



IMMIGRATION TRENDS REPORT

2016

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Employers are placing substantial value on the role of foreign nationals within their organizations — investing considerable time and money in order to bridge the skills gap and remain competitive in today’s global environment, according to the Envoy Immigration Trends 2016 survey.

“The results of our survey indicate that it’s crucial for employers to be able to hire and retain key foreign national employees,” said Dick Burke, president and chief executive officer of Envoy. “Seemingly, employers are concerned that what they perceive to be an increasingly difficult application process, citing an uptick in Requests for Evidence, slow processing times and lack of transparency, is threatening their ability to hire the highly skilled individuals they require to achieve long-term success.”

KEY FINDINGS INCLUDE:

- Four in 10 employers say **sourcing foreign nationals is very/extremely important** to their hiring strategy.
- More than one-third of employers say they expect their company's **foreign national headcount to increase** during the next year. Only one in 10 expects a decrease.
- Six in 10 employers say their **company has sponsored a foreign national for a green card.**
- Of these, four in 10 start the process when the employee has completed **one year of service.**
- Nearly half of employers (46 percent) say their company's visa **application process has become more difficult** in the past five years, citing most often that applying for a green card has become more difficult.
- Four in 10 employers cite **increased Requests for Evidence (RFEs)** as a reason the process has become more difficult.
- Nearly five in 10 employers say their **RFEs have increased** in the past five years.
- A majority of employers (63 percent) **believe the U.S. immigration system is broken.**
- Half of employers (49 percent) believe that in the next five years, **technology-powered platforms/services will be the most important source** for making the application process easier.
- Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump are the top picks overall for **best candidate to reform the current system.**
- Employers believe that quicker processing times and **increasing transparency are very/extremely important** to fixing the immigration system.

The national survey was conducted online by Harris Poll from Nov. 20 to Dec. 4, 2015, with 412 HR professionals and hiring managers participating across a variety of industries and company sizes. Questions covered the application process and cultural and political immigration issues.

FOREIGN NATIONALS ARE A VALUED RESOURCE

Immigrants play an important role in meeting the needs of employers. Seven in 10 employers cite filling a skills gap as very/extremely important in the decision to hire a foreign national.

Using the following scale, please tell us how important each item is in regards to your company hiring a foreign national.



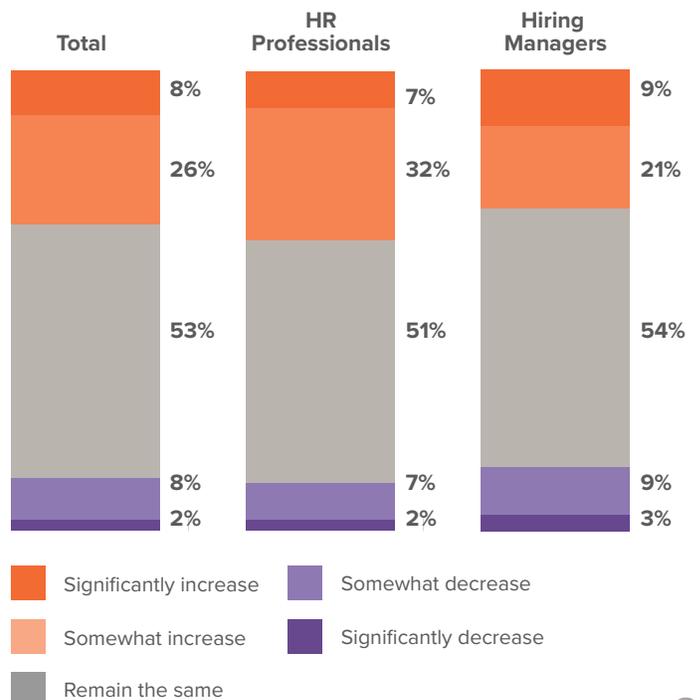
Four in 10 employers say sourcing foreign nationals is very/extremely important to their hiring strategy.

How important is sourcing foreign nationals to your company's hiring strategy?



More than one-third of employers say they expect their company's foreign national headcount to increase during the next year. Only one in 10 expects it to decrease.

