with firms that hired at least one employee averaging 31.1 hours per fee earner, compared with 24.3 hours at firms with no pro bono employee. However, within these global averages there is considerable difference by firm size. For Large Firms, the relationship is much more pronounced: Fee earners at Large Firms with a pro bono employee average 37.5 hours compared with 7 hours at

## DID THE FIRM HIRE SOMEONE FULL TIME OR PART TIME IN THEIR PRO BONO PRACTICE?



At least one pro bono employee



No pro bono employee

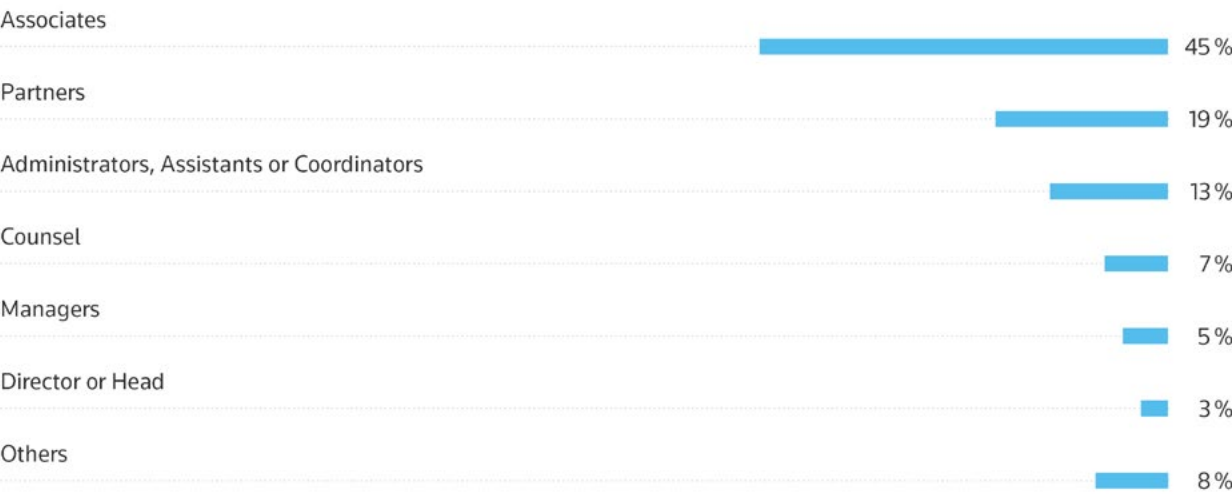


AVG HOURS

\* Q.6. Over the relevant reporting period, how many people were employed as either full or part-time pro bono professionals in your pro bono practice?



MOST COMMON PRO BONO ROLES



\* Q.6.a. **Please indicate how many employees in your pro bono practice were:** (Multiple Answer)

firms that do not, a factor of more than five times. For Medium-sized Firms, the difference is meaningful, but smaller: 20.3 hours at firms with a pro bono employee compared to 16.2 hours at firms without such a person. For Small Firms, the relationship is inverted, which may be explained because small firms that reported into the Index in 2024 tend to be very small and highly engaged in pro bono.<sup>14</sup>

The presence of a pro bono employee also correlates to engagement. Globally, 45 percent of lawyers from firms with at least one pro bono employee record ten or more hours of pro bono compared to 53 percent in firms without one. However, for Large and Medium-sized Firms this relationship looks very different, with 43 percent of lawyers at Large Firms with a pro bono coordinator

doing 10+ hours of pro bono compared to 21 percent at firms without a coordinator, and 48 percent of lawyers at Medium-sized Firms doing 10+ hours of pro bono compared with 25 percent at firms without one. On the other hand, for Small Firms, the influence of having a dedicated pro bono employee is less clear: Our data showed that 76 percent of lawyers were engaged in 10+ hours at firms without a coordinator compared to 47 percent at firms with one.

These findings can be understood in terms of the growing value of pro bono infrastructure and staff with size—larger firms with more staff benefit more from hiring dedicated staff to drive pro bono coordination.

Common pro bono roles

For the survey, we asked firms to tell us how many pro bono roles they had across a selection of standard titles—pro bono administrator, manager, associate, partner, director or head, and counsel. We also asked that they categorise these roles as either:

- “exclusive pro bono role” referring to a pro bono role with remit to work exclusively or principally on pro bono matters, or administration of such matters, or the firm’s pro bono programme; or - “mixed role” meaning pro bono employees who balance meaningful pro bono administration/management responsibilities with other fee-earning or non-fee-earning responsibilities.

The data indicates that **pro bono associates** are the most common pro bono role within firms (45 percent of the total roles reported). **Pro bono partners** are the second most prevalent type of role (19 percent), followed by administrators, assistants or coordinators (13 percent), counsel (7 percent), managers (5 percent), directors or heads (3 percent) and other (8 percent).

However, only 15 percent of reported pro bono partners and 20 percent of associates are in an exclusive pro bono role, compared with 66 percent of pro bono counsel, 62 percent of directors and heads, 62 percent of managers, and 57 percent of administrators. This indicates pro bono associates and partners are more likely to balance their pro bono responsibilities with other non-fee earning or, more likely, fee-earning responsibilities, whereas other types of roles (although less common) are more likely to be focused principally on pro bono.

For ease of analysis, we asked firms to report under common umbrella titles for pro bono staff (i.e. for senior associates, etc. to be reported as “associates” and so on), but we also provided an “Other” option and invited firms to tell us what other roles they have. These free text responses included some mixed roles, e.g. Pro Bono Counsel and Director, as well as other titles not offered as distinct options, such as Pro Bono Consultant and Chief Pro Bono Officer.

PRACTICE INSIGHT: DEDICATED STAFF AND AMBITIOUS TARGETS

*Basham Ringe & Correa (Mexico) engages in pro bono through a dedicated foundation called Fundación Basham.*

*In 2023, they implemented a new pro bono initiative in which all lawyers committed to perform at least 24 pro bono hours per year. They also hired a full-time pro bono coordinator to organise and measure the firm’s pro bono cases and objectives. The aim was to provide more structure and accountability for the pro bono programme, and to enhance participation and the quality of their pro bono work.*

*The hiring of a full-time pro bono coordinator, together with the pro bono target, has been a key factor in the success of the initiative. The coordinator allows the firm to more efficiently organise cases, track hours and provide meaningful opportunities for their lawyers to engage in pro bono work. The coordinator also keeps communication open and provides support, helping motivate their teams and ensuring that most lawyers meet or exceed their commitments. This combination of structure, support and accountability contributed to a 38 percent increase in pro bono hours from 2023 to 2024.*

Partner buy-in and senior leadership in pro bono

Having partner and other senior-level buy-in can have a meaningful impact on the uptake of pro bono in firms, helping drive commitment to and effectiveness of pro bono initiatives. Around half of firms (52 percent) reported that a partner was the most senior individual in charge of pro bono within the firm. Meanwhile, 14 percent indicated a director was the most senior person, 9 percent indicated a counsel, 5 percent indicated a manager, 3 percent indicated an associate, and 1 percent indicated a coordinator/administrator.

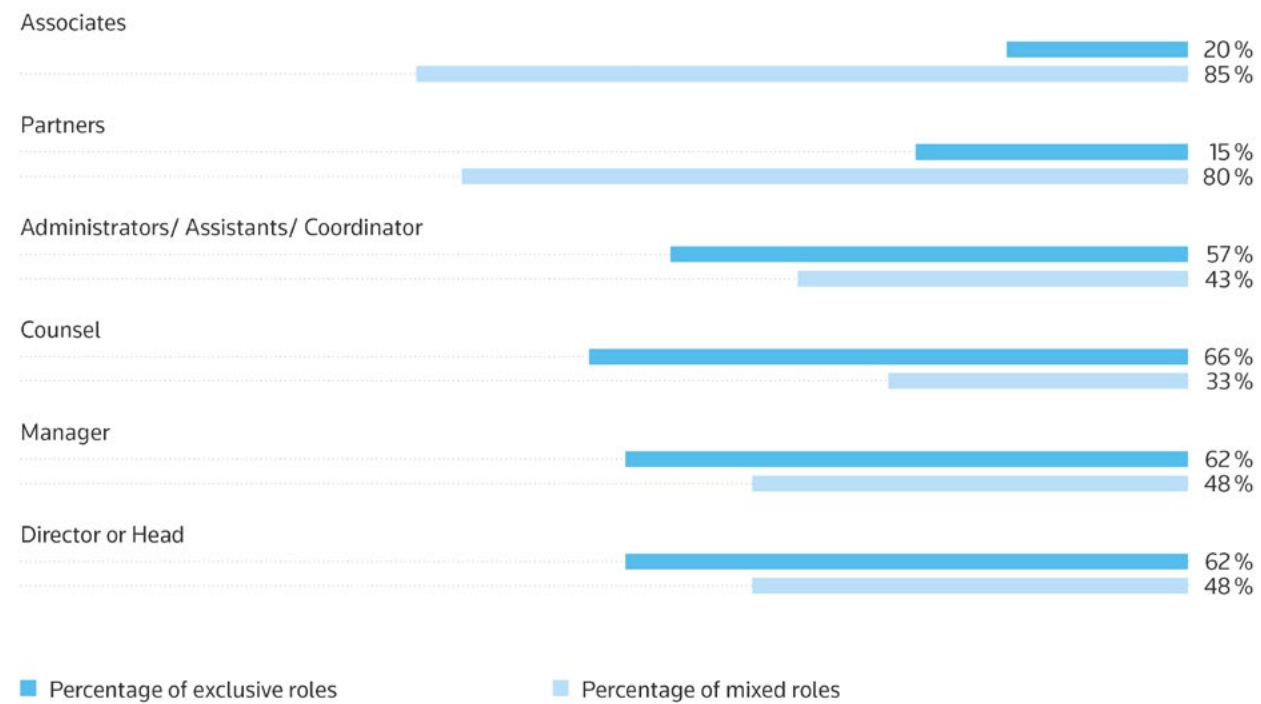
To assess the impact of seniority, we compared firms that reported having a partner, director, counsel, or head in charge of pro bono with a second group of firms that reported having a manager, associate, or administrator/ coordinator as the most senior person in charge of pro

<sup>14</sup> 43 percent of Small Firms reporting into the Index with hours data have 10 or fewer employees.



## MOST COMMON PRO BONO ROLES

### EXCLUSIVE PRO BONO ROLES V MIXED RESPONSIBILITIES



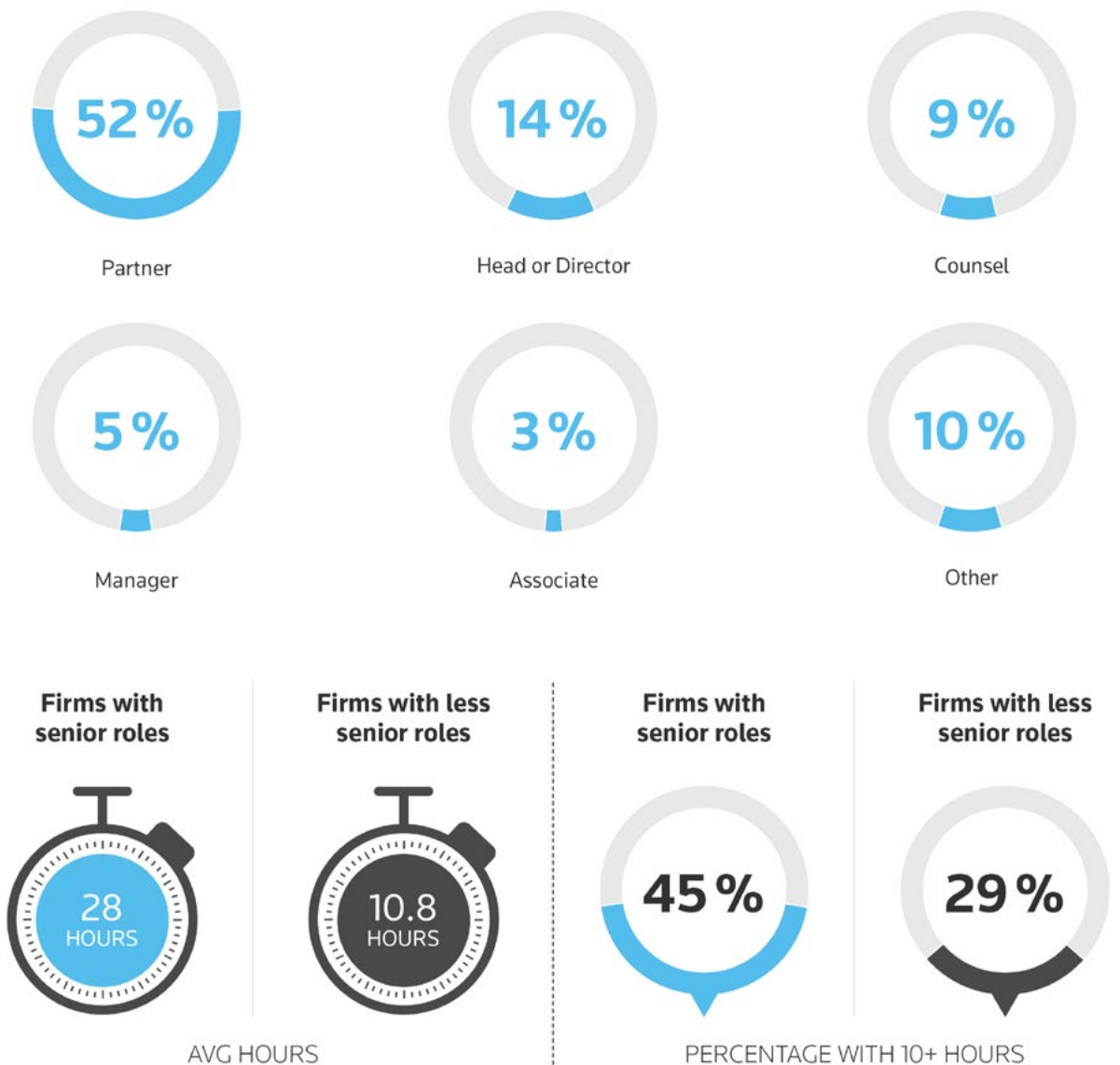
\* Q.6.a Please indicate how many employees in your pro bono practice were: (Multiple Answer)

bono.<sup>15</sup> Our hypothesis was that having a more senior person within a firm overseeing pro bono can contribute to buy-in within the firm and a higher overall level of pro bono hours and engagement. In the data, we confirmed that firms with more senior roles in charge of pro bono report nearly three times the average pro bono hours of those with less senior roles (28 hours versus 10.8 hours, respectively). Likewise, firms with more senior roles averaged 45 percent of lawyers doing 10 or more hours of pro bono compared to 29 percent at firms with less senior leadership.

Seniority is not a meaningful factor within Small Firms (average hours and engagement are effectively the same whether responsibility for pro bono sits with someone more senior or not) but in Large and Medium-sized Firms the difference is significant and, among those, firms with more senior roles in charge of pro bono have significantly higher average hours than those without—for Large Firms, 34.4 average hours versus 6.7 hours and for Medium-sized Firms, 18.4 hours versus 6.4 hours. On engagement, the difference is similar, with Large Firms with more senior oversight reporting that 42 percent of lawyers do 10 or more hours of pro bono versus 15 percent at firms without that senior leadership and Medium-sized Firms reporting 40 percent versus 24 percent.

<sup>15</sup> We acknowledge these are approximate groupings—we are using titles as a proxy for seniority and in different firms and markets different titles convey different levels of seniority.

## SENIOR LEADERSHIP FOR PRO BONO



\* Q.7 Who is the most senior person in charge of pro bono in the firm?



PRO BONO AND CSR

This year, we aimed to explore the relationship between pro bono and other corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, sustainability efforts, social impact programmes, environmental, social and governance (ESG) initiatives, and other similar programmes or activities (collectively, “CSR programmes”).

Among responding firms, 74 percent have an internal-facing CSR programme.<sup>16</sup> Of those, **45 percent reported that their pro bono and CSR programmes were managed separately and 26 percent said they were managed jointly**, while 29 percent did not specify. Half of firms (50 percent) indicated that their pro bono and CSR programmes had a separate budget, whereas 19 percent had a shared budget and 31 percent did not specify.

The data seems to signal that, at least for now, firms with a dedicated pro bono programme do more pro bono work than those whose pro bono is managed jointly with another CSR programme. Specifically, **firms with a dedicated pro bono programme performed 42 percent more pro bono hours**: an average of 33.9 hours, compared with 22.2 hours at firms with combined teams. We also see slightly higher levels of engagement in the data (46 percent of fee earners doing 10+ hours, compared with 39 percent where the programmes are managed jointly).

PRO BONO BUDGETS

We know financial investment can have a meaningful impact on the effectiveness of a pro bono programme. This year, we asked firms how much budget their firm allocated to conducting its pro bono practice. We asked firms to include amounts given as donations to pro bono charities and non-profits (e.g. to clearinghouses or bar association pro bono programmes) but not donations to pro bono charity clients, for example.

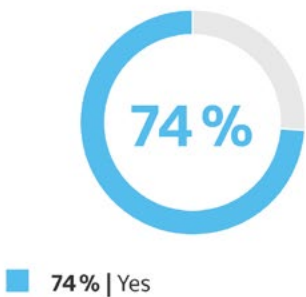
**More than a quarter of firms (26 percent) have a pro bono budget above \$100,000 USD.** The rest of firms

take a varied approach: 5 percent of firms have budgets of \$50,000–\$100,000, 1 percent are between \$30,000–\$50,000, and 9 percent are between \$10,000–\$30,000. Other firms operate with more modest budgets of \$1,000–\$5,000 (18 percent) and \$5,000–\$10,000 (10 percent), while 32 percent chose not to specify their budget.

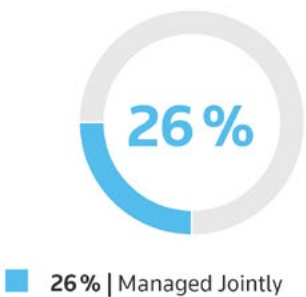
By firm size, unsurprisingly, Large Firms generally allocate more financial resources to support their pro bono practices. The most common pro bono budget among Large Firms was above \$100,000 (46 percent), followed by \$50,000–\$100,000 (6 percent). Medium-sized and Small Firms most commonly report budgets of \$1,000–

PRO BONO AND CSR

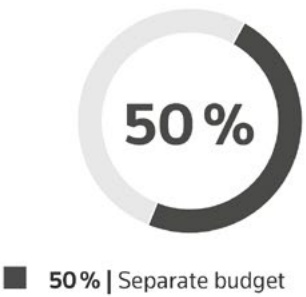
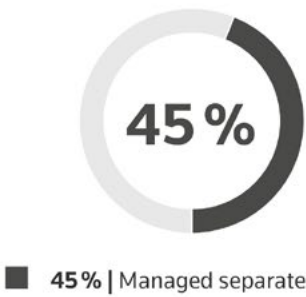
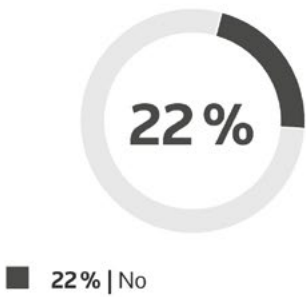
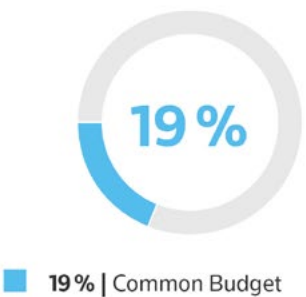
DOES YOUR FIRM HAVE A CSR, ESG OR OTHER SIMILAR PROGRAMME?



IF YES, ARE THE PROGRAMMES MANAGED JOINTLY OR SEPARATELY?



DO THE PROGRAMMES HAVE A COMMON OR SEPARATE BUDGET?



<sup>16</sup> Q.8 b. **Are the programmes managed jointly or separately?** (Managed jointly/Managed separately; single-select answer) + relationship with hours

<sup>16</sup> We specifically asked respondents to focus on internal-facing CSR initiatives, not client-facing CSR or ESG practice groups.

BUDGET COMPARISON AND IMPACT ON AVERAGE HOURS

IS YOUR BUDGET WERE LARGER, SMALLER, OR THE SAME COMPARED TO TWO YEARS AGO?



AVERAGE HOURS



\* Q.21. **is your budget larger, smaller or the same compared to two years ago?** Q. relationship of budget to # hours



\$5,000 (19 percent and 38 percent, respectively) or \$5,000–\$10,000 (15 percent and 13 percent, respectively).

Generally, pro bono budgets are growing, with 51 percent of firms with a dedicated budget responding that their budget is larger than it was two years ago. Among the rest, 46 percent had the same budget, and only 2 percent had seen cuts to their budgets in the last two years.

To make sense of the data and understand whether higher budgets correlate to more pro bono, we grouped firms with pro bono budgets of \$50,000 and above and those with budgets under \$50,000 to compare the two groups.

We find that firms with budgets of \$50,000 and over had more than three times higher average pro bono hours than their counterparts with lower budgets: an average of 31.9 hours, compared with 9.8 hours for firms allocating pro bono budgets of less than \$50,000. Firms with higher budgets have an average 38 percent of lawyers doing 10+ hours of pro bono compared with 21 percent in firms with lower budgets.

In this way, budget allocations seem to lead to higher pro bono engagement, making the financial investment worth the return.

# INCENTIVISING AND REWARDING PRO BONO

Many firms use incentives to encourage their lawyers to participate in pro bono. These incentives can take the form of compensation, incorporating pro bono into the appraisal or review process to ensure lawyers are rewarded for their efforts, or setting mandatory or aspirational targets for pro bono engagement.

## PRO BONO IN PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

By considering pro bono work in performance reviews, law firms can help signal that lawyers should approach these matters with the same level of commitment and professionalism as fee-earning matters. Globally, 80 percent of firms now factor pro bono into their review processes (up from 78 percent in 2022). Among those, 90 percent of Large Firms and 88 percent of Medium-sized Firms factor pro bono work into their review processes (a rise from 80 and 87 percent, respectively, in 2022). Among Small Firms, 70 percent consider pro bono in reviews (from 65 percent in 2022).

The data shows a positive relationship between factoring pro bono work into reviews and average pro bono hours, with lawyers (non-partners) at firms that factor pro bono performing an average of 29.7 hours of pro bono work, significantly more than the 17.4 hours at firms that do not do so.

Interestingly, we see little difference in terms of depth of pro bono engagement among non-partners—44 versus 47 percent of non-partner lawyers did 10+ hours of pro bono, depending on whether the firm does or does not factor pro bono in reviews. Though, we did see a difference among partners, with 47 percent of partners at firms that factor pro bono in reviews performing 10+ hours of pro bono, compared to 40 percent at firms that do not.

## FACTORING PRO BONO IN COMPENSATION

Taking pro bono into account when assessing compensation for lawyers can also send a clear signal and influence engagement levels. We see that 57 percent of firms now consider pro bono work in their compensation decisions for non-partners, up from 52 percent in 2022. Among those, 82 percent of Large Firms and 50 percent of Medium-sized Firms and 28 percent of Small Firms factor pro bono work into their compensation processes (a rise from 78 percent and 44 percent in Large and Medium-sized Firms, and a drop from 38 percent for Small Firms from 2022).

Lawyers (non-partners) at firms that consider pro bono work when determining compensation averaged 33.4 hours of pro bono work, compared to 19 hours at firms that do not. Meanwhile, partners at firms that consider pro bono work when determining compensation averaged 34.5 hours compared to 24.8 hours at firms that do not.

In this year’s data, we do not see a significant difference in percentage engagement depending on whether compensation factors in pro bono. Lawyers are engaged in 10+ hours of pro bono at firms that factor pro bono into compensation at similar rates (44 percent) to those at firms that do not (46 percent).

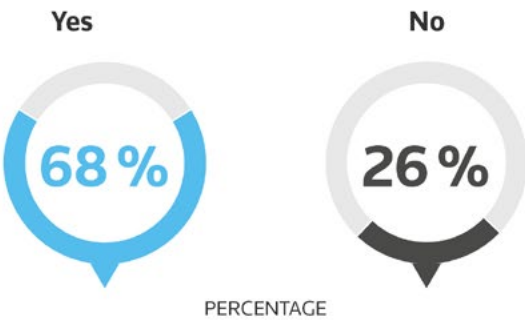
## COUNTING PRO BONO HOURS TOWARDS FEE-EARNING TARGETS

Our data shows that 68 percent of responding firms factor pro bono into their fee-earning or utilisation target.

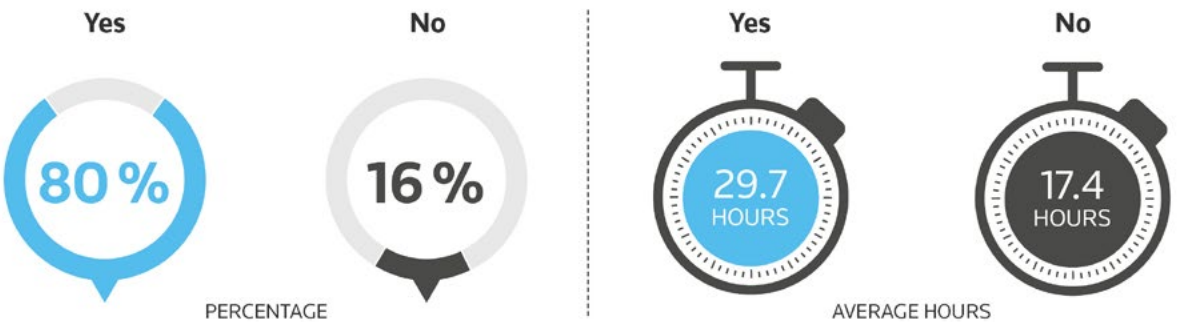


## INCENTIVISING AND REWARDING PRO BONO

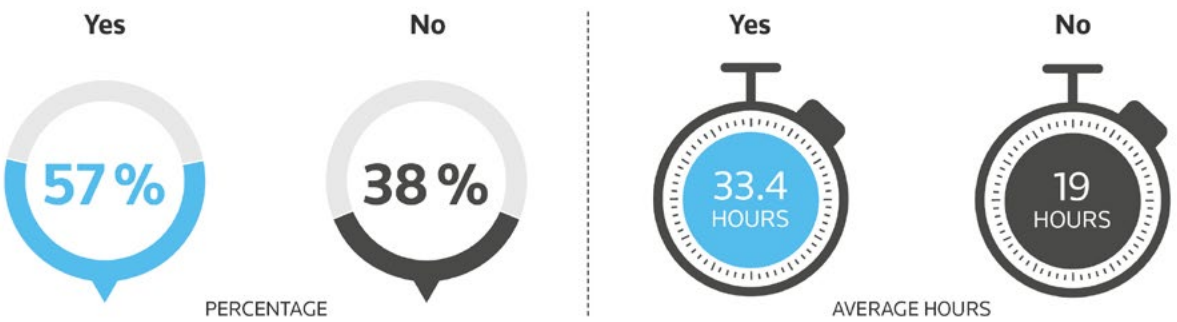
### PRO BONO FACTORED INTO HOURS OR TARGETS



### PRO BONO FACTORED INTO APPRAISAL/PERFORMANCE REVIEW PROCESS



### PARTICIPATION IN PRO BONO FACTORED INTO COMPENSATION



\* Q.15 Is participation in pro bono factored into the appraisal/performance (non-partners)?

