





## **Foreword**



Ben Tyrrell, Head of Movehub

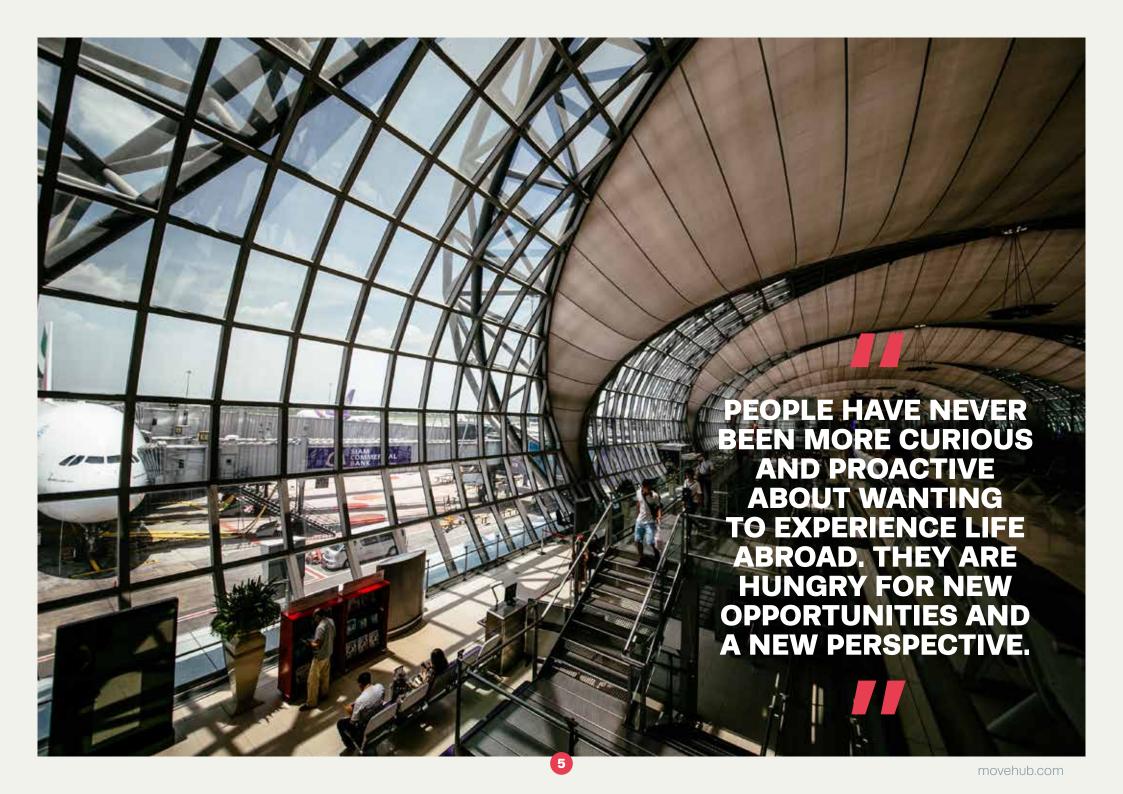
In a year that has delivered more international discord and uncertainty than ever before it is perhaps surprising that the appetite for international relocations has far from dwindled – in fact 2016 proved to be one of the most popular years for international moves.

Despite the turbulent political landscape attitudes towards living abroad have never been more positive – it seems people still believe that moving to a new destination promises them invaluable life experiences, better career opportunities and the chance to immerse themselves in a new culture.

This is MoveHub's second annual report, a thorough analysis of 220,000 moves we have helped to facilitate over the last 12 months and over 350,000 enquiries. The reasons for moving this year are not the same as last year – we are seeing tactical moves to sidestep Brexit and Trump restrictions, swathes of people seeking out danish comfort in the 'hygge' trend, and a rise in the influence of TV and social media on where people choose to move to.

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**88%** of people think that it's **beneficial** to have lived abroad.

