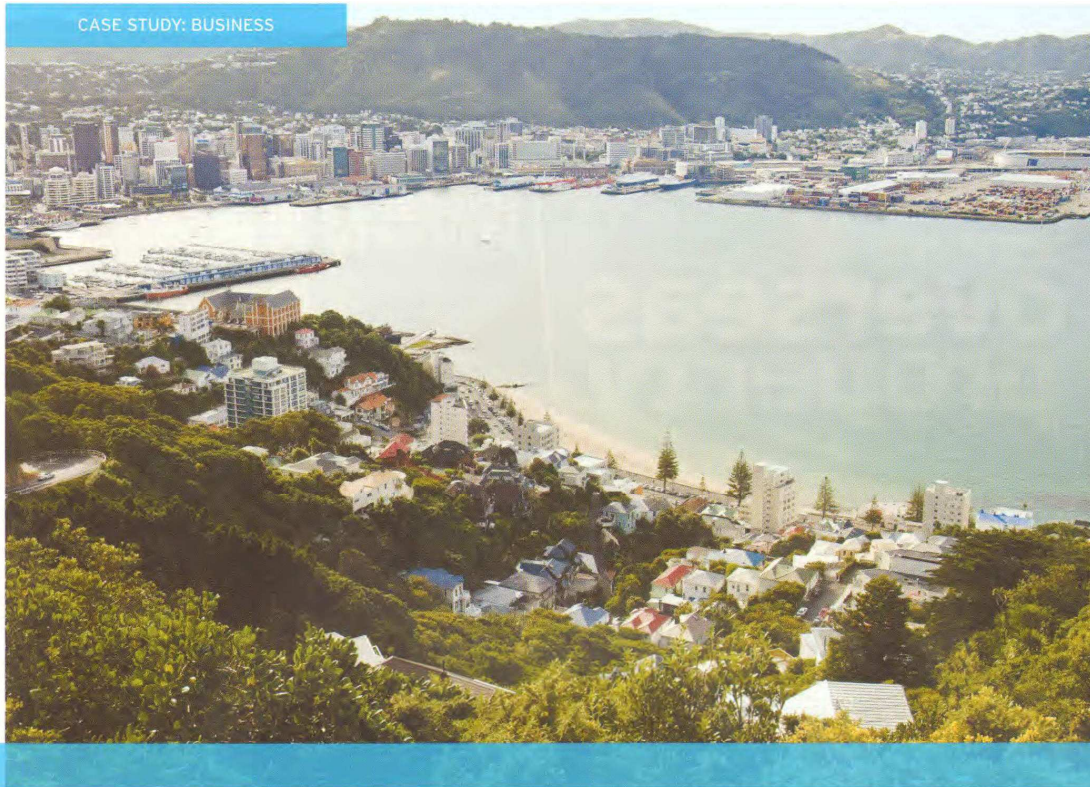


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A BUSINESS DOWN UNDER

MANY OF US EMIGRATE EVERY YEAR.
GORDON MILLER SPEAKS TO A FAMILY WHO
HAVE MADE NEW ZEALAND THEIR NEW HOME

Over the last decade two million Britons have emigrated, according to the Office of National Statistics. The figure is said to be the greatest exodus of British nationals since WW1. Last year alone, 207,000 British citizens, or one every three minutes, left the country.

Since New Labour came to power in 1997, 1.8m British people have left but only 979,000 have returned. The majority of British emigrants settled in just four countries: Australia, New Zealand, France and Spain.

Chester-based emigration specialist The Emigration Group note that an increasing number of those emigrating are looking to set up businesses abroad. Backing up official statistics, the company finds that among the most popular destinations are Australia and

New Zealand, primarily because of their strong commercial outlooks and stable business environments.

Paul Arthur, a director of The Emigration Group explains: "Enquiries from Britons looking to set up businesses abroad are really on the rise and this comes as no surprise. With lower tax levels, straightforward codes of business practice and support from government bodies, Australia and New Zealand are welcoming places to start a new venture.

"Many will argue that Britain has one of the strongest economies in the world, so there are plenty of opportunities for business start-ups here but conditions are increasingly challenging. And our clients want a lifestyle change as well. It's not just about making money, they see emigration as a way of having a better lifestyle for both themselves and their children."

