

# WIL Group Global Survey 2017

## Business Transformation in a Changing World

EXPERIENCED PEOPLE ► DELIVERING RESULTS

WIL Group  
WORLDWIDE INTERIM LEADERSHIP



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*// Transformation is not a fashion. It used to be a programme with a beginning and an end. Today it's ongoing, enterprise-wide and much more complex. If you don't do it, you won't exist anymore."*

**Asma Aidi**  
Head of Transformation  
Vodafone

*// There is no normal anymore. The world has changed so dramatically and will change again. That is why you need people who can create and deliver new visions."*

**Christophe Bellynck**  
Corporate Development  
Director  
Veolia Environmental Services





*// Sometimes cultural differences stop you achieving something. The WIL Group overcomes that through multiple experiences and locations - and a focus on transforming organisations around the world."*

**Patricia Manton-Hall**

Programme Controls Director  
High Speed Two (HS2) Ltd

*// We're not just transforming business. We have a responsibility to people, to the environment, to suppliers - if we manage it properly, we'll create a legacy to move it all forward."*

**Joanne Spick**

CEO  
Van der Wiel Group



*// We live in an unpredictable world, and are witnessing huge economic, digital and geopolitical shifts. Together these factors are driving transformation at an unprecedented pace. And, as a result, the global market for executive interim is rapidly growing.”*

**Patrick Laredo**  
Chairman of the WIL Group



# About the WIL Group

The WIL Group offers a single solution for clients to find interim and transition management leaders of every discipline to work anywhere in the world.

Currently there are 17 member firms with 37 international offices and an international executive talent pool of 4,500+ top-level industry leaders.

WIL Group's vision is to be the number one company for global interim and transition managers, by offering a unique 'international multi-sourcing' model that leverages the assets of each member firm and ensures the best talent is selected for assignments globally.

The Group offers five global services:

- Performance improvement
- Company transformation
- Turnaround & restructuring
- Private equity & investment services
- Project & programme management

Each WIL Group member complies with consistent and seamless operational standards offering clients a smooth and professional service.



## Overview of the Survey

This booklet contains the findings of two separate, yet complementary surveys carried out in December 2016 by the WIL Group. Building on last year's survey, the first ever research study of its kind, the 1,466 participants were comprised of both "C-suite" clients and interim/transition managers from WIL Group's core talent pool of leaders. Participants represented a staggering 45 different nationalities.

Company directors all over the world are today facing new, different and often difficult challenges compared to only a few years ago. Complexity and speed continue to increase, and - at the same time - organisations are constantly reviewing the need to trim down and become leaner. Where previously internal resources were in abundance and readily available to handle critical short-term change/transformation projects within an organisation, today the situation is very different. Company directors have to rely on other resources to help effect change.

*// If transformation  
doesn't start from the top  
it will never succeed  
- ever. Successful leaders,  
communicate openly,  
involve the right people,  
measure, learn and adjust."*

