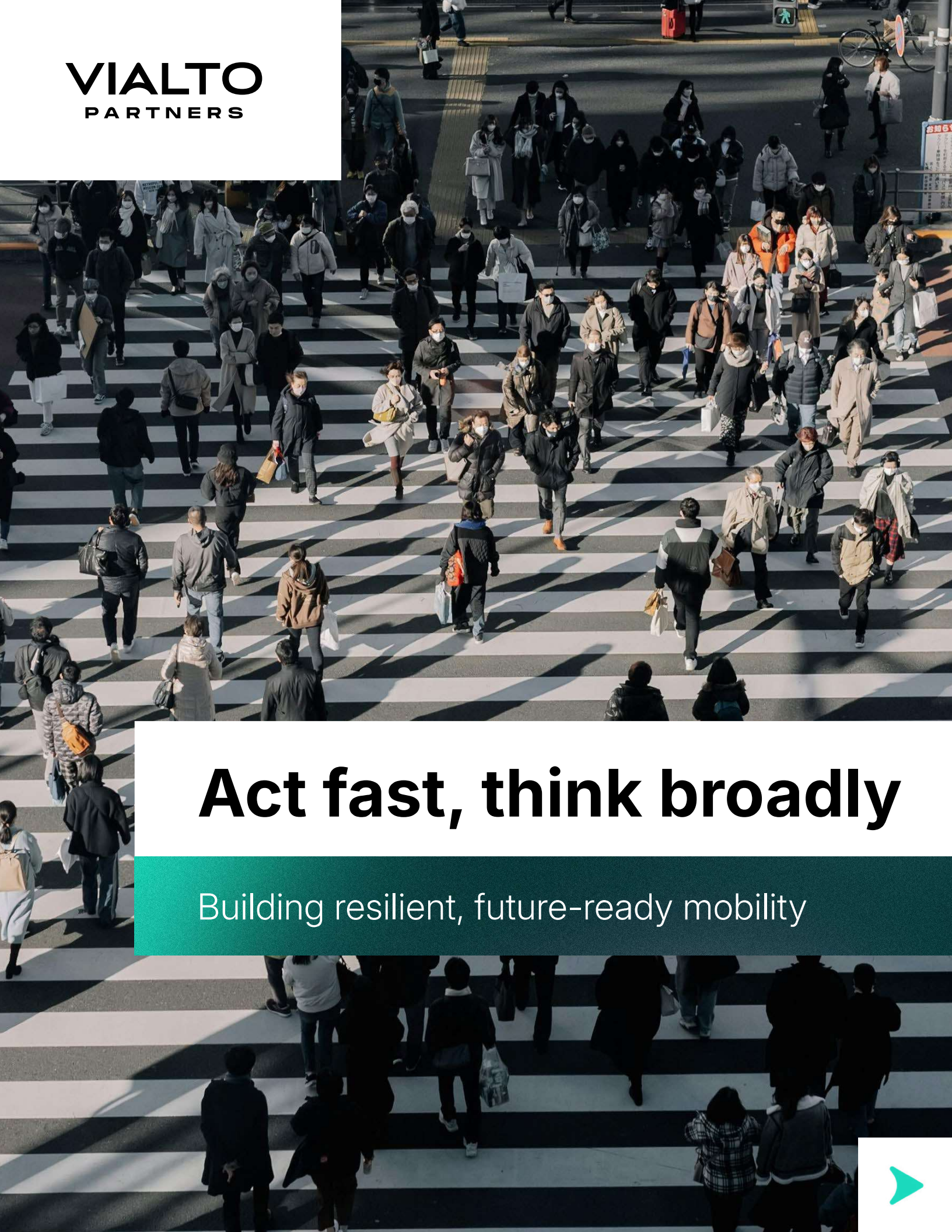


VIALTO
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Act fast, think broadly

Building resilient, future-ready mobility





Introduction

Complexity is the new normal

Global mobility is inherently complex. But geopolitical shocks, extreme weather events related to climate change, shifting visa regimes, and growing protectionism can further complicate mobility programs, making a coordinated response essential.

