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Intro

As I sit here writing this EAR, unable to fully bring my chair close enough to my desk because my cat is under my desk where my feet need to go (and she's the boss), I find myself reflecting on a [post](#) that my counterpart, Chris Blair, wrote on LinkedIn this week and I subsequently commented on; has Global Mobility (GM) changed as much as some believe, or are we simply using the same tools as before but differently? It was a great insight from Chris. The important conclusion to make is that there's no right or wrong answer, it's just a discussion which hopefully helps others grapple with their thoughts and challenges. What matters is that GM professionals can feel part of a community that listens and helps them through whatever they're dealing with, regardless of the 'trends'. Which is where we come in!

Aberdeen Network Huddle

And this week, we swooped into **Aberdeen!**

We had a great mix of companies and industries, and the view of the river from our host **Vialto Partners'** window certainly was conducive to flowing conversation (see what I did there?!).

What advice would each person give their 20-year-old self, and what are their GM challenges at this current (still youthful!) age? Challenges are broadly consistent with the rest of our community with a lot of **programme changes, policy reviews, and benefits considerations**. As for what we would tell our 20-year-old self: the consensus was "don't dwell on your mistakes" – a mantra we can all try to adopt regardless of age!

After that lively discussion we had some excellent immigration and tax updates from Vialto with key highlights being a focus on the upcoming [ETA](#) and [ETIAS](#) schemes to be introduced in the next 12-18 months as well as an overview of the recent UK budget and potential impacts on GM programmes, specifically with the changes to pension allowances.

In relation to **policy reviews** – in typical Expat Academy fashion – we challenged attendees' thinking regarding their approaches; working through **lump sum** approaches and how to create **adaptable, flexible policies**. The room was buzzing with creative thoughts and challenges, and crucially, could leave with key, **actionable takeaways**.

When it came to inevitably talking about **ESG**, it was refreshing that we spent as much time discussing and debating the **'S' (social)** and **'G' (governance)** of ESG. Furthermore, Vialto demonstrated some amazing tech and dashboards to help with that journey as part of the session, which will also be viewable at our [Global Workforce Colloquium Tech Hub](#) (don't forget to actually [book onto the event](#), not just a slot at the Tech Hub!).

Coming to the end of the day, we had a corporate update from **Dan Erwin** at **Baillie Gifford** who is trying to bring **internationals business travellers** into GM, followed by a group counselling session, helping our members out with their challenges!



Articles for You

BDO's [Top 15 Tips for Companies Seconding People to Africa](#)

& [Employers' Year End Reporting 2023—UK](#)

Grant Thornton's [Cross-border telework: New framework agreements on social security with Austria and the Czech Republic as well as Austria and Germany](#)

What's Trending in MyGMPD?

1. DEI
2. Tax
3. Talent Management
4. IRW
5. Policy

A full packed day from which our members got so much out of (their words not ours; we always get feedback!) and a great opportunity for us to get to know our members in Aberdeen, sharing some weird and wacky stories. We won't share them all here, you'll have to come along to our [events](#) in future to hear them, or maybe share your own!

International Women's Day

We pride ourselves at Expat Academy at diving deeper into issues we know a lot about, or asking more questions about things we don't know a lot about in order to become better educated. When it comes to International Women's Day, I won't pretend to know all of the barriers women face in the workplace, but I'll ask questions with good intentions to understand more, and like many said on LinkedIn, I know some amazing women (mum, wife, sister, daughter, grandmothers who have sadly passed, etc.).

However, while those positive posts flooded LinkedIn, we shouldn't be fooled in believing sufficient progress has been made in breaking down the barriers. As our partners [Santa Fe](#) outline in a [blog](#), **Global Mobility is failing to keep up**; not for the lack of wanting to keep up—as you can see in the panel on the left—DE&I is the top trending topic in **MyGMPD**. Intention and action are different though and, knowing very well that international experience is often important to progression in multinational organisations, the stats don't read well when "female leadership rates in senior roles linger at **20-30%**, while the number of women active across the global expatriate workforce sits steadfastly at **under 15%**."