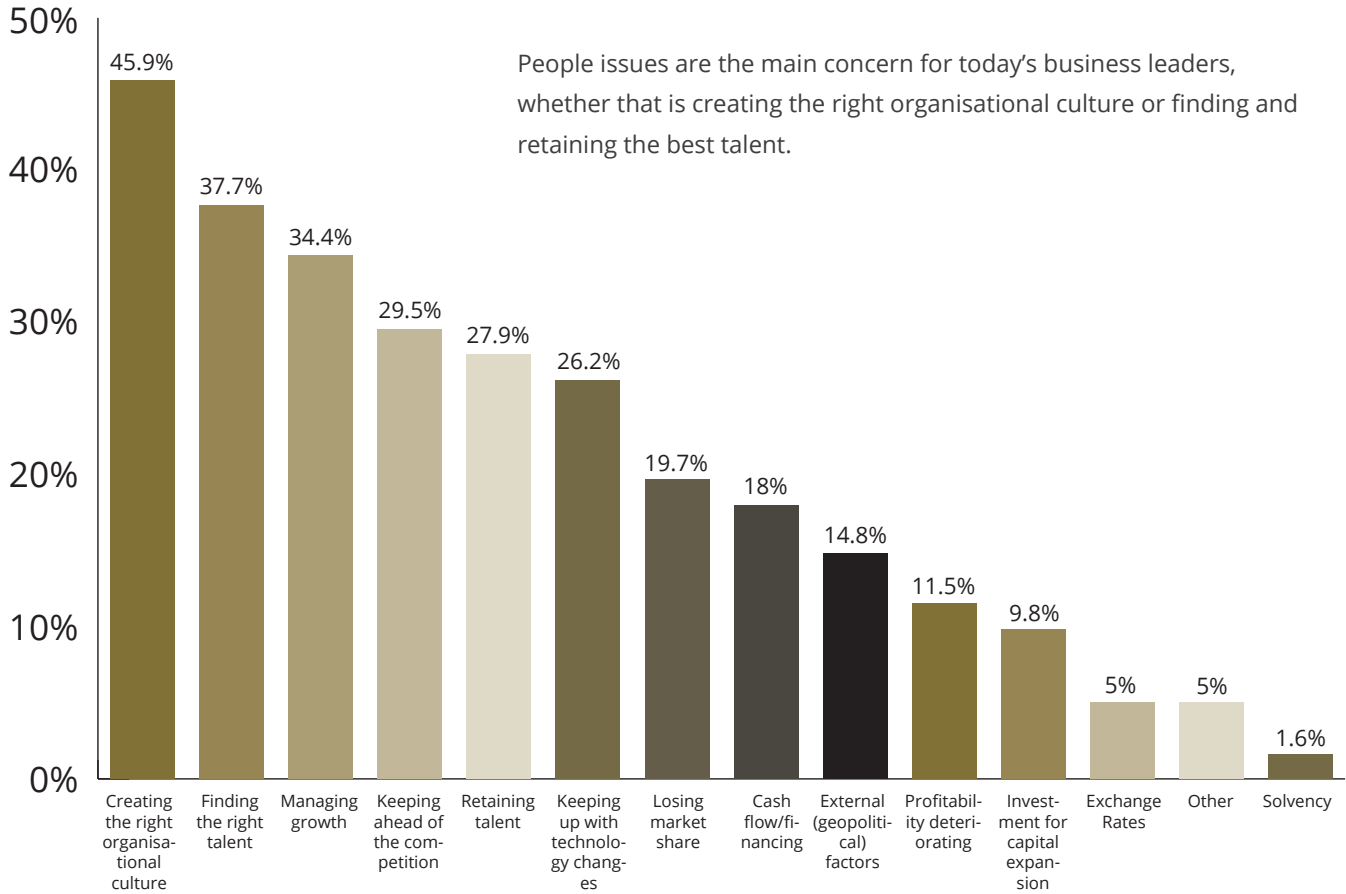
**Trevor Davis**  
CEO Life & Pensions  
AdminRe (part of SwissRe)



## Key Findings

- CEO's are most concerned about people issues: creating the right culture, finding and retaining the right talent and managing growth.
- Today's businesses are in a state of near constant change:
  - 71% have been through a business transformation in the past 12-18 months.
  - 39% are planning a business transformation over the next 12-18 months.
- Businesses are trying new resourcing models to deliver the changes needed, including interims, management consultants, existing and new permanent resource.
  - 48% use interim/transition managers in their organisations to effect change
- The main drivers for transformation include: growth planning, restructuring and M&A activity.
- Organisations look towards interim executives for 'fresh thinking' and an 'external perspective.'
- The key global locations for interim assignments are: Germany, UK, France, USA, Netherlands and Denmark.
- Interims are truly international with 69% having worked on international projects; and across 166 different countries (ranging from Andorra to Zimbabwe).

# Key Business Issues



# Biggest Business Challenges in 2017

## Top 10

1. Adapting to digital transformation and accelerating IT transformation.
2. Growth and hiring talent; finding the right resources and enough of them.
3. People motivation.
4. How to turn a medium sized company into a big group whilst maintaining flexibility and agility. This includes upgrading the management team.
5. Getting ourselves consolidated with a future view.
6. Survival, cash flow, delivering business growth whilst reducing costs, and environmental issues.
7. Geo-political events.
8. Coping with the information security aspects.
9. Competitors, market share increase and clarity on trade.
10. Consumer confidence including finding new customers in a fiercely competitive market with growth limitations.



*// Transformation is all about the people, but also about the way you put people together. You want open minds; people who are prepared to look at - and who are interested in - the unique possibilities."*

**Julian Davis**

Senior VP

- Mergers and Acquisitions  
Mastercard

## Business Transformation - Resourcing and Delivery

The research suggests a trend away from the traditional management consultancy model when it comes to supporting business transformation programmes.

