

*How can you make
sure your global talent
mobility programme
is fit for the future?*

Moving people with purpose

Modern mobility survey 2014



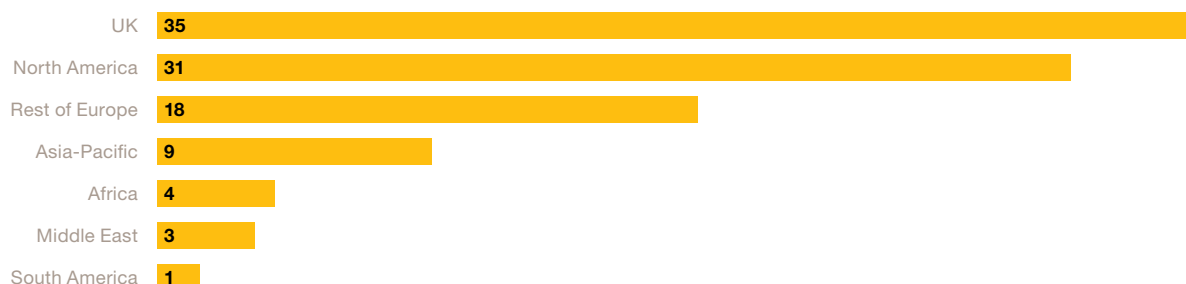
About the survey

The findings set out in this report are based on an in-depth survey of 193 executives from organisations across the world, who have responsibility for global mobility within their organisation. The survey was carried out during August and September 2014. The participants bring together

a representative cross-section of business types, sizes, sectors and global headquarter locations.

This report also draws on a number of interviews with Global HR, Reward and Mobility leaders.

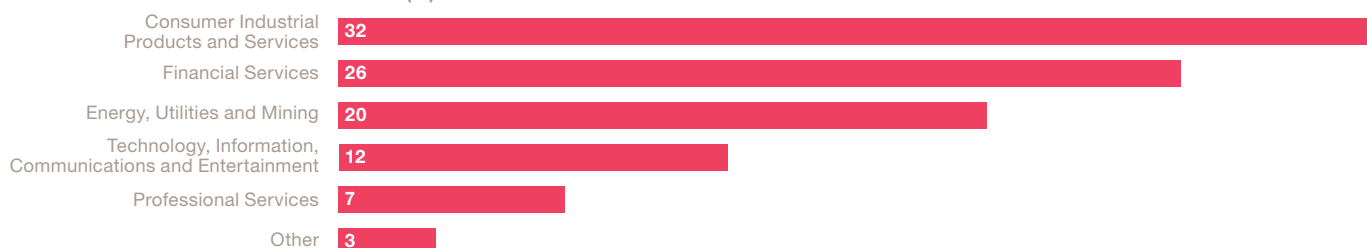
Company HQ location (%)



Number of employees (%)



Sector (%)





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Introduction

Rethinking mobility

Welcome to *Moving people with purpose: Modern mobility survey 2014*.

Businesses worldwide are looking to mobility to help them reach into fast growth markets and forge the global mindset needed by today's business leaders. Leading organisations are starting to think about their longer term global workforce needs, not just reacting to what is needed in the short-term. They're tapping into talent pools in new geographies and new demographic segments, to develop an agile global workforce that can thrive in an increasingly fluid global landscape.

It's clear the world of work is changing, and fast. Being able to access these new talent pools – and in parallel, strategically manage existing talent into the right roles, in the right locations, at the right cost – can be a real competitive advantage, when done well. The result is a need for a more innovative and sophisticated approach to mobility – what we call 'modern mobility'.

In 2012 we published *Talent mobility 2020 and beyond*¹. The report anticipated a 50% increase in mobile employees by 2020, highlighting the growing importance of mobility in realising strategic business goals and attracting and retaining the best talent.

Two years on from that, in this survey, we look at how businesses across the world are dealing with the challenges modern mobility brings and what leading organisations are doing to strengthen their capabilities.



89% are planning on increasing the amount of mobility over the next two years

Mapping mobility to business success

Looking ahead, HR and mobility teams want and need to move from the primarily operational role they have today, to more strategic activities that focus on business outcomes, return on investment and talent development. At the same time, mobility functions need to continue to manage the cost and compliance challenges modern mobility brings, in an increasingly complex environment. The majority of our participants believe global mobility can help their organisation to meet its business objectives. And where we're seeing businesses getting it right, mobility is being used as a driver of business success and a way of developing senior leadership talent.

But talent mobility is set to increase and diversify, so the way it's managed needs to change. What's not clear is whether mobility teams have the information, investment and infrastructure to meet evolving business demands and manage the growing number of internationally mobile employees. Without a significant operational overhaul, it's also far from clear how they can free up the time to take on a more strategic role. Where will the transactional work go? The findings show that few companies are up to the task at the moment. Over 30% aren't even sure how many of their employees work overseas each year.

¹ <http://www.pwc.com/gx/en/managing-tomorrows-people/future-of-work/global-mobility-map.jhtml>



Organisations have a strong appetite for change. Yet with predicted increases in mobility activity and ever growing to-do lists, there is a danger that change will be put off. Assessing business needs, creating a strong talent mobility brand, centralising and simplifying operations and offering a 'high tech high touch' approach can put you ahead of the game. But without the right support, time and investment, will this happen? How can you create a compelling business case for change? We hope you will find answers to these questions in this report.

