



Inclusion and diversity

How global mobility can help move the needle

March 2018



Most of today's international companies recognize the proven benefits of a diverse and inclusive workplace, and a high majority of them have strategic goals and performance measures in place to broaden their pool of talent. A new survey from KPMG International shows that Global Mobility teams can help their companies realize these goals in important ways.

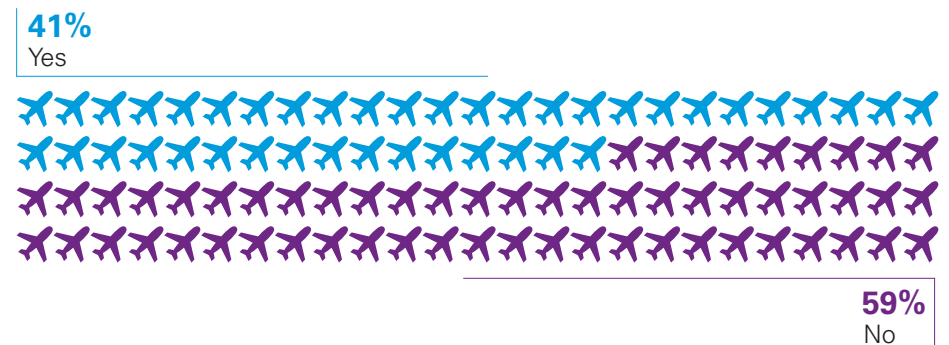
But with specific employee relocation decisions largely in the hands of the business, many global mobility teams struggle to see how they can make a difference. Encouragingly, the survey shows that some global mobility teams are embracing their role in advancing inclusion and diversity — helping their companies bring people's differences together in the workplace, fully utilize all of their talent, and foster an innovative, productive business environment.

The business case for inclusion and diversity

The business case for boosting inclusion and diversity is clear. By providing equal opportunity, promoting acceptance and understanding, and highlighting the value that all employees bring, companies can tap a bigger pool of resources and improve their brand, reputation and global market competitiveness.

However, the majority of global mobility professionals surveyed do not have specific inclusion and diversity objectives as part of their department's strategy. The most common reason for this lack of goals, cited by 59 percent of respondents, is that international assignments candidates are chosen by the business unit, not global mobility. The idea that global mobility's job in facilitating assignments is purely operational is another common reason (31 percent).

Do you have specific inclusion & diversity (I&D) objectives as part of your global mobility department's strategy?



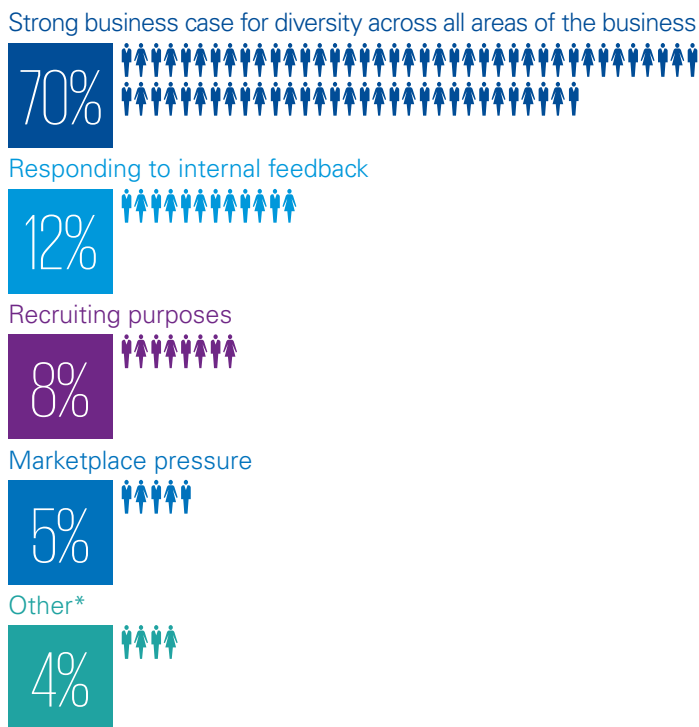
Source: KPMG International, 2017

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With the view that global mobility is merely providing service to the business, many mobility professionals say inclusion and diversity goals are not only unnecessary but also counterproductive and unattainable. Further, almost a third of respondents (31 percent) see no need for these goals because they see the movement of people to new countries and cultures as inclusive and diverse by its very nature.

