



EuRA IN  
CAPE TOWN

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EuRA IN  
ASIA

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CHICAGO  
RECEPTION

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March 2017 [www.eura-relocation.com](http://www.eura-relocation.com)

## Depart

Time	Destination	Airline	Flight Status	Gate
10:35	Tokyo	SU581	Go to Gate	20
11:30	Kuwait	KU102	Will board gate 8	
11:40	Houston	CO5	Flight closing	
11:45	Amsterdam	KL1010	Boarding	5
12:00	Kuala Lumpur	MH003	Go to Gate	15
12:05	Newark	CO113	Go to Gate	6
12:05	Larnaca	A3759	Gate opens 11:30	2
12:15	Rome	AZ203	Go to Gate	10
12:20	New York	SV112	Gate opens 11:15	
12:30	Jeddah	CZ7014	Gate opens 12:15	
12:30	Paris CdG	DL273	Gate opens 11:30	
12:45	Atlanta	KL9087	Gate opens 12:25	
13:00	Atlanta	SU242	Gate opens 11:35	
13:05	Moscow	DL145	Gate opens 12:05	
13:15	Moscow	JU211	Gate opens 13:00	
13:25	Moscow	DL41	Gate opens 12:25	
13:35	Moscow	EY020	Gate opens 12:55	
13:45	Moscow	KL1018	Gate opens 13:55	
13:55	Moscow	KL2055	Gate opens 14:20	
14:00	Moscow		Gate opens 14:00	
14:05	Moscow		Gate opens 13:35	
16:00	via: Riyadh			
16:00	Paris CdG			
16:10	Amsterdam	AZ20		
16:25	Rome	RO392		
16:25	Bucharest	MK053		
17:00	Mauritius	KL9083		
17:05	New York	FB852		
17:05	Sofia	KL1022		
17:10	Amsterdam	XM5233		
17:40	Milan-Linate	TU791		
17:45	Tunis	MK962		
18:00	Paris CdG	BD		
18:00	Newark			
18:10	Casablanca			
18:20	Seychelles			
18:35	via: Milan			
18:50	Amsterdam			
19:15	Milan			
19:30	Milan			

**THIS EDITION:**  
 Using Time Across Cultures - New MIM Fellowship Study  
 Warsaw - The Phoenix City  
 The Power of Attention  
 Warsaw - Must Sees



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## The EuRApean

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Since our last edition, EuRA has scored a number of firsts. We had more guests than ever join us in Washington DC for our annual WERC reception. We ran our first ever full conference outside Europe

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## Save the Dates

**EuRA WARSAW 2017**

25-28 April Warsaw Sofitel Victoria - Fully Booked

**CHICAGO 2017**

28 September Chicago Renaissance Hotel

**EMEA CONFERENCE 2017**

Dubai November 22-24 - details and bookings online May



in the spectacular city of Cape Town, an event we will run alternate years in Africa and the Middle East. A full report is in this edition. We ran our first event in Asia alongside the IMC World conference in Penang and were delighted to be joined by 100 guests. Again a full report is in this issue. This is always a really busy time in the EuRA calendar and is characterised by the final prep for the Conference. We are also saying goodbye this year to two fantastic Board Members, President Anita Meyer and VP Klaus Kremers who have served the members for the past six years. They will be sorely missed. However we welcome our

new President, Andrew Scott of Dwellworks and new VP, Stuart McAlister of Inter Relocation as well as two new Board Members, Isabelle Premont of Map Relocation Group and Pierre Jeronimo of Geneva Relocation. We have some great projects in the pipeline for the coming years all aimed at increasing our value to our members and continuing to keep EuRA at the forefront of our dynamic and fast changing industry. We are really looking forward to welcoming our 650+ delegates to the great city of Warsaw for a week of inspiration, new ideas and some great networking - oh and a fantastic party or two!

# Warsaw Don't miss our great sessions...

## MIM+ Points for Sessions

We have really expanded our breakout programme for 2017 with 12 sessions to choose from on Wednesday and Thursday and our plenary and keynote programmes on Friday, we have the best programme ever. You can now add to your MIM+ total by attending our breakout and plenary sessions at the conference. Please just ask the room usher for the session for a form to sign to prove your attendance.

## Tuesday 25th April

Immigration Symposium:

- Session 1 - Stealth Expats
- Session 2 - Africa & Asia
- Session 3 - Brexit

## Wednesday 26th April

- MIM Training 1
- New EU Data Directives
- The Sharing Economy - Who's beds are your assignees staying in?
- EGQS Update
- The Challenges of Compliance
- Pathways to Qualifications
- Review of the Year
- Opening Keynote - Tony Chapman "Tell a Story - Sell a Brand"



## Thursday 27th April

- MIM Training 2
- KISS Your Client - Improving Delivery
- The Next Generation of Mobility Professionals
- Managing Expat Risk
- Stress Reduction Through Relo Coloured Glasses
- Power of Social Media for Small Business
- RMC DSP Forum
- The Power of API's



Keynote - Tony Chapman



Keynote - Dr Janet Lapp

## Friday 28th April

Planery Sessions:

- The State of Industry Leaders Summit
- Clicking Culturally - Mergers and Challenges
- Ignite!
- Closing Keynote - Dr Janet Lapp "Bold Leadership Through transformative Change"



Please be aware that our fabulous Gala Dinner venue has a tiled wooden floor and there are small gaps between the tiles. The venue have asked us to make guests aware that the floor may not be suitable for shoes with thin heels.

[A full programme is online](#)

# Letter from the President

Anita Meyer - *am&pm*



Spring is in the air, the Warsaw conference is calling.

Meanwhile, the EuRA board has had the pleasure of reviewing the accomplishments of an excellent 2016. It's hard to describe the actual momentum of the European Relocation Association; we are spreading our wings, fast and in various directions.

The membership is flirting with the 500 number, the conference in Malta was a success from all points of view, the networking events at the CERC in Canada, at the WERC in the US and Asia had great scores of appreciation from its attendants. In March EuRA hosts a first ever dinner in Penang at the IMC conference, whereas the next EMEA event is being signed, sealed, ready to be delivered in Dubai in November this year.

Thanks to the big hearts of the members, we have reached a total donation to charity this year of € 27500, fabulous, thank you.

As of the 1st of July 2017, your representatives for the Benelux and the Central region will be replaced by Isabelle Prémont and Pierre Jérónimo. My congratulations to you both for

joining the EuRA board; my expectations are very high. The new president of EuRA, who will host the 20th anniversary of the EuRA conference in 2018 in (oops...) is Andrew Scott. He will have the support of the vice president, Stuart McAlister, and of all 7 other board members and of the EuRA office.

With the help of the entire membership, i.e. you all, Andrew and Stuart have the intention to increase the importance of the association by giving it the extra dimension of a relocation knowledge center. I'm sure they'll tell you all about it, very soon.

Looking forward to seeing you all in Warsaw, the EuRA conference with the largest offer of breakout sessions ever, one as interesting as the other.

*Anita*

# Letter from the New President

Andrew Scott - *Dwellworks*



Being in the relocation industry for over 25 years and seeing EuRA and our industry grow significantly during this time, I am truly humbled by the opportunity to write this welcome note and to serve on the board of EuRA in the capacity of President.

Having the privilege of knowing many of the previous presidents well, I can't promise the same wit and charm as

Patrick Oman, or the exacting German delivery of Helmut Berg, but I do hope to compliment many of the qualities brought to this role by my predecessors.

For those of you who know our outgoing President, Anita Meyer, and Vice President, Klaus Kremers, you know how committed they are to EuRA, and their advice, guidance and humour will be missed by all.

I am also delighted to announce that Stuart McAlister has accepted the Vice President role. We both intend to continue the open-door policy fostered by EuRA, so please feel free to contact us at any time.

As we enter 2017, EuRA has several exciting initiatives to launch that we believe will add further value to you as members, which we look forward to sharing and involving you in as the year progresses.

2017 has opened the door to us and whilst there may be uncertainties around the globe - both regionally and nationally, businesses are still looking to expand in their current markets and grow into new ones. Therefore, the opportunity for our industry is still strong and the requirement for further innovation and smart delivery solutions is stronger than ever.

Given the huge talent and knowledge we have in our industry, we are looking forward at EuRA to seeing how we can harness and share some of this expertise to help us all build stronger and more profitable businesses that meet the needs of our clients today, and into the future.

I look forward to seeing many of you in Warsaw in April.

