



See it differently

Part 1:
Shaping mobility
through non-traditional
paths and innovative
solutions



KPMG International

[kpmg.com](https://www.kpmg.com)



Heightened competition for talent, AI's revolutionary impact, the pressing need to manage costs and compliance, the accelerating pace of change. Critical, time-sensitive challenges are in sharp focus today as global mobility looks to transform its efficiency and enhance its strategic business role.

Welcome to 'See it differently,' a three-part series offering timely insights from KPMG global mobility professionals on today's workplace trends and challenges — and the approaches that are making a difference in today's hypercompetitive new era.

In Part 1, we feature four articles that put the spotlight on key themes in the dynamic world of global mobility:

- **EU pay transparency:** As the clock ticks down to meet new pay-equity rules under the EU Pay Transparency Directive, global mobility teams will need to be in close alignment with HR to prioritize implementation and enforcement of the directive.
- **Shaping tomorrow's global mobility function:** What does tomorrow's mobility function look like? A truly modern mobility function promises an engaging experience that aligns with the changing global landscape.
- **AI and business use cases:** Today's innovative mobility teams are tapping into the vast power of AI to attract talent, meet employee expectations, navigate regulatory demands and create greater value for their organizations.
- **Unconventional versus conventional mobility:** A decisive shift to non-traditional mobility is unfolding. But is an unconventional approach the way forward? Or does traditional mobility simply need reinventing?

Global mobility is at an inflection point requiring innovative strategies and powerful new capabilities. AI is poised to transform mobility in unimagined ways. But mobility's future remains unwritten. It will be up to its leaders and their organizations to redefine global mobility and drive business success in a rapidly shifting landscape. I hope you find these insights informative and thought-provoking as the journey unfolds.



Marc Burrows

Head of Global
Mobility Services,
KPMG International

Contents



Article 1:

EU pay transparency

The countdown is on for employers to meet major changes under the EU Directive



Article 2:

Shaping tomorrow's global mobility function

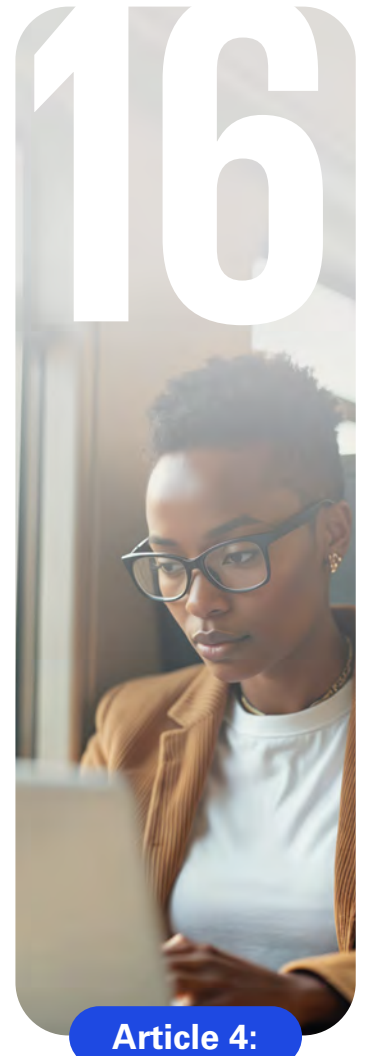
Lessons from innovative 'pathfinders' setting the pace to create engaging experiences



Article 3:

AI-powered global mobility

Unleashing new levels of efficiency and business value



Article 4:

Are unconventional moves becoming the convention?

Mobility reaches a crossroads as businesses pursue agile new approaches

Article
01

EU pay transparency

The countdown is on for employers to meet major changes under the EU Directive

- **Paula Holmström**
Partner, Tax & Legal,
KPMG Finland
paula.holmstrom@kpmg.fi
- **Kathrin Brügger**
Partner, KPMG Germany
kbruegger@kpmg-law.com
- **Scott Cullen**
Partner, Reward Consulting,
KPMG UK
scott.cullen@kpmg.co.uk





As the clock ticks down to meet new pay-equity rules under the EU Pay Transparency Directive, global mobility and HR teams are facing a pivotal challenge — one that is expected to demand close alignment and collaboration amid uncertainty over what constitutes a gender pay gap.

The Directive represents a major cultural shift for mobility and their organizations amid the unprecedented requirement to report employee salaries broken down by gender. Businesses will need to know along the way how a mobility assignment package is to be included in the organization's pay-analysis reporting. And there is no time to lose as the Directive requires all EU nations to implement the first wave of changes by June 2026.

Adopted by the European Parliament in 2023, the Directive is a key component of the EU's agenda to eliminate the persistent gender pay gap in the European labor market. Member states are expected to prioritize both implementation and consistent enforcement of the Directive to ensure equal compensation for work of equal value. EU states will be able to sanction companies that violate the new rules on gender-based pay inequity.