\* Q.16. Is participation in pro bono factored into compensation for target (non-partners)?

\* Q.17. Is participation in pro bono factored into hours or utilisation non-partners?

However, firms take different approaches. Over a third (34 percent) said they treat all pro bono hours and work in the same way as fee-earning hours and work (down from 46 percent in 2022).<sup>17</sup> Another 22 percent credit pro bono

hours and work up to a maximum threshold (as in 2022), while only 3 percent indicated a minimum fee-earning hours threshold must be reached before pro bono hours are considered (compared to 5 percent in 2022). Only 2

## DOES YOUR FIRM HAVE A PRO BONO TARGET?



\* Q.18 Does your firm have a requirement that your lawyers perform a specified amount of pro bono each year?

## COUNTING PRO BONO HOURS TO FEE-EARNING TARGETS

### PRO BONO FACTORED INTO HOURS OR TARGETS



\* Q.17. Is participation in pro bono factored into hours or utilisation target (non-partners)?

<sup>17</sup> It is too early to say if this is a trend or not and will be an area to monitor in the next Index.



percent of firms indicated pro bono is not factored at all into their hour or utilisation targets. Overall, firms that count pro bono hours towards fee-earning targets perform twice the number of hours compared to firms that do not (31.5 hours versus 16 hours).

PRO BONO TARGETS

Over the years, we have seen a trend towards setting specific targets for pro bono hours. Such targets, whether mandated by regulatory bodies or established as requirements by firms themselves, can meaningfully impact the amount of pro bono being done within a firm. Some firms have aligned with voluntary industry initiatives such as the UK Collaborative Plan for Pro Bono, which carries with it a 25-hour annual pro bono target expectation. Similarly, the Pro Bono Declaration of the Americas commits signatory law firms to achieve 20 annual pro bono hours per attorney. The Australian Pro Bono Centre has a voluntary aspirational target of 35 hours for lawyers in private practice and 20 hours for in-house counsel.

These targets, whether mandatory or aspirational, play a crucial role in shaping pro bono engagement by establishing clear expectations and benchmarks. They reflect a recognition of the importance of pro bono work from the top and provide structured goals that help firms and individual attorneys contribute effectively to pro bono service.

Pro bono targets

We first asked about pro bono targets in 2014 and at the time 21.7 percent of firms had pro bono targets. In 2024, 42 percent of responding firms overall had a pro bono target.

Most firms that set a target opt for an aspirational target, where hitting a threshold for pro bono is encouraged

but not strictly enforced (76 percent), while a quarter of firms set mandatory targets (24 percent). Targets are more prevalent among Large and Medium-sized Firms. We saw 52 percent of Large Firms reporting having pro bono targets, followed by 50 percent of Medium-sized Firms and 26 percent of Small Firms.

Firms that adopt targets, whether mandatory or aspirational, report 37 percent higher hours than firms without targets: an average of 33.8 hours of pro bono per lawyer at those with targets, compared to 23.2 hours in firms without targets. Firms that adopt mandatory targets do more hours than those with aspirational targets: 40.4 hours on average, compared to 32.1 hours.

Similarly, higher pro bono engagement is associated with pro bono targets, with 50 percent of lawyers completing 10+ hours of pro bono work at firms that have targets, compared to 39 percent at firms without targets. Firms with mandatory targets average higher participation, with 71 percent of lawyers doing 10+ hours compared to 45 percent at firms with aspirational targets.

What target to set

This is the first year we are publishing specific data on pro bono targets. Our survey findings indicate that the **average global annual pro bono target is 30 hours**, and the median pro bono target adopted by firms globally is 25 hours, with submissions covering a wide range from 1 to 240 hours.<sup>18</sup> The most common targets set by firms were: 20, 25, 30, 40 and 50.

By firm size, Large Firms had a median target of 25 hours, while Small Firms and Medium-sized Firms were not far off, reporting a median of 20 hours. Australia had the highest median target of 36.5 hours, while most other regions, including the US, Europe and UK (England & Wales), all had a median of 25 hours, and the Americas (excluding the US) had a median of 20 hours.

PRACTICE INSIGHT: THE POWER OF SETTING A MANDATORY TARGET

*Dechert LLP (United States and Global) introduced a 25-hour annual pro bono requirement for all the lawyers in its US offices in 2006. The policy was extended to all global offices in 2014. The target facilitated Dechert in keeping its commitment under the PBI Pro Bono Challenge to contribute at least 3 percent of its total billable hours to pro bono work.*

*The pro bono requirement is monitored by practice group leaders, and compliance levels are close to 100 percent. This makes it easier for the firm to staff pro bono matters and to take on large projects knowing that they will have volunteers available to work on them and that their pro bono team will not need to spend significant time persuading lawyers to work on these matters. The mandatory requirement also helps ensure pro bono is embedded at all levels of the firm’s culture. Junior lawyers are encouraged to take on pro bono work and this is reinforced by seeing all partners and associates doing the same.*

*The 25-hour requirement is a minimum, but over the years engagement in the pro bono programme has grown and, as of 2024, more than half of the firm’s lawyers exceed 50 hours per year of pro bono.*

Mandatory or aspirational

As we note above, all targets have a positive relationship with the number of hours and depth of engagement with pro bono within firms.

There are continuing ethical and practical debates about whether pro bono should be voluntary or required. However, we do see in the data that mandatory targets are associated with higher average hours—40.4 hours—compared with 32.1 hours by lawyers at firms with aspirational targets.

At firms with a mandatory target, 71 percent of lawyers performed 10+ hours of pro bono, compared to 45 percent where the target was aspirational. This is akin to our 2022

data, which showed that 85 percent of lawyers working at firms with a mandatory target performed 10+ hours of pro bono, which was twice the percentage of their colleagues whose firms’ targets were aspirational, at 44 percent in that same year.

PRACTICE INSIGHT: GETTING CREATIVE TO MOTIVATE MORE PRO BONO

*In 2020, Debevoise & Plimpton LLP (United States) created an incentive by which US associates and counsel who have done 50 or more hours of pro bono work during the year can nominate six organisations to receive a monetary donation from the firm. Lawyers are encouraged to nominate organisations with which they have a connection. As a result, the organisations are diverse and work internationally, nationally and across the cities where the firm has offices. They are selected by lawyers in each office, coordinated by the firm’s Pro Bono Counsel. After hearing about the organisations and a period of discussion, each office group selects an organisation to receive a donation. The firm publicises the donations so that lawyers who did less than 50 hours of pro bono hours are incentivised to increase their participation.*

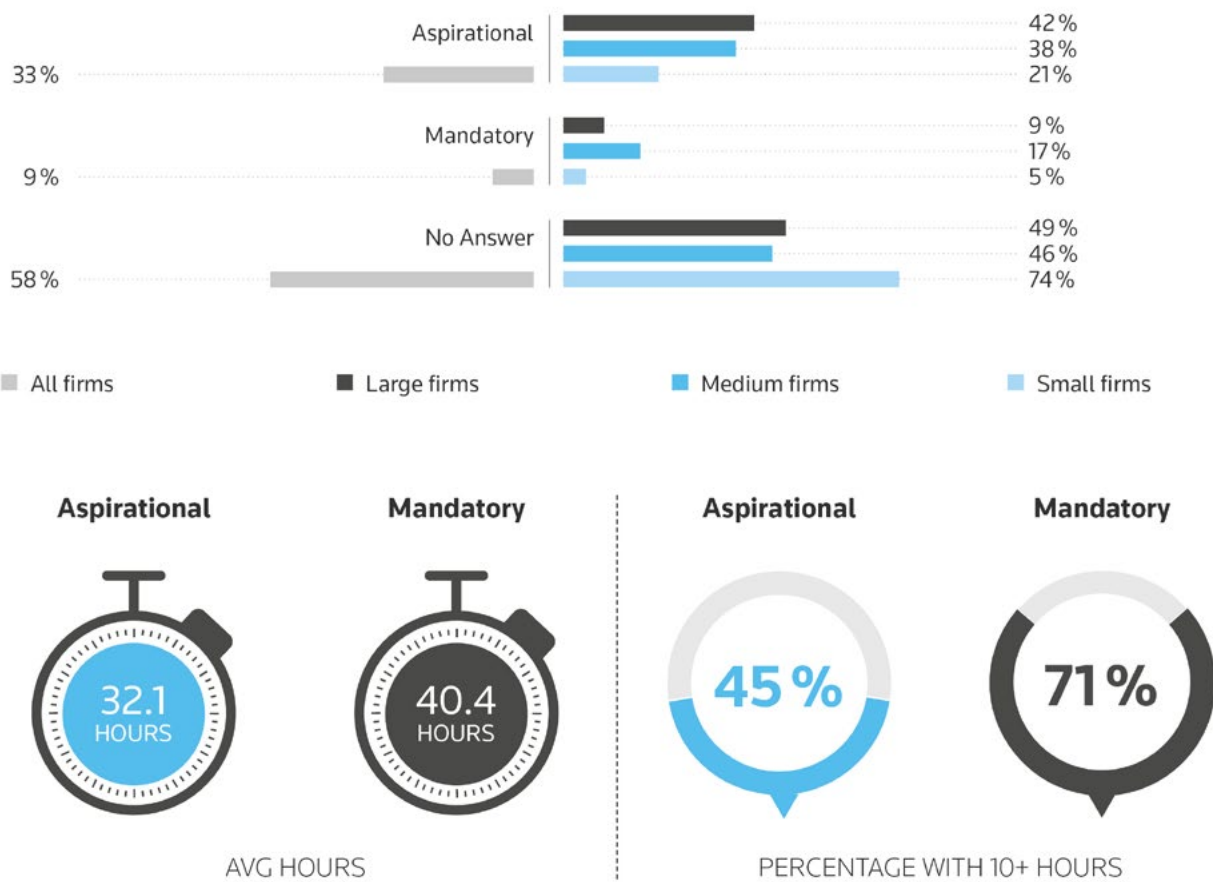
*The initiative has helped lawyers across the firm to better understand the issues and communities that their colleagues care about. It has also helped to deepen connections between the organisations and the firm. The initiative began in April 2020, and the early days of the programme were particularly important in connecting lawyers across the firm while they were working from home during the pandemic.*

*The incentive complements others the firm has in place to encourage involvement in pro bono. For example, they hold a reception each year for lawyers who have done 20 or more hours of pro bono and highlight pro bono successes in their internal weekly newsletter. Importantly, the firm also counts pro bono hours towards lawyers’ overall hours targets.*

<sup>18</sup> 240 hours as a target is commendable, but it is an outlier from one firm and not representative of the broader sector. In line with good practice for data analysis, this outlier was excluded when calculating average and median targets across the data set to avoid skewing our results.



IS THE TARGET MANDATORY OR ASPIRATIONAL



\* Q.18. Does your firm have a requirement that your lawyers perform a specified amount of pro bono each year?

DIVERSITY AND PRO BONO

For the first time in 2022, we asked about firms’ diversity commitments in relation to pro bono. We did not define the term “formal diversity commitment” to be inclusive of different approaches to diversity, which vary considerably around the globe, and we invited free text responses to give a broad picture of how firms were thinking about diversity in the pro bono context. This year, we introduced structured questions to allow more precision and comparability.

There is an increase in the number of firms with diversity commitments in relation to pro bono—33 percent of firms, up from 27 percent in 2022. Firms in Australia report the highest rate of diversity commitments at 55 percent, followed by firms in the Americas region (excluding the US) at 46 percent and 36 percent of firms in the US.

This year, we included a question to understand what form diversity commitments take. The data suggests that firms are taking different approaches, but most commonly commitments included:

- Offering pro bono support to organisations that work on matters that serve diverse communities (29 percent)
- Commitment to staffing pro bono matters with a diverse team of lawyers (22 percent)
- Offering financial contributions to organisations that serve diverse communities (13 percent)

We offered a free text box and received insightful responses. Several firms reported forming pro bono task forces with diverse objectives, including raising awareness about racial inequalities and LGBTQ+ issues. Others mentioned developing pillars and structures like private social investment, corporate volunteering, pro bono practices and DE&I (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) initiatives. Additionally, some firms highlighted their participation in alliances that promote diversity, such as the Law Firm Antiracism Alliance.

PRACTICE INSIGHT: ALIGNING SOCIAL IMPACT FOR STAFF AND PRO BONO CLIENTS

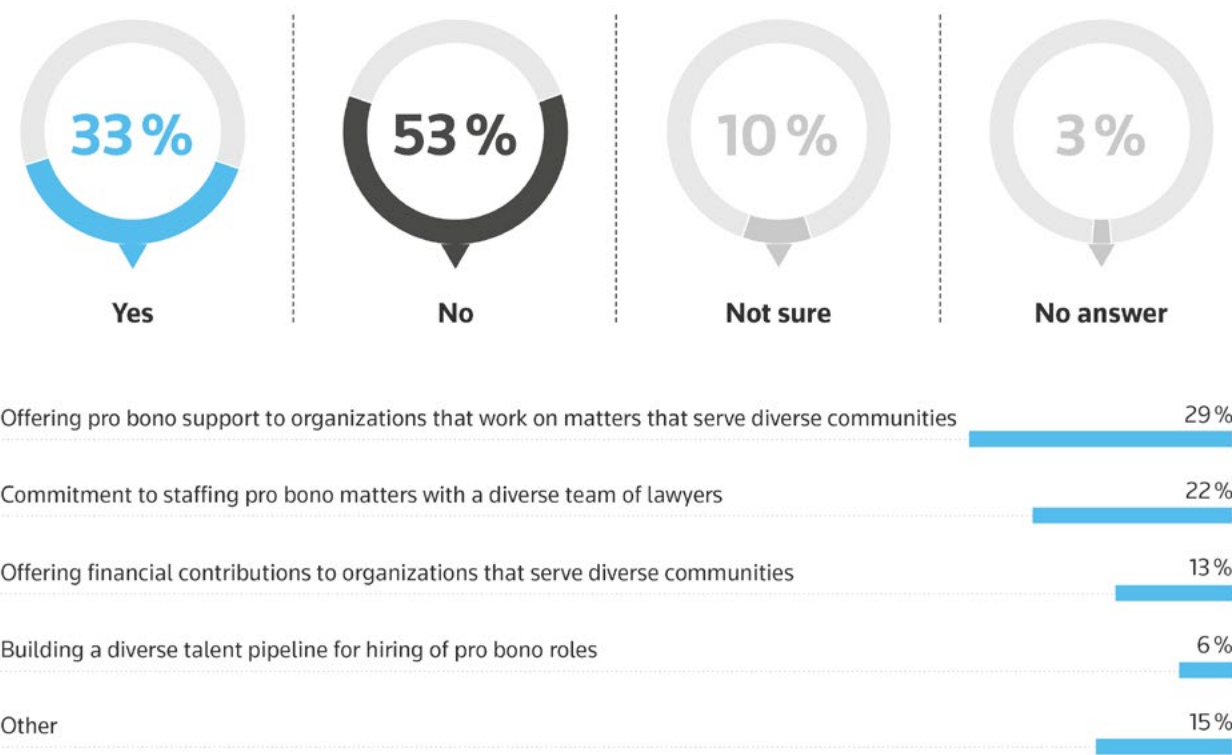
*TozziniFreire Advogados (Brazil) established a pro bono initiative in 2022 to support vulnerable and unhoused transgender people in São Paulo in rectifying their identity documents. This process can be prohibitively expensive and, when documents are not rectified, it often leads to discrimination and exclusion from the job market. The initiative is carried out in partnership with local organisations that operate shelters in São Paulo. In addition to legal assistance, the firm covers associated notary costs.*

*From 2022 to 2024, the firm had assisted a total of 26 people, with 13 certificates rectified and 396 hours of work dedicated by 44 pro bono volunteers. The firm also prepared booklets on how to rectify documents and the respect of chosen names, and it engages with public interest litigations for the acknowledgement of the rights of trans people.*

*In addition to the impact on the lives of the people who receive pro bono support, the project also trains volunteers to be multipliers in the fight for trans people’s rights, in line with the firm’s DE&I commitments. The work has created space for staff members of the firm to share their personal experiences and catalysed the adoption of an internal policy to help transgender staff with funding and assistance in rectifying their documents when needed—aligning the firm’s social impact internally with its work for pro bono clients.*



FORMAL DIVERSITY COMMITMENT



\* Q.4 Does your firm have a formal diversity commitment in relation to pro bono? (Yes/No answer)  
Q.4 If yes, what is the commitment and what form does it take?

PRACTICE INSIGHT: TACKLING INJUSTICE THROUGH PRO BONO AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Mayer Brown LLP (US) created an initiative called Project Equity in June 2020 following the killing of George Floyd by police officers in Minneapolis. The project was designed to broaden the firm's community engagement on issues of racial and social justice, and to help bring about meaningful change.

Through Project Equity, the firm pledged to devote 50,000 hours through 2023 to fight systemic racism and promote racial equity in the US. The firm also pledged financial support to organisations that work to fight systemic racism or that primarily serve communities of colour and developed pro bono

and community service opportunities focused on voter rights, criminal justice and policing reform, housing and economic stability, education equity and minority-owned small business assistance. While initially directed at addressing systemic racism in the US, the initiative was expanded to all global offices with a focus on migrant workers, housing, education, empowering minority-owned social enterprises and creating greater opportunities for Black law students.

Through the end of 2023, the initiative had allowed the firm to develop more than 50 projects in the US and surpass their goal of devoting 50,000 hours on matters addressing racial justice. The firm recently renewed their hours and financial commitment to Project Equity for another three years.

PRO BONO IMPACT

For the first time, in 2024, we asked how firms track, measure and communicate the impact of their pro bono work.

A significant number of firms (74 percent) reported that they measure or track their pro bono results and/or impact. Among these, 93 percent of Large Firms, 71 percent of Medium-sized Firms and 49 percent of Small Firms track or measure their pro bono results.

For firms that track impact, we asked *what* they measure or track. The top three metrics firms reported were: the number of pro bono hours worked (70 percent), the number of clients served and the number of pro bono matters handled (62 percent), and the source of pro bono matters (43 percent).

Our data indicates there remains more focus on quantitative metrics, like number of hours and matters, though a good number of firms are also looking at qualitative metrics such as client feedback (33 percent), community impact (29 percent), outcome of matters (38 percent) and lawyer engagement (40 percent). We will look to see if these figures grow in future years.

We offered firms a text box to provide details of other metrics too, beyond the predefined list, and firms also noted:

- notional corresponding value if pro bono hours were charged at fee-paying rates
- qualitative analysis of specific projects
- number of partners involved in pro bono
- number of teams involved in pro bono<sup>19</sup>

Firms use impact data in different ways and for different reasons. By far, the top ranked way firms use impact data is to demonstrate value provided to the community and to communicate impact, and this finding holds across all firm sizes. Of next importance were (in order): identifying areas for improvement in pro bono practice (i.e. evaluation and learning), professional development, strengthening client relationships and evaluating staff performance.

Finally, we asked how firms spread the word about the impact of their pro bono work. The top three avenues for sharing results of pro bono impact were internal newsletters and blog posts (78 percent), published impact stories on websites and social media updates (67 percent) and awards (61 percent).

<sup>19</sup> For the next Index, we will consider if we can include these additional metrics in the pre-select list, where appropriate to do so.



**PRACTICE INSIGHT: USING THE POWER OF COLLABORATIVE TARGET-SETTING, DATA AND COMMUNICATIONS TO FUEL PRO BONO ACTION**

*Gowling WLG (UK) LLP decided to professionalise and strengthen the firm’s UK pro bono practice through a series of new initiatives implemented in 2021 (basic infrastructure), 2022 (new reporting) and 2023 (new aspirational targets).*

*The new reporting initiative includes revised monthly pro bono reports. The report now includes the total pro bono hours for the firm, as well as the total hours for each of the four areas of practice groups and for each sub-area team within them. It also includes the number of pro bono hours per fee earner, firm-wide and for each team, and tracks each team’s progress against the aspirational target they set. Finally, the report shows the percentage of lawyers doing, and not doing, pro bono, to help to highlight spare pro bono capacity in each team. The reports go out monthly and complement other initiatives, like target setting, pro bono “thank you” vouchers, etc.*

*The new aspirational targets initiative was encouraged to increase pro bono engagement and team ownership of their own targets. The firm considers that there has been a shift in mindset with the aspirational targets. Whilst they initially thought it would have been better to have a top-down, firm-wide target, they realised that the aspirational target by team was a key motivational factor.*

*The firm nearly doubled its pro bono hours from 2022 to 2023, and this trend has continued into 2024.*

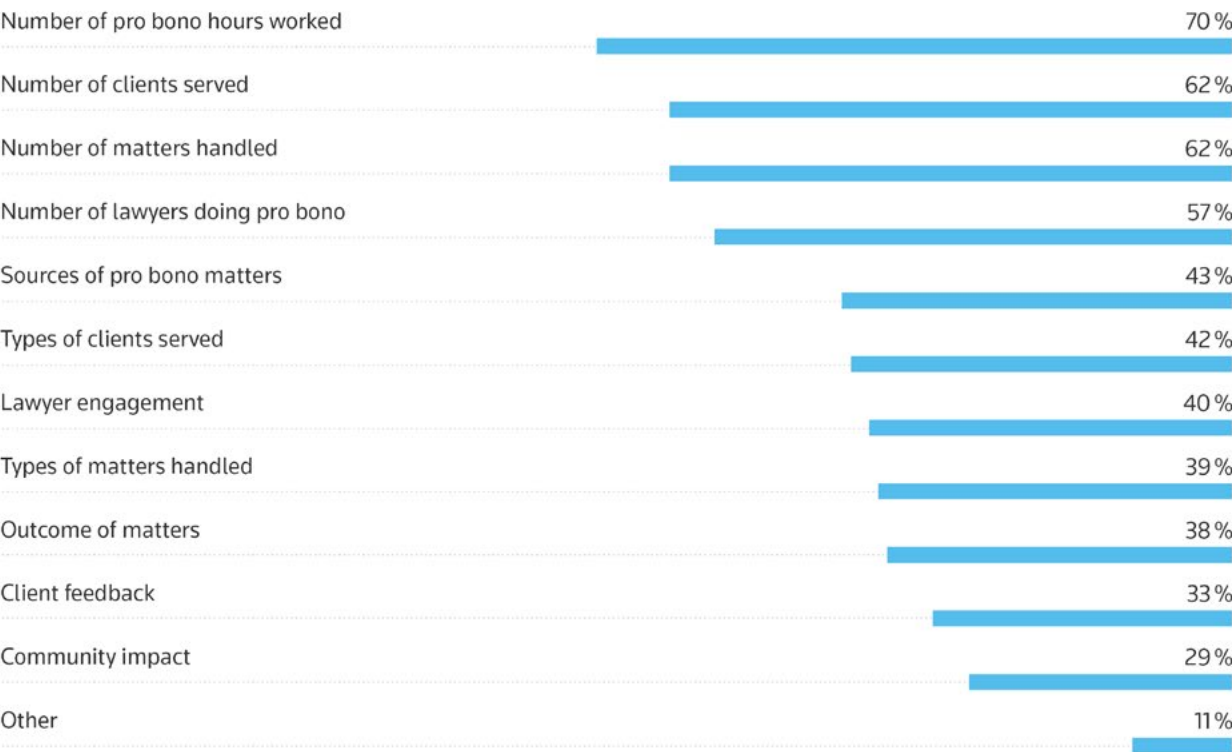
**PRO BONO IMPACT MEASUREMENT**



**HOW DO YOU COMMUNICATE THE IMPACT OF YOUR PRO BONO WORK?**



**WHAT DO YOU MEASURE OR TRACK?**



\* Q.21. Does your firm measure or track your pro bono results and/or impact? Y/N

## REGIONAL AND COUNTRY FINDINGS







# AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

The culture of pro bono in Africa and the Middle East is diverse. In some countries, the practice of pro bono is still nascent, with pro bono activities being carried out on an ad hoc basis, while in others, the practice of pro bono is more established, with a vibrant pro bono culture. This year, we received submissions from 74 firms in 19 countries in Africa and the Middle East, compared to 98 firms in 2022. This is the first year we are including an in-depth analysis for Saudi Arabia, having received five submissions for the country.

In Africa, South Africa continues to be a pro bono leader, with high levels of engagement and an average of 38.4 hours of pro bono per lawyer each year. However, Kenya and Nigeria are increasingly influential pro bono markets in the region. New ecosystem entrants such as the Pro Bono Institute in Kenya and longstanding voices such as the Public Interest Law Partnership in Nigeria, the Center for Reproductive Rights in Kenya, Women's Probono Initiative in Uganda, Avocats Sans Frontières in Uganda and Tanzania, and ProBono.Org in South Africa, are striving to build interest in and support for pro bono.

In the African context, bar associations play a pivotal role in putting pro bono and access to justice on the agenda, such as at the 2024 annual conferences of the East Africa Law Society<sup>20</sup> and the Nigerian Bar Association<sup>21</sup> and in dedicated convenings like the SADC (Southern African Development Community) Lawyers' Association Regional Probono Forum in 2024.<sup>22</sup> Beyond convenings, the East Africa Law Society is monitoring pro bono impact in the region and working to raise the profile of pro bono in the legal community across East Africa. In South Africa, we see a more directed approach to pro bono through linking minimum pro bono hours expectations to licensing requirements. Still, we did see a decline in the number of African firms reporting into the survey in 2024, with Medium-sized Firms especially citing a lack of dedicated pro bono staff and resources as a barrier to consistently tracking and reporting their pro bono.

