

A photograph of a modern glass building with a prominent spiral staircase. The sun is shining brightly, creating a lens flare effect. In the foreground, a person is walking across a paved plaza, their shadow cast on the ground. The overall scene is bright and architectural.

From strategy to operations: mobility function overview

Mobility function survey

February 2022

The EY logo, consisting of the letters 'EY' in a bold, white, sans-serif font. Above the 'Y' is a yellow chevron shape pointing to the right.

EY

Building a better
working world

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EY clients have told us that the focus is on employee experience and embedding this in strategic objectives and operational delivery...



Gerard Osei-Bonsu
EY EMEA Integrated
Mobility Leader



In summary

Since the pandemic, the way people work and travel has significantly changed – and continues to evolve rapidly. Amid technological, demographic and disruptive organizational designs, companies need to continuously enhance their people experience.

To understand trends in the mobility function across people, processes and technology, EY teams interviewed 120 mobility leaders across EMEA. We share their individual and collective insights in this survey. The study summarizes the findings of the EY organization and provides an outlook on the path from strategy to operations as companies stand on the brink of transformation.

Highlights:

- ▶ Almost 70% of mobility functions drive both operations and strategy, yet 20% of organizations do not have sufficient technical skills to deliver on strategic objectives.
- ▶ Of the organizations surveyed, 63% say that talent is driving their mobility strategy in part or in whole.
- ▶ 58% of organizations have a remote working policy in place, and 38% have a cross-border remote work policy.

How can you achieve success?

- 1 Define your mobility purpose – to align better with your talent agenda
- 2 Embrace transformation – mindset is as important as skillset
- 3 Review your key program attributes – fit for purpose to meet business objectives
- 4 Plan and design your journey – set achievable milestones
- 5 Empower your people – up-skilling and re-skilling
- 6 Choose the right sourcing and operating model – align to organizational goals
- 7 Orchestrate the digital ecosystem – re-purpose and re-cycle your data
- 8 Balance ambition and change efforts – rigorous planning and monitoring



1 | Define your mobility purpose – to align better with your talent agenda

Key questions

What is the driver behind your mobility strategy?

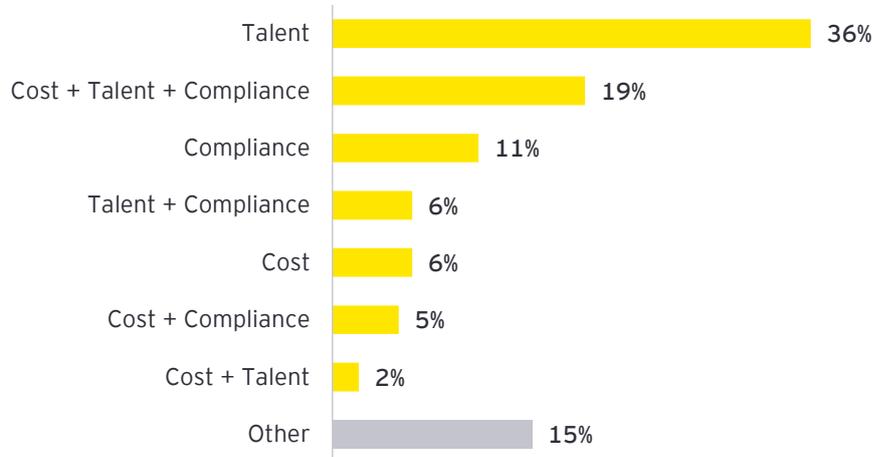
Talent attraction and retention is overtaking cost as the number one driver behind organizational mobility strategy.

Organizations are looking to redefine their business and HR strategy. In turn, mobility functions are reviewing their strategy and program to ensure it is future-fit and designed around talent needs.

Current trends suggest that now, more than ever, mobility programs should be designed with a humans-at-the-center perspective of employee needs, taking into account the end-to-end experience including flexibility options, process enhancement, and technology enablement.

This will provide a competitive advantage to win the “race for talent” and enhance employer branding.

What is the driver behind your mobility strategy?



Shared Perspectives



We are striving to meet the business and project requirements according to the budget. We forecast and reforecast project costs to plan for and meet the business needs.

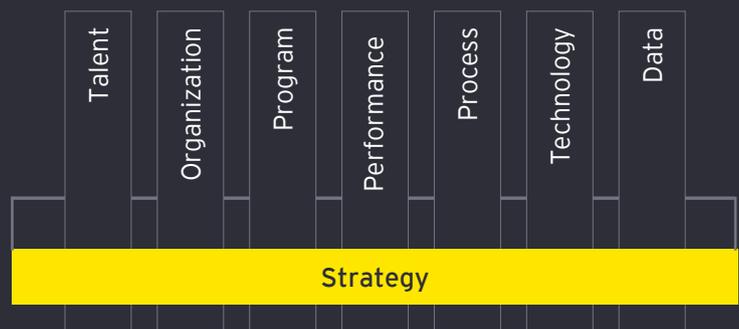


Our focus is to perform as a talent-driven organization – looking at capabilities and finding the right development opportunities.



