



# Global Benefits Report 2022

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## Summary

Over half of company decision makers expect their employee network to become more geographically distributed over the next five years.

If you're a business or HR leader, you've likely considered the possibilities of expanding your workforce globally. In the post-2020 era, and with hiring partners like Remote, international hiring has never been easier. Still, the constantly-shifting landscape of the future of work can be challenging to navigate, particularly when it comes to understanding the expectations of international employees.

While the talent pool is larger than ever, so too is the pool of opportunities for top talent. You want to stay competitive and become a trailblazer in this new era of work, but how? The answer is one that many overlook – the power of benefits.

Remote's 2022 study of global benefits across **the US, UK, Eastern Europe, Brazil, and India** is a first-of-its-kind report on benefits and employment trends in these key markets. Our research shows that benefits expectations differ based on factors including geography, gender, age, remote/hybrid vs. on-site, and more, and it's crucial to understand these differences as you expand across the globe.

Benefits are also more important during times when company budgets are constrained and cost efficiency is essential.

## What you'll get from this report:

- An understanding of emerging benefits trends globally
- Insights into what benefits employees in different regions consider to be essential and innovative
- An understanding of flexible work as a modern benefit and what benefits remote workers want and need
- Guidance on how to build a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive workforce with your benefits offerings

Our goal is to help employers understand the macro and micro changes in the workforce when it comes to benefits and flexible work.

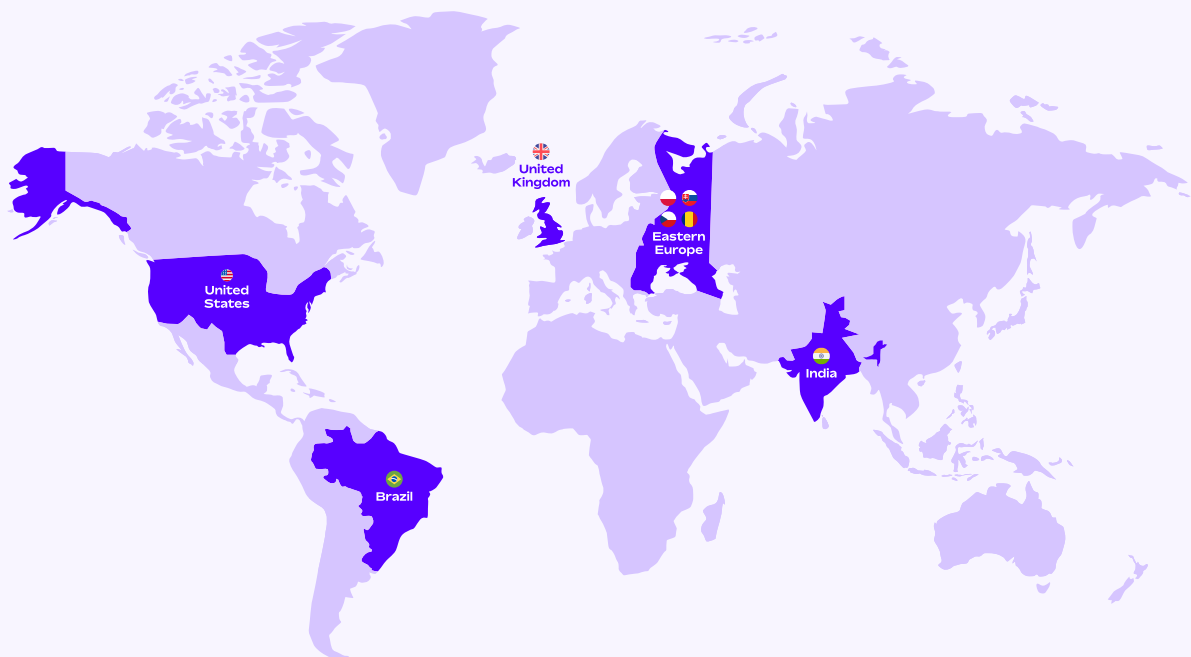
This includes understanding what benefits their global employees want and need, how to create a healthier and more connected company culture, and how to build a more diverse workplace where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.





## About the study

Remote conducted a survey of **2,569 employees and decision makers in 5 markets** covering a range of geography and labor market environments: Brazil (n=510), Eastern Europe (Czechia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia; n=483), India (n=508), the United Kingdom (n=506), and the United States (n=562). The survey fielded from June 28th - August 2nd, 2022. We placed quotas on company size, gender, and work setup for on-site, hybrid, and fully remote companies and employees. To supplement our panel sample, we also conducted a snowball sample using Remote-owned channels.



**In the following report, all data referring to employees is referencing full-time employees (FTEs), except where noted otherwise.** We also fielded the survey among a sample of contractors and looked at their results separately. Contractor findings are located in their own subsection.

**Data referring to decision makers references all decision makers, inclusive of both HR and business decision makers (DMs).** Exceptions to this are noted throughout the report in places where the data is among subgroup audiences like women, remote workers, or similar target populations.

## About our key markets

Our country selection for this survey was intentional to include a diverse cross-section of global hiring and working environments on four continents, as well as representation of markets that are net senders of global remote work as well as net receivers of global remote work.

**Furthermore, each of the markets in this study represents a unique archetype in the global and remote work landscapes:**



### United States

A large employer and employee market that serves as the headquarters of many multinational companies looking to hire internationally, and a major sender of both remote work and remote workers to other markets.



### United Kingdom

A European market rapidly hiring global talent both at home and abroad. A sender of remote work to other markets, and both a sender and receiver of remote workers to/from other markets.



### Brazil

A major South American employment market with an interest in attracting foreign investment, and a unique benefits environment grounded in the prevalence of collective bargaining. Brazil is additionally a growing hiring hub for multinational companies looking to geographically diversify and expand their prospective talent pools, and a growing receiver of remote work and remote workers from other countries.



## India

An established, but still growing receiver of global and remote work from other markets. A notable receiver of remote work in IT and technology.



## Eastern Europe (Slovakia, Czechia, Poland, Romania)

A newer, but quickly growing recipient of outsourced and remote work due to local tax advantages and increasing technical skill in the region.

As expected, we see some individual differences between these markets, but perhaps even more notable are the similarities — global employees' desire for remote and hybrid work, and the importance of competitive benefits and perks packages in hiring and retention are trends that transcend individual markets. In order to compete in this remote, global market, employers must offer **competitive benefits packages**.

## Key findings: the appeal of remote and flexible work

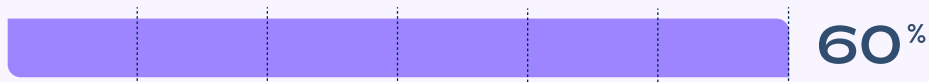
### 01

#### Remote and hybrid employees are more satisfied with their benefits compared to on-site employees.

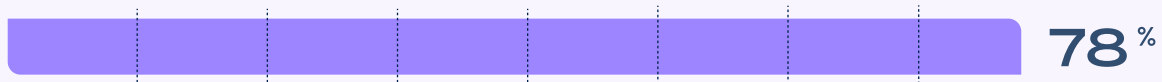
For many remote employees, working remotely is the benefit or perk they most desire, so they're less critical towards the rest of the package.

#### BENEFITS SATISFACTION

##### ON-SITE EMPLOYEES



##### REMOTE EMPLOYEES



##### HYBRID EMPLOYEES



**Only 60% of on-site employees are satisfied with their current benefits** compared to to 78% of remote employees and 80% of hybrid employees.





Many workers view remote work as a benefit in and of itself. It is still a relatively new phenomenon for those who went remote in 2020 and can be a compelling reason to join a company. However, it would be short-term thinking for any decision maker to think that they don't have to offer good benefits and perks because employees are happy working in a remote or hybrid setup. While remote work may feel novel for many workers today, that won't be the case for much longer. **Trying to find the lowest possible floor by offering employees remote work as a substitute for good benefits will inevitably lead to issues across hiring, retention, and culture.**



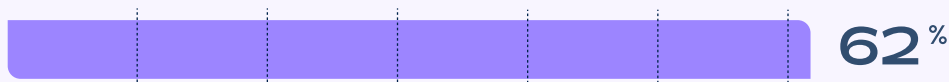
**J MICHAEL MCMILLAN**

Senior Benefits Expert, Remote (United States)

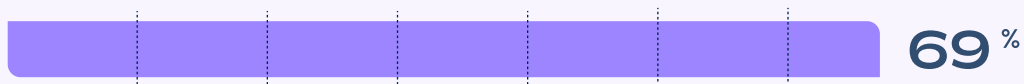
## 02

### Remote workforces are expected to expand in the next five years

DECISION MAKERS (DMS)



EMPLOYEES



...anticipating that remote work will become more common.

### 03

#### **Flexibility is a high priority for women, younger employees, and contractors and the opportunity to work flexibly could make or break their decision on where to work.**

The ability to work flexibly (where and how they want) is a top consideration for 29% of employees overall, but higher when looking at contractors (38%, it's their #1 consideration overall), Gen Zers (35%, it's their #3 consideration overall), and women (32%, it's their #4 consideration overall). It is also crucial in competitive markets like India, where 51% of employees have considered switching jobs for the flexibility to relocate abroad.



## Key findings: competing for global talent

### 01

With remote work expected to grow over the next five years, employers are anticipating that their workforces will also become more globalized.

# 54%

Over half of decision makers expect their companies' employee networks to become more geographically spread out over the next five years.

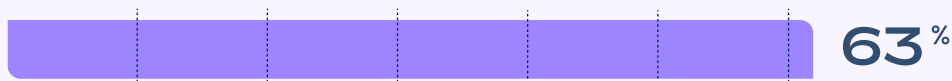
### 02

To get global employees to sign on the dotted line, it's about the individual, not the organization.

Organizational prestige and cultural fit are nice to have, but to accept a job offer, employees need to have their individual needs met first.

#### IN DECIDING WHETHER OR NOT TO TAKE A JOB:

##### SALARY



##### CAREER GROWTH POTENTIAL



##### BENEFITS/PERKS OFFERED



## 03

**Competitive benefits offerings are important both to attract top talent and retain the talent companies already have.**

**60%**

A massive of employees say they have chosen one job over another because it offered a better benefits package.

**35%**

In addition, over one-third of employees state that they have **turned down or left a job due to issues or concerns with the benefits offered.**

**78%**

a vast majority of company decision makers have **seen greater retention after adding or improving their benefits packages.**

## 04

**Localized benefits plans can provide employers with a big advantage when trying to recruit the best international talent.**

**67%**

A large majority of global employees expect their benefits to be comparable to those of other professionals in their country or city.

On the flip side of this, **almost half (44%) of all company leaders say they've lost international employees or had international candidates turn down offers because the benefits offered weren't adequate in their country.**



05

**When money is tight, benefits matter even more to employees.**

**88%**

of employees say when money is tight, having a good benefits package that covers their needs becomes more important.

Maintaining strong benefits during hard economic times is also a good way companies can signal to employees they care about their wellbeing.

**78%**

of employees say a good benefits package can still make a company a good place to work **even if salaries are frozen.**



## Essential benefits by country

Sick leave, paid holidays, and health insurance are among the core essential benefits around the world.

One notable exception to this is in the UK, where supplemental health insurance is not as important (just 38% say it's essential). However, there is wider variation in secondary essential benefits by market:



**In Eastern Europe, awards and incentives (56%) are an important part of a benefits package** (in addition to essential benefits like health insurance and paid leave).



In Eastern Europe, the desire for awards and incentives dates back to the communist era, when it was the norm for companies to offer them to incentivize increased performance. Today, many large companies will often offer things like a “13th month salary” or a Christmas bonus, where if you take holiday time off you get additional pay. **Any benefit that offers tangible financial gain is important.** Salaries in Eastern Europe are typically lower than they are in Western countries, so additional money is a big deal.



**KAROLINA ZACHARA**

Benefits Program Manager, Remote (United Kingdom)



**In India, awards and incentives (65%) are also important, as is life insurance (63%)** (in addition to essential benefits like health insurance and paid leave).



In India, employees expect bonuses to be built into their overall compensation as a bonus quotient, paid out annually or quarterly if goals are met. Often, employees will lose money from their total compensation with this structure because meeting 100% of the objectives needed to achieve the full bonus is rare. Retention bonuses are also a common way to retain talent, meaning every 18–24 months employees will receive a bonus that locks them in for an additional period of time, similar to a signing bonus. While this is a norm with Indian companies, **international employers can stand out by offering true bonuses that aren't attached to retention or baked into the total compensation offered.**



**AKHIL AJIT**

Senior Benefits Expert, Remote (Canada)





In Brazil, parental leave (72%), severance pay (69%), and life insurance (57%) are all essential (in addition to essential benefits like health insurance and paid leave).