Our point of view



What we'll cover in this report

We'll look at the role that modern mobility plays in the competitive global economy and the different types of assignments that are emerging and evolving. We'll explore the resulting new demands, expectations and aspirations for mobility and why things will need to change if businesses want to get real strategic value. And we'll look at what makes companies leaders in mobility and the strategies they use to move people with purpose.

The front-runners are going to be in a stronger position to attract talent and move quickly to capitalise on market opportunities. Their mobility teams are also going to be able to make a stronger contribution to business development and success, which will enhance their role and influence within the organisation. Measuring and reporting on the return on investment the organisation gets from mobility will drive continuous improvement and help the business make sure its global talent workforce is truly fit for the future.

We would like to thank all the participants for sharing their time and insights. If you want to know more about the issues we address or would like to benchmark your mobility programme against your peers, please get in touch with your usual PwC representative or one of the contacts listed on page 23.

Competitive imperative

The rising profile of global mobility

As your business enters new markets and the aspirations of your workforce change, the need to modernise your approach to mobility becomes ever more pressing. So what does modern mobility look like?

Growth locations are changing

The focus of global investment and growth is shifting beyond the once dominant G7. This isn't just evident in the rise of the BRIC economies of Brazil, Russia, India and China, but also in the fast growing F7 'frontier' markets, stretching from the Philippines to Peru. As a result, businesses are casting their net ever wider as they look for new growth opportunities; even relatively small companies are extending their international reach. This brings with it the challenge and complexity of getting people on the ground quickly in these new markets, as well as hiring and potentially mobilising local talent.

It's clear that mobility has a key role to play. 85% of survey participants stress the importance of mobility in helping to meet business objectives and 75% agree that assignment destinations match their organisation's priority destinations for growth.

"There will be a significant increase in mobility and we need to be slicker and readier to execute this than we have been in the past."

Global Pharmaceutical company, UK

"Business travel tends to be something people are afraid to touch because it's just quite a big area which can be complex and tie up resources. But it's a hot area that various countries' tax regimes are looking at more closely, and so businesses need to think about bringing it forward on their agenda."

*Yvonne Lowe,
International Mobility
Manager, Bupa*

"We will move into areas which we have not been involved in previously, such as business travel and multi-state workers."

*Financial Services
company, Europe*

More people are moving, in new and different ways

89% of organisations plan to increase the number of internationally mobile workers in the coming two years. Figure 1 shows the net increase in the different types of mobility businesses will be using in two years' time.

Short-term assignments of up to one year will see the biggest increase in usage, probably due to our increasingly service-led economy and the need to get the right people on the ground quickly to deliver projects. We're seeing short-term moves being used as a way to develop emerging, high potential talent, providing exposure to working in different cultures and countries. They're often more attractive to women and can encourage mobility from destinations where there is often a reluctance to move away from extended family members for a longer period of time (e.g. Asia).

International business travellers are the second biggest group to grow. While the need for employees to travel internationally from time to time to perform their role is clear, this is the most challenging mobility type to manage. Do you know every time one of your employees works overseas? Just 17% of respondents said they had robust policies, processes and controls in place to track and manage business travellers.



Figure 1: Predicted net increase by mobility type in the next two years

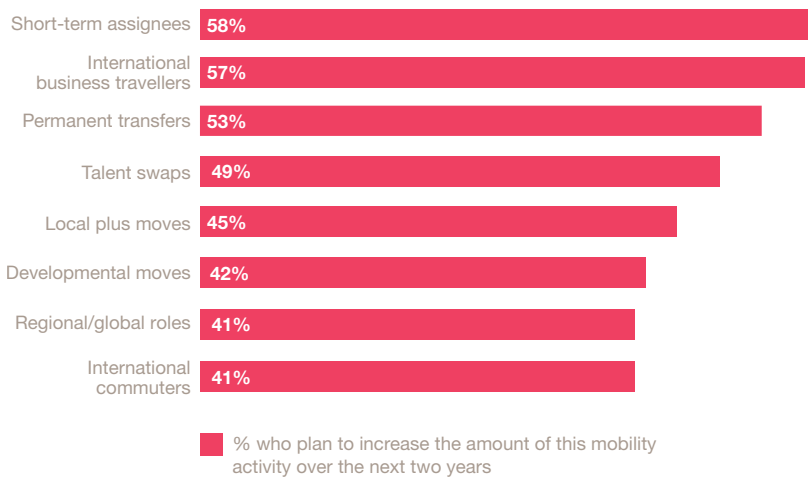
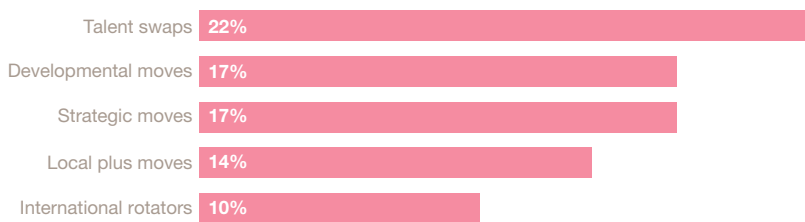


Figure 2: % of organisations planning to introduce mobility types in the next two years



Mobility and talent start to align

Organisations are planning to introduce new mobility types. As Figure 2 shows, the biggest predicted increase in new mobility types that businesses don't use today is centred around talent. The results show an expected 22% adoption rate (and 49% net increase) in the use of **talent swaps**. This is where an organisation 'swaps' high potential talent between two countries for a fixed time, so employees can experience working in a different country at an early stage in their career. These swaps can help to promote personal development, cultivate a group culture and strengthen a global mindset. This is closely followed by **developmental moves** which 17% of organisations expect to adopt; a 42% net increase in use. There is a shift away from the traditional use of mobility as a way of deploying people for tactical business needs, towards also using mobility as a way to attract and develop top talent and create a more global mindset in the company.

