# **Deloitte**



# **The Impact of the Digital Age on Global Mobility** 2017 Global Workforce Trends

#GlobalWorkforce

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# Introduction

Deloitte's 2017 Global Human Capital Trends survey identifies what appears to be the critical trends shaping the HR agenda<sup>1</sup>. The report speaks of "rewriting the rules for a digital age," noting a radically shifting context for the workforce, the workplace, and the world of work. The trends are relevant to virtually every organisation, and the report highlights a unique opportunity for HR to help leaders and organisations adapt to the changes and address the challenges. In this report, we focus on the implications of the trends for Global Workforces, considering how Global Mobility experts can help address the challenges and the new roles and skills required to meet these changes.



The annual human capital trends survey is one of the largest human resource studies of its kind. More than 10,400 respondents from 140 countries contribute to an understanding of current and potential workforce changes. The 2017 survey contains input from respondents in financial services, consumer business, technology, media, telecommunications and manufacturing.

These priorities and challenges unfold against a backdrop of a digital revolution, including demographic, political and social forces. Almost 90% of HR and business leaders rate building the organisation of the future as their highest priority. Where once, organisations did digital things, now organisations are digital, in ways that combine new technologies with new cognitive, emotional, and behavioral expectations.

In response to these changes, Global Mobility leaders are seeking new ways to shift their organisation, leverage technology, and advance their capabilities in delivering experience. This report identifies four Global Workforce trends, complementary to the broader Human Capital trends that are disrupting the mobility landscape and fueling the "digital age":

## 1. Employee-driven global workforce programmes

The fast changing and diverse employee landscape requires global workforce programmes to adapt.

## 2. Mobility and talent acquisition

The employer brand that attracts talent and effective use of the talent on hand require that mobility and HR work more closely together.

## 3. The human side of mobility

A global move is professionally and personally disruptive. An inclusively designed, people-centered mobility experience can increase engagement, productivity, and impact.

## 4. Mobility analytics

Data-driven insights from active business processes can inform better proactive decisions on talent, deployment and future global workforce planning.



Each of these four Global Workforce trends offer organisations the opportunity to envision their futures, assess their present-day capabilities, identify their areas to improve, and implement changes that can help them navigate the changing landscape and enable their business and talent priorities.

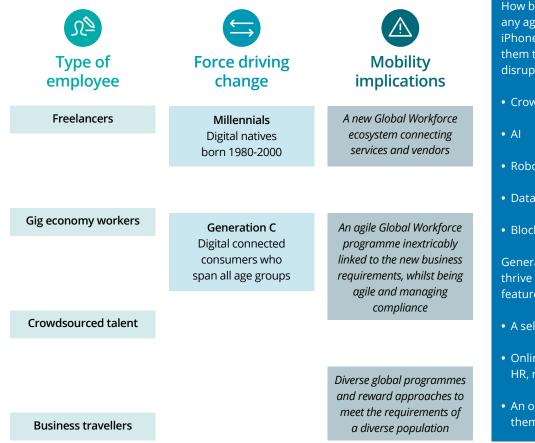
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# Global Workforce Trend 1: Employee-driven global workforce programmes

High-performing organisations operate as empowered networks, coordinated through culture, information systems and talent mobility. Global Workforce programmes need to be adapted in order to address the diverse employee landscape and build capabilities required for the future of work.

Organisations of the future will continue to be driven by the changing mobile employee landscape. From freelancers and gig economy workers to a growth in business travellers, being able to adapt to the growing group of 'millennial' employees and those who we call 'Generation C' will be the next challenge that organisations are facing<sup>2</sup>.

#### The changing landscape of mobile employees



## **C the future:** understanding the impact of an "always-switched-on" mindset

How big is Generation C? They can be any age. Take the world's 2.6 billion iPhones as a yardstick. What makes them tick? A ready embrace of disruptive technologies.

Crowdsourcing
Al
Robotics
Data wrangling
Blockchain.

