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GLOBAL LEADERSHIP: How financial services are responding to global change

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EDITOR'S LETTER



"In a rapidly changing world where AI, economic volatility, political uncertainty are centre stage, we examine the issues that matter."

In this issue we examine the shifting global landscape and ongoing tech disruption and explore its impact on global mobility, leadership and education.

We take a special look at the surge in migration among high net individuals – who's moving where and why and discover how different industries are adapting to global change.

The Relocate Global team report on the critical digital skills shortage among UK workers and how employers can be a vital part of the solution. Read about the burgeoning hydrogen industry and what this exciting new industry means for talent, skills and the wider economy in the global race to reach Net Zero. Explore the future of workforce management and how global organisations are using AI and new technologies to stay ahead, better connect their employees, boost productivity and enrich their work culture.

Professor Dame Vlatka Ariaana Hlupic, one of our 80 Outstanding Global Women, shares powerful leadership lessons on how to humanise business and redefine management practice. Her approach empowers leaders to take a more conscious approach and challenge the status quo. She advocates embracing both purpose and profit to create real impact and positive change.

Following on the theme of global leadership, Dr Sue Shortland provides actionable ways to create psychological safety in the workplace as well as more inclusive environments for all, while Marianne Curphey investigates the persistent gender wealth gap.

We hope this issue inspires, educates and empowers you.

Fiona Murchie
Founder & Managing Editor

PS. Watch out for exciting developments on TGP – building on the success of our Featured Schools we are introducing featured coaches, relocation professionals and global mobility specialists in areas such as immigration and tax to thinkglobalpeople.com so you can source the best support you need for projects and clients.

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CHARTING THE ROAD TO 2030: WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR GLOBAL MOBILITY?

Fiona Murchie, Relocate's publisher and Managing Editor, brought together senior global mobility leaders, HR professionals, educators, destination service providers, tax and immigration specialists and strategists for the Global Leaders Forum: Forging a Path in Our Fragile World at the Glaziers Hall in London this month, writes **Marianne Curphey**.

The Question Time styled event brought together panellists from across a variety of sectors to explore how organisations can adapt, lead, and thrive in today's volatile world. In a world increasingly defined by volatility and reinvention, Fiona introduced the panel for the Global Leaders Forum and explained the reasoning for the event.

"Geopolitical and economic tensions are rife, and there are political changes and regulatory shifts. AI is reshaping the future of work and there is rapid technological change," she said.

She asked attendees to think about the political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental changes which would challenge and change their

business over the next five years. She emphasised that now was the time to reimagine talent pipelines, to consider how education systems must evolve and how borderless workforces and AI augmented workflows will reshape everything from tax codes to talent retention. The question she posed: What are your drivers of change for 2030? was as much about mindset as it was about policy or planning.

"I would like you to think about what the world looks and feels like in 2030 for you and your organisation and think of a future scenario in which your business must survive and thrive," she said.

The panellists were:

- **Mike Lambert**, Global Education Director, Inspired Education
- **Benjamin Oghene**, CEO & Founder, The Cozm
- **Sofia Oragano**, Senior Director International Sales, Synergy
- **John Rason**, Group Head of Consulting, Santa Fe Relocation
- **Josh Winfield**, Senior Manager, Global Mobility Consulting, KPMG

The panel was chaired by Relocate journalist and broadcaster Marianne Curphey, who facilitated the panel discussion on the trends in global mobility, and the need for honest and collaborative dialogue focussing on the future, shared learning, and forward thinking. The discussion which followed was enlightening, collaborative and provided some real insights into how the industry might change in the coming years.



“If you now look at the way the world is changing, the dynamics, the AI, the commerce, with all the shocks which are happening in the world, the ability to use what you did in the past and extrapolate that to predict the future is no longer possible.”

JOHN RASON, GROUP HEAD OF CONSULTING,
SANTA FE RELOCATION

NAVIGATING THE PERFECT STORM: THE NEW ROLE OF GLOBAL MOBILITY

Starting the discussion, John Rason, Group Head of Consulting at Santa Fe Relocation, spoke candidly about an industry and a world in flux and how the global mobility industry was facing a “perfect storm”.

“It’s very volatile. It’s very unpredictable,” he said. “We are not just dealing with geopolitical uncertainty, we are dealing with a transformed world of work.” The pace of change in global mobility, he explained, has accelerated beyond anything most of us have experienced in the past.

“If you now look at the way the world is changing, the dynamics, the AI, the commerce, with all the shocks which are happening in the world, the ability to use what you did in the past and extrapolate that to predict the future is no longer possible,” he said.

He explained how tariff shifts, immigration changes, and ongoing geopolitical instability are now the new normal. The pandemic, which now seems like a distant memory, has instead become a turning point in how businesses and individuals approach work, life, and cross-border movement.

“Businesses could use their past experiences to forecast the future,” John Rason said. “Today, that model no longer holds.” Instead of relying on models from the past, forward-thinking companies are reimagining their structures and how they leverage talent globally. The most successful are those willing to reinvent themselves – adapting resources, embracing flexible working models, and building in business resilience.

For him, the Covid-19 pandemic was not just a public health crisis – it was a paradigm shift that permanently altered our behaviour and our expectations and changed the world of work. He shared a personal anecdote about

how his neighbour heads global IT for a Dutch company while living in High Wycombe, England.

People are no longer tied to one location. They are asking to extend holidays into working trips, and rethinking what a workplace even looks like.

EXPECTATIONS ARE CHANGING – AND EMPLOYERS MUST CATCH UP

One of the most powerful takeaways from his comments was the realisation that employee expectations have dramatically evolved. “Five years ago, the idea of going into the office five days a week was unquestioned,” he said.

“Mobility sits at the intersection of all this. It’s no longer about moving assignees from A to B. It’s about enabling a fluid, dynamic workforce – often in real-time and under mounting pressures.”

At the same time, mobility teams today face the challenge of having to achieve more with less.

“There is cost pressure. There is compliance pressure. There is tech that’s often outdated,” John Rason said. “And yet mobility professionals are expected to be all things to all people.”

He described how, all too often, global mobility is brought into the conversation only after critical decisions have been made, frequently without input from the people who understand the true risks, limitations, and opportunities of cross-border work. Mobility professionals must now juggle skills that go far beyond logistics and make sure that their voice is heard in the boardroom.

John explained the dilemma of a colleague who worked in a technology company, which had been recruiting a lot of international staff in order to get round expatriate assignments.

“They have been doing lots of international hires,” he explained. “They did a head count and they have

“We’re not just finding homes anymore – we’re finding solutions in places no one was looking five years ago.”

SOPHIA ORAGANO, SENIOR DIRECTOR
INTERNATIONAL SALES, SYNERGY

got 8,000 international hires and the company has not thought about the immigration implications of that.”

John’s three takeaways for business leaders:

- The global mobility function is no longer a back-office operation – it is a strategic enabler that must evolve to remain relevant.
- Organisations must build resilience and flexibility into their talent strategies to keep pace with global change.
- Human presence still matters, especially in an AI-powered world, when it comes to customer experience, market insights, and relationship-building.

CORPORATE HOUSING: A SECTOR UNDER PRESSURE BUT FINDING CREATIVE SOLUTIONS

In a global mobility landscape undergoing radical change, the demand for flexible, safe, and often unconventional housing solutions is on the rise. Sophia Oragano, Senior Director International Sales at Synergy, offered new insights into how the concept of corporate accommodation is being redefined as new markets open up and clients require housing in remote and unconventional locations.

“Every customer is different,” she said. “Every assignment and every market brings new challenges. But at the heart of everything we do is traveller safety. That will always be essential, ensuring accommodation is safe, vetted, compliant, and meet at least the minimum requirements.”

While established hubs like London, Paris, and Frankfurt remain key to the corporate housing market, Synergy is looking for creative solutions in new markets and more remote locations, and in some cases, finding alternative cities to those which are overcrowded or have no capacity.

Above: left to right: Marianne Curphey interviews:
Mike Lambert, Josh Winfield, Benjamin Oghene,
Sofia Oragano and John Rason

“We are being pushed further and further out from global cities,” she said. “We are seeing high demand emerging in new and often less traditional markets, for example in Debrecen, Hungary, where we have just completed a large project.”

That project required Synergy to stretch the definition of corporate housing. “We used hostel-style accommodation for a group of workers relocating there. It is not just serviced apartments and aparthotels anymore. We are talking handpicked homes, student housing, hostels, even caravans and mobile homes in some cases.”

The market isn’t just changing geographically, there are also new and interesting demographics emerging, including rising demand from the education sector, for instance, with universities and research institutions increasingly seeking extended-stay accommodation for faculty and international students, especially those who have a large budget to spend on relatively short-term lets.

This diversification has required housing providers to shift their mindset and expand their networks, both in terms of locations and types of housing stock.

In rapidly developing regions, infrastructure is under pressure. “If you look at India, for example,” she said, “cities like Bangalore and Hyderabad are at capacity. They can’t expand up or out anymore. So investment is moving into tier two and tier three cities, and we are following that movement.”

This means corporate housing providers must now build deeper expertise in less-established markets, often with little or no existing accommodation infrastructure, while maintaining service levels and transparency.

One of her key messages was the importance of honesty and expectation-setting. “We have to be realistic with clients about what’s possible in these locations. If the housing doesn’t exist, we can offer alternative solutions that still meet the safety and comfort needs of travellers.”

Sophia’s three takeaways for business leaders:

- The definition of corporate housing is expanding rapidly – from aparthotels to hostels, student housing, and even mobile homes – driven by geographic shifts and market constraints.
- Demand is growing in tier two and tier three cities, especially in emerging markets, requiring new levels of local knowledge and investment from providers.
- Transparency, flexibility, and expectation-setting are now critical elements of delivering successful housing solutions in less traditional locations.

“We’re not just finding homes anymore – we’re finding solutions in places no one was looking five years ago,” she said.

AUTOMATION, DIVERSITY & THE FUTURE OF MOBILITY: RETHINKING GLOBAL TALENT MODELS

As the demands on global mobility functions evolve, one question continues to dominate: how can we adapt faster, smarter, and more inclusively? For Benjamin Oghene, CEO and founder of The Cozm, the answer lies in blending intelligent automation with human insight and knowing when to apply each. He explained how heavily repetitive processes currently performed by humans are being done in a matter of minutes or days by AI-enabled technology, a combination which he called “augmented intelligence”.

For example, when making a visa application, The Cozm’s technology uses predictive analytics to forecast which applications are likely to be rejected by authorities before they are even submitted, something which no human would be able to know.

“This is about doing what machines do best, fast, accurate, data-driven work so humans can focus on relationship-building and high-impact decision-making,” he said.

He also offered a unique perspective on how AI can potentially both solve and replicate bias in global hiring. Reflecting on his time at Unilever, he described how the company replaced first-round interviews in one recruitment programme with AI interviews, while keeping second-round interviews conducted by humans. “Within 12 months, gender diversity improved by 14 per cent, and we cut recruitment costs by a million. That

combination, AI plus human, was far more effective than either alone,” he explained.

However, he cautioned that AI itself can be biased. One major source of bias is the training data. If it lacks diversity, or if the developers of the model come from a narrow demographic, then there is more likely to be bias in the system.

Organisations also need to think more carefully about who is sent on assignment, and why. AI augmented systems can help global mobility departments where talent exists already. He cited the example of an oil and gas company which was sending people from Houston to Lagos, even though there was plenty of qualified talent in Lagos, including locals who spoke English and understand the market. The company just was not using data to guide those decisions and was using an outdated mindset to think about how to find and use talent.

Benjamin three takeaways for business leaders:

- Stop viewing peers solely as competitors. Many companies are so fixated on competition they miss what’s coming next. “Collaboration is key. We are partnering with other firms right now and each of us brings different expertise. Together, we can offer something far more powerful.”
- Discover how to learn effectively and efficiently: Most people think taking notes is the best study method but research shows it is one of the least effective. The new world of AI augmented work will require us all to learn and upskill constantly, whatever our age and job role.
- Automate intelligently: AI can radically improve speed and accuracy in compliance and talent processes but works best when paired with human judgment and oversight.

“Remember Blockbuster? That company didn’t believe streaming would take off because their customers said they liked browsing in-store,” he said. “But that’s the danger, planning for today’s world, not tomorrow’s. The companies that thrive will be the ones that embrace change before it feels comfortable.”

EDUCATION, AI & PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE OF WORK

In a world where technological advancement is accelerating at unprecedented pace, preparing young people for the future is no longer a straightforward task. Mike Lambert, Global Education Director at Inspired Education, explained that with AI, automation, and innovation reshaping every sector, educators are being asked to equip students not only with knowledge and the traditional curricula, but with adaptability, agency, and resilience.

Schools have always operated on long timescales, educating children from birth to adulthood, but the rate of change in the world outside means traditional education models need to adapt to keep pace, he said.

Inspired Education has already taken significant steps in this direction. The group has strategic partnerships with major tech companies, including Meta, and is exploring the educational potential of the metaverse. Virtual reality headsets are already in use across Inspired classrooms, giving students immersive experiences with emerging technology.



“This is about doing what machines do best, fast, accurate, data-driven work so humans can focus on relationship-building and high-impact decision-making.”

BENJAMIN OGHENE, CEO & FOUNDER, THE COZM

Additionally, a partnership with Century Tech enables students to receive personalised support in English, maths and science through an AI-based system called Inspired AI. The platform analyses student responses, adapts tasks, and provides targeted feedback or instructional videos.

However, Mike believes that use of technology is only half the picture. The next step is to equip students to become creators, innovators and responsible users of the huge potential that technology offers.

Inspired Education is now exploring how to teach AI literacy and ethics from the very beginning of the school curriculum. One initiative, developed in collaboration with MIT, is called The Day of AI. It introduces students from Year 3 to Year 13 to core AI concepts including basic coding and AI ethics. MIT will ensure the programme is kept up to date, so that students are not learning last year’s curriculum when in the real world change has already take place.

“If we’re not giving our children exposure to this technology now, they won’t be ready for the future we’re heading into,” he said.



“If we’re not giving our children exposure to this technology now, they won’t be ready for the future we’re heading into.”

MIKE LAMBERT, GLOBAL EDUCATION DIRECTOR, INSPIRED EDUCATION

This also includes fostering what Mike calls entrepreneurial mindedness. This is not necessarily about starting a business, but about having the mindset to be agile, innovative thinkers within organisations. In a world where job roles and industries are shifting rapidly, these traits will become increasingly vital, he said.

EDUCATION AT THE HEART OF GLOBAL MOBILITY

Beyond the classroom, he said education can play a key role in facilitating the success of global mobility assignments. For internationally mobile families, education plays a key role in the success or failure of a relocation. Schools that cater to globally mobile communities must understand the emotional and academic challenges children face when transitioning between systems and cultures, he said.

Mike’s three takeaways for business leaders:

- Remain open minded and ready to learn – it does not just start and end in school, it carries on from that point forward, right the way through our working careers.
- Be curious and willing to embrace lifelong learning, which includes understanding AI, how it impacts education, work and ethics, and the world as a whole.
- Understand that a relocation may only be successful if the whole family is happy, and schools can provide education as well as community for children and their parents.

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT THAT GLOBAL MOBILITY CAN MAKE

Josh Winfield, Senior Manager, Global Mobility Consulting at KPMG, explained that global mobility is changing fast, and it is no longer just about logistics, compliance and tax. It is becoming a core part of how organisations think about talent, leadership, and global growth. That means thinking about mobility as something far more expansive than it once was, and embracing new tools and ways of working, especially around artificial intelligence.

He said that traditionally, mobility teams sat within tax or legal departments, focused on the logistics of moving people from one country to another. But that model is outdated. Increasingly, mobility is a people and talent issue – about how organisations find, grow and retain their best people across borders. That shift also reflects growing expectations from clients and assignees. They want the move to work not just on paper, but in reality for the employees and for their family.

Mobility teams have a key role to play in the talent pipeline, to make sure that they are voicing their role around talent management to those who are looking at succession planning, at recruitment, and those who are looking at developing those future leaders.

KPMG, like many firms, is investing heavily in AI. Yet while technology plays a key role, Josh Winfield is clear that mobility still comes down to people, and one of the biggest reasons assignments fail is because the family is not happy.

That means policy needs to go beyond just the employee. Support for spouses, partners, and children is critical because if they don’t settle, the whole move can unravel.

“In many cases, these family members haven’t chosen the move themselves and so helping them find purpose, connection, and support is essential,” he said.

Another important shift is that organisations are moving fewer people on long-term assignments. Instead, they’re favouring short-term moves, secondments, or business travel models where the family stays behind.

“We are seeing a reduction in long term assignments and permanent moves on a global basis,” he said. “That is driven by cost pressures and the rise of AI. You now need to create a stronger business case to move someone and their families to a new location. Organisations are choosing instead to move people on a shorter term basis or combining it with a business trip, where actually the families stay at home. For many employees, that is more attractive as a proposition, rather than uprooting

the entire family and their social network and support system to a new location.”

However, fewer family moves may mean fewer students enrolling in international schools, or different demands on relocation services, so education and mobility providers need to adapt too.

“Mobility isn’t just about moving people. It’s about making the move meaningful – for the business, for the employee, and for the family behind them,” he said. “People are generally looking for four things, and I think that probably applies to children as much as adults.

“They are looking for health support and that they are insured, they are looking for wealth, making sure that their pensions are being supported, and that they are building up wealth so they have the ability to return home or the ability to move to another country. They are looking to make sure that they are compliant,” he said.

“They don’t want the stress of a tax return going wrong or having to pay a massive liability. On top of that is making sure that they have magical experience, something which is really going to integrate them in the culture of the new country. That could be something like going to a football game if they go to Spain and they get to go to the Real Madrid stadium. It is something which makes them feel valued as an employee. If you get those four elements right, wellness is taken care of, and hopefully the assignee will be happy and successful in their new location as well.”

As for the world of work, he explained that at the moment, things are changing so rapidly that we cannot really prepare for such momentous change.

“There is a danger of putting your head in the sand, but actually what we should be doing is saying the world is changing, it is not going to be the same as it is today,” he said. “It is not going to be the same as it is tomorrow. But that is an exciting prospect, and actually you need to really enjoy and learn all of these different things in the pipeline. Learn about AI, learn about what the capabilities are, because one day, you will be talking about it with everyone and it will be a core part of your day to day work. Don’t be scared. Embrace it, because otherwise you will be left behind.”

Josh’s key takeaways for business leaders:

- Embrace AI – not as an add-on, but as a central part of delivery.
- Rethink the purpose of your mobility function – it is now about talent, leadership, and growth.
- Put families first – because if the family doesn’t thrive, the move might not be a success.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE – MOBILITY CAN PLAY A KEY ROLE

Addressing a room filled with global mobility leaders, international project managers, talent experts, and educators, Fiona Murchie brought to a conclusion a lively discussion around the challenges we face today, as well as the ones we will need to address in the future. The Global Leaders Forum was an engaging and wide-ranging debate which brought thought-leaders from different parts of the industry together to discuss how

to collaborate and share knowledge at a critical time for business and global mobility as a whole. Sharing in the Relocate Global and Think Global community, exchanging knowledge and collaborating with colleagues in the industry will help our organisations and our services stay relevant and connected, now and in this exciting but uncertain future for global mobility, she explained. She called on attendees to continue the discussion to navigate this new world of work. •

“Mobility isn’t just about moving people. It’s about making the move meaningful – for the business, for the employee, and for the family behind them.”

JOSH WINFIELD, SENIOR MANAGER, GLOBAL MOBILITY CONSULTING, KPMG





TRACKING GLOBAL WEALTH MIGRATION

The relocation of high net worth individuals can have a significant impact on the economic growth of host countries, from the taxes they contribute to the jobs their businesses create. **David Sapsted** looks at some recent trends.

Last year saw an increase of 4.4% in the number of people across the world with a net worth of more than \$10 million, bringing the total to 2,341,378, according to Knight Frank's 2025 Wealth Report.

While all regions across the globe saw increases in numbers of these high net worth individuals (HNWIs), North America continued to lead growth with a 5.2% rise over the year to 970,401.

President Donald Trump seems bent on boosting that total even further: soon after his return to the White House in January, he announced his intention to introduce a new golden visa – the so-called Trump Gold Card – for migrant HNWI with \$5 million USD to invest in the US. This would make it one of the most expensive golden visa programmes in the world, second only to Singapore's Global Investor Programme, which offers residency to incomers with \$7.78 million USD to invest in new or existing businesses.

ECONOMIC GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

Dr Juerg Steffen, CEO at international investment migration firm Henley & Partners, welcomed Trump's proposal, saying it would enhance US competitiveness in the global investment migration landscape by providing a clear and attractive investment route to citizenship. "The proposed gold card visa presents an exciting new opportunity for high net-worth investors seeking US residence and citizenship," he said.

"However, maintaining continuity and clarity in investor immigration policies is also crucially important. We encourage US authorities to ensure stability for investors by implementing a well-structured transition that safeguards existing programmes, such as the US EB-5 Immigrant Investor Program."

Dr Steffen maintained that attracting wealthy migrants was critical for economic growth, including in affluent regions such as the US and Europe. "These high-net worth individuals not only bring their wealth, but host countries also benefit from the taxes they pay, the businesses they create, and the jobs they generate," he said.

"The benefits of this migration of wealth and talent are wide-ranging, including foreign exchange revenue from incoming wealth, increased stock market investments, and a boost in local job creation, particularly in high-value sectors such as luxury retail, high-tech, and prime real estate. Furthermore, many relocating millionaires are entrepreneurs and company founders who start new businesses and drive economic activity, reinforcing the long-term economic prosperity of their new home nations."

THE AMERICAN EXODUS

However, Kristin Surak, an associate professor of political sociology at the London School of Economics and an expert on elite mobility and globalisation whose most recent book was *The Golden Passport: Global Mobility for Millionaires*, has doubts about the likely efficacy of the Trump Gold Card.

"What Trump has missed in launching this new programme is that the tide began to turn several years ago," she commented. "More US citizens than ever are looking for their own exit routes, spurred on by Covid

and the rapid shifts in US politics. Portugal has been running a popular golden visa programme for over a decade. For most of its history, demand was mainly from China. Since 2022, the US has been climbing the charts and it's now the top source of applicants. The 2024 elections have only driven the trend higher, not only in Portugal but also in countries such as Greece, as more and more US citizens look for an escape route."

ASIA'S GROWING DOMINANCE

Liam Bailey, global head of Knight Frank's research department, pointed out that the 2025 Wealth Report forecasts that Asia will outpace North America in wealth creation over the next four years. But he added: "There is no realistic challenge to US dominance. Outside of stock valuations, the much-heralded AI-powered boom has yet to arrive – if it does, the US and China seem poised to benefit more than any other country."

The report found that, over 2024, the number of HNWI in the Asia Pacific region grew by 5% to 854,465, forecasting that between this year and 2028, the area would account for 47.5% of all wealthy individuals created.

"This remarkable growth is not only fuelled by the region's economic resilience, but also the rise of a new generation of entrepreneurs through technological innovation," said Christine Li, head of research at Knight Frank Asia-Pacific.

"Apart from the Chinese mainland and India, countries like Malaysia and Indonesia are also emerging as key contributors, driven by their young, digitally connected populations and increasing integration into global markets."

The report found that the appetite for risk assets, such as equities, had expanded rapidly in emerging markets such as India, while European and Japanese attitudes to investing tended to be more conservative. India now has 85,698 HNWI, which puts it fourth behind the US, China and Japan.

Meanwhile, the firm sees Africa as a region with emerging wealth creation potential. "While North America and Asia lead the narrative, we believe Africa is poised to outperform in future wealth creation – in growth, if not in absolute terms," said Bailey.

"A fast-growing, young population; rich natural resources; rapidly improving infrastructure; and significant foreign investment provide strong foundations, while the potential for significant growth in consumption from an expanding middle class is creating opportunities for entrepreneurs across manufacturing and services." •

"More US citizens than ever are looking for their own exit routes, spurred on by Covid and the rapid shifts in US politics."

KRISTIN SURAK, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY, THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS



WHAT DOES THE MILLIONAIRE MIGRATION MEAN FOR SCHOOLS?

High net worth migration is a growing global trend. How will this impact schools and colleges that cater to international citizens and globally mobile families, and which countries will be the beneficiaries? **Marianne Curphey** learns more.

As global wealth continues to shift across borders, 2025 is shaping up to be a pivotal year for high-net-worth individual (HNWI) migration. According to international wealth and investment migration specialists, Henley & Partners, the UK is expected to lose around 9,500 millionaires this year – the highest outflow globally. But where are they going – and what ripple effects will this migration have, particularly on education systems in their new host countries?

Dr Juerg Steffen, CEO of Henley & Partners, says last year 134,000 high-net-worth individuals relocated and established new domiciles worldwide. This exceeded initial forecasts, driven by migration to the UAE, US, and Italy, alongside higher than expected departures from the UK. He predicts 142,000 high-net-worth individuals will seek new horizons in 2025.

“This represents the most significant wealth migration wave ever documented and reflects fundamental changes in how affluent individuals approach geographic and financial planning,” he says. The definition of high-net-worth is an individual with liquid investable wealth of USD \$1 million or more.

WHY MILLIONAIRES ARE MOVING

Henley & Partners predicts that while the UK, China, India, Russia and South Korea will lose many of their millionaires in 2025, the UAE looks set to take first place as the world’s leading wealth magnet. Wealthy people are moving for a variety of reasons, including concerns over geopolitical tensions, economic uncertainty, and social upheaval. Other considerations that are important to high net worth families are safety and security; taxes and retirement; work and business opportunities; schooling and education for their children; healthcare; quality of life; and standard of living.

Despite uncertainty in the US, it still has 11 cities on the Top 50 Cities for Millionaires list in the latest World’s Wealthiest Cities Report 2025 ranking, led by New York in first place, followed by San Francisco and Silicon Valley, according to the fourth edition of the annual report published by Henley & Partners in collaboration with global intelligence firm New World Wealth.

Outside the US, the tech and financial centres of Shenzhen and Hangzhou in China, and Dubai are seeing a huge rise in the number of wealthy people living there, followed by Tokyo and Singapore. London and Moscow are the biggest losers of incoming HNWIs.

Several factors are driving the exodus in the UK:

- Tax uncertainty, especially over potential changes to non-domicile rules and wealth taxes
- Political instability and shifts in regulation
- Concerns about personal safety and quality of life



“...many wealthy migrants choose countries not just for lifestyle, but for access to education pathways for their children. Golden visa and investment migration programmes are tied directly to education opportunities for children and young people.”

TOP DESTINATIONS FOR MILLIONAIRE MIGRATION

The new top destinations for millionaire migration are as follows and reflect a common theme: stability, low taxes, and opportunity.

- **UAE:** Dubai continues to attract HNWIs due to zero income tax, luxury lifestyle and global connectivity.
- **Australia:** Particularly popular among Asian HNWIs, the country offers quality education and a secure environment.
- **Singapore:** Combines economic growth with safety, security and high educational standards.
- **US:** Despite high taxes, elite networks and access to top-tier education still attract wealth, with the Bay Area in the US now having more billionaires than in New York.

Despite this, according to Harvey Law Corporation, 53% of American millionaires are contemplating leaving the US. This figure rises to 64% among millennials and Gen-Z millionaires (aged 18-29), who express a strong interest in securing golden visas abroad.

RISING DEMAND FOR SCHOOLS & COLLEGES

The migration of wealthy families is creating noticeable shifts in education sectors, particularly in private schools and international colleges across host countries. There is a rising demand for elite international schools, as well as a growing market for local families whose wealth is increasing.

In countries like Dubai and Singapore, enrolment in British and American-curriculum schools is rising sharply. Schools are also expanding capacity and

increasing tuition to match demand. New “wealth corridors” are forming in areas where luxury schooling options are concentrated. For example, in the UAE, there are 237 international schools in two different cities, Dubai-Sharjah-Ajman and Abu Dhabi. Dubai has a number of notable international schools with links to other countries, including Nord Anglia International School Dubai, Royal Grammar School Guildford in Dubai and Repton School Dubai. GEMS also has a number of modern, newly-built schools across Dubai.

The latest data from ISC Research also reveals sustained growth in the international schools sector, including rising school and student numbers, increased staff recruitment, and higher total annual fee income.

Asia continues to dominate the sector with 58% of the world’s schools based in the region, the report says. The rise of multinational corporations in countries like Japan, Malaysia, and South Korea is driving large expatriate communities who opt for the stability of international schools’ globally recognised curricula and English language instruction.

The two countries with the most international schools are China and India, and as of January 2025, the international school market generates USD \$67.3 billion in total annual fee income, representing a 22% increase since January 2020.

