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GUIDE · WORKSHEET

The Global Salary *Negotiation* Guide

When the company is in one country and you are in another, the number on the offer is the start of the conversation, not the conversation. What to ask, what to ask for, and how to compare two offers that are not in the same currency, tax system or employment type.

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The number is less than half the offer

Most remote listings do not state a salary. On EnRoute, 30% of active remote listings disclose one, and the site shows a market estimate on the rest; elsewhere the figure is lower. So the first conversation about money is usually one you start, and it happens with a company that may be paying people in six countries on six different bases.

That is the opportunity. A company hiring across borders has already decided to be flexible about where its people are. The same flexibility often extends to how they are paid, what they are paid in, and what sits around the number. Candidates who ask the right five questions routinely improve an offer by more than a salary negotiation alone would.

THE FIVE QUESTIONS

1. Is the pay location-based, and what is the band for my location?
2. Employee, contractor, or EOR?
3. Which currency, and when is it reviewed?
4. What does the employer pay on top (contributions, benefits, equipment)?
5. What happens to all of the above if I move?

01 How location-based pay actually works

Remote companies pay in one of four ways, and the one they use determines how much room there is to negotiate and what to negotiate about.

MODEL	HOW IT WORKS	WHAT TO NEGOTIATE
Single global rate	Everyone in a role earns the same wherever they live. Rare, and usually at companies that hire only senior people.	The band itself, and level. Location is not a lever.
Location bands	A base rate for the role, multiplied by a factor for your country or city (often 0.5 to 1.0 of the HQ rate). GitLab, Buffer and many others publish theirs.	Which band you are put in (city versus country versus region), and whether the band is re-set if you move.
Local market rate	They pay what the role pays where you are, using local salary data. Common with employer-of-record hires.	The data source and the percentile. Ask what survey they use and where in the range they place you.
Whatever you ask	Small companies with no policy. Your number becomes the band.	Everything. Anchor high, in their currency, with market evidence.

ASK FOR THE BAND, NOT THE NUMBER

"Is compensation location-adjusted, and if so, what is the range for someone in my location at this level?" Companies with a policy will answer directly and you now know the ceiling. Companies without one reveal that too, and you are in the fourth row of the table.

02 Employee, contractor, or employer of record

Three contracts that can carry the same headline number and be thousands apart.

	EMPLOYEE (DIRECT)	EMPLOYEE VIA EOR	CONTRACTOR
Who employs you	The company, through a legal entity in your country	A third-party employer of record in your country, on the company's behalf	Nobody. You invoice the company from your own business
Employer contributions	Paid by employer on top of salary	Paid by EOR, funded by the company	None. You pay both sides of social contributions yourself
Paid leave, sick pay	Local statutory minimum or better	Local statutory minimum or better	None unless negotiated into the rate
Health, pension	Local statutory schemes	Local statutory schemes	Your own
Tax withheld	Yes	Yes	No. Set aside 25–35%
Stability	Local employment law protects you	Same	Terminable on notice; often 30 days or less
Where you can live	The country of the entity	The country the EOR contract names	Anywhere the company will pay, subject to your own tax residence
Headline for the same net	**100**	**100**	**130–150**

The last row is the one to remember. A contractor rate has to be roughly 30 to 50% higher than an employee salary to leave you in the same place after you have paid both halves of social contributions, bought your own leave and cover, and priced in the lack of notice. Companies know this; many quote contractor rates that are the employee salary divided by twelve, and hope you do not.

03

The true cost of a contractor rate

Work it through before you say the number.

From an employee salary to a contractor rate

Target net annual (what I need to live on and save) ________

÷ (1 – my combined tax and contribution rate) = gross needed

+ health insurance I now buy myself, per year ________

+ pension I now fund myself ________

+ equipment, software, coworking, accountant ________

+ 15% for unpaid leave, sick days, gaps between contracts ___

= annual contractor income needed ________

÷ billable days (200–220) = day rate ________

Worked example

Employee offer: $60,000 in a country with 25% combined deductions, employer contributions of 20% on top, 25 days leave and health cover.

