THE ADECCO GROUP

2025

GLOBAL EMPLOYEE MOBILITY SURVEY

CERC
Leadership for Workforce Mobility

Ipsos

Introduction

- The 2025 Canadian Employee Relocation Council's (CERC) Global Mobility Survey marks the fourth edition of the ground-breaking survey first conducted in 2011. The 2025 survey, conducted in partnership with Ipsos Global Public Affairs, reports on the attitudes of 10,574 working women and men in 19 countries towards international relocation for employment purposes. The Ipsos Global advisor poll was conducted between February 21st and March 7th, 2025.

- With businesses globally facing shortages of skilled workers that stifle economic growth, the mobility of talent emerges as a key solution. However, the global economy is facing enormous pressure from protectionism and a realignment of economic integration. This project seeks to answer crucial questions, especially in the post-pandemic era and a new, economically aligned world: How do we get people to where the jobs are? Will people move for employment reasons in the changed landscape? As future workforce growth is projected to be fueled mainly by immigration and talent mobility, understanding the needs and expectations of employees becomes paramount. While much is known about employer intentions, little research is available to inform decision-makers about employee expectations in this rapidly changing world of work.

- Where possible, the report has identified certain trends observed since the findings of the 2017 study. The 2025 survey includes several new questions relating to preferences for hybrid and remote working arrangements, new incentive mechanisms, the appeal of diversity, equity, and inclusion policies, important country characteristics that motivate the desire to relocate, and the likelihood of seeking our relocation services.

- The global poll is sponsored by The Adecco Group, Armstrong Moving, Asian Talent Mobility Alliance, Atlas International, European Relocation Association, the World Federation of People Management Associations, and Weichert Workforce Mobility. The report provides insights based on major industry grouping, country of residence and factors that would most likely motivate or incent a global employee to accept an employer sponsored relocation for employment purposes.

Executive Summary: Key Findings

Across 19 countries, the analysis of results was conducted on an overall global basis, by industry type, by country, and by demographics. In this executive summary, the themes which contribute to the key findings of the study include:

- Employee willingness to relocate abroad has grown since 2017.
- Willingness to relocate for employment is about more assurances than it is about risk.
- When considering a new job opportunity abroad, helping to facilitate a connection to home is essential.
- Relocation incentives and benefits matter, most notably providing housing assistance and covering travel costs to visit family.
- Flexible work options are essential for employees looking to relocate.
- Emphasizing quality of life benefits of relocating to a new country can effectively help inspire employees to consider overseas assignments.
- Highlighting career growth is also appealing to those willing to relocate for employment.
- Country-specific economic and political climates play an important role in shaping employees' relocation preferences.

Details about these key topics are laid out in the executive summary in the next sections.

Employee willingness to relocate abroad has grown since 2017

Globally: The willingness to relocate internationally for work has grown since 2017 among a significant portion of employees. This trend has increased in 6 of 19 surveyed countries and remained stable in most others.
Almost one-half of employees (49%, +3 points) would consider international relocation for work for up to two years.

Across countries: South African and Mexican employees are most likely to consider international relocation, even more so than in 2017.
Employees in South Africa are most likely to consider such a move (75%, +13 points), followed by workers in Mexico (71%, +9 points), Turkey (65%, +12 points), and Argentina (64%, +3 points). An increased desire to consider moving abroad for work for two years is also notable in India (63%, +11 points), China (51%, +9 points), and Spain (48%, +8 points). Employees who are the least likely to temporarily relocate for two years include those from Japan (22%, -4 points), the Netherlands (31%, +3 points) and Germany (38%, +2 points). The only substantial decrease seen in considering a move for a new job is found among residents of Brazil (59%, -7 points).

Across industry sectors: Employees in utility (59%), information technology (58%), agriculture (57%), finance, and construction sectors (55% each) round out the top five industries most likely to consider international relocation for work.
More locally specialized workers such as local government workers (41%) and employees in health care and social services (41%), appear to be more content in their positions and with their local work locations. Some would still consider relocation, but it would be more difficult to motivate.

Across socio-demographic subgroups: The willingness to relocate internationally for work decreases with age, consistent with trends observed in the previous survey.
Compared to other socio-demographic subgroups, those most likely to agree on relocating include senior executives (58%, +5 points), business owners (58%, +7 points) and employees under the age of 35 (60%, +3 points),. There are no declines in the possibility of international mobility among socio-demographic subgroups, and older employees aged 50 to 74 (37%, +4 points) are least likely to consider an international move for work.

International mobility is about assurances than about risk

Globally: If guaranteed a full-time job, employees are now more likely to consider international relocation (60%, +4 points).
Workers also want a guarantee that they would have the ability to return to their previous workplaces if needed (66%, -3 points), which could indicate they see the work assignment abroad as a way to enrich their careers in the long run.