COMPETITION FOR TOP-TIER EDUCATION

In some regions, the influx of wealth is increasing competition for prestigious places, including in IB programmes and international colleges. Institutions are responding by expanding campus footprints and tailoring offerings to HNW families’ expectations, including global university placements.

The Henley Opportunity Index, published earlier this year, revealed the impact of education and global citizenship on generational success, and found that Switzerland, Singapore and the US lead the ranking of top investment migration programmes for accessing opportunities for future generations to thrive and maximise their career and income potential.

It found that many wealthy migrants choose countries not just for lifestyle, but for access to education pathways for their children. Golden visa and investment migration programmes (e.g. in Portugal, Greece and the UAE) are tied directly to education opportunities for children and young people.

In emerging markets such as Africa, private equity firms have been investing in education. Under a long term plan, the Chinese government is also working with UNESCO to develop more higher education institutions in Africa.

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

Top UK institutions like Eton and Harrow public schools and universities such as Oxford and Cambridge remain attractive to home and overseas students. Many international schools have also set up new campuses in emerging and established markets in order to capitalise on their own international kudos.

The 2024 COBIS Annual Research survey found that student numbers in COBIS schools remain consistently strong, with 58% of responding schools reporting an increase in student numbers compared to last year.

A further 39% have seen a notable or significant change to the nationalities that make up their student bodies in the past two years. These changes vary from region to region, but increases in Chinese, Russian, and Ukrainian nationals are the most common responses. A key challenge for international schools is recruiting and retaining the right teaching staff.

The same survey found that 91% of leavers from COBIS Schools (from 2023/24) went on to university. Of those, 39% of those leavers went on to university in the UK (down from 45% in 2023 and 44% in 2022). The report suggests that the cost of a UK education might be one reason for the decline in numbers.

Research by the International Schools Database found that the US and China are the most expensive countries in the world for international education, with six cities in the top ten between them. Despite its reputation as an expensive region, the Middle East did not rank as costly in terms of education. Within Europe – Spain, Portugal, Denmark and Bulgaria – were among the locations that had the cheapest international schools, although South Africa and Malaysia were the cheapest.

Migration is about more than just relocation for business or tax purposes, it also involves a choice around where future generations will be raised and educated. As reports show, cost is one factor that families are considering when choosing where and how to educate their children. Overall, countries that offer a combination of political stability, top-tier schooling and personal freedom, are emerging as the preferred destinations for international families. •



How to thrive in the age of volatility

When's the last time you did some deep thinking? Digital anthropologist **Rahaf Harfoush** shared her blueprint on how to navigate tech disruption at the recent UKG Connect event, writes **Ledetta Asfa-Wossen**.

“When we talk about emerging technologies, we often focus on the surface changes,” said Harfoush. The changes that we see. We say this is going to have an impact on recruitment, our security, operations, or marketing.

“Technology is moving so fast, we’re overlooking the deeper, cultural impacts these tools are having on our world and how we see it. If we don’t take the time to understand these hidden and slower changes, we will overlook the impact it is having on our world.”

Highlighting the positive and negative impacts of an increasingly digital world, Harfoush explained how tech is shaping our interactions, self-perception, decision-making and other areas of work.

A NEW WORKING ORDER

Harfoush shared a map of the thousands of AI and machine learning companies operating in the sector.

“Technology has now become embedded inside every single aspect of the business, every role and every function. When you look at HR, that runs from recruiting and hiring, right through to onboarding, performance management and beyond. What we’re also seeing is technology causing a blending of functional responsibilities.”

Five years ago, people could work in relative silos, and focus on their roles and objectives, she added.

“Now, people have to know a little bit about everything. The leaders of tomorrow will have to

be able to act as a bridge between culture, technology, strategy and people. You can’t just be a tech person and not talk about culture anymore and you can’t be a culture person and not think about tech or strategy, if you want the complexity and expertise to be a leader that thrives in this new economy. And for that – you need a bit of a mindset shift.”

Leaders need to possess the ability to not only absorb shocks but to use these disruptions as fuel for growth and innovation.

“Leaders have to cultivate a deep understanding of digital culture, trends in technology, and the impact of these forces on their organisations and industries. This requires a shift towards a

leadership style that is dynamic, responsive, and adept at leveraging the insights and opportunities afforded by the digital age.”

Harfoush calls this disruption-busting mindset shift – FOPA. Future-oriented, but present-acting.

“We’re so obsessed about talking about the future. What’s going to happen to jobs, the influence of AI and so on. The reality is the decisions that you make, every single day, from the types of tools you use, to the people you hire, or the policies you put in place – are all directly related to what the future is going to look like,” she said.

“Being future-oriented means having a really clear goal about what type of company you want to have. The teams you want to grow, and the types of behaviours you want to encourage. While understanding that to get there, you have to be very clear and intentional about every decision you make on a day-to-day basis.”

FOCUS, CREATE, INNOVATE

To develop a FOPA mindset, Harfoush emphasised the need for focus. “Cultivating focus sounds easy but it’s the most critical skill to build in today’s technological context.”

Harfoush discussed the harms of distraction in the workplace and the values we normalise – expecting people to always be available and immediately responsive. These are often reinforced at work by various tools like Microsoft Teams and Slack, all in the name of productivity.

However these values we respect and uphold as organisations and people create a hyper-prioritised and fragmented work environment.

“When you use Microsoft Teams, that green circle says ‘available’. It doesn’t say strategising or collaborating. We get notifications from every single platform because it’s considered rude to not respond right away. What this has created is a norm where we are constantly interrupted.”

According to Harfoush, the average employee gets interrupted every six minutes and it takes them 25 minutes to get back on task after that interruption.

“We’re tapping, swiping and

clicking about 2,600 times a day.”

Interruptions and over-stimulation is problematic on many levels but in the workplace it can be especially damaging.

“Creativity is the basic skill-set you need for innovative and strategic thinking and creativity requires your brain to be de-stimulated. It needs your brain to have uninterrupted thinking time. It may even require you to be bored.”

Creativity is not just reserved for those in the creative sector, either.

“If you are strategising, communicating, collaborating, managing, leading, training or doing any of these sorts of activities, from a neuroscience perspective – you are a creative professional. Because those are the skills we need to foster innovation. If you want to unleash your creative performance, your best ideas and strategies, you have to give your brain room to do so.”

The workplace in some ways is stuck in a paradox. “We have all of these tools that are supposed to help us collaborate and communicate better but we’re accidentally using

them in a way that prioritises urgency and addiction.”

This creates team cultures that are rewarded for these behaviours, instead of deep, thoughtful time on the complexities that organisations have to manage on a daily basis, she argued.

“Just in the UK, distractions cost the economy roughly £142 billion annually. This translates in managers losing around 683 hours a year to distractions.”

As businesses become more reliant on tech, she urged companies to promote deep thinking and allow their people to process ideas, and the data and insights provided by these tools, in order to extend their knowledge base.

BUILDING EXPERTISE WITH AI

Harfoush shared how AI is positively transforming businesses. From predictive AI software aiding manufacturing and maintenance to enhanced scheduling and workforce management that provide better flexibility for

employees to custom training.

But in an age of automated and augmented creativity, research shows we are moving from a “searching culture” to a “generating culture” that is changing how we learn, said Harfoush.

“We used to look for answers and piece things together to find a solution from different sources. For an entire generation, that process is going to look completely different. If they have a question, they’re going to ask the AI, and the AI will give them a solution. How are we going to interact with ideas if we’re just given one solution instead of finding one? One of the biggest risks of not being intentional with these tools is that we risk losing the mastery of thinking.”

Mastery of thinking includes the ability to problem solve, generate solutions, to iterate and bounce back after failure.

“Problem solving isn’t just about finding a solution. It’s a really good practice for your brain and we have to make sure technology doesn’t remove that and hurt our skills.”

Citing a Microsoft study from earlier this year, she said that every technology investment made by companies should be matched with an investment in human expertise.

“Navigating this disruption is going to require all of us to be really invested in our own knowledge base. Making training and learning vital, not just for frontline workers but all the way up to executive level.”

Looking closer at talent management specifically, she added that companies are shifting from “knowing employees to learning employees”.

“The traditional HR strategy was to go out into the market and find the person that had the exact skill-set and bring them into the organisation but technology is moving so fast that that’s no longer going to be possible. We now need to hire people with a rich capacity to learn.”

Sharing the profile of what a successful candidate looks like, she stated that we are now moving away from seeking purely expertise, towards: “Is this person curious? Are they comfortable with change? Do they have a flexible thinking mindset? Because those are the sorts of people who will be able to learn again, and again.”

Harfoush also urged organisations to use digital and social platforms to better understand their employees and tap into the diverse experiences of employees across the globe.

Most importantly, she told organisations to carefully consider the cultural context embedded within the technologies they use. “Technology is the manifestation of belief systems,” warned Harfoush.

“Every piece of technology that you use has someone’s idea of what the world looks like. When we use these tools we are effectively co-signing on their vision of what they want the world to look like. If we’re not careful, we can risk being swayed by those views without even knowing it. If you bring technology into your home or workplace without thinking about what it believes, you might be gaining information with a very specific worldview.” ●

Harfoush’s top tips for companies navigating disruption

- 1. Deep thinking** – Design work environments that prioritise focus and reflection to be able to process, innovate and create
- 2. Build human knowledge and expertise with AI** – Use AI tools that deepen the human expertise of your workforce, not replace it
- 3. Look for encoded beliefs in your technology** – Understand the underlying cultural values of the technologies you adopt in the workplace
- 4. Seek and connect diverse views** – Embrace platforms like TikTok, which offer insights into real-world workplace experiences
- 5. Embrace duality and change** – Understand that tech will simultaneously help and harm, raising critical questions about ethics, environmental concerns, truth, and democracy

GLOBAL LEADERS FORUM

WATCH THE VIDEOS

FUELLING THE UK'S HYDROGEN ECONOMY

What's next for the burgeoning hydrogen sector? Industry and policymakers talked growth and skills challenges at the Westminster Energy, Environment & Transport Forum. **Ledetta Asfa-Wossen** reports



The UK government's Clean Power Action Plan aims to clean up the power system by 2030, with at least 95% of electricity generation coming from low-carbon sources. As a low carbon fuel, hydrogen is an important part of the energy mix.

Hydrogen can offer significant benefits in the quest to achieve net-zero, not to mention jobs and a boost to the economy, but concerns exist around cost, skills and infrastructure.

Baroness Brown of Cambridge, Chair of the Climate Change Committee (CCC) and The Carbon Trust outlined the state of the hydrogen industry and invited experts to define the best way forward.

STATE OF PLAY

"Just a few years ago, McKinsey and Bloomberg estimated that around 20% of global energy by 2050 could come from hydrogen. We're now looking at predictions that are significantly less, and typically around half of that," said Brown.

Now that hype has died down, and hopefully the UK has settled into a more stable condition, Brown asked how the UK should be driving the hydrogen industry for the benefit of decarbonisation and the economy.

"In the CCC's Sixth Carbon Budget, it suggested we would be using something like 200 terawatt hours equivalent of hydrogen by mid-century. Our current electricity consumption is around 300 terawatt hours. So we're nearly talking about the scale of our

“THE UK HAS A STRONG MODEL MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY AND ONE OF THE KEY AREAS WE ARE ASKING IS HOW DO WE TRANSITION ELEMENTS OF THE INTERNAL COMBUSTION INDUSTRY INTO NET-ZERO BY INTRODUCING HYDROGEN COMBUSTION.”

PAOLO FAVINO, HEAD OF INNOVATION, TECHNOLOGY & TRANSFORMATION, AUTOMOTIVE UNIT, THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS & TRADE



current electricity system – a huge new industry. More recently, the CCC’s Seventh Carbon Budget, although not yet legislated, states 106 terawatt hours of hydrogen in the UK by 2050. 106 terawatt hours of low carbon and green hydrogen in the UK being produced and used by 2050, again seeing a cut of about half. And now focused on hydrogen being used in hard to decarbonise parts of industry, such as ceramics, chemical production and things like sustainable aviation fuel, shipping fuel, and potentially energy storage, but not being used for heating in buildings. And very little, if any, being used for surface transport. But even though we’ve settled down to this much lower figure, it is still a huge new industry and a major opportunity for the UK,” she explained.

According to Brown, the UK is particularly well placed to take a lead in this low carbon hydrogen industry amid slow global progress if it has the right support in place to drive it.

DELIVERING ON HYDROGEN

Paolo Favino, Head of Innovation, Technology and Transformation, Automotive Unit, at the Department of Business and Trade, gave an overview of its work to support the transition to hydrogen and implied the current government had a more

ambitious stance on hydrogen.

Favino shared how the UK is identifying different opportunities for growth and hydrogen propulsion technologies. Working with stakeholders across automotive, aerospace, marine, rail and off-road, in order to maximise investments.

“The previous government had a different approach to the current government. It was very much – let’s address the market failures then the market will fix it. This government is different – it has a plan. We have an industrial policy. That means that we have a vision for how future advanced manufacturing supply chains in the UK should look like to maximise growth.”

In terms of primary opportunities for hydrogen, experts discussed a number of potential areas.

“The UK has a strong model manufacturing industry and one of the key areas we are asking is how do we transition elements of the internal combustion industry into net-zero by introducing hydrogen combustion,” added Favino.

Other areas of opportunity included using hydrogen for the decarbonisation of maritime – both domestic and international shipping.

“Aviation and aerospace are other areas where hydrogen can play a role but they are not as technology ready as maritime – so we’re talking 2040. While we look at maximising the benefits from

a net-zero perspective, what we want to see is maximised growth for UK companies, here and internationally,” said Favino.

Questions from the floor were raised on how the UK expects to compete with countries like China. While there was no direct answer, Favino suggested it would be through a focus on quality and niche applications and technologies, rather than a race to the bottom.

Later in the morning, speakers from GeoPura to Burges Salmon and E3G shared some of the exciting zero emission hydrogen projects that are underway, as well as some challenges around infrastructure and value.

“Clean hydrogen could offer some really major economic benefits for the UK. Particularly in supporting a reliable clean power system and securing the future of many key industries across the country. But clean hydrogen will be expensive. I think we need to be very open about that. It will require significant subsidy, possibly in perpetuity, and where we can electrify end uses instead, electrification will be a cheaper option,” said Chris Galpin, Energy Policy Advisor at think tank, E3G.

Galpin warned that governments need to invest wisely in hydrogen and work to minimise costs. Both to ensure investments deliver value for money, and to bring forward

the right infrastructure, so the UK receives all the benefits of a clean hydrogen economy.

“The hydrogen economy at its current scale faces a kind of chicken and egg problem. That’s common in many markets of this size. We need to create confidence and certainty, both on the supply side, and on the demand side. End users need certainty of available and affordable supplies before they start moving away from whatever fuel they are currently using towards clean hydrogen. Equally, hydrogen producers need certainty that there will be a market for the hydrogen they produce,” said Galpin.

Being really clear on where hydrogen will be needed and where it won’t be and prioritising strategically important end uses over poor value ones was also recommended.

SKILLING FOR GROWTH

The industrial sector is the largest consumer of hydrogen. Use cases include the chemical industries, steelmaking, cement and glassmaking to the power sector.

In her talk, Professor Aoife Foley, Chair of Net Zero Infrastructure at University of Manchester noted hydrogen’s potential role in decarbonising agriculture, agrifood and transport to heating and cooling industrial loads, such as data centres.

Foley stated the industry was at a ‘bridge point’ but that the UK isn’t in a hugely different situation to any other country around the world when it comes to the low carbon transition. She cited Germany, France, the US, Japan, China and India as all navigating similar challenges in developing the hydrogen industry.

A sector of this size requires the right talent. Another point of discussion was workforce skills gaps for installation, commissioning and beyond.

“We have the key problem of a skills shortage,” said Foley. “It’s not just engineers – it’s technicians, tradespeople to do the installation, plumbers and electricians. All of these individuals, even people that can dig a trench to put in a pipe – are all part of a labour force that we need in order to scale up hydrogen, and the electrification of transport. It’s the same issue in all these infrastructure sectors.”

Justine Fosh, CEO of Cogent Skills, who have partnered with the Hydrogen Skills Alliance, spoke about their work to map talent needs and build skills across the whole hydrogen chain.

“We undertook a piece of work to estimate what the hydrogen workforce would look like. We got to a figure that by 2030, about 29,000 people will be employed against an initial starting point of around

1,600 people working in alternative fuels. That’s a significant increase in the number of people required.”

There is another factor too. “Hydrogen has a very unique set of skills and issues. In the UK, we have a demand-led system where employers and the sector start to need skills and then the system responds. However, one of the issues with a very nascent industry is that those demand signals are not very strong. They can also be fragmented. There’s also a lack of scale, and as a result, those messages to the supply chain, to colleges, to universities, and so on, aren’t a very strong message,” said Fosh.

Another issue, she said, is that not many brand new occupations will be required for the hydrogen sector. Instead, a lot of existing skills-based roles will need to learn a host of new additional skills to be able to deal with hydrogen. “That change in skills required is going to be quite significant,” added Fosh.

In addition to reskilling needs, there is a current lack of capacity to deliver apprenticeships and training to grow the new talent needed for the hydrogen economy.

There is work to do, but as with any emerging industry, growing business confidence and building public awareness and education of the hydrogen sector will be key to its sustained growth. ●

NUMBER CRUNCH

29,000 The estimated amount of jobs the hydrogen economy will directly support.

64,500 The amount of indirect jobs the hydrogen economy is expected to support by 2030.

* Source: Hydrogen Skills Alliance



LEADING WITH PURPOSE: A LIFE OF LEADERSHIP & INNOVATION

Professor Dame Vlatka Ariaana Hlupic, having undergone her own leadership transformation, knows that if you pursue your vision and goals, you can create opportunity. Finding purpose and meaning is as important for individual fulfilment as it is for organisations, she tells **Marianne Curphey**.

Professor Hlupic explains, “Deciding what my real purpose was became the stepping stone to greater things. I realised my purpose was to help leaders achieve organisational transformation, and that is why I put all my energy and time to make it happen, and I made it happen. I had a vision to create happy and healthy workplaces for everybody, especially for the young generation, and there is still a lot of work to be done. I tell my students, when you pursue your purpose – success will pursue you.”

WORKING WITH PURPOSE & PASSION

All her years of interdisciplinary research have led to the development of The Management Shift, a system which has enabled many organisations to evolve from the “command and control” system of leadership, with rigid hierarchies and a lack of employee contribution, to collaborative, engaging, purposeful, conscious, healthier ecosystems that harness the power of human potential, listen to ideas and are innovative and powerful.

The Management Shift adopts a practical and systemic approach to diagnose leadership issues, help leaders shift their mindset and enable them to make changes that will lift their organisational culture to better levels of thinking, performance, and bottom-line efficiencies and productivity.

Her message is that change is not only important, but necessary, if organisations are to grow and thrive. Stale businesses with rigid hierarchies and inflexible rules are not going to attract top talent in a world where highly skilled workers are difficult to recruit. Nor is such a structure going to be attractive to the new generation of workers who are starting to join the workforce and who



expect organisations to be progressive, flexible and open to contributions from all employees.

The Management Shift has the power to shift the mindset of leaders and build better places to work.

“Organisations should be the force for good in society,” Professor Hlupic says. “Think about what you can do as a leader to make the world a better place. By challenging yourself to think this way, you can start to make the ripples that will spread out beyond your own organisation and be a force for change in the world. By being part of the transformation, you will also see the benefits in your personal and professional life.”

CREATING REAL IMPACT

Asked about her leadership style, she describes it as “a Level 4 leadership style – empowering, supporting, being a servant leader.” This framework is part of the broader model she developed, mapping the five levels of organisational consciousness. Beyond that, she has also created 36 additional models mapping those five

levels to areas such as gratitude, leadership, psychological safety, and even AI adoption. Clients often return to say her training changed not only their work life but their personal life.

“I transitioned from being just an academic because I wanted to see real impact in businesses and organisations,” she explains, “I collect both quantitative and qualitative data so that we have real figures on how and why these programmes work.”

The results of her programme are profound, on many levels. Companies regularly see increased revenue and reduced absenteeism, which could be described as the concrete results. But they also report a rise in the softer side of the workplace – people baking cakes for communal activities, more of a workplace community, and social media posts sharing fun and creativity.

She is happy to share a striking example of a public sector organisation, where the Management Shift approach reduced start-up grant processing time from 60 to four days, an incredible transformation in terms of efficiency and customer service.

Another client, a private company, was an SME business in the US which doubled in size within 18 months and increased revenue by 500%. Her global experience, crossing cultures and countries, has taught her a lot about community and open-mindedness.

“At the end of the day, we are all humans, looking for meaning and connections,” she says. “Everybody wants to be part of a healthy, happy workplace, but not every culture supports these ideas equally.”

She advises clients not to focus on ‘managing up’ but to “speak Level 4 language, form your own network... and changes will happen.” One such story came from a woman in a pharmaceutical company who felt limited by a non-diverse board. She emailed the CEO, and although he didn’t reply immediately, the message

went viral internally. “Eventually, the CEO responded and gave her a new role. She is now an independent consultant and author. Change can happen, and sometimes the ripples take time to be visible, but you can create a shift.”

To sceptics who think soft skills don’t drive performance, she has data to prove otherwise. “I share hard data – not just from my clients, but from other researchers too. For example, research was published showing that a 1% increase in engagement can increase profit by 0.5%. These are not just soft skills – they are essential.”

THE IMPORTANCE OF INTEGRITY & FLEXIBILITY

In every example, her message is clear: human-centred leadership is essential for thriving organisations and healthier societies. So is human creativity, and the genius of the human, which is why she believes that AI can be a complement to human thought but human creativity and connections can never be replaced.

“Level 4 leadership represents the future,” she explains. “With it comes not just innovation, but also integrity, compassion, and a genuine commitment to being a force for good in society.”

She believes that integrity, in particular, is becoming the main currency of the future. Companies that believe they can continue with unethical practices will simply not survive in the long-term. Awareness is rising globally, and consumers are becoming more conscious and are increasingly choosing to buy from ethical and transparent organisations. The reputation of a company matters now more than ever. Change has to be real and meaningful if it is to be credible and long-lasting, she says.

“This is why I often talk about company health. For years, I’ve used the 6 Box Leadership Diagnostic Tool to identify strengths and weaknesses across six key dimensions of organisational culture,” she says. “It has been instrumental in helping companies shift toward Level 4 leadership and organisational culture.”

“We have recently redeveloped the tool and are preparing to launch it as the Organisational Health Scan. It uses the same core model and questions but is now supported by updated software. Importantly, it blends AI insights with human intelligence to generate strategies based on each organisation’s unique profile.”

Organisations will receive an organisational health index score and a certificate, allowing them to publicly demonstrate their commitment to healthy, ethical, and Level 4-aligned practices. She says that it is a powerful way to signal that they take corporate social responsibility seriously and that they are truly future-ready.

On hybrid working practices, something of a controversial issue at present, she says flexibility is crucial.

“Forcing people back into the office is control-based management,” she explains. “We know when you micromanage from Level 3, performance declines, whereas giving people responsibility instead of tasks is a hallmark of Level 4 in the Management Shift.” •

“ORGANISATIONS SHOULD BE THE FORCE FOR GOOD IN SOCIETY. THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU CAN DO AS A LEADER TO MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE. YOU CAN START TO MAKE THE RIPPLES THAT WILL SPREAD OUT BEYOND YOUR OWN ORGANISATION AND BE A FORCE FOR CHANGE IN THE WORLD.”

PROFESSOR DAME VLATKA HLUPIC

PROFESSOR DAME VLATKA HLUPIC

Professor Hlupic is the author of four books, the most well-known are Humane Capital (2018) and The Management Shift, How to Harness the Power of People and Transform Your Organisation for Sustainable Success (2014).

As an international thought leader and CEO of Management Shift Solutions Limited, she runs the flagship TMS (The Management Shift) Leadership Development Programme. She has won over 30 international awards and has consistently ranked among the world’s most influential HR thinkers.

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



Professor Hlupic at our Think Global People & Relocate Gala Dinner & Awards Ceremony



GETTING GLOBAL MOBILITY PARTNERSHIPS RIGHT

As organisations strive for greater competitiveness, they appoint and engage with a number of different service providers to deliver specialised and tailored solutions to workplace issues. **Dr Sue Shortland** explains what the global mobility function should consider when appointing external vendors.

The global mobility function typically uses a wide range of service firms to deliver specialist services or to operate relocation management programmes in different parts of the world. The use of specialist vendors is particularly useful in countries where organisations are setting up for the first time, or where the locations are particularly challenging.

Selecting the right provider is critical for assignment success and for the delivery of business priorities. It is therefore extremely important that the service organisations selected are able to meet the needs of the business and can do so seamlessly, acting as an extension of the organisation's global mobility function. It is also crucial for service suppliers to demonstrate flexibility in order to be able to meet the organisation's changing needs as these arise.

To achieve global mobility goals, it is vital that the function internally knows what it needs, is aware of its own culture and ways of working, and is able to prioritise what is of greatest importance. Only when a global mobility department knows exactly what it wants and how it should be delivered will it be able to define and then go on to identify the qualities and capabilities available in the marketplace and so find a suitable vendor.

CULTURAL ATTRIBUTES & SKILLS REQUIREMENTS

Trying to identify one's own culture can be quite difficult as this tends to be unspoken. The first step is therefore for global mobility professionals to identify what they see as the most meaningful aspects of their roles. For example, what are the qualities that are deemed to be most important within the team and how are these expressed?

Are there any gaps in the expertise of the team? If so, can these potentially be filled by a service provider? If the answer is yes, then the next question concerns potential vendors' way of thinking. This must align with how the team operates. Once again, this may sound difficult to identify but one way to go about this is to think about past relationships with service providers.

Try to identify aspects that worked well and aspects that did not. This can help narrow down the cultural attributes as well as skills and capabilities that the global mobility department is seeking to bolster its internal strengths.

In the same way as a person specification is used in the recruitment and selection process, so a list of essential and desirable attributes should be drawn up. These should align with the requirements of the role that the vendor is expected to fulfil.



“To achieve global mobility goals, it is vital that the function internally knows what it needs, is aware of its own culture and ways of working, and is able to prioritise what is of greatest importance.”

Alongside the requirements for particular expertise in delivering services and cultural alignment, global mobility functions should also be seeking out evidence of experience from any potential service provider. Global mobility professionals will need to ensure that evidence is provided to demonstrate a responsive approach as well as strong and timely communications. Just as in the recruitment and selection process for internal staff appointments, references should be sought out to support the specific service and communications aspects required from the vendor.

EXPERIENCE & EXPERTISE

Turning to issues of experience and expertise, service providers should be able to demonstrate a proven track record. However, global mobility professionals should look beneath this to determine whether the potential vendor candidates have worked for or with comparable businesses. For example, industry/sector knowledge and experience may be deemed to be relevant. The size of the businesses with which

vendors have worked may also be viewed to be important.

Niche vendors who have only worked for small, locally or regionally based companies may (or may not) be suitable for a contract with a large global firm and vice versa. Every organisation is unique and whichever firm is appointed must be able to match the requirements that are specific to the needs of the global mobility function.

COMMUNICATION CAPABILITY

A further area that is of immense importance in a service partnership is communication. The vendor in question must be responsive and flexible. The degree of proactive communication expected should be considered in advance. This will link to the organisational culture of the global mobility function. Does it want a reactive vendor who does what is asked, when it is asked? Or does the function look for a partner, working with the global mobility team, who communicates proactively to help identify issues and solve them before they become problems?

SEEKING OUT REFERENCES

Following up references will be an important part of the appointment process. Evidence should be sought of a high quality, cost and resource efficient service, alongside flexibility.

Organisations should also look to the leadership capability of the service supplier to support its staff in delivering exceptional service. How they are supported in their training and career development may also be relevant. Global mobility professionals might also consider turnover data – do the members of the service company’s team have relatively long service?

Global mobility professionals should ensure that they seek out references from companies that have used the vendor’s services in a similar manner to that identified as a requirement for the appointment. For example, if the organisation has specific needs for particular types of relocated staff, does the service supplier have experience of these and can the level of service be supported by appropriate referencing? Further areas to consider are the technological and reporting capabilities of the vendor.

SETTING EXPECTATIONS

It is important to ensure that expectations are articulated clearly and measurable benchmarks are set. These are important because they ensure alignment between the demands of the business and the actions of the service supplier and also because these can be used to ensure capability and to foster continuous improvement.

Service level agreements should, for example, include statements that address response times, compliance, communication reports/reviews, and standards with regard to escalating and/or resolving problems.

