

Country Focus United States of America



Short Introduction and Methodology

The *Expat Insider Business Edition* is a report based on the InterNations *Expat Insider* survey of thousands of expatriates — 18,135 participated in 2018. The business edition specifically examines the following three expat types, based on their main reason for relocating: Foreign Assignees (respondents that were sent abroad by their employer), International Hires (respondents that found a job abroad on their own or were recruited by a local company), and Relocating Spouses (respondents that moved abroad together with their partner).

The Countries in Focus

The survey results published in this *Expat Insider Business Edition Country Focus* give an overview of these expat types in nine featured countries. The choice of the nine countries (China, France, Germany, Hong Kong, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America) was solely based on having a big enough data sample (31 respondents or more) of each expat type in a specific country.

These nine countries are not ranked in this mini report,

but comparisons are made between the countries, where relevant. Global percentages for each expat type are also compared.

A Snapshot of Relocation Support, Settling In, and Happiness

There is information regarding the topics: Relocation Support, Ease of Settling In, and Happiness. The survey questions for the Relocation Support chapter were structured around discussions with and feedback from employers regarding the types of relocation support that companies offer. The focus for the Ease of Settling In and Happiness sections was based on the five years of expertise that the *Expat Insider* survey has on the expat perspective, and more specifically the social aspects of expat life.

The Survey Methodology

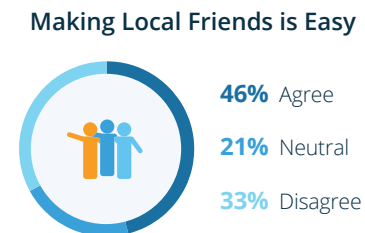
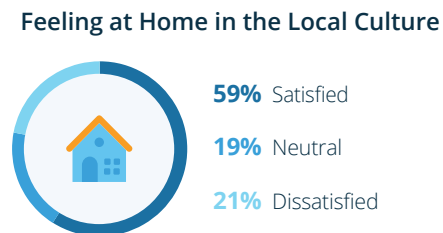
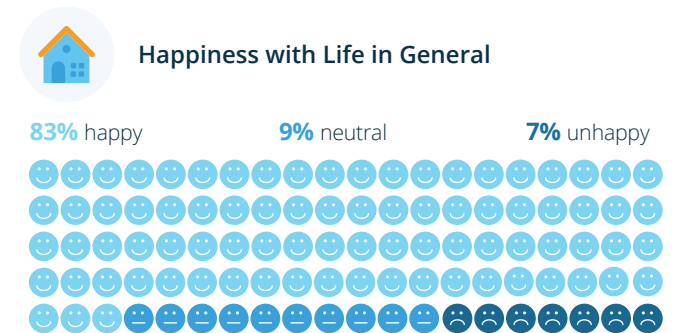
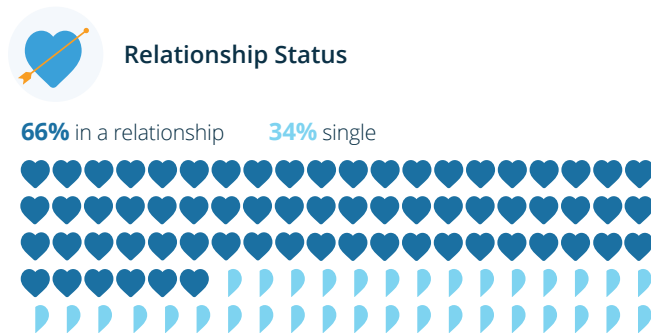
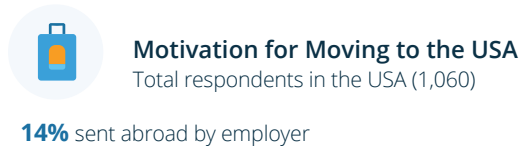
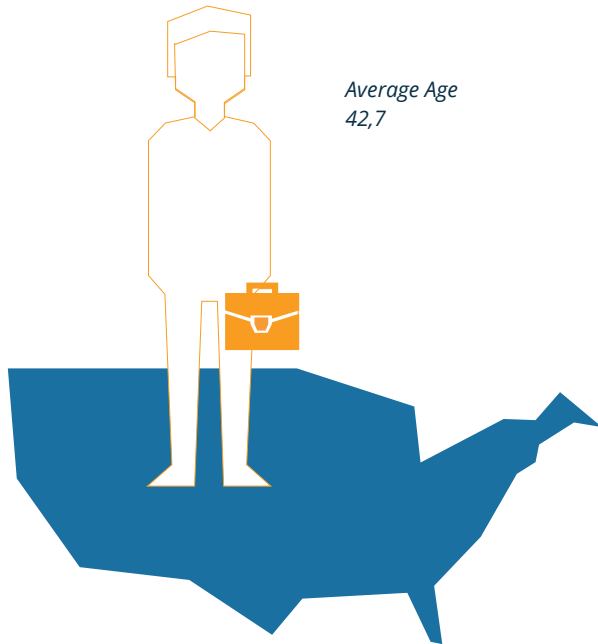
Where respondents were asked to rate different factors concerning various aspects of life abroad, such as their happiness or ease of settling in, this was done on a scale of one to seven (1= don't agree at all / not satisfied at all; 2