The gender pay gap in the EU stood at 12 percent as of 2023 and changed minimally over the last decade, according to the European Commission (EC). This gap varies across the EU, with less than 5 percent difference in countries like Belgium, Italy and Luxembourg, compared to over 17 percent in Germany, Austria, Hungary and Estonia. In most EU countries with available data, the gender pay gap is higher in the private sector than in the public sector.

The Directive applies to all companies with employees in EU countries, regardless of where they are headquartered. Employers must comply with most of the Directive's requirements as soon as it is implemented in each country. The impact of the Directive will be wide-ranging — affecting everything from recruitment policies and hiring processes to the management and accessibility of employee pay data. Non-compliance could lead to costly legal claims, financial penalties and reputational damage.

In this article, we examine the EU Pay Transparency Directive and outline the decisive measures employers should be taking without delay to prepare for and successfully meet the EU's 2026 and 2027 deadlines.

Key EU employer requirements at a glance

What is needed by June 2026

Pay structures: Pay and reward structures for reporting must be in place by June 2026 and based on objective, gender-neutral criteria. The Directive says employers must

Employers must provide, if requested by employees, average pay for men and women for their worker category and their position in the pay band.

implement "pay structures ensuring equal pay for equal work or work of equal value." A robust reward architecture that has been tested and validated is required. All related information needs to be accessible to employees and agreed upon by worker-representative bodies such as unions. Employers must also provide, if requested by employees, average pay for men and women for their worker category and their position in the pay band.

Transparency: During recruitment, employers will be prohibited from inquiring about an employee's pay history and must disclose the initial pay level or range for the specific job. Once employed, employees should be informed about the criteria used to determine their salary and any progression in pay. Employers are also prohibited from including any contractual terms that prevent workers from disclosing information about their pay to others. These initial changes will likely create significant pay risks for organizations that have existing pay anomalies.

What is needed by June 2027

Worker category reporting: Employers are required to report pay gaps according to worker categories, broken down by salary and other reward elements (whether in cash or in kind). In cases where there is a 5-percent or more difference between male and female pay that cannot be justified by objective, gender-neutral criteria — or where a gap has not been rectified within six months of reporting pay data — the employer must conduct a joint-pay assessment and resolve any discrepancies. This effectively mandates equal-pay auditing.



Overall pay gap assessments: Mandatory gender pay-gap reports must include assessments of pay on a mean and median basis, as well as the distribution of men and women across each pay quartile.

Compliance deadlines

Employers with 250 or more employees must publish pay data by 7 June 2027, and then every year thereafter. Employers with 150–249 employees must publish by 7 June 2027, and every three years after that. Employers with 100–149 workers are required to publish by 7 June 2031, and then every three years. Employers will need to understand their current salary structures and implement precise changes as needed to meet the new Directive requirements.

Organizations that are not currently compliant should recognize that implementing changes may take several months. Waiting too long before the June 2026 deadline could result in serious compliance issues.

Meet the EU deadlines or risk costly consequences

What happens if employers fail to comply with the Directive requirements? The Directive contains enforcement measures requiring each member state to ensure that employers establish pay structures allowing for clear pay comparisons between employees who do equal work or work of equal value.

Employers could face costly legal claims if employees pursue court action to uphold their rights and obligations related to equal pay, both during employment and after termination.

Employers could also face challenges from associations, organizations, employment-equity groups or worker representatives that are acting on behalf of workers within administrative procedures or during court proceedings to address and rectify alleged equal pay infringements. If pay discrepancies are evident, employers may be ordered to stop violating equal pay principles and ensure compliance with equal pay rights and obligations.

Notably, the burden of proof regarding pay infringements lies not with employees but with employers. They must demonstrate under the Directive that no pay discrimination occurred. If an employee files an equal-pay claim, it is the employer's responsibility to prove the absence of both direct and indirect discrimination.

In addition, workers may seek compensation for damages that they believe are linked to infringements of equal-pay principles, such as emotional distress resulting from

unequal treatment by an employer and compensation for lost opportunities. Failure to comply with the Directive can also cause reputational damage to organizations, particularly if disputes gain media attention.

The European Commission plans to take action against non-compliant member states starting 7 June 2027. Continued failure to comply could prompt action by the European Court and the enforcement of financial sanctions.

Navigating the journey to meet new EU rules

As highlighted, the Directive presents a significant challenge to employers, many of whom are not ready for pay transparency, according to [research](#) released by KPMG UK. Just over half of UK-based businesses (56 percent) have taken steps to consider pay transparency, compared to only 39 percent in the rest of Europe as of 2023. Additionally, 83 percent of companies say they do not currently publish pay data when recruiting new talent.¹

With the deadline for effective and transparent pay policies and reporting approaching, there are a number of key actions and considerations that organizations should be aware of and ready to pursue prior to June 2026.



¹ Great expectations but what's really changed in Reward?, KPMG UK, 2025.



An underpinning pay structure: Implementing a job architecture and pay-grading structure based on an analytical and truly gender-neutral methodology is essential. Dedicating time and resources to review existing pay-grading structures and practices will likely provide valuable insights into what is needed for compliance. Access to accurate and timely pay data will be crucial for achieving success.