Rebalancing the mobility deal

While traditional assignments still have a role to play, we are seeing a move away from a one-size-fits-all policy and reward approach for mobile workers. Only 10% of companies believe the home-based, tax-equalised approach to mobility is dead (see figure 3). But what we are seeing is a rebalancing of how frequently it is used. **Permanent transfers** and **'local plus' moves** (net increases in use of 53% and 45% respectively) are set to increase significantly, as companies use these as alternatives to more expensive, home-based assignments. This is likely driven by cost pressures and a desire to deploy and reward mobile talent in a way that is more equitable with local employees. We find this is especially true when moving people across developed markets such as the UK, Europe, the US, Australia and Hong Kong.

Adopting a more global approach to pay and reward

There is an interesting trend towards adopting a **global pay and reward** approach for certain types of mobile workers. Just 8% of participants do this today but 26% will have a global approach in the next two years. By contrast, there is a predicted 22% shift away from home-based reward packages. While a global reward package won't be right for all mobility types, with a planned 41% net increase in employees who have **regional or global roles**, this is certainly something to consider. It can facilitate a cadre of employees that is truly globally mobile. Respondents told us that pensions can be one of the main challenges to moving talent overseas, as individuals can be reluctant to stop contributing to their 'home' country plan. Employers that develop a more international approach to rewarding mobile workers may reap the benefits of a more mobile global workforce.

"I feel that the traditional, long-term, tax equalised assignment is not dead, it is just used more selectively, and rightly so. However, business needs are changing and so companies are responding by offering more flexible types of assignment."

*Yvonne Lowe,
International Mobility
Manager, Bupa*

Figure 3: Do you agree that the home based, tax equalised approach to mobility is dead?

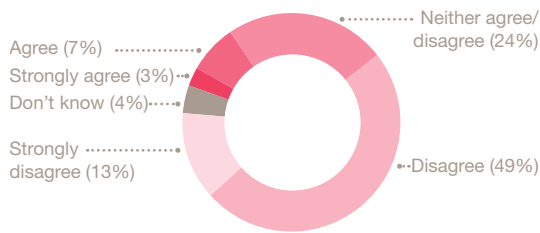
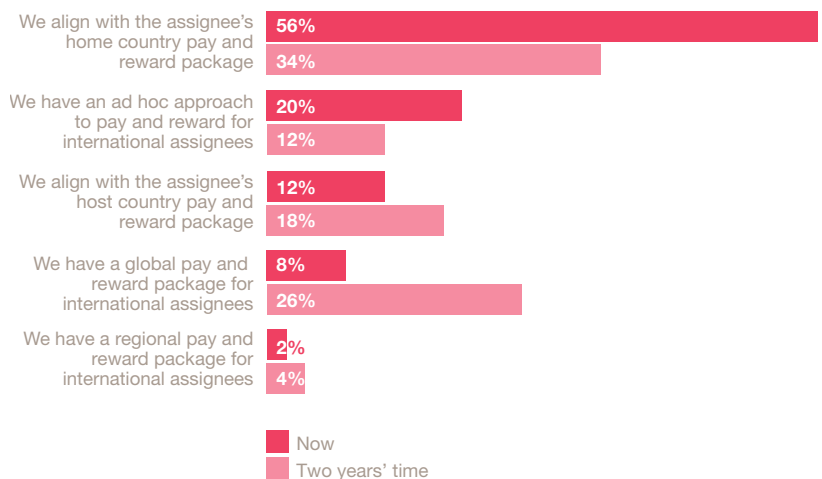


Figure 4: Organisations are adopting a more global approach to pay





Managing the mix of talent

Mobility is evolving as today's global economy brings more countries into the talent exchange. This is no longer a world of primarily West to East movement. The typical assignee could as easily be someone coming from an emerging to mature market to gain experience of Group culture or take up a leadership position.

This fast changing business landscape demands a rethink of what kind of talent you need across the world and how you can source, deploy, manage and motivate them. Without systematic identification of the right skills and people needed to execute global business plans and the agility to assemble them quickly, your business could miss out on valuable opportunities and lose out in the war for talent.

Managing the mix of talent is a fine balance to get right – how many local employees should you hire? How many people should you fly in or send on assignment, to provide expertise, assure consistent quality levels and provide 'corporate glue' in the new location? And how many people might you hire as a contingent workforce? Leading organisations are starting to identify, at an international level, what skills they are going to need and where, to deliver on business growth plans. This is assessed against the internal talent supply so actions can be taken, in a planned way and with purpose – to develop talent, mobilise talent, acquire new talent.

Our point of view

The battle for talent

Further drivers for the growth in mobility include predicted changes in the availability and location of global talent. With more than 50% of graduates aged 25–34 likely to be living in emerging markets by 2020 (including China 29%, India 12% and Indonesia 6%)², it makes sense to tap into these talent pools now and to create a ‘global employer’ brand to compete in the battle for talent with local employers.