and 3 = negative rating; 4 = neutral; 5 and 6 = positive rating; 7 = agree completely / completely satisfied). In the report, both the negative ratings (1–3) and the positive ones (5–7) have been combined, while the neutral results (4) stand on their own.

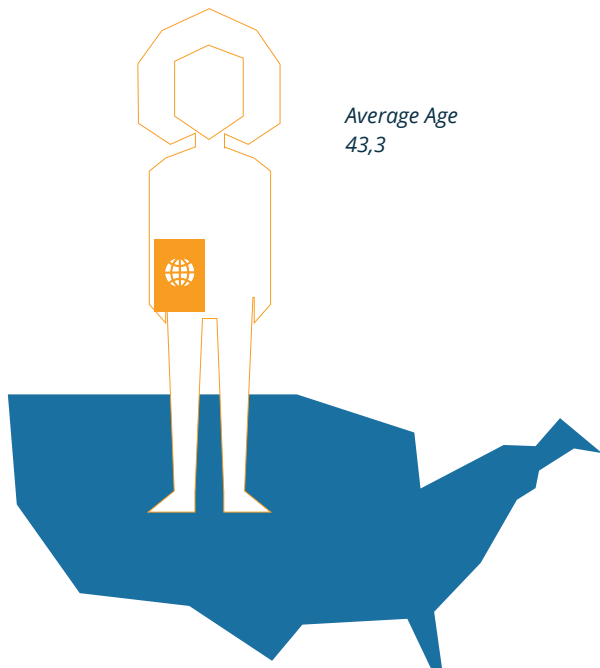
Respondents that moved abroad for either their own or their partner's work were asked specific questions about the types of relocation support they received. Respondents could choose between the answers: yes, they offered it (received); no, but I would have liked it (wanted); and no, and I didn't need it anyway (not needed). They could also rate the usefulness of any support they were offered on a scale of one to five. The rating process emphasizes the respondent's personal satisfaction with these factors.

Please be aware that all percentages have been rounded to full integral numbers. In some cases, this may lead to all responses to one question adding up to either 99% or 101%, instead of 100%. These instances are simply due to rounding and are not based on erroneous data.

Foreign Assignees



International Hires



Motivation for Moving to the USA

Total respondents in the USA (1,060)