A strong governance process: Businesses need to be specific and precise about how pay-related decisions are made for new positions or changes to an existing pay structure. This includes establishing appropriate levels of approval, as well as providing training or upskilling of HR personnel and line managers.

Equal-pay analysis: Keeping equal-pay data precise and consistent to identify gaps in pay and understanding their underlying causes, such as fewer promotions or a faulty job architecture. Be aware that in some cases, a pay gap may indeed be justified and will not require action under the Directive. Maintaining a consistent and detailed approach to address discrepancies is therefore crucial.

Consistent communication: Ongoing communication and guidance is imperative and this starts at the top with leadership. Senior leaders need to fully understand the requirements and implications of the Directive and share their insights across the organization. Develop a solid communication plan to keep employees informed about their rights and the measures the business is taking to protect those rights. This plan should also include details about the organization's overall compensation strategy with both current and prospective employees.

Game-changing technology: Now is the time to elevate pay data and monitoring to a new level by utilizing advanced digital technology that moves beyond outdated reliance on spreadsheets. By making strategic investments in modern technology and software, you can apply precise data and analytics and real-time data modeling to achieve greater speed and accuracy.

The time to act is now

For employers operating in the EU, make no mistake — a new reality regarding pay transparency is here, and immediate and decisive action is necessary. Forward-thinking employers have already started assessing their current status and are taking strategic steps to prepare for these changes.

KPMG's global mobility professionals are advising businesses on what they can do right now in anticipation of upcoming challenges. Businesses lacking compliant pay and grading structures, should act quickly to establish them. It is crucial to conduct a review or set up appropriate structures, run equal-pay calculations behind the scenes and develop a game plan with timelines to resolve issues as they arise.

Key takeaways

1. The EU Pay Transparency Directive introduces significant changes to how organizations manage compensation and creates a substantial risk. Organizations that are not currently compliant may need several months to implement the necessary changes. That means waiting until just before the June 2026 deadline to take action could lead to complications and new risks.
2. The steps organizations need to take will vary based on their current reward practices. However, having established grading and pay structures does not guarantee compliance. If governance has not been consistently applied — which is often the case in many companies due to a lack of transparency — most organizations will need to undertake corrective actions.
3. The changes required by the Directive promote sound reward practices and will have a positive impact in the long run. However, they will also necessitate tighter governance and control around rewards, representing a cultural shift for many organizations and will require training and education for leadership.



Shaping tomorrow's global mobility function

Lessons from innovative 'pathfinders' setting the pace to create engaging experiences

- **Mike McCoy**
Partner, KPMG Switzerland
mikemccoy@kpmg.com
- **Demetra Marcantonio**
Global Mobility Services Director,
KPMG UK
demetra.marcantonio@kpmg.co.uk
- **Robert Smith**
Managing Director, Tax,
Global Mobility Services,
KPMG US
robertsmith@kpmg.com
- **Anita Bhargava**
Principal,
Global Mobility Services,
KPMG US
abhargava1@kpmg.com





With business models and strategies rapidly evolving amid technological disruption, new marketplace demands and workplace trends, global mobility needs to keep pace as it embraces a strategic organizational role.

Tomorrow's mobility function is personalized, data-driven and technology-enabled — driving talent strategy, growth and competitiveness as its focus shifts from transactional tasks to include increased involvement in workforce planning and talent development initiatives. Innovative new approaches are quickly becoming imperative in the race to acquire scarce talent, manage evolving regulations and complex immigration policies, control costs and harness the power of technologies such as AI.

A truly modern mobility function can consistently deliver a supportive and engaging experience that aligns with the changing global landscape — aiming to ensure increased business value, employee satisfaction and organizational success. What are the world's leading global mobility programs doing as 'pathfinders' — innovative organizations that are setting the pace for success in today's dynamic reality. Based on [KPMG UK research](#) highlighting how leading organizations are adapting to the evolving challenges of working across borders, pathfinders listen and respond to organizational needs and share the following four powerful capabilities:

Prioritizing their own mobility teams

Today's mobility pathfinders empower their teams — helping them understand and take pride in their mission. They ensure that no one is limited to their current job or skillset and every team member has development opportunities in place. Maintaining a continuous improvement mindset, leading mobility programs regularly assess how the function is operating. And when undertaking new initiatives, pathfinders look to their teams for valuable insights on shaping change and driving progress.

Engagement with internal stakeholders

Leading mobility programs recognize the advantages of continuous engagement and close alignment with internal stakeholders. Pathfinders take the time to understand stakeholder needs and to consistently provide them with a voice in mobility's decision-making. Emphasis is also placed on demonstrating and articulating mobility's value to the organization, and in doing this, the pathfinders build the global mobility brand. When needed, they proactively put forward global mobility to support strategic business initiatives such as cost-cutting, compliance and talent recruitment.