When it comes down to businesses who have undergone a transformation, 42% of those surveyed relied on their existing management resources to deliver the business transformation and 19% on management consultancies. However, this was closely followed by 18.5% who used either interims or a 'mix' of support structures. One respondent commented:

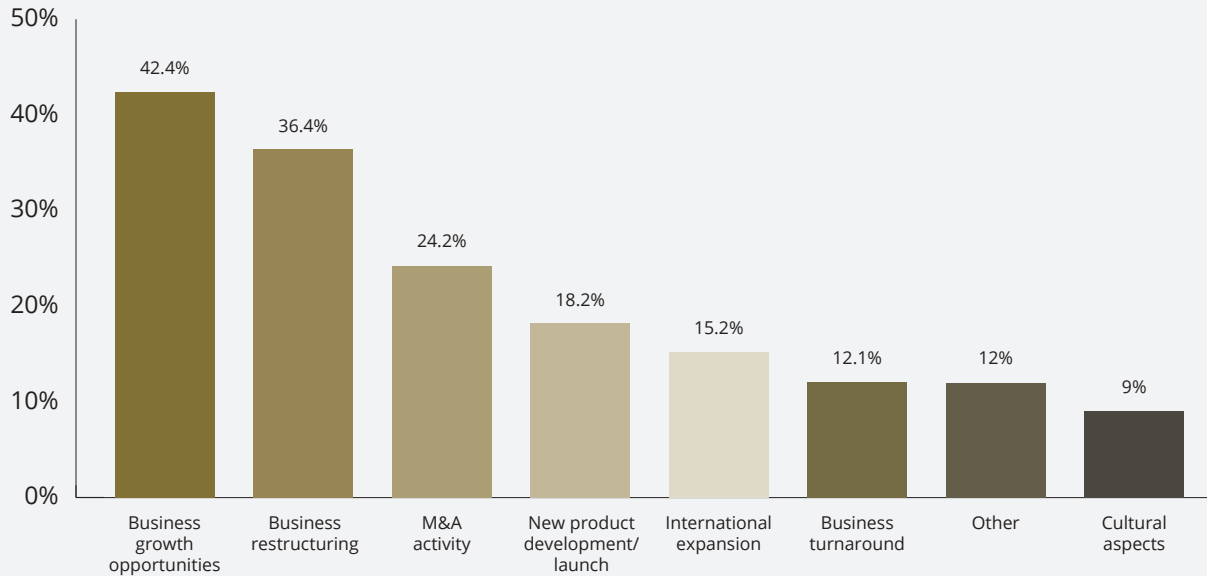
*"Different phases of the integration, turnaround and transformation have required different levels of resourcing and different skills/expertise. Different business units/functions also had different needs."*

Those embarking on a business transformation programme over the next 12-18 months are predicting a 13% increase in the use of 'mixed' resource and an equivalent reduction in the use of management consultants.

One respondent commented that they would use a mix:

*"...contractors, interims and consultants, as well as some new permanent staff."*

# The Main Drivers for Organisational Business Transformation



Other reasons cited include:

- “Keeping up with technological developments.”
- “Upcoming projects in the Asia-Pacific zone represent a major business turnaround and a significant growth opportunity.”
- “Regulatory pressures.”



*“Business agility is critical for business transformation. Having the competencies and structure for cross-functional teams, giving people the power to make the decisions.”*