10% found a job / recruited by a local company



Relationship Status

59% in a relationship 41% single



Gender Split

50% female

50% male



Happiness with Life in General

78% happy

10% neutral

12% unhappy



Feeling at Home in the Local Culture



58% Satisfied

16% Neutral

26% Dissatisfied

Making Local Friends is Easy

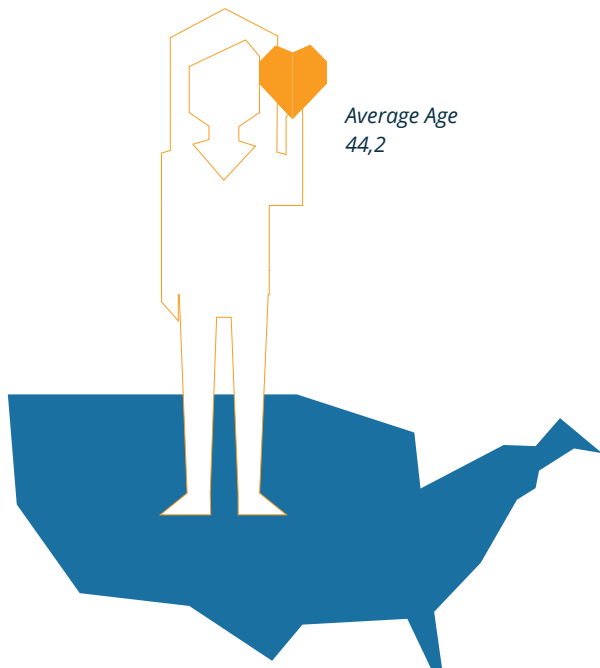


51% Agree

13% Neutral

36% Disagree

Relocating Spouses



Motivation for Moving to the USA

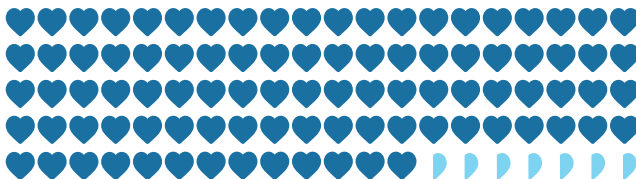
Total respondents in the USA (1,060)

10% moved for partner's job or education



Relationship Status

93% in a relationship 7% single



Gender Split

92% female

8% male



Happiness with Life in General

67% happy

19% neutral

15% unhappy



Feeling at Home in the Local Culture



45% Satisfied

19% Neutral

36% Dissatisfied

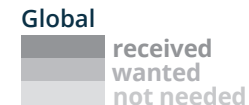
Making Local Friends is Easy



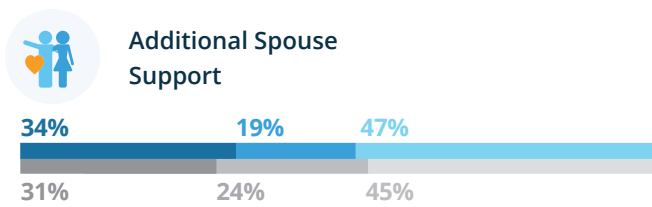
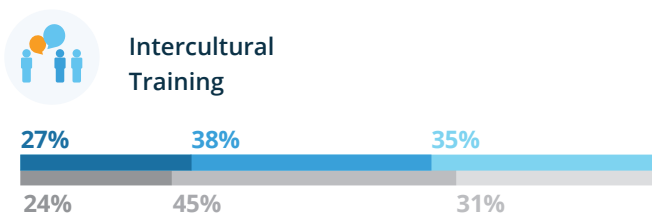
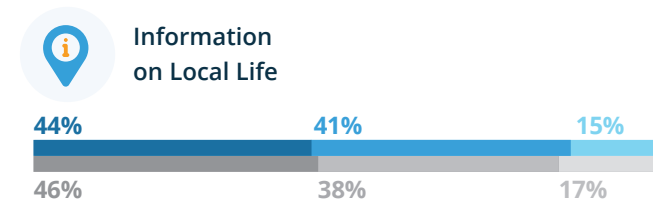
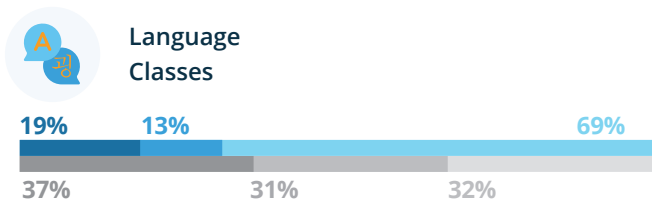
29% Agree