In the Middle East, pro bono culture is growing, driven by influence from international firms with offices in the region. This shift is supported by a widening range of ecosystem players that encourage pro bono, such as government-sponsored programmes and informal initiatives led by international law firms, including in Dubai where firms have set up pro bono networks and lawyers are participating in programmes to provide free advice to members of the public.

<sup>20</sup> EALS Annual Conference, Kampala, Uganda (Nov. 2024), <https://events.ealawsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/29th-EALS-Annual-Conference-Brochure-Final-Update.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> Nigerian Bar Association Annual General Conference, Lagos, Nigeria (Aug. 2024), <https://agc.nigerianbar.org.ng/conference/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/2024-NBA-AGC-Preliminary-Conference-Schedule.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> Sic. SADC Lawyers' Association Regional Probono Forum, Zanzibar, Tanzania (Apr. 2024), <https://sadcla.org/sadc-la-regional-probono-forum/>



However, the picture is also mixed. Much of the Middle East is becoming an increasingly challenging environment for both civil society and legal service providers, with worsening political and economic instability and armed conflicts, making local pro bono delivery difficult or impossible. By contrast, in the Gulf region there are promising signs of growth, led by the presence of international firms with offices in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), where firms increased their pro bono hours in the last two years. With limited exceptions, we continue to see very few regional and local firms in the Middle East reporting into the Index of Pro Bono survey.

HOURS AND ENGAGEMENT IN 2024

In Africa and the Middle East, firms reported a total of 60,925 hours of pro bono. This year, we see a small dip from 2022’s regional average of 21.9 hours to **18 hours** of pro bono per lawyer, but an increase in average pro bono hours for partners up to **19.4 hours** from 14.7 hours in 2022.

Pro bono engagement in the region is relatively steady. Across reporting firms in Africa and the Middle East, **29 percent** of fee earners provided pro bono services, from 32 percent in 2022. Meanwhile, 20 percent of lawyers offered more than 10 hours of pro bono per year, as in 2022 at 21 percent. The picture is mixed at the country level, with a rise on key metrics in places like South Africa and the UAE, and a decline in others. Pro bono engagement in the region shows mixed results. Among reporting firms in Africa and the Middle East, 29 percent of partners provided pro bono services, a decrease from 34 percent in 2022. However, as noted above, the average number of hours spent on pro bono in the year increased. Meanwhile, 24 percent of partners contributed 10+ hours of pro bono work per year, up from 20 percent in 2022.

The average annual pro bono target for the Africa and Middle East region was 33.8 hours and the median was 27.5 hours.

OTHER FINDINGS

Firms with offices in the region are motivated to support the community, with 88 percent citing it as their main reason for pro bono work. Other reasons include training and skill development (73 percent), client interest alignment (52 percent), staff retention (50 percent), marketing (39 percent) and external mandates (20 percent).

The data shows firms are placing emphasis on immigration (44 percent) and access to justice (64 percent), as well as emerging areas like climate and biodiversity (45 percent). Support for charities, individuals and social enterprises remains robust, with 86, 74 and 67 percent of firms supporting these client groups, respectively. The primary methods of assistance are corporate advice (88 percent) and legal research (81 percent). Legal clinics and direct client approaches are key sources of pro bono opportunities, with 77 and 68 percent of firms relying on those sources, respectively.

Especially in the Middle East and North Africa, reporting is heavily weighted to international firms. Thus, it is not surprising (but perhaps not fully representative) to find that most firms have implemented some element of pro bono infrastructure (86 percent) and 76 percent have a pro bono policy. Many are committed to diversity initiatives in relation to pro bono (38 percent) and 79 percent are tracking their pro bono impact. Of the reporting firms with offices in the region, 29 percent reported allocating over \$100,000 USD to their pro bono practice and 14 percent allocate a more modest budget of \$1,000–\$5,000, with the remaining firms (around 20 percent) falling in between.

COUNTRY	FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Bahrain	Charles Russell Speechlys LLP	-	-
Bahrain	DLA Piper	1.7	16.7
Egypt	Dentons	-	-
Egypt	White & Case LLP	12.5	13.6
Ethiopia	Senaite Tassew Law office	-	-
Ghana	Africa Legal Associates	11.1	56
Iraq	Eversheds Sutherland LLP	0	0
Jordan	Dentons UK and Middle East LLP	2.9	20
Jordan	Eversheds Sutherland LLP	5.1	12.9
Kenya	ALN Kenya   Anjarwalla & Khanna LLP	55.8	16.5
Kenya	Bowmans	8.2	-
Kenya	Meru & Njagi Advocates	16.7	66.7
Kenya	Ochieng Oginga & Co. Advocates	10	100
Kenya	TLO Advocates LLP	16.8	100
Kenya	WKA Advocates	10	100
Kuwait	Holman Fenwick Willan LLP (HFW)	-	-
Lebanon	Dentons	-	-
Mauritius	Accenture	0.4	0
Mauritius	Uteem Chambers	-	-
Morocco	Dentons Morocco	1.9	11.1
Morocco	DLA Piper	0	0
Nigeria	Dentons ACAS-Law (Adepetun, Caxton-Martins, Agbor & Segun)	225	100
Nigeria	ALN Nigeria   Aluko & Oyebode	0.5	3.8
Nigeria	E&P Legal	8.6	86
Nigeria	Udo Udoma & Belo-Osagie	4.5	14.4
Oman	Addleshaw Goddard LLP	1.4	10
Oman	CMS	-	-
Oman	Dentons UK and Middle East LLP	1.9	4.5
Oman	DLA Piper	0	0
Qatar	Al Tamimi & Company	6.2	13
Qatar	Crowell & Moring LLP	0.2	-
Qatar	Dentons UK and Middle East LLP	0.8	-
Qatar	DLA Piper	0	0
Qatar	Eversheds Sutherland LLP	0.6	-
Qatar	K&L Gates LLP	7.7	30
Qatar	White & Case LLP	20.7	14.3
Saudi Arabia	Accenture	0.4	-
Saudi Arabia	Al Tamimi & Company	4	11.9
Saudi Arabia	Dentons UK and Middle East LLP	3	5
Saudi Arabia	DLA Piper	0	0
Saudi Arabia	Eversheds Sutherland LLP	0.3	2.85



COUNTRY	FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Saudi Arabia	White & Case LLP	8.1	17.9
South Africa	Allen & Overy*	25.7	49
South Africa	Bowmans	28.6	-
South Africa	Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr Inc.	12.9	6
South Africa	Dentons	10	61.1
South Africa	DLA Piper	79.9	53
South Africa	Norton Rose Fulbright South Africa	85.6	84.3
South Africa	White & Case LLP	19.7	51.3
Tanzania	Maxiserve Attorneys	1	50
UAE	Accenture	0.1	-
UAE	Addleshaw Goddard LLP	0.8	2.6
UAE	Al Tamimi & Company	9.3	22.4
UAE	Allen & Overy*	4.8	10.6
UAE	Ashurst	4.2	18.8
UAE	Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP	18.3	25
UAE	Dechert LLP	19	100
UAE	Dentons UK and Middle East LLP	2.2	7.8
UAE	DLA Piper	11.5	22.6
UAE	Eversheds Sutherland LLP	2.1	6.4
UAE	Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	50.8	44.4
UAE	Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher	18.5	26.9
UAE	Holman Fenwick Willan LLP (HFW)	2.2	9
UAE	K&L Gates LLP	5.6	10
UAE	Latham & Watkins LLP	45	78.2
UAE	Linklaters LLP	2.3	10.7
UAE	Mayer Brown LLP	8.3	11
UAE	Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	0.9	1.9
UAE	Reed Smith LLP	38.8	63.6
UAE	Shearman & Sterling LLP*	62.9	75
UAE	Simmons & Simmons LLP	5.9	11.8
UAE	Vinson & Elkins LLP	25.2	33.3
UAE	White & Case LLP	12.8	47
Zambia	Dentons Zambia	8.3	50
Zambia	Mweshi Banda & Associates	16.7	100

\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.

# KENYA

Kenya has a lively, growing pro bono and legal aid culture. Since the passing of the Legal Aid Act in 2016, legal aid provision in Kenya has continued to gain momentum, and while there is no statutory definition of the term “pro bono” under Kenyan law, it is generally accepted as the practice of advocates taking up legal briefs at no charge.

The Law Society of Kenya plays a pivotal role in access to pro bono services through its Public Interest and Litigation Department, working closely with the Public Interest, Legal Aid and Human Rights Committee. The Law Society also collaborates with players in the ecosystem, including clearinghouses and law firms, to grow the practice in Kenya. In 2024, the Law Society initiated a process to draft guidelines for pro bono in Kenya, which will cover which matters qualify for pro bono and the process for engaging in pro bono. The effort is being led by the Law Society and various other players, including the Center for Reproductive Rights, the Independent Medico-Legal Unit (IMLU), TrustLaw (Thomson Reuters Foundation) and others. Also, the Pro Bono Institute of Kenya, a new pro bono clearinghouse, recently launched in 2023 with support from the US-based non-profit Cyrus R. Vance Center for International Justice.

Access challenges remain, as most pro bono services are concentrated in urban areas. However, the Finance Bill protests in Kenya in 2024 offered a glimpse into the growth of pro bono access, with lawyers contributing significant pro bono support to uphold the right to protest and the rule of law in Kenya in the case of individual protesters. Relatedly, scrutiny of civil society organisations and associated compliance obligations are on the rise in Kenya. There will be significant pro bono opportunities to help non-profits navigate the recently enacted Public Benefits Organisations Act 2013, which has been long awaited as a more modern non-profit framework but, as news reports have indicated, is already being relied on to deregister large numbers of

non-governmental organisations (NGOs).<sup>23</sup> Maintaining strong organisational foundations and legal compliance will be increasingly important for preserving civic space and civil society movements in the country.

We had six submissions from law firms in Kenya in 2024, from 11 in 2022. The 2024 data shows that 25 percent of fee earners were engaged in pro bono, with 23 percent recording 10+ hours of pro bono work, indicating a concentration of pro bono work among more highly engaged lawyers within firms with offices in Kenya. Lawyers contributed an average of **28.2 hours** of pro bono in the year, though there is considerable variation among individual firms.

At the partner level, we see higher engagement, with 39 percent of partners doing pro bono at an average of 23.9 hours and 25 percent of partners performing 10+ hours of pro bono work. A comparative analysis between 2022 and 2024 has not been carried out for this Index due to the distinct samples in each reporting year.

A sizable majority of Kenyan firms (78 percent) have an element of pro bono infrastructure, though this is below the regional average of 86 percent, and only 11 percent of Kenyan firms indicated that they have all the elements of pro bono infrastructure. Firms in Kenya indicated they are focusing their pro bono efforts on human rights (56 percent), access to justice (44 percent), and environment, climate and biodiversity (44 percent).

23 <https://www.citizen.digital/news/sakajas-foundation-among-2802-ngos-listed-for-deregistration-n354038>

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
ALN Kenya   Anjarwalla & Khanna LLP	55.8	16.5
Bowmans	8.2	-
Meru & Njagi Advocates	16.7	66.7
Ochieng Oginga & Co. Advocates	10	100
TLO Advocates LLP	16.8	100
WKA Advocates	10	100
<b>Country average</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>23</b>

# NIGERIA

Nigeria has a vibrant, growing pro bono culture. One of the key drivers has been the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), which promotes pro bono across the country by facilitating free legal services for those in need. The NBA’s Pro Bono Declaration mandates that lawyers dedicate a portion of their time to offering free legal services to help address the access to justice gap. Time dedicated to pro bono is a key mandatory metric in considering application for conferment of the rank of Senior Advocate of Nigeria, which further encourages lawyers, including more senior practitioners, to take up pro bono matters.

The Legal Aid Council of Nigeria is another key player in the country’s pro bono landscape. It maintains a register of legal practitioners who engage in pro bono work to recognise their efforts.<sup>24</sup> It also coordinates free representation in criminal matters for those unable to afford a lawyer. Local clearinghouses and non-profits such as the Public Interest Law Partnership and the Network of Pro Bono Lawyers also help to facilitate pro bono connections and work to champion the practice of pro bono through pro bono weeks and campaigns.

An area of significant focus for pro bono efforts in Nigeria in recent years has been in the fight against detentions without trial—it has been reported that as many as seven out of 10 detainees are being held unlawfully. Pro bono has also played a role in helping uphold the right to freedom of expression and challenging the unlawful arrest of journalists and citizens, notably in the wake of

the #EndSARS protests in 2020. Law firms are taking the initiative to step up their pro bono practice, including through efforts to engage with civil society and pro bono sector partners and to showcase their pro bono work and impact.<sup>25</sup> In our data, we see a little over half of firms formalising their pro bono practice in some way, though adoption of pro bono infrastructure remains behind the regional average.

Four Nigerian firms submitted data for the 2024 Index, from six firms in 2022. Our data this year shows that 22 percent of fee earners offered pro bono services, with 13 percent contributing 10+ hours. Fee earners averaged 6.9 hours of pro bono. Meanwhile, 21 percent of partners performed pro bono services this year, averaging 7.8 hours with 10 percent performing 10+ hours. A comparative analysis between 2022 and 2024 has not been carried out for this Index due to the distinct samples in each reporting year.

The percentage of firms in Nigeria reporting at least one element of pro bono infrastructure is 57 percent, which is lower than the regional average of 87 percent. The 2024 data reveals that the most prevalent thematic areas of focus are access to justice (43 percent), aid and development (29 percent), and anti-corruption and good governance (29 percent). In 2022, the top focus areas were access to justice, anti-corruption and good governance, economic development, microfinance and social finance, and human rights, all at 33 percent.

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
ALN Nigeria   Aluko & Oyeboode	0.5	3.8
Dentons ACAS-Law (Adepetun, Caxton-Martins, Agbor & Segun)	225	100

<sup>24</sup> Pursuant to sections 14-17 of the Legal Aid Act

<sup>25</sup> For example, the Pro Bono Connect Initiative and the Pro Bono Impact Report launched by Udo Udoma & Belo-Osagie in 2024 in collaboration with key partners, <https://uubo.org/uubo-launches-pro-bono-connect-initiative/>



FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
E&P Legal	8.6	86
Udo Udoma & Belo-Osagie	4.5	14.4
<b>Country average</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>13</b>

# QATAR

Qatar does not have a well-established culture of pro bono, but there are promising opportunities emerging for members of the local legal community to provide free legal assistance to those in need. For example, in 2020 the Qatar International Court and Dispute Resolution Centre (QICDRC) launched a pro bono service for individuals who do not have the financial means to pay for legal services. The legal assistance is provided by volunteer lawyers who are part of the programme. Free legal assistance is also provided through Qatar University’s College of Law, as part of its educational programme for law students.

Seven firms with offices in Qatar responded to the survey this year, from seven in 2022. In 2024, we find that 14 percent of fee earners were spending an average of 5 hours on pro bono services, with 9 percent of them recording 10+ hours. Among partners we see that 20 percent participated in pro bono work, averaging 11.1 hours, with 13 percent of them recording 10+ hours this year. A comparative analysis between 2022 and 2024 has not been carried out for this Index due to the distinct samples and level of detailed reporting in each year.

Among firms with offices in Qatar, 90 percent had at least one element of pro bono infrastructure, and half of firms in Qatar had all three. Firms reported a focus on access to justice (80 percent), immigration, refugees and asylum (50 percent) and human rights (40 percent).

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Al Tamimi & Company	6.2	13
Crowell & Moring LLP	0.2	-
Dentons UK and Middle East LLP	0.8	-
DLA Piper	0	0
Eversheds Sutherland LLP	0.6	-
K&L Gates LLP	7.7	30
White & Case LLP	20.7	14.3
<b>Country average</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>

# SAUDI ARABIA

This is Saudi Arabia’s first in-depth analysis in the Index. Pro bono in Saudi Arabia is largely driven by informal and voluntary initiatives by law firms and lawyers, who sometimes work with local non-governmental organisations and government agencies to provide free legal assistance. These include international law firms with a presence in the country, which tend to have firm-level targets for hours dedicated to pro bono work.

Among the six reporting firms, 9 percent of fee earners rendered pro bono services and spent an average of 3 hours on pro bono matters, with 8.1 percent spending 10+ hours. Meanwhile, 24 percent of the partners engaged

in pro bono at an average of 1.3 hours, with 3 percent of them rendering 10+ hours of pro bono support.

Among firms with offices in Saudi Arabia, 94 percent of firms had at least one element of pro bono infrastructure, which is consistent with our findings in other markets with a high presence of international firms. Firms reported focusing on access to justice (75 percent), human rights and immigration, refugees and asylum (both at 56 percent) and environment, climate and biodiversity (44 percent).

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Accenture	0.4	-
Al Tamimi & Company	4	11.9
Dentons UK and Middle East LLP	3	5
DLA Piper	0	0
Eversheds Sutherland LLP	0.3	2.9
White & Case LLP	8.1	17.9
Country average	3	8.1

# SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa’s pro bono tradition is formidable, and pro bono is recognised as an essential lever to achieving social justice, alongside legal aid. The practice has grown since the adoption of the Legal Practice Act (LPA) of 2014, which aimed to institute mandatory pro bono hours for licensed lawyers. The Cape Bar Society of Advocates, for example, requires its members to dedicate not less than 20 hours to pro bono work. In 2023, regulations under the LPA were adopted to require a minimum of 40 hours of community service, which can be achieved through pro bono, legal aid and other specified activities.

A sizable number of South African law firms have structured pro bono programmes, and this is reflected in the data, with nearly half of firms reporting having all elements of pro bono infrastructure (namely, a pro bono policy, committee and dedicated staff). The pro bono landscape in South Africa has also been shaped by efforts from clearinghouses such as ProBono.Org and the South African Legal Practice Council. In addition to access to justice for indigent individuals, there is a clear focus on human rights-related causes, with growing emphasis on climate and environmental rights.

This year, we received submissions from seven firms, similar to the eight submissions we received in 2022, and

the data shows a promising rise across nearly all points. The 2024 data shows that 40 percent of fee earners performed an average of **38.4 hours** of pro bono work, up from 26 percent of fee earners and an average of 34.2 hours in 2022. Of the reporting firms, 28 percent recorded 10+ hours of pro bono in 2024, compared to only 16 percent in 2022.

This year, 26 percent of partners recorded any pro bono hours, averaging 38.9 hours, with 40 percent surpassing the ten-hour mark. In contrast, the 2022 data showed that among partners, 26 percent engaged in pro bono work, averaging a lower 13.1 hours, with only 13 percent exceeding the ten-hour mark.

As noted above, most South African firms have formalised their pro bono programmes in some way, with 93 percent reporting at least one element of pro bono infrastructure (higher than the regional average of 87 percent), and nearly half (43 percent) of firms indicating they have all elements of pro bono infrastructure. Access to justice remains the top pro bono focus area for responding firms, at 64 percent. This is followed by human rights at 57 percent and immigration, refugees and asylum at 50 percent.

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Allen & Overy*	25.7	49
Bowmans	28.6	-
Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr Inc.	12.9	6
Dentons UK and Middle East LLP	10	61.1
DLA Piper Africa	79.9	53
Norton Rose Fulbright South Africa	85.6	84.3
White & Case LLP	19.7	51.3
Country average	38.4	28

\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.



# UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has a sizeable legal community with an international workforce that provides pro bono services through various initiatives. There are no national frameworks or regulations for the provision of pro bono, which suggests that pro bono legal services are not consistently available across the country, but there is a growing culture of pro bono.

Pro bono work is encouraged and facilitated by certain public authorities. For example, the Government of Dubai has set up the Voluntary Legal Services Smart Portal initiative, an online portal connecting pro bono legal service providers to members of the public in need of free legal advice. The Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) also has a pro bono programme which aims to provide access to free legal advice to individuals on civil matters that fall within the DIFC’s jurisdiction. International firms with offices in Dubai are also taking the initiative to coordinate their local pro bono efforts: The Dubai Pro Bono Roundtable, for example, is an informal network of firms who meet to discuss pro bono activities and explore opportunities for collaboration in the jurisdiction.<sup>26</sup>

This year, the number of responding firms increased to 23 from 20 in 2022. All submissions came from international or regional firms with offices in the country. Average hours are up slightly across all fee earners, but partner hours and participation have seen a small decrease.

In the 2024 Index, 34 percent of fee earners engaged in pro bono work, compared with 32 percent in 2022, and fee earners averaged **10.4 hours** in 2024, up from 8.3 hours in 2022. We see 21 percent of fee earners record 10+ hours of pro bono work in 2024 (compared to 20 percent in 2022). The 2024 data shows that 33 percent of partners dedicated an average of 7.3 hours to pro bono work, with 13 percent completing 10+ hours. In 2022, 36 percent of partners devoted an average of 12.1 hours to pro bono matters, with 18 percent contributing 10+ hours.

Given the high number of international firms reporting into the Index, it is not surprising that nearly all (97 percent) say they have formalised their pro bono with least one element of pro bono infrastructure, and more than half (58 percent) have all three elements. Firms with offices in the UAE are focusing their pro bono efforts on access to justice (74 percent), immigration, refugees and asylum (58 percent) and human rights (50 percent).

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Accenture	0.1	-
Addleshaw Goddard LLP	0.8	2.6
Al Tamimi & Company	9.3	22.4
Allen & Overy*	4.8	10.6
Ashurst	4.2	18.8
Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP	18.3	25
Dechert LLP	19	100

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Dentons UK and Middle East LLP	2.2	7.8
DLA Piper	11.5	22.6
Eversheds Sutherland LLP	2.1	6.4
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	50.8	44.4
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP	18.5	26.9
Holman Fenwick Willan LLP (HFW)	2.2	9
K&L Gates LLP	5.6	10
Latham & Watkins LLP	45	78.2
Linklaters LLP	2.3	10.7
Mayer Brown LLP	8.3	11
Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	0.9	1.9
Reed Smith LLP	38.8	63.6
Shearman & Sterling LLP*	62.9	75
Simmons & Simmons LLP	5.9	11.8
Vinson & Elkins LLP	25.2	33.3
White & Case LLP	12.8	47
Country average	10.4	21.6

\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.

26 “The Rise of Networks for Dedicated Law Firm Pro Bono Professionals”, Global Pro Bono Hub (2024), <https://www.globalprobonohub.com/export/sites/pro-bono/resource/downloads/Global-PB-Hub-Article-Pro-Bono-Professional-Networks.pdf>





# AMERICAS

*The analysis in this section relates to the Americas excluding the United States*

In the Americas, pro bono is mostly a well-established part of the legal community, though there are differing levels of engagement across the region. In many places, legal professionals are actively and increasingly engaged in offering free services to address critical issues such as human rights, environmental advocacy and the protection of Indigenous communities. In others, pro bono has been slower to take hold.

The Pro Bono Declaration for the Americas was launched in 2008 by several partners, including the Cyrus R Vance Center for International Justice, and continues to serve as an important touchstone for pro bono in the region, with law firm signatories agreeing to advance the practice of pro bono and to provide an average of 20 hours or more per lawyer per annum. In 2024, the declaration had more than 570 signatories spanning 21 countries.

Prominent law firms and non-profits are enthusiastic to collaborate when it comes to pro bono, forming networks to tackle regional challenges such as poverty, immigration, political instability and institutional barriers, among others. These efforts are supported by bar associations and international partners. A notable example is the Pro Bono Network of the Americas, launched as an informal collaboration in 2011 between lawyers, NGOs and others in the pro bono field. It has now become the institutional home of many leading pro bono clearinghouses in the region, with more than 20 organizations representing 16 countries across South, Central and North America.

For countries with more established pro bono culture, the focus now is to consolidate the work and to more meaningfully make pro bono services accessible to the most vulnerable groups through pro bono patrols or legal clinics (such as through the Federal Network in Argentina and the Territorio ProBono project in Colombia). There is growing interest in engaging in-house teams and working with universities through awards, pro bono internships and courses.

Elsewhere, such as in Central America and the Caribbean, pro bono engagement has been more limited. However, this may be changing with local efforts such the annual Pro Bono Week, which has taken place in the Cayman Islands since 2022, and the recently established Pro Bono Association of Guatemala. Legal clinics, often organised by local bar associations, provide crucial free legal advice to low-income residents. Despite progress, participation in the Index survey in these sub-regions remains very limited, highlighting opportunities for growth in the future.

## HOURS AND ENGAGEMENT IN 2024

In total, 74 firms from the Americas contributed to the 2024 Index, a slight decrease from 80 firms in 2022, but up from 64 firms in 2020. However, the contributing firms offer a broader geographical reach—19 countries compared with 13 countries in 2022.



Responding firms spent 122,426.4 hours on pro bono work. Nearly half of fee earners (45 percent) engaged in pro bono, dedicating an average of **11.1 hours** to pro bono per year, with a quarter of fee earners (25 percent) contributing 10+ hours. This is consistent with our findings in 2022, when 42 percent of fee earners spent an average of 11.6 hours on pro bono work, with 24 percent contributing 10+ hours.<sup>27</sup> Colombia and Mexico reported the highest average pro bono hours in the region, at 20 and 22.9 hours per lawyer, respectively, while other countries featured in our in-depth chapters are trending around the regional average.

The average annual pro bono target reported by firms with offices in the Americas was 26.9 hours and the median was 20 hours.

Partner engagement in pro bono remains strong in the Americas, with 31 percent of partners participating in pro bono, averaging 6.2 hours, and 12 percent performing 10+ hours. This is on par with 2022, where we reported that 32 percent of partners participated in pro bono, averaging 7 hours, with 15 percent performing 10+ hours. Partners seem to be most highly engaged in pro bono in Argentina, at an average of 12.8 hours, and Peru, at 17.3 hours per partner, per year. Despite lower average partner hours, Colombian firms report that over half of partners (52 percent) are participating in pro bono, which is a positive signal of senior-level buy-in.

### OTHER FINDINGS

Pro bono in the Americas is increasingly supported by dedicated infrastructure. Most firms in the region have pro bono infrastructure, with 93 percent reporting at least one element and 57 percent indicating they have all elements, up from 41 percent in 2022. Of those with pro bono infrastructure, 78 percent of firms have a pro bono policy, 72 percent have a pro bono committee and 46 percent have a formal diversity commitment for pro bono work. In recent years, there has been growing interest in measurement of pro bono—81 percent of firms report tracking their pro bono impact in some way, but we also see interest in metrics that better reflect the impact of pro bono work beyond hours. Similarly, the Vance

Center reported that among firms they surveyed, the vast majority in Latin America had some formal procedure for approving pro bono cases, at around 75 percent. However, the same survey suggested that 47 percent of law firms are measuring pro bono impact, a far smaller proportion compared to those that participated in TrustLaw’s survey.