Key performance indicators should also be stated. These might

be based on, for example, employee satisfaction scores, accuracy of cost estimates, and policy compliance.

MAINTAINING LINKS

Once the appointment is made, communications should not cease between the global mobility function and its chosen service supplier. The partnership should be supported by regular communication activities and celebrations of successes. Regular communication helps to create a motivational partnership and foster creativity and innovation. Celebrating successes together helps to bond people together from both inside the organisation and within the service supplier’s team.

It is important to keep service suppliers up to date with future plans. If the service supplier is expected to act as an extension of the global mobility team, it cannot achieve this without regular briefings and inclusion in the function’s thinking.

TECHNOLOGY NEEDS

One of the key factors that must be considered in the appointment of any service provider is flexibility to engage with new technologies. Although the use of AI is currently relatively limited within the global mobility function, its use is only going to increase and it is important that both global mobility professionals and their chosen suppliers are willing and able to keep up with technology as it advances.

Policy design today is becoming more flexible and the delivery of benefits and services to international assignees more tailored and personalised. As a result of this, technological solutions and data analytics have become essential to ensuring both the equitable design and delivery of policy components as well as measuring costs and return on investment.

Reporting is critical to compliance. Ensuring that

compatible data systems can operate between the supplier and the global mobility department is essential to this. Before appointing a service supplier, it is crucial to see what technology is being used and how this can be dovetailed into that used by the global mobility function.

GET IT RIGHT, FIRST TIME

The appointment of service suppliers in global mobility is a time-consuming but worthwhile process. Getting the partnership right in the first instance will save significant time and money. Getting it wrong means repeating the process all over again and can have potential negative business and relocation outcomes.

A careful and methodical approach will pay dividends and lead to innovative, creative and successful partnerships. And it is these which will pave the way for greater competitiveness and global growth. ●

“One of the key factors that must be considered in the appointment of any service provider is flexibility to engage with new technologies.”

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Staying ahead

FUTURE-PROOFING THE GLOBAL MOBILITY FUNCTION

The world is changing fast and the global mobility function must stay ahead and be ready to tackle new disruptors. **Dr Sue Shortland** reports on recent data from AIRINC to help navigate this dynamic landscape.

Research by the consultancy and research firm AIRINC* suggests five ways in which global mobility professionals can future-proof their roles. These include becoming more agile, using innovative design approaches, understanding the best outcomes and use of technology, improving communications, and ensuring measurement of actions taken.

BUILDING AGILITY

It is important that global mobility professionals make space within their working lives and environments to pre-empt and/or respond to disruptors. Currently, the geopolitical landscape is extremely unstable with global conflicts and political shifts taking place unexpectedly. Economic instability and shocks must also be prepared for. In addition, advances in AI and emphasis being placed to a greater extent on compliance issues are important factors that the function must be ready to manage.

Trends in hybrid working and the use of digital skills and remote work also require the function to stay ahead of the curve. These issues are linked into the need to attract and retain talent with the global skills required for enhanced competitiveness. The function also must respond to changing employee expectations and demographics within the workplace.

Underpinning employment activities are concerns for the environment, social issues and employee health. All of these must be factored into actions taken by the global mobility function to ensure that the business is supported appropriately, employee concerns are addressed, and crises are not generated through lack of understanding and/or inaction.

Issues that were once at the forefront of concern are changing. DEI is a case in point – a few years back DEI was rising rapidly up the global mobility agenda as the social aspects of relocating people around the world were becoming a key focus. With the change of presidency in the US, this has fallen back in the list of priorities, particularly for public sector organisations in the Americas. Nonetheless, DEI still remains of high priority in other parts of the world. Global mobility professionals will need to be agile to manage the different priorities set in different countries.

Global mobility professionals will need to engage their leadership in particular aspects that are of relevance and/or concern to gain their support for actions taken. It is critical to ensure that designated personnel or teams take responsibility for addressing specific challenges and for gaining an understanding of potential issues to come. In this way, the function can be agile and stay ahead of potential problems.

Despite the need to be agile, research indicates that relatively few global mobility functions have agility built into their ways of working. Its research finds that only 5% of organisations describe themselves as being highly agile and able to adapt quickly to changing circumstances.

“ACCORDING TO AIRINC, OVER 80% OF GLOBAL MOBILITY FUNCTIONS EITHER NEVER OR RARELY USE AI IN THEIR MOBILITY PROGRAMMES. THE STATISTICS INDICATE ONLY 19% EITHER OCCASIONALLY OR MODERATELY USE AI – NO COMPANIES USE IT EXTENSIVELY.”



Almost half of organisations either report having limited agility or a primarily reactive programme. Going forward, it is important that all global mobility functions develop greater agility to respond to challenges. Creating a SWAT team is suggested by AIRINC as one means of addressing this.

DESIGNING NEW SOLUTIONS

It is important that the global mobility function is creative. Rather than relying on old policies, the development of new flexible approaches with a range of solutions available to the business is needed. The global mobility function can make good use of their partners to do this. Working creatively with others can help to leverage new solutions. For example, AIRINC suggests getting vendors together to brainstorm issues that their clients might be facing. In this way, solutions that are specific to the business can be found.

For some while now, there has been a trend towards more flexible, dynamic approaches to policy design. Relocation is a personal issue and employees today are looking for a policy that matches their personal circumstances. One single policy is no longer appropriate. We have seen a trend towards multiple policies but even these can require individuals to be “boxed up” under one heading. A more flexible approach is needed whereby using overarching guidelines, individual solutions can be created for each person or family on the move.

To produce greater flexibility within the function, a more creative mind-set is needed amongst global mobility professionals. Also, any new policy guidelines produced must be marketed and communicated extremely well. Flexibility can suggest, inaccurately, a lack of equity. Effort must be made to ensure that all individuals on the move understand that tailored policy design is appropriate and works for everyone for their best interests and those of the employing organisation.

UNDERSTANDING NEW TECHNOLOGIES

The global mobility function must become more technologically aware. If it is to use flexible approaches to policy design, these will depend upon the use of appropriate technology. It will be impossible to design equitable approaches to relocation support, cost them

out, and measure performance against them unless appropriate technology is used.

We are hearing much about the use of AI and this is becoming a key focus within business. Yet, despite it being such a hot topic, relatively few global mobility functions appear to be actively engaging with it currently. According to AIRINC, over 80% of global mobility functions either never or rarely use AI in their mobility programmes. The statistics indicate only 19% either occasionally or moderately use AI – no companies use it extensively. It also shows that no global mobility functions have a detailed strategy for significantly expanding the use of AI.

Given the potential of AI and the focus being placed upon it globally, global mobility functions need to consider how they can use it going forward. AIRINC suggests that the function might use AI to answer frequently asked questions, to help develop and upload policies and to form part of the global mobility chat function. While the dangers of relying too heavily on AI must be recognised, this technology can help to improve the efficiency of the global mobility function and free up some of its time to use it in more strategic activities.

COMMUNICATING VALUE EFFECTIVELY

There is absolutely no doubt that the global mobility function is one that adds value to the business. It has the potential to provide significant input into talent identification, management and deployment. It can also play a far more strategic role than it does currently. While there is no doubt that the value of the function in managing compliance and process issues is very high, the potential for adding further value at the strategic level must be pursued. In order to do this, the function must communicate effectively what it does, how it can add value, and the benefits that can flow from its involvement. Unless global mobility professionals make an effort to communicate their strategic contribution, their role may well remain operational.

The research explores a wide range of impactful roles that the global mobility function can undertake. These include supporting talent growth and development through the use of global assignments, as well as addressing skill shortages and filling critical roles. The

talent agenda also includes helping to increase employee engagement and retention.

With respect to the business itself, the global mobility function plays a key role in expansion into new markets and in building their leadership capabilities. In terms of more operational activities, its role is to mitigate compliance and legal issues involving international moves and ensure budget optimisation and cost management.

In terms of communicating the wide range of activities that global mobility is involved in, and its desire to be more strategic, the function might consider a rebranding in terms of its title. Potentially it might consider itself as global talent mobility rather than simply global mobility.

AIRINC also suggests that it is important for the function to develop its own mission statement and that this should capture its strategic, advisory and operational activities. If all stakeholders can see the range of activities that the function is involved in, its worth becomes more obvious.

DEFINING & MEASURING SUCCESS

In order to assess its own value and for the business to recognise this, measurement is needed. Very surprisingly, the AIRINC research indicates that over half of organisations do not have a clear definition of success against which they can measure international assignments. Only 6% of those surveyed actually had a clear and established definition.

If global mobility professionals are going to show what they have achieved, they will need statistics to measure this and demonstrate value. To do this, it is important to determine what constitutes success. There could be a number of bases from which to do this – for example, employee satisfaction, employee retention, return on investment, career progression, and business impact including revenue growth. These factors can be related to individual assignments or the relocation of groups of employees. Statistics will help raise the visibility of the function and provide the basis for communication of successful outcomes.

The choice of base for measurement should be made carefully. For example, using return on investment

is a strategic indicator, whereas measuring employee satisfaction is more operational. The global mobility function will need to determine upon which base(s) it wishes to be judged. It should use more strategic indicators if it is taking the path towards being a strategic function.

SKILLS FOR FUTURE SUCCESS

Finally, it is important to consider the skills and capabilities that the global mobility function will need if it is to become an agile and valued part of the business. As organisations expand into more destinations, so is the development of a global mind-set and cross-cultural capabilities are critical for members of the function.

Global mobility professionals will need to take a far more strategic approach to their work as well as gaining in-depth understanding of operational necessities such as changing compliance requirements. Understanding how best to use data and present this to their advantage is another area in which global mobility professionals must become proficient.

Rather than fearing technology and AI, a new mind-set is needed to embrace it and its potential for improving the capability of the function. Members must also be receptive to change and adaptable if the function is to become more agile.

Despite the overwhelming pace of change going on in today’s world, the backdrop for the global mobility function is a positive one. The function has always had to adapt and to do so quickly due to changes in the global landscape. Global mobility professionals should not be fearful of the pace of change but excited by the opportunities that it presents to them, personally and professionally, and the career growth that they can each attain in the future. ●



MORE INFORMATION

*Air Inc. Mobility Outlook Survey 2025. Available from [here](#).

HOW THE FINANCIAL SERVICES INDUSTRY IS RESPONDING TO GLOBAL CHANGE

The global finance landscape is shifting due to geopolitical conflict, trade wars, changes of government, new legislation and a strategy towards investment in emerging economies. **Marianne Curphey** identifies some trends.



As geopolitics continues to evolve, the financial services sector is expanding into new areas and jurisdictions. London, once a key player in global finance, is now facing pressure from new hubs in Singapore, Shenzhen, Hong Kong, Dubai and Dublin.

For organisations with global teams, investment and opportunity are now far more widely distributed. This means the search for talent is truly global, and global mobility teams are increasingly responsible for placing assignees in a variety of new and up and coming financial centres.

WHAT MAKES A REGIONAL FINANCIAL SUPER-HUB?

Regulatory and political stability are key, as is a highly-skilled, multi-lingual workforce, legal expertise, digital infrastructure, and tax incentives. Since moving talent into emerging hubs now often involves navigating new visa regimes, having clarity over entry and exit requirements and immigration are equally important.

“INVESTMENT IS NOT JUST ABOUT CAPITAL FLOWS; IT IS ABOUT HUMAN POTENTIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP & THE ENDURING PURSUIT OF A MORE EQUITABLE & SUSTAINABLE WORLD.”

REBECA GRYNSPAN, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF UNCTAD



THE NEW FINANCIAL HUBS

Across the globe, cities once seen as regional outposts are emerging as serious contenders for global financial leadership. Global capital is also flowing into more unexpected destinations. Sovereign wealth funds, especially those from the Middle East and Asia, are pushing into fintech, ESG, and green infrastructure. For example, data published last year by GlobalSWF reported that Middle Eastern funds accounted for more than half the \$96 billion invested by state-backed funds globally in the first six months of 2024.

With talent increasingly globalised, and remote work still a key factor in attracting top talent, new financial centres are becoming more important, and governments are incentivising inward investment with tax breaks, special visas for highly-skilled workers and dedicated economic zones.

“Investment is not just about capital flows; it is about human potential, environmental stewardship and the enduring pursuit of a more equitable and sustainable world,” says Rebeca Grynsan, Secretary-

General of UNCTAD, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in the IMF World Investment Report 2024.

Yet the most recent EY-Parthenon CEO Outlook, conducted in March, found that tariffs and trade are the key concern of global CEOs as they move quickly to navigate complexity amid global uncertainty.

The current trade war between the US and China, and the uncertainty over what type of deal President Trump will try to negotiate with Europe, is affecting global confidence around growth and investment as well as inward investment into the US.

French President Emmanuel Macron has asked EU businesses to stop investing in America as an act of European solidarity until the tariff situation has been resolved. The announcement of the trade deal between the UK and US in May has so far been light on detail, but does offer some concessions on importing cars and steel and aluminium into the UK, which will be good news for British businesses. However, it seems likely that President Donald Trump’s blanket

10 per cent tariffs on imports from countries around the world still applies to most UK goods entering the US.

Here is our guide to developments in the financial sector, and the regions with the fastest growing finance hubs.

LONDON & EUROPEAN HEADQUARTERS

Despite the disruptions of Brexit, which drove financial firms to relocate some of their operations to Dublin and Paris to maintain EU membership and trade deals, London remains a key financial centre. It is still one of the top cities in the world for fintech innovation, according to the recent Global Financial Centres Index. Of 115 centres analysed, New York came top for fintech, followed by London, Shenzhen and Hong Kong. Along with New York and Singapore, London forms part of the trinity of global financial centres.

For the financial sector overall, New York also topped the index, followed by London, Hong Kong and Singapore. The cities of San Francisco, Chicago, Los Angeles,

Shanghai, and Shenzhen also all made it into the top ten.

While Europe, the UK and the US have long held prime positions in the financial markets, China, India, Vietnam and Malaysia are gaining traction as important financial hubs. The report found that in Asia/Pacific there was significant growth in Hangzhou, New Delhi, Kuala Lumpur, Ho Chi Minh City, Manila, and GIFT City-Gujarat, while in the Middle East, Dubai and Abu Dhabi continue to take first and second places in the region.

Lesser known cities are also progressing up the league table, with Reykjavik, Kigali and Sao Paulo climbing up the rankings, particularly in relation to their fintech developments.

London did suffer some banking and financial services fallout as a result of Brexit, and tighter immigration rules post-Brexit have seen some financial firms decentralise. For example, Goldman Sachs and JPMorgan Chase expanded their European operations and other banks have favoured Paris, Frankfurt and Dublin as footholds in the EU.

Goldman Sachs has significantly increased its EU presence post-Brexit, notably in Paris and Frankfurt. JPMorgan has also expanded its EU operations, adding senior bankers to its hubs in Paris, Frankfurt, Dublin, and Luxembourg.

Indeed, while it lacks the glitz of Dubai or the scale of Singapore, Dublin has emerged as one of the beneficiaries of Brexit. EU passporting rights, a familiar legal environment, and favourable corporate tax rates make it a natural magnet for UK-based firms looking for post-Brexit continuity, and for EU companies which want a headquarters within a short flight of London.

Rather than outright challenging the dominance of London, Frankfurt, Paris and New York, smaller financial hubs such as Dublin and Luxembourg are specialising and complementing larger financial centres. Dublin specialises in fintech and fund administration services for Europe, a role which has been boosted by favourable corporate taxation rates, a highly-skilled workforce, and a transparent regulatory regime. Luxembourg has found a niche by specialising in sustainable finance and fund management, giving it access to the international financial ecosystem.

“Ireland is famous for attracting international tech titans,” according to Santa Fe Relocation in its recent review of Ireland. Much of the new inward investment is being directed towards setting up new data centres. In June 2024, Google announced plans to build a 72,400sq m digital storage facility at Grange Castle on the Western outskirts of Dublin—its third data centre on that site.

Opinion is still divided on how bad Brexit was for London. IntaCapital Switzerland described it as “an unmitigated disaster both for the City itself and the British economy”. However, a new report by KPMG states that London has not lost its lustre, and that negativity about the City’s health has been overplayed.

The KPMG report, the UK Financial Services Sentiment Survey, reveals that more than half (53%) of the UK’s financial services bosses believe that negativity about the health of London as a financial centre is being overplayed, as the majority (62%) plan to increase investment in their London operations over the next five years.

More than two thirds (68%) of leaders ranked London as the leading financial centre in Europe, followed by just 8% ranking Zurich as the top spot and 6% ranking Frankfurt. When thinking about how London compares to other global financial hubs, such as New York and Singapore, financial services leaders ranked London’s talent and skills, global reach and a strong regulatory environment as its strongest assets.

ASIA & AUSTRALIA

Even so, London and New York face strong competition. Singapore has become a magnet for fintech, wealth management, and crypto services. It has a number of attractive benefits, including a highly skilled population, good transport links, a strong regulatory regime, and open immigration policies, and is well placed to capitalise on the economic growth within Asia. A quarter of Singapore residents now own cryptocurrency, and of those, half use it for everyday purchases.

Singapore prioritises attracting highly skilled individuals who can contribute to the economy

“WHILE EUROPE, THE UK & THE US HAVE LONG HELD PRIME POSITIONS IN THE FINANCIAL MARKETS, CHINA, INDIA, VIETNAM & MALAYSIA ARE GAINING TRACTION AS IMPORTANT FINANCIAL HUBS.”



through specialised work permits, and it has a policy of attracting foreign investors and entrepreneurs who want to set up businesses within Singapore. In a move to retain highly skilled workers, from July, Singapore will abolish the maximum employment period, which previously ranged from 14 to 26 years, and allow foreign workers to stay indefinitely.

Yet while Singapore has undoubtedly led the charge in Asia's financial rise, it is far from alone. Hong Kong, despite some political uncertainty, remains a powerful force in global capital markets, especially for Chinese IPOs and wealth management. Its sophisticated infrastructure, and time zone advantages continue to attract major investment banks, although some have diversified their risk by establishing parallel operations in Singapore and Tokyo.

To date, HSBC has made a decision to reduce its investment banking business and corporate advisory activities in the UK, US and Europe in order to refocus on more profitable operations in Asia, saying it would retain more focused M&A and equity capital markets capabilities in Asia and the Middle East.

Hong Kong remains a preferred venue for Chinese companies

seeking to raise capital outside of the mainland. In 2025, the country could benefit from listings of \$20 billion, including battery giant CATL, pharmaceuticals producer Jiangsu Hengrui, and soy sauce maker Foshan Haitian, which are among the major companies that are planning or proposing new stock market listings.

In Japan, Tokyo is pushing to regain its role as a global finance hub, driven by government-backed reforms. It is aiming to attract fintech startups, green finance investors, and global banks. However, Tokyo's work culture, regulatory system and language barriers remain hurdles to it becoming a major financial centre like New York. Currently, it ranks 20th on the Global Financial Centres Index, which evaluates the relative competitiveness of major financial centres around the world.

"Singapore, Hong Kong and Shanghai, which are among the leading international financial centres in Asia, have been focusing on fintech as a key area for several years," KPMG notes in its International Financial Review 2024/25.

While Singapore is politically secure, it is becoming increasingly expensive to do business there, as prices of real estate, office rentals and the overall cost of living have

made it challenging, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises. As a result, some companies are looking to South Korea and Vietnam as more low-cost alternatives.

In South Korea, Seoul is becoming a new challenger, attracting foreign investors and financial institutions to the country. Although Seoul has yet to attain the global stature of established financial hubs like Singapore or Hong Kong, it has significantly bolstered its domestic financial system, capital markets, and fintech sector.

In Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh City now aims to emerge as Southeast Asia's next major financial centre, hoping to capitalise on the demand for green finance.

In Australia, Sydney and Melbourne offer stability and strong regulatory frameworks which mean they are popular with organisations looking for long-term investment. Australia's pension sector—the fourth largest in the world—is also a magnet for asset management and infrastructure investment. It could become the second largest in the world after the US by 2030 if it continues its spectacular growth.

India has a booming economy and growing middle class and in May, it saw the announcement of a free trade deal between the UK and India, an agreement which will benefit both countries.

India is currently in the process of building GIFT City – a new business district in Gujarat state. This flagship initiative is aimed at creating a new financial centre that could rival Dubai or Singapore, and is becoming a 'smart city' for India's growing finance and technology sectors.

As a special economic zone, the city will have tax incentives, regulatory independence, and advanced infrastructure, and will be India's first International Financial Services Centre (IFSC), focusing on governance and sustainability in financial operations. It has already attracted inward investment, with the IFSC Banking Unit (IBU) of Deutsche Bank setting up in GIFT City in July 2022. JP Morgan Chase Bank is also now operating there, offering clients both inside

and outside India access to global financial products.

However, Mumbai continues to be India's financial centre, although with a population of 12.5 million people it still faces problems around overcrowding, congestion and poverty.

MIDDLE EAST: DUBAI LEADS

The UAE has a strong track record of investment in tax-free zones, and easy set-up processes for companies and investors in order to attract outside capital. The Dubai International Financial Centre is a special economic zone established in 2004 as a financial hub for companies operating throughout the Middle East and has attracted global banks, hedge fund operators and fintech innovators. Last year, the UAE was removed from the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) "grey list" – the global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog, after making a commitment to upholding global standards of transparency and due diligence.

Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 aims to reduce the country's economy's reliance on oil production and diversify into other sectors include tourism, electric vehicles, data storage centres and luxury hotels. According to the International Monetary Fund, Saudi Arabia's banks are currently well-capitalised, profitable and appear resilient to severe macroeconomic shocks.



OFFSHORE FINANCIAL CENTRES: CHANGES IN REGULATION

Offshore hubs like Bermuda, the Cayman Islands, Jersey, Luxembourg, and Guernsey continue to attract private equity and hedge funds due to their specialist legal and financial expertise. The Cayman Islands also serves as a critical hub for global fund administration – especially for US-based asset managers.

Yet offshore financial centres are coming under increasing pressure from regulators to be more transparent over tax and ownership. For example, significant global reforms have been introduced over Ultimate Beneficial Ownership rules which are reshaping the landscape for offshore financial centres and requiring countries to be more transparent around the companies and entities which are registered on their shores. The changes aim to combat illicit financial activities by enhancing accountability.

The FATF has also begun to require more transparency on the ownership of entities, which in turn has prompted a global shift towards greater financial openness. In addition, in order to tackle the financing of terrorism, the FATF has issued a "black list" of high risk countries, including Iran and Myanmar, which are not demonstrating a commitment to identifying money laundering and terrorist financing. •

KEY TAKEAWAYS – THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL LANDSCAPE

- London remains a global finance hub but faces rising competition from Singapore, New York, and Dubai.
- Hong Kong, Tokyo and Seoul are all aiming to stimulate economic growth by investing in their financial sectors
- New financial hubs in India, China and Malaysia are offering a range of services to global and local clients
- Trade talks and tariffs are still unknown factors which governments and companies are trying to factor into their strategy in 2025
- Fintech and data storage are key areas of investment
- A stable political environment, favourable tax incentives, flexible working policies and good quality of life are all factors which attract investors and senior executives to different jurisdictions
- Offshore centres are becoming more transparent in their register of companies and entities in order to comply with international regulatory requirements

"SINGAPORE, HONG KONG AND SHANGHAI, WHICH ARE AMONG THE LEADING INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL CENTRES IN ASIA, HAVE BEEN FOCUSING ON FINTECH AS A KEY AREA FOR SEVERAL YEARS."

KPMG INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL REVIEW 2024/25

India & UK reach trade deal

The UK's free trade agreement with India is estimated to increase bilateral annual trade between the two countries by £25.5 billion, but how has the news been received by industries and experts? **David Sapsted** reports.

It took three years of intense and sometimes gridlocked negotiations, but finally in May – galvanised, it seems, by Donald Trump's imposition of global tariffs – India and the UK reached a long-awaited free trade agreement (FTA).

The bilateral deal might not be quite signed, sealed and delivered. Officials in New Delhi reckon the signing and sealing could still be three months away, while delivery could take over a year. Even so, Narendra Modi and Keir Starmer were quick to sing its praises.

The British Prime Minister hailed the “landmark” agreement as one that would boost the economy and “deliver for British people and business”. His Indian counterpart described the deal as an historic milestone that would “catalyse trade, investment, growth, job creation, and innovation in both our economies”.

Headline moves in the FTA included lower or no tariffs on clothing and footwear, cars, food

“The global trading environment is currently an unstable one, with greater fragmentation and increased levels of protectionism. In light of recent trade wars and US tariff related disruption, new partnerships that encourage free and open trade should be celebrated.”

EMMA ROWLAND, TRADE POLICY ADVISER
AT THE INSTITUTE OF DIRECTORS

and jewellery arriving in the UK from India; and on whisky, gin, aerospace, electricals, medical devices, some foodstuffs and cars going the other way.

One major – and mildly controversial – concession made by the British was to free intra-company transfers coming from India, along with other Indian business professionals arriving on temporary visas, from having to make national insurance contributions in the UK for up to three years, as long as they were still making social security payments in India.

GREATER BUSINESS MOBILITY

Some opposition MPs maintained that such a concession would lead to a surge in immigration and undercut British workers. But the government emphasised that the FTA preserved the UK’s existing points-based immigration system. And Douglas Alexander, Minister of State at the Department for Business and Trade, pointed out that the deal only covered business mobility as it was about travel for specific and temporary business purposes.

The government in London estimates that the effects of the deal will boost trade between the two countries, which totalled £42.6 billion last year, by an additional £25.5 billion a year by 2040.

According to The Times of India, the FTA not only marks a significant milestone in bilateral relations, but

also greatly enhances professional mobility between the two nations. “This agreement will facilitate the movement of various professionals, including contractual service suppliers, business visitors, investors, intra-corporate transferees, and independent professionals,” the newspaper commented.

It added that the deal would make it simpler for Indian professionals to work in the UK by introducing rules that streamlined employment laws and visa procedures. “Under business mobility options, the UK has increased the range of occupations for which highly qualified Indian experts can apply. However, to utilise these expanded routes, professionals must prove they have the necessary experience and qualifications for those specific roles, as the UK will require them to meet strict standards before allowing them to work in the country.”

HR professionals in the UK believe the trade deal offers businesses the opportunity to address skills shortages and cut costs, but only if recruitment strategies and auxiliary risks are properly managed.

“Employers need to be wary of, and manage, wider discrimination risks such as how different nationalities are treated in terms of job opportunities and recruitment processes, plus, how certain nationalities might be treated by colleagues during employment because of perceived

preferential treatment,” said Rob Smedley, employment director at law firm Freeths, which specialises in business legal services in HR Magazine.

Ashley Stothard, immigration executive at the firm, added that, if HR management is executed effectively, the FTA offers businesses an opportunity to address skills shortages, especially in sectors such as IT, engineering and healthcare.

“These sectors often struggle to source workers from the resident labour market and so often look overseas. The trade deal means that UK businesses can look first to India, and benefit from the cost savings in national insurance contributions,” he said, adding that HR professionals would need to review their organisations’ recruitment strategy. “They should ensure that they’re up-to-date with immigration law and sponsor compliance, and prepare for an increase in overseas recruitment.”

SECTORS VOICE CONCERNS

Yet not all sectors in the UK economy are happy with the deal, notably the pharmaceutical industry, which does not believe it offers sufficient support to businesses beyond the reduction in medical devices tariffs. The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI) is particularly concerned that the FTA does not address areas such as intellectual property (IP)

protections for innovators in the Indian market.

“As one of the UK’s largest exporting sectors, it’s disappointing that this deal seemingly won’t support the UK’s growth ambitions for pharmaceuticals,” said Richard Torbett, ABPI chief executive. “Robust intellectual property protections are fundamental for the innovation our companies deliver, but we believe an opportunity has been missed by the UK to demonstrate a commitment to high IP standards for our sector in this agreement. We urge the government to use ongoing negotiations with other key trading partners, including the EU, US, and Switzerland, to deliver agreements that better support Britain’s pharmaceutical industry.”

David Henig, UK director at the European Centre for International Political Economy, also has reservations, describing the treaty as “very much a tariff reduction deal, with no mention of data or financial services”. But he added, “that’s always been the most realistic landing zone. Talk of incredible levels of ambition always seemed unwise.”

WIDESPREAD APPROVAL

However, in general the arrival of the FTA – which followed a final round of negotiations between the UK’s Business and Trade Secretary Jonathan Reynolds and India’s Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal

06/05/2025, London, United Kingdom. Prime Minister Keir Starmer calls Narendra Modi, the Prime Minister of India, as the two countries announce a trade agreement.

Picture by Simon Dawson / No 10 Downing Street.

