

The Future of Global Workforces – Trends and Predictions for 2025



Profit and Loss summary



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The global workforce is evolving rapidly, shaped by emerging trends in employee expectations,

regulatory changes, and technological advancements. Just as fashion and music trends influence cultures worldwide, workforce trends are reshaping how businesses operate across borders. To help you stay ahead, here's what to expect in 2025.

Work Flexibility and the Rise of New Remote Models

The shift to remote and hybrid work, initially driven by necessity during the pandemic, has now become a defining feature of the modern workforce. Employees value flexibility, and employers have seen productivity gains and cost savings from reduced overhead.

Despite this, some companies are pushing for a return to full-time, in-office work—a move that risks talent attrition. Employees unwilling to sacrifice flexibility are more likely to seek new opportunities elsewhere. Organizations looking to retain top talent must embrace and optimize hybrid and remote work models.

“A lot of it comes down to flexibility,” says Connie Diaz, Senior Director of Human Resources at

G-P. “For many knowledge workers, remote work allows us to integrate our work and personal lives with more flexibility, which can lead to increased well-being.”

Flexible work options can also benefit the employer, says Diaz: “It gives employers access to talent regardless of location. Having a global workforce improves your likelihood of finding the talent and skills you need for your business.”

Dan Grace, Director of International HR Consulting at IRIS Global Workforce Management, highlights the increasing demand for flexible work arrangements: “Workplace flexibility is now a key factor for job seekers considering their next career move.”

Employee Well-Being and Mental Health

Employee expectations around well-being have changed—**92% of workers now believe it's essential** for organizations to prioritize their emotional and psychological health. Employees are no longer willing to endure burnout and chronic stress without employer support.

To meet this demand, companies are expanding mental health benefits, implementing well-being programs, and fostering cultures that promote work-life balance. This trend is no longer exclusive to global enterprises—mid-sized and even small businesses are recognizing that employee well-being is a business imperative.

Technological Integration and the Future of Work

AI, automation, and advanced technologies aren't replacing workers—they're enhancing productivity and efficiency. Companies that resist digital transformation risk falling behind, while those embracing these tools are gaining a competitive edge.

By 2025, technology integration will be essential to business success. Just as email and cloud computing became indispensable, AI-driven solutions and automation will be fundamental to global operations. However, successful adoption requires a skilled workforce.

"We want to empower employees with the skills to collaborate with technology rather than fear it," says Connie Diaz of G-P. "AI isn't taking jobs—but those who fail to leverage AI may eventually be replaced by those who do."

Global Talent Mobility

The search for top talent is increasingly global. As companies expand their reach, they are tapping into a diverse and highly skilled workforce beyond their local markets. This shift not only enhances workforce expertise but also helps businesses remain competitive in an evolving economic landscape.



Regulatory Compliance Challenges

Expanding into global markets brings compliance complexities. Companies must navigate international, federal, regional, and local regulations governing payroll, taxation, HR, and labor laws. Even minor compliance failures can lead to financial penalties, legal action, or loss of business licenses.

Unlike domestic regulations, international compliance requirements are highly fragmented. Businesses must continuously monitor regulatory changes to ensure they remain compliant across multiple jurisdictions.

The Growth of the Gig Economy

Freelance and contract work continue to rise—**12% of global work is already conducted within the gig economy**, and this trend is accelerating.

"It's expected that 50% of the U.S. workforce will engage in freelance or contract work," says Matt Sheridan, Sales Director at IRIS Software Group.

This shift benefits both employees and employers. Workers enjoy greater autonomy and work-life balance, while businesses gain access to specialized talent for short-term projects without the overhead of full-time hiring. As organizations seek agility, the gig economy will remain a vital workforce strategy.

Workforce Development as a Competitive Advantage

Hiring new employees is costly—on average, it costs **\$4,000 beyond salary and benefits** to recruit and onboard a new hire. By contrast, investing in workforce development through learning and training programs is significantly more cost-effective.

In 2025, more companies will focus on upskilling and reskilling their existing workforce, ensuring they retain valuable employees while closing critical skill gaps.

Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

A thriving global market depends on a sustainable planet. Over the past decade, businesses have increasingly prioritized sustainability efforts to minimize their environmental impact.

A staggering **57 companies account for 80% of global emissions**—making corporate responsibility more crucial than ever. Organizations are adopting sustainability strategies to reduce their carbon footprint, not only to meet regulatory expectations but also to enhance brand reputation and stakeholder trust.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives are also expanding beyond environmental concerns. More companies are embracing ethical, philanthropic, and social responsibility programs that support communities, drive inclusion, and promote fair labor practices.





Navigating 2025 with Confidence

As businesses enter 2025, success in the global workforce requires the right technology and a trusted partner. **IRIS Global Workforce Management** provides expert guidance, global coverage, and scalable solutions to help organizations thrive.

With **centralized payroll across 135 countries**, expert compliance support, and **tailored employee benefits**, IRIS simplifies international operations. Our end-to-end HR services—covering everything from compliant contracts to seamless onboarding—ensure that your workforce is supported and paid accurately, on time, every time.

Our cloud-based, scalable solutions help businesses mitigate compliance risks, optimize workforce performance, and focus on strategic growth. And through our partnership with G-P, our **Employer of Record (EOR) service** enables compliant global hiring in **180+ countries**—eliminating the need for a local entity.

Take the first step toward a stronger workforce in 2025. **Connect with an expert today** to see how IRIS can support your global expansion strategy.

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IRIS partners with thousands of CPA firms, payroll service bureaus and small to midsize businesses across North America, including 52 of the top 100 US CPA firms. We offer innovative Payroll and HR solutions, making us the preferred partner in the region. Globally, IRIS serves over 100,000 customers, with 80% having tenure of five or more years.

