



Expatriate spouse and partner survey data for host country UK

Introduction

The data in this report is an extract of a global survey conducted by Permits Foundation in autumn 2008.

It has been produced to accompany a submission to the UK Migration Advisory Committee in response to its call for evidence on the economic contribution of dependants of PBS migrants and their role in the labour market.

For a summary report of the global survey see
http://permitsfoundation.com/docs/permits_survey_summary.pdf

In the data tables that display survey results, the term “N” refers to the number of respondents that answered each question. Because every question does not pertain to every company, the “N” varies from question to question. All the percentages are rounded off to the nearest integer, so the total for each question may not equal 100 percent.

Acknowledgement

Permits Foundation wishes to thank Industrial Relations Counselors (IRC) for sponsoring the survey and ORC Worldwide for providing on-line hosting and analysis of data.

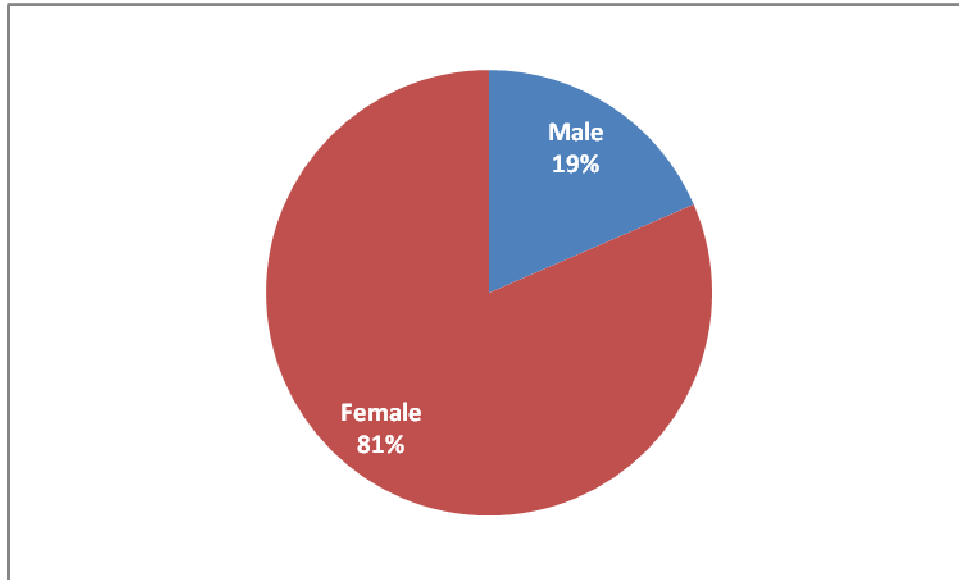


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Question-by-Question Analysis

Bio Data

What is your gender?



18.5%	Male
81.5	Female
254	= N (Total respondents)

What is your country of nationality? If you have dual nationality, please choose the one that you are using for this assignment.

0.4%	Algeria
1.6	Argentina
6.6	Australia
0.4	Austria
0.4	Belarus
0.8	Belgium
3.1	Brazil
2.0	Canada

0.4	Chile
1.6	China
1.2	Colombia
0.4	Czech Republic
0.4	Ecuador
0.4	Egypt
4.3	France
4.3	Germany
4.7	India
0.8	Indonesia
0.4	Ireland
2.3	Italy
0.8	Kazakhstan
3.1	Malaysia
2.0	Mexico
0.4	Myanmar (Burma)
15.6	Netherlands
1.6	New Zealand
2.3	Nigeria
0.4	Norway
0.4	Pakistan
0.4	Panama
0.8	Philippines
0.4	Portugal
0.8	Romania
3.1	Russia
0.4	Singapore
2.0	South Africa
1.2	Spain
0.8	Sweden
0.4	Trinidad and Tobago
0.4	Turkmenistan
0.4	Uganda
9.4	United Kingdom
14.8	United States

0.4	Uruguay
1.2	Venezuela
0.4	No response
256	= N (Total respondents)

What is your age?

0.4%	24 or younger
30.5	25-34
45.7	35-44
19.1	45-54
4.3	55 or above
256	= N (Total respondents)

What is your highest equivalent qualification?

5.1%	Secondary or high school diploma
8.6	Vocational college diploma
34.4	Bachelors degree
46.1	Masters degree or post-graduate diploma
5.9	Doctorate / PhD
256	= N (Total respondents)

How many languages do you speak?