– has won widespread approval after being lauded as “the biggest and most economically significant bilateral trade deal the UK has done since leaving the EU” by the Department for Business and Trade in London.

Marco Forgiione, director general of the Chartered Institute of Export & International Trade, said the agreement represented “welcome news to our members and the wider business community. It is a strong example of what can be done when good will and mutual benefits between trading partners are clear. With UK industries, such as automotive, currently feeling the challenges of the US tariffs, this deal comes at an opportune moment for a range of goods and services industries. With the deal due to increase bilateral trade between the UK and India by £25.5 billion, there are significant gains to be seized upon by British businesses right across the UK’s nations and regions. The benefits of our world-leading services businesses now having access to India’s £1.5 trillion services sector, and one that is growing at nearly 8% a year, is not to be underestimated.”

Emma Rowland, trade policy adviser at the Institute of Directors, agreed that the pact offered new opportunities and easier access for exporters looking for growth. “With significant growth prospects on the horizon and a rising consumer base, India is an attractive place for UK

companies to do business,” she said.

“The global trading environment is currently an unstable one, with greater fragmentation and increased levels of protectionism. In light of recent trade wars and US tariff related disruption, new partnerships that encourage free and open trade should be celebrated.”

The deal with the UK could also open up fresh opportunities for India, not least the possibility of securing an FTA with the European Union, which has been the subject of on-off negotiations since 2012.

Himanshu Tewari, a partner specialising in trade and customs at KPMG India, points out that the agreement with the UK comes on the heels of several other trade deals the Delhi government has reached in the recent past, starting with Australia and followed by the UAE, and with the four members of the European Free Trade Association: Norway, Switzerland, Liechtenstein and Iceland.

“It demonstrates a very deliberate and sure-footed approach of expanding India’s FTA footprint for gaining market access for goods of Indian origin and opening new avenues of growth and international cooperation,” he says.

“Successful negotiation of the FTA with the UK – till most recently being part of the EU – also bodes well for the progress that India will be able to make with EU FTA negotiations, which have been waiting for a decisive push after the past thirteen years of negotiations.”

Viraj Mehta, the World Economic Forum’s head of the regional agenda for India and South Asia offered his perspective. “The deal between India and the UK is particularly important in a global environment of rising trade tensions and highlights the critical role of partnerships for shared progress and prosperity. India is a key growth engine for the world.”

And the Brits are pinning their hopes on the FTA generating some key growth for them, too. ●

BEYOND INDIA: THE UK'S EXPANDING WEB OF GLOBAL TRADE DEALS

In this article, **David Sapsted** explores the UK's recent wave of global trade negotiations, from fresh deals with the US and EU to slower-moving talks with the Gulf and Switzerland. With global alliances shifting and trade blocs expanding, the UK's post-Brexit strategy is gaining complexity and urgency.

It turned out to be quite a spring for the UK's trade deal aspirations. At the forefront, of course, was the free trade agreement (FTA) with India, but one other not-quite-so-free deal was agreed with the United States, and progress made for a post-Brexit "reset" with the European Union.

Meanwhile, out of the spotlight, talks continued over a pact with Gulf states and over an advanced FTA with Switzerland.

Additionally, last December the UK became the first European nation to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) – a move that even the government conceded would have little immediate effect on the nation's trade prospects. Now, though, that might be about to change.

Spurred on by Donald Trump's global tariffs policy, leaders of the EU and the CPTPP – whose membership comprises Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the UK and Vietnam – have held tentative discussions over a possible trading partnership. And in late May, Sweden formally proposed at a meeting of foreign ministers in Brussels that the EU join the CPTPP with the aim of forming the world's biggest free trade bloc.

It remains to be seen if such a development is feasible. Here is what we do know about other UK trade deals, already achieved or in the offing (the India FTA is covered separately in this edition of the magazine on [page 46](#)).

EU DEAL SIGNALS A PRAGMATIC POST-BREXIT RESET

British business groups, manufacturers and even supermarket chains unanimously praised the UK-EU deal, the first to be agreed since Brexit became a reality five years ago.

Although a host of details, timeframes and costs remains to be resolved, the agreement promises a reduction of Brussels red tape on UK exports, particularly on food and drink; and opens up the prospect of British passport holders the chance to use e-gates when travelling to mainland Europe.

Additionally, a new UK-EU defence and security pact has been pencilled in, which could offer British arms firms access to Europe's Security Action for Europe (Safe) – a £150 billion fund providing loans for defence projects. There will also be a link-up between carbon markets to avoid tariffs on carbon-intensive goods, such as steel and cement.

The big UK concession has been to extend by 12 years the Brexit deal allowing EU and Norwegian fishermen access to UK waters, which was due to expire next year. The move has not gone down well with the British fishing industry, although there will be annual reviews of catch quotas.

Rain Newton-Smith, CEO of the Confederation of British Industry, welcomed the deal overall.

"After the turbulence of the last decade, today's Summit marks a leap forward in the EU-UK relationship. The government has been relentless in its commitment to free and fair trade on the international stage, providing businesses with a shot of confidence through recent deals with the US and India," she said.

However, Ms Newton-Smith added: "The work must not stop here: making the most of this opportunity means not just resetting the relationship but futureproofing it. With the EU as our largest trading partner, continued cooperation will unlock the investment needed to drive growth, protect jobs, and raise living standards.

"The bleak global trading environment – from escalating geopolitical tensions to sluggish growth has underscored the importance of deepening ties with trusted, like-minded partners. Looking ahead, continued progress on business travel and youth mobility can help give more momentum to the government's sustainable growth mission."

Shevaun Haviland, director-general of the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), said the deal "marks a turning point in UK-EU relations which puts our trade relationship at the forefront of our partnership going forward".

"For four years, businesses have fought hard to sustain sales to the EU in the face of a rising tide of costs and paperwork which has severely dented their competitiveness.

"But we must not stop here, this agreement must be the foundation on which we aspire to build a much stronger business relationship going forward. That can only be of benefit to all our economies."

"After the turbulence of the last decade, today's Summit marks a leap forward in the EU-UK relationship. The government has been relentless in its commitment to free and fair trade on the international stage, providing businesses with a shot of confidence through recent deals with the US and India."

RAIN NEWTON-SMITH, CEO, THE CONFEDERATION
OF BRITISH INDUSTRY

“After years of uncertainty, especially post-Brexit, the removal of steel and aluminium tariffs could breathe new life into the British metals industry. And for car manufacturers, the reduced tariffs, though capped, give a clearer path to the US market.”

GARIMA SRIVASTAVA, LEGISLATION SENIOR ADVISER, THE CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF EXPORT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE

HISTORIC BUT IMPERFECT: A COMPROMISE DEAL WITH THE US

Sir Keir Starmer hailed the deal reached with the US in May as “historic” and he was right in as much as it was the first agreement reached with Washington since President Trump imposed tariffs across the world on the occasion he labelled – with unintended irony, according to many – Liberation Day.

Unfortunately, by the beginning of June, the confusion surrounding the White House’s clampdown had been thrown into further confusion after a US federal court ruled that Congress, not the president, had exclusive powers under the constitution to regulate commerce with other nations. The ruling affected only the blanket, global tariff of ten per cent, apparently leaving industry-specific tariffs in place.

Only weeks before the ruling, the US-UK Economic Prosperity Deal (EPD) had been hailed as an agreement that would save thousands of manufacturing jobs in the UK, even though it was far from a free trade deal. The British enthusiasm stemmed mainly from the fact that the Americans reduced the tariff on British-made cars from 27.5 per cent to ten per cent (subject to a maximum quota of 100,000 vehicles per year) and abolished the 25 per cent tariff on UK exports of steel and aluminium products, subject to a quota still to be determined.

Adrian Mardell, CEO of Jaguar Land Rover – which, in April, suspended all exports to the US when the car tariff leapt to 27.5 per cent – said the firm “warmly welcomed the deal, which secures greater certainty for our sector and the communities it supports”.

An economic security alignment also means zero tariffs on jet engines and aerospace components imported into the US, but other UK exports will still be subject to the universal ten per cent tariff imposed by the White House.

The two governments have also agreed to negotiate a digital trade agreement but the concessions so far made

by the British to the US have caused concerns, not least the fact that US has trebled tariffs on the UK from the pre-Trump 3.4 per cent to ten per cent now, while the UK has cut its tariffs by two-thirds from 5.1 per cent to 1.8 per cent.

Specific grievances centre on the zero duty rates that will allow up to 13,000 tonnes of US beef into Britain a year (though UK rules banning hormone treated beef will remain, along with the outlawing of chlorinated chicken) and the abolition of the current 19 per cent tariff on ethanol.

On beef, the National Farmers’ Union (NFU) applauded the protection of UK food standards in the deal, but condemned the level of access it granted US competitors. Tom Bradshaw, NFU president, said: “Our biggest concern is that two agricultural sectors have been singled out to shoulder the heavy burden of the removal of tariffs for other industries in the economy.

“While we understand this, we also know that today is the start, not the end, of a process and UK agriculture cannot continue to shoulder such imbalances in future negotiations.”

On ethanol, a petrol substitute produced from agricultural products, the leaders of the two companies that dominate the industry in Britain warned that they could collapse as a result of the deal.

Paul Kenward, chief executive of ABF Sugar, and Grant Pearson, chairman of Ensus, told The Times the deal posed “an existential threat” for the sector and put at risk hundreds of jobs at plants in NE England and Yorkshire.

However, Garima Srivastava, legislation senior adviser at the Chartered Institute of Export & International Trade said that, overall, the agreement represented “very welcome news” for UK exporters. “After years of uncertainty, especially post-Brexit, the removal of steel and aluminium tariffs could breathe new life into the British metals industry. And for car manufacturers, the reduced tariffs, though capped, give a clearer path to the US market,” she said.

“Of course, the trade-offs on agricultural access and digital taxes mean the UK is walking a fine line. But this deal signals a fresh momentum in transatlantic trade and businesses would do well to pay attention.”

Ms Srivastava added that although “it is not a done deal across the board, it is a strong signal that deeper cooperation could be coming”.

CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM IN THE GULF: GCC DEAL STILL IN LIMBO

Although the UK government has branded a trade agreement with the six GCC nations (Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, and Bahrain) the “next deal” it will make, relatively little has emerged after three years of negotiations.

These negotiations “have been going on for yonks so we should be further on than we are now,” according to Edward Lister, co-chairman of the UK-UAE

Business Council. He questioned why the UK had not pursued deals with individual Gulf states. “You cannot underestimate the importance of a direct deal between two countries,” he stated.

The UK government remains committed to securing a deal, which it estimates will boost bilateral trade by 16 per cent, equivalent to an extra £8.6 billion a year in trade between the GCC and UK.

Current sticking points in negotiations are believed to include the choice of a mutually-acceptable jurisdiction to resolve trade disputes, and the removal of complex non-tariff barriers such as standards and procedures affecting foreign companies.

Alana Li, Middle East analyst at the Asia House think-tank, told Arabian Gulf Business Insight

(AGBI): “A deal would pave the way for the UK to enhance commercial relationships across the region, potentially leading to deeper bilateral agreements with individual economies such as the UAE.

“The Gulf states are not a homogeneous bloc. Differing economic priorities and regulatory frameworks can complicate collective negotiations.”

A spokesman for the Department for Business and Trade said: “Negotiations are progressing at pace, with the priority being to get the right deal for both sides.” Mr Lister said that against the backdrop of Donald Trump’s tariffs, trade deals were “more important than ever before” and this should encourage both sides to move swiftly towards an agreement.

SWITZERLAND TALKS OFFER HOPE FOR SERVICES SECTOR BOOST

A seventh round of negotiations on an enhanced FTA with Switzerland are scheduled for “early summer”, according to a government spokesman in London, with optimism high that a deal is not far away.

In January, the two nations signed the Recognition of Professional Qualifications Agreement making it easier for qualified professionals in regulated sectors to work in both countries.

Now, the FTA negotiations will centre on “the UK’s ambition to secure improved market access for its service suppliers, ensuring that data and innovation flow seamlessly between two of the world’s foremost service-driven economies,” according to the EU Today website.

“The agreement also aims to provide long-term assurances regarding UK business travel to Switzerland, a key consideration for British professionals operating across sectors such as finance, law, and consultancy.”

The report added that in the latest round of negotiations in the spring, the two sides “made substantial headway”, adding: “Both sides are reportedly working towards what could be the most comprehensive financial services chapter ever agreed by either country in a trade deal. Given London and Zurich’s status as global financial hubs, an agreement in this area could bolster cooperation, reduce barriers, and set a new benchmark for international financial trade agreements.”

LOOKING AHEAD: CPTPP & THE EU’S SURPRISE MOVE

The UK’s accession to the CPTPP was initially seen as more symbolic than substantial. But with Sweden proposing that the EU join the bloc, potentially forming the world’s largest free trade area, the strategic implications could grow dramatically. Whether this proves feasible or not, it signals shifting sands in global trade diplomacy. ●

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Donald Trump and Sir Keir Starmer ratified most of the US-UK trade agreement at the G7 summit in Canada in June. It means that a ten per cent tariff will be imposed on most UK goods. However, the deal has yet to address the removal of US charges on steel imports.

*Below:
16/06/2025.
Prime Minister
Keir Starmer and
US President
Donald Trump
sign a trade
agreement as
they attend the
G7 Summit in
the Kananaskis
mountain lodge in
Canada.*

*Picture by Simon
Dawson / No 10
Downing Street.*



THE FUTURE OF WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT

Global companies from across different industries discussed how they are optimising their global operations, managing risks and securing the talent they need amid disruption at UKG Connect 25. **Ledetta Asfa-Wossen** reports on their top priorities.



The CEO of HR solutions company UKG, Jennifer Morgan, said “As a leader, never before has it been so essential to engage and communicate with your workforce.”

Sharing her insights on the future of workforce management, she stressed the importance of employee engagement and seamless borderless payroll solutions when operating on a global scale and the negative impact it can have on employees and productivity if poorly managed.

“The complexity of operating successfully while remaining compliant of regulations and local laws is accelerating and the need for precision in payroll is absolute. The penalties and repercussions are real, and beyond that, the impact on your people can be immense.”

Morgan proceeded to share how various HR solutions and technologies are helping companies to operate more efficiently, from workforce planning tools to cloud-based culture solutions.

“AI and generative AI presents some profound changes to the world of work. We shouldn’t be too fearful of that because that’s something that’s always happened, throughout the other previous industrial revolutions.”

TIM GOOD, SENIOR MANAGING DIRECTOR & EMEA TALENT & ORGANISATION LEAD, ACCENTURE



EMBRACING NEW TECHNOLOGY

Later that morning, a stimulating panel featuring HR, talent and operational leads from Sainsbury’s, Greggs, Schneider Electric and Accenture shared how they are driving growth and working to elevate employee experience across their organisations.

Moderated by UKG, the panel touched on talent retention to digital transformation, organisational culture and the latest workforce trends.

“The pace of change has never been faster than it is today. The expectations of generations are different too, so we’re really looking

at how we embrace that for the good of our businesses and our colleagues who work with us and that we’re responsible for,” said Neil Parrish, workload planning manager at Greggs.

“Greggs is a value brand and labour is our biggest single cost so it’s absolutely critical that we manage that cost from a business perspective but also that we do that without compromising on service and it’s a fine line getting that balance right. Embracing new technology to be able to do that is really important for us.”

Claire Howells, payroll and time management director (Europe) at Schneider Electric shared how the

company is optimising their payroll systems and creating efficiencies that their employees can benefit from.

“From a business perspective, we’re very serious about ensuring all our solutions and technology partners are certifiable. Not all potential partners pass the test as there is a very strict process we go through in order to ensure we’re protecting employee data and the business as a whole so that we remain compliant. Reducing the amount of suppliers, vendors and solutions is helping us reduce costs and any potential risks across networks,” she explained.

SHIFTING WORKFORCE TRENDS

Tim Good, senior managing director and EMEA talent and organisation lead at Accenture, outlined some broader workforce trends that are impacting organisations across all sectors.

“AI and generative AI presents some profound changes to the world of work. At Accenture we cover a lot of floor space, around 800,000 people worldwide and conduct a lot of research as well as speaking to many executives and business leaders. We know that 50% of the work done today will be disrupted. Of that 50%, about half of it will be automated away and we shouldn’t be too fearful of that because that’s something that’s always happened, throughout the other previous industrial revolutions.

There are certain things that we still do in the workplace as human beings that aren’t very time efficient or engaging.”

Many more roles will also be augmented, added Good. “Creating new opportunities and skills – not necessarily doing something different – but using data to empower what we do.”

He continued that AI is also likely to inform and augment every walk of life, including front office, back office and core value chain.

“We’re also going to see new roles created, like prompt engineering, and around ethics and compliance. Any good AI, in very simple terms, always needs to have a human check to verify things like accuracy and the data behind it, so that will be profound. There is also a huge shortage in skills.”

To address the skills gap, Good suggests that organisations are going to have to ‘widen the aperture for accessing skills and build new connective tissue into places of the workforce’. He spoke of needing to build stronger and earlier connections between workplaces and education institutions, as well as challenging how we build work ready skills and growing and valuing different routes, like apprenticeships.

Due to the pace of change, he added that re-skilling and building new capabilities would be inevitable for organisations, as well as figuring out how best to connect their people’s skills to match future business opportunities that create value.

The panel later touched on using data to tap into organisational culture. In order to empower employees and enrich their experience and overall feeling of purpose, as well as practical applications for AI tools in people operations.

ADAPTING TO EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS

Panelists spoke on the growing importance of culture in the workplace. Fostering a positive organisational culture becomes even more critical for companies if the majority of their revenue comes from people operating out of vast amounts of physical space.

Managing a diversity of generations across the workforce, and the need to understand each generation of employees, what they expect, need and desire was both a challenge and priority for companies.

The panel explored how employee needs have changed over the years, particularly for newer generations, to become more focused on the type of work environment they are entering. Desiring not just compensation, but flexible working times, the ability to work from different locations, and the room and support to acquire new skills and develop themselves.

Members of the panel also debated the somewhat fading idea of a ‘traditional career’. From one where you may stay in one role at the same company for a decade and climb the ladder, to a less linear career that is multi-faceted and involves multiple roles across different locations, at different companies.

Howells spoke to the audience about managing a technical workforce. She described how many of their technical and industrial employees have been doing their roles for 20 or more years and shared how Schneider is actively adapting to developments in robotics and AI and ensuring the workforce remains engaged and upskilled, while catering to new generations coming through who want to work in a different way.

“We work very closely with universities. We also have large graduate and apprenticeship programmes that are really important to us to make sure we are attracting the best individuals for jobs of the future. It’s a big challenge but one that we’re making good progress in.”

The future of work requires new forms of leadership too. “At Schneider, we’re focused on upskilling leadership, so leaders of yesterday can act more like leaders of tomorrow, change with the times and adapt to how people want to be managed.”

DID YOU KNOW?

55% say work-life balance/ flexibility is one of the most important factors when choosing an employer

More than half

of all frontline employees would take more vacation time over a pay increase.

Workplace flexibility is the second most important factor when choosing an employer for frontline employees

Source: Perspectives from the Frontline Workforce: A UKG Global Study





PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

Trust and psychological safety have much in common but they are not interchangeable concepts. **Dr Sue Shortland** explains how these issues differ, the benefits of developing a culture of high psychological safety and the actions required.

TRUST RELATIONS

Trust is central to effective social structures. Trust refers to interactions between a minimum of two individuals or parties: the trustor who grants trust and the trustee who receives or obtains trust. Trust exists in the mind of an individual and pertains to a specific target individual or organisation.

Trust creates an expectation between the parties that each will behave in a mutually acceptable way and that neither will exploit the other's vulnerabilities. For instance, you might trust one colleague but not another. In essence, there is a shared understanding between the parties with respect to professional conduct and related standards. To illustrate trust in an organisation, you might trust a particular company to uphold high standards, while not trusting others to do so.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

A key difference between trust and psychological safety is that psychological safety is experienced at a group level. Psychological safety refers to the belief that you will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns or mistakes. People working together tend to have similar perceptions of whether or not the organisational climate is psychologically safe.

Positive benefits from creating a culture of psychological safety include putting conflict to good use, leveraging diversity, and helping to overcome geographic dispersion.

Psychological safety is about being candid. While this may well result in conflict, this should be productive, not destructive, and so it will enable inclusion of diverse viewpoints. Psychological safety enables different and new ideas to be heard; this can encourage minority groups to speak up.

When employees are geographically spread, there is an absence of perceptive cues that are usually gained from direct communication. This means that employees are not directly able to see or hear how their ideas and suggestions are being received. Developing a culture of psychological safety means that people will have confidence that they will not be embarrassed or humiliated if they make a mistake or present something that is not well received.

HIGH VERSUS LOW PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

The impact of a climate of psychological safety on organisational performance and agility depends upon the organisational standards applied to employees. When psychological safety is high and high standards are expected, a culture of learning and high performance can result. If high standards are not necessarily expected, high psychological safety generates a comfortable zone for employees – although this does not necessarily result in them stretching themselves to help contribute to greater organisational agility.

If organisations have low psychological safety but demand high standards, this will create anxiety for employees. A combination of low psychological safety and low standards is likely to generate apathy.

BENEFITS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

Where there is a climate of high psychological safety individuals will feel comfortable even when making mistakes and can learn from these. People will openly share ideas and this can result in better innovation, decision-making, organisational performance and agility.

By contrast, where there is a climate of psychological danger, people will fear making mistakes. A blame culture will result and so people are less likely to share views and ideas. This can result in a “common knowledge effect” whereby there is a tendency to defer to information or decisions held by the majority of the group.

The CIPD has defined organisational agility as the “ability to stay open to new directions and be continually proactive, helping to assess the limits or indeed risks of existing approaches and ensuring that leaders and

followers have an agile and change-ready mind-set to enable them, and ultimately the organisation, to keep moving, changing, adapting”.

It is clear that if organisations are to be change-ready and adaptable, a climate of psychological safety, alongside high trust relationships, is valuable.

HOW TO CREATE PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

The behaviours required for a climate of psychological safety include: co-operation; knowledge sharing; inclusivity; helpfulness; mutual respect; and experimentation and creativity.

To encourage these behaviours, organisations' leaders and managers must foster empathy, a fair and inclusive environment, a learning culture, a growth mind-set, and empowerment. Workplace practices must embrace delegated decision-making, participation, autonomy, and supportive leadership. Underpinning these is an appropriate organisational structure.

THE ROLE OF LINE MANAGERS

At the recent Westminster Employment Forum policy conference: Next Steps for Women in the Workplace, Dr Meenakshi Krishnan, principal research fellow at the Institute of Employment Studies, highlighted the role of line managers in creating a culture of psychological safety, particularly in respect of widening the participation of minorities.

Dr Krishnan noted that line managers are often the gatekeepers to the kind of support that minorities often feel they do not get. To create psychological safety, line managers may need to be flexible in their demands. If they have very rigid ideas about what the ideal worker, productivity and cost efficiency look like, then creating an inclusive workplace will be problematic.

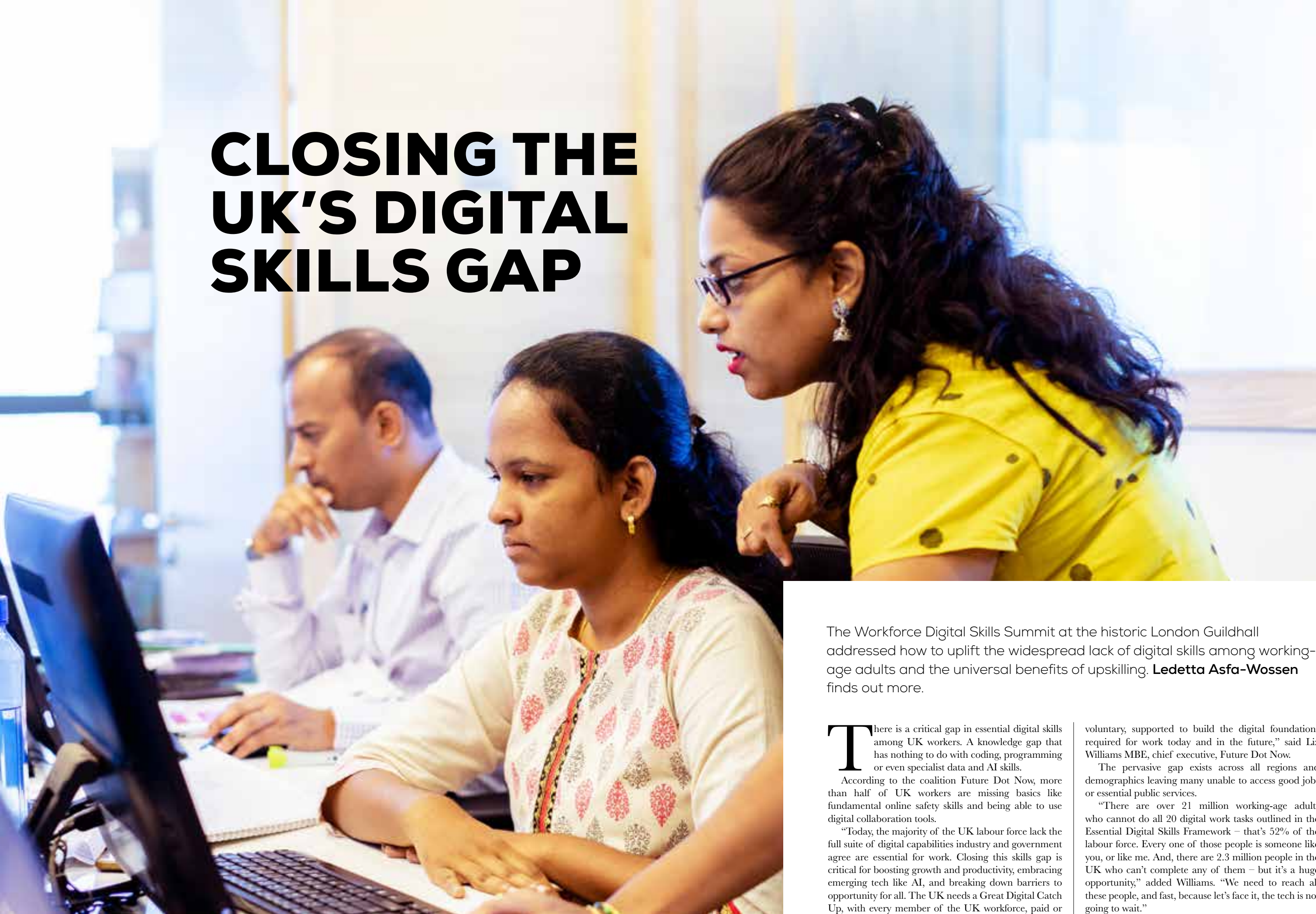
Leaders and managers need the skills to have difficult conversations in the workplace, engage with diversity dilemmas and be flexible around what kind of workplace adjustments might be needed by different people. Dr Krishnan pointed out that this is not just a question of HR policy; organisations must move beyond policy to ensuring that there are everyday practices of inclusion that really matter. Line managers lie at the heart of this.

SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

To support an organisation's capacity to change, leadership and management must review their attitudes to conflict, criticism, sharing information, and experimentation. They must also consider their degree of willingness to give people autonomy and support for their actions, their openness to new ideas (especially from below), their willingness to discuss sensitive issues openly, and the degree to which the organisational structure and culture facilities change.

All of these issues must be underpinned by a positive climate of high trust and psychological safety if organisations are to increase their agility in today's dynamic global world. •

CLOSING THE UK'S DIGITAL SKILLS GAP



The Workforce Digital Skills Summit at the historic London Guildhall addressed how to uplift the widespread lack of digital skills among working-age adults and the universal benefits of upskilling. **Ledetta Asfa-Wossen** finds out more.

There is a critical gap in essential digital skills among UK workers. A knowledge gap that has nothing to do with coding, programming or even specialist data and AI skills.

According to the coalition Future Dot Now, more than half of UK workers are missing basics like fundamental online safety skills and being able to use digital collaboration tools.

"Today, the majority of the UK labour force lack the full suite of digital capabilities industry and government agree are essential for work. Closing this skills gap is critical for boosting growth and productivity, embracing emerging tech like AI, and breaking down barriers to opportunity for all. The UK needs a Great Digital Catch Up, with every member of the UK workforce, paid or

voluntary, supported to build the digital foundations required for work today and in the future," said Liz Williams MBE, chief executive, Future Dot Now.

The pervasive gap exists across all regions and demographics leaving many unable to access good jobs or essential public services.

