VisitBritain Business Events

Research and insights webinar
12 July 2023

Manchester, England; ©Chris Chambers / Alamy Stock Photo

Glasgow, Scotland; ©Alamy Stock Photo/Jim Monk

Contents

Global business events performance

UK business events performance

UK conference and meeting survey
“UKCAMS”

Future trends with MMGY

Global business events performance

Events Industry Council

Global Economic Significance of Business Events

VISIT BRITAIN
VisitEngland

Events Industry Council | Looking back to the impact of the business events sector in 2019

1.6 billion participants across **180+** countries

$1.2 trillion in direct spending

10.9 million direct jobs supported and **$663 billion** direct GDP generated

$707 spent per business event participant

The business events sector directly generated more **business sales than many large global sectors**, including telecommunication equipment and air transport

GDP supported by the sector would rank it as the **13th largest economy** globally

The total output supported by the sector **grew by 9%** in 2019 vs. 2017

Source: Events Industry Council, 2023 Global Economic Significance of Business Events

Events Industry Council | Solid recovery in 2022

In 2022…

81% spending vs. 2019

74% direct employment vs. 2019

Direct impact of global events over time

Measure	2017	2019	2020	2021	2022
Direct spending ($m)	$1,071	$1,152	$423	$525	$938
YoY growth		8%	-63%	24%	79%
% vs. 2019		100%	37%	46%	81%
Direct jobs (000s)	10,308	10,879	4,066	4,887	8,097
YoY growth		6%	-63%	20%	66%
% vs. 2019		100%	37%	45%	74%

Two thirds of global direct business event spending was lost in 2020 – with the pandemic being the cause of losses of $1.9 trillion in sales

Global business events activity recovered solidly in 2022, with a growth of 79% vs. 2021, and achieving 81% of 2019 levels

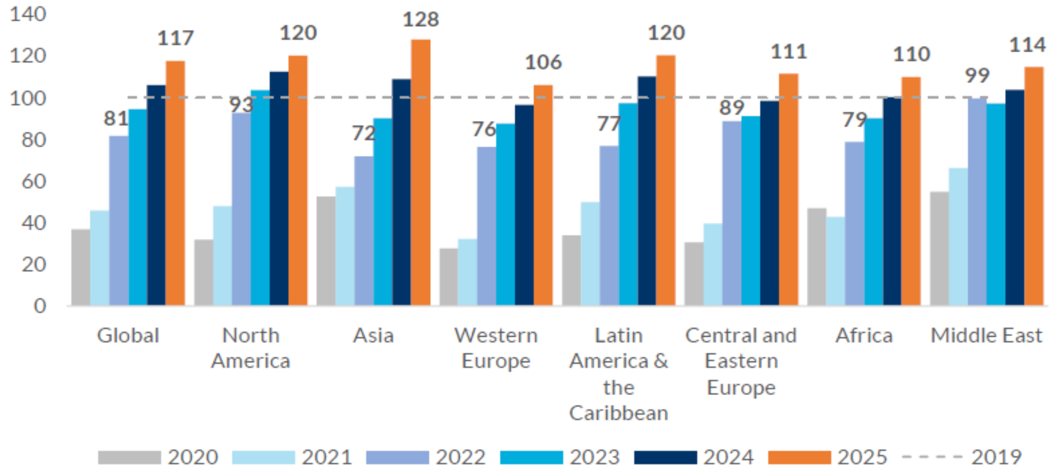
Global business event spending is forecasted to recover to 2019 levels in 2024

Source: Events Industry Council, 2023 Global Economic Significance of Business Events

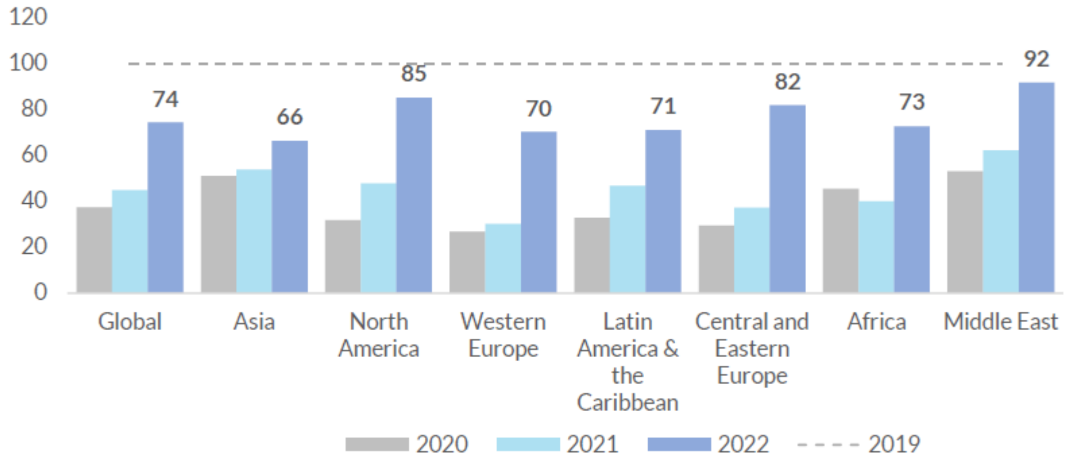
VISIT BRITAIN VisitEngland

Events Industry Council | The Middle East closest to full recovery

Events direct spending (indexed to 2019)



Events direct employment (indexed to 2019)



In 2022, the Middle East region got closest to recovering 2019 levels of events direct spending, followed by North America, and Central and Eastern Europe. Western Europe recovered 76% vs. 2019
We can see a similar trend for direct employment, with Western Europe recovering 70% vs. 2019

Source: Events Industry Council, 2023 Global Economic Significance of Business Events

Events Industry Council | Non economic impacts of business events are also significant

41% Agree events will be increasingly important in building **culture and engagement**

36% Agree events will be used more to **advance growth** of individual employees

67% View **building relationships** through face to face interaction as most difficult to replace

Typical 'returns on investment' from hosting events

- **44%** revenue that would be lost without hosting in-person events
- **38** new leads generated on average per event (exhibitors)
- **37%** marketing and sales expense reduction from hosting-in person events

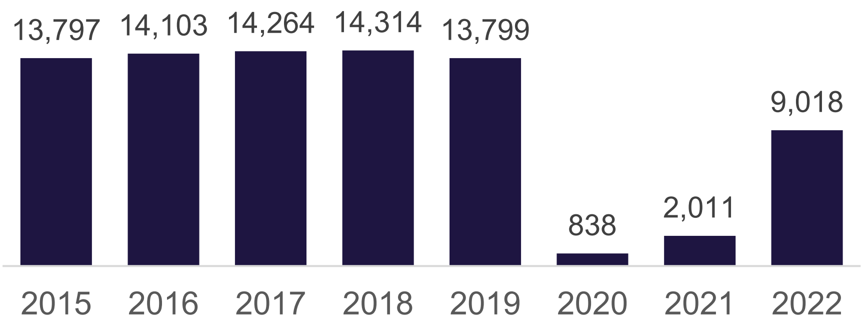
This study also explored 'catalytic effects' of business events, defined as broader impacts that occur as a result of the events, ranging from new business opportunities, knowledge transfers and future sales, to innovative collaborations and career connections. These impacts can be difficult to measure and communicate, but progress is being made

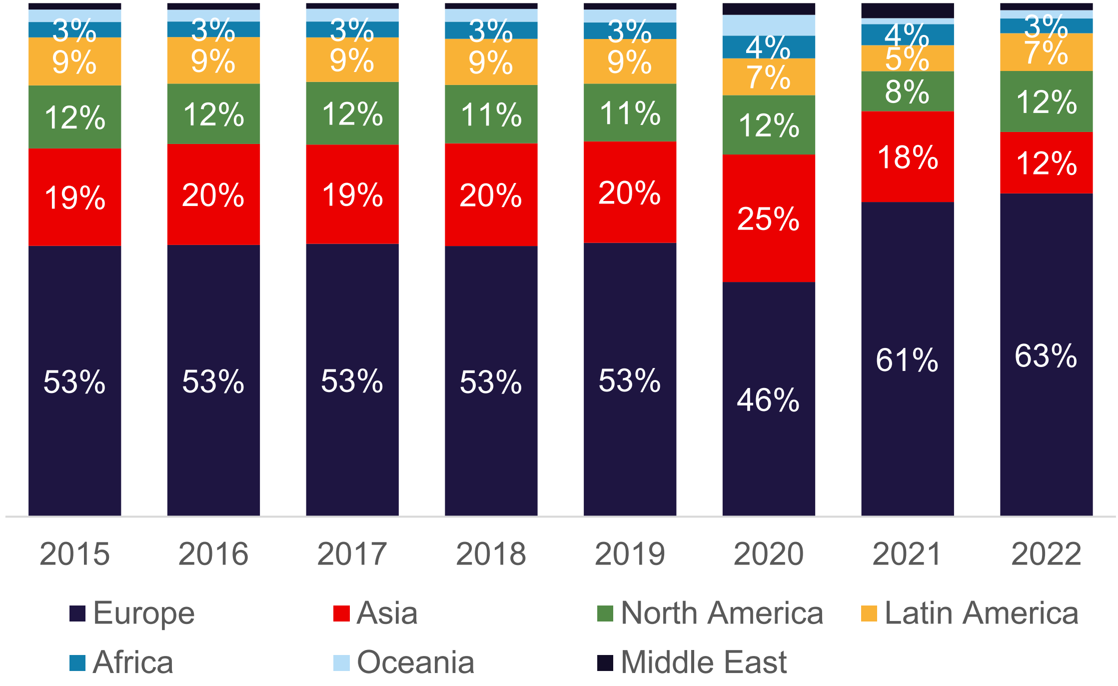
Source: Events Industry Council, 2023 Global Economic Significance of Business Events

ICCA

VISIT BRITAIN
VisitEngland

ICCA | Global meetings at 64% of pre-COVID levels, with Europe hosting a larger share





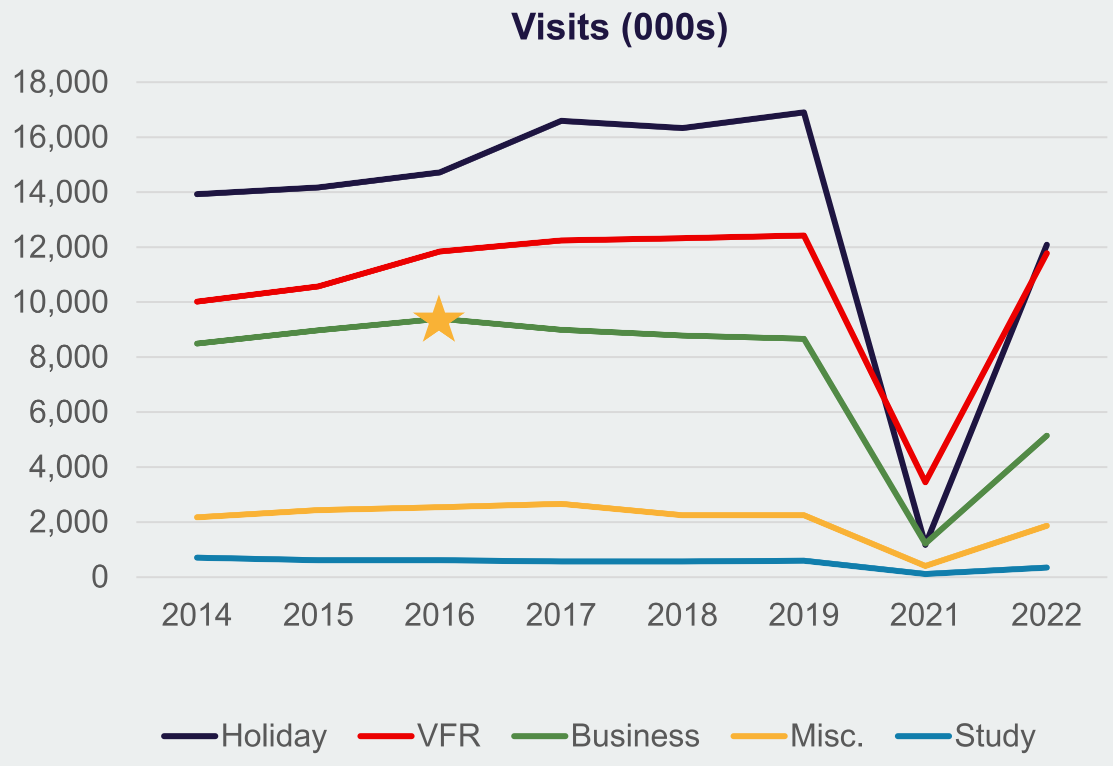
There were 9,018 international association meetings in 2022; exceeding 2021 levels by over four times, and reaching 64% of 2019 levels
Post-COVID, Europe has increased its share of global meetings by 10 percentage points, with Asia losing 8 points of share in kind. However, Asia still maintained a similar share to North America in 2022

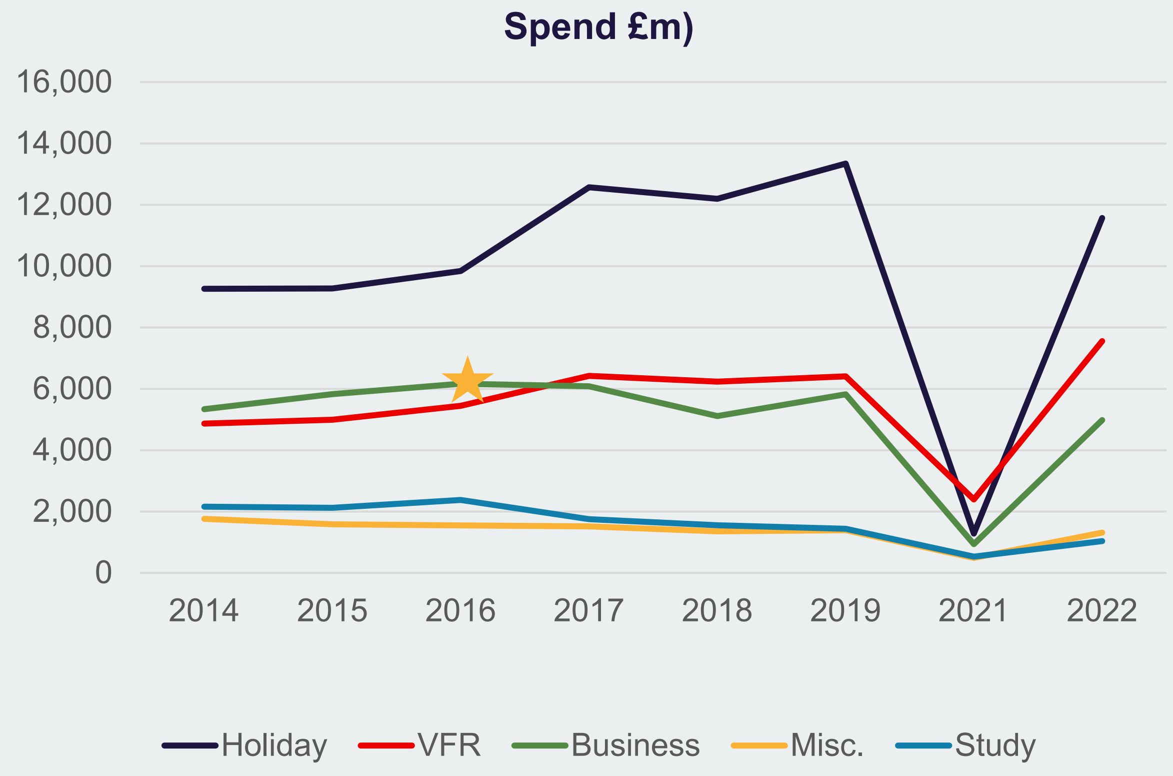
Source: ICCA Business Analytics Statistics Report 2022