Generation C assignees are likely to thrive in a mobility environment that features:

- A self-service digital vision
- Online, real-time connections with HR, mobility, and each other
- An online ecosystem that connects them to vendors.

#### **Mobility developments**

#### A Global Workforce ecosystem is required to meet the needs of the changing employee and digital landscape.

A new powerful Global Workforce model is emerging and comprises of a carefully selected and highly collaborative vendor network<sup>3</sup>. This new service delivery model encircles the employee with a suite of diverse mobility specialists who collaborate with one another and are empowered to share information and problem solve within established guidelines. The model offers the mobile employee the best of both worlds: direct access to specialists when they need it, and minimal disruption when they don't. Individuals are able to tailor their own experience based on how they interact with the network.

Part of this change involves technology: process automation and robotics are replacing repetitive work, while new digital tools permit deeper engagement between employees and business, especially across distances. Real-time dashboards, cloud platforms, and mobile apps are helping cement this global view by enhancing transparency, reporting and connectedness for employees, HR and the business.

## 2. Global Mobility is demanding new commitments from leaders.

68% of leaders agreed that a global workforce is an enabler of business and talent strategies. Supporting a commitment to effective Global Mobility means promoting an agile and global career model in order to adapt more quickly to new roles, new projects and new businesses solutions. The new global workforce framework needs to be fully supported and promoted by leadership in order to meet the future needs of the business. It needs to be nimble in order to adapt to rapid and disruptive organisational change, and it needs to be able to handle the ever-increasing compliance complexities and pace of change in order to control risks and exposure.

#### 3. New game, new global policy rules.

The concept of a "career" is being shaken to its core, driving companies towards "always-on" learning experiences that allow employees to build skills quickly, easily, and on their own terms as stated in the 2017 Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends Report. Global workforce policies must adapt to the diversity of employee types and changing business needs. There is a call to challenge traditional approaches to Global Mobility policy suites and consider alternative programmes which are fit for purpose, providing reward flexibility to the employees, whilst balancing organisational duty of care.

#### Building the organisation



88% – survey participants who believe that building the organisation of the future is an important or very important issue



11% – survey participants who believe that they understand how to build the organisation of the future

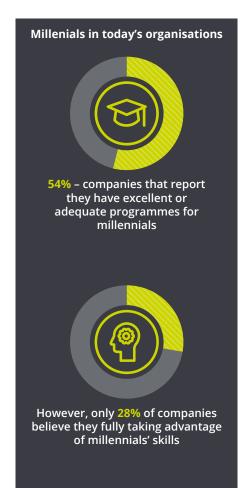
#### How Mobility can adapt

The new employee landscape and upheaval in learning and careers has become a catalyst for radical change to Global Workforce programmes. In this new world, ecosystems and partnerships will strengthen the Global Workforce offering and there will be exciting opportunities for Global Mobility to become further embedded as a strategic tool to meet business goals. A number of transformational opportunities exist:

- Develop a Global Workforce vendor network for your organisation, mapping out shared data points, reporting and touch points with key stakeholders (e.g. employees, HR, business).
   Assess opportunities to align data requests and share information
- Embed Global Mobility as a core value in order to promote an agile career model. Partner with talent management and encourage top-down leadership sponsorship and communication to set the new brand, culture and approach

• Develop a varied policy suite that meets the needs of a diverse workforce (e.g freelancers, business travellers, gig workers) and their alternative working practices. Consider flexible benefit packages where employees have degree of flexibility to choose rewards aligned to their needs, whilst maintaining a baseline of duty of care benefits (e.g. immigration support, health insurance).

In this new world, ecosystems and partnerships will strengthen the Global Workforce offering and there will be exciting opportunities for Global Mobility to become further embedded as a strategic tool to meet business goals.



• Implement technology or tools to provide compliance analytics

#### What roles and skills does the Global Mobility function need?



#### **Organisation engineer**

To be skilled at designing and implementing agile organisation structures including team based solutions that are impactful and scalable.