"There are over 21 million working-age adults who cannot do all 20 digital work tasks outlined in the Essential Digital Skills Framework – that's 52% of the labour force. Every one of those people is someone like you, or like me. And, there are 2.3 million people in the UK who can't complete any of them – but it's a huge opportunity," added Williams. "We need to reach all these people, and fast, because let's face it, the tech is not going to wait."

20 ESSENTIAL DIGITAL SKILLS

So, what are the essential digital tasks that everyone in the UK workforce must be able to complete? The 20 tasks identified by government and industry come under five core areas.

HANDLING INFORMATION & CONTENT

1. Being able to follow an organisation's IT policies when sharing information anywhere
2. Securely access, synchronise and share information across different devices e.g. calendars

COMMUNICATING

3. Communicate at work digitally using messaging applications e.g. MS Teams, Slack
4. Use workplace digital tools to create, share and collaborate with colleagues e.g. OneDrive, WeTransfer
5. Set up and manage an account on a professional online network/community/job site e.g. LinkedIn

TRANSACTING

6. Complete digital records on behalf of, or within an organisation e.g. absence, tax returns
7. Access salary and tax information digitally e.g. password protected payslips

PROBLEM SOLVING

8. Be able to find information online that helps solve work-related problems
9. Able to improve skills and ability to do new things at work using online tutorials, learning platforms and how-to-guides
10. Use appropriate software that is required of day-to-day job e.g. spreadsheets
11. Improve own and/or the organisation's productivity using digital tools e.g. Trello

BEING SAFE & LEGAL ONLINE

12. Act with caution online and understand that there are risks and threats involved in carrying out activities
13. Follow data protection guidelines online
14. Recognise suspicious links and know that clicking on these links or downloading unfamiliar attachments is a risk
15. Being careful with what is shared online and understanding that online activity produces a permanent record that can be accessed by others
16. Respond to any requests for authentication for online accounts
17. Identify secure websites e.g. looking for padlock and https
18. Identify secure Wi-Fi networks to connect to
19. Update device software/operating systems as and when necessary to prevent viruses and other risks
20. Set privacy and marketing setting for websites and all accounts e.g. managing cookies, updates and preferences

BUILDING FOR FUTURE DISRUPTION

Research also shows that no sector is immune to this gap. The Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index Report states 20% of the tech sector cannot complete all 20 essential digital tasks. While the construction sector has the lowest levels of essential digital skills – with only 35% able to do all 20 work tasks.

Starting off proceedings was guest speaker Baroness Jones, Minister for the Future Digital Economy and Online Safety, to help set the scene.

“On the one hand we have a job market that feels a bit turbulent. Where people feel there's not as many opportunities. Then I hear young people I visit in schools say they don't necessarily see a career in tech, or view it as an option for them. Meanwhile, employers around the country doing really exciting work have a huge number of vacancies that they are struggling to fill because they simply can't find people with the right skills. We have to deal with that anomaly.”

Jones stressed a lack of digital skills is leaving ‘jobs sitting empty’ up and down the country – not just in London and the Southeast and urged more employers to help close the gap.

“When we think of digital skills we often think about children or teenagers. They are a big part of the future we are trying to build but closing the skills gap among working adults is a vital part of that puzzle. These skills are necessary across all jobs, no matter what field.”

The essential digital skills gap will be worsened by automation and AI and if not addressed could exasperate inequalities. Furthermore, over half of UK employers say their staff don't yet have the skills to leverage generative AI.

“We can act now, to help people participate in the future economy,” said Jones. “We know that for every £1 invested in digital skills training – £9.48 can be gained.”

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

New Future Dot Now research was previewed on the day quantifying the economic value of improving digital skills and the positive long-term impact of employee training.

Researchers shared that employer-led digital training was proven to create more highly-skilled and productive staff than when they were trained elsewhere outside of work.

Improving digital skills of UK individuals in full-time work was shown to boost pay by an estimated £897 per year. The data also illustrated how upskilling job seekers unlocks more opportunities.

For businesses, and the wider economy, the numbers shared were compelling too. Improving essential digital skills was found to add an additional £7,300 annual profit for a typical firm of 50 employees. Nationally, widespread upskilling was estimated to be an ‘annual engine of growth’ that could add £23.1 billion per annum.

ALIGNED IN PURPOSE

Panellists featuring Deloitte, Mercer and Skills England among many, went on to discuss the business case for a digitally capable workforce. They agreed these skills

were required at all job levels, including executive, and across all regions.

Aurelie Marais, head of strategy and transformation at Bouygues, talked candidly about construction and engineering being one of the least digitised industries and its challenges around project delivery.

“The construction sector hasn't greatly improved its productivity for years. On top of that we have a huge shortage of talent. Of course we want to accelerate digitisation and are currently investing in this but it's also fair to recognise that many digital transformations programmes fail. I think a big lesson from that is that we often focus on developing advanced skills – engineers or technical people, but fail to empower everyone more broadly. There is no point developing these brilliantly sophisticated models at design stage in 3D, 4D or even 10D if supervisors onsite don't have the basic digital skills to help deliver the job,” she explained.

Another challenge, noted Marais, is that technology can often be very fragmented across organisations. A factor that plagues most sectors. Essential digital skills, while not advanced, aid people to work in more agile and productive ways and enable people to problem solve.

“I spoke to an IT director and he mentioned they are dealing with around 15 types of different software. You can train people on one particular system but I think what's crucial is people having the basic foundational digital skills to be able to get by and work across different systems.”

Some panellists emphasised the need to present individuals with motivations to upskill as well as clearer pathways to work in an age of continual reskilling.

“We have a unique opportunity to design better jobs and to prepare people for jobs of the future,” said Peter Cheese, CEO, CIPD.

There's a long road ahead but the day closed with a packed hall of fully engaged people from industry, government and civil society proving that it is possible to break out of organisational silos and drive change.

“Upskilling combines social benefit with business benefit. Nobody loses – everyone benefits from this and that's not often true,” added Dr Dave Smith, national technology adviser. •

DID YOU KNOW?

55% of the UK's adult labour force prefer to teach themselves skills through platforms like TikTok and YouTube.

Source: Lloyds Consumer Digital Index 2024

NUMBER CRUNCH

£145 billion

Inadequate digital skills in the UK's workforce could risk losing this amount in cumulative GDP growth between 2018-2028.

£5.69 billion

The amount UK workers who lack essential digital skills are missing out on in additional wages.

Source: Future Dot Now

GLOBAL
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MASTERING LEADERSHIP: COURAGE, CURIOSITY & LIFELONG LEARNING

The recent Think Global Women event brought together a global audience of educators, leaders, global mobility experts and innovators and featured panel discussions brimming with insights on authentic leadership, learning and navigating an international career. **Marianne Curphey** reports.



Relocate Global and Think Global People's recent celebration of International Women's Day featured an impressive line-up, including keynote speakers Mark Freed, co-founder of Men for Inclusion, and international speaker, psychologist and coach, Sarah Rozenthuler. The event hosted two panel discussions on leadership with four executives whose careers have spanned multiple countries and industries.

The first panel included Elaine Héry, co-founder of Eres Relocation Services, and Angela Fubler, founder of Chatmore British International School in Bermuda, who discussed serendipity and the need to be adaptable and curious in your career.

In the second panel discussion, Paul Williamson, author and head of talent development, Ambassador Theatre Group (ATG), and Pam Mundy, education consultant and founder of Pam Mundy Associates, described the importance of nurturing the next generation of leaders, and why being bold in your career choices can reap dividends.

“Whether you’re outgoing or a shy introvert, believe in yourself, build your teams, and know that leadership comes in many forms.”

ELAINE HERY, CO-FOUNDER,
ERES RELOCATION SERVICES



Elaine Hery
speaking on the
Think Global
Women panel.

CROSS-CULTURAL COMPETENCE & UNDERSTANDING

Together with business partner José Antonio de Ros, Héry oversees international marketing, global communication and personal development and training for Eres’ teams in Europe, where the company has eight offices in Spain, Portugal, Italy, France and The Netherlands. Her entrepreneurial journey began in Barcelona in 1991 when she launched her first relocation company. Over the years, she has navigated the complexities of international business, from leading teams to supporting families in transition. Her fluency in Spanish and French has undoubtedly facilitated her success, but the true advantage has been her ability to adapt.

“There’s nothing like experiencing the challenges of living in a different country to open your horizons,” she says. “You tend to believe your way is the only way until you’re immersed in a new culture.” Héry had joined ICI on their graduate scheme after university, and had been seconded to Barcelona. After 14 years working at ICI, she was living in Barcelona and fluent in Spanish

but decided not to return to the UK after her European assignment had ended, and was looking for new opportunities.

In 2007, she founded Eres Relocation Services, drawing on her vast background in international business and communication, but her first few roles in Spain working for small family businesses had been a learning experience that underscored the importance of cultural awareness.

“I had always excelled in school and my previous roles, but suddenly, I felt like I was upsetting people without understanding why,” she said. It wasn’t until she attended a cross-cultural training session that the realisation hit. “I was applying my UK rules in a different culture where the rules had changed. That’s why I wasn’t succeeding.”

For leaders in global mobility, this story serves as a reminder of the importance of cross-cultural competence and understanding, and how nuances in communication can have a significant impact. The most successful executives learn to adapt, taking the best of different cultures while contributing their own strengths.

“For me, following a plan and being efficient with your time is

important, but for the Spanish small businesses I was working for, changing your plan is the best thing you can do,” she explained. In the end, she learnt to take the best of different cultures.

“If you go to a different country with your eyes wide open, you can take the best of both worlds, adapting to new rules while applying what you already know. There is nothing like experience to teach you how others feel. Social sensitivity is key. I believe both women and men can have great social sensitivity,” she said. “Whether you’re outgoing or a shy introvert, believe in yourself, build your teams, and know that leadership comes in many forms.”

CAREER GROWTH THROUGH SERENDIPITY

Fubler’s career evolved in unexpected ways. She had originally trained as a speech therapist, but her path moved to education, transitioning from speech and language assistance, and then to policy analysis at the Ministry of Transport, before returning to education to found her own school.

“Leadership skills are transferable,” she explains. “What I learned as a teacher helped me

in many roles, and problem-solving and communication became my strongest assets.”

Her own journey is one of wide international experience, having been to boarding school at St. Johnsbury Academy, an independent school in Vermont in the US, and then living in Canada for 10 years during which she studied at Mount St Vincent University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. She has also worked and travelled extensively in the US, Canada and the Caribbean. For executives considering global assignments, her experience highlights the importance of embracing unfamiliar opportunities.

“I have often been handpicked for roles rather than applying for jobs,” Fubler notes. “It is about bringing value, no matter the setting. For International Women’s Day, if I could offer advice to young women facing career blockages, I would say: stand out and stand up – put on your best boots and show up.”

For executives and leaders, the lesson is clear: embrace the unfamiliar, build strong partnerships, and lead with empathy. By navigating your career with curiosity and courage, you will not only succeed, but thrive.

THE POWER OF LIFELONG LEARNING

In the second panel discussion, Mundy discussed the importance of taking opportunities and embracing challenges in international careers, while Williamson shared examples of authentic and inclusive leadership programmes and why they were so successful.

Mundy provides consultancy to many of the world’s leading school and education groups, independent and international schools, UK multi-academy trusts and international ministries of education on strategic planning, leadership, development and expansion. She also provides advice and guidance to start-up schools on brokering and securing investment,

selecting partnerships, school design and development, and is involved in a wide variety of high-net-worth education development projects worldwide.

Williamson’s approach to leadership development offers a powerful reminder that investing in talent is vital to help organisations build future leaders and be innovative. From fostering authenticity and creativity to breaking down traditional leadership stereotypes, ATG’s commitment to nurturing emerging leaders has delivered long-term value and changed the way the organisation leads its teams.

SPOTTING OPPORTUNITIES

In the world of international education, navigating challenging environments often requires resilience, curiosity, and an open mind. Mundy is a seasoned educational consultant and early childhood specialist and has built her career by embracing opportunities that many might shy

away from. Her experiences offer powerful insights for executives and leaders, particularly those seeking to encourage greater diversity in international assignments.

Mundy’s journey wasn’t meticulously planned. “I didn’t map out my career,” she admits. “I fell into opportunities.” But rather than resisting the unfamiliar, she leaned into it. Whether working in Nigeria or other regions perceived as difficult, her perspective remained grounded in a simple, empowering question: Why not me?

“If I could offer advice to young women facing career blockages, I would say: stand out and stand up – put on your best boots and show up.”

ANGELA FUBLER, FOUNDER, CHATMORE
BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL



Angela Fubler
speaking at
Think Global
Women.

“Senior leaders often think they’ve learned on the job, so they assume they’re done. But leadership is a continuous journey. The best leaders are those who remain open to learning.”

PAUL WILLIAMSON, AUTHOR & HEAD OF TALENT DEVELOPMENT, AMBASSADOR THEATRE GROUP (ATG)

Traditionally, international assignments in complex regions have been dominated by men. Mundy’s career challenges that norm.

“Being an early childhood specialist often invites scepticism,” she said. “In meetings, I’ve had people either dismiss me or immediately launch into stories about their own children.” Rather than feeling undermined, Mundy saw these moments as opportunities to shift perceptions and demonstrate the transferable value of her expertise.

This resilience is particularly relevant for companies seeking to diversify leadership talent. Often, qualified women hesitate to pursue international assignments due to perceived risks or doubts about their readiness. Her advice? “Someone has to be the prime minister. Someone has to be the president. Why not you?”

For global mobility leaders, this mindset shift can be a game-changer. By fostering confidence and supporting diverse candidates, companies can unlock untapped talent and begin to build their leadership pipelines. For individuals, this fearlessness and willingness to take opportunities that arise can help to build experience and valuable skill sets.

CURIOSITY AS A SUPERPOWER

While some professionals meticulously plan their next career move, Mundy champions curiosity as the most powerful career driver. “The biggest piece of advice I give is to follow what’s interesting,” she says. “You may not know everything about a new opportunity, but you can build on the skills you have.”

Her decision to work in Nigeria exemplifies this mindset. During a leadership training session, attendees were asked if they’d consider working in Nigeria – a location often perceived as high-risk. Most declined. Mundy, however, didn’t hesitate. “I remember thinking, ‘Why not?’” she says. “The next thing I knew, someone asked, ‘What are you doing next Thursday?’”



Paul Williamson and Pam Mundy speaking on the Think Global Women panel

One of the most practical lessons Mundy shares is the importance of cultural humility. “You can read every cultural guide and prepare thoroughly, but the best learning happens on the ground,” she says. “It is about listening, observing, and asking questions.”

She distinguishes between the “big C” of culture – the visible aspects like language, dress, and customs – and the “small c” – the nuanced social behaviours and business norms that often go unspoken. “Understanding both is key to navigating any new environment,” she advises.

For leaders facilitating international assignments, promoting cultural training is a valuable first step. However, Mundy emphasises the importance of encouraging authentic interactions. “The real insights come from conversations with the people who live and work there. Be curious. Ask. Learn from their perspectives.”

CHAMPIONING AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP

In a fast-paced and dynamic industry like live entertainment, the need for effective leadership and talent development is essential. Williamson described the benefit of ATG’s intentional leadership development programmes. His belief in lifelong learning and authentic leadership has not only influenced emerging leaders but also reshaped senior leadership perspectives. For executives in global mobility seeking insights into building leadership pipelines, his experience offers valuable lessons.

Ten years ago, ATG launched its Emerging Leaders Programme with one fundamental question: Where are our future leaders? It wasn’t a rhetorical question, but rather a strategic move.

“We didn’t know where our future leaders were in the business, and we got curious,” he explains. “We designed the programme to be inclusive, inviting managers from

across the organisation to contribute. Everyone had a voice in defining what great leadership should look like at ATG.”

The approach wasn’t about imposing top-down directives. Instead, it empowered employees to shape their own development journey. For executives navigating talent retention and leadership challenges, this bottom-up strategy offers a compelling alternative to the old “command and control” leadership style. By involving employees in leadership conversations, businesses ensure that diverse voices and opinions are heard, leading to greater innovation and creating a more fertile ground for new ideas.

Williamson firmly believes leadership development is never truly complete. “Senior leaders often think they’ve learned on the job, so they assume they’re done. But leadership is a continuous journey. The best leaders are those who remain open to learning.”

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL

After the programme’s first two years, ATG’s emerging leaders were asked to present their leadership journeys. Williamson recalls how participants transformed from anxious, self-doubting presenters to confident storytellers. “Some were physically ill from nerves before their first presentations,” he says. “But by the end, they spoke with authenticity and passion. It was incredible.”

Interestingly, these presentations didn’t just inspire the emerging leaders themselves. Senior executives took notice. “Leaders came up to me and said they want to learn how to speak like that,” he recalls.

One of the most striking outcomes of the Emerging Leaders Programme has been the rise of authentic leadership. Williamson recalls a particular participant who initially struggled with public speaking. “She ran out of her first practice presentation. She was nearly sick from the fear,” he says. “But by the end of the

programme, people noticed a completely different presence. She led with authenticity, and now she runs a prestigious venue in London.”

Her transformation wasn’t just personal. It became a model for others. “People come to her for advice, coaching, and support,” he shares. “That’s what authentic leadership creates – a ripple effect of confidence and mentorship.”

Reflecting on traditional perceptions of leadership, he challenges the notion that leaders must be all-knowing decision-makers. “There was this belief that leaders had to be the biggest brain in the room,” he says. “But that’s outdated. If you’re leading a team of ten people and you’re the first to speak, you risk shutting down other valuable perspectives.”

Instead, Williamson advocates for collaborative leadership. “Your role as a leader is to create space for others to contribute. That’s where innovation happens.”

This mindset shift is particularly relevant for leaders managing international teams, where navigating diverse perspectives is essential. Encouraging inclusive dialogue ensures that organisations harness the full breadth of talent, driving smarter decision-making and greater innovation.

FINAL THOUGHTS

The panel discussions revealed that true leadership growth and career growth is not about titles or seniority. It is about curiosity, courage, and a commitment to lifelong learning. By creating spaces where people can step into their authentic leadership, businesses not only cultivate future leaders but also build resilient, adaptive organisations – ready to thrive in a complex global landscape.

On a personal level, the ability to embrace your uniqueness, adapt to the unexpected, and harness every opportunity that comes your way will be valuable throughout your whole career journey. Gaining international experience, whether through careful planning or serendipity, can transform your career, open up future opportunities, and give you a greater understanding of the variety of different ways leaders can show up and inspire their teams. •



DRIVING CHANGE: GROWING WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

Women are making clear progress in board representation and senior leadership roles, but more needs to be done to achieve gender equality. **Dr Sue Shortland** reports on the latest data from the FTSE Women Leaders Review.



Vivienne Artz OBE, CEO of FTSE Women Leaders Review, presented the latest findings on women on boards and in leadership at a recent Westminster Employment Forum event on Next Steps for Women in the Workplace.

The FTSE Women Leaders Review was set up in 2011 by Lord Davies. At the time, 9.5% of the FTSE 350 boards (the largest public companies in the UK) comprised women. When the Review was set up, it set a target to increase the proportion of women with board representation in FTSE 350 companies to 25% in the space of five years. The target was met.

When the Review renewed itself and became the Hampton-Alexander Review, a target of 33% was set over a five year period. One-third representation was considered as important because this represents a critical mass of women, who could have an impact in a very different way from previous token representation. Again, this target was achieved.

THE FTSE WOMEN LEADERS REVIEW

The latest edition of the FTSE Women Leaders Review has set a target of 40% female representation on the boards of the FTSE 350 by the end of 2025. The scope of the Review has also been broadened, to not only include women on the boards of the biggest public companies in the UK, but also to address women's representation at leadership level in the 50 largest private companies headquartered in the UK. It has set a 40% target and an end of 2025 timescale for women's representation achieving at least one of the four key decision-making roles: chair, CEO, senior independent director, and finance director.

The FTSE Women Leaders Review published its 2025 report in February*. The report shows where women currently stand in terms of board membership and leadership in the FTSE 350 and the 50 largest private companies. It also finds that the number of women on boards and in leadership continues to increase.

Over 60% of the FTSE 350 companies are achieving, or close to achieving, the target of 40% women's representation by the end of 2025. The progress being made by the 50 largest companies is keeping pace with the very largest public companies: with 37% women in leadership, the statistics align with those for the FTSE 100.

WOMEN ON BOARDS

Turning to the statistics for board representation, women comprise 43% in the FTSE 350 and 31% in the 50 largest private companies. However, this data needs to be broken down to understand women's participation as executive directors and non-executive directors. In the FTSE 350, women comprise 16% of executive directors and 50% of non-executive directors. In the 50 largest private companies, the figures are 29% and 33% respectively.

The large increase that has taken place over the years in the population of women in non-executive roles is

to be welcomed but the gap needs to narrow between those in non-executive roles and the number of women in key executive roles. This is not only because it is the executive roles that get paid the most, so they are much more likely to close the gender pay gap, but also because these are the ones that have the most impact and influence in relation to the organisation.

Of the 350 FTSE companies, the report indicates that 73% are at or above the target for 40% female representation by the end of 2025. 21% are below 40% but above 33% and only 6% are below 33%. For the 50 largest private companies, the figures are: 34%; 12% and 54% respectively. This indicates that the private companies have a long way to go to achieve the target of women comprising 40% of board membership.

With respect to comparator countries, the UK, with a 43.4% female board representation, is performing well. Women comprise 45.4% of boards in France, 39.1% in Canada, 36% in Germany, 34.6% in the US and 19.5% in Japan.

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

The report indicates that 35% of leadership roles are held by women in the FTSE 350 companies and 37% in the 50 largest private companies. Unpicking this data, 29% of the executive committee are female, and 36% are direct reports (i.e. in the talent pipeline) in the FTSE 350. The picture is more balanced in the 50 largest private companies with the executive committee comprising 35% women, and direct reports comprising 37%.

Of the 350 FTSE companies, the report reveals that only 28% of these companies are at or above the target for 40% female representation in leadership by the end of 2025; 33% are below 40% but above 33%; and 39% are below 33%. For the 50 largest private companies, the figures are: 34%; 43% and 23% respectively. This indicates that the private companies are outperforming the FTSE 350 in terms of appointing women to leadership positions.

CALL FOR ACTION

Nonetheless despite women's progress, a call to action is still required to drive forward the 40% target for women in leadership and to increase women's participation in the roles that form the pipeline to leadership positions.

Women's representation in the leadership roles of chair, CEO, and finance director, in particular, needs to increase and the gap between the numbers of women in key executive roles compared to those in non-executive roles needs to narrow. Of course, this does not negate the progress made by women in non-executive positions. Despite this, action is still required to improve gender diversity, alongside the participation of minorities, in the roles played by non-executive directors, such as on remuneration committees, as highlighted in recent academic research**. •

*FTSE Women Leaders Review: Achieving Gender Balance available from: ftsewomenleaders.com/latest-reports

**Shortland, S. and Perkins, S.J. (2024) 'Diversity in remuneration committees: A view from the inside', published in *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*, Vol. 43, No. 7, pp. 1208-1229.

THE GENDER WEALTH GAP

Despite decades of debate and lobbying, the gender pay gap remains a problem internationally. While progress has been made, particularly in women's access to coaching and leadership roles, deeper structural inequalities embedded in the workplace continue to widen disparities in wealth accumulation, especially in retirement. **Marianne Curphey** investigates.



The gender pay gap affects not just current salaries for women, but their long-term savings, and significantly affects women's retirement income and financial security. Addressing these disparities requires a number of measures, including targeted policy interventions, such as equal pay legislation, paid family leave, and pension credits for caregiving periods in order to promote equitable retirement outcomes for women. For companies with international teams and those wanting to nurture women's leadership and promotion, the issue of the gender wealth gap is particularly pressing.

This is a subject which was hotly debated at our conference for International Women's Day, which looked at workplace policies and actions we could all take to support women and girls progress in their careers and reach their full potential.

PENSION WEALTH DISPARITIES

As an example, the European Journal of Population Study Pension Wealth and the Gender Wealth Gap (2022) provides a comprehensive analysis of pension wealth disparities between men and women across Germany. It identifies significant gender gaps in statutory, civil, and occupational pensions, with occupational pensions showing the largest disparity (41.8%). The study attributes these gaps to differences in labour market participation, earnings, and the types of employment contracts held by men and women. While the relative raw gender wealth gap is about 35% (or 31,000 euros) when analysing the

standard measure of net worth, it shrinks to 28% when pension wealth is added, the study reports.

In the UK, Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) published a report in March 2023 on The Gender Gap in Pension Saving, examining the differences in pension incomes and savings between men and women. It highlighted that while the gap in state pension income has narrowed, significant disparities remain in private pension savings, primarily due to differences in earnings, employment patterns, and caregiving responsibilities.

"Women – who have lower lifetime earnings on average and have longer retirements – are likely to continue to have lower retirement incomes than men," the IFS report says.

LOWER EARNINGS POTENTIAL

Sam Bourgi, an analyst at Investors Observer, argues that the issue is not just what women are paid now – it is how the cumulative effects of inequality affect their entire financial lives. In his analysis of women's earnings and lifetime wealth in the US, he has uncovered major disparities in the financial fortunes of men and women.

"Leadership and promotional barriers, maternity leave, and salary negotiations are among the costliest inequalities for women," he says.

"Wealth accumulation in the stock market is also a reflection of lifetime earnings potential," he notes. "Since men have higher lifetime earnings than women, on average, they can invest more money in the stock market, which results in a much larger portfolio when it's time to retire."

The roots of this disparity stretch back to leadership barriers, wage negotiation gaps, maternity leave, and the often invisible cost of unpaid care work – all disproportionately borne by women. Research by Investors Observer found that women lose \$1 million USD in retirement wealth due to the gender wage gap in the US.

UNDERREPRESENTED AT BOARD LEVEL

The Department for Work and Pensions published a report on the Gender Pensions Gap in Private Pensions in June 2023 and found that women's private pension pots in Britain are typically worth 35% less than those of their male colleagues by the time they reach 55.

Equally in the US, Sam Bourgi says that there has been a noticeable failure to close the gender pay gap, despite women's increasing presence in high-paying industries.

"Women are increasingly present in high-paying roles and sectors, but they are still underrepresented in

"WOMEN – WHO HAVE LOWER LIFETIME EARNINGS ON AVERAGE & HAVE LONGER RETIREMENTS – ARE LIKELY TO CONTINUE TO HAVE LOWER RETIREMENT INCOMES THAN MEN."

THE IFS REPORT

C-suite roles,” he said. “The gap is wider at the very top, especially in highly competitive roles. It could be because these roles “penalise” care work and career interruptions, which overwhelmingly impact women. It is usually women who take maternity leave, give up paid work to stay home with children, or take care of elderly parents.”

He believes that there are also social and structural issues here which make it difficult for many women to contemplate a C-suite position.

“Our society is not structured in a way that promotes family formation,” he says. “Anxiety over taking maternity leave and wondering about the future of your job and career progression because you have a child is a symptom of a much deeper societal issue.”

ERODING EARNING POTENTIAL

One of the biggest issues that goes unnoticed is that women are far less likely to negotiate a competitive salary. This so-called “negotiation gap” can erode women’s lifetime earnings potential, especially considering that average salary increases in the US are between 3% and 4% annually. For example, a position with a salary range of \$100,000 to \$120,000 USD can



“ANXIETY OVER TAKING MATERNITY LEAVE & WONDERING ABOUT THE FUTURE OF YOUR JOB & CAREER PROGRESSION BECAUSE YOU HAVE A CHILD IS A SYMPTOM OF A MUCH DEEPER SOCIETAL ISSUE.”

SAM BOURGI, ANALYST,
INVESTORS OBSERVER

lead to very different financial outcomes for someone who took the lower end of the range than someone who negotiated the very top payout.

Yet with women contributing only slightly less than men (6.2% versus 6.6%) towards retirement, the really significant figure is the compounding effect of even small annual differences in retirement savings.

“Even the smallest differences compound over a 40-year career and create large discrepancies during retirement,” Sam Bourgi says. “Although this difference only amounts to a few hundred dollars per year, it can dramatically reduce future wealth. However, the biggest disadvantage women face is taking mid-career breaks. For example, even a two to three year break from work could mean hundreds of thousands of dollars less in retirement due to missed compounded investment growth.”

Since retirement contributions in 401(k)s and IRAs (in the US) are a fixed percentage of wages, women’s lower earnings and more frequent career interruptions translate into lower retirement savings over time, he says.

HOW HIGHER EDUCATION COULD SHIFT THE BALANCE

The positive news is that women are now over-represented in college and postgraduate studies (women outnumber men in college enrolments and graduation rates in the US currently). Despite the recent issues college graduates face in finding commensurate employment, the research suggests that workers with a Bachelor’s degree or Master’s degree have significantly higher lifetime earnings than those who only complete high school.

