

Meetings & Events Pulse Survey

Q4 2022

A report on what is currently driving
decisions in the global MICE industry.

Responses collected November 10-December 16, 2022



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Key Insights



Higher costs are the #1 challenge for planners

88% report that budgets have increased due to inflation/higher costs and this percentage has increased from 68% in Q2 2022. Planners continue to be tasked to do more with less and educate their clients that there is less room to negotiate in the current economic climate.



Finding availability and service levels/quality are the #2 and #3 challenges

With prolonged industry staffing challenges and high demand for in-person events, these two challenges are high on the list, with responsiveness and budget management falling close behind. Cancellation and/or rebooking terms is the #1 challenge for planners when negotiating a contract.



Majority of planners report a positive outlook for attendance levels at in-person events

66% report that their attendance levels at in-person events are the same now as they were pre-pandemic, or greater than what they were pre-pandemic. The survey also points to an increased interest in almost all regions around the globe for 2023 programs.



The importance of sustainability continued to grow throughout 2022

Overall, 15% more now report that they or their clients have sustainability goals in place for their programs as compared to the Q2 2022 report. This sentiment has grown substantially within the international pool of respondents with 73% reporting they or their clients now have sustainability goals in place as compared to only 45% in Q2 2022.



Many planner organizations report that they are still hiring

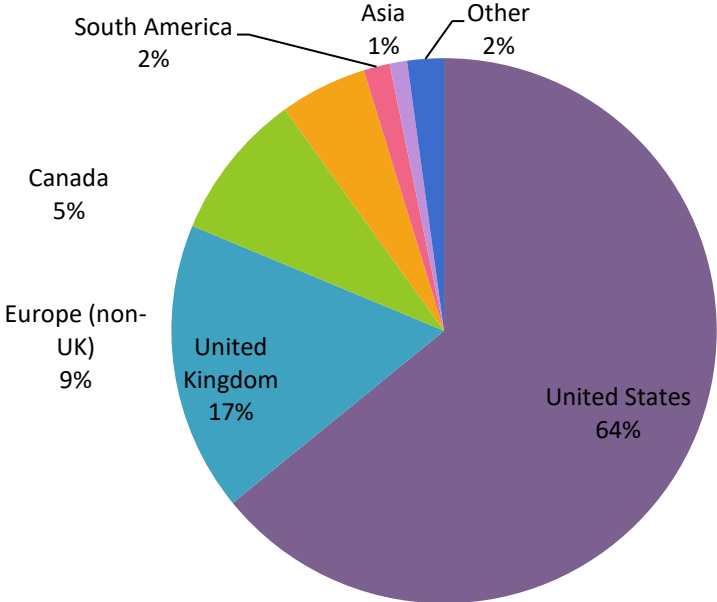
Slightly less respondents are reporting that their companies are hiring as compared to earlier on in 2022, although 45% report that they are actively hiring or will be hiring later this year. Mid-level and entry-level positions are still the most popular level roles to be hiring for, and more planners (32%) are now reporting that they are hiring for freelancers/event staff as compared to 23% in Q2 2022.

Respondent Demographics

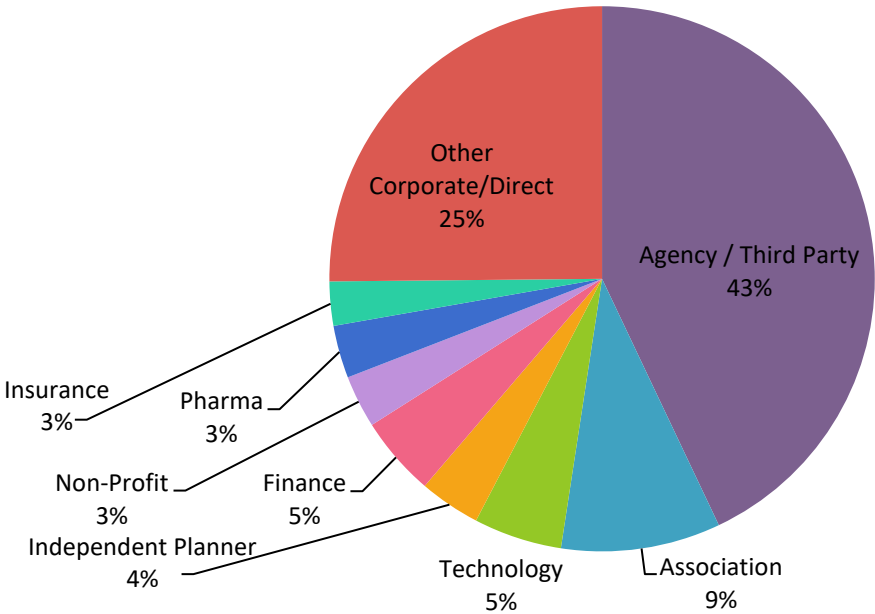
Highlights:

- 200 Meeting and Event Professionals
- Majority based in the United States with 26% in Europe
- 48% Corporate/Direct, 43% Third Party, 9% Association

