

Guide to Global Mobility

An **HR Grapevine** supplement

2019

Global assignments:
Exciting new career
phase or isolation
and loneliness?

How important is
it to ensure you
have a solid pension
scheme for globally
mobile staff?



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WELCOME LETTER

It's often said that we live in an increasingly VUCA world – one that is volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous. It's easy to see global trends that fit this pattern, from the chaos of Brexit to the uneven strides forward in technology.

It's not just the wider environment that can be VUCA – our personal lives can be as well. There's very little quite so VUCA as deciding to embark on a new global assignment, and there's naturally some trepidation before starting a new job in a foreign country. From accommodation to tax, there's many material concerns that need to be addressed - and then there are some more personal, such as wellbeing and mental health.

In this guide, we explore how to manage pensions when overseas, and one of the most important benefits of all – ensuring your staff and their families feel remembered and included as they embark on their new adventure.



Daniel Cave
Managing Editor,

HR Grapevine

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PUBLISHED BY:
Executive Grapevine
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ISSN 2397-7078

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Welcome to HR Grapevine's 2019 Guide to Global Mobility

The globally mobile population is growing. At the same time, local regulations for pensions are complex and local legislation more demanding. These facts combined equal the need for a flexible and easy to manage pension solution. Do offshore based International Pension Plans (IPPs) represent the answer?

Understandably, companies operating across Europe can find it a challenge to deal with the variety of country-based pension systems. To further complicate this picture, recent trends show that countries are raising the exit tax of second pillar pensions or increasing the retirement age.

Employers worry that national governments could "catch up" and take back advantages negotiated at the entrance. Consequently, we're seeing increasing interest in international plans from companies that have small groups of expatriates and need a compliant pension solution.

While IPPs could certainly represent the answer here, it is our responsibility to inform clients of the pros and cons of this approach, allowing for best informed decisions and ensuring the success of employee benefits strategies.

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Our collection of industry experts give their opinion on Global Mobility in 2019



Rosemary Lemon
Group Head of Reward
Hays

Rosemary has experience of all aspects of executive and employee remuneration, pensions, global benefits, share schemes and global mobility. She is also a member of the Government's Money Advice Service Steering Committee looking at improving the financial capability of working people in the UK.



David Enser
Founder
The RES Forum

David has had significant international mobility experience with the likes of Adidas, IBM, Nokia and P&G. He has personal experience of living and working in France, Germany, Hong Kong, Japan and the UK. He has lead several global mobility operations and programmes.



Mark Bancroft
Head of Global Mobility
Thomson Reuters

Mark works at the global mass media and information firm – which has 25,800 employees operating in more than 100 countries around the globe. There are over 16,000 employees in the Americas, over 5,000 in Asia Pacific and over 3,000 in the EMEA region.



Go it alone

A global assignment can be exciting new phase - but it comes with the risk and isolation

Words by Beckett Frith | Design by Matt Bonnar



Travelling abroad for a global assignment is a huge step in any employee's life. It can represent a brand new start, an exciting chapter in their career – or, it can spell loneliness and isolation.

Research from AXA – Global Healthcare has found that expats can run into a number of different problems resulting from the sudden change to the culture and environment they are used to. Four in ten (40%) report that being away from their support network is the most difficult part of moving abroad. Another 30% cited the local language whilst 26% said the weather and 20% said making friends.

“Once the excitement of moving abroad for a new career opportunity wears off, the fact is that for most people (single or with families) the reality of being alone in a strange country hits home,” explains Mark Bancroft, Head of Global Mobility for Thomson Reuter. “This can be a combination of missing the support of your extended family circle or friends, together with the inevitable culture shock and language barriers that can have you longing for the familiarity of your home country.

“Usually these perfectly normal feelings are temporary and will pass quickly as the integration and adjustment process starts to happen, but it is true that such feelings can translate into poor performance in the workplace and in some extreme cases can lead to depression or early repatriation and a failed assignment.”

However, there are some steps firms can take to reduce the impact of loneliness and improve the outcomes for those starting out in an unfamiliar location.

Family considerations

Rosemary Lemon, Group Head of Reward for Hays, tells HR Grapevine that one way to help employees settle in is to ensure both them and their families have a good understanding of what their new life will be like once they commit to the assignment.

