



# Reinventing Workforce Travel in Financial Services

A Roomex Report  
May 2025



# Executive Summary



The financial services sector relies heavily on a mobile workforce – from area managers covering multiple locations, to training, operations and support teams frequently travelling between sites. Yet the systems supporting that travel are often fragmented, inefficient, and poorly suited to the realities of shift-based, reactive operations.

This mini-report draws on Roomex's Reinventing the Journey campaign, which surveyed over 1,500 respondents, including:

- 105 corporate travel bookers and buyers (from all sectors)
- 1,405 frequent work travellers, including 101 from financial services

It reveals a sector under pressure: rising costs, lack of process, and poor visibility are leading to missed savings and a negative employee experience. In financial services specifically, challenges such as tight regulatory demands, rapid client response times, and frequent site visits across branches or client offices only exacerbate the strain.

## Key findings:

- **58% of corporate travel bookers say last-minute bookings are a core challenge**
- **76% of financial services workers regularly pay travel costs out of pocket**
- **54% have left or are considering leaving a job due to poor travel arrangements**
- **The estimated unclaimed daily spend for financial services workers averages £68.20**

This report outlines what is going wrong, how it's affecting staff and budgets, and what financial services businesses can do to take back control.

Last-minute bookings	58%
Pay expenses out of their own pockets	76%
Have considered leaving a job due to poor travel arrangements	54%
Average daily unclaimable spend	£68.20

# Introduction & Industry Context



Workforce travel in financial services looks very different to traditional corporate travel. It is operational, not executive. It is often booked by team leads, branch managers, or support staff, often at short notice. And it is carried out by mobile employees such as auditors, implementation teams, compliance officers, or relationship managers who travel between branches, client sites, or regional hubs.

Unlike pre-planned, policy-managed corporate travel, workforce travel in this sector tends to be reactive, decentralised, and loosely managed. And as this research shows, that is costing businesses - both financially and culturally.

The challenge is magnified by sector-specific pressures:

- Heightened regulatory requirements and compliance obligations increase the need for in-person audits, client visits, and inspections
- Short deadlines and client-driven timelines can leave teams travelling at irregular hours, adding to fatigue and stress
- Greater focus on financial conduct and data security means stricter oversight and safety expectations, especially for mobile workers
- Frequent mergers, acquisitions, and branch changes create unpredictable spikes in workforce travel demand

Despite all this, many businesses still lack a formal travel strategy, wellbeing policies, or systems that support scale. As the sector continues to recover and grow post-COVID, travel remains one of the most overlooked sources of cost and inefficiency.



# Key Insights: Planning and Cost



## Booking and planning challenges / Reimbursement and financial strain

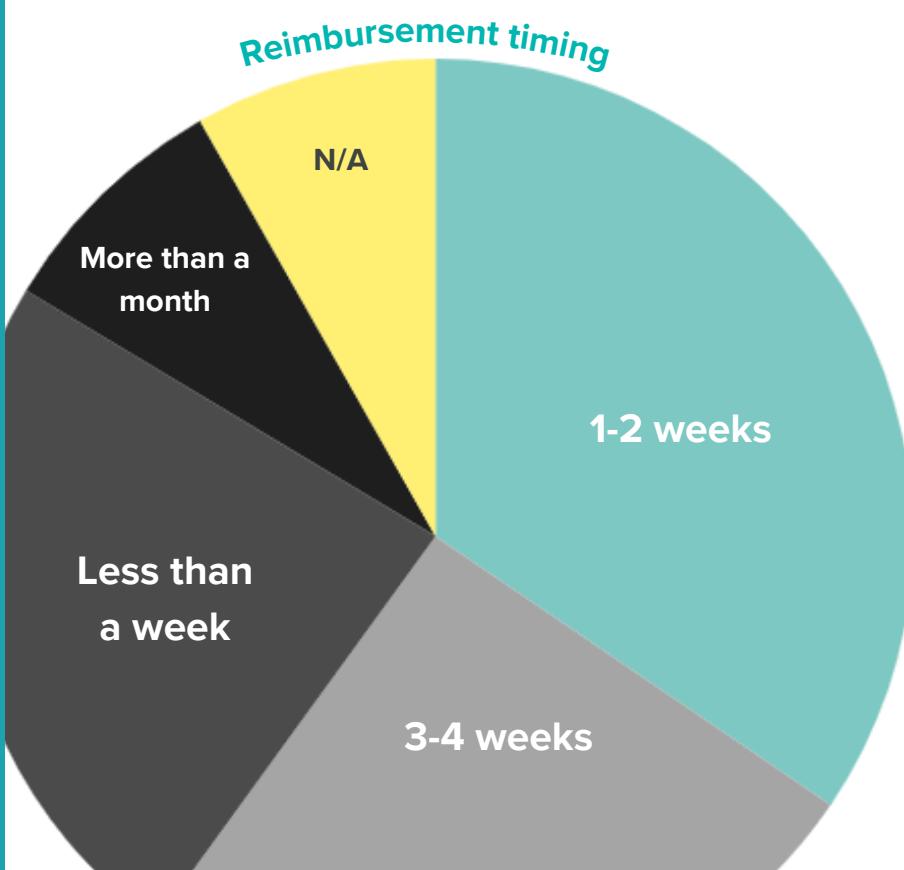
Across all sectors, 58% of travel bookers say last-minute bookings are a persistent challenge, pushing up costs and leaving limited choice of transport or accommodation. In the financial space, this is often due to urgent client needs, regulatory inspections, or rapid deployment of specialist teams.