Today, the ability to act fast and think broadly is the shift from reaction to resilience. Acting fast impacts operational speed. Thinking broadly considers the full range of consequences, from immigration and payroll, to tax, compliance, sanctions, and duty of care.

Disruptions rarely happen in isolation. We're now in an era of the polycrisis: overlapping shocks, where political instability, climate events, and economic volatility collide, often making each other worse¹. These aren't one-off crises; they can ripple across systems, magnifying risks. As a result, preparing for one threat increasingly means planning for several at once, and doing so fast.

The impact of disruption is stark. A cyberattack may seem distant from mobility, yet it shows how quickly operations can grind to a halt. TechRadar reports that it now takes organizations an average of five weeks to fully recover from a cyberattack². A cyberattack at a British multinational retailer in April 2025 reportedly led to a £300 million hit to operating profits³. These examples suggest that the business case for being prepared is clear.

Even with sophisticated dashboards and real-time data, many executives remain caught off guard. Awareness alone may not be enough. The differentiator is not only knowing, but acting. In volatile times, the instinct may be to pause: to delay moves or scale back plans. But that defensive posture can place long-term growth at risk. Resilience must mean readiness rather than retreat. Strategic mobility, even under stress, is key to competitive advantage.

This calls for a fresh approach; one that navigates nuance and sees opportunity where others may see obstacles. While headlines often highlight hardening borders and political backlash, the picture is more mixed. Governments may talk tough, yet many are also opening new pathways to attract talent. Selectivity is replacing openness, with targeted visa routes emerging alongside more populist rhetoric.

Mobility models are shifting too. Long-term postings remain important, but they now sit within a broader, more varied work structure. Short-term projects, remote work, and cross-border commuting have become more common. Many of these new roles operate outside standard HR systems, complicating planning and slowing responses.

The rise of digital nomadism illustrates this shift. Global hub cities now attract remote workers in increasing numbers. New York alone currently hosts around one million digital nomads each year⁴. These wandering professionals often sit beyond the reach of conventional tracking frameworks, making real-time visibility even more critical.

Global economic hubs are now just as vulnerable as more traditionally fragile states. For example, during the March 2023–February 2024 North American "fire season," research found that climate change made extreme wildfire weather in Canada "unprecedented in scale and...three to four times more likely⁵."

As a result of such risk evolution, mobility teams are increasingly being asked to protect people, minimize disruption, and support strategic as well as operational goals. In the sections that follow, we look at some of the factors that may hold mobility programs back and outline three priorities that can help organizations build resilience.



When preparedness falls behind reality

Despite growing volatility and sharper expectations, many organizations still rely on mobility models designed for earlier conditions. When disruption strikes, companies often struggle to answer one basic but critical question: Who is affected, and where are they?

This lack of real-time insight is exacerbated by fragmented legacy systems. Employee location data may be spread across travel platforms, HR records, or outdated spreadsheets. Emergency contacts may be incomplete. Some populations, such as remote workers or dependents with complex visa arrangements, may be entirely missing from internal systems. Without more complete oversight, decision-making slows, communication breaks down, and risk increases.

Even when organizations have successfully located their people, many still lack a coordinated response. The crisis mobility policy (if one exists) may be outdated, untested, or incomplete. Governance may be unclear. Decision-makers may lack a shared understanding of when to act, how to escalate, or

who qualifies for support. In practice, responses often depend heavily on ad hoc coordination between functions, each with its own distinct system, timelines, and priorities.

Each disruption scenario requires a different type of response. Some may require an urgent logistical effort, such as employee relocation. Others may need immigration advice or visa waivers for dependents. The range of possible scenarios is broad and growing.