#### **Digital pioneer**

To understand and tap into emerging digital technologies that can enable efficient and effective delivery of strategies and programmes.



To recruit, acquire, and retain critical talent, companies now compete on a new battlefield shaped by global talent pools and global talent networks, global employer brands, social media, and changing career definitions.

Mobility and talent acquisition can no longer afford to work in silos – not when companies are competing for talent on a global scale. People view careers differently, and now more than ever, employer brands define the battle for talent.

Some of the challenges that leaders identified in Deloitte's 2017 Global Human Capital Trends Survey bear on their ability to adapt to these changing expectations. Almost one in five (18 percent) said employee willingness to move is an impediment, while 16 percent said their organisations lack a structured internal talent management programme.

To strengthen the employer brand and develop effective talent solutions, mobility and talent acquisition must collaborate. Companies that fail to adapt in this effort risk falling victim to a scarcity of key skills.

Mobility and talent acquisition can no longer afford to work in silos – not when companies are competing for talent on a global scale. People view careers differently, and now more than ever, employer brands define the battle for talent.

#### **Mobility developments**

#### Employers are leveraging mobility and talent acquisition data and insights to inform global talent sourcing solutions.

Organisations must look to the entire global talent pool and make use of all sourcing channels, both internally and externally. This has become even more crucial amidst global regulatory uncertainty that may affect the talent sourcing strategy and model for organisations. Should developments related to Brexit, US immigration, and policies in other countries constrain cross-border movement, talent and mobility teams will need data to understand how such changes affect talent supply and demand. Organisations that can 'see' their global talent, match to critical roles, and deploy in a speedy, cost-effective, and compliant manner will not only gain a significant advantage, but will also be prepared to adapt to any potential talent sourcing disruptions.

To accomplish this effectively, companies are placing greater importance on analytics and cognitive technologies that provide full visibility into the internal and external global talent pool. This presents a strategic opportunity for the global mobility and talent acquisition functions to leverage their strengths and in-depth capabilities to support the business.

#### **Talent sourcing strategies**

# B

In our global survey, 60% of respondents report current or recent updates to their talent sourcing strategies



In our global survey, 27% are considering these changes

#### Ready, Willing. Able?

Survey respondents say internal candidates are among the top three sourcing channels for international assignments. Yet:



73% of companies don't maintain a candidate pool for future international assignments



53% companies report aligning mobility with talent strategy as a top challenge

#### 2. Companies are creating an 'open talent market' globally to support flexible career paths, retain talent, and enable interdisciplinary skill development.

Lifespans are growing, but the concept of a single lifelong career path is waning. In the global survey, 83 percent of respondents say their organisations are shifting to flexible, open career models that offer enriching assignments, projects, and experiences, rather than a static career progression along traditional lines.

To keep in pace with these changes, organisations are moving towards an 'open market' approach that connects the internal talent pool with global business needs. This not only increases talent supply for business needs, but also allows organisations to retain and engage current employees by offering more open, diverse and flexible career development opportunities. If done well, this 'open market' may benefit both the organisation and the employees, who learn new skills and gain access to more career advancement opportunities.

# 3. Global Mobility helps strengthen the employer brand to attract and retain talent.

In today's transparent digital world, candidates now often find the employer, not the reverse – so a company's employer brand must be highly visible and attractive. Global mobility can help strengthen the employer brand by offering a value proposition that is more appealing to the changing demographic of today's workforce: continuous opportunities for learning and growth through international work experience.

Often, international experience is expected or required as part of an employee's career, and – equally important – employees desire global opportunities. Many job seekers already have international work experience or are willing to move to another country for work. Moreover, millennials, who will make up 75 percent of the workforce by 2025, demand rich career experiences and rapid development<sup>4</sup>. The "ability to learn and progress" is now the principal driver of a company's employer brand and 71 percent of millennial workers say they expect a global assignment during the course of their careers<sup>5</sup>.