However, in order to help women secure a more financially secure retirement, government intervention may be necessary. Some potential policy fixes are government matching or top-ups for low-income earners, universal retirement accounts that allow for government and employer contributions during unpaid leave, and caregiver credits that acknowledge unpaid labour. However, it bears mentioning that these programmes can be controversial in the US, especially with such a large fiscal imbalance.

“Career interruptions directly impact women’s lifetime earnings

and, therefore, their lifetime retirement savings,” Sam Bourgi says. Government matching or top-ups, universal retirement accounts, and caregiver credits could potentially mitigate the impact.

HOW TO REDRESS THE BALANCE

One of the key issues is that global companies have opaque or inconsistent pay across jurisdictions, sometimes for the same role.

“It is common for companies to offer different pay packages for the same role depending on local norms,” he says. “To prevent the gap from widening, companies with global teams should standardise mobility policies (including pay) and apply them consistently across genders and geographics.”

Conversely, the public sector has one of the narrowest gender pay gaps, given the standardised pay scales, greater transparency in compensation, stronger benefits and paid leave, and more predictable promotion tracks.

“The private sector could probably apply some of these lessons in creating transparent and predictable pay structures,” he says.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FINANCIAL LITERACY

Financial literacy plays a crucial role to lifetime financial security and wealth, yet access to investment education remains uneven. Those who understand how to maximise 401(k) contributions and employer matches are better equipped to prepare for retirement in the US. Bourgi stresses the importance of consistent saving and long-term planning – areas where gaps in knowledge can have lifelong consequences.

“People who are financially literate are more likely to invest, save consistently, and plan for the long term,” he says. “They are also more likely to maximise 401(k) contributions, which play a significant role in preparing oneself for retirement. Understanding how to maximise 401(k) contributions can ensure that workers do not delay saving for retirement or leave employer contributions on the table.”

Economic shocks, too, have gendered consequences. Women are overrepresented in sectors that are more vulnerable to downturns, such as retail, hospitality, and caregiving. During the Covid-19

pandemic, women experienced a disproportionate share of job losses in what became known as the “Shecession,” driven by school closures, childcare shortages, and unpaid caregiving responsibilities.

RETHINKING THE WORLD OF WORK

The current retirement system favours linear, full-time employment, Sam Bourgi says, and acknowledges very little about non-linear career paths due to maternity leave, child rearing, or other forms of unpaid care.

He argues that pension formulas should not just focus on “highest earning years” or “total years of service,” but should also factor in real-life circumstances that may require people to pull away from full-time work. Traditional planning also overlooks longer life expectancy (especially for women), greater likelihood of part-time work, and out-of-pocket health costs during retirement.

However, it is unclear whether workplace structures can accommodate anything but the status quo at the moment, he says. So how can public discourse move





“THE BIGGEST DISADVANTAGE WOMEN FACE IS TAKING MID-CAREER BREAKS. EVEN A TWO TO THREE YEAR BREAK FROM WORK COULD MEAN HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS LESS IN RETIREMENT DUE TO MISSED COMPOUNDED INVESTMENT GROWTH.”

SAM BOURGI, ANALYST,
INVESTORS OBSERVER

beyond salary comparisons to address the broader, compounding effects of income inequality on lifetime wealth accumulation and intergenerational financial security for women?

“It begins by having an honest conversation about what kind of society we want to have — one that encourages family formation and teaches the value of unpaid work (e.g. taking care of children and the elderly), or one that treats everyone like a robot on a treadmill progressing from point A (age 22) to point B (age 65),” he says.

He urges companies and policymakers to think beyond linear employment models and understand the different pressures and components of women’s careers.

Companies with globally mobile teams also have a role to play in addressing gender pay disparities. The challenge is not simply closing a gap on a spreadsheet, it is about reimagining a world of work that values every stage of life equally and recognises that women’s careers are often non-linear and involve breaks for caring and family responsibilities.

PROGRESS IN THE UK AND EUROPE

Over recent decades, the gender pay gap in the UK and Europe has narrowed significantly, reflecting changing labour market structures, growing public awareness, and a series of legal and policy interventions. However, progress has been uneven and slow, and the persistence of the gap reflects both structural and cultural challenges that have yet to be fully addressed.

In the UK, one of the most visible drivers of progress has been the 2017 introduction of mandatory gender pay gap reporting for companies with over 250 employees. This legislation has improved transparency and placed reputational pressure on firms to address disparities in pay and representation. Since the introduction of the reporting requirements, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has noted a gradual decline in the median pay gap, which stood at 7% in 2024, down from 9.1% in 2017. While modest, this represents progress, especially when viewed alongside increasing female representation in senior roles,

particularly in the public sector and some corporate boards.

Across Europe, EU-wide initiatives have also pushed member states to act. The European Commission’s Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025 has set the addressing of the gender pay gap as a key goal, and the forthcoming EU Pay Transparency Directive, adopted in 2023, aims to extend transparency obligations and empower workers to challenge pay discrimination. It requires employers to disclose salary ranges in job advertisements, provide employees with information about pay levels and criteria, and explain any pay differentials between male and female workers. Under the new rules, EU companies will be required to share information on salaries and take action if their gender pay gap exceeds 5%.

Several European countries have gone further. In Iceland, where equal pay laws are more rigorous than most, companies are legally required to prove they pay men and women equally for the same work — or face fines. Nordic countries more broadly have seen some of the narrowest gender pay gaps in Europe, thanks in part to strong welfare states, subsidised childcare, and widespread take-up of shared parental leave.

In contrast, countries in Southern and Eastern Europe often show smaller headline pay

gaps, but this can be misleading, as it sometimes reflects lower female labour force participation or occupational segregation, rather than genuine pay equality.

One important area of progress has been in education. Across Europe, women now outnumber men in higher education attainment, which has led to increased participation in professional sectors. This educational advantage is starting to shift patterns in some industries, particularly in the younger workforce. However, the so-called “motherhood penalty” continues to exert a significant influence, with women more likely to reduce working hours or drop out of the workforce following childbirth — a trend that continues to widen the pay gap with age, according to a recent report by PwC.

Progress has also been hindered by the persistence of part-time, low-paid work, in which women are overrepresented. Structural reforms — such as improving access to affordable childcare, increasing flexibility in senior roles, and embedding salary transparency — remain crucial to closing the gap entirely.

While the UK and many European nations have made tangible progress, the gender pay gap remains a complex issue that will require both cultural change and stronger legal frameworks in order to support the career aspirations of women and girls. ●



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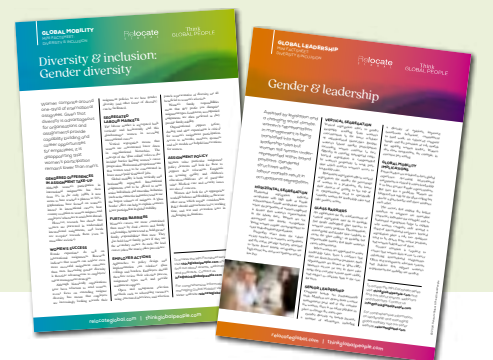
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Nurturing the Next Generation of Global Citizens

WHY SUSTAINABILITY IS AT THE HEART OF EDUCATION AT THE BRITISH SCHOOL OF BRUSSELS



Above:
student from
The British
School of
Brussels

For families relocating to Belgium, choosing the right school for your children is a critical decision. Beyond academic excellence, parents increasingly seek institutions that instil values preparing students for the challenges of the 21st century, particularly environmental responsibility.

At The British School of Brussels (BSB), sustainability is not just a subject; it is woven into every aspect of school life, fostering environmentally conscious global citizens and future custodians of the planet.

BSB firmly embeds green practices and values throughout its curriculum, campus, and broader community. The conviction that learning transcends the physical boundaries of the classroom has led to

innovative programmes aimed at empowering students to understand their environmental impact and take meaningful action.

“LEARNING WITHOUT WALLS”: CONNECTING WITH NATURE

A cornerstone of BSB’s educational philosophy is the innovative “Learning without Walls” programme. This outdoor learning initiative takes education into the natural world, offering enriching experiences under the guidance of dedicated teachers and staff. By immersing themselves in outdoor settings on campus like The Glade, their dedicated outdoor nature hub, and the surrounding Tervuren Forest, students develop a deep appreciation for nature and a sense of connection to the natural world.

These sessions are carefully designed to complement and enhance the curriculum, providing unique opportunities for students to engage with nature, foster environmental stewardship, and cultivate a diverse set of skills. Activities range from constructing shelters to explore early human adaptation to creating nature-inspired art while delving into scientific concepts, interweaving academic knowledge with hands-on

experiences. This approach builds empathy and understanding towards ecological systems from an early age. Outdoor learning also promotes physical play, gross motor skills, creativity, risk-taking, teamwork, and independent learning, contributing to overall well-being.

SUSTAINABILITY WOVEN INTO THE CURRICULUM

Environmental education at BSB is seamlessly integrated across various disciplines.

In Primary, younger students engage in hands-on activities such as gardening, composting, recycling programmes, and outdoor lessons through the “Learning without Walls” initiative. These experiences foster early connections with nature and instil conservation values. Primary students also participate in two outdoor lessons per term through the “Learning without Walls” program.

At the Secondary level, sustainability is explored through different subjects. Year 9 students participate in interdisciplinary units on climate change, covering topics like renewable energy, sustainable food systems, and fashion. STEM workshops allow them to develop practical solutions to industry challenges, while geography lessons focus on the impacts of climate change. Art classes encourage creative expression related to environmental themes. Year 8 Geography students have also created art installations and poems on ocean pollution which have been displayed at international events.

Additionally, teachers across the school integrate concepts like renewable energy, biodiversity, and climate change into classroom discussions and projects.

EMPOWERING STUDENTS THROUGH ACTION & ADVOCACY

BSB fosters a culture of empowerment and agency, inspiring young minds to take meaningful actions towards a sustainable future.

The thriving BSBees eco-club, with 75 dedicated student members, encourages student agency in sustainability through activities like tending the school garden, wildlife projects, creating habitats, organizing fundraisers, and raising awareness. Elsewhere, Year 10 students contribute to sustainability efforts through a Biodiversity Database project.

At the Secondary level, the Global Issues Network (GIN) group empowers students to create sustainable solutions for global challenges. Students identify issues they are passionate about and lead campaigns, ranging from conservation efforts to improving cafeteria nutrition. Participating in GIN exposes students to global issues, teaches essential life skills, and connects them with professionals, shaping their sustainability-focused career aspirations.

BSB also actively engages with international organisations such as the United Nations Environment Office and the European Union. Students have recently participated in UN Earth Day celebrations, presenting models addressing plastic pollution, and contributed to a Sustainable Textile Event by showcasing upcycled denim outfits. This creative advocacy aims to create a mindset shift.

RECOGNISED LEADERS IN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

BSB’s commitment has earned international recognition. In May 2022, BSB was first granted the esteemed Eco-School status, which it holds to this day, and awarded the prestigious Green Flag accreditation for sustainability. BSB was the first international school in Belgium to receive this honour. This achievement followed an intensive program of audits, action plans, and projects addressing sustainability areas such as waste management, energy use, climate change, and global citizenship, with students playing a leading role. Eco-Schools is the largest and oldest recognition of education for sustainable development globally. This status connects BSB with an international community, facilitating the exchange of environmental information and cultural experiences.

SUSTAINABLE CAMPUS, SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Beyond the curriculum and student initiatives, BSB has made significant strides towards reducing its environmental footprint through campus-wide initiatives. In March 2025, the school announced the installation of 580 solar panels with an annual production capacity of 233MWh, covering over 20% of its electricity consumption. This investment demonstrates BSB’s commitment to sustainable infrastructure development.

SHAPING FUTURE LEADERS & ADVOCATES

Through hands-on activities, thoughtful lessons, community initiatives, and international engagement, BSB empowers every student to become a mindful, eco-conscious citizen ready to build a brighter, greener future for all. BSB’s sustainability initiatives aim not only to educate but also to inspire lifelong advocacy for environmental stewardship. Graduates leave BSB equipped with the knowledge and passion for sustainability, often pursuing careers dedicated to preserving the planet.

Many students are actively seeking higher education opportunities in fields like Sustainable Development, Urban Planning, and Wildlife Conservation, a significant shift compared to a decade ago. The encouragement and inspiration received throughout their BSB journey, from Primary to Secondary, and through programs like BSB Futures career talks, play a vital role in shaping these aspirations.

At BSB, sustainability is embedded in every aspect of school life. It aims to inspire curiosity, foster resilience, and cultivate a lifelong love for learning, alongside a profound respect for our planet. For relocating families seeking an international school that prioritises environmental education and develops students into responsible global citizens, BSB offers a transformative educational journey.

Interested in joining the BSB community?

Please contact our Admissions team for more details.





A CHILD'S BACKPACK IS THEIR MOBILE OFFICE – AND WE MUST HELP THEM PACK IT

King's InterHigh students, Erihn and Jacob Scholey Smith

As online learning and digital platforms continue to reshape traditional education, the humble backpack takes on a profound new meaning. No longer just a vessel for books and lunchboxes, it now symbolises a child's mobile office – a portable hub of potential, resilience, and readiness for the real world, writes **Ashley Harrold**, CEO, Inspired Online Schools.

As the nature of education evolves across the world, it's crucial we reconsider not only what and how young people learn, but how we help them carry those lessons into life.

BLENDING TRADITION & INNOVATION: THE FUTURE OF LEARNING

Online schooling, including the likes of King's InterHigh and US Performance Academy, is more than a trend. It existed long before the Covid pandemic and has transformed the way children can learn, connect on a global scale, and balance academic success with careers and lifestyle preferences. To truly prepare children for future success, many students now require a flexible, blended model that combines the discipline of traditional schooling structures with the agility of digital innovation and asynchronous learning. This approach enables students to access rich, diverse content on their own terms and personalised support, all while still

encouraging elements of structure, socialisation and discipline.

But more than technological tools, what genuinely equips a child is what goes into their metaphorical backpack: the skills to celebrate success, the resilience to overcome failure, the ability to build relationships, the willingness to join communities, and the confidence to foster independence. These are the key pillars that we encourage and celebrate at Inspired Education Group, to support not only academic excellence but personal development and cultural empathy.

CHASING DREAMS WITHOUT SACRIFICING EDUCATION

An example of the power of this model comes from Inspired. With our global network of online schools, we empower young people to pursue their passions without compromising their education. Whether it's a budding sports stars who train daily or gifted artists with international exhibitions, online schooling ensures that these

children no longer have to choose between academic achievement and personal dreams.

For example, after relocating from India to Geneva and back again, rising tennis star and online IB student Varun was looking for a school where he could continue studying for the IB Diploma Programme, as well as balancing his burgeoning tennis career. Through King's InterHigh he was able to seamlessly align his academic and athletic goals – the time zone difference between India and the UK worked with his daily tennis training schedule, and the online curriculum provided the flexibility for Varun to compete in as many tennis tournaments as possible. Not only has his tennis career flourished – ranking in the top 150 of the International Tennis Federation – but he's also been accepted at the prestigious Yale University.

The traditional dichotomy of school 'or' career is being replaced with a liberating 'and'. The flexibility of online learning, combined with asynchronous or tailored synchronous support, allows learners to access lessons and learn from wherever they are in the world, whenever is most convenient for them. This empowerment is the essence of a well-packed backpack – full of knowledge but also balance, autonomy, and purpose.

REDEFINING CONNECTION IN A GLOBAL AGE

The word 'connection' and what this means looks very different in today's world. For children growing up in a post-Covid society, building relationships isn't limited to the classroom or playground. Inspired's online and bricks and mortar schools all offer opportunities including global camps, exchanges and online communities to allow children to form meaningful bonds across time zones and cultures, developing cultural awareness and empathy far beyond their local communities.

These virtual – and physical – interactions mirror modern professional environments, where diversity of thought and background

drives creativity and innovation. In learning how to meet and collaborate with peers around the world, children are also learning to navigate the realities of future workplaces full of individuals with different histories, strengths, and skills.

Take, for instance, a group project on climate change involving students from four continents. They not only gain knowledge, but also learn to communicate across cultures, appreciate diverse perspectives, and collaborate toward a common goal.

Another example is the Scholey Smith family who have been travelling the world since 2019 and started online schooling with King's InterHigh in 2021. After trying various education settings, the flexible nature, live classes, the ability to cater to different global time zones and offering a solid British curriculum made King's InterHigh the perfect fit for Jacob and Erihn. Not only does online schooling mean they can join both live and pre-recorded lessons depending on their travels, but Jacob and Erihn have been able to meet other King's InterHigh families from all over – including a safari in Mexico, a playdate in Portugal, and a South East Asia LEGO session over WhatsApp. They've learned to be more independent, manage their own schedules, and adapt to all the changes that come with a travel lifestyle. These are competencies that no textbook can teach alone and is something we place huge emphasis on.

STUDENT-CENTRED, SKILLS-FOCUSED EDUCATION

The student-centred model is at the heart of this evolution. By allowing children to learn at their own pace, in a manner tailored to their unique needs and ambitions, we encourage them to take ownership of their journey. Our learning models empower students to manage their time, meet their deadlines, and be accountable – all critical real-world skills.

This approach also respects and celebrates individuality. For example, a neurodivergent student might prefer recorded lessons

they can replay at their own pace, while another might thrive in live discussions. The ability to choose how and when they engage with their education empowers students to understand their preferred learning styles and advocate for their own needs, which is something that will build a foundational element for lifelong success.

HELPING CHILDREN PACK THEIR REAL-WORLD BACKPACK

It's well-known that education is not a one-size-fits-all experience. It's a dynamic, evolving process that must be intentionally designed to fill each child's backpack not just with academic content, but with life-ready tools. That includes resilience to bounce back from setbacks; empathy to connect with others in a meaningful way; independence to lead their own learning and growth; cultural fluency to thrive in diverse environments; goal setting to dream big and achieve even bigger.

As educators, parents, and society, our role is not simply to hand over a backpack and hope it gets filled. It's to guide, support, and help pack it with intention, ensuring that when our children step into the future, they do so ready not just to succeed, but to thrive.

For more information, visit: www.kingsinterhigh.com

Below: King's InterHigh student, Varun





Education Solutions for the Internationally Mobile Family

In an increasingly connected world, more families are finding themselves on the move – whether chasing professional opportunities, embracing new cultural experiences, or navigating global uncertainty, writes **Charmaine Samakande** from Rugby School Japan.



Above: Students from Rugby School Japan

For many of these globally mobile households, frequent relocations have become a way of life. While this nomadic lifestyle offers rich rewards, it also brings a unique set of challenges, especially when it comes to providing children with continuity, stability, and a sense of belonging.

As parents seek educational solutions that can keep pace with their global lifestyle, many are asking: how can we support our children's development amid regular changes in location? This article explores the rise of globally mobile families, the complex decisions they face, and how the right school can offer far more than just academic consistency – it can offer a home away from home.

THE RISE OF THE INTERNATIONALLY MOBILE FAMILY

International mobility is becoming a defining feature of modern life. Millennials and Gen Z, in particular, are leading the charge, drawn to flexible lifestyles that prioritise experiences over possessions. Whether working remotely, studying abroad, or pursuing personal and professional growth, a growing number of individuals and families are embracing a mobile way of life.

The digital nomad movement – once a fringe concept – has rapidly expanded, with projections suggesting the number of digital nomads could reach 1 billion by 2035. In fact, according to 76%

of Gen Zers and Millennials, the new American Dream for young Americans is to live and work anywhere one chooses.

Motivations for this lifestyle range from a desire to explore new cultures, to safety concerns in home countries, to a search for more affordable living. For families, the appeal often includes providing their children with a global perspective, enriched learning experiences, and the freedom to raise their families in environments that align with their values.

Among this mobile population is a growing cohort of “anywhere workers” – knowledge-based professionals with stable jobs who are no longer tethered to a fixed location. A study by Lonely Planet and freelance platform Fiverr

revealed that of the 1,400 people surveyed across 67 countries, 54% identified as anywhere workers – and remarkably, 70% of them were parents travelling with children.

THE STRUGGLES OF FAMILIES IN NOMADIC LIFESTYLES

But while the lifestyle may seem idyllic, it comes with its own set of complexities. One concerned mother on a digital nomad forum put it simply: “I’m considering traveling around with our little family while we work, but I’m concerned about not providing my son with the stability of one place and the same friends.”

Children, in particular, thrive on familiarity and routine. Constantly shifting time zones, environments, and social circles can take a toll on their emotional wellbeing and academic progress. As Dr. Jody LeVos, Chief Learning Officer at children’s learning platform BEGiN, explains: “Children typically crave a sense of familiarity. Creating that can be a challenge when time zones, physical surroundings, and social contacts are constantly changing.”

Beyond the logistical hurdles, nomadic families often grapple with deeper emotional and relational challenges. Without a fixed home base, building lasting friendships and support networks becomes a recurring uphill climb – not just for parents, but for young people too. Each new location means starting over, and children may miss out on the steady friendships and community ties that many of their peers enjoy.

While some children develop impressive adaptability and confidence, others may struggle with a sense of uprootedness and anxiety. Parents, too, may carry quiet guilt – wondering whether their children are missing out on the best parts of a more traditional upbringing, such as knowing the neighbour’s dog, celebrating birthdays with the same friends, or staying close to extended family.

Education adds another layer of complexity. Homeschooling and distance learning can provide flexibility, but they often place additional burdens on working parents and can leave children without a consistent peer group.

While these options work for some, others are beginning to consider a different solution, one that offers structure and stability amid global movement: boarding school.

BOARDING SCHOOLS AS A GROWING SOLUTION

While homeschooling or distance learning can work well for some globally mobile families, they are not without their challenges. As highlighted in Why Many Digital Nomad Families Fail: The True Challenges, many parents experience significant physical and emotional strain when trying to juggle full-time work with home education. Children, too, may suffer from social isolation and a lack of consistency, which are critical for their social and emotional development.

Boarding school might not be the first solution that comes to mind but for many families, it’s a compelling one worth considering. These schools offer the consistency and routine that children need, while also providing high-quality academics, strong pastoral care, and a sense of belonging.

Still, many parents hesitate due to persistent misconceptions about boarding schools. Common concerns include homesickness, lack of parental involvement, or the idea that boarding is a last resort for troubled children. But today’s boarding schools are worlds away from these outdated stereotypes:

- Homesickness is real, but boarding schools are well-equipped with staff and systems to help children adjust and thrive in their new environment.
- Parental involvement is encouraged, with regular updates, family weekends, and open lines of communication.
- Social isolation is addressed through welcoming student communities, co-curricular activities, and peer support networks.
- Lack of individual attention is mitigated by small class sizes and a strong focus on personalised learning.
- Family relationships can actually be strengthened, as many children grow in independence and confidence, enhancing the quality of time spent together.

PROVIDING CHILDREN WITH STABILITY

Far from being relics of the past, modern boarding schools are nurturing, forward-looking environments designed to support the whole child. They offer the stability, structure, and continuity that nomadic lifestyles often lack, giving children a strong sense of routine, belonging, and community.

Schools like Rugby School Japan belong to a new generation of globally-minded, values-based boarding schools that understand the unique needs of internationally mobile families. Drawing on British educational traditions while embracing the diversity of international life, RSJ provides a stable home base amid global transitions. Situated in Japan – one of the world’s safest and most popular destinations – it offers families peace of mind alongside cultural richness. With a focus on inquiry-based learning, wellbeing, and personal growth, RSJ delivers academic rigour and emotional support in equal measure.

Like other schools in this evolving category, RSJ blends heritage and innovation to meet the expectations of modern families. For those navigating complex international paths, these schools offer not only consistency but also a strong foundation for life beyond the classroom.

CONCLUSION

In a world where change is constant and mobility is increasingly common, families are seeking more than just academic continuity – they are looking for emotional stability, personal growth, and a true sense of belonging for their children. Boarding schools, far from being outdated institutions, have evolved into dynamic, enriching communities that understand the needs of families on the move.

For parents navigating the complexities of international life, boarding schools can offer not just a consistent education, but a holistic upbringing that prepares children to thrive – wherever life may take them.

In many ways, they are becoming one of the most forward-thinking solutions for globally mobile families, offering both roots and wings. •

www.rugbyschooljapan.ed.jp

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EAGLE WEEK AT OASIS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

WHERE YOUNG LEADERS LEARN TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Oasis International School – Kuala Lumpur is an international school that prioritizes more than just academics. OIS offers something uniquely impactful. Through this innovative program called EAGLE Week, students don’t just learn about global challenges—they step into real-world experiences that prepare them to lead with empathy, critical thinking, and purpose, writes the Community Relations Department at OIS.

As Mrs. Sarah Ong, Middle School Service-Learning Coordinator, puts it: “One of the best ways to cultivate empathy, critical thinking, and a commitment to serve others and the community is to take our learning outside of the classroom and apply it to the real world.” EAGLE Week is a cornerstone of the school’s curriculum that reflects this philosophy. Each year, students across elementary, middle, and high school engage in immersive, hands-on service learning experiences – locally and internationally – that align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It’s a powerful way to teach students that leadership starts early and that even the smallest action can be a catalyst for meaningful change.

PRACTICAL LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

During this year’s EAGLE Week, students explored a wide range of global issues: coral reef preservation, social enterprise, accessible healthcare, food insecurity, and more. These were not just classroom discussions – students stepped into communities, ecosystems, and organizations to see the impact of their learning in action.

Elementary students were introduced to sustainability through activities focused on the environment, health, and education. From field trips to Taman Tugu and Zoo Negara to campus-based recycling projects, they learned what it means to be responsible global citizens. Even our youngest learners got involved – Kindergarteners explored the school’s composting system and discovered how Black Soldier Fly larvae help turn waste into fertilizer.

Middle school students took their learning a step further:

- Grade 6 focused on “Zero Hunger,” volunteering at a soup kitchen, and building teamwork through outdoor leadership activities at Tadam Hill Resort.
- Grade 7 explored Climate Action and Life on Land through a rugged expedition in Gopeng involving hiking, whitewater rafting, and bamboo farm visits to understand sustainability and biodiversity.
- Grade 8 took a deep dive into Life Below Water during their trip to Pulau Tenggol, snorkeling coral reefs, studying marine ecosystems, and learning about marine conservation firsthand.

High school students expanded their reach even further. Some traveled to Indonesia for the school’s first international service trip, participating in environmental and educational outreach. Others remained in Malaysia, working on coral reef regeneration in Tioman Island or collaborating with organizations in Kuala Lumpur on projects focused on health, social justice, and economic development. Some even launched a rooftop garden project right on campus – demonstrating how global thinking starts with local action.

Graduating Senior Muhammad Haziq Shamsul Fitri shared, “EAGLE Week challenged me in ways I hadn’t expected. I grew by stepping out of my comfort zone to actively engage with conservation work, and the experience sparked a stronger commitment to environmental sustainability in my own life.”

MORE THAN JUST AN EDUCATION

In a landscape filled with international schools, Oasis International School stands apart by developing the heart, not just the mind. Through EAGLE Week and other service learning programs, students gain knowledge and hands-on experience to become change-makers in their communities and beyond.

This kind of experiential learning is more than an educational trend. It is a vital way to raise children who understand their role in the world and take action to shape it. From solving community problems to caring for the planet, OIS students are learning that leadership doesn’t wait until adulthood – it starts with compassion, curiosity, and the courage to serve.

For expat families looking for a school where values, vision, and global responsibility are central to their child’s education, Oasis International School offers

more than a classroom. It offers a launchpad for young leaders ready to make a difference – one act of service at a time.

EAGLE Week was a transformational time of growth and global citizenship. These shared experiences not only strengthened their understanding of global issues but also deepened their commitment to serving the community around them. At OIS, service learning continues to be a cornerstone of character formation, and the school community looks forward to building on this foundation for years to come.