LOCATION



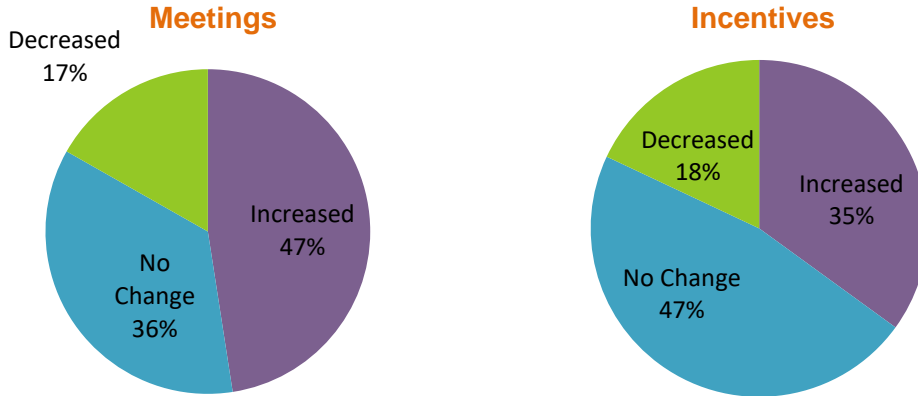
INDUSTRY



Budgets & Costs: Both Are Going Up

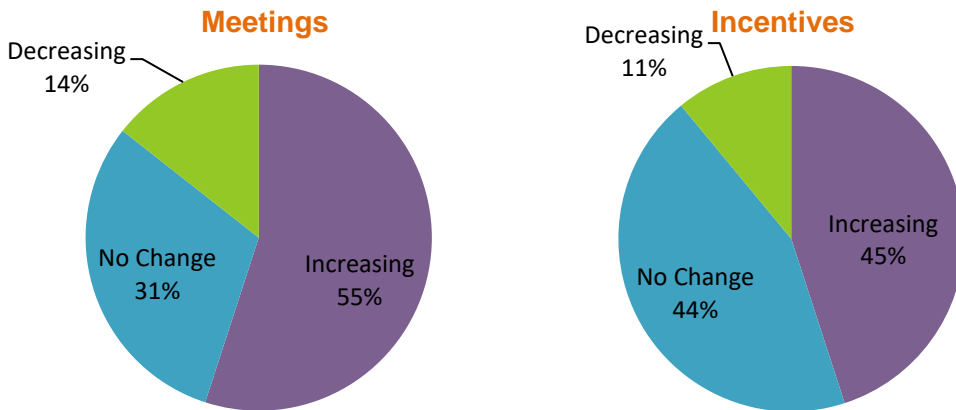
47% say their budgets for meetings increased over the course of 2022 with 35% reporting their incentive budgets increased. More planners are now reporting that 2023 and 2024 budgets are increasing as compared to what they reported in May 2022 on our Q2 survey. Nearly 15-17% more planners report their budgets are increasing for 2023 as compared what they reported in Q2 2022. On average, 10% more planners now report that their budgets are increasing for 2024 as compared to what they reported in Q2 2022.

Did budgets increase across 2022?



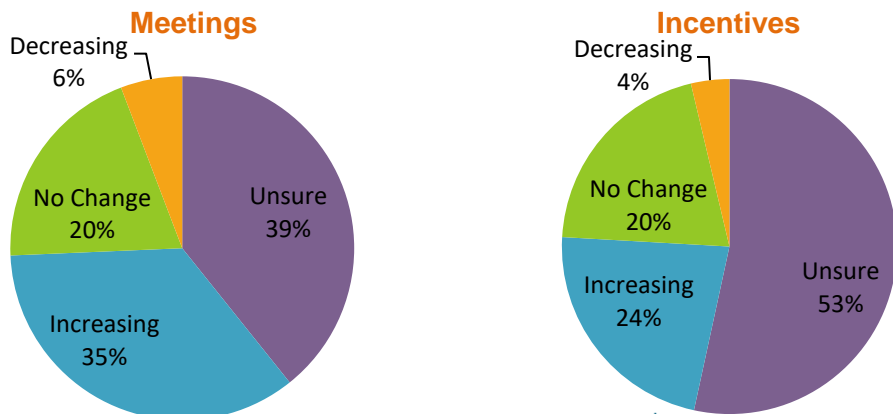
Did budgets increase from 2022 to 2023?

55% now report that their meeting budgets are increasing for 2023 as compared to 41% in Q2 2022. 45% now report that their incentive budgets are increasing for 2023 as compared to 28% in Q2 2022.



Did budgets increase from 2023 to 2024?

35% now report that their meeting budgets are increasing for 2024 as compared to 24% in Q2 2022. 24% now report that their incentive budgets are increasing for 2024 as compared to 16% in Q2 2022.



88% report that budgets are increasing due to inflation or higher prices as compared to 68% in Q2 2022. One respondent commented that budgets have increased, but not enough and planners still need to be prepared to “do more with less”.

Why are budgets increasing?

Q2 2022

Answer option	Percent
Inflation / higher prices	67.5%
Program format changes (ex: incorporating more tech, additional safety measures)	29.4%
Company decision	28.8%
Change in # of attendees	23.1%
Other	17.5%
Unsure	10.0%

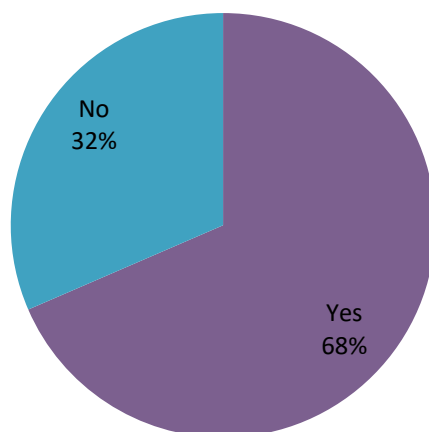
Q4 2022

Answer option	Percent
Inflation / higher prices	88%
Change in # of attendees	26%
Program format changes (ex: incorporating more tech, additional safety measures)	22%
Currency exchange rates	19%
Company decision	18%
Other	9%

In the comments, some that reported no change or a decrease in budgets said that they are being asked to find savings in order to deliver the best solution for the same budget. Others mentioned that budgets had been set prior to an awareness that the sudden rise in inflation would affect costs so much, and are now tasked with making budgets that were set over a year ago work in the current climate. Third party/agency planners cited that there is a need to educate clients about the increase in prices and that there is less room to negotiate costs.

Are rising airfare costs affecting the destinations that you choose for your upcoming programs?

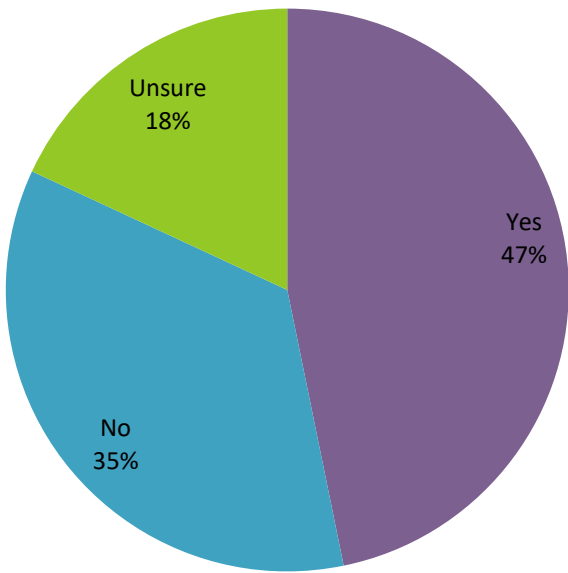
In addition, rising airfare costs are still affecting the chosen destinations for the majority of planners (68%), with 60% reporting the same in Q2 2022. Some cited in their comments that their organizations or clients are choosing locations based on where the majority of their attendees are located, and/or locations that have other transportation methods for attendees (ex: train). Others commented that lack of routes/availability also affect the decision around chosen program destinations.