Source: Vivatic



**30%** of those asked said the **cost** of living was the most important thing to think about before moving abroad.

## **Attitudes to Moving**

We conducted a survey of 2,000 people using independent survey provider Vivatic to find out how the public feel about moving abroad. We were pleased to see that, despite today's turbulent politics surrounding migration, people still recognise the vast array of benefits that a life abroad can bring. In fact, 88% of respondents thought that it was beneficial to have lived in another country, with 75% saying it gives a fresh perspective on life, 67% saying

it encourages an understanding of different cultures and 58% saying it encourages you to learn new skills.

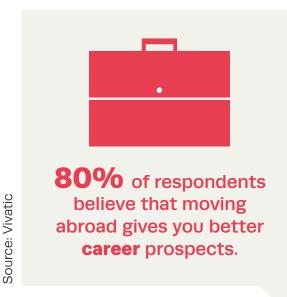
## When it comes to the motivations behind moving:

- Over 50% moved abroad for better jobs prospects
- 1/3 relocate in pursuit of a new challenge or adventure

# Most important things to consider before moving overseas:

- 2nd the job you will have in your new hometown
- 3rd the language of the destination country





We also asked people about the factors that would be most likely to stop them moving abroad. The majority said that not wanting to leave family would be the most influential reason to stay at home but the cost of moving was also

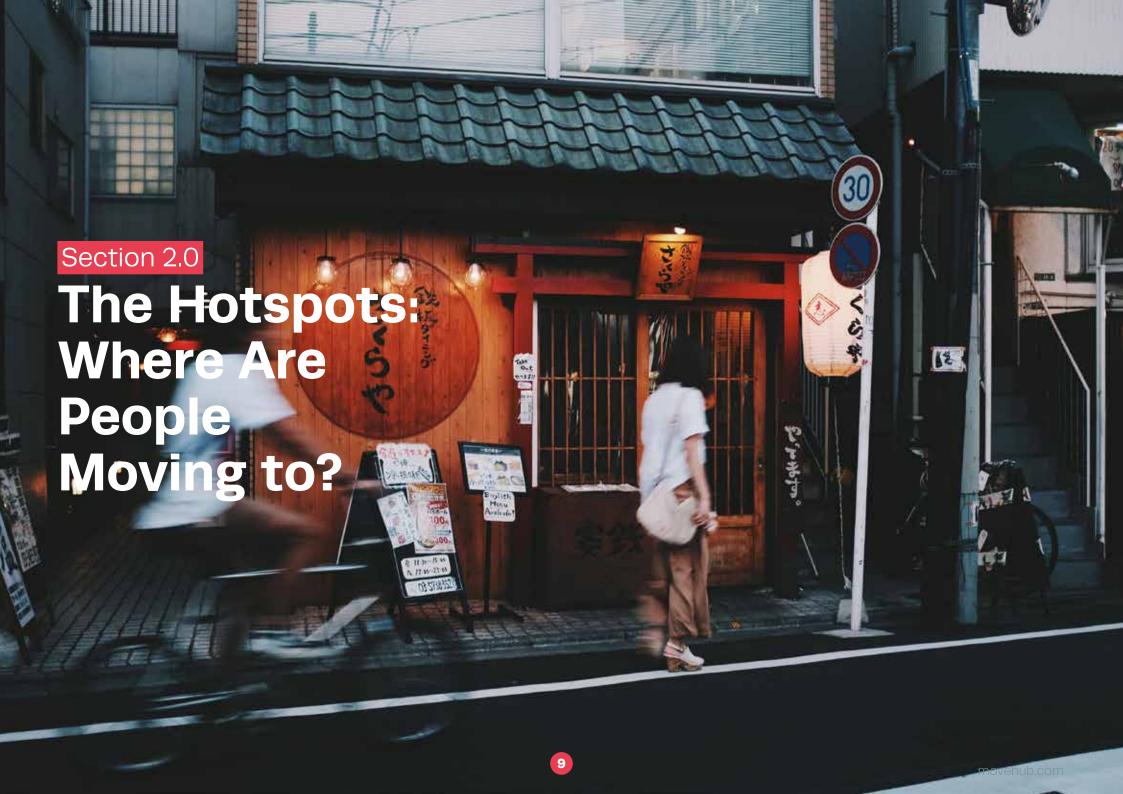
highlighted as an important factor; that 29% of people said they would worry about the most. The survey also revealed that the health care system of a country is a key issue when deciding whether to move there; 38% of respondents cited this as an extremely important factor, with 57% saying that they would be put off moving to a country where healthcare is not subsidised.