19% Neutral

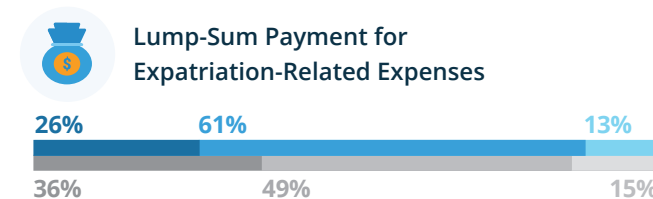
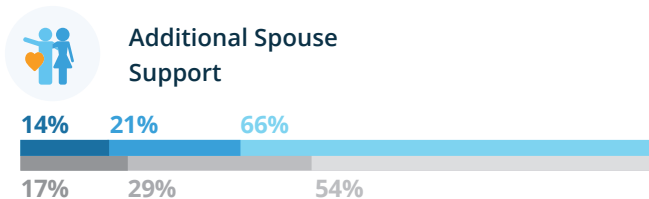
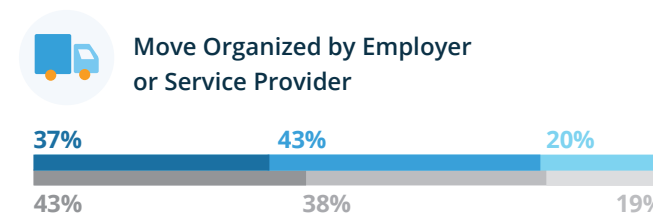
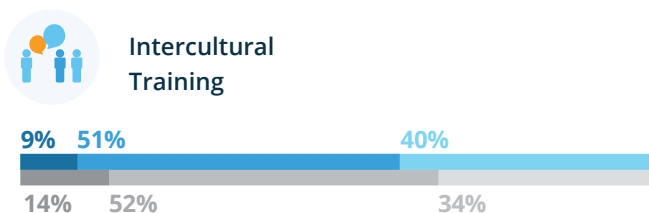
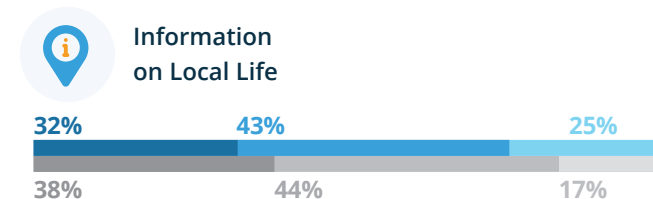
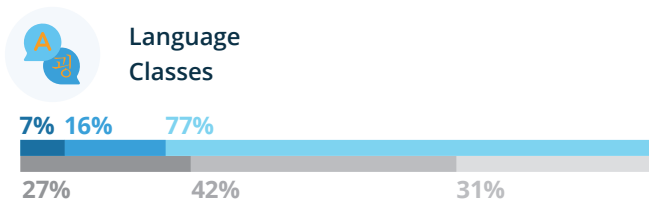
52% Disagree



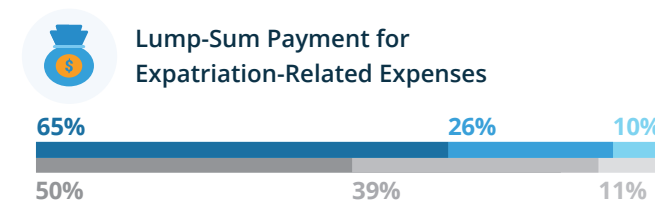
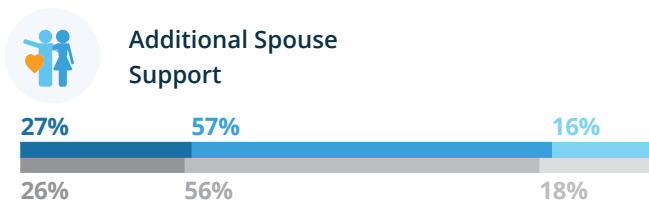
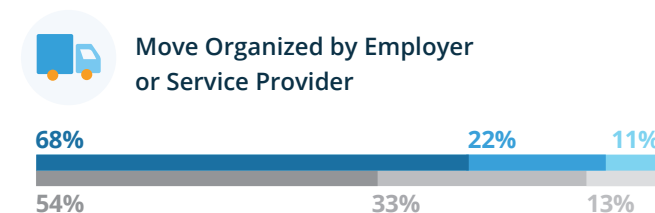
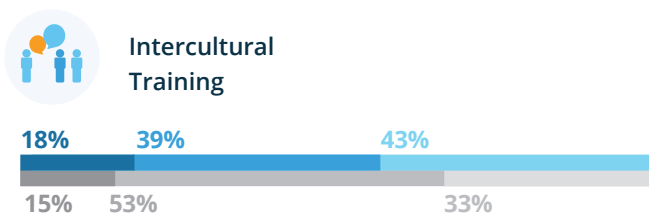
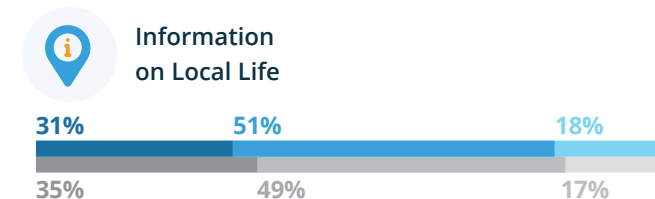
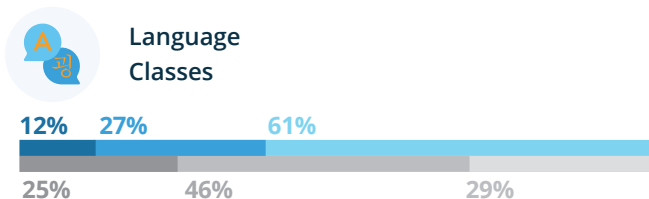
Relocation Support



