

Preparing for the new UK immigration system: Your checklist

May 2020

Whilst the world's focus has been on the coronavirus pandemic and global mobility professionals have dealt with implications of a COVID displaced workforce, the negotiation of a trade deal between the UK and the EU has continued. Contrary to the pandemic slowing progress, at the end of April, Michael Gove confirmed that the current transition period would not need extending. Where there is economic decline, restrictive immigration policies tend to follow. Therefore, if there is a rise in unemployment, we would expect to see the government ensure that free movement ends when scheduled to do so. This is a timely reminder to businesses that despite the COVID-19 pandemic, planning for your workforce post-Brexit must continue. From 1 January 2021, Europeans arriving in the UK (and vice versa) will need permission to work (although none of this will apply to Irish nationals). In the UK, there will be a new immigration regime (detailed in [our guide](#)).

Whilst planning to remobilise, it is important that you communicate about the issues the business could face and how to solve them. This will ensure realistic timeframes post the economic downturn are taken into account and requisite budgets can be made available. Here is our checklist to get you started.

CORE MESSAGING THROUGHOUT THE PERIOD OF CHANGE IS KEY



Define core messages



Identify key stakeholders



Message ongoing planning and business continuity efforts



Define action points required from stakeholders

Task	What this means	How to do it	When to do it	Who needs to know
GATHER DATA	<p>Check you know of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Number of employees ▶ Salary band for the role ▶ Job role and skill level ▶ STEM skills ▶ English language ▶ Nationality 	<p>Review systems, available data, data held by vendors</p> <p>Draw out key themes and potential risk areas including particular impacted business divisions or roles</p> <p>Consider how and what data you are collating now for any new hires</p>	Now	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Mobility ▶ People Ops ▶ HR ▶ Line Managers
WORKFORCE PLANNING	Identify at risk roles and plan how to mitigate impact	<p>Assess job titles, roles, business divisions to identify risk areas via salary and a workforce planning audit</p> <p>Define workforce into three potential pools of talent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Likely to qualify but at increased cost and speed ▶ Likely to qualify but for limited period at increased cost and speed ▶ Unlikely to qualify <p>Consider whether European/UK business visitors need work permission</p> <p>Communicate the potential delays and costs to Line Manager reliant on talent</p> <p>Adjust business model or recruitment strategy, if needed, in line with vastly reduced access to lower skilled workers</p> <p>Consider alternatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Train ▶ Redeploy ▶ Retain ▶ Offshore or Outsource ▶ Automate 	Now	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The C-Suite ▶ HR and Recruitment ▶ Finance ▶ Legal ▶ Line Managers ▶ Public Affairs

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HEADCOUNT PLANNING	Strategically move people to take advantage of the immigration regime in place	<p>Review staffing needs including recruitment streams, projects and graduate intakes and map against the impact of the new immigration regime</p> <p>Educate Recruiters, Mobility and Line Managers on the benefit of strategically planning start dates to avoid immigration costs or take advantage of preferential regimes</p> <p>This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Move Europeans earlier – by 31 December 2020 ▶ Facilitate eligibility of Europeans to the EU Settlement Scheme ▶ Delay moves of non Europeans who will benefit from the new immigration regime ▶ Provide training and resources to Recruiters to explain the impact of start dates ▶ Communicate costs and timing implications to the business and impact on projects or large populations ▶ Communicate with impacted individuals and move start dates accordingly 	Summer 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Recruiters ▶ Line Managers ▶ Impacted individuals
FINANCIAL FORECASTING	<p>Use data to plot moves and plan ahead</p> <p>Analyse the impact to 2021 budgets</p>	<p>Plot UK government fees against projected number of moves</p> <p>Predict the spend and required budget for 2021 by using the results of the workforce assessments and knowledge of business priorities</p> <p>Communicate the impact and build into financial planning</p>	Mid to late Summer 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Finance ▶ The C-Suite ▶ Line Managers
REVIEW POLICIES AND PROCESSES	Ahead of UK free movement rights ending, adjust mobility policies in line with predicted requirements.	<p>Carry out a review and update of the following policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Recruitment ▶ Onboarding including contracts of employment and letters of assignment ▶ Work ready populations ▶ Visa services and benefits ▶ Remote working ▶ Graduate intakes and internships 	Late 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ HR ▶ Legal ▶ Recruiters

HOW WE ARE HELPING OUR CLIENTS

We continue to support our clients in a variety of ways to meet their business needs:



SOC code mapping



Workforce audits



Issue awareness videos



Quick-glance reference guides



Remote training sessions



Data driven analysis



Bespoke communications

There is a lot to do, but planning can start now. Do get in touch with your Fragomen contact if you'd like help with any of the above.