Kindest regards,  
*Andrew Scott*

# Warsaw Must Sees

Warsaw is a diverse, fascinating, beautiful and historic city with a great deal to see... Having spent some time in the city, here are our Must Sees



University of Warsaw, and the stunning Holy Cross Church. Continuing along, cross the main street Swietokrzyska and continue along the Royal Route in a section lined with great restaurants and bars. Take any turning to the right and you will end up in the main shopping district. Continuing along the Royal Route you will come to the Parliament, the Centre for Contemporary Art in Ujazdow Park (stop for a coffee and a cake in their fantastic cafe) and eventually you will reach Lazienki Park, a stunning open green space home to the beautiful Lazienki Palace. The park is also home to a stunning amphitheatre which is home to many free concerts during the spring and summer.

## Warsaw Rising Museum

If you've read the History of Warsaw in this edition and on our App, you'll know how brutally the Uprising of 1944 was suppressed. This museum highlights its significance and no



visit to the city is complete without a visit to both admire the jaw dropping

exhibition, but also to understand how the people of Warsaw suffered during the terrible war. The Museum, opened in 2004 in an old tram power station, takes the visitor on a truly interactive journey from pre-Uprising occupation, culminating in a state-of-the-

art 3D aerial film of the total destruction of the city. The feel of the place is totally absorbing thanks to the amount of detail and exhibits that vie for your attention. Follow the steel monument time line that rips straight through the floors of each level to the Peace Garden on the roof, where you can see the Memorial Wall and the names of the 10,000 that perished.

## Wilanow



The Wilanow Palace is Poland's Versailles and is a must see if you have the time. Wilanow is more than just a palace. It represents an era in European history that has largely been lost in much of the country. There are many must sees in this sprawling 42 acre complex: The Poster Museum - a huge collection of 55,000 exhibits, the museum focusses on the artistic merits of the art rather than on their documentary significance. St Annes Church - an historic church of architectural significance, St Annes was used in the war as an internment camp by the Nazis. Park & Gardens - with some lovely walks, Wilanow park is as spectacular as the house with examples of baroque, oriental and English planting. Wilanow Palace Museum - housing one of the great European portrait collections the museum also displays a world class ceramic collection and the private apartments which have been restored to their 18th century splendour. Wilanow is a 45-60ZL (€10-€14) cab ride from the city centre.

## Fryderyk Chopin Museum

In a city of many world class museums, this one is a gem. Chopin is one the world's great composers and one of the most famous sons of Warsaw. Restored and revamped in 2010 to celebrate Chopin's 200th birthday the museum takes you on a journey through



19th century Warsaw and Chopin's Paris to truly immerse you in the spirit of the time which so inspired the great composer. There are also frequent piano recitals in the museum for the true fan.

## Polin - Museum of the History of the Polish Jews

This extraordinary museum highlights the history of Europe's Jewish community across 1000 years and focusses in particular on the history of Warsaw as once home to the second largest Jewish diaspora and home to Europe's



largest synagogue. The exhibition chronicles the success and diversity that the Jews brought to Central Europe and the holocaust perpetrated by the Nazis. The museum stands in what was once the heart of Jewish Warsaw which the Nazis turned into the Jewish ghetto during the war. Informative, moving, shocking and celebrational, the Polin paints a vivid picture of the history of the Polish Jews.

## Palace of Culture and Science



Constructed in 1955, the Palace of Culture and Science was a "gift" from the Soviet Union to the people of Poland, though they

were made to build it themselves from national funds. Originally known as the Joseph Stalin Palace, it houses offices from companies and government departments, and cultural activities including cinema, theatre as well as universities, sports clubs, and the Polish Academy of Sciences. A symbol of Soviet domination, many Warsawians despise the structure but it is still an important symbol of Polish political history.

## Neon Museum

This fascinating museum takes another look at Poland's recent social history. In socialist Poland, neon signs fulfilled a different function than in capitalist countries. In the West, their role was always directly connected with advertising. In the People's Republic of Poland, where there was no free market, they served to provide information and prestige. In a national government campaign, neon signs were installed all over urban areas in accordance with a detailed plan. They were designed for entire streets in order to form an integral part of the architecture – mutually matched in size and colours, and so that they would not obscure each other. The Polish neon signs were



designed by famous graphic designers, artists and architects. Privately funded, this is a one of a kind art museum with a very unique focus.

## Praga

Not an attraction, but an area of the city, Praga was regarded as off limits to tourists due in part to high crime rates and austere soviet



style architecture, but today the city's art and cultural scenes have found a new home. Bo-ho and up and coming Praga houses Warsaw's art scene. Still said to be a good few years away from becoming Warsaw's Brooklyn or Montmartre, the area is for those who want to get off the Old Town Royal Route tourist track. Head for Zabkowska Street where a period of renovation and renewal has led to the opening of new and lively bars and funky galleries.

## Copernicus Science Centre

Standing on the banks of the Vistula River a short (ish) walk from the Old Town the Copernicus Centre houses over 450 interactive exhibits and is the largest institution of its kind in the country and after London's Science Museum one of the largest in Europe. Funded by the EU the centre is divided into four zones, Roots of Civilisation, Humans and the Environment, Light Zone, New World on the Move and Bzzz aimed at children under 6. Really worth a visit.





## EuRA in Africa

For our first full conference outside Europe, we went to the South African city of Cape Town. This amazing city was a terrific back drop for a conference celebrating our members in Africa and we were delighted to welcome 80+ delegates.

EuRA President Anita Meyer had a mission for her term in office; to reach out to our members outside Europe and ensure EuRA truly represented its diverse constituents around the world. With this goal in mind, we organised our first conference in Africa and were delighted to welcome 80+ delegates to the

Westin Hotel Cape Town. Held over three days, EuRA delivered two MIM modules and delegates enjoyed our first gala dinner in Africa, a great day of conference sessions and then a party down on the beach. Our keynote speaker was Michael Dale who inspired us all with his address focussing on his research into understanding the

core needs that drive us as individuals and how this awareness can radically improve our experiences throughout our lives. The day's sessions began with an in depth look at the challenges facing providers in terms of immigration compliance across the continent. Moderator Andreas Krensel assembled a panel of experts from a wide



## #eurarelocationcongressafrica

cross section of providers and immigration experts. After a networking lunch Steven Powell, a Forensics Executive at ENS, Africa's leading law firm, lead a fascinating session on the challenges of working according to compliance in such a diverse market. His address, both funny and deeply serious, enlightened delegates on how business is done and how MNC's are rising

to the challenge of staying compliant with increasingly complex legislation. In our final session, Isabel Cudell led a diverse panel of mobility experts in a discussion about working in such a culturally diverse continent both in terms of business and society. After a great day of learning, networking and connecting, we went down to the beach for a

final opportunity to enjoy the Cape sun and the company of our peers. As the sun set over beach and across Table Bay, delegates had a final chance to talk and connect and enjoy a spectacular sunset. We owe a huge thank you to our generous sponsors and look forward to our next EMEA event in Dubai, November 22nd to 24th.



## EuRA in Asia

EuRA was delighted to partner with IMC World at their sixth Asia convention. The IMC Conference has established itself as a landmark event in the mobility calendar and we were delighted to welcome over 100 people to EuRA's first Asia Dinner.

The IMC World conference is an established landmark in the Asian mobility calendar attracting delegates from across the continent. The turnout this year was a record high with just under 200 delegates converging on the city of George Town Penang for four days of networking, learning and some serious fun.

EuRA was delighted to be asked for the second year to deliver the MIM programme at the event and Dominic Tidey and Tad Zurlinden presented two of the MIM Modules; Mobility Industry in Context and Managing International Assignments. Over 30 IMC delegates have now received the MIM designation

which is a great validation of our programmes and we're indebted to them for letting us bring this programme into Asia.

The conference kicked off pool side at the Tuesday night welcome reception in the G Hotel on Gurney Drive, Penang's beautiful and famous downtown seaside corridor.



## @imcworld

IMC take CSR very seriously and had spent the day at a local school where they had raised money to build a new playground.

Guest of honour at the opening plenary session was Lim Guan Eng, Penang's first minister. Malaysia is a federal state and Penang is central to it's success as an economic powerhouse. Mr Eng greeted the delegates and

spoke eloquently on how important inward investment and incoming talent is to the country and the region.

