

★ EURAFALL FORUM

Rethinking Global Mobility



BRILLIANCE & RESILIENCE

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INTRODUCTION

I came about this idea because, through all the time I've spent on LinkedIn and social media in the past few months, the narrative has often been about updates and what's happening here & now and what we are doing in the moment. People were constantly talking about adapting to the pandemic through the lens of the current way of thinking. But what I believe has not been discussed and what I think is really interesting is looking at it from a different and entirely fresh perspective.

What ideas can we come up with if we want to start and create a brand-new narrative around Global Mobility? What would the priorities be if we start from an entirely blank page?

There is a lot of discussion at the moment about a global reset so this is also a great opportunity to consider alternatives in our industry.


Ben Sookia

Head of Global Immigration - Reiss Edwards



REIMAGINING A NEW NARRATIVE

Acceptance, challenge & adaptation



We need to be realistic and accept the situation and challenge ahead with a focus on evolution. There is no going back to before and everything we have been talking about for the last 10-15 years has been heightened. There is an urgent need to reconsider service delivery and find a balance between the automation of processes but offer a personal service.

We rely much more heavily on technology but should not be consumed by it : the industry will always require personal service, mobility is about the movement of people and requires understanding of human beings. We must understand the clients we are working with and balance this with what is achievable.



Relocation House offers virtual tours for home finding : this is a good way to adapt and deliver the service, but still we need to keep in mind that human contact is important (body language, personal touch).



relocationhouse.com.b

Data

In times of uncertainty we need to use research and data to control and predict what lies ahead to prepare and plan. There will still be a demand for global mobility but work will be different : for example, we have seen the growing trend for remote workers/digital nomads.

This will need regulation, not just for immigration compliance but also to meet tax/social security regulations. Countries will need to adapt to online systems/increased use of technology as it will grow, but AI is not a long-term solution for service delivery which requires creativity.

Machine learning, data, AI, can help with other areas such as marketing, but we will always need the human touch.

At Mazzeschi we tried to implement a chat bot to answer queries from prospective clients on our website, but we gave up as we found out we were losing opportunities that required more tailored services and advice.

**MAZZESCHI**mazzeschi.it

Compliance

Compliance is becoming a number one subject issue for Global Mobility. This includes of course tax and social security considerations (bi-lateral agreements, EU directives, posted workers, digital nomads...).

These are subjects that we will all have to deal with moving forward, regarding digital workers and other workers who are now working from home or from another country : where are they working ? Where is the employment contract ? What is included in the package ? Is the income taxable in the home or the host country?

We do have to start having partners who can help with these very specific subjects, either there they are brought in with you or you can send your clients to them. This is going to be the new normal for smaller companies that don't have their own experts in-house. Today when talking about personalized service, we all have to start thinking about : what is going to work for client A or B is not necessarily going to work for client C.



Accessibility

From the African perspective, automation is a challenge as technology is not always as advanced so there is still a reliance on delivering bespoke services but there is still a desire to thrive and consider different approaches. The solution to this is continuing and building relationships and adapting to the climate (oil and gas companies still need people on the ground but assignments are much shorter term).

Also African countries have started to look inwards and how they can attract Africans who have been studying abroad to come back and share their knowledge to reduce the knowledge/skill gap that exists between African countries and others continents.

Lots of countries in the African continent are struggling with basic business needs such as internet connection, so talking about automation processes is difficult. But some governments (Nigeria, Ghana) have recently introduced an e-visa which allows you to apply online, as a result of the Covid-19 crisis.