The minority of respondents that do have inclusion and diversity goals (41 percent) tell a different story. The strong business case for inclusion and diversity across all areas of the business is the most common reason for setting global mobility inclusion and diversity goals (70 percent), well ahead of other factors such as responding to internal feedback (12 percent) and marketplace pressure (5 percent).

What motivated you to incorporate specific I&D objectives into your global mobility strategy?



*Other includes:
 — Aligns with company I&D objectives
 — Clients compliance requirement
 — I&D are company-wide objectives

Note: Chart may not total to 100 percent due to rounding.
 Source: KPMG International, 2017

Goals versus real world challenges

Most global mobility teams face distinct challenges in meeting these goals. One of the biggest hurdles is the scarcity of mobility-related data on most demographics, apart from gender. The data gap makes it difficult for global mobility teams to identify patterns, problem areas and solutions related to, for example, religion, ethnicity and disability status.

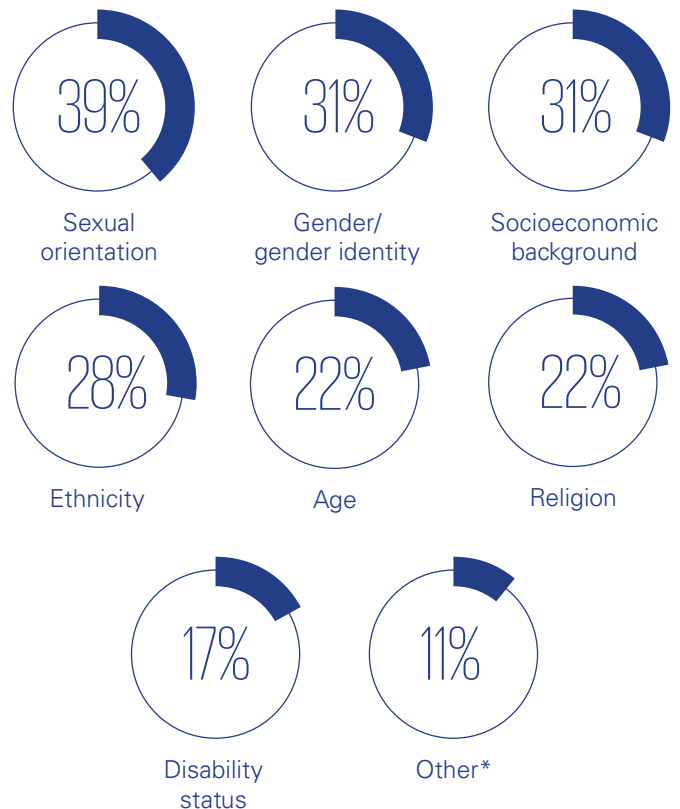
The survey results themselves highlight how data can reveal areas where changes in priority could advance inclusion and diversity. When asked which areas of diversity and inclusion

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are priorities for their global mobility programs and policies, gender/gender identity was named by over three-quarters of respondents, followed by socioeconomic background (41 percent) and age and ethnicity (both 37 percent). Only 24 percent said priority is given to sexual orientation.

But responses to another question suggest sexual orientation warrants higher priority. At 39 percent, sexual minorities were the most common demographic reported as turning down assignments or making other adverse mobility decisions. Gender/gender identity and socioeconomic background were the next most commonly cited, both at 31 percent. While understanding the reasons behind all of these responses is important, they also indicate that the priority allocated to different demographics needs a closer look.

In your experience, which of the following demographic categories have you seen result in an adverse decision around assignments?



*Other includes:
 — Child with special needs
 — Nationality
 — Remote location drives hiring to business hub locations
 — Same sex couples not being legal in the host country location

Note: Chart may not total to 100 percent as multiple responses allowed.
 Source: KPMG International, 2017

Achieving inclusion and diversity goals can also be blocked by a lack of diversity among the pool of candidates. If all the potential candidates for an assignment share similar demographic traits, as occurs with traditionally male-dominated work in construction and mining, casting a wider demographic net may be impossible.

