

# Global Housing



## The Issue

Housing is a top mobility challenge, impacting recruitment, retention, and workforce planning globally. Key drivers include affordability barriers, supply chain shortages, high interest rates, bureaucratic hurdles, and the impact of remote work. The crisis is global, with regional nuances—Europe faces limited supply and high prices, North America prioritizes livability over ownership, and the younger generation in the Asia-Pacific region feels acute insecurity about housing.

Across regions, one theme stands out: **housing affordability is deteriorating**, making homeownership more unattainable than ever.



## The Mobility Impact

In the US alone, the average age of first-time home purchasers has reached 40 years old, a record high according to recent data from the [National Association of Realtors \(NAR\)](#). For context, the median age was 33 in 2020 and 29 in 1981, when NAR first began tracking this data.

Amidst persistent roadblocks of limited availability, rising costs, and regional disparities, mobility professionals are struggling to secure suitable accommodations for relocating employees, which impacts their ability to thrive abroad.

A tension exists between temporary housing needs for short-term assignments and longer-term settlement goals, requiring mobility teams to balance comfort, safety, and affordability while supporting the broader relocation journey.



Behind every relocation is a family navigating uncertainty. Housing challenges turn mobility from an opportunity into an obstacle.

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## Client Impact

Homeownership is becoming increasingly out of reach — especially for younger generations — as soaring prices, limited inventory, slow new construction, poor urban housing conditions, and weak tenant protections reshape the market. In this environment, when home sale and home purchase are part of a relocation package, many employees view mobility as a rare opportunity to improve their living situation. This is even more true for families with special housing or accessibility needs.

In these situations, destination service providers (DSPs) play a critical role. They act as trusted experts in securing appropriate housing and serve as confidential intermediaries, especially when employees may hesitate to disclose their needs out of fear that doing so could jeopardize their assignment.

The reality is that whether families choose to disclose or withhold their accommodation needs, today's challenging housing market heightens the risk of failed or declined assignments. And for organizations, that translates into significant costs, lost productivity, and potential talent impacts.



## The Numbers

### 56%

of renters worldwide don't believe they'll ever afford a home (rising to 70% in Germany).

- *IPSOS Housing Survey*

### 71%

agree that even well-employed young professionals will struggle to secure housing.

- *Weichert Global Housing Survey 2025*

### 67%

expect prices to rise in the next 12 months.

- *Weichert Global Housing Survey 2025*

### 52%

believe their country is on the wrong track in addressing the housing crisis.

- *IPSOS Housing Survey*



**Top pain points:** high property prices (49%), rental costs (43%), interest rates (29%), taxes (28%).

- *Weichert Global Housing Survey 2025*

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## Recommendations

- Refine housing policies: Use global insights to shape support programs addressing affordability and lease complexities.
- Anticipate exceptions: Identify strained markets to adjust allowances, lease terms, and expectations.
- Collaboration and policy design: Start early with RMC, DSP, and local HR; align on policy elements, training, and cost estimates.
- Pre-assignment support: Where possible, put immigration, cultural trainers, and DSPs in front of assignees before travel to set expectations and improve home-finding effectiveness.
- Housing allowance governance: Educate local HR on allowance philosophy and nonnegotiable elements to ensure consistent messaging; leverage third-party market data and DSP "feet on the ground" to validate practicality.
- Offer flexible options: Some core-and-flex programs include allowing single employees/single parents to bring a non-family support person (friend/relative) for settling-in or housing trips to improve decision-making.



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## From Global to Local Impact

On a global scale, rising costs persist with no end in sight, there is limited supply where people want to live, and elevated flexibility expectations (often misaligned with market realities). But drill down a little closer, and micro-markets vary dramatically even within metropolitan areas, interest-rate paths remain uncertain, and housing development often lags demand in many of the world's burgeoning locations.

Here's a look at some of the top regional challenges in two of the world's largest markets for mobility: India and the United States.

### Spotlight: India

**Market Dynamics:** The housing market in India is extremely complex, landlord-driven, and state-specific; a single nationwide housing policy or protocol doesn't exist.

