

# LOCATION LOCATION

Avoid the rush hour by avoiding the UK.  
By Bryony Taylor.

Stepping out of your front door into the sea of the bustling rush hour commuters and rainy weather provides an experience which is very nearly enough to stop you going into the office at all. The commuting experience has never been envied and, with a growing population and tourism trade, getting around some of the United Kingdom's major cities for work can often seem like more stress than it is worth. For those living in the city hub, infamous, crowd-filled public transport systems are a constant source of disquiet among the disgruntled work force, who do at least bond with colleagues complaining about its appalling state.

Other commuters who choose to clog the arteries of the city streets by driving in from their suburban country piles in the crucial pre-work rush hour seem to harbour a growing hatred for the journey and for fellow commuters themselves. Commuting can cause dangerous stress and rage levels in even the most placid people. How far you live from the office is an important part of your working day, and often affects your choice of job or home.

Notoriously high house prices in cities and an equally renowned commute to the concrete office block are forcing a new breed of office worker to adapt to survive. According to recent research more and more office workers fly into their work from homes across Europe. Flexible working hours, fast internet connections and affordable air travel are making it easier for the

long-distance commuter to exist. In a constant quest for a better quality and more affordable life the question is not in which county to reside, but which country.

A report from Future Forum, set up by travel firm Thomson, suggests that by 2016 there will be 1.5 million people working within the United Kingdom in jobs that do not require you to be in the office every morning, but who will live overseas. The report drawn up by a panel of experts in demographics, travel and technology includes a list of hotspots likely to be in this international commuter belt- Barcelona, Palma, Marrakech, Dubrovnik, Faro, Alicante, Verona, Tallinn, Pula, and Valencia.

With the opening next year of the fast trains between the UK, France and Belgium, making the French city of Lille a mere 80 minutes away, getting to and from our European neighbours has never been easier. Forward thinking employers save on expensive overheads by letting their staff work mostly from their exotic homes, or by allowing them a four day week in the office if needs be.

The rise of international businesses, with their offices in different cities all over the world, has fostered the rise of the international office worker. In future issues, *USP* aims to look at the office cultures of certain major cities and bring to light some of the interesting, humorous and often depressing differences between the office cultures we have become so accustomed to. ■



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