IMC is famous for its "speed dating" networking, facilitated by a very nifty App based solution and the rest of the day was spent with delegates deep in conversation. doing business and making new connections. The gala dinner was inspired by Alice in Wonderland but it was

the EuRA IMC dinner on Thursday in the famous Kebab Dining Rooms that was the highlight of the event for us. The impeccably restored restaurant is part of the Seven Terraces Hotel, one of the very best in Penang. We were delighted to welcome our guests to what proved to be a sumptuous culinary treat from one of the best kitchens Malaysia. See you in Asia next year!



As we approach our 19th International Relocation Congress taking place in the Polish capital Warsaw, it strikes me just how far EuRA has moved forward over the last two decades. I am grateful for the incredible support of our members, sponsors, awesome team at HQ and around the world, and of course our Board Members who give their time and expertise for free to further enhance our profession.

Our first EMEA Conference in Cape Town was a landmark event for EuRA and we were so humbled by the turnout and the enthusiasm from our members across Africa. We had three days of learning, networking, sharing and friendship. New business relationships were formed, new friendships were made and along the way we had some fun too. We enjoyed a great gala dinner and auction where we raised €3000 towards our charity, GOLD helping kids without prospects to find their place in the Rainbow Nation. Given that we had just 100 delegates this was a great achievement. After an inspirational keynote from Michael Dale, our conference sessions concentrated on the challenges and opportunities of working across the continent

## CEO Report

Tad Zurlinden

specifically compliance and corruption, diverse cultures and the issues thrown up by ever changing immigration rules. We ended the event on a true high with our Retro Beach Party down on the shore near the famous V&A Waterfront. I would like to send a special thank you to all our sponsors who are listed on the webpage for their support of the event. I was so glad to have your trust and faith in us.

We will alternate this event each year between Africa and the Middle East and I'm really excited to announce that we will hold the next MEA event in Dubai, 22-24 November in the Jumeirah Creekside Hotel. We will again run MIM training, hold a gala dinner in the hotel, have a great day of sessions and knowledge sharing and hold our party, on the amazing deck of the Palace Downton Hotel overlooking the fountains of the Burj Khalifa. If you've seen the fountains at the Bellagio in Las Vegas, think bigger! We will be opening bookings from May 1st.

In another first, we held a dinner in Penang alongside the IMC World Conference. IMC have run this event in Asia for the last six years and the numbers have steadily grown for it to become an essential event in the Asian Mobility calendar. With a very diverse range of providers, the feedback from the EuRA members who attended was extremely positive as they made

new contacts and will be working with new partners. Our dinner was held in the incomparable Kebaya Restaurant of the Severn Terraces Hotel, one of the finest in Malaysia. It was terrific to welcome 100 guests to an evening filled with great food, laughter and much singing!

Do not miss our massively expanded programme in Warsaw. We have some fantastic sessions, two truly inspirational Keynote speakers and of course, two great venues for our Gala Dinner and Party Night. We have worked with our newly convened RMC DSP Forum to come up with a survey which was sent to members last month and we will be basing the agenda for our RMC Meeting in Warsaw on the results. The forum is made of 6 representatives from our existing RMC Group and 6 DSP representatives. We had our first meeting in London in January and it was incredibly constructive. Myself and the Board have the aim of developing EuRA's knowledge sharing and research capabilities over the coming years and this group will be central to that. We all want to make sure that EuRA is an inclusive association that works solely in the best interests of its members. That's why we have always been and always will be, not for profit. See you in Warsaw!

## Case Study... A Merger

Fiona Klomp

*EuRA Communications Consultant Fiona Klomp, interview the CEO's of the newly merged map group, Isabelle Premont and Anita Meyer to get an insight into the process and outcome of a merger and how they see mobility in Belgium...*

### So how has the merger been treating you so far?

"It's been great actually," enthuses Isabelle. "The response has been incredibly positive, both from our clients and our team, as we are now able to offer more flexibility and a wider range of services. We have more people and are able to manage a greater number of relocations, which is exactly what we were aiming for."

"That said, there's a lot of hard work taking place behind the scenes to bring our two teams together as a fluent and cohesive unit. The biggest challenge has been getting used to a different work process. We're trying to merge two accounting systems, two ways of processing a client file,... It's not always easy and takes a lot of careful thinking, but our common goals unite us."

"It's been four months since our merger and we spent six months contemplating the merge before it even took place, so we were confident we had everything in place for a seamless transition," Anita admits. "We both thought it would be business as usual, but I have to admit I underestimated how much else is involved in a merger. As we are - or were, should I say - so different, we have different in-house processes to contend with as well as our own company cultures. Our differences are what make us so complementary, so really it's a positive thing, but there are things you have to discover about each other as you go along."

"It's very much a process of trial and error. We'll have a plan agreed, put it into practice and then find out that it isn't working for us at all. We keep having to go back to the drawing board. From processes to IT systems, we're still figuring things out. Even deciding who does what comes with its own set of challenges. We'll set out our chess board, putting this person in charge of that, that person in charge of this, thinking they'll really enjoy the work only to find out that they are bored to tears," laughs Anita. "People management is taking a lot of our time, but we're going to keep at it until everyone is happy."

### No regrets yet then?

"Size matters," states Isabelle. "We have to invest in our people, in the technology we use. Look at essential compliance requirements such as IT systems and data encryption, these are serious costs which you can only carry if you are a larger organisation. I think we're going to see more and more companies merging in order to be able to keep up with client's standards. It's going to be a major trend in the next few years."

Anita agrees: "As a larger entity you are able to meet so many more needs. Conscious capitalism is starting to become more and more important to both clients and staff and you have to be able to meet their expectations. We've been able to introduce sliding hours, working from home, 4/5 contracts and more. Work is becoming increasingly flexible. People don't want to work eight hours a day, five days a week anymore. Quality of life has become much more important than a pay check. People would much rather work four out of five days and earn a little less money; you have to adapt to this cultural shift. Everything from introducing a paperless desk to our new electric bikes that allow team members to do a quick shop during

their lunch break is geared towards meeting today's expectations." "Work-wise we've just rented an additional floor for our office which we are going to equip with a theatre, a small meeting room and a lunch room. This second floor is designed to become the social hub of our company," adds Isabelle. "People are happier, which has an instant impact on performance." "With staff aged between 26 and 62 we have quite the culture gap to begin with and their expectations and ways of working are completely different. It's not always easy managing such a diverse group, but you have to develop a framework that can carry your overall policy. Even if the 62 year old and the 26 year old will have their own ideas about this policy, it is possible," says Anita.

### Millennials seem to be a particularly hot topic at the moment...

"We've been saying for years that relocation is a cyclical business. Every so many years the goalposts shift. Today it's the millennials who are making waves in our services. They're starting to travel for work, overseeing projects and filling skills gaps, just as other generations did before them, but their expectations are different. They don't need a big house with a huge garden and four bedrooms to house their three children anymore. They're not staying as long either. There is no such thing as a job for life anymore."



Isabelle Premont, CEO map group

Assignments are for a year, or even eight months, and then they're off again."

"Millennials are much more worldly," adds Isabelle. "They have a good idea of where they want to live. They have friends there, or know someone, and have often already visited. They come with a suitcase and not much else. They'd much prefer a flat share in a furnished property and can often find these online."

"We were at the MindGate conference in Leuven the other day, which aims to position the Leuven region as a premier destination for multinationals," says Anita. "They've conducted a number of studies over the past year with some 5000 respondents of all nationalities, which gives it a solid base. The two greatest concerns to come forward were the happiness of spouse and children. It used to be that your home was one of the biggest concerns: you needed a house that reflected your hierarchical standing within the organisation, today this priority seems to be completely off the radar."

"Also, trailing spouses used to be perfectly happy living the expat life," adds Isabelle. "Today they want to continue their careers, which wasn't so much the case five or ten years ago. Spousal support is one of our strongest services and one that we want to continue developing."

"The main problem is that our legal system hasn't quite followed yet," muses Anita. "In Belgium a spouse is the person that you are married to, but today's expats aren't necessarily married anymore. They live together, have same sex



partners or blended families, but the government doesn't really recognise these partnerships. Each spouse needs to have their own work permit, independent of the other, because they can't apply for family reunification. The services are in place, it's just the government that needs to follow now."

#### **Ah, the red tape of Belgium**

"I can only really speak for the Benelux," says Isabelle. "But the Netherlands are much more prepared for this new type of expat. There are a lot less problems there in getting work permits for partners. It doesn't make finding a job any easier, but at least the framework is in place. They've always been ahead of us in that regard. Luxembourg is like Belgium in its archaic view on what constitutes a spouse."