Relocation Support



Relocation Support



International Hires Badly Supported and Relocating Spouses Unhappiest

While the relocation support provided by employers is average, Foreign Assignees and Relocating Spouses are better supported than International Hires. There is, however, more emphasis on practical support than personal support, which could be why the expats struggle with certain aspects of settling into the local culture.

TOP FINDINGS

- **Employers with Foreign Assignees in the USA support them well with the organized move, lump-sum payment, and additional spouse support, but personal support is lacking.**
- **Relocating Spouses in the USA received more practical support than International Hires. The shares of Relocating Spouses that received moving assistance and a lump-sum payment are also above global averages.**
- **For eight of the nine types of relocation support in the survey, the shares of International Hires that received them are lower than the global averages.**

The United States of America (USA) may be home to the “American Dream” and, therefore, an attractive expat destination, but according to the *Expatriate Insider*, the country does not appear to be living up to this notion for its expats.

The USA ranks 44th out of 68 countries for personal happiness in the 2018 *Expatriate Insider*. Furthermore, the country ranks 51st for political stability — only 45% of expats are satisfied with the country’s political stability, compared to 63% rating this positively across the world. (For more general country rankings, download the *Expatriate Insider* report [here](#).)

Of the 1,060 expats based in the USA that participated in the survey, 14% are Foreign Assignees, 10% are International Hires, and 10% are Relocating Spouses.

Employers sending Foreign Assignees to the USA support them well with practical assistance, such as organizing their move and offering a lump-sum payment, but they don’t seem to put much effort into offering more personal

types of relocation support.

Compared to Foreign Assignees in the USA and International Hires in the other featured countries, International Hires in the USA are not well supported by their employers. While Relocating Spouses are not as supported as Foreign Assignees, they do, however, receive better assistance than International Hires in some instances.

Foreign Assignees and International Hires in the country have some of the most positive satisfaction ratings in terms of their ease of settling in when compared to those in the other featured countries, but this is not true for Relocating Spouses. This expat type is also not as satisfied with their ease of settling in, compared to Relocating Spouses in some of the nine featured countries.

Relocating Spouses are also not as happy as the other two expat types in the USA — 67% of Relocating Spouses are happy, compared to 83% of Foreign Assignees and 78% of International Hires.

ZOOMING IN ON THE EXPAT TYPES



FOREIGN ASSIGNEES IN THE USA

Relocation Support

Employers sending Foreign Assignees to the USA support them well with practical assistance, such as organizing their move and offering a lump-sum payment. The shares of Foreign Assignees that received these are above the global averages — 77% of Foreign Assignees had their move arranged, which is two percentage points higher than the global average (75%), and 71% received the lump-sum payment, which is six percentage points higher than the global average (65%).