There is growing recognition of the need to treat pro bono work with the same importance as other practice groups. This year, we see 58 percent of firms with offices in the Americas reporting that they have at least one dedicated pro bono staff member. In terms of financial resource, 30 percent of firms report having a budget for their pro bono programme of over \$100,000 USD. Another 11 percent have allocated \$10,000–\$30,000 to pro bono and 18 percent of firms have allocated between \$1,000–\$5,000.<sup>28</sup>

At the regional level, the most common key areas of pro bono focus identified were access to justice (61 percent), immigration, refugees and asylum (41 percent) and human rights (38 percent), while the top areas of strategic growth were access to justice (34 percent) and environment, climate and biodiversity (28 percent). Pro bono also reflects the local and historical context, with lawyers keen to tackle pressing issues close to home. In Canada, for example, there is notable emphasis on pro bono work that addresses Indigenous rights and environmental and climate justice, while in Argentina there is a longstanding focus on education.

We see continued focus across the region on support for registered charities and non-profits (89 percent), social enterprises (74 percent) and individuals in need (57 percent). Small businesses and startups also receive pro bono support, with 54 percent of firms indicating that they support this type of client and 16 percent saying they support journalists and/or small and mid-sized independent newsrooms. The data shows that 90 percent of firms deliver pro bono through corporate/commercial advice, 87 percent through legal research and 68 percent through legal training and/or public legal education. Most commonly, pro bono matters are sourced directly from individual clients (78 percent), through clearinghouses (68 percent) and through legal clinics (57 percent). Interestingly, though other sources

are relatively constant we see higher numbers of firms sourcing pro bono matters through legal clinics this year, up to 57 percent from 39 percent in 2022.

Overall, the pro bono landscape in the Americas region is robust and evolving, reflecting a deep commitment to social responsibility and justice. Despite some variances, the general dedication to pro bono work remains strong, with engagement from across firms.

COUNTRY	FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Argentina	Accenture	0.99	2
Argentina	Barreiro, Oliva, De Luca, Jaca, Nicastro	2.3	33.3
Argentina	Bruchou & Funes de Rioja	14.7	32.9
Argentina	Estudio Jurídico Gross Brown	10	100
Argentina	Marval O’Farrell Mairal	22.1	26.5
Argentina	O’Farrell	-	-
Argentina	Richards Cardinal Tützer Zabala Zaefferer (RCTZZ)	70	100
Bolivia	Cervieri Monsuárez	-	-
Bolivia	Ferrere	12	13.3
Brazil	Accenture	1.9	7.5
Brazil	Cescon, Barrieu, Flesch & Barreto Advogados	7.3	19.3
Brazil	Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP	4.1	25
Brazil	Demarest	2.5	8
Brazil	K&L Gates LLP	5.5	25
Brazil	Linklaters LLP	53.5	50
Brazil	Machado, Meyer, Sendacz e Opice Advogados	14.2	40.6
Brazil	Mattos Filho, Veiga Filho, Marrey Jr. e Quiroga Advogados	21.2	23.7
Brazil	Mayer Brown LLP	12	31.7
Brazil	Pinheiro Neto Advogados	0.0	19.3
Brazil	Proskauer Rose LLP	0.7	0
Brazil	Shearman & Sterling LLP*	51.3	-
Brazil	Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP	8.4	22.2
Brazil	TozziniFreire Advogados	0.01	19.1
Brazil	White & Case LLP	30.4	66.7
Canada	Accenture	0.07	-
Canada	Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP	14.9	25.9
Canada	Dentons Canada	5.7	10.6
Canada	Gowling WLG (Canada) LLP	5.7	13.2
Canada	Integral North	100	100
Canada	McCarthy Tétrault	13.5	25.7
Canada	McMillan LLP	5.8	13.7

<sup>27</sup> The Vance Center’s 2024 survey on pro bono in Latin America suggests a modest rise in pro bono engagement. It reported that there was a slight increase from 27 percent to 30 percent of firms completing 1,000 hours of pro-bono work or more annually. Of course, the measures of engagement that are used in each survey are distinct, but it is notable that broadly the finding is consistent.

<sup>28</sup> The remaining percentage did not respond. No firms indicated budgets between \$5,000–\$10,000 or \$30,000–\$100,000

COUNTRY	FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Canada	Norton Rose Fulbright Canada LLP / S.E.N.C.R.L., s.r.l.	10.2	20.2
Canada	Shearman & Sterling LLP*	49.4	100
Canada	Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP	37.5	58.8
Cayman Islands	Dentons	-	-
Chile	Accenture	-	-
Chile	Albagli Zaliasnik	17.5	81.7
Chile	Cariola Díez Pérez-Cotapos - Sargent & Krahn	9.9	50
Chile	FerradaNehme	17.1	40
Colombia	Accenture	-	-
Colombia	Dentons Cardenas & Cardenas	3.1	25
Colombia	Gómez-Pinzón Abogados	32.4	91
Colombia	Muñoz Tamayo & Associates	10.8	25
Colombia	Philippi Prietocarrizosa Ferrero DU & Uría	13.6	48.2
Colombia	Posse Herrera Ruiz	18.6	50
Costa Rica	Consortium Legal	6.4	23.6
Ecuador	Pérez Bustamante & Ponce (PBP)	0.2	51.1
El Salvador	Consortium Legal	68.5	-
Guatemala	Consortium Legal	11.1	32.6
Guatemala	Corpolegal	-	-
Honduras	Consortium Legal	11.3	40
Mexico	Accenture	-	-
Mexico	Basham, Ringe & Correa	18.4	42.8
Mexico	Creel, Garcia-Cuéllar, Aiza y Enriquez, S.C.	-	-
Mexico	Dentons López Velarde Monterrey, S.C.	-	-
Mexico	Galicia Abogados, S.C.	12.1	26.5
Mexico	Hogan Lovells	71.4	78.1
Mexico	Mayer Brown LLP	20.1	50
Mexico	Ritch, Mueller y Nicolau, S.C.	-	-
Mexico	Von Wobeser y Sierra	19	35.4
Mexico	White & Case LLP	20.8	51.8
Nicaragua	Consortium Legal	10	38.5
Panama	Morgan & Morgan	10.9	38.7
Paraguay	Estudio Jurídico Gross Brown	6.7	100
Paraguay	Ferrere Abogados	7.6	9.5
Peru	Dentons	6	13.6

COUNTRY	FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Peru	Estudio Echeopar (in association with Baker & McKenzie International)	10.4	34.7
Peru	Garcia Sayan Abogados (GSA)	21.4	50
Peru	Osterling Abogados	0.7	-
Uruguay	Cervieri Monsuárez	-	-
Uruguay	Dentons	-	-
Uruguay	Vanrell Intellectual Property	-	-
Venezuela	A2 Legal, S.C.	4.5	-
Venezuela	Dentons	-	-

\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.



# ARGENTINA

The culture of pro bono in Argentina is steadily growing, driven by initiatives such as the Pro Bono Declaration for the Americas. Pro bono work is seen as a powerful means of practicing law and promoting social change.

While large law firms in Buenos Aires have the most institutionalised pro bono practices, small and medium-sized firms and legal teams throughout the country are increasingly committed to pro bono work. Pro bono is actively promoted among new generations of law students through contests that identify social issues and propose legal solutions. Bar associations, such as the Federal Pro Bono Network by the Pro Bono Commission of Lawyers of the City of Buenos Aires, play a crucial role in creating a robust ecosystem for the sustained growth of pro bono in Argentina. A good example of this is Pro Bono Week in Argentina, which has been celebrated every year since 2021. The event serves as a platform where hundreds of lawyers come together to promote and raise awareness about the role and the importance of pro bono legal support.

Seven firms with offices in Argentina participated in this year’s Index. Almost half—45 percent—of fee earners engaged in pro bono activities, at an average of **11.5 hours** of pro bono work, with 19 percent contributing 10+ hours. Among partners, 35 percent provided pro bono services, averaging 12.8 hours, and 23 percent contributed 10+ hours, according to the 2024 data. A comparative analysis between 2022 and 2024 has not been carried out due to the distinct samples in each reporting year.

The 2024 data indicates that all responding firms in Argentina have some element of pro bono infrastructure, pointing to a well-established culture of pro bono. The most selected areas of focus for Argentinian firms were education, training and employment, and environment, climate and biodiversity, both at 44 percent, with women’s rights identified as an area of expected growth at 32 percent.

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Accenture	0.99	2
Barreiro, Oliva, De Luca, Jaca, Nicastro	2.3	33.3
Bruchou & Funes de Rioja	14.7	32.9
Estudio Jurídico Gross Brown	10	100
Marval O’Farrell Mairal	22.1	26.5
O’Farrell	-	-
Richards Cardinal Tützer Zabala Zaefferer (RCTZZ)	70	100
Country average	11.5	18.5



# BRAZIL

Brazil has a dynamic and growing pro bono culture. Pro bono took a major leap in the country in 2015 when the Ethics and Disciplinary Code of the Bar Association was amended to include a chapter specifically allowing lawyers, including in-house lawyers, to provide pro bono legal services—a previously restricted practice. As a result, the pro bono market has expanded and diversified, allowing for pro bono support for private contentious matters and individuals who were previously excluded.

Most large law firms have scaled their pro bono work and continue to lead the pro bono movement in the country, alongside growing participation from smaller and medium-sized firms, with support from key ecosystem players like the Instituto Pro Bono and various local and international clearinghouses.

Fifteen law firms from Brazil participated in this Index, a slight decrease from 17 in 2022. These firms were varied in terms of size and local versus international presence. Fee earners performed an average of **8.7 hours** of pro bono in 2024, up from 3.9 hours in 2022. Engagement also appears to be also rising, with 42 percent of fee earners engaged in offering any pro bono (compared with 34 percent in 2022) and 22 percent going over the ten-hour mark (compared with 17 percent in 2022).

For partners, we continue to see strong, steady engagement: In the 2024 data, 37 percent of partners engaged in pro bono and averaged 8.9 hours, with 12 percent recording 10+ pro bono hours. This is consistent with 2022, when we reported 34 percent of partners doing any pro bono, at an average of 5.3 hours and 9 percent recording 10+ hours.

Pro bono infrastructure remains strong, with 96 percent of firms indicating they have some element, which is above the regional average of 93 percent. Additionally, 63 percent of firms in Brazil indicated that they have all the elements of pro bono infrastructure, which is higher than the regional average of 58 percent.

According to the 2024 data, the top pro bono focus areas in Brazil were access to justice (54 percent), immigration, refugees and asylum (50 percent), and ethnic/minority rights and racial justice (45 percent). Most firms do pro bono work for registered charities and non-profits (92 percent), individuals in need and social enterprises (both at 66 percent), as well as for small businesses and startups (50 percent).

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Accenture	1.9	7.5
Cescon, Barrieu, Flesch & Barreto Advogados	7.3	19.3
Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP	4.1	25
Demarest	2.5	8
K&L Gates LLP	5.5	25
Linklaters LLP	53.5	50
Machado, Meyer, Sendacz e Opice Advogados	14.2	40.6
Mattos Filho, Veiga Filho, Marrey Jr. e Quiroga Advogados	21.2	23.7
Mayer Brown LLP	12	31.7
Pinheiro Neto Advogados	0.01	19.3

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Proskauer Rose LLP	0.7	0
Shearman & Sterling LLP*	51.3	-
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP and Affiliates	8.4	22.2
TozziniFreire Advogados	0.01	19.1
White & Case LLP	30.4	66.7
Country average	8.7	22.1

\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.



# CANADA

The pro bono community in Canada has a strong focus on supporting local communities and initiatives through pro bono work with, for example, support for social entrepreneurship and the rights of Indigenous peoples being key focuses of pro bono work.

The Canadian pro bono market is supported by strong legal professional bodies and associations. Lawyers are not required to complete a mandatory number of pro bono hours, but federal and provincial bar associations and pro bono organisations (such as Pro Bono Canada, Pro Bono Ontario, Access Pro Bono in British Columbia, and Justice Pro Bono in Québec) raise awareness of pro bono practices and provide ample access to pro bono resources, programming and opportunities.

Ten firms in Canada participated in the 2024 Index, as in 2022.

Fee earners performed an average of **9.9 hours** of pro

bono in 2024, down from 11.5 hours in 2022. Engagement also appears to have slightly dropped, with 40 percent of fee earners engaged in offering any pro bono (compared with 46 in 2022) and 19 percent going over the ten-hour mark (compared with 24 percent in 2022).

For partners, we continue to see good engagement: In the 2024 data, 24 percent of partners engaged in pro bono and averaged 4.1 hours, with 8 percent recording 10+ pro bono hours. This is consistent though slightly lower than 2022, when we reported 24 percent of partners doing any pro bono, at an average of 5.2 hours and 12 percent recording 10+ hours.

The number of firms in Canada reporting that they have formalised their pro bono in some way rose from 67 percent in 2022 to 92 percent in 2024. Meanwhile, the key pro bono focus areas were access to justice (77 percent), human rights (62 percent) and immigration, refugees and asylum (54 percent).

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Accenture	0.1	-
Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP	14.9	25.9
Dentons Canada	5.7	10.6
Gowling WLG (Canada) LLP	5.7	13.2
Integral North	100	100
McCarthy Tétrault LLP	13.5	25.7
McMillan LLP	5.8	13.7
Norton Rose Fulbright Canada LLP / S.E.N.C.R.L., s.r.l.	10.2	20.2
Shearman & Sterling LLP*	49.4	100
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP	37.5	58.8
Country average	9.9	19.2

\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.

# COLOMBIA

Colombia’s pro bono culture is robust and growing, with significant engagement from the legal community. Large local law firms have institutionalised pro bono practices as part of their corporate social responsibility programmes, supported by internal policies and structures. Fundación ProBono Colombia, the strongest local clearinghouse, collaborates with regional and global networks to encourage pro bono and offer pro bono opportunities, despite there being no mandatory pro bono requirements in the country.

Six firms participated in the 2024 Index, as compared to nine firms in 2022. We see a small dip in average hours but, promisingly, broader participation in pro bono including among partners. Fee earners performed a strong average of **20 hours** of pro bono in 2024, down from 23 hours in 2022, but still well above the regional average of 11.1 hours. Engagement appears to be rising, with 86 percent of fee earners engaged in offering any

pro bono (compared with 56 in 2022) and 60 percent going over the ten-hour mark (compared with 35 percent in 2022).

For partners, we continue to see strong, steady engagement: In the 2024 data, 52 percent of partners engaged in pro bono and averaged 5.3 hours each, with 12 percent recording 10+ pro bono hours. This signals a rise from 2022, when 35 percent of partners said they did any pro bono and similarly averaged 6 hours, and a slight dip from 2022’s 17 percent recording 10+ hours.

This year, 86 percent of the responding firms indicated they had at least one component of pro bono infrastructure. According to the data, the primary focus areas for pro bono work in Colombia are access to justice (57 percent), anti-corruption and good governance, and sexual and reproductive rights, both at 43 percent.

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Accenture	-	-
Dentons Cardenas & Cardenas	3.1	25
Gómez-Pinzón Abogados	32.4	91
Muñoz Tamayo & Associates	10.8	25
Philippi Prietocarrizosa Ferrero DU & Uría	13.6	48.2
Posse Herrera Ruiz	18.6	50
Country average	20	60

# MEXICO

Mexico is a leader in pro bono in the region, showcasing a thriving culture across law firms of all sizes and supported by the efforts of strong clearinghouses like Appleseed Mexico and Centro Mexicano Pro Bono A.C. and other specialised non-profits.

Pro bono in Mexico happens through local, regional and global networks supporting low-income individuals, indigenous communities, vulnerable groups and non-profits and, in part, aims to fill gaps left by legal aid institutions. Many of pro bono actors that work in Mexico have joined the Pro Bono Declaration for the Americas and law firms have formed alliances to create a self-regulated environment for delivering these services. In 2018, for example, a group of law firms, clearinghouses and non-profits created the Pro Bono Mexico Standards to establish appropriate guidelines and structure and to strengthen the pro bono culture in Mexico.

In Mexico, 10 law firms participated in the 2024 Index, a decrease from the 15 firms that participated in 2022, and we also saw fewer firms reporting detailed pro bono

hours and participation figures. Fee earners performed an impressive average of **22.9 hours** of pro bono in 2024, which is double the regional average of 11.1 hours. Engagement of fee earners performing any pro bono stood at 63 percent and 27 percent met or went over the ten-hour mark.

For partners, in the 2024 data, 40 percent of partners engaged in pro bono and averaged 8.4 hours, with 27 percent recording 10+ pro bono hours. A comparative analysis between 2022 and 2024 has not been carried out for this Index due to the distinct samples in each reporting year.

Mexican firms have continued to enhance their pro bono infrastructure, with 100 percent of responding firms reporting some form of pro bono infrastructure, which is higher than the regional average of 93 percent. Key focus areas for pro bono work were access to justice (64 percent), immigration, refugees and asylum (50 percent), and environment, climate and biodiversity (43 percent).

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Accenture	-	-
Basham, Ringe & Correa	18.4	42.8
Creel, Garcia-Cuéllar, Aiza y Enriquez, S.C.	-	-
Dentons López Velarde Monterrey, S.C.	-	-
Galia Abogados, S.C.	12.1	26.5
Hogan Lovells	71.4	78.1
Mayer Brown LLP	20.1	50
Ritch, Mueller y Nicolau, S.C.	-	-
Von Wobeser y Sierra	19	35.4
White & Case LLP	20.8	51.8
Country average	22.9	27

# PERU

Pro bono culture in Peru has been growing and consolidating over the last decade. There is steady development, with increasing participation from the legal community. Several law firms in Peru have ratified the Pro Bono Declaration for the Americas, which has helped to expand the pro bono movement and enhance the scope and expectation for lawyers to provide pro bono legal services.

Alianza Pro Bono was established in 2013 with the mandate to institutionalise pro bono in Peru. This clearinghouse collaborates with public interest NGOs and has undertaken projects in environmental protection, human trafficking and education. In 2017, for example, Alianza Pro Bono focused on natural disaster relief efforts after Peru experienced its worst flooding in decades. As a result, the clearinghouse and its member firms launched a legal aid manual on disaster relief, which was distributed to NGOs, state institutions, and local governments across Peru. Efforts like these have contributed to strengthening the pro bono culture in Peru, ensuring that vulnerable populations receive the legal support they need.

Four firms in Peru participated in the 2024 Index, from six firms in 2022. Fee earners performed an average of **10.6 hours** of pro bono in 2024, up from 6.9 hours in 2022. Engagement also appears to be rising, with 47 percent of fee earners engaged in offering any pro bono (compared with 20 percent in 2022) and 30 percent going over the ten-hour mark (compared with 12 percent in 2022).

For partners, we see higher engagement: In the 2024 data, 40 percent of partners engaged in pro bono and averaged 17.3 hours, with 26 percent recording 10+ pro bono hours. This is also higher than 2022, when we reported 25 percent of partners doing any pro bono, at an average of 10.3 hours and 12 percent recording ten or more hours.

All responding firms have formalised pro bono infrastructure, consistent with the 2022 Index. Responding firms indicated key pro bono focus areas that include access to justice (40 percent), environment, climate and biodiversity (40 percent), and ethnic/minority rights and racial justice (40 percent).

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE HOURS PER FEE-EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Dentons Gallo Barrios Pickmann Abogados	6	13.6
Estudio Echecopar (in association with Baker & McKenzie International)	10.4	34.7
Garcia Sayan Abogados (GSA)	21.4	50
Osterling Abogados	0.7	-
Country average	10.6	30





# ASIA & PACIFIC

*The analysis in this section relates to Asia and Pacific excluding Australia*

The pro bono culture across Asia and the Pacific has grown steadily in recent years, with increasing emphasis on access to justice, support for vulnerable populations and addressing social inequalities.

The growth in pro bono in Asia region owes credit in part to initiatives like the Asia Pro Bono Conference, spearheaded by BABSEACLE, which for more than a decade has convened legal professionals, lawyers, law firms, clearinghouses and non-profit organisations focused on pro bono. In recent years, other pro bono-focused events have been on the rise. For example, in 2023 Hong Kong hosted its first Pro Bono Week, and India followed suit in 2024. These pro bono initiatives have primarily been led by pro bono clearinghouses and civil society organisations as well as key law firm champions.

There is a strong spirit of collaboration in the Asia pro bono community, evident in initiatives like the Asia Pro Bono Roundtable Consortium, which comprises 14 member organisations working across the region and organises quarterly roundtables on thematic focus areas relevant to pro bono with rotating responsibility for hosting. A new Asia Law Firm Pro Bono Network, established in 2024, aims to connect local law firm professionals and those managing pro bono practices in the region from other locations via quarterly calls and an email distribution list to share knowledge and encourage collaboration.<sup>29</sup>

With this support, law firms and legal organisations in the region are progressively establishing pro bono programmes and infrastructure, encouraging lawyers to contribute their time and expertise to various causes, including human rights, environmental protection and community development. The influential presence of international firms from the United Kingdom, United States and Australia also helps to drive meaningful pro bono engagement.

Taking inspiration, more local law firms are adopting pro bono targets, setting up pro bono committees and even assigning the role of pro bono coordinator to partners or senior associates within the firm, especially in South Asia. In Southeast and East Asia, much pro bono is still driven by international firms and organised pro bono practices are mostly limited to larger law firms. However, in recent years, medium and boutique firms are beginning to emerge on the pro bono scene in countries like India, Thailand and Malaysia.

In the Pacific Islands or Blue Pacific, there is less formalised tradition of pro bono but a strong commitment to access to justice and a growing need for pro bono in the face of the climate crisis, where the impact is existential. There are heartening efforts at the local and cross-regional level to offer pro bono support to support climate resilience and access to justice for those already affected, such as the Blue Pacific Pro Bono Collaborative.

<sup>29</sup> “The Rise of Networks for Dedicated Law Firm Pro Bono Professionals”, Global Pro Bono Hub (2024)



In Central Asia, pro bono is nascent, but there is growing interest, such as in Mongolia where the Bar Association is helping to champion the spread of pro bono. We also see sporadic pro bono activity in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan, including among domestic firms. With the 2025 Asia Pro Bono Conference to be held in Mongolia, we may see growth in pro bono in this sub-region.

Despite challenges such as varying legal frameworks and resource limitations, the commitment to pro bono continues to strengthen, reflecting a broader regional trend towards social responsibility and community service within the legal profession.

HOURS AND ENGAGEMENT IN 2024

The region recorded a total of 104,321 hours of pro bono, up from 94,447 hours in 2022. We received 142 submissions across 21 countries in the Asia and Pacific region from 2022’s 167 submissions from 22 countries.<sup>30</sup> Excitingly, this is the first year the Philippines and Kazakhstan will feature in dedicated chapters in the Index. Indonesia also returns to the Index after a brief hiatus in 2022.

The overall trend in the region is very positive. Fee earners in the region performed an average of **17.3 hours** of pro bono in 2024, up from 6.2 hours in 2022. Engagement also appears to be also rising, with 41 percent of fee earners engaged in offering any pro bono (compared with 17 percent in 2022) and 28 percent going over the ten-hour mark (compared with 16 percent in 2022). At the country level, the picture is more mixed: Thailand and South Korea have seen notable rises in average pro bono hours and engagement metrics, while others are holding steady or dropping slightly.

For partners, we also see strong regional showing: 40 percent of partners engaged in pro bono and averaged 14.3 hours, with 28 percent recording 10+ pro bono hours. This is up from 2022, when we reported 20 percent of partners doing any pro bono, at an average of 6.6 hours and 14 percent recording 10+ hours. On partner-level engagement with pro bono, South Korea leads the way, with 67 percent of partners doing pro bono, at an average of 45.8 hours each year.

The average annual pro bono target for the region was 32.3 hours, with a median target of 25.

OTHER FINDINGS

With many international firms responding in the region, it is not surprising that the data continues to show high levels of formalisation of pro bono, with 89 percent of firms overall (98 percent of Large Firms) indicating an element of pro bono infrastructure. Of the responding firms, 71 percent have a formal pro bono policy, 57 percent have a pro bono committee and 29 percent have a formal diversity commitment. We see that 76 percent of firms in the region report tracking their impact in some way.

On budget allocation for pro bono activities among responding firms, 29 percent reported allocating over \$100,000 to their pro bono programme, while 8 percent allocated between \$10,000–\$30,000 and 12 percent of firms allocated a more modest figure between \$1,000–\$5,000.

In 2024, the key areas of reported pro bono focus in the region were access to justice (63 percent), immigration, refugees and asylum (54 percent), human rights (41 percent) and LGBTQ+ rights (29 percent). The top areas of strategic focus or growth in the next 12 months for the firms in the region were environment, climate and biodiversity (41 percent) and access to justice (37 percent).

We see continued pro bono support to registered charities and non-profits (86 percent), individuals in need (74 percent) and social enterprises (71 percent), with a focus on legal research (90 percent) and corporate/commercial advice (87 percent). Firms are receiving their pro bono matters directly from individual clients (71 percent), legal clinics (67 percent), collaborative efforts with other law firms (60 percent) and clearinghouses (56 percent).

In Asia and the Pacific, legal professionals are increasingly dedicating their time and resources to pro bono causes such as human rights and environmental protection, supported by robust infrastructure and formal policies. Broadly, the data paints a picture of a bright future for pro bono work in the region, as long as momentum continues and there are continued efforts to engage local legal communities with pro bono.

COUNTRY	FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Bangladesh	A.S & Associates	12	24
Bangladesh	Accord Chambers	1.2	17.6
Bangladesh	Dr Kamal Hossain and Associates	52.2	41.7
Cambodia	Husky & Partners Law Firm	20	100
Cambodia	Sok Siphana & Associates	-	-
China	Accenture	1.4	4.1
China	Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer LLP	2.6	14.3
China	Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP	0	0
China	DLA Piper	2	9.8
China	Eversheds Sutherland LLP	0	0
China	Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	2.7	15.9
China	Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP	13.7	71.4
China	Holman Fenwick Willan LLP (HFW)	0.1	0
China	Kirkland & Ellis LLP	1	0
China	K&L Gates LLP	0.6	1.8
China	Linklaters LLP	12.7	31.1
China	Mayer Brown LLP	37.7	66.7
China	Morrison Foerster	14.2	38.5
China	O’Melveny & Myers LLP	0	0
China	Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP	99.2	91.7
China	Proskauer Rose LLP	125.5	-
China	Reed Smith LLP	4.4	16.7
China	Ropes & Gray LLP	104	180
China	Shearman & Sterling LLP*	6.5	13.3
China	Simmons & Simmons LLP	1.3	5
China	Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP	20.3	31.8
China	White & Case LLP	1.5	4.8
Hong Kong	Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP	-	-
Hong Kong	Allen & Overy*	12.1	28.6
Hong Kong	Ashurst	7	25.4
Hong Kong	Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP	0	0
Hong Kong	Dechert LLP	103.4	-
Hong Kong	DLA Piper	36.4	48.7
Hong Kong	Eversheds Sutherland LLP	1.4	4.3
Hong Kong	Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	9.5	21.1
Hong Kong	Goodwin Procter LLP	0	0
Hong Kong	Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP	45.2	83.3
Hong Kong	Holman Fenwick Willan LLP (HFW)	1.7	6.7
Hong Kong	Kirkland & Ellis LLP	27.8	52.5
Hong Kong	Latham & Watkins LLP	58.6	69.1
Hong Kong	Linklaters LLP	9.8	18.6
Hong Kong	Mayer Brown LLP	21.3	48.1

<sup>30</sup> This is partly due to a drop in submissions in China with several international firms closing offices in the country, and to mid-sized and smaller firms not reporting as they cited lack of capacity and/or resources as a barrier to tracking their pro bono on an ongoing basis.



