

LESS WILLING TO MOVE OR WORK ABROAD

South Africans want to stay home

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SOUTH Africans are less willing to relocate to a new country physically than in 2018, according to a new study, Decoding Global Talent, Onsite and Virtual, by Boston Consulting Group (BCG) and The Network, including local partner organisation CareerJunction. The study included almost 209 000 participants in 190 countries and 1 421 in South Africa.

The study shows that the pandemic has had a major impact on people's attitudes towards work abroad, reducing their interest and inclining them towards countries that have done the best job of containing Covid-19.

Only 59% of South Africans are willing to move to another country for work, which is down from 72% in 2018. Young and highly educated

South Africans aren't willing to move abroad either: only 56% of young people and 61% of highly educated people in the country said they would be willing to relocate.

"This is in line with the global trend of decreasing mobility – probably due to the pandemic, but also because of tighter immigration policies by some of the big destination markets," says Rudi van Blerk, principal and recruiting director at BCG Joburg.

However, people in some of the most sought-after jobs are still willing to move and work abroad; these include digitalisation and automation (85%), science and research (78%), law (76%) and IT (74%).

The US remains the top destination South Africans would move to, but the next most popular destinations have shifted. The UK overtook Australia,

and New Zealand and the United Arab Emirates are also more popular targets than in 2018, moving up a spot to fifth and sixth respectively. "This is also in line with global trends, with Asian and Middle East destinations growing in popularity, probably due to their comparably better management of Covid-19," Van Blerk says.

Overall attractiveness of South Africa to global workers dropped from ranking 40th in 2018 to 45th last year, but the country remains an attractive destination for other African countries, as well as the Netherlands and the UK.

While there is less willingness now to move a foreign country, South Africans have shown their interest in virtual mobility, with 73% saying they are open to work for an international remote employer, compared to the global average of 57%.