

Special Report

Gender Diversity at Singapore Law Firms

2022



Introduction

Legal industry rankings are an important benchmarking tool for buyers of legal services. They offer a clear indication as to which law firms and lawyers are most active, have the highest market reputation, and are working on the most significant legal matters – an independent seal of quality and assurance.

Increasingly, diversity and inclusion policies have become a consideration in the selection of outside counsel. Using data driven analysis of the latest rankings, this **Legal Media 360** special report assesses gender diversity at the largest multi-practice domestic and joint-venture law firms in Singapore.

The report examines data at three levels: **1)** firm wide; **2)** by practice area; and **3)** by individual lawyer rankings. It will reveal:

- Which firms are most gender diverse;
- Whether gender diverse firms are more successful than male dominated firms;
- Whether female lawyers are being afforded the same opportunities as men; and
- If rising star data implies a more gender balanced future.



LegalMedia 360

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Methodology

Results are based on the analysis of lawyer rankings in the following international publications: *asialaw*, *Benchmark Litigation*, *Chambers and Partners*, *IAM1000*, *IFLR1000*, *IP Stars*, *Legal 500*, and *World Trademark Review 1000*. These have been selected based on their multilateral research process, where peer and client reviews as well as submissions are used to determine the rankings.

For the purposes of this report, due to the variance in the categorization at atomic levels, lawyer rankings have been reclassified by **Legal Media 360** to bring them together in a common scale without distorting the differences in the range of the values. This has been achieved by referring to the definitions provided by the publications.

Lawyers have been grouped on a five-tier scale:

- **Senior Statesperson:** Retired/semi-retired influential lawyers with close relationships with major institutional clients. Mainly work as a consultant.
- **Tier 1:** Leading lawyers who have an outstanding reputation and a strong track record for leading the most significant matters.
- **Tier 2:** Highly regarded lawyers who are active on significant matters.
- **Up and Coming Lawyer:** Lawyers establishing their reputation and have been recognised for assisting on significant matters. Potential to be a tiered lawyer in the future.
- **Notable Practitioner:** Lawyers who have had some market recognition and been on some notable matters. Not yet a tiered lawyer.

The 2022 dataset covers rankings published from June 2021 to June 2022. This timeframe ensures that similar matters submitted by the firms and evaluated by the above publications fall into the same research cycle.



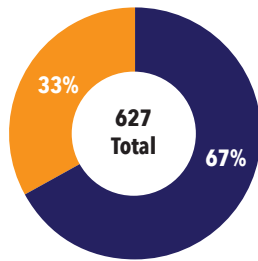
Findings

Overall Gender Statistics

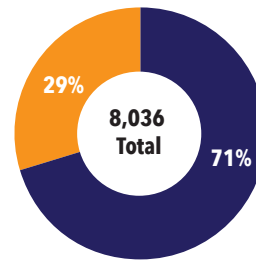
In the eight publications examined, a total of 627 lawyers in Singapore were recognized.

The national average male to female ratio for Singapore law firms is 67 to 33 percent which, as can be seen from the charts, is slightly better than the overall Asia average of 71 to 29 percent:

Male to Female Ratio: Singapore

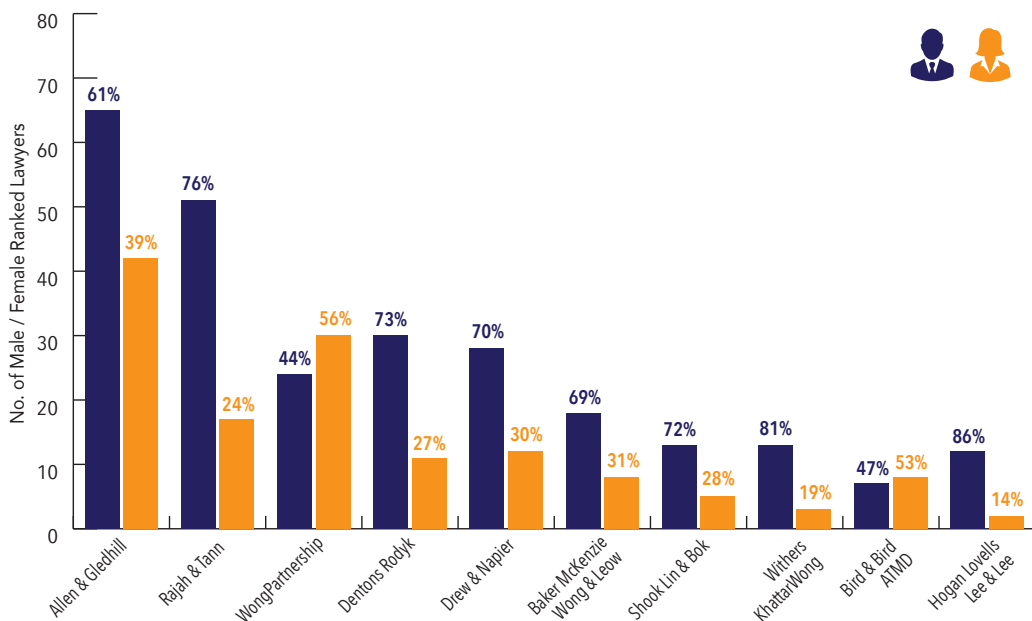


Male to Female Ratio: Asia



Firm Level

Top 10 Firms with the Most Lawyer Recognitions





Commentary: Examining the law firms with the greatest number of lawyer recognitions reveals:

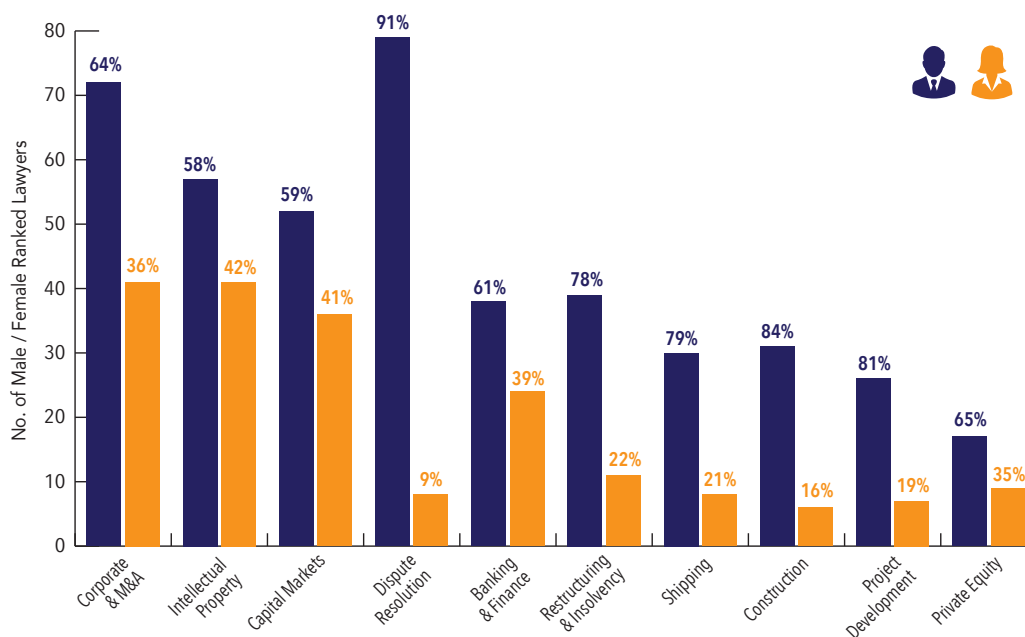
- Three of the top 10 firms have better gender diversity ratios than the national average;
- Bird & Bird ATMD and WongPartnership are the most gender balanced firms; and
- Hogan Lovells Lee & Lee and Withers Khatterwong have the greatest overall gender imbalance.

When asked to comment on their gender diversity policy and its impact on firm success, a spokesperson for Allen & Gledhill said: “As a Firm, we embrace diversity and value inclusive, harmonious and collaborative practices in our work environment. This is further highlighted by our formal diversity policy, which was developed and launched in 2018. Our diversity policy underlines our belief that each individual brings a unique set of skills, experience and expertise that is formed by their character, culture, gender, and background. This has allowed our lawyers to give their best to clients with the knowledge that their contributions will be evaluated based solely on the quality of work that is produced.

We are also the first Singapore law firm signatory to the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), and our policies and practices are aligned to the UNGC’s ten principles which include a commitment to the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation (Principle 6 of the UNGC). Among our lawyers in Singapore, Myanmar and Vietnam, 47 percent are female, and among our partners, 43 percent are female.”