COUNTRY	FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Hong Kong	Morrison Foerster	32.9	48.6
Hong Kong	Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	2.6	5.5
Hong Kong	Reed Smith LLP	3.6	11
Hong Kong	Ropes & Gray LLP	27.2	80
Hong Kong	Shearman & Sterling LLP*	16	10.8
Hong Kong	Simmons & Simmons LLP	6	25.5
Hong Kong	Steptoe LLP	21.2	80
Hong Kong	White & Case LLP	19.6	66.7
India	Accenture	0.2	0.4
India	Altacit Global	16.7	16.7
India	RNA, Technology and IP Attorneys	14	24
India	Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co.	26.7	60
India	Sreemannaarayana Mallela	-	-
India	Suraj Narayan	10	100
Indonesia	Accenture	-	-
Indonesia	Allen & Overy*	21.7	53.3
Indonesia	Ashurst	10.1	25
Indonesia	Linklaters LLP	1.3	6.7
Indonesia	White & Case LLP	30.6	91
Japan	Accenture	0.1	0
Japan	Ashurst	13.8	45.5
Japan	DLA Piper	32	52.7
Japan	Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	39.4	62.5
Japan	K&L Gates LLP	9.3	20
Japan	Latham & Watkins LLP	83.2	100
Japan	Linklaters LLP	11.1	25.5
Japan	Mayer Brown LLP	13.5	33.3
Japan	Morrison Foerster	29.5	40
Japan	O'Melveny & Myers LLP	-	-
Japan	Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP	146.5	100
Japan	Ropes & Gray LLP	18.7	40
Japan	Shearman & Sterling LLP*	46.6	30
Japan	Simmons & Simmons LLP	1.7	2.9
Japan	Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP	0.7	4.4
Japan	White & Case LLP	10.9	36.7
Kazakhstan	Dentons Europe LLP	14	21.2
Kazakhstan	Kinstellar	1	5.3
Kazakhstan	Reed Smith LLP	6	16.7
Kazakhstan	White & Case LLP	36	38.1
Malaysia	Accenture	0.1	0
Malaysia	MahWengKwai & Associates	2	6.7
Nepal	Himalayan Lawyers & Associates	-	-

COUNTRY	FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Nepal	Pradhan & Associates	10	100
New Zealand	Dentons	-	-
New Zealand	Simpson Grierson	26.3	51.2
Pakistan	Pakistan Legal United Society (PLUS)	0	0
Papua New Guinea	Ashurst	39.8	25
Philippines	Accenture	0.3	0
Philippines	Martinez Vergara & Gonzalez Sociedad (MVGS)	10	60
Philippines	Puyat, Jacinto & Santos (PJS Law)	1.1	0
Philippines	Salazar Hernandez & Gatmaitan (SyCipLaw)	4.1	14.7
Philippines	Weigand and Partners	4	30
Singapore	Accenture	0.9	2.9
Singapore	Addleshaw Goddard LLP	5.7	20
Singapore	Allen & Overy*	10.3	19.3
Singapore	Ashurst	1.5	2.9
Singapore	Dechert LLP	122	-
Singapore	Dentons	-	-
Singapore	DLA Piper	12.6	46
Singapore	Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	13.7	42.9
Singapore	Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP	39.3	43.8
Singapore	Goodwin Procter LLP	0	0
Singapore	Holman Fenwick Willan LLP (HFW)	0.3	2.6
Singapore	K&L Gates LLP	41	62.2
Singapore	Latham & Watkins LLP	54	70.6
Singapore	Linklaters LLP	6.4	19
Singapore	Mayer Brown LLP	4.7	18.4
Singapore	Morrison Foerster	33.6	52
Singapore	Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	4.3	15.4
Singapore	Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP	33.8	80
Singapore	Reed Smith LLP	19.1	27.4
Singapore	Shearman & Sterling LLP*	54.8	52.9
Singapore	Simmons & Simmons LLP	0.8	3.4
Singapore	Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP	37	50
Singapore	White & Case LLP	28.4	75
South Korea	Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer LLP	46.7	33.3
South Korea	Bae, Kim & Lee LLC	51.9	54.9
South Korea	Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP	-	-
South Korea	Dentons Lee	0.2	21.7
South Korea	DLA Piper	0.3	20
South Korea	K&L Gates LLP	6.5	25
South Korea	Linklaters LLP	2.9	14.3
South Korea	Milbank LLP	-	-
South Korea	Ropes & Gray LLP	26.3	100

COUNTRY	FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
South Korea	Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP	0	0
South Korea	White & Case LLP	16.7	55.6
Sri Lanka	D.L. & F. De Saram	2.2	20
Sri Lanka	Sudath Perera Associates	4.5	6.1
Taiwan	LCS & Partners	7.5	15
Thailand	Allen & Overy*	-	-
Thailand	Anglo Thai Legal (ATL)	50	50
Thailand	DLA Piper	14.9	38.2
Thailand	Kudun & Partners Co., Ltd.	-	8.3
Thailand	Linklaters LLP	10.7	32.3
Thailand	Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	14.7	66.7
Thailand	Thanathip & Partners	1.2	7.7
Thailand	The Legal House (Thailand)	16.5	100
Uzbekistan	Dentons Europe LLP	5.5	17.4
Uzbekistan	Kinstellar	12.6	33.3
Vietnam	Allen & Overy*	-	-
Vietnam	Duane Morris LLP & Affiliates	-	-
Vietnam	Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	24.8	80
Vietnam	Mayer Brown LLP	20.5	75

*\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.*

# CHINA

Although Index submissions tend to be from international firms with offices in China, there has been notable growth in the engagement of local law firms in pro bono activities. There is more awareness of social responsibility among legal professionals and a burgeoning civil society sector demanding legal expertise.

While there are currently no mandatory targets or regulations set by local authorities specifically for pro bono hours in China, there is a general encouragement from the legal community and some local law societies, such as the All-China Lawyers’ Association, to support pro bono initiatives.

The pro bono environment in China is also shaped by unique social and political factors. The Chinese government’s regulatory framework regarding NGOs and foreign non-profits often requires navigating complex legal channels, which has increased the demand for legal services in areas such as compliance and operational legality. Despite these challenges, pro bono culture in China is present, with international law firms in particular driving engagement in pro bono. This trend reflects a broader shift towards greater emphasis on corporate social responsibility within the legal community in China, aligning with global practices while continuing to cater to localised needs.<sup>31</sup>

In 2024, 22 firms with offices in China submitted data to this Index, a decrease in submissions from 2022 (29 submissions)—in part due to several international firms withdrawing or closing their offices in China in 2023 and 2024.<sup>32</sup> Overall, though, the composition of the sample is comparable.

Fee earners performed an average of **11.2 hours** of pro bono in 2024, slightly down from 13 hours in 2022. Engagement is reasonably strong, with 36 percent of fee earners engaged in offering any pro bono and 21 percent going over the ten-hour mark.

For partners, we see a decline in engagement: In the 2024 data, 23 percent of partners engaged in pro bono and averaged 5.2 hours, with 15 percent recording 10+ pro bono hours. This is a decline from the 2022 Index, when we reported 43 percent of partners doing any pro bono, at an average of 19 hours, and 37 percent recording 10+ hours.

The presence of pro bono infrastructure has improved, rising from 86 percent in 2022 to 94 percent in 2024 among responding firms. The primary focus areas indicated by firms with offices in China were access to justice (68 percent), immigration, refugees and asylum (66 percent) and LGBTQ+ rights (40 percent).

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Accenture	1.4	4.1
Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer LLP	2.6	14.3
Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP	0	0
DLA Piper	2	9.8
Eversheds Sutherland LLP	0	0

<sup>31</sup> Corporate Social Responsibility, Lehman, Lee & Xu, <https://www.lehmanlaw.com/resource-centre/faqs/corporate-social-responsibility/corporate-social-responsibility.html>

<sup>32</sup> “Exodus of US law firms from Shanghai accelerates”, Financial Times, 30 May 2024, <https://www.ft.com/content/8a94e7a8-7a6a-4318-876d-9dab0076576c>



FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	2.7	15.9
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP	13.7	71.4
Holman Fenwick Willan LLP (HFW)	0.1	0
K&L Gates LLP	0.6	1.8
Kirkland & Ellis LLP	1	0
Linklaters LLP	12.7	31.1
Mayer Brown LLP	37.7	66.7
Morrison Foerster	14.2	38.5
O'Melveny & Myers LLP	0	0
Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP	99.2	91.7
Proskauer Rose LLP	125.5	-
Reed Smith LLP	4.4	16.7
Ropes & Gray LLP	104	180
Shearman & Sterling LLP*	6.5	13.3
Simmons & Simmons LLP	1.3	5
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP	20.3	31.8
White & Case LLP	1.5	4.8
<b>Country average</b>	<b>11.2</b>	<b>21</b>

*\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.*

# HONG KONG

The pro bono landscape in Hong Kong is well established, with a significant number of international and local law firms actively participating in pro bono activities. In this year’s Index, 23 firms with offices in Hong Kong participated, from 25 in the 2022 Index: all are international firms.

Hong Kong does not have mandatory pro bono requirements for lawyers, but the Law Society of Hong Kong encourages its members to engage in pro bono. Voluntary targets are promoted, and many law firms have internal targets for their lawyers. Organisations like the Hong Kong Law Society’s Pro Bono Committee and PILnet, alongside local non-profit organisations like the Justice Centre and Equal Justice Hong Kong, have been pivotal in connecting law firms with those in need and responding to recent political changes and social unrest. Convenings such as Hong Kong Pro Bono Week, launched in 2023, are keeping the cause of pro bono top of mind. Equal Justice Hong Kong and PILnet have collaborated to develop CLIX (Hong Kong Pro Bono Portal), a digital portal for local pro bono connections.

Broadly, fee earners performed an average of **19 hours** of pro bono in 2024, up from 18.1 hours in 2022. Engagement appears to be rising, with 50 percent of fee earners engaged in offering any pro bono (compared with 46 percent in 2022) and 35 percent going over the ten-hour mark (compared with 31 percent in 2022).

For partners, in the 2024 data, 45 percent of partners engaged in pro bono and averaged 9.1 hours, with 26 percent recording 10+ pro bono hours. This is a mixed picture from the 2022 Index, when we reported 31 percent of partners doing any pro bono, at an average of 12.8 hours, and 31 percent recording 10+ hours. Overall, the average hours and percentage of partners doing 10+ hours have decreased, but it is promising to see a higher percentage of partners doing pro bono.

The presence of pro bono infrastructure is well established in Hong Kong, with 95 percent of firms indicating its existence, surpassing the regional average of 89 percent. For firms reporting in Hong Kong, pro bono efforts were focused on access to justice (67 percent), immigration, refugees and asylum (64 percent), and ethnic minority rights and racial justice (40 percent).

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP	-	-
Allen & Overy*	12.1	28.6
Ashurst	7	25.4
Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP	0	0
Dechert LLP	103.4	-
DLA Piper	36.4	48.7
Eversheds Sutherland LLP	1.4	4.3
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	9.5	21.1
Goodwin Procter LLP	0	0
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP	45.2	83.3
Holman Fenwick Willan LLP (HFW)	1.7	6.7
Kirkland & Ellis LLP	27.8	52.5

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Latham & Watkins LLP	58.6	69.1
Linklaters LLP	9.8	18.6
Mayer Brown LLP	21.3	48.1
Morrison Foerster	32.9	48.6
Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	2.6	5.5
Reed Smith LLP	3.6	11
Ropes & Gray LLP	27.2	80
Shearman & Sterling LLP*	16	10.8
Simmons & Simmons LLP	6	25.5
Steptoe LLP	21.2	80
White & Case LLP	19.6	66.7
<b>Country average</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>35</b>

\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.

# INDIA

India’s culture of pro bono is relatively well established among larger firms, as well as more widely among the mid-size firms and independent lawyers in metropolitan cities. It is driven by significant societal need and access to justice gaps, as well as increasing awareness within the legal community. While the Constitution and allied acts such as the Legal Services Authorities Act provide a strong basis for providing legal aid services, the pro bono ecosystem in India is still growing and is yet to reach maturity.

There are no mandatory requirements or formal targets for lawyers in India to engage in pro bono. However, the Bar Council of India encourages lawyers to voluntarily dedicate a portion of their time to pro bono, and many law firms have set internal benchmarks for pro bono hours. While the Department of Justice has a Pro Bono Legal Services programme, it is predominantly a legal aid service-focused initiative—in India legal aid and pro bono are often regarded as the same within the legal

community. India celebrated its first Pro Bono Week in September 2024, marking a moment of momentum for the pro bono movement in the country.<sup>33</sup>

Six firms participated in the Index, a decrease from 11 firms in 2022. Fee earners performed an average of **19.3 hours** of pro bono in 2024. The data shows 53 percent of fee earners engaged in offering any pro bono and 35 percent going over the ten-hour mark. For partners, in the 2024 data, 10 percent of partners engaged in pro bono and averaged 3 hours, with 7 percent recording 10+ pro bono hours. A comparative analysis between 2022 and 2024 has not been carried out for this Index due to the distinct samples in each reporting year.

The main areas of focus for pro bono in India are education, training and employment (45 percent), environment, climate and biodiversity (36 percent) and access to justice (36 percent). Among reporting firms, 91% have an element of pro bono infrastructure.

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Accenture	0.2	0.4
Altacit Global	16.7	16.7
RNA Technology and IP Attorneys	14	24
Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co.	26.7	60
Sreemannaarayana Mallela	-	-
Suraj Narayan	10	100
<b>Country average</b>	<b>19.3</b>	<b>35</b>

33 <https://indiaprobonoweek.in/>



# INDONESIA

Indonesia enjoys a strong pro bono culture that is embedded within the legal community, with the celebration of annual pro bono awards organised by a national legal digital portal, Hukumonline. As in other parts of the region, legal aid and pro bono are seen as overlapping and sometimes interchangeable, with legal aid provisions of the Advocates Law defining legal aid as free-of-charge legal assistance for “justice seekers” in and outside the court, which falls within our definition for pro bono.

Pro bono service provision continues to grow as awareness and participation by Indonesian law firms of all sizes increases, as well as the involvement of international law firms in pro bono work. This is supported by rules under the Indonesian Advocates Association (PERADI), which recommends that domestic lawyers provide at least 50 hours of legal aid (pro bono) each year. This pro bono requirement must technically be satisfied by lawyers to obtain or renew their advocate identity card, although this does not appear to be strictly enforced. Organisations like the Indonesia Legal Aid Foundation (YLBHI), the Jakarta Legal Aid Institute (LBH) and the Indonesian Legal Resource Center have been instrumental in bridging the

gap between law firms willing to offer pro bono services and communities in need.

This year marks the second inclusion of Indonesia in the Index as a standalone chapter, and the first time since 2020. Five firms with offices in Indonesia participated in the 2024 Index. All are offices of international firms.

Our data shows strong engagement with pro bono. Fee earners in Indonesia performed an average of **14.8 hours** of pro bono in 2024. Half (50 percent) of fee earners engaged in offering any pro bono, with 39 percent going over the ten-hour mark. Among partners, 79 percent engaged in pro bono and averaged 22.3 hours, with 57 percent recording 10+ pro bono hours.

All the responding firms indicated the presence of an element of pro bono infrastructure and the reported focus areas for responding firms with offices in Indonesia were immigration, refugees and asylum (63 percent), access to justice (50 percent), and ethnic/minority rights and racial justice (38 percent).

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Accenture	-	-
Allen & Overy*	21.7	53.3
Ashurst	10.1	25
Linklaters LLP	1.3	6.7
White & Case LLP	30.6	91
Country average	14.8	39.2

\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.

# JAPAN

Pro bono culture in Japan is still young but growing steadily. Key players in Japan’s pro bono landscape include the Japan Federation of Bar Associations (JFBA), which promotes pro bono activities within Japan, and the Lawyers for International Pro Bono Services (LIPS), a non-profit organisation that connects Japanese lawyers with international pro bono opportunities.

There are no mandatory pro bono targets set by local regulators. However, the JFBA encourages its members to engage in pro bono activities and has established guidelines for pro bono. Pro bono is distinct from the country’s legal aid system, known as Houterasu, which provides government-funded legal information and consultation to individuals who cannot afford legal representation. There are no special government-funded programmes for pro bono in Japan, and this is predominantly driven by the initiative of law firms. It is worth noting that international and regional firms are most involved in pro bono, with only larger firms reporting their pro bono work.

This year, 16 firms participated in the 2024 Index, similar to 2022, when 17 firms participated. As in 2022 and 2020, all contributors were international firms with

offices in Japan. Overall, the 2024 data shows a slight increase in average hours for partners, as well as partner engagement, but a decrease across all fee earners.

Fee earners in Japan performed an average of **18.8 hours** of pro bono in 2024, down from 27.5 hours in 2022. Engagement appears to be relatively consistent, with 36 percent of fee earners engaged in offering any pro bono (compared with 40 percent in 2022) and 28 percent going over the ten-hour mark (compared with 30 percent in 2022).

For partners, in the 2024 data, 45 percent of partners engaged in pro bono and averaged 20.2 hours, with 24 percent recording 10+ pro bono hours. This is an increase from the 2022 Index, when we reported 33 percent of partners doing any pro bono, at an average of 17.7 hours, and 19 percent recording 10+ hours.

The main areas of focus for pro bono were access to justice (72 percent), immigration, refugees and asylum (66 percent) and LGBTQ+ rights (44 percent). The presence of pro bono infrastructure is established in Japan, with 94 percent of firms indicating its existence, surpassing the regional average of 89 percent.

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Accenture	0.1	0
Ashurst	13.8	45.5
DLA Piper	32	52.7
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	39.4	62.5
K&L Gates LLP	9.3	20
Latham & Watkins LLP	83.2	100
Linklaters LLP	11.1	25.5
Mayer Brown LLP	13.5	33.3
Morrison Foerster	29.5	40
O’Melveny & Myers LLP	-	-
Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP	146.5	100

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Ropes & Gray LLP	18.7	40
Shearman & Sterling LLP*	46.6	30
Simmons & Simmons LLP	1.7	2.9
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP	0.7	4.4
White & Case LLP	10.9	36.7
<b>Country average</b>	<b>18.8</b>	<b>28</b>

*\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.*

# KAZAKHSTAN

This is Kazakhstan’s debut with its own country chapter in the Index. For the first time, we received submissions from four firms with offices in Kazakhstan, all international or regional firms.

Legal aid has historically been more widely practiced than pro bono in Kazakhstan, but there is growing awareness of pro bono, especially with growing international law and consultancy firm presence in the country. These international players are collaborating with local law firms to bring global pro bono practices to Kazakhstan. They often partner with local NGOs and legal clinics to provide services.

While advocates are required to provide free legal aid in certain cases, there are no mandatory pro bono targets

or regulations set by local regulators. While Kazakhstan has made efforts to improve its legal aid system, there are still gaps in coverage, particularly for civil cases and non-profit organisations, and there is generally a need for pro bono services.

Among firms reporting with offices in Kazakhstan, fee earners performed an average of **16.1 hours** of pro bono in 2024. We see that 38 percent of fee earners have engaged in offering any pro bono and 22 percent went over the ten-hour mark. For partners, in the 2024 data, 42 percent of partners engaged in pro bono and averaged 12.2 hours, with 17 percent recording 10+ pro bono hours. All responding firms with offices in Kazakhstan have at least one element of pro bono infrastructure.

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Dentons Europe LLP	14	21.2
Kinstellar	1	5.3
Reed Smith LLP	6	16.7
White & Case LLP	36	38.1
<b>Country average</b>	<b>16.1</b>	<b>21.5</b>



# PHILIPPINES

This is the Philippines’ first time in the Index with its own country chapter. We received submissions from five firms with offices in the country.

The pro bono culture in the Philippines continues to grow, driven by a strong tradition of public service within the legal profession. Since 2017, the Community Legal Aid Service Rule issued by the Philippines Supreme Court requires new lawyers to render 120 hours of “pro bono legal aid” services to qualified parties. As of 2024, a new mandatory requirement was introduced for practicing lawyers to render at least 60 hours of free legal aid services to indigent litigants and other qualified beneficiaries annually under the Unified Legal Aid Service (ULAS) Rules. As elsewhere, the definition of legal aid, which is a free legal service without government compensation, falls within generally understood definitions of pro bono. The ULAS Rules allow lawyers to extend financial contributions to the ULAS Fund instead of performing pro bono legal aid service to help cover reasonable expenses of lawyers who perform pro bono legal aid services, but only up to 50 percent of the minimum hours.

The Integrated Bar of the Philippines, the Public Attorney’s Office, the Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG), and the

Alternative Law Groups coalition are the primary pro bono leaders in the Philippines. While the Philippines does not have a specific pro bono week or day, several legal organisations and law schools regularly organise events and activities to build awareness of pro bono work and highlight their initiatives.

Fee earners in Philippines performed an average of **2 hours** of pro bono in 2024. A fifth—20 percent—of fee earners engaged in offering any pro bono, with 8 percent going over the ten-hour mark. For partners, in the 2024 data, 77 percent of partners engaged in pro bono and averaged 9.2 hours, with 18 percent recording 10+ pro bono hours. Of the responding firms, 88 percent indicated the presence of pro bono infrastructure.

Firms reported that they were focusing their pro bono efforts on access to justice and education, training and employment (each 62 percent) and human rights (50 percent). A notable trend in the Philippines pro bono community is the growing involvement of law students and young lawyers in pro bono activities, often through legal clinics and community outreach programs. This trend is fostering a new generation of socially conscious legal professionals.

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Accenture	0.3	0
Martinez Vergara & Gonzalez Sociedad (MVGS)	10	60
Puyat, Jacinto & Santos (PJS Law)	1.1	0
Salazar Hernandez & Gatmaitan (SyCipLaw)	4.1	14.7
Weigand & Partners	4	30
Country average	2	8.1

# SINGAPORE

Singapore’s pro bono culture is well-established, supported by a robust network of international law firms, non-profit organisations and regulatory bodies. Organisations such as Pro Bono SG and The Law Society of Singapore, through its Pro Bono Services Office, alongside NGOs such as the Catholic Lawyers Guild, the Lawyers’ Christian Fellowship, Jamiyah Singapore (Muslim Missionary Society Singapore) and the Community Justice Centre, help coordinate initiatives that promote and facilitate legal volunteerism.

Pro bono work in Singapore is not mandated by law. However, many law firms have embraced voluntary targets to foster a culture of giving back to the community. While Singapore boasts a strong legal aid system, the distinct and diverse needs addressed by pro bono services highlight an ongoing demand. This has been pivotal in addressing the legal needs of those who may not qualify for legal aid but still require legal assistance. Singapore’s annual Pro Bono Week serves as a significant event to celebrate and encourage pro bono work, raising awareness and engagement across the legal profession.

For the 2024 Index, 23 firms with offices in Singapore submitted data, up from 22 firms in 2022: all are international firms. Fee earners in Singapore performed an average of **18.1 hours** of pro bono in 2024, similar to 18.8 hours in 2022. Engagement was also consistent, with 42 percent of fee earners engaged in offering any pro bono (compared with 43 percent in 2022), though we see a drop to 31 percent going over the ten-hour mark (compared with 45 percent in 2022).

For partners, in the 2024 data, 35 percent of partners engaged in pro bono and averaged 12.1 hours, with 24 percent recording 10+ pro bono hours. This is a decrease from the 2022 Index, when we reported 43 percent of partners doing any pro bono, at an average of 17 hours, and 28 percent recording 10+ hours.

All the firms in Singapore indicated presence of pro bono infrastructure, which is not surprising given that all the responding firms are international. The main areas of focus for pro bono among responding firms were access to justice (70 percent), immigration, refugees and asylum (65 percent) and human rights (47 percent).

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Accenture	0.9	2.9
Addleshaw Goddard LLP	5.7	20
Allen & Overy*	10.3	19.3
Ashurst	1.5	2.9
Dechert LLP	122	-
Dentons Rodyk & Davidson LLP	-	-
DLA Piper	12.6	46
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	13.7	42.9
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP	39.3	43.8
Goodwin Procter LLP	0	0
Holman Fenwick Willan LLP (HFW)	0.3	2.6
K&L Gates LLP	41	62.2

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Latham & Watkins LLP	54	70.6
Linklaters LLP	6.4	19
Mayer Brown LLP	4.7	18.4
Morrison Foerster	33.6	52
Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	4.3	15.4
Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP	33.8	80
Reed Smith LLP	19.1	27.4
Shearman & Sterling LLP*	54.8	52.9
Simmons & Simmons LLP	0.8	3.4
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP	37	50
White & Case LLP	28.4	75
<b>Country average</b>	<b>18.1</b>	<b>31</b>

*\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.*

# SOUTH KOREA

South Korea has a strong commitment to social responsibility and access to justice, which is reflected in its commitments to pro bono. The Korean Bar Association (KBA) actively promotes and facilitates pro bono opportunities, and the Legal Aid Foundation also supports pro bono initiatives, despite its primary focus on legal aid. Additionally, many large law firms in South Korea have established dedicated pro bono departments.

In South Korea, there is a mandatory pro bono requirement for licensed attorneys under the Attorney-at-Law Act, which requires all practicing lawyers provide at least 30 hours of pro bono legal services annually. In theory, failure to meet the mandatory target can subject lawyers to penal provisions through a fine, though this has rarely, if at all, been levied. In practice, the 30-hour target can be met through a payment in lieu to a pro bono fund and local bar associations can also reduce the requirement to 20 hours. There are exemptions for those who have been practicing for less than two years and those who are older than 60 years of age.