The bit that hits home for me as a dad to a young daughter is how this creates a lack of role models, which in turn has a limiting effect of the pipeline of the next generation. Don't get me wrong, there are great female role models, but we want **more**, especially through GM's increasing influence upon organisations.

I don't know how many times I say "there's no silver bullet" (it feels like every EAR, on every topic), but searching for one may be a red herring anyway. **Small steps** has been our motto in 2023 and Santa Fe suggest starting with **benchmarking**, **measuring**, and **surveying**. "Attitude surveys to better understand the barriers behind the inequality" and "sharing international **stories** of success also helps to redress the imbalance and normalise female leaders, without making their gender the centre or pioneering part of the piece".

Another thing we used to do at a previous company I worked at was to always run all GM policy developments passed a '**project group**' of HR stakeholders, including **Legal, HR, Reward, Talent**, and—importantly here—**DE&I**. The same worked in reverse by the way, so Reward policy developments were run past me in GM, for example. It was a good system; not perfect, but a small step.

There will be so much more out there though, so many more ideas. What small steps or progress have you made in GM, in your companies, that can be shared with the community? Let us know [here](#) and please do say if you're happy to be featured in a future EAR or newsletter!



Quote of the week...

‘What’s the bravest thing you’ve ever said?’, asked the boy.

‘Help’, said the horse.

‘Asking for help is not giving up’, said the horse. ‘It’s refusing to give up’.

- The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse



Author



Greg Smith, Head of Client Services – Symposium Network. “Spilling coffee is the adult equivalent of losing your balloon”.



Benchmarking

Have you got GM activates in **Canada**? We could use your help on this [Canada Immigration](#) question. Oh, and while you’re at it, why not answer some [other questions](#)! NOTE: Please do allow me to **bust a myth** though; you don’t need to respond with ‘I don’t know’ or ‘I’m interested in this answer too’ in order to view the results when published! They are always available to all members :)

- [Data on Global Mobility's Importance and Value](#)
- [UK Specific - DAC 6 / Cross Border Working Arrangements](#)
- [UK immigration costs - what do companies cover](#)

The results are in for **recently closed** benchmarks too:

- [How much money do you provide as Cash Relocation Allowance for your Permanent Transfers?](#)

The most popular answer was to provide **one month’s salary**, which we hear a lot anecdotally too.

- [How does your company support you international new hires?](#)

Most GM teams do own these. The most popular benefit to offer is **immigration** (66%), followed by **flights** (61%), **temp living** and **shipping** (both at 56%), then a **relocation allowance** (50%), and some form of **DSP**/ local search/settling-in assistance (44%). Other benefits are offered, some case-by-case.

- [How do you manage assignee sickness leave?](#)

87% of responders advised that assignees are subject to **Home** sickness terms as per the Home contract of employment . Do **be careful** though, **Host employment law** must be considered!

- Click [here](#) to see more recently concluded questions and **save yourself time and money** having to research yourself!

In the Vault

A nice warm, out-of-the-oven technical update from **Certino** has landed in the Vault for you to **download**: ‘[Global Payroll in 2023: What do the experts say?](#)’

Today’s GM landscape is rapidly evolving. When it comes to **international payroll**, organisations are looking for new, **automated capabilities** that enable smarter, safer and more employee-friendly processes than ever before, explains Richard McBride. He asked several experts to share their predictions on this fascinating space.

We’re always bringing new things to the [Vault](#) and it certainly feels like there’s a renewed impetus from clients right now to share and learn more than ever before with all the reviews, job changes, and re-designs occurring. So, keep reading the EAR for updates, and keeping checking the Vault whenever you need anything. If you want something and it’s not there, **just ask**! You never know, we may be able to get it from our vast community!