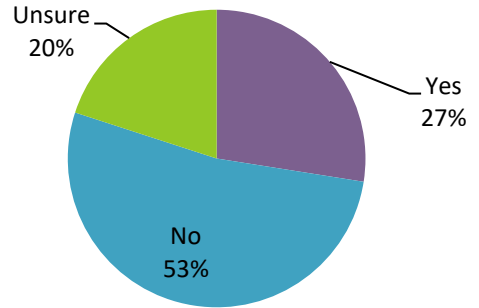
Are organizations increasing their pricing for services or events?

Similar to what was reported in Q2 2022, most organizations (47%) are increasing their pricing, however we now see that more international planners (50%) are reporting that their organizations are increasing pricing for services or events as compared to only 27% reporting the same in Q2 2022. 64% report that they are increasing pricing to match higher operating costs.

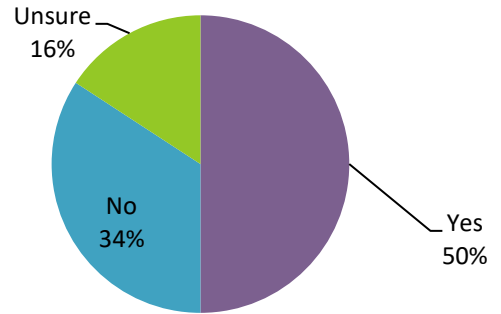
ALL RESPONDENTS



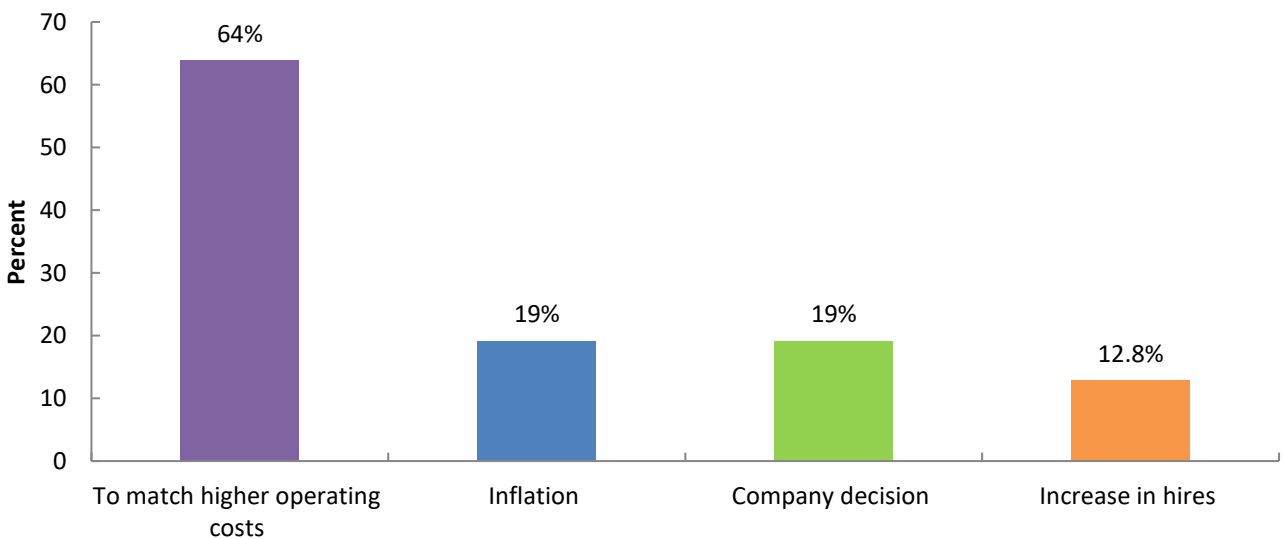
INTERNATIONAL – Q2 2022



INTERNATIONAL – Q4 2022



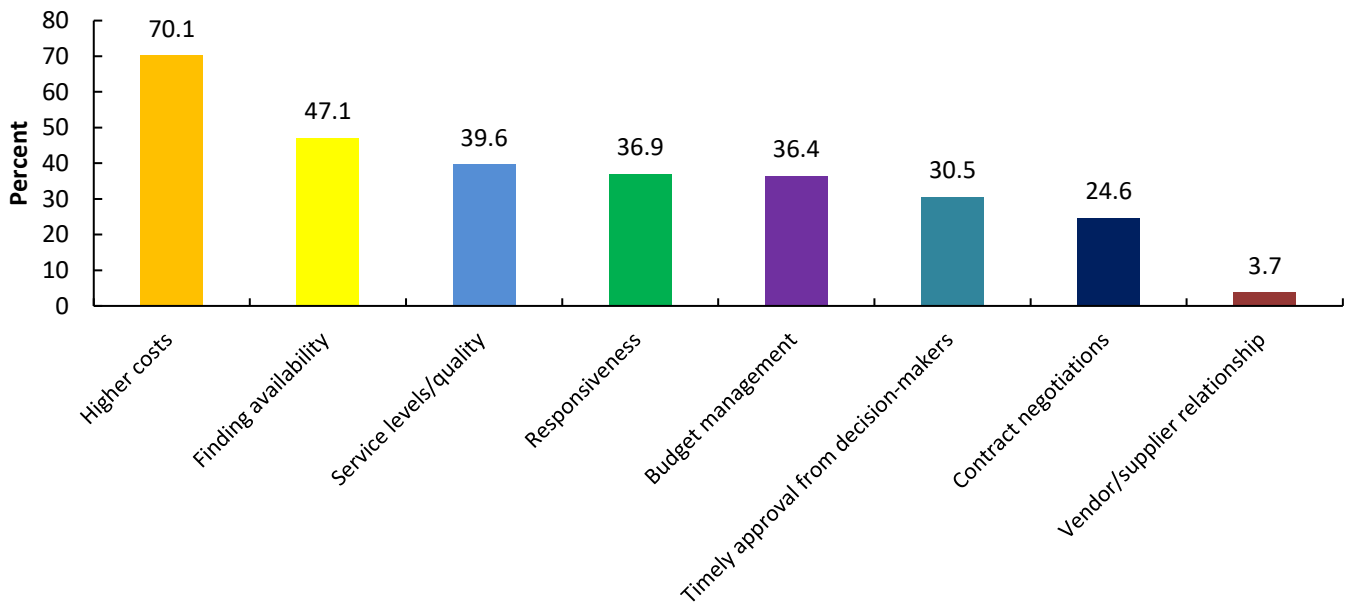
Why is your organization increasing pricing?