Unapproved expenses and non-compliant bookings are another key issue, with 71% of travel bookers reporting that this is a common occurrence. 29.5% cite a lack of real-time visibility as a barrier to managing spend effectively.

In financial services sector specifically, 76% of workers pay out of pocket for travel. Many do this on personal cards, with 45.5% waiting between 1-2 weeks for reimbursement and 3% waiting over a month. This not only causes financial stress, but also adds admin for finance teams.

On average, financial services staff report spending £68.20 per day on non-expensable extras like food, drinks or leisure while working away. That is a significant hidden cost that can create tension if it is not acknowledged or addressed.

<b>Last-minute bookings</b>	58%
<b>Unapproved expenses and non-compliant bookings</b>	71%
<b>Lack of visibility</b>	29.5%





# Key Insights: Wellbeing and Retention

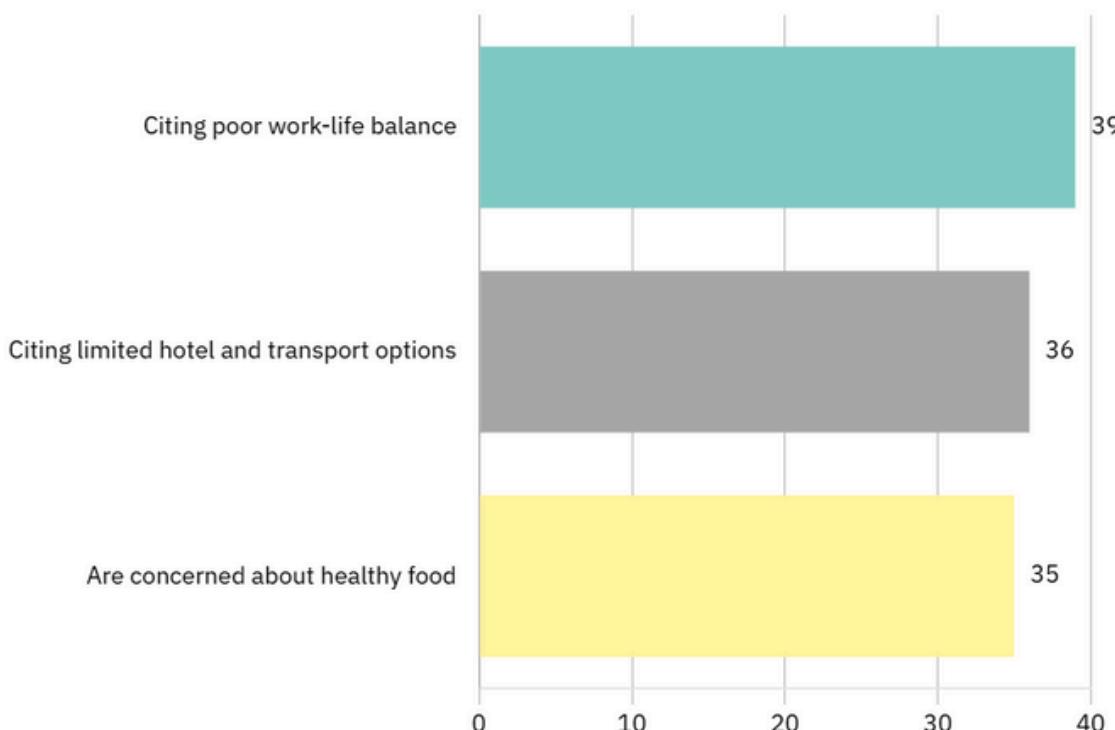
## Survey findings and key insights - Wellbeing and retention

The cumulative effect of poor travel management is clear. 39% of financial services workers report poor work-life balance as a result of frequent travel.

### The top contributing factors include:

- Poor work-life balance from frequent or long-distance travel (39%)
- Limited choice of hotels or transport options (36%)
- Lack of healthy food options when travelling (35%)

54% say they have either left or considered leaving a job due to poor travel arrangements. For a sector where retaining skilled professionals is already a challenge, that should be a wake-up call.