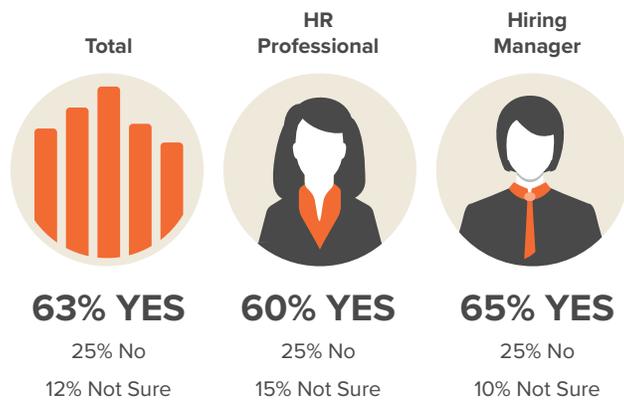
During the next year, do you expect your company's foreign national headcount to:



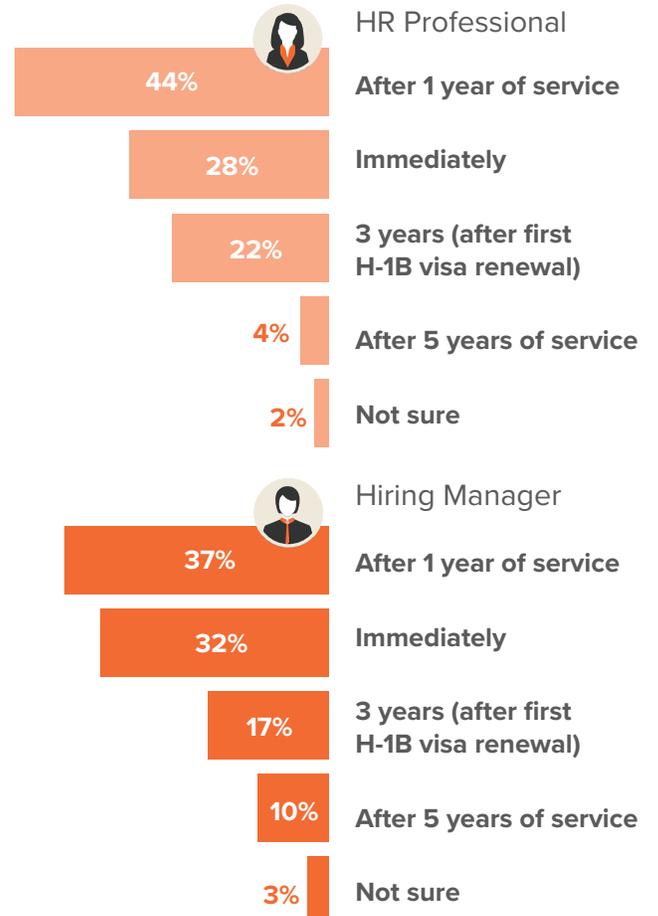
EMPLOYERS ARE INVESTING IN FOREIGN NATIONALS

Immigration is a major financial investment, and companies are apparently willing to invest in candidates who best meet their demands for talent. A majority of companies (63 percent) have sponsored a foreign national for a green card. Of those, 92 percent have also submitted an H-1B application in the last two years. About four in 10 employers say their company starts the green card application process after one year of service. Approximately three in 10 say the process is started immediately upon hiring.