Across countries: Workers in almost one-half of the countries surveyed express an even higher likelihood to relocate internationally for work if guaranteed full-time work in comparison to 2017.
Consideration to relocate if a guaranteed full-time work is offered is highest among workers in South Africa (81%, +3 points), India (78%, +8 points), Turkey (77%, +9 points), Mexico (76%, -2 points), and China (72%, +6 points); and has increased in has increased in 7 out of the 19 surveyed countries, including countries that are not part of the top listed such as South Korea (69%, +10 points), and in Germany (49%, +8 points). In 2025, the likelihood of moving for guaranteed work is lowest in Japan (32%, -6 points) and in the Netherlands (37%,+ 7 points).

Across industry sectors: Workers in the utilities sector (74%) and information technology sector (72%) are most likely to consider a move to work remotely abroad for two years if guaranteed a full-time job vs. other industry sectors.
Conversely, those working in health care and social assistance (50%) and those working for the government or in public administration (51%) are less likely to pursue an international work move if guaranteed a full-time job.

Across socio-demographic subgroups: Many different socio-demographic groups are significantly more likely to relocate for work for two years with the guarantee of a full-time job compared to 2017.
Compared to 2025, significant increases in the likelihood to consider international relocation are seen among business owners (67%, +9 points), besides those aged under 35 years (71%, +6 points) and senior executives (70%, +8 points). The group that is the least likely to consider international temporary relocation for work if guaranteed a full-time job rests with those aged 50 to 74 (45%, +2 points). There are no significant declines in this area among subgroups since 2017.

Relocation incentives and benefits matter

Globally: All incentives are motivating and if packaged together in a structured manner, can further allure workers to consider international relocation.
Employees often respond positively to compelling incentives for overseas work relocation. If the benefit package is right, three-quarters of workers (74%, -3 points) would consider an international move. The most appealing incentives would involve benefits such as covering travel costs to visit family in their home country (69%), the provision of temporary housing (67%, +12 points), and paid language training (67%, -1 point). Two-thirds of workers (65%, -1) say that it would be motivating to have the option for hybrid work arrangement, to have educational opportunities (65%, -1 point), and to have a minimum of five weeks paid vacation (65%, no change).
It is also important for employees to ensure that their family is taken into consideration, including incentives to help with finding proper housing and schools (62%, +3 points), including paid tuition for their children (56%, no change). Incentives related to immigration assistance are less important in 2025 (61%, -4 points). Diversity, equity, and inclusion policies (74%, no change) are also important elements to attract workers. Benefits and incentives ultimately make it easier for workers to relocate and acclimate in their new environment.

Across countries: Those in South Africa, Mexico, Turkey, and often in Argentina are most lured by incentives and benefits. Those in Japan and in the Netherlands are least likely to be influenced by incentives.

Across industry sectors: Workers in IT, utilities and mining, quarrying, and oil and gas are most likely to embrace incentives to motivate an international work move.

Across socio-demographic subgroups: Senior executives, business owners, and younger workers (less than 35 years) are more likely to be motivated by most incentives evaluated. Results exhibit declines for many incentive offers across several socio-demographic groups, especially among those with lower household incomes, the lowest education levels, and workers aged 50 to 74.

Flexible work options are motivating when considering international relocation for work

Globally: Accommodating adaptable workplace options are attractive to 65% of workers.
Despite the widespread adoption of remote and hybrid work during the COVID-19 pandemic, the proportion of employees motivated by flexible work arrangements for international relocation remains unchanged. Those willing to relocate for work continue to value hybrid or remote work options (65%, -1 point), suggesting that such arrangements have become an expected feature rather than a unique incentive. Given that no change has emerged in desiring hybrid/remote work opportunities, the results underscore that this work option has always been important and continues to be appealing. When asked to identify their preference, 45% would prefer a hybrid job opportunity vs. 32% preferring a fully remote job opportunity, and 23% opting for a fully in-office situation. One in five workers (18%) has no preference.

Across countries: The highest interest in hybrid or fully remote work options in the destination country are found among workers in South Africa (89%), Mexico (80%), Argentina (79%), and India (79%).
The lowest interest in hybrid or fully remote work opportunities in the foreign destination rests with workers in Japan (25%) and the Netherlands (44%).

Across industries: When considering international relocation for work, employees who work in IT (77%), mining, quarrying and oil and gas (76%), administrative and support roles (74%), and in finance and insurance (74%) are most likely of all sectors to find this incentive appealing.
Conversely, hybrid/remote work options are less alluring among workers in the arts, entertainment and recreation sector (58%), in the wholesale trade industry (58%), and in transportation and warehousing (59%).

