

Global Talent Trends & Strategic Action Summary

January – March 2026

Q1 2026 marks a point of convergence in global talent strategy. According to Manpower Group's [2026 survey](#), structural talent shortage is already limiting hiring for 74% of employers worldwide, while immigration enforcement is tightening simultaneously across the U.S., UK, EU, and APAC. Together, these forces are narrowing talent pipelines across major receiving markets. At the same time, trade policy volatility is prompting organizations to reconsider where operations are located, and accelerated AI and data-center buildouts are increasing demand for on-site talent in locations with constrained local supply.

For talent and mobility leaders, the implication is operational. The traditional model of waiting for location decisions before arranging movement is no longer viable. Workforce planning, talent acquisition, and mobility programs must now align earlier to support speed, control cost, and manage risk.



U.S. immigration enforcement reset the global talent pipeline

Expanded travel bans and USCIS processing holds are creating indeterminate authorization timelines, constraining access to critical talent and disrupting hiring and mobility planning.

Middle East escalation shifted duty-of-care to operational management

Disruptions to airspace, shipping routes, and embassy operations required real-time intervention to manage employee movement, visas, and relocation activity across the GCC.



Digital borders made traveler compliance visibility non-negotiable

New systems such as EES and the UK ETA enable real-time tracking, increasing exposure to immigration, tax, and regulatory risk for organizations lacking accurate traveler visibility.

Tariff volatility is driving cost pressure and reshaping workforce strategy

As tariffs emerge as a leading cost pressure, organizations are rethinking where work happens and how talent moves, exposing the limits of fixed relocation models and cost assumptions.



AI is transitioning from pilot to enterprise deployment

Integrated, end-to-end AI workflows are emerging, but gaps in governance and capability continue to limit scalable impact.

A once-in-a-generation skills mismatch is constraining hiring

Despite persistent job openings, skill scarcity—combined with low geographic mobility—is slowing hiring and dampening growth.



Complexity is now a constant rather than a temporary condition. Resilient talent models will determine who can act and who must react.