

Regional Pulse Survey Report: EMEA and APAC

To better understand the role that DE&I plays at a strategic and tactical level across markets and borders, Cartus conducted a survey earlier in the year, which received responses from more than 50 companies worldwide, albeit with the majority from U.S.-based organisations.

To provide a more regional perspective, we conducted two follow-up surveys in September 2021: the first amongst organisations attending an industry event in London, garnering more than 20 responses; the second in China at a mobility event in Shanghai, garnering nearly 50 responses.

On the whole, the two regional pulse surveys reiterate our original findings in that, despite the ever-growing influence of DE&I within organisations, many global mobility teams are not yet at the forefront of necessary change.

When respondents were asked how closely connected their global mobility/relocation programme is to their organisation's overall DE&I and/or talent acquisition strategy, **14%** of UK respondents indicated they were "very connected," while **48%** replied "somewhat connected," and the remainder said they were "not connected." In comparison, **45%** of China-based respondents said they were "very connected," while over half (**51%**) replied "not connected."

Of those who felt either somewhat or not connected, **62%** (UK) and **65%** (China) have plans in the next two years to better align their global mobility programme with organisational DE&I objectives.

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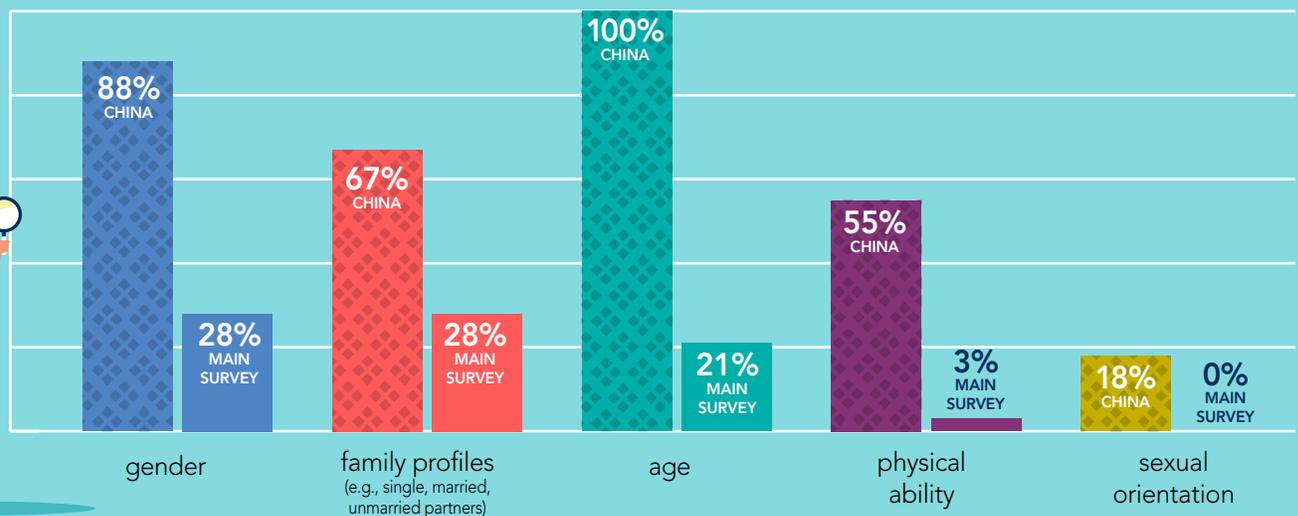
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TRACKING DIVERSITY DATA AND EXPLORING TALENT POOLS

By understanding the talent profile of those receiving transfer or assignment opportunities, an organisation can better evaluate how diverse that pool is—or isn't—and determine how to take action to expand those opportunities in alignment with broader organisational DE&I initiatives.

Similar findings were reported in this area, with the majority of China (70%) and UK (62%) respondents indicating their organisations are not currently tracking diversity data related to their relocation and/or global mobility programme.

DIVERSITY DATA TRACKED BY COMPANIES



34% of China respondents reported they tracked assignment acceptance and decline rates, but an additional 40% of respondents to both the China and UK surveys indicated their organisations were not tracking this kind of data.

Encouragingly, nearly a quarter (24%) of UK respondents and 12% of China respondents indicated that they plan to start tracking this data within the next two years.

Evidently, the tracking of more programme data is an area of opportunity for relocation and global mobility teams to increase insights into the make-up of their mobile population(s)—and to look more closely at the acceptance and decline rates for relocation (and the reasons for these rates) across the diverse background of their workforce or potential talent pool.

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SUPPORTING EMPLOYEE INCLUSION

A critical element of DE&I is inclusion—ensuring that employees feel heard, valued, and included within the organisation. Relocating employees face the challenge of adapting to a new

work environment and community to which they are not accustomed and for which they can be frequently unprepared as they strive to build new relationships and connections.

The survey also found **62%** of UK respondents said their organisation provided support to enable newly relocated employees to network, connect, be “heard,” or otherwise feel included in the new work environment.