When it comes to parental leave in Brazil, there is a huge gap in what's legally mandated for women (120 days) compared to male parents (five days). It's also somewhat of a cultural norm for men to not even take those five days, fearing it will seem like they lack commitment to their work and result in being passed over for opportunities. **This makes parental leave as a benefit very important for male employees so they can be more involved in those pivotal early moments of their child's life and support their female partners, who will then have an easier transition back to the workforce after their maternity leave is over.**



**JOANA VIANA**

Senior Expert, Benefits Strategy, Remote (Spain)







**In the UK, severance pay (51%) and telecommuting (48%) are also important** (in addition to essential benefits like paid leave).



Public healthcare in the UK, provided by the NHS, is very good. Because of this, a medical plan offered by the employer seems more like a "nice to have" than an absolute must. This perception is also tied to BIK taxation, which means any medical plan provided to employees by the employer is taxable at 20% or 40% (depending on the employee's salary), which creates the feeling of paying for something that otherwise an employee could get free (with the exception of dental and vision coverage which are not typically provided under the NHS).

**Telecommuting is a highly regarded benefit in the UK due to the high cost of transportation and the cost of living in a city center like London.** The cost of living in the city is prohibitive to most, thus driving employees to move outside cities and work from home instead of commuting.



**JOANA VIANA**

Senior Expert, Benefits Strategy,  
Remote (Spain)





Finally, in the US, dental insurance (70%) and life insurance (52%) are essential benefits (in addition to essential benefits like health insurance and paid leave).



The US is a consumer-driven market, meaning that businesses and individuals are saddled with the responsibility of securing adequate health and wellness coverage. **The norm is for employers to sponsor and/or subsidize health insurance and other benefits like life, disability, dental, and vision.** Offering dental and vision coverage may seem like a fringe offering, but when considering the relatively low cost to offer these benefits, along with the significant increase in buying power it affords employees (by way of lower premiums and better negotiated procedure rates), it is a no brainer, and why roughly 90% of companies with headcounts of 1000+ offer dental. **Life insurance is also a strong income protection benefit.** There are virtually no state-offered death benefits in the US for non-retirees, making this crucial in the event of the untimely.



**J MICHAEL MCMILLAN**

Senior Benefits Expert, Remote (United States)



## Key finding: Benefits and DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion)

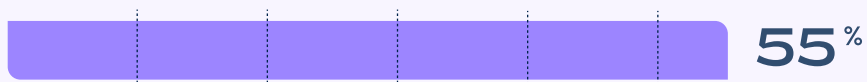
### O1

When looking to recruit women, highlight the stability of your organization, offer a strong starting salary and benefits with a clear and guaranteed return, and provide options for flexibility.

Women are more likely than men to work for large, established enterprises (55% of women vs. 47% of men);

#### TOP FACTORS WHEN CONSIDERING A JOB OFFER:

##### GUARANTEED STARTING SALARY



##### BENEFITS/PERKS



They also place higher importance on opportunities for flexibility (32% list as one of their most important job considerations vs. 26% of men), particularly with regard to flexible leave.



## 02

### Men are more likely to take risks and accept a lower starting salary in exchange for the potential of financial and career growth in the future.

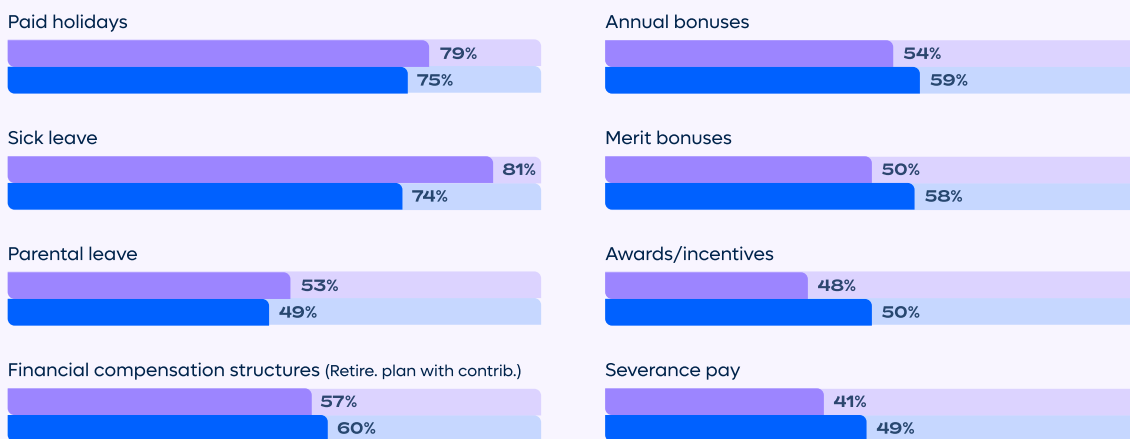
Starting salary is the top consideration for men (48%), as it is for women (55%) when evaluating a job offer, but with a lower proportion of men than women saying it's one of their most important criteria. Career growth potential (43%) is men's other top consideration, indicating they're more likely to take on risky trade offs now in hopes of benefitting from larger returns later.

## 03

### Notably, women are slightly more likely than men to view all forms of leave as their non-negotiables, while men are slightly more likely than women to regard future financial incentives as theirs.

#### MULTIPLE TYPES OF LEAVE

Women Men



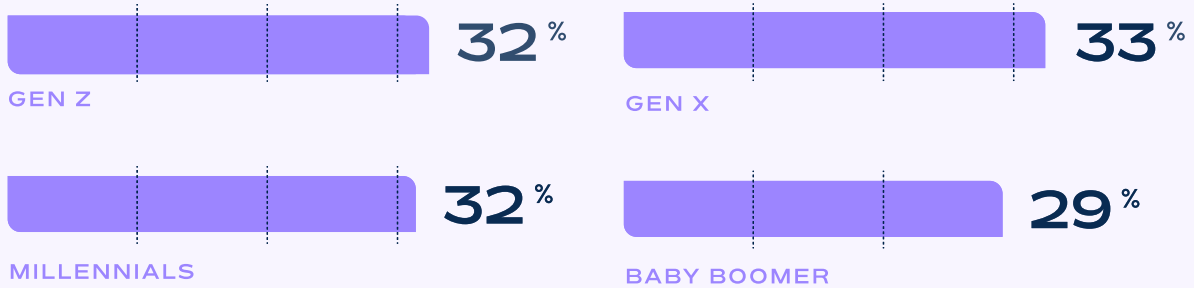
For organizations looking to recruit more women, emphasizing guaranteed leave over non-guaranteed financial opportunities is likely to be beneficial.



## 04

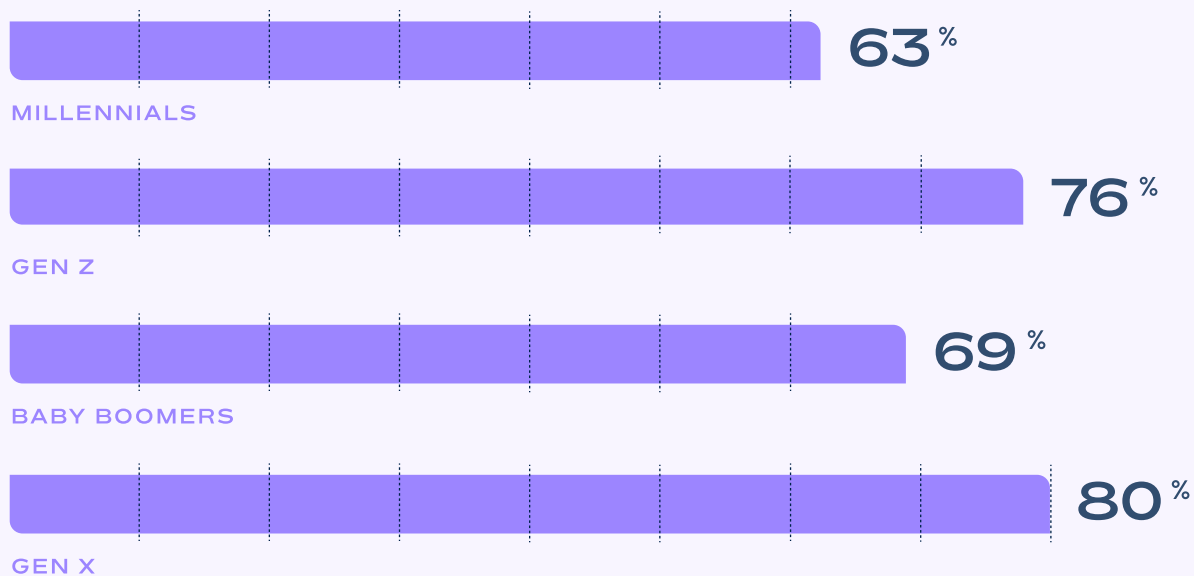
Dispelling the common misconception that remote work opportunities are more appealing to the young, nearly a third of each generation says their ideal work setup is to be remote full-time.

### IDEAL WORK SETUP IS TO BE REMOTE FULL-TIME



Even more striking, more than two-thirds of each generation want a work setup that's at least partially remote.

#### A WORK SETUP THAT'S AT LEAST PARTIALLY REMOTE



**If you are looking to create an environment where workers of all ages can thrive, offering flexibility is key.**

## 05

**For Gen Z hires, it is important to highlight flexibility first. As employees get older, however, other benefits and perks become more important.**

When evaluating a job offer, Gen Z places highest priority on salary amount (54%), career growth potential (51%), and flexibility (35%). 54% of Gen Z workers say they would consider switching jobs to relocate abroad, highlighting the level of flexibility they're looking for.

Benefits and perks grow in importance as employees get older, overtaking career growth potential and flexibility as top priorities by the time people are in their 40s.

## 06

**Although benefits are not as strong of a consideration as salary, career growth, and flexibility, the right package can still be a key differentiator for a young person deciding between job offers.**

**67%**

Despite being early in their careers, a whopping of Gen Z and Millennial employees have chosen one job over another because it offered a better benefits package.

This is in comparison to only 52% of Gen Xers and 40% of Boomers who have done so, despite having more time in the workforce under their belt.

**Furthermore, 44% of Gen Zers and 40% of Millenials have turned down or left a job due to issues or concerns with the benefits offered, whereas only 29% of Gen Xers and 20% of Boomers have done the same.**



# Detailed findings

## Remote and global workforces are expected to grow

While the pandemic kicked off the initial shift towards remote work, companies anticipate continued growth in remote hiring. This allows employers to find workers at a global scale rather than just in their own backyards.

### 01

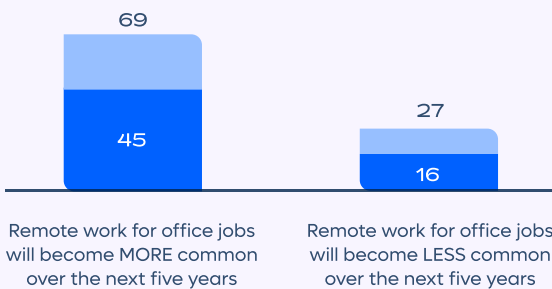
#### Both employees and decision makers agree: Remote and global workforces will grow over the next five years.

62% of decision makers (DMs) expect remote work to become more common over the next five years, and 69% of employees expect the same.

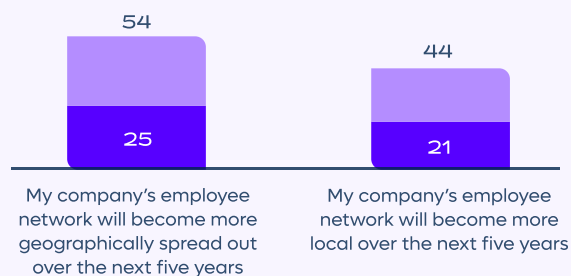
**54%** Over half of DMs expect their companies' employee networks to become more geographically spread out over the next five years.

Much closer    Somewhat closer

#### EMPLOYEES



#### DECISION MAKERS



## 02

### Emphasizing flexibility is key.

# 29%

“Flexible work” (flexibility in where and how you work) holds a slight edge over “remote work” (23%) in drawing the interest of top talent.

“Flexible work” casts a wider net by signaling that it’s “remote work plus” — giving employees not only the ability to not only work from home, but to have greater overall control over when, where, and how they work.

#### WHAT ARE THE TOP THREE MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS WHEN EVALUATING A JOB OFFER?



### 03

## Providing flexibility is also one of the most important considerations DMs have in integrating remote employees into their workforces.