Technology can help but most internal systems were not designed to manage real-time travel intelligence, regulatory updates, and case-by-case eligibility simultaneously. Fewer are still able to automate scenario planning or trigger tailored communications based on individual circumstances.

In the next section, we explore how leading organizations are working to close the gap between fragmented legacy systems and a continuously evolving and accelerating environment.



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**Three priorities
for resilient mobility**

Conclusion: Resilience starts
with readiness

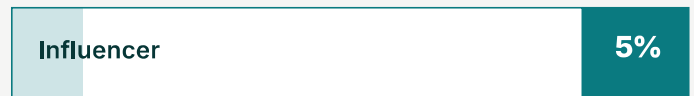
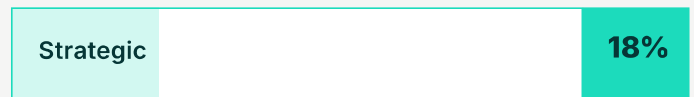
Three priorities for resilient mobility

Mobility teams need more than process improvements. They need the operational muscle to respond to the unexpected without compromising continuity or care.

According to Vialto's Mobility Matters survey, nearly a third of respondents (32 percent) describe their mobility program as either "unstructured" or only "operational," with limited policy development, compliance readiness, and strategic alignment⁶. Only 23 percent reach the top tiers described as "strategic" or "influencer" where mobility tends to be more risk-proactive and closely aligned with business priorities.

This gap highlights the need for an approach that builds capability and credibility, and positions mobility as a driver of resilience and growth. The following three priorities offer a starting point.

Where companies' global mobility programs are today



Unstructured: No formal program in place

Operational: Developing processes, some structure, increased awareness of compliance requirements

Meaningful: Defined approach with standardization, standard policies and processes, compliance checks, and audits in place

Strategic: Single managed global process with alignment across stakeholders, strong compliance management with real-time monitoring, proactive management of risks, and comprehensive training

Influencer: Data driven strategic mobility around policy and exception management, adaptability, and responsiveness to new regulation and market changes, continued process improvement, and innovation



1: Build real-time visibility and scenario readiness

Resilience begins with knowing the location and circumstances of everyone in your business. Yet for many organizations, that information can be fragmented or missing altogether. Employees may be working remotely in a country other than their home or host location, traveling for business, or moving under visa categories that standard HR workflows can fail to register. Dependents, contractors, and employees on short-term assignments can also fall through the cracks.