We are moving toward a talent-centralized mindset with focus on international experience to extend the horizon of our people, by embedding cultural and leadership skills.

When looking at how to optimize a mobility program, the first step is to define the overall strategy and then focus on the program enablers.



2 | Embrace transformation – mindset is as important as skillset

Key questions

Do you have the right skills in your team to deliver on your mobility strategy?

Mobility functions are often required to manage complex programs. Sometimes they can be disconnected from the business and perceived as an administrative function.

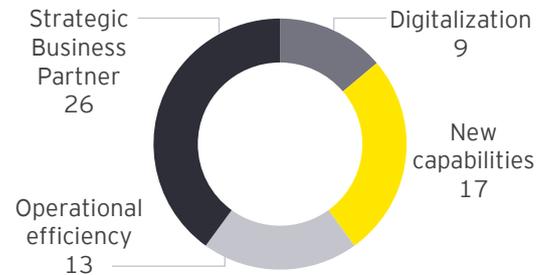
As the scope of Mobility diversifies and businesses require more agile and flexible programs, more sophisticated skill-sets will be required to find creative solutions to unique mobility challenges.

Only in this way will Mobility act as a strategic business partner, talent enabler and master of operations.



of organizations do not have sufficient technical skills to deliver on strategic objectives.

What does the future of mobility mean to you?



Source: Future of Mobility event, Switzerland 2020

Shared Perspectives



Our mobility team has the understanding, knowledge and technical skills but not the time to focus on strategy. Therefore we rely on service providers' support to deliver our strategic goals.



Continuous development is required based on market and our industry needs. We are hiring data analysts into our mobility team to enable better use of our data.



What matters is agility: anticipate all the compliance issues that arise in mobility (tax, immigration, social security) and act on them pro-actively.

Collaborator



HR and Business strategy



Cost efficiency



Global workforce planning

Talent enabler



Different generation needs



Employee flexibility of choice



Talent development

Master of operations



Complexity of move types



Increased compliance requirements



Volume fluctuation and scalability

3

Review your key program attributes – fit for purpose to meet business objectives

Key questions

Which mobility policies do you have?

Do you track exceptions to these policies?

Long-term and short-term policies still form the cornerstone of many policy suites. Additional flexibility is now being provided by broadening this suite to include e.g., development, junior or commuter policies and business travel.

We are seeing a trend toward purpose-led, rather than duration-based, policy segmentation, combined with embedded flexibility options for mobile talent. Examples of this are: permanent split family options, cash vs. reimbursement approaches and dial-up and down of defined entitlements.

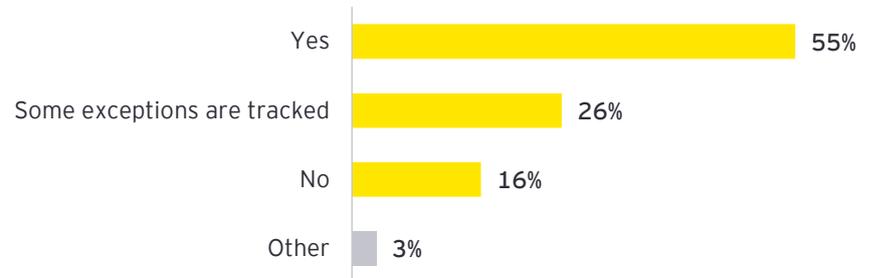
The creation of broader mobility policy suites and flexibility options for mobile talent have assisted businesses in addressing individualization and thereby in reducing exceptions.

This has been further enhanced by organizations embracing international remote worker and/or virtual assignment methodologies.

Which mobility policies do you have?



Do you track exceptions to these policies?



Shared Perspectives



Our policy suite is currently undergoing review. We are adding a remote work policy to address requests from the business. Additional flexibility is also needed in our long-term and short-term policies as these are no longer fully fit for purpose.



We have very few exceptions due to the flexible benefit packages which we have in place, as these allow a personalized approach.

3

Review your key program attributes – fit for purpose to meet business objectives

Key questions

Do you have a remote work policy in place?

EY survey results show that 9 out of 10 employees want flexibility in where and when they work. Yet only 38% of participants have a cross border remote work policy in place.

Consequently, to enable talent attraction and retention, many organizations are defining their approach to cross-border remote working.

Matters to consider:

- ▶ **Guiding principles** such as eligibility
- ▶ **Compliance** such as permanent establishment
- ▶ **Compensation** such as connectivity costs
- ▶ **Contractual** setup such as service agreements
- ▶ **Technology** support such as monitoring

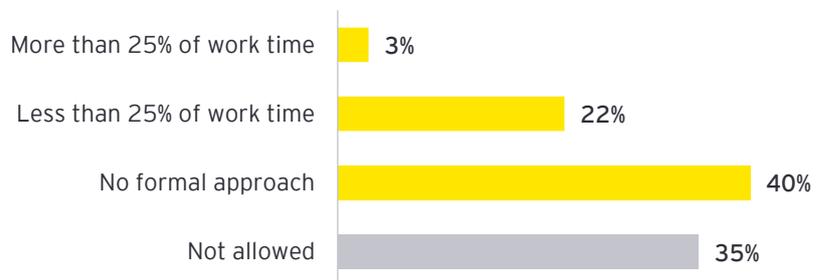


58% of organizations have a domestic remote working policy in place.



