

india

relocation country guide



A land of vibrant culture and dynamic growth, India beckons professionals worldwide. Conversely, the allure of this thriving nation is often accompanied by complexities in navigating its unique relocation landscape. Understanding its unique system and nuances, therefore, is essential for a smooth transition.

In this comprehensive guide, we will explore the critical aspects of corporate relocation to India, examining the immigration regulations and procedures, household goods shipment, temporary accommodation, and destination services.

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immigration

India's immigration system is moderated under a compliance program by the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO). The FRRO registers and monitors foreign nationals and can conduct site visits for newly established companies. Non-compliant employers and employees may face fines, penalties, and prosecution under the Indian penal code. Foreign nationals working in breach of immigration laws may face imprisonment of up to one year, monetary penalties, deportation, and/or an entry ban.

key considerations:

- **Visa types:** India offers various visas for foreign nationals, including employment visas, business visas, and project visas. Understanding the specific requirements for each visa type is crucial.
- **FRRO compliance:** Strict adherence to FRRO regulations is essential to avoid penalties.
- **Tax compliance:** Some Indian consular posts require certification from an India sponsoring entity, including the entity's corporate Tax Identification Number (TIN).
- **Residence reporting:** Certain locations require foreign nationals to submit residence reporting forms such as Form C and/or a Tenant Verification Form, with Form C to be issued within 24 hours of arrival, necessitating a secured residential address before travel.

household goods shipment

Navigating the complexities of moving personal belongings and settling into a new environment can be daunting, yet, with the right strategies and advance planning, the process can be made efficient and more manageable.

key considerations:

- **Customs clearance:** An original passport is mandatory for customs clearance.
- **Packing/delivery:** Direct containers will not be placed for packing or delivery in India.
- **Housing:** The type, size, and furnishing of houses at the destination location will determine what goods are to be shipped.
- **Shipment timeline:** Understand the estimated door-to-door shipment timeline, which can vary significantly depending on factors like origin, destination, customs processing, and local transportation.
- **Restricted goods:** Certain items, such as plants, food items, and flammable materials, may be restricted or prohibited.
- **Insurance:** Obtain comprehensive insurance to protect your belongings during transit.



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key challenges and impacts:

- **Availability of skilled labor:** This can increase the risk of damage and delays in packing and delivery.
- **Poor road infrastructure:** This results in longer transit times, increased transportation costs, and a higher risk of damage due to rough handling.
- **Limited availability of CNG (compressed natural gas)/electric vehicles for long-distance transport:** This can increase the environmental impact of shipments and potentially lead to higher fuel costs.
- **Changes in legislation and processes:** This can cause unexpected delays and require adjustments to shipment plans, leading to increased costs and frustration.

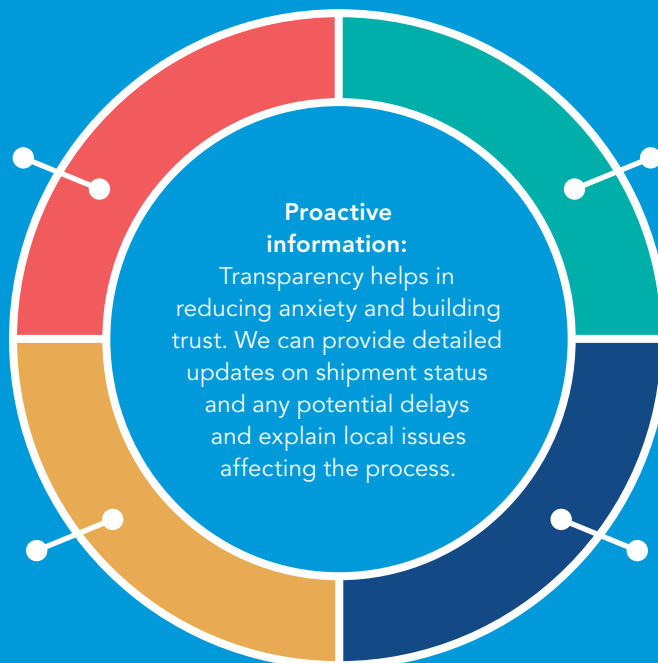
Our Cartus experts will work closely with the assignees to provide guidance and support for a smooth transition.

Realistic timelines:

We will provide estimated delivery windows to manage expectations and allow for arrival planning.

Flexible solutions:

We will offer alternative transportation options to accommodate needs and mitigate potential challenges to ensure service continuity, minimizing disruptions and maximizing employee satisfaction.



Open line of communication:

We will keep employees informed during the entire relocation with frequent status reports. Prompt replies will aid in their planning.