Top Challenges

Overall, the top three challenges planners are currently facing are higher costs, finding availability, and service levels/quality, with responsiveness and budget management falling close behind in the fourth and fifth spots. Many cited in the comments that it was hard to only choose three from the list and all of them could apply. A couple respondents also mentioned that staffing is still a challenge which was not one of the answer options but is a factor within service level/quality and responsiveness.

What are the top three challenges you are currently facing?

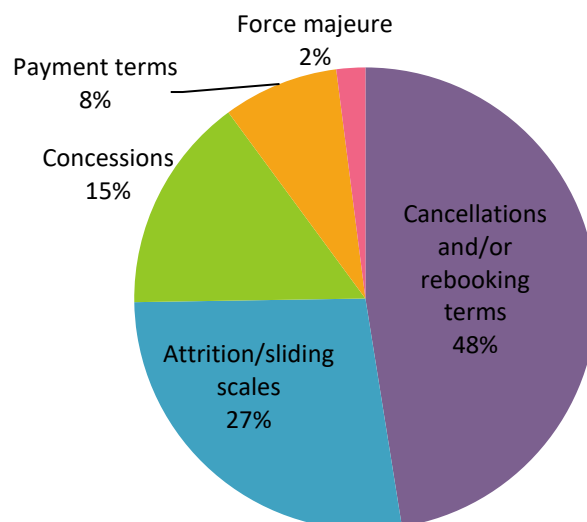


Out of the below, what is your #1 concern when negotiating a contract?

Cancellations and/or rebooking terms is the top concern when it comes to negotiating a contract. Below are some direct comments from respondents regarding this challenge.

Post Covid, I have noticed a trend in hotels requesting a much larger first deposit, with very strict cancellation terms. Due to the nature of our programs, dates change all the time, which affects the payment and cancellation terms and has become a concern when reviewing and signing hotel contracts.

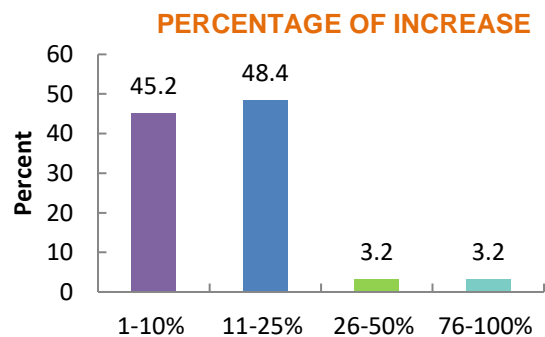
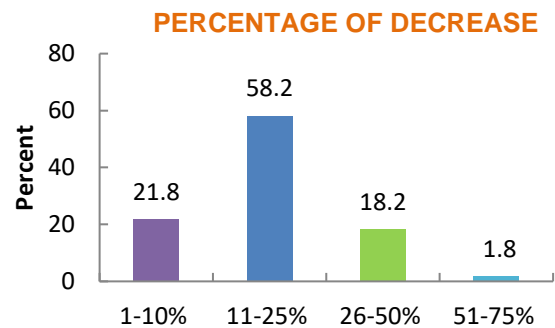
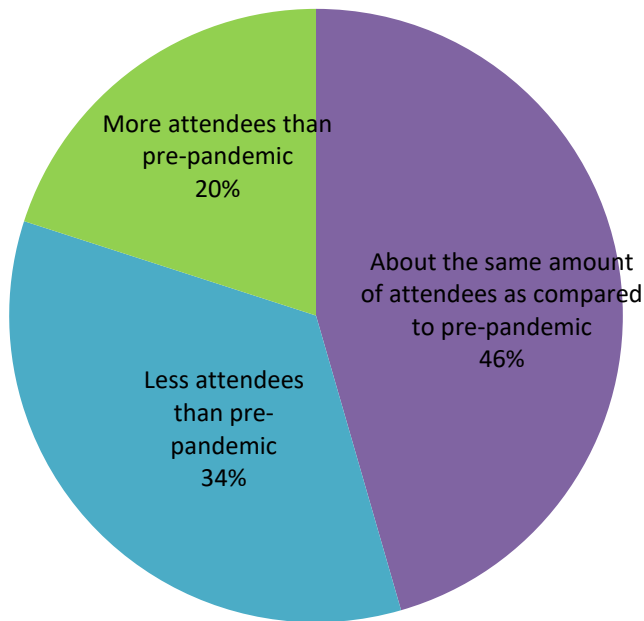
Hotels are asking for higher cancellation tiers but also changing terms. If they cancel on the Group, they want to follow the same cancellation tiers as if Group would cancel with hotel.



Program Format

Most respondents (46%) are seeing the same amount of attendees at their in-person events as compared to pre-pandemic with 34% reporting less attendees and 20% reporting more attendees. Of those who are seeing a decrease, 58% report that their attendance numbers decreased by 11-25%, and of those who are seeing an increase, about half report their attendance numbers increased by 1-10% with the other half reporting their numbers increasing by 11-25%.

At your in-person events what are you seeing in terms of attendance levels?