Pathfinders demonstrate resilience in changing environments — adapting to new challenges and opportunities.

True partnership with suppliers

Beyond remaining closely aligned with internal stakeholders, today's mobility pathfinders stay close to their suppliers — viewing them as a true extension of their team and organization. Leading mobility programs dedicate time and resources to forging connections across their supplier network — ultimately enhancing the employee experience as well as speed and efficiency to everyone's advantage.

Ensuring resilience and adaptability

Pathfinders demonstrate resilience in changing environments — adapting to new challenges and opportunities. Beyond responding strategically to today's dynamic global reality, leading mobility players keep the future in sharp focus to anticipate what comes next.

What does tomorrow's strategic mobility function look like?

Whether it's launching new markets, facilitating executive transfers or supporting diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) goals through global opportunities, mobility's scope is ever expanding. KPMG mobility professionals believe the successful mobility function of tomorrow will be defined by these five key characteristics: *agility, digital enablement, personalization, capabilities, and brand and influence.*



Agility: In today's dynamic reality, the global mobility function must be agile enough to effectively anticipate and respond to emerging organizational demands. Mobility leaders need to stay close to the business and remain flexible — quickly adapting the way they operate in response to shifting business priorities and emerging global trends. Flexible mobility policies that empower organizations to support diverse talent and business scenarios have become indispensable.

According to the [2025 KPMG Global Mobility Benchmarking Report](#), nearly three-quarters of respondents say they are leveraging short-term assignments, often as a lower-cost alternative to traditional long-term moves — signaling a shift toward agile, project-oriented deployment and faster speed to value.

Mobility must engage with key stakeholders through ongoing communication and collaboration, ultimately striving to ensure organization-wide alignment, from a strategic, policy and operational perspective. On the latter, maximizing automation, technology capabilities and data insights will be crucial for faster, more informed decision-making.

Digital enablement: A digitally enabled mobility function leverages integrated data and digital connections to create friction-free mobility processes. Every decision and workflow is powered by a seamless, intelligent data flow. Automation is fundamental to executing repeatable tasks and providing workflow-focused case management.

Consistency is crucial. Built-in systems called “rules engines” check and apply policies and legal requirements. Along with clearly defined processes, these tools help make sure the same rules are followed every time and stay compliant in areas such as immigration, tax, and labor laws. Mobility should also be data-enabled to provide precise visibility across the mobility program. Data must also be connected across service providers, vendors and internal IT to enhance speed and efficiency.

Mobility leaders should ensure that technology solutions fit the business's unique needs and that all systems provide reliable integration across the organization and its stakeholder network. They should ensure fast, reliable access to all data components and identify where changes to the data model may be needed if data differs across systems. Finally, consider the user experience: Is technology such as automation and AI easy to use and available on all devices at all times or are innovations needed?

According to the [2025 KPMG Global Mobility Benchmarking Report](#), 59 percent of businesses say their priorities for future AI implementation include automating administrative tasks, while nearly half are looking to AI to accelerate cost projections and payroll reconciliations.

At the same time, however, 72 percent of organizations report that analytics enablement and scalability pose challenges — with reporting and analytics still largely spreadsheet-driven.

Personalization: A personalized experience is both indispensable and challenging amid the need to meet the diverse demands and expectations of mobility teams, the organization, and mobile employees. Effective personalization for a mobility team member, for example, will look different from personalization for an HR or finance employee and the way they experience their workday.

Forward-looking mobility functions should concentrate on technology, self-service, empathy, and a personal touch — while carefully balancing the use of technology with authentic human connection. On the technology front, today's automation and AI capabilities bring highly personalized, precise self-service interactions. However, businesses cannot ignore the need to keep a human in the loop to ensure technology continues to meet the needs of each user group providing consumer-centric and in many cases, a mobile-first experience. Experiences should be easy to use and provide transparent access to necessary data.

Mobility programs are also challenged to determine the correct mix of personal touch and connection. This includes weighing the need for technology and data across all user groups against personal connection points that are critical to promote team camaraderie, empathy and understanding for mobile employees, and strategic prowess with business leaders and stakeholder groups.

Capabilities: Forward-looking organizations are reviewing how they deliver global mobility services in today's environment. They are revisiting the age-old insource vs outsource debate, validating the right balance from a cost, organizational culture, experience, and expert skills perspective. Vendor capabilities are in focus to inform decisions on the extent to which external capabilities will be appropriate to support mobility tasks.

The focus on operational efficiencies, achieved either through outsourcing transactional tasks or better leveraging technology and AI to automate them, means that mobility professionals will increasingly have more time to spend on value-add activities like strategic projects or partnering with talent and advising the business.

Future-oriented leaders are assessing team members' skills to ensure the best fit within the evolving function — identifying where internal skills gaps need to be addressed. The [2025 KPMG Global Mobility Benchmarking Report](#) shows that just under one third of global mobility leaders say strengthening the skills of their mobility teams is a top priority as AI and automation assume administrative roles.