When asked what type of support their organisation provided to network, connect, and otherwise facilitate the inclusion of relocated employees, some of the answers given by UK survey respondents included:

- Including cross-cultural coaching in the onboarding programme
- Establishing a host “buddy” or mentorship programme as well as networking and mentoring groups—within the organisation for employees and within the community for spouses/partners
- Networking events
- Encouraging newly relocated employees to provide their input, ideas, and feedback throughout the onboarding experience and in relocation experience surveys

Additional ways organisations can help facilitate employee inclusion include:

- Utilising Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), new location integration support services, and/or an employee onboarding plan
- Providing additional learning and development or training support



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INCORPORATING DE&I PRINCIPLES INTO POLICY REVIEW

mobility policies and programmes. This is an area where we have seen a comparative difference between the findings of our original DE&I survey—which anticipate our China findings—and the UK-based one. Both the China and the main survey reported that a third of respondents have reviewed mobility policies to ensure inclusive services and non-discriminatory language are utilised. Compare this to almost double the number of UK respondents at **62%**.

Examples of specific changes that an organisation can make to incorporate DE&I principles into policy reviews may include:

- Using only the plural pronoun (they, them, their) to refer to an expat or many expats

Another important aspect of DE&I is the use of non-discriminatory or exclusionary language across

- Ensuring policy language is open to include same sex partners and various types of family arrangements (e.g., using the more neutral term of “partner” in lieu of specifying the type of partner or spouse; extending policy support to non-married partners)
- Re-branding spouse/partner assistance to a broader category of “Integration Services” so it is available to all eligible employees, including singles
- Adding a trip for single employees going on assignment that allows them to bring over a friend or relative at the start of or during their assignment
- Conducting a new culture report internally, led by an external party
- Regular DE&I surveys
- The hiring of a new team to start looking at DE&I within the organisation

Our parent company, Realogy, recently hired a new Social Impact Leader to steer the organisation’s diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) strategy.

COACHING SUPPORT FOR ASSIGNEES

Global mobility is a natural enabler of diversity and inclusion, as it directly supports talent embarking on international assignments across the globe. In doing so, it increases their exposure

to diverse ways of working, communicating, and navigating environments where many find themselves in the minority for the first time.

To maximise the organisation’s potential, assignees working across different cultures and languages must be properly equipped to bridge the cultural and linguistic diversity they encounter in order to thrive on the assignment, while also providing accompanying partners and family members the knowledge and tools to manage the transition to living in a new environment.

Intercultural coaching—to develop cultural awareness, illuminate unconscious biases, and develop strategies to mitigate how these may impact success on assignment—is critical, and language and/or communication coaching—to support inclusion efforts, allowing each voice to be heard and understood in a very fundamental way—are generally considered key to enabling success.

Responses to our original DE&I survey support these points with **71%** of respondents providing language and/or communication coaching for non-native speakers and **67%** providing coaching for the development of cultural awareness. This reflects similar findings in China, with **85%** of respondents saying their global mobility programme includes cross-cultural and language support.



CONTINUING YOUR DE&I JOURNEY

It is clear from our pulse survey and in discussions with our clients that there is no universal standard for DE&I best practices. Each organisation can vary significantly based on industry, culture, and geographical location, so it is essential that each company's mobility goals closely align with the company's overall DE&I goals.

As organisations continue the journey of creating a truly diverse, equitable, and inclusive mobility programme, they are seeking ways to ensure that any previous barriers are removed. Some key concepts/support under consideration include:

Overall Programme

Establish DE&I priorities and goals for relocation—for example, if the priority is to grow diverse representation, develop mechanisms to measure, analyse, and act on insights.

Understand DE&I employee concerns and priorities—collect and review feedback from diverse employees (those who moved and those who chose to decline their offer) to better understand barriers to successful relocations from a DE&I point of view.

Study current and future mobility locations and analyse whether all company talent can move to all locations and, if not, how to address those locations (e.g., for LGBTQ+ employees who are not able to go to parts of the Middle East, are there other options they can be offered for a similar experience?).

Employee Selection

To ensure everyone interested in global mobility is considered, look to develop enterprise-wide talent pools to increase options. On a larger scale, ask if mobility is really accessible to all employees. In general, only 30% of assignees are female. What can be done in your organisation to increase that number?

Has a truly diverse group of employees been considered for the opportunity? Do the current recruitment and selection processes allow for inclusion of a broad spectrum of candidates? Pressure-test your selection process against unconscious bias.

Employee Preparation

Early immigration, tax, and security briefings are key to ensuring employees have a holistic understanding of their legal status and environment. Intercultural coaching delivers the tools to help employees and families manage transitions across cultures as they embark on assignments and the ability to recognise what is appropriate and what will work best in a different context. Targeted language coaching equally supports cultural transitions in a very fundamental way.

Practical Relocation Support

Review policies with a DE&I lens. Are the policy offerings and language used inclusive of everyone? Do words like “family” need to be redefined?

Utilisation of a flexible policy framework (e.g., core/flex) can help employees select and define benefits that best support them and their family, as one size does not fit all (e.g., single parent families, LGBTQ+ relationships, adult children).

Career-focused Support While on Assignment

Consider what support networks can be made available to employees in the host location. Mentorships and employee resource groups and local networks can be a vital source of support and enablers of inclusion.

For more information on DE&I within global mobility, please contact us at cartussolutions@cartus.com.