38% of organizations have a cross-border remote working policy in place.

How much cross-border remote work do you allow?



Shared Perspectives

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In creating our cross-border remote working policy, we reviewed all compliance topics, with a key focus on permanent establishment risk. This way we were able to complete a risk assessment and can define employee eligibility based on a decision tree. It was really important to have all relevant stakeholders at the table including talent management, mobility and our group tax function.

Flexible work arrangements – the new norm?

How would you reimagine your work policies in this new environment?

9 out of 10 employees want flexibility in where and when they work.

On average, employees expect to work between **2 and 3 days** remotely after the pandemic.

One third of employees want their employers to offer shorter working weeks.

54% are likely to quit if they are not offered the flexibility they want – with millennials two times as likely as baby boomers to quit.



What is driving your strategy?

Source: EY Work Reimagined Survey – April 2021

4

Plan and design your journey – set achievable milestones

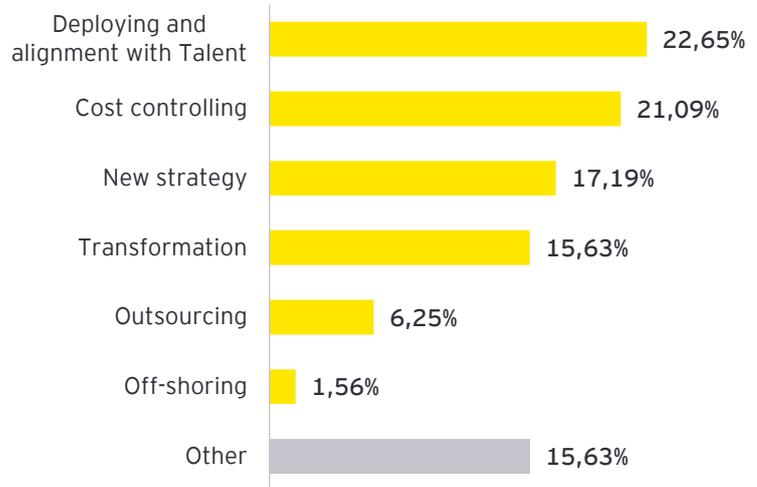
Key questions

What is on your mobility agenda for the coming year(s)?

For years, organizations have worked on aligning mobility and talent. The pandemic has made this goal even more desirable, and our participants shared that this is the number one focus area on their mobility agenda for the coming year(s).

Based on EY's Work Reimagined Employer Survey, most employers agree that their company's approach to flexibility will impact their ability to attract/retain talent.

Cost controlling continues to remain high on the mobility agenda. Companies are looking into digitization, automation and process optimization through, e.g., exploring outsourcing models, to control costs while remaining compliant and increasing the employee experience.



Shared Perspectives



One of our key tasks is to improve employee experience by understanding the mobile workforce expectations and tying the program to the talent agenda.



We are in the middle of HR transformation, requiring us to review our mobility operating model and program delivery.



New ways of working is part of our strategy re-fresh, with a focus on cross-border remote work. We want to embed flexibility in our mobility program and increase alignment with talent development.



Compliance and process efficiency are our key topics: to optimize salary cost, improve cost accountability and governance, systematize processes.



Process optimization is our priority number one, which comes with a review of outsourcing and/or offshoring our operations.

5

Empower your people – up-skilling and re-skilling

Key questions

How many estimated Full-time Equivalent (FTE) resources are delivering mobility services within your organization?

Who is responsible for the delivery of mobility services?

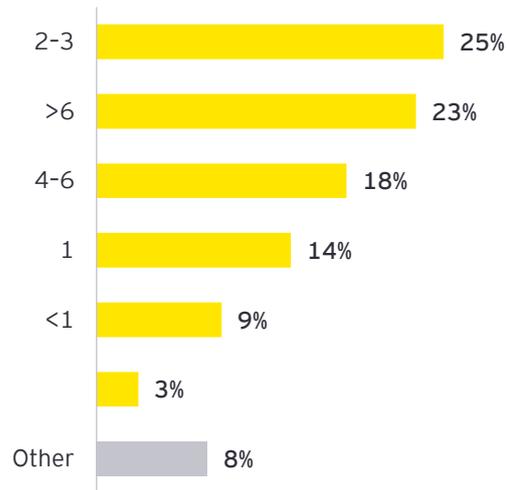
The significant increase of remote and virtual work will require a re-think of the resources and skills to be ready for new disruptors impacting the people agenda. Connectivity and team cohesion are going to be essential - with the mobility function right at the heart this need.

The mobility FTE requirement for 'new ways of working' is dependent on the service delivery model, standardization and technology enablement.

Some key questions to ask:

- ▶ Can we deliver on business strategy with the capacity and capabilities of existing resources?
- ▶ Are we technologically enabled?
- ▶ Can we fulfil our mobility ambition?

