

Creating gender
inclusive global
mobility

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Female demand for international mobility at an all-time high

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Female demand for international mobility at an all-time high

PwC survey that women in Singapore value international mobility opportunities more than global counterparts, but disconnect between women's aspirations and what employers offer remains

- 69% of women in Singapore say employers that offer mobility opportunities are more attractive
- But 17% of women in Singapore (vs. 14% globally) don't believe men and women have equal opportunity to undertake international assignments at their current employer
- Most women in Singapore (83% vs. 73% globally) want to take a mobility experience in their first six years of their careers
- Employers are using mobility to develop their future pipeline of leaders – but only 22% globally are actively trying to increase their female workforce mobility
- Only 22% of global mobility executives say their mobility and diversity strategies are aligned
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Singapore, 4 March 2016 --To mark International Women's Day (IWD) on Tuesday, 8 March 2016, PwC surveyed 3,937 professionals from 40 countries to find out about their international mobility experiences and aspirations. Of these 3,937 respondents, 2,285 were women and 1,652 men, including 70 women and 34 men in Singapore. In parallel, PwC surveyed 134 global executives with responsibility for global mobility to explore current mobility, talent management and diversity trends.

The report – *Modern mobility: Moving women with purpose* – reveals the opportunities for an international experience feature high on the list of desirable employer traits, with 71% of females in Singapore saying this is critical to attracting and keeping them with an employer, versus 64% globally. This echoes PwC's research in 2015 which revealed that 82% of female millennials in Singapore want to work outside their home country during their career ([The female millennial: A new era of talent](#)).

Yet, the report also shows that that women are less likely (global - 19% vs. Singapore – 25%) than men to believe the opportunities for international

mobility with their current employer are equal for men and women.

Said Karen Loon, Diversity Leader, PwC Singapore:

“This PwC report highlights a number of critical diversity disconnects. CEOs must drive an agenda where women are both aware of, and provided with, the critical experiences required to progress their career, including international assignment opportunities. Global mobility, diversity and talent management strategies must be connected to support the successful realisation of international business and people strategies.

As Singapore becomes more prominent on the world stage, Singapore companies and brands will naturally need to level up to compete at an international level. Global mobility and international experience can play a big part in retaining talent and driving innovation, which are necessary for competing at a global level.”

Diversity disconnects

The report highlights that we are experiencing a time of unprecedented female demand for mobility, but this demand is not yet reflected in reality. More than half (57%) of global mobility executives said their female employees were underrepresented in their mobility populations.

And while 60% of multinationals are using mobility to develop their succession pipeline of future leaders, only 22% are actively trying to increase their levels of female mobility. Furthermore, only the same low percentage of global mobility leaders said their mobility and diversity strategies are aligned.

Challenging gender stereotypes

The PwC report challenges certain assumptions and gender stereotypes, for example that women with children don't want to work overseas or that women don't want to move because it will put their partners' higher income at risk. In fact, globally, 41% of the female respondents who told us they want to undertake an international assignment are parents, compared with

40% of men. And 85% of women in Singapore in a dual-career couple earn equal to or more than their partner, making the dual-career challenge a mobility factor for organisations when it comes to both male and female talent.

In addition, the report also found that women in Singapore (83% vs. 73% globally) want to take a mobility experience in their first six years of their careers. Yet 33% of organisations globally don't currently offer early mobility opportunities. 79% of women in Singapore also said they wanted a mobility experience prior to starting a family, and a similar number (79%) prior to having eldercare responsibilities.

Karen Loon, PwC Singapore Diversity Leader, says: "To overcome the barriers to more gender-inclusive mobility, employers must first identify and understand the actual – not assumed – barriers confronting them. Using data analytics to gain a clear view of current mobility and wider workforce demographics is one avenue that companies can explore to close this gap."

A gender-inclusive mobility programme

When looking at the professional concerns women are most challenged with when considering an international assignment, three of the top five barriers relate to repatriation. Top of the list is a concern about the level of international assignment support that would be provided by their employer, both financial and instrumental (53% vs. 34% globally). In addition, the survey shows that flexibility and choice offered in assignment packages would make international mobility programmes more attractive to females (80% globally and 89% in Singapore).

Sakaya Johns Rani, PwC International Assignment Services Leader, said:

"International assignments and the experience gained from them are critical for leadership development. This will prepare female talents for greater advancement in their careers. Employers need to communicate clearly around global mobility, and have transparent, formal processes and arrangements available to promote and facilitate such opportunities. There is also room for global mobility programmes to be more flexible, especially in the area of repatriation and support for working mothers seeking global mobility opportunities. A gender-inclusive mobility programme will include a world-

class repatriation programme, together with flexibility, choice and options around assignment duration and package. These new norms need to fit into global mobility programmes to include more employees.”

More findings and areas of disconnect include:

- 63% (vs. 65% globally) of females in Singapore would like opportunities to work overseas to be more transparent at the companies they work for.
- 80% of women in Singapore who had been on a mobility experience went on their own, much higher than the global average of 63%.
- Only just over half of women (56% in Singapore vs. 49% globally) agree that their organisation has enough female role models with successful international assignment experience.
- The preferred assignment destinations for professionals often don't match what's on offer. In Singapore, 59% of women and 50% of men said they would never relocate to Africa. Meanwhile, 51% of women and 38% of men said the same about the Middle East.

NOTES TO EDITORS

1.To find out more about PwC's IWD activities and to download *Modern mobility: Moving women with purpose*, visit pwc.com/iwd. The report is based on a survey of 3,937 professionals from 40 countries (2,285 women and 1,652 men), as well as a survey of 134 executives with responsibility for global mobility. More thoughts on diversity can also be found on [PwC's Gender Agenda blog](#).

2.On Monday 7 March 2016, PwC launches its fourth Women in Work Index. This index ranks 33 OECD countries on a measure that combines five key indicators of female economic empowerment: the equality of earnings with men; the proportion of women in work, both in absolute terms and relative to men; the female unemployment rate; and the proportion of women in full-time employment.

3.On Tuesday 8 March 2016, PwC will also launch '**PwC Next Generation**

Survey 2016: The Female Perspective, a report on the perspectives of female family business executives. Based on the views of 73 women from 25 countries, the report reveals that while companies with women on the board or in leadership roles often perform better, there is still some work needed on the ground to ensure that women have the opportunities needed to reach those positions. The report states that one in five women don't think they have the same chances of succeeding in the family business as men.

But in terms of addressing long-term business needs, female next generations seem better poised to understand and address key issues. Specifically around digital and technological disruption: 37% of women feel that their business is vulnerable to the threat of digital disruption compared with 24% of men. **Launching on 8 March 2016 at** <http://www.pwc.com/nextgen>.

4.PwC is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion and has a range of programmes in place to make progress on the issue. These include [Aspire to Lead: The Women's Leadership Series](#), a global forum on women and leadership for students around the world. PwC has also partnered with the UN Women's [HeForShe](#) campaign, which aims to mobilise one billion men and boys as advocates and agents of change in ending the persisting inequalities faced by women and girls globally.

5.To read PwC research on the Millennials, take a look at [The female millennial: A new era of talent](#); [Next Generation Diversity: Developing tomorrow's female leaders](#); [Millennials at work](#); and [PwC's NextGen: A global generational study](#).

6.To read more PwC research on Global Mobility, take a look at [Moving people with purpose](#); and [Talent Mobility 2020](#).

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