Future-focused functions recognize that today's mobility employees could be tomorrow's mobility leaders and are giving team members a greater voice in executing strategic projects. Tomorrow's mobility professionals will act as digitally literate negotiators, influencers and problem solvers, with familiarity in data management and analytics.

Brand and influence: Global mobility's brand is its identity and perception within the organization, and this perception is critical to building trust and shaping behaviors as mobility's strategic role grows. A strong brand establishes authority and significantly increases influence.

Forward-thinking mobility leaders are asking themselves, what do I want my organization to be saying about global mobility? According to the 2025 KPMG Global Mobility Benchmarking Report, one of the top goals for mobility leaders is to articulate their strategy or their mission within the organization.

Mobility teams are reflecting on the strategic intent of mobility and asking key questions:

- Why is the function important?
- How does it contribute to organizational success?
- What tangible steps are required to sustain mobility's success — both today and tomorrow?

However, KPMG research shows that while 34 percent of businesses say they have a mobility strategy and it is widely communicated, only 20 percent of mobility teams say the strategy is both widely communicated and truly understood across their organization.

Mobility teams need to close this communication gap. This means translating mobility's strategy into specific business outcomes that are easily understood and measurable and using data to demonstrate those outcomes.

The future is here for global mobility

Forward-looking mobility teams and businesses recognize that the mobility function of tomorrow is increasingly strategic, data-driven and technology-enabled — driving talent strategy, growth and competitiveness as its focus shifts from transactional tasks to ensuring business value, employee satisfaction and organizational success.

As mobility embraces a more strategic role and greater value to the organization, the future demands a supportive and engaging experience that aligns with the changing business landscape. Personalization, new skills and modern strategies are becoming indispensable to success. Leading global mobility programs are setting the pace for success as pathfinders amid the challenges of today's dynamic reality.

Key takeaways

1. Personalization means different things to each user group. Therefore, all users must be considered when determining the best course for personalization. Technology may help enable personalization, but it is not a solution in and of itself. Consider how technology overlays your processes and personal outreach points.
2. Mobility skillsets are changing. As more administrative tasks are automated, there is a greater focus on skill sets that add more value. Take the time to get to know your team members. What types of work do they enjoy doing, and what are their career aspirations? Consider how you will support them to get there.
3. Strategy is critical. One of the top goals for today's mobility leaders is to clearly articulate the function's strategy within the organization. How is global mobility contributing to the success of the business? Translate your strategy into clear, easily understood business outcomes. Measure and share the impacts to strengthen the brand of global mobility.

AI-powered global mobility

Unleashing new levels of efficiency and business value

- **Steve Herlocker**
Partner, Global Mobility Services,
KPMG US
sherlocker@kpmg.com
- **Bryan Samek**
Director, KPMG US
bryansamek@kpmg.com
- **Michelle Berners-Price**
Partner, KPMG UK
michelle.berners-price@kpmg.co.uk





The revolutionary power of artificial intelligence (AI) is reinventing global mobility — transforming workforce planning, employee experiences, data-driven decision-making and operational efficiency.

Forward-looking mobility teams are tapping into the power of AI in the race to attract scarce talent, meet employee expectations, navigate regulatory demands and create greater value for their organizations.

According to the [2025 KPMG Global Mobility Benchmarking Report](#), 59 percent of businesses say their AI implementation priorities include automating administrative tasks, while nearly half are looking to accelerate cost projections and payroll reconciliations. Most organizations (62 percent) say they are planning new technology investments in the next 12 to 18 months.

As AI proliferates, a balanced strategic approach will be pivotal to mobility's success — leveraging AI's vast potential while carefully managing significant challenges that include trust in the technology and its safe, ethical application.

AI in action: Case studies for success

AI's impact is being felt across the entire spectrum of industries — from healthcare, finance and manufacturing to education, transportation and beyond — and it stands to take mobility to new heights of strategic influence and business leadership. Here are a few examples of how AI is transforming businesses and mobility teams.

A global industrial giant goes all in on AI

A US-based international conglomerate is ambitiously implementing AI to transform its diverse operations and enhance business efficiency.

In today's hypercompetitive environment, speed is essential. The company's mobility team had once spent about 100 hours coordinating with legal, HR, immigration, and compliance after an employee, requested temporary employment in a third country without residing or working there. The time and complexity of managing this unusual assignment highlighted the need to accelerate and streamline mobility processes, leading the business to adopt an AI-powered solution with advanced automation to improve efficiency.

Automation is now breaking new ground in managing massive volumes of widely dispersed data across the organization's 50-plus global sites. The company is now gaining unprecedented data insights and predictive analytics through four lenses — HR, mobility leadership, mobility operations teams, and customers — using

As automation and AI advance, keeping humans in the loop is seen as imperative to success.

Microsoft Power BI and Copilot. Teams can tap into AI for instant solutions to questions and problems as they arise during mobility assignments and projects.

At the same time, the business recognizes that automation is not a replacement for critical thinking by mobility professionals who are consistently validating data outputs and summaries. As automation and AI advance, keeping humans in the loop is seen as imperative to success.