UK business events performance

International Passenger Survey

IPS | 5.1m business visits in 2022, spending £5bn in the UK





In 2022, inbound Business visits recovered to 59% of 2019 levels – one of the slower journey purposes when it comes to recovery, alongside Study visitors. However, 86% of 2019 spend was recovered, which was similar to recovery of Holiday spend. Business travel was the source of 19% of inbound spend in 2022, a similar share to what was achieved in 2019

Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS ★ = record high

VISIT BRITAIN VisitEngland

IPS | Over 1 in 5 business visitors were MICE in 2022

In selected years since 2016, VisitBritain has included an added question on the IPS to identify types of business travellers. Within the categories included, MICE includes business travellers for:

- Meetings (21+ attendees)
- Incentives/Team building
- Conferences/Conventions/Congresses
- Exhibitions/Events/Trade shows

1.1 million MICE visitors came to the UK in 2022, constituting **22%** of Business visitors, and **4%** of all visitors

5.1 million nights were spent by MICE visitors in the UK in 2022, constituting **21%** of Business nights, and **2%** of all nights

MICE visitors spent **£1.5 billion in the** UK in 2022, constituting **29%** of Business spend, and **5%** of all spend

Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS

IPS | MICE travelers are highly valuable compared to the average inbound visitor

MICE:

5 nights per visit

£1,310 spend per visit

£285 spend per night

Average inbound visitor (all journey purposes):

8 nights per visit

£848 spend per visit

£101 spend per night

When examining trip characteristics, we can see that MICE travellers tend to stay in the UK for a shorter time compared to other travellers. However, they are more valuable visitors. Average spend per visit was 54% higher than average in 2022, with spend per night almost triple that of the average visitor
All these metrics saw an increase since 2019; MICE visitors spent an average one more night in the UK, with spend per visit 39% higher.

Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS

IPS | MICE visits were growing pre-pandemic, and recovered to 63% in 2022

	2016	2018	2019	2022
Visits (000s)	1,425	1,602	1,774	1,112
Nights (000s)	5,897	7,521	7,618	5,102
Spend (£m)	£1,479	£1,289	£1,678	£1,456

The volume and value of MICE visits increased when comparing 2016 with 2017 and 2019. In this period, visits increased by 24% and spend increased by 13%. Despite the impact of the COVID pandemic, inbound MICE visits reached 63% of 2019 levels in 2022, with spend recovering to an even stronger 87%. However due to inflation, we can estimate that in real terms spend has recovered to more like 74% of 2019 levels.

Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS

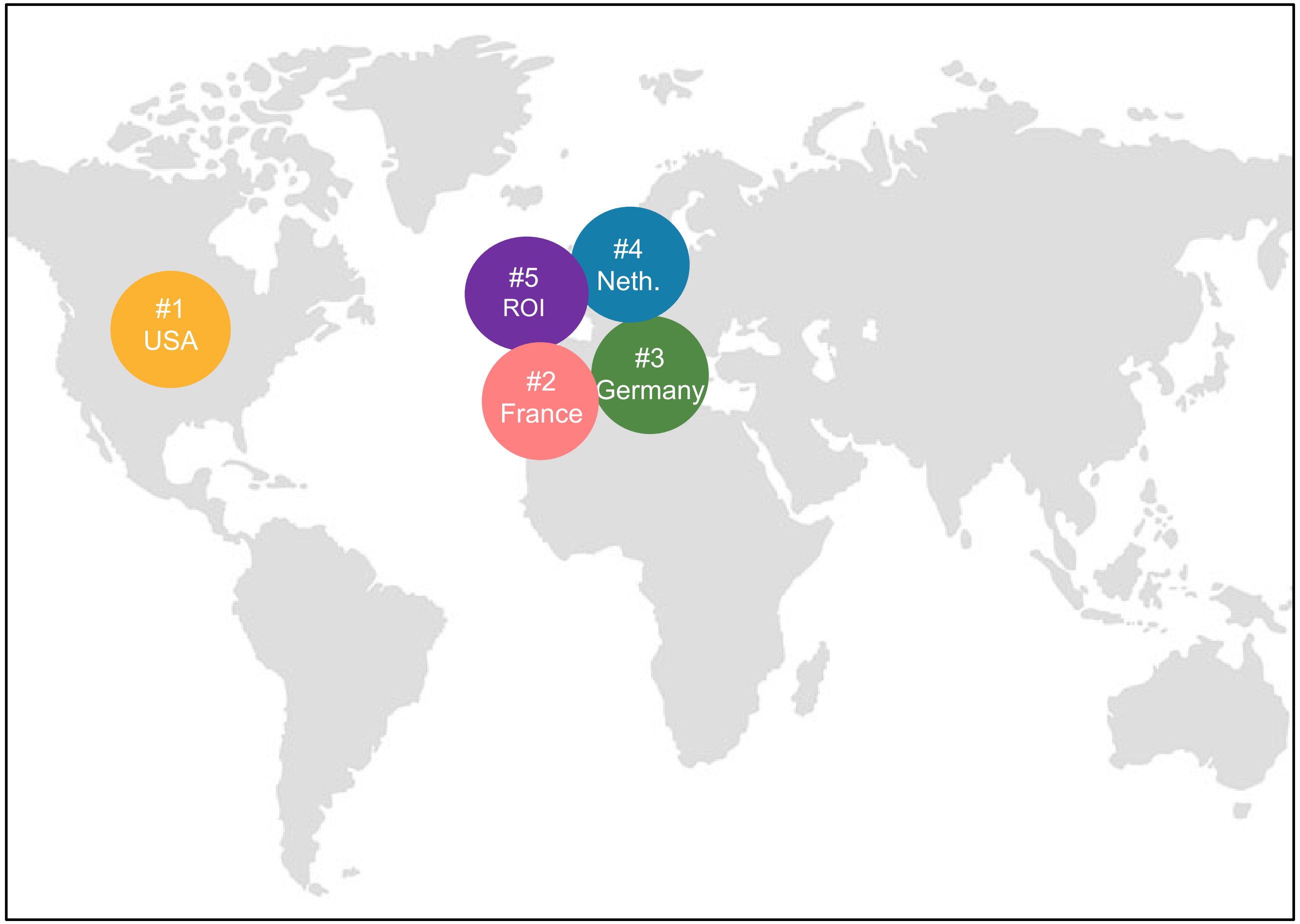
IPS | Conference and meeting attendees contributed the majority of MICE visits and spend in 2022

	Visits (000s)	Visits (% within MICE)	Nights (000s)	Nights (% within MICE)	Spend (£m)	Spend (% within MICE)
Meeting (21+ people)	361	33%	1,628	32%	507	35%
Incentive/Team Building	94	8%	490	10%	139	10%
Conference/Convention/ Congress	414	37%	1,940	38%	504	35%
Exhibition/Event/Trade Show	242	22%	1,043	20%	305	21%

In 2022, the largest category of visitors within MICE was ‘conferences, conventions and congresses’, contributing 414,000 visitors, who spent £504 million during their stays. However, despite a lower volume of visitors, the ‘meetings (21+ attendees)’ category contributed slightly more spend at £507 million. With both types of traveller exhibiting a similar length of stay, meeting attendees spent on average more per night compared to conference attendees, at £311 compared to £260

Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS

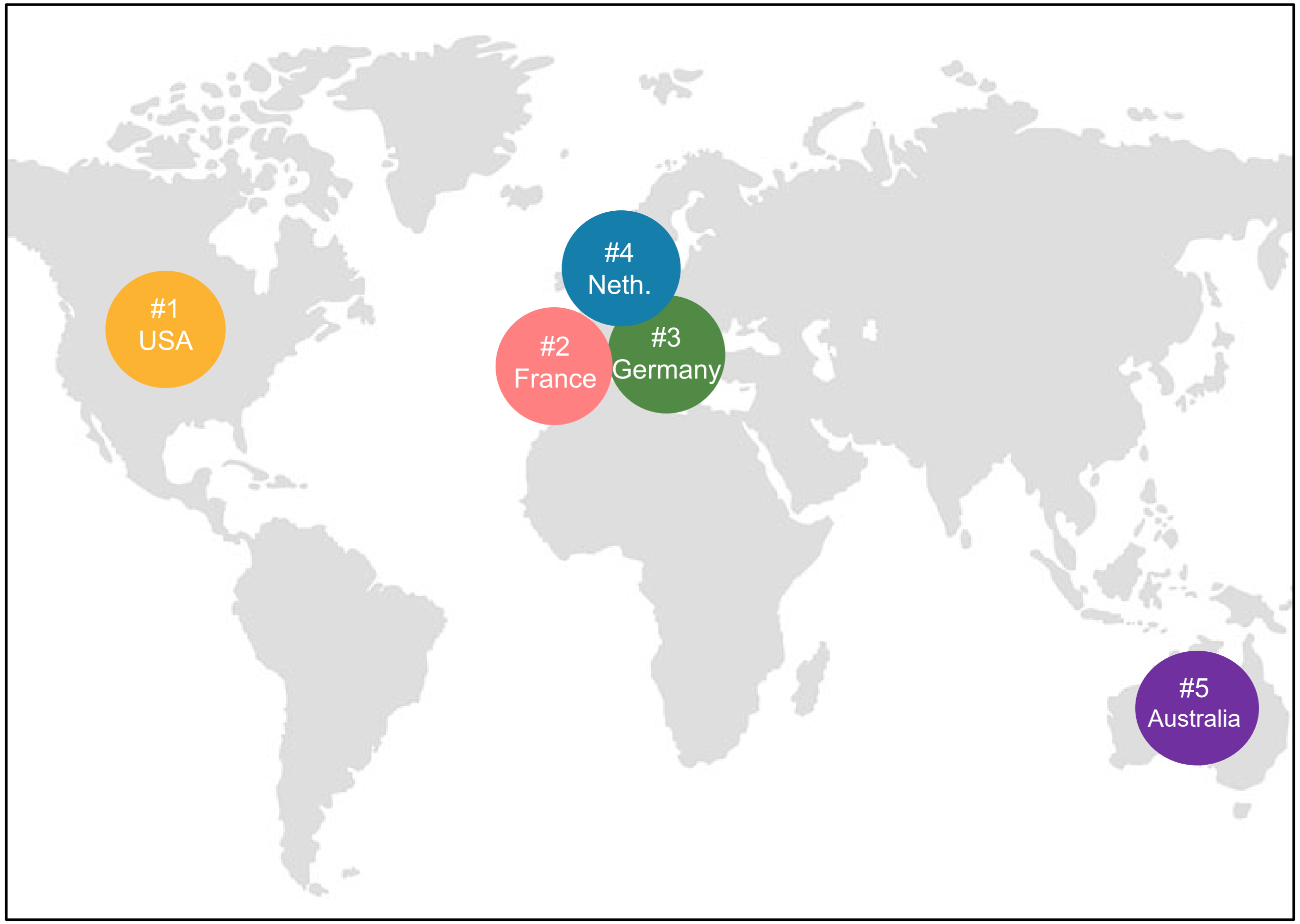
IPS | USA the largest source of MICE visits



Rank	UK Rank***	Market	Visits in 2022
1	1	USA	165,775
2	2	France	117,398
3	4	Germany	104,484
4	6	Netherlands	76,747
5	3	Irish Republic	76,200
6	8	Italy*	56,979
7	5	Spain*	52,701
8	12	Belgium*	47,648
9	10	Switzerland*	39,226
10	16	Norway*	29,920

Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS *Sample size below 100, please treat with caution ***Market ranking among all inbound visitors in 2022

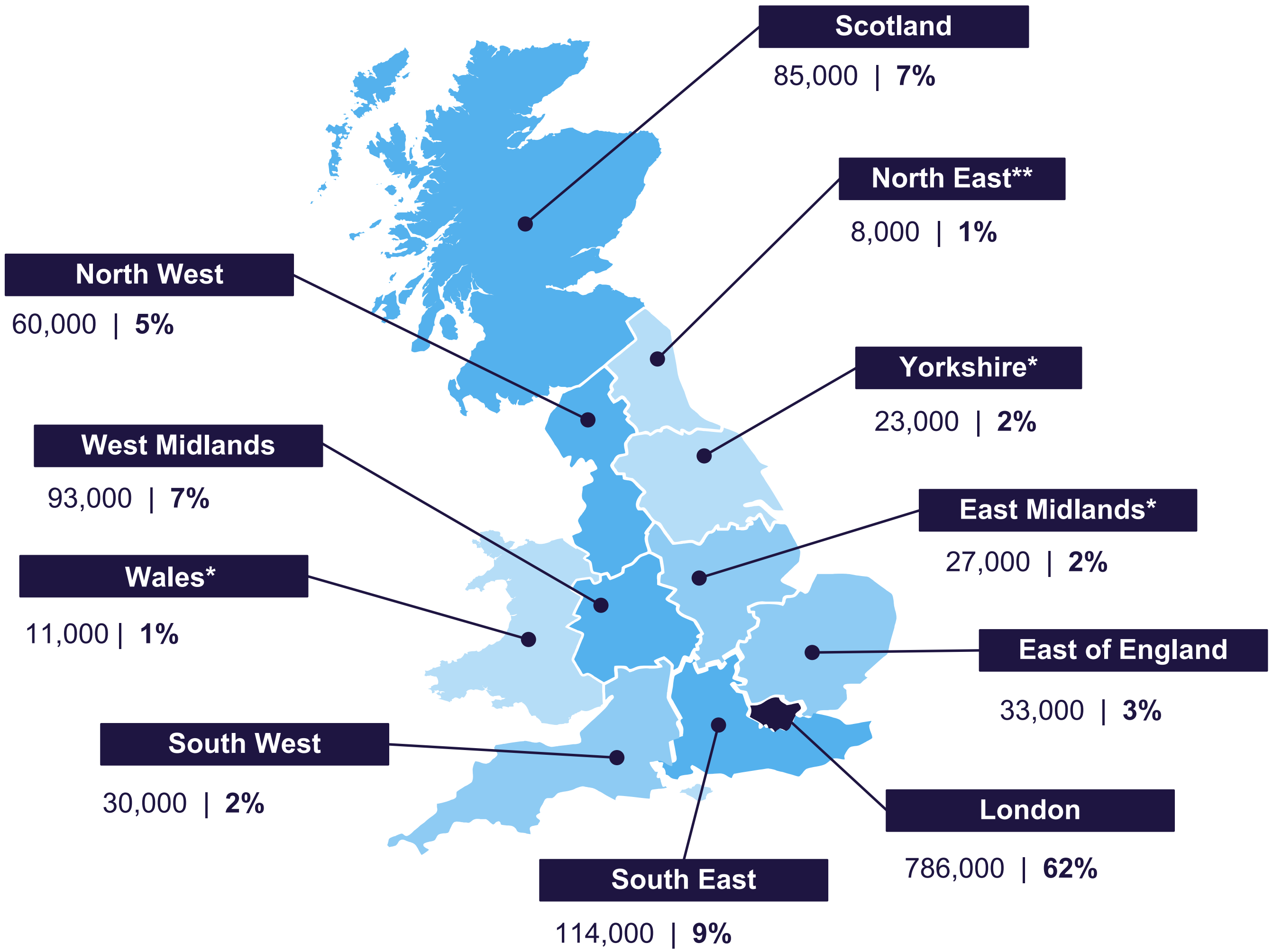
IPS | Similar top 5 for MICE spend



Rank	UK Rank***	Market	Spend in 2022
1	1	USA	£377m
2	2	France	£100m
3	3	Germany	£98m
4	8	Netherlands	£67m
5	4	Australia*	£62m
6	6	Irish Republic	£61m
7	9	Italy*	£49m
8	13	Switzerland*	£46m
9	11	India*	£45m
10	19	Singapore**	£45m

Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS *Sample size below 100, please treat with caution. **Sample size below 30, may be misleading ***Market ranking among all inbound visitors in 2022

IPS | London received the majority of MICE visitors, followed by the South East, West Midlands, and Scotland



Due to limited sample size, regional insights from three years of the IPS have been combined to provide an indication of the spread of MICE travellers

62% of MICE travellers visited London in 2018, 2019, and 2022, receiving an average of 786,000 visits per year

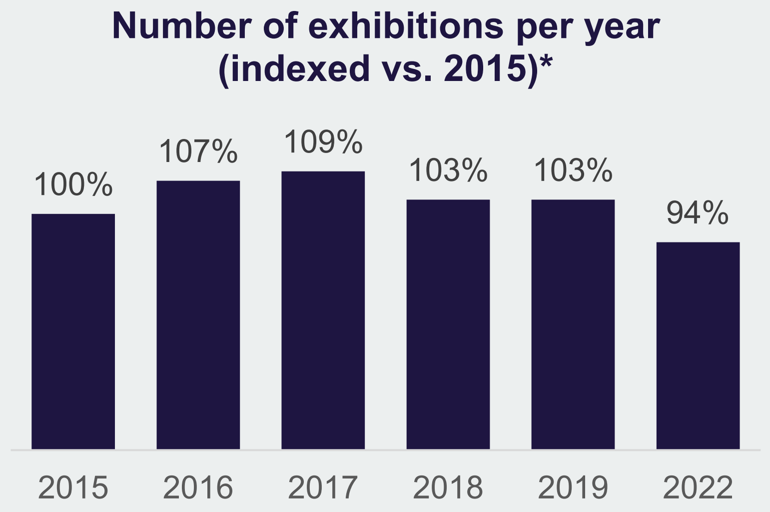
The next most prominent regions were the South East; hosting 114,000, the West Midlands (93,000), and Scotland (85,000)

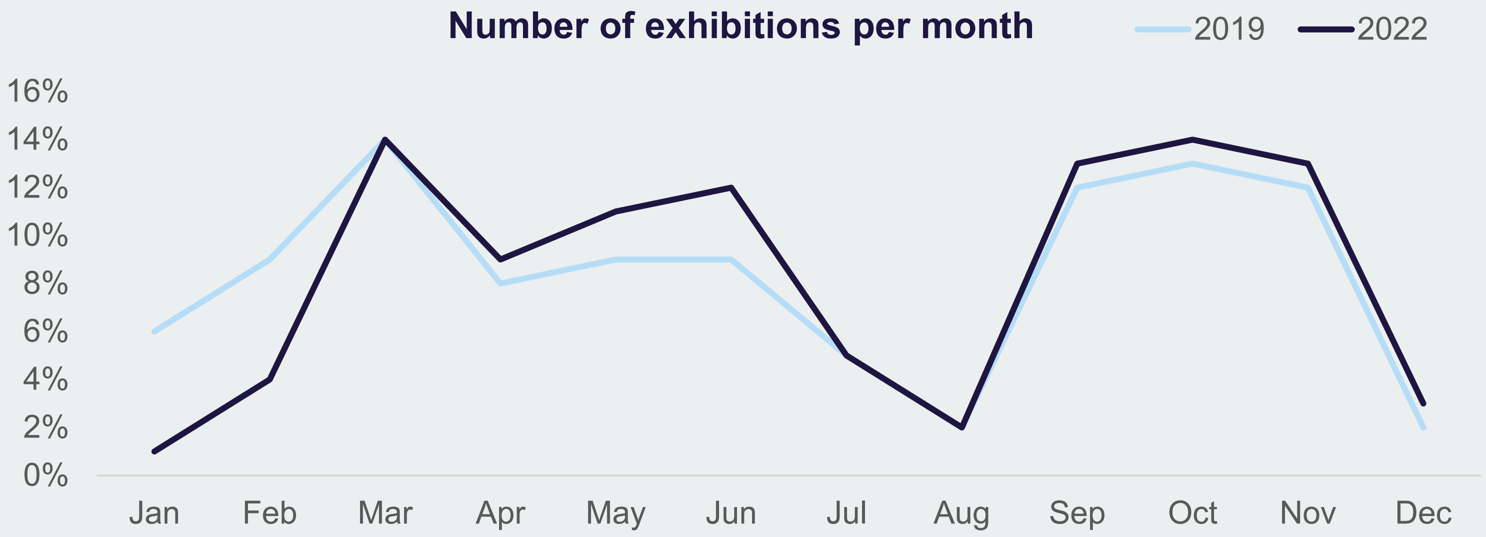
Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS 2018, 2019, 2022. *Sample size below 100, please treat with caution **Sample size below 30, may be misleading

VISIT BRITAIN VisitEngland

SASiE

SASiE | 969 exhibitions in 2022, at an estimated 91% of 2019 levels





In 2022, there were an estimated 969 exhibitions at the UK's main exhibition venues

The number of exhibitions in 2022 showed a strong post-COVID recovery; nearly on par with 2019

2022 saw a slow start with a lower number of exhibitions in January and February, due to the continuing impact of Omicron, but a robust recovery began in March. The busiest months were March, September, October and November

Source: SASiE Size and Scale Index for Exhibitions 2022 *Trend analysis carried out on a smaller sample of venues where comparable year on year data exists

SASiE | Trade exhibitions estimated to be exceeding pre-COVID levels

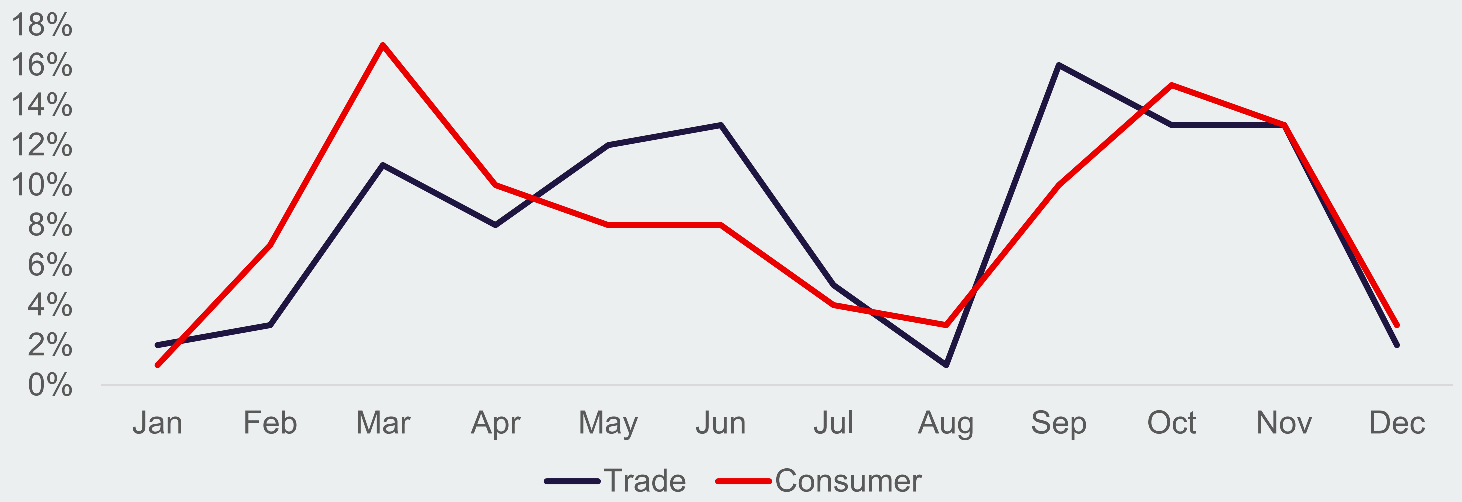
Number of exhibitions recovery in 2022 vs. 2019*

Trade **104%**

Consumer **82%**

Conference **68%**

Number of exhibitions per month (2022)



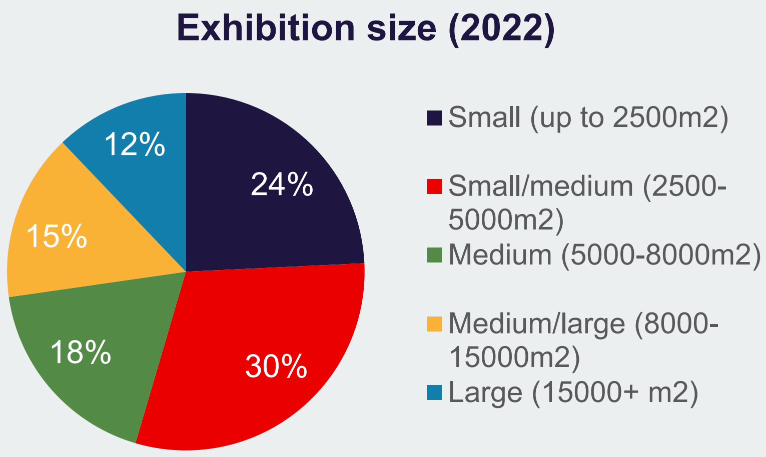
In 2022, trade exhibitions accounted for the largest proportion of the market at 44%, followed by consumer exhibitions (42%) and conferences (14%)

Post-COVID, trade exhibitions are seeing the strongest recovery, followed by consumer exhibitions and then conferences

In 2022, the most consumer exhibitions were held in March, October, and November, with trade exhibitions peaking in September (but seeing significant numbers in June, October and November)

Source: SASiE Size and Scale Index for Exhibitions 2022 *Trend analysis carried out on a smaller sample of venues where comparable year on year data exists

SASiE | Event characteristics in 2022



There were an estimated 6.1 million visits to exhibitions at the UK's main venues in 2022, with a median attendance of 2,800 visitors. Average visitor numbers were 13% below pre-COVID levels, despite a slow start to the year

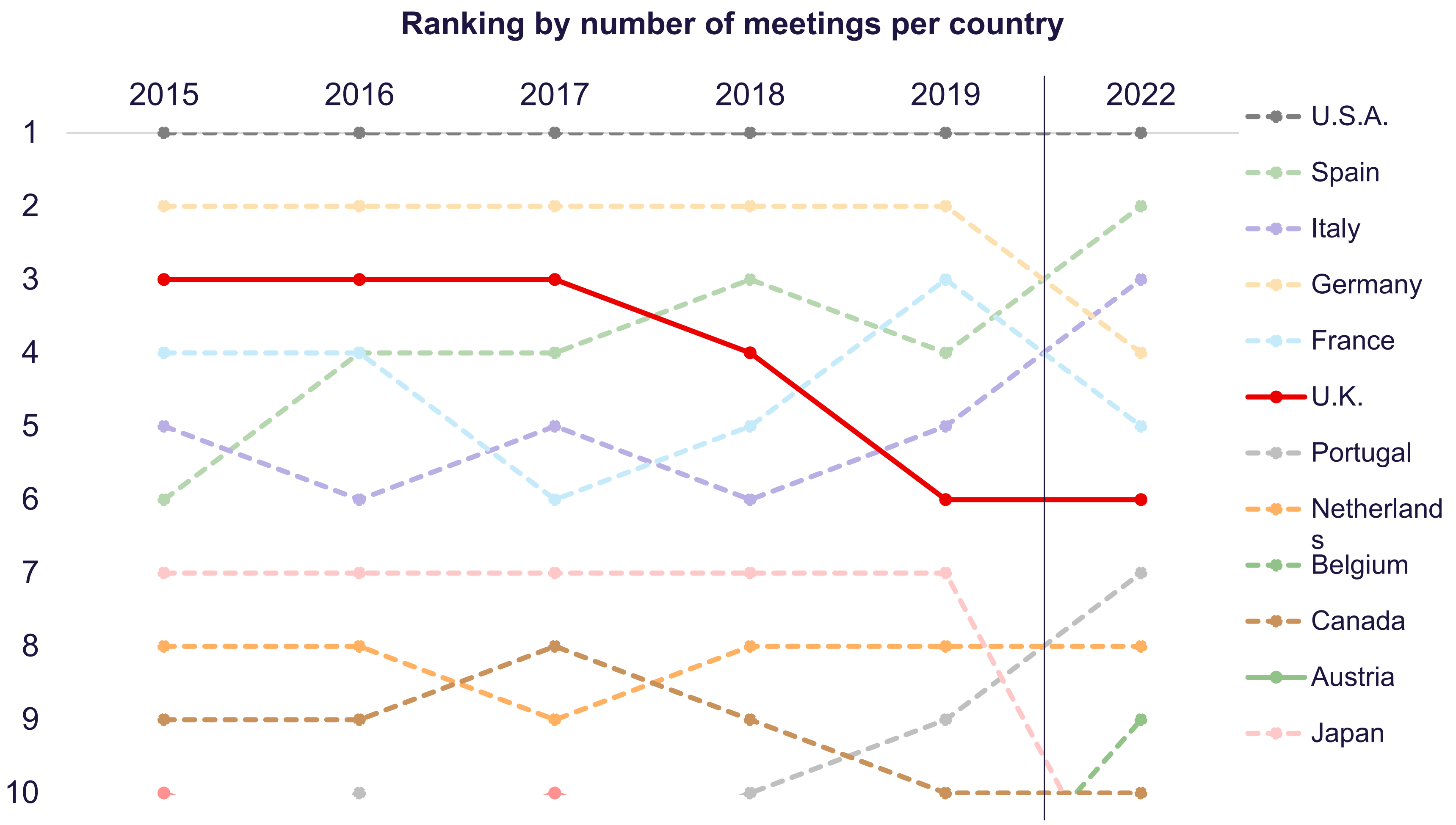
In 2022, exhibitions were most likely to be a small/medium size, with a median square footage of 5,000m^2. Size was slightly lower than what was seen in 2019 overall, however consumer exhibitions exceeded pre-COVID sizes

On average exhibitions occupied a venue for 4.7 days, with exhibitions open for an average of 2.4. Both these metrics were broadly on par with pre-COVID levels

Source: SASiE Size and Scale Index for Exhibitions 2022. Trend analysis carried out on a smaller sample of venues where comparable year on year data exists

ICCA

ICCA | UK returning to 2019 rank of 6th worldwide



In 2022, the UK hosted 449 meetings, ranking 6th worldwide. This was a return to our 6th place ranking in 2019, however still lower than what seen from 2015 to 2018.