“When you first arrive somewhere new it's almost like having a holiday”

“Even simple things like going shopping are that much harder if you're unfamiliar with the products or brand names,” she says. “While the employee themselves has the umbrella of their new workplace which can help combat loneliness, if their spouse doesn't have a job then they can feel quite isolated.”

She suggests holding a ‘look-see’ visit before the assignment, in which both the worker and their family can get a taste for the new location. Then, once they arrive, there needs to be continuing support that reaches beyond just the employee.

“When you first arrive somewhere new it's almost like having a holiday,” Lemon adds. “It's very new and exciting but then when you really are settling in, but two or three weeks afterwards you realize this is actually going to be life going forward. It becomes less and less exciting and more routine, and that's when issues start to show up.

“I think it's important that support is spread out, and not just focused in those first few weeks but continuously.” →

Making connections

Giving employees a little help when it comes to building new relationships can be extremely helpful. "It is important that the expat understands and embraces the reality of the new situation and that things that they take for granted in the home location like friendships and family relationships now need a lot more work to maintain them," Bancroft explains.

"Stay in touch and communicate with your employees regularly"


"Social and professional networks are important vehicles for keeping in touch and tools that offer face to face contact become more important," he added whilst also noting that it can also be very helpful for global assignees to join clubs, participate in sport or other activities as ways to make friendships in the assignment location and meet other expats and locals.

Not one-size-fits-all

However, not everybody will respond to potential isolation in the same way. Dr Benjamin Bader, who is an academic partner and strategic adviser to the global mobility forum and community, The RES Forum, and Senior Lecturer in International Human Resource Management at the Newcastle University Business School, suggests that personality plays a key role in how well an employee adapts to a new location.

He explains: "The world does not stand still while the traveller is gone, the network structure changes, and at some point, ties that were strong earlier are weak or don't exist anymore. Realising this can create and increase feelings of loneliness that in the worst case can lead to a depression."

Fears about what an expat employee has left behind can also prevent staff from fully enjoying their assignment. "A common worry is that if something happens to a loved one, particularly an elderly relative or dependent, an assignee wouldn't be able to get to them quickly," adds Caroline Walmsley, Global Head of HR, AXA – Global Healthcare. "Working closely with the employee and the local HR representative to placate these fears can help provide reassurance. Some companies will offer flights home as a benefit for international assignees, so use details such as this to comfort an assignee if they are worried about being away from family."

Bader continues that a strong channel of communication to your employee can be extremely reassuring. "Stay in touch and communicate with your employees regularly," he said. "Many things are not made explicit and coined by assumptions and (mismatched) expectations [from both the employer and the employee]. This can become detrimental at some point and applies to expatriates and frequent travellers alike. Hence, my recommendation is talk and manage expectations and feelings." 



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INTERNATIONAL

The pros & cons of international pensions for expats

Paolo Lippi
International Pension Manager
GEB International Lines



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The need for all individuals to save for their future retirement needs is not simply a 'nice to have', it is essential: security and safety representing a basic necessity of all humans in Maslow's infamous hierarchy¹. However, this basic need is becoming ever harder for companies with globally mobile workers to provide thanks to the market complexities involved. In fact, some pension providers are simply refusing to cover those living and working abroad thanks to the ambiguities involved with regards to local legislation.

Against this backdrop, International Pensions Plans (IPPs) represent a welcome solution. But it's important to understand the pros and cons of this approach in order to make informed decisions in line with employee benefit strategy.

Growing need

The mobile employee population is increasing like never before. Emerging markets have created a significant shift in mobility patterns. Plus, the world is now truly connected with more global assignees, business travel, virtual tools and, especially, more short-term assignments.

PricewaterhouseCooper (PwC)² predicted 50% overall growth in international assignments over the two decades to 2020.

Having the right talent now represents the most critical factor for business growth, according to 97% of CEOs in PwC's annual global CEO survey².

The ability to offer international experience - historically a key differentiator in identifying top talent - is now frequently cited as the determining factor between winners and losers.

According to a report by Learnlight Insights³, in the face of current high attrition, low unemployment and the associated focus by companies on employee experience, 2019 global mobility trends will see the offer of international experience being used strategically as a magnet to attract talent.

Open to interpretation

So where does that leave pensions? In the past, companies would organise international assignments without even thinking about pension provision. They would perhaps just increase the employee's salary by a certain percentage and leave it to the individual to do the rest.

