

CHILEAN M&A SLOWS DUE TO ELECTORAL UNCERTAINTY - PHILIPPI PRIETOCARRIZOSA FERRERO DU & URÍA (PPU)

Posted on 4 September 2017



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Uncertainty of Chile's presidential election in November 2017 has had the effect of slowing M&A activity in the country says Juan Francisco Gutiérrez, partner at Philippi Prietocarrizosa Ferrero DU & Uría (PPU).

"It's a wait-and-see attitude, everyone is waiting for the outcome of the presidential elections, and that has a less than positive impact on M&A," adds Gutiérrez, who highlights the subdued growth of the economy.

The outcome of the election is far from certain at the time of writing, with no clear frontrunner among the candidates. "Some polls forecast a win for a candidate of the centre-right, in that scenario the expectation is that it will bring a much awaited boost to the local economy and increase M&A flow," ventured Gutiérrez.

However, opportunities remain for law firms amid the downturn. Gutiérrez highlights work related to new tax, labour and environmental regulations. "Our experts in the regulatory team are particularly active," he says. "Expanding the regulatory area at the firm has paid off, with our lawyers picking up

mandates either helping clients navigate the complex regulatory system or defending them from the aggressive practices of some regulators." Gutiérrez also notes that, in general, litigation and arbitration work is on the increase.

Global law firms see Chile as an attractive proposition, says Gutiérrez. "International law firms keep coming to Chile, with CMS among the latest, however we do not see it as a threat. It makes us rise to the challenge."

Gutiérrez is positive about the prospects for PPU: "The integration of our teams as regional practice groups across the offices in Chile, Colombia and Peru is right on track – it requires discipline and a collective mindset but it is happening."