**Karla Plas**

Interim HR Leader  
Imerys

## What Do You Need to Succeed?

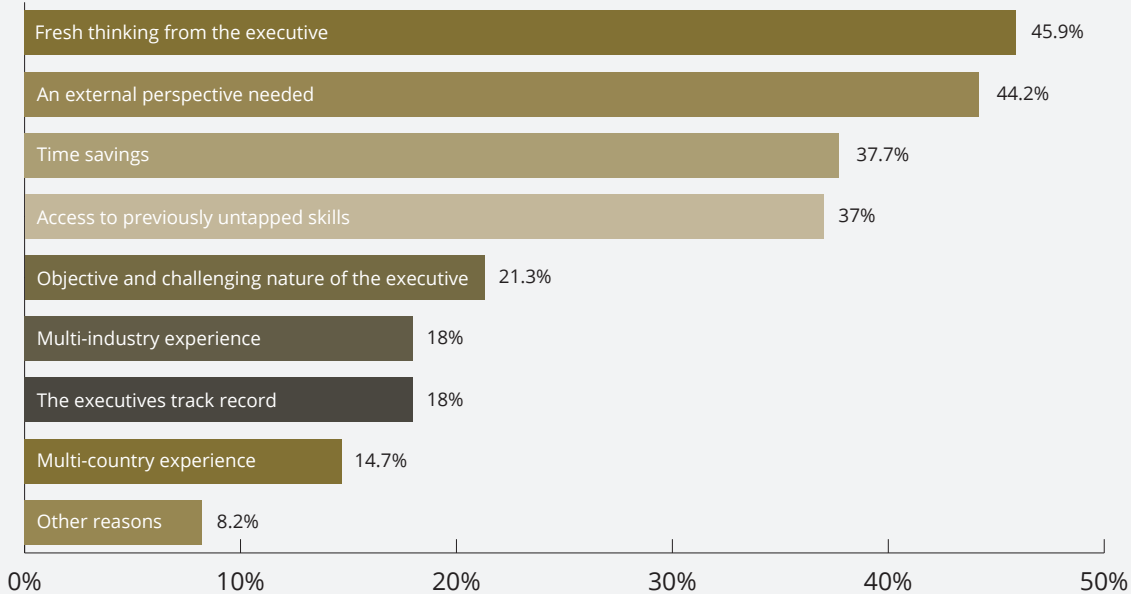
When asked what they felt were the essential experiences, skills and qualities required to make a success of a business transformation project, respondents (CEO's and interim executives) offered valuable insight and comments, as follows:

- Excellent conceptual skills together with an ability to rapidly grasp detail, and brilliant Board level stakeholder management skills.
- Be consistent with market requirements, and be realistic with our own human and financial capabilities.
- Drive, commercial discipline, people skills, change management, focus on the impactful, proven experience.
- Proven track record, attention to detail, strong operational command. Demand a clearly defined vision for the company, including the task, the intent and the outcome, these must be able to be articulated throughout the varying levels of the organisation.

One CEO commented:

*“For our business, it is mobilising a large transformation and doing it in a way that works (agile: customer focused, incremental and iterative) in contrast to past monolithic, slow, top-down transformations, which have largely failed.”*

## Key Reasons for Using an Interim/Transition Manager



Respondents commented:

- “Interims are not influenced by culture.”
- “They show a dedication towards the objectives with a more results-oriented perspective.”
- “Interim executives provide dedication towards the objectives in a more results oriented perspective”



*// Companies don't create value from legacy thinking of what has gone before, the opportunity for the WIL Group's approach is therefore huge - it offers the platform to disrupt, and then to create new value."*

**Antony Perillo**  
Group Director  
Sourcing & Product  
Development  
Clarks

## Interim Executives as Transformational Leaders

- On average, interim executives have completed a total of seven interim/transition assignments.
- Interim executives operate at the top level in organisations and cover all key professional disciplines.
- 38% operate at CEO and CFO level.
- 16% operate within a general management role, and 25% deliver change and transformation roles involving project and programme management, restructuring and turnaround.
- The average length of international assignment is eight months.

## On-Boarding

'Hit the ground running' is a prerequisite when it comes to the on-boarding process.

- Nearly two thirds (64%) of interim executives claim to have a one-week to one-month on-boarding timeframe.
- In comparison, 52% of permanent managers take up to three months to achieve this same level of trust according to the same group of respondents.
- 15% stated this time as being less than one week.

