

Template for Coming Home Checklist

1/General

- Check the Foreign Services Allowances and Facilities System (removal, housing, relocation, home leave, language training, school fees).
- Visit the Family Office(FO)/Partners and Children Office website, check if a special 'repat'(repatriation) programme exists.
- Consult the 'Home-Coming' post report of your Ministry for Foreign Affairs /MFA) or association, if available, and guides and websites on your hometown.
- Check what services your Association provides when coming home (buddy system, welcome back coffee, list of useful contacts etc).
- Foreign Born Partners (FBP) coming to the home country for the first time: arrange authorisation for temporary stay (allow a minimum of six weeks).
- Inform the FO and your Spouses Association of your return and, if possible, provide your contact details/personal email address.

2/Documents

- Apply for passport or ID.
- Arrange visa and (temporary) residence permit for Foreign Born Spouse (FBS) if applicable.
- Arrange tickets for trip home.
- Arrange certified copies of birth certificate, marriage certificate, good behaviour certificate (criminal record), educational certificates and deeds if necessary.
- Check your (international) vaccination booklet.
- Apply for national/international driving licences.
- Apply for drivers licence if your home country (HC) does not recognise your foreign one. If necessary take a new driving test.
- Get passport photographs (check whether you need black-and-white or colour).
- Order business cards if necessary, but first find out what is now customary in your home country.
- Keep copies of the bills of the last 6 months (can be asked for in your home country).
- Give back your local ID.

3/Work/Study

- Contact your (eventual) former employer(s).
- Contact your Family Office (FO) and Spouses Association (or check websites) about employment opportunities in your home country.
- See Human Resources Department (career advisers) for information about jobs within the MFA.
- Get addresses and check out contacts for voluntary work.
- Give notice/change employment arrangements.
- Arrange authenticated translation of educational certificates.
- Request letters of reference to your former employers or associations where you worked voluntarily (validation of experience certificate if available).
- Register as an unemployed jobseeker with the local employment office to be eligible for continuing education, training or benefits.
- Check if you are entitled to unemployment money (in case you were working abroad).
- Check with the Family Office (FO) regarding the new rules for your pension, once back home.
- Join career networks and use all your 'old' and existing networks.
- Ask the Family Office (FO) for information about language courses and acculturation courses.
- Check your eligibility for a study allowance with the FO.
- Eventually, enrol for correspondence courses.

4/Children and Schools

- Get information and brochures from your FO, your MFA or your association.
- Enrol children at new kindergarten/school/college in time (be aware of waiting lists).
- Pack most recent school reports and curriculum information for the new school in your suitcase!
- Arrange boarding school/host family/accommodation if necessary.
- Notify your children's old school, crèche, nannies, clubs, etc., in writing of the family's departure.
- Collect addresses and e-mail addresses of the friends you made locally.
- Discuss child benefits and student finances with your FO.
- Return books to the library, rented material to clubs, etc.

5/Finances

- Wind up any outstanding tax matters.
- Make sure your personal finances are in order (open a transferable bank account, if necessary).
- Arrange credit cards, cheques and currency, valid in your home town.
- Note down the telephone numbers for blocking bank and credit cards.
- Cancel (or request) direct debit authorisations.
- Close your local bank account and cancel credit cards connected to it.
- Stop all automatic payments.

6/Removal

- Contact your MFA or Head of Administration (HOA) at your old post about removal procedure.
- Get quotations from removal firms (if relevant).
- Keep a copy of the inventory and pictures with you.
- Keep the bills of the items you have bought while abroad.
- Arrange customs formalities for furniture, personal effects and car.
- Check tips for relocations in general.
- Get and fill in transport and storage insurance forms. Check what you can and cannot import in your country (e.g. ivory, imitations of branded luxury goods).
- Check local rules about exporting antiques, art objects etc.
- Pack personal valuables by yourself.
- Use one room to store your personal items/suitcases and lock it.

7/Housing

Old Home

- Cancel or amend your rent in your country of departure.
- Organise inspection of your house to get your deposit back, if applicable.
- Cancel house insurance, house guards/security, house cleaning company, etc.
- Make inventories (note dimensions if useful) itemising according to Transport, Storage or Leave behind (to sell, give away, or State-owned).
- Arrange cleaning/repairs of home, clothing, footwear, furniture, curtains (keep receipts).
- Check inventories of household items with Head of Operational Management (if furnishings are state-owned) and/or landlord.
- Draw up official inventory of home and contents.
- Take pictures of valuable furniture and other items (useful in case of theft, loss or damage during the removal/transport).
- Have gas, water, electricity, telephone and cable TV disconnected.
- Cancel utilities contracts with electricity, gas and water suppliers (verification of the meters/counters), landline phone, mobile phones, internet supplier, surveillance companies and local subscriptions.
- Cancel/change TV/radio licence, household help, window cleaner, central heating maintenance, gardener, chimney sweep, insurance policies, subscriptions, memberships, statutory medical insurance, etc.
- Gather manuals for use of equipment and assembly instructions.
- Go through all your cupboards to weed out what you don't need and organise sale of items you will not take with you (by word of mouth, school, companies, etc.).