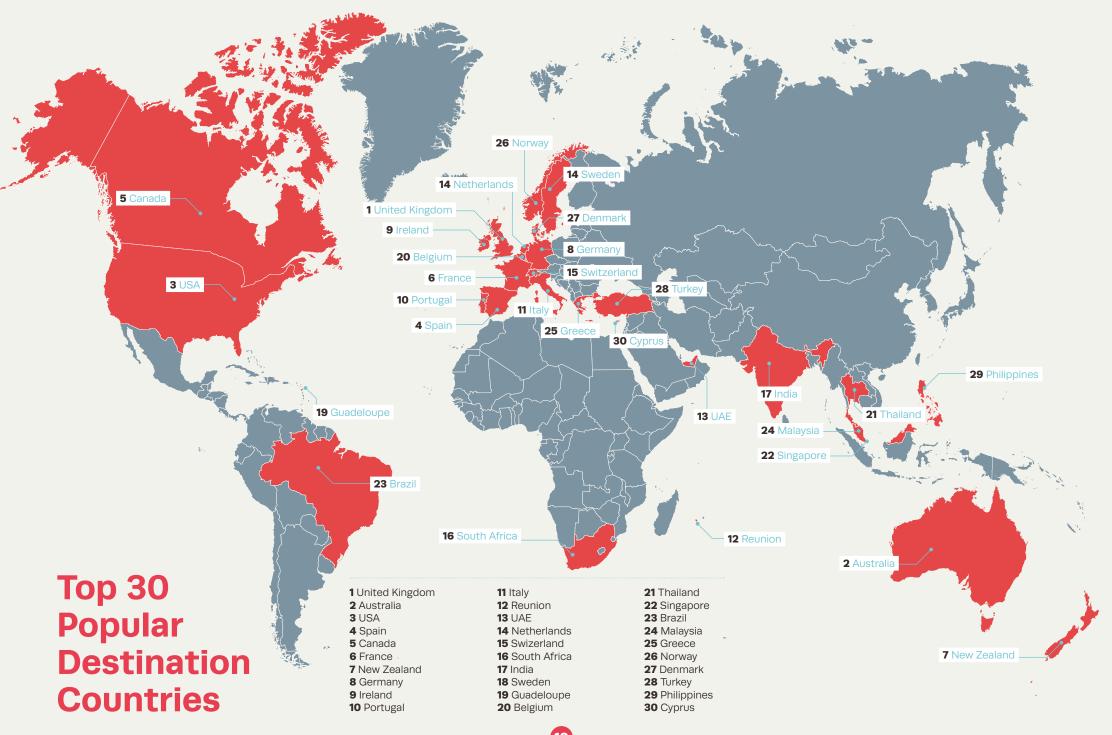
It was encouraging to see that, despite the controversial political events of 2016, 62% of people said they have not been put off moving abroad. Travelling is more popular than ever, especially with millennials, and is one of the most popular experiences to share on social media according to a recent study by Schofields Insurance. Overall, we're delighted to see that the well travelled are held in very high esteem. The majority of survey

respondents described those that have lived abroad as adventurous, confident, ambitious and successful which is a clear testament to the wealth of benefits that living abroad can have.

62% of people said that the political events in 2016 have not put them off

wanting to live overseas.