**Domestic Mobility Surge:** There are 1,700 Global Capability Centers (GCCs) today, expected to grow to about 2,500 by 2030, fueling intercity moves. This contributes to housing shortages, especially for young movers who face quick lease challenges due to intense competition.

**Language and Culture:** Cross-regional moves within India face language/culture gaps; only 5% of Indians speak English, though it serves as a bridge language among 18 national languages and 1,500 others. Indian nationals as well as foreign nationals struggle with language and cultural barriers when relocating.



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## Spotlight: United States

### Nationwide Economic Factors

#### Impacting the Housing Market:

- Low locked-in mortgage rates depress willingness to move amid higher current rates.
- Inventory is limited country-wide, from small towns to large cities.

### State-by-state Variability:

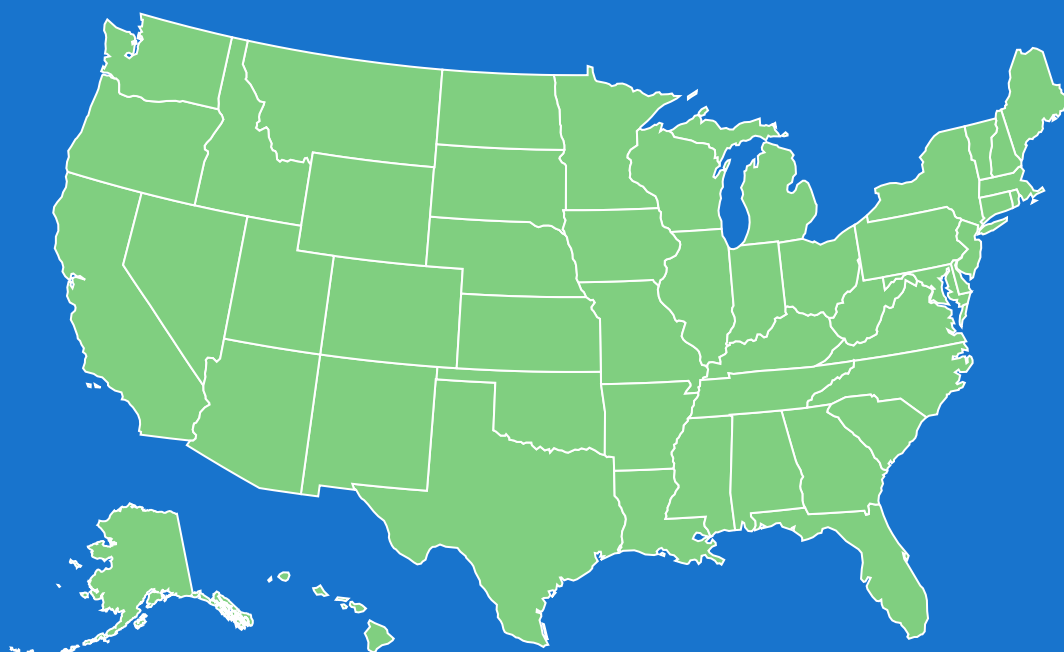
- Tenant rules, deposits, and market conditions differ widely with little consistency in policy execution.
- Changeable housing market, challenging the ability to set housing allowances and budgets, even by micro-geographies.

### School District Pressure:

- Highly competitive districts drive demand for both temporary and long-term housing (to secure enrollment).
- Higher rents in coveted zones.
- Longer commutes as an alternative, but require appropriate expectation setting.

### Additional Challenges for Inbound Foreign Nationals:

- Many come on lump sums without DSP support and rely on strong community networks.
- Credit constraints for newcomers: transferees without US credit face rejections.





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## The Bottom Line

The housing crisis isn't confined to one region; it's a global mobility challenge with real implications for talent strategy.

By understanding regional dynamics and acting proactively, mobility leaders can build programs that are efficient and empathetic, supporting mobile employees in an increasingly complex housing landscape.

Weichert's recent **Global Housing Survey** provides invaluable housing market information for over 90 countries, available upon request. For more information, contact your Weichert Representative, or reach out to a member of our [Advisory Services Team](#).



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