Total FTE resources to deliver mobility services



50% of organizations have a central mobility team.



20% of organizations deliver mobility under human resources function.



30% of organizations have a decentralized delivery of mobility services.

Shared Perspectives

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We have outsourced part of our mobility operations. CoE is spread across regional oversight roles.

“

Our central mobility team is in charge of the traditional long-term and short term assignments. Local hires and business travelers are local HR responsibilities.

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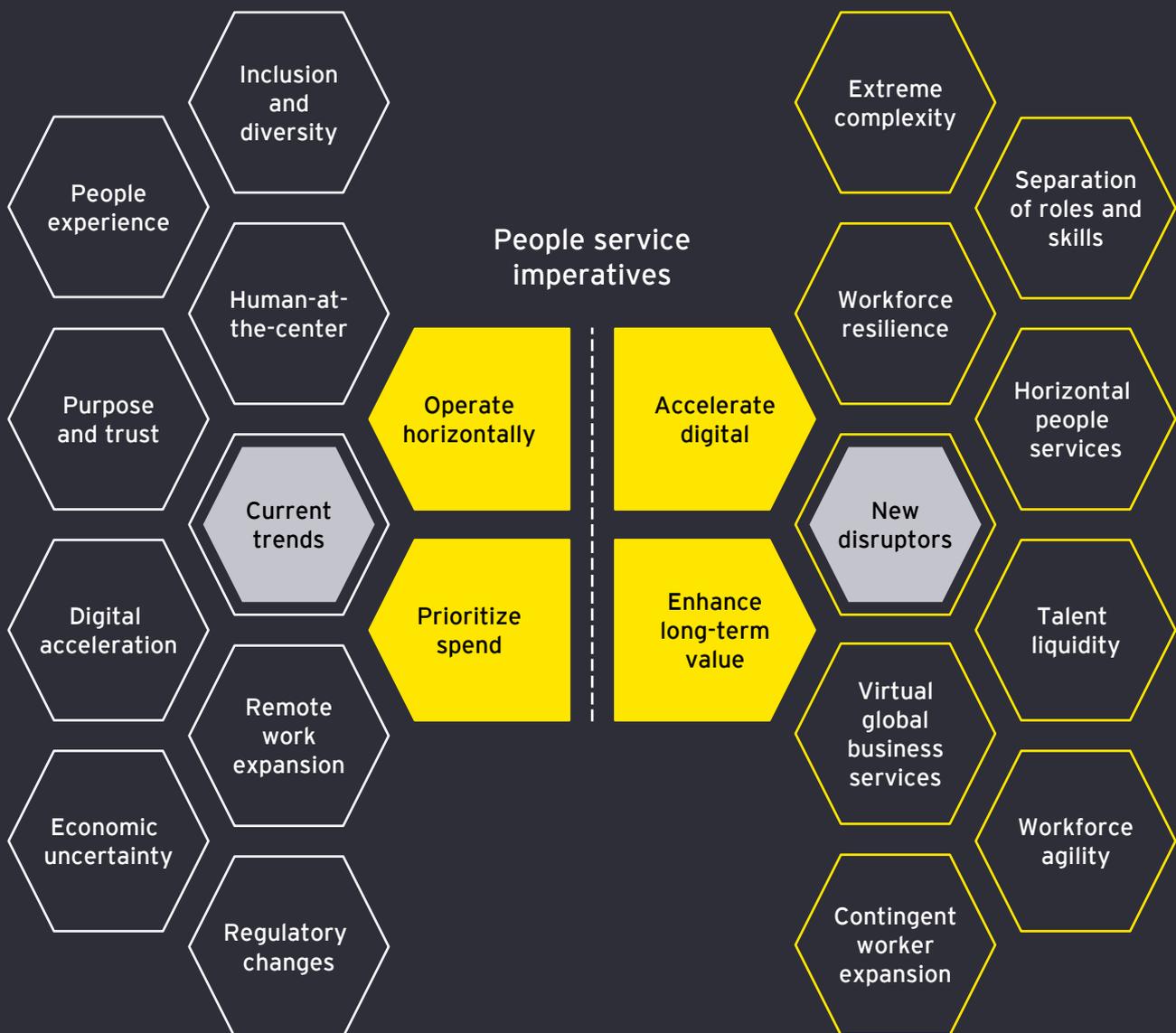
We utilize our HR shared service center to perform mobility operational tasks. The mobility Center of Excellence is in charge of program governance and development and business partnering.

5 | Empower your people – up-skilling and re-skilling

The mobility and HR functions are undergoing fundamental changes and transformation, accelerated by pandemic developments. Moving to the “next normal” is about empowering, up-skilling and re-skilling your people to adjust to this new way of working.

Mobility and HR have the power to create purpose and to contribute to long-term business value. For that to happen, and to enable the business to transform into new ways of working, the people function needs to shift from activity-based to output-based working. With links across the people agenda, the mobility function is in a prime position to be the driver of this transformation.

Trends shaping the future of the people experience and function



6

Choose the right sourcing and operating model – align to organizational goals

Key questions

How is your operating model structured?