#### **Is there a role for EuRA or ABRA to be found here?**

"There's less of a place for EuRA in this as there are so many different European countries, each with their own set of rules regarding work and residents permits, but it would be great if ABRA could lobby for better acceptance and legislation for trailing spouses. They've proven their strength before by convincing a significant number of town halls to open up fast lanes for expat registrations, but then I suppose a lobbyist's work never ends," laughs Anita.

#### **How do you see services changing?**

"Studies such as the one conducted in Leuven are a great basis of information to share in Europe, but I think the issue is a global one," says Isabelle. "Whether it's the EU or the US, people are increasingly bringing along partners who want to work too."

"As well as spousal support, language training and cultural training are becoming increasingly popular with expats," continues Anita. "It's incredibly difficult finding a job in Belgium without Dutch or French."

"I've only been active in relocation for six years but a lot has changed already and things keep changing faster and faster," admits Isabelle. "Following the ERC conference I think that our core business of home finding will disappear for a large part, so we need to start updating our service package. A lot of our communications go via email at the moment, but people don't have time to read their emails anymore, so there are technological challenges and innovations that need exploring today and in years to come."

"It's important to stay abreast of every trend," agrees Anita. "We're lucky because thanks to Isabelle's work with ABRA and mine with EuRA we get to keep our ears close to the ground and know what is happening when it's happening. We all need to be alert in our line of business and use what is at our disposal."

#### **Where do you see yourselves going from here?**

"Quality and service will always be at the heart of what we do," explains Isabelle. "If your client isn't happy things come to a halt pretty quickly, but I also believe that both HR and RMC's are going to expect even more service and flexibility. They want a proactive approach, extensive reporting and the most secure of IT systems and although this is important to the future of our business, quality will always be at the heart of it."

"At the end of the day we have to make sure that our expats and their families are happy. Whichever way you turn it, it will always come down to this," agrees Anita. "We want expats to be able to get to work as quickly as possible, which means their housing needs to be in place, their spouse is happy and the kids are settled in, the rent is paid and everyone is compliant with local immigration rules."

*This article was first published in [ABRA's Relocate Magazine](#)*

# Warsaw - The Phoenix City

Warsaw has a long and noble history that was all but brought to an end during the second world war... but the Warsawians are passionate about their city and it has truly risen from the ashes to become one of Europe's great capitals. Dominic Tidey explains...



Warsaw has a tumultuous history having experienced plagues, invasions, destruction and devastating fires. It is testament to the tenacity of its inhabitants that today it truly is one of Europe's great cities.

The site of today's Warsaw on the banks of the Vistula river was founded around 1200 by Prince Boleslaw II who ordered the building of a brick cathedral. From this time on, the city became one of the seats of the Dukes of Masovia, becoming capital of Masovia in 1413. During the 15th century the population expanded hugely from 4,500 to over 20,000 and the city was quickly gaining a reputation as a trade centre due to its central geographical location. The powerful Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth was born and Warsaw became the seat of the Polish Crown in 1596. King Sigismund Vasa III rebuilt the Royal Castle (venue for the EuRA Gala Dinner) and moved to Warsaw for good, cementing the city's place as capital.



In 1700 the Great Northern War broke out between Sweden and Russia and Poland found itself in the centre of conflict. Warsaw was besieged in 1702 by Swedish troops and in 1704 was retaken by the Saxon army after days of severe bombardment. In 1705 the Saxons lost Warsaw to the Swedish in a bloody battle. In 1707 the Russians marched in only to be forced out two months later. In 1709 the Russians finally triumphed over the Swedish forces and Warsaw became part of Russia, suffering an oppressive occupation. On the death of Augustus II in 1733, in-fighting in the factions wanting to take control led to the War of Polish Succession. Warsaw was once again occupied by oppressive forces.

The Saxon kings of Germany took control and during this time the city was rebuilt in the classical style of Dresden. Warsaw became home to the first public library in Europe and by the end of the 1780's a Warsaw renaissance was well under way with the city now a centre for arts and culture. Also during this time the practice of electing the Kings of Poland was established and in 1764 the highly pro-Russian Stanislaw Poniatowski turned Poland into a Russian protectorate for the second and not final time.

In 1793, the second partition of Poland ended the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth in an attempt by the Polish Government to prevent total annexation of the country by Russia. This led to the first Warsaw Uprising in retaliation for the brutality and looting of the Russian forces in the city. 2000 troops were killed and in retaliation, the city was razed to the ground and 20,000 of its citizens were killed.

Poland was liberated from Russian rule in 1806 by Napoleon and in 1815 the Congress of Vienna made Warsaw the centre of the Congress Poland, a constitutional monarchy under the control of Imperial Russia. However, under the rule of the liberal Emperor Alexander I, Warsaw flourished once again. After his death and the accession of the power mad Emperor Nicholas I, the November Uprising broke out, starting with an attack on the Royal Palace Belvedere, the residence of the commander in chief of the Polish army and de facto viceroy for the Emperor. The uprising led to the Polish Russian war which led to the defeat of Polish forces and the dissolution of the Sjem, the parliament, the army and the university.

Warsaw blossomed once more during this period as again its central location made it a huge rail

hub as the growth of the railways made it a strategic trading city. Electricity was wired throughout the city and the first power stations and water sanitation systems and drains were constructed. New tramways were built and new bridges across the Vistula opened up the suburbs.

However this came at a cost. The Russians closed Polish schools and undertook to crush any sense of Polish identity. Striking at the heart of Polish culture, they built more and more Russian Orthodox churches and diminished the influence of the Catholic church. Tempers flared and demonstrations against Russian rule began. Following Russian troops firing into a crowd and killing five people at a protest, a new uprising broke out in 1863. Unrest continued for the next 30 years and by the turn of the century, the demographic of Warsaw was 57% Polish, 36% Jewish and 6% Russian. With the advent of world war one, the German army entered Warsaw. The Russians in retreat, destroyed all of the bridges and looted the factories. The war did not end well for Poland - years of hyper inflation and threats from the Red Army did little to bring stability to the country for the next decades.

The first bombs of world war two fell on Warsaw on 1st September 1939 and just one week later the city was again besieged. Despite brave and fierce resistance, the city fell to the Nazis within a month. At this time, around 1/3 of the population of the city was Jewish. On October 12th 1940, the holy day of Yom Kippur, the governor of the Warsaw District Ludwig Fischer signed a decree on the establishment of a ghetto in the city. During 1939 the Nazis had already begun a series of repressive actions against the Jewish population, including the concentration of the population in defined areas, blocking Jewish



bank accounts and savings and banning ritual slaughter, effectively outlawing Kosher observance. By December 1939 the order was given for all Jews to wear Star of David armbands. In February 1940 Jews were banned from using trams. By April the Judenrat (Jewish Council) was forced to build a wall around the ghetto, 3 metres high and topped with barbed wire. The cost was imposed on the Judenrat. By November the ghetto had been sealed and in early 1942 the Nazis began deporting Jews from the ghetto to concentration camps. The Polin Museum of the History of the Polish Jews portrays the stark horror of the ghetto and concentration camps. One exhibit reads:

*" Before the eyes of the whole world, in the summer of 1942, 300,000 Jews were deported... the destination always one and the same - the slaughterhouse of Treblinka. The last round ups and deportations from the Umschlagplatz occurred on 21 September, Yom Kippur."*

From, The Liquidation of Jewish Warsaw, a report of the united underground ghetto organisations to the Polish government in London and the Allied governments, dated 15 November 1942.

On August 1st 1944, the Warsaw Uprising began. Insurgents attacked 180 German military installations and the city's strategic positions. Heinrich Himmler sends reinforcements and on August 5th German Troops exact terrible

revenge, executing 65,000 civilians trapped in the captured districts, indiscriminate of age. 1,300 patients and staff of the two main hospitals were also murdered. By the end of September the uprising had been brutally crushed and a massive organised looting campaign began. Delegations from German municipalities were allowed to enter the city and take any remaining goods. 33,000 railway wagons filled with furniture, personal belongings and factory equipment left the city. Once anything of value had been taken, a systematic destruction of every building, church and home was ruthlessly executed. Monuments and government buildings were blown up by special German troops known as "Verbrennungs und Vernichtungskommando", burning and destruction detachments. Everything you see today has been rebuilt since 1944. The incredible

restorations to the Royal Route and the Old Town, including the complete re-building of the cathedral and Royal Castle are so meticulous that the area has been awarded UNESCO World Heritage Status. "It is an outstanding example of a near total reconstruction of a span of history covering the 13th to the 20th century."