Lawyers can engage in legal aid through the Korea Legal Aid Corporation, a state-subsidised legal aid institution, and through the Seoul Bar Association Pro Bono Support Center. To meet their mandatory targets, many large private practices, as well as international firms, regularly engage in providing pro bono services. Though the

mandatory pro bono targets remain controversial among lawyers, they have led to a substantial growth of the pro bono practice, notably in domestic law firms. Overall, however, legal aid is not specifically distinguished from pro bono.

In 2024, we received submissions from 11 firms, compared with 12 firms in 2022. Fee earners in South Korea performed an average of **48.8 hours** of pro bono in 2024, up from 26.2 hours in 2022. Engagement showed a slight increase, with 72 percent of fee earners engaged in offering any pro bono (compared with 70 percent in 2022) and 54 percent going over the ten-hour mark (compared with 43 percent in 2022).

For partners, in the 2024 data, 67 percent of partners engaged in pro bono and averaged 45.8 hours, with 49 percent recording 10+ pro bono hours. The 2022 Index showed 77 percent of partners doing any pro bono, at an average of 33.9 hours, and 55 percent recording 10+ hours.

The main areas of focus among responding firms were immigration, refugees and asylum (80 percent), and access to justice and human rights, both at 60 percent. Nearly all of the firms in South Korea—93 percent—indicated presence of pro bono infrastructure.

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer LLP	46.7	33.3
Bae, Kim & Lee LLC	51.9	54.9
Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP	-	-
Dentons Lee	0.2	21.7
DLA Piper	0.3	20
K&L Gates LLP	6.5	25
Linklaters LLP	2.9	14.3
Milbank LLP	-	-



FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Ropes & Gray LLP	26.3	100
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP	0	0
White & Case LLP	16.7	55.6
<b>Country average</b>	<b>48.8</b>	<b>54</b>

# THAILAND

Organised pro bono efforts have gained momentum in Thailand in recent years. Key players in the pro bono landscape include the Lawyers Council of Thailand, which facilitates pro bono opportunities, and various NGOs—including organisations like BABSEACLE, the Asia Foundation and the Thailand Institute of Justice—that work to promote and democratise access to justice. International law firms with offices in Thailand have also been instrumental in promoting pro bono culture, and local law firms have begun to match with their own robust pro bono programmes.

There are no mandatory pro bono targets set by local regulators. However, the Lawyers Council of Thailand encourages its members to engage in pro bono activities. While Thailand has a state-funded legal aid system, it faces challenges in meeting the high demand for assistance, particularly in rural areas, and does not cover all areas of legal need.

For the 2024 Index, we had submissions from eight firms with offices in Thailand and a mix of international and local players, comparable to seven submissions in 2022. Fee earners in Thailand performed an average of **13.2**

**hours** of pro bono in 2024, up from 9.5 hours in 2022. Engagement showed an increase, with 28 percent of fee earners engaged in offering any pro bono (compared with 26 percent in 2022) and 28 percent going over the ten-hour mark (compared with 24 percent in 2022).

For partners, in the 2024 data, 37 percent of partners engaged in pro bono and averaged 6.8 hours, with 23 percent recording 10+ pro bono hours. The 2022 Index showed 24 percent of partners doing any pro bono, at an average of 3.4 hours, and 12 percent recording 10+ hours. This data indicates an increase in the intensity and engagement in pro bono activities among fee earners, including partners, despite a slight decline in fee earner participation rates.

More firms (92 percent) are also reporting formalisation of their pro bono through adoption of infrastructure, which also indicates growing attention to pro bono. The key focus areas for pro bono identified by responding firms in Thailand were access to justice (58 percent), immigration, refugees and asylum (50 percent), and ethnic/minority rights and racial justice (25 percent).

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Allen & Overy*	-	-
Anglo Thai Legal (ATL)	50	50
DLA Piper	14.9	38.2
Kudun & Partners Co., Ltd.	-	8.3
Linklaters LLP	10.7	32.3
Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	14.7	66.7
Thanathip & Partners	1.2	7.7
The Legal House (Thailand)	16.5	100
<b>Country average</b>	<b>13.2</b>	<b>28</b>

*\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.*





# EUROPE

*The analysis in this section relates to Europe excluding England and Wales*

Pro bono culture in Europe has been steadily gaining momentum in recent years, with greater involvement and commitment to pro bono activities among European law firms and legal professionals. Many European firms now have dedicated pro bono programmes and policies, encouraging lawyers to contribute their time and expertise to support a variety of causes, including human rights, environmental protection and access to justice for underserved communities. Additionally, there is more collaboration between law firms, NGOs and legal clinics to address pressing social issues and provide legal assistance to those in need.

Pro bono in Europe is bolstered by national and international initiatives and awards that recognise the efforts of firms and individuals who excel in pro bono work. This increased visibility is helping foster a more vibrant pro bono culture across the region. The European Pro Bono Alliance, for example, is a network that connects law firms, legal professionals and pro bono organisations. They foster collaboration and knowledge sharing and help to coordinate the annual European Pro Bono Week, which promotes pro bono across the region, through various local and regional events and initiatives.

Major international law firms with offices in Europe have played a key role in fostering the growth of pro bono through strategic relationships with local NGOs and clearinghouses and, in recent years, developing networks and roundtables for collaboration and knowledge sharing. The most prominent of these networks is the European Pro Bono Initiative, a

community of law firm pro bono professionals established in 2019 to identify growth opportunities for, and remove barriers to, pro bono and to increase collaboration across the region. The Initiative's members also organise country roundtables across Europe (such as in Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg and Germany) to exchange information and discuss best practice.

Despite promising growth, there are still significant differences, even between neighbouring countries. For example, while Germany and France have built vibrant and active pro bono ecosystems, pro bono in Switzerland remains limited, despite the large NGO community in the country. In comparison to the rest of the European region, the legal communities of Nordic countries have been slower to embrace pro bono.

## HOURS AND ENGAGEMENT IN 2024

In 2024, 194 responding firms from 29 countries provided 245,029.3 hours of pro bono. In 2022, we saw 222,809 hours of pro bono provided and received 197 submissions from 26 countries in Europe. This is the first year Scotland appears with an in-depth chapter in the Index, having received four submissions for the jurisdiction.

Across Europe, 36 percent of fee earners engaged in pro bono work, averaging **14.5 hours** per fee earner per year, with 24 percent contributing 10+ hours. This is a slight but promising uptick in both average hours and engagement from 2022, when 31 percent of fee



earners participated in pro bono services, averaging 12.2 hours, with 21 percent providing 10+ hours of pro bono. Responding firms with offices in the Czech Republic and Belgium reported the highest overall pro bono participation rates, well above the regional average, at 64 and 53 percent, respectively. The highest average hours for the European region were reported in Ireland, at an impressive 31 hours, more than double the regional average and a meaningful jump from 2022.

Meanwhile, pro bono participation among partners in Europe remains strong at 37 percent, averaging 10.8 hours per year, with 20 percent recording 10+ hours. This is consistent with our findings in 2022, when partners had a pro bono engagement rate of 36 percent, averaging 10.5 hours of pro bono, with 19 percent providing 10+ hours. Countries in Central and Eastern Europe have reported high average hours for partners in the region, including Slovakia at an average of 45.9 hours per partner and Romania at 22.5 hours. Meanwhile, Ireland and Slovakia reported the highest levels of pro bono engagement among partners at 66 and 67 percent, respectively.

The average annual pro bono target for the European region was 32.5 hours and the median was 25.

OTHER FINDINGS

In Europe, most firms have infrastructure to support their pro bono programmes, such as pro bono policies (86 percent), pro bono eligibility criteria (84 percent) and pro bono diversity commitments (34 percent). Meanwhile, 86 percent of firms are tracking their pro bono impact. Broadly, this is indicative of a well-established pro bono landscape.

On financial resources for pro bono, 38 percent of responding firms reported having budgets over \$100,000 USD and 6 percent of firms between \$50,000–\$100,000.

On the more modest end, 6 percent of firms had budgets between \$5,000–\$10,000 and 8 percent of firms had budgets of \$1,000–\$5,000.

Responding firms in Europe are placing strategic focus on access to justice (70 percent), immigration, refugees and asylum (57 percent) and human rights (45 percent). Firms expect access to justice to continue to grow in strategic focus (51 percent), accompanied by other key issues like environment, climate and biodiversity (43 percent).

We see continued interest in supporting traditional pro bono beneficiaries such as registered charities (95 percent), individuals in need (77 percent) and social enterprises (75 percent). However, notably, more than half of firms (60 percent) also offer pro bono to small businesses/start-ups, and nearly a quarter (23 percent) support journalists and/or independent media. Firms are mostly delivering a mix of pro bono corporate/commercial advice, research and representation in legal proceedings. Firms are getting their pro bono matters from legal clinics (81 percent), individual referrals (72 percent) and clearinghouses (71 percent). While other sources are consistent with 2022, the number of firms looking to legal clinics as a source for pro bono has nearly doubled from 44 percent in 2022, signalling growth in opportunities in clinic and project-based pro bono in Europe.

The picture of pro bono in Europe is one of cautious optimism. While we have not seen significant growth in our main numerical metrics for pro bono (with few country-level exceptions), the trend is mostly one of gradually rising engagement and average pro bono hours, supported by the work of collaborative networks, roundtables, pro bono weeks and other initiatives to build the knowledge, impact and profile of pro bono across the region.

COUNTRY	FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Austria	Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	29.1	63.5
Austria	DLA Piper	20	50.8
Azerbaijan	Dentons Europe LLP	26.1	33.3
Belgium	Allen & Overy*	43.6	48.5
Belgium	Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer LLP	33.7	76.5
Belgium	Ashurst	26.2	46.7
Belgium	Baker Botts LLP	67.2	40
Belgium	Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP	20.6	30.8
Belgium	Crowell & Moring LLP	21.4	40
Belgium	Dechert LLP	91.6	125
Belgium	Dentons Europe LLP	15.8	33.3
Belgium	DLA Piper	49	45.3
Belgium	Eversheds Sutherland LLP	5.1	23.5
Belgium	Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	21.2	42.7
Belgium	Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP	19.7	38.9
Belgium	Holman Fenwick Willan LLP (HFW)	0.6	0
Belgium	Kirkland & Ellis LLP	9.5	50
Belgium	K&L Gates LLP	8.2	28.6
Belgium	Latham & Watkins LLP	35.7	63
Belgium	Linklaters LLP	15	29.1
Belgium	Mayer Brown LLP	14.7	38.5
Belgium	Morrison Foerster	45	72.7
Belgium	Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	9.4	25
Belgium	O'Melveny & Myers LLP	0	0
Belgium	Reed Smith LLP	43.7	76.1
Belgium	Shearman & Sterling LLP*	37.6	100
Belgium	Simmons & Simmons LLP	9	19.2
Belgium	Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP	-	-
Belgium	Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP	2.6	9.4
Belgium	Steptoe LLP	32	66.7
Belgium	White & Case LLP	15.6	31.4
Bulgaria	Kinstellar	1.5	5.3
Croatia	Divjak Topić Bahtijarević & Krka odvjetničko društvo d.o.o.	-	-
Croatia	Kinstellar	-	-
Cyprus	Antoniou McCollum & Co.	5.6	25
Czech Republic	Accenture	0.9	0
Czech Republic	Allen & Overy*	26	55.3
Czech Republic	Dentons Europe LLP	20.7	41.3
Czech Republic	DLA Piper	25.9	23.8
Czech Republic	Kinstellar	1.7	7.5

COUNTRY	FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Czech Republic	White & Case LLP	25.8	43.4
Finland	White & Case LLP	11.3	36.4
France	Accenture	0.2	0
France	Addleshaw Goddard LLP	5.8	9.3
France	Allen & Overy*	14	28.8
France	Ashurst	9.5	15
France	Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP	13.8	31.3
France	Dechert LLP	85.2	-
France	Dentons Europe LLP	19	42.6
France	DLA Piper	45.6	25.9
France	Eversheds Sutherland LLP	2.5	6.7
France	Foley Hoag LLP	18.5	15.4
France	Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	22.9	34.4
France	Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP	18.2	35.8
France	Goodwin Procter LLP	-	-
France	Holman Fenwick Willan LLP (HFW)	1.1	2.1
France	Kirkland & Ellis LLP	9.2	36.4
France	K&L Gates LLP	5.4	27.3
France	Latham & Watkins LLP	82.3	93.8
France	Linklaters LLP	3.6	9
France	Mayer Brown LLP	8.2	20.7
France	Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	6.5	14.4
France	Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP	39.7	79.7
France	Proskauer Rose LLP	19.3	33.3
France	Reed Smith LLP	64.6	66.5
France	Shearman & Sterling LLP*	61.1	31.3
France	Simmons & Simmons LLP	14	30.8
France	Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP	35.6	44.1
France	White & Case LLP	7.4	19
France	Winston & Strawn LLP	27.5	15.2
Georgia	Dentons Europe LLP	5.1	18.2
Germany	Addleshaw Goddard LLP	4.3	9.7
Germany	Allen & Overy*	10	16.8
Germany	Ashurst	17.2	26
Germany	Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP	4.7	8.6
Germany	Dechert LLP	68.2	95.2
Germany	Dentons Europe LLP	9.6	16.1
Germany	DLA Piper	15.2	19.3
Germany	Eversheds Sutherland LLP	2	6.6
Germany	Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	9.9	20.6
Germany	Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP	59.1	68.1

COUNTRY	FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Germany	Goodwin Procter LLP	-	-
Germany	Kirkland & Ellis LLP	31.1	100
Germany	K&L Gates LLP	1	2.9
Germany	Latham & Watkins LLP	32.3	68.2
Germany	Linklaters LLP	1.3	2.9
Germany	Mayer Brown LLP	13.7	31
Germany	Morrison Foerster	35.3	52.9
Germany	Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	0.6	2.2
Germany	Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP	36.4	86.8
Germany	Reed Smith LLP	38.5	64.4
Germany	Simmons & Simmons LLP	0.8	3.4
Germany	Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP	35.6	45.5
Germany	White & Case LLP	6.3	24
Greece	Reed Smith LLP	51.2	74.3
Hungary	Dentons Europe LLP	8.9	20.3
Hungary	DLA Piper	10	29.5
Hungary	Kinstellar	0.8	2.9
Ireland	A&L Goodbody LLP	40.9	71.7
Ireland	Accenture	1.4	2.6
Ireland	Addleshaw Goddard LLP	0.1	1.1
Ireland	Arthur Cox LLP	36.5	56.2
Ireland	Dechert LLP	62.4	-
Ireland	Dentons UK and Middle East LLP	2.9	9.5
Ireland	DLA Piper	28.6	35.6
Ireland	Simmons & Simmons LLP	6	21.1
Italy	Albè & Associati (A&A) Studio Legale	2.6	10.5
Italy	Accenture	0.1	0
Italy	Allen & Overy*	-	-
Italy	Ashurst	6.8	23.1
Italy	Carotenuto Studio Legale	50	33.3
Italy	Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP	14.6	23.3
Italy	Dentons Europe LLP	11.8	45.1
Italy	DLA Piper	15.7	17.8
Italy	Ferdinando Lajolo di Cossano	5	0
Italy	Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	8.2	15.6
Italy	K&L Gates LLP	0.9	1.8
Italy	Latham & Watkins LLP	37.3	74.5
Italy	Linklaters LLP	3.6	12.3
Italy	Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	2.5	7.7
Italy	Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP	39.7	88.5
Italy	Simmons & Simmons	0.1	0



COUNTRY	FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Italy	White & Case LLP	19	78.6
Luxembourg	Accenture	-	-
Luxembourg	Allen & Overy*	8.3	19
Luxembourg	Ashurst	17	18.8
Luxembourg	Dechert LLP	37	92.3
Luxembourg	Dentons Europe LLP	7.3	20
Luxembourg	DLA Piper	14.2	35.7
Luxembourg	Eversheds Sutherland LLP	0.3	0
Luxembourg	Goodwin Procter LLP	-	-
Luxembourg	Linklaters LLP	1.4	3.1
Luxembourg	Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	8.3	31.8
Luxembourg	Simmons & Simmons LLP	1.7	2.9
Luxembourg	White & Case LLP	25.4	50
Netherlands	Allen & Overy*	16.1	28.2
Netherlands	Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer LLP	0	0
Netherlands	De Brauw Blackstone Westbroek N.V.	30.9	-
Netherlands	Dentons Europe LLP	13	31.8
Netherlands	DLA Piper	12.8	29.5
Netherlands	Eversheds Sutherland LLP	7.5	17.5
Netherlands	Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	24.9	30.6
Netherlands	Linklaters LLP	6.3	12.2
Netherlands	Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	3	8.8
Netherlands	Simmons & Simmons	7.9	8.1
Netherlands	Stibbe B.V.	17.8	20
Poland	Allen & Overy*	9	16.9
Poland	Dentons Europe LLP	14.4	21.1
Poland	DLA Piper	26.6	21.5
Poland	Linklaters LLP	10	18.9
Poland	Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	13.5	14.6
Poland	White & Case LLP	12	33.9
Portugal	Linklaters LLP	0.7	1.8
Romania	Accenture	0.3	0.6
Romania	CMS	-	-
Romania	Dentons Europe LLP	19.1	33.3
Romania	DLA Piper	13.8	38.6
Romania	Kinstellar	0.8	3.2
Russia	Dentons	-	-
Serbia	Kinstellar	1.1	0
Slovakia	Accenture	0.6	0
Slovakia	Allen & Overy*	-	-

COUNTRY	FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Slovakia	Dentons Europe LLP	33	50
Slovakia	DLA Piper	23.3	63.6
Slovakia	Kinstellar	14.2	29.2
Spain	Accenture	0.6	0
Spain	Allen & Overy*	14.4	31.3
Spain	Ashurst	19	54
Spain	Dentons Europe LLP	5.9	20.9
Spain	DLA Piper	16.8	35
Spain	Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	4.8	12.1
Spain	Latham & Watkins LLP	44.5	100
Spain	Linklaters LLP	6.6	16.8
Spain	Simmons & Simmons LLP	0.8	2.3
Spain	White & Case LLP	23.9	63
Sweden	Linklaters LLP	2.5	11.1
Sweden	White & Case LLP	7	17.5
Switzerland	Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP	-	-
Switzerland	Holman Fenwick Willan LLP (HFW)	0	0
Switzerland	Mangeat Attorneys at Law LLC	11.5	15.4
Switzerland	Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP	65.7	100
Switzerland	White & Case LLP	27.2	66.7
Turkey	Dentons Europe LLP	5.5	17.2
Turkey	Kinstellar	9	25
Turkey	Özalp Law Firm	-	-
Turkey	White & Case LLP	7.7	22.2
UK - Northern Ireland	A&L Goodbody LLP	4.1	23
UK - Other	Addleshaw Goddard LLP	6.4	12.1
UK - Scotland	Addleshaw Goddard LLP	1.1	2.7
UK - Scotland	Ashurst	8.4	1.2
UK - Scotland	Dentons UK and Middle East LLP	8.5	26.1
UK - Scotland	Eversheds Sutherland LLP	5.7	14.8
Ukraine	Dentons Europe LLP	5.2	13
Ukraine	Kinstellar	17.7	62.1

\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.

# BELGIUM

As the host of several key European Union institutions, Belgium serves as an important hub for international and regional NGOs. This not only increases the demand for pro bono legal support in the country, but also raises awareness about the importance of pro bono work in strengthening civil society within the local legal community. The provision of pro bono services in Belgium is voluntary with no legal requirement for lawyers to provide pro bono assistance. However, with funding cuts to legal aid, there has been growing attention on the critical need for pro bono to support people with lower incomes, as well as NGOs. The presence of several international law firms and companies with UK and US roots has contributed to a rise in pro bono work, as lawyers strive to meet internationally set pro bono targets.

Law firms are adopting a collaborative approach to pro bono efforts. For example, the Brussels Pro Bono Roundtable, an initiative led by various firms and local and international clearinghouses, was established in 2023. The roundtable allows stakeholders to regularly meet, network, discuss new strategies and collaborate on different pro bono projects.<sup>34</sup>

Twenty-eight firms with offices in Belgium responded to the 2024 Index, up from 24 firms in 2022. The average

number of pro bono hours per fee earner held steady at **26.6 hours**, compared with 27.1 hours in the 2022 Index, and almost double the regional average of 14.5 hours. This year, more than half of fee earners (53 percent) engaged in pro bono work, with 40 percent contributing 10+ hours. This is a slight increase from 2022, where we saw 49 percent of fee earners engaged in pro bono, with 39 percent contributing 10+ hours.

As in previous years, partner pro bono engagement remained strong in Belgium: Partners averaged 20.7 hours of pro bono, a positive increase from 13.1 hours in 2022. Meanwhile, partner pro bono participation levels remain steady at 44 percent (45 percent in 2022), with 29 percent offering 10+ hours of pro bono (versus 26 percent in 2022).

The key pro bono focus areas for the responding firms in Belgium were immigration, refugees and asylum at 70 percent, access to justice at 63 percent and human rights at 47 percent. Of the respondents, 93 percent indicated they have an element of pro bono infrastructure, with 70 percent reporting all elements of infrastructure—higher than the regional average of 61 percent

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Dentons Europe LLP	15.8	33.3
DLA Piper	49	45.3
Eversheds Sutherland LLP	5.1	23.5
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	21.2	42.7
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP	19.7	38.9
Holman Fenwick Willan LLP (HFW)	0.6	0
K&L Gates LLP	8.2	28.6
Kirkland & Ellis LLP	9.5	50
Latham & Watkins LLP	35.7	63
Linklaters LLP	15	29.1
Mayer Brown LLP	14.7	38.5
Morrison Foerster	45	72.7
Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	9.4	25
O'Melveny & Myers LLP	0	0
Reed Smith LLP	43.7	76.1
Shearman & Sterling LLP*	37.6	100
Simmons & Simmons LLP	9	19.2
Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP	-	-
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP	2.6	9.4
Steptoe LLP	32	66.7
White & Case LLP	15.6	31.4
Country average	26.6	40

\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Allen & Overy*	43.6	48.5
Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer LLP	33.7	76.5
Ashurst	26.2	46.7
Baker Botts LLP	67.2	40
Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP	20.6	30.8
Crowell & Moring LLP	21.4	40
Dechert LLP	91.6	125

34 Brussels Pro Bono Roundtable (LinkedIn page), <https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/brussels-pro-bono-roundtable/posts/?feedView=all>



# CZECH REPUBLIC

As in most other countries in the region, pro bono in Czechia is largely unregulated. There have been efforts to pass legislation on the practice but, at present, pro bono continues to be driven by voluntary efforts of the legal community and NGOs based in the country, as well as by international firms with offices in the country. The Czech Bar Association takes an active role in the coordination of certain types of pro bono and facilitates free legal assistance for non-profit organisations.

Six firms submitted data for the Czech Republic to the 2024 Index, as in 2022. All are international or regional firms with offices in the Czech Republic. On average, fee earners provided **18.5 hours** of pro bono, double what was reported in 2022 (9.3 hours). In addition, we see broader engagement with pro bono. An impressive 63 percent of fee earners engaged in any pro bono, with 34 percent contributing 10+ hours. That is up from 2022, when we saw 40 percent of fee earners engaged in pro bono work and 23 percent contributing 10+ hours.

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Accenture	0.9	0
Allen & Overy*	26	55.3
Dentons Europe LLP	20.7	41.3
DLA Piper	25.9	23.8
Kinstellar	1.7	7.5
White & Case LLP	25.8	43.4
Country average	18.5	34

\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.

# FRANCE

Until recently, the culture of pro bono in France lagged behind other pro bono leaders like the US and UK. The French legal community is now a major provider of pro bono legal services in Europe, and there are ongoing efforts among local and international law firms, NGOs and bar associations to promote the practice further.

Lawyers in France have various opportunities to provide pro bono legal assistance. For example, the Alliance des Avocats pour les Droits de l’Homme acts as the leading local pro bono clearinghouse in the country, connecting lawyers to over 250 human rights NGOs. Droits d’Urgence, an NGO working to assist vulnerable groups and people facing social exclusion, works in partnership with lawyers and various public bodies to provide free legal assistance. Although it does not regulate pro bono legal services, the Paris Bar plays an active role in promoting and facilitating pro bono services, including by running local surgeries staffed by lawyers to provide free and confidential consultations.

Twenty-eight firms with offices in France participated in the 2024 Index, from 25 firms in 2022. Fee earners

performed an average of **22 hours** of pro bono in 2024, up from 17.6 hours in 2022. Engagement also appears to be rising, with 46 percent of fee earners engaged in offering any pro bono (compared with 36.4 in 2022) and 31 percent going over the ten-hour mark (compared with 28 percent in 2022).

For partners, we continue to see strong, steady engagement: In the 2024 data, 37 percent of partners engaged in pro bono and averaged 11.7 hours, with 23 percent recording 10+ pro bono hours. This is consistent with 2022, when we reported 36 percent of partners doing any pro bono, at an average of 12.1 hours, and 22 percent recording 10+ hours.

Nearly all firms (98 percent) have an element of pro bono infrastructure and 74 percent have all elements—higher than the regional average of 61 percent. The key focus areas for pro bono identified by responding firms were access to justice (72 percent), immigration, refugees and asylum (67 percent) and human rights (46 percent).

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Accenture	0.2	0
Addleshaw Goddard LLP	5.8	9.3
Allen & Overy*	14	28.8
Ashurst	9.5	15
Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP	13.8	31.3
Dechert LLP	85.2	-
Dentons Europe LLP	19	42.6
DLA Piper	45.6	25.9
Eversheds Sutherland LLP	2.5	6.7
Foley Hoag LLP	18.5	15.4
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	22.9	34.4
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP	18.2	35.8

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Goodwin Procter LLP	-	-
Holman Fenwick Willan LLP (HFW)	1.1	2.1
K&L Gates LLP	5.4	27.3
Kirkland & Ellis LLP	9.2	36.4
Latham & Watkins LLP	82.3	93.8
Linklaters LLP	3.6	9
Mayer Brown LLP	8.2	20.7
Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	6.5	14.4
Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP	39.7	79.7
Proskauer Rose LLP	19.3	33.3
Reed Smith LLP	64.6	66.5
Shearman & Sterling LLP*	61.1	31.3
Simmons & Simmons LLP	14	30.8
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP	35.6	44.1
White & Case LLP	7.4	19
Winston & Strawn LLP	27.5	15.2
<b>Country average</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>31</b>

\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.