Global deployments offer these eager employees the chance to face new challenges and stretch their professional skills and learning in a fast-paced environment.

#### How Mobility can adapt

Organisations must be thoughtful and agile when it comes to building a global talent pool and leveraging it to the fullest extent to meet critical business needs. This requires the combined wisdom of multiple functions and their delivery capabilities. Silos must be broken for all enabling functions to forge strong partnerships and collectively solve those complex talent issues.

For the Global Mobility function, this opens up new opportunities to contribute and directly impact strategic business issues, leveraging their deep expertise in managing global moves. Ways to contribute include:

- Partner with talent acquisition to share data, develop insights, consult on compliance requirements to help business evaluate diverse talent channels and make informed talent sourcing decisions
- Work with talent management to build a 'market' that matches the right talent with the right opportunities, offering rich and meaningful career experiences to the employees while developing a skilled workforce that are critical for the business success
- Support the business to build and promote a global employer brand with a clear, differentiated messaging that appealsto the new demographics of talent.

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#### What roles and skills does the Global Mobility function need?



#### **Ecosystem curator**

To be adept at curating both the internal and external ecosystem of talent, especially as the gig workforce becomes a reality.



Mobility is about more than getting someone from point A to point B. Organisations that do mobility well – which includes attending to the human side of mobility – can expect greater individual productivity and performance and higher organisational return on investment and impact.

A global move is not only a professional event, but is also a highly personal event. The move can disrupt all dimensions of a person's life – career, family, finances, and more. The process is complex and confusing, services are generally focused on logistics and compliance to the exclusion of other needs, and employees rarely have a roadmap for the journey ahead.

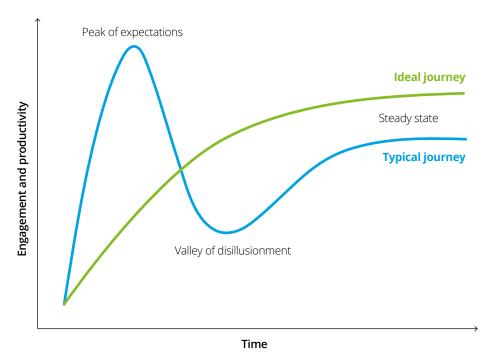
What's more, statistics tell a story of additional obstacles to participation in international opportunities by employees with "non-traditional" profiles. Candidate identification and selection is generally not as transparent as other recruiting efforts, increasing the potential for bias. Policies may also not be flexible enough to support employees' individual circumstances.

Finally, moving an employee globally can create an "out of sight, out of mind" situation, where employees lose regular feedback and mentoring and find it difficult to reintegrate upon return. These and other factors combine to create a poor experience, that limits engagement, productivity, success, and ROI. A positive, inclusive mobility experience, on the other hand, offers many organisational and individual benefits by tapping into human potential and driving strong performance<sup>6</sup>.

A positive, inclusive mobility experience offers many organisational and individual benefits by tapping into human potential and driving strong performance.



#### Figure 1. Global Mobile employee journey



#### **Mobility developments**

#### Organisations are increasingly focused on mobile employee engagement and end-to-end mobile employee experience.

With increasing transparency in a digital world and the growing influence of Millennials, employees are demanding a holistic, end-to-end experience from their employers. Indeed, employee experience, wellness and resilience is fast becoming a critical competitive differentiator for employers and there needs to be a greater focus towards the start of the employee journey as well as closing the expectation gaps throughout the mobility lifecycle per Figure 1. However, a differentiated mobile employee experience need not mean extra cost: Often, it involves streamlining touchpoints, providing self-service options, and using data to iterate on the process – these three actions can actually save money in the long run while improving the experience and reducing "noise" and escalations.