### HOW IMPORTANT ARE THE FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS IN YOUR COMPANY'S DECISIONS AROUND REMOTE WORK?

Please use a 1-7 scale where 1 means "Not important at all" and 7 means "Extremely important." (Showing 7 - Extremely important)



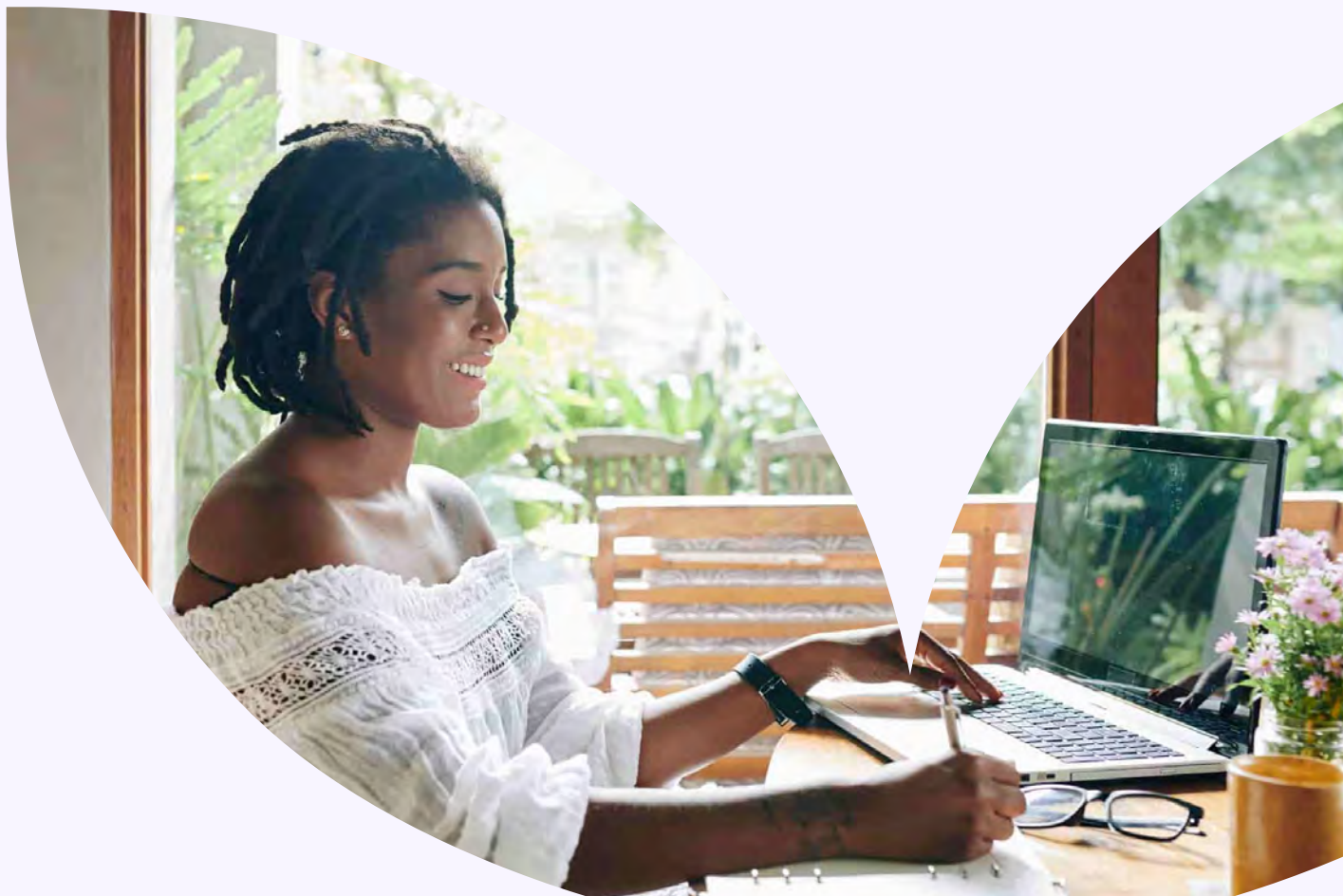




Being able to have flexibility with working hours during the day, the ability to move locations without jeopardizing your job, and the opportunity to work on your own projects outside of work (without your employer owning those projects) are so important, especially in today's climate.



**CASSIDY WILLIAMS**  
CTO at Contenda (United States)



## Competitive benefits are essential when hiring globally

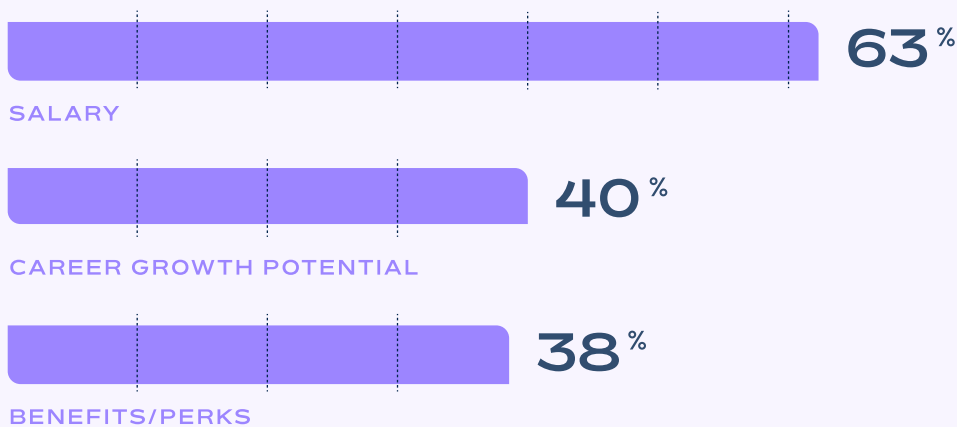
Global reach comes with both benefits and drawbacks for employers. Recruiting globally enables employers to cast a wider net for talent, but it also increases the number of companies and organizations employers are competing against for this top talent. Not to mention, it increases complexity — namely, creating a great employee experience for their international workforce.

### 01

#### To get employees to sign on the dotted line, it's about them, not the organization.

Organizational prestige and cultural fit are nice to have, but to accept a job offer, employees need to have their individual needs met first — it's Maslow's hierarchy of needs for the modern workplace.

#### IN DECIDING WHETHER TO TAKE A JOB (TOP 3):



Considerations focused on the organization rather than the employee's individual needs — such as the organization's growth, prestige, values, and culture — are less important to prospective employees at the point of recruitment, signaling they likely play a larger role in talent retention than in talent acquisition.

## WHAT ARE THE TOP THREE MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS WHEN EVALUATING A JOB OFFER?



## 02

### **Competitive benefits offerings are unique in that they are important to both attract new top talent and retain the talent companies already have.**

As mentioned above, benefits and perks are a top-three consideration for employees when evaluating a new job offer. Good benefits and perks are a particular draw in the U.S., with 59% of American employees selecting them as one of their most important considerations when evaluating a job offer.

### **Benefits and perks are also a common tiebreaker for top employees receiving multiple offers:**

# 59%

more than half of global employees have chosen one job over another because it offered a better benefits package,

# 36%

have even accepted an offer with a lower salary than they wanted because the company offered a strong benefits and perks package.

On the opposite side of the coin, having uncompetitive benefits can drive talent away and have negative impacts on employee retention, particularly when hiring internationally. 35% of employees say they've turned down a job offer or left a job due to issues with the benefits offered, while 44% of decision makers say they've lost international employees or had international candidates turn down offers because the benefits offered in their country weren't adequate.

# 67%

Localization of benefits plays a key role here, as two-thirds of employees say when working for an international company, **they expect benefits comparable to those of other professionals working in their country or city.**

### 03

**For a sizable group of employees, the ability to work flexibly could also make or break their decision on where to work and whether or not to stay in their current role.**

**29%** of overall employees rated **the ability to work flexibly (where and how they want)** as a top consideration.

...and that figure is higher among several key subgroups within the labor market, including contractors (38%, it's their #1 consideration overall), Gen Zers (35%, it's their #3 consideration overall), and women (32%, it's their #4 consideration overall).

Flexibility is also crucial in competitive hiring markets like India, where 51% of employees say they've considered switching jobs for the flexibility to relocate abroad.

There are core benefits employers must offer on a global scale. These benefits are non-negotiables for prospective talent when considering job offers. However, depending on the country, different secondary benefits and less common benefits appeal to top talent in certain markets.



## 04

### **Sick leave, paid holidays, and health insurance are among the core essential benefits around the world.**

One notable exception to this is in the UK where supplemental health insurance is not very important (just 38% say it's essential). However, there is much wider variation in secondary essential benefits by market:



In Eastern Europe, awards and incentives (56%) are an important part of a benefits package.



In India, awards and incentives (65%) are also important as is life insurance (63%).



In Brazil, parental leave (72%), severance pay (69%), and life insurance (57%) are all essential.



In the UK, severance pay (51%) and telecommuting (48%) are also important.



Finally, in the US, dental insurance (70%) and life insurance (52%) are essential benefits.





As an American employee, little is guaranteed in terms of mandated benefits, and access to healthcare is usually tied to one's employer. A great health insurance plan is non-negotiable when evaluating a job offer. I also expect to receive dental and vision insurance, as it can be very expensive to receive care without it. Life insurance is another compelling benefit to protect one's loved ones. At a time when Americans are feeling a lot of financial insecurity and with limited government protections, **having an employer willing to offer these safeguards makes a big difference and builds trust between the employee and the company.**



**RHIANNON PAYNE**

Senior Product Marketer, Remote (United States)

## ESSENTIAL, EMERGING AND INNOVATIVE BENEFITS

### Essential benefits

I wouldn't work for a company that didn't have this

### Emerging benefits

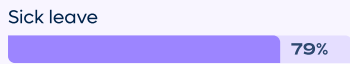
This is an intriguing perk: Not a necessity, but offering it would make me more likely to work for a company

### Innovative benefits

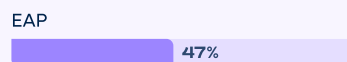
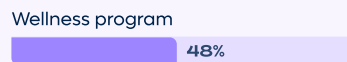
My company doesn't offer this benefit, but I would use it.

## GLOBAL FTES

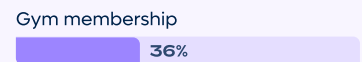
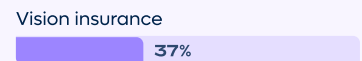
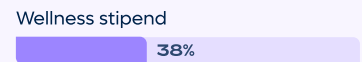
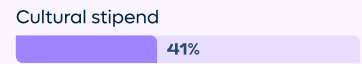
### Essential