Figure 5 highlights participants’ recognition of the importance of mobility in developing talent and giving future leaders experience of how to deal with cultural diversity and work in unfamiliar markets. Our research suggests that opportunities for mobility are especially important in attracting talent from the millennial generation. In 2011, we spoke to more than 4,000 new graduates from around the world about what they wanted from their careers. More than 70% said they would like to work abroad, making this one of the most important attributes for a graduate employer³.

The problem is that many of the markets your business is likely to be targeting for growth are low down the list of the millennials’ favoured destinations. While nearly 60% put the US in their top 20, only 11% are keen to work in India and just 2% in China. How can you encourage your people to undertake business critical assignments to these ‘less favoured’ locations?

Challenging locations

Mobility challenges created when organisations expand into new locations are heightened by the fact that many of the targeted markets are unfamiliar and difficult to enter. Participants told us that tax and immigration compliance are the main challenges to moving employees, with security considerations and pension benefits also frequently cited. Figure 6 lists the regions participants say they have found most challenging – how can your business capitalise on the opportunities in these markets while still managing risk and compliance effectively?

Figure 5: Why organisations move people globally



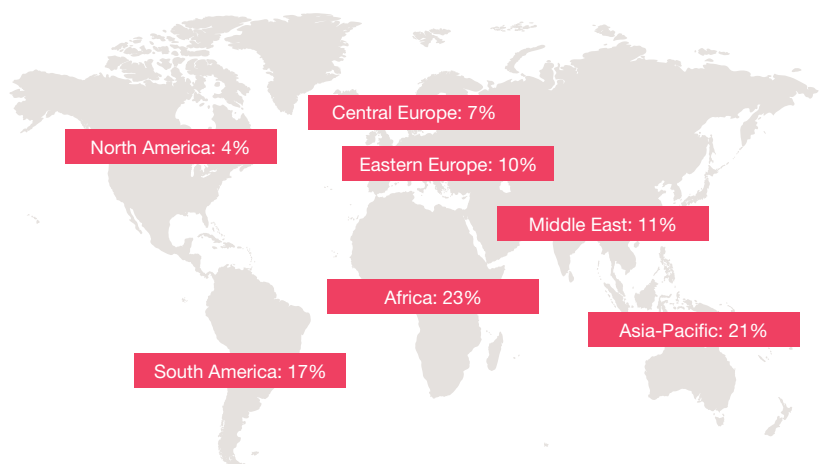
“Different parts of our business have different needs from global mobility, which poses varying challenges. We want the business to see global mobility as an enabler to the development of leadership roles and to nurture the development of the future of our organisation.”

Simon Helliwell, SVP
Reward and Systems,
Reed Elsevier

It’s interesting to see that while mobility is increasingly being used as a way to develop, motivate and retain talent and many people now expect mobility as part of their career, businesses are still over-paying for mobility. What about creating a ‘mobility deal’ that focuses more on the non-financial aspects such as mentoring and exposure to senior leadership?

Our point of view

Figure 6: Locations participants tell us are the most challenging to move people to



² OECD Education Indicators in Focus, 2012

³ Millennials at work: Reshaping the workplace, PwC, 2011



“Connecting and moving talent between East and West is a challenge for us. We find a key barrier is often immigration restrictions; in particular the increasing number of changes in regulations in the UK, US and Asia. There’s a lot of national emphasis on promoting the internal talent market, before looking at bringing people in from overseas who will need work permits. It’s certainly not as easy as it was a few years ago. This challenge is quite real to us.”

Global Financial Services company

“The immigration landscape has shifted significantly in the last few years, through ongoing global political and economic events. Governments across the world are placing ever increasing restrictions and regulations on foreign nationals. Getting your people to where they need to be quickly and cost-effectively, is becoming increasingly complex. There is a heavy focus on compliance. For example, this year we saw a landmark fine imposed by the US Government for a serious incidence of immigration non-compliance.”

*Julia Onslow-Cole,
PwC Legal Head
of Immigration*

Heightened risk

Modern mobility brings significant challenges, in a world where paying the right tax in the right location is more important than ever for companies who want to be trusted by their customers. It is forcing companies to rethink their approach to managing the risks of modern mobility. From taking care of employer compliance, tax, immigration and duty of care obligations, to managing reputational risk, the time to act is now.

Companies need to take a fresh, systematic look at what needs to be done and prioritise accordingly. **How can you get the basics working well, so you can step up to take on the value-add activities the business says it needs?**

Feeling the strain

Mobility as we know it isn't fit for purpose

Both the complexity of mobility and the challenges of delivering against strategic objectives have escalated. Can your business meet these demands with the operating model, resources, policies and processes you have in place?

