

Investor Migration

Helping HNWI's with Offshore Citizenship and Residency Alternatives

Dominic Volek, Managing Partner and Head for Southeast Asia at global citizenship and residency consultancy Henley & Partners, spoke to Michael Stanhope in a head to head interview at the Malaysia Wealth Management forum. His message to the assembled wealth managers? That they should be aware of the many sensible Investor Migration options available to Asia's HNWI's.

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“WE SEE OUR SERVICES AS PART of the overall broadening of the wealth management offering, as clients expect a broader array of ideas, services and products,” Volek observed. “To help relationship managers wanting to expand their client connections and their array of ideas and offerings, we work with their banks and other advisory firms to spread our message. Many of our client introductions are through the banks and other specialist firms and of course



DOMINIC VOLEK
Henley & Partners





we also share in the financial rewards relating to clients who take up any of the citizenship or residency options we offer.”

Volek explained that Henley has built a multi decade experience advising HNWI’s and the ultra-rich on obtaining either citizenship by investment or residence by Investment. “Interest and uptake have both been growing apace in Asia. We work closely with Hubbis in this region through their many events, as much of our business is generated through our relationships with private banks, independent asset managers, family offices, law firms and other advisory businesses.”

Volek’s central message was that anyone in Asia considering alternative residence or citizenship needs the best professional advice and that Henley is the

proven expert. “We are leaders in this sector,” he told the audience. “Henley has a history of more than 20 years and 300 staff across the world in 29 offices.”

He explained that Henley has two core businesses, government advisory and the private client advisory business. The company is broadly spread across the wealth markets of Asia, a rapid growth arena in which Henley’s expertise is in great demand.

In the first category, Henley helps certain governments around the world to structure and promote their residence and citizenship programme. Volek noted that Henley has a long history dating back two decades working with governments around the world to help them create and tailor their residence and citizenship programmes.

The second category involves Henley working with HNWI’s to advise them on and help them achieve residence and citizenship alternatives around the world. “This is all about tailoring solutions and guiding clients carefully though what is often a long and complex process to achieve their residence or citizenship goals,” Volek elucidated. “Taking the right steps towards a new residence or citizenship must be carefully considered and the process must be professionally managed.”

Residence by investment is the less complex option, while citizenship by investment is, understandably, the more demanding and expensive option. Volek noted that citizenship programmes confer on the successful individual, and potentially their families, the same rights as citizens of those coun-

tries; the solution is permanent and includes voting rights and passports. The great advantage of citizenship by investment is that it bypasses the traditional route of a HNWI and the entire family relocating to another country in order to earn citizenship.

Instead, through substantial investment or donation, individuals can achieve a passport in a relatively short amount of time. The key options that Henley currently promotes include countries in Europe, such as Malta and Cyprus and several Caribbean jurisdictions.

“There are different motivating factors for individuals in different

countries in the region,” Volek explained. “So, for example, a family from India or China or Bangladesh or the Philippines might see investor migration as a means to achieve much easier travel rather than needing visas to go everywhere. While Malaysia has a passport that allows plentiful visa free travel, so the motivations might be for lifestyle, or education of their children and so forth.”

Volek explained that most of Henley’s Malaysian HNWI clients are looking at obtaining European citizenship. “It is seen as an insurance policy,” he noted, “like a plan B. The reality is that very few of our clients

actually migrate, so for example in Europe neither Malta and Cyprus require those seeking citizenship or residency to physically move there. The great advantage of Europe is that due to the EU and Schengen, those who obtain citizenship in either of these countries can live and work in any other EU country.”

Volek noted on closing his interview that Henley’s door is always open to wealth management firms wanting to expand their knowledge of these matters and the firm was always receptive to working with their clients to help advise on and then facilitate these investor migration options. ■