Across socio-demographic groups: Flexible hybrid or remote work opportunities in the relocation destination tend to be particularly motivating among senior executives (75%), business owners (73%) and younger workers under the age of 35 (72%).
Older workers aged 50-74 (56%), those with lower household incomes (58%) and workers with lower education levels (57%) are less likely to be motivated by hybrid work opportunities in comparison to other socio-demographic subgroups.

When considering international mobility, a maintained connection to home is a must for many

Globally: Survey results reveal that opportunities to reconnect with 'home' are highly influential in motivating them to consider international relocation for work.
The top incentive of 12 benefits assessed lies with having employers ensure that paid travel costs are in place for workers or their family to travel between the new country and home (69%, no change). Further, 62% of workers would like to have the opportunity to work for up to half a year in the new country, while remaining in their home country for half a year.

Across countries: Having paid travel costs to return home is particularly motivating for workers in South Africa (89%), Mexico (85%), Argentina (85%), and Turkey (83%).
This incentive is less impactful among workers in Japan (28%), the Netherlands (49%), and Germany (54%).

Across industry sectors: When looking at industry sectors, workers in IT (79%) would be most likely to desire the ability to receive paid travel home for visits vs. workers in other industry sectors.
While the majority would still find paid travel home for visits motivating, the intensity factor is comparatively less impactful among workers in wholesale trade (64%), arts and entertainment (65%), health care and social assistance (65%), and personal services (65%).

Across socio-demographic subgroups: The subgroups of employees who would be most motivated by receiving paid travel home for visits include senior executives (77%), business owners (75%), and younger workers under 35 years of age (75%).
Once again, those with lower education levels (59%), lower household incomes (60%), and older workers aged 50-74 (60%) are less likely to be swayed by paid travel home for visits home, albeit the majority would still find it appealing.

Emphasizing quality of life benefits can effectively inspire employees to consider overseas assignments

Globally: How comfortable will I feel, and can I afford it?

Workers cite important quality of life factors involved in decisions, with the top three factors being affordability and cost of living (47%), crime rates and safety (39%), and access to quality health care (37%). Another important factor in decision-making involves affordable housing (32%). In addition, consideration is given to the ability to speak the local language (25%), the potential to have their spouse/partner work in the country as well (25%), and the ability to bring family members (25%). Of less importance, respondents point to the extent of leisure and entertainment activities (10%) and the proximity to their current home country (12%).

A helping hand to navigate a foreign land is beneficial.
As seen earlier in this report, the ultimate quality of life outcome for workers is also dependent upon assistance they may receive during their move and upon their arrival. The majority of workers would appreciate and seek assistance with relocation (62%), especially among IT employees, the provision of temporary housing (67%) and paid language training (67%).

What other types of assistance would employees seek?
The majority of employees across the globe indicate that they would seek a variety of services, including access to a vehicle or transportation services (80%), educational and/or language training (78%), moving assistance (78%), and settlement services (78%). Additional services which would be likely to be sought involve legal service (immigration/tax) at 77%, personal banking (76%), short-term housing (76%), and real estate services (75%).

Global workforce values career benefits of international assignments

Globally: Study results imply that workers are interested in knowing what they would get out of an international work experience, yet a faction of employees would never even consider it.
The majority of employees agree that the long-term benefits of temporary international relocation for work would benefit their long-term career (69%, -1 point) and workers would also appreciate the learning opportunities there may be to upgrade their skill set (65%, -1 point).

Across countries: Workers from Mexico (89%, -1 point), Turkey (86%, +7 points) and South Africa (86%, no change) are the most likely to want to understand the benefits of international work relocation.
Ensuring that international relocation for work offers benefits to workers' long-term careers is less likely to play a role in decision-making among workers in the Netherlands (47%, -8 points), Japan (48%, -14 points), the US (50%, -11 points), and Germany (50%, -10 points).
Further, 49% (+9 points) stand strong in stating that there is nothing their employer could do to convince them to take an international assignment. particularly in India (70%, +13 points). Workers in Argentina (30%, no change) and South Africa (32%, +6 points) are less likely to hold this view.

Across industry sectors: The sense that an international contract would be beneficial to their careers is more likely to occur among employees in the IT sector (80%) in comparison to other industry sectors.
Lower agreement levels that international contracts would be beneficial to their careers are found among workers in the health care and social assistance sector (56%).

Across socio-demographic subgroups: In addition, those under the age of 35 strongly agree (78%, +2 points) that international relocation could be beneficial to their long-term careers, along with senior executives (77%, +2 points) and business owners (76%, +5 points).
Older workers aged 50 to 74 are notably less likely to agree that international relocation would be beneficial (57%, -5 points).

