

FIRST LOOK:

The Evolving Role of Global Employee & Labor Relations Leaders

From “International Firefighter” to “Global Future-looking Strategist”

This summer, HR Policy Global conducted a survey of nearly 100 members, offering unique insight into the evolving role of Global Employee Relations (ER) and Labor Relations (LR) leaders. The report highlights historical and new challenges the role has faced and offers solutions. More importantly, it guides CHROs on building and developing the talent and team needed to support their businesses. The full report and findings will be sent to members soon. Thank you to those who participated!

Key findings include:

Global employee and labor relations has established itself as a key business leadership role.

- **Employee experience rises to the top** of the agenda with ER and LR as disciplines moving closer together. In organizations and countries with strong labor representation, LR activities dominate. In organizations and countries with less engagement with organized labor, defending employee choice in workplace representation is paramount.
- At the center of the current global role is **the management of bargaining or works council type activities** with a focus on **restructuring and organizational change**.
- **“Fixing problems”** dominates the agenda. International crisis management involving the COVID pandemic and post COVID working arrangements, wars and conflicts and dealing with non-union led employee voice has come to the fore.

Into the future:

CHROs should look for **a talent profile** that not only plays a pivotal role in managing the relationship with employee representative bodies in restructuring, acquisitions and divestitures, but also looks to future risk that includes emerging issues such as pay equity, supply chain management, the gig economy, top down union strategies, alternative forms of employee voice, and artificial intelligence on a global scale.

Key skills of the role include:

- Operational excellence
- Strategic leadership
- Collaboration and coordination with different functions
- Future-oriented risk analysis and measurement
- Managing uncertainty and resilience