21.5%	1
37.1	2
28.1	3

13.3	4 or more
256	= N (Total respondents)

What is your marital status?

89.8%	Married
3.9	Registered or civil partner
5.9	Common law or de facto partner
0.4	Engaged
255	= N (Total respondents)

On how many assignments have you accompanied as spouse or partner?

43.3%	1
26.0	2
17.7	3
5.5	4
3.5	5
3.1	6 to 10
0.8	More than 10
254	= N (Total respondents)

On this current assignment, in which company is your partner employed?

	ABS
	Akzo Nobel
	American Bureau of Shipping
	AstraZeneca
	BG Group plc
	BMW
	British Council
	British Telecom
	British United Provident Association
	BT Group plc
	Capita Group
	CMA CGM S.A.
	Foreign & Commonwealth Office, UK
	Fortis Bank
	GlaxoSmithKline plc
	ING
	JP Morgan
	NetApp, Inc.
	Randstad Holding N.V.
	Rolls-Royce plc

	Royal Navy
	Schlumberger
	Scott Wilson
	Shell
	StatoilHydro ASA
	Unilever
	249= N (Total respondents)

At the start of this current assignment, was your spouse or partner:

87.7%	Transferred by his/her company or organization
8.3	A new international recruit
4.0	Locally hired foreign staff
253	= N (Total respondents)

Impact on Partner Employment and Other Factors on Mobility

Were you in paid employment or self-employment before becoming an accompanying expatriate spouse or partner?

78.1%	Yes, I was in paid employment
7.4	Yes, I was self-employed
14.5	No
256	= N (Total respondents)

If "Yes", in which occupational field?

9.9%	Accounting/Banking/Finance/Insurance/Real Estate
3.1	Administrative/Clerical

6.7	Advertising/PR/Marketing
2.7	Artistic/Design
5.4	Business/Strategic Management/Consulting
0.9	Customer Support/Client Care
13.9	Education
9.0	Engineering/Construction
1.3	Food Services/Hospitality/Tourism/Leisure
1.8	Governmental/Diplomatic/NGO
4.0	Human Resources
9.9	IT/Computers/Software/Telecommunications
0.4	Journalism/Writing/Publishing
1.8	Legal
0.9	Logistics/Transportation
1.8	Manufacturing/Production/Operations
13.0	Medical/Health
2.2	Research/Science/Technology
2.2	Sales/Retail
9.0	Other
223	= N (Total respondents)

"Other" responses included:

- Ship Management company
- Architecture
- Marketing, market research, pharmaceutical marketing (3)
- Child Care/Social Work
- Dental surgeon
- Oil & Gas (3)
- Religious, Musical
- Librarian

- Veterinary surgeon
- Engineering/Design for Petrochemical Refinery Co.
- Mechanical technician
- Airlines
- Film production
- Facility Management
- Media

How important was your employment or career in the decision to accept the current assignment?

30.5%	Very important
36.5	Important
25.7	Unimportant
7.2	Very unimportant
249	= N (Total respondents)

Has your spouse or partner ever declined an international job offer or assignment because of concerns about your employment or career?

16.1%	Yes, once
3.5	Yes, twice
2.0	Yes, three times
0.8	Yes, four times or more
77.6	No
254	= N (Total respondents)

Are you currently in paid employment or self-employment?

37.5%	Yes, I am in employment
8.6	Yes, I am self-employed
53.9	No
256	= N (Total respondents)

If "No" to this question, do you want to be employed during this assignment?

63.0%	Yes, I want to be employed
19.6	Yes, I want to be self-employed
26.8	No
138	= N (Total respondents)

If "Yes" to this question, please indicate if your job is:

71.2%	In your preferred field or profession
28.8	In another field or profession
118	= N (Total respondents)

Challenges and Solutions

If you are or have been employed or self-employed in your current location, to what extent has it had an impact on the following aspects?

a) Your adjustment to the location or to expatriate life in general

27.7%	Very positive impact
53.5	Positive impact
10.3	No impact
7.7	Negative impact
0.6	Very negative impact
155	= N (Total respondents)

d) Your willingness to stay in this assignment for its expected duration

31.0%	Very positive impact
44.5	Positive impact
18.1	No impact
4.5	Negative impact
1.9	Very negative impact
155	= N (Total respondents)