US healthcare leader tackles cancer treatment with AI

A major global healthcare company is leveraging artificial intelligence and machine learning to accelerate drug discovery and development, with a focus on advancing cancer treatments.

At the same time, the business is tapping into AI to implement workplace changes that optimize product and process design, supplier interactions, and overall business efficiency. AI is accelerating human resources processes, for example, as an HR workspace agent. Where employees previously submitted an IT support ticket for help and recommendations, AI now handles those requests, instantly providing support and recommendations. Turnaround time for support has been dramatically reduced.

The organization provides mandatory AI training and remains careful to include human support, combining 'bots and brains' at all times as reliance on AI grows. It is also conducting an initiative to promote the use of AI and the business-wide sharing of AI agents that are advancing mobility's self-service capabilities.



Global investment firm taps into the power of workplace AI agents

A US-based multinational providing investment, advisory and risk-management services launched Microsoft Copilot's workplace AI agents to automate key tasks and support informed decision-making. To streamline its complex year-end accounting process, the organization also began using Copilot to 'sit in' on year-end meetings to take notes, address challenges and provide guidance.

Copilot's AI-based analyst agents are seamlessly integrating with existing workflows to analyze huge volumes of business data, summarize key documents and help prepare time-sensitive year-end reports.

An analyst agent now delivers an agenda for more than 45 leaders and team members who meet weekly from across the giant organization's various verticals and corporate functions. The agent identifies key data and deliverables that leaders need to address in the year-end process — including important updates and changes regarding equity cash, bonus payouts and employee salaries.

The business says AI is delivering 'a much higher degree of efficiency' to its time-consuming accounting demands and reducing operating risk along the way. Going forward, the corporate tax team plans to implement an agent that will analyze the organization's employee-travel and remote-work data to assess risk, apply key learnings and continually improve the year-end accounting journey.

Renewable-energy company accelerates complex operations

A global renewable-energy company has an ambitious target to be carbon-neutral by 2040. AI is gaining momentum as the company transforms its capabilities, processes and operational efficiency. The power of AI is having an impact on delivering insights across technical functions that include infrastructure maintenance and planning the business's increasingly complex energy grids and networks.

The energy leader is also unleashing AI across business operations, including management and team support for global mobility and HR workflows. AI is solving traditional mobility challenges, such as the critical need for speed in assigning mobile employees and managing the diverse array of logistics, administration, immigration and compliance needs.



Making a difference — KPMG's approach to Gen AI

KPMG's mobility professionals are tapping into the power of Gen AI to boost employee satisfaction, identify top talent for assignments, improve decision-making and streamline compliance communication.

As the Gen AI journey unfolds, platforms such as [KPMG LINK Go](#) and [KPMG Digital Gateway](#) are making a difference. Powered by Microsoft Azure and built on the cloud, LINK Go is a centralized, AI-enabled portal that delivers a comprehensive suite of essential tools and solutions. A key feature of LINK Go is an advanced Gen AI experience that includes a user-friendly and intuitive chat interface for secure interaction with large language models.

Gen AI capabilities are integrated into the LINK Go ecosystem, providing advanced data management, analysis and virtual assistant capabilities that transform business operations. The platform leverages Gen AI's accuracy and speed to integrate into mobility and tax function workflows — from automation of basic tasks and data analysis to strategic modeling and planning.



Harnessing the power of Gen AI Personas

Gen AI personas are designed to perform specific tasks within a Gen AI experience — essentially serving as virtual assistants that rely on human guidance to complete tasks. KPMG mobility professionals are currently using Gen AI personas to transform capabilities through advanced, data-driven simulations that manage specific processes and solve business challenges.

Personas, simply put, function as the apps of the AI era. They go beyond static profiles, helping users test scenarios, generate ideas and guide decisions across mobility's spectrum of needs. KPMG personas can analyze and refine AI prompts to produce AI outputs that are far more detailed and effective.

KPMG personas help mobility teams by providing a starting point for employee assignments and related decisions. They guide users through key questions, such as the type of assignment, destination, and whether the move is for personal or business reasons, as well as checking for necessary immigration documents.

With the right information, personas can offer recommendations on requirements like visas and work permits, and estimate assignment costs, including tax considerations between countries. This approach allows employees to get answers quickly, making the mobility process smoother and more efficient.

The road ahead

As AI and Gen AI advance and proliferate to unlock unprecedented advantages, global mobility is poised to take its services, results and strategic value to exciting new heights. Forward-thinking organizations are capitalizing on AI's transformative power, navigating its complexities and opportunities with a focus on trust, ethics and readiness. As organizations embrace AI, they will be wise to keep the big picture in focus — ensuring a vision for new opportunities and solutions that AI can deliver as the future unfolds and its power evolves. The AI journey underscores the importance of continuous learning and adaptation to consistently evolve the employee experience, workflow automation and mobility's advisory role to the business.