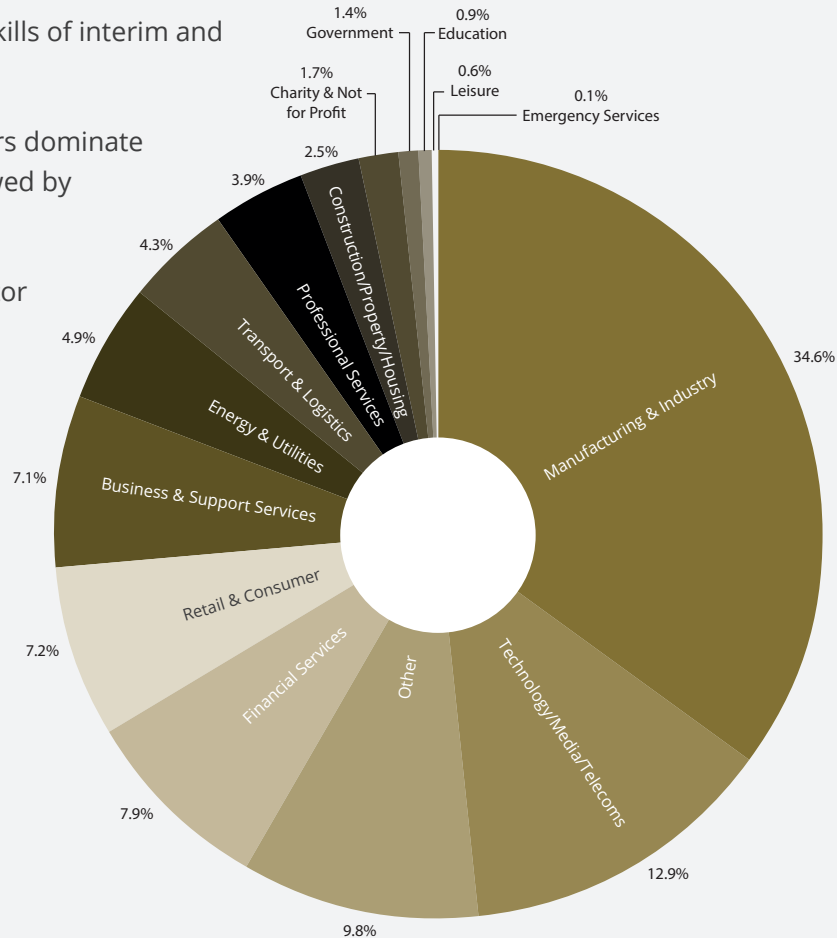


# The Industries

A broad range of industries utilise the skills of interim and transition management leaders.

The manufacturing and industrial sectors dominate (standing at 35% of assignments), followed by technology at 13%.

But these experts are used in every sector – from energy and leisure through to transport and logistics.



*“Being comfortable with uncertainty is a real driver for improvement. You can unlock an amazing amount of energy - and that’s transformative.”*

**Rob Williams**  
CEO  
War Child





*// The WIL Group stands out as being the one with an international cross-border network, capable of delivering assignments of the calibre that I'm looking for."*

**Diane Blaxland**  
Transformation Director

## International Assignments

- Interim executives completed assignments in a staggering 166 different countries or 82% of the countries in the world, this compares to 91% (178 countries) from our 2016 survey.
- More than two thirds (69%) of all assignments completed had an international component with the majority spending most of their time based away from their home country. This compares with 72% in 2016.
- The concept still dominates in Western European countries, such as: France, the UK, Denmark and Germany, but the US ranks in fourth place.
- Brazil was the only new country to enter either of the Top 10 league tables.
- On average, 47% of interim executive assignments have had an international dimension.

## Location of Assignments - Top 10

The countries covered in the survey reflect the wide international footprint of the WIL Group. The below table ranks the top 10 countries according to the location of assignments - outside of the interim executive's home country.

### Europe 2016/17

1. Germany (29.9%)
2. UK (27.5%)
3. France (23.4%)
4. Denmark (17.3%)
5. Netherlands (16.3%)
6. Belgium (15%)
7. Sweden (14.3%)
8. Switzerland (13.1%)
9. Spain (11.4%)
10. Italy (10.9%)

### 2015/16

- ▼ France (32.2%)
- ▲ Germany (28.8%)
- ▲ UK (28.2%)
- ▲ Switzerland (15.6%)
- ▲ Denmark (13.7%)
- ▲ Sweden (13.4%)
- ▲ Netherlands (13.2%)
- ▲ Belgium (12.6%)
- ▼ Italy (12.4%)
- ▲ Spain (11.4%)