These days, country by country legislation determines what employers must do with regards to providing appropriate cover for their travelling employees.

For example, new French legislation says that any non-French nationals working in the country for more than 3 months and 1 day must be provided with appropriate insurance. The problem is that local insurers don't want to take charge of those individuals who aren't fiscally located in the country. Why? Because processes are all automated now. If an insurer has to manually intervene in that process to make a change to suit the local authorities in the country where the employee fiscally resides, that not only adds complexity but also presents a potential risk in that mistakes can be made.

Furthermore, national regulatory regimes tend to be open to interpretation. For example, in some countries there's an obligation for employers to offer guaranteed pensions, with levels of employer and employee contributions regulated and normal retirement age regulated. To further complicate matters, this obligation can vary from one country to the next.

Compliance lawyers and risk managers all have different views on the correct approach. It's no wonder that some insurers simply refuse to cover pension schemes for those living and working abroad.

In short, companies with globally mobile employees face a challenge.

IPPs - the pros

International Pensions Plans (IPPs) were designed and launched in order to address that problem. They are based offshore, allowing for complete flexibility as they're not tied to any national legislation. Plus, they're easy to manage.

With an IPP, employers design the contract. They can choose: the currency; whether it's unit linked or guaranteed; the level of contribution; and have the option of a normal retirement age before 67 years of age.

IPPs are also easy to manage. The platform does all the administration work to ensure full compliance. And there's only one contract for the employee's countries of residence. In contrast, it's not unusual for a HR Manager to be looking after, say, 100 expats in 10 different countries, necessitating 10 different contracts with 10 different insurers: all with different rules applying. And if one of those expats goes to work in another country, they need to be shifted into a new pension scheme. What a headache!

Finally, IPPs are generally less taxed at the exit (retirement stage) because they were not granted fiscal advantages before.

IPPs - the cons

However, when assessing risks and benefits, it is important to note that IPPs are not recognised by national legislations. This means that although they are absolutely legal (employers have the right to invest in IPPs) it will not be possible to obtain deductibility of contributions. In other words, employers and employees cannot apply for the usual tax reliefs.

As a result, if an employee receives a salary of 2500 euros and places 300 euros in an IPP, the individual will be taxed on their total salary (2500) and not on the remaining 2200, as would be the case if they were using a national pension plan.

In short, IPPs represent a valuable alternative to local pension plans where companies have small groups of expats and need a compliant solution. But it's important to determine whether the advantages of flexibility, easier management and lighter taxation at exit, outweigh the loss of fiscal deductibility.

At this stage, it is not possible to get both within an IPP.

¹Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Simply Psychology, 2018 <https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>

²Talent mobility 2020: The next generation of international assignments, PwC, April 2010 <https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/managing-tomorrows-people/future-of-work/pdf/talent-mobility-2020.pdf>

³Global Mobility Trends to Look Out For in 2019, Learnlight Insights, Dec 2018 <https://insights.learnlight.com/en/articles/2019-global-mobility-trends/>

How to solve the complexities of having a global workforce



Nina Breneman
Solutions Consultant



For further information visit
www.topia.com

As the reach of global organisations extends to new geographies, HR teams are faced with the challenge of hiring and managing a global workforce.

According to Paul Sparrow, Professor of International HR at Lancaster University Management School, solving the complexities of a global workforce is a leading challenge for HR teams today. Even for organisations with an established global mobility team, there are specific actions that can address the challenges of having a global workforce. Data-driven insights in the following areas can help you better manage—and understand—your global workforce:

Recruitment

Sourcing talent from global talent pools involves a number of challenges, from understanding local labour markets to identifying individuals who possess the desire and ability to relocate regionally or internationally. A survey of over 13,000 global job seekers found that 64% were interested in finding work in another country. However, there still remains a global talent shortage with companies struggling to fill positions. Mobility teams can add value to global recruiting efforts by offering insights about the costs of employee mobility by location, job level, and length of assignment - helping to forecast the cost and time to fill global roles.

Diversity and Inclusion

Mobility teams are tasked with ensuring individuals moving between locations have the resources and knowledge needed to navigate cultural differences and be successful in their new location. They can also provide data and metrics that help organisations understand workforce demographics. As diversity and inclusion continue to be recognised as an important factor in an organisations competitive advantage, there will be a need to learn more about how diversity and mobility decisions interact. Mobility teams can play a valuable role in helping organisations track this information.

