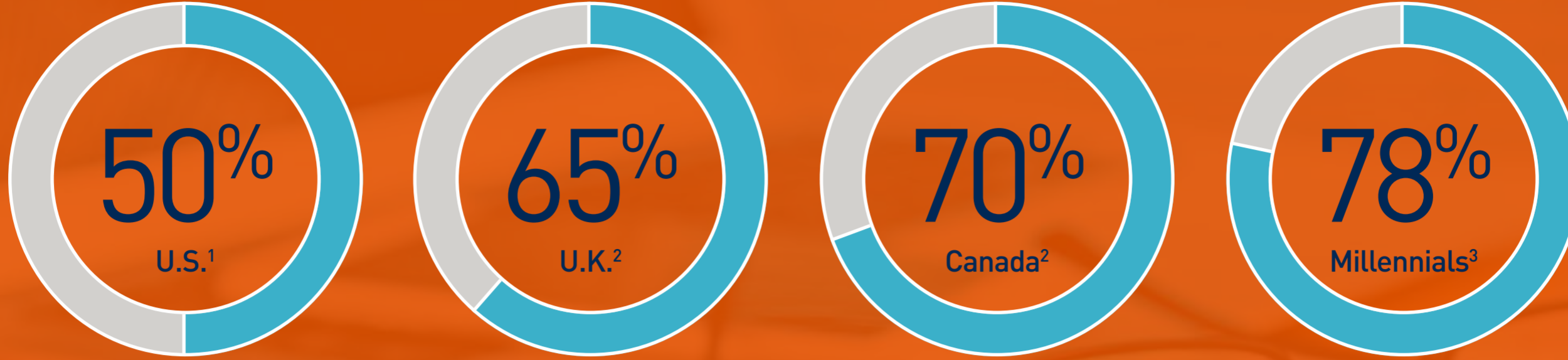


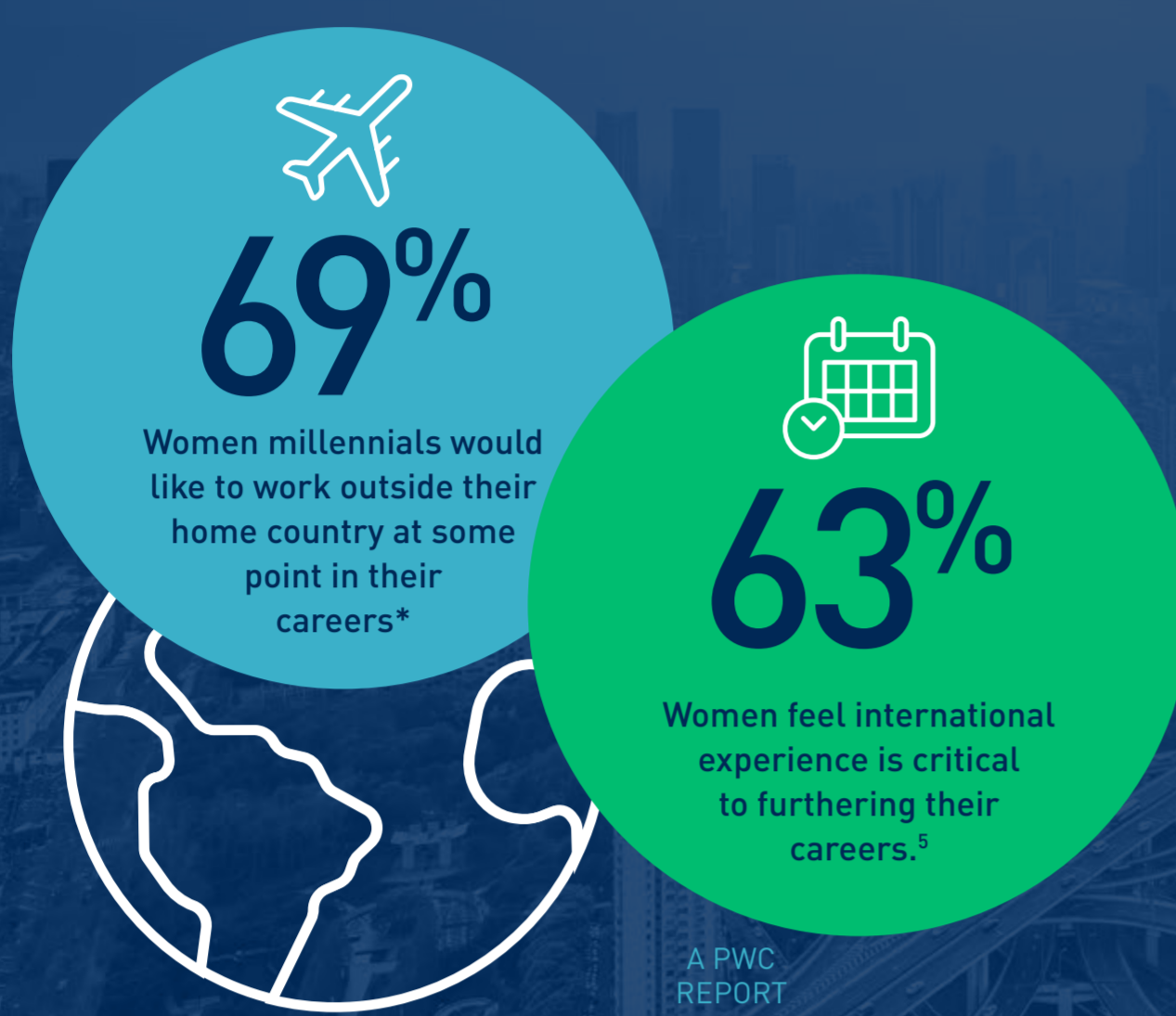
Relocation challenges for dual-career couples