### Emerging



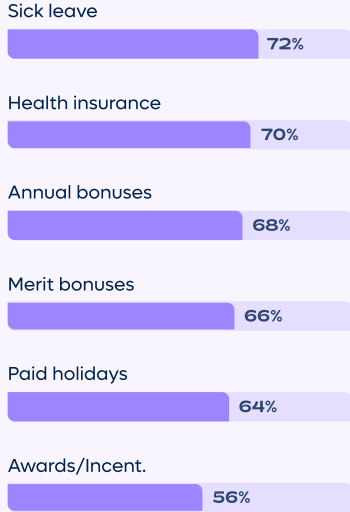
### Innovative



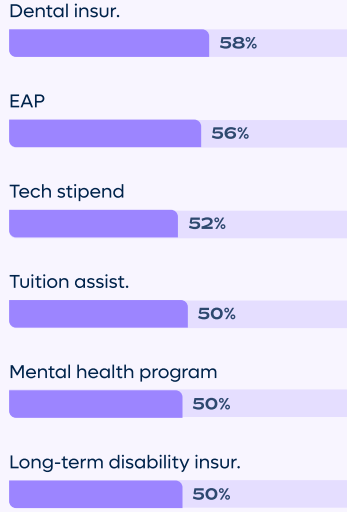
EASTERN EUROPE



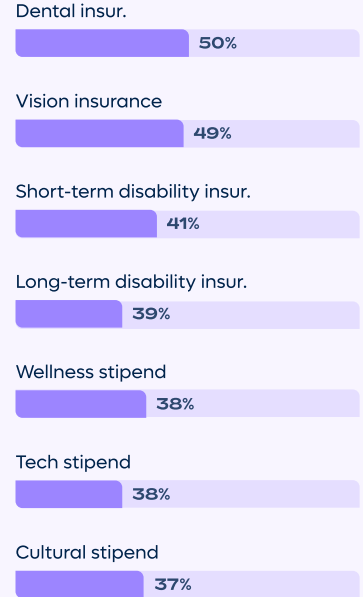
Essential



Emerging



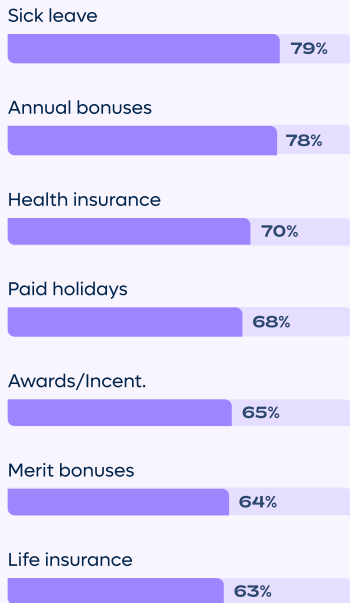
Innovative



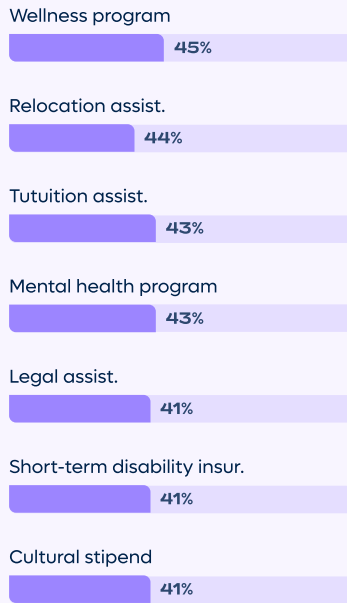
INDIA



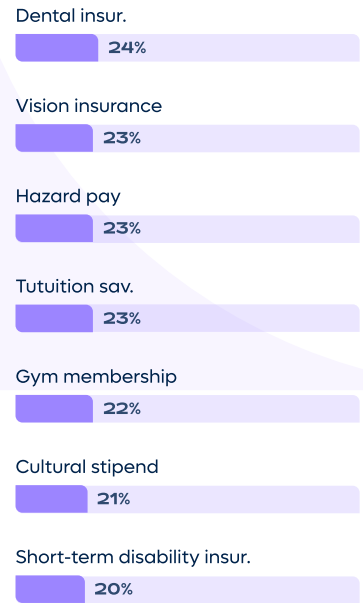
Essential



Emerging

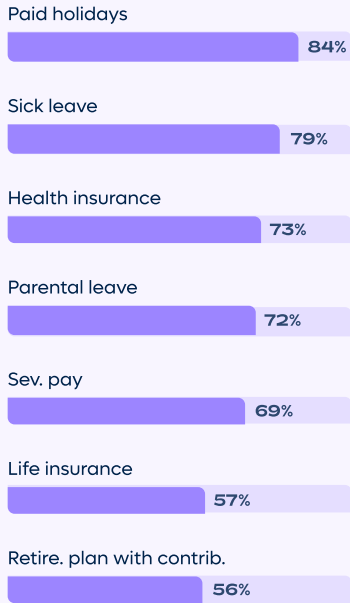


Innovative

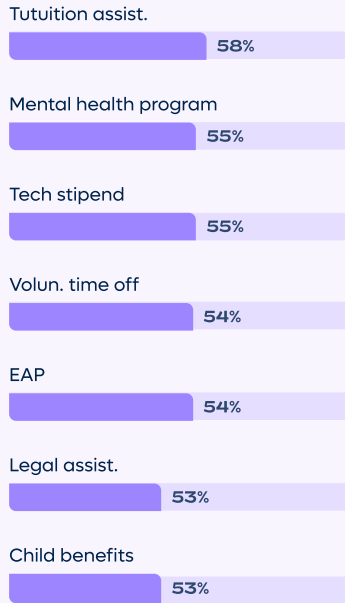


BRAZIL 

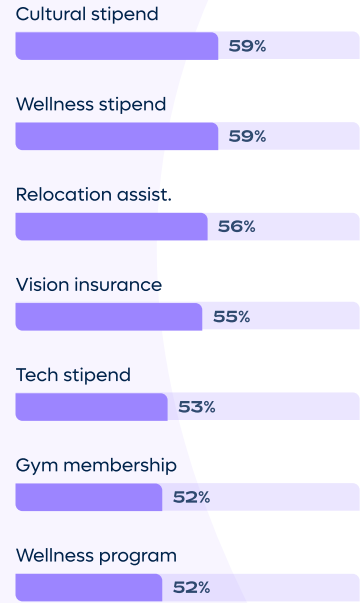
**Essential**



**Emerging**

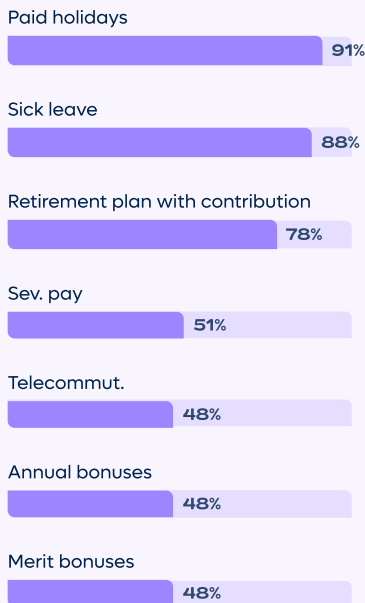


**Innovative**

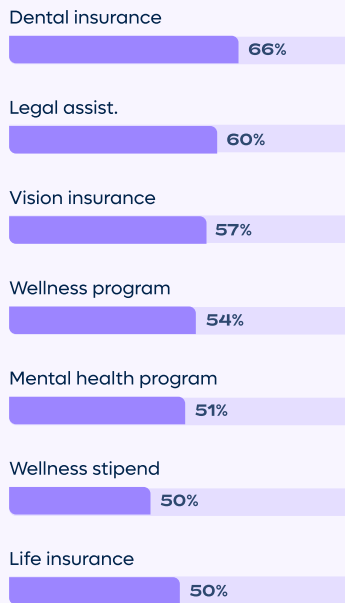


UNITED KINGDOM 

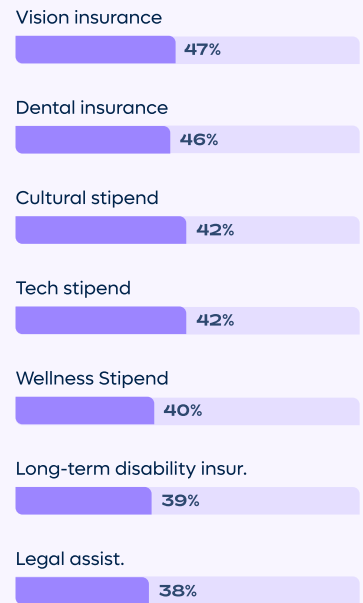
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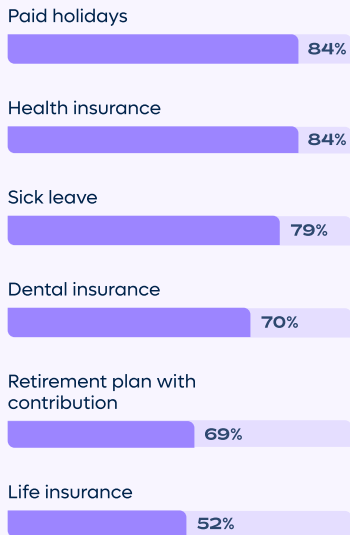
**Emerging**



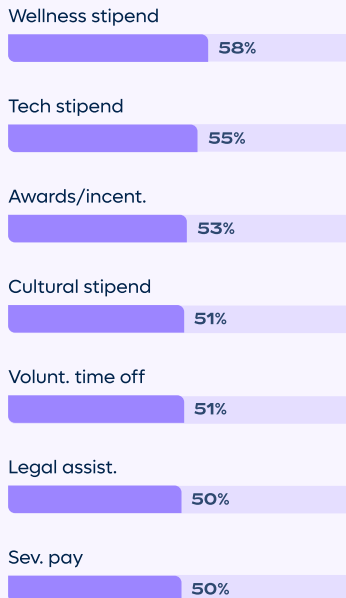
**Innovative**



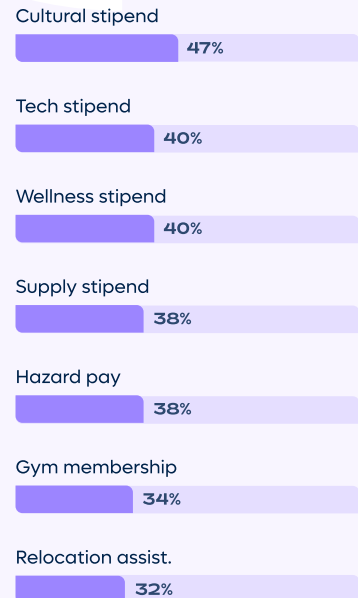
**Essential**



**Emerging**



**Innovative**



The pandemic has raised the bar on the need for core benefits such as medical, life, and disability insurance. These are now expected of companies. **The benefits that are now differentiating companies are lifestyle benefits like wellness programs,** employee assistance programs (EAP), gym memberships, legal assistance, and relocation assistance. HR teams and employees alike are now focusing on their ancillary benefits as value adds and also a duty of care from the employer.



**EDWARD CHA**

SVP, RMD, Midwest and Global Practice Leader at Newfront (United States)



## A “good” benefit improves quality of life

According to employees, a “good” benefit is one which improves their quality of life and that they’re likely to use. That’s intuitive.

However, by prioritizing these two criteria, employees might be missing a piece of the bigger picture. Employees are more focused on whether their benefits are usable and improve their quality of life now, rather than how well their benefits apply to their specific lifestyle and future plans. They’re locked in on net present value and even (in some markets) cost savings more than tailored benefits which might deliver more value to them during the course of their employment. The contradiction emerges when employees find the benefits they have do not meet their individual needs or they’re unable to use them to their full potential.

### 01

#### **A good benefit improves quality of life.**

A plurality (48%) of FTEs say a good benefit is one which improves their quality of life, and 35% say it’s a benefit they are likely to use. Only 27% think of good benefits as being applicable to their individual lifestyle and future plans and just a quarter (25%) think a good benefit is one of high quality. This is particularly true in the US and UK, where the gaps between likelihood to use and lifestyle applicability are largest.



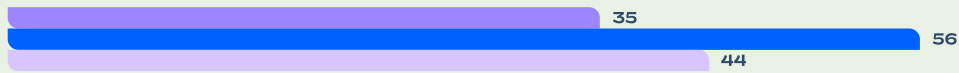
## WHAT MAKES A BENEFIT A “GOOD BENEFIT”?

■ Global
 ■ UK
 ■ US

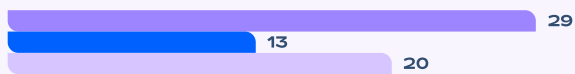
Improve my quality of life



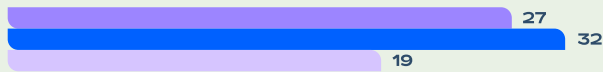
Is a benefit I’m likely to use



Can be used by my entire family



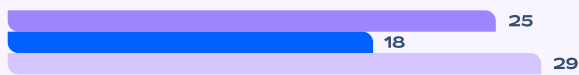
Applies to my lifestyle



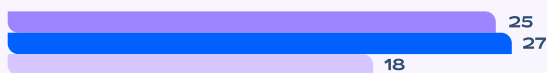
High monetary value



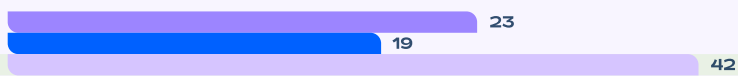
Is high quality



Something I want but wouldn’t pay for myself



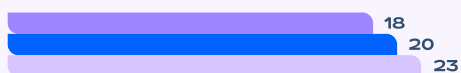
Is affordable for me



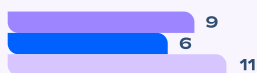
Ease of use



Gives me choice



Is up to par with the industry standard



## 02

### **Benefits which save money are more important to employees than benefits tailored to their lifestyle.**

In a head-to-head matchup, 55% would choose benefits and perks which save them the most money, vs. 42% who would choose benefits and perks tailored to their lifestyle.

**Additionally, in the U.S., affordability is also a top quality which defines what a “good” benefit is, overshadowing lifestyle applicability by a wide margin (42% vs. 19%).**

## 03

**This disconnect between what employees think makes up a good benefit (broad usability and contribution to quality of life) and the reality (tailored applicability to employees’ lifestyles) contributes to the biggest challenges employees face with their current benefits packages.**

# 76%

of employees have experienced challenges with the benefits and perks offered by their companies.

