global talent mobility survey 2024

consumer goods and retail: industry trends summary

Our Global Talent Mobility Survey Report 2024 is a comprehensive exploration into the dynamic intersection of macroeconomic challenges, employee experience, and the ever-evolving landscape of global mobility strategies. With the final report out now, we have taken a deep dive into specific industries—including Consumer Goods and Retail—to see what the data tells us.

FOLLOWING ARE KEY FINDINGS FROM OUR 12 CONSUMER GOODS AND RETAIL RESPONDENTS:

mobility volume

Most Consumer Goods and Retail respondents (67%) have fewer than 100 moves for annual **international (cross-border only)** assignments. Another quarter manages 100 to 500 moves per year. This very closely tracks what the full survey report shows (66% had fewer than 100 moves and 25% had 100 to 500 moves).

For **domestic (intra-country)** non-US moves, a third of the companies in this industry have mobility programs that involve less than 100 moves, and a quarter of them move between 100 and 500 employees every year. This sector seems to relocate more employees than respondents in our full report: 501-1,000 moves (17% vs 9%) and 1,000+ moves (17% vs 4%).

While 42% of Consumer Goods and Retail respondents reported an increase in mobility activity over the past two years, a third reported a decrease, and a quarter reported no change.

Drivers for increasing volume
The leading factors that significantly increased mobility activity for Consumer Goods and Retail respondents over the past two years are talent not available locally (36%), expansion into different markets (29%), and greater emphasis on career development (21%).

Drivers for decreasing volume
The top three factors that significantly contributed to decreasing mobility activity are cost containment strategy (40%), negative company growth (40%), and reduced support/interest in global mobility by the wider business (20%).

> “A priority goal for 2024 is the creation of regional intra-country relocation policies.”
>
> – 2024 Cartus survey respondent (Consumer Goods and Retail sector)

anticipated move types for 2024

- **19%** international short-term assignments
- **14%** intra-country moves
- **14%** international long-term assignments
- **14%** business traveler

With a resounding 92% of respondents indicating they have intra-country moves (up from 80% reported in the full survey), it is interesting that 36% said they did not have policies in place for these types of assignments.

Consumer Goods and Retail respondents appear to have a different way of managing intra-country moves than the majority of Cartus survey respondents. More than half (55%) of the former reported that local entities were the only ones responsible for these assignment-types, while only a quarter of the full report said the same. In fact, almost half (49%) of the full report’s 138 respondents indicated that these moves were managed by in-house global mobility teams, a strategy only 18% of the Consumer Goods and Retail industry has adopted. With a relatively small assignee population (67% move fewer than 100 employees per year), it is typical to manage assignments locally.

Some additional insights from the data:

- Over half (58%) of respondents in this sector considered lump sum moves a priority for their mobility programs.
- As in the main survey, most of the respondents (92%) were not interested in a "technology-only" solution for any of their mobility populations. This reflects a clear preference for a human touch and a trusted expert in the field, rather than relying solely on technology.

mobility priorities vs. challenges

2024 mobility PRIORITIES

	consumer goods and retail industry	full report
1	improve the employee experience	improve in-house moblility processes and optimization
2	review or redesign mobility policy	improve the employee experience
3	a more flexible approach to mobility (e.g., core/flex, tiered policy)	a more flexible approach to mobility (e.g., core/flex, tiered policy)

The Consumer Goods and Retail industry shares many of the priorities that are discussed in the full report, but there is one main difference: they are more interested in updating their mobility policies this year and rank it as their second priority (compared to the full report ranking it fourth). This may be because they want to adjust to new changes and expectations of their employees after the pandemic or have faced a talent shortage in recent years.

Respondents in this sector also said their company should spend more money in the following two ways, which further suggests that the industry is trying to create more attractive mobility programs:

- Better recruitment resources to attract external talent
- Add assignment benefits to entice key talent for assignments

2024 mobility CHALLENGES

	consumer goods and retail industry	full report
1	rising mobility costs	rising mobility costs
2	calculating mobility return on investment	meeting relocating employee expectations
3	macroeconomic pressures	achieving a more flexible approach AND tax and compliance

Both groups rank rising mobility costs as their number one challenge, indicating that managing the expenses and budgets of global mobility programs is a common concern across industries. However, while the full report ranks meeting relocating employee expectations as the second challenge, the Consumer Goods and Retail industry cites calculating mobility return on investment (ROI), suggesting the latter is more focused on measuring the value and impact of their mobility programs than the average respondent. Consumer Goods and Retail respondents also appear to have a stronger focus on external factors impacting their business operations with macroeconomic pressures in third position.

hybrid, extended business travel, and remote worker moves

What do we mean by Extended Business Travel (EBT), hybrid, or remote moves?