A focus on employee experience also encourages higher employee engagement and productivity pre-, during, and post-assignment, with greater assignment success and a higher return on investment. Addressing mobility letdowns: Don't repay, rethink

Many employers try to make up for poor mobility experience through increased compensation; however, our experience shows that this approach can have a limited impact on employee experience. Instead, the real opportunity lies in transforming the entire mobility experience, from candidate identification, selection, and decision; to pre-move planning and being in country; on to repatriation, localisation, or next move. The mobility experience must be designed around the employee (and his or her family, since family is critical to assignment success), with a focus on empathy, inclusivity, and engagement at every step of the way.

Employee experience is fast becoming a critical competitive differentiator for employers. 2. Aligning Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) and global mobility efforts can mobilise the diverse talent needed to address challenges and drive individual and organisation performance on a global scale.

In today's digital organisation with networked teams; empowerment, open dialogue, and inclusive working styles are critical. Indeed, mounting evidence confirms that organisations with diverse workforces and inclusive workplaces outperform the competition. D&I is no longer only about "check-the-box" compliance or "doing good" – D&I is now a comprehensive business and talent strategy. At the same time, Global Mobility continues to evolve from an operational function and transactional "people mover" to a strategic business and talent partner.

While D&I and Global Mobility seem like natural partners for mobilising and engaging diverse talent globally, they are typically disconnected within organisations. Bringing D&I and Global Mobility through inclusive mobility offers several benefits. Designing mobility inclusively, from candidate identification to repatriation or localisation, can broaden access to international opportunities for employees with "non-traditional" profiles, e.g. women, employees with disabilities, single parents, dual-career couples, LGBTQ employees, and ethnic and religious minorities. A focus on inclusive mobility can also support the acquisition of new and diverse talent as well as faster and better deployments through a broader pool of talent. Finally, inclusive mobility can help build a broader pipeline of diverse, globally minded leaders ready to tackle tomorrow's challenges.

#### How Mobility can adapt

As a start, it is important for Global Mobility to start working with the Diversity & Inclusion team and acknowledging that tending to the human side of mobility involves not just people, but optimising processes, programme and technology. This includes:

 Focus on empathy and inclusivity for the mobile employee and encourage internal partners and external vendor to "walk in their shoes" to understand the professional and personal aspects of a move.

- Develop a collaborative vendor ecosystem, where vendors are connected and empowered to solve problems with limited company intervention
- Review the end-to-end mobility lifecycle for inclusive design, e.g. create a transparent candidate identification and selection process to mitigate bias.
- Offer flexible mobility programmes and policy provisions that can accommodate a wide range of individual circumstances
- Integrate opportunities to support performance management, career planning, acculturation, families, and well-being pre-, during, and post-assignment
- Take into account employee wellness and resilience when measuring assignment success (e.g. via pulse feedback tools and wellness apps).
- Strive toward a single mobility technology platform that integrates and shares data
- Push mobility data to drive insights about diverse demographics and inclusive design, employee experience and engagement, and assignment success and ROI.

#### What roles and skills does the Global Mobility function need?



#### **Experience designer**

To pick up and use design thinking at the heart of everything the Global Mobility function does. There is a need to be targeted in terms of core talent personas, and ensure a fantastic experience.



#### Engagement architect

To drive recommitment of employees' hearts and minds at a time of significant uncertainty through the use of innovation and digital technologies.



# Global Workforce Trend 4: **Mobility analytics**

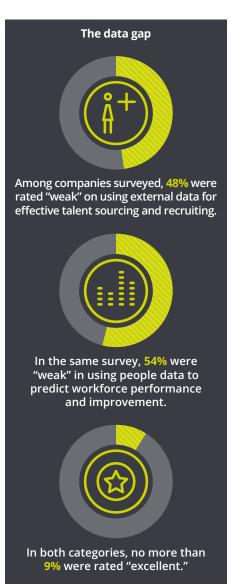
Measurement is no longer just "before" or "after" – it is "during." It is now common for companies to recognise the strategic value of people analytics, and many of them are able to add this function without building new teams.

Organisations have traditionally kept analytics at the margins of the business. When insights emerge, they feed them into the operation. Now, organisations are more likely to integrate analytics directly into the core business so real-time insights happen when and where they are needed.