What is the role of the Mobility Center of Excellence?

What are the responsibilities of Mobility?

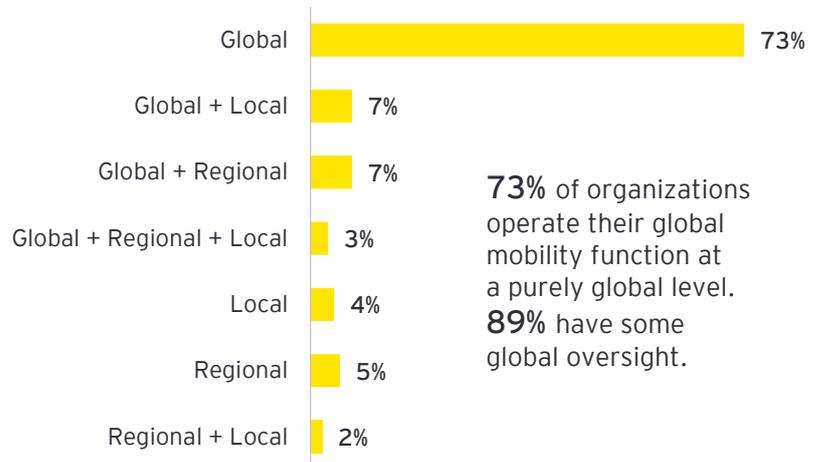
Many mobility functions retain core responsibilities, such as assignment briefings and program management, combined with providing advisory support to the business.

Preparation of cost estimates, third party data and relocation services are typically sourced externally.

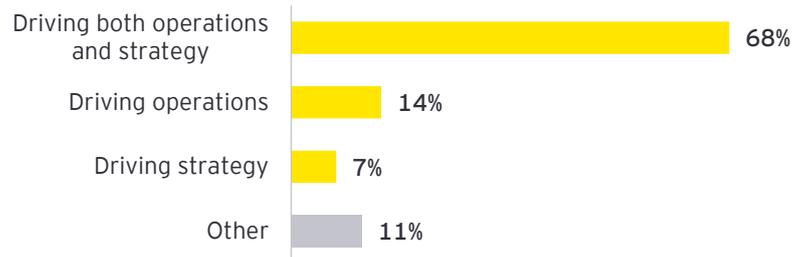
While nearly 70% of respondents indicated they were responsible for driving both operations and strategy, the day-to-day operations are seen as the priority.

A shift to an outsourced or hybrid model would enable greater focus on strategic goals, with proactive planning of cross-border arrangements.

How is your mobility operating model structured?



Role of the mobility Center of Excellence



Shared Perspectives

“ We are moving from a regional oversight role to a global model. The regions will still have a great importance to flag local differences in compliance and benefits, but we want to centralize our operations to strengthen the governance of our program.

“ Our mobility team is focused on operational delivery, reacting to the ever-changing business needs. The time to focus on our strategic goals and embed these in program delivery is limited.

Nearly two-thirds of mobility functions exclusively handle the production of assignment documents, assignment briefings, mobility advisory, and program management.

6

Choose the right sourcing and operating model – align to organizational goals

Key questions

What are your current biggest challenges in mobility?

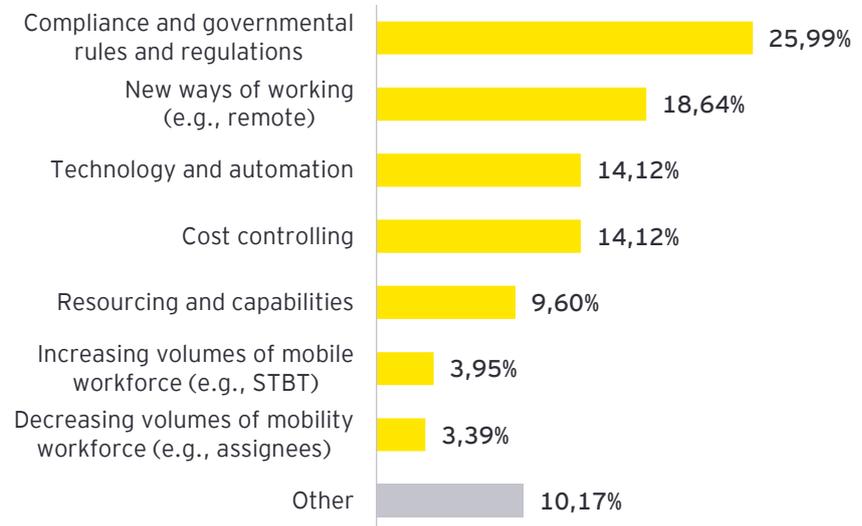
Compliance with governmental rules and regulations has long been the top mobility challenge, and respondents anticipate this is likely to increase as regulations have become more complex due to the pandemic.

Adapting to new ways of working, e.g. with cross-border remote working presents an opportunity for mobility to showcase expertise as an enabler of the organization's goals.

