



Working at ECA
**Internships and
graduate opportunities**

eca
INTERNATIONAL

About ECA

Welcome to a unique international business serving diverse clients around the world.

ECA International provides the data, software and know-how that companies need to help them manage their global mobility programmes. Helping multinational companies with anything from one to several thousand expatriates, we make sure that their assignees are competitively, fairly, efficiently and legally paid and managed, in turn helping them to achieve their international business goals.

We were founded by international companies looking to exchange information and benchmark their assignment salaries in 1971. Since then, ECA has continued to specialise in this arena, developing into the leading provider of services for companies managing an international workforce. Every year, we invest 15% of our revenue in service development, which ensures that we remain responsive to our clients' needs and can anticipate their future requirements. For example, ECA is proud to have been the first company in its field to provide online solutions, and our priority remains to lead the way in advanced solutions for our clients. For people working at ECA, that means there is a constant opportunity to lead or become involved with the development or improvement of our products.

ECA has corporate clients based worldwide from Botswana to Uzbekistan, in all sectors from oil and gas to legal. Their international staff may be commuting, on short projects, on long-term relocations or even permanently mobile. They may be moving to a city not dissimilar from their own, or to a gated community in a dangerous location, or to a remote island with little infrastructure. They may be taking their families or they may not. They may be going at their own request or the company may need to incentivise them. Making sure that every company's mobility policy and its terms and conditions can adequately cater for all these factors makes our business challenging, interesting and vital to their success.

Some of our clients



Cover: Ciudad del Carmen, Mexico



Graduate research roles

Imagine you were going to work in a different country...

- Would you reap the benefits of paying no tax in Dubai?
- Why would you find it so expensive to rent in Moscow?
- Could you get hold of tea bags in Angola?
- How often could you expect a hurricane in Honduras?

This is the kind of information ECA researches and analyses in locations worldwide to provide the data, tools and software companies need to run effective compensation and benefits programmes for their mobile staff.

Customers of ECA buy this information in a number of ways. They can take out an annual subscription to online reports and calculators, focussing on their countries of operation, or buy information direct from us on a one-off basis. They can use our software programmes, preloaded with the latest data created by us. Our consultancy service combines data with expertise to provide policy, tailored information and solutions to our clients. We also run training courses that provide insight into the theory and practice of managing international assignments.

ECA's Production team undertake regular surveys and on-going research in six key areas that create the foundation for these products and services. The team is based in London and recruits graduates for the following roles:

Research Interns (temporary)

Research Interns are employed for a 12 week period at fixed times throughout the year (see p. 14) to provide essential support to the Production team during busy survey periods. They could be required to work in any research area although generally the team to which they are assigned will depend on the time of year. Interns are required to conduct research and analysis for over 450 cities across the globe and are responsible for processing, verifying and uploading large volumes of questionnaire data.

Research Analysts (permanent)

Research Analysts have real responsibility for our products from day one. They are involved in the whole production process - from conducting online research, co-ordinating and promoting surveys, reviewing and validating data returned by suppliers and survey participants, through to analysing data and publishing the results in online reports and software solutions.

Research Analysts are expected to monitor international events and specialist resources to track developments affecting our products. They are required to field queries from ECA's clients on a day-to-day basis, to explain and enhance our published data, detail our methodologies and provide advice on adapting our data and products to their specific requirements.

Analysts could be required to work in any of ECA's research areas, liaising closely with ECA's client-facing teams in London, Hong Kong, New York and Sydney.

International Data Researchers (permanent)

International Data Researchers (IDRs) spend 70% of their time travelling to diverse (often remote and basic) locations worldwide, visiting supermarkets to obtain the prices of groceries and other everyday essential items and meeting relocation agents and estate agents to collect information for ECA's accommodation products. They may also be required to research data for other products and meet expatriates at post to discuss ECA's data. Between trips, IDRs work on writing up their findings for research teams and blogging about their experiences while obtaining visas for and otherwise planning their next trip.