Within the top 20 countries, Greece has gained most ranks post-COVID (+4), with Belgium and Austria also gaining 3 ranks when comparing 2019 with 2022.

Source: ICCA Business Analytics Statistics Report 2022

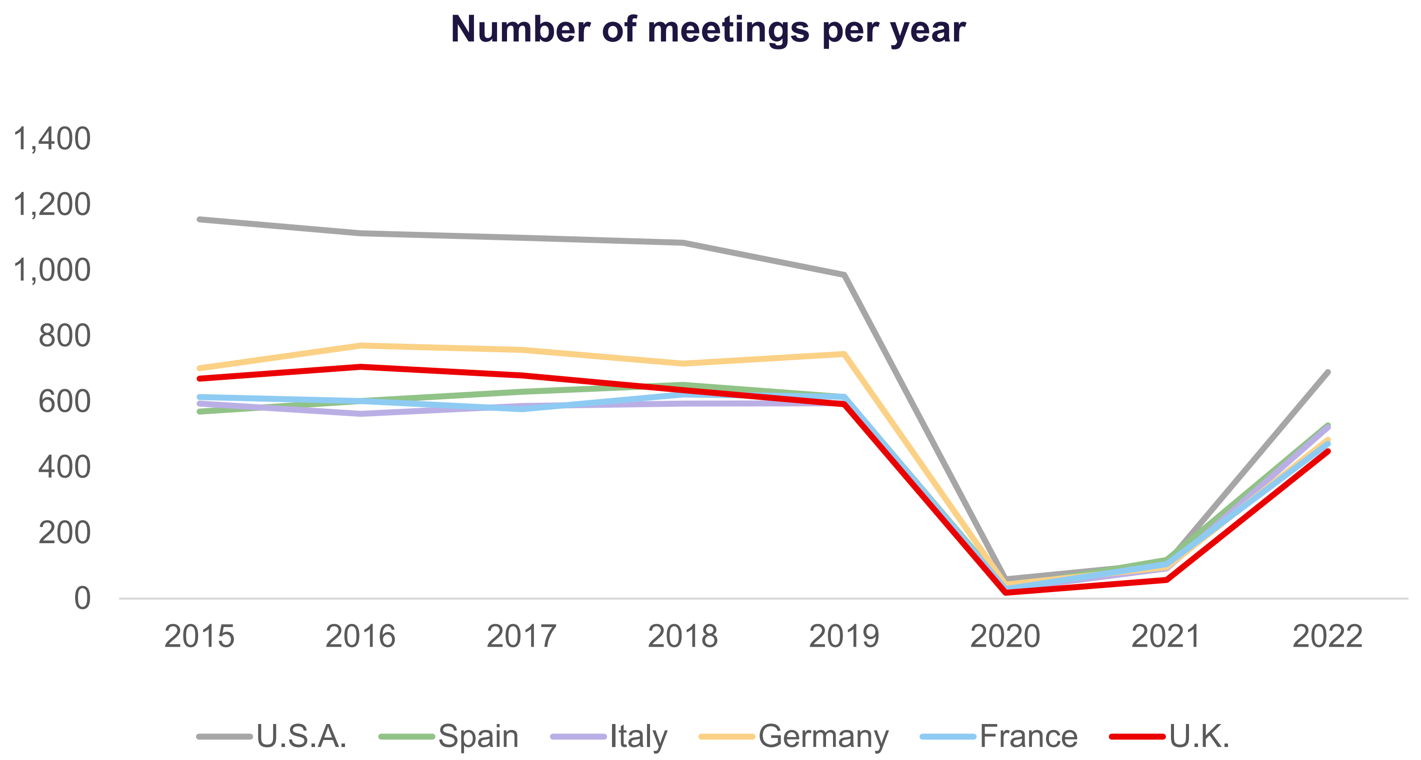
VISIT BRITAIN VisitEngland

ICCA | UK has recovered 76% of pre-COVID meetings, on par with average recovery across key competitors

The number of meetings held in the UK was drastically impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic; dropping to 3% of 2019 levels in 2020, before climbing to 10% in 2021

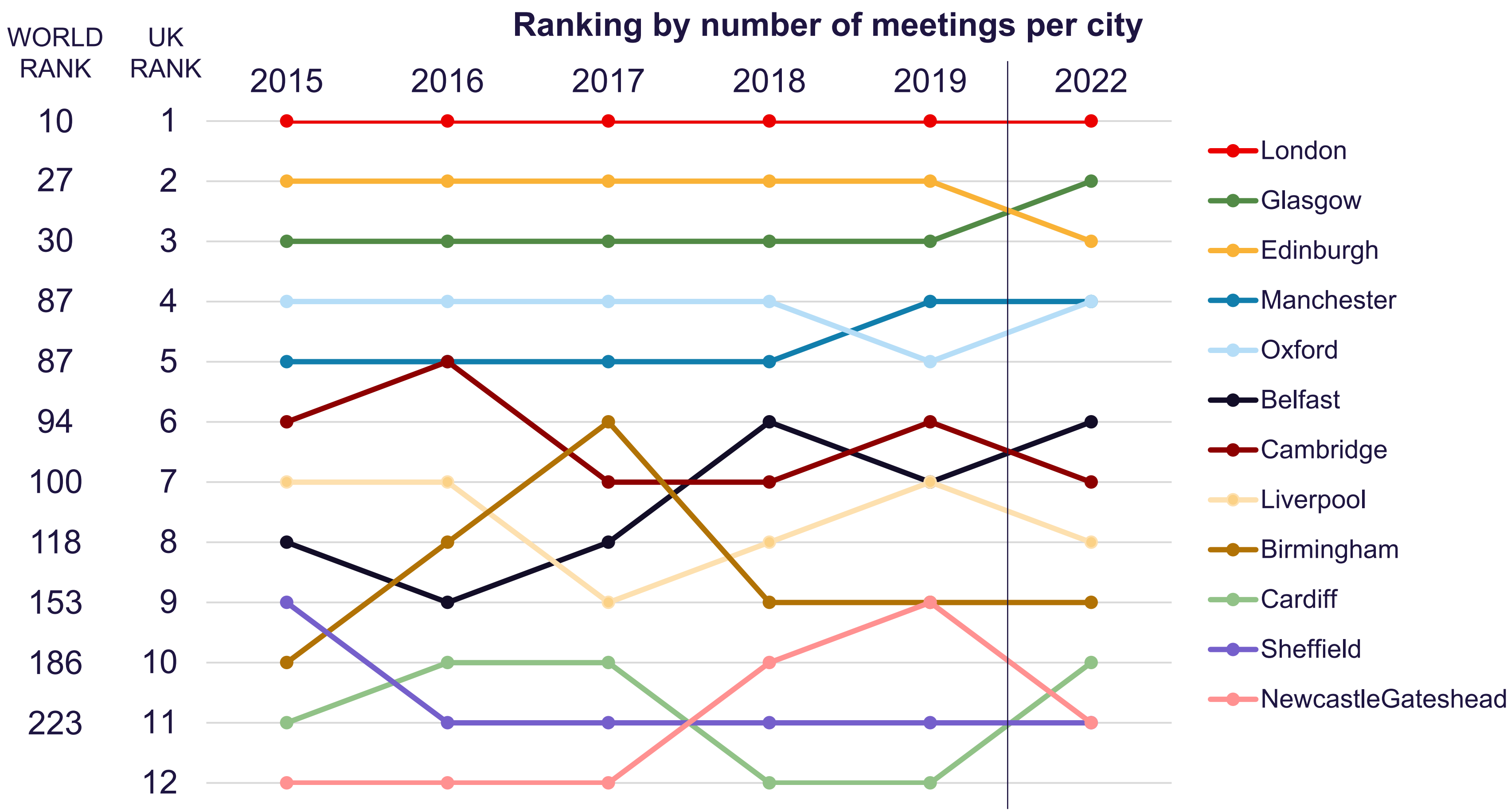
In 2022, the UK regained 76% of the meetings it hosted in 2019. This rate of recovery is on par with that of France, but exceeds that of the USA and Germany

Spain and Italy have seen the strongest recovery among key competitors, at 86% and 88% respectively



Source: ICCA Business Analytics Statistics Report 2022

ICCA | Top UK cities similar post-COVID, with number of meetings exceeding 2019 for some



When comparing 2019 and 2022 rankings, the top ranked UK cities have remained largely the same, with London, Glasgow and Edinburgh leading

Within the top 12, Cardiff, Sheffield, Birmingham, and Belfast have seen a growth in the number of meetings hosted post-COVID, with Cambridge also matching 2019 volumes

Source: ICCA Business Analytics Statistics Report 2022

Sector performance | Key insights

- The Events Industry Council uncovered the significant impact of the business events sector globally in 2019, with **$1.2 trillion** in direct spending and **10.9 million direct jobs** supported, alongside new evidence of non-financial benefits. 81% of direct spending was recovered in 2022, and 74% of direct employment
- In the UK specifically, the IPS revealed **1.1 million** inbound MICE visitors in 2022, who spent **£1.5 billion** during their stays. This constituted 63% of pre-COVID visits, and an estimated 74% of pre-COVID spend in real terms. MICE travellers also **spent 54% more** per visit compared to other travellers to the UK
- The **US**, **France**, and **Germany** were the most significant origin markets of MICE travellers, with **London**, the **South East**, **West Midlands**, and **Scotland** attracting the most visitors across 2018, 2019, and 2022
- SASiE reveals that UK exhibitions recovered to an estimated **91%** of 2019 levels in 2022, with a robust recovery beginning in March of that year. Visitor numbers were approaching 2019 levels, with exhibition size and duration already close to or on par with pre-COVID metrics
- Turning to association events, the UK was **ranked 6th** worldwide by ICCA for the number of meetings hosted in 2022, and recovered **76%** of pre-COVID volumes, with London, Glasgow and Edinburgh hosting the most meetings within the UK

Credit: VisitBritain/Visit Cardiff/Visit Wales

UKCAMS 2023

Richard Smith

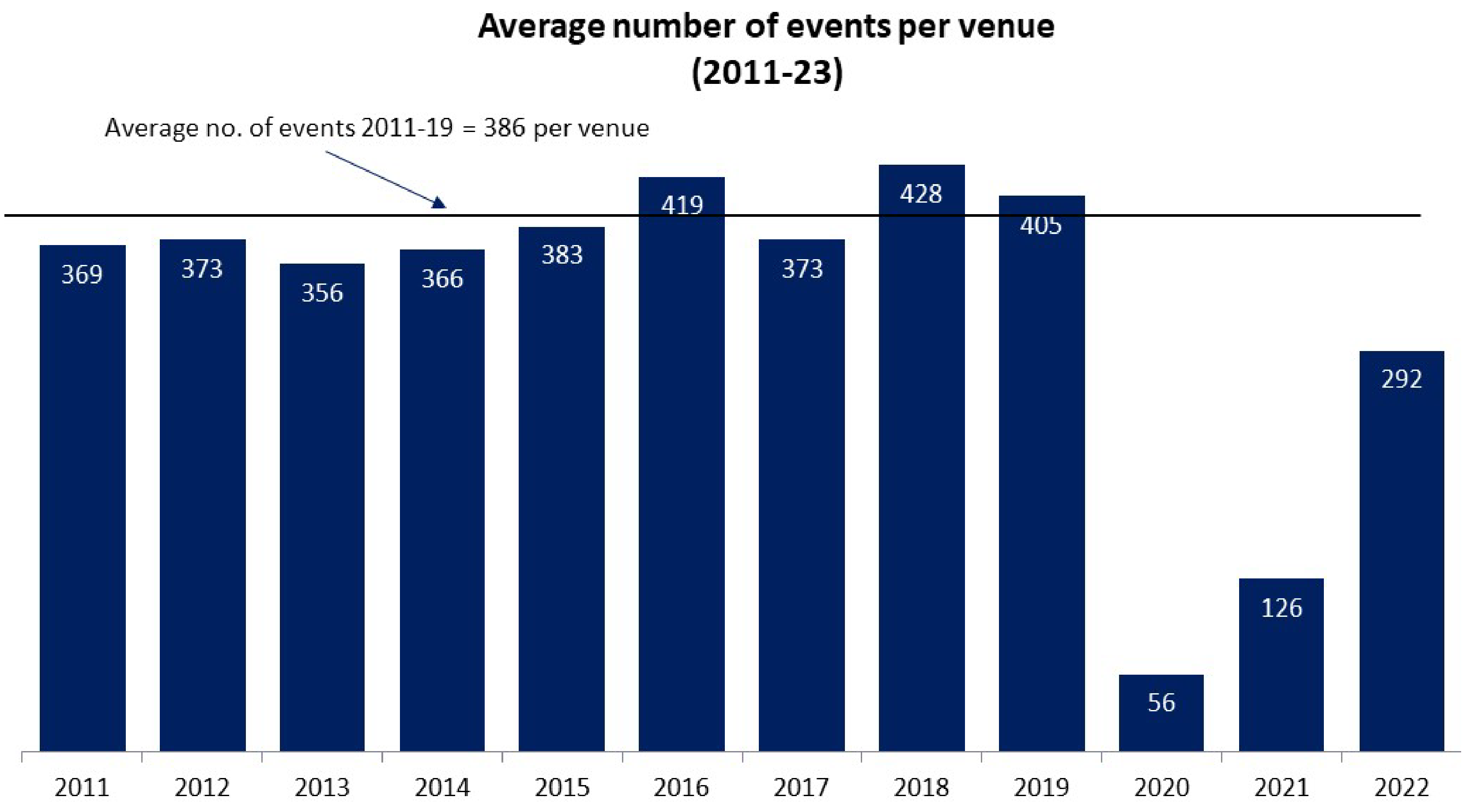
UK CONFERENCE AND MEETING DIMENSIONS

INTRODUCTION TO UKCAMS

- What is a conference or meeting?
  - An out-of-office conference, meeting or other business event of at least four hours' duration involving a minimum of 10 people".
  - Covers conventions, congresses, conferences, meetings, training courses, sales briefings, seminars, product launches, roadshows etc.
- Venue based
- Long term trend