The strategic challenge for mobility

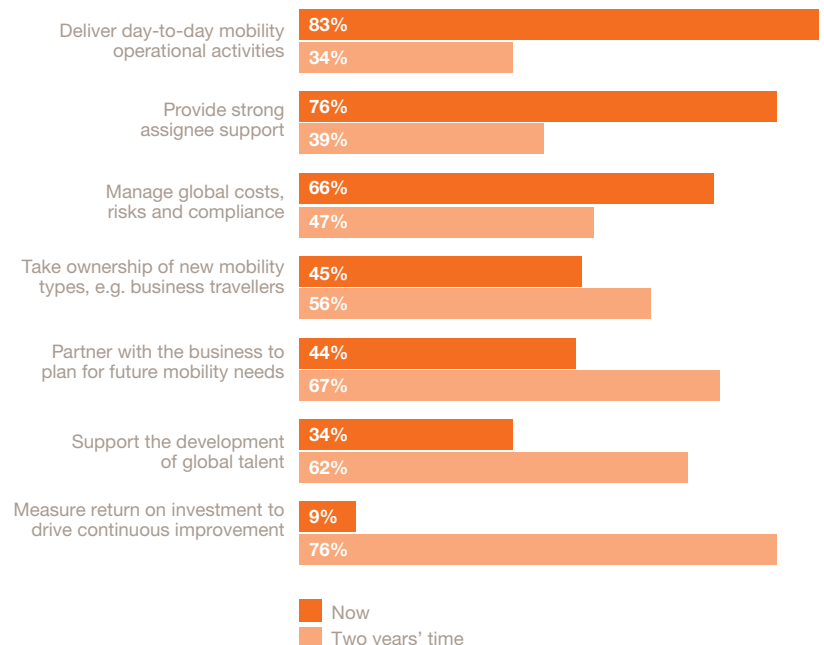
Modern mobility is shaping the priorities and aspirations of mobility teams and what the business expects. Having been seen primarily as an operational function that moves people from A to B, our survey indicates that businesses need HR and mobility teams to step up and take a more strategic role. Two-thirds of participants expect to be partnering with the business to plan for future talent needs by 2017, compared to 44% today (see Figure 7).

But the results reveal a disconnect between mobility teams' aspirations, business expectations, and the operational realities faced. How can you continue to provide day-to-day support and manage increasingly complex compliance, while moving into a more strategic role? Only 34% of mobility teams see themselves continuing to focus on the day-to-day delivery of mobility operations by 2017.

"We want to move from a reactive, transactional function to a strategic advisor to the business."

Daniel Zinner, Global Mobility Governance, Bombardier

Figure 7: What activities does mobility do today and what is expected in two years' time?





It is concerning that by 2017 over 50% of participants still won't be able to accurately quantify the cost of their mobility programme. Mobility functions that are unable to articulate the cost and value of their mobility programme will struggle to survive in the current climate.

Our point of view

Managing cost was the second highest priority for participants behind remaining compliant, but only...

67%

calculate and approve the cost of an assignment before it begins

31%

compare the actual cost of an assignment against budgeted costs

8%

are able to accurately quantify the total cost of their mobility programmes



Managing cost and value

Taking on a more strategic role demands a strong business case for change and solid data to support it. Three in four respondents expect to be measuring return on investment from mobility in two years' time, compared with just 9% who do this today. Fewer say they can accurately quantify the cost of their programme. Even by 2017, only around half (49%) expect to be able to do this accurately.

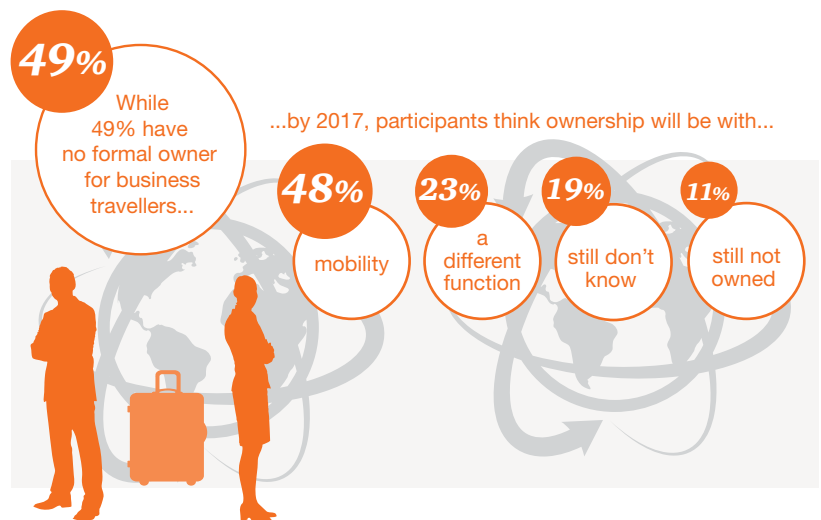
More effective metrics are going to be important in measuring return on investment and demonstrating value within your organisation. Nearly 40% say they plan to use metrics to predict the success of future mobility assignments. But this is heavily dependent on obtaining the right data and freeing up resources to take on this more strategic role.



Developing the right mobility policies

Our findings show that while on average 1.6% of an organisation's total workforce is on a formal international assignment, 12.2% of employees are internationally mobile each year, on average. For some companies this number is even higher so having the right policies and resources in place to manage this population is important.

Only 57% of participants agree their mobility policies meet business needs, with only 6% confident enough to say they strongly agree. There is a risk that the focus of mobility policies and support remains too narrow, focused on the workforce on formal international assignment. They are just one part of a much more diverse, often shorter-term mobile population, but have traditionally received the majority of the mobility attention and resources. The groups of mobile employees that require more focus include the growing army of business travellers and those in regional/global roles.