- Donate items you will not take with you (charity organisation, etc.).
- Computer: *Make a back-up of all important documents and pictures on an external hard disk.
*If you sell your computer, take out or format your internal hard disk.

New Home

- Arrange housing (buy, rent or recuperate your own home).
- Check if you are eligible “social/state-subsidised housing” once back in your country.
- Obtain information about waiting lists and waiting times for rented accommodation.
- Organise temporary accommodation if necessary (hotel, family, furnished flat).
- Apply (if applicable) for a housing allowance on your return to your home town.
- Organise (temporary) storage of household goods and check the rules of the MFA.

8/Medical matters

- Make an appointment for medical examinations and vaccinations according to your home country’s requirements.
- Buy, if needed, an extra supply of medications you were used to (ask for copies of your prescriptions).
- Get copies of your medical records (with medical terminology in Latin or the local language), medical/dental X-rays and optical records.
- Get or check your blood group card and medication passport.
- On arriving home, make arrangements to find a doctor, dentist and medical specialists or contact your old ones.
- Pack in your hand luggage necessary medicines and a first aid kit.
- If applicable, women should register in the state program for Mammography and Cervical PAP test.

9/Insurances

- Notify insurance companies well in advance of your departure date and ask for eventual refunds.
- Change your medical insurance to get coverage in your home country.
- Arrange for insurance cover for your household effects.
- Arrange for house insurance.
- Arrange for travel and luggage insurance.
- Arrange for accident insurance.
- Arrange for third-party insurance.
- Get your car insurance changed (ask for Bonus-Malus report/No-claim statement from your previous insurer).
- Pack a copy of your insurance policies in your hand luggage.

10/Pets

- Get information from the MFA or your removal company about the conditions applicable to pets (vaccinations, health certificate, other conditions for entry).
- Arrange vaccinations and health certificate in good time.
- Get an animal passport and vaccination certificates.
- If the pet has an electronic chip and is registered by the federal Veterinary Authorities/Ministry of Agriculture; inform them of your departure.
- Get the airline checklist for pets.
- Arrange for transport and/or collection/boarding.
- Attach a label with the name of the pet, your name and address and feeding instructions to the side of the travel box.

11/Car

- Order a car/sell your car.
- Organise a temporary rental car if necessary.
- Cancel old car insurance (ask for refund if possible).
- Get information about import and export procedures.
- Arrange for road tax in your HC.
- Arrange for registration of new car/customs formalities.

- O Arrange for no-claim statement (Bonus Malus) for car insurance (in the language of the home country or in English).
- O Arrange for Third Party insurance.
- O Hand in your old licence plates in due time.
- O Cancel your resident parking permits or rental of parking space if relevant and arrange for it in your HC if necessary.

12/Change-of-address notices

- O Put your name back into the national and municipal database.
- O Notify all the necessary departments of your MFA.
- O Apply to the post office for a change-of-address service.
- O Send a mail to your entire address book announcing you are moving and giving your new data: new address, new email address, new phone.
- O Send change-of-address cards to your bank, insurance companies, friends, family, and business relations (update the list).
- O Change the voicemail of your telephone and give your future/new contact number.
- O Get your name put on the electoral register in your home town at the municipality's Elections Office (for eligibility to vote in general, municipal, European elections and referendums).
- O Inform your doctor, dentist and/or medical specialists of your departure and organise new ones in your home country.

13/Last minute arrangements

- O Arrange for transport to the airport.
- O Check tickets and reconfirm booking 24 hours before departure.
- O Hand in diplomatic passes and/or ID cards (including Ministry pass).
- O Pack your important bank and insurance papers in your hand luggage.

14/On arrival

- O Make a note of and report any items damaged during removal.
- O Declare your presence at local municipal or police office (according to local law).
- O Register foreign documents with the Foreign Documents Department/or relevant authorities (birth certificate, marriage certificate etc) in the municipality of your home town.
- O Check about international organisations for expats active in your hometown (e.g. International Women's Club, Accueil Francophone, etc.).

Glossary :

HC	Home Country
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
FO	Family Office
FBP	Foreign Born Partner
HOA	Head Of Administration