In Deloitte's 2017 Global Human Capital Trends survey, over 71% of participants surveyed recognised analytics as important, yet there still are gaps on using data for talent sourcing and recruiting, and even a wider gap (54%) on analytics being used in workforce planning.

With the rapidly changing employee landscape and global regulatory uncertainly, organisations need to be prepared to implement more dynamic analytics solutions whilst managing the compliance challenges associated with a Global Workforce. This "shift" to how analytics is viewed should start from understanding the impact and wealth of potential from the underlying data that underpins every mobility programme, to shaping an organisation's broader Global Workforce strategy.

Organisations are more likely to integrate analytics directly into the core business so real-time insights happen when and where they are needed.



#### **Mobility developments**

1. Organisations should start focusing on predictive analytics in order to assess employee experience and engagement.

With the focus on the human aspects of mobility, organisations are now finding more ways to understand their employees and what makes them tick. Predictive analytics will be seen as an integral part of this change and key in what constitutes "employee value". There will continue to be a shift from focusing on traditional metric indicators, such as revenue and billable hours, to understanding emotional, cognitive and behavioural indicators that can be used to monitor and predict employee resilience, providing a framework for just-in-time support.

These insights, particularly when partnered with external benchmarking data or research methodologies, can be incredibly valuable in workforce planning strategies by revealing blind spots in touchpoints of the mobile employee lifecycle and identify employees who may be underrepresented in professional and personal opportunities in the mobility space. This type of holistic reporting will also contribute to measuring the success of assignments.

2. Analytics can be used to support the Global Workforce delivery framework and strategy.

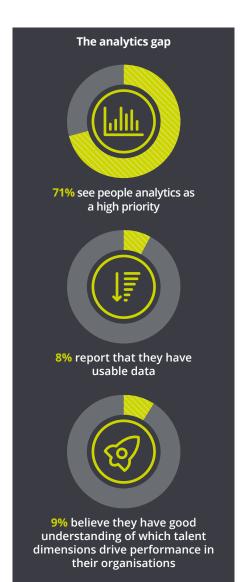
Organisations that are adopting analytics are bringing it to the core of their business and using it to inform business strategy<sup>7</sup>. In designing a Global Workforce strategy that caters for the changing profile of employees as well as holistic factors, organisations need to ensure that they have a nimble delivery framework in place.

For instance, insights gained from understanding employee engagement and experience can be used in identifying and driving priorities for the business whilst revealing areas for optimisation for the entire delivery framework. This can enable more informed decisions relating to outsourcing discussions and determining the level of assignee support required, including how this support can be delivered. 3. With the rise of business travel coupled against the backdrop of an uncertain regulatory landscape, analytics can be used to help mobility partner with the business more effectively.

In recent years, authorities have placed a greater spotlight on business travel, from immigration, tax and social security aspects. For many organisations, this is an area that is starting to be owned by Global Mobility, and the need for ongoing management of these moves, along with pre to post travel assessments, has resulted in greater demand for a different type of technology that can handle the volume and frequency of these data inputs.

Analytics driven technology solutions are a key use case in managing business travelers, however being compliant is just the first step. Organisations are starting to recognise the value of the data mined from these tools, and the insights it can deliver to their business. For instance, business travel data can be used to identify countries where the level of business travel investment, assess the accuracy of budgets and used to price projects driven by project workers<sup>8</sup>.

By understanding that analytics is multidisciplinary, Global Mobility can partner with experts, consultants and business leaders across the business to develop richer insights and meaningful information and solutions that can be acted upon.



#### How Mobility can adapt

Mobility analytics plays an instrumental role in transforming Global Workforce programmes. There are many opportunities to tap into these benefits and build a successful analytics programme, including:

- Prioritise clean and reliable data by taking steps to educate key stakeholders and implementing data governance programmes
- Utilise various sources of data within your organisation and integrate with external talent methodologies and market research data to reveal enhanced insights and improvement opportunities
- Identify how mobility can develop leadership capabilities. Design a framework for future leaders embedding effective performance metrics
- Identify whether specific tools are required to manage aspects, and consider how this integrates with the rest of the delivery model
- What roles and skills does the Global Mobility function need?



