
INTENTIONAL BUSINESS TRAVEL
TURNING INSIGHTS INTO ACTION
CAPE TOWN CORPORATE TRAVEL WORKSHOP 2026
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OPENING & WELCOME

Monique Swart

Founder - ABTA

ABTA
AFRICAN BUSINESS TRAVEL ASSOCIATION

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AMERICAN EXPRESS
Sun International
TOURVEST Travel Services
VISA
INTERNATIONAL SOS
UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
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YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

ABTA
AFRICAN BUSINESS TRAVEL ASSOCIATION

A WORD FROM OUR HOSTS

Andrew Dietrich

Operations Manager

Sun
GrandWest

CAPE TOWN CORPORATE TRAVEL WORKSHOP 2026

ABTA
AFRICAN BUSINESS TRAVEL ASSOCIATION

A QUICK ABTA OVERVIEW

- Established in 2010
- Focus on CORPORATE travel
- Events, Networking, Webinars, Focus Groups, Market Research
- Partner events & projects – Absa, Visa, ASATA, Tourvest, Wings, KATA, NANTA etc
- Members in Angola, Ghana, Kenya, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa & Zambia
  - ❑ Associations (ASATA, KATA, NANTA, TAAZ etc)
  - ❑ TMC's (Eg. ATPI, Rennies BCD, CWT, FCM, Tourvest, Destini etc)
  - ❑ Suppliers (Eg. Absa, Peermont, Sabre, Mastercard, Fastjet, Visa, Woodford etc)
  - ❑ Travel Buyers


absa
Air Liquide
Allan Gray Orbis Foundation
Amway
AngloAmerican
Australian High Commission
Kenya
Avroy Shlain
TRUE BEAUTY SHINES
BASF
We create chemistry
BAT
BDO
75
British International Investment
BMW
Compensation Fund
WORKING FOR YOU
CRICKET
SOUTH AFRICA
Cummins
Deloitte.
Discovery
ERICSSON
EY
FIRSTRAND
GAUTENG
LEGISLATURE
Your View — Our Vision
Giesecke+Devrient
Heineken
Hollard.
IDC
Industrial Development Corporation
Imperial logistics
ICPD
INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR PROTOCOL & DIPLOMACY
KPMG
KRONES
LANDBANK
MMV
Medicines for Malaria Venture
MTN
MULTICHOICE
ENRICHING LIVES
NDTC
A NAMIBIA DE BEERS PARTNERSHIP
national treasury
Department:
National Treasury
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
NEHAWU
AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL
NETCARE
OLDMUTUAL
PAP
Pan-African Parliament
PEPSICO
PetroSA
PPECB
PSL
PREMIER SOCCER LEAGUE
RAND WATER
Roche
Diagnostics
SABC
Sahara
GROUP
SANDVIK
santam
sasol
SAVANNAH
SENTECH
connecting You
SOLAR AFRICA
South African Reserve Bank
SOUTH AFRICAN FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION
Standard Bank
THE WORLD BANK
TFG
TotalEnergies
university of south africa
UNISA
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VERTEX
ENERGY
W
WOOLWORTHS
WWF
ZUTARI
IMPACT. ENGINEERED.



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About the respondents

- 6 Hotel chains
- 4 Airlines
- 16 Travel Buyers
- 5 TMC’s



A Quick Overview

- **A look at some numbers**
- **Traveller Behaviours**
  - Hotels
  - Air Travel
  - Ground Transportation
- **Survey results sneak peak**
- **Project next steps**



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Region / Category	Estimated Daily Business Trips	Source / Notes
Global (All regions)	**4-5 million per day**	Derived from GBTA 2025 forecast of ~US$1.57 trillion spend ÷ average trip cost (~US$829). Approx. 1.89 billion trips/year.
South Africa – Domestic overnight business trips	**7,700 per day**	Stats SA Q1 2025 Domestic Tourism Survey: 8.3 million total overnight trips, 8.3% for business/MICE (~689,000 per quarter).
South Africa – International inbound business visitors	**1,100–1,300 per day**	Based on ~8–9 million annual international tourist arrivals; ~5% business purpose share.
South Africa – Combined (domestic + inbound + outbound + day trips)	**10,000–15,000 per day**	Composite estimate including domestic overnight, inbound, outbound, and same-day business trips.