- **Extended Business Travel (EBT):** Business-initiated request for the employee to work from a different business location for a defined period (e.g., employee travels from the UK to France to work from their Paris office for an extended period, typically 30 to 90 days.)
- **Hybrid:** Employees work partly at home and partly in the physical office, 1-2 days a week.
- Remote work: **Employee-initiated request to work** from a location that is different from their permanent residence for a defined period (e.g., an employee based in the US wants to work from Spain for two months during the summer).
- **Work from home:** Everyone works at their place of residence.

Three quarters of survey takers in this industry have international remote workers, much higher than the 57% who indicated as much in the full report. Nearly all (92%) offered no company-sponsored benefits to these employees. The two companies that do only provide tax handling and immigration services.

According to our survey, 42% of respondents said their company's business travel volume had dropped compared to before the pandemic, and one-third said it had returned to the levels of 2019. Only a quarter said current business travel had risen since then, which is six percentage points lower than what the full report indicated.

cost management

Cost control was a major concern for most companies in this industry. All respondents said their organization's focus on cost control has either increased or remained the same this year compared to the previous two years.

The respondents suggested the following ways to achieve cost savings in their global mobility programs:

- Restructuring or redesigning policy
- Administrative process improvements
- IT enhancements/integration

More than two-thirds (67%) of respondents in the Consumer Goods and Retail industry reported that their relocation budgets remained the same this year.

policy review and redesign

The survey explored how often and why HR and mobility professionals review and change their policies. The Consumer Goods and Retail industry does not review its mobility policies as often as most other respondents, with a third of them saying they do it every one to two years (compared to 45% mentioned in the full report). The majority (58%) said they review policies every three to four years.

The main factors that motivate the respondents to review or redesign their policies are:

- Employee experience - 21%
- Cost - 17%
- Flexibility - 17%

international compensation services

Consumer Goods and Retail professionals administer international compensation services in different ways. A third use a global tax provider, and a quarter prefer to manage things in-house. Notably, an additional 25% work with a relocation management company compared to the 42% reporting the same in the full survey.

flexible mobility

The majority (83%) reported a rise in the demand for more flexibility in mobility programs—18 percentage points higher than the full report findings. Key drivers for a more flexible approach mirrored our findings from the full report:

- Changing employee expectations – 31%
- Changing employee needs – 22%
- Budget constraints and macro-economic environmental pressures AND Talent attraction – 19%

mobility DEI

Cartus data reveals the varying degrees of progress that respondents have made in aligning their global mobility programs with their organization's diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) priorities.

- Making progress – 33%
- Just getting started – 33%
- Leaders in the space – 25%

Encouragingly, more Consumer Goods and Retail respondents identified as leaders in the DEI mobility space compared to the overall survey, where just 12% indicated so.

sustainability

Three-quarters of the respondents have a strategy for corporate sustainability that covers their whole business and its supply chain, but more than half (57%) said they do not know how their business takes sustainability into account when selecting partners. Two-thirds (67%) also said that their company's mobility program was not involved in sustainability metrics or initiatives when it comes to sustainability strategy.

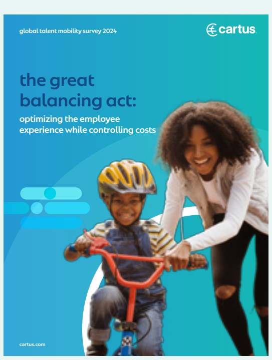
Many businesses are setting sustainability goals and priorities, but turning these priorities into practical actions and services for mobility teams is still a new process. However, this is an area where we can anticipate more innovation and focus to meet the engagement and preparation needed for future compliance requirements.

cross-cultural and language training

All Consumer Goods and Retail respondents collaborate with third-party providers to offer cross-cultural support to their relocating employees and their families—significantly higher than the full survey report (77%). Tracking closely against findings in the full report, the most common approach to cultural awareness training is to recommend it to relocating employees, their spouse/partner, and children.

However, when compared to findings in the full report (16%), Consumer Goods and Retail companies also seem to have more companies (25%) that offer this benefit to other dependents, like parents and care-givers.

Furthermore, language training seems to be more valued in the Consumer Goods and Retail industry than in other sectors. More than half (58%) recommend language training or include it as a core policy for employees and their families, while only 44% were found to do the same in the full survey report.



read our full report!

Drawing global insights from 138 respondents across diverse industries, our **Global Talent Mobility Survey Report 2024** unravels the intricate balancing act of dichotomies that define the current corporate relocation landscape. Themes emerging from the data highlight an unwavering focus on employee experience and cost-effectiveness. Striking a delicate balance between these two imperatives requires innovative (and often flexible) mobility policies. Other dualities facing HR and mobility professionals include the need for a human touch against a backdrop of rapid technological advancement. As artificial intelligence (AI) evolves at lightning speed, the timeless necessity for an empathetic (and human) guide and advocate persists.

Pressed for time? Catch the survey highlight reel **here**.