For the same reason, some candidates may not pursue mobility opportunities because they feel they are not the right demographic fit and would be uncomfortable and out of place. This would explain why, for example, women, older workers and people with disabilities may not raise their hands for relocations to oil rigs or construction sites.

Finally, barriers caused by external factors may shrink the pool of candidates for mobility assignments. Even though the definition of family has expanded to include same-sex couples for most mobility teams — rising from 17 percent in 1999 in this survey’s first iteration to 70 percent currently — attitudes and laws in many countries have not kept pace. The majority of countries don’t allow same-sex marriage, and homosexual acts are illegal in over 70 countries. According to the Human Rights Campaign Foundation, there are still 10 countries where people identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, transgendered or transsexual (LGBTQ+) can be put to death.¹

Equally harmful to mobility’s inclusion and diversity goals are cultural attitudes and customs that would, for women and some ethnic groups, make the idea of relocating to some parts of the world unattractive.

Strategies for broadening the talent pools

Global mobility teams can’t change the world, but there are a number of ways they can help broaden the pool of talent ready to enlist in relocation opportunities. By understanding your company’s operations and knowing its existing inclusion and diversity policy, global mobility teams can define a strategy that aligns with and promotes the company’s inclusion and diversity goals.

Here are some steps global mobility teams can take to help move the needle toward more inclusive and diverse international assignment programs.

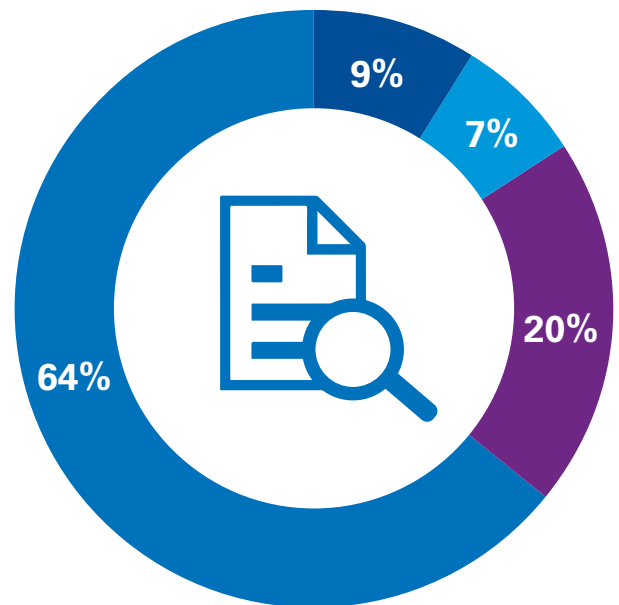
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Dig into the data

Our earlier example showed how data can reveal trends and obstacles to global mobility participation, but, apart from gender, demographic data is currently scarce. For many global mobility teams, much of this data may already be accessible within global assignment management technology systems.

However, 64 percent of respondents have not reviewed the demographics of their globally mobile employees based on diversity, believing their policies are acceptable as is. Only a minority of 20 percent said they have reviewed these demographics, and that this review has prompted a global mobility policy review. An even smaller minority (6 percent) have completely overhauled their global mobility programs and policies to support their organization’s inclusion and diversity objectives.

Have you changed your global mobility policies after reviewing the demographics of your global mobility employees based on diversity?



- Yes — based on a review, we have updated our global mobility policies
- Yes — based on a review, we plan to update our global mobility policies
- We have a review planned and will determine any action needed once completed
- No — we do not plan to review; our policies are acceptable as is

Source: KPMG International, 2017

¹ <https://assets2.hrc.org/files/assets/resources/Criminalization-Map-042315.pdf>

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Getting the most out of this analysis means gathering inclusion and diversity data beyond current participants to cover the entire employee base that is potentially eligible. Finding out why people do not elect to put themselves up for mobility in the first place can reveal barriers that might otherwise stay out of view.