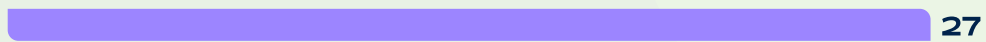
Employees undervalue applicability of benefits, but then cite benefits not matching their needs or lifestyles (28%) and difficulty in using benefits to their full potential (27%) as their biggest challenges.

**WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ARE CHALLENGES YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED WITH THE BENEFITS AND PERKS YOUR COMPANY OFFERS?**

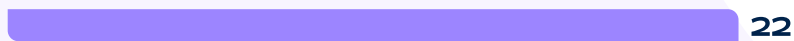
Benefits offered don't match my needs or lifestyle



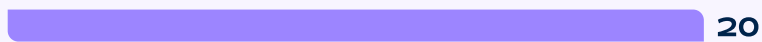
Difficult to use my benefits to their full potential



Difficult to understand which benefits options are the best fit for me



Difficult to keep up with year changes to the benefits that are offered



Logistical challenges in utilizing my benefits



High cost to enroll in benefits



Unaware of benefits offered



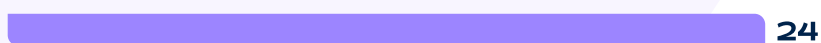
Difficult for my spouse or partner to use my benefits



Don't have time to use my benefits



None of these





A benefit that is not perceived as a benefit is not serving its purpose. Often we see companies implementing benefits simply because it's traditional within their local workforce, but the workforce is changing and becoming more distributed. **It is very important to consider your employees, where they are based, varying market practices, and the global availability of your benefits.** Whenever possible, track the usage and shift swiftly when necessary. If you offer something that has low utilization, it is not always a matter of better education or awareness, but sometimes employees simply have no need for that benefit. Listen to what they have to say and shift your budget towards solutions that will increase utilization.



**JOANA VIANA**

Senior Expert, Benefits Strategy, Remote (Spain)





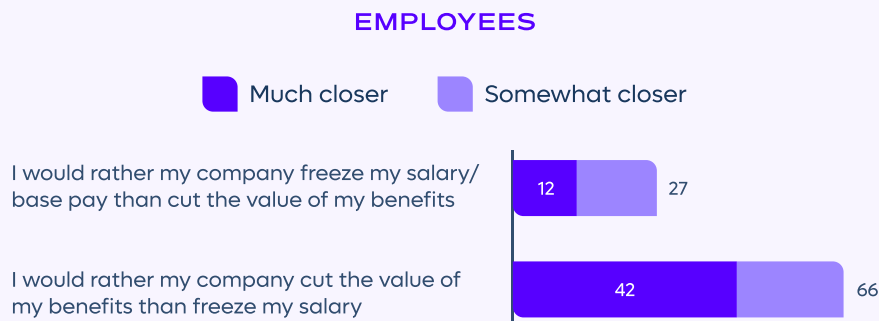
## Streamline benefits (but never cut what's essential)

A good benefits package becomes increasingly important in a tight economic climate. When circumstances are financially tenuous, companies are faced with a lot of bad options between streamlining benefits, pausing hiring, and freezing salaries. While employees offer up cutting benefits as their preferred haircut, employers should tread carefully. Companies need to streamline certain benefits while keeping the ones which matter most to employees.

### O1

#### A majority of employees would rather a company cut the value of their benefits than freeze their salary.

66% would rather have their benefits cut than their salary, vs. just 27% who said they'd prefer a salary freeze over the value of their benefits being cut. In Brazil (64%) and India (59%), employees are right in line with the overall data. Employees in Eastern Europe (79%) and the UK (82%) feel even stronger about having salary untouched versus cutting benefits.



The U.S. is something of an outlier. **The U.S. is something of an outlier. While benefit cuts still outweigh a salary freeze in the US, it's much closer, with 40% of employees preferring a salary freeze and 45% preferring to have their benefits cut.** A general trend throughout our data is that employer-provided benefits appear more important to employees in the US than in the other markets researched.

**But, when money is tight, core benefits matter even more to employees.**

**88%** of employees say when money is tight, having a good benefits package which covers their needs becomes more important.

Maintaining strong benefits during hard times is also a good way companies can signal to employees they care about their wellbeing.

**78%** of employees say a good benefits package can still make a company a good place to work even if salaries are frozen.

The core essential benefits mentioned earlier — sick leave, paid holidays, health insurance (and dental in the U.S.), retirement plans, and annual bonuses — are viewed by employees as non-negotiables. Cutting them during times of economic downturn could significantly jeopardize employee satisfaction and retention.

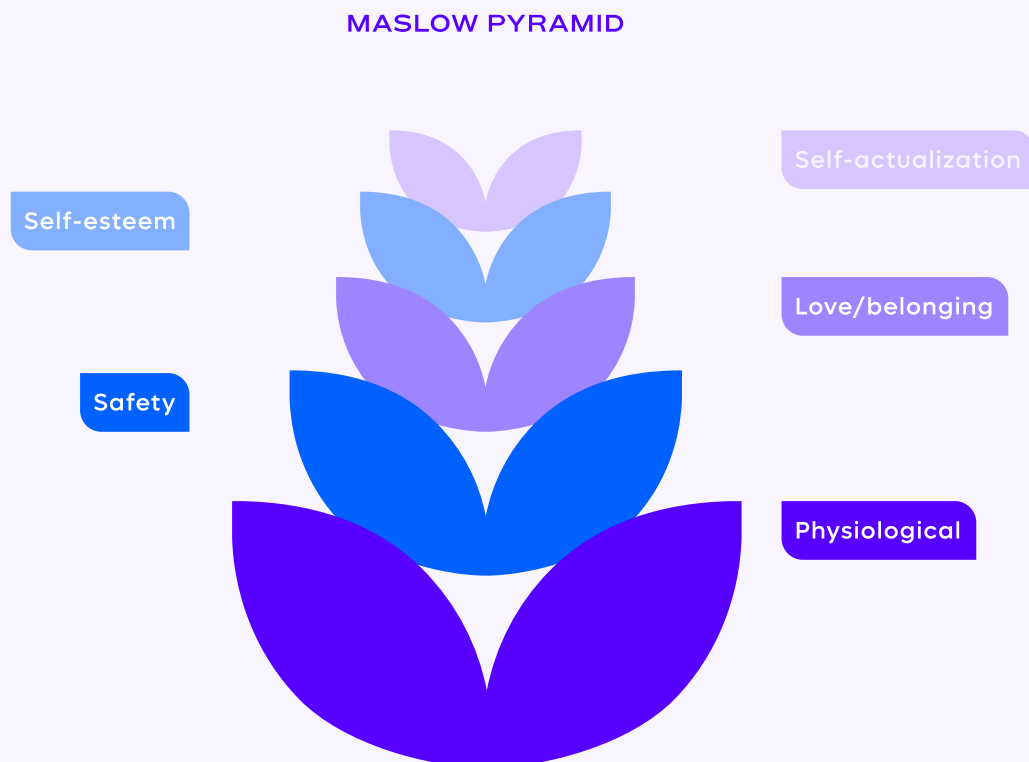


In countries where access to healthcare is widely available, redesigning your medical plan to make it more cost effective might make sense. But in markets like the US, where access to healthcare is often tied to employment, this move would be very badly received by employees. If you're thinking about what benefits to reduce, simply look at the **Maslow pyramid** and the market – **losing a benefit that falls higher in the pyramid is less likely to cause a lot of unhappiness and disengagement.**



**JOANA VIANA**

Senior Expert, Benefits Strategy, Remote (Spain)



### 03

## Companies should look to cut back on fringe and underutilized benefits to weather a downturn.

### BENEFITS THAT ARE REGARDED AS ESSENTIAL BY MUCH SMALLER PROPORTIONS OF EMPLOYEES:

Paid leave (beyond holiday and sick days) like sabbaticals



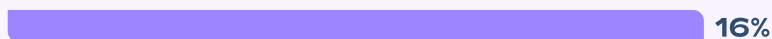
Military leave



Volunteer time off



Stipends for the gym



Cultural activities



Tuition savings



Cutting these benefits during times of economic downturn is less likely to create widespread discontent. This can also vary by market.

**In certain markets, there are additional benefits that can be cut back in workplaces that offer them:**



**In Brazil:**

Wellness programs (regarded as essential by only 18% of employees)



**In Eastern Europe:**

EAPs (17%) and mental health programs (20%)



**In India:**

Dental (24%) and vision (26%) insurance, hazard pay (26%), and short-term disability (26%)



**In the UK:**

Supplemental dental and vision insurance (15%), legal assistance (15%), wellness programs (17%), hazard pay (18%), wellness stipends (19%), and tuition assistance (20%)



**In the US:**

Hazard pay (17%), relocation assistance (17%), legal assistance (19%), and tuition assistance (19%). By pure numbers, childcare benefits (17%) also rate as essential for only a small proportion of employees in the U.S. due to demographic trends, although they are undoubtedly more important to parents who are currently utilizing them.



# Target audience findings

## Employers and employees have varying perspectives

Employees and employers don't always see eye-to-eye on certain aspects of benefits packages. These discrepancies can lead to misunderstanding and misallocation of resources with employers investing in benefits their current or prospective talent do not prioritize.

### 01

**There is a disconnect between how satisfied employers think employees are and how employees really feel about the benefits packages they receive.**

**90%**

of decision makers believe employees are satisfied with their benefits but less than three-quarters (72%) of employees actually are satisfied – a glaring 18 point gap.

### 02

**There's also a mismatch between how much flexibility in benefits employers think they're offering vs. what employees and contractors think they're receiving. When asked about "flexible benefits,"<sup>1</sup>**

**69%**

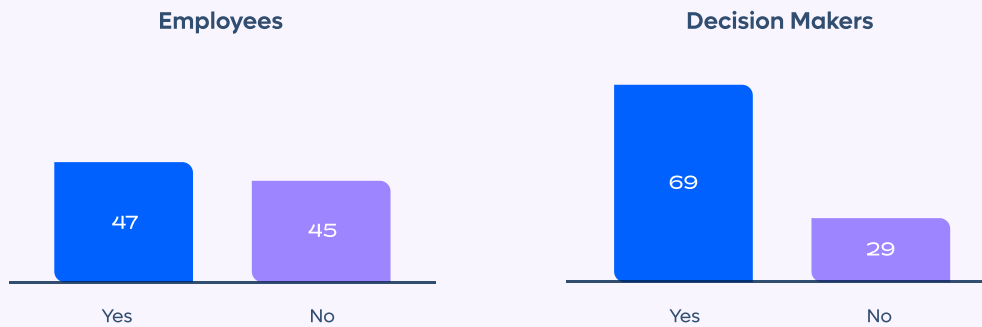
of employers believe they currently offer flexible benefits, but only 47% of employees say they're receiving them.

This perception gap explains the dissatisfaction among employees and could lead to disillusioned employees whose efforts and investments are not being recognized.

<sup>1</sup>Defined as: "A benefit program offers employees a choice between various benefits including life insurance, health insurance, vacations, retirement plans, shopping vouchers, and/or child care. Although a common core of benefits may be required, you can choose how your remaining benefit dollars are to be allocated for each type of benefit from the total amount promised by the employer. Sometimes you can contribute more for additional coverage."



## DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION CURRENTLY OFFER FLEXIBLE BENEFITS?



### Remote and hybrid employees are unique

On average, remote and hybrid employees are significantly happier with their benefits packages than on-site employees. They also place a higher value on employee recognition compared to their on-site counterparts. These benefits can help set apart companies looking for a globally distributed workforce and signal to recruits how remote employees will be supported and valued. It seems remote and hybrid employees also have lower expectations for benefits compared to on-site employees. They don't care about them as much and, therefore, tend to be more satisfied overall.

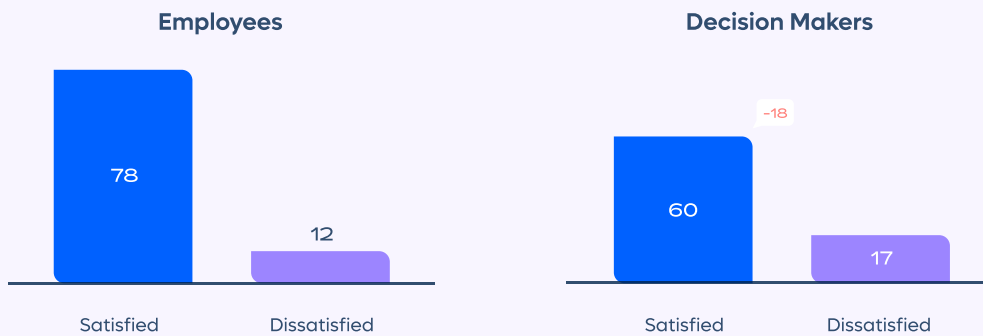
01

**Remote and hybrid employees are overall more satisfied with their benefits compared to on-site employees.**

**60%**

of on-site employees are satisfied with their current benefits package compared to 78% of remote employees and 80% of hybrid employees who say the same.

HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU OVERALL WITH THE BENEFITS AND PERKS YOUR COMPANY OFFERS?



02

**Remote workers do it for flexibility.**

On-site employees widely value compensation (59%), career growth potential (46%), and benefits and perks (45%) over flexibility (21%) when evaluating job offers. Their remote counterparts value flexibility (33%) at a higher rate, and put it on par with benefits and perks (36%) and career growth potential (33%) in their top-tier of considerations. Remote workers also tend to trend slightly younger, and younger employees tend to place a higher importance on flexibility than on traditional benefits and perks, which is likely partially driving this trend (more on this below in the Generations deep-dive).



## WHAT ARE THE TOP THREE MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS WHEN EVALUATING A JOB OFFER?

- Remote employees
- Hybrid employees
- On-site employees

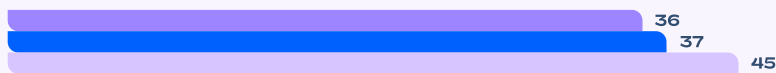
### Salary amount



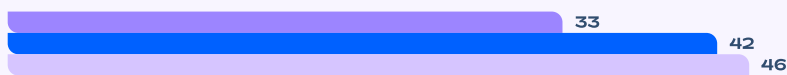
### Ability to work remotely



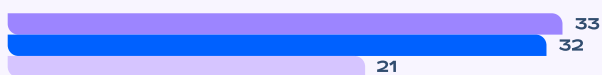
### Benefits and perks



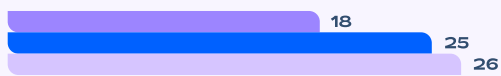
### Career growth potential



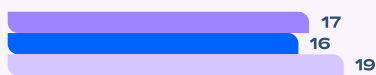
### Flexibility in where/how I work



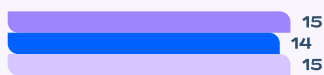
### Organization growth/success



### Organization prestige



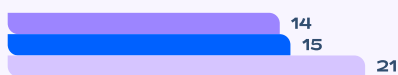
### Organization values/initiatives



### Manager and coworkers



### Cash incentives



### Organizations cultural fit



### Equity incentives



Difference between on-site and remote

- +16 Salary
- +13 Career growth
- +9 Benefits
- 12 Flexibility
- 30 Remote work

### 03

**For many remote employees, working remotely is the benefit or perk they most desire, so they're less critical towards the rest of the package.**

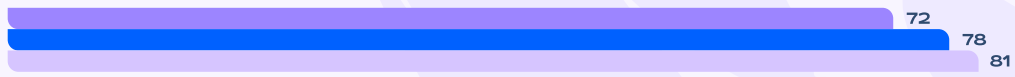
Only 36% of remote employees name benefits and perks as one of their most important considerations when evaluating a job offer, in comparison to 45% of on-site employees. **They value telecommuting as a top-tier essential perk – one that's nearly as important as core benefits like health insurance and paid holidays.** As long as their need for remote work is being met, they tend to be satisfied with their overall benefits and perks package.



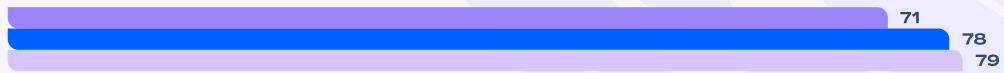
## TOP ESSENTIAL BENEFITS

■ Remote employees
 ■ Hybrid employees
 ■ On-site employees

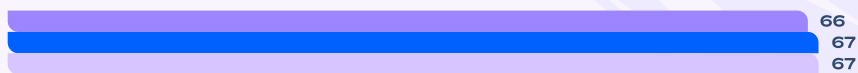
### Sick leave



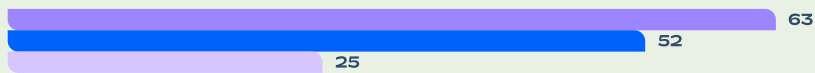
### Paid holidays



### Health insurance



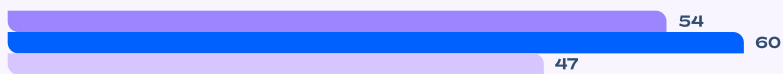
### Telecommuting



### Annual bonuses



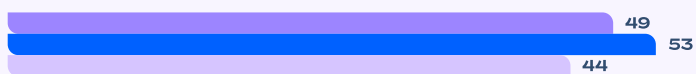
### Merit bonuses



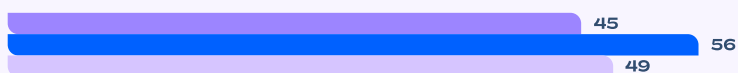
### Retirement plan



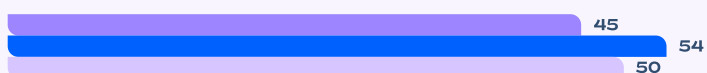
### Awards/incentives



### Life insurance



### Parental leave



### Severance pay



## 04

### **Employee recognition through awards or incentives is essential for remote and hybrid workers.**

Remote and hybrid workers like recognition. It's something which can make them feel closer to the company even if they are not there physically.

# 49-53%

**Almost half of remote and hybrid employees cite awards and incentives as essential benefits,** meaning they would not work for a company that didn't offer them.

On-site employees, on the other hand, are more likely to view awards and incentives as intriguing perks that are enticing, but non-essential.

## **Attracting and retaining top female talent <sup>2</sup>**

**Women are looking for stability and security in their work, often working for larger, established enterprises and desiring benefits packages with paid time off and parental leave.** Men, on the other hand, place higher priority on career growth potential and perks such as bonuses, which may not be guaranteed but offer the allure of future financial upside.

**Women also desire flexibility more than their male counterparts,** which should be considered through the lens of how the workforce has changed since 2020. Working women have faced considerable losses, with the pandemic squeezing many out of the workforce. School closures also created setbacks for women, who are much more likely to be expected to perform unpaid childcare and household work while also balancing professional work. Moving beyond this period of upheaval, it makes sense that women increasingly look for flexibility in order to better manage all aspects of their lives.

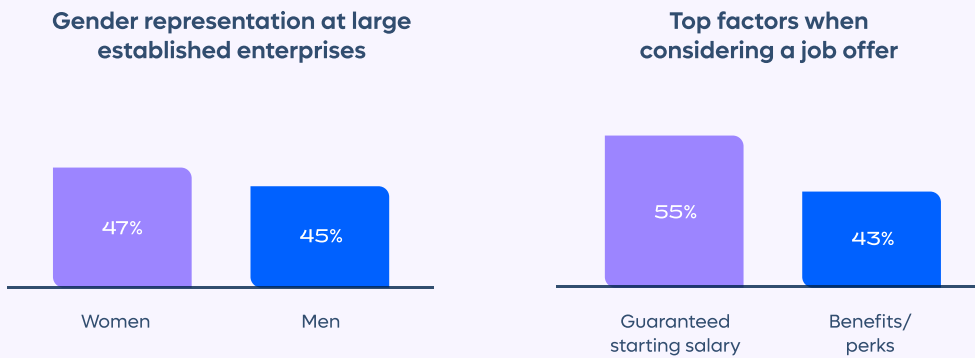
<sup>2</sup>Data in this section includes the full sample (FTEs, DMs, and Contractors) to capture the full spectrum of workers.



## O1

**Women value benefits and perks more than men do when evaluating job offers, and are more likely to prioritize security and stability over growth potential.**

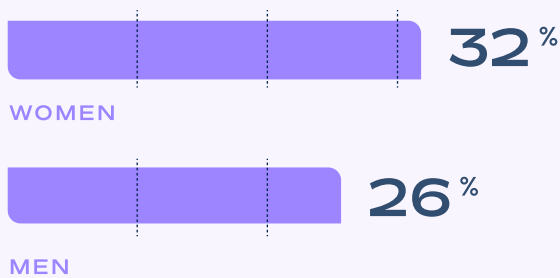
### WOMEN ARE MORE LIKELY THAN MEN TO WORK FOR LARGE, ESTABLISHED ENTERPRISES.



## O2

**Women also place higher importance on opportunities for flexibility.**

### FLEXIBILITY AS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT JOB CONSIDERATIONS:



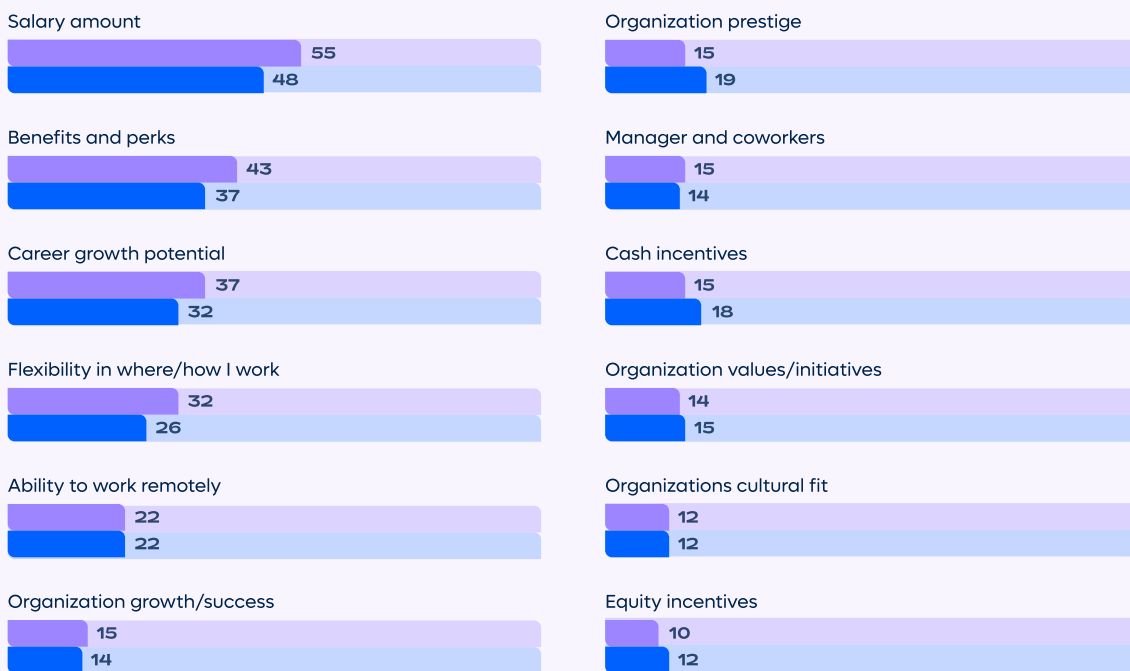
### 03

## Compared to women, male employees are more likely to take risks and accept a lower starting salary now in exchange for the potential of future financial and career growth.

Starting salary is the top consideration for men (48%), as it is for women (55%) when evaluating a job offer, but with a lower proportion of men than women saying it's one of their most important criteria. Career growth potential (43%) is men's other top consideration, indicating they're more likely to take on the risky tradeoffs of working for smaller companies and earning less in guaranteed salary now in hopes of benefitting from larger growth returns down the road.

### WHAT ARE THE TOP THREE MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS WHEN EVALUATING A JOB OFFER?

Women Men



## 04

### Men and women are largely similar in what they regard as their highest-priority essential benefits.

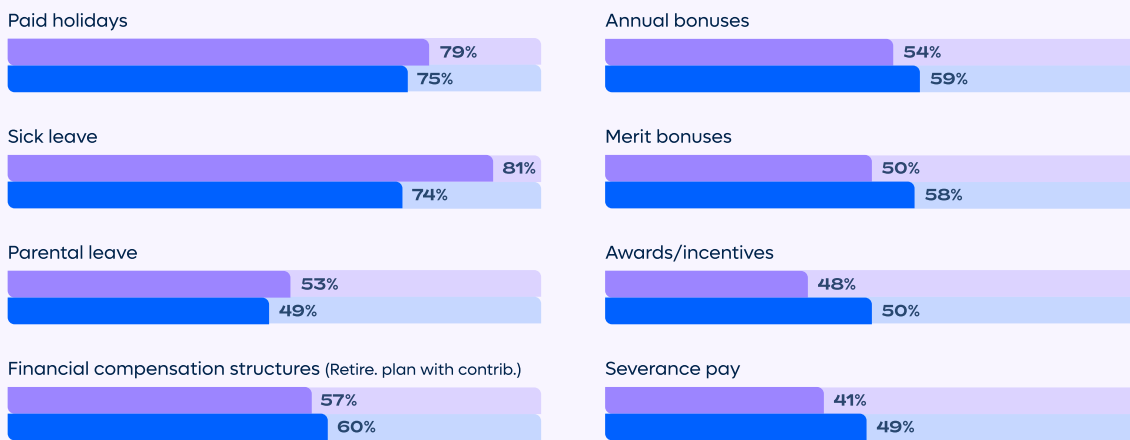
Sick leave, paid holidays, and health insurance are regarded by both men and women to be essential benefits, followed by retirement plans with company contributions, and annual bonuses.