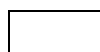
If you are not employed or self-employed in your current location, to what extent has it had an impact on the following aspects?

a) Your adjustment to the location or to expatriate life in general

9.1%	Very positive impact
25.9	Positive impact
32.9	No impact
25.9	Negative impact
6.3	Very negative impact
143	= N (Total respondents)

d) Your willingness to stay in this assignment for its expected duration

9.9%	Very positive impact
23.2	Positive impact
40.1	No impact
17.6	Negative impact
9.2	Very negative impact
142	= N (Total respondents)



With regard to countries that allow spouses and partners to work easily, how do you view these countries as a potential destination for future relocations?

55.3%	Very attractive
41.6	Attractive
2.0	Unattractive
1.2	Very unattractive
255	= N (Total respondents)

In the future, would you relocate to a country where it is difficult for a spouse or partner to get a work permit?

6.3%	Definitely
30.7	Probably
43.7	Probably not
19.3	Definitely not
254	= N (Total respondents)

Please explain your choice.

For ease of reading we have collated the comments in six broad themes .

Theme 1: “Working is important for me”

- We have already taken an assignment to a country where it was difficult for me to get a work permit. The process was frustrating and disruptive for our family. One of the key criteria in choosing our current assignment location was to avoid such a situation again.
- I really feel very unhappy not earning my own income, being able to earn and manage my own money, it’s very degrading to be in the "maintained wives model". Nothing is done by (Company name removed) concerning a partner vocational program; very upsetting I am constantly pushing my partner to apply with (a different company name removed) who do seem to care about partners. It put pressure on us.
- My wife and I both have excellent careers which are the focus of our life. Any country not willing to allow both of us to work would be intolerable to us - and we would find somewhere we could both contribute.
- Work is important, as it provides you with an income, social network, feeling of being useful to society, ... work is an important integrated part of my personal life
- Now that I am back in the workforce and have resumed my career, it would be psychologically very difficult to take another break. It would be very hard for me to go to a new location where I couldn't work. It is very important to me to be a person in my own right - to have an existence outside of my "Company Wife" role, and to be using my brain again! It has made an incredible difference to how my children see me (a mother, a wife, and now a professional) and to their expectations of what they, as women, will be able to do with their own lives. My daughter's comment to me ("I didn't realise girls could work too Mum")

was a huge wake-up call for me. Our wonderfully tolerant, versatile expat children shouldn't have their world view limited in this way.

- It is important that I maintain my own independence, further my career, and remain intellectually stimulated whilst living abroad, going to a country where I am unable to work has very little appeal.
- It is important for both members of the marriage to work because nowadays living costs are not easy to handle.
- Because I want to get employed and work legally
- With child bearing out of the way, I want to get back to work real bad
- It is very important for me to be in paid employment, this really is our first criteria when my husband starts looking for a next step in his career. When I met him, he was already an expatriate and after due consideration I decided to join him, as international life is very much part of his personality and close to his heart. However we agreed we would only go if there would be job opportunities for me. From experience I now know it takes quite a while to get settled into a new country and finding a suitable job takes at least a year.
- I felt it has been a huge sacrifice to give up my dream job and I never got the equivalent in terms of career prospects. You have to rethink what another "career " might be but might have to change careers when you move to a new country thus not developing or keeping up previous skills. You don't have the local knowledge of your host country job market and when you are relocated home you might be seen as having lost touch with your home market as well. It is a bit of a struggle to keep a career going. You definitely have to compromise, sometimes a lot and if the financial bonus disappear then your earning income is far from what it could have been had you pursued your initial career. You do get cultural awareness and it can be a great experience for kids but still I find it very taxing for the accompanying partner in terms of continued career.
- It is important to be able to work as it provides a great avenue to interact with others and adapt to the local culture.
- Our first assignment was to the US. It was so difficult to get a work permit and to transfer all my qualification (new exams etc.) and it was a very lengthy process. I would not choose a country where it would be that difficult again. It was much too stressful and I lost so much work time. It can also put a major strain on personal relationships. I would never do it again.
- As a former professional engineer, it's very difficult to see how the local spouses can be allowed to have a job, and the expats spouses denied this opportunity by local authorities, arguing those families have enough economical resources and don't need more... It's not about money, it's about my lifestyle and my personal satisfaction, I HAD a well-paid job, and professional aspirations, why I can not continue with?
- I would recommend to allow the work permit dependant partners and spouses to work in country without a separate work permit
- From the US, the 2 main destinations for (company name removed) are

UK and NL. I have been told that NL does not allow spouse-partners to work, so it would be VERY difficult to accept an assignment in the NL.