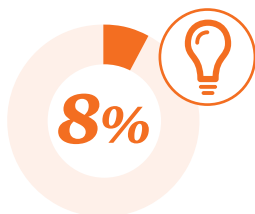
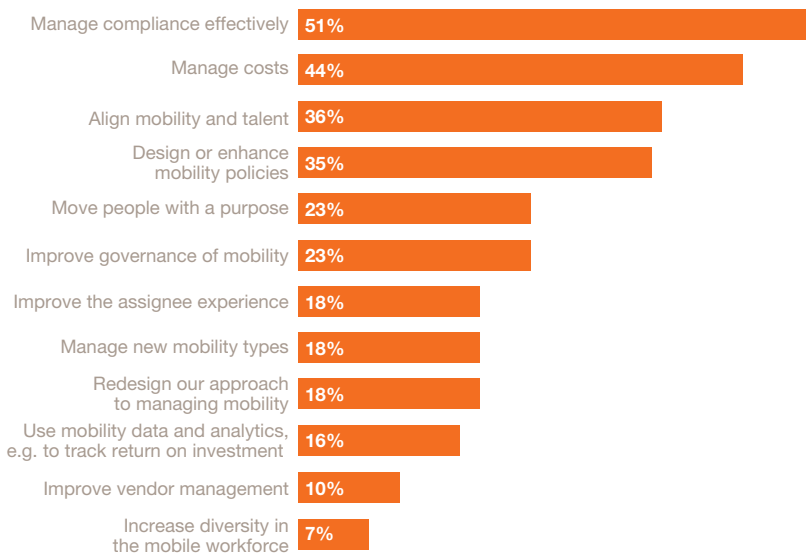
"You can think blue sky, but if you can't get the basics right you've had it. We need to provide strong assignee support, yet be as efficient as possible. We also need to be able to have robust conversations with the business so we manage tax, immigration and reputational risks for the company, yet enable the business to move people to where they need them to be. We're able to do this because we have a policy suite that supports the mobility types the company needs."

Global Financial Services company

Managing risk and compliance are high on the priority list. Mobility teams can't move to a more strategic role until there is a clearer strategy for how risk and compliance will be monitored and managed effectively in all locations. Even with outsourcing these activities, the business still needs to take ownership and responsibility for ensuring that their organisation is compliant.

Our point of view

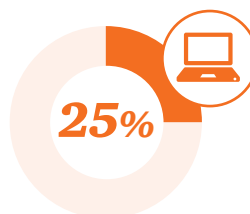
Figure 8: Top priorities for mobility teams



Only 8% believe they have a sophisticated and innovative global mobility programme

“It’s much more fun to jump right into the sexier things – designing the programme and the policy, creating a great experience for our employees who move internationally. We’re doing lots of great work in these areas but really we needed to focus first on compliance, to make sure that when we send people around the world, often on very short notice, that we are compliant with taxes and immigration.”

Mark Daniels, Director – Global Mobility, Guidewire



Only 25% of survey participants say the technology used to support mobility meets business needs. Just 36% have access to the right data to manage the globally mobile population.



Compliance concerns

Managing mobility costs and compliance effectively are the top priorities for respondents (see Figure 8). Getting these basics right is an essential first step to enable the shift towards more strategic activities.

Some organisations have moved mobility operations to shared service centres or regional hub teams who develop expertise by performing mobility activities day in, day out. Done well, this can be a good way to drive standardisation, consistent processes, service improvements, as well as improved compliance. It can also free up other mobility team members to partner with the business more directly, rather than through HR business partners, to plan mobility needs, make better decisions and achieve the right outcomes.

Systems deficiencies

Technology is vital in tracking and managing a bigger and more diverse mobile population, improving their mobility experience and keeping them in close contact with your business. But barely a third of participants say they have access to the right data to manage globally mobile employees and only one in four say their mobility technology meets their business needs.

In the face of systems deficiencies and heightened risk and complexity, the fact that most participants are expecting to reduce the time they spend managing cost, risk, compliance, assignee support and day-to-day operational activities over the next two years does seem like something of a challenge. How can you fulfil strategic aspirations and at the same time meet operational demands? **Achieving these strategic aspirations won’t happen overnight – investment, time and resources will be needed.**

Up to speed

Future proofing your mobility programme

Forward-looking businesses are developing a more agile and strategic approach to mobility, while ensuring they have the strong operational foundations to deliver. What are the key attributes for moving people with purpose and how can you achieve this?

Securing business buy-in

Redefining mobility

Senior leadership attitudes towards mobility are as important as financial investment in getting your programme fit for the future. As a first step it's important to secure buy-in from the top, even board-level, to redefine mobility's role in taking your business forward and communicate its value in developing talent and realising strategic goals.

Mobility should ideally be viewed as a business investment in the same way as talent more broadly, rather than simply a cost to be contained. This demands data – clear cost and return on investment measurement, to track and justify spending.

Leading companies are also building mobility into their employee value proposition as it becomes an expected part of an employee's career path and an experience that people need before they can move up to senior management.

“The surprisingly high costs of our Global Mobility programme removed any emotion previously attached to internal politics – it got us buy-in from the very top.”

Simon Helliwell, SVP
Reward and Systems,
Reed Elsevier

Understanding the views of key stakeholders through 'voice of the customer' dialogue can help you to anticipate their evolving needs and plan how mobility can support this.

Our point of view

Cutting across this redefinition of mobility is a mindset that sees your competitive environment as primarily global rather than local, and looks at your people as being part of a global talent pool rather than tied to their home country.

More diverse talent pipelines and leadership are needed to reflect the shift in focus of global investment and growth. So it's perhaps surprising that less than 40% of participants plan to increase the diversity of their mobile population. A further 13% aren't aware whether this is a priority or not. The lack of transparent mobility opportunities and clear policies on diversity are likely to reinforce barriers to progression among under-represented groups.