## 05

But, the divergences are in the details. Notably, women are slightly more likely than men to view all forms of leave as their non-negotiables, while men are slightly more likely than women to regard future financial incentives as theirs.

### MULTIPLE TYPES OF LEAVE

Women Men



For organizations looking to recruit more women, emphasizing guaranteed leave over non-guaranteed financial opportunity is likely to be beneficial.



In addition to necessary benefits like health insurance, **I also appreciate having unlimited PTO and the ability to work remotely and asynchronously.** As a mother and a provider to my family, being able to do both brings a lot of positive benefits to our lives.



**CHARLOTTE JOSEPH-SMITH**  
Senior Partnerships Marketer, Remote (United Kingdom)

## 05

**Looking beyond the essentials, emerging and innovative benefits (those that are less expected but are intriguing/useful and could set a company apart in the recruiting process) largely center around stipends and employee wellness, with some nuances by gender.**

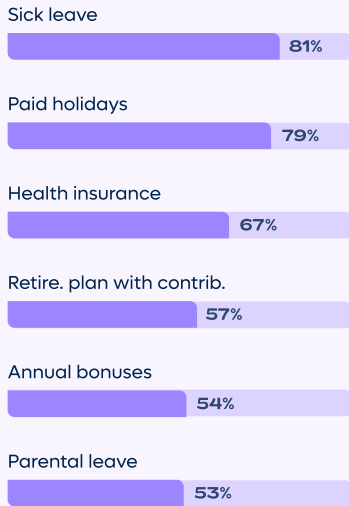
Legal assistance, tuition assistance, mental health programs, and tech stipends all have the potential to differentiate a company across prospective employees — about half of both women and men rate them as intriguing perks that make a company more appealing to work for.

**Both men and women are interested in companies offering wellness benefits, but while women would prefer their company offer wellness programs (50%), men would prefer to receive a cash stipend to use toward wellness (47%)** - once again fitting the trend of men preferring benefits that increase total financial compensation. Women are more likely to be drawn to a company that offers cultural stipends (48% view as an intriguing perk that make a company more attractive), while men rate them as something they'd use, but not something that would shift their opinions towards a company (38% say their company doesn't offer these currently, but they'd use them if they could). Men also name EAPs (47%) and vision insurance (47%) as intriguing perks that could make a company more attractive.

## BENEFITS FOR WOMEN

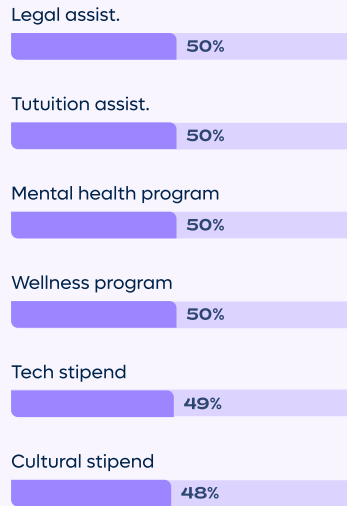
### Essential

I wouldn't work for a company that didn't offer it.



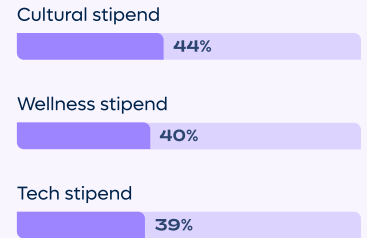
### Emerging

This is an intriguing perk. Not a necessity, but offering it would make me more likely to work for a company.



### Innovative

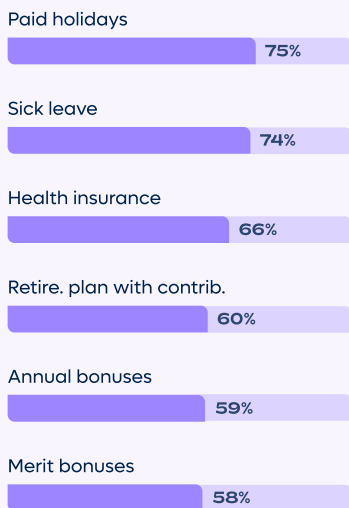
Company doesn't offer, but I would use it.



## BENEFITS FOR MEN

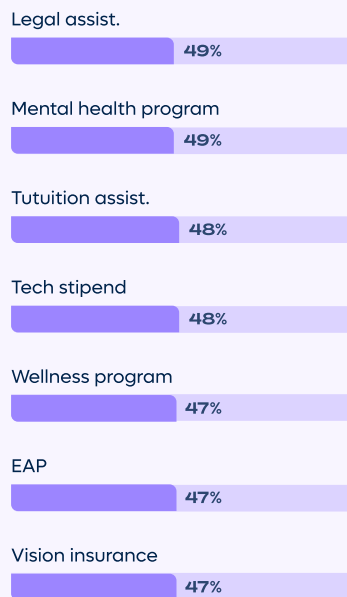
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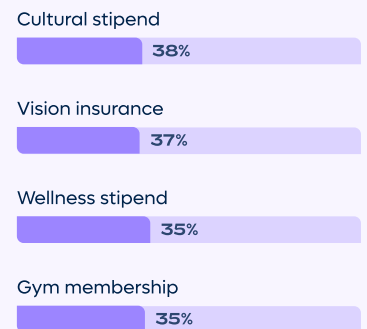
### Emerging

This is an intriguing perk. Not a necessity, but offering it would make me more likely to work for a company.



### Innovative

Company doesn't offer, but I would use it.





**Women want to see the pay gap close faster, workplace security, and for flexibility in their working time and leave.** Other tangible steps employers should take include ensuring that women who decide to be mothers are protected and accounted for in your medical plan and implementing a good parental leave policy (ideally providing both parents with similar time off) and reintegration policies when parents return.



**JOANA VIANA**

Senior Expert, Benefits Strategy,  
Remote (Spain)





## Remote work and benefits across generations<sup>3</sup>

Younger workers tend to prioritize flexibility and career growth opportunities over benefits and perks, but a competitive benefits package can still be the deciding factor in choosing between multiple job offers. **Meanwhile, although older workers prioritize benefits and perks over flexibility, many are interested in a hybrid or remote work setup.** Ageism in the workplace is a growing focus of DEI efforts, particularly in IT and related industries, so we evaluated the differences between generations and which benefits will allow older workers to thrive in their roles.

### 01

**Flexibility is more important to the younger, up-and-coming generation of workers than benefits and perks, but as workers get older, benefits and perks become more important to them.**

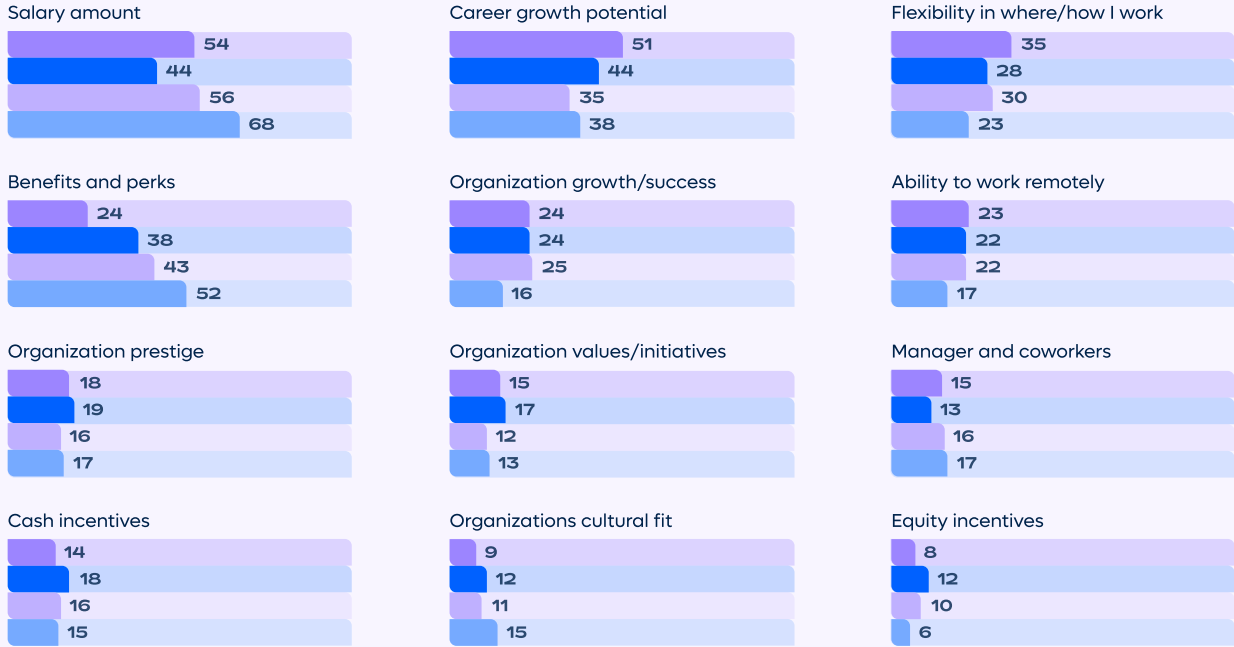
When evaluating a job offer, Gen Z places highest priority on salary amount (54%), career growth potential (51%), and flexibility (35%). Benefits and perks lag, at 24%. 54% of Gen Z workers say they would consider switching jobs to relocate abroad, highlighting the level of flexibility they're looking for. Benefits and perks quickly grow in importance as employees get older, overtaking career growth potential and flexibility top priorities by the time people are in their early 40s.

<sup>3</sup>Data in this section includes the full sample (FTEs, DMs, and Contractors) to capture the full spectrum of remote vs. on-site employees.



WHAT ARE THE TOP THREE MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS WHEN EVALUATING A JOB OFFER?

Gen Z Millennial GenX Boomer



02

Although benefits and perks are not as strong of an upfront consideration as salary, career growth, and flexibility for younger employees, the right package can still be a key differentiator in a young person deciding between competing job offers.

Despite being early in their careers,

67%

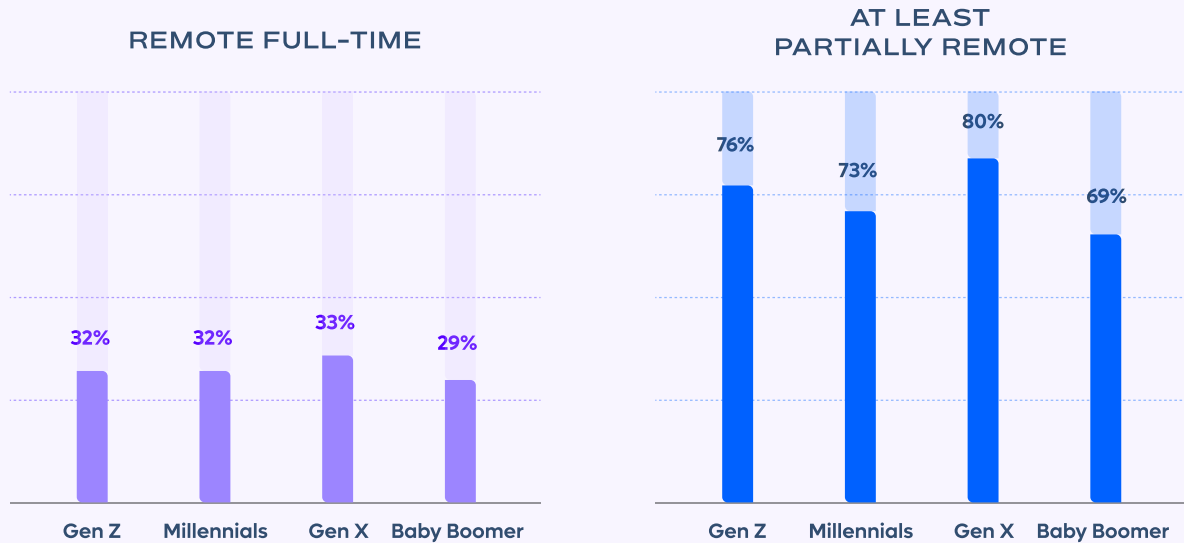
of Gen Z and Millennial employees have chosen one job over another because it offered a better benefits package.