# **Most Popular Countries and Cities**

Typically, the UK, Australia and the US are some of the most popular places for MoveHub customers to relocate to. In fact, last year's report focussed heavily on finding out exactly why these countries are such favourites and what people expect from their new lives there. We found that many of the people moving there were young professionals seeking better job opportunities and a better quality of life in countries with advanced economies.

This year we compared Movehub data with moving data from 2016 to see if the UK, US and Australia have maintained their hotspot status and our analysis shows that their time in the limelight may be coming to

an end. Out of the three, the UK has taken the biggest popularity hit with 22% less people moving there than last year. The US is also suffering a dip of 10% whilst Australia has fared the best with a 5% decrease on last year. It seems that even 'the big three' are not immune to burgeoning competition as other up-and-coming countries offer a more exciting and often cheaper lifestyle, perfect for increasingly world savvy expats who are hungry for adventure that doesn't break the bank.

In another dramatic turn of events, Indian Ocean island Reunion raced up the ranks this year moving from 21st to 12th most popular country for Movehub customers to move to.

### **UK MOVEMENT**

% change in people moving to UK

 22% fewer people moving to the UK

% change in people leaving UK

 Nearly 2% decrease in number of people leaving the UK

#### **AUS MOVEMENT**

% change in people moving to AUS

 Over 5% decrease in number of people moving to Australia

% change in people leaving AUS

• 41% decline in number of people leaving Australia

#### **US MOVEMENT**

% change in people moving to US

• 10% less people moving to America

% change in people leaving US

• 28% fewer people leaving the US



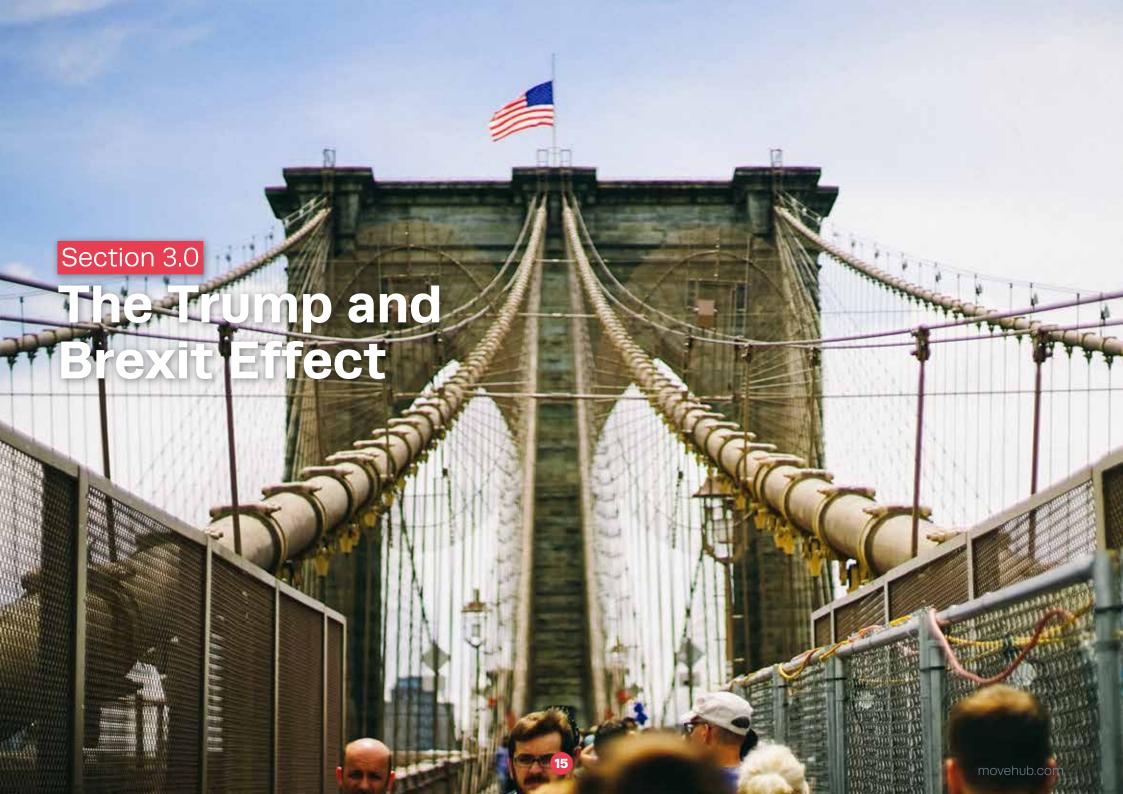
Similarly, Guadeloupe, which failed to make the top 30 last year, this year sailed into the rankings as the 19th most popular destination location, up a phenomenal 153% from last year. The majority of moves to these French island territories are from retirees from the French mainland.