Name: Steven Kilfedder

Job Title: Production Manager

Studied: Economics and Geography and International Studies (Masters)

Career paths: Management

I applied to work at ECA because I wanted to do something that was international in scope following my degree, and also because of my own experience as an expatriate teacher in Baku, Hanoi and Yangon where my employer had used ECA data to help calculate my package and opened my eyes to the practical application of international HR.

I joined in a temporary position as a Location Ratings intern, which was fascinating as I got to learn a lot about the Asia Pacific region and also use my experience of the countries I had only recently lived in. I then applied for a permanent position, and went to work in Remuneration. Everyone in the team at that time was relatively new so we all had to learn everything very quickly, which was challenging but rewarding. After a while, I was promoted to Manager of

Remuneration Services, which meant that I was able to oversee the implementation of some of the product improvements my team and I had suggested, which was very gratifying.

I was then given the challenge of managing the Cost of Living team, which was another great opportunity to make my mark in one of the company's core research areas. I now oversee the Benefits and Location Ratings teams too, which gives me the opportunity to take a more strategic look at ECA's production team as a whole.

I think if I had to sum up my time so far at ECA, I would say that it's been varied and interesting and has given me the opportunity to learn many new skills. I'm really looking forward to continuing to develop my career here.



Key research areas

The following key indicates the areas of research in which each role could be involved:

-  Research Interns
-  Research Analysts
-  International Data Researchers

Accommodation

The Accommodation team conducts an annual survey of the costs of renting expatriate accommodation around the world, ranging from high-rise apartments in inner city Tokyo to remote compounds in Saudi Arabia. Analysts in the team research, write and edit guides to renting in different countries, which enable managers to control costs and make informed decisions in providing appropriate housing for their mobile employees.

Benefits and Daily Rates

ECA also produces reports about the costs of other benefits commonly provided in remuneration packages such as cars, utilities and international schooling. The team collate and report this information for over 150 different countries, enabling companies to calculate assignment cost projections and develop benefits policies. They also research the costs of hotels and incidental expenses to create Daily Rates used to compensate employees on short-term assignments or business trips.

Cost of Living

ECA conducts a survey of living costs in over 450 locations twice a year, producing cost of living indices that are used to adjust salaries so that assignees maintain a spending power on assignment similar to what they had at home. The team co-ordinates the collection of prices for more than 150 items of everyday expenditure in each of these locations, including food and drink, personal goods and services, clothing, motoring and electrical goods. They conduct extensive analysis on the prices returned, which are then combined with in-depth analysis of national shopping habits and consumption patterns to produce a number of different indices to suit different company policies.

Location Ratings

The Location Ratings survey is carried out annually to provide information for recommending location or "hardship" allowances, often paid by companies to their employees to compensate for the difficulty that may be experienced by them and their families when adjusting to a new location. These allowances are derived by assessing factors such as climate, infrastructure, security, civil liberties, language and culture for over 450 locations around the world. Analysts conduct research using a wide range of data sources, supplemented by questionnaires completed by expatriates, in order to obtain an objective view of the quality of life in each location.

Remuneration

Salary packages for mobile employees can be complex in design, involving factors such as differentials in tax and cost of living which are not a consideration for local employees. The Remuneration team carry out detailed surveys of expatriate compensation packages to enable companies to benchmark their salary and benefits provision with other companies, to ensure that their provision is both competitive and cost-effective.

Tax

The Tax team conduct extensive research to develop and maintain a broad knowledge of personal income taxation and social security systems in over 100 countries around the globe. This is used to write and update online reports and produce tax calculation software using an in-house language, all of which enable our clients to calculate an assignee's tax liability in both the home and host locations.



Career paths

Many of our employees who join us as graduates confess that until they started job-hunting they didn't realise companies like ECA existed and are happy that their skills and experience can be transferred to such a niche and interesting industry. Our research roles provide a foundation on which to build a career in research and analysis, global mobility and many other professional disciplines.

The Research Intern role is a great way to get to know the company and a good introduction to the work done in some of the departments where our permanent staff work. A significant number of Research Interns have gone on to join us as Research Analysts or International Data Researchers and enjoy successful careers at ECA.