When Russian forces finally recaptured Warsaw, there was nothing left. Only one building remained in tact on the Royal Route - The Hotel Bristol, which was used as Nazi HQ.

Warsaw is a beautiful place with an incredible history, truly the Phoenix City.

*Dominic Tidey is the COO of EuRA and the editor of the European. Contact him at [dominic@europa-relocation.com](mailto:dominic@europa-relocation.com) or on Twitter*

# Legal & Tax Report



Gordon Kerr

A question often raised by clients is whether there are legal or tax advantages to be gained in taking an expat lease in name of the individual assignee or in name of the corporate employer. So for this Report, I carried out a quick survey covering 13 European countries and the results appear below. As always, EuRA members were happy to share their expertise and it is a perfect reminder of the high levels of knowledge - and excellent co-operation - which exist within EuRA.

While the impact of Brexit on future UK-EU immigration remains unclear, new UK immigration rules which come into effect in April will increase the cost of UK assignments from outside the EU. We explain why below.

The EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) becomes law in May 2018. As the relocation industry relies heavily on legally-compliant processing and sharing of personal data, the year ahead will see a great deal of compliance activity, driven particularly by RMCs. By way of introduction to the GDPR, we summarise the main practical changes.

It is no coincidence that immigration and data protection are two of the main topics for the Warsaw conference. I look forward to seeing you there!

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## Corporate Lease or Personal Lease? - A Quick Overview

The question of whether an expat lease should be put in the name of the individual assignee or the corporate employer can be a complicated issue and can sometimes give rise to challenges for a relocation adviser who is trying to give best advice to their client. The starting point will often be the employer's global policy, which could be "we always take the lease in our corporate name" - or may be the exact opposite: "the lease must be taken in the employee's name"! But a strict global policy on this issue may result in unnecessary costs or complications, which arise from the laws and practices of particular countries. It is also interesting to learn if recent trends are moving in

favour of corporate or personal leases.

Here is a snapshot of what some EuRA members had to say:-

### Belgium

A contract in the name of a corporate entity, rather than the individual private tenant, is viewed by the taxation authorities as a commercial lease rather than a residential agreement, resulting in significantly higher taxation implications for the Landlord. Consequently, clients requiring a corporate lease are usually restricted to seeking properties owned by companies rather than private individuals to avoid the significant fiscal penalty which would otherwise arise for the Landlord.

### Czech Republic (Prague)

From a legal perspective if the tenant is a private individual, they are quite

well protected by the civil code. In case of a corporate lease the rights and obligations for both parties are more balanced and the protection provided to the tenant very much depends on what is stipulated in the lease contract.

Most landlords do not have particular preference for a personal or corporate tenancy. From our perspective as a DSP, getting a corporate lease approved takes much more time and from this perspective a personal lease is easier and quicker to complete and to allow the tenant to move in. In general we see a trend moving towards personal rather than corporate leases. This appears to be driven by employers more commonly requiring that their foreign assignees "take care of themselves".

## France

We see a 50-50 mix of corporate and personal leases. For personal leases, the candidacy acceptance process in France is hefty. The transferee needs to have a strong service reference with his/her employer (hence not be in a new hire / trial period situation) and have a total monthly compensation net (housing allowance included as applicable) to correspond to 3 to 4 times the total monthly rent amount. Even when these 2 main criteria are met, ad hoc guarantees in the form of a bank guarantee or 3rd party guarantee may be requested. A bank guarantee does imply blocking one year's worth of rent in an escrow account in France for the duration of the occupancy.

The corporate lease, in the French entity's name, provides the advantage of being lifted from these criteria requirements, as the home owner will be looking at the company's financial standing in France. The transferee's name appears as the occupant and there are tax advantages for the corporate lease when the assignee benefits from an expat package and housing allowance.

However, due to certain special insurance guarantee requirements being requested by individual home owners, we are seeing corporate leases being discarded in favor of the individual leases where the non-payment of rent insurance applies, under certain income conditions.

## Germany

In Germany there is no difference between corporate and personal tenancy from the tax and the legal perspective. However, more and more of our clients tend to the personal tenancy and monthly rent allowances because then the employees take much better care of the properties. Also, when the tenancy agreement needs a diplomatic clause allowing the lease notification prior to the agreed duration this only applies to personal leases and not to corporate leases.

Besides that, when US companies pay rents to German landlords this requires a W8N confirmation from the

landlord to allow third country payment. Most German landlords are reluctant to sign such an unfamiliar document, especially when we go outside the major cities.

## Hungary (Budapest)

In legal terms there is no practical difference between a personal and corporate lease, the housing law applies in both cases. From a tax perspective there are a couple of potential minor issues. If the owner of a property is a legal entity then there is sometimes but not always a requirement to charge VAT on top of the rent. With a corporate lease the tenant may be required to withhold the tax payable on the landlord's income and pay it direct to the tax authority.

As the lower end of the housing market in Budapest (generally rents of less than 1,000 EUR/month) is currently extremely dynamic, the ability to make a swift decision and even pay a cash deposit on the spot is more and more important. The requirement for a cumbersome lease approval process can put deals at risk as landlords will generally choose to conclude a deal quickly if they can choose to do so.

In general terms, for lower budget properties a personal lease is preferable and for a higher budget property the perceived security of a corporate lease is seen as an advantage.

## Ireland

The trend is moving from corporate leases to personal leases. The main reasons for this:-

1. The name of the occupier is usually requested by the landlord
2. The lease can be used as proof of address when applying for Social Security No. called PPS No. in Ireland
3. Companies are not held responsible for any dilapidations when the lease is in the assignee's name

There is one advantage to having the lease in the company's name. If an assignee is waiting for a work permit to come through they can come in on an orientation and select their long term property, therefore saving the

company the cost of temporary accommodation and also saving the assignee the upheaval of moving twice. When the assignee's name does not appear on the lease they are not jeopardising their work permit application.

**Netherlands**  
In the Netherlands property owners prefer corporate over personal tenancies, as it reduces the risks for the owner. There is no difference in legal protection, but corporate tenancies have less chance of rent arrears. Furthermore, in the Netherlands an agency fee has to be paid to the real estate agent and a company is able to reclaim the VAT. Nevertheless, most companies do not want corporate leases, as they will have to carry the risk.

## Poland

There are no differences in legal terms between a corporate and private lease. However, in general, corporate leases are often preferred by owners as they are viewed as offering greater financial security. The general perception is that a legal entity is easier to take action against than a foreign individual. In practice however we have never experienced a case where a landlord refused to sign a personal lease contract.

## Portugal

Landlords prefer the lease to be in name of tenant, with the Company as guarantor. It is very important for landlords to have the Company as guarantor or the landlord may not be prepared to rent. If a lease is in a corporate name, the Company has to deduct 15% monthly and pay this to PT tax office - which landlords do not like!

## Spain

This is a complex question as it depends how the property is set up for tax purposes. If the owners have registered the property in the name of a company and it is a corporate lease, then there will be tax applied. In principle this is 21% unless it is registered as a short term apartment and then it is 10%.

If the tenant pays there may or not, be 21% VAT applied.

If the property is in the name of a person and the company pays, then sometimes they apply VAT and issue invoices and often not. The law is quite complex. If it is an individual who signs and the property is in the name of a person then tax is not usually applied.

When it is a corporate signing, the company will often be asked to produce the power of attorney of the person signing on behalf of the company, along with ID and other company documents. Quite a lot of documentation needs to be presented, which can be particularly challenging for an overseas company.

In summary, the law is a little "grey" and it depends entirely on the circumstances of each situation and how the property is registered.

In practice, we find that the majority of cases are private leases.

**Sweden**  
The Swedish legislation regarding how an apartment can be subleased is very strict and has a big impact on the available number of flats on the market. There are three different types of lease contracts we need to consider:

1. Rental lease (Hyresrätt). You sign a long term agreement directly with the landlord allowing you to live there as long as you abide by the rules that apply to renting an apartment.
2. Tenant ownership (Bostadsrätt) as a part of tenant-owner's association. You do not own your apartment, but a percentage of the building. You need to abide by the rules set up by the tenant owners' association.
3. Tenant ownership (Andelsrätt). You own your own apartment and have more options available if you want to rent out the apartment. These days it is very rare to find a tenant ownership apartment.

Most apartments can only be subleased if the rental lease holder has a legitimate reason for not being able to live in the flat themselves. Any lease holder wanting to sublet needs the approval from the tenancy association or landlord.