High growth rates

Jamie Smith, specialist business advisor for Australia with The Emigration Group says: "Australia has seen high growth rates in recent years and sectors such as personal services, construction, imports, exports and retail still offer great investment and business opportunities."

For anyone considering setting up a business down under Jamie has the following advice: "Australia has a quota and points system, which means your first step to starting a business Down Under is to see if you can qualify for a visa. Specialist advice companies can assess clients to see if they can match the requirements, and then help them through the visa process."



New Zealand offers newcomers with a cheaper cost of living and a great way of life

"Many Britons who think they need to be young or have university qualifications to qualify for a business visa will be pleasantly surprised. Essentially, if you have been a general manager, senior executive or owner of a business, you have a good chance of qualifying.

"The business visa also offers other benefits over a normal working visa, in that you don't need qualifications at all in the field you are entering and there is a higher age threshold. You can apply for a business visa up until the age of 55 in Australia and there is no age limit for a New Zealand business visa.

"I would advise anyone considering starting a company in Australia to get specialist advice from the outset. Professionals can help sort out the good businesses from the bad, negotiate the red tape and regulations associated with setting up a business on the other side of the world and also help you access the support some states in Australia offer. A business adviser can also give an insight into the opportunities out there, help with the business planning and the creation of a successful visa application."

Enjoy the lifestyle

One family that's heading south is the Pitts from Nomansland in Hampshire. They are leaving the UK to start a new life running a polo business in New Zealand. Ken Pitts, wife Audrey and sons Toby and Mat are emigrating to Matira in the North Island of New Zealand to open up the Amberwood homestead, which will provide top quality accommodation and access to polo pony training facilities.

Ken who worked as a client executive for Hitachi said: "I'd been considering emigration for a number of years. I wanted to get out the rat race and couldn't see an end to it in England. While at 57 I'm not that far from retirement, I realised I would have to keep on working if I wanted to enjoy the lifestyle I had in the UK.

"We began seriously to think about New Zealand as a place to emigrate to after visiting my son, Mat, who was working out there on a polo ranch in Matira. The cost of living was so much cheaper than at home and the area was really beautiful, in rolling countryside but still close enough to the big cities like Auckland and stunning stretches of coastline like Raglan." >>

CASE STUDY: BUSINESS

Mat Pitts, second from the left is obviously enjoying the family's new lifestyle



"THE POLO RANCH MY SON WAS WORKING ON WAS A THRIVING BUSINESS RUN BY TWO NEW ZEALAND INTERNATIONAL POLO PLAYERS"

While visiting his son, the Amberwood homestead, a luxury farmhouse, came up for sale, and Ken spotted a real business opportunity. He said: "The polo ranch my son was working on was a thriving business run by two New Zealand international polo players. People from all over the world were visiting for training in polo. However, the ranch had no accommodation it could offer visitors. When the Amberwood homestead came up for sale close by, we realised we could use it for accommodating visitors to the ranch."

No age restriction

The first thing Ken did was to investigate the complications of how to get a visa. Because he was 57 he was past the age to be granted a normal working visa for New Zealand, but with the help of The Emigration Group he successfully gained a business visa, where there is no age restriction.

Ken said: "Getting a business visa was a daunting process and there were a lot of hoops to jump through. Starting a business abroad isn't for the faint-hearted and there can be a lot of red tape. The advice we had was vital to navigating through all the complications."

Once the visa had come through Ken finalised the purchase on the Amberwood Homestead. Audrey and Mat are currently out in New Zealand and have opened up Amberwood for its first months of business. Ken has recently gone out to join them, travelling with his youngest son, Toby, having completed his A-Levels.

Before he left, Ken said: "Moving to New Zealand will be a radical change, and I don't have any illusions, I know its hard work starting a new business, but I am really looking forward to the challenge and the chance to enjoy the lifestyle over there." □

CONTACTS

For more information on setting up a business in Australia or New Zealand visit: www.emigrationgroup.co.uk

Australian High Commission:
www.uk.embassy.gov.au

New Zealand High Commission:
www.nzembassy.com