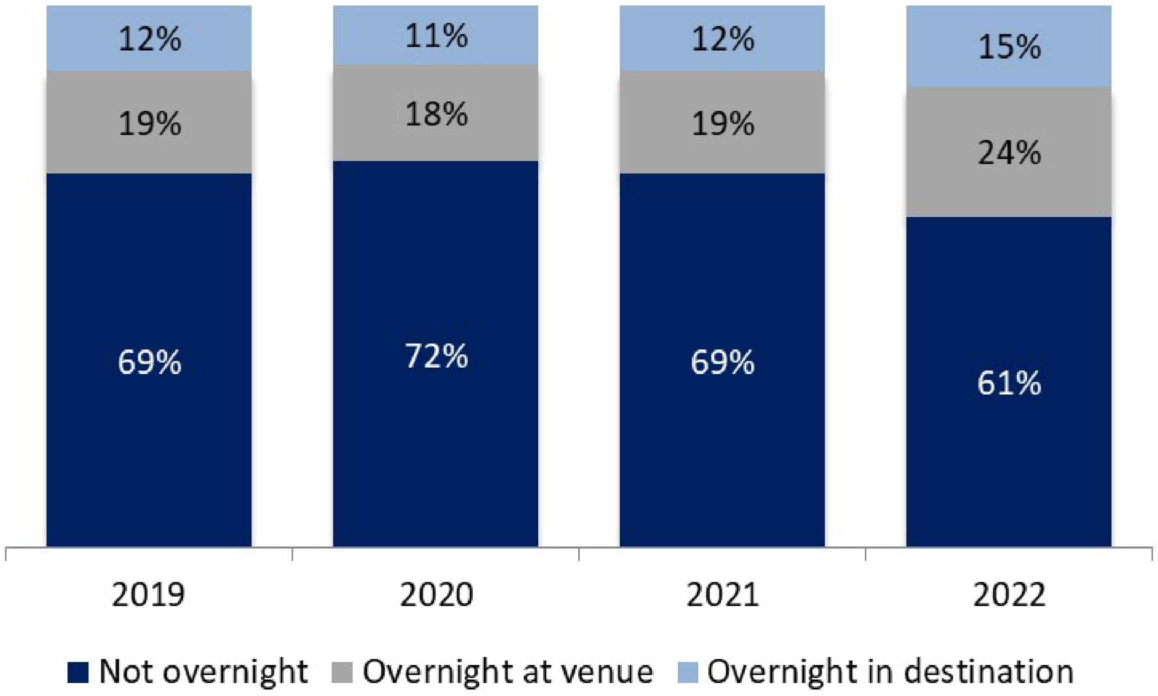
Visit the UKCAMS website for more insights

CONFERENCE/MEETING VOLUME



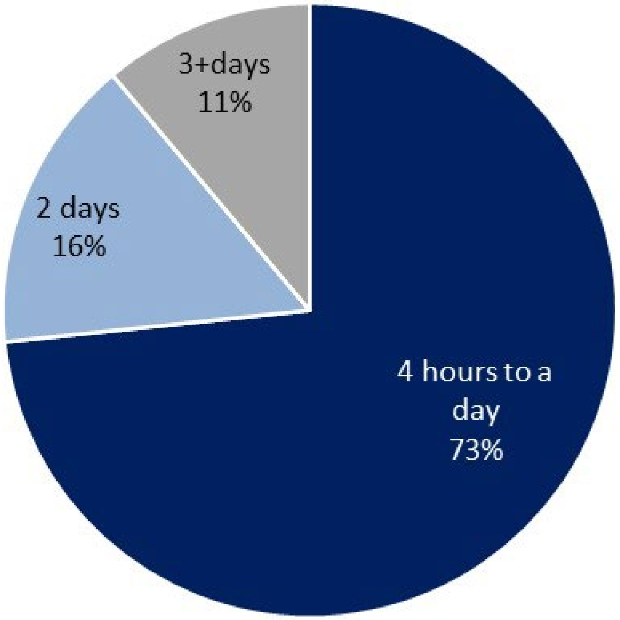
Visit the [UKCAMS website] for more insights

DAY VS OVERNIGHT

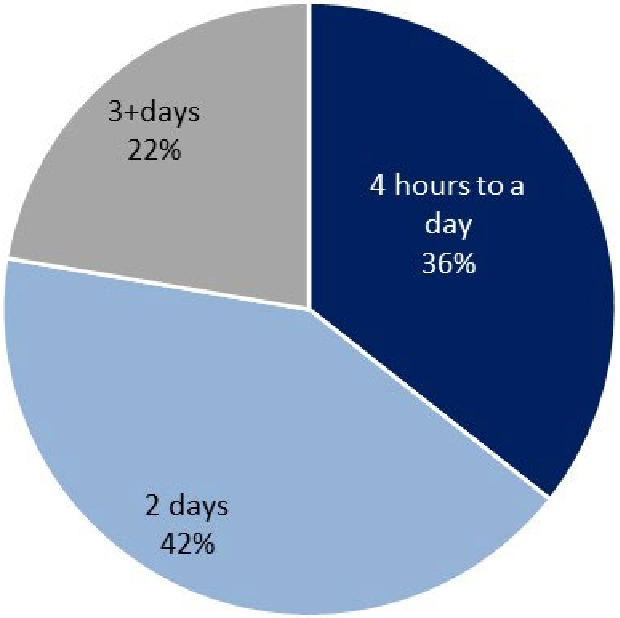


Visit the UKCAMS website for more insights

CONFERENCE DURATION



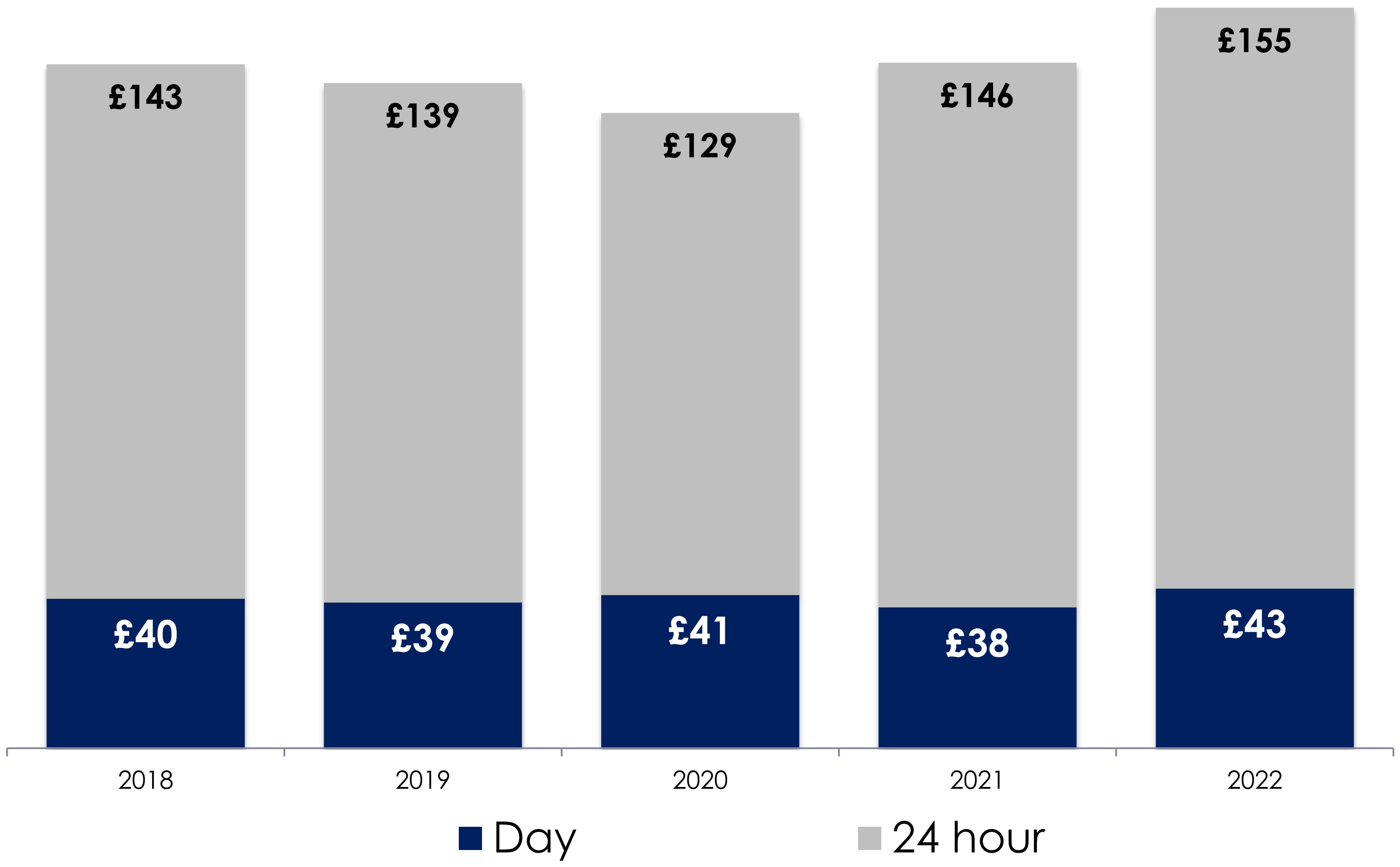
Non-Residential



Residential

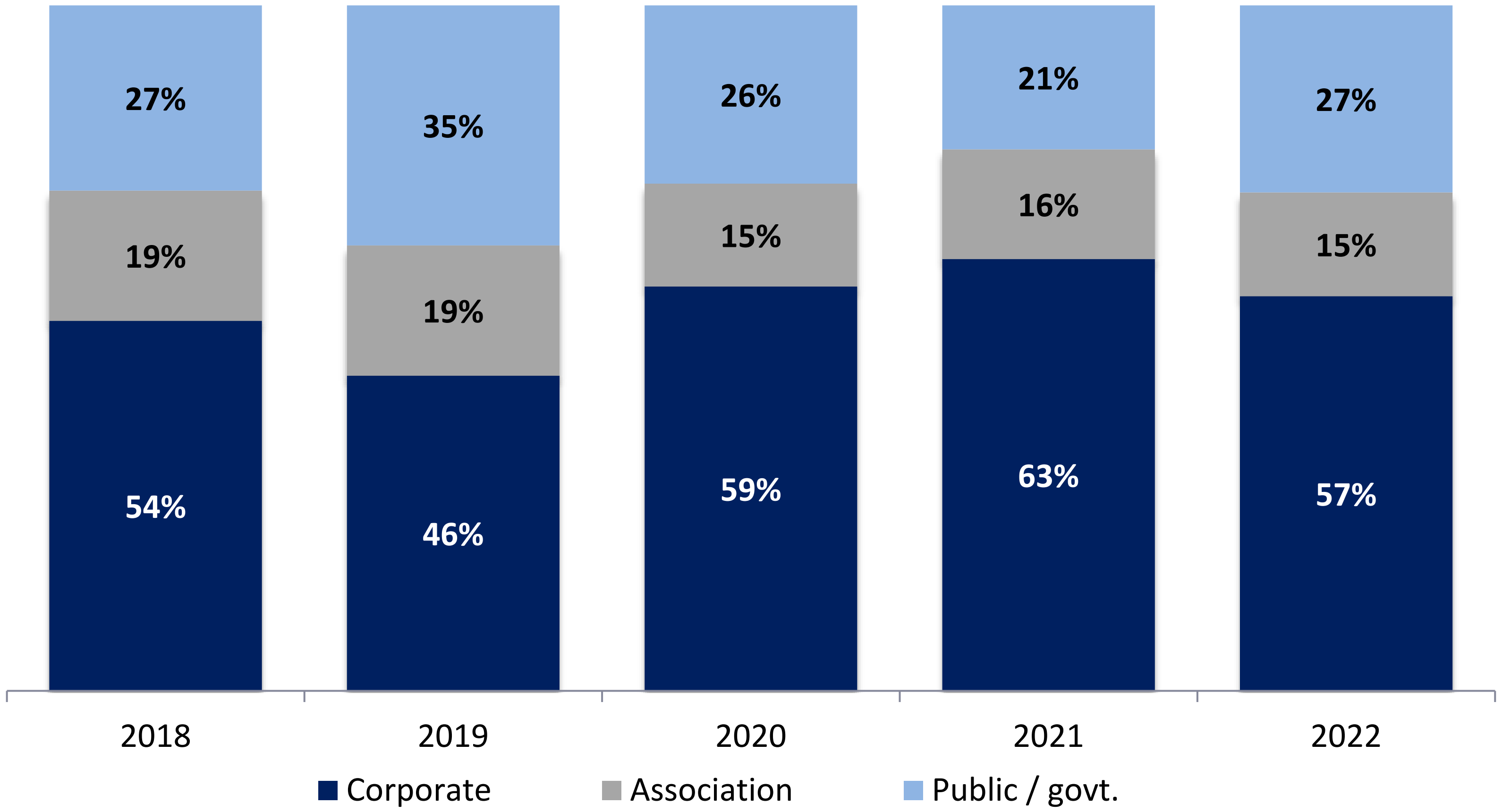
Visit the UKCAMS website for more insights