# GERMANY

The pro bono landscape in Germany has changed significantly in recent decades. Helped by clarifications in a law regulating minimum fees for legal matters, the efforts of various NGOs and the legal community to promote the practice, and the growing demand for pro bono driven in part by the displacement of people from Ukraine and West Asia, pro bono is becoming a much more ingrained part of the legal culture in Germany.

Pro Bono Deutschland plays a prominent role in pro bono. It has been active since 2011 and brings together local and international law firms through a range of events and other initiatives. It also supports Pro Bono Rechtsberatung, a pro bono clearinghouse that works to connect pro bono legal service providers to local NGOs and produces various materials to help NGOs understand and navigate the law. Pro bono services are also provided by certain NGOs and by university law clinics.

Twenty-three firms with offices in Germany submitted data to the 2024 Index, compared to 29 firms in 2022. We

see a slight increase in engagement and hours, with 28 percent of fee earners engaging in pro bono work (versus 26 percent in 2022) and 22 percent performing 10+ hours (versus 20 percent in 2022). Fee earners performed an average of **11.9 hours** of pro bono per year, up from 10.6 hours in 2022.

For partners, we see a slight decrease from an average of 11.6 hours of pro bono in 2022 to 8.4 hours in 2024. The data shows 31 percent of partners engaged in pro bono work (versus 36 percent in 2022), and 20 percent contributed 10+ hours, as in 2022.

All firms with offices in Germany have adopted at least one element of pro bono infrastructure and 74 percent of firms reported all elements—higher than the regional average of 61 percent. The key focus areas for pro bono identified by responding firms were access to justice (67 percent), immigration, refugees and asylum (72 percent) and human rights (44 percent).

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Addleshaw Goddard LLP	4.3	9.7
Allen & Overy*	10	16.8
Ashurst	17.2	26
Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP	4.7	8.6
Dechert LLP	68.2	95.2
Dentons Europe LLP	9.6	16.1
DLA Piper	15.2	19.3
Eversheds Sutherland LLP	2	6.6
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	9.9	20.6
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP	59.1	68.1
Goodwin Procter LLP	-	-
K&L Gates LLP	1	2.9
Kirkland & Ellis LLP	31.1	100
Latham & Watkins LLP	32.3	68.2



FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Linklaters LLP	1.3	2.9
Mayer Brown LLP	13.7	31
Morrison Foerster	35.3	52.9
Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	0.6	2.2
Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP	36.4	86.8
Reed Smith LLP	38.5	64.4
Simmons & Simmons LLP	0.8	3.4
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP	35.6	45.5
White & Case LLP	6.3	24
<b>Country average</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>22</b>

*\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.*

# IRELAND

Ireland boasts a flourishing and dynamic pro bono culture, with an ever-growing number of legal professionals and law firms dedicating their time and expertise to pro bono work. While the provision of pro bono services is not legally required, there is a deep-rooted commitment within the legal community to offer free legal assistance to those in need.

The Pro Bono Pledge Ireland launched in 2020. It is an initiative spearheaded by independent law firms, barristers and in-house legal teams, and coordinated by the Public Interest Law Alliance (PILA). The Pro Bono Pledge establishes a unified definition of pro bono work, sets an aspirational target of at least 20 pro bono hours per lawyer per year, and provides a framework for tracking progress through the annual reporting of anonymous pro bono data. In 2023, PILA published its latest impact report, revealing impressive results, including the contribution of over 42,000 pro bono hours. Also in 2023, a new pro bono initiative, the In-House Pro Bono Lawyers Network (PBN), formed to support in-house legal teams. The network has been actively engaging in pro bono work, supporting various community initiatives and encouraging more lawyers to participate in providing free legal services.

Eight firms with offices in Ireland participated in the 2024 Index, up from six firms in 2022. In Ireland in 2024,

46 percent of fee earners participated in pro bono, a meaningful jump from 23 percent we reported in 2022. As well, more than half of fee earners (51 percent) engaged in pro bono, averaged 10+ hours. The reported average per fee earner has also more than doubled from 13.7 hours in 2022 to **31 hours** in 2024. While not all metrics are comparable, we note that PILA's Pro Bono Impact Report for 2023 found similarly strong 10+ hours engagement: At that time, they reported 41 percent of lawyers in reporting firms were completing more than 10 hours of pro bono per annum.<sup>35</sup>

For partners, the average pro bono hours were similar: 8.3 hours in 2024, a slight drop from 9.4 hours in 2022. However, we see a sizeable increase in partner participation and engagement rates. Partners engaged in pro bono at a rate of 66 percent, compared to 42 percent in 2022, with 8 percent of those providing 10+ hours, compared to 15 percent in 2022.

All firms in Ireland reported having formalised their pro bono with least one element of infrastructure, and 60 percent have all elements. The key focus areas for pro bono identified by responding firms are access to justice (73 percent), immigration, refugees and asylum (53 percent) and human rights (47 percent).

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
A&L Goodbody LLP	40.9	71.7
Accenture	1.4	2.6
Addleshaw Goddard LLP	0.1	1.1
Arthur Cox LLP	36.5	56.2
Dechert LLP	62.4	-

<sup>35</sup> Impact Report 2023, PILA/Pro Bono Pledge Ireland (2023), [https://www.pila.ie/assets/files/pdf/pro\\_bono\\_pledge\\_impact\\_report\\_2023.pdf](https://www.pila.ie/assets/files/pdf/pro_bono_pledge_impact_report_2023.pdf). We encourage interested readers to read the Pro Bono Pledge Impact Report and note that the sample, timing and questions asked in that survey are distinct from the Index of Pro Bono and the exact figures and findings cannot be directly compared.

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Dentons UK and Middle East LLP	2.9	9.5
DLA Piper	28.6	35.6
Simmons & Simmons LLP	6	21.1
<b>Country average</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>51</b>

# ITALY

Italy has an active and vibrant civil society with a diverse range of non-profit organisations and social enterprises that drive demand for pro bono legal services. While the culture of pro bono is not as deeply rooted or as engrained as it is in the legal communities of the UK or the US, there has been a steady growth in the practice in recent decades.

Pro bono remains unregulated in Italy, but there are efforts to promote the practice through various collaborations led by local and international law firms and practitioners. For example, Pro Bono Italia ETS was set up in 2017 by a coalition of law firms, lawyers and forensic associations to foster the development of pro bono legal services. It hosts regular roundtables and a clearinghouse to facilitate access to free legal assistance for NGOs and individuals in need.

Pro bono legal assistance is also provided through smaller NGOs, with the view to targeting specific social and human rights challenges, such as homelessness and the rights of Afghan refugees, and several universities have set up pro bono legal clinics that form part of educational programmes for law students. Further, some local bar associations also operate help desks to provide legal information and advice to members of the community.

Seventeen firms participated in the 2024 Index, up from 16 in the 2022 Index. Nearly a third—30 percent—of fee earners engaged in pro bono work, up slightly from 28

percent in 2022. They averaged **8.7 hours**, compared to 10 hours in 2022, with 19 percent performing 10+ hours, compared with 20 percent in 2022. While the figures are, overall, lower for 2024, the difference is slight.

Partner participation also decreased, but those who did participate contributed more hours on average. Among partners, 34 percent participated in pro bono, averaging 13.6 hours, with 27 percent contributing 10+ hours. By comparison, in the 2022 data, partner participation was 47 percent, with an average of 8.7 hours, and 29 percent performing 10+ hours of pro bono work.

We have seen a significant increase in firms reporting for Italy saying they have an element of pro bono infrastructure (from 67 percent in 2022 to 96 percent in 2024). Enhanced infrastructure likely provides better support and resources, enabling fee earners to engage more extensively in pro bono work.

The main focus areas for responding firms in Italy were human rights (58 percent), immigration, refugees and asylum (58 percent) and access to justice (54 percent). In contrast, in 2022, the top areas of pro bono support were human rights (83 percent) and immigration, refugees and asylum (75 percent), followed by economic development, microfinance and social finance (42 percent), education, training and employment (42 percent), and environment and climate change (42 percent).

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Accenture	0.1	0
Albè & Associati (A&A) Studio Legale	2.6	10.5
Allen & Overy*	-	-
Ashurst	6.8	23.1
Carotenuto Studio Legale	50	33.3
Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP	14.6	23.3



FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Dentons Europe LLP	11.8	45.1
DLA Piper	15.7	17.8
Ferdinando Lajolo di Cossano	5	0
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	8.2	15.6
K&L Gates LLP	0.9	1.8
Latham & Watkins LLP	37.3	74.5
Linklaters LLP	3.6	12.3
Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	2.5	7.7
Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP	39.7	88.5
Simmons & Simmons LLP	0.1	0
White & Case LLP	19	78.6
<b>Country average</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>19</b>

*\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.*

# LUXEMBOURG

There are no legal or self-governing regulations on pro bono work in Luxembourg, but all trainee lawyers in the country are required to take on legal aid cases and provide free legal advice to those who cannot afford to pay for legal services privately. This is a condition for lawyers to obtain their practicing licences.

Luxembourg has an active legal community, but with a relatively small population and widespread confidence among many practitioners in the state-funded legal aid system, there has historically been limited pro bono activity. Further, there are strict rules that compromise lawyers’ ability to publicise their pro bono work, which can undermine the impulse for practitioners to provide free legal services to support social and environmental causes. Despite this, the practice of pro bono has begun to develop in more recent years, partially influenced by international law firms with offices in the country.

Twelve firms participated in the 2024 Index, from 11 in the 2022 Index. We see a minor decrease in reported

average hours and engagement numbers, except for partners, whose average hours increased. In the 2024 data, 38 percent of fee earners participated in pro bono work, compared with 43 percent in 2022. Fee earners averaged **8.1 hours**, compared to 9.1 hours in 2022, and 19 percent were performing 10+ hours, compared with 24 percent in 2022.

Among partners, 49 percent engaged in pro bono, averaging 12.8 hours, with 29 percent contributing 10+ hours. In 2022, partner participation was at 54 percent, averaging a slightly lower 10.2 hours, with 33 percent exceeding ten hours.

All firms with offices in Luxembourg have at least one element of pro bono infrastructure and 61 percent of firms report all elements. The 2024 data also shows that the primary focus areas for responding firms with offices in Luxembourg were access to justice (72 percent), immigration, refugees and asylum (67 percent) and human rights (44 percent).

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Accenture	-	-
Allen & Overy*	8.3	19
Ashurst	17	18.8
Dechert LLP	37	92.3
Dentons Europe LLP	7.3	20
DLA Piper	14.2	35.7
Eversheds Sutherland LLP	0.3	0
Goodwin Procter LLP	-	-
Linklaters LLP	1.4	3.1
Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	8.3	31.8
Simmons & Simmons LLP	1.7	2.9
White & Case LLP	25.4	50
<b>Country average</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>19</b>

*\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.*

# NETHERLANDS

The pro bono culture in the Netherlands is experiencing steady growth, with a rising number of legal professionals and law firms actively engaging in providing free legal services to those in need. The Netherlands is home to a large and diverse civil society, and there is a significant demand for pro bono services from foundations and organisations focused on human rights.

Pro Bono Connect is a central organisation in the Netherlands that plays a crucial role in facilitating pro bono work. Established by the Dutch section of the International Committee of Jurists for Human Rights (NJCM), it connects law firms with non-profit organisations and social enterprises in need of legal assistance. Other key players include the Dutch Bar Association (known as Nederlandse orde van advocaten – NOvA), which actively promotes pro bono work among its members. Although pro bono service is not mandatory, NOvA provides resources and guidance to lawyers interested in participating in such activities.

Eleven firms with offices in the Netherlands submitted data

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Allen & Overy*	16.1	28.2
Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer LLP	0	0
De Brauw Blackstone Westbroek N.V.	30.9	-
Dentons Europe LLP	13	31.8
DLA Piper	12.8	29.5
Eversheds Sutherland LLP	7.5	17.5
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	24.9	30.6
Linklaters LLP	6.3	12.2
Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	3	8.8
Simmons & Simmons LLP	7.9	8.1
Stibbe N.V.	17.8	20
Country average	17.1	18

\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.

# POLAND

Pro bono in Poland has grown and diversified in recent decades, thanks to voluntary efforts by the legal community, NGOs and academic institutions. While there are no official requirements for lawyers to undertake pro bono work, there is an active community of law firms and practitioners that provide free legal assistance to NGOs and individuals who have no other means of accessing justice.

Centrum Pro Bono plays an important role as a clearinghouse for pro bono matters in Poland, connecting local lawyers to NGOs and hosting regular events to promote the practice. There are also opportunities for lawyers to get involved in pro bono activities through various NGOs. For example, the Association for Legal Intervention (Stowarzyszenie Interwencji Prawnej) works with pro bono lawyers to provide legal assistance to people on the move and victims of hate crimes and gender-based violence, and the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights provides opportunities for lawyers to help with strategic litigation.

Given its geographic proximity to Ukraine, Poland has received large numbers of refugees fleeing the war, and it played a crucial role as a transit country for people seeking sanctuary in other parts of Europe in the immediate aftermath of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. In recognition of the legal needs of refugees from Ukraine, European Lawyers in Lesvos, which was initially established to provide legal

assistance to refugees in Greece, expanded its work by setting up the Poland Project with international law firms with offices in Poland. The initiative provides free legal assistance on a variety of matters with the view to helping refugees regularise their status and settle in the country.

Six firms participated in the 2024 Index, as in 2022. The 2024 data shows an increase in average hours of pro bono and in those doing 10+ hours compared to 2022, as well as steady engagement with pro bono more broadly. No doubt, the increase in average hours relates to the growing need for pro bono to support refugees from Ukraine.

The average hours for fee earners rose from 9 hours in 2022 to **15.4 hours** in 2024, while partners held constant at an average of 18.5 hours. In 2024, 21 percent of fee earners and 21 percent of partners were doing 10+ hours of pro bono, compared with 13 and 17 percent, respectively, in 2022. Meanwhile, broader engagement with pro bono has remained steady: 32 percent of fee earners and 31 percent of partners did any pro bono in 2024, only a slight increase from 28 and 30 percent, respectively, in 2022.

All firms with offices in Poland report having some pro bono infrastructure. The primary pro bono focus areas identified by responding firms in Poland are access to justice (77 percent), immigration, refugees and asylum (69 percent) and human rights (46 percent).

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Allen & Overy*	9	16.9
Dentons Europe LLP	14.4	21.1
DLA Piper	26.6	21.5
Linklaters LLP	10	18.9
Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	13.5	14.6
White & Case LLP	12	33.9
Country average	15.4	21

\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.



# ROMANIA

Romania does not have a long-established culture of pro bono in the legal community, but the practice has begun to gain traction in more recent years, thanks to NGO activities and efforts by law firms, including larger international firms with offices in the country. The National Union of Romanian Bars actively encourages the practice, including through various initiatives and events and by allowing pro bono hours to count towards minimum experience requirements for trainee lawyers. There are no mandatory requirements for lawyers to do pro bono, and the practice remains unregulated.

Five firms with offices in Romania submitted data for the 2024 Index, from four firms in 2022. The trend is positive in 2024, with partners leading the pro bono charge.

From our data, average hours of fee earners rose from 5.7 in 2022 to **6.5 hours** in 2024 and, more significantly, average pro bono hours of partners rose from 13.5 to 22.5 percent. In addition, the number of partners spending 10+ hours on pro bono rose from 14 percent in 2022 to 27 percent in 2024, while the number of fee earners doing 10+ hours of pro bono rose from 9 to 14 percent. Overall, 24 percent of fee earners and 38 percent of partners spent any time on pro bono.

All responding firms in Romania have at least one element of pro bono infrastructure. The primary focus areas for responding firms in Romania were access to justice (83 percent), human rights (67 percent) and immigration, refugees and asylum (67 percent).

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Accenture	0.3	0.6
CMS	-	-
Dentons Europe LLP	19.1	33.3
DLA Piper	13.8	38.6
Kinstellar	0.8	3.2
Country average	6.5	14

# SCOTLAND

This is Scotland’s first time featured as a standalone Index chapter, after we received submissions from four firms with offices in the nation. Although the provision of pro bono services in Scotland is not formally regulated, there is a culture of pro bono. In recent years, the demand for and the supply of pro bono services have steadily increased. However, there remains significant potential for further growth, especially when compared to the more well-established pro bono culture in England and Wales.

One of the key players in promoting pro bono work in Scotland is the Government Legal Service for Scotland (GLSS). The GLSS has established a pro bono network that continuously encourages lawyers to offer their legal services to benefit communities. They actively participate in the UK’s Pro Bono Week, and also organise various events throughout the year to promote and celebrate pro bono initiatives.

In 2023, the Faculty of Advocates’ Free Legal Services Unit, in collaboration with the Law Society of Scotland and

the legal services charity JustRight Scotland, introduced the “Scottish Guide to Pro Bono”. This booklet, published during UK Pro Bono Week alongside a similar guide for England and Wales, serves as a valuable resource for legal professionals seeking to engage in pro bono work. It aims to provide guidance and support to those looking to contribute their expertise to underserved communities.

Among the firms reporting into the Index for Scotland, the data shows that 30 percent of fee earners participated in pro bono work, averaging **5 hours** per annum, with 15 percent performing 10+ hours. Among partners, engagement is lower: 11 percent participated in pro bono work, averaging 0.5 hours, with no partners performing 10+ hours.

All firms with offices in Scotland have at least one element of pro bono infrastructure. The primary focus areas for responding firms in Scotland are access to justice (63 percent), immigration, refugees and asylum (50 percent) and women’s rights (38 percent).

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Addleshaw Goddard LLP	1.1	2.7
Ashurst	8.4	1.2
Dentons UK and Middle East LLP	8.5	26.1
Eversheds Sutherland LLP	5.7	14.8
Country average	5	15

# SLOVAKIA

The development of pro bono in Slovakia has been supported by the establishment of the Pro Bono Attorneys initiative by the Pontis Foundation, which has promoted pro bono and connected local NGOs to legal service providers since 2011. This collaboration includes major international and local law firms, and there are regular events to highlight and celebrate the transformative impact of pro bono assistance. Pro bono continues to be voluntary endeavour, with no legal or other forms of regulation mandating practitioners to provide legal services for free.

Five firms participated in the 2024 Index, from six firms in 2022. From 2022 to 2024 the average pro bono hours of fee earners fell slightly from 19.7 hours to **16.6 hours**, but average hours for partners quadrupled from 11 hours to 45.9 hours, driven by a couple of particularly engaged firms. Engagement numbers are on the rise, from 43 percent of fee earners involved with pro bono work to

48 percent in 2024, and 29 percent doing 10+ hours, compared with 23 percent in 2022.

For partners in 2024, an impressive 67 percent are participating in pro bono, with 56 percent performing 10+ hours. This is a marked increase from 2022, when 38 percent of partners were doing any pro bono and 31 percent were doing 10+ hours. Overall, the 2024 data shows increased participation and hours for both fee earners and partners in Romania compared to 2022, with a significant rise in partner involvement and average hours.

All responding firms with offices in Slovakia have at least one element of pro bono infrastructure. The primary focus areas for responding firms in Slovakia are access to justice (86 percent), human rights (71 percent) and immigration, refugees and asylum (71 percent).

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Accenture	0.6	0
Allen & Overy*	-	-
Dentons Europe LLP	33	50
DLA Piper	23.3	63.6
Kinstellar	14.2	29.2
Country average	16.6	29

\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.

# SPAIN

The practice of pro bono in Spain has been growing steadily in recent decades and there are increasing opportunities for Spanish lawyers to engage with pro bono work. It is common for large local and international firms with offices in Spain to take on pro bono projects, and some large law firms have created pro bono committees to offer legal know-how and resources to the community, as well as being actively involved in social responsibility programmes.

There is strong demand for pro bono legal services in Spain. According to the Barometer of the Third Sector of Social Action, a barometer of non-profit organisations, the third sector in Spain accounts for more than half a million jobs, with an income that represents 1.41 percent of the country's GDP in social action projects. The Center for Lawyers' Social Responsibility (Centro de Responsabilidad Social de la Abogacía) was founded in 2008 within the Madrid Bar (Ilustre Colegio de Abogados de Madrid) and connects NGOs with legal clinics. Fundación Pro Bono España, a domestic pro bono foundation that offers a free legal service for NGOs, was launched in 2018. Although there is widespread recognition of the importance and benefits of pro bono work in legal education, most Spanish law schools mostly do not offer pro bono activities within their university programmes. However, there are notable exceptions where pro bono programmes run by

universities have achieved significant success and impact.

Ten firms participated in the 2024 Index, from 11 in 2022. This year, we have seen slight decrease in the average pro bono hours and across engagement metrics, and a more pronounced decrease for partners, though not all metrics are down. We see steady engagement with pro bono among fee earners, with 45 percent of fee earners doing any pro bono, up from 43 percent in 2022, and 30 percent doing 10+ hours compared to 29 percent in 2022. At partner level, engagement in any pro bono dropped from 53 percent in 2022 to 37 percent this year, and the portion of partners doing 10+ hours of pro bono fell from 38 percent in 2022 to 24 percent.

Fee earners in 2024 provided an average **12.5 hours** of pro bono, down from 14.8 hours in 2022. For partners, average hours dropped from 20.2 in 2022 to 11.1 in the 2024 Index.

Most firms (94 percent) with offices in Spain have at least one element of pro bono infrastructure. The primary focus areas for responding firms in Spain are immigration, refugees and asylum (67 percent), access to justice (61 percent), and LGBTQ+ Rights (50 percent).

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Accenture	0.6	0
Allen & Overy*	14.4	31.3
Ashurst	19	54
Dentons Europe LLP	5.9	20.9
DLA Piper	16.8	35
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	4.8	12.1
Latham & Watkins LLP	44.5	100
Linklaters LLP	6.6	16.8



FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Simmons & Simmons LLP	0.8	2.3
White & Case LLP	23.9	63
<b>Country average</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>30</b>

\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.

# SWITZERLAND

Switzerland does not have specific regulations governing the provision of pro bono services. Nonetheless, law firms of various sizes frequently offer such services. Given perceptions that the country’s legal aid system reduces the necessity for pro bono work, the practice of pro bono is not widespread, with only a limited number of law firms highlighting their pro bono efforts in their promotional materials.<sup>36</sup>

However, there are various initiatives led by NGOs and professional bodies to provide or facilitate pro bono legal services. For example, the newly established Swiss branch of the US-based Innocence Project, currently located in Geneva, aims to offer free assistance to individuals in Switzerland who have been wrongfully convicted. Additionally, the Geneva Bar Association has introduced an online platform called the Plateforme Pro Bono, designed to connect legal entities that are focused on human rights—such as NGOs, foundations and associations—with lawyers from the Geneva Bar who are willing to provide free legal support in their areas of expertise. Despite such efforts, the legal needs of non-profit organisations continue to be underserved, and as a major hub for international NGOs, there is ample room for pro bono to grow in Switzerland.

Five firms from Switzerland participated in the 2024 Index, up from four firms in the previous Index.

The data presents a mixed picture, with certain areas seeing slight declines and others, such as partner hours and engagement, seeing a rise. Overall, 43 percent of fee earners participated in pro bono work, averaging **18.9 hours**, with 35 percent performing 10+ hours. By contrast, in 2022, 53 percent of fee earners engaged in pro bono work, averaging 21 hours, with 42 percent spending 10+ hours on pro bono.

Among partners, the 2024 data shows participation rates are higher at 56 percent, and they average 22 hours per year, with 50 percent recording 10+ hours. In 2022, 57 percent of partners participated in pro bono, averaging 19.6 hours, with 36 percent performing 10+ hours.

All responding firms with offices in Switzerland have an element of pro bono infrastructure. The primary focus areas for responding firms in Switzerland are access to justice (71 percent), human rights (71 percent) and immigration, refugees and asylum (57 percent).

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP	-	-
Holman Fenwick Willan LLP (HFW)	0	0
Mangeat Attorneys at Law LLC	11.5	15.4
Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP	65.7	100
White & Case LLP	27.2	66.7
<b>Country average</b>	<b>18.9</b>	<b>34.8</b>

<sup>36</sup> “Pro Bono Practices and Opportunities in Switzerland”, Latham & Watkins LLP and Pro Bono Institute (2019), <https://www.lw.com/admin/upload/SiteAttachments/pro-bono-in-switzerland.pdf>





# LARGE PRO BONO MARKETS

*This section sets out country-level analyses for three markets with a particularly high degree of pro bono infrastructure (Australia, England and Wales, and the United States)*





# AUSTRALIA

Australia has a well-established pro bono ecosystem. The country's pro bono landscape is characterised by collaboration between law firms, individual lawyers, law societies and dedicated pro bono organisations. There is no mandatory requirement for lawyers to undertake pro bono work. However, the legal profession has embraced voluntary targets to encourage participation in pro bono activities. The National Pro Bono Target, established by the Australian Pro Bono Centre, sets an aspirational goal of 35 hours of pro bono legal services per lawyer per year. Many law firms and individual practitioners have signed up to this target, and there is a strong commitment to pro bono work within the legal community. It is not surprising, then, that the Index 2024 data shows an average annual pro bono target in Australia of 35.4 hours.

The Australian Pro Bono Centre and Justice Connect are key organisations setting the stage for pro bono in the country. There are various state-based law societies that facilitate pro bono opportunities and support the practice across the country too. Australia has a National Law Week, and National Pro Bono Day takes place in May each year, on the Tuesday of National Law Week. While Australia's comprehensive legal aid system has faced funding challenges in recent years, pro bono initiatives and interest from law firms continue to grow, with low reliance on independent organisations or international clearinghouses.

There is a strong focus in Australia on the rights of asylum seekers and ethnic and minority rights, and specific growing focus on the rights of Indigenous people across the country. Especially since 2022, tailored pro bono services have expanded to support Indigenous communities and address issues such as land rights and cultural heritage protection. The legal profession is increasingly aware of the importance of culturally appropriate, trauma-informed pro bono services for Indigenous Australians.

The country has seen an increase in demand for pro bono assistance with domestic violence, immigration and refugee issues, and environmental matters. There is also a growing focus on collaborative and innovative approaches to pro bono service delivery and development. One example is the collaborative initiative of the Refugee Advice & Casework Service and Herbert Smith Freehills, which provides pro bono support to people seeking asylum in New South Wales. Another example is the Accessible Justice Project, which uses a custom built chatbot on its website for client intake assessment purposes.