This year's report also looked at the ways the most popular cities have changed since last year. Previously, New York, Amsterdam, Sydney, Dubai and Melbourne were the places to be, but this year Amsterdam and Melbourne have been knocked off the top spots by London and Dublin. In the face of Brexit London remains a microcosm of the world, with people from all over the globe sharing a city whose multiculturalism is central to its much celebrated vibrancy and global appeal. Dublin will remain part of the EU and is now lucratively positioned for businesses wanting to remain in Europe whilst staying close to the UK, which may go some way in explaining its surge in popularity.



MOST POPULAR CITIES	MOST POPULAR CITIES
OVERALL IN 2016	OVERALL IN 2017
New York	New York
Amsterdam	London
Sydney	Sydney
Dubai	Dubai
Melbourne	Dublin





# The Trump and Brexit Effect

## 3.1 The EU Referendum / Brexit

The EU Referendum was one of the most controversial political events of 2016 and its outcome has had global repercussions. Not only has the decision to leave the EU had a huge impact on the UK, it has also greatly influenced the movement of people all over the world. MoveHub data shows that expats from key European countries such as Germany and Spain are flocking back to the UK due to the uncertainty that their future non-EU expat status brings. International relations with EU countries are strained to say the least and statistics show that there is now an influx in Brits returning returning to the UK post-Brexit.



July 2016 - **169%** increase in the number of people **moving back** to the **UK from Germany** following the UK **referendum** result about its future in the EU.

The number of moves from Germany to the UK has increased 19% since 2016 and has risen by 32% for those moving back to the UK from popular expat destination, Spain. In the run up to the EU referendum election, searches for moves to the UK in both Spain and Germany peaked to X% and x% respectively.



Searches for moving back to the UK peaked in Spain and Germany in the run up to the referendum vote on June 23rd.

Searches for the phrase 'move to Canada' peaked to an all-time high the day after Super Tuesday.



## 3.2 Trump Election

There was no shortage of political drama in the US this year either. In one of the most contentious and hotly anticipated presidential elections in history, Donald Trump was named president of the US in November 2016. His controversial policies meant that the day after the Republican primaries, searches for the phrase 'move to Canada' were higher than at any other time

in Google's history and this wasn't the only place they were thinking of starting a new life in. In the 24 hours after Trump was announced as president the website of immigration New Zealand received 56,300 visits from the US – 24 times the usual amount.