ACHIEVED RATES



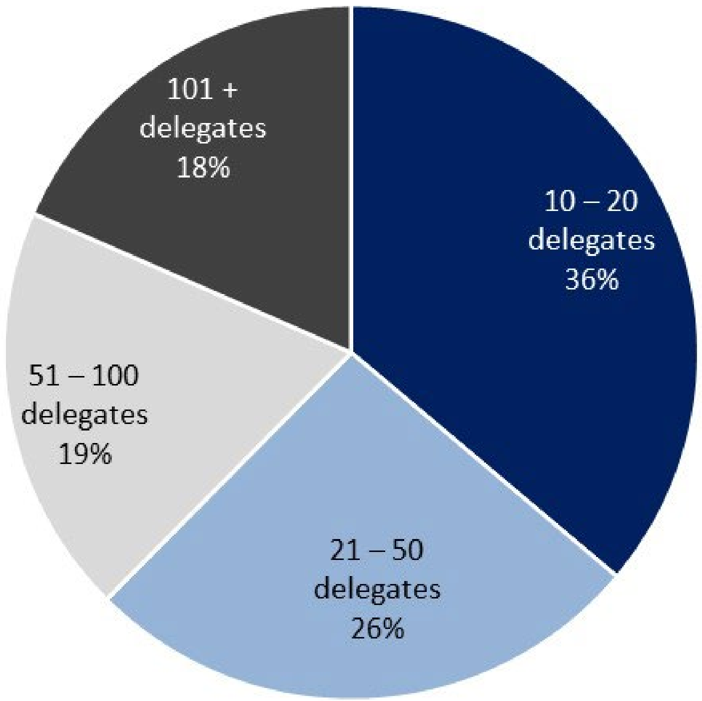
Visit the [UKCAMS website] for more insights

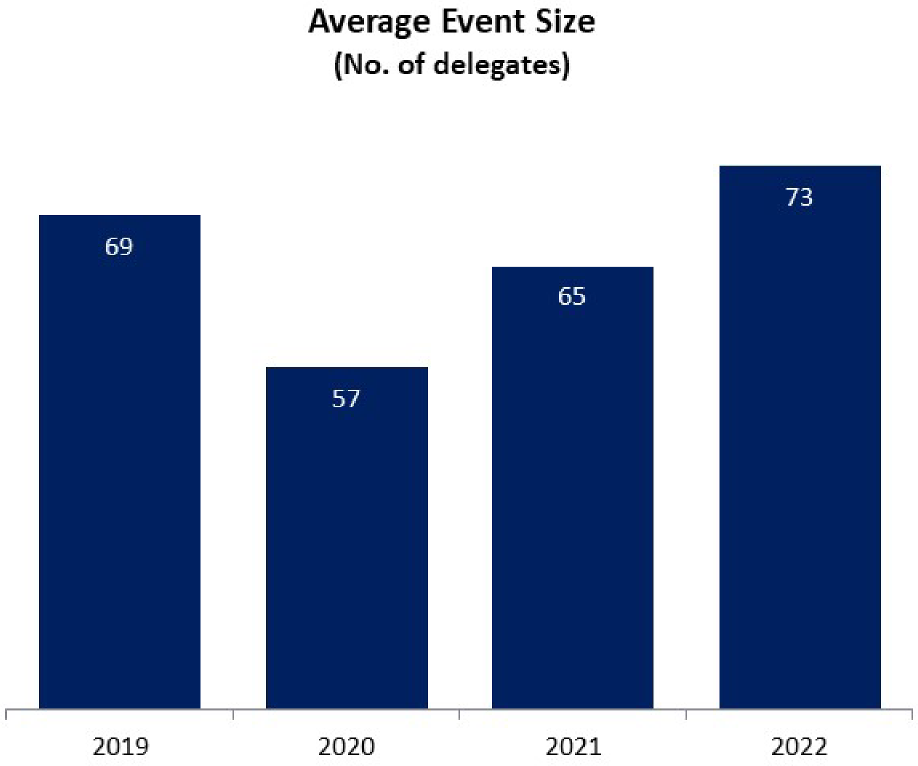
EVENT ORGANISATION



Visit the UKCAMS website for more insights

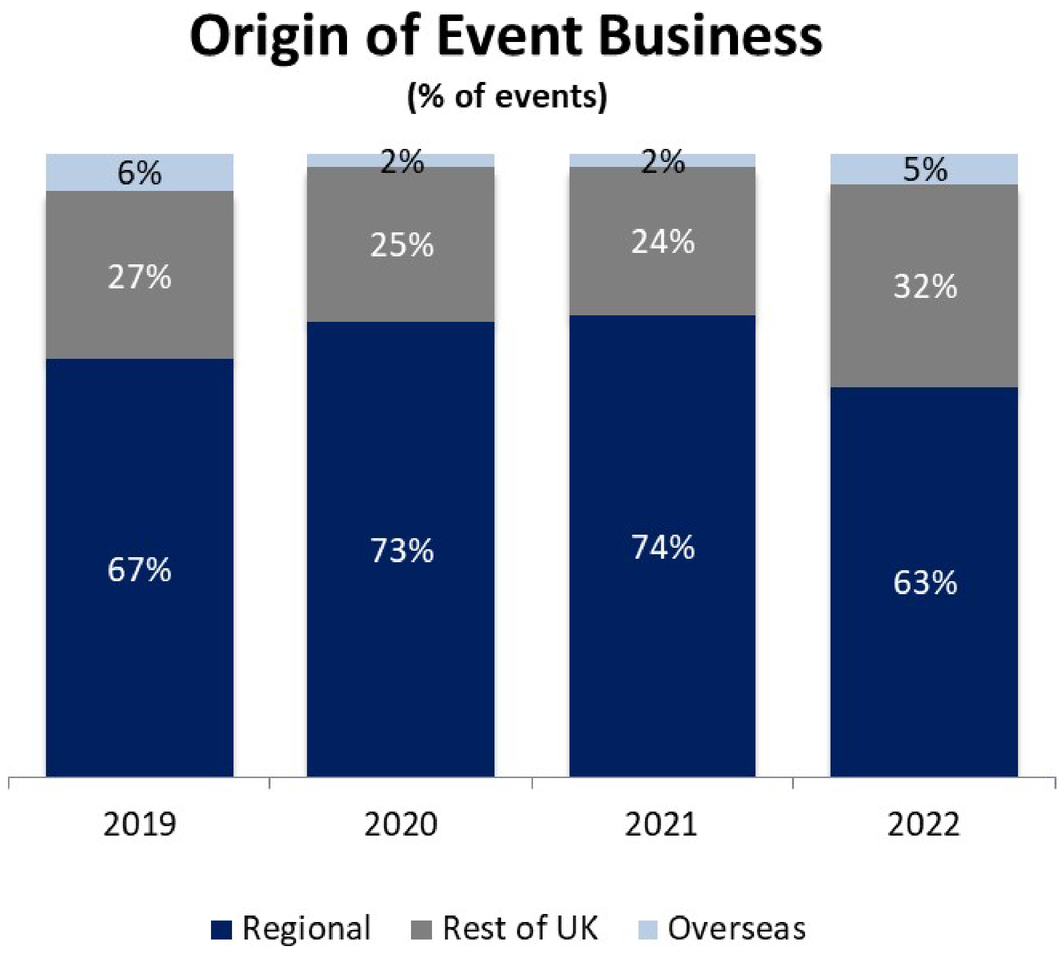
SIZE – RELATIVELY SMALL





Visit the UKCAMS website for more insights

BUSINESS ORIGIN - REGIONAL



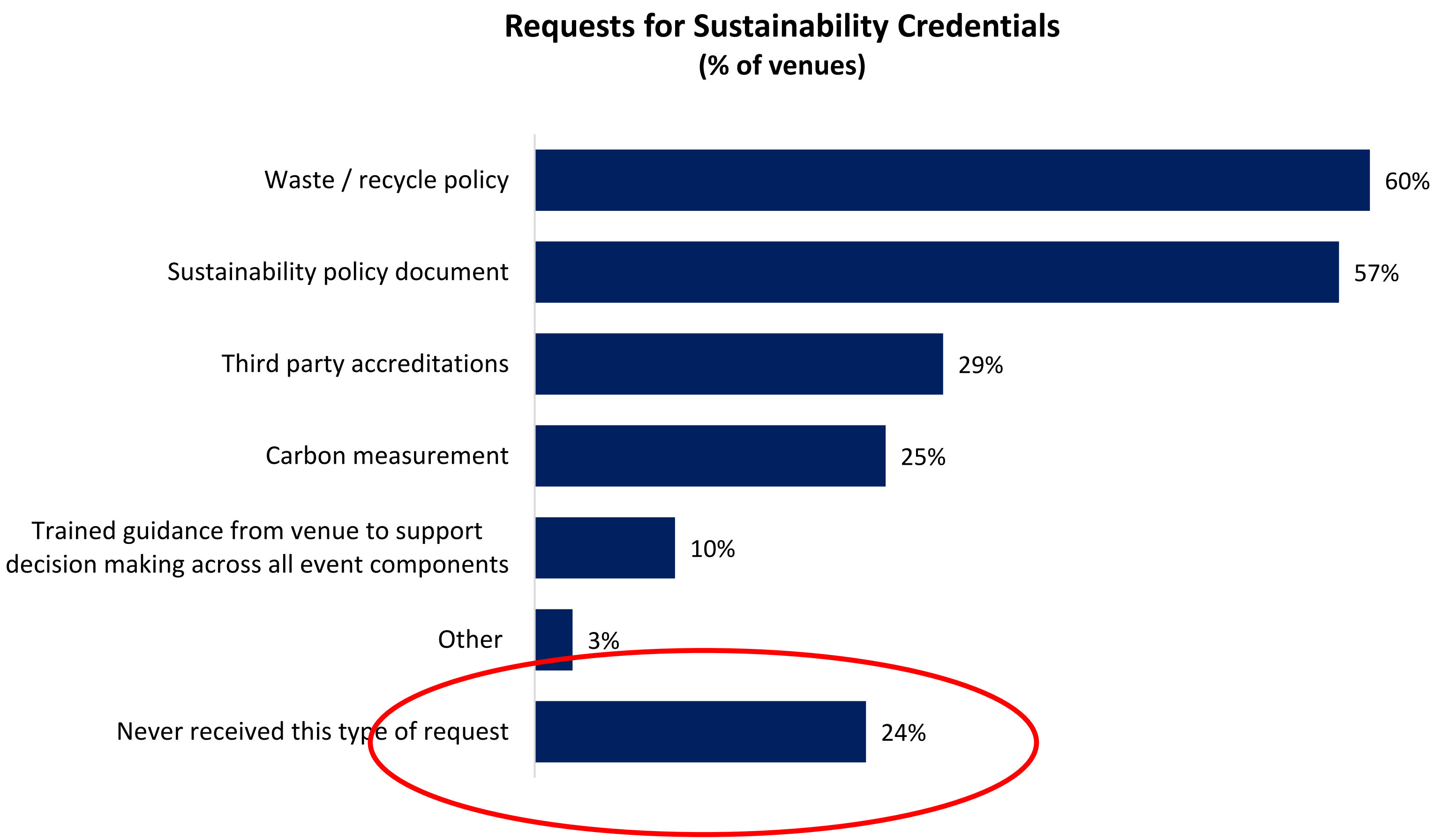
Visit the UKCAMS website for more insights

SOME KEY POINTS

- A ‘typical’ conference/meeting = day, less than 50 people, regionally generated and corporate
- Substantial recovery in 2022 – events at 72% of 2019 levels
- Increases in some key indicators:
  – Overnight business (above pre-Covid)
  – Public/government sector
  – Event size
  – Non-local/regional business

Visit the UKCAMS website for more insights

SUSTAINABILITY



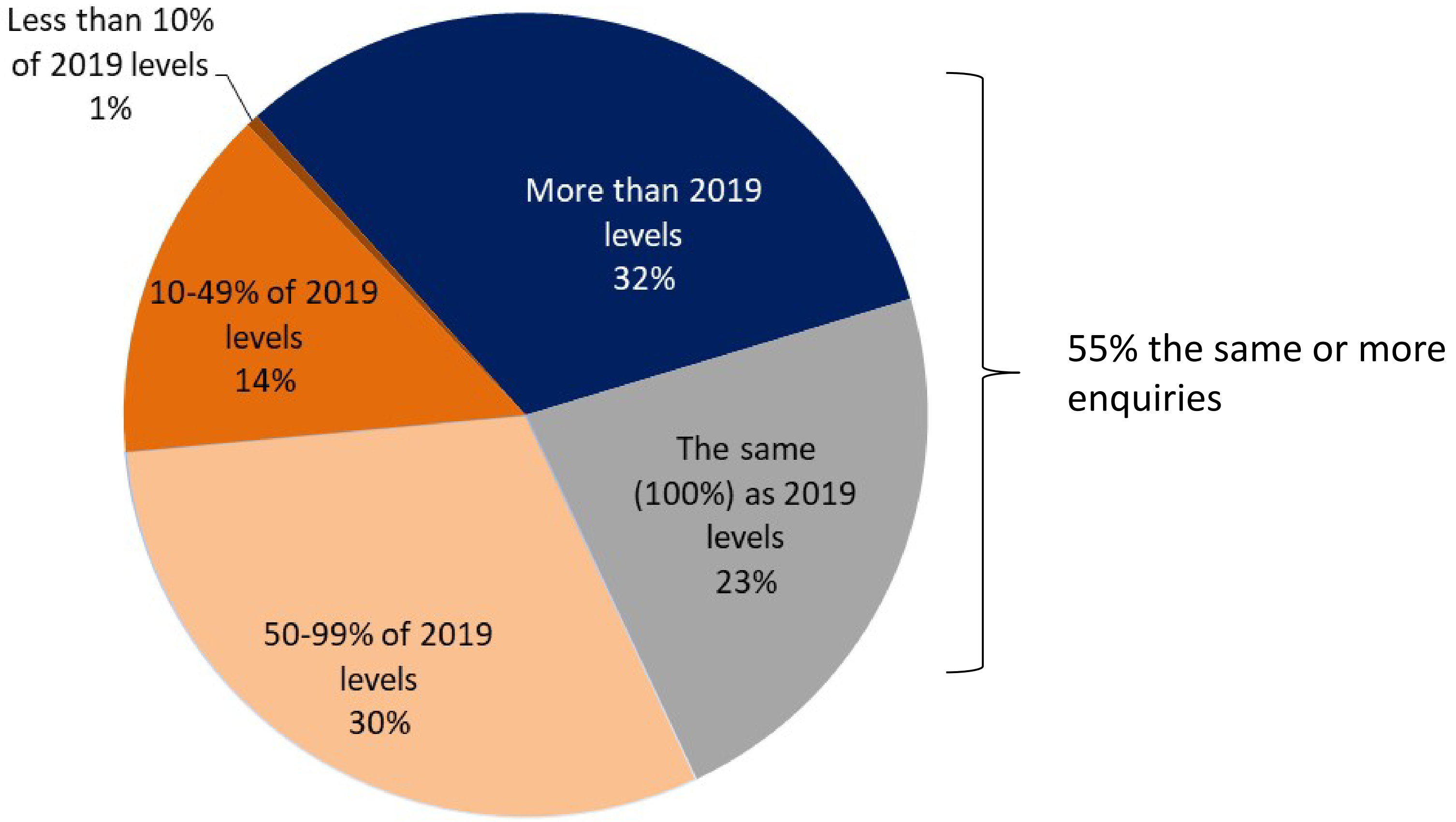
Question: What type of requests have you received from organisers to demonstrate your environmental credentials? NB multi-choice