- At the moment we're only considering posts where I can work. Not so bothered about the sector but it's very important to keep myself busy. It's not so much about having a great career, but finding satisfaction in having my own income and responsibilities.
 - Now that I retired (when I was working in UK), it does not matter if I can work or not. When I was working, I would refuse to move to a country where I could not work.
 - If it would be possible to continue to do my consultancy work from home, using the internet, I would consider the location.
-
- You settle much better in a country where you can go out and work and meet people - that goes for both partners.
 - In current environment, one income is not enough.
 - It is a question of self worth
 - By not being able to get a work permit, I will be placing a financial burden on my partner. Also, being unemployed would not help my career in any way.
 - I have settled down in a new job and would like to continue this job.
 - Work is for me the key to a lot of things in a new country. You'll learn the language much easier, you'll make new contacts, it'll give you a challenge and most important it'll give you structure in your daily life.
 - Not willing to give up my career. And, no, charity work is not the same although it has been suggested by my husband's employer that it is.
 - We both need to work therefore a country where I can't work or where it's complicated to get working permit are not an option for us
 - Work is a release for me ; it need not be well paid, but I require my own engagement to keep my sanity in a new environment
 - It is very important for me to continue my own professional development.
 - It is important for me to work, and we would not choose a location where it is difficult for me to do so.
 - We're a same sex couple. In our selection of the countries to relocate to, one of the most important criteria is whether or not the same-sex couples are recognized. Normally, the countries where same-sex couples or unmarried couples are recognized, a partner is allowed to work and vice versa.
 - It creates an imbalance in the relationship that will have its effects on all other aspects of the relationship sooner or later. If I do not feel fulfilled my husband won't either and vice versa.
 - If I would know beforehand that I cannot work I would not relocate

because I know not having a job would make me very unhappy.

- Because I don't want my options for a prospective job limited just because I have the 'wrong' passport
 - Ability to work helps the functionality of the mind. It helps sanity and enhance quality of life through opportunity to socialise
 - My working is important to the income of our family. If I am unable to work in the same country as my husband I will not be able to go with him on any future international assignments
 - Have been absolutely fine without work while my children were little, but wish to resume my own career again.
 - We both have careers (x4)
 - My ability to work in a host country is very important to me and to my spouse.
 - I don't want to give up my career development opportunities any more in the future. Therefore, I won't go anywhere which I can't find a job there as I can get one at my home country easily.
 - Job is not only about make money, it is also essential to live make friends, keep in touch with people on daily basis and feel useful.
-
- It is very difficult for a partner who has been working for many years to stay home doing nothing especially if he/she is university graduated. It gives a feeling that you have spent years studying for nothing.
 - I have had difficulty in the Netherlands and do not want to face similar problem
 - Despite my wish to keep close to my family, it becomes frustrating not be able to be in gainful employment
 - My work is fulfilling and makes the assignment a positive experience.
 - I am currently employed as an offshore geophysicist, which allows me to live anywhere in the world without losing my job.
 - As my wife is employed by the same company, and we have managed to align our movements with business needs, I am counting on company support to facilitate future assignments.
 - Working with other people has significantly helped in settling in to the new place. It provided a way of meeting and interacting with people, making friends as well as a feeling of self-worth. I however found that self-employment did not really provide these benefits for me, so I needed to seek out extra employment not in my field to do this.
 - With uncertain economic future, it would be a difficult to exclude two incomes.
 - We were not assisted for me to get a resident permit nor a working visa in our current location. This will be a point to be stressed next time a new assignment is offered