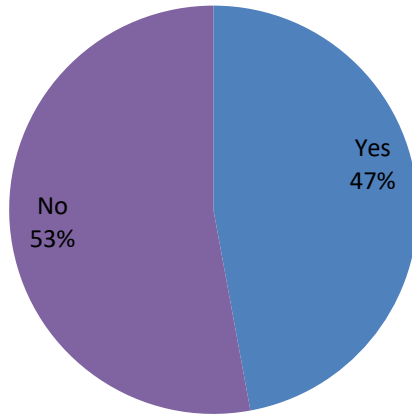


Respondents cited a mix of sentiments in the comments regarding their attendance levels:

- *We have doubled in size since 2020 but our attendance numbers are the same as pre-pandemic. Has gone up a little but not as much as we had thought.*
- *More last minute attendees - delegates are not signing up that far in advance.*
- *Starting to get back to pre-pandemic levels but it is taking time.*
- *More are choosing the digital experience than previously.*
- *The lockdowns had about a 40% effect (decrease) in our attendance for late 2020 and for 2021 events. For 2022 events, we are back to pre-lockdown attendance numbers.*

More than half of the respondents (53%) reported that their organizations are not hosting virtual events in 2023 and beyond, while less than half (47%) reported that they are hosting virtual events in 2023 and beyond.

Are you/your organization currently organizing any virtual events for 2023 or beyond?

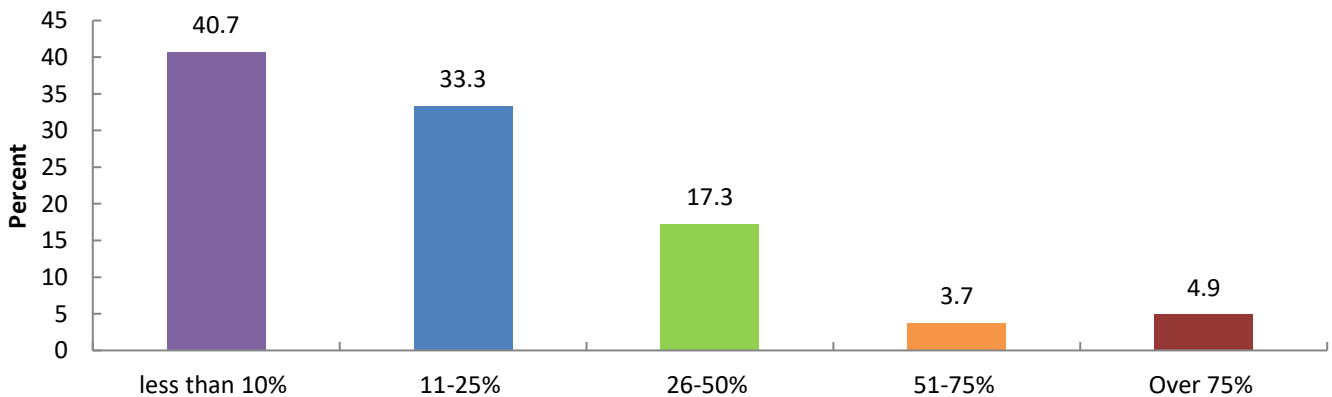


In the comments, respondents had mixed feelings about virtual events, and many mentioned hybrid components to in-person events:

- *Currently avoiding where possible.*
- *To a smaller degree and scale - not a full virtual program - we want to invest budget in the in-person event*
- *We will have hybrid components to select programs but will not host any virtual events.*
- *Just (1) virtual event, in 2023 compared to (3) in 2022.*
- *Global audience for a 1-day conference x 3 a year. Utilizing a virtual solution saves on budget, time and more eco-friendly.*

Of those reporting that they are organizing virtual events, none of them said all of their events will be virtual and the largest group, 41%, reported that less than 10% of their events will be virtual, with 33% reporting that 11-25% of their events will be virtual.

What percentage of your/your organization's programs are virtual?



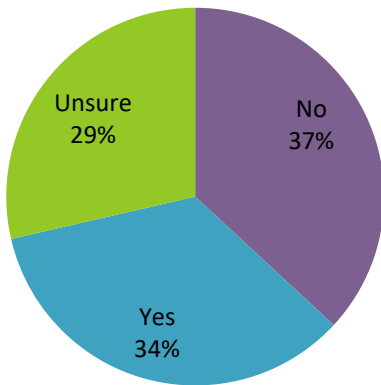
Sustainability: International is Still Ahead

Overall, the international response to incorporating sustainability into travel, meetings and events is more positive than their US/Canadian counterparts, and this disparity has grown over the course of 2022. While the survey shows that the importance of sustainability has grown overall for both groups over the course of 2022, it has grown vastly, by nearly 30%, within the international pool.

Do your clients/your company have sustainability goals in place for travel, meetings, events and/or incentives?