For example, non-visible minorities, such as LGBTQ+, may self-select out of the program for fear of being placed in a hostile location. People with disabilities may likewise not put themselves forward, assuming that their disability would create costs that would put them out of the running anyway. Without data on why some employees are opting out the international assignment pool, companies cannot take steps to address their concerns and misconceptions.

Diversify international assignment terms

Once you know what barriers are in place, you can start to identify ways to work around them. For example, the survey shows that 39 percent of global mobility professionals have found that an employee's dependents and family unit affected their decision to accept an assignment. Global mobility can help drive more positive decisions by developing alternatives to conventional long-term secondments — like commuting arrangements and short-term transfers — so assignees don't always need to uproot their families and bring them along in order to develop and have an international experience.

Adjust policies for selecting candidates

Similarly, data on global mobility participation can point to policy changes that could improve inclusion and diversity results. For example, a European-headquartered financial services firm was finding low participation among its senior female talent. Research revealed that many of these women had school-age children who they did not want to relocate and wished they had had the opportunity for an international assignment earlier in their careers. As a result, the organization began identifying high-potential female talent for mobility at more junior levels, offering them opportunities at a stage of life better suited to their work-life progression.

Broaden communications about opportunities

Perhaps one of the biggest barriers to greater inclusion and diversity is a lack of awareness of the programs and policies to encourage them. Of the surveyed companies that conducted a demographics-based review of their global mobility programs, almost half decided they needed to broaden their communications about the opportunities available. As we saw earlier, organizations are likely to have potential candidates

with concerns or misconceptions that prevent them from pursuing international assignments. Clear, comprehensive communications that address these concerns can help change minds and steer these employees toward the pool of mobility candidates.

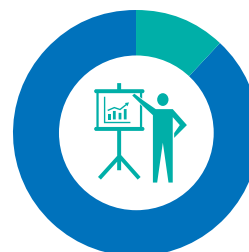
In addition to increasing communications, demographic reviews of global mobility programs also caused companies to:

- increase support for spouses and families (38 percent)
- embed inclusion and diversity into policies by covering all diverse employees (32 percent)
- change their initial candidate selection process (29 percent)
- extend inclusion and diversity to cover dependents of diverse employees (26 percent)
- provide accessibility support (26 percent).

Extend leadership training to global mobility

In addition to spreading the word among employees, training on inclusion and diversity concepts for the organization's senior executives can help set the right tone from the top. It can also help eliminate unconscious biases and ensure all worthy candidates are being considered for global mobility.

Are you aware of any inclusive leadership training within your organization?



12%

Yes — I have been involved in the training as part of our global mobility strategy



49%

Yes — but I have not had any direct involvement in the training



39%

No — I am not aware of any inclusive leadership training within my organization

Source: KPMG International, 2017

While this training is occurring in a majority of companies, only a small minority extend this training to global mobility leaders. Sixty-one percent of respondents say they are aware of inclusive leadership training within their organization, but mobility leaders are usually not included. Only 12 percent of respondents have been involved in this training as part of their global mobility strategy.

Overall, however, the majority of respondents agree or strongly agree that the inclusion and diversity agenda is moving the company toward having both an inclusive leadership and culture.

Unite your company's global mobility and inclusion and diversity goals

Even though many mobility professionals don't feel they can influence inclusion and diversity in their international assignment programs, global mobility and inclusion and diversity are in fact a great fit. Both areas seek to:

- attract, retain and grow talent
- help fill talent gaps where needed
- provide opportunities and engage employees.

By aligning with your company's talent strategy and inclusion and diversity goals, global mobility teams can move beyond their operational role to become a strategic partner, helping to broaden the talent pool taking part in international assignment programs and adding business value.

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About the survey

KPMG International conducted an inclusion and diversity in global mobility survey from 15 October to 15 November 2017. A total of 181 professionals participated in the survey which included participation from the Americas (40 percent), Asia Pacific (20 percent) and Europe, Middle East and Africa (40 percent). The top industries represented include: consulting/professional services (24 percent), financial services (32 percent) and technology (16 percent).

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