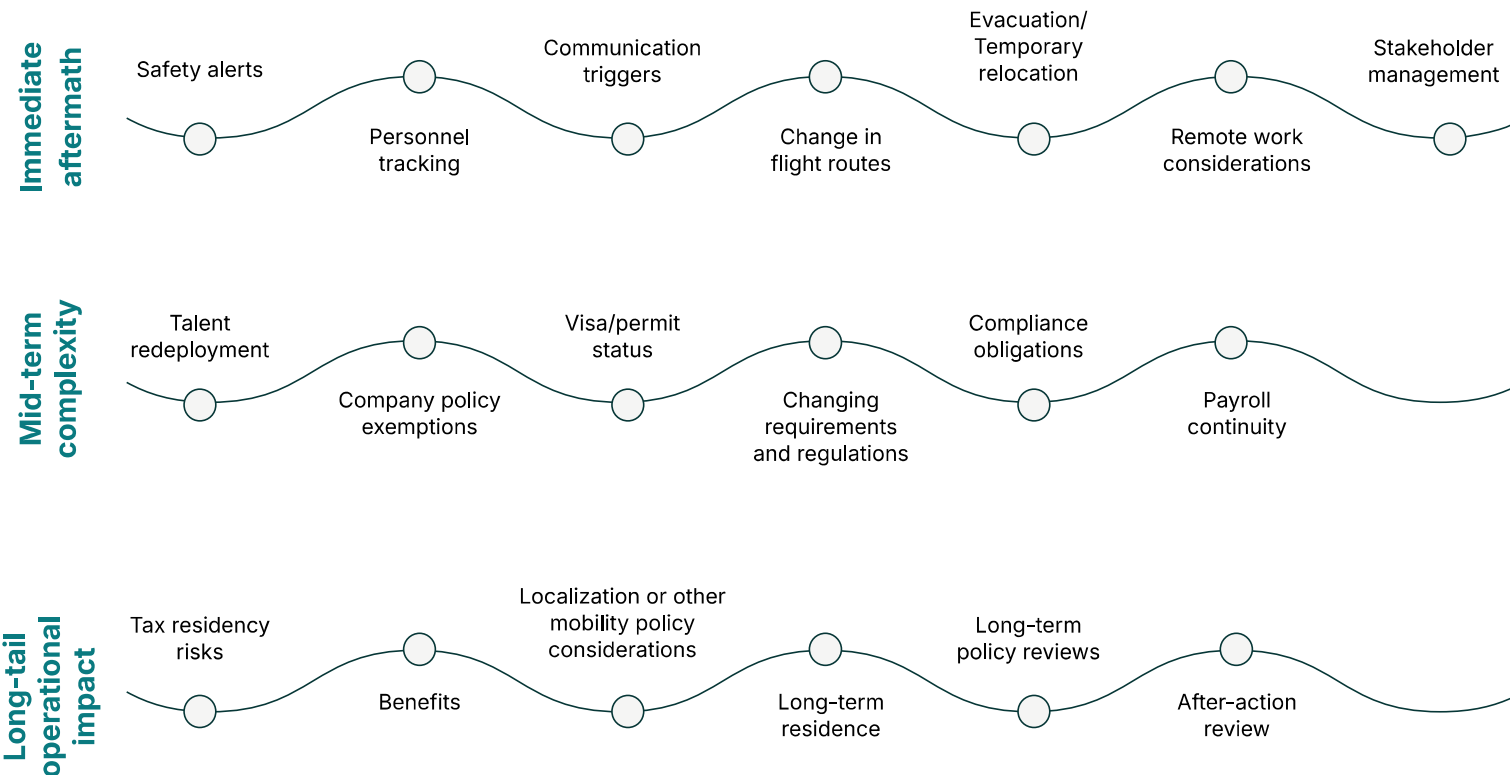
Companies need to establish a clear, up-to-date view of their mobile populations, including location, visa status, dependent family members, and travel plans. But visibility is only the starting point. The most resilient organizations layer that data into scenario-planning models that allow them to anticipate how

different crises could impact different groups and develop a response for each. They also invest in contingency planning and scenario-modeling tools. These tools can help simulate a range of disruptions, assess knock-on effects, and map alternative paths based on real-world constraints.

This approach recognizes that not all crises unfold the same way. Some erupt without warning, forcing rapid decisions under pressure. Others develop slowly, layering in legal, compliance and operational challenges over time. Mobility teams must be prepared for both the immediate chaos but also the complexity that follows.

In this sense, crises can behave more like waves. Some build slowly, peak suddenly, and fade. Others hit fast, then shift into longer, more complex operational challenges. Resilient teams prepare for both the initial disruption and the drawn-out demands that often follow.

From shock to ripple: Planning for the aftermath of disruption





Tools, analytics, and processes must evolve to meet those demands. Many organizations are:

- using real-time dashboards to track mobility populations and overlay them onto external data sources (e.g., flight availability, border policies, security alerts).
- stress-testing crisis plans to expose operational blind spots and sharpen response protocols.
- mapping potential destination countries, identifying visa pathways, infrastructure support, and relocation options.
- establishing early-warning signals (e.g., tonal changes in embassy advice or regional risk ratings) that trigger parallel adjustments to internal scenario approaches.

This level of preparation moves companies from firefighting to prevention, which is a defining characteristic of resilient mobility functions.