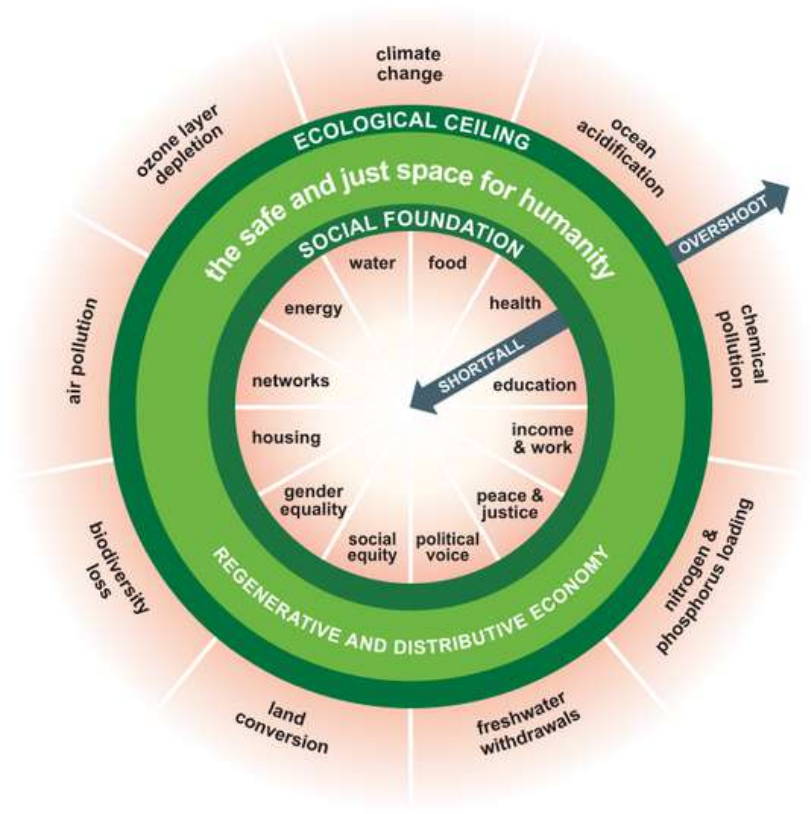
SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL DEVELOPMENT AT THE CORE OF BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY

Doughnut Economics

The concept of Doughnut (or Circular) economics was created by the economist Kate Raworth and it emphasises the fact that whilst we often prioritize growth as the only solution for economic success, what we should be doing now is try to understand how important social initiatives are (what people need to thrive globally) and balance this with the needs of the environment (what the planet needs to survive).



doughnuteconomics.org



Initiatives

Relocation House have launched several social initiatives that promote wellbeing within the community and started raising money for charities with a meaningful cause.

As a business and at a personal level we should spend time reflecting on this generally : in many ways it has been part of our values pre-Covid however the pandemic has emphasised the importance of empathy, now more than ever.

Sustainable Migration

In 2019, according to the International Organisation for Migration, 270 millions international migrants, and 2/3 of which were economic migrants (not asylum seekers or refugees as we may think of first). Some people have the choice to move from their country (most of the time sponsored by a company), but the other part of economic migrants don't migrate by choice but as a necessity. They migrate to find opportunities, because in their home country they can't find a job or live a decent life.

Making immigration more of a choice than a necessity (UN policy) and fostering partnerships between the movement of migrants to offer better education and integration .

The numbers given are more likely to worsen in a few years from now, for two main reasons:

- The Covid-19 crisis has sharply restricted international movements
- Countries are implementing increasingly selective and limited immigration policies

The result of this would most likely be an increase of illegal immigration due to the lack of opportunities to migrate legally and in a controlled way. Sending countries should therefore improve their migration policies and migrants employability through training and/or educational programs. Another key point, is to facilitate Circular Migration: many low-skilled migrants face lots of difficulties when they want to go back to their home country, so the point is to facilitate the possible return in their home country to help the economy and knowledge-sharing.



Localization Policies in Africa

Nigeria, for example, requires one assignee to have at least two local understudies : this is a government focus to encourage "sustainable migration" by upskilling local talent (a trend in African countries) to reduce unemployment through the NCDMB (Nigerian Content Development & Monitoring Board). In another way, the governments start to look how they can attract their nationals who have lived/studied abroad back in their country.

Purpose

The narrative has shifted from focusing just on profit to purpose. What can we, as the Industry, find as a large purpose for everybody ?

French politician Jean-Louis Borloo started up a program "Energies for Africa" which aim is to bring electricity massively into Africa, through various programs (2015: 615 millions people in Africa did not have access to electricity). The question was simple then: how can you possibly think to educate people and children if they don't even have access to electricity to be able to read?



