The following summary references the results of a joint survey report produced by Cartus and Topia in early 2022 on the topic of remote, hybrid, and distributed workforces in the global talent mobility space. The survey received responses from 50 different global organizations across the fields of Consumer Goods, Energy & Utilities, Finance, Healthcare, Life Sciences, Manufacturing/Construction, Media, Medical Devices, Pharmaceutical, Professional Services, Technology, and more. The full report will be available later in 2022.

It was unclear a couple of years ago if remote work was going to remain or fade post-pandemic. Today, it seems as though, for many companies and industries, the practice is here to stay. A straightforward concept on paper—employees simply work from somewhere other than an office—the actual where, when, and how of remote work is a much more complex question than many organizations expected and can easily become overwhelming. Extended holidays, temporarily moving to work near family, picking up and relocating without mentioning it to your employer—these are just a few of the many considerations organization must grapple with to keep their workforce happy, effective, and legally compliant.

Adopting a remote or hybrid employment paradigm influences the very core of an organization—from recruitment to culture, engagement to retention, and everything in between. As our joint survey confirms, the results are in: remote work has become a top priority, and companies need a scalable solution to help manage their distributed workforces.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Not surprisingly, most respondents felt remote work would have a positive impact on both recruitment (80%) and retention (80%). Being able to reach past the invisible boundaries of office hubs to find the best candidates creates a wide pool of talent ripe for hiring. When current employees know they can still do their day-to-day job from the location they choose, and that remote work is acceptable and encouraged, it makes them feel valued—not just for what they can contribute in-person at the office but as individuals.
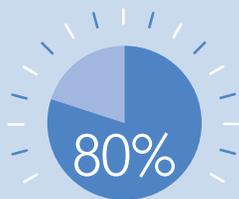
80%

feel remote work has a positive impact on recruitment and retention

CULTURE AND ENGAGEMENT

When it comes to culture and engagement, there seems to be a little less certainty, with 55% and 70% of respondents, respectively, predicting that remote work will have a positive impact in those areas. Historically, companies have built their culture within the walls of their brick-and-mortar locations. But what do you do when your handful of locations suddenly become empty, and employees want to work wherever they choose? How do you create a cohesive culture where employees are recognized, engaged, valued, seen, and feel like they have growth opportunities? This is something that the respondents to our survey are figuring out, but they need to do it quickly.

76%
have a remote work policy

Fortunately, employers are coming up to speed, with 76% of respondents claiming to have a remote work policy in place—even as they admit to adapting those policies to an ever-changing talent pool that does not want to come to the office for even a day or two per week.

COMPLIANCE AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

With employees choosing to relocate or work remotely from another state or country other than their home location—and, in some instances, not even advising their employers when they move—compliance concerns are at the forefront of corporate challenges. However, there is clearly a need to identify who is going to take on this extra work with self-governed (not company-sponsored) requests and the subsequent need for an approval process.

Global Mobility, HR, and others in the organization need to ensure that they can develop a process and a policy that leads the organization's management to take appropriate actions to remain compliant globally. With the potential for hundreds of requests per year by employees who wish to work remotely, having a scalable remote work technology in place and an expert partner to analyze the data and surface best practice policy and program recommendations is key to managing remote work requests, remaining compliant, and ensuring high employee satisfaction and productivity.

RESPONDENTS REACT

It has been challenging building a consistent approach across the organization globally.

We are only flexible to 'Work Appropriately' within the US, and it is not a policy but instead a philosophy that other policies below it [have] adapted to. Other countries are responsible for their own remote work philosophies.

We have many resources, but it can be difficult for employees to sift through and find what they need.

Although we set a policy, we see many exceptions being granted.

We are now in the process of adjusting our policy to align to new domestic remote working concepts. International remote working was fast off the block, and domestic remote working is catching up.

For more information about how Cartus and Topia can help manage such compliance risks, please visit **www.cartus.com/distributed**, and remain on the lookout for our full-length survey report later this year.