Clarifying expectations

It's important to have a clear understanding of what your senior leaders want and need from mobility as part of their business and workforce plans.

Employees are of course another key stakeholder group. Mobility is going to be an ever more important element of your employees' experience. How can you find out about their individual career aspirations and what would encourage them to go on an assignment? For those who have moved, what worked well and how could their experience be enhanced?



Questions for the CEO

As having the right skills in the right place becomes more strategically critical, while the risks and operational challenges of mobility increase, what are the most pressing issues facing you as the CEO? We believe there are five key questions you and your board should address:

- 1. What people do you need to deliver your strategy in the markets you've targeted for growth and how are you going to attract, develop and retain them? How does this fit into your international workforce plan?*
- 2. Do you have the right policies and governance framework in place to make sure the right people are deployed on the right type of international placement?*
- 3. Does your employee value proposition ('assignment deal') encourage people to take up opportunities for mobility, ensuring the experience is positive and beneficial for both you and them?*
- 4. Does your mobility team have the right people, skills and technology to realise your objectives (operational and strategic) and to maximise return on investment?*
- 5. Is your business doing enough to re-integrate returning assignees and make the most of their new skills and experience?*

Our point of view

Aligning with strategy

Anticipating demand

A crucial part of the strategic support you can provide for your business is assessing future mobility needs to ensure you can quickly have talent in place when it's required.

The foundation is a consistent organisation-wide approach to mapping the capabilities, experience and potential of employees and then using this to ensure the right people are moved into the right roles. The talent map can be matched against business needs to quickly deploy suitable people from within your organisation. Predictive analytics can help to anticipate future demands and match this against the talent map to identify the right people for deployment. This requires an integrated approach across HR, pulling in mobility, talent, resourcing and succession planning expertise.

Good governance

Strong governance of mobility on both a global and regional basis can help to ensure that the right people are sent on the right types of assignment. Who approves assignments and the resulting investment?

It's important to base assignments on a clear business case. A dedicated steering committee can help to set targets and vet selection, supported by mobility quotas (e.g. 5% of team on development assignment) to prevent talent blocking. Once a move is approved, clear communications, roles and responsibilities are critical to ensure everyone knows the part they play. While the business 'owns' its people, interventions and prompts from a central team can help ensure the right outcomes for the global organisation and the right next role for the employee.

The business case for moving internationally should include the plan for re-integration and utilisation of international skills and experience at the end of a move. This requires a change in mindset from seeing the end of the assignment as the culmination of the development process for the employee and your business.

Flexibility to meet business needs

Moving people with purpose

One-size-fits-all assignments based on duration alone are no longer adequate. Forward-looking organisations are moving to purpose-based assignments, which match the type of move and the associated reward package with the business and career development reasons for the move.

The key objectives of the assignment are determined upfront and progress tracked during the assignment to make sure it is delivering on the investment. The goals might include leading a defined project, passing on specific skills to local teams or developing the next regional CEO.

The reward package, incentives and ‘mobility deal’ for a specialist being brought in to oversee the development of a factory in a new market might be different to a person being sent to develop their leadership potential, for example. The choice of person and type of move evolves from an ad hoc decision within a business unit to a systematic selection process based on the planned objective and value of the move.

Moving people with purpose can also build better business buy-in to mobility. By developing a strong suite of policies for different mobility types, rather than shoe-horning employees into policies that don't fit, teams can partner with the business more effectively. Developing a consistent approach when recruiting senior international hires into a new country, for example, means the business can move quicker to hire the talent they need rather than be slowed down negotiating bespoke agreements every time.

Flexible reward – within a framework

Part of the move away from a one-size-fits-all approach is also greater flexibility in how mobile employees are rewarded. Short-term assignments may still suit a traditional home based tax-equalised approach, but host based pay may now be more appropriate for longer term placements. Global nomads may be more suited to a global pay scale.

“The critical focus on cost demands more flexible programmes for the business, so that we can best mobilise talent going forward. Assignee choice and flexibility will come into play. Close alignment with the talent team will also be necessary.”

Retail and Consumer company, UK

Clearly location is likely to be a key factor in determining the appropriate reward package. It may be easier to opt for a local package when sending someone to the US, for example. By contrast, a move to a less favoured market might require additional assignment allowances alongside home-based pay in order to incentivise a move.

But pay is not the only incentive that can be offered. For example, millennials may simply want the international experience and the opportunity for personal development. Other incentives to attract staff to a less desirable location might include a three month sabbatical on successful completion of the assignment or opportunities to work on voluntary projects one day a week in an emerging location. Mentoring and exposure to senior leadership can also be attractive to employees with aspirations to progress within the company.

A final point is that all this flexibility comes within a centrally owned and clearly governed framework. Developing the right mobility solutions to meet business needs means that exceptions should be rare. Supporting processes can be standardised and streamlined to help deliver operational excellence.

Enhancing operational foundations

Redesigning the operating model

Operational excellence is critical to run mobility activities efficiently and compliantly, but also to enable mobility teams to manage company risk and reputation, a broader range of mobility types and free them up to provide more strategic advice and support.

We're expecting to see more operational responsibilities move to shared service centres or be performed by one or two individuals who perform this role day in, day out. We're also likely to see closer integration with HR systems and processes as operational activities become more automated and streamlined.



The investment in technology doesn't have to be huge to make a difference – a simple system can help manage your mobile workers or track and measure return on investment. There is a wealth of mobility data sitting in your organisation – how can you best use this to increase and demonstrate the value that mobility brings?