Mobility program leaders need to consider new ways to respond to these challenges:

- ▶ Adjust the mobility program to support the company's strategy and talent agenda
- ▶ Assess the resourcing model and the skillset of the mobility function
- ▶ Make efficient use of technology and other resources

What are your current biggest challenges in mobility?



Shared Perspectives



Our mobility function is not aligned to people strategy, setting its goals in isolation. We need to get a 'seat at the table' to be able to support the HR agenda in full.



We have several tools where we capture and process data. The challenge is to connect them to avoid duplication and limit the manual error.



It is challenging to keep up with Covid-19 compliance regulations and at the same time try to find ways to embed new ways of working. Cross-border compliance remains challenging.



Employee experience and duty of care have been our focus for the last two years and continues to be so, but we need to tie this to a cost-efficient way to deliver mobility.

Whereas **Compliance with legislation** remains number one, The second biggest challenge in current mobility is adapting to **New ways of working**.

7 | Orchestrate the digital ecosystem – re-purpose and re-cycle your data

Key questions

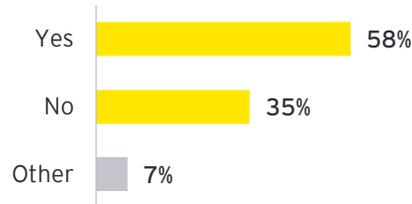
Do you provide regular data reporting to support the business?

Data analytics in Mobility has extended beyond demographic requirements.

Advanced mobility programs define which data sets they want to collate based on their mobility strategy:

- ▶ Successful candidate selection
- ▶ Volumes in growth markets
- ▶ Diversity and inclusiveness
- ▶ Uptake of flexible benefits
- ▶ Sustainability
- ▶ Post assignment retention

This information provides actionable business insights for better decision-making.



58%

of mobility functions provide regular costs and demographic data reporting to support the business.

Shared Perspectives



We are providing business with a ad-hoc cost information when requested. This is very time consuming as we don't have standard reporting capabilities in place.

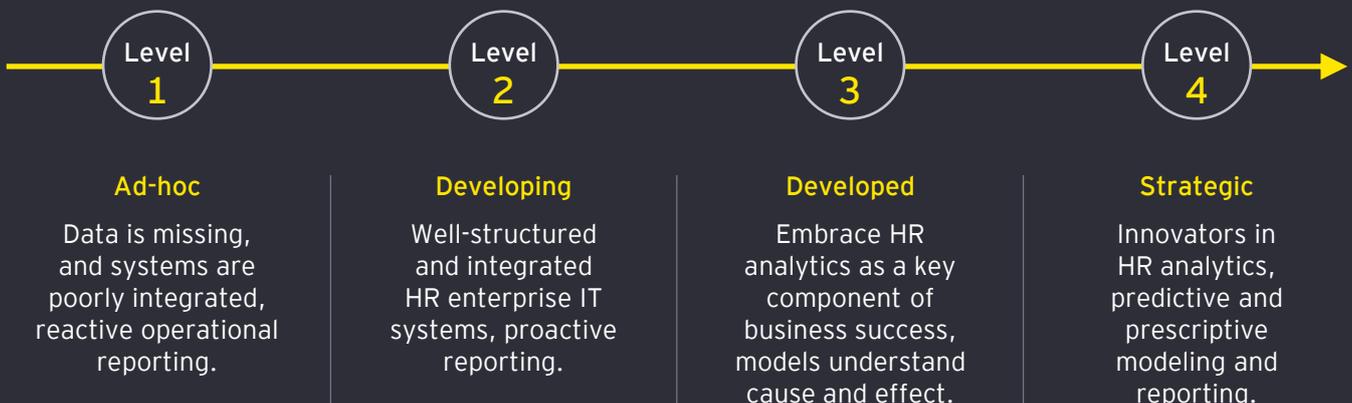


Our mobility team is receiving regular requests on costs and the duration of the assignments. Duration is easy to provide, but we do not track actual costs, so cost reporting is based on initial estimates, not always matching the reality.



We currently provide regular reports to our global HRBPs showing demographics, country combinations, assignments per type. These reports are standard and operative. Our ambition in the near future is to identify data which can help with talent development and retention.

Analytics capability maturity



7 | Orchestrate the digital ecosystem – re-purpose and re-cycle your data

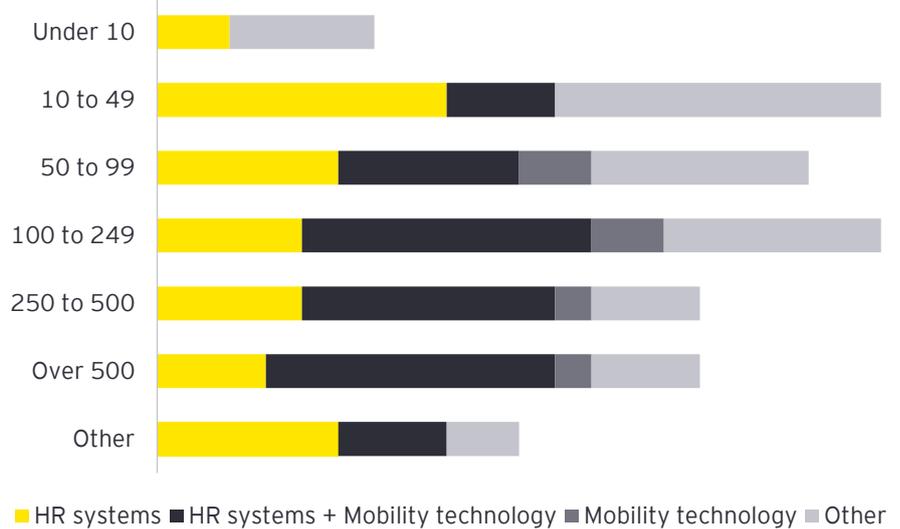
Key questions

What technology do you have in place to manage your mobility program?