Rotations

On joining ECA as a Research Analyst, you will initially be assigned to work in one of our core production teams where you can expect to spend at least 12 months, although you may work with other production teams from time to time. During that time you will have the opportunity to learn more about the business and the work carried out in other teams, so that you can identify other departments where you may be interested in working for a short or longer period.

Research Analysts are encouraged to take active responsibility for their professional development and to talk to their manager about the direction they'd like to go in. Your manager can facilitate rotations into other departments to broaden your experience and knowledge or alternatively you may decide that you would prefer to specialise in a particular area. Whatever direction you choose, we will ensure that you are supported and encouraged to enable you to perform to the best of your abilities.

While some graduate employees choose to remain in the production department, perhaps eventually moving into management, others have taken up client-facing roles in the commercial part of the business, moved into more technical positions in our expanding software and web development teams or travelled the world as International Data Researchers. It is important to keep an open mind about your future and recognise development opportunities as they arise, as global mobility is a rapidly moving world and ECA must change rapidly too to ensure it continues to serve the evolving needs of our clients. Technology and working practices have changed so much in recent years that many people are now working in roles that did not exist when they first joined ECA as graduates.

See our Career Path case studies for some examples.

“The internship was an excellent way to get a feel for the organisation, offering an opportunity to experience the atmosphere of the company, as well as the chance to learn more about the work ECA undertakes. From my first day I found everyone extremely welcoming, and this provided an excellent catalyst to develop my knowledge of international mobility.”

Zoe Weetman



Name: Athanasia Ntitoura

Job Title: Software Team

Studied: MSc in Management with Human Resource Management

Career paths: Software and technology

ECA seemed to be a really good fit for my skills and interests so I applied for a position as a Research Analyst. I really liked the idea that I could move around and work in different areas, although in practice I liked working in the tax department so much I stayed there for several rotations and ultimately became a Senior Research Analyst.

While I was working in the tax team, ECA was developing its tax software and international assignment salary management system, ECAEnterprise, which many of the larger clients take and customise to fit their particular mobility policies and processes. I got involved in the

tax customisations for these clients, and the development of the data for a new employer social security feature in ECAEnterprise.

So I suppose it's only natural that I now work in the Software Team! It's not really where I thought my career would go back at the start, but I love it. I get to deal with the technical elements of the data we produce, the systems that our clients use to implement their policies and I work as part of different project teams comprising programmers, client services and the clients themselves. Working at ECA is varied and challenging but above all interesting, dynamic and friendly.



What does ECA offer?

We believe in offering a great place to work. We employ people of all nationalities and have a diverse and interesting workplace as well as a diverse and interesting client base.

In addition to salary we offer a discretionary, profit-based bonus, an excellent pension scheme, health insurance, subsidised sports club access, free travelcard loan and Cycle to Work scheme.

We have an elected Social Committee which runs free and subsidised events for staff six times a year outside of work (things like ten-pin bowling, theatre trips, wine-tasting, ice skating, pub quizzes, treasure hunts), and hold regular staff events and briefings.

Development and training

ECA is committed to ensuring its employees achieve their full potential.

Training is primarily delivered “on the job”, where you will benefit from the full support and experience of your colleagues. Regular progress reviews with your manager give you feedback on your performance and a forum to discuss your career path.

This is complemented by a whole spectrum of formal training and development opportunities which enable you to expand your skills and knowledge. ECA encourages employees to be proactive in their professional development to ensure training is tailored to their own needs and interests.

Typically, permanent staff might take part in some of the following:

- an induction process to welcome graduates to the company and help them feel settled in their new work environment;
- a modular programme designed to give an insight into the work of the different production teams and how the outputs are used by international HR professionals when planning assignments;
- relevant IT skills courses such as Excel, SQL and Access;
- ‘soft’ skills courses around areas such as communication and presentation skills, or thinking creatively;
- specialist technical training conducted by experts;
- language courses;
- studies towards relevant professional qualifications in areas such as statistics or taxation;
- industry events, such as conferences and seminars.