- Highly qualified. no children, not prepared to be sitting around the house or otherwise being idle!
- My professional qualifications are as high as my partner's. It is important for my balance as well as the balance of the future family that I can work and be encouraged in a job that suits my competencies and motivates me. Nowadays, two salaries are necessary to raise a family. Finally, I am convinced that relocating can be associated with harmonised handling of two careers
- Unwilling to put my career on hold indefinitely. (x2)
- My husband and I usually make relocation decisions based on what is best for the collective. If either of us were offered a job where the other was unable to work, we would probably not go.
- For the last two assignments I have not accompanied my husband so that I could pursue my own career.
- My professional life is very important for myself and for the family
- I think it is very important for a balanced relationship to have a career of some sort in addition to have paid employment for me is very important for my self-esteem, it ensures some independence.
- Before the transfer of my partner in (company name removed) , as I worked for (same company) also, I thought it was easier to follow when employed by the same company. But, (Company) did not facilitate my transfer at all in UK and I was obliged to resign at the end. So I cannot imagine if in addition, I was obliged to be relocated in a country where it is more difficult for a spouse to work!
- As a school teacher I am able to get work easily but maybe in the future I would like to do something else so work permits could become an issue.
- We are both employed by our company at a good level of Seniority, we are young, have no children and both want to work and further our careers.
- I would like to work myself and not be dependant on my spouse
- The difficulty of obtaining a work permit has no reflection of what the culture will be like. UK was relatively easy to get a work permit, trying to start a life in the UK as a foreigner is virtually impossible.
- As long as it is possible to get a permit with assistance from the company I would be happy to relocate.
- I am currently studying and want to become self employed after graduation
- Currently I am able to work but have in preference studied further in this location to potentially allow me a wider field from within which to seek employment in other less accessible locations to spouse employment.
- Even though I cannot be employed, I will always do volunteer work anyway. Being a medical doctor, I have difficulties starting work in almost every country because you need to be registered in that country, regardless you have the work permit or not.

- I would still go and I am sure I will find a job which will give me opportunities and job satisfaction .

Theme 2: “I want to have the choice / keep options open”

- Depends on quality of life, education of children and how difficult it is: if impossible I would probably not go.
- It's great to keep options open, but at the moment I am not planning to go back to work, now we're having kids. In the beginning of this assignment I did work though.
- I changed my career to be more appropriate with the expat life. My new career is about the well being. I can practice everywhere paid or unpaid. But it is much better for my ego and independence if it is official and paid.
- As I do not have to work (but like to), we will consider a location where working may not be an option for me.
- As we would move without children, my children being either at University or boarding, I might like to seek employment
- I can work from home following personal interests.
- I don't want to work now. I am happily studying in the University. But if I went to another country, maybe I would be interested in working.
- I do not work right now because I take intensively care of our little children, who are 2, 4, and 6 years old. As soon as the kids are all in school, I will get more time. This means I would love to develop myself and likely do some work. Either self employed, or with an employer. So, the work intensions of a spouse depend a lot on the family situation. Given the fact that my husband travels a lot and we moved to a new country, where you have to build up a new social network, and find your way in simple things, like shops etc., it would have created a lot of stress in the family if I would have started working as well. For me this is not worth it. In the meantime I have to say that moving to another country in itself was less of a shock to me than to stop working. It took me about nine months in the previous country, where we were, to get used to that.
- For me, the benefits of being an expat are not related to my job - I can as easily volunteer, which is what I currently do as well. However, it would be nice to have a small income of my own, to feel less dependent from partner.
- As I'll be working as a teacher (TEFL-Teacher, or Special Needs Teacher), I will most probably have opportunities to work on a voluntary basis, which will (hopefully) give me sufficient satisfaction.
- I work from home; therefore it would not necessarily affect me. I believe that being able to work is very important, but at my current stage and with small children at home, I would be happy to not work if it was too difficult. However, if my children were older and at school, my work would become very important to me and the ability for me to work would impact our decision making process.

Theme 3: "Do not want to work at present" (family reasons, children)

- NOW, not really interested in working as we have three young kids. Will probably want to work during subsequent postings.
- Currently and in the next 4-6 years I will not be looking for paid work b/c of family situation (young children).
- It suits me not to work while on this assignment as I have 3 young children. In 3 years time when we need to move again a country where I can work will most definitely be more attractive.
- Most important is the family.
- Being able to work in another country would be great for me in the future. At this moment, I have 3 young children and put my career on hold until they are a little older. Looking forward to working again though, at some stage!
- My husband and I have 2 young kids and we feel they need at least 1 parent to give full attention at all times, although attention from both parents is the best. As long as my husband is able to support all of us well, me getting a work permit is not the top most priority.
- Due to our family situation with 3 young children I deliberately want to stay at home at the moment and in the nearer future, in a few years time, though, I will probably like to go back to work
- I need the flexibility of returning to my base country whenever I need to for family commitments.
- I didn't work outside the home before the move to the UK. I am pleased that I do not have to work here so I can take advantage of cultural/social opportunities and help the children to adjust to their new home.

