

Expatriate Partner Support Demand

Comparison results

Joint HR survey Global Connection & the RES Forum

and

Partner survey Global Connection

May and June 2013

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Responses (1)

HR Survey (Global Connection & the RES Forum)

Number of participating organisations/responses: 91*

(Global Connection / RES: 38 / 53)

- Average number of staff: 78 K**
- Average number of expat partners: 270**
- Traditional expats / expat lights: 70% / 30%

* incl. 5 mobility organisations/professionals

** excl. 5 mobility organisations/professionals

Partner Survey (Global Connection)

Number of participating organisations: 47

Number of participating partners/responses: 588

Responses (2)

HR Survey - participating organisations, among others:

ABB	Foot Locker
ABN AMRO Bank	FrieslandCampina
Achmea	Grant Thornton
adidas Group	HEINEKEN
Ahold	H.J. Heinz
AMEC	Howden Group Ltd
APM Terminals Management	IKEA
Avery Dennison	Imperial Tobacco Group plc
Barry Callebaut	ING Banking
Booking.com	ING Insurance
Bupa	International Criminal Court
Cargill	JTI International S.A.
DSM	Lloyd's Register
Electronic Arts	Mammoet
ENRC	
Marks and Spencer plc	See also Responses (3)

Responses (3)

HR Survey - participating organisations, among others:

<p>Continued from Responses (2):</p> <p>Ministry of Defence (Netherlands) Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Netherlands) Noble Mobility* Old Mutual Petrofac Limited Philips PON Prudential R Twining and Company Limited Rabobank The RES Forum* Rolls-Royce plc Santander ScottishPower</p>	<p>SGS SHV Gas Standard Chartered Daniel Swarovski Corporation AG Tang People Mobility* TheMIGroup* The Sage Group plc TomTom International B.V. UniGroup UTS* Van Oord Vertex Whitbread plc Willis Limited Yara</p>
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* mobility organisations/professionals

Responses (4)

Partner Survey - participating organisations:

ABN AMRO Bank Achmea Adidas Group Ahold Anglo American APG Asset Management Arla Foods Asia Pacific Breweries ASML BAM International Bupa Cargill Continental AG Danisco DSM FrieslandCampina HEINEKEN	ING Insurance KLM KPMG H. Lundbeck A/S Meyn Food Processing Technolgy B.V. Ministry of Defence (Netherlands) Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Netherlands) Nike NOV Flexibles Novozymes NS Nutreco Philips PON Rabobank	Randstad RWE SAP SCA SHV Gas Smit International Solvay Tata Steel The Nielsen Company TNT TomTom International B.V. Vitens Evides International Yara Zurich Insurance Company Ltd
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Purpose of survey

Does HR have the right perception of the partner support demand and cost efficiency?

Scope

This survey only concerns information and support that is exclusively aimed at the expat partner. It does not concern support/activities such as:

- Pre-departure visit to the expat location
- Finding housing and schools
- Personal property removals
- Travel/flights to and from the expat location
- Visits to schools, banks, shopping centres, etc.

Support areas

How would you split up the need for expat partner information and support?

	HR's view (ranking)	Partners' view (ranking)
Destination	23% (1)	26% (1)
Life abroad	20% (2/3)	24% (2)
Networking (learning how)	20% (2/3)	15% (3)
Paid work	14% (4)	14% (4)
Alternatives to paid work	12% (5)	10% (5/6)
Repatriation (settling in)	9% (6)	10% (5/6)
Other	2% (7)	1% (7)

Support areas

Other - HR:

- Family issues at home and in host country
- Financial and insurance matters
- What we don't know - we need to survey and understand what our expat partners really need
- Relocation process and local onboarding

Other - Partners:

- More non-success stories
- Tips for children who are homesick and how to repatriate them in the most effective way

Support areas

Comments - HR:

- Based on enquiries from partners for assistance.
- Expat partners are typically seasoned travelers. Support is confined to details of the host country and local networking.
- Need depends on spouse. If he/she takes a career break for duration of assignment, etc.
- Not specifically based on input directly received from expat community in our organisation.
- No specific partner support. Information does not get used other than for home leave, deployment and repatriation flights etc.
- We are currently rarely involved in paid work and/or alternatives to paid work

Comments - Partners:

- Not applicable

Skipping plans to work abroad

According to the partner survey, 53% of the expat partners who wanted to work abroad changed their plans once they were there.

Skipping plans to work abroad

Why did the need (or options) of the expat partners to find paid work change once they were abroad?