Same person as a contractor needs: $45,000 net ÷ 0.68 (32% self-employed rate) = $66,200, plus $3,600 health, $4,000 pension, $2,400 tools, plus 15% = **$87,600 a year, or about $420 a day**.

A contractor offer of $5,000 a month ($60,000) for this role is a 30% pay cut wearing the same number.

ASK WHO DECIDES EMPLOYEE VERSUS CONTRACTOR, AND WHY

Sometimes it is a genuine constraint (no entity in your country, no EOR relationship). Sometimes it is a choice to save the employer 20 to 30%. In the second case, the saving is your negotiating room: ask for it in the rate, or ask for the EOR arrangement instead. Also note that many countries treat a full-time, single-client "contractor" as an employee in law, which is a risk to the company and another reason they may prefer an EOR if you ask.

04 Currency

Which one you are paid in decides who carries the exchange-rate risk.

- **Paid in their currency, living in yours:** you carry the risk. A 10% move against you is a 10% pay cut nobody decided. Ask for an annual review pegged to the rate, or a floor.
- **Paid in your local currency:** the company carries the risk, and usually sets the rate at the start of the contract. Fine if your currency is stable; worse if it is depreciating and the number is not reviewed.
- **Paid in a third currency (USD or EUR) while living somewhere else:** common for contractors. You carry the risk but hold a strong currency; keep a buffer and convert monthly, not in one go.

ASK	WHY
"Which currency is the contract in, and is it reviewed against exchange rates?"	Finds out whether a review is policy or a favour.
"How do you pay: bank transfer, a payroll provider, a platform? Who pays the fees?"	International transfer and platform fees can be 1 to 4%; they should not be yours.
"Can the contract state the rate in the currency I spend, with the equivalent shown?"	Locks your side of the risk.
"If I move to a country with a different currency, what happens?"	Many location-band companies re-band on a move; know the rule before you move.

05 Scripts for every stage

Say it plainly, in their currency, with a reason.

In the screen, when asked for expectations

> "Before I give a number: is compensation location-adjusted here, and what is the band for this level in my location? I want to make sure I am anchoring to the right range." Then, if pressed: "Based on what I have seen for this role in [market], I am targeting [range in their currency]. I am flexible on the shape of the package, less so on the base."

When they lead with a contractor rate

> "I am open to a contractor arrangement. For that to be equivalent to the employee package, I would need the rate to reflect the contributions, leave and cover I would then be carrying myself, which puts it around [rate]. Alternatively, an employer-of-record arrangement at [salary] would work well for me."

At the offer, asking for more base

> "Thank you, I am excited about this. The base is below where I need it to be. [Evidence: the band you quoted, a competing offer, market data for this level.] Can you get to [number]? If the base is fixed, I would like to talk about [signing bonus, review at six months, equipment, extra leave]."

When the base is genuinely fixed

> "Understood. Then I would like to agree three things in writing: a compensation review at six months against the [next band / market], [n] days of additional leave, and a [equipment / coworking / home office] allowance of [amount]."

Currency and moves

> "Two practical points for the contract: can we state the salary with an annual exchange-rate review, and can we note that the arrangement continues if I relocate within [region], with any re-banding discussed before it applies?"

06 The comparable-offer worksheet

Two offers, one column each, one comparable number at the bottom.

My spending currency ______________ Exchange rates used, and on what date ______________

LINE	OFFER A	OFFER B
Base pay, annual, in my spending currency		
Employment type (E / EOR / C)		
If contractor: minus my self-paid contributions		
If contractor: minus health and pension I buy		
If contractor: minus 15% leave and gap allowance		
Plus employer pension contribution (value)		
Plus health cover provided (what it would cost me)		
Plus equipment / coworking / home-office allowance		
Plus bonus, equity (realistic annual value)		
Plus paid leave above my alternative (days × daily rate)		
Minus tax I will owe in my country (estimate)		
Minus transfer and platform fees		
Comparable net annual		
Currency risk: who carries it? Review clause?		
Can I move without re-banding?		
Notice period and stability		
Decision		

> **The best-paid remote workers are not the best negotiators. They are the ones who asked what the package was made of before they argued about the number on top.**

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- The Visa-Sponsored Job Playbook
- The Income Stacking Worksheet
- The Cost of Living Atlas
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