Country-specific economic and political climates play diverse roles in shaping employees' relocation preferences

Globally: Where there may be economic and/or political strife across the globe, employees are generally more likely to consider international relocation (i.e., South Africa, Mexico, and often Argentina, Turkey).

Globally, workers prioritize factors that contribute to an overall better quality of life when considering international relocation. The top three considerations are affordable cost of living (47%), low crime rate and safe environment (39%), and access to a quality healthcare system (37%). These are closely followed by affordable housing (32%) and a strong economy (31%), rounding out the top five factors. This ranking suggests that employees are primarily focused on securing a stable and comfortable lifestyle abroad. The emphasis on safety, affordability, and healthcare access indicates that workers are keen to avoid potentially negative scenarios or destinations. Rather than being motivated solely by economic factors (31%), and political stability (27%) employees appear to be searching for a holistic improvement in their living situation when contemplating an international move.

The likelihood of international relocation for work is generally highest among workers in countries that are impacted by less economically developed or experience high levels of social differences. Consistently, workers in South Africa, Mexico, Argentina, and Turkey express higher levels of consideration to relocate, including higher motivational levels associated with a plethora of benefits and incentives.

In opposition, where there is more economic and political stability, workers are less likely to want to leave their current environment (i.e., Japan and the Netherlands). Workers in these countries are also least likely to be attracted to benefits and incentives, with most knowing that they likely will not eventually relocate to another country for work. They exude a higher confidence in their at-home work situation than workers in other countries because of their stable economic and political atmospheres.

Highlighting the preferred countries to move to for work

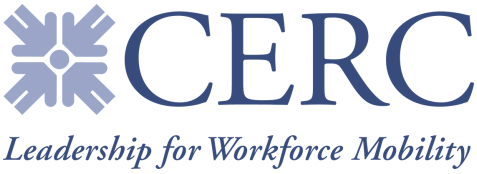
The top preferred relocation destinations among all workers globally are:

- The United States tops the list with one quarter (25%) selecting it among the top 3 preferred countries to relocate to. Despite showing a lower proportion compared to 2017, the US remains a top preference.
- Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and Canada form a second tier (18% each)
- Spain rounds up the 3rd tier (17%)

At the bottom of the preference, less than one percent of workers would consider Peru, Algeria, Romania, Pakistan, Nigeria, Egypt, Israel, Iran, Venezuela, and India as countries to relocate to.

A focus on Canada:

In Canada, the likelihood of considering a move abroad for a temporary work assignment has not significantly changed since 2017 (45% in 2025 and 42% in 2017). However, the proportion of Canadian workers who now state that 'there is nothing my employer could do to convince me to take an international assignment' has risen substantially by 18 points (52% in 2025 vs. 34% in 2017). The appeal of benefits and incentives offerings has decreased among Canadian workers across the board, except for motivational increases in two areas: the provision of temporary housing and working in a country in a language they already know. For Canadian workers considering relocation, Australia (29%), the United States (26%), and the United Kingdom (22%) remain the top three preferred destinations. However, these countries have seen a significant decline in popularity among Canadians since 2017. The United States and Australia each experienced an 11-point drop in preference, while the United Kingdom saw an 8-point decrease.



Martin Hrobsky
Senior Vice President, Ipsos Public Affairs
+1 416 324-2017
Martin.Hrobsky@Ipsos.com
2025 Ipsos - All rights reserved

Ipsos is an independent research company controlled and managed by research professionals. Founded in France in 1975, Ipsos has grown into a worldwide research group with a strong presence in all key markets.
With offices in 88 countries, Ipsos delivers insightful expertise across six research specializations: advertising, customer loyalty, marketing, media, public affairs research, and survey management.

To access the full CERC report please contact:

Stephen Cryne, President & CEO
Canadian Employment Relocation Council (CERC)
Tel: +1 416 593 8912
scryne@cerc.ca
www.cerc.ca

The Canadian Employee Relocation Council (CERC) is Canada's leading business association dedicated to improving the mobility of human capital, which is vitally important to Canada's future economic prosperity.

Established in 1982, the organization represents the interests of its members on workforce mobility matters. The Council is a not-for-profit organization funded entirely by its members, many of which are listed in Canada's Financial Post Top 100.

© 2025 Canadian Employee Relocation Council (CERC). All rights reserved.

This publication, including all content, data, graphics, and analysis contained herein, is the property of the Canadian Employee Relocation Council. No part of this report may be reproduced, distributed, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise—without prior written permission of CERC.

This report is intended for informational purposes only and may not be used for commercial or derivative purposes without explicit authorization.

For permissions or licensing inquiries, please contact: info@cerc.ca