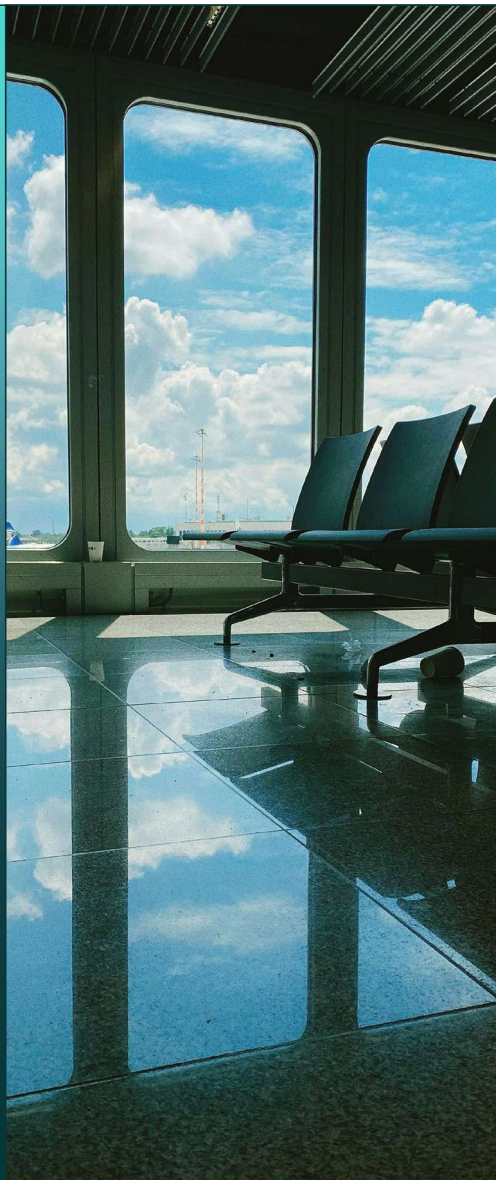
CASE STUDY

Relocation under pressure: Responding to the Russia-Ukraine war

At the onset of the Russia-Ukraine war, a global organization turned to Vialto for urgent guidance on relocating their employees from Russia to safer locations. Working quickly, Vialto assessed viable options, with the UAE and Turkey emerging as strategic destinations. After proactive discussions and a thorough evaluation of timelines, costs, and employee well-being, the UAE was selected as the relocation hub for a large-scale move.

In addition to speed, sensitivity was core to the response. The approach prioritized employee welfare while ensuring minimal business disruption. Vialto's crisis team launched a free dashboard within days of the conflict, providing real-time updates on outbound immigration, tax, social security, and payroll considerations. This tool became a lifeline for over 4,000 users in its first week.

The Vialto team supports organizations in these sorts of situations by analyzing workforce data to provide targeted impact assessments for affected employee populations during times of crisis. Mapping immigration pathways can equip affected organizations with clarity on where their employees can relocate or travel, considering visa-on-arrival options, e-visas, and other mobility pathways. More recently, a similar methodology was implemented to support organizations with Lebanese national employees, by detailing where they could enter visa-free or secure e-visas, enabling businesses to make informed decisions swiftly and strategically.





2: Coordinate a multidisciplinary crisis response

Mobility disruptions are rarely just mobility problems. Sudden relocation or redeployment may lead to official questions around tax residency, social security contributions, immigration compliance, payroll obligations, employment contracts, and more. Responding effectively requires a cross-functional taskforce ready to move at speed.

This is where some organizations can fall short. Crisis responsibilities can often be unclear. Governance structures may be untested. Communication flows between HR, legal, risk, payroll, and leadership may rely on personal relationships rather than established processes.

To embed real resilience and respond to crises effectively, organizations need:

Mobility professionals need an open line to the C-suite. The ability to brief stakeholders, shape scenario planning, and coordinate functions will be essential to strategic management and mitigation of disruption.