Key takeaways

1. Global mobility professionals have an opportunity to drive significant value for their organizations and stakeholders by embracing AI today. While often not the first department businesses target for AI investment, mobility professionals can take the AI journey into their own hands by learning the technology, using AI in day-to-day activities, and focusing on incremental AI deployment within their teams.
2. Building AI tools for a global mobility program does not need to be complicated or costly. By using AI personas, organizations can bring new value today. Get started with these 3 steps:
 - Identify a bottleneck: Pinpoint a repetitive or time-consuming task in your mobility program.
 - Pilot with a simple AI persona: Test a basic AI solution to address this task using available platforms or tools.
 - Measure and report impact: Track time savings or added value and share results with your team to build momentum.
3. Good technology cannot fix a broken process. While the global mobility function explores and experiments with AI in existing processes, it's important to document process flows and data points. AI will accelerate processes but zooming out to focus on what's possible tomorrow can foster more meaningful change.

Are unconventional moves becoming the convention?

Mobility reaches a crossroads as businesses pursue agile new approaches

- **Iain McCluskey**
Partner, KPMG UK
iain.mccluskey@kpmg.co.uk
- **Kristin Noble**
Partner, KPMG Canada
knoble@kpmg.ca
- **Dan Hodgson**
Partner,
KPMG Australia
dghodgson@kpmg.com.au





Resistance to traditional global mobility strategies is on the rise as many organizations ambitiously pursue non-traditional pathways to meet pivotal challenges that include the race to acquire scarce talent. But is an unconventional approach the way forward in today's dynamic environment? Or does traditional mobility simply need reinventing — a 'reboot' to overcome current challenges and enhance mobility's strategic role within the organization?

This article explores today's emerging options for mobility, including a strategic makeover for traditional mobility that could restore its prominence in today's fast-changing reality.

Is traditional mobility being replaced?

Mobility leaders are grappling with unprecedented challenges in today's dynamic and hypercompetitive environment and for many, a decisive shift to non-traditional mobility solutions is unfolding.

Managing costs is a critical concern. Long-term assignments are costly to implement and manage, prompting more organizations to optimize spending through short-term assignments and business travel or commuter approaches.

At the same time, competition for talent remains fierce and businesses in many cases are scrambling for solutions that will quickly deliver the right capabilities in the right place. Some organizations are turning to support from new AI-driven talent-management platforms. Meanwhile, employees are challenging traditional approaches that require moves to new locations as they embrace new ways of working such as hybrid and fully remote work arrangements.

Acquiring adequate funding to implement new technology for mobility programs is also becoming prohibitive amid cost concerns in the current hypercompetitive global environment.

The ever-changing regulatory landscape, new immigration rules and emerging visa limitations among nations are tightening requirements as they look to protect local jobs in today's volatile global economy.

What's enabling non-traditional assignments?

The shift to non-traditional mobility is underway amid today's unprecedented business needs and challenges. An agile new approach is seen by many organizations as the inevitable way forward. Here's what these businesses are doing as mobility's non-traditional future unfolds:

Virtual assignments: More businesses and mobility teams are meeting employee expectations by providing virtual cross-border assignments that eliminate the need to relocate much-needed talent.

Employer of record: Where businesses lack a legal entity in a specific location, they are turning to local talent to meet their needs. A third-party company will legally employ staff in a foreign country as an 'employer of record' on behalf of the business seeking talent — handling administrative, legal and HR compliance tasks like payroll, taxes and benefits.

Global employment company: The use of global employment agencies to access local talent in specific locations is also on the rise, forgoing the need to relocate talent, while providing advantages that include centralized payroll and compliance.

Businesses are innovating with these solutions to solve the challenges of costs, compliance and employee preferences — taking an agile approach that positions them to acquire appropriate talent quickly and reliably.





Saying 'Yes' to innovation and limitless mobility

Many of today's mobility leaders and teams are saying 'Yes' to change and embracing innovation to manage costs, acquire scarce talent, meet employee expectations and optimize operating efficiency. But the journey ahead will require strategic thinking across a range of overarching needs that include:

Infrastructure: Building adaptable infrastructure is essential to support seamless and near limitless mobility assignments across regions. Reliance on third-party vendors to provide talent is making a difference for many organizations.

Technology: Advanced platforms are enabling remote collaboration, compliance tracking and data-driven insights.

Automation: Automation and the growing embrace of AI are empowering continuous, seamless moves while reducing human errors in dynamic business environments.

Policy and culture: Flexible policies and an inclusive business culture serve to empower diverse mobility models — with leadership driving mobility as a strategic priority.

Traditional mobility gets a 'reboot' for a new era

As the trend to non-traditional approaches unfolds, some forward-looking mobility leaders and their organizations are instead looking to simply 'reinvent' traditional global mobility. They are maintaining long-term assignments and traditional methods while innovating as needed. Here are four examples of businesses that are choosing a mobility 'reboot' to redefine mobility in a new era of challenges and opportunities.