“I did my degree in International Relations, and the course gave me a solid basis for the kind of research that the internship involved. I learned many new things, about both the locations I researched as well as ECA and the world of global mobility overall. The internship was an excellent springboard into my current role as a Research Analyst in the Accommodation team, and I have continued to enjoy my time at the company and the opportunities to learn and be challenged in the varied nature of the job.”

Anni Keranen



Name: Oliver Graham

Job Title: Senior Cost of Living Analyst

Studied: Mathematics and Economics

Career paths: Specialist

After completing a degree in Mathematics and Economics at Warwick, I began working at ECA in 2009 as an intern. Following my internship, I took a permanent position in the Cost of Living team which I felt was a natural fit to my interests and the skills I developed at university: combining numerical analysis with a need to keep abreast of the international economic landscape and any developments that could contribute to a change in the cost of living.

I have chosen to remain in the Cost of Living team and deepen my knowledge and understanding of this specialist area. My key areas of focus are

Asia and Africa and the complex economic factors which exist in the developing markets across these regions have always kept my work interesting.

During my time with the team I have taken on more responsibility in a variety of areas. For example, I now lead the research into official household expenditure surveys to determine country-specific spending patterns that feed into the calculation of our cost of living indices. I take great satisfaction from knowing I am able to play a prominent role in developing ECA's products and improving our processes, contributing to making ECA's tools and data the best in market.



What is it like to work at ECA?

ECA is an informal place to work, but one where hard work, initiative and creativity are both encouraged and rewarded. Teams work closely together and across disciplines to bring together quality, dependable information and service innovations.

ECA employs a wide variety of people in a broad range of roles. Between us, we speak over 17 languages, represent 22 nationalities and can field some formidable quiz teams.

Inquisitiveness, intelligence, an eye for trends, attention to detail and a good sense of humour are all valued here. Join ECA and you will be part of a team that reaches across four continents, will build your skills and reward your endeavours. You can make your mark and shape the future of our business.



From the social committee

"The Social Committee aims to epitomise the spirit of ECA... Good times, lots of laughs and friendship... The six events we arrange each year are an important platform for maintaining ECA's strong social culture and take full advantage of our central London location. Past activities have ranged from the active to the intellectual, including paintballing, bowling, quiz nights and sushi making to name a few. All events are open to the entire staff, and are a great way to get to know people you may not interact with on a daily basis."

"I joined ECA as a Research Intern during a very busy period for the company. From my first day I was encouraged to get stuck-in and really contribute to the work that ECA undertakes. It was a rewarding experience that allowed me to gain an insight into the interesting processes behind global mobility. The internship is a fantastic chance for graduates looking to gain experience in an industry that is international in scope, with a company that offers real responsibility from the off."

Daniel Flear



Name: Georgia Wilson
Job Title: Client Relationship Manager
Studied: Economic History

Career paths: Commercial

When I applied for the Research Analyst position at ECA, I was completely unfamiliar with the global mobility world – but the international focus and the opportunity to learn more about the specialist but vital international HR industry appealed to me. The role also suited the research and analysis skills I honed during my studies.

I joined the Accommodation team as a Research Analyst, which involved both qualitative and quantitative analysis and producing reports on rental markets around the world. I especially enjoyed researching and analysing the effects of supply and demand on rental market trends, due to my interest in economics.

During my two and a half years in the Accommodation team, I discovered that I was

particularly passionate about investigating queries from clients, especially the problem-solving element. I also became responsible for finding leads for new accommodation data sources, establishing collaborative relationships with providers all over the world and liaising with our International Data Researchers so that we could expand our coverage. This was a role that I found challenging, but fun and rewarding.

These two passions naturally led me to apply for my current position in the Client Services team, which involves building good relationships with the clients I work with, and providing them with help and advice whenever they need it. It's a fantastic role. I love how varied my work is, and it's very satisfying when I know that I've made my client's day a little easier!

What we are looking for

At ECA, providing the industry's most respected data and software isn't enough for us.

We also want to innovate and anticipate the needs of our clients, stay a step ahead of the market and provide an exceptional level of service.

