

17026 Meet the people leaving for countries where they feel more at home.

By Eric Barton, BBC News, February 2017

In August, when the US presidential election came down to two candidates, neither of whom he liked, an American and his family decided to move to Canada. When he told friends and family about his plan to leave, many wondered if he was abandoning his country.

The move wasn't difficult for this American, logistically or emotionally. He already works from home in his job as a video game developer and he says his future Canadian home aligns more closely with his left-wing political ideals.

It's not a new concept, the idea of moving somewhere that's more suitable to how you think or the way you want to live your life. But with the spectacular rise in telecommuting, and as firms become increasingly globalised, it has become much less complicated.

After the Brexit vote and the election of President Trump, many more people than normal have considered leaving their "passport" countries. Most people were looking to move to countries with more liberal or progressive politics. Top of the list are Scandinavian countries and New Zealand.

It's easy to think that the polarised political climates are the main cause for people choosing to cross borders indefinitely. But this recent trend actually has as much or more to do with technology. In the era of telecommuting, and as companies spread wider across the globe, moving to feel more at home in another country has become much easier.

Since 2005, the number of people working from home has more than doubled. For an employee with the desire to move countries but not to destabilise their working life or career altogether, the barriers to relocation are rapidly disappearing. Technology has meant people are not tied to an office the ways they have been.

While some are moving to new countries for a better personal fit, others are declining offers to work overseas for the same reasons. Many Americans, for example, have refused work in the Middle East, worried that the US's recent attempts to ban immigrants from seven predominantly Muslim countries will make them unwelcome when travelling to Arab nations.

For a long time now, it was widely accepted that people travelled around the world without borders for new jobs, but doesn't that seem to be eroding? In reality, most immigrants will be welcome when moving internationally. People in most nations think immigrants can become citizens and fit in to their new country, just like native-born people.

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