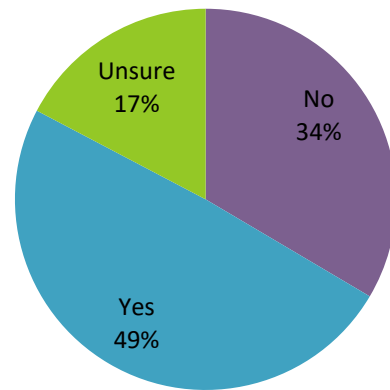
Q2 2022

ALL RESPONDENTS

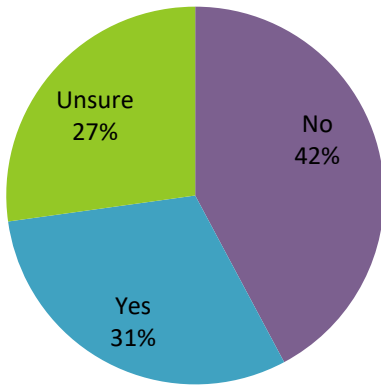


Q4 2022

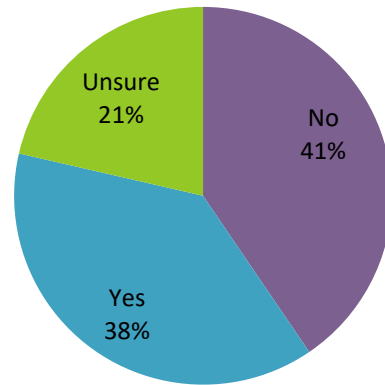
ALL RESPONDENTS



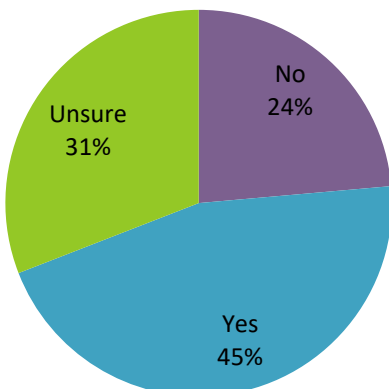
US/CANADA



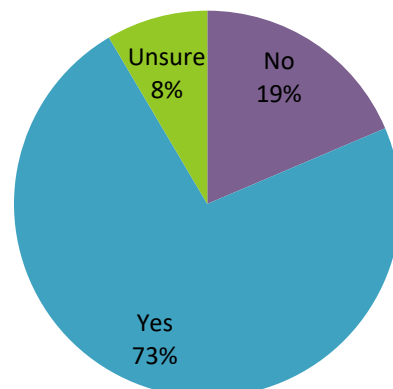
US/CANADA



INTERNATIONAL

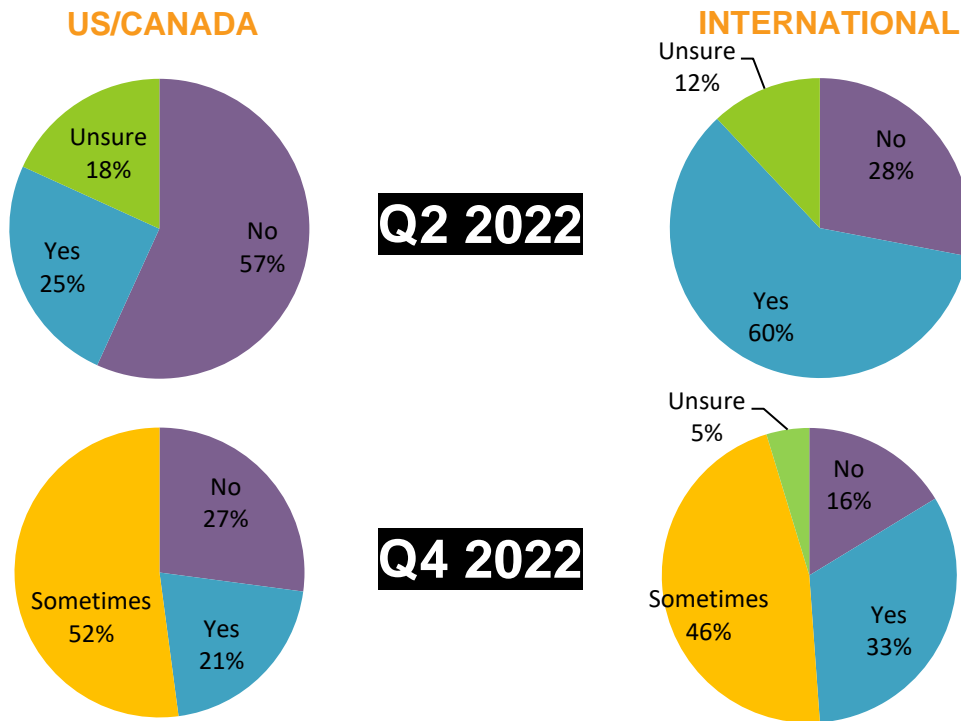


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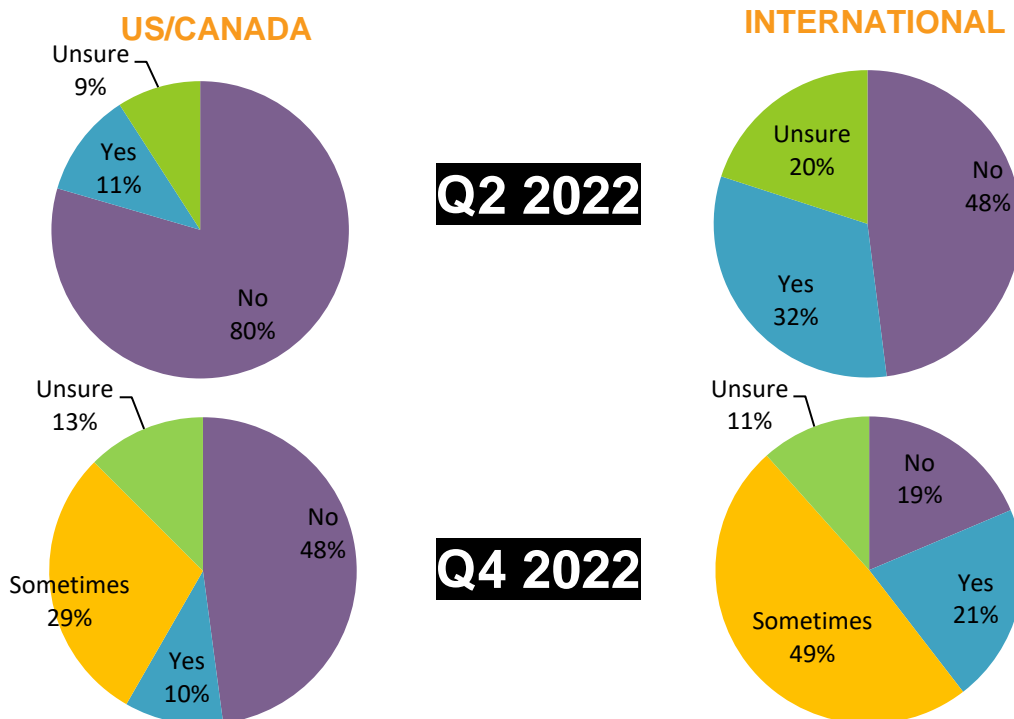


In terms of sustainability being a driving factor for program locations and for working with suppliers, we added “sometimes” as an answer option in the Q4 survey as many third party planner respondents commented in the Q2 survey that it depended on the client. We see that across both groups, sustainability is growing as a driving factor in choosing destinations and suppliers, and it is stronger within the international group especially when it comes to requiring that suppliers have a certification of sustainability.

Are these sustainability goals a driving factor in choosing a destination for upcoming programs?



Do you require your vendors/suppliers/venues to have a certification of sustainability?