This explains to some extent why the rental market in Sweden is limited, causing so much frustration with the expat community. Finding good rental accommodations for a reasonable price is quite the challenge when moving to Sweden. The actual number of flats available is more or less limited to the number of Swedes that have a legitimate reason to sublet their flats. The wait for a rental apartment in Stockholm averages 104 weeks, rising to as much as 20 years for attractive areas. Regarding tax implications, the general rule in Sweden is that all remuneration and benefits, whether in-cash or in-kind, in respect of an employment or temporary assignment constitute taxable income.

**Switzerland**  
There are hardly any corporate leases in Switzerland, as companies moved away from this approach. We also do not recommend corporate leases for one significant reason. According to our experience, the occupant (transferee) takes much less care about the condition of the apartment knowing that the lease agreement has been signed by the company rather than by himself.

**United Kingdom**  
There is no difference in the tax treatment of corporate and personal tenancies. There is, however, greater legal protection for personal leases, as these are protected by deposit protection rules and consumer "unfair contract" legislation. Overall, the general trend is a move away from corporate to personal leases, though many US employers retain a preference for corporate leases.

(My thanks are due to the following EuRA members which contributed to this survey: Andrews Blakeway Consult Relocation; Antares Relocation; Auris Relocation;

European Relocation Services; Executive Relocations; Inter Relocation; Irish Relo; Nordic Relocation Group; Palladium Mobility Group; Team Relocations; and Triplicado.)

## Upcoming UK immigration changes

March and April is always a busy time for UK immigration lawyers as UK Government fees increase and new rules come into force. At the time of writing, we are still waiting on confirmation of any proposed changes to the immigration rules, but there are two known changes which will have particular implications for the relocation industry and businesses which bring international assignees to the UK.

**Immigration Health Surcharge**  
From the end of March, the exact date has yet to be published, the UK will require individuals applying for Tier 2 (Intra Company Transfer) visas, which is the most common visa for international assignments, to pay an additional fee to cover the cost of being able to access the National Health Service. This will be the equivalent to £200 per year for each year of their assignment and will also be applied to applications by family members.

The charge will apply to all visa applications, including extending existing assignments.

**Immigration Skills Charge**  
From 6 April 2017, the cost of international assignments involving non EU nationals coming to the UK will dramatically increase due to the introduction of the Immigration Skills Charge. This is a new charge, which will apply to most Tier 2 visa applications. The charge will be based on the size of the company and the length of the proposed assignment.

The charge will apply at the point the UK company issues a Certificate of Sponsorship, the electronic document needed to support a visa application, and will either be:

- £1000 for each year of the assignment in large companies; or
- £364 for each year of the

assignment in small companies or charities.

The UK Government defines a large company as one with at least 50 employees in the UK and an annual turnover of at least £10.2 million. Many multinational companies will therefore fall within the definition of a large company and the charge is an extra cost for employee mobility budgets.

The charge will apply to all new assignments except for those involving Tier 2 (Intra Company Transfer)(Graduate Trainee) applications, which involve short assignments as part of a management training programme. Assignees already in the UK will not be affected by the skills charge.

As an illustration of the consequences of the charges, a standard 3 year visa for an international assignment currently costs £575 for a single employee with no trailing family members. From 6 April 2017 the cost of this visa will be £4,175 when the health and skills charges are taken into account.

The cost for the same assignment but with a spouse and 2 dependent children will increase from £2,300 to £7,700.

Relocation professionals should make sure that clients are aware of these additional costs and are budgeting accordingly. There is currently no indication as to whether skills charges will be refunded if assignments are cut short. So businesses will need to carefully consider who they select for international assignments, since the cost of failed assignments is unlikely to be recoverable.

#### **Criminal records checks in some occupations**

A further change from 6 April is that applicants applying to do certain jobs in healthcare, teaching or social work professions will be required to provide a criminal records check when making their visa application. Although this change is only applicable to a small number of occupations, it is likely to be rolled

out to all jobs in the near future and relocation professionals will need to be aware of the potential delay in visa applications being submitted while these are obtained.

This change, if rolled out across all jobs, will be particularly problematic for some assignees. This is because applicants will need to provide a check from every country where they have lived for 12 months in the last 10 years. It is not difficult to envisage an applicant with multiple previous assignments having to obtain checks from 3 or 4 different countries before being able to submit their UK visa application. This will be a further complication when planning international assignments.

#### **The General Data Protection Regulation - Key Points for Businesses**

It is worth reminding ourselves just how critical the correct management of personal data has become for relocation businesses. We need the personal data of transferees (and their families) in order to deliver relocation services. And to do this efficiently, we often share this data across several different organisations: between employers, RMCs, DSPs and other specialists across the relocation supply chain. We also frequently share personal data with service providers in other countries.

In each of these situations - gathering, retaining and sharing personal data - we need to comply with data protection law. Much of this is common-sense, such as keeping data safe and accurate. It becomes more complicated when we want to share this personal data with third parties or perhaps use the data for our own marketing purposes. With these latter scenarios, we need to ensure that the individual has provided full consent to our use of their data for that particular purpose. When we wish to send personal data to a country outside the EU, we need to be particularly careful that we are not breaching EU data protection law. For example, in the context of relocation services, personal data of

EU nationals will often be held by US-headquartered RMCs on their servers located in the US (i.e. there is a data transfer from the EU to the US). It is for this reason that RMCs have been quick to obtain accreditation under the EU-US Privacy Shield.

It is against this sometimes complicated background that the EU is introducing the GDPR. For the first time, a single set of data protection rules will apply across all EU countries. In practice, it is likely that many RMCs will also adopt the GDPR as their global standard of data protection and we can expect to see this reflected in amendments to relocation service agreements this year.

Below is a summary of the main changes that the GDPR will introduce when it becomes law in May 2018. Many of these changes will require substantial lead time, so it is important for businesses to plan ahead.

#### **• Expanded Territorial Scope**

The GDPR applies to all data controllers/data processors processing the personal data of data subjects residing in the EU, regardless of the data controller's/data processor's location. This means that many non-EU businesses that were not required to comply with the current Data Protection Directive will be required to comply with the GDPR. Non-EU businesses processing the data of EU citizens will need to appoint a representative in the EU.

#### **• Increased Enforcement Powers**

Under the GDPR, data breaches could result in fines up to 4% of annual global turnover (or 20 Million Euros, whichever is greater). For violations relating to internal record keeping, data processor contracts, data security and breach notification, the GDPR allows for fines up to 2% of annual global turnover (or 10 Million Euros, whichever is greater). Accordingly, it would be prudent for organisations to review how they obtain, use and secure personal data. Data processing procedures should

be monitored and reviewed with an aim to minimise data processing and retention of data. It is worth noting that under the GDPR data processors may also be liable for high fines.

#### **• New Rules for Obtaining Consent to Process Data**

The GDPR requires a very high standard of consent for the processing of personal data. The burden of demonstrating that the legal standard of "consent" has been achieved will lie with organisations, so businesses should review whether its documents and forms of consent are adequate, and check that consents are freely given, informed and specific. Where the data processing has multiple purposes, the data subject should give their consent to each of the processing purposes. Businesses also must ensure that a data subject can withdraw their consent to the processing of their personal data at any time.

#### **• Reporting Security Breaches**

The GDPR requires that businesses will have to report breaches that are likely to harm individuals to national authorities (e.g. the ICO in the UK) within 72 hours. If the breach might result in high risk to the affected individuals, businesses must inform these individuals "without undue delay".

Organisations should develop a data breach response plan enabling them to respond quickly in the event of a data breach.

#### **• Subject Access Requests**

The rules for dealing with subject access requests (e.g. an enquiry from a transferee) will change under the GDPR. Organisations will have just a month to comply from the date of receipt of the request. The data controller must provide a copy of the personal data free of charge and in an accessible electronic format. There will be different grounds for refusing to comply with subject access request, and manifestly unfounded or excessive requests can be charged for or refused.

#### **• Right to be Forgotten**

In May 2014 the European Court of Justice ruled that search engines

such as Google were data processors and that citizens had the right to ask that content referring to them be "forgotten". The GDPR provides a more limited right to be forgotten in certain circumstances, such as where the data controller has no legal grounds for processing personal information.

#### **• Privacy by Design**

Privacy by design appears as a central concept within the GDPR, and means data protection considerations



being taken into account from the outset of designing a new process, product or service, rather than treating it as an afterthought.