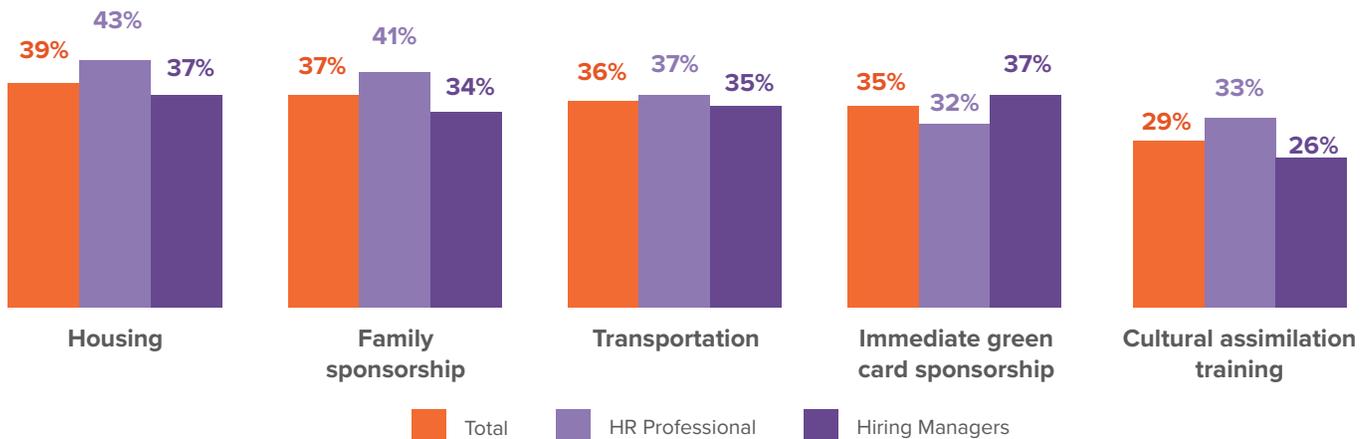
Sponsored a foreign national for a green card



Typically start green card application process



Housing is the most popular perk that employers offer to foreign national employees, followed by family sponsorship and transportation.

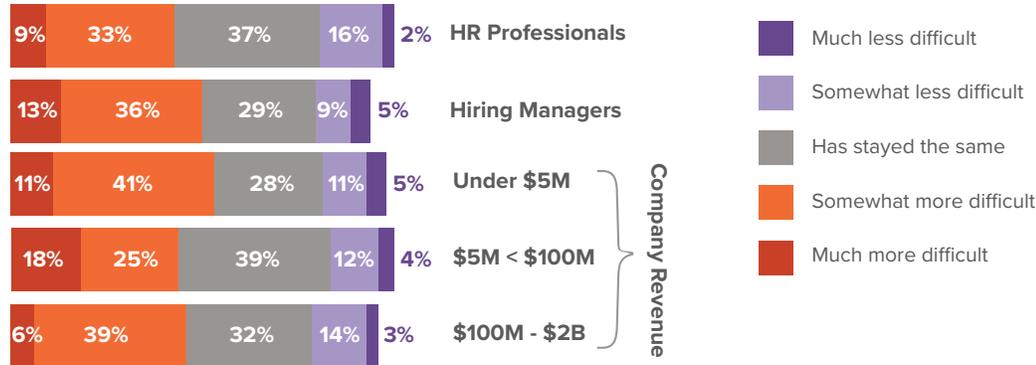


What is the typical “perk package” your company offers foreign national employees?

LANDING FOREIGN NATIONAL TALENT IS INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT

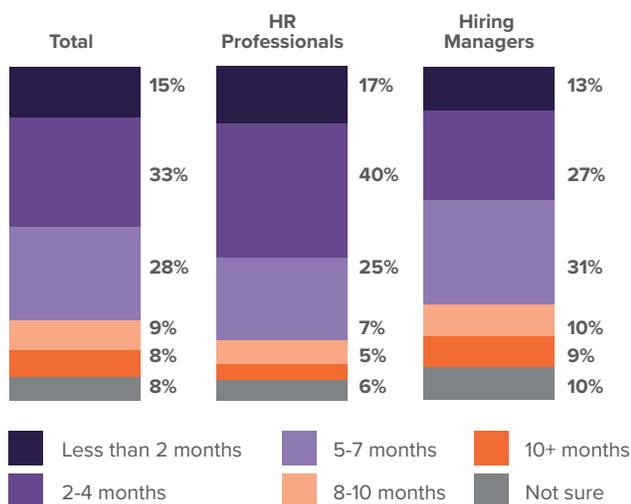
Almost half of employers (46 percent) say their company's visa application process has become more difficult in the past five years. Small and medium-sized businesses are most likely to say it has become much more difficult.

