

intercultural trends survey 2026: snapshot

Our survey of 76 global intercultural coaches reveals a look at the evolving landscape of intercultural programs—highlighting changes in assignment types, participant demographics, and expectations for content, delivery, and technology.



take a deeper
dive into the
data: read the
full report today

where in the world are respondents based?

EMEA - **41%**

Americas - **32%**

APAC - **28%**

cartus' intercultural coach network

The intercultural coaches in our Cartus network help relocating employees improve their intercultural competence, address intercultural challenges, and leverage cultural diversity to achieve personal and organizational goals ahead of a corporate relocation.

Cartus delivers cross-cultural coaching to 1,400+ relocating employees annually in 200+ countries.





64% noticed changes in the mindset of today's youth program participants.

Youth program participants are dependent children of international assignees, typically between six and 18 years old.

top trends in intercultural programs

1. Participant preference for virtual sessions
2. Increased demand for employees to have intercultural skill sets
3. Participants in intercultural programs are more likely to view the topic of "culture" as part of a larger discussion around inclusion

* **Note:** Examples were provided in an open-ended response format and analyzed for themes.



58% of coaches are seeing more women in international assignments

47% report an increase in dual career couples

intercultural programs: shifting demographics

Today's assignee population is more diverse than ever before, encompassing a broad spectrum of cultural backgrounds, ethnicities, geographic origins, sexual orientations, abilities, and generations. This signals a meaningful shift toward inclusivity and representation in global mobility opportunities.

Top three changes in assignee populations

- More women of all ages
- More employees with rich and varied identities, e.g., bicultural, bi-racial, etc.
- An increase in dual career couples (where an assignment for an employee temporarily disrupts the career of the accompanying partner and potentially reduces the income of the family)

youth programs: the next gen perspective

Today's youth program participants are typically:

- More globally aware than previous generations
- Skilled at multitasking but tend to have shorter attention spans
- More open about sharing aspects of their personal lives
- More comfortable with hands-on learning and practical applications
- Influenced by social media and technology



mobility matters podcast

Hear Lisa Johnson, Director, Global Consulting, and Diane Mullen, Manager, Cartus Intercultural Academy, discuss the importance of investing in training employees for the global workplace.

non-relocation intercultural programs: preparing the modern workforce

More companies are requesting programs that focus on:

- Developing cultural agility
- Enhance team performance
- Support career development
- DEI
- Developing actionable skills

Program content may include:

- Mental fitness
- Growth mindset
- Leadership mentoring
- Intercultural conflict resolution
- Influencing from a distance
- Leading remotely
- Business coaching for local leaders

Intercultural skills for all. Reaching beyond executives, early career pros, team members, and those with international experience all participate in intercultural programs. The result? A richer mix of voices and perspectives in every session, and a new wave of employees ready to navigate the world with confidence.

Program duration and delivery trends

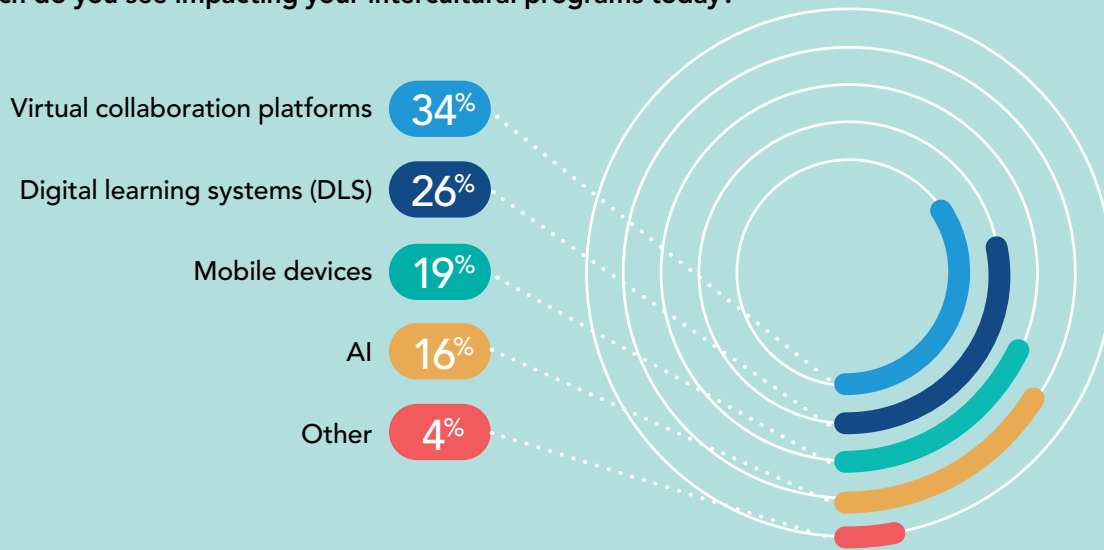
- Virtual formats are increasingly popular for intercultural programs
- Greater emphasis on interactive content and experiential learning (e.g., games, activities)
- Programs are trending shorter—typically two-hour or half-day sessions
- Condensed formats are generally preferred by participants and organizations

Non-relocation intercultural programs include participants who are not typically relocating but will have intercultural responsibilities in their role. They include coaching and training sessions on developing global competencies, cultural awareness, country-specific business briefings, multicultural teambuilding, global leadership, and inclusive leader competence.



connecting across cultures: platforms, devices, and AI

Which tech do you see impacting your intercultural programs today?



Ways AI is used across the Cartus global intercultural coach network:

- Creating role plays
- Finding visuals
- Translating
- Creating examples that are specific to the audience's industry or function
- Researching and data finding
- Drafting content
- Checking on current events
- Making examples more engaging

It is important to note that using AI still requires fact-checking for accuracy and is not a reliable source for everything!

rethinking intercultural programs: belonging, safety, and the power of connection



Safety drives belonging. When stepping into a new country and culture, people seek assurance that their well-being is a priority, and today's intercultural programs must meet these expectations head on.

Inclusion powers connection. In recent years, there has been an increased focus on inclusion and belonging, with companies making more resources available to support community building among employees.

Ready or not, the future of intercultural programs is vibrant, people-centered, and more dynamic than ever before.

Want to discuss this or any other aspect of your global mobility program? Contact your Cartus representative or email cartussolutions@cartus.com

