



GLOBAL EMPLOYMENT COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST



**questions to stress-test international hiring
before you enter a new market**

- Local Employment Law
- Payroll Management
- Employee Benefits
- Global Mobility
- Cross-border Hiring Risks

HOW TO USE THIS CHECKLIST

A practical checklist for employers planning international hiring, covering employment law, payroll, tax withholding, immigration and work permits, permanent establishment risk, worker classification, benefits and compliant local employment contracts.

1

Map the cross-border hiring scenario

Country, role, seniority, candidate location, nationality, start date, hiring route, mobility need and commercial purpose.

2

Identify risk before commitment

Market entry, employment law, entity and classification risk, payroll and tax, contracts, disputes, immigration, benefits, employee lifecycle and ongoing support.

3

Turn unknowns into actions

Mark what is already confirmed, what needs local validation, and what may change the cost, timeline, contract, hiring model or implementation plan.

Treat this checklist as a diagnostic. Use it to map out what you have fully covered and where your expansion strategy is still exposed. For the areas where you need a localised, compliant solution, that is exactly what we build.

Before capital is committed, test how the new market will affect cost, speed, liability and exit options.

01

What are the regulatory requirements for entering a new market without establishing a local entity?

06

What is the best way to scale your workforce in a new market while managing risks?

02

How do employment laws affect your ability to hire quickly in a new region?

07

How do you evaluate a market's potential before making a full commitment?

03

Are there specific sectors or industries that require different compliance measures?

08

What are the legal implications of running a pilot or test phase without setting up a permanent presence?

04

What are the risks of entering this market from a political, economic and legal standpoint?

09

How do you maintain operational flexibility while exploring new markets?

05

How does local competition affect your hiring and compensation strategy?

10

What is the best way to pivot or exit a market quickly if it proves unviable?

Operating cross-border means navigating complex statutory benefits, local working-hour limitations and strict termination rules where non-compliance carries immediate financial exposure.

11

Which critical employment laws differ between your home country and the new market?

16

Are there industry-specific regulations that need special attention?

12

Are you aware of the mandatory benefits and protections required for employees in that jurisdiction?

17

Do you understand how unionisation or collective bargaining laws could affect your workforce?

13

How do local contract laws affect your employment agreements?

18

What are the legal consequences of misclassifying workers?

14

What are the specific notice periods and termination rights in the new country?

19

What are the requirements for severance payments and dismissal procedures?

15

Which labour laws, if any, limit employee working hours and overtime?

20

How will you handle conflicts between your corporate policies and local employment law?

Hiring without a local entity requires careful assessment of tax exposure, local tax presence and worker status.

21

Do you need a legal entity in each country where you plan to hire, or can you operate without one?

26

How does local law define the difference between an employee and an independent contractor?

22

Which activities could trigger permanent establishment status in the countries you're entering?

27

What are the risks of misclassifying employees as contractors in the markets you're expanding into?

23

How can you assess and mitigate the risk of creating a permanent establishment by accident?

28

What processes ensure correct worker classification across different jurisdictions?

24

Are you aware of the tax obligations that come with permanent establishment status in each jurisdiction?

29

How will you handle payroll, taxes and benefits for contractors and stay compliant?

25

What are the legal and financial implications of operating without a local legal entity?

30

What alternatives let you enter and test new markets without long-term commitment, so you can pivot or exit if things change?

Payroll must be accurate from the first cycle: reporting, deductions, contributions and cross-border payment detail all matter.

31

How do tax regulations differ in each country you're operating in?

36

How will you manage currency exchange and cross-border salary payments?

32

Are you clear on the payroll reporting requirements for each jurisdiction?

37

What are the social security and pension obligations in each market?

33

What is the local tax withholding process for employees?

38

How do tax equalisation and tax protection schemes apply to your expatriates?

34

How do you ensure proper tax deductions for remote workers across borders?

39

What are the penalties for missing local payroll deadlines or tax filings?

35

Are there country-specific payroll tax holidays or exemptions to consider?

40

Are you prepared to handle tax audits across multiple jurisdictions?

05 INTERNATIONAL EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS

Every clause must be checked against local enforceability, language requirements, public policy and collective rules.

41

Which clauses must be included for a contract to be enforceable locally?

46

What are the requirements for probationary periods in different countries?

42

How do local contract laws affect the terms of your employment agreements?

47

How do non-compete and confidentiality agreements differ from country to country?

43

What are the key differences between fixed-term and open-ended contracts in your target country?

48

How will you manage contract renewals in regions with unusual employment laws?

44

Are there mandatory contract terms or benefits that need to be reflected in your agreements?

49

What are the risks of using foreign-language contracts, and how should translation be handled?

45

How do termination clauses vary between regions, and how should they be handled?

50

How do you handle local language requirements while keeping contracts compliant with regional collective bargaining agreements?