Our point of view

Leading organisations are building centralised global, and sometimes regional, centres of excellence for mobility. Activities include being a true mobility partner to the business (often in place of HR business partners who are not experts on the broad range of issues that mobility brings), policy development, aligning with colleagues from talent, resourcing, tax and finance to provide a more integrated service to the business, vendor management and reporting on return on investment to drive continuous improvement.

Smart systems and use of data

More effective systems will help your business to anticipate needs, quickly identify and deploy the right people and achieve operational efficiencies through workflow functionality. Increased use of technology can also drive standardisation and consistency of processes and data, leading to improved compliance.

We predict more organisations will embrace the benefits that 'cooperative compliance' brings and will look to implement this in countries where tax authorities permit it. By being able to demonstrate that compensation and payroll data for mobile workers is robust and the right controls and governance are in place, it can remove the need to file individual tax returns.

It will rely on companies establishing tax compliance control frameworks to gain approval from authorities on their reporting and withholding processes. This can generate efficiency savings for global organisations that currently spend significant time and money on employee tax returns for mobile workers. Working with authorities to get this compliance right, up front, could be a game-changer that companies should start to think about.

Innovative technology can improve the mobility experience for end-users. 'Anytime anywhere' tools and apps mean stakeholders can access the information they need 24/7, with key information presented at a glance so they can make informed mobility decisions. While some may see this as self-service, what matters most is getting the balance right.

But having access to good data isn't the end of the story. It's important to think about how to use that data to provide meaningful information to the business that drives continuous improvement.

This high tech approach can set the stage for more meaningful interactions so mobility can act as a partner and adviser to the business and to mobile employees.

Case studies

Mobility in action

Simon Helliwell, SVP Reward and Systems, Reed Elsevier

Getting buy-in from senior leadership was key

We'd tried to move towards a more centralised model in the past, but although people agreed in principle to the need for a centre of expertise for mobility, we kept reaching an impasse when we got into the detail (e.g. which business unit's policies would we use and who would do what role).

This time around we had the support of senior leadership, as we'd presented a clear business case and rationale for what we wanted to do. This buy-in from the top meant we were able to drive change more effectively, and once business units started to hand over responsibility for their mobile workers, you could feel a sense of relief. Managing assignees is complex and touches multiple dimensions across HR, Finance, Legal and Tax. Handing that over to us as experts meant people in HR could then focus on their 'day-jobs', using our team as experts in our field of mobility – better for the business, better for our mobile employees. Our challenge over the next 1–2 years will be to then use the data we have on our mobile population to drive continuous improvement in the mobility programme and share this with the business units, so they can make better informed decisions.

Mark Daniels, Director – Global Mobility, Guidewire

Using technology to enhance the mobility experience

I quickly realised the employee experience at Guidewire is critical. The people we move are software developers and consultants – they don't want long policy documents and briefings, they want to be able to get the information they need, at their fingertips, when they want it. This led us to create a website for our mobile workers; a self-service site that has all sorts of information that they can access 24/7. It's been a big hit and a great way of getting information into people's hands. It fits very well with the culture of our organisation. It's created a buzz, a way for people to connect with each other – and it does some of my job for me; someone who's already worked in Asia can talk about what it's like to live and work there.

You see people's anxiety decrease once they've heard what it's really like from a colleague who's been there and done it. We're going to survey our assignees soon, so we can assess what they like, what they want more and less of – so we in mobility can continuously improve over time, based on the feedback from our customers.



“We have a very employee-centric approach at Guidewire. We want to be a market leader in terms of how we take care of our employees and create engaging work opportunities. Global mobility is a big part of that offering.”

Mark Daniels, Director – Global Mobility, Guidewire

Conclusion

The power of mobility

Our survey portrays a world of mobility that's not in transition, but in full scale transformation. You only need to look at participants' priorities now and where they want to be by 2017 to see how much is likely to change.

We believe that there are a number of attributes that mark out the leaders and are going to set the benchmarks for others to follow (see opposite).

Developing these winning capabilities is going to be as much about promoting the case for modern mobility as the operational changes and investments that you plan to make in the coming years. CEOs can take the lead in conveying the importance of mobility in realising your immediate goals, fulfilling the personal aspirations of your employees and in forging the global workforce of the future.

As an HR or mobility professional, demonstrating the value of your contribution is an opportunity to enhance your standing and influence within your business. As one of the participants in our survey said: "As global mobility professionals we can sometimes become overly bogged down with the mechanics of moving people around the world and fail to acknowledge that in many cases this might be the most ground-breaking personal and professional experience that a person can have".

In short, mobility can change companies and mobility can change lives. **How can your business realise the extraordinary transformational potential of modern mobility?**



Contacts

To discuss this report in more detail please contact:

Peter Clarke

Global Leader, Global
Mobility Services

+1 914 980 4061
peter.clarke@us.pwc.com



Carol Stubbings

UK Leader, Global
Mobility Services

+44 7739 874275
carol.a.stubbings@uk.pwc.com



Eileen Mullaney

US Global Mobility Strategy
Consulting Leader

+1 973 641 9552
eileen.mullaney@us.pwc.com



Clare Hughes

UK Global Mobility Strategy
Consulting Director

+44 7810 050952
clare.d.hughes@uk.pwc.com



With thanks to researchers:

Christine Weddell

Kathryn Osborn

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