Figures based on available industry and official data sources incl GBTA and Statistics South Africa (Stats SA).

Let’s break it down

Electricity

- R20 – R50 cost per day per hotel room
- Est. 69 500 hotel rooms in RSA = ***R 1.73 M*** per day
- 5% used wastefully = R 86 500 per day = ***R 31.5 M*** per year

Food Waste

- One medium-sized property - **2 215 Kg** / per year
- 130 hotels from chains in Jhb & CT = **287 950 Kgs** per year

Sources: Statista and Hotelchains.com

Traveller Behaviour: HOTELS

- Water wastage
- Electricity Abuse
- Food Waste
- Frequent use of single-use plastics / containers
- Theft
- Towels & Linen
- Laundry

- Guest Supplies
- Staffing resources
- Mis-use of appliances / facilities
- ‘Just in case’
- MICE
- Paperwork
- Other

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Traveller Behaviour: AIR TRAVEL



- Food and Water Waste
- Excessive Cabin Waste
- Paper Waste
- Waste Segregation
- Luggage
- Choosing carbon-heavy flights

Traveller Behaviour:
GROUND TRANSPORTATION

- Using taxis or ride-hailing for short, walkable distances.
- Booking solo cars instead of sharing rides with colleagues.
- Booking a car for a single day trip where Uber will suffice
- Taking cabs or Uber for short walkable distances
- Over-sized rental cars for single travellers
- Using car rental, Uber or taxi when free hotel transfer services exist