Of those that received the moving assistance, 81% found it helped, while 87% found the lump-sum payment useful.

While these percentages are positive, compared to the other featured countries, employers sending employees on assignment to the USA are not best at offering these support types. For the organized move, for example, only Foreign Assignees in the United Kingdom (UK), with 66%, and Hong Kong, with 63%, had lower shares that received it.

Employers with Foreign Assignees in the USA do seem to put some focus on their partners, as 34% of the assignees received additional spouse support — three percentage points higher than the global average (31%). While this is slightly better than the global number, it is a basis for employers to build on, as expat partners are known to need

more support (findings from the *Expatriate Insider 2018 Business Edition*). Of the nine featured countries, employers sending assignees to China stand out for offering additional spouse support to Foreign Assignees (45%).

Of those that received the additional spouse support, just over half (51%) found it useful. This may be a further indication that employers need to look deeper into the types of spouse support they offer, in order to improve its usefulness.

Employers don't seem to put much effort into providing more personal types of relocation support. Of the Foreign Assignees in the USA, 11% received access to local networking opportunities (73% would have liked it), 11% received access to local socializing opportunities (66% would have liked it), and 5% received membership in an expat organization (71% would have liked it). While these support types are not yet as commonly offered globally, the shares of Foreign Assignees in the USA receiving them are lower than the global averages — 16% for both networking and socializing opportunities, and 8% for membership in an expat organization. This could be a further indication of what employers should focus on when supporting these expats.

Ease of Settling In

Foreign Assignees in the USA have some of the most positive satisfaction ratings in terms of their ease of settling in, when compared to those in the other featured countries. Even so, their satisfaction percentages are not extremely high, indicating that settling in and making friends remain challenging in all the featured countries.

For example, compared to the other featured countries, Foreign Assignees in the USA are in first place when it comes to feeling at home in the local culture and making local friends. When looking at the percentages, however, 59% feel at home in the local culture and 21% don't, and 46% agree that making local friends is easy, while 33% disagree. Although these ratings are the most positive of the Foreign Assignees in the nine featured countries, the positive satisfaction percentages are still below 60%.

“I don't like the superficiality and lack of community.”



German Foreign Assignee

A French male Foreign Assignee living in the USA, says: “Unfortunately the people, they seem really superficial and relationships feel really shallow”. A German seems to agree: “I don't like the superficiality and lack of community”.

An Australian female has a positive view, saying she likes the “quality of life, career options, and ability to travel around the world with ease”.

A Trinidadian/Tobagonian male speaks to a lack of forming relationships: “I don't like the superficiality of people. They are friendly, but you can't form deep relationships with Americans”.

A Mexican female doesn't like the fact that she has “no

social life,” while an Indian female also finds this difficult, saying: “It’s very difficult to make friends here. People are polite and courteous, but not warm or friendly. Not much social interaction with neighbors and cannot depend on anyone for help. Everybody lives their own life”.

“ *I have no social life.* ”



In terms of ultimately feeling settled in the USA, 63% of Foreign Assignees agree that it’s easy to settle down in the country, while 21% disagree (compared to 57% and 25% respectively globally). Only Foreign Assignees in the Netherlands (80% agree and 8% disagree) and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) (59% agree and 16% disagree) are more content with their ease of settling down.

Happiness

In terms of their happiness with life in general, 83% of Foreign Assignees in the USA state happiness and 7% unhappiness — compared to 80% globally indicating happiness and 8% globally indicating unhappiness. Those in the USA are not happiest, as Foreign Assignees in the Netherlands (86% are happy and 2% unhappy), Switzerland (84% are happy and 7% unhappy), the UAE (81% are happy and 11% unhappy), and France (83% are happy and 5% unhappy) have better overall happiness ratings.



INTERNATIONAL HIRES IN THE USA

Relocation Support

International Hires in the USA are not well supported by their employers when compared to Foreign Assignees in the country and International Hires in the other featured countries.