Visit the [UKCAMS website]() for more insights

SUSTAINABILITY

Visit the UKCAMS website for more insights

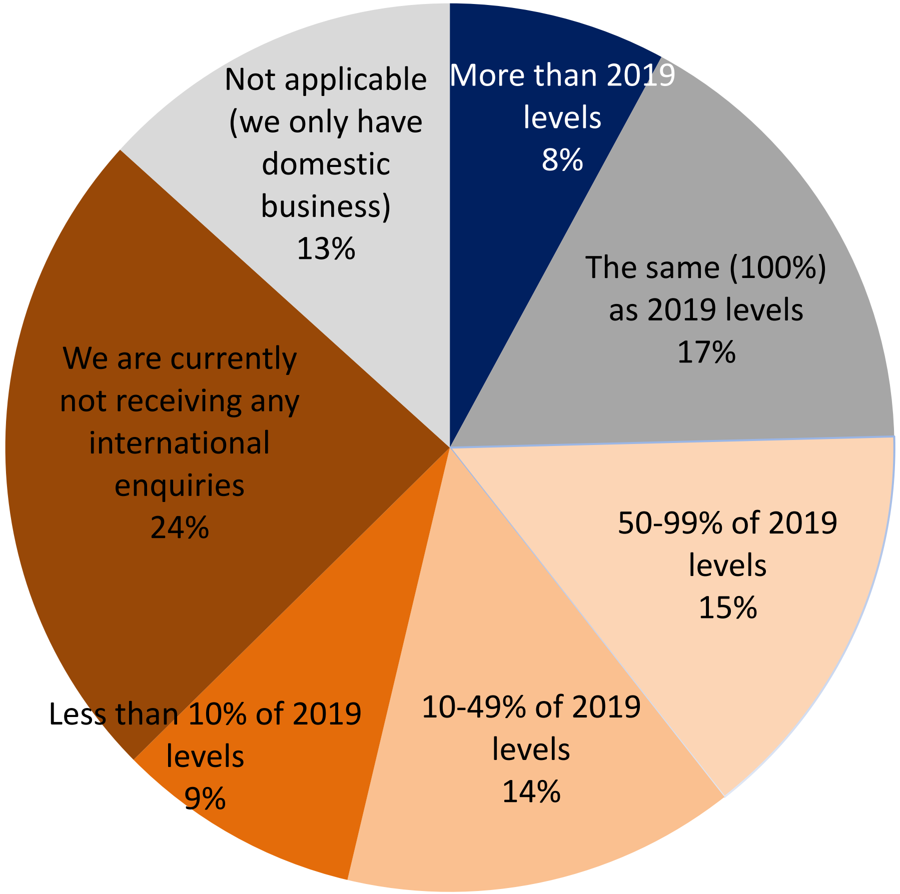
DOMESTIC ENQUIRIES



Question: What level of future domestic enquiries are you currently receiving compared to pre-pandemic (2019 and earlier)?

Visit the [UKCAMS website] for more insights

INTERNATIONAL ENQUIRIES



25% the same or more enquiries

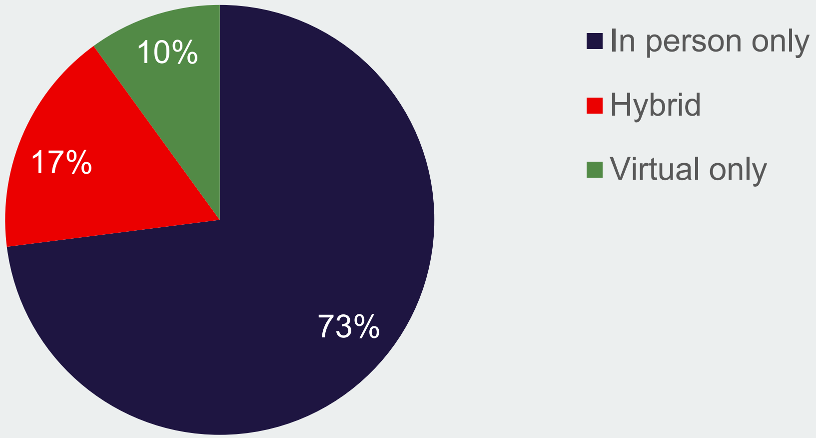
Question: What level of future international enquiries are you currently receiving compared to pre-pandemic (2019 and earlier)?

Visit the UKCAMS website for more insights

Future trends with MMGY

In person meetings dominant for the next 2 years, with medical and financial sectors most prominent

Planned meeting formats (all respondents)



Top 10 industry segments typically booked (planners)

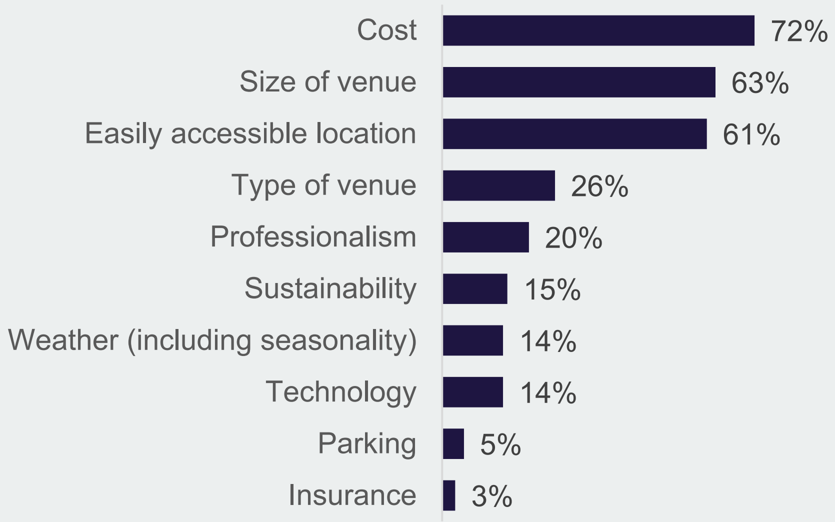
1	Medical and healthcare
2	Financial services and insurance
3	Pharmaceuticals
4	Tech and innovation
5	Travel/hospitality
6	Engineering, construction, building
7	Industrial manufacturing
8	Government and public services
9	Food industry
10	Transportation and logistics

More than 70% of planners are solely planning in-person meetings and events for the next 24 months, with 56% of attendees likely to attend an in person event in the same period. Planners say they ‘typically’ are most likely to book events for the medical and healthcare, financial services and insurance, and pharmaceuticals industry segments.

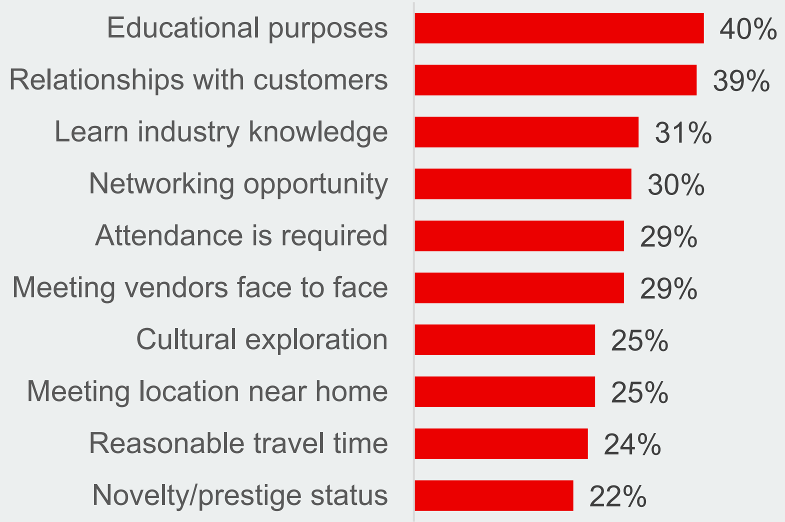
Source: MMGY Portrait of European Meeting & Convention Travel 2023

Cost the key driving factor when clients choose an event location, with attendees seeking learning and relationship building

Deciding factors for clients (planners)



Reasons for attendance (attendees)

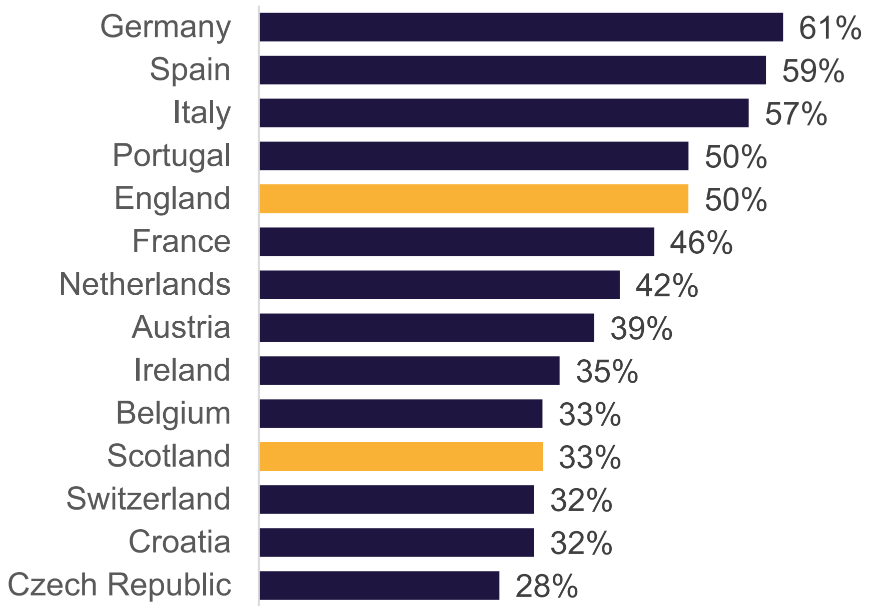


Planners report that their clients are highly cost driven when deciding a location, and are next most influenced by the ability of the venue to host all functions linked to the event, and an easily accessible location. From the attendees' side, they are most likely to choose to attend in order to increase their learning, knowledge, and to build relationships in their industry.

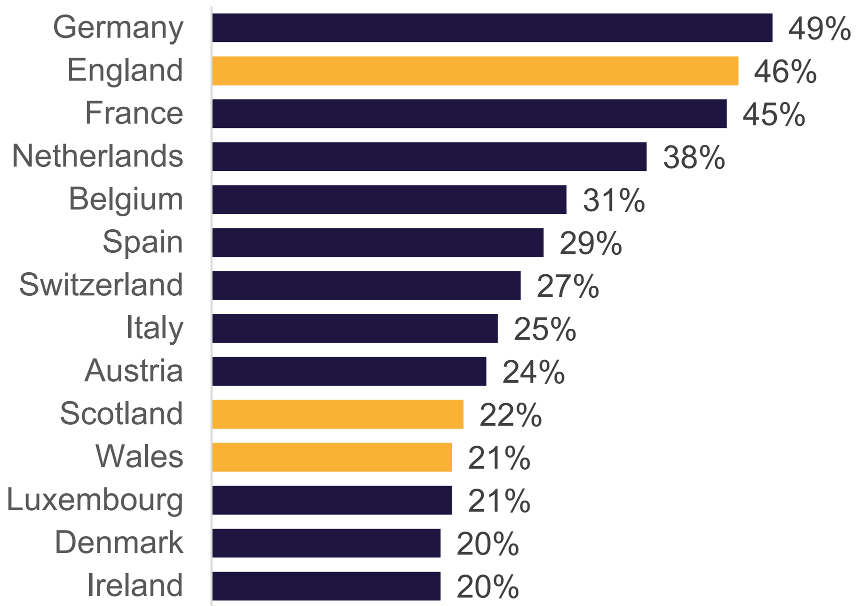
Source: MMGY Portrait of European Meeting & Convention Travel 2023

England ranked 5th within Europe by planners for a meetings destination in the next 2 years

European destinations for next 2 years (planners)



European destinations for next 2 years (attendees)



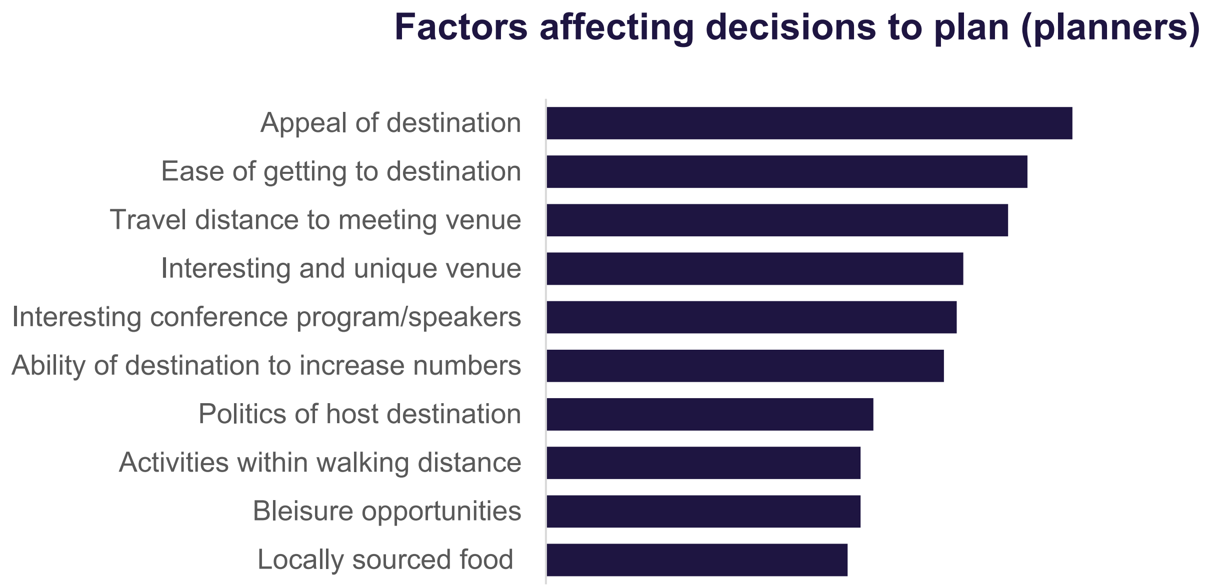
England is ranked 5th by planners as a European destination where they would plan a meeting in the next 2 years, and 2nd for anticipated attendance by attendees themselves. Scotland also features 11th and Wales 25th for planners, with those destinations ranking 10th and 11th among attendees. Looking at non European destinations, the US leads for both audiences.