Learning and Development

International assignments are valuable talent development tools that can help any global organisation build a workforce skilled at working with a variety of cultures. In this survey of mobility professionals, building global management experience was named as one of the top reasons for sending employees on international assignments. The mobility team can be a valuable voice in talent management discussions by presenting data that helps organisations understand the impact of international assignments on an employee's readiness for promotion or movement into a leadership position.

Organisations with global workforces need to have the capability to deploy the right people to the right roles, wherever they are based. Because of the complexity of the global labour market as well as the need to make data-driven and cost-efficient mobility decisions, HR and mobility professionals must work together to understand the rationale, benefit, and value associated with every mobility decision. When that happens, organisations are in a much better position to build a highly-qualified, diverse, and capable global workforce.



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How important is it to ensure you have a solid pension scheme for globally mobile staff?



Paolo Lippi
International Pension Manager

Celebrating 30 years with the Generali Group, for the past 10 Paolo has headed up the pension unit at Generali Employee Benefits (GEB), helping multinational clients set-up, coordinate and implement cross border tax-efficient pension solutions.



For further information visit www.geb.com

How to provide pensions for the elderly represents a challenge for businesses and governments. And the solutions offered vary widely between countries. As a result, the provision for the retirement of employees is organised and regulated across different jurisdictions in many ways: ways that are often not particularly consistent with each other.

For example, in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), in addition to end-of-service benefit, many employers offer private pension schemes to their expat workforce, to which both the employer and employee contribute. They are paid in a cash lump sum when the employee retires or leaves the company. However, if a contract is terminated early, the employee may lose the employer contributions.

In Malaysia, private sector employers are required to contribute to a government-established fund that employees may use in part for retirement provision and part for buying a home or emergency medical expenses over the age of 55.

In most other countries, the provision is by way of a pension that is paid out from retirement until death, providing some guaranteed income in old age.

Pension provision is a complex matter and the issues that arise for each country are numerous and varied. Ensuring a compliant solution for those not fiscally located in the country in which they're working is no mean feat. At the same time, it's an important consideration for globally mobile workers.

To be able to answer the question above effectively, it's worth considering all of this alongside what a good pension scheme brings to your people - in terms of security and peace of mind - and to your business in terms of recruitment and retention.



Rosemary Lemon
Group Head of Reward - Hays



www.hays.co.uk

I think there's a genuine problem when people localise in lots of different countries because they end up with little bits of pension in various places. Trying to sort that out when they finally come to retire and working out the tax treatment is quite a big challenge. I think

ideally, if it was at all possible, if an employee can remain in their home country's pension plan that makes life a lot easier all around. Failing that, looking into an international plan so they have the ability to move but retain those benefits would be really useful.



David Enser
Founder - The RES Forum



theresforum.com

On one hand, a solid benefits offering of course enhances an employer brand and enriches the value proposition that an employer can extend to its international staff. However, on the other hand, it also mitigates risk and potential duty of care issues given increasing employer requirements to ensure employees save for their future - no matter how complex their career paths may be.

An employee who concludes a career at an organisation, for which they have made sacrifices and faced disruptive moves, with a multitude of pension pots and no centralised overview of accrued benefits presents, in my view, a potential legal risk but also constitutes a failure in fulfilling employer obligations in the psychological contract.



Mark Bancroft
Head of Global Mobility - Thomson Reuters



www.thomsonreuters.com

From a pension perspective, globally mobile employees are really no different to local employees in that they need to be encouraged to save for retirement. Mobile employees who traditionally have home-based contracts are usually encouraged to stay in their home retirement plan. However, some circumstances mean that this option may not provide adequate retirement

savings opportunities through tax efficient savings, or the investment options may be low return. In these situations, and also where a globally mobile employee has no "home base", it may be appropriate to use an International Retirement Plan, whether that be an insured or trust based arrangement to operate as an 'umbrella' plan to support gaps in coverage.

