

Brexit – Relocation Relocation Relocation

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TOP TIPS FOR SENIOR EXECUTIVES

The past few months have seen significant upheaval – both across the financial markets and politically. Many businesses are still in the throes of deciding what their Brexit strategy is going to be, but there are already some murmurs of mass relocations to countries elsewhere in the EU, such as Dublin and Frankfurt, or even outside of the EU altogether.

For some employees, a geographical move may not be feasible. For others, it may be an unexpected opportunity. However, if

you are amenable to relocation, you should give careful thought to your relocation terms, as it is a mistake to assume that there is no negotiating room. If there is a mass relocation, many employers will be worried about retaining key staff, which may make them much more willing to negotiate than they may otherwise be.

Your contract and employer

The starting point for any change should be your contract. Many contracts may have a term allowing for relocations but they are typically limited in duration. If you are going to be issued with a new contract as a result, you should understand the implications: is your employment being permanently transferred to another company altogether or are you going on a secondment? If you are no longer going to be working in the UK, it may be that UK employment law will cease to apply to your employment: you may not necessarily be worse off as a result if you are moving to another country in the EU but you would be if you were moving to the United States.

You may need advice as to whether you should be bought out of your UK employment rights. If so, see [this article](#).

Transport and haulage

On a practical level, you should consider how you are getting there. Most companies will pay the shipping costs for your personal belongings but you should check how much and what they are prepared to transport and insure. Family and partners' accommodation and haulage costs should be covered as well. Most companies should cover outward business class flights, and you may be able to negotiate a certain number of flights home every year.

Accommodation

Accommodation is a significant cost. If you are going somewhere on a short term basis, you may be able to negotiate

paid accommodation as part of your package. Even for permanent moves, it would be reasonable to ask for interim accommodation, to allow you to find somewhere appropriate.

If you own a property in London which you are leaving, you may also want to ask for money to cover the costs of renting that property.

Taxation

The move is likely to have an impact on how you are taxed and you could potentially become subject to two tax regimes. It will be important for you to check what this tax position is likely to be and, if you are moving to a less favourable regime, you may want to ask for tax equalisation. Equally, if you are moving to a more favourable regime, you may want to be taxed as a local resident. You may be able to negotiate the costs of independent tax advice to assist you with completing and filing any tax returns you require during your stay, and when your employment comes to an end.

Visas and immigration

The cover of visa and immigration advice should be covered in the package for any move. If you are moving with a family or partner, you should think about negotiating the cost of immigration advice for them too. If your relocation is for the longer term, you should not overlook this if your relocation is in the EU.

Schooling

Schooling is also a cost that is easy to overlook. However, this can be expensive, particularly if you are moving to a jurisdiction which has fewer English speaking schools and there may be a disparity of costs with the UK.

The extras

One you have relocated, there is the question of your salary

and soft benefits. Do not overlook negotiating a pay-rise or a promotion if you do agree to the move. You may also be eligible for a cost of living allowance (particularly given the variable value of the pound), or may want to be paid in a different currency altogether.

Whilst you plan and hope for the best, as assignment contracts often contain clawback provisions, think about the contingencies if things do not work out as planned.

There is a lot more to think about if you are offered the chance to relocate but if you are going to agree to the disruption and inconvenience of a move, you should make sure that you are being properly compensated for it.

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