SCENARIO:

Acting fast and thinking broadly in a crisis

An international employer receives early security alerts relating to civil unrest in a major business hub. Borders remain open for now, but high-level government meetings are underway, and local media are speculating about imminent lockdowns.

The company's crisis team activates a tabletop response, starting with population mapping. Of 1,000 employees in the region, 800 are local nationals. The remaining 200, which comprise assignees and cross-border staff, are flagged for potential action. A team that includes representatives from HR, mobility, legal, tax, and travel functions evaluates each case.

Under existing assignment frameworks, some individuals are eligible to return to their home countries. Others require short-term relocation support or visa feasibility checks for nearby jurisdictions. Within hours, the team identifies viable destinations, prepares travel documentation, and alerts staff. The company dispatches a support team to manage stress at departure points. Travel letters are issued to smooth passage through border processes. Exit permits or family waivers are arranged to allow employees to travel with dependents who hold different nationalities to them.

These measures can help affected employees remain safe and productive, while minimizing operational disruption.



In some cases, continuity may depend on alternative employment models. An Employer of Record (EoR) can act as a critical stopgap, allowing organizations to maintain compliant employment relationships when direct sponsorship is not possible. By enabling rapid redeployment into new jurisdictions without the delays of entity setup, an EoR approach can help minimize downtime, protect employees, and preserve business operations during crises.



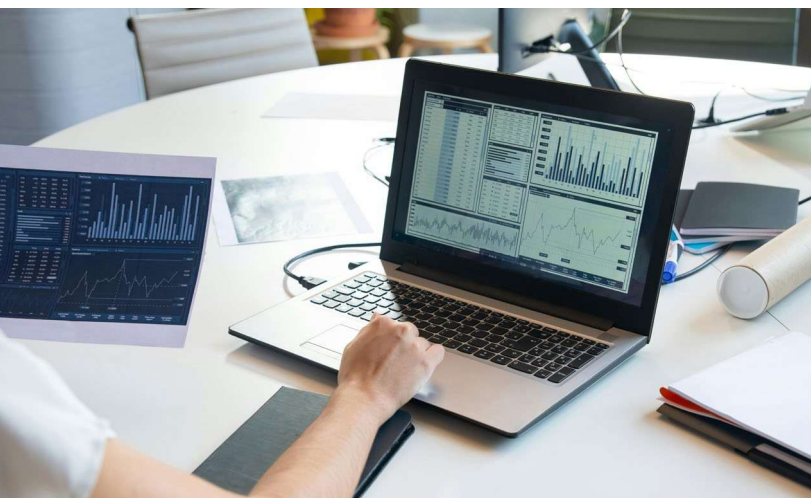
3: Make technology central to crisis response and risk mitigation

Technology has become a core driver of crisis resilience. When mobility is disrupted, advanced tools can accelerate response times, automate compliance tasks, and offer predictive insight. Human judgment and empathy remain essential, but scaling a response and anticipating risk increasingly depends on smart, connected systems.

The most effective solutions combine real-time data, emerging technologies, and human discretion to support fast, accurate, and context-aware decisions.