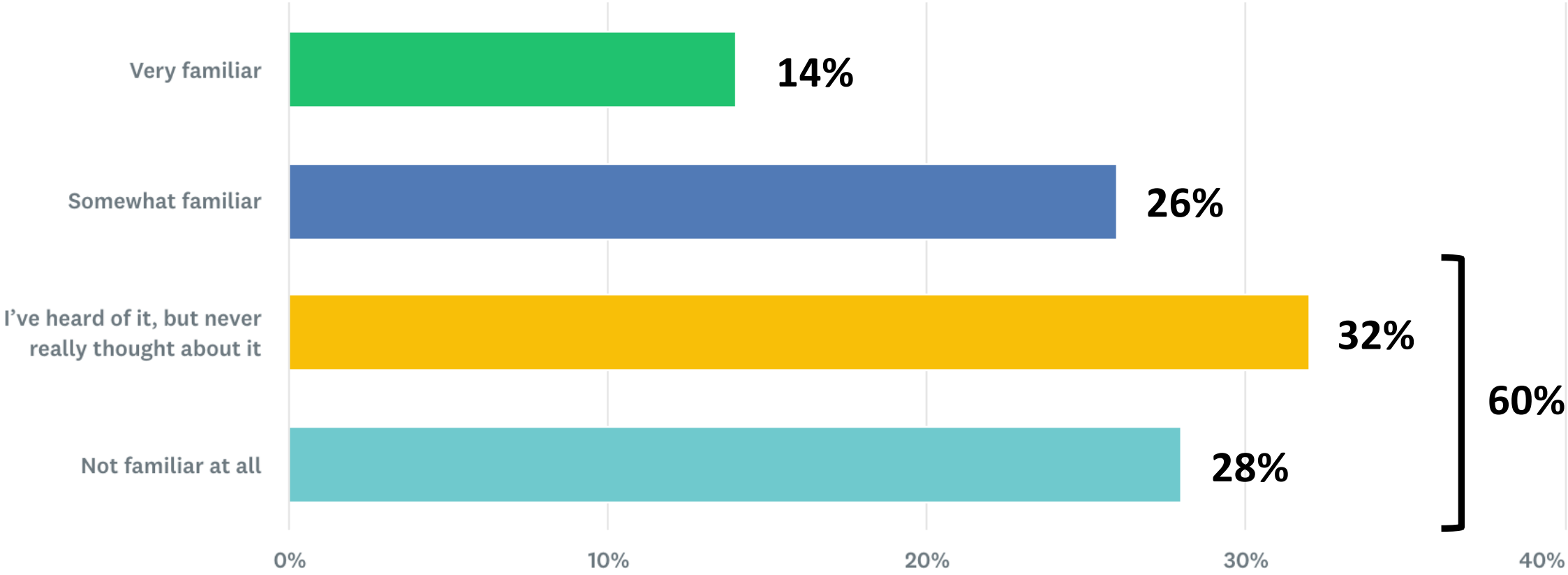


Motivation to Change

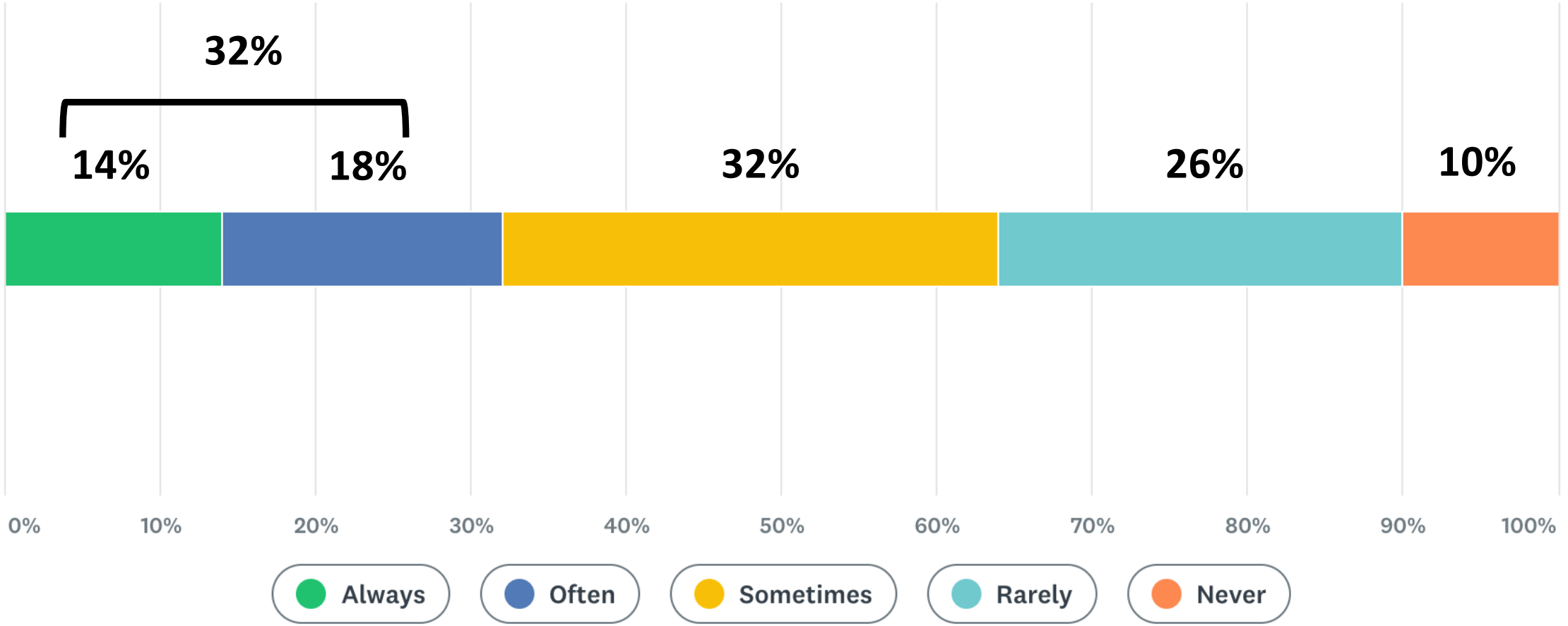
- Environmental Impact
- Ethical & Moral Concerns
- Company Culture and Requirements
- Cost