That means that in addition to high levels of numeracy, literacy and a close attention to detail, we want people who can genuinely make a mark on the company through personable service and a creative approach, constantly looking to improve how we source and process information to create high quality products in the most effective way.

If you have the following qualities, we'd like to hear from you:

- Excellent level of numeracy
- Sound verbal and written communication skills
- A collaborative mentality
- Process driven
- Ability to take responsibility
- Customer focussed
- Solid attention to detail
- Proven research skills
- A focus on getting results
- Initiative and problem-solving skills
- Inquisitiveness and keenness to learn
- An international outlook

Applicants for the International Data Researcher role in particular must also have experience of world travel, cultural sensitivity, resourcefulness and confidence in alien environments.

“The thing that struck me the most about my internship at ECA was just how supportive and welcoming everybody was. There was such an atmosphere of collaboration. I felt that my opinions were important and that the work I was doing directly helped the business. I would definitely recommend working for ECA to anyone looking for a great working environment and the chance to stretch themselves and develop new skills.”

Zara Ahmed



Name: Mark Johnson

Job Title: International Data Researcher

Studied: Geography

Career paths: International Data Researcher

After graduating I knew I wanted a career with an international slant and so ECA appealed to me. I started working at ECA as an analyst in the Cost of Living team, which combined my love of working with numbers with the chance to analyse data from all corners of the globe. Within 18 months I became a senior analyst in that department.

At that time ECA was rapidly expanding its global data coverage and so the need for the International Data Researcher (IDR) role came about. I grabbed the opportunity to apply all that I had learnt and be a part of a team which actually collects data on the ground to submit to the research teams.

After many surveys I'm still in the IDR role and as enthusiastic about it now as when I started.

One of its obvious attractions is the opportunity to travel to parts of the world which I would not otherwise have visited. I have been to over 150 countries and collected data in over 270 different cities. As well as the obvious places like China, India, Europe and the USA I have been to places as diverse as Iraq, Tahiti, Chad, Bolivia and Tajikistan.

The IDR team have become friends as well as colleagues and the role gives the opportunity to work with many different ECA teams. We also have the opportunity to meet with our clients while on the road and sometimes their expatriates too. A highlight for me was meeting Heineken assignees in the Congo who told me all about how life is different away from home - not to mention the beer they provided!

Applying

Research Interns are employed for 12 week periods at fixed times throughout the year to assist with specific research areas as follows:

Recruitment opens	Internship starts	Research areas
December	February	Accommodation, Benefits, Cost of Living
May	June/July	Benefits, Location Ratings
June	August	Accommodation, Benefits, Cost of Living, Daily Rates, Remuneration

Research Analysts and International Data Researchers are recruited on an ad hoc basis as vacancies arise and are advertised internally to Research Interns as well as externally.

The process on the right outlines the procedure for applying for the Research Intern role and may differ slightly for Research Analyst and International Data Researcher roles.

Our application process is designed to help us evaluate candidates' suitability for research roles at ECA, and to help applicants decide whether ECA is the right organisation for them.

Vacancies

Vacancies are advertised on the Jobs area of our website as they arise. If there are no vacancies available at the current time, you are welcome to submit a speculative application to workforus@eca-international.com but please note that we will be unable to progress with your application until a suitable vacancy arises.



Submit your application

When vacancies are advertised you will be asked to complete a short online application form including a small number of screening questions. You will also need to submit your CV along with a covering letter which explains why you want to work at ECA and how your academic background, work experience and extra-curricular activities make you a desirable candidate. You can expect to hear whether you are being put through to the next round within 4-5 weeks of the application deadline.



Test

You will be asked to visit our London office to complete a skills test covering Maths, English and Geography. The questions are largely designed around the typical tasks a Research Intern would be expected to undertake, for example calculating exchange rates, inflation or indices, drawing conclusions from different data sources, or proof-reading a written report.



Face-to-face interview

The final stage of the application process is an in-depth, face-to-face interview conducted at our London office by two members of the Production department. As well as establishing your overall suitability for the position, your technical capabilities will be tested to determine which area of research you are most suited to.



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