For eight of the nine types of relocation support mentioned in the survey, the shares of International Hires that received them are lower than the global averages. These support types are: language classes (7% received it, compared to 27% globally), intercultural training (9% received it, compared to 14% globally), additional spouse support (14% received it, compared to 17% globally), access to local networking (14% received it, compared to 17% globally), membership in an expat organization (5% received it, compared to 8% globally), information on local life (32% received it, compared to 38% globally), organized move (37% received it, compared to 43% globally), and the lump-sum payment (26% received it, compared to 36% globally).

Employers are seemingly doing a better job in supporting International Hires in the USA in terms of providing access to local socializing opportunities — 20% received this, which is equal to the global average. Compared to the other featured countries, only International Hires in China (33%) and the Netherlands (32%) have a larger share that received it, making those in the USA third-most likely to get socializing assistance (along with International Hires in the UAE, also at 20%). Furthermore, compared to Foreign

Assignees in the USA — who are more supported overall — the percentage of International Hires that received access to socializing is nine percentage points higher. This is a further indication that employers do see the need to help International Hires more with their social integration, even though it is still only a small share.

In terms of overall support, the survey results show that International Hires received below-average support and need more in terms of practical and personal support.

Ease of Settling In

As with Foreign Assignees in the USA, International Hires in the country have some of the most positive satisfaction ratings in terms of their ease of settling in, when compared to those in the other featured countries.

In terms of getting used to the local culture, 73% of International Hires find it easy, which is much higher than the global average of 56%. Of the featured countries, they are most content with this aspect of settling in. Furthermore, 58% state they are satisfied with feeling at home in the American culture — higher than the global 52% — and 26% are dissatisfied. Only International Hires in the UAE rate their ease of getting used to the local culture more positively than those in the USA — 58% are satisfied and 23% are dissatisfied.

While the initial phase of getting used to the American culture has a much higher positive response, the percentage of International Hires feeling at home in the local culture is 15 percentage points lower. This indicates

that the integration factor of eventually feeling at home in the USA is where International Hires struggle a bit more, and could suggest that this is where they require more support.

In terms of making friends, International Hires have some of the most positive ratings compared to those in the other featured countries, but the percentages are not very high — 57% are satisfied with the ease of making new friends and 36% are dissatisfied, while 51% find it easy to make local friends and 36% struggle. Of the featured countries, International Hires in the USA are most content with making local friends. In terms of making new friends, only International Hires in the UAE and China are more satisfied than those in the USA. In the UAE, 61% are satisfied and 18% are dissatisfied with making new friends, and in China, 55% are satisfied and 24% are dissatisfied.

As with the Foreign Assignees, this is again an indication of the difficulties that the expats have with settling in.

A French female International Hire says that while she likes the “work opportunities” and the fact that “people are generally friendly,” she dislikes “that in the USA relationships are easy to make but are also much more superficial. Don't expect any call back”.

An Indian male says: “There is a general disconnect with people and their true self. It all appears to be a facade but maybe that's just a cultural thing”.

A Canadian male states: “Making new friends is not easy.

Very few Americans prefer to mix outside of their social bubble”. A Portuguese female seems to agree: “I don't have many friends”.

“*Making new friends is not easy. Very few Americans prefer to mix outside of their social bubble.*”



Canadian male
International Hire

Happiness

Of the International Hires in the nine featured countries, those in the USA are second-happiest with life in general — 78% indicate happiness and 12% unhappiness. Only those in the Netherlands are happier overall — 84% are happy and 8% are unhappy. Globally, 71% of International Hires are happy with their life abroad, making the share of those that are happy in the USA seven percentage points higher than the global average. Foreign Assignees in the USA are happier, with a positive happiness rating five percentage points higher (83%) than that of the International Hires in the country.



RELOCATING SPOUSES IN THE USA

Relocation Support

While Relocating Spouses are not as supported as Foreign Assignees in the USA, they do receive better assistance than International Hires in some instances.

For example, in terms of practical support, 68% of Relocating Spouses in the USA received moving assistance (compared to 37% of International Hires) and 65% received a lump-sum payment for expatriation-related expenses (compared to 26% of International Hires). Furthermore, the shares of Relocating Spouses that received these two types of support are above the global averages — 54% of Relocating Spouses globally received the organized move and 50% received the lump-sum payment.