At Expat Partners, in our Indian Branch, we had a young "cleaning boy", Jacob, who was very efficient and spoke very good English. We thought this boy could do so much more than just serving tea and cleaning. It took us 2 years for him accept to sit with the team and have lunch with us, and now to have an admin position and enter data. It's been a long process, but the team was very proud of helping him. The sense of purpose you can bring to your own team is absolutely fantastic.



COMMUNITY COLLABORATION WITHIN OUR INDUSTRY

African Union

In addition to the NCDMB that seeks to promote in-country development within Nigeria and localization policies in Africa, there has been a general consensus to promote unity within the African Union which includes initiatives for visa free travels in the region but also economic integration, gender equality, social development. As of July 2019, 54 states (of 55) have signed the "Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement" (AfCFTA) treaty which allows free movement of goods and services, facilitates intra-continental business travels, attract long-term investment and, as a result, ensures economic growth within the African continent.

This treaty was supposed to start February 2020 but has been delayed due to the Covid-19 crisis.



**An Integrated, Prosperous
and Peaceful Africa**



Training Programs

Through existing communities such as EuRA it is easy for those of us who are well established to think of ourselves but perhaps we can use this time to initiate a training programme for junior colleagues in our teams to connect and learn about immigration or mobility services in different countries (Erasmus exchange for Global Mobility initiative).

If you want to have people in the relocation industry and also you want them to have empathy, there's got to be a lot of intercultural exchange about this. Being inspired by such programs like Erasmus, wouldn't it be wonderful if we could set up an exchange program for junior staff, for 1 year, to travel the world amongst EURA members. One member of my team could spend a month in Italy working with Marco, then spend 3 months working with Kunle in Nigeria and then go to Brazil to work with Julyana.

We could really have someone who comes back from this year and who has gained so much knowledge and experience than most people would have gained in 5 years sitting in their office.

Of course, it sounds tricky at the moment regarding the global situation with the Covid-19 crisis, but we can still start connecting people digitally by setting up group discussions or even coffee shops.

Lobbying Government

The need for community collaboration within mobility and relocation in order to have a voice in public office is real. From a mobility and relocation provider perspective there is the feeling that this side of the business is not always heard whereas immigration and tax have a greater opportunity to be connected with government.

It also depends on the country: lobbying at EU level in Brussels is very effective, consolidated and regulated, and it will become more integrated. Another example, regarding the Schengen area, as it i's a free-movement zone, the entry of migrants can also impact the other members of the Schengen area.

New Communities

The boundaries that have been imposed on us has also fostered new relationships and communities that encourage inclusivity. We are more connected with people outside our 'normal circles' that we used to have.

For example, "Brazil Talks" is a community created by Patricia Tavares (Unilever Brazil). "Brazil Talks" has the purpose of sharing knowledge and best practices in the area of Human Resources and Global Mobility and promoting networking.



braziltalks.com



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

What would your advice be for remaining relevant and efficient in the industry?

Marco Mazzeschi

"My advice would actually work for any other businesses. The Economy is moving so fast, that you should not take anything for granted. What you know and what you do shall always be reconsidered and readjusted: be ready to change your business model at any time. What we've seen with the Covid-19 crisis is that our world is so globalized now that something happening for example in China can impact any other business in the world. We should also consider and follow the technological progress with attention."

Fiona Mougnot

"First of all I do believe you can learn from the past. You should look at what happened historically and how people adapt. You've got to take what we are living today documented and get ready for the next time if it ever happens. You've got to be nimble and adapt, and of course you've got to keep ahead of all the technology, try and get out of your comfort zone. That's the way forward."

How important is it to be resilient, not only personally but also commercially?

Kunle Obebe

"Even before the Covid-19 crisis, we've seen that globally things were changing rapidly. We have to keep in mind to remain as flexible as possible and open-minded as well. We don't know what next year holds, Covid-19 is more likely to have an impact over the next few years. Generally speaking, we all have to be better in all fields, we can't afford to remain where we are."

Imagine what kind of advice your child could give to us, to make us brilliant now so that we can benefit her generation and future generations.

