1. <u>Projects</u>

The ideal mobility for employee as seen by companies

Finished research
Begin: March 2015
End: April 2016

Work-related mobility (the leading reason for daily transit in France) structures contemporary lifestyles. How do companies, as key actors in the organization of labor both spatially and temporally, envision the ideal mobility for their employees? What influence will they have on the future of mobility? Discover the results of the survey Paris IAE did for the Mobile Lives Forum.

Research participants

- Geraldine Schmidt
- Remi Bourguignon
- Anne-Sophie Volz-Tollet

I. Introduction

In parallel to an international survey examining people's aspirations in terms of mobility's role in <u>future lifestyles</u>. Though rarely studied, companies play a central role in structuring their employees' movement, both with regard to the pace of life (working hours and rate) and the places people frequent as a result (company locations, transport accessibility, etc.).

Mobility in business: a polysemous term

The term mobility has multiple meanings in business and in management in general. It can refer to both:

- The evolution of an employee's career (also known as professional mobility, be it internal or external, voluntary or involuntary)
- The different types of movement: home to work commutes, business travel or relocation for professional reasons.

This study focuses on how companies envision the future of mobility for employees, an area of management that is often ignored:

- home to work commutes
- Business travel
- Relocation

II. Research Design

This survey was conducted between March 2015 and April 2016 and includes several qualitative sections designed to develop and enrich the core quantitative section:

- Exploratory interviews with human resource managers to gain insight into professional best practices in terms of mobility and to determine the key focus areas for the quantitative questionnaire;
- The quantitative survey was conducted in an online panel with French human resource professionals via an existing HR Network (RH&M)
  - In total, 340 respondents completed the survey
  - Respondents mostly came from companies with more than 1000 employees (**60%**), in the private sector (**85%**).
  - More than 40% of respondents were human resource directors of large companies in the private sector.
- Three case studies were conducted with the companies that participated in the quantitative phase of the study. The companies were chosen so as to represent a diverse range of profiles (size, sector, location).
- Finally, a focus group with twelve participants from the HR network DéclicMobilités (an HR network in the region of Hauts-de-France) was held to enrich the insight gained from the quantitative phase of the study in conjunction with pioneering companies in the field of mobility. Marcq-en-Barœul (Lille), 25 February 2016.

III. Overall research findings

Concerning the vision of mobility in companies:

- Both today and for the future, human resource managers did not intend to not prioritize mobility and its impact on employees' personal lives. Mobility ranked far behind professional mobility or job changes associated with employee career management.

Concerning the current and future management of employee travel:

- Digital tools, notably telecommuting tools, were considered one of the top solutions for managing employee mobility in the future. This ranked higher than the development of improved transportation options, for example.
- However, such technological solutions face numerous barriers and, in the middle term, cannot become widespread enough to substitute or allow for a radical decrease in employee travel.

- Today, most companies have management policies that do not take into account the social and environmental issues linked to employee mobility.

IV. Key results

1. Mobility of the future: a technological gamble

In order to manage, even replace, employee mobility in the future, HR professionals are counting on the development of technological solutions, notably via the spread of digital tools to allow for telecommuting and the development of more rapid and efficient forms of transportation.

In regards to home to work commutes:

- **53%** of companies considered the standardization of telecommuting as an ideal solution, removing the need for centralized offices;
- This result ranked higher than improved transport options (**47%** of respondents surveyed).

In regards to business travel:

- **69%** of companies were in favor of using digital tools (Skype conferencing, 3D video conferencing, the invention and development of hologramming) as an alternative to face-to-face meetings.
- This result ranked far ahead of improved transport options (**36%** of companies).

In regards to professional mobility necessitating relocation:

- For **45%** of companies, professional relocation would no longer be necessary in the future thanks to the digital revolution.
- However, for **42%** of these respondents, the ideal future solution would be to encourage employees to weekly commute via company housing policies.

However, these solutions will take a long time to implement: One out of two companies estimated that it would take at least 10 years to put them in place.

2. An enthusiasm for telecommuting…

- **53%** of companies considered telecommuting as a valuable tool for limiting home to work commutes.
- **34%** of companies considered it the top solution for limiting home to work commutes,
- This ranked ahead of more classic solutions such as "reimbursing public transportation fees at a rate higher than that of the legal minimum" (13%) or "mutualizing motorized vehicles such as carpooling/car sharing" (**12%**).

…despite the numerous limitations cited by the pioneering companies (Focus Group).

- Practical limitations: pioneering companies felt that a large-scale adoption of telecommuting practice was not possible. Telecommuting was the preferred solution for a maximum of 1-2 days per week. Moreover, this solution cannot be offered to all employees, in particular those whose physical presence (the restaurant industry,

manual labor, personal services, etc.) is vital. Telecommuting will not eliminate centralized workplaces or commutes between the home and office. However, nine out of ten companies declared they have already provided employees with communication tools enabling them to better manage their mobility. The pioneering companies underscored that the greatest challenge was the appropriation and use of these tools by employees.