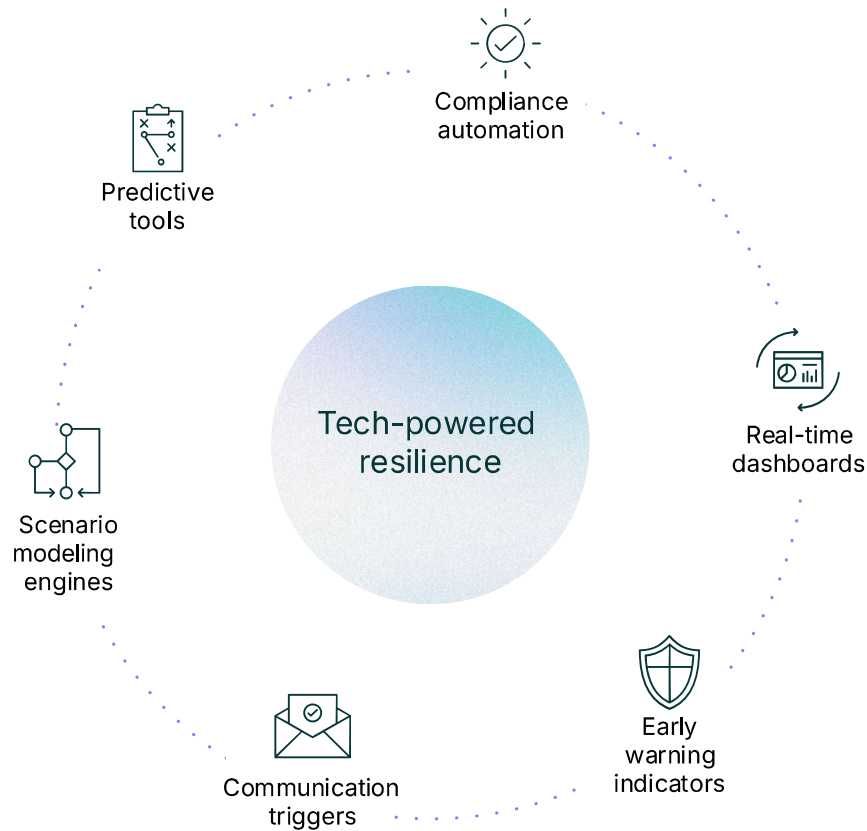
For example:

- Integrating risk and policy data from immigration updates, flight schedules, and security advisories
- Using predictive tools to forecast how crises may evolve, identify vulnerable employees, and anticipate logistical blockages
- Applying AI to assess relocation feasibility, flag documentation gaps, and spot visa risks for dependents of mixed nationalities
- Automating compliance workflows, such as triggering shadow payroll, renewing visas, or raising jurisdiction-specific alerts
- Building robust communication channels to reach staff quickly, particularly in high-stress or low-connectivity settings





Technology-enabled crisis response and resilience-building



Of course, even the most advanced platforms can't always replace human judgment. Consider an employee traveling with a child who has a different surname, or someone seeking a visa waiver to keep a mixed-nationality family together. These cases call for empathy, flexibility, and sometimes escalation to local authorities.

Crisis is personal, not just operational. Some organizations place staff at major airports, run 24/7 immigration hotlines, or issue comfort letters to border officials. These are more than tactical responses. Instead, they're moments to build trust and show care when it matters most.

CASE STUDY

Using tech to turn compliance into competitive advantage

When Singapore introduced its new COMPASS framework for Employment Passes, one global bank needed to adapt fast. Vialto responded with its proprietary analytics platform, using automation, data extraction and predictive modelling to complete more than 2,000 eligibility assessments in a single day.

The real-time insights helped the organization stay compliant, anticipate workforce needs, and build more agility into its mobility planning. It's a sharp example of how data-driven tools can help shift mobility teams from reacting to planning. This type of capability can be especially valuable when disruption occurs.

Source: "Accelerating immigration compliance and workforce planning with data analytics"



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Global mobility teams are striving for faster response times, deeper foresight, and broader operational alignment. But resilience must be designed, rehearsed, and embedded into the structure of mobility itself.

Organizations that make progress in this area will recognize mobility not as a transactional service, but as a strategic enabler of business continuity, risk agility, and global talent strategy. This requires a shift away from linear relocation models, toward a dynamic approach that uses a blend of data-driven technologies and human judgment.

Resilient mobility is not about a single system, policy, or tool. It's about readiness across three dimensions: visibility, coordination, and judgment. Organizations that invest in these capabilities are not only supporting their people; they are also positioning mobility as a driver of business continuity, strategic foresight, and long-term confidence.

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