In the past five years, has your company's visa application process become:



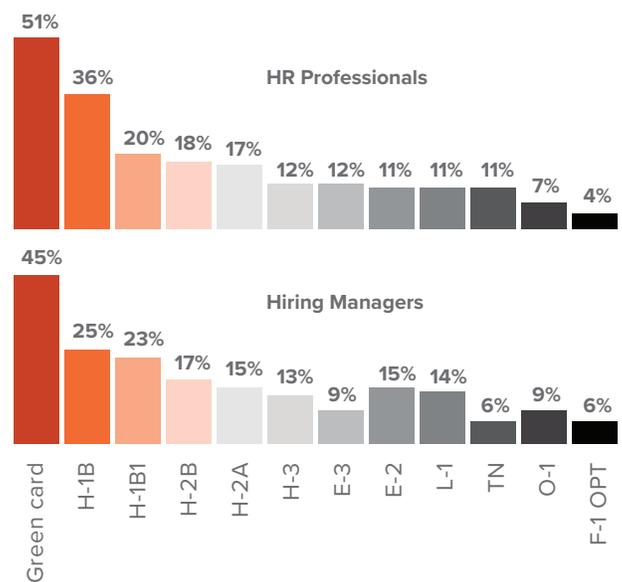
Further complicating matters, from the time a company identifies a candidate to that employee's first day of work, about 60 percent of employers say it can take anywhere between two and seven months to onboard a new foreign national.

Length of time it takes company to onboard foreign nationals



Specifically, about half of employers (47 percent) say green cards have become more difficult.

Which immigrant and nonimmigrant visa types have become more difficult in the past five years?



EMPLOYERS ARE FRUSTRATED WITH AN INEFFICIENT SYSTEM

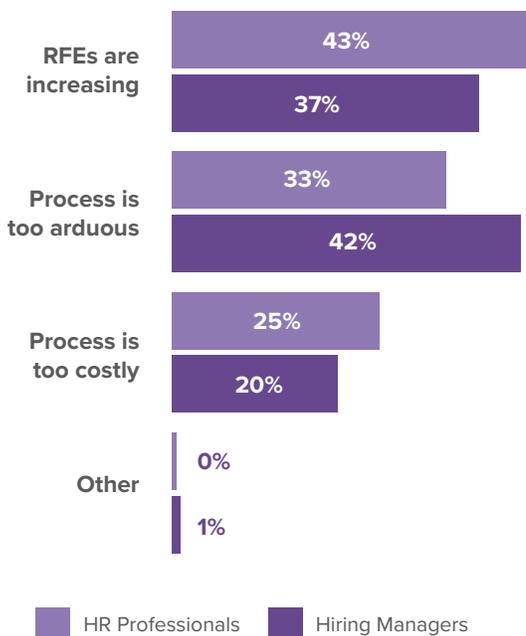
A majority of employers (63 percent) believe the current U.S. immigration system is broken.

Do you believe the current immigration system in the United States is broken?



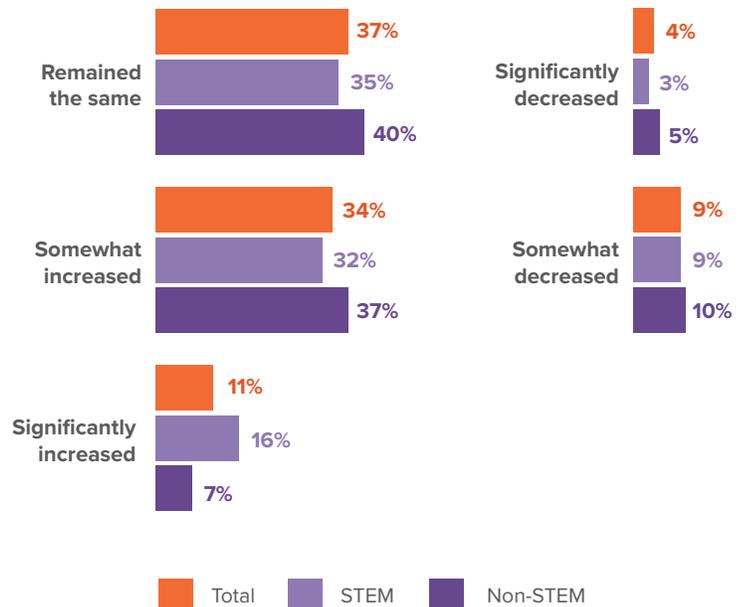
Requests for Evidence (RFEs) receives the most mentions (39 percent) for why employers think their company's application process has become more difficult.

Why has your company's visa application process become more difficult?



Almost half of employers (45 percent) report an increase in RFEs. Employers in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields are two times more likely than non-STEM employers to report a "significant increase" in the number of RFEs (16 percent vs. 7 percent).