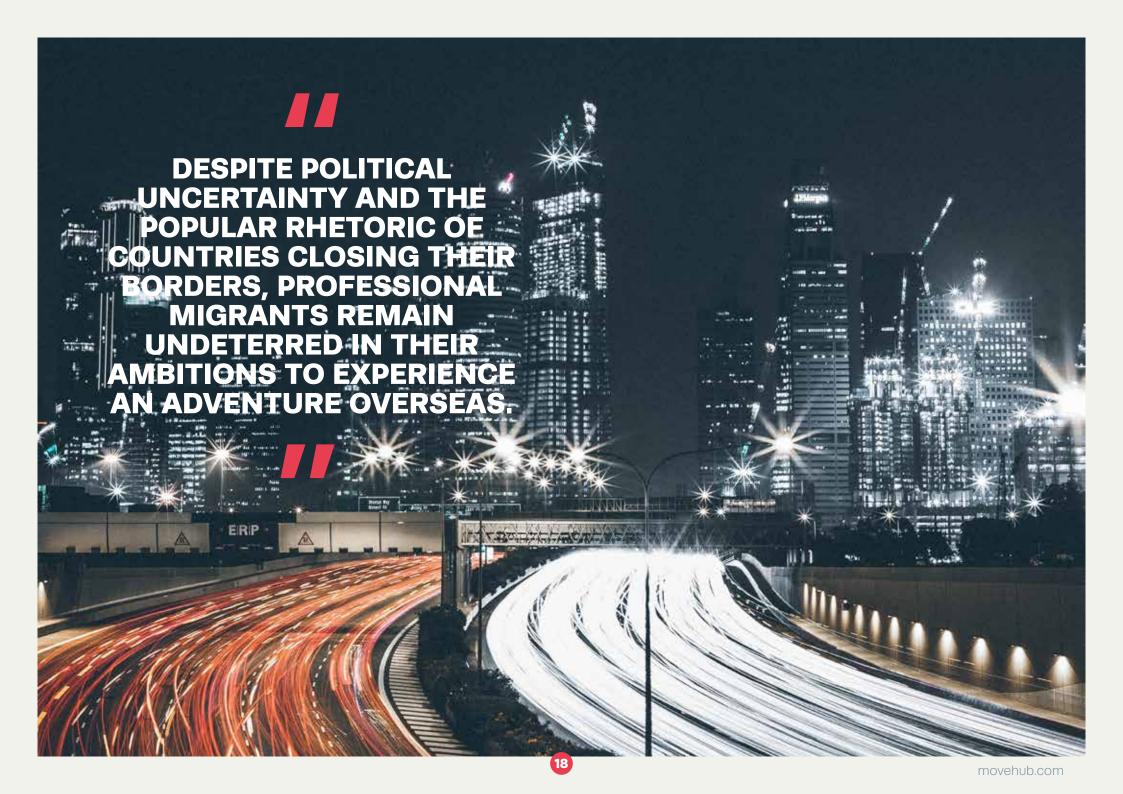
According to MoveHub data, moves to the US are already down 10% compared to last year. It seems that far from sticking around to watch Trump 'make America great again' people are opting to leave the country to escape his controversial policies. MoveHub's 'Attitudes to Moving' survey also revealed that over a quarter of respondents said that Trump's presidency has put them off ever wanting to move to America.



**32%** increase in the number of people moving back to the UK from Spain in the same period between 2015 and 2016.



**10%** decrease in moving enquiries to the **US** since 2016.





# The Countries That Got Their PR Right

## 4.1.1 Canada – The Trudeau Effect

In 2016, Canada frequently hit the headlines for taking an anti–American stance on key foreign policy issues. Canada was vocal in, Canada remained vocal in welcoming immigrants from war-torn nations and Trudeau was celebrated for his forward-thinking approach to gender equality. The 'Trudeau Effect' caused millennials from all over the world to look to Canada for a more liberal political stance in the face of the growing pockets of right-wing populism throughout the West.

## Highlights

- Overall moves to Canada increased by over 1%
- UK searches for moves to Canada increased by 308%

## 4.1.2 Ireland - Still Close to EU

Uncertainty after Brexit has prompted many financial institutions to seriously consider moving their business to countries which still belong to the EU. For companies with bases in the UK, Ireland is the perfect EU neighbour to relocate to and ensure uninterrupted access to the market post–Brexit. Should such

moves go ahead Ireland would enjoy a huge boost to their economy and already, shrewd business people are looking to relocate to Ireland to take advantage of this shift in opportunity. According to MoveHub data, in the August after Brexit there was already a 20% increase in moves to Ireland compared to the same time period in 2015 and Ireland's foreign minister has since reported a 20.000 increase in British applications for Irish passports following Brexit. Though Brexit may be bad for Britain, Ireland could certainly reap the rewards.