Destination information:

Providing information on regulations, customs, and potential delays helps in making informed decisions and minimizing misunderstandings.

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temporary living

The temporary housing market in India faces several challenges, including limited inventory for hotels in cities like Sriperumbudur and Assam, and a general lack of good, serviced apartments across major cities like Delhi, Mumbai, and Chennai. Lower-cost or budget-friendly property options can be explored, but often struggle with infrastructure issues, impacting the overall experience.

destination services

housing market: rising demand, tight inventory, and new challenges

India's housing market is landlord-driven, especially in major urban centers. Demand is surging, fuelled by economic growth, intra-India migration, and the return of corporate employees to office spaces. Cities like Bengaluru, Mumbai, Hyderabad, New Delhi, and Chennai are seeing intense competition for rental properties.

To mitigate these challenges, Cartus works closely with our suppliers and recommends clients adopt these best practises:

- **Set expectations:** Understand the market challenges and clearly communicate them to the relocating employees to manage their expectation when moving to India. This can help to minimize surprises.
- **Preview trips:** Consider offering preview trips to help relocating employees understand the location realities, such as weather conditions and the quality of temporary housing and living conditions.
- **Alternative accommodation:** Offering options beyond typical serviced apartments and hotels for more flexibility, such as working with agencies who sublet apartments on long-term leases to short-term rentals. This option helps to address supply issues and is currently available in major cities such as Bengaluru (e.g., The Leela Residence and LNT Raintree) and Hyderabad.

market trends and nuances:



High demand:

Competition remains high for quality rental properties.



Rising rentals:

Rental prices have increased by 5% or more, especially in Bengaluru and Hyderabad.



Limited supply:

Expatriate-friendly properties are scarce, resulting in fierce competition among tenants.



Intra-India movement:

Significant talent migration from other parts of India is adding to the housing demand in major cities.



Unregulated market:

The housing market remains largely unregulated and unorganized. Online rental portals often have misleading or outdated information.



TIP: Work with your relocation partner early to optimize planning, shortlist housing options, and negotiate leases. Due to the dynamic nature of the housing in the major cities of India, it is essential to work closely with a reliable vendor who can provide valuable insights and expert guidance. The Cartus destination team leverages deep local expertise and trusted networks to secure ideal housing for our assignees — even in hyper-competitive markets.

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here are some recommendations to start your housing search:

- **Review your housing budget:** Align your housing budget with market trends. A competitive budget will increase the chances of securing an ideal housing in a timely manner.
- **Start your search early:** Do not wait until the weekend or when your temporary accommodation ends.
- **Exercise flexibility and readiness:** Be open to considering different types of accommodations and locations to enable a wider range of options. This will increase the assignees' chances of finding suitable accommodations. Consider suburban or commuter belt areas where rental costs are more manageable. Act swiftly to secure the house once a suitable option is identified.
- **Trust professional expertise:** Stay within official authorized destination services programs and providers. Avoid engaging with independent realtors and online listings without verifying their credibility.

schooling: options and competition

India offers a wide range of international schools, but admissions remain highly competitive and popular schools typically have long waiting lists, especially in prime urban areas. International schools in India offer a variety of curriculum such as International Baccalaureate (IB), International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), and American curriculums. Families are advised to start their school search early:

- **Plan early:** An experienced relocation partner will share school options, facilitates school tours, assist in enrolment, and advise on timelines to maximize success.
- **Tailored school search:** Align school choices based on curriculum preferences, extracurricular activities, and proximity to housing for a smooth relocation experience.

TIP: Plan at least six to nine months ahead, especially for top-tier schools.



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personalized support

Beyond the physical move, employees relocating to India may require further support such as settling-in services and familiarization with the local culture. Cartus' consulting team will provide a personalized program according to the assignees and their family's needs for a smooth transition and support throughout the relocation and assignment. Some of the services include:

Orientation needs: Intercultural and language training will be offered to assignees and their families to learn about the local culture, social norms, and languages. **Essential information and pre-assignment trips** can provide a preview of the lifestyle, commuting options, available healthcare facilities, and recreational options at the new environment.

Settling-in services: Your relocation provider can help set up bank accounts, SIM card acquisition, vehicle registration, and utility applications. This removes any burden or stress on the assignee as these tasks can be complex and time-consuming, especially in an unfamiliar city with different regulations and processes.



Relocating to India requires early planning and expert guidance, given the immigration complexity and dynamic housing challenges. Please reach out to your Cartus representative or email CartusSolutions@cartus.com to learn more about our programs and relocation services for India.