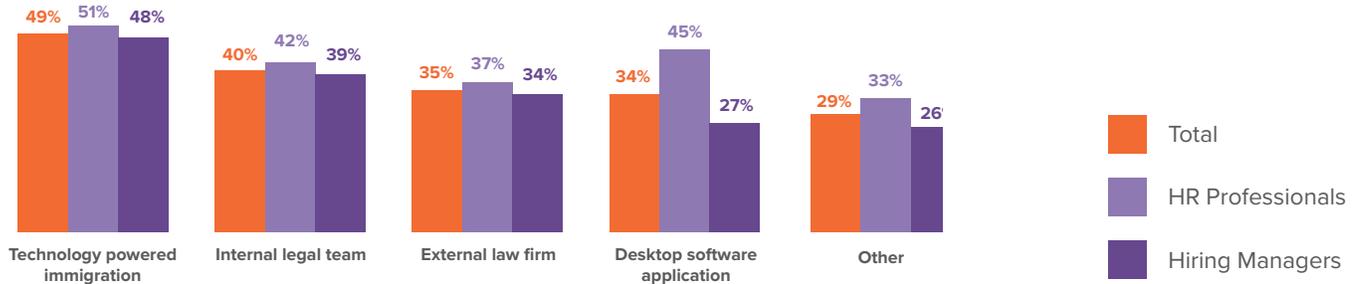
In the past five years, have your RFEs:



EMPLOYERS ARE SPLIT ON A SURE FIX

Half of employers (49 percent) believe technology-powered platforms/services will be the most important source for making the application process easier in the next five years.

Which of the following sources do you think will be most important for making the visa application process easier for your company in the next five years?



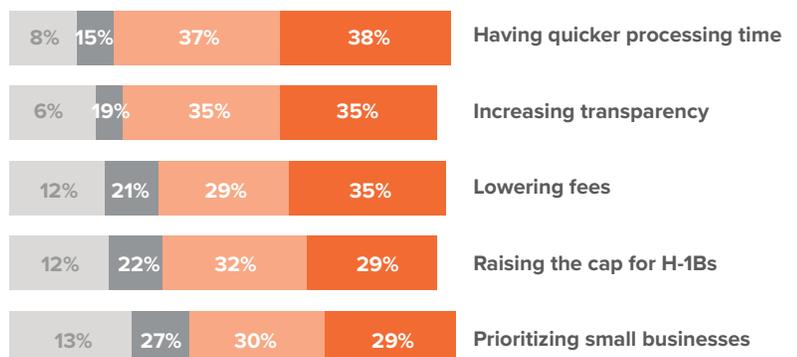
Hillary Clinton (27 percent) and Donald Trump (24 percent) are the top picks for presidential candidates thought to be best able to reform the current immigration system. Regionally, the number increases to 33 percent in the South for Trump vs. 19 percent for Clinton; in the Midwest and West, it's 31 percent for Clinton vs. 21 percent for Trump; and in the East, it decreases to 26 percent and 21 percent for Clinton and Trump, respectively.

Based on his or her immigration stance/proposed plan, which presidential candidate do you think will be best for reforming the current system?



Employers believe that quicker processing times and increasing transparency are very/extremely important to fixing the immigration system.

Using the following scale, how important are each of these items when fixing the immigration system?



Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the United States by Harris Poll on behalf of Envoy among 412 HR professionals and hiring managers ages 21 and older (employed full-time) between Nov. 20 and Dec. 4, 2015. Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Poll surveys. Because the sample is based on those who were invited to participate in the Harris Poll online research panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated. The data is weighted.

About Envoy

Envoy is a global immigration services provider integrating the best of both people and technology. The company offers a transparent and streamlined way to navigate the tedious and confusing visa application process. Its patented online platform provides fast response times, easy access to case information and comprehensive customer support — helping customers save time, money and stress. The company has prepared cases for tens of thousands of business and individual visa applications, with a 95%+ Envoy-retained attorney case approval rate.* (*Approval is not guaranteed in any given case; approval depends on the specific facts and legal circumstances of each case. This excludes B-2 visas.)

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Totals may not equal 100 percent due to rounding or the ability to select more than one response.