#### Data scientist

A need to use analytics to successfully predict demand and supply of key skills within the industry, particularly given high retirement rates.

- Develop more targeted employee engagement surveys/pulse checks to gain insights into specific areas of the mobility life cycle
- Embed predictive analytics within mobility retention strategies, including using data to identify flight risk factors during the assignment and following repatriation as organisations focus on employee experience
- Integrate analytics-driven talent sourcing tools within the talent strategy, moving beyond mobile employees and using this to identify project workers, groups of individuals, commuters in order to unlock hidden talent across the organisation.
- Embed analytics to inform compliance requirements (i.e. tax, immigration, social security), including pre-tax, post-travel and throughout the mobility lifecycle.

# Conclusion

The 2017 Deloitte Human Capital Trends report reflected on seismic changes in the world of work which is fundamentally transforming business, the broader economy and society. A principle characteristic of this new era is not merely change, but change at an accelerating rate.

The four themes explored in the report highlight some of the key disrupters which present new challenges and opportunities for Global Mobility.



## Employee-driven global workforce programmes

Agile career models and frameworks that cater towards the needs of the changing profiles of mobile employees, recognising a global career as an enabler of leadership.



#### Mobility and talent acquisition

Building a global talent pool through harnessing data, partnering with talent and appealing to new demographics organically through building a global employer brand.

#### Figure 2. A nimble Global Mobility programme



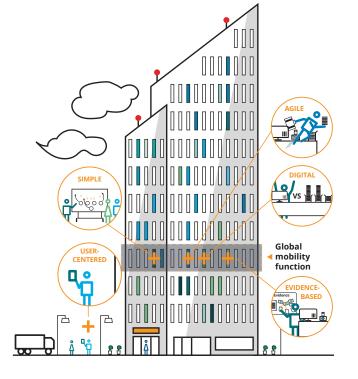
#### Human side of mobility

Global workforces of the future having a greater focus on employee wellness, recognising employee experience and inclusivity as a component of assignment success.



#### Mobility analytics

Predictive analytics used in a holistic manner and driving workforce planning on a global scale; taking into account both gig and contingent workers.



A profoundly different mobility function is required in order to support organizations' to remain competitive. Global Mobility is being asked to be more agile, user-centred, digital, evidence-based and simple (Figure 2).

The Global Mobility function is expected to be as nimble as start-ups in their operations. In order to meet and prepare for the expectations of a changing Global Workforce and demands from business leaders, mobility professionals will not only have to continue being the trusted advisor and delivery champion, but there will be an expectation to play a number of other roles (see Figure 3) and develop new skillsets.

#### Figure 3. Different roles of the Global Mobility Function going forward



The opportunities for Global Workforce programmes and Global Mobility specialists is exciting. New rules need to be re-written for the digital age, with a requirement for organisations to broaden their outlook of the mobility landscape, whilst embracing new skills and roles to support a global, diverse and digitally empowered workforce.

## Endnotes

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# Deloitte Global Workforce

Deloitte's market leading Global Workforce practice partners with individual organisations to navigate this increasingly complex environment and establish a futureproof global workforce strategy, tailored to each organisation's specific strategic business and talent objectives. With specialists in **transformation**, **analytics, technology and innovation**, we are a truly multi-disciplinary team with a proven track record of delivering complex projects and providing unrivalled thought leadership.

Our integrated team of over 250 global professionals have vast experience in collaborating with organisations to help them **secure**, **manage and optimise their global workforce**. With a focus on both the operational and strategic aspects of global mobility and talent programmes, our unique approach offers not only industry specific and functional knowledge, but also data driven insights and innovative technology solutions.



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