Compared to Relocating Spouses in the other featured countries, those in the USA have the second-highest share that received moving assistance — only Hong Kong has a larger share that got the offer (74%). For the lump-sum payment, only those in Hong Kong and China (68% in both countries) have larger shares that received it. Of the Relocating Spouses in the USA that received these types of support, 70% found the organized move useful and 83% indicated that the monetary support helped.

In terms of receiving additional spouse support, 27% of Relocating Spouses in the USA got the offer, while 57% didn't, but would have liked it. The percentage that received it is one percentage point above the global average (26%). Furthermore, compared to the other featured countries, it is the second-largest share that received it — only China has a larger share of respondents indicating they received it (45%).

Relocating Spouses in the USA also received better support with intercultural training than those in most of the other featured countries — 18% received it, higher than the global

average of 15%. The same percentage of Relocating Spouses in Germany (18%) received intercultural training, while 37% of those in China got this support.

This is a positive sign that employers with Relocating Spouses in the USA do support this expat type a bit better than employers with spouses in some of the other featured countries. However, there does still seem to be a lack in other, less practical, support. For example, with access to local networking and socializing opportunities, and membership in an expat organization, the shares of Relocating Spouses in the USA that received it are less than the global averages. Furthermore, 72% indicated a need for networking, 66% a need for socializing, and 68% a need for membership in and expat organization.

Ease of Settling In

Relocating Spouses in the USA are not as satisfied with their ease of settling in, when compared to Foreign Assignees and International Hires in the country, as well as Relocating Spouses in some of the other featured countries.

In terms of getting used to the local culture, 54% agree that it's easy and 24% disagree. The positive rating is just one percentage point higher than the global average (53%) and the negative rating two percentage points lower than the global average (26%). Of the nine featured countries, Relocating Spouses in the UK (61% agree it's easy and 16% disagree), UAE (60% agree it's easy and 20% disagree), Hong Kong (56% agree it's easy and 16% disagree), and the Netherlands (60% agree it's easy and 27% disagree)

find getting used to the local culture easier than those in the USA.

An even lower percentage of Relocating Spouses feel at home in the local culture — 45% are satisfied with feeling at home and 36% are dissatisfied. Their positive satisfaction percentage is below the global average of 50% (globally, 33% are dissatisfied). Of the Relocating Spouses in the other featured countries, those in Hong Kong (56% are satisfied and 22% dissatisfied), the UAE (58% are satisfied and 27% dissatisfied), France (54% are satisfied and 24% dissatisfied), and the UK (47% are satisfied and 26% dissatisfied) are overall more satisfied with feeling at home in the local culture. Again, making the Relocating Spouses in the USA some of the most discontented.

“As close as their culture may be to European culture, there are certain things you will simply never get used to.”

 German female Relocating Spouse

Furthermore, making new friends is a big pain point for Relocating Spouses in the USA — the satisfaction and dissatisfaction percentages are equal at 43% each. Globally, 50% of Relocating Spouses are satisfied with the ease of making new friends, so the share in the USA is seven percentage points lower than the global average. Only Relocating Spouses in the UK (37% are satisfied and 46% dissatisfied) and Switzerland (38% are satisfied and 47%

dissatisfied) are less satisfied. This makes the Relocating Spouses in the USA third-least satisfied.

A German female Relocating Spouse says she doesn't like not getting used to the culture: “As close as their culture may be to European culture, there are certain things you will simply never get used to”. A Danish female says she dislikes “their superficial politeness”.

Another female, a Polish national, says she dislikes her “poor social life” in the country, while a Venezuelan female says she feels “a lack of exposure to locals”.

From the ratings and some of the responses of Relocating Spouses, it is clear that settling in has its challenges and that they specifically need more support with broadening social circles and feeling at home.

Happiness

Similar to their lower positive ratings for settling in in the USA, Relocating Spouses also rate their happiness with life in general lower than most of those in the other featured countries — 67% are happy and 15% are unhappy. Their happiness percentage is five percentage points lower than the global average (72%), and their unhappiness percentage is two percentage points higher than the global average (13%). Of the nine featured countries, only Relocating Spouses in the UK (61% are happy and 21% unhappy) and France (59% are happy and 19% unhappy) are unhappier overall. This makes those in the USA third-unhappiest.

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