#### **• Benefits to Businesses**

The GDPR reduces 28 sets of different data protection laws to a single regulation, reducing compliance costs, complexity, risk and uncertainty over reporting for organisations who operate throughout the EU.

With just over 12 months to go before the GDPR becomes law, here are some practical steps to consider for your business:-

• Implement training programmes in your organisation so that employees are aware of the data protection compliance they must follow

• Audit and document the personal data your organisation holds, noting where it was obtained from, who it is shared with and how long it has been held for

• Ensure mechanisms are in place within your organisation to ensure that, by default, only personal data necessary for each specific purpose is

processed and the data is stored no

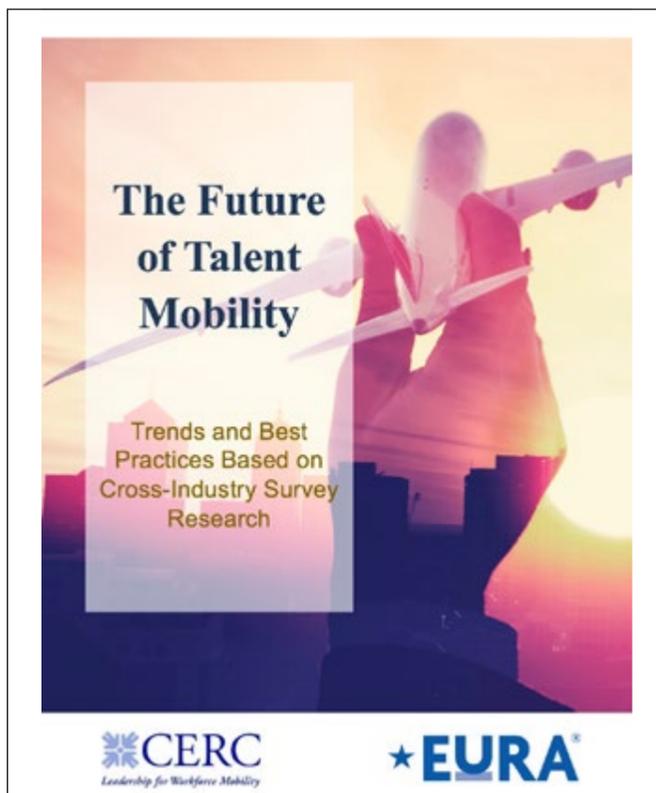
longer than necessary

• Review all privacy notices used by your organisation and put in place a plan for changing these notices to comply with the GDPR.

Even relatively small businesses within the relocation industry will be affected by these changes and, initially, this may take the form of changes to clauses in RMC service agreements and related requests for suppliers to participate in data protection refresher training.

*The Legal & Tax Report is produced for The EuRApean by Gordon Kerr, the Employee Mobility Unit at UK law firm, Morton Fraser LLP.*

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### REMINDER

The Future of Mobility Research is now complete and available to members at no charge.

This ground breaking, joint research project between The Canadian Employee Relocation Council and EuRA examines data from over **57 reports involving over 25,000 respondents** with the aim of establishing how our industry will develop over the next decade.

The report forms an essential blueprint, bringing together some of the best research from a broad array of sources and gives insights into how our industry can respond to the new realities and challenges that face our changing global workforce.

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# "The Power of Attention"

## Jon Harman

### Global Account Manager - CORT

My first job in relocation, way back in 2005, was also my first "real" office job in a long time. Sitting in that large, open plan Move One work space in Budapest, I would pause from time-to-time to listen to the sounds of the modern office. I should say "sound," not "sounds" because there above all else, a single sound defined our working environment. It was the sound of fingers striking computer keyboards. Rarely, people spoke. Even more rarely a telephone would ring. Everyone was looking at a screen and moving their fingers. The conversation about how the advent of computer technology has changed the working world is, perhaps, a bit worn, but there is a new conversation starting that is, arguably, much more relevant; namely, the conversation about what working in a digital world and having a device at hand nearly every waking moment of every day does to us, and more specifically, to the way we think. In an economy where "knowledge work" predominates, it would make sense to pause and consider just how the always-on-at-your-fingertips digital reality impacts our ability to store, recall, and use that same "knowledge."

The human brain has a gift for making behaviors automatic. Think of a five year old learning to tie her shoes. While at first the task requires her undivided attention, within several weeks her fingers will be tying her shoes on their own while the girl looks up at her father and tells him about the birthday party she attended over the weekend. Shoe tying requires a brief, but fairly intricate, series of fine motor movements. Yet after only weeks of practice, the girl will cross a threshold beyond which she will never need to pay attention to the act of tying her shoes again.

This facility for making routine activities automatic is an evolutionary adaptation that

has served us well.

Focused thought requires energy in the form of glucose and oxygen. If we had to devote our full cognitive effort to everyday tasks such as tying our shoes, pouring a glass of juice, or sharpening a pencil, we would not have much cognitive reserve left for work.

In other words, we would not have the brainpower left to invent shoes in the first place, much less learn to tie them. Our brains are incredibly adept at automatizing. So much so that we are generally unaware of just how dependent we are on our autopilot. Each day, our unconscious brains orchestrate a vast array of behaviors and decisions, all without calling on our conscious mind for input. A familiar example of operating on automatic is the sensation of arriving at a familiar destination, work, the grocery, the gym, and yet having no immediate, conscious recollection of the trip. How much conscious thought, outside of choosing an outfit, is required to take us from the moment we wake to the moment we sit down at our desk each morning?

Because we activate them so frequently, the neural circuits that we use when tying our shoes or frying an egg, or driving our car, are strengthened, while those circuits that we use fleetingly, say the network we developed to recall our best friend's phone number or to calculate the circumference of a circle weaken, and in some cases are pruned away.

While there are obvious benefits to be gained from conserving energy by automating the ritual tasks of daily life, this ability does come with a downside. What is a bad habit but an



ingrained, automatic, and mindless tendency to engage in a behavior that is not in line with our goals or desires. I am writing this piece fairly late at night. Starting in college, I relied on food to add a bit of pleasure to the tedium of late night study sessions. For me, late night study-snacking was a behavior that I turned to enough to develop a fairly powerful habit (essentially a well developed neural circuit) that associates late night mental effort with tasty snacks. I am resisting the habit for now (really, I am!) but it is interesting, and a bit irritating, to see just how intact those circuits still are. I laid those tracks well and I have returned to them often enough to keep them alive and kicking. Establishing a habit of late night snacking or learning to tie ones shoes without paying attention is made possible by one of the human brain's most fascinating capabilities – its plasticity. Where just a few decades ago pioneering neuroscientists were ridiculed for questioning the “fixed brain” orthodoxy, it is now a well documented fact that our brains change based on how we use them. All learning, from memorizing a multiplication table, to perfecting a difficult passage on the piano, to following a certain daily work routine, involves observable physical change to the brain. While our genetics get us started, as we move through life, our experience plays a critical role in brain development. Another way to think of experience is that which we pay attention to.

Considering the fact that our brains change based on how we use them, it makes sense to pause and consider how the brain of a “knowledge worker” in the digital age might be physically different than that of a clerk in a mid-20th century accounting office. In this era of the ever-present digital device, we can work in the toilet, we can watch a movie while walking down a crowded sidewalk, we can carry on multiple conversations simultaneously



via text, chat, and email. We can now fill every spare moment: in line at the bank, waiting at the doctor's office, stuck in traffic, with some sort of stimulation from the super computer in the palm of our hand. What does the resulting fragmentation of focus and the lack of mental downtime mean for our brains? How many of us have noticed our attention spans shrinking? Who among us finds it difficult to read more than three pages in a book before becoming distracted and feeling an impulse to glance at the nearest device? If how we spend our attention has the power to change our brain, would it not make sense to be mindful and deliberate about what we pay attention to? When we say we are going to focus on a specific project and then get caught up answering email for an hour, just exactly who, or what, is directing our attention? Are we deciding, or are our devices deciding for us?

In this brave new working world of constant connectivity, don't we at least owe it to ourselves to pause and consider our relationship with the amazing new technologies that have worked their way into every aspect of our lives?

Do the implications of digital living concern you or does all the chatter about the encroachment of the digital/virtual into our material lives sound like the paranoid musings of a luddite? I am aware that this article has raised more questions than it has answered, but I do hope that you will join me to continue the conversation in Warsaw. EuRA. Please join the session entitled “The Power of Attention.” I am looking forward to an interactive hour spent exploring our experience of digital work and how we might counter any negative impacts that we have experienced. Until then, I encourage you to pay a bit more attention to your experience of working in the digital world and to come prepared to share your observations.