Theme 4: "Would depend on type of country, assignment, package etc"

- It's more the sort of relocation and the part of world which is important to me. (X2)
- Depends on the Career Opportunity and Job Assignment
- It depends on the opportunity for our children and also cultural experience.
- Would depend on life/work balance issues. If cost of living is less, then would be more inclined to go somewhere where a work permit is not needed for myself.
- It would depend on the economic conditions of that country
- Being able to work is an advantage, but I would sacrifice work opportunities if there were other compelling advantages to the location.
- It would be considered only if the duration was expected to be quite short or quite long (so that it was worth the effort)
- Conditions of expatriation would have to be reviewed before making the choice.
- The decision will be based on other subjects too, not only on my career. And if the country has other positive things, why not?
- It all depends on the total financial package--will we be able to reach our financial goals with one earner in the family? Also, depending on our family situation (dependent kids or not) we may be happy to experience a new culture, with a rewarding single money earning family.
- Those countries can be challenging too. You don't always need a work permit to find interesting things/jobs to do, and to develop yourself. I know this from experience.
- It depends on so much more than on a job for me alone, e.g. education for the children.
- The countries where it is most difficult to get a work permit are usually the most attractive ones in terms of cultural differences and your standard of living. It is 17 years ago that I had my own income, so it's not that important anymore. I hate volunteering so I don't do that. There are loads of other things to do than working
- If my husband likes what he does and we're able to live with one income only, then I'd be willing to temporarily live in such countries.
- Depending on business needs & family situation.

Theme 5: "Partner's career has priority"

- I would like to work but if it's not allowed it won't stop us from accepting especially if it's a good opportunity for my husband.
- The job satisfaction for my partner is very important. If I can't find a job, I will do voluntary work.

- My partners career development is more important (x2)
- It would completely depend on the opportunity my spouse was given. If the opportunity provided him was great, then my working or not working would not be an issue.
- Because my husband's income is very important for our family.

- When I got serious with my partner, I knew what his job involved and what the consequences can be for me. I have accepted this and have an open mind. I can still enjoy living somewhere even though I do not have a job.
- I would be ready to follow my partner without me being able to work in the host country for a short assignment.
- Whilst I would like to work in the future I think we made the decision in this assignment to prioritise my husband's career and the decisions we make regarding that, coupled with what is best for the family, would take priority over my working again.
- Depends on the age of my children, opportunity for my husband, etc.
- The choice is for my husband to have a career, not me. Priority is schooling for the children.
- My husband's career is the most important. Its is not always easy, but I am flexible and willing to give up career. Most important is that we are happy.

Theme 6: "I'm not looking for paid employment"

- I'm not working now so it doesn't matter. I have been a stay at home mom for many years.
- I have no real desire to work except perhaps in a voluntary position therefore work permits are not high on my priority.
- I prefer voluntary jobs, and you can find that everywhere
- Busy family life and adaptation to new environment takes up most of my time. The experience of being in a different place exceeds my preference to work.
- I have a disablement.
- I have not worked full time as a teacher for a few years, so it would not effect how I felt about relocation

When considering how to manage your career or employment upon relocation, for each of the following, please indicate in column 1 all the items you feel would help and in column 2 all items for which you received adequate support

	Item Would Help (N=)	Received Adequate Support (N=)
Career counselling (clarifying skills / aspirations)	168	56
Information on local opportunities (including paid and unpaid work, self employment and study)	200	48
CV / résumé preparation and improvement	151	65
Interview skills training	140	48
Certainty that a work permit will be granted (or not required)	154	70
Job search advice or guidance	180	40
Network contacts or vacancies	188	34
Employment in partner's organization	164	26
Self-employment or business start-up advice	129	33
Education or training allowance/reimbursement	148	92
Language training	147	89
Advice on tax and pensions implications	184	38
Other	9	2

"Other" responses included:

- Cultural Training and coping with change
- Network contacts for childcare/children's activities to allow for access

to spouse events

- Succeeding in foreign work environment
- Childcare or childcare reimbursement (x3)
- Sure employment offer would help
- Aid in getting bank accounts, credit cards, loans, etc
- Psychological assessment on what to do
- I wish we had received a few months notice before the transfer so I could've gotten better advice before leaving my job in the US. It took me 10 months to find a job in the UK.
- Volunteer employment in partner's organization to gain local experience

Additional Information

If you could speak directly to governments about work permits and employment for spouses and partners, what would you want to say or recommend?