Practice Area Level

Gender Representation by Practice Area



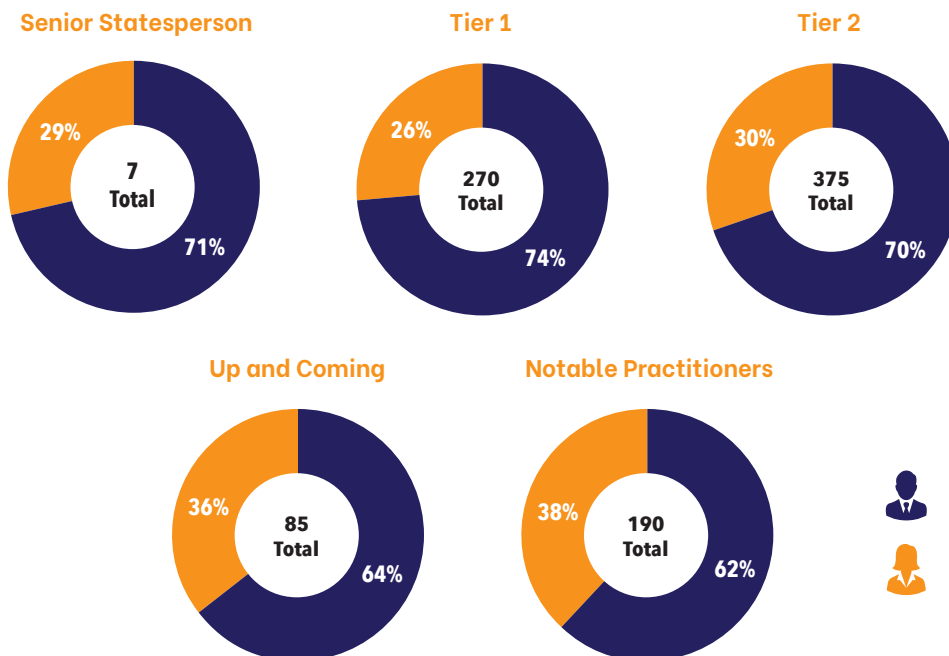


Commentary: The above chart shows the top 10 practice areas by recognized lawyer count. Data shows women lawyers are under-represented in five out of the 10 practice areas, with female representation clearly lacking in Dispute resolution. In Asia, the female ratio for Dispute resolution is only 9 percent.

Aside from Dispute resolution, the gender balance for the other top four practices areas in Singapore is better than the average for Asia.

Lawyer Levels: Gender

Breakdown of Gender by Tier



Commentary: The lawyer tiers can be seen to reflect the development cycle in a lawyer's career. Senior Statesperson represents those lawyers in their senior years. Tier 1, 2 and Notable Practitioners are lawyers at partner level, while Up and Coming Lawyers reflect the future representation of a law firm. The above figures do not indicate any notable shift towards more gender balance within the younger generation of lawyers. However, Singapore's overall gender balance for all tiers is better than the overall averages for Asia.



Top Lawyers by Practice Area with the Greatest Number of Tier 1 Rankings

Banking and Finance

-  **Chee Wai Kok**, Allen & Gledhill
-  **Susan Wong**, WongPartnership
-  **Kai Zee Liew**, Shook Lin & Bok
-  **Mark Hudspeth**, Allen & Gledhill

Capital Markets

-  **Chia Kim Huat**, Rajah & Tann
-  **Jerry Koh**, Allen & Gledhill
-  **Margaret Chin**, Allen & Gledhill
-  **Tze Gay Tan**, Allen & Gledhill

Corporate and M&A

-  **Andrew Lim**, Allen & Gledhill
-  **Mei Lim**, Allen & Gledhill
-  **Wai King Ng**, WongPartnership
-  **Andrew Ang**, WongPartnership

Dispute Resolution

-  **Cavinder Bull**, Drew & Napier
-  **Davinder Singh**, Davinder Singh Chambers
-  **Jimmy Yim**, Drew & Napier
-  **Francis Xavier**, Rajah & Tann
-  **Shen Yi Thio**, TSMP Law Corporation

Intellectual Property

-  **Alban Kang**, Bird & Bird ATMD
-  **Andy Leck**, Baker McKenzie Wong & Leow
-  **Tony Yeo**, Drew & Napier
-  **Stanley Lai**, Allen & Gledhill
-  **Tee Jim Tan**, Hogan Lovells Lee & Lee

Commentary: A breakdown of the top lawyers with the most Tier 1 recognitions shows that, aside from Capital markets, female representation at the top level is lacking. This suggests that female lawyers are not leading the most significant cases or deals in Singapore.

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