To learn more about how EAGLE Week is shaping the next generation of compassionate, capable leaders, we invite you to explore our Service Learning program at www.ois.edu.my/learning/service-learning. You’ll find detailed insights into our hands-on approach and how students across all grade levels are making a real-world impact. Better yet, come see it for yourself – schedule a campus tour by reaching out to us at admissions@ois.edu.my. We’d love to show you how Oasis International School is raising globally minded students who lead with purpose.

www.ois.edu.my

Left & below: students taking part in EAGLE week at Oasis International School

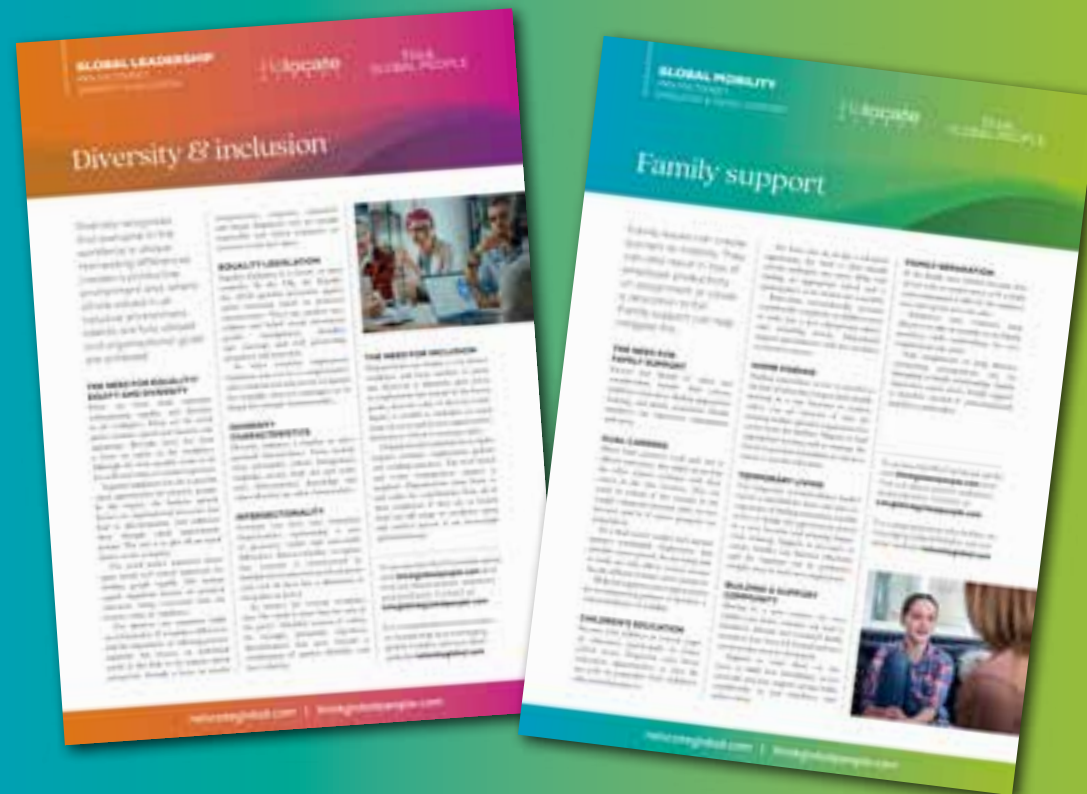


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“With fast-change comes opportunity. We're widening our reach into global leadership and new markets.”

FIONA MURCHIE, MANAGING EDITOR, RELOCATE GLOBAL





Celebrating excellence: Highlights from the Think Global People & Relocate Awards

The prestigious Think Global People & Relocate Awards Ceremony 2025, brought together international leaders, mobility experts, educators and HR professionals in the beautiful and historic venue of the Glaziers Hall in London. The inspiring evening, hosted by Managing Editor, **Fiona Murchie** recognised organisations that are breaking the mould in their industry sectors, challenging the status quo and embracing our new world of work and global talent mobility. **Marianne Curphey** reports.



This year's awards were held against a backdrop of significant global change and complexity. Fiona Murchie encouraged attendees to engage in meaningful dialogue, share insights, and make the most of networking opportunities throughout the evening. She explained how important it was to build connections, especially in difficult times. Fiona referenced the thought-provoking discussions held earlier in the day during the Global Leaders Forum, which had debated the future of global mobility with a distinguished panel of thought leaders and experts across the industry, facilitated by journalist Marianne Curphey. Highlights from the Forum are available via video and now feature on both the Relocate Global and Think Global People platforms and are included in a magazine supplement.

Attendees at the awards dinner represented a wide variety of global mobility, international leaders, entrepreneurs and educators, with many coming from the United States, Spain, Ireland and other parts of Europe to receive their award. The awards were facilitated by Jayne Constantinis, experienced BBC TV announcer and business reporter on BBC World.

The annual Think Global People & Relocate Awards showcased and celebrated achievement across the dynamic international management, HR and mobility sectors, and it was fitting that the keynote speaker for the evening was Professor Dame Vlatka Ariaana Hlupic, author and creator of 'The Management Shift'. Professor Hlupic's work is transforming the way organisations operate and how leaders manage their people and the culture of their organisation. A distinguished academic and award-winning advisor to CEOs, she is also an author, entrepreneur, and advocate for healthy workplace culture. Just two months prior to the event, she was honoured with a damehood for her exceptional contributions to leadership and transformation.

The Head Judge for the awards was Dr Sue Shortland, who led a panel of independent experts representing the diverse sectors that shape the modern global workforce – ranging from mobility and business to HR, technology, and education. Her leadership and professionalism ensured a rigorous and inclusive judging process.

A NIGHT OF CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE & INNOVATION

The Think Global People & Relocate Awards continues to champion outstanding achievements, fostering a community committed to purposeful leadership, innovation, and the wellbeing of globally mobile professionals and their families. Starting off the awards, Jayne Constantinis noted how the original building Glaziers Hall was destroyed in the Great Fire of London in 1666, and it then took 300 years to relocate to the current building close to London Bridge. The venue was steeped in history and had spectacular views over the River Thames towards the City of London and Fishmongers Hall, having originally been sited at Fye Foot Lane near Cannon Street before it was burned down. ●



"This company is only two and a half years old, so we're a baby startup. It's amazing!"
WINNER



"I've absolutely loved judging across multiple categories, and seeing the passion, innovation and creativity that you provide to all of your people."
JUDGE



On the banks of the River Thames at Glaziers Hall with stunning views over London, we celebrated the Think Global People and Relocate Awards. Innovation, creativity and ambition are flying high for a global sector that embraces change and understands the complexities of managing and supporting people to flourish in international markets and locations.





FROM APATHY TO ENGAGEMENT

How to make changes that benefit your organisation & your employees via the Management Shift

When **Professor Dame Vlatka Ariaana Hlupic** took the stage at the Think Global People & Relocate Gala Dinner & Awards Ceremony at Glaziers Hall in London, she didn't begin her keynote speech with statistics or corporate jargon, writes **Marianne Curphey**.

Instead, she began with a story of how as a young girl in Croatia, she had set up a homemade blackboard in her living room in order to help her friends with their homework after school.

"That was the beginning of my conscious leadership journey, and of a life of service, empowerment and education," she explained. Professor Hlupic then summarised her findings from three decades of academic and corporate research, and explained how different layers of organisational culture can motivate or destroy employee enthusiasm and business innovation. Her message was clear – if you change the way you lead, you can dramatically improve innovation, performance, and profit, and see real change within a short time period in your professional life and in your organisation. The journey towards more inclusive leadership and a happier and more productive workforce is made possible by what she calls The Management Shift.

THE CHANGE TO LEADERSHIP PRACTICE THAT DELIVERS OUTSTANDING RESULTS

Professor Hlupic has distilled years of interdisciplinary research into a simple yet transformative model, which is a four to five level framework that maps how individual leaders and organisational cultures evolve.

"Every level is characterised by specific thinking patterns, and by emotions, energy, the language used, leadership style and organisational outcomes," she explained. "We can't skip the levels. We can only go up one level at a time, but there are pockets of different levels within the same organisation. Once you understand this, you will not be able to unlearn it or unsee it. You will start seeing the world through lens of these five levels."

Her methodology begins at Level 1, where organisations have a lifeless mindset and an apathetic culture. Think fear, toxicity, and stagnation. Employees at this level often suffer in silence, and there is no innovation or collaboration, no sharing of ideas, and no enthusiasm for work or workplace culture.

"Not much gets done," she said. "There is a lot of fear and worry and blame. It is a very unhealthy place, and nobody likes to be there. People just want to escape."

Level 2 is barely better. It is where employees do the minimum. They show up in body, but their minds are long gone.

"They would rather do anything else but being at work," she said. A quick nod to the television series *The Office* explains the point – these workplaces have a culture of clock-watching, cynicism and avoidance.

"At Level 2, the mindset is reluctant, and culture is stagnating, and this is where people do a bare minimum, just to be paid," Professor Hlupic says. "They bring their

body to work, but their heart and mind stay somewhere else. They will sneak out for long lunch breaks."

Then comes Level 3. It is orderly, efficient, and appears on the surface to be productive. However, if you dig deeper you will find rigid control, micromanagement, and a business paying a heavy price, that is, stifled innovation and talent that is planning to look elsewhere for job and personal fulfilment.

"Knowledge workers don't like to be micromanaged," Professor Hlupic warned. "The research shows that they will go somewhere else, even for a lower salary."

At Level 3, organisations are often led by big bosses who have big egos as well, she said, and who manage rules and regulations and who control the culture.

"Sometimes we need elements of Level Three for safety, security and compliance purposes," Professor Hlupic said. "But if we are stuck at level three as organisation, there will be lack of innovation, and there will be lack of purpose and passion for work. In most cases, you will not be able to retain talent, especially knowledge workers."

She explained that knowledge workers don't like to be micromanaged. They need to be treated as associates, not as subordinates. If they are not treated as individuals with needs they will just withdraw silently their cooperation and go somewhere else.

The answer to this leadership and corporate malaise and waste of human talent is Level 4, where the real transformation takes place. Here, the mindset is enthusiastic, and the culture is innovative and collaborative. It is a working environment where trust replaces fear, purpose fuels performance, and teams don't just survive, but thrive and work together.

"When the shift to Level Four happens, the keywords are trust, transparency, purpose, collaboration, giving back to society, having fun, working on something bigger than ourselves," she explained.

According to Professor Hlupic, this is where everything improves – innovation, engagement, wellbeing, and profit. She has seen profits double within a year when the organisations she works with fully embrace this shift.

"The big shift is when leaders, employees and the entire culture shifts from Level Three to Level Four," she explained. "Then something magical happens and everything changes and everything gets better. Not only that, we create happier and healthier workplaces, and that is priceless, because we know from many research studies that people get sick from stress from work."

She emphasised that leadership really is important, and that it can change lives and change organisations. At Level Four, compassionate and insightful leadership enables you to lead from London, Nairobi or Lagos or anywhere in the world.

"The big shift is when leaders, employees and the entire culture shifts from Level Three to Level Four. Then something magical happens and everything changes and everything gets better."

PROFESSOR DAME VLATKA HLUPIC

Professor Dame Vlatka Ariaana Hlupic speaking at the 2025 Think Global People & Relocate Gala Dinner & Awards Ceremony





“Be aware how powerful each and every one of you are. You can start to create the ripples of change. I have always been of the mindset: be the change that you want to see in the world.”

PROFESSOR DAME VLATKA HLUPIC



“There is a choice of being stuck at lower levels and creating miserable employees who want to escape, or creating happy, healthy, thriving workplace with conscious leadership based on the values of compassion, collaboration, networking, integrity, all these values and purpose,” she said.

“We know that companies that are based on purpose, are not only more productive and engaging places, but also they have more customers. Customers want to buy from companies that are driven by a higher purpose, and from companies that want to make this world a better place.

“These principles are borderless and they are timeless. You can take them with you, like I took mine when I relocated from Croatia to the UK. Leadership is not about what we do, it is about who we are.”

A LEADERSHIP REVOLUTION THAT STARTS WITH YOU

For younger generations, this is even more vital. In response to a question from the audience about Gen Z, many of whom are about to join the workforce, Professor Hlupic explained: “They want purpose. They want feedback. They want opportunities to grow. And if they don’t get that, they will move to another job.”

The culture of an organisation is also strategically important, she said. It defines the mission and the purpose of the business, and the experience that employees will have when they join. That is why Professor Hlupic has developed an Organisational Health Scan, which is a diagnostic tool that helps companies identify cultural pain points and take action to improve.

Professor Hlupic explained that although this shift might sound as though it only works if managers and the C-suite embrace it, she emphasised how each one of us has the power to act as catalysts for the shift to begin. Change doesn’t just start from the top, it can also spread from every level in an organisation. Professor Hlupic shared a striking example from her book Humane Capital, in which she interviewed 58 leaders globally from all over the world, where a mid-level manager

in a French pharmaceutical company challenged the status quo with a bold email about board diversity. Her message went viral internally. At first the CEO ignored it, but it had started a ripple, and months later, she had a new role, a published book, and then later became an independent consultant and received an award from the French president.

“It all started with one short email,” Professor Hlupic said. “Be aware how powerful each and every one of you are. You can start to create the ripples of change. I have always been of the mindset: be the change that you want to see in the world.”

LEADERSHIP WITHOUT BORDERS BUT WITH A CHANGE IN MINDSET

Professor Hlupic has applied her Management Shift model with great success in multinational organisations across continents.

“We can relocate the mindset,” she said. “We can give them the same vocabulary and align them around the same level four culture, regardless of their national cultures.”

Although everyone can contribute to change within organisations, it is the leaders who can make the real systemic difference, but only if they are willing to change the culture and themselves in the process.

“It is very important that it starts from the top, and then it spreads elsewhere in the organisation,” she explained. “The Management Shift as a method and as a system for transformation is agnostic to any culture, location, industry, or size of organisation. I have worked with multinational organisations globally, as well as smaller businesses.”

As she closed her speech, Professor Hlupic offered a challenge – not just to leaders, but to everyone. “Let’s shift. Let’s connect. Let’s lead with conscious leadership to make this world a better place. When I relocated from Croatia to London I took all these conscious leadership principles with me, which are based on service, empowerment and compassion.

“If leaders operate from Level Four behaviour and language, it will spread like a ripple, and then they will elevate others.”

Professor Hlupic was the keynote speaker for the annual Think Global People & Relocate Awards. These prestigious awards showcase and celebrate achievement across the dynamic international management, HR and mobility sectors. The awards evening was a fantastic time to network, have lively conversations and engage with colleagues in the industry. •

THREE TAKEAWAYS FOR BUSINESS LEADERS

- You can make a difference at every level of your organisation
- Cultural change benefits business, profit and employees
- Embracing the process of the Management Shift can lead to profound change and innovation in personal and professional terms





Human relationships & collaboration

GLOBAL MOBILITY & LEADERSHIP TRENDS HIGHLIGHTED

The 2025 Think Global People & Relocate Awards offered a vivid snapshot of the dynamic changes that are taking place in global mobility and the way that the industry is innovating and rising to the challenge, writes **Marianne Curphey**.

Across many of the categories, from destination services to talent management and technological innovation, the winning entries highlighted key trends shaping the future of work, the employee experience, and how to manage organisations and people effectively in an increasingly mobile and borderless world.

The Think Global People & Relocate Awards have once again highlighted the pivotal role that people and purpose play in global

mobility. Across a diverse range of categories, from education and family support to ESG and research, the qualities of empathy, connection, and adaptability were recognised.

HUMAN-CENTRED MOBILITY IN A TECHNOLOGICAL WORLD

A key theme from this year's awards was the increasing focus on the human experience in mobility. This was particularly evident in the Destination Services Provider of the Year awards, both global and local.

Santa Fe Relocation was recognised for its “human-focused approach,” which combined innovation with client care and cultural sensitivity. Meanwhile, NYC Navigator's local category win reflected a growing trend toward empathetic, personalised support, particularly for families and assignees adjusting to new environments. Their community-focused, multilingual, and female-led team reflects an ongoing shift in the sector towards wellbeing and emotional support for relocating employees and their families.

TECHNOLOGY & AI AS CATALYSTS FOR TRANSFORMATION

The growing role of artificial intelligence and analytics in global mobility was recognised in The Cozm's win in the Excellence in Technology or Analytics category. The company's AI-powered compliance platform demonstrates how digital innovation is reshaping mobility functions, and how back-end processes can be speeded up to enable organisations to be more agile when it comes to visa applications and placements, doing a job in a matter of minutes which might previously have taken days or weeks to complete.

As Olu Euba, Associate Director, Global Talent Mobility of WPP, noted when presenting the award, AI is not only transforming advertising but is now core to collaboration, ideation, and operations in global mobility. The

entries all showed how they were implementing smart, scalable solutions that can free mobility teams from their repetitive tasks and growing administrative burden and allow them to focus on strategic impact. This then enables them to influence the business in a more strategic way, and build human relationships both internally and externally. This will be particularly important in the future as mobility staff and departments are now taking on a wider role and are often being asked to manage requests to work remotely as well as managing the logistics of moving families across international borders.

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP & HEALTHY WORKPLACES

The Excellence in Talent Management award, won by Icon, reflected another emerging trend around the need for leaders to create inclusive, connected workplace cultures across hybrid and dispersed workforces. Icon impressed judges with its authentic “people-first” approach, integrating remote and on-site employees into a workplace culture that included everyone.

This recognition aligns with the broader leadership conversations held at the event's Global Leadership Forum and echoed in Professor Vlatka Hlupic's keynote speech for the awards, which emphasised the importance of purpose-driven cultures and emotionally intelligent leadership as essential for retaining talent, making workplaces purposeful and

improving business performance. Professor Dame Vlatka Hlupic, who is the author and creator of The Management Shift, emphasised in her keynote speech for the awards how important it was to create a culture of human engagement in the workplace, and how leaders can transform their organisations if they move away from a ‘command and control’ model to one of inclusive leadership.

THE GLOBAL MOBILITY FUNCTION AS A BUSINESS ENABLER

Winners in policy and relocation categories, such as A Y & J Solicitors and Synergy Global Housing, demonstrated that mobility is no longer just a support function but a strategic enabler of growth. A Y & J Solicitors was praised for their ‘bold vision and leadership’ in UK immigration, showcasing how specialist firms can lead with innovation and long-term thinking when winning the Excellence in Global Mobility: Global Policy Design or Implementation. Synergy's serviced apartment solutions which won the Best Serviced Apartment award, reflected the growing complexity and demands of international assignments, where governance, sustainability, and employee wellbeing must go hand-in-hand, and where specialists can help companies find accommodation in new regions and cities, sometimes in remote and unconventional housing.



Above: Excellence in Education – Schools award winners, International School of London (ISL)

INNOVATION, INCLUSION & PURPOSE

Whether through digital platforms or service models, what united this year's winners was a focus on the human aspect of innovation. From startups like The Cozm to established players like Santa Fe and Synergy, organisations were recognised not just for their technological advances or operational excellence, but for aligning those innovations with values, inclusion, and global responsibility.

MOVING FAMILIES WELL FOR A SUCCESSFUL ASSIGNMENT

Education emerged as a central factor in successful relocations, because assignments can fail if a family does not settle and integrate into their new community. In the Excellence in Education – Schools category, the International School of London (ISL) was recognised for its excellence in education for mobile families, not simply for academic provision, but for its 'authentic community connections' and a deep commitment to student wellbeing during transition. This shows how educational institutions

can help create stability for relocating families, which in turn supports employee engagement and talent retention.

In Excellence in Education – Consultancy, Quintessentially Education was praised for providing bespoke homeschooling options to relocating families. Judges praised their pastoral care, international reach, and ability to deliver high-quality outcomes in diverse settings. Their model exemplifies how flexible, personalised services can reduce stress for mobile families, enabling employers to offer a range of support packages to help them settle in.

This theme was also emphasised in the Excellence in Family support award for BiCortex Languages & Translations. It showed how responsive, personalised service can help with a positive relocation experience.

Beyond family and education, the awards also showcased thought leadership and excellence in environmental, social and governance (ESG) policies. Santa Fe Relocation's research on wellbeing among global mobility professionals tackled an often overlooked aspect

of the industry around the health and wellbeing of those delivering global mobility services.

The award for Best Book went to Force for Good by Dr John Blakey, a compelling reminder that purposeful leadership is not only desirable but essential in today's uncertain global climate. Meanwhile, Eres Relocation Europe set a benchmark for ESG standards, from pro bono legal advice to strong internal governance, proving that doing good and doing well are no longer mutually exclusive.

The 2025 Think Global People & Relocate Awards reveal a global mobility sector undergoing profound transformation. Technology will change the way global mobility teams work, but done well, it can augment human roles rather than replace them, as Benjamin Oghene, CEO of The Cozm, described in the Global Leaders Forum panel discussion. Other leading trends emerged around support for relocating families, the importance of education for community and well being, and the importance of supporting global mobility professionals themselves at a time of huge pressure and an increasing workload.



Above: Keynote speaker Professor Dame Vlatka Hlupic

By embracing excellence and learning from each other, global mobility can build human relationships and the qualities of trust, empathy and connection, something which Artificial Intelligence (AI) cannot replicate. While technology will change the way the industry operates, at its heart global mobility is about people, families and connections. That is why the Think Global People and Relocate Awards are so important, because they provide a focus for discussion, collaboration and community. As Fiona Murchie, founder and managing director of Relocate Global and Think Global People, said in her closing remarks, "being part of this community, meeting together for networking, discussions and collaborations will help us all navigate this new and challenging work of global mobility".

To continue the discussion, watch the Awards highlights, see the panel discussion on the Global Leaders Forum, and join the community at Think Global People for exclusive access to thought-leadership, events and articles.





AWARD CATEGORY: EXCELLENCE IN GLOBAL MOBILITY, GLOBAL POLICY DESIGN OR IMPLEMENTATION

WINNER: A Y & J SOLICITORS



Yash Dubal, Founder & Director, A Y & J Solicitors

The first award of the evening was presented by Tosin Adenrele, Global Mobility Regional Lead EMEA, IQVIA.

Tosin has been a member of the judging panel for five years and was excited to present the first award of the evening.

"I was particularly impressed with the quality of the entries for this category," she said. "That actually made it quite challenging from a judging perspective to narrow it down. I was inspired by the innovation, the cultural and organisational values, as well as a strong focus on customer service delivery, which was impressive. So all of the entrants you should be proud, and thank you for entering."

Awards evening host, Jayne Constantinis explained the judges' decision. "AY&J Solicitors impressed the judges with their innovative use of technology, commitment to staff development, and exceptional client service. Their bold vision and leadership in UK immigration mark them as true pioneers in the sector."

Yash Dubal, Founder and Director of A Y & J Solicitors, accepted the first trophy of the evening with pride.

"This is for the entire team at AY&J Solicitors. We've been doing this for over 15 years, and it hasn't

been an easy journey. I'm very, very grateful for the amazing team we have. They made all this possible. So thanks to the A Y & J Solicitors team, and thank you, Relocate Global."

INNOVATION MEETS IMPACT: A BOLD VISION FOR UK IMMIGRATION

The judges were impressed by their innovation, "The turnarounds of immigration cases are impressive and will be groundbreaking for companies who need to deploy staff quickly overseas. 24-hour responses with a guarantee of a discount if they fail is a clever approach and an attractive proposition."

The judges were impressed by some excellent examples of cost savings achieved by opening Indian operations, which were part of their success story. WhatsApp communications were also seen as a refreshing alternative to typical 3-day turnaround responses via email.

CULTURE, COMMITMENT & CAREER GROWTH DRIVE SUCCESS

Leveraging technology through various digital media platforms and AI was innovative and resourceful.

"With excellent customer support and the effective use of technology to enhance service speed and delivery, along with a strong emphasis on staff career development, this firm has a very bright future. It is recognised as a leading expert in UK immigration", the judges concluded.

The significant growth in the company, along with a paternalistic approach to the organisation's culture (including a 30% increase in employee satisfaction) and staff development, was evidenced in the submission.

One judge commented, "I absolutely loved the submission video – AY&J's passion for radical change, striving for innovation and career opportunities for all their staff provides a very compelling story and competitive edge in the immigration industry".

www.ayjsolicitors.com

"This firm is not simply
about immigration solutions –
it's about changing lives."

CATEGORY JUDGE

AWARD CATEGORY: DESTINATION SERVICES PROVIDER OF THE YEAR – GLOBAL

WINNER: SANTA FE RELOCATION

This was a hotly contested category as it is every year as the destination services providers respond to growing complexity and the reality of ever changing economic and geo political situations. These impact on the needs of international assignees and their families as well as the growing demand from project teams, business travellers and entrepreneurs in pursuit of new markets.

A NEW GLOBAL STANDARD IN RELOCATION CARE

Santa Fe Relocation's entry explained their mission to redefine Destination Services by embedding mental health into every stage of the relocation journey. This people-first approach rather than being logistics-led improves assignment success, reduces early return and delivers lasting impact for clients they affirm.

The Santa Fe Relocation model is applied locally, regionally and globally with the leadership team encouraging consultations to act with empathy, initiative and creativity. They claim, caring for the people rather than being a soft extra is the reason assignments succeed.



Fruzsina Hodson, Senior Manager Group
Destination Services, Santa Fe Relocation

Explaining that relocation is a disruption whereby employees can face isolation, culture shock and family strain their solution was to offer a formal partnership with BetterGo.

ACCESS TO TRAINED MOBILITY MENTORS

This partnership provides access to trained Mobility Mentors, professionals with experience in counselling, coaching or therapy. The bespoke service provides an additional layer of personal wellbeing support which complements Santa Fe Relocation's destination services.

An example was given of how a UK to Japan move was turned around a through targeted spousal support, practical neighbourhood connections and one-to-one mentoring.

By recognising emotional triggers, the bespoke service can prevent costly escalations before they happen saving clients time, money and lost talent.

The award winner's trophy was collected on behalf of Santa Fe Relocation trophy by a delighted Fruzsina Hodson, Senior Manager Group Destination Services, Santa Fe Relocation.

"I would like to thank all of our teams in 39 countries and everybody in this room and the judging panel for this award. We have put mental health and mental health support for our teams, our clients and our assignees at the forefront of our support and this award recognising this commitment to our clients and assignees means everything to us", said a beaming Fruzsina Hodson.

www.santaferelo.com

"Santa Fe Relocation impressed
the judges with their unique,
human-focused approach
to relocation. By integrating
emotional support into their
services and partnering with
BetterGo, they've delivered
real innovation, cost savings,
and outstanding care for
clients globally; showcasing a
truly supportive and forward-
thinking culture."

CATEGORY JUDGE





AWARD CATEGORY: DESTINATION SERVICES PROVIDER OF THE YEAR – LOCAL

WINNER: NYC NAVIGATOR

Category judge, Tosin Adenrele, Global Mobility Regional Lead EMEA, IQVIA and fellow members of the judging panel were clearly struck by the calibre of this year's entries. She explained how as an in house corporate, global mobility professional, you have great expectations of your service providers.

Brenda Levis, president of NYC Navigator had come over from the US especially to attend the Gala Dinner and Awards Ceremony, so hopes were riding high.

The judges praised NYC Navigator, "for its personalised, empathetic approach to relocation, led by a passionate, female-led team. Their focus on community, philanthropy, and authentic, multilingual support creates a truly meaningful and successful relocation experience for clients and their families."

CARING FOR TRANSFEREES

Brenda Levis responded by saying, "It's a pleasure to be here from New York today, and I'm going to volunteer to be relocated to the UK, and London in particular, after walking around these past couple of days, it's been



Brenda Levis, President, NYC Navigator

a real pleasure to be here. I also want to thank the judges for your consideration of our entry, and then also to my peers that I am very honoured to be in the same category with. They're all outstanding providers, and I'm really excited to bring this home to my team, who put a lot of heart and dedication into caring for our transferees. So, thank you. Thank you".

NYC's entry was praised for the number of wellness-oriented initiatives mentioned. For example, a walking group that promotes health and a compass club offered to assignees to foster connections. A number of events take place which bring assignees together including hiking, meals, and a women's day lunch. The approach to wellness is a reflection of the in-house approach to relocation. Destination services are provided by employees and not outsourced to consultants and this fosters a warm relationship with clients.

The programmes are tailored to accommodate various budgets from the modest to the opulent. Comprehensive support is provided throughout the relocation process. Education assistance is provided for children and career coaching for accompanying partners.

IMPORTANCE OF PHILANTHROPY

There is considerable emphasis placed on the role of philanthropy with staff encouraged to participate in local initiatives. This was well illustrated in the entry with a page of engaging photographs. They also achieved an Eco-Vadis award.

One judge particularly highlighted the way NYC Navigator leveraged their team's experience to foster a family-like community which enhanced the relocation experience for clients and their families throughout the relocation process. This support was on offer throughout the assignment and could prove to be a lifeline in times of uncertainty.

There is a real sense of partnership with clients to maintain a successful assignment no matter the budget". ♦

www.nycnavigator.com

"NYC Navigator stands out with its female-led, team-first approach, offering a highly personalised and empathetic relocation experience."