This is in comparison to only 52% of Gen Xers and 40% of Boomers who have done so, despite having more time in the workforce under their belt. Furthermore, 44% of Gen Zers and 40% of Millennials have turned down or left a job due to issues or concerns with the benefits offered, whereas only 29% of Gen Xers and 20% of Boomers have done the same.

### 03

#### Younger and older workers alike desire remote and hybrid work setups.

Dispelling common perception that remote work opportunities are more appealing to the young, nearly a third of each generation says their ideal work setup is to be remote full-time, and more than two thirds of each generation want a work setup that's at least partially remote.



**If you are looking to create an environment where workers of all ages can thrive, offering flexibility is key.**



## 04

**Core essential benefits such as sick leave, paid holidays, and health insurance are consistently at the top of the list across generations, but second tier essential benefits differ by age.**

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Intuitively, parental leave ranks highly as an essential benefit for:

**56%**  
GEN Z

**59%**  
MILLENNIAL

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While retirement plans with company contributions ranks more highly for :

**64%**  
GEN X

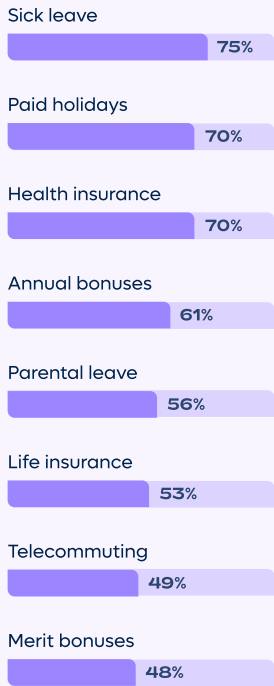
**65%**  
BOOMERS

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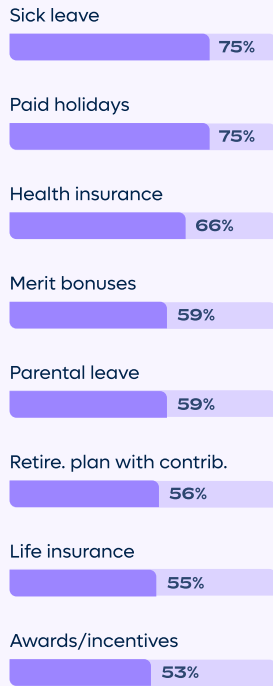
In-line with their expectations around flexibility, roughly half of Gen Zers and Millennials view telecommuting options as essential. Gen Xers and Boomers are more concerned with ensuring their financial safety if their employment is terminated, rating severance pay relatively highly as an essential benefit (51% Gen Xers, 41% Boomers).

**ESSENTIAL BENEFITS** (I wouldn't work for a company that didn't offer it.)

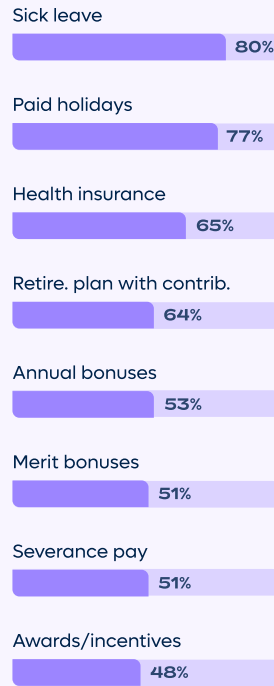
**Gen Z**



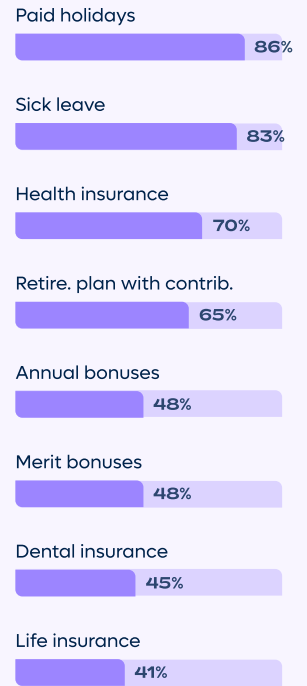
**Millennials**



**Gen X**



**Boomers**



## Contractor benefits

**Similar to remote workers, contractors work the way they do for the flexibility. They want their job(s) and benefits or perks to work around their lifestyle, not the other way around.** Lead with this understanding when hiring contractors.

Contractors are also compensation-focused and have simpler expectations around benefits and perks offerings than full-time employees. They tend to view a more limited set of benefits to be a worthy sacrifice in favor of good compensation and control over their work-life balance.

### 01

**Flexibility and compensation amount are contractors' top priorities when considering job offers.**

Flexibility and compensation should be at the forefront of recruitment outreach to contractors. Supplementing flexibility messaging with the opportunity to work remotely and compensation messaging with language around growth potential hits the top four criteria contractors are looking for.

#### WHAT ARE THE TOP THREE MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS WHEN EVALUATING A JOB OFFER?

##### Contractors





## 02

**Not surprisingly, contractors are making less use of core traditional benefits than full-time employees, likely because they receive a more limited set of offerings. In spite of this, contractors report high satisfaction with the benefits they are receiving because their lifestyle needs are being met.**

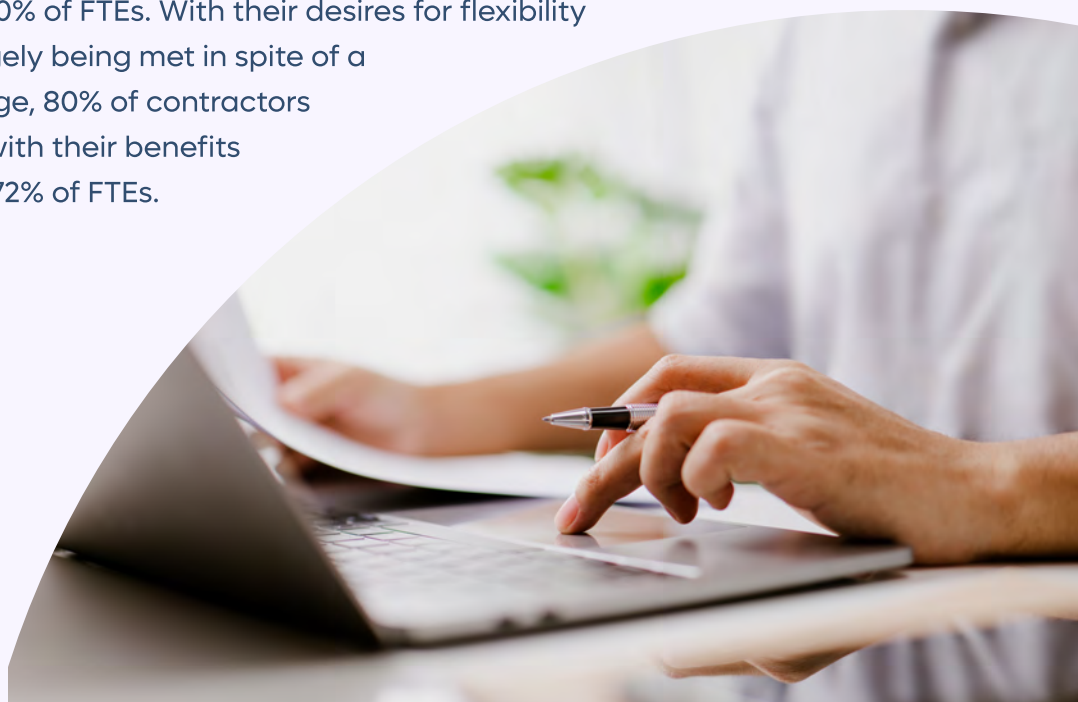
Companies looking to recruit more contractors should ensure any benefits and perks they do offer to contractors align with contractors' values around flexibility (time off and telecommuting), and compensation (bonuses, awards/incentives).

## 03

**Contractors still look for paid time off and other perks.**

Although at significantly lower rates than full-time employees, **the majority of contractors report having access to and using time off (60% of contractors take paid holidays, 60% make use of sick leave).**

Contractors also receive financial perks and awards at rates on par with full-time employees (58% receive awards/incentives vs. 54% of FTEs, 52% receive annual bonuses vs. 56% of FTEs, and 52% receive merit bonuses vs. 51% of FTEs). And, 60% of contractors are taking advantage of telecommuting opportunities, vs. just 50% of FTEs. With their desires for flexibility and compensation largely being met in spite of a smaller benefits package, 80% of contractors report being satisfied with their benefits in comparison to only 72% of FTEs.





Since 2020, we have seen an increase in the number of contract workers. It can be challenging both legally and operationally to offer benefits for contractors as the vendors are not always prepared to accommodate them, but it's worth asking questions to determine what you can offer in order to attract the best contractor talent. **With health insurance, for example, adding contractors is unlikely to impact your company's plan, but for the contractor, it can make a huge impact in their lives** by offering more (and cheaper) healthcare options than would otherwise be available to them.



**JOANA VIANA**

Senior Expert, Benefits Strategy, Remote (Spain)

## 04

**Health insurance holds high appeal among contractors. Most view it as an essential benefit despite their contractor status, and even those who don't can be swayed by a company that offers it.**

**65%**

of contractors categorize health insurance as an essential benefit, placing them on par with FTEs (67% of whom say health insurance is an essential benefit).

A further 28% of contractors categorize health insurance as an intriguing (emerging) benefit, meaning they aren't necessarily holding out for a company that offers it, but are more likely to work for one that does.

SOMETHING ELSE TO CONSIDER:

57%

A surprisingly high proportion of contractors say **their company already offers health insurance that they utilize.**

It's likely our survey drew in a larger proportion of longer-term contractors rather than short-term contractors or freelancers — the type of contractors who would expect more stability from a contract and benefits package.



When I worked independently in the last few years, I couldn't afford to get sick, and that created a lot of pressure. These are now non-negotiable benefits because **they make me feel protected** allowing me to deliver the best work possible, no matter what happens.



**CARLA PIANESE**  
Consultant (United Kingdom)

05

**Contractors can further be enticed by the addition of fringe benefits that support their wellbeing but don't break the bank for companies.**

Specifically, wellness and lifestyle-focused benefits such as mental health programs and wellness stipends are benefits that contractors aren't receiving now, but would make them more interested in working with/for a company.

Wellness and lifestyle-focused benefits:

**49%**  
MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM

**50%**  
WELLNESS STIPENDS





## Closing thoughts

In a few short years, the world of work has changed more quickly and more significantly than any of us could have predicted. While remote work and global hiring were already on the rise, the pandemic accelerated that shift.

At Remote, we decided to pursue this study of global employees and decision makers to provide leaders and workers around the world with the most comprehensive, informative piece of research available on global benefits to date.

As our report clearly demonstrates, remote work will only continue to grow. Most company decision makers believe their remote and global employee footprint will continue to expand. While this expansion is exciting, not all businesses are prepared for the challenges that accompany international hiring and distributed collaboration.

To attract the best talent and create a more inclusive future of work, it is imperative for companies to consider the benefits they're offering to every member of their team, regardless of where those team members are logging in. Benefits become even more important during periods of economic decline, when having access to good benefits is non-negotiable for employees and can help maintain employee trust in hard economic times.

Companies also cannot ignore the need not only to build more diversity within their teams, but also to support and champion that diversity across race, gender, and age.

Benefits are a key way to close gaps and create greater diversity, equity, and inclusion.



**If you have found something interesting in our Global Benefits Report, we would love for you to share these findings with credit to Remote.**

If you would like to share your own thoughts and experiences on benefits, reach out to us on social media on Twitter and LinkedIn.



## About Remote

Remote empowers companies of all sizes to pay and manage full-time and contract workers around the world.

We take care of international payroll, benefits, taxes, stock options, and compliance in dozens of countries.

Our people are on the ground on every continent, building culturally aware employment packages that help you build trust with your global team. Our ironclad intellectual property protections and industry-leading security guarantee give you peace of mind across the globe.

Best of all, Remote never charges percentages or fees: one low flat rate helps you control your budget so you can focus on growing your business.



To learn more about Remote's global benefits offerings, visit [Remote.com/benefits](https://Remote.com/benefits)





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