The right technology enables mobility professionals to consolidate data, meaning they can re-use consistent data and information. Ultimately, this leads to increased efficiency and cost saving.

New ways of working and increasing complexity, especially in cross-border remote work, require an agile technology solution. The mobility function needs to be in a position to collect the data only once, and then re-purpose it for multiple use.

Mobility population size



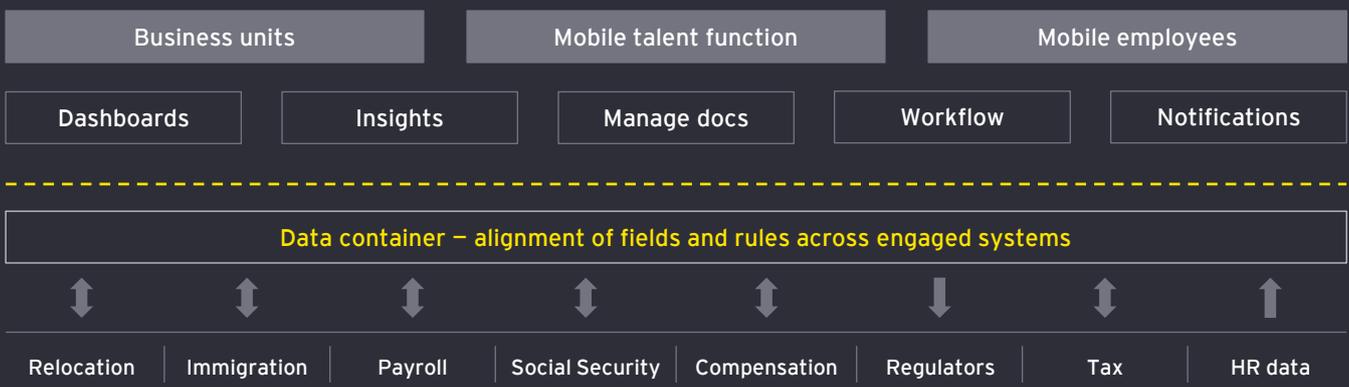
Shared Perspectives



We are using our HR IT systems for workflow and data gathering, but mobility-related tasks are run outside the common HR platform using special mobility technology or manual templates and emails.

Organizations with more than 100 mobile employees are the most **technology-enabled**, but need more agility to adapt to new ways of working.

Bringing diverse systems data together ...



8

Balance ambition and change efforts – rigorous planning and monitoring

Key questions

Do you measure the assignee experience?

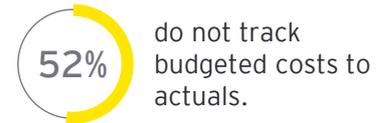
Do you measure the performance of the Mobility function?

Measuring performance is important, and there are many ways to do so.

But to understand how the mobility function's performance impacts its stakeholders and the mobile workforce, the purpose of mobility needs to be clearly defined first.

Only then, can the perception of the mobility function shift toward business partnering and being a strategic advisor, delivering on the HR agenda.

Understanding performance drives key objectives



Shared Perspectives

“ Employee experience is high on the HR agenda. This means our mobility function is regularly surveying our mobile employees to understand how our program is delivering and how we can better contribute to improve the employee experience.

“ We are measuring the resource capacity and operational task delivery to help our people to perform at their best.

“ We measure performance of our mobility function through one-to-one conversations. There are no official KPIs in place for our function.

“ There is still a long journey ahead of us to measure a true return on investment of our assignments. We need to find a way to combine the costs, the performance and the retention rate of our assignments. The new mobility arrangements like cross-border remote work, does not make this any easier.