	HR's view (ranking)	Partners' view (ranking)
No suitable jobs available	77% (1)	32% (3)
Cannot get a work permit	66% (2)	25% (5)
Possibility to change course and do something completely different	55% (3)	35% (2)
Life as an expat partner is more difficult to combine with paid work than expected	36% (4)	42% (1)
Local conditions of employment – low pay	27% (5)	24% (6)
Local conditions of employment – limited number of vacation days	15% (6/7)	27% (4)
Other, e.g. no part-time jobs available	15% (6/7)	13% (7)

Skipping plans to work abroad

Other - HR:

- Language barrier (6X).
- Skill transfers (2X).
- Even with a work permit it is more difficult for people from outside the EU to find a company willing to hire them.
- Skills set. For example, the lack of a degree is not so important in the EU, but essential in Asia/USA.
- Local issues take more time to resolve than in home country.
- Family splits responsibilities differently than before, and the expat partner stays at home with the children and household.
- Temporary nature of employment.
- Spending more time with the children.
- Takes longer to find a suitable job than expected.

Skipping plans to work abroad

Other - Partners:

- Family (9X)
- Language barrier (9X)
- Voluntary work (5X)
- Degree not valid (3X)
- Not financially attractive (3X)

Skipping plans to work abroad

Comments - HR:

- Limited feedback on this topic so this response is only based on a limited number of assignees.
- Not specifically based on input directly received from expat community in our organisation.
- Very few of our expats quote dual income as key issues - mainly arises for Norwegian outbound assignees.
- All of the options given are applicable; unfortunately we do not know the answer to this question.
- Very few of our expat partners have any interest in paid work.
- No insight into the reasoning, but based on our business and operation locations, finding a suitable job is likely to be the issue.

Comments - Partners:

- Not applicable

Phases of support

How would you split up the need for expat partner information and support?

	HR's view (ranking)	Partners' view (ranking)
Settling in	24% (1)	25% (1)
Pre-departure	22% (2)	21% (2)
Pre-decision	21% (3)	15% (3)
Settled	14% (4)	10% (6)
Pre-repatriation	8% (5/6)	12% (4)
Repatriation	8% (5/6)	11% (5)
Repatriated	3% (7)	5% (7)

Phases of support

Comments - HR:

- Need during every phase (2x).
- Arbitrary to try and split this up by percentiles.
- Most important is the support to make an informed decision. To prepare the couple for what they can expect during the assignment. This way, the partner can also have a great experience without developing a feeling of 'I am doing this for you but I suffer', which can be destructive both personally and professionally for the expat.
- Response based on actual requests for information.
- Need to survey our expat partners to really understand what they need, and also to test out what they don't know they need.

Comments - Partners:

- Not applicable

Types of support

How would you split up the need for expat partner information and support?

	HR's view (ranking)	Partners' view (ranking)
Personal support	43% (1)	34% (2)
Networks	27% (2)	15% (3/4)
Local meetings/workshops	15% (3)	15% (3/4)
Media	12% (4)	36% (1)
Other	3% (5)	0%

Types of support

Other - HR:

- It depends on the person and location. Our new policy shows there is also a need for training/development. For life abroad we offer a separate cultural course.
- Reading: books available.
- General information.

Other - Partners:

- Not applicable

Types of support

Comments - HR:

- We offer a cultural training and a budget for training so they can train for an alternative career while in the host country.
- Difficult, as there hasn't been a lot of issues.

Comments - Partners:

- Not applicable

Cost efficiency

Ranking of paid expat partner information and support based on cost efficiency* (1 = most cost efficient).

	HR's view (ranking)	Partners' view** (ranking)
Networks	1	1/2
Media	2	1/2
Personal support	3	3/4
Workshops	4	3/4

* Optimum cost efficiency for meeting the partner support needs and related expenditure

** Based on 'support needs met' scores and related expenditure

Cost efficiency

Comments - HR:

- Most cost efficient: high value at a low price. Not fully aware of the costs of these services as we do not currently use them. The answers are therefore based on estimates.
- Personal support is the least cost efficient, simply due to scalability issues. However, we find this is the most important, as it manages emotions, creates trust, increases the sense of support and safety, and reduces stress levels.
- Understanding needs is a key factor.
- We provide cultural and language training for partners if necessary.

Comments - Partners:

- Not applicable

General comments HR

- Involvement of the spouse as early as possible creates the best results.
- Not all of the services mentioned in this survey are offered by us. These answers reflect my personal opinion rather than my company's agreed approach at this moment.
- We often see that partners use their time abroad to either stay at home with the kids and/or complete a degree course locally or online.

Conclusions

- On average, HR has the right perception of the partner support needs regarding the assignment phase and support area.
- The partners feel, however, that media is far more important than anticipated by HR.
- The partners gave different reasons than HR for their decision to skip their work wish once on location.
- Opinions were unanimous about the high cost efficiency of network and media support.