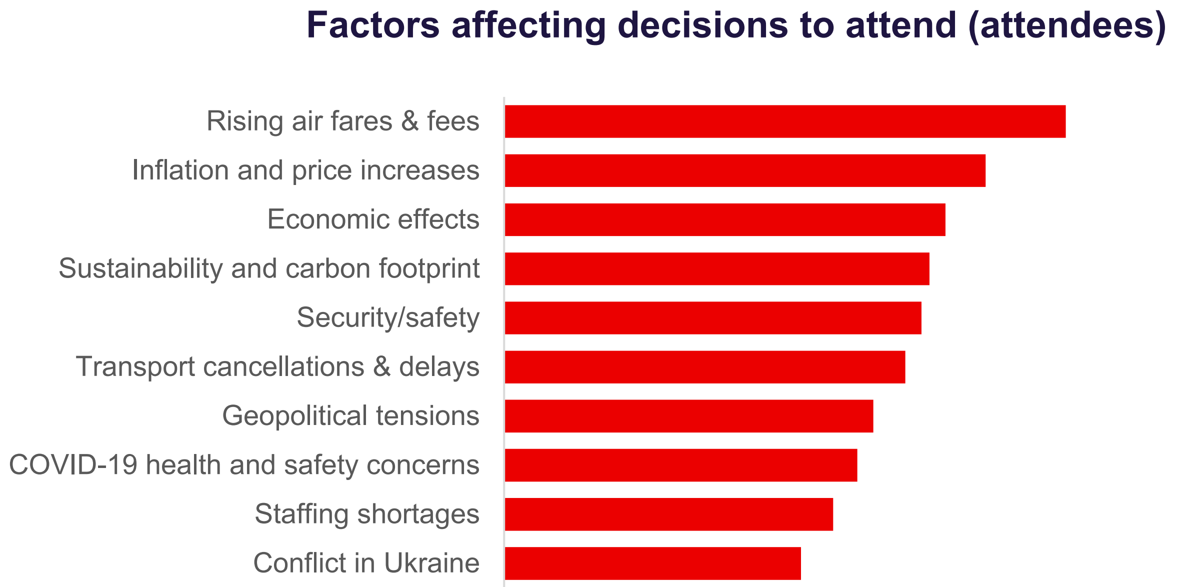
Source: MMGY Portrait of European Meeting & Convention Travel 2023

MMGY Travel Intelligence

VISIT BRITAIN VisitEngland

Planners driven by destination appeal and accessibility, with attendees most influenced by economic factors





When planning events, planners are currently most likely to consider the appeal of the destination, the ease for attendees in reaching it, and travel distance. From attendees' perspective, the top three factors affecting the decision to attend a meeting or event are all linked to economic pressures, with air fares and fees most prominent.

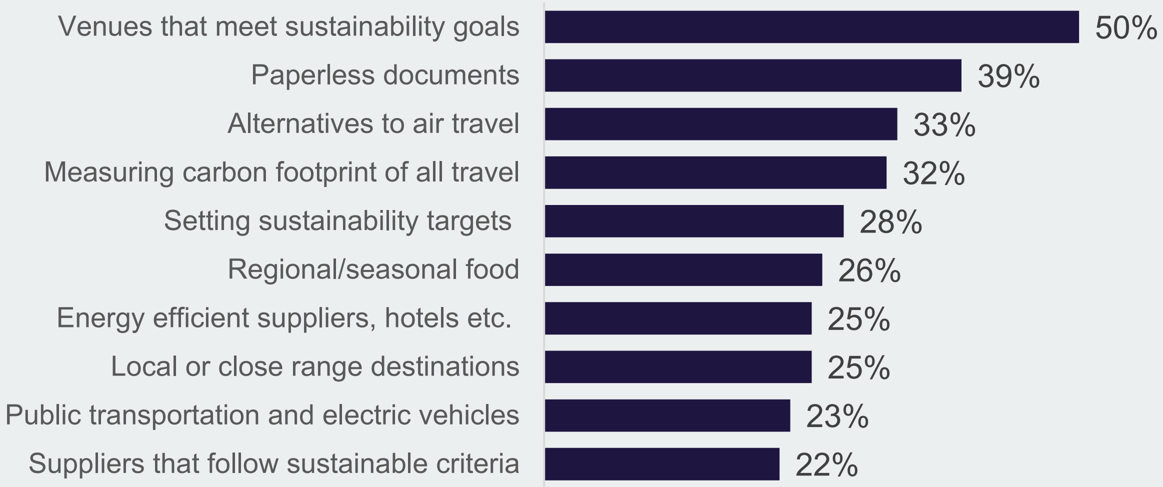
Source: MMGY Portrait of European Meeting & Convention Travel 2023

Planners are reporting more demand for sustainable meetings and events

50%

of planners are being requested to select venues and accommodation that meet sustainability goals

Sustainability efforts most frequently requested



Planners say that the demand for sustainable meetings has increased post-COVID, with 51% stating that they are requested to select venues and accommodation that meet sustainability goals. Beyond this, they are most likely to receive requests for paperless documents linked to the events, and to identify energy efficient suppliers, hotels or event venues.

Source: MMGY Portrait of European Meeting & Convention Travel 2023

MMGY Travel Intelligence

VISIT BRITAIN

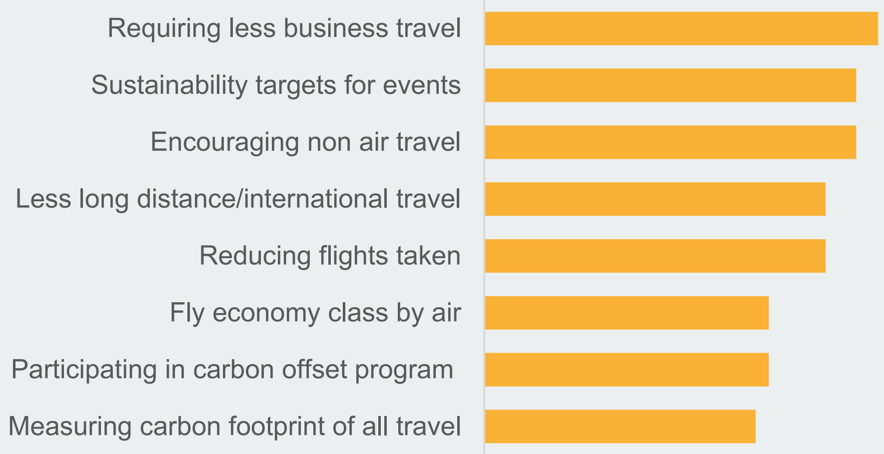
VisitEngland

Attendees recognize the importance of sustainability

65%

of attendees are willing to pay more to fund environmental and sustainable programs

Desired sustainability efforts for organisations (attendees)



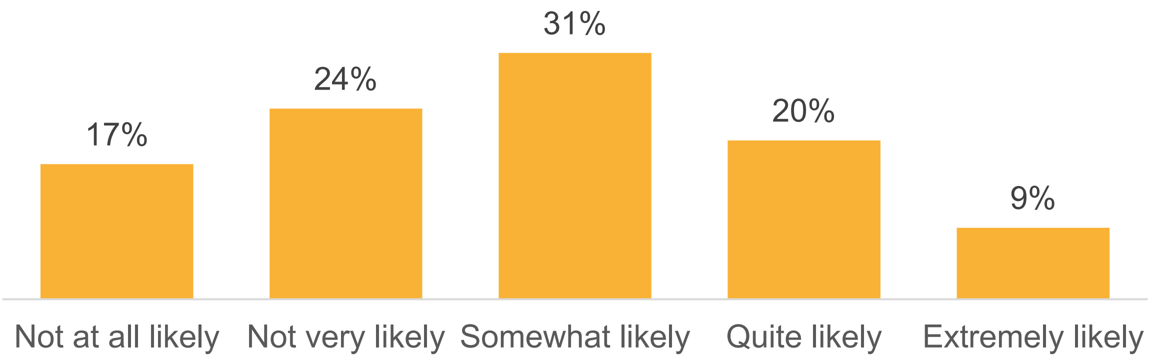
Attendees echo planners' reports, with 65% willing to pay more to fund environmental and sustainable programs. Attendees are most keen for organisations to work towards sustainability by requiring less business travel and setting sustainability targets for company events.

Source: MMGY Portrait of European Meeting & Convention Travel 2023

Nearly 60% of attendees likely to extend a business trip for leisure purposes

Attendees are more likely to plan to extend business trips in the next 2 years when asked in 2023 vs. 2022 (60% vs. 54%).
Bleisure is most likely among the younger age groups, and most plan to invite their spouse/partner to make the most of their trip

Extending business trips in next 2 years

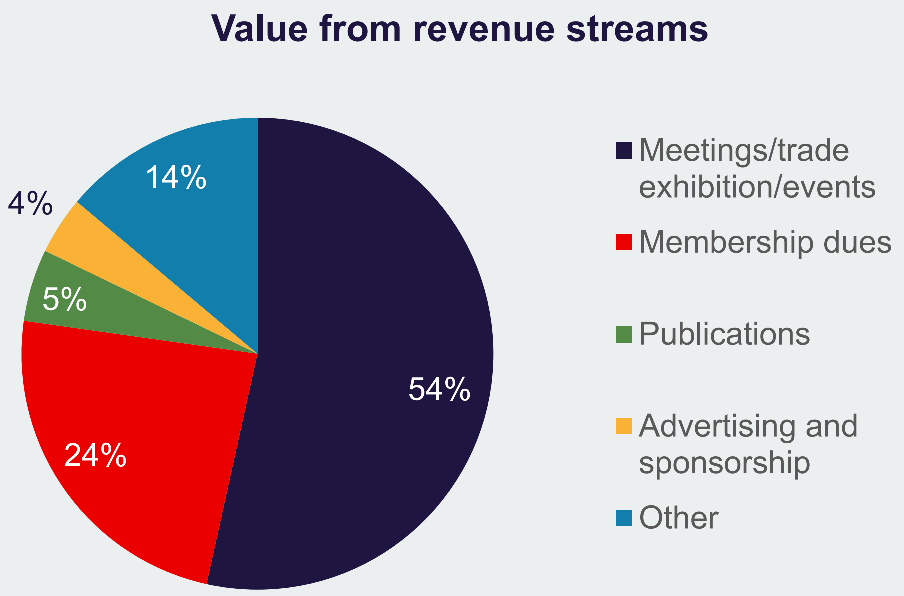


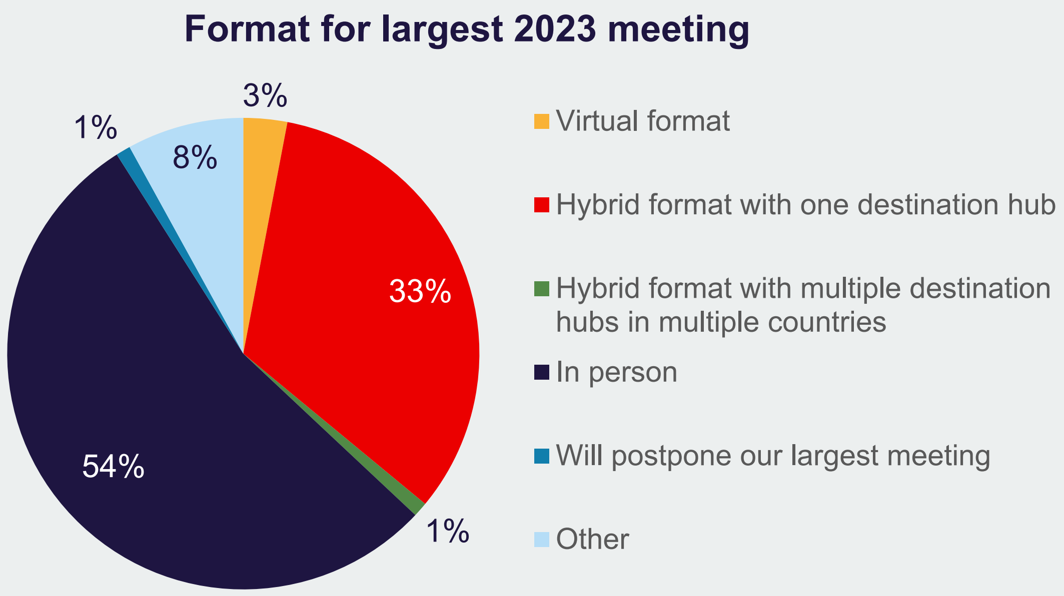
Two thirds of attendees will invite their spouse/partner along when they extend their business trip

Source: MMGY Portrait of European Meeting & Convention Travel 2023

ICCA

ICCA | Meetings and events still most important revenue stream, with 2023 meetings returning to in-person





Meetings and events are still the largest segment of revenue generation for associations, although there is a growing need for associations to diversify their revenue stream to become more financially sustainable for the future

There is a clear trend towards getting events back to in-person format, with 54% of associations to hold their largest 2023 meeting in person

Source: ICCA 2023 Association Survey, Europe region

ICCA | Associations' needs are changing as in-person events return

Within Europe, 42% of respondents say they have changed their RFPs in the last three years, with hybrid/digital, sustainability and legacy initiatives key themes

When it comes to association needs, the return to in-person events makes virtual support less relevant, but the need for core PCO services has increased

Exhibition management and DMC/logistics services follow as the next most important supplier services

Source: ICCA 2023 Association Survey, Europe region

ICCA | A clear focus on sustainability and inclusivity

Areas for support and education

81% of respondents are working towards more sustainable events and practises, however many are in different stages of the sustainability journey

Unsurprisingly, associations are most keen to gain support and learning on the topic of sustainable events. Legacy programmes are also of particular interest at 29%

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is also highly important, with 70% having a policy in place or actively working to address this

Source: ICCA 2023 Association Survey, Europe region

Sector trends | Key insights

- MMGY reveals that **in person** meetings are the most likely format planned for the next 2 years, with planners reporting medical and financial sectors most prominent. **Cost** is the key driving factor when clients are choosing an event location, with planners considering destination appeal, access, and travel distance. Attendees are also subject to **economic pressures**, but are motivated to attend events to learn and build relationships in their industry.
- **Bleisure** continues to be highly relevant, and **sustainability** is growing in importance in both planners' and attendees' minds. 50% of planners being requested to select venues and accommodation to suit sustainability goals, and 65% of attendees willing to pay more to fund sustainable programs
- The ICCA survey found that meetings and events are still the **most important revenue stream** for European associations, with over half of the largest 2023 meetings planned to take place in person. As in-person events return, associations' are most likely to require the support of core PCO services, exhibition management, and DMC/ logistics services
- **Sustainability**, **inclusion**, and **legacy programs** are also top of mind for associations, with 81% working towards more sustainable events and practises, and 70% either with or working towards a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion policy

Birmingham, England; ©West Midlands Growth Company