We also see increasing emphasis on pro bono work that addresses systemic issues and promotes law reform. Many Australian lawyers and law firms are dedicating pro bono efforts to strategic litigation, policy advocacy and research projects aimed at addressing root causes of legal and social problems.<sup>37</sup>

The Australian Community of Pro Bono Lawyers (ACPL) was formed in 2023 and focuses on supporting dedicated pro bono professionals based in Australia. Membership is free and is open to lawyers who dedicate at least half of their professional time to managing pro bono practices within commercial law firms. The ACPL facilitates an email distribution list and quarterly calls, and co-hosts with the Australian Pro Bono Centre an annual professional development academy.<sup>38</sup> A New and Developing Pro Bono Practices Network, formed in September 2022 and coordinated by the Australian Pro Bono Centre, supports lawyers who are starting out or are in the process of growing their pro bono practices.

## HOURS AND ENGAGEMENT IN 2024

For the 2024 Index, we saw a slight increase in firm participation of 11 firms, up from 10 firms in 2022. Despite the slight increase, the total hours of responding firms

<sup>37</sup> Australian Pro Bono Centre, <https://www.probonocentre.org.au>

<sup>38</sup> Global Pro Bono Hub, The Rise of Networks for Dedicated Law Firm Pro Bono Professionals (2024)

with offices in Australia is slightly lower at 132,399.9 hours of pro bono work in 2024, compared to 138,454.7 hours in 2022.

Fee earners in Australia performed an average of **39.8 hours** of pro bono in 2024, down slightly from 42 hours in 2022. Engagement shows an increase, with 74 percent of fee earners engaged in offering any pro bono (compared to 66 percent in 2022) and 43 percent going over the ten-hour mark (compared to 41 percent in 2022). In its 2024 Annual Performance Report of the National Pro Bono Target, the Australian Pro Bono Centre reported an average of 39.6 pro bono hours per lawyer—a slight increase from 38.3 hours in 2023.<sup>39</sup> While the Target and Index surveys are very distinct in terms of sample and other factors, the 2024 Target report figure nonetheless tracks closely to the Index findings.

Of the firms responding to our survey, 54 percent of partners said they engaged in pro bono and averaged 17.6 hours, with 24 percent recording 10+ pro bono hours. The 2022 Index showed 53 percent of partners doing any pro bono, at an average of 15.2 hours, and 21 percent recording 10+ hours.

As observed above, the average pro bono target was 35 and the median was 35.6.

OTHER FINDINGS

The majority of responding firms in Australia (91 percent) report having at least one element of pro bono infrastructure and 41 percent have all elements. More specifically, 82 percent have a pro bono policy, 41 percent have a pro bono committee and 92 percent have at least one dedicated staff member. Among reporting firms, 55 percent have a formal diversity commitment, the highest of any region or large pro bono market. Most reporting firms also measure or track their pro bono impact (82

percent).

The top areas of pro bono focus reported by firms with offices in Australia include access to justice (68 percent), environment, climate and biodiversity (45 percent), immigration, refugees and asylum (45 percent), LGBTQ+ rights (45 percent) and human rights (41 percent). Pro bono work on access to justice and the environment are areas of most expected growth in pro bono focus in the next one to two years. These findings align with what we see in terms of key needs and areas of pro bono interest.

Firms reporting in Australia source pro bono clients and matters through legal clinics (86 percent) and individual clients and clearinghouses (68 percent), as well as through local law societies or bar associations, and 50 percent through collaboration with other firms. They most commonly deliver pro bono in the form of corporate/commercial advice to eligible organisations (91 percent), through legal research (82 percent) and legal training and/or public legal education (73 percent), and to a lesser extent through litigation or representation in legal proceedings (64 percent), public interest litigation (55 percent) and technical assistance (32 percent). Firms reporting in Australia prefer to work with registered charities/non-profits (91 percent), individuals in need (77 percent) and small businesses/start-ups (73 percent).

Regarding budget allocation for pro bono activities among firms in Australia, 27 percent of the firms report allocating over \$100,000 USD and 9 percent of firms report budgets between \$50,000–\$100,00. The remaining firms who provided this data had budgets between \$10,000–\$30,000 (9 percent of firms) and \$1,000–\$5,000 (9 percent of firms).

Overall, our data shows a strong and thriving culture of service, supported by voluntary targets and a collaborative ecosystem of organisations in Australia.

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Accenture	0.5	-
Acrolex Pty. Ltd.	48.7	100
Allen & Overy*	18.9	43.5
Ashurst	50.4	50.6
DLA Piper	53.8	36.3
Holman Fenwick Willan LLP (HFW)	0.4	1.6
K&L Gates LLP	22.1	41.9
King & Wood Mallesons	45.1	45.1
Norton Rose Fulbright Australia	51.7	56.2
Seyfarth Shaw LLP	62.5	-
White & Case LLP	25	56.4
Country average	39.8	43

*\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.*

<sup>39</sup> 17th Annual Performance Report of the National Pro Bono Target, Australian Pro Bono Centre (September 2024), <https://www.probonocentre.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/17th-National-Pro-Bono-Target-Report-2024.pdf>. We reference the findings out of interest but note that the Australian Pro Bono Centre collects data from a large, concentrated set of firms and other legal practitioners, and exclusively from signatories to the Australian Pro Bono Target.





# ENGLAND AND WALES

There is a strong culture of pro bono in England and Wales that continues to strengthen and expand. Historically, both legal professions in England and Wales (solicitors and barristers) have had a tradition of volunteering to provide access to legal advice and assistance to individuals and organisations who would otherwise have difficulties accessing appropriate support. This commitment to pro bono work is evident across the legal community, from large international law firms to individual practitioners.

Over the past two decades, this culture has been bolstered by the establishment of numerous NGOs providing specialised pro bono opportunities for lawyers. These include international bodies, human rights organisations, and local groups and citizens advice centres offering legal advice to members of local communities. Additionally, there are services specifically designed to source corporate and commercial pro bono support for NGOs and social enterprises.

There is no mandatory pro bono requirement set by the regulatory authorities for licensed lawyers. However, there are a growing number of initiatives to encourage and incentivise lawyers to commit more of their time and resources to pro bono work. The UK Collaborative Plan for Pro Bono is a collaborative initiative among law firms which encourages firms to commit to a minimum of 25 pro bono hours per fee earner per year. In 2024, a Pro Bono Recognition List launched. The initiative is supported by the Chief Justice of England and Wales and recognises barristers and solicitors who gave 25 hours or more pro bono legal assistance over the last year. In its first year, more than 3,000 lawyers were recognised.

In-house legal teams of large companies also play a growing role in the provision of pro bono legal services. The In House Pro Bono Group, which takes inspiration from the UK Collaborative Plan for Pro Bono (UKCP), launched an In House Pro Bono Pledge in 2024 to

encourage companies to pledge their commitment to pro bono and to take practical steps to ensure their teams can undertake pro bono work.

England and Wales are home to a vibrant and diverse community of domestic and international NGOs that have faced numerous challenges in recent years, including cuts to public funding and disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the same challenges have also heightened the crucial role of civil society in providing essential services and in driving social and environmental change. These factors continue to fuel demand for pro bono legal assistance from NGOs and social enterprises.

## HOURS AND ENGAGEMENT IN 2024

In 2024, 61 firms responded to the Index survey, up from 2022, when 54 firms participated. Responding firms in England and Wales recorded a total of 505,925 hours of pro bono work. Large Firms contributed 488,892 hours, while Medium-sized Firms contributed 13,415 hours and Small Firms contributed 3,618 hours.

Fee earners in England and Wales performed an average of **23.6 hours** of pro bono in 2024, similar to but slightly lower than 25.7 hours in 2022. More than half of fee earners (54 percent) engaged in offering any pro bono, up from 49 percent in 2022, which is positive. One-third of lawyers (33 percent) exceeded the ten-hour mark, which is only slightly lower than 35 percent in 2022.

The average annual pro bono target for England and Wales was 33.1 hours, higher than average hours currently, and the median was 25.

The figures for average hours are comparable, albeit slightly higher, than those of the UKCP, which reported 17.6 hours of pro bono per lawyer in 2024.<sup>40</sup> The UKCP surveys have seen lower average pro bono hours in recent

<sup>40</sup> UK Collaborative Plan for Pro Bono, <https://www.globalprobonohub.com/resource/gpbh/uk-collaborative-plan-for-pro-bono>. Note, we cannot directly



years, from a peak of 24.8 hours per lawyer in 2017, but this coincides with a significant expansion of the cohort of firms taking part in the survey (the number has more than doubled since 2025) so it should not necessarily be interpreted as a negative trend in terms of the amount of pro bono happening within individual firms.

In the 2024 Index data, we see 40 percent of partners engaged in pro bono and averaged 11.3 hours, with 22 percent recording 10+ pro bono hours. This is, effectively, constant with the 2022 findings, where 43 percent of partners were doing any pro bono, at an average of 11.5 hours, with 23 percent recording 10+ hours.

OTHER FINDINGS

In terms of formalisation of pro bono, 96 percent of responding firms have some form of pro bono infrastructure in place, which includes pro bono policies (92 percent) and formal pro bono criteria (88 percent). We see a nearly three-fold increase in firms reporting a formal diversity commitment in relation to pro bono, from 12 percent in 2022 to 34 percent of firms in 2024, a very promising shift.

Regarding budget allocation for pro bono programmes, 41 percent of the firms reported allocating over \$100,000 USD, which is considerably higher than the global average of 26 percent. A smaller number, 7 percent, allocate between \$50,000–\$100,000 toward pro bono programmes and 6 percent allocate between \$10,000–\$30,000.

Most firms in the region measure or track their pro bono impact (89 percent), though we know there is ongoing dialogue about whether current means and metrics for

tracking impact are sufficient.

Legal clinics are the primary source of pro bono (87 percent), followed by clearinghouses (76 percent) and individual clients (71 percent). As in Europe, other sources are largely holding constant, while legal clinics are growing in popularity up as way for firms to engage with pro bono, with a 4 percent increase since 2022.

Among responding firms, access to justice remains the most selected pro bono focus area at 76 percent, followed by immigration, refugees and asylum at 60 percent and LGBTQ+ rights at 38 percent. This is consistent with last year’s findings. Firms expect access to justice and immigration, refugees and asylum to continue to grow in strategic importance, while environment, climate and biodiversity (40 percent) is also expected to take on more strategic focus.

Most firms (91 percent) are doing pro bono by offering corporate/commercial advice to eligible organisations, 88 percent through legal research, 81 percent through other litigation or representation in legal proceedings, 73 percent through legal training and/or public legal education, 67 percent through public interest litigation and 42 percent through technical assistance. Firms report working mostly with registered charities/non-profits (93 percent), individuals in need (86 percent), social enterprises (74 percent) and small businesses/start-ups (63 percent).

Overall, the picture in England and Wales is one of cautious optimism. Despite a slight decrease on certain metrics, the jurisdiction is for the most part holding steady on pro bono hours and engagement. However, there is arguably more work to do to maintain the momentum and continue a trajectory of growth.

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Accenture	1.6	4.5
Addleshaw Goddard LLP	-	-
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP	39.6	-
Allen & Overy*	23.1	33.4
Anglo Thai Legal (ATL)	60	50
Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer LLP	57.9	88.5
Ashurst	30.5	40.8
Baker Botts LLP	16.5	20
Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP (BCLP)	11.8	21.8
Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft LLP	2.9	9.6
Charles Russell Speechlys LLP	12.1	20.8
Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP	27.5	36.8
Clifford Chance LLP	21	-
Cooley LLP	92.7	91.6
Crowell & Moring LLP	36.6	60.5
Debevoise & Plimpton LLP	79.1	67.5
Dechert LLP	94.8	-
Dentons UK and Middle East LLP	12.5	32.6
DLA Piper	29.6	29.9
Duane Morris LLP	73.4	91.7
Entain plc	-	12.5
Eversheds Sutherland LLP	6.5	15.6
Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP	42.6	50
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	48.7	51.4
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP	78.2	68.5
Gowling WLG (UK) LLP	8.1	17
Hogan Lovells	47.2	69.4
Holman Fenwick Willan LLP (HFW)	3	7.5
K&L Gates LLP	27.7	50.4
Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP	36.8	56.1
Kingsley Napley LLP	15.7	34
Kirkland & Ellis LLP	17.7	46.7
Latham & Watkins LLP	50.2	69.6
Linklaters LLP	21.1	27.1
Mayer Brown LLP	24	52
McGuireWoods LLP	21.6	58.8
Milbank LLP	32.9	68.2
Mishcon de Reya LLP	6.3	14.9
Morrison Foerster	86.3	75
Norton Rose Fulbright LLP	13.7	25.8
O’Melveny & Myers LLP	56.4	83.3
Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP	57.5	90

compare the findings as the survey samples are distinct: the number of firms that responded to UKCP’s survey in 2024 is slightly higher and of a slightly different make-up than those participating in TrustLaw’s survey.



FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Osborne Clarke	8.5	11.6
Pallas Partners LLP	88.8	105.3
Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP	35	47.4
Proskauer Rose LLP	13.1	28.8
Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan LLP	5.1	10.7
Reed Smith LLP	77.6	68.6
Shearman & Sterling LLP*	68.4	87.7
Simmons & Simmons LLP	8.8	23.4
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP	69.7	72.7
Stephenson Harwood LLP	2.3	6.2
Steptoe LLP	6.2	21.2
Sullivan & Cromwell LLP	5.6	16.9
Taylor Wessing LLP	4.7	15.5
Vinson & Elkins LLP	4.1	7.7
Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP	54.5	74
White & Case LLP	19.2	42.4
Winston & Strawn LLP	62.7	96
Womble Bond Dickinson (UK) LLP	1.2	2.3
<b>England and Wales</b>	<b>23.6</b>	<b>33</b>

*\* Now A&O Shearman. Note: Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this Index was collected pre-merger.*



# UNITED STATES

The United States (US) continues to maintain an impressive role in pro bono leadership globally. As of 2024, 11 states now require attorneys to report their pro bono hours,<sup>41</sup> up from 9 states when the 2022 Index was published. An additional 13 states have voluntary pro bono reporting schemes, and the American Bar Association encourages all lawyers to complete at least 50 hours of pro bono work annually.<sup>42</sup> Notably, New York State remains the only state to require pro bono service as a condition for bar admission.

Law firms across the US continue to demonstrate a strong commitment to pro bono work, integrating it as a core aspect of their practice. Many firms have established dedicated pro bono departments, staffed by professionals who oversee and coordinate pro bono efforts. This institutional support allows firms to take on complex and impactful cases, addressing significant societal issues such as racial justice, immigration and environmental protection.

In recent years, there has been a notable trend of law firms hiring dedicated pro bono professionals, both to administer their pro bono programmes and to staff pro bono matters in specific areas of law, such as impact litigation or tax-exempt organisations. This highlights firms' commitment to social justice and specific issues including racial justice and immigration.<sup>43</sup> This strong pro bono culture continues to be supported by an ecosystem of institutions working to set standards for the pro bono profession and advance the role of pro bono, including The Association of Pro Bono Counsel,<sup>44</sup> the leading association of pro bono professionals in the US, as well as pro bono teams within federal and state bar associations.

In addition, pro bono advice and representation for small businesses and non-profits is becoming more common in the face of rising legal costs and strained organization budgets.

While law firm pro bono culture remains strong, the US is also seeing an uptick in corporate in-house teams engaging in pro bono work. According to the most recent Corporate Pro Bono Challenge Report by the Pro Bono Institute, there has been a small increase in the number of hours performed by corporate teams, after a dip in participation rates over the pandemic years. Many corporate teams choose to partner with law firms on pro bono matters and projects.<sup>45</sup>

Pro bono or legal service organizations (LSOs) remain a critical part of the US pro bono ecosystem, with LSOs working to identify the legal needs of individuals and organizations and place these matters with firm and in-house teams.

Recent years continued to pose many challenges to the most vulnerable communities in the country. Legal decisions rolling back access to reproductive rights and gender-affirming care, overturning limitations on firearm ownership, challenging affirmative action, and restricting immigration have galvanized the pro bono legal community into action. Pro bono lawyers have come together to respond to these critical issues.

For example, the Law Firm Antiracism Alliance was formed following the killing of George Floyd in 2020 and subsequent protests. It continues to operate collaboratively for systemic change and racial equity under

<sup>41</sup> Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, with California to implement a reporting requirement beginning in 2026

<sup>42</sup> American Bar Association, [https://www.americanbar.org/groups/probono\\_public\\_service/policy/arguments/](https://www.americanbar.org/groups/probono_public_service/policy/arguments/) and [https://www.americanbar.org/groups/probono\\_public\\_service/policy/aba\\_model\\_rule\\_6.1](https://www.americanbar.org/groups/probono_public_service/policy/aba_model_rule_6.1)

<sup>43</sup> Jeffreys, B.S., "Firms are Beefing Up Pro Bono Teams With Specialists", American Lawyer (July 11, 2023), <https://www.law.com/americanlawyer/2023/07/11/firms-are-beefing-up-pro-bono-teams-with-specialists/>

<sup>44</sup> <https://apbco.org/>

<sup>45</sup> Pro Bono Institute, CPBO Challenge Report 2024: In-House Pro Bono on the Rise (2024), <https://www.cpbo.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/2024-CPBO-Challenge-Report.pdf>



the law, seeing pro bono as a key means to achieving this goal.<sup>46</sup> Collective advocacy has also been deployed to address the winding back of reproductive rights following the overturning of Roe v. Wade. In New York, the Attorney General in partnership with 24 national law firms and eight non-profits operates a pro bono task force and hotline to provide people who live in the state and those visiting with referrals, know-your-rights information and resources on how to access abortion. Lawyers for Good Government has also launched projects bringing lawyers together to advance reproductive rights and health equity.<sup>47</sup>

State laws restricting access to gender-affirming care for transgender youth have increased in recent years, leading to a surge in pro bono efforts to uphold these rights and retain access to lifesaving care. Law firms across the country have been involved in challenging these bans, filing amicus briefs and representing impacted individuals.

Immigration continues to be a focus for pro bono support, ranging from pro bono clinics to help with individual pro bono applications to longer-term representation.<sup>48</sup> Initiatives like the ABA's Afghanistan Response Project provide pro bono support to Afghans seeking permanent resettlement, including in the US,<sup>49</sup> and other projects focus on pro bono efforts to support migrants stranded at the US-Mexico border.<sup>50</sup> In July 2024, the White House called on the legal profession to deploy pro bono to help address the backlog of cases in immigration courts, with the ABA mobilizing resources to respond to this call.<sup>51</sup>

Growing attention is being paid to the need for pro bono to defend free and independent media in the US, especially as attacks on journalists increase and many areas face a lack of reliable news sources due to serious challenges to operational sustainability. ProJourn, a collaboration between Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, Davis Wright Tremaine LLP, Microsoft and the Knight Foundation, is an example of an initiative helping to ensure journalists and news organisations can adapt and

continue their essential work through direct support, legal action and advocacy. The Index finds that 22 percent of firms in the US are working with journalists or independent newsrooms as clients.

Finally, the legal community continues to be deeply engaged in pro bono work related to elections in the US, focusing on protecting voting rights and ensuring fair access to the ballot. Prior to the 2024 election in particular, law firms were active in combating voter suppression and supporting efforts to maintain the integrity of the electoral process.

### HOURS AND ENGAGEMENT IN 2024

Firms in the US reported a total of 2,380,545.7 hours of pro bono work, with submissions received from 49 firms. In comparison, the 2022 Index data indicated that the US contributed 3,115,456 hours of pro bono work, with submissions from 54 firms and in-house teams. In 2020, the US received submissions from 45 firms.

Overall, the trend is modest but positive. Fee earners in the US performed an average of **63.4 hours** of pro bono in 2024, up from 60.8 hours in 2022. Engagement was steady, with 74 percent of fee earners engaged in offering any pro bono (compared with 75 percent in 2022) and 67 percent going over the ten-hour mark (compared with 64 percent in 2022).

For partners, engagement continues to be strong: 70 percent of partners engaged in pro bono (compared to 71 percent in 2022), and 49 percent recorded 10+ pro bono hours (compared with 50 percent in 2022). However, average hours have dipped from 46 hours in 2022 to 30.2 hours in 2024.

The Pro Bono Institute has also reported mixed trends in its 2024 Report on the Law Firm Pro Bono Challenge Initiative.<sup>52</sup> The Report similarly shows a modest increase

of average pro bono hours to 54.7 hours per lawyer in 2023 (from 52.6 hours in 2022). However, the figures remain lower than levels seen five to ten years ago, when averages were consistently around 60 hours. The reported percentage of partners engaging in pro bono is similar to the Index at 64 percent. Meanwhile, the PBI survey separately tracks associate hours (whereas the Index only collects separate data on partners) and reports much higher levels of engagement by associates, at 84 percent.

Interestingly, the reported average annual pro bono target for the region was 32.7 hours and the median was 25, which is considerably lower than the 63.4 average hours that we see reported and signals other factors beyond targets are driving high pro bono engagement in the US.

### OTHER FINDINGS

Unsurprisingly, 95 percent of responding firms in the US have at least one element of pro bono infrastructure and 67 percent have all three. We see that 90 percent of firms in the US have a pro bono policy, 73 percent have a pro bono committee and 96 percent have at least one pro bono staff. This robust infrastructure likely plays a role in facilitating and encouraging pro bono work and is also a reflection of the highly developed pro bono ecosystem in the US. Most firms in the region measure or track their impact (86 percent) in some way, however as in other parts of the world, the conversation around pro bono impact tracking is lively and there is enthusiasm to build better models for tracking impact beyond hours.

Regarding financial resources for pro bono programmes, 41 percent of US firms report allocating over \$100,000 USD. Only 4 percent of firms had budgets between \$50,000–\$100,000 and \$1,000–\$5,000, respectively.

More than a third of firms in the US (36 percent) report

having a formal diversity commitment for their pro bono work, slightly down from 41 percent in 2022.

The most selected areas of pro bono focus are access to justice at 70 percent, immigration, refugees and asylum at 68 percent and LGBTQ+ rights at 43 percent, which resonates with where we see the focus of many pro bono efforts. The top three strategic focus or growth areas over the next 12 to 24 months identified are: access to justice (38 percent), environment, climate and biodiversity (34 percent) and immigration, refugees and asylum (32 percent).

Most firms (92 percent) offer pro bono in the form of corporate/commercial advice to eligible organisations and legal research, 84 percent through other litigation or representation in legal proceedings, 73 percent through legal training and/or public legal education and 39 percent through technical assistance. Firms in the US do pro bono through public interest litigation at rates considerably higher than the global average: 75 percent, compared with 50 percent globally.

Our view for pro bono in the US remains positive. The US continues to be a frontrunner on pro bono hours and engagement in the world, providing inspiration for others to follow. The market is shaped by local circumstances, including a highly organised and engaged civic space with sophisticated NGOs that are more used to working with pro bono lawyers and a large, engaged legal sector and strong traditions of public service and volunteerism. In coming years, the need for pro bono is likely to rise in the face of threats to marginalised groups and free and open civic space. It will be crucial for the pro bono sector in the US to continue to find ways to serve the public good while navigating a challenging political environment, which can often result in the recasting of basic human rights and pro bono causes as controversial political issues.

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.lawfirmantiracismalliance.org/lfaacharter/Home>

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.lawyersforgoodgovernment.org/repro-health>

<sup>48</sup> “What Attracts Big Law to Immigration Pro Bono Work?”, American Lawyer, <https://www.law.com/americanlawyer/2024/07/09/what-attracts-big-law-to-immigration-pro-bono-work/>

<sup>49</sup> ABA, Statement of ABA President Mary Smith Re: Pro bono help in immigration matters (July 17, 2024), <https://www.americanbar.org/news/abanews/aba-news-archives/2024/07/aba-president-statement-re-pro-bono-immigration-matters/>

<sup>50</sup> Lawyers for Good Government, <https://www.lawyersforgoodgovernment.org/project-corazon>

<sup>51</sup> ABA, Statement of ABA President Mary Smith Re: Pro bono help in immigration matters

<sup>52</sup> Pro Bono Institute, 2024 Report on the Law Firm Pro Bono Challenge Initiative (2024), [https://www.probonoinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2024\\_PBI\\_Challenge-ReportFinal.pdf](https://www.probonoinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2024_PBI_Challenge-ReportFinal.pdf)

[Challenge-ReportFinal.pdf](#). Note the findings of the two surveys cannot be directly compared because of differences in sample size and composition, as well as key differences in what is measured.

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Accenture	1.8	4.6
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP	-	-
Allen & Overy*	51	60
Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer LLP	108	84
Ashurst	27.3	73.3
Baker Botts LLP	18.1	27.6
Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP	96.2	76.6
Crowell & Moring LLP	65.6	76.8
Debevoise & Plimpton LLP	122.4	73.6
Dechert LLP	99.3	-
Dentons US LLP	36.9	44.8
Duane Morris LLP	41.9	63.7
Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP	39.3	54.2
Foley Hoag LLP	73.9	62.3
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	120.9	93.6
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP	80.4	68.9
Goodwin Procter LLP	55.6	63
Hogan Lovells	87.2	86.4
Holman Fenwick Willan LLP (HFW)	1	-
K&L Gates LLP	23.5	35.4
Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP	42.6	50.7
Kirkland & Ellis LLP	44.5	71.9
Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel LLP	97	68.3
Latham & Watkins LLP	90.2	82.5
Linklaters LLP	78.8	63.4
Loeb & Loeb LLP	28.8	31
Lowenstein Sandler LLP	69.5	58.4
Mayer Brown LLP	46.7	65.3
McGuireWoods LLP	35.7	59.3
Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP	60.7	100
Morrison Foerster	75	73.9
O'Melveny & Myers LLP	98.1	83
Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP	89.8	99.5
Osborne Clarke	-	-
Pallas Partners LLP	19.5	27.3
Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP	-	-
Proskauer Rose LLP	63.2	65.4
Reed Smith LLP	46.5	47.7
Ropes & Gray LLP	68.8	83.9
Seyfarth Shaw LLP	23.7	47.1
Shearman & Sterling LLP*	60.8	-
Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP	36.7	-

FIRM NAME	AVERAGE PRO BONO HOURS PER FEE EARNER	FEE EARNERS WITH 10+ HOURS OF PRO BONO (%)
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP	117.9	72.7
Steptoe LLP	78.9	79.7
Sullivan & Cromwell LLP	63.6	56.5
The Legal House (Thailand)	15.3	100
Vinson & Elkins LLP	28.1	39
White & Case LLP	54	63.4
Winston & Strawn LLP	65.8	100
<b>Country average</b>	<b>63.4</b>	<b>67</b>

\* Now A&O Shearman. Note, Allen & Overy and Shearman & Sterling merged in May 2024. The data for this index was collected pre-merger.





REUTERS/ Kacper Pempel