

FORECAST: MICE INDUSTRY TO RECOVER WITHIN ONE OR TWO YEARS



MICE industry professionals are confident and feel well equipped to plan even complex events and adapt to lingering uncertainties. That is the main finding of the Global Meetings and Events Forecast 2022, the eleventh edition of the annual report from American Express Meetings & Events, a division of American Express Global Business Travel (GBT).

The global survey of 500 industry workers from 31 countries shows that two-thirds (67 percent) expect a return to pre-pandemic levels within one to two years for events with in-person attendance. The survey and interviews took place in June and July.

The number of meetings & events with in-person attendance will grow in 2022, respondents forecast, **with 81 percent of events expected to have at least one element of in-person attendance.** In another indicator of the MICE industry growth, 64 percent of global meetings & events professionals report increased budgets in the coming year. However, the industry does not expect a return to business-as-usual and is not planning for it; instead, lessons learned from the pandemic period will be used to optimize the value, effectiveness, and sustainability of future events.

According to the report, companies are increasingly recognizing the value of internal meetings - internal conferences and training are predicted to grow the most in 2022. Despite the increase in face-to-face meetings and events, virtual and hybrid meeting formats will continue to play an important role, according to global respondents. Hybrid formats will continue to grow in importance as they can reach larger audiences, allow for an integrated virtual contingency plan, and increase revenue. Attendance is expected to increase across all event types and formats.

Environmental friendliness will be a priority for the majority of meetings & events programs in 2022, with 83 percent of respondents saying their companies consider sustainability in event planning. The most commonly cited measures for 2022 are minimizing paper use and taking steps to save energy and reduce waste.

The picture across regions is rather different, however.

Europe

The MICE industry professionals in Europe are cautiously optimistic about 2022 - 59 percent report their level of optimism as 8 or higher on a scale of 1 to 10; the lowest among the four regions. However, 48 percent of European events are expected to be exclusively in-person in 2022, the second-highest behind the North American region. And although respondents forecast a slower recovery than other regions, 86 percent are confident that in-person attendance will return to pre-pandemic levels within five years.

North America

Meetings & events professionals in North America are very optimistic about the recovery in 2022. Seventy-four percent report their level of optimism as 8 or higher on a scale of 1 to 10. The region led the way for a return to meetings & events with in-person attendance, with 31 percent already

having in-person events in June/July 2021 - and showed the highest likelihood of such events in the coming year, at 54 percent.

Central and South America

Meetings & Events professionals in Central and South America showed the greatest optimism for the outlook in 2022, with 87 percent reporting their level of optimism as 8 or higher on a scale of 1 to 10, and 82 percent rating their career opportunities as good or excellent. Projections for elements of personal attendance are slightly lower in this region than in the others at 76 percent - though 81 percent of respondents expect a return to pre-pandemic levels of personal attendance within one to two years. This is the highest figure among the four regions.

Asia/Pacific

The MICE industry professionals in the Asia/Pacific region are fairly positive about the health of the industry in 2022. **Nearly two-thirds (64 percent) rate their level of optimism as 8 or higher on a scale of 1 to 10**, and 58 percent rate their career opportunities as good or excellent. They expect 81 percent of the region's 2022 events to include an in-person attendance component. And 62 percent of the region's respondents expect the number of in-person attendees to return to pre-pandemic levels within one to two years.

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