For ease of reading we have collated the comments in eight broad themes.

Theme 1: Attracting top talent

- Governments that want to retain top expats from around the world need to provide opportunities for their spouses to work.
- If governments wish to attract skilled workers then it is crucial that spouses-partners be able to work without the detriment of a difficult work permit process--especially if the partners/spouses are also skilled.
- I would highlight the benefits of attracting high calibre individuals to their countries, which will help to improve their economy and increase their GDP. Governments need to put aside political rhetoric and/or popular policies and think about the long term impact of their actions. The possibility of partners to be able to work without restrictions would help in getting the best people to your country.
- If you would indeed like to stimulate expats to come to your country, I know many women do not even consider coming, just like me, if there is no opportunity to work for them.
- Give spouses the opportunity to work, and the transfer of qualified employees to your country will be more feasible. Especially if the company of the partner who is transferred helps in the process of getting a job.
- Family members / partners of people in full-time employment in high-value sectors should not have any work restrictions placed on them. After all, it is highly likely that expats (who are usually high-flyers anyway) attract the same kind of people (i.e. driven, educated, etc)
- Restrictive work permit rules do not take into account the value that both of the partners could add by both working, disadvantage a country because it misses out on having two professional people building the wealth of the host country.
- I think we can bring a lot of know how to a country, it's a bonus really to have all these educated people (most of us are) who are willing to work.
- As international expatriates, we bring new skills which can be valuable for your country.
- From the govt stand point, you are getting educated skilled resource; it is worth making use of them for that host country's benefit. Why not? More importantly, if the host country needs to be seen as a preferred destination for 'high skilled employees', this flexibility & support for partner employment is crucial. In today's world, both partners normally, have highly ambitious careers, so asking one to compromise for the other will not work. In fact, we see this as a big blocker with many spouses not willing to move and the partners refusing their new posting.
- A number of expatriate partners are highly qualified individuals and more flexibility in work permitting would enable governments to exploit these talents. Everyone should be flexible to work for any employer if they qualify to get in.

Theme 2: Contributing to economy and country, paying taxes, no additional housing burden

- Nothing to lose by giving expat spouse a permit to work. Permit holder is paying taxes.
- Encourage two income earners.
- Consider employment rights for married couples as one. It will help them integrate into the community and become productive contributors.
- Both parties should be provided with the opportunity to work and contribute to the country.
- Since spouses can also be economically viable, without any extra workforce coming into the country, they should automatically qualify for work permits without any problems. It is a good idea for countries, to use the available human resource in the country rather than bring in more families
- I think it is again a waste of resources if the partners, who are willing to work, can't work due to the lack of a work permit.
- In so far as the spouse is working and paying tax, they should be considered as an entity in their own right and not always as a 'dependent', as this limits the individual.
- If a spouse is already in the country, all other expenses met. It should clearly be attractive to government to assist local organisations (that may require international skill/experience in addition to local) in employing people who effectively would not require housing etc which in my experience is a major expense and a benefit of employing a spouse often overlooked.
- Open work permits for accompanying partners should be seen as an opportunity and not a threat. The partner is working there for a limited time period and can contribute much to the local economy. Actively promoting open work permits makes your country a more attractive location for international companies.
- Spouse employment for those who demonstrate the right qualifications should be seen as a huge benefit as the country gains additional resources at the cost of one move. Screening criteria should always be applied with knowledge and without prejudice. I personally have never had a problem so far but if I ever did would have marked consequences in my family.
- International spouses-partners will not "steal" jobs from the local people as many governments tend to think. If the local people do not want to work and the internationals do, the problem lies somewhere else...