SURVEY SNEAK PEAK

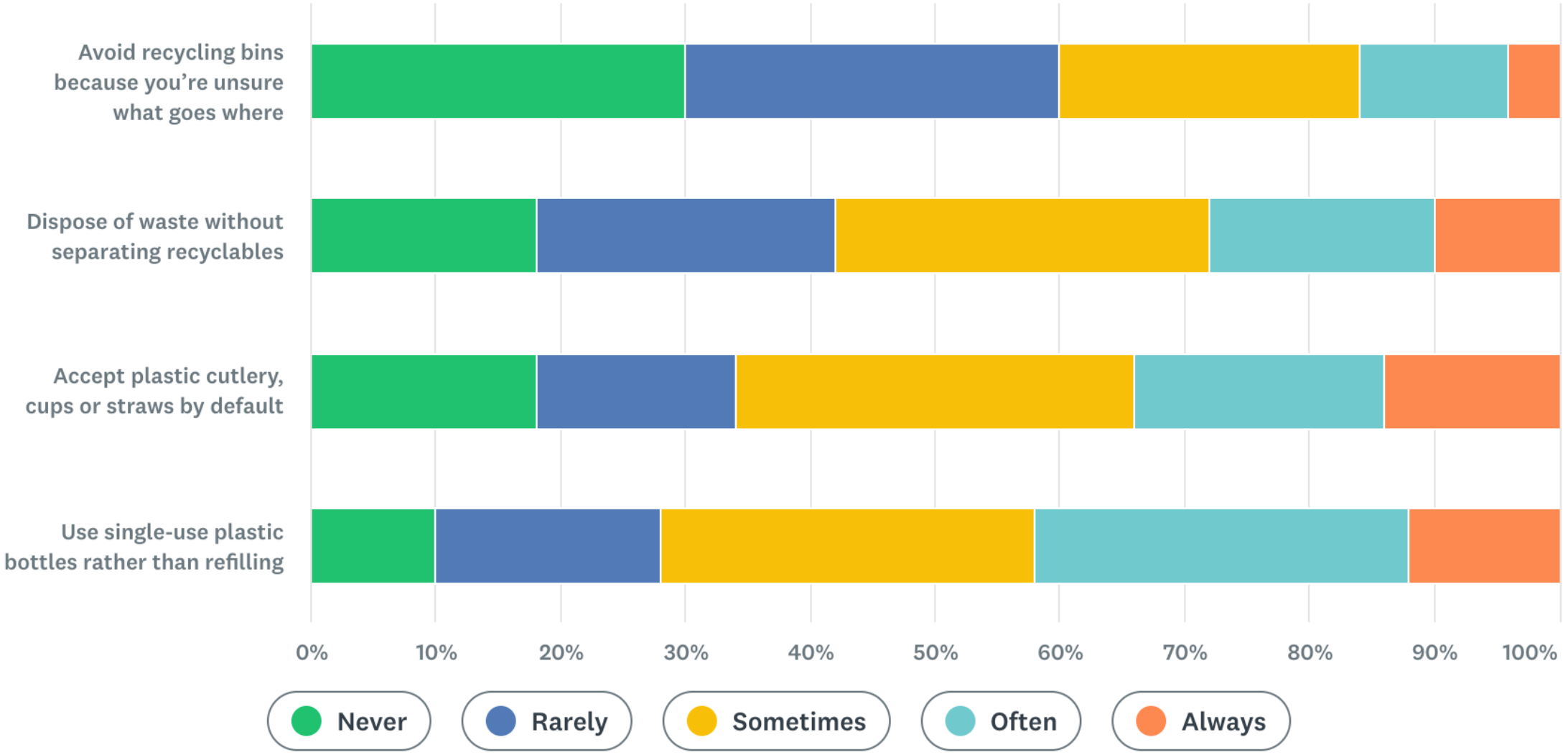
Before today, how familiar were you with the idea of “intentional traveller behaviour”?