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# Sector-Specific Challenges

**The financial services sector has unique challenges when it comes to workforce travel:**

- Urgent client demands and regulatory deadlines often require last-minute travel, increasing fatigue and stress
- Managing multiple branches, client sites, or regional offices puts pressure on relationship managers, auditors, and compliance teams to travel frequently
- Project-driven work, such as system upgrades or merger integrations, can create sudden spikes in travel with little advance notice
- Decentralised operations often mean local offices arrange travel independently, with limited central oversight or consistency

In such environments, poor planning does not just mean higher costs - it also creates inconsistency. Some teams may book through preferred suppliers, while others use ad hoc methods. Some staff may be reimbursed quickly, while others wait weeks.

Roomex helps bring order to this complexity by centralising booking, pre-paying for accommodation, and automatically enforcing company policies, so that no matter where the journey starts, the experience is consistent.



# Recommendations

For financial services businesses looking to improve their travel operations, the data suggests three areas to focus on:

1

## Prioritise forward planning and policy clarity

- Introduce shared calendars or project management tools to reduce last-minute bookings
- Develop clear policies that are easy to follow, including approved accommodation and expense caps
- Train regional leads to book in advance, where possible, and use preferred channels

2

## Reduce the burden on staff

- Pre-book and pre-pay for hotels so employees are not out of pocket
- Use expense platforms that allow photo receipts and mobile claims
- Set up direct billing arrangements to reduce claims altogether

3

## Invest in tools that scale

- Centralise all bookings into one platform, like Roomex
- Automate expense tracking and reporting
- Use data to monitor spend trends and adjust policies accordingly





# Conclusion & Roomex Overview

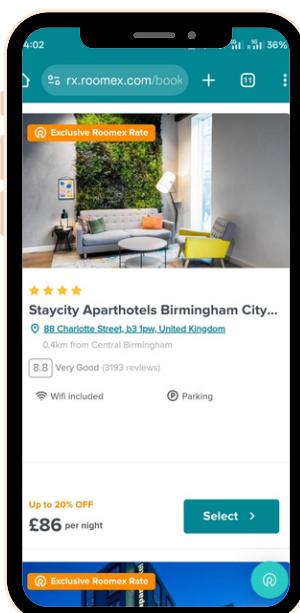
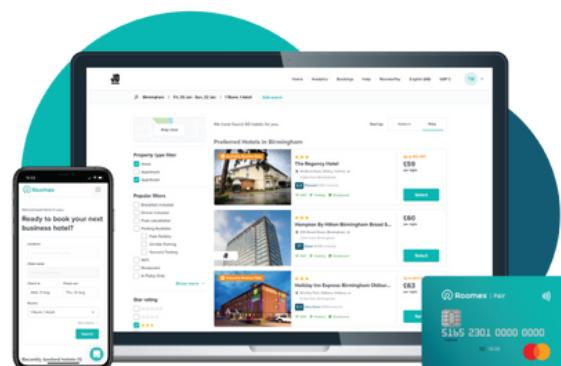
The Roomex Reinventing the Journey campaign highlights what many financial services leaders already know: workforce travel is harder and more expensive than it should be - and it is affecting both staff morale and the bottom line.

Travel may not feel like a strategic priority, but it touches everything from cost control to retention. Businesses that continue to rely on manual processes and inconsistent policies risk losing money, time and people.

Roomex provides a scalable, easy-to-use solution to manage workforce travel more effectively, offering visibility for businesses and a smoother experience for staff.

**With Roomex, financial services businesses can turn travel from a pain point into a point of difference.**

**Roomex is a leading platform for UK workforce travel, uniquely tailored to the needs of mobile workforces.** The free-to-use platform is designed to simplify travel booking, expenses and reporting for businesses and their teams. It offers the largest selection of workforce-suitable hotels in the world and enables companies to book, manage and analyse workforce travel in one place - saving time, money and hassle.



It enables businesses to streamline train and accommodation bookings, control spending, and enhance employee convenience and wellbeing during travel - all in one unified solution.

Roomex caters to diverse industries and delivers best-in-class workforce travel by providing real-time insights and cost-effective control over travel spend.

Exclusive benefits include VAT-compliant invoices, RoomexPay cards (which eliminate the need for employees to use personal cards for expenses), and consolidated reporting, which is why thousands of companies trust Roomex to take care of their workforce travel needs.

**Get in touch with our team today at [tryus@roomex.com](mailto:tryus@roomex.com) to find out how we can help you better manage your workforce travel.**

Get in touch with our team to start using the free travel management platform that's built for your business.

To learn more or get started, visit **roomex.com** or scan the QR code below.