## Member News



### Movers & Shakers

#### OAKWOOD WORLDWIDE

Mapletree acquires Oakwood Worldwide to accelerate its corporate housing and serviced apartment expansion globally  
To read more [click here](#)

#### R3Location LIMITED

Claire Hagger joins R3Location  
To read more [click here](#)

## Member's Focus



ZAGRANITSA INTERNATIONAL MEDIA GROUP LLP is a London-based international company serving clients around the world. The International Education, Emigration and Property Expo is the one of the largest projects of the company.

To read more [click here](#)

#### COSMOS Consult

The 'A' in EMEA  
A Uniquely Challenging yet Alluring Destination!  
The article first appeared in The Global Phoenix [www.theglobalphoenix.org](http://www.theglobalphoenix.org)  
To read the full article [click here](#)

#### TTHCurzon Relocation

Simon Robins joins TTH as the New Director of Business Development.  
To read more [click here](#)

## New Members

A very warm welcome to our 26 new Members! [Click here to view all new members](#)



# Congratulations to Our Newest MIM Fellow!

We are delighted to welcome Anita Meyer, EuRA President and partner in map am&pm to the ranks of our illustrious "MIM Fellows". Anita has completed all her MIM and MIM+ training and has successfully submitted her Case Study for grading, gaining her designation of MIM Fellow. You can read her full Case Study, which focusses on how we use time in

different cultures and how this impacts on the delivery of relocation services, on the link below. If you are interested in achieving your MIM Fellowship, we now have a formal mentoring programme in place, full details are on the website, [click here](#). We have one further candidate waiting for his Case Study submissions to be graded, one EuRA CEO, Tad Zurlinden.

Full details of the MIM programme and your routes to professional certification are on the website and we will be running a session on how to start your journey in Warsaw. Congratulations to Anita on her success.



ANITA MEYER - am&pm

Every day we are faced with confrontations between people, groups, and nations who think, feel and act differently. At the same time, these people, groups and nations are exposed to common problems that require cooperation for finding a common solution. One of the reasons why so many solutions do not work or cannot be implemented is because differences in thinking among the partners have been ignored.

During my post graduate course Intercultural Communication and Management of Diversity at the Center for Intercultural Management and International Communication (CIMIC) in Mechelen, Belgium, I was confronted with a vast variety of interpretations of the concept of time. Never before had it occurred to me that apart from traditions, food, religion, education, the political and geographical climate, also the experience of time, would have a significant impact on the way we live, work, and plan for the future.



Throughout the one year CIMIC course, cultural trainers made us aware with exercises on problem solving, on time management, that "one might say that there are as many different kinds of time as human beings on this earth" (1). Asking around in the CIMIC classroom – only

Belgian students, same culture - what the expression "on time" stands for, a dozen different answers were given for a dozen students present that day. In Western European languages, we treat time as a continuum, divided into past, present and future, which makes it possible for us to feel that we can manage time, spend it, save it, or waste it. And yet, some cultures don't have the word in their vocabulary, such as the Hopi native Americans (2).

This case study will look at the most important interpretations of time and how this aspect of culture affects the success of a relocation mission.

#### Purpose

In my field of activity – relocation - we help families coming from all over the world to find a suitable home, to register their children in the right school, to integrate into their new community. Being aware of their interpretation of time, which in some cases is almost the opposite of our view on time, will facilitate the empathy of our relocation consultants. Empathy leads to listening for the right indicators to understand these family's real needs, as demonstrated in the following example. During conversations with a French Executive Director, one might become gradually aware of his achievements in the past, his excellent marks in a highly respected Parisian university; to him, where you come from will have an impact on where you are going from here. This person will be inclined to choose a traditional school for his

children, a discrete but classy house for his family. The Russian Sales Manager however, is more present and future oriented. His choices are based on getting the most out of today, which explains why a very ostentatiously luxurious house, bargained down to his budget, will make him very happy. If the relocation consultant manages to obtain that, the expat's settling in process will start off with a positive attitude to the new life environment.

One family thrives on the past; the other only has eyes for achievements in the present and future.

The goal of this study is to expose some of the main lines of thinking on this subject, by referring to the perception of specialists in the field, namely Geert Hofstede, Fons Trompenaars and Edward T. Hall.

The purpose is to improve the quality of relocation services, by adding this paper to the training material of the relocation consultants, and by encouraging them to adapt certain nuances in those elements of the settling in process that are influenced by cultural perceptions of time.

**TO READ MORE CLICK HERE**

# Advertise in the Next EuRApean - Raise Money for our 2017 Charity

Each year we support a charity operating in the city or country which hosts the EuRA International Relocation Congress.

We try to think of value driven, innovative ways for members to help. Sunglasses in Malta and baseball caps in Warsaw, silent and live auctions and now, for the first time, you can buy an advert in this magazine and every cent will go to the charity.

**Let me repeat that... every cent you spend buying ad space, will go to our charity.**

So if you'd like to reach over 5,000 people who get the magazine direct to their inbox and up to 30,000 via our Facebook Page and Twitter, you will also be doing some serious good for children and families in Warsaw.

#### Prices:

Full Page - €100

Half Page - €75

Quarter Page - €40

**Voluntary contributions above the prices are extremely welcome!**

Help us to help our charity and get some great coverage at the same time!

For details and to book your ad, contact [Maria Manly](#)

Please help us to support Protecting Wings  
With thanks, Tad Zurlinden, CEO  
Anita Meyer, President



## EuRA Foundation Charity 2017

### Protecting Wings

Protecting Wings helps families and children in crisis. When children are placed at risk as a result of parents with drug or alcohol issues. Protecting Wings provide safe houses for children where they can learn, study and play in a home from home atmosphere away from the toxic environment that makes them so vulnerable. Right now, Protecting Wings have just been given a house from the local authority and need money to renovate it to make it a further safe space for the children they support. We would very much like to help them achieve this goal by raising money for the renovation of the building. For more information check out Protecting Wings at

<http://fundacjajoannyradziwill.pl/>

# EuRA Global Quality Seal

Congratulations to our newly certified EuRA Global Quality Seal Members:

[TTHCURZON Relocation Prime Relocation LLC](#)  
[Schmid Relocation GmbH](#)

Congratulations to our newly re-certified EuRA Global Quality Seal Members;

[Clapham GmbH Relocation Services](#)  
[Palladium Mobility Group](#)  
[Finland Relocation Services Oy](#)  
[INN - International Network of Norway Relocation Services](#)  
[Strohmayer Antares Relocation](#)  
[i-Mobility Relocation](#)  
[Relocations Espana](#)  
[Executive Relocations France](#)  
[Icon Relocation Ltd](#)  
[Cosmopolitan Services Unlimited](#)  
[Relocation Belgium](#)  
[Dwellworks LLC](#)  
[Auris Relocation AG](#)

The annual EGQS Standard review has just taken place and the new standard will be sent out to members at the end of January. The 2017/2018 version will only apply to audits taking place after July 1st, unless you



choose to upgrade to the new standard prior to that date. We know how much effort and time achieving the certification takes and we salute our EGQS qualified Members.

## Webinars

**Introduction** to the EuRA Global Quality Seal  
May 24-26, 2017

Speaker: Martina Scharwey

To book [click here](#)

**NO COST TO MEMBERS**

## Recordings

Recordings of all our webinars are available to members at no cost. All webinars, except the Introduction to the EuRA Quality Seal series are one hour long. Using the webinars as part of an internal training programme can help to fulfil the EQS requirement for individual training plans for all staff. If you would like to receive the recordings, just [email us](#).



## SAVE THE DATE!



**Bookings  
Online  
from May  
2017**



# WARSAW BY THE NUMBERS

**83**

Hotels in Warsaw

**1.7 Million**

People live in Warsaw

**79**

Parks in Warsaw

**1,596**

Poland's capital moved to Warsaw

**2.8%**

Unemployment rate

**58,145**

Number of seats in Warsaw Stadium, Party Venue

**November 19, 1901**

Hotel Bristol was the first 5 star hotel in Central Europe

**63**

There are 63 museums in Warsaw

**237**

At 237 metres tall, The Palace of Culture and Science, is the tallest building in Poland

**3**

It took 3 years to build the Sofitel Victoria Hotel

**38,699**

People attended Madonna's concert at the National Stadium on 1st August 2012

**500,000**

People visit the Royal Castle, every year

**650**

Delegates attending the Conference. We are fully booked!