Julyana Ruiz

"I would say: keep our curiosity and keep making connections with each other. This will help us keep positive and share our knowledge by learning from each other. That's what I try to tell my daughter Luiza, to educate her for the future and understand her feelings. Even though she is only 5 years old, I deeply think she can understand."

OUR SPEAKERS

Julyana Ruiz

**Immigration & Taxation Partner
Relocation House**



Julyana Ruiz is a qualified lawyer and Partner at Relocation House, with a dedicated focus on servicing corporate clients on their immigration and taxation requirements in Brazil.

Julyana has over 10 years experience in global mobility and began her career at PwC advising clients on private tax matters.

Having advised a range of companies in the automotive and energy solar sectors, she has extensive experience facilitating visa applications and ensuring compliance requirements are met for her clients employees who are sent on assignment to Brazil. This often requires working within a strict timeframe for large-scale group projects of specialised skilled individuals who require work authorisation.

In addition to the above, Julyana is also responsible for Relocation House's marketing strategy with an emphasis on building her firm's online presence through social media channels such as LinkedIn and Instagram.



relocationhouse.com.br
jruizerelocationhouse.com.br

**Fiona Mougnot****Managing Director & Founder
Expat Partners**

I have been lucky enough to be living and working in France for over 25 years now, during this time I have developed a deep understanding of the French culture and business practices. My professional experiences in the areas of marketing, tax and international human resources consulting, have been with multi-national companies such as IBM, TRW, Barclays and KPMG LLP.

As a result of which I have built a reliable network with members of the French public administration. Through my own personal experience, and experience helping many international assignees who have come to live and work in France I have built a firm that fully understands the difficulties facing not only the expatriate but also the company regarding the multiple layers of compliance for a foreign assignment.

I founded Expat Partners in 2003, initially to provide French immigration services, today I am lucky to have an amazing team which has grown to include a branch office in Bangalore and a representative office in Shenzhen, where we all share common values: "integrity", "top service with passion", and "business with a heart".

Kunle Obebe

Managing Partner Bloomfield Law Practice



I am the managing partner and head of the regulatory compliance practice group at Bloomfield Law Practice. Bloomfield is a corporate law firm with offices in Lagos, Nigeria. Bloomfield currently advises a number of fortune 500 companies with subsidiaries in Nigeria.

I advise on issues relating to regulatory compliance with particular reference to expatriate employee work authorisation. Our clients include two of the largest FMCG's, mining and resources including oil and gas, information technology, financial services and other industries.

I am a certified global mobility specialist, a member of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators, and the Chartered Institute Arbitrators. I am an international associate of the American Immigration Lawyers Association.

I am a regular speaker at international conferences on regulatory compliance and emerging corporate immigration issues in Nigeria. I am the author of Corporate Immigration Manual in Nigeria, Expatriate Employee Handbook and the Nigeria Immigration Law & Practice



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**Ben Sookia****Head of Global Immigration
Reiss Edwards**

Ben Sookia is the Head of Global Immigration at Reiss Edwards and specialises in the coordination and project management of all non-UK immigration matters. Ben has previously led the EMEA immigration practice for a global relocation and mobility services company and he has also worked as a primary relationship contact to senior executives whilst coordinating transactional immigration cases across complex jurisdictions.

Ben partners with clients with a global footprint and immigration providers in various jurisdictions to deliver a strategic and pro-active approach to service delivery. This requires an awareness of changing immigration regulations across multiple jurisdictions and an empathic approach to service delivery.

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Marco Mazzeschi**Attorney at Law & Founder
Mazzeschi**

Marco Mazzeschi is a seasoned lawyer with more than 30 years experience. He is the founder of Mazzeschi Srl, an Italian boutique firm specialising in corporate immigration and citizenship law, which assists more than 100 of the Fortune 500 companies for all their immigration matters in Italy.

Marco is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and accredited partner with Invest in Tuscany, the Govt agency for the promotion of foreign investments. He speaks frequently at international conferences and seminars and has written several articles and contributions to international journals, publications, Lexisnexis and Thomson Reuters publications.

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Thanks again to our speakers**You can watch the Full Replay on Youtube :**[Rethinking Global Mobility](#)