



GMS Flash Alert

Immigration Edition

2019-065 | April 1, 2019

Ireland - Impact of Brexit on "The Common Travel Area"

The Common Travel Area and associated rights and privileges represent a series of informal and recognized rights for British and Irish citizens travelling between, as well as working and living in, the U.K. and the Republic of Ireland.

It is the position of the U.K., Ireland, and the European Union (EU) that the Common Travel Area will not be affected by the U.K.'s exit from the EU.¹

In this *GMS Flash Alert*, we highlight the impact of Brexit on rights in respect of U.K.-Ireland cross-border travel, immigration, social security, and health-care.

WHY THIS MATTERS

As a result of the U.K. leaving the EU, immigration changes are imminent for British citizens travelling to and working in the EU.

However, whether there is a "hard" or "soft" Brexit, the position of British citizens travelling to and living and working in the Republic of Ireland will remain unchanged. In addition to this, there will be no change to the rights of Irish citizens travelling to and living and working in the United Kingdom.

Immigration Impact of Brexit on Common Travel Area

British citizens are exempt from the application of Irish immigration legislation,² and U.K. legislation provides that the Republic of Ireland is not deemed to be a foreign country,³ meaning that, Irish citizens do not require immigration permission to live and work in the United Kingdom.

As a result, British citizens can live and work in the Republic of Ireland, and Irish citizens can live and work in the U.K., without requiring immigration permission. This will **not** be impacted by Brexit.

Social Security Impact of Brexit on Common Travel Area

The Irish government published the *Withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union (Consequential Provisions) Bill 2019* on 22 February 2019. The bill seeks to enable certain health-care arrangements to be maintained between the U.K. and Ireland,⁵ and allows for the continued payment of a number of Social Security payments.⁶

In essence, the proposed legislation seeks to codify the existing health-care and Social Security rights of British citizens in the Republic of Ireland, so that those rights are **not** impacted by Brexit.

KPMG NOTE

It is the position of the U.K., Ireland, and the EU that the Common Travel Area will not be impacted by Brexit, whether the U.K. leaves the EU with a deal in place or without a deal (so-called “no deal Brexit”). As such, employers will still be able to send their British employees to the Republic of Ireland, and Irish employees to the U.K. as they do now.

FOOTNOTES:

1 For related coverage, see GMS [Flash Alert 2017-189](#) (21 December 2017).

2 Aliens Exemption Order 1999.

3 Ireland Act, 1949, s.2.

4 See “The UK’s future skills-based immigration system,” White Paper, December 2019 by clicking [here](#).

For general information, see the Irish government’s Brexit [website](#).

5 “Withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union (Consequential Provisions) Bill 2019”, s.4.

6 “Withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union (Consequential Provisions) Bill 2019.”

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Contact us

For additional information or assistance, please contact your local Legal, GMS, or People Services professional* or one of the following professionals with the KPMG International member firm in Ireland:



Aoife Newton
Tel. + 353 1 700 4258
Aoife.newton@kpmg.ie



Philip McNally
Tel. + 44 28 90 893 888
Philip.mcnally@kpmg.ie



Reshma Shah
Tel. + 353 1 700 4862
Reshma.shah@kpmg.ie

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