# 71%

In 2017 moving enquiries to New Zealand were up 83% in the UK in comparison to 2016.

71% increase in people wanting to move to New Zealand from the US in November 2016.

## 4.1.3 New Zealand

In 2016 New Zealand saw its highest levels of immigration since records began. People from America and the UK are leaving the political pandemonium of their countries in their thousands and for the first time since 1991 more Australians are moving to New Zealand than the other way round.

New Zealand's economy is another contributing factor for the surge in immigration; it continues to perform strongly whilst Australia's mining boom dwindles, pushing up prices and encouraging yet more Australians to seek a cheaper cost of living across the Tasman. Though Australians may be moving to a well known neighbour, Americans and Britons are relocating to a country half a world away, however, it is clear that the distance pales into significance for the chance to live somewhere so beautiful with such a strong sense of community.

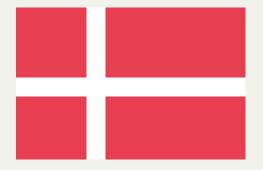


## **Danish Hygge**

## 4.2 The Quest to Find Hygge

Shortlisted for the Oxford Dictionary's word of the year, the Danish word 'hygge', defined as "a quality of cosiness, contentment or well-being", was one of the stand-out trends of 2016. It is considered a defining characteristic of Danish culture and one that has made inroads with an international audience. At Movehub we have seen this trend reflected in the searches and number of moves to Scandinavian countries, including Denmark, Sweden and Norway.

## **DENMARK**



- 27th most popular country to move to in 2016–17
- 6% increase in moves since 2015/16
- 580% increase in the number of people wanting to move to Copenhagen
- 12% decrease in residents wanting to leave Denmark

## **NORWAY**



 more than 3% increase in number of people wanting to move to Norway in comparison to 2015–16



The comfort and convenience of 'hygge' proved so appealing that in November 2016, Sweden raced up the ranks of MoveHub moving trends with 174 moves for that month alone. This increased dramatically to 471 moves in December which saw Sweden swoop into second place for the highest number of moves for November overall. This has helped Sweden maintain its position as the second highest ranking country well into February and March 2017.

The popularity of the 'hygge' trend is no doubt supported by the fact that Scandinavian countries' inhabitants are regularly judged to be the happiest people in the world, in fact, Denmark has kept its position in the top 20 destination countries to move to for the past three years and the number of moves continues to increase, most recently up by 6%.

GOOGLE SEARCH VOLUME HIGHLIGHTS:

100%

increase for term "Denmark life" in the US in 2016

#### 4.2.1 Game of Thrones

The immense popularity of fantasty TV series, 'Game of Thrones' has meant that Iceland has gained much attention as a potential moving destination. In the week that one of the most dramatic episodes to date was aired, searches for 'Iceland', where much of the programme is filmed, reached peak levels. Searches for 'Icelandic life' also achieved peak popularity over this period, with the most significant search volume achieved in the UK. These statistics show just how influential popular culture can be on international relocation trends.



## Conclusion

There is no doubt that the past year has put considerable strain on international relations but this has not deterred appetite for international relocations, in fact in some cases it has even increased demand. Whether it's as a direct result of popular culture, unpopular politics or extremely good PR, people will always want to explore new places and MoveHub will be there to support them.

Each year we track the countries that have fallen in and out of favour with movers and this year the stand-out favourites were Canada and New Zealand. Trudeau has been a hit worldwide and for the first time in history New Zealand has overtaken

Australia for moves across the Tasman. Scandinavian countries also enjoyed a swift rise in popularity this year as everyone wanted a comforting piece of the Hygge pie.

Despite political upheaval in the UK and the US we are happy to see that people's attitudes to moving remain unwaveringly positive. We're already looking forward to what the world will have to offer next year and how our MoveHub customers will respond to global events.