- Legal constraints: pioneering companies emphasized that legal questions surrounding conditions for telecommuters (accountability for professional accidents at home, verification of working conditions, management of health-related questions and balance of personal/professional life), are not yet subject to specific rules and regulations.
- Managerial constraints: in addition to legal concerns, telecommuting also raised questions about how to manage company culture. Nearly one out of two companies considered the presence-based culture in France as an obstacle to the development of telecommuting. Managers feared that a dispersed workforce would make employee management increasingly complex: new methods for monitoring productivity (system of deliverables and reporting), the evolution of business relationships in the company. Participating companies underlined the paradox between the greater freedom and autonomy employees would potentially have with an increase in monitoring and control.

3. Companies overlook the environmental and social concerns of mobility

Priority given to economic objectives; relegation of environmental objectives

When companies create management policies for employee mobility, it is above all for economic gains, far ahead of reducing their environmental impact.

- For **78%** of companies, increased employee productivity was the top motivation for creating a mobility policy.
- Only **28%** of companies considered reducing their carbon footprint as an important criteria when creating management policies for employee mobility.

Today, cars and motorized vehicles in general are companies' main focus when it comes to managing employees' home to work commutes. This included providing parking spaces for motorized-vehicles (**92%** of companies) and company cars (**81%** of companies).

Mobility management that is not individualized

- **50%** of companies admitted that they did not consider the potential risk of burnout or family-related issues linked to repeated or long-term employee mobility
- However, among the companies that responded negatively, nearly **70%** % stated that they were willing to integrate these elements into mobility management and **63%** to put in place regular check-ups to detect the challenges facing employees.

This finding resonates with mobility management policies that often do not take into account the individual circumstances of employees:

- In most cases, the participating companies did not tailor their mobility policies to different employee profiles: **67%** of companies said they treated all employees uniformly.

Public policy and the management of employee mobility: limits to explore

This research reveals a contradiction between companies' desires for increased support from public authorities and their non-use of tools created by public authorities to manage employee mobility.

- Only **24%** of companies said they had put a Plan de déplacement d'entreprises (PDE) in place. While the biggest companies (more than 1000 employees) were more likely to use this tool, only **34%** had adopted it. This number dropped even lower for companies with less than 1000 employees, only **17%** of which had adopted it.

This could be due to the lack of clarity of local public action surrounding mobility, according to surveyed innovative companies. According to these companies, it is difficult to find a "one-stop shop" for questions regarding mobility. If this service existed, it could facilitate the process for companies. Additionally, surveyed companies emphasized that alternative transportation options were not designed with companies in mind: for example, in Paris or Lille, companies cannot sign up for a bicycle service subscription for employees; employees must do it individually.

V. Documents: research and survey

Find the detailed results in French in downloadable reports <u>at the bottom of this page</u>.

Mobility

For the Mobile Lives Forum, mobility is understood as the process of how individuals travel across distances in order to deploy through time and space the activities that make up their lifestyles. These travel practices are embedded in socio-technical systems, produced by transport and communication industries and techniques, and by normative discourses on these practices, with considerable social, environmental and spatial impacts.

<u>En savoir plus</u> x

Movement

Movement is the crossing of space by people, objects, capital, ideas and other information. It is either oriented, and therefore occurs between an origin and one or more destinations, or it is more akin to the idea of simply wandering, with no real origin or destination.

<u>En savoir plus</u> x

Car sharing

Car sharing is the pooling of one or several vehicles for different trips at different times. Three types of car sharing exist: commercial car sharing, peer-to-peer car sharing and "informal" sharing between individuals.

<u>En savoir plus</u> x

Associated Thematics :

Lifestyles

- [Futures](#)
- [Digital technologies](#)
- [Representations](#)
- [Work](#)

Policies

- [Time policies](#)
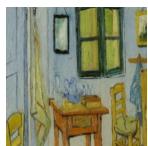

To cite this publication :

Geraldine Schmidt et Remi Bourguignon (03 November 2016), « The ideal mobility for employee as seen by companies », Préparer la transition mobilitaire. Consulté le 14 May 2025, URL: https://forumviesmobiles.org/en/project/3350/ideal-mobility-employee-seen-companies

---

Other publications

[Teleworking](#)

Anne Aguiléra

[Being a bicycle delivery rider: passion or exploitation?](#)

Juliette Maulat, Master 2 Aménagement du Territoire et Urbanisme Université Paris 1 2020-2021

<u>Mobility</u>

Agathe Lefoulon, Mobile Lives Forum

<u>Digital Nomads</u>

Maurie Cohen, Laura Stanik

1 https://en.forumviesmobiles.org/project/2016/05/23/aspirations-mobility-and-lifestyles-3246
2 http://www.grouperhm.com/fr/
3 https://fr.forumviesmobiles.org/projet/2016/11/03/mobilite-ideale-des-salaries-vue-par-entreprises-3350
4 http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/fr/
5 http://forumviesmobiles.org
6 http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/fr/
7 http://fr.fvm.localhost/modal_forms/nojs/contact