Online Learning: A key resource in the evolving world of work

Karen Cygal

Vice President Of
Product Development



For further information visit
www.worldwideerc.org

Converging trends of disruptive technology, shifting demographics, fluid labor markets and demands for new skills are radically reshaping the world of work. Competition for talent continues to heat up and learning and development (L&D) opportunities are high on employees' "must-have" lists. In turn, organizations are increasingly seeing the value of investing in training. Research from Bersin by Deloitte puts the current global corporate training market at more than US\$ 200 billion. With technology increasingly automating or augmenting our work, the need to develop new skills continues to grow.

Accenture and the G20 Young Entrepreneurs Alliance (G20 YEA) published a 2018 collaborative report entitled "It's Learning. Just Not as We Know It." Among its key findings was the potential for the G20 economies to lose up to US\$ 11.5 trillion in cumulative GDP growth in the next ten years if skill-building doesn't catch up with the rate of technological progress. It recommends a three-step approach, including: Speeding up experiential learning; shifting the focus from institutions to individuals, incentivizing them to develop a broader blend of skills; and empowering more vulnerable learners by giving them greater access to modular training. The report also recommends the use of technology "to make learning more immersive, engaging and personalized."

While there is no "one-size-fits-all" solution for employee training, there is ample evidence to support that the use of a blended, multimedia approach is one of the most effective ways to learn and retain information. Looking more closely at how we learn, most of us can identify with the key characteristics of the modern learner, defined by Bersin/Deloitte in 2014 and still relevant today. We are:

Overwhelmed, distracted and impatient.

Elucidat's take on the learner profile reports that today's worker typically spends 33 percent of an average week in meetings, 25 percent on email, 5 percent being interrupted, and only one percent on training and development. We typically decide if content is right for us in an average of about seven seconds, so clearly learning content has to be accessible, relevant and efficient.

Eager to learn – and highly mobile.

We seek personalized, timely content and are ready to learn as needed, anywhere, anytime – increasingly from our mobile devices. Again, citing Elucidat's data: 96 percent of us will turn to our phones first for information, and the average worker today checks a phone ten times an hour.

Seeking and benefitting from collaboration.

With the growing success of gamification, badges, friendly competition and social sharing embedded into so many of our online experiences, we clearly crave community. Not only do we want high quality and relevant content, we also want it to be collaborative. We turn to trusted personal and professional networks and learn through interactions with peers, teammates and managers, asking others for information and eager to share what we know, too. With a blend of text, video, checklists, podcasts, and interactive engagement, we're much more likely to learn, retain and share new information.

Common characteristics of highly effective online courses include things like clear takeaways explained up front; material developed by instructors with real-world experience in what they're teaching; an emphasis on both developer and student accountability; the strength of a community of fellow learners to engage with; and material that presents multiple points of view.

With all of this in mind, Worldwide ERC® is an ideal source for the development of a new online learning platform to meet the needs of global HR practitioners. Bringing together voices and perspectives from all sides of the mobile talent journey, we draw on decades of objective research, and global event and regional one-day program development. We have observed and measured the learning and information sharing that occurs through regularly hosted webinars and the discussions and benchmarking within our community. And we have considerable experience with developing professional certification programs.

The first phase of our new platform (expected this summer) will refresh and enhance such core content as the principles of global and U.S. domestic employee mobility, strategic talent mobility, U.S. tax policy, and data analytics. In addition, we're helping HR practitioners build the broader business skills they need to grow their professional development and enhance their strategic business value – from agile workflows, to design thinking, to principles of advanced finance. Phase two will involve partnering with additional course providers and sources of information to bring our customers options in such areas as enhancing cross-cultural competence; market-leading data on short term and permanent relocation; mobility and the full employment model: how HR leaders are reacting to the tightening talent landscape; and perspectives and insights on how mobility professionals can have a more strategic impact on their organizations.

Understanding the importance of continuous learning and skill building, we are eager to bring HR professionals new ways to learn, grow, and demonstrate expertise.

Karen Cygal is Vice President, Product Development with Worldwide ERC®, the association for global workforce mobility, empowering mobile people through meaningful connections, unbiased information, inspired ideas and solutions.