The proportion of married couples and partnerships with dual careers has been growing steadily around the world and in key demographic groups.

Percentage of couples with dual careers



Additionally, there's growing parity between the income levels of the two wage earners in these households.⁴ As a result, maintaining a dual-career relationship increasingly entails navigating tradeoffs between career advancement and commitments to family.



Global assignments on the rise

This is especially evident when it comes to professional relocations — an area critically important to successful global companies and aspiring professionals. PwC predicts that the number of workers who will take on global assignments will rise by 50 percent over the next decade.⁶

With global assignments on the rise, balancing career and family is more challenging than ever.

The growing relocation dilemma for dual-career couples

When relocation opportunities arise for dual-career families, potential assignees must weigh spousal/partner concerns. Whose career should take priority at this time? Should the family temporarily be separated? Should one spouse leave the labor market temporarily or permanently? All too often, the answers to these questions can cause an employee to turn down the international assignment—even a coveted one.

Solutions to the dual-career relocation dilemma

In spite of all these challenges and trade-offs, a remarkable number of dual-career family assignments do take place—thanks in many instances to supportive policies and programs instituted by progressive employers.

Consider the following factors as reported by the Permits Foundation⁷

- Nearly 100 percent of companies report that being able to transfer employees internationally is highly important to their organizations
- Destination and career support for spouses and partners is highly valued by workers
- Easing access to host country employment for assignee partners can be beneficial to families, employers and the host country

Clearly, employers should offer career support for spouses and partners of their assignees, beginning with these types of benefits:

Even when a company offers ideal levels of support in these areas, successfully implementing a dual-career assignment can be a formidable challenge in certain countries. Thus, corporate policies and programs must be locally interpreted and implemented.

CAREER SUPPORT BENEFITS:

- > Language training
- > Work permit information or guidance
- > Education/training allowances
- > Job search advice or guidance
- > Information on local opportunities
- > CV and resume advice
- > Career counseling
- > Networking leads and contacts
- > Tax/pension advice
- > Interview skills training

The right kind of career support is key to successful relocations for both employees and employers.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 1 Employees will increasingly insist on relocation support for spouses and partners—or they will turn down assignments and/or seek out more accommodating employers
- 2 A number of spousal partner relocation services are becoming standard elements of a corporate mobility program
- 3 Corporate programs and policies for assisting relocating spouses and partners should be implemented by local partners familiar with the business community and who can navigate specific work-related hurdles for expatriates

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SOURCES:
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