CATEGORY JUDGE

AWARD CATEGORY: BEST SERVICED APARTMENT PROVIDER

WINNER: SYNERGY

Serviced apartments, business travel, and corporate housing are sophisticated, fast-growing industry sectors. Over the last couple of years, business travellers have increasingly come under the remit of global mobility departments. In addition, companies are expanding into new markets and responding to changes in the supply chain, with an increase in demand for second- and third-tier destinations, as well as new underdeveloped markets. Governance, duty of care and wellbeing are also part of the remit for business traveller employees, international assignees and new recruits. The complexity of new ways of working, including hybrid working and localisation, also needs to be addressed by the serviced apartment sector, which offers huge opportunities but also presents challenges in new locations. The need to be agile and capitalise on creative connections and a wide range of stakeholders has never been greater.

Against this background, the winner of the Best Serviced Apartment Provider, Synergy once again rose to the challenge to win this award for the fourth consecutive year.

SYNERGY'S STANDOUT YEAR

Synergy's submission summarised 2024 as an exceptional year for the company. They highlighted expanding their operational presence, investing in technology, data security, sustainability, and associate development, while simultaneously refining their approach to VIP groups and crisis management. This resulted in Synergy increasing their revenue and the number of new clients it works with.

Synergy has made considerable efforts to reduce carbon emissions and provide more sustainable services. This included setting a new Carbon Net Zero Target for 2045. Achieving a silver EcoVadis rating, putting synergy in the top 15% of 130,000+ companies. In addition, they piloted a "Green Leaf" programme to reduce emissions across their supply chain.

LEADERSHIP IN ACTION: A HUMAN-CENTRED, CRISIS-READY APPROACH

Examples of leadership in the sector included hiring a Chief Technology Officer to develop their new SAPPHIRE accommodation programme. An expanded crisis management team responded to the LA fires, the Lebanon escalation, the US hurricane, and the Myanmar earthquake, reflecting their position in the global market.

This company is a leader in the field with energy, passion, and the determination to deliver sustainable goals and customer service. Financial results and growth demonstrate they are doing things exceptionally well with purpose. Crisis management and client data protection is a priority for globally mobile clients and are



Sofia Oragano, Senior Director
International Sales, Synergy

leaders in fulfilling relocation needs. They demonstrate creative connections with their stakeholders and clients confirm they feel in safe hands from an organisation with a wealth of knowledge in tune with current needs and locations.

As the judges said, "Synergy impressed the judges with their commitment to secure sustainable and high-quality service department solutions, their innovative, client-focused approach, operational excellence and global crisis support team showcase true leadership and forward thinking in today's complex world".

The trophy was collected by Sofia Oragano, Senior Director, International Sales of Synergy. In her response, she said, "Thank you for the accolade. We work hard, we work with purpose, and we're truly delighted to bring this home. I'd like to thank my team more than anything".

After the awards ceremony, Sofia spoke about what lies at the real heart of the assignee experience. She explained, "I think at the heart of it, it's them being happy. It's about moving somewhere that's foreign, and they want to feel familiar. We can cater to their individual preferences to ensure that as soon as they move to their host destination, they feel comfortable, can settle in, and are essentially going to be productive and effective." ♦

www.synergyhousing.com





AWARD CATEGORY: EXCELLENCE IN TECHNOLOGY OR ANALYTICS

WINNER: THE COZM

Presenting the award was Olu Euba, Associate Director, Global Talent Mobility, WPP who spoke about the importance of the category.

“This category reflects innovation across the whole industry as everybody is responding to new World of Work and the changes in mobility, AI applications, analytics across the whole sector. The quality, depth and range of the entries reflect the appetite for digital advances and the importance of these analytics”.

TRANSFORMING GLOBAL MOBILITY COMPLIANCE

On behalf of the judges, Olu explained, “The Cozm impressed the judges with its AI-powered platform that transforms global mobility compliance. By combining cutting-edge innovation with inclusivity and industry collaboration, The Cozm is paving the way for a more strategic and empowered future in the mobility space.”

Benjamin Oghene, CEO and Founder of The Cozm responded saying, “Thank you so much for this award. This company is only two and a half years old, so we're a baby startup. It's amazing. I'm a computer scientist by background, and when I used to tell people what we do, they would walk off in different directions.

“AI is becoming more and more part of our lives. So this is a bit strange for me. Our whole team has worked really, really hard, over the last two and a half years. We really appreciate this award.”



Benjamin Oghene, CEO & Founder, The Cozm
Paul Papacz, Technology Lead, The Cozm

FREEDING UP HUMAN SPECIALISTS

The Cozm demonstrated an exceptional experience by automating complex compliance filings – reducing processing time from weeks to under 60 seconds. Their AI-powered platform ensures global mobility professionals and businesses can access and manage international opportunities quickly and efficiently, regardless of background, nationality, or race. This democratizes access to global talent markets and ensures inclusivity.

The Cozm's AI agents handle routine but critical tasks (communications, vendor management, finance, governance, policy development), freeing up human specialists for higher-value, strategic work. This approach is not only cost-effective and resource-efficient but also highly responsive to client needs, allowing for creative and flexible solutions that adapt to a rapidly changing global marketplace.

The Cozm's leadership team, with deep expertise in technology and global mobility, actively supports innovation and industry engagement. They foster partnerships with major industry players and regularly host client roundtables and participate in events to drive community building, professional empowerment, and collaborative re-skilling. Their proactive approach helps the industry adapt to AI-driven change, making their service both innovative and inspirational.

Ben said, “We are trying to contribute as much to the global mobility industry as possible, collaborating with others, sharing knowledge, so this isn't just for The Cozm, I'm happy for all of our partners as well.”

A case study demonstrated how Cozm's AI-powered platform, in partnership with CIBT, enabled Cisco to rapidly and efficiently meet urgent international compliance requirements for the Paris Olympics, showcasing the platform's unique speed, automation, expert support, and real-world impact – directly supporting the award submission's claims of exceptional, differentiated service in global mobility. •

www.thecozm.com

“An exceptional blend of AI-driven innovation, human empowerment, and inclusive values. Its creative connections between technology, people, and industry set it apart as both a leader and an inspiration in the global mobility space”.

CATEGORY JUDGE

AWARD CATEGORY: EXCELLENCE IN TALENT MANAGEMENT

WINNER: ICON

This year's winner of Excellence in Talent Management is Icon. The judges were clearly impressed by their entry.

“Icon stood out for its strong commitment to employee connection and inclusion across remote and office-based teams. With high retention and outstanding client feedback, it's clear their people feel valued – and their supportive, people-first culture sets a powerful example for the industry.”

The Award was presented by Paul Williamson, Group Head of Talent Development, ATG Entertainment and member of the judging panel for a number of years.

WALKING THE WALK

Paul remarked, “So many businesses say that people are our biggest asset. I think this is an award for an organisation that is walking the walk in terms of that. Because, to the keynote speaker, Professor Dame Vlatka Hulpic's point earlier on, it's all about culture and how you create positive cultures in the workplace that encourages retention. Talent development is really at the heart of this, and it's a passion of mine. So, it's a real privilege to be able to judge this and to give this award.

He explained, this organisation has placed considerable emphasis on bringing together both office-based and remote workers and on fostering initiatives that help to share experiences and ideas.

WELLBEING & ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Key to their retention strategy is their employee-led Wellbeing and Engagement Committee. Acting as a peer-driven support network, the Committee provides a direct channel for employees to come together, voice concerns and drive positive change. With an increasingly remote workforce they see fostering engagement as more crucial than ever. Feedback from clients and assignees described the team as “incredibly patient, empathetic, efficient, and thoughtful,” “a necessary calming force,”. With an eight-year average service record it is notable that Icon's core pillars of training and employee satisfaction/retention are working. In the current climate the role of a busy destination service provider is not likely to get any easier.

The emphasis on bringing together both office-based and remote workers is to be commended as is the involvement of the CEO and directors in supporting creative activities such as charitable volunteering and teambuilding alongside career development training and supporting professional qualifications. The talking heads video illustrated the creative connections theme and reflected the culture of the organisation.

They live and breathe the ethos of providing world-class relocation services built on a foundation of exceptional people.

Vanessa Szmagara, Quality & Supply Chain Director



Vanessa Szmagara, Quality & Supply Chain Director, Icon

“Icon is committed to investing in its people. It is also clear that senior leadership within this business listen to their people and are prepared to support employee-led initiatives.”

CATEGORY JUDGE

of Icon accepted the trophy on behalf of the company saying, “I just want to say thank you to the judges for those lovely comments. It's an honour to be able to represent icon and collect this award. It's a reflection really on the hard work that the team have done. And ultimately, that Icon really values the people, and we put people first in everything that we do, it's part of our culture. So thank you”. •

www.iconrelocation.com





AWARD CATEGORY: EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION – SCHOOL

WINNER: INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF LONDON (ISL)



Claudine Hakim, Head of Transitions Care and Student Support, International School of London (ISL)

The judges were full of praise for the International School of London's (ISL) winning entry.

EMBRACING CREATIVE CONNECTIONS

Arguably, this entry more than any other, took to heart this year's theme of the value of creative connections. The International School of London (ISL) places considerable emphasis on collaboration and making creative connections for the benefit of students, parents, and all stakeholders involved in children's education when families are on the move. There is clear effort made by the leadership team to link up both with staff and parents and for families to share experiences. It is good to see that the senior leadership team is so actively involved in building communities.

The school recognises the multi-faceted and complex nature of relocation, and key to that is the care to ensure that connections are created ahead of relocation, toward ensuring an effective and calm transition as well as at different stages of the education journey. From class buddy to first day teacher who speaks their home language to student ambassadors there is a warm welcome.

This is illustrated by fun events like Multilingualism Week and the International Food Festival which celebrate diversity and bring people together. Parents are clearly very involved in school life. Families and staff also get great tools and resources like checklists, training, and workshops to help with the move.

The judges said "The entry showcases each aspect of the ISL approach to relocation – the highly effective and authentic community connections, the impact on those receiving this support at all levels and from the beginning of the process. Most of all, ISL's commitment to excellence with and for their students and families."

Judge, Pam Mundy reminded the audience of the importance of education, "As an educator myself, it's critical that we have people in this world focusing on the main thing, which is our children. All of you, all of us here, wouldn't be in a job if it wasn't for the children".

For Claudine Hakim, Head of Transitions Care and Student Support, International School of London it was clearly a joyful result with smiles radiating around the room and whoops of delight from her team members.

She said "On behalf of the team at ISL, we'd like to thank the judges for their consideration. The event is always so special, and what matters to us is that this is a category that you consider. On many, many occasions, schools are forgotten, and as you were saying, putting the children first is so important and it's very much part of our DNA to look after our community and the wellbeing of our community. So, thank you, and congratulations to the other schools who are on the awards shortlist as well."

LOOKING TO THE LEGACY

The heart-warming entry video reflected the creative partnerships across the school community. It opens with the esteemed Dr Doug Ota, founder, Safe Passage Across Networks (SPAN), "If you are coming to the school you are lucky to be coming...". The children are at the heart of the story with many child interviewers including a young boy who enthuses about how much he loves the school, "Thank you ISL for making my life good" and how he will tell his children and grandchildren about it. Parents spoke passionately about the nationalities, cultures and languages represented in the school and the value of the parents English class. The judges recognised an underlying theme of 'legacy' for the future and commitment to excellence for their students and families.

The range of activities and actions taken to support the building of a strong community involving all stakeholders is impressive. There is no doubt that high value is placed on ensuring authentic connections for the benefit of children and their parents who are relocating to a new environment to ensure that they are happy and fulfilled. There are 54 nationalities among the students, 24 languages taught in school and 40 nationalities among the staff.

International employers, global mobility professionals and talent managers can all perhaps learn from this approach to build flourishing organisations. •

www.isllondon.org

AWARD CATEGORY: EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION – EDUCATION CONSULTANCY

WINNER: QUINTESSENTIALLY EDUCATION

The judges congratulated the winner saying, "The flexibility of Quintessentially Education is clear from the different sections of the entry, as is its careful deployment of personnel who are skilled in relocation and education and with worldwide connections and links to necessary expertise. A focus on ensuring the very best educational outcomes for students makes this an holistic and practical solution for relocating families."

Amelia Buckworth, Education manager of Quintessentially Education, said: "Relocation and global mobility are very much at the heart of everything we do. Children really are the heart of everything relocation. There is no better honour than to be considered and to have won this award. So thank you so much."

This is a global brand that understands global mobility, having built creative connections for discerning families worldwide for 25 years. It boasts unrivalled customer service with 95% of families giving them a 5 star review in 2024. As part of a wider group, they offer wraparound care for a child's transition. The service encompasses academic assessment, EFL cultural immersion support, guidance on etiquette, immigration and choosing a guardian.

THE KEY QUALITIES WHICH IMPRESSED THE JUDGES

Quintessentially Education is particularly proud of its rapid response in time-poor scenarios, which can be so important in the global mobility and relocation context. They are poised to devise creative and effective solutions to the changing needs of global clients. They pride themselves on being able to build human connections and to go the extra mile for their clients.

There is a strong emphasis on the close-knit relationships between the families, consultants, and key personnel. The judges enjoyed the professional video which showed commitment to the personal and human connections and an understanding of the unique and diverse needs of relocating families at a stressful time. It is evident that QE understands and works with the complexity of time zones, travel and work commitments.

The judges said the submission clearly outlined the importance of creative approaches. This is a small organisation, effectivity using its educational expertise as the foundation for its services. Using a range of partners, QE supports students' effective transitions, helps introduce them to new cultures, provides legal support for immigration and provides academic assessments.

QE's links to additional key aspects of global mobility make this a comprehensive consultancy service.

A GLOBAL COMMUNITY ACROSS TUTORS, SCHOOLS & ACCOMMODATION

QE has a pool of 150 global tutors and can handle everything from school placements to finding homes

through Q Estates. Tools like the Qapp and personalised updates keep families in the loop and feeling supported.

In addition, strong school links demonstrate an ability to solve challenges for relocating families. Taking the stress out of relocation is core to their service, which spans 65 countries.

"This company prides itself on a responsive and flexible service. Providing solutions to clients under tight time constraints is our area of expertise," QE explained in its entry for the Awards, citing two case studies which exemplified the approach.

- When a US-based family relocated to the UK for work, timing was critical. Our team coordinated school visits during the school spring break while our travel and estates team handled the logistics and housing. The result? Father and son began their new chapters on the same day.
- With just two months' notice, a family relocating from India to the UK needed urgent support to prepare their child for a new academic and cultural environment. Our team arranged a taster week at their new school and secured a place at a UK summer camp focused on language development. The result? A confident, well-prepared student ready to thrive in their school. •

www.quintessentially.com



Amelia Buckworth, Education Manager, Quintessentially Education





AWARD CATEGORY: EXCELLENCE IN FAMILY SUPPORT

WINNER: BICORTEX LANGUAGES

Our Excellence in Family Support category is crucial in response to skill shortages and the importance of supporting international employees and their families, as well as dual-career couples, in settling successfully in their new location and thriving. It is a keystone for employee engagement and supports the culture of organisations that put people at the heart of their global mobility initiatives and policy.

PUTTING FAMILIES FIRST: A HUMAN-CENTRED RELOCATION EXPERIENCE

We were delighted to welcome Kelly Blackaby, HR Director for Europe and the Middle East at Mavenir and a judge for the first time, onto the stage to present the trophy. She was impressed by how the winning company, BiCortex Languages & Translations, delivered highly personalised relocation support with local experts in 85 countries.

The judges commented, “This is a highly responsive company that addresses the need for language tuition and translation effectively and quickly.

BiCortex relocation support looks to combine personal care, local expertise, and shows proven results to make moves smooth and stress-free.”

Brenda Levis, President of NYC Navigator, accepted the trophy on behalf of Inigo Lopez, CEO of BiCortex Languages & Translations and read their response, “Supporting families during relocation is not just a service, it’s a responsibility. From language training to cross-cultural support, we are proud to help families feel at home, wherever life takes them.”

“BiCortex are passionate about supporting families throughout every stage of the relocation process with personalised care, real-time, human solutions and a truly human approach. This award reflects the dedication of our amazing team and the trust placed in the, by our clients. Thank you for celebrating the work that they love to do.”

TAILORED SOLUTIONS, GLOBAL REACH: INNOVATION IN REAL-TIME SUPPORT

The judges commented: “A fast-paced awards submission video explains what the company does, and we meet many of the coordinators. Interesting examples of real-life needs, such as translating a birth certificate within 42 minutes. The employees have relocated themselves and clearly understand the need to learn a foreign language quickly to integrate and settle.”

The use of social media is highlighted to maintain strong client connections and accessibility globally. A combination of communication through WhatsApp, email and phone makes a difference to families on the move and under pressure. Feedback scores are high and testimonials support this.

Communication is prioritised with accessibility in mind, considering time zones, which highlights the urgency of many relocation requirements. The company

specialises in tailored learning, addressing individual needs. With a team of only 30+ employees, they deliver personalised services that ease transitions for families worldwide. They keep costs low with their bespoke CRM app, which tracks learner progress and adjusts lessons accordingly. Their ability to respond quickly ensures high-quality services and real-time feedback addresses issues immediately.

They are proud of their document services tailored to each country’s requirements. Their ability to manage complex language and country combinations simplifies the process for assignees, even in urgent situations.

The company is proud to go beyond instruction, ensuring families feel heard, valued and supported.

Technology, a people-centred approach and dedication to continuous improvement are what make them a worthy recipient of this award in fast-paced, challenging and cost-driven times. •

www.bicortexlanguages.com



As the BiCortex Languages team were not able to attend the Awards ceremony in person, the trophy was received in Central Park, New York by Maggie Williams (left), Global Client Services Director via envoy Alexa Brontman of NYC Navigator. The trophy made its way from London, where it was accepted on the night by Brenda Levis, President, NYC Navigator (winner of 2025 award for Destination Service Provider – Local) on behalf of the BiCortex team. The trophy’s relocation journey continues from US to Spain!

AWARD CATEGORY: BEST RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION

WINNER: SANTA FE RELOCATION

This award recognises a deeply insightful and practical research report ‘Taking Care of Global Mobility Professionals’ undertaken by Santa Fe Relocation.

Their research assessed why global mobility (GM) teams are considerably overstretched and, in many cases, facing business expectations that global relocations can be executed ‘at the flick of a switch’.

COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO RESEARCH

They developed a detailed questionnaire to determine where global mobility/human resources (HR) professionals spend/should be spending their time, together with identifying key challenges across their global mobility work continuum and their business and leadership stakeholder interactions.

The GM ‘Maturity’ framework created enables GM and HR professionals to assess what they currently deliver and presents options to transform their function. They shared the findings and insights with 500+ global mobility and HR professionals.

An overview slide submitted as part of their entry, encapsulates the levels of activity within global mobility functions and graphically plots tactical/administrative; risk and cost management and the global strategic business partner, highlighting mindset, operations and skills. These three dimensions illustrate the reflections global mobility

professionals need to have on where they are today, where do they want to go in the future and how you can plot your journey. There is an urgent call for action on mindset, operations and skills to create a brighter future and the way forward for global mobility.

INSIGHTS SHAPING THE FUTURE

The judges said, “This award recognises a deeply insightful and practical research report, ‘Taking Care of Global Mobility and HR Professionals.’ With a strong research culture and practitioner-led approach, this firm is shaping the future of global mobility by providing tools that drive transformation and meaningful change across the industry.”

“Santa Fe Relocation has a strong research culture that actively involves practitioners in research design and dissemination. Research is embedded in this company’s culture and the findings are widely available to the benefit of all. What is invaluable is that the research questionnaire can be tailored and used as a tool by global mobility teams to undertake time/resource reviews, and support and shape desired future state global mobility transformations.”

John Rason, Group Head of Consulting, Santa Fe Relocation accepted the award. Thanking the judges he said, “I know the rigour that you go through to actually evaluate who’s going to win an award. And just to say, that this research that we do, we see as putting back into the industry. You know, it’s not just about competing. It’s about how we take the industry forward? And it’s about being evolutionary. And so, I’m absolutely delighted on behalf of Santa Fe Relocation to accept this award. Thank you”. •

www.santaferelo.com



John Rason, Group Head of Consulting, Santa Fe Relocation

“‘Taking Care of Global Mobility Professionals’ is extremely well-researched, crafted, comprehensive and valuable report. The research provides real insights into the changing role of global mobility and how global mobility professionals need to adapt as individuals, as teams and develop their relationships with key stakeholders”.

CATEGORY JUDGES



AWARD CATEGORY: BEST BOOK

WINNER: DR JOHN BLAKEY

There was no mistaking the pride and joy John Blakey felt at accepting his Award for Best Book at the Think Global People & Relocate Awards.

Our winning book packs a punch. I am a big fan of this powerful and concise book, and I will treasure my signed copy as I endeavour to become a force for good.

I enjoyed getting inside the head of Alisa, the case study leader, who we follow through the course of her leadership fable. Having left her high-flying role in financial services she lands abruptly in the brave new world of a CEO in a not-for-profit organisation and enlists the help of Executive Coach, Ajit to guide her through the highs and lows of purpose-driven leadership. We discover through her eyes the UP, the IN and the OUT of the dilemmas and pressures of modern organisational life. She learns how to thrive rather than just survive by achieving a worthwhile mission that aligns with her own personal purpose. Secondly, she learns to take care of her energy, physical and mental health and to enjoy her new role. Thirdly, to bring others along, from staff to clients and stakeholders, how to inspire them and build positive relationships.

THRIVE NOT JUST SURVIVE

This human story illustrates the changed leadership landscape: the Post-modern; Post-pandemic and Future-fragile. A neat table illustrates what we have lost, how it makes us feel and what we need to rediscover. John Blakey describes six paths to follow to become a force



Dr John Blakey, Author

multiplier: B Corp, coach, community leader, speaker, writer, philanthropist. The road isn't easy but we fallible international leaders will enjoy unpicking our path to success, as a combination of the personality types described as zealot, martyr or Pied Piper. On any one day of course, we can show up as all three! The art is to understand why and what takes over your emotional personality. I loved the reference to the three elephants. Dust off your 'thrival kit' and discover how you can thrive, not just survive, as a purpose-driven leader. As John Blakey explains, 'Inside us are two wolves – a force for good and a force for bad. Which one wins? The one you feed'.

A big takeaway, no doubt reaching back to his years spent as an elite sports coach, is for the reader to discover, the joy that comes from experiencing who you really are. The joy comes from briefly appearing at level six in Maslow's hierarchy. Full of hope, the book is written to create force multipliers who can help others to do their own purpose-driven work', he writes.

The judges praised the book saying, "Force for Good stood out as an inspiring and practical guide to purpose driven leadership, well researched and accessible. It offers a powerful framework for ethical, impactful leadership and delivers a message of real change that resonates with audiences worldwide".

HOPE & ENCOURAGEMENT WHEN YOU NEED IT MOST

In his acceptance, he joked revealing his authentic humanity, "Various spiritual gurus will tell you, that you shouldn't rely upon external recognition. It should all come from inside you.

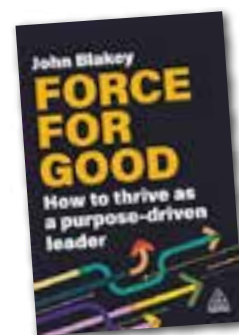
"Well, even at my mature years, I can't quite rely on that. I love external recognition.

"I hope one day to be enlightened enough not to need it. But for now, this makes me feel good, and it motivates me, encourages me to carry on doing what I'm doing and what I'm passionate about, because we all need that little bit of encouragement, don't we on the tough days?

"Thank you to the judges and most of all to my clients who inspired this book". •

"Full of hope, the book is written to create force multipliers who can help others to do their own purpose-driven work."

JOHN BLAKEY



AWARD CATEGORY: ESG EXCELLENCE – ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL & GOVERNANCE

WINNER: ERES RELOCATION EUROPE

Presenting the award, Fiona Murchie, Managing Editor praised the winners Eres Relocation Europe on behalf of the judges.

"This company impressed the judges with its deep commitment to ethical, sustainable, and socially responsible practices. With a strong ESG ethos across global operations – and standout initiatives like pro bono immigration consulting – it sets a powerful example of purpose-driven business."

Coline Michaux, Communication, Marketing & Sustainability Manager of Eres Relocation Europe accepted the award saying 'Thank you very much. I'm very honoured to be here tonight and to represent my company, Eres Relocation.

We have put so much effort in in 2024 and the years before in terms of ESG, and I'm really happy to come back home with this award.

Asked why ESG is important in today's world she said, "Because the world is evolving. Global mobility isn't just about moving people. I think it's also about taking our responsibility as a company to make it more ethical and more focused on the humans and on the environment.

Commenting on the evening and meeting up with colleagues in the industry she said, "I think it's a good opportunity to share ideas and best practices and to share new ideas and innovations on all kinds of topics in our industry".

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The entry illustrates through its leadership how employees are empowered to forge creative connections in the context of ESG. Access to a wellness platform, mindfulness and an annual company gathering strengthen the bonds across the staff and leadership team in the various locations. Encouragement to support charitable work and activities such as beach cleaning are also evident.

A well-crafted commentary addresses the creative aspects that the company has employed to produce a quality experience combining ethical and social practices.

Clearly the EcoVadis Gold Medal, awarded to the company in December 2024, was a pivotal moment on their environmental journey. As they state "Our ESG approach is embedded in everything we do, shaping the quality of our services and how we engage with our clients, employees and communities."

DEDICATION TO THE COMMUNITIES THEY OPERATE IN

From pro bono immigration services in Portugal to Christmas baskets for families in need plus supporting an initiative to help immigrants find housing and employment opportunities, all show dedication to the communities they operate in. Employees are



Coline Michaux, Communication, Marketing & Sustainability Manager, Eres Relocation Europe

encouraged to support cultural exchange, operational learning and innovation which ultimately enhance the services Eres Relocation provides to their clients, the entry explains.

The judges praised the personalised video which addressed the creative connections, theme and the various aspects of ESG. It is good to see evidence of Eres Relocation's leadership and governance, for example by setting up an ethics committee and the appointment of an ethics officer. Recycling and eco-friendly office supplies plus the provision of mindfulness to support wellbeing. Even adopting train travel over flights for internal business trips reinforces the commitment to reducing carbon emissions.

As the Head judge commented, "It is excellent to see a mix of environmental, social and governance practices that all support a culture of ESG excellence and plans to take these forward and improve further in the future".

"At Eres, ESG isn't just policy – it's part of our culture", they state. They explain, "Winning this award would recognize our achievements and inspire us to push even further. ESG excellence is an ongoing journey – one of progress, innovation, and commitment". Well done, a worthy winner with purpose. •

www.eresrelocation.com



AWARDS SHORTLIST

EXCELLENCE IN GLOBAL MOBILITY, GLOBAL POLICY DESIGN OR IMPLEMENTATION

- A Y & J Solicitors
- Mauve Group
- Reckitt & NetExpat

DESTINATION SERVICES PROVIDER OF THE YEAR – LOCAL/GLOBAL

- Eres Relocation Europe
- IKAN Relocation Services India
- NetExpat
- NYC Navigator
- Santa Fe Relocation

BEST SERVICED APARTMENT PROVIDER

- Synergy
- Week2Week Serviced Apartments

EXCELLENCE IN TECHNOLOGY OR ANALYTICS

- Aires
- Eres Relocation Europe
- Mauve Group
- MovePlus Mobility
- NetExpat
- The Cozm

EXCELLENCE IN TALENT MANAGEMENT

- Icon

EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION – SCHOOLS OR EDUCATION CONSULTANCY

- Chatsworth International School
- Enjoy Education
- The International School of Kuala Lumpur
- International School of London (ISL)
- King's InterHigh
- Quintessentially Education

EXCELLENCE IN FAMILY SUPPORT

- BiCortex Languages & Translations
- NetExpat

BEST RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION OR BOOK

- Dr John Blakey
- Santa Fe Relocation

ESG EXCELLENCE – ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL & GOVERNANCE

- Eres Relocation Europe
- Synergy

HIGHLY COMMENDED

EXCELLENCE IN TECHNOLOGY OR ANALYTICS

NetExpat
www.netexpat.com

EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION – SCHOOL

Chatsworth International School
www.chatsworth.com.sg

EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION – EDUCATION CONSULTANCY

Enjoy Education
www.enjoyeducation.co.uk

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www.synergyhousing.com



JUDGES



Dr Sue Shortland,
Head Judge
Professor Emerita, London
Metropolitan University



Tosin Adenrele
Global Mobility
Regional Lead,
EMEA, IQVIA



Kelly Blackaby
Senior Global HR
Director, Mavenir



Siobhan Cummins
Strategic Global Mobility
Advisor



Olu Euba
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Director, Relocate
Global



Paul Williamson
Group Head of
Talent Development,
ATG Entertainment

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