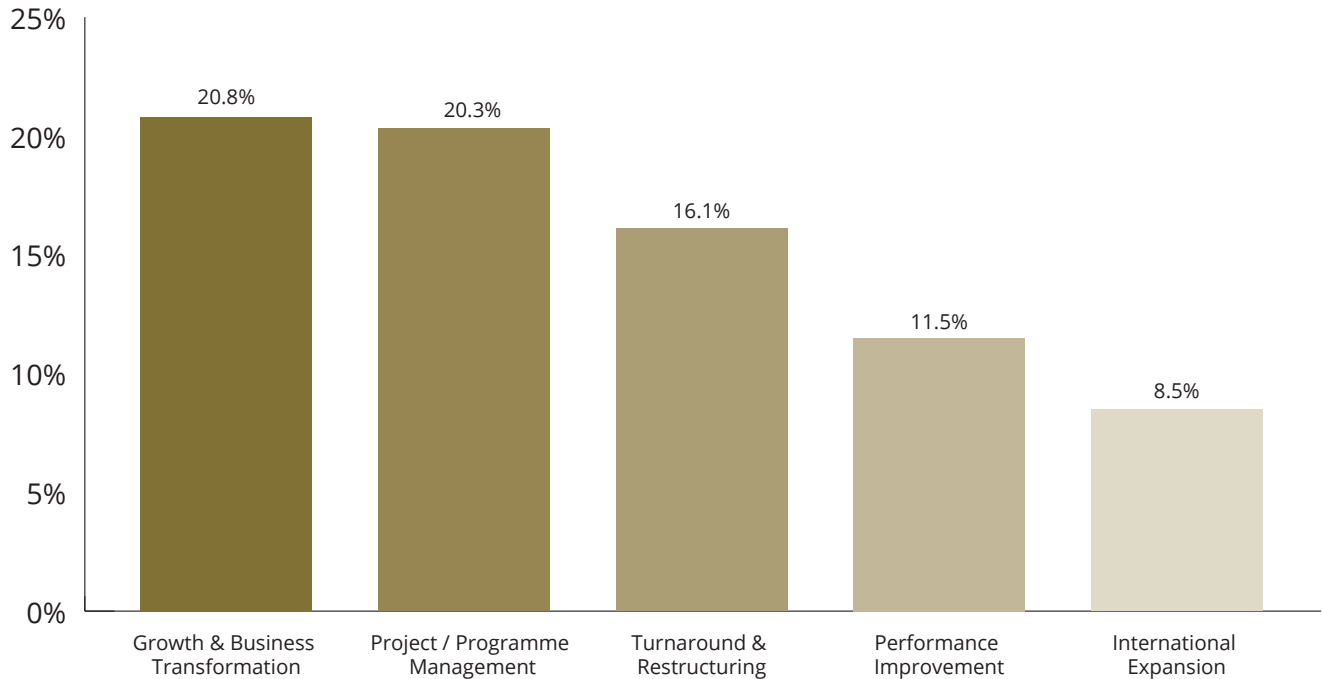
### Rest of the World 2016/17

1. USA (20.9%)
2. China (9.6%)
3. India (6.9%)
4. United Arab Emirates (5.6%)
5. Russia (5.5%)
6. Singapore (5.2%)
7. Australia (3.9%)
8. Brazil (3.6%)
9. Canada (3.5%)
10. South Africa (3.5%)

### 2015/16

- ▼ USA (23%)
- ▼ China (11%)
- ▼ United Arab Emirates (6.5%)
- ▲ India (6.5%)
- ▼ Russia (6.2%)
- ▼ Singapore (5.5%)
- ▼ Hong Kong (5%)
- ▼ Canada (4.6%)
- ▼ South Africa (4.5%)
- ▲ Australia (3.5%)

## Reasons for International Assignments



When it comes to the main reasons clients choose international as opposed to local interim/transition executives, some of the following reasons were cited:

- “The necessary skills sets were not available locally.”
- “The client wanted to bring in a very different/fresh way of thinking.”

## Other Key Findings

### **Market outlook:**

Overall these executives are buoyant about the market for projects with 36% envisaging an increase in international roles over the next 12 months. However, 37% are unsure either way about the next 12 months. In some ways hardly surprising given the global economic uncertainty.

### **Multi-lingual and highly educated talent pool:**

85% speak more than one language; 43% speak three or more languages. A Bachelor's degree is the 'standard' (94%); 64% have Master's Degree or equivalent. 12% have a Doctoral Degree.

### **Representation of senior executive woman still needs to grow:**

Only 9.7% of the top level talent pool are female but there is a commitment to increase. 28% say it is harder for women to land international assignments.

### **Strong commitment to this career choice and approach:**

43.5% are committed to Interim and transformation management assignments. However, 56.5% could potentially be interested in a permanent opportunity. This proves there is a convergence between these two approaches in terms of sourcing leadership talent.

### **Downsides:**

42% believe that the biggest challenge is leaving friends and family for a prolonged period of time; 16% say living in a hotel/temporary accommodation; and 12% find the cultural differences to be a challenge.

### **What they enjoy:**

29% find working overseas more challenging and stimulating; 25% of Interim and transformation leaders enjoy the exposure to different cultures with only a very small number purely doing it for higher remuneration (7.4%).

# WIL Group Partners



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