Theme 3: Avoiding failure

- There is no point of granting a work permit to somebody and not to his or her partner. It is simply condemning them to fail as partners since there will always be a 'sacrificed' side of the partnership. It shouldn't be this way.
- A better appreciation of the expat partner's requirements will reduce mishaps in a variety of areas

- The success or failure of an employee's career and to an extent, an employee's marriage is dependent on whether the spouse is happy or not happy. So, helping the families with work permit is a sure way of helping this process
- Spouses often need continuous employment if they are to maintain credentials. To refuse to easily grant a qualified person a work permit will probably mean the partner without the permit must stay back which will jeopardize the relationship. I was fortunate but I am hearing too many stories about inappropriate treatment of women at interviews and the inability to get work unless the company is American.
- Work Permits should be a given to trail spouses. Finding out that you are unable to work in a host country after you have arrived is too late. Returning home with your expat partner both without jobs because one of you is unable to work will come at considerable cost, time and frustration to employer and employee.

Theme 4: Discrimination and equal opportunity

- I imagine that due to custom and tradition there are many more women who travel with their husbands than men who travel because of their wives' transfer. As such, countries who do not permit spouses to have work visas are implementing a policy which has discriminatory impacts particularly on women. In my experience as a (Company name removed) spouse it is generally women who end up in these countries sitting at home while their extensive qualifications and breadth of experience essentially go to waste. I find that quite disturbing in the 21st century.
- Offer everybody equal opportunity to work
- Have an equal opportunity to work with my own qualifications.

Theme 5: UK specific (comments on work permit process)

- Thank you. This step was very easy; I have no negative comments at all (x3).
- The duration of the work permit application process should be reduced. In my case, it has taken over 6 months to have the work permit processed, and I have to leave the country to receive my work permit.
- On my partner's previous 3 assignments I was unemployed due to restrictions in Work permits laws. I wasn't entitled to a work permit on those locations and it prevented me from finding employment. In the current location (UK) I am allowed to work for any employer and I could find work within 6 months, which draws me to the conclusion that the only reason why I was unemployed before was because I didn't have permit to work on those locations (US, Mexico, Trinidad).
- I think it is wonderful that some permits allow the spouse to work with any employer. It's a much more flexible approach and I would love to see it in other countries other than UK.

Theme 6: Problems of diploma recognition and registration for specific professions

- If they could have a special permit for spouses that could make easier the access to specific jobs. The time that you spend for the proper registration and to be able to enter the common path of the career is almost the period of an assignment. Then it is time to move again. So what happens is that loads of skilled professionals just gave up of their careers.

- The U.K. education department needs to re-examine their policy of not accepting foreign teachers' qualifications. I have a BA degree, a teacher's diploma and a further diploma in Special needs which qualifies me as a learning support teacher, yet I have to regain my qualified teacher status to work in state schools in the UK. The government is losing out on some very valuable resources at a time when there is a shortage of good teachers.
- Qualifications should be recognised worldwide without having to be put through the mill to prove that you are what you say you are.
- This is a very important issue. Here in the UK, they have a shortage of dentists but the process of getting in is so tedious that I would need to take all the exams, like a fresh first year student. There should be some other simpler way for experienced dentists like me to get in, through some interview processes. In general, permits foundation should work hard to free up the constraints for spouses travelling with partners to get 'work permits' without the hassle.
- To the British Government, especially to the General Medical Council, you must let those medical doctors graduate from the EU or Ireland specifically to get their registration with the council regardless of their nationality. What has nationality got to do with where you are trained?
- To be part of an organisation that can deal effectively with diploma recognition.

Theme 7: Spouses are skilled too

- It is often an untapped resource.
- The work force represented by partners should not be wasted but used skilfully to the advantage of all.
- To allow easier work permit applications as the experience brought by a relocating spouse is often invaluable to the work place. This would help employers to hire expatriate spouses.
- Why take one if you can have the expertise of both of us?!
- Employee will want to work for the economy of your country if they are happy. If spouse or partner works, the family life will be better and important employee will stay longer.
- Make it easy/easier to provide a work permit for the partner. My personal opinion is that especially people who are prepared to leave their own country can add special value to other organizations.
- Should make the legislation open to spouses to work as they are usually well qualified people, speaking several languages, very adaptable, that could add value significantly.

Theme 8: Processes, contacts with embassies etc.

- Train the people working in the embassies and consulate to be more friendly and efficient.
- Ensure clarity in the process of application and approval.
- Make the process easier and faster
- Make it easier for employees and their spouses to get a work permit if they come via a company contract. Paperwork will put off people to take on assignment elsewhere.
- Governments should have an integration process for foreign workers as they need special

support