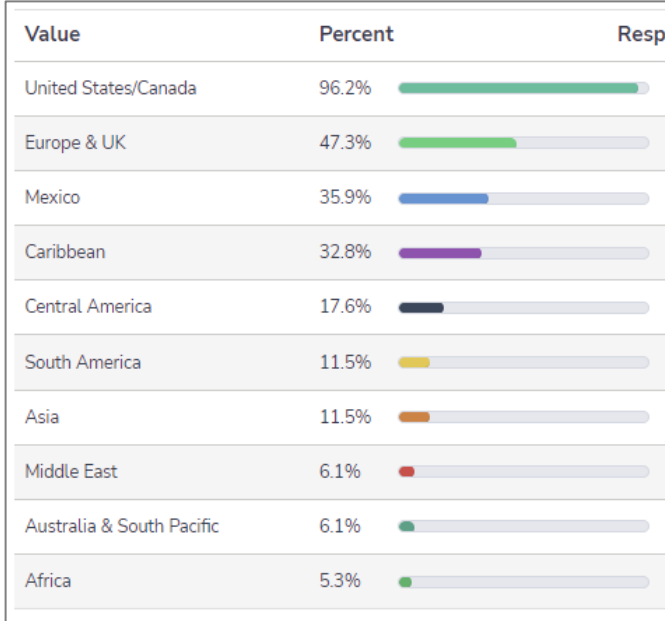


Regions of Interest

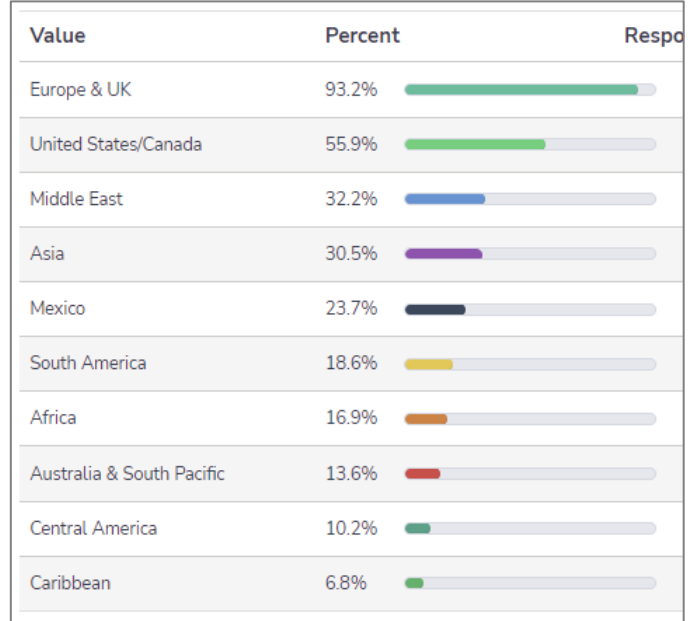
The top five regions for programs in 2022 were the United States/Canada, Europe & UK, Mexico, Caribbean and Central America for US and Canadian respondents. For international respondents, the top five regions for programs in 2022 were Europe & UK, United States/Canada, Middle East, Asia and Mexico.

In what regions did you organize programs in 2022?

US/CANADA



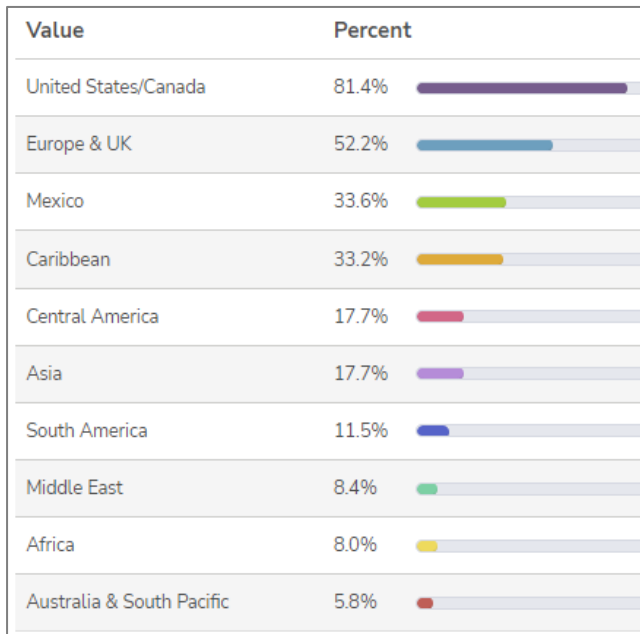
INTERNATIONAL



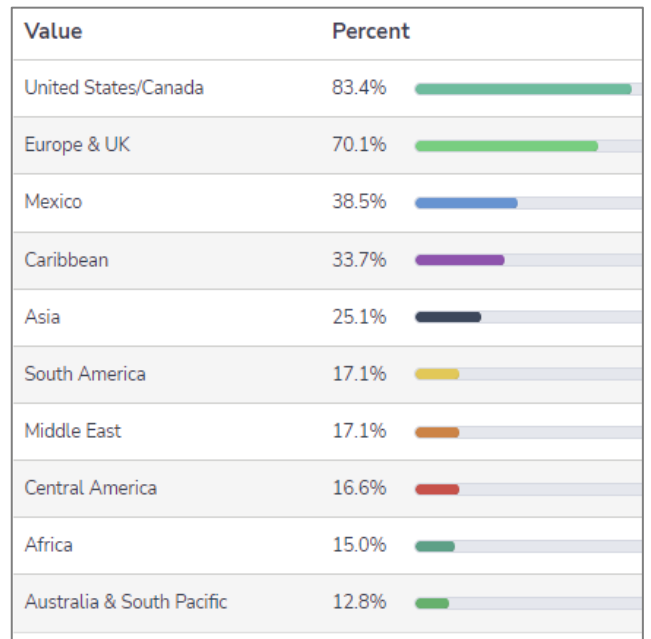
What regions are you considering for your programs in 2023?

By the end of 2022, we are seeing increased interest in almost all regions around the globe for 2023 programs, with particular increases in Europe & UK, Asia, South America, Middle East, Africa and Australia & South Pacific.