Planning for these challenges in advance helps minimise disruptions to your operations. The right strategy will keep your business stable even when problems arise.

51

What are the most significant regulatory risks in the markets you're entering?

56

How will you manage workforce conflicts that arise from cultural misunderstandings?

52

How does local law affect your ability to resolve disputes with employees?

57

How do local courts handle employment disputes, and what are the timelines for resolution?

53

Are there specific legal protections for employees that could lead to disputes?

58

Are there added risks from political instability in the regions you're entering?

54

How will you prepare for changes in employment law after you expand?

59

What contingency plans are in place for sudden changes in regulatory requirements?

55

Which local arbitration or dispute resolution mechanisms are available?

60

How will you stay compliant with termination law if a dispute arises?

Overlooking specific work permit processing windows or quota restrictions creates severe risk of regulatory fines and operational disruption.

61

What are the specific visa and work permit requirements for each country?

66

Are there restrictions on hiring expatriates, or do specific quotas apply?

62

How long does work permit processing take on average, and how can it be expedited?

67

What are the risks of hiring employees before their work permits are approved?

63

What are the costs of securing work permits and visas?

68

How do dependent visas and family relocation affect your hiring decisions?

64

How do changes in local immigration law affect your ability to hire foreign talent?

69

What are the implications of hiring remote workers from countries where you have no legal presence?

65

How will you manage visa renewals and work permit expirations?

70

How do you ensure full compliance with immigration rules for international hires?

Designing viable total reward packages means identifying the exact tax-efficient benefits valued within that distinct economic landscape.

71

What are the mandatory employee benefits in the countries where you're hiring?

76

Which cultural differences in benefit expectations do you need to account for?

72

Which voluntary benefits are most valued in the specific regions you're operating in?

77

How do you handle holiday entitlements and local time-off policies?

73

How do local pension and social security systems affect your compensation packages?

78

Are there unique voluntary benefits you can offer that stand out from local competitors?

74

Are there tax-efficient benefits you can offer to attract local talent?

79

How will you manage salary benchmarks and benefits across markets to stay competitive?

75

How do you tailor voluntary benefits, like wellness programmes or flexible work, to cultural expectations?

80

How do you offer flexible packages that let employees customise perks to personal and cultural preferences?

09 EMPLOYEE LIFECYCLE MANAGEMENT

Compliance risk continues after onboarding: performance management, promotions, transfers, and termination all require local handling.

81

What are the local onboarding requirements for new hires?

86

How do you handle grievances and disciplinary action while complying with local law?

82

How do you manage probationary periods and performance reviews across different countries?

87

What support systems can you put in place to improve retention in international markets?

83

Which local laws govern promotions and salary adjustments?

88

How do you ensure training and development programmes meet both corporate and legal standards?

84

How do you ensure smooth transitions when employees are promoted or transferred across borders?

89

What legal protections must be in place for employees resigning or being terminated?

85

What are the requirements for managing terminations in different jurisdictions?

90

How does local law affect severance, and what can you do to avoid disputes?

Remote teams require reliable, round-the-clock escalation paths and localised crisis resolution to maintain alignment and mitigate risk.

91

How do you handle urgent employee issues across time zones to ensure timely resolution?

96

What will you do to build an agile problem-solving framework for your global workforce?

92

What systems let employees access immediate HR, technical or personal support?

97

How do you keep a personal, human touch when resolving issues remotely?

93

How do you ensure employees in different regions get localised support relevant to where they are?

98

How do employees know exactly who to contact in a crisis, and can they expect a fast, empathetic response?

94

What processes address unexpected legal or regulatory issues affecting remote employees?

99

How will you manage sudden technical problems that hold up remote employees' productivity?

95

How do you make sure employees feel supported during personal challenges while working remotely?

100

How do you ensure decision-makers are reachable and responsive when a critical issue needs escalating?



COMPLIANT EMPLOYMENT FOR KEY INTERNATIONAL HIRES

Acumen International acts as the legal employer in 190+ countries, helping companies hire, retain, relocate and formalise talent through compliant local employment solutions. We support local and international hires, blue- and white-collar roles, executive and senior appointments, project-based roles and workforce needs across every major sector.

- Local employment through Acumen's Employer of Record solutions
- Payroll, statutory contributions, mandatory and optional employee benefits
- Work permit sponsorship and immigration support for international hires
- Global mobility support for relocation, cross-border deployment and workforce planning
- Compliant employment arrangements for senior, executive and revenue-generating roles
- Contractor-to-employee transitions to avoid misclassification risk
- Country-specific hiring compliance, tax reporting and ongoing HR support
- Market entry and exit where a local entity is not the right immediate route

Talk to Acumen International experts about the right employment route before the first hire is made.

US: +1 (646) 500-8634 | UK: +44 (203) 468-8777 | EU: +357 (22) 056-002