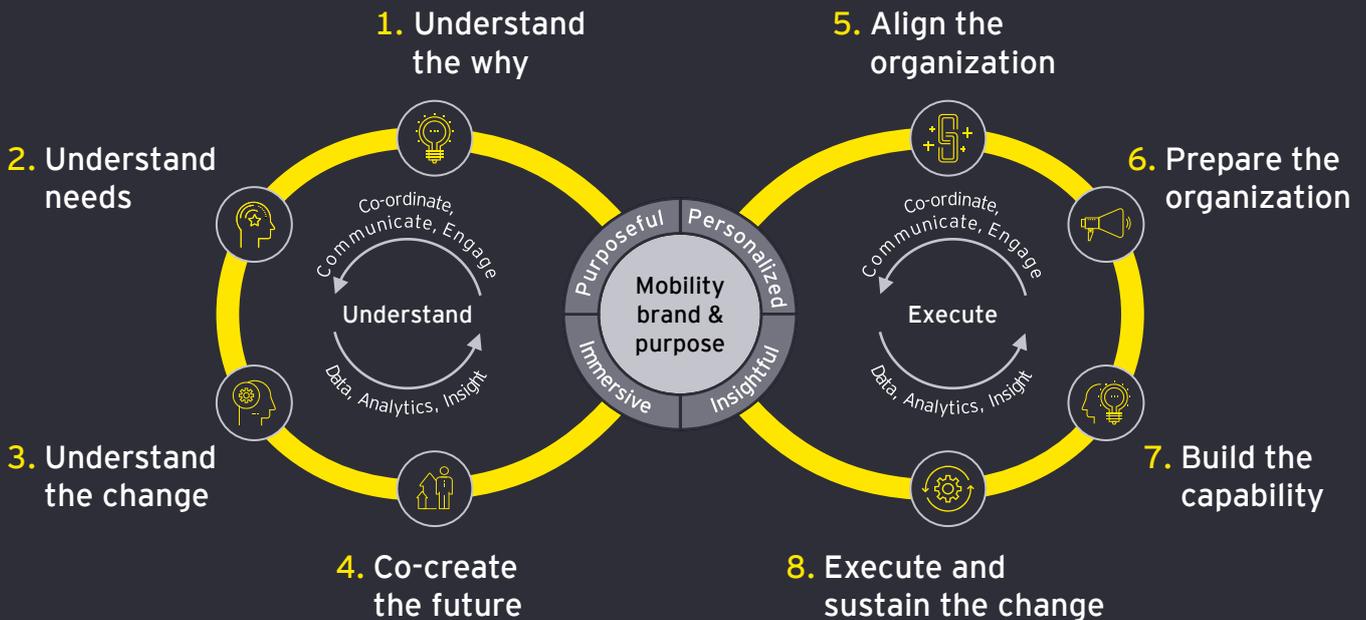
“ Our organization is very compliance-focused. We have tracked of all costs, including payroll and vendor costs, for a few years now. This helps us monitor our spend and make cost-based adjustments to our mobility program as needed.

8

Balance ambition and change efforts – rigorous planning and monitoring

Building the journey starts with asking the ‘why’, understanding and defining the ‘what’ and then moving to execute the ‘how’...

Changing the perception of mobility



1. Understand the why

Define your purpose and vision

What is the role of mobility?

2. Understand needs

Build a rich understanding of preferences, needs and reactions of your stakeholders

What do my stakeholders need?

3. Understand the change

Develop a deep understanding of the implications of change

What does this mean to my organization?

4. Co-create the future

Listen and learn – how your stakeholders want you to deliver

What is my target operating model?

5. Align the organization

Align your message to your HR Agenda

What is mobility's purpose?

6. Prepare the organization

Communicate and engage, prepare webcasts and inform your stakeholders

Welcome to our webcast ...

7. Build the capability

'Walk the talk', use data to make fact-based decisions, innovate with technology

What does our data tell us?

8. Execute and sustain the change

Implement new ways of working, measure success and track benefit realization

Look back ... how are we doing?

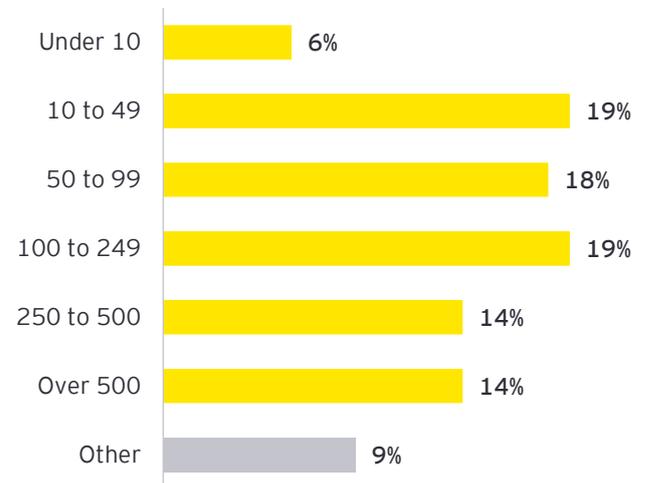
Survey demographics

120 one-to-one interviews with mobility leaders across the EMEIA region (Europe, Middle-East, India, Africa).

Company size



Mobility population size



EMEIA countries

Austria	Norway
Czech Republic	Portugal
Finland	South Africa
France	Spain
Germany	Sweden
India	Switzerland
Italy	UK
Luxembourg	

Industries

- Advanced Manufacturing & Mobility
- Banking & Capital Markets
- Consumer
- Energy & Resources
- Financial Services
- Government & Public Sector
- Health Sciences & Wellness
- Insurance
- Other
- Private Equity
- Real Estate, Hospitality & Construction
- Technology, Media & Telecommunications
- Wealth & Asset management

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