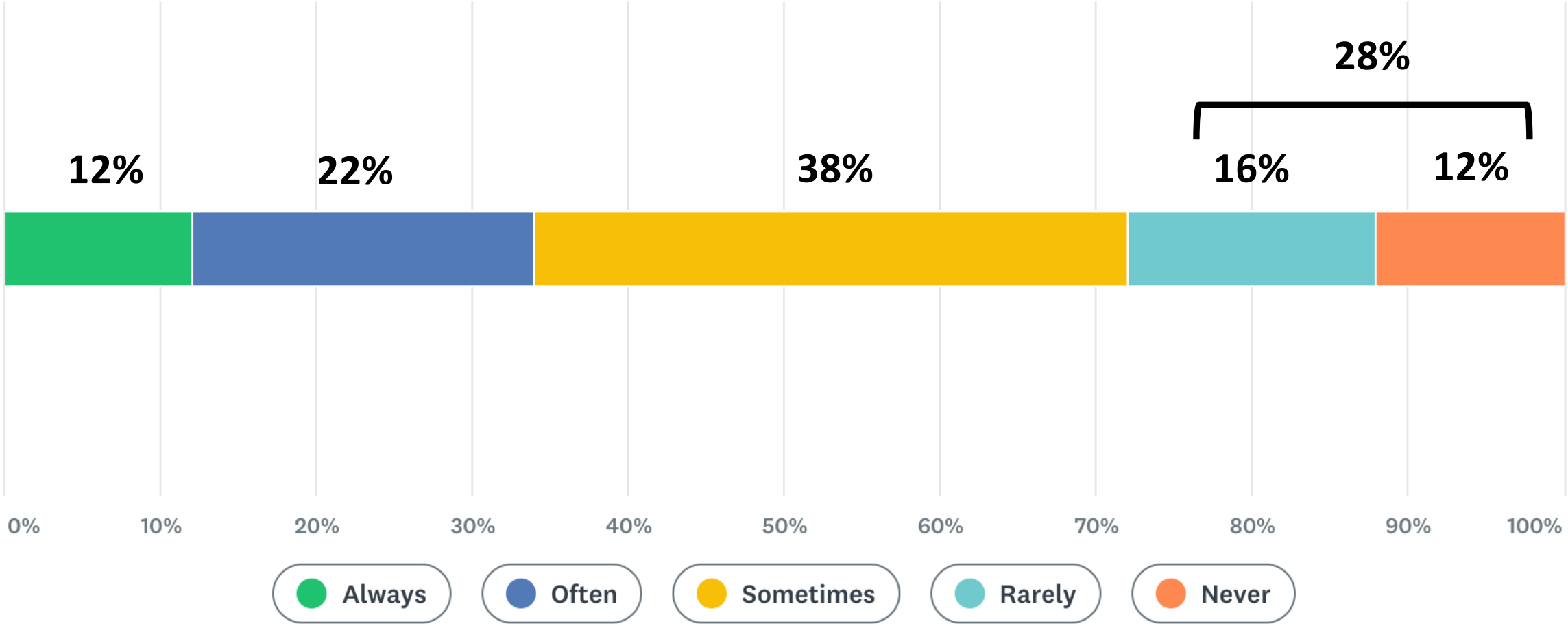
When travelling for work, how often do you consciously think about the environmental impact of your actions?