Q2 2022



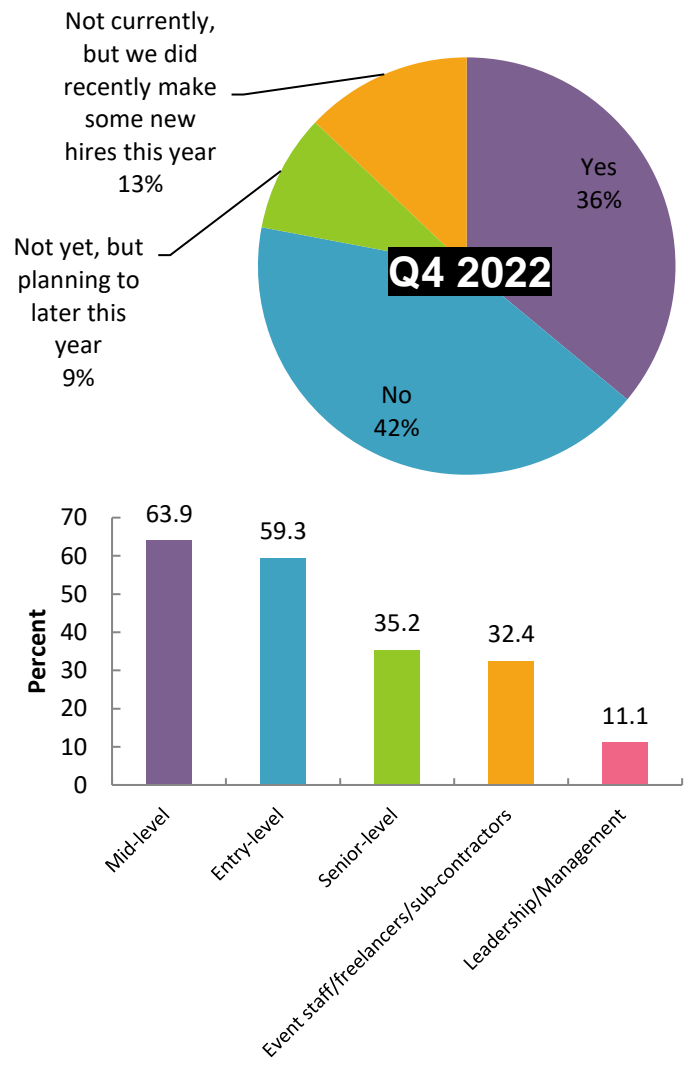
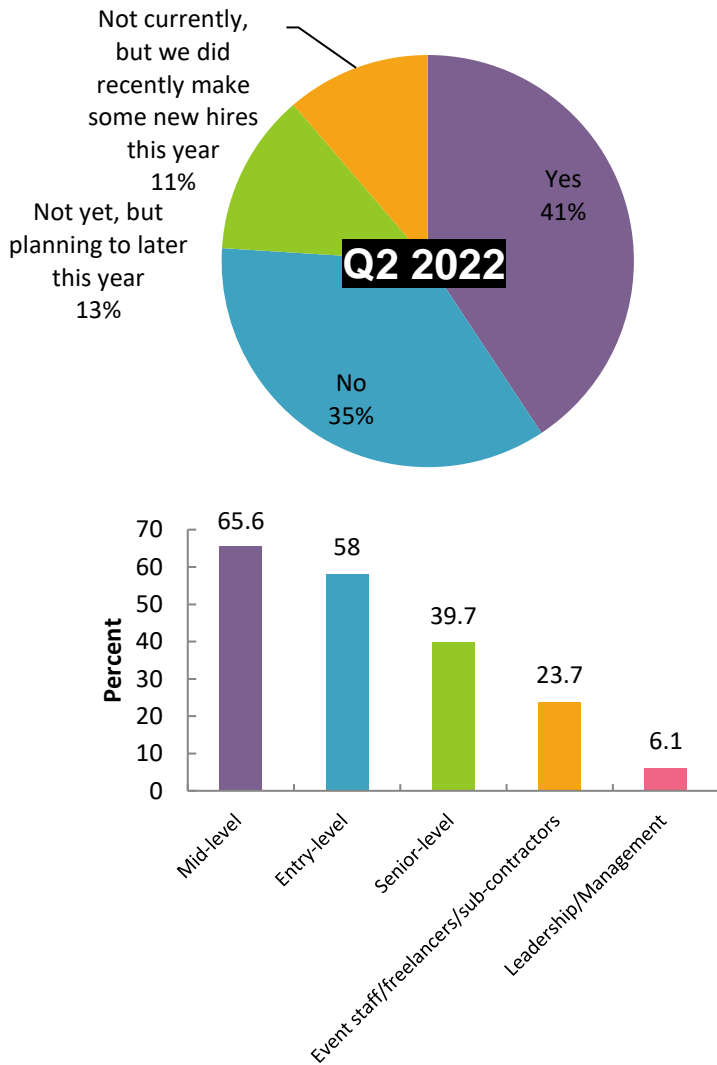
Q4 2022



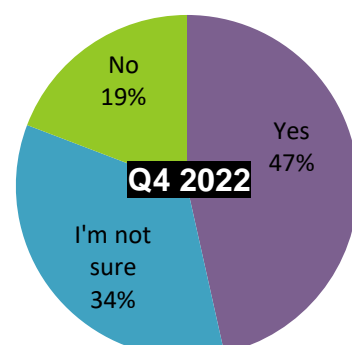
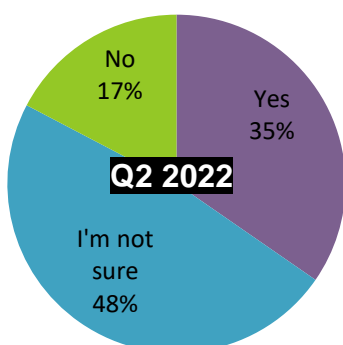
Hiring: Many Are Still Actively Hiring

Slightly less respondents are reporting that their companies are hiring as compared to earlier on in 2022, although 45% report that they are actively hiring or will be hiring later this year. Mid-level and entry-level positions are still the most popular level roles to be hiring for, and more planners (32%) are now reporting that they are hiring for freelancers/event staff as compared to 23% in Q2 2022. 12% more planners are now reporting that their companies have had to increase salaries/compensation packages to attract the right candidates.

Is your organization hiring and if so, what roles are your organization hiring for?



In order to attract the right candidates, have you had to increase your salary/compensation packages?



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A graphic element consisting of a series of dots in blue and orange, arranged in a curved, arrow-like shape pointing towards the top right.

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