Shaping 'moments of magic' in a career 'playground'

Consider the unusual example of one emerging financial services tech organization that has reimagined the workplace as a career 'playground' — one where mobility assignments are designed to deliver special moments and memorable experiences.

To attract, retain and, ultimately, develop employees to fill future leadership roles, the business has reimagined global mobility and is implementing long-term assignments that apply an eight-year rotation cycle.

Global mobility today finds itself at a pivotal moment as today's dynamic and hypercompetitive environment fuels a shift to non-traditional mobility approaches.

The program is designed to deliver 'magical moments' during long-term assignments — creating innovative personalized experiences that include concierge services and other specialized solutions catering to individual employee needs. The business believes its drive to create unique employee experiences will pay off in retaining and developing the top talent it will inevitably need to fill tomorrow's leadership roles.

Leaving a legacy for emerging talent

A global pharmaceutical giant, also recognizing the need to develop talent to fill future leadership roles, is reinventing its mobility program by strategically tapping into the vast experience and skills of older employees who are closing in on retirement age.

Under this program, older employees are encouraged and incentivized to spend the last three or four years of their career on assignment in order to reskill the next generation of talent. The business believes that dedicating time and resources to enabling a huge transfer of skills to its valued young employees will position the business to grow and innovate.

Chasing a world-record pace

While many businesses are intently focused on shaping a new generation that will drive their organization forward in a new era of mobility challenges and opportunities, another organization in the tech sector is reinventing mobility and relying on long-term assignments for a very different reason: the need for speed.

Its innovative mobility strategy is entirely based on 'speed to market.' The business believes that long-term assignments are quicker to implement and easier to manage compared to external hiring or permanent transfers. Mobility teams are challenging themselves to relocate employees as quickly as possible. Speed to market is a business priority that's driving the mobility strategy and making the business future ready amid change.



Rebranding mobility for the 'social media generation'

Today's young global workforce is relying on social media as one more tool to shape and enhance both work experiences and lifestyles. One leading technology company is capitalizing on this reality by making mobility assignments a key part of its social media brand.

The business is using global mobility opportunities and long-term assignments to promote the organization as an innovative employer — and spreading the word far and wide via social media. Mobility leaders are encouraging mobile employees, and family members, to share their experiences on long-term assignments via social media. In doing so, the company's brand is promoted among young tech-savvy talent that the business is always looking to recruit and develop.

As you can see, whether today's pressing challenge is future leadership and succession planning, the need for speed to market, or the endless search for top talent — these four organizations are being true to their belief that traditional long-term mobility assignments will unlock value for their organization.

Their message is clear: Traditional mobility is not dead — it simply needs to be reinvented for today's and tomorrow's ever-evolving reality.

The way forward?

Global mobility today finds itself at a pivotal moment as today's dynamic and hypercompetitive environment fuels a shift to non-traditional mobility solutions. The ongoing race for talent; employee expectations for new ways of working; the need for new technologies; and cost and compliance concerns are prompting mobility leaders to pursue a new approach. But traditional mobility continues to have an impact and might simply need reinventing in an ever-changing global reality.

Key takeaways

1. Mobility has become more complex and many moves are now non-traditional. As these start to mature, more-complex enablement vehicles such as employer of records are becoming more prevalent. Understanding these will allow mobility functions to create the right pathways to enable non-traditional mobility.
2. The mobility function of the future will likely be the function that says 'Yes' — deploying technology across multiple pathways to enable mobility to happen in almost any circumstance. The most successful will be those that say 'Yes' most often and execute quickly.
3. Traditional mobility is not dead. Its decline is being turned around by forward-thinking organizations who have decided traditional mobility best executes their business and people strategy. Businesses can revive traditional mobility by thinking radically.



Some or all of the services described herein may not be permissible for KPMG audit clients and their affiliates or related entities.

kpmg.com



The information contained herein is of a general nature and is not intended to address the circumstances of any particular individual or entity. Although we endeavor to provide accurate and timely information, there can be no guarantee that such information is accurate as of the date it is received or that it will continue to be accurate in the future. No one should act on such information without appropriate professional advice after a thorough examination of the particular situation.

© 2026 Copyright owned by one or more of the KPMG International entities. KPMG International entities provide no services to clients. All rights reserved.

KPMG refers to the global organization or to one or more of the member firms of KPMG International Limited ("KPMG International"), each of which is a separate legal entity. KPMG International Limited is a private English company limited by guarantee and does not provide services to clients.

For more details about our structure, please visit kpmg.com/governance.

The KPMG name and logo are trademarks used under license by the independent member firms of the KPMG global organization.

Throughout this document, "we," "KPMG," "us" and "our" refers to the KPMG global organization, to KPMG International Limited ("KPMG International"), and/or to one or more of the member firms of KPMG International, each of which is a separate legal entity.

Designed by Evalueserve.

Publication name: See it differently — Part 1: Shaping mobility through non-traditional paths and innovative solutions

Publication number: 140224-G

Publication date: January 2026