Learn more at www.worldwideerc.org

STATS & TRENDS

A 360° VIEW OF GLOBAL MOBILITY IN 2019

Three-quarters of those working outside of their home country report that while they enjoy the experience of working abroad, they are significantly less satisfied with their levels of wellbeing than the norm

Cigna Wellbeing Index



Just one in five professionals say their current global mobility policies address diversity and inclusion issues well or very well

Learnlight



The top five most expensive cities in the world for expats are Ashgabat, Geneva, Zurich, Basel and Bern

ECA International



Nearly a third (**30%**) of global professionals said they found picking up a foreign language to be the most challenging aspect of moving abroad

AXA - Global Healthcare



70% of companies believe offering expat assignments increases staff loyalty

Allianz Care

What are the top three compliance topics that represent the most challenges when relocating personnel?

49% - Income Tax

34% - Immigration

26% - Permanent establishment

KPMG



When asked to select their top three work destinations, UK professionals chose:
The United States (**40%**)
Canada (**24%**)
Spain (**16%**)
UK (**16%**)
Germany (**15%**)

Crown World Mobility

How best to support partners on assignment?

Many expatriates are accompanied by their partner and children when they go on an international assignment. ECA's Managing Mobility survey identified that the top three key concerns of candidates when considering an expatriate assignment were family-related, with the partner's career/income being the second most important issue. For many families whether the partner can or will work whilst overseas, or what they will do otherwise, is critical to the family decision to take an assignment.

This matters for organisations because attracting individuals to go on expatriate assignments isn't always easy. 74% of respondents to the survey reported they often or sometimes have difficulty attracting candidates with the right skills and experience. Addressing issues relating to the partner's career potentially increases the candidate pool for assignments.

Challenges facing expatriate partners who want to work

For many partners getting a job in the new country would be ideal. There are, however, essential challenges to be overcome first:

- Can the partner get a work visa or work permit? Do they need a potential employer to apply for the work permit on their behalf?
- Do they speak the language, or can they learn enough to be employable?
- Are qualifications recognised automatically, recognised but through an accreditation process, or not at all?

Anna Michielsen

General Manager, Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific

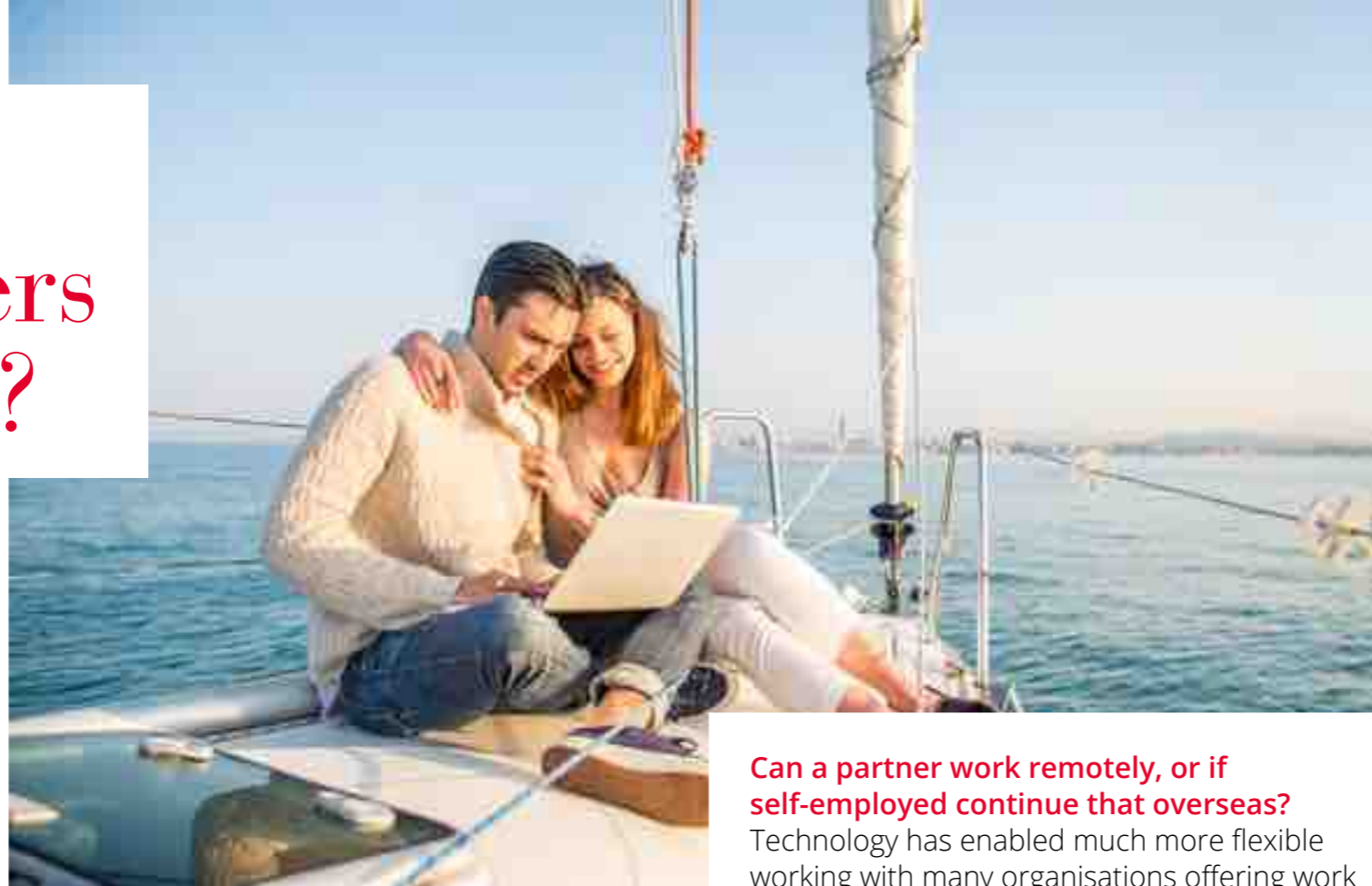


For further information visit www.eca-international.com



ECA's Country Profiles provide information on work permit availability for partners. It is important to note some countries make a distinction between a married partner and an unmarried partner for the purpose of work permit availability, limiting availability to married partners only.

The challenges relating to work permits, language and qualifications lead to very real limitations on employment abroad. Even if these essential hurdles can be overcome there are also the practical challenges of the job market, including finding a job in a new country and adapting to a new work culture. The Permits Foundation records partner employment falling from 79% pre-assignment to just 28% whilst on assignment.



Can a partner work remotely, or if self-employed continue that overseas?

Technology has enabled much more flexible working with many organisations offering work from home and non-standard hours as an incentive to attract and retain talent. If pre-assignment a partner works in an organisation which offers flexible working, could they just work from a home or office in another country? To answer this question organisations need to carefully consider permanent establishment, tax, immigration and labour law as well as any practical challenges presented by the role itself. Increasingly organisations are including clauses on international flexibility in their employment policies to clarify the responsibilities of employees and manage these situations.

Self-employed partners, especially those in the digital space, may have a range of options available. However, they also need to be very aware of any legal or tax implications.

Remote work possibilities are also changing the game and it may be possible for a partner to secure a remote role, especially, though not exclusively, in the digital space. A quick internet search of best remote job sites will turn up dozens of sites and literally thousands of jobs. Again, the partner needs to be mindful of legal and tax implications – some organisations may include this in their partner career advice.

How are organisations supporting partners?

ECA's Benefits for International Assignments policy survey shows that 24% of organisations globally provide support for the partner to continue their career or personal development. Practical support may be provided in the form of career or recruitment advice and assistance with work permits. Some organisations provide a broader scope of support including networking or paying for education which will further the partner's career generally or assist with employment on return to the home location.

Perhaps unsurprisingly only 8% of organisations provide direct financial compensation for loss of income if the partner is unable to work, and where it is provided it is generally of token or nominal value. A slightly higher percentage of organisations pay the partner's social security or pension contributions during the assignment.

Where direct financial compensation is paid, over 90% of organisations pay that benefit to the assignee, their employee, rather than the partner. This practice demonstrates the very real challenge organisations face as they navigate the relationships with their employee and potentially the partner and family as well. For the partner to participate in any programme offered by an organisation they need to be contacted and engaged by the organisation. Organisations who do this well engage early and often with partners, create networks and invest resources. Some organisations do this directly, others prefer utilising the services of independent third parties.

An international assignment can be an exciting and rewarding experience not just for the assignee but also their partner and family. The partner's ability to work abroad may impact the decision to take the assignment in the first place, both for personal fulfilment and financial reasons. Organisations who acknowledge the challenge and provide support to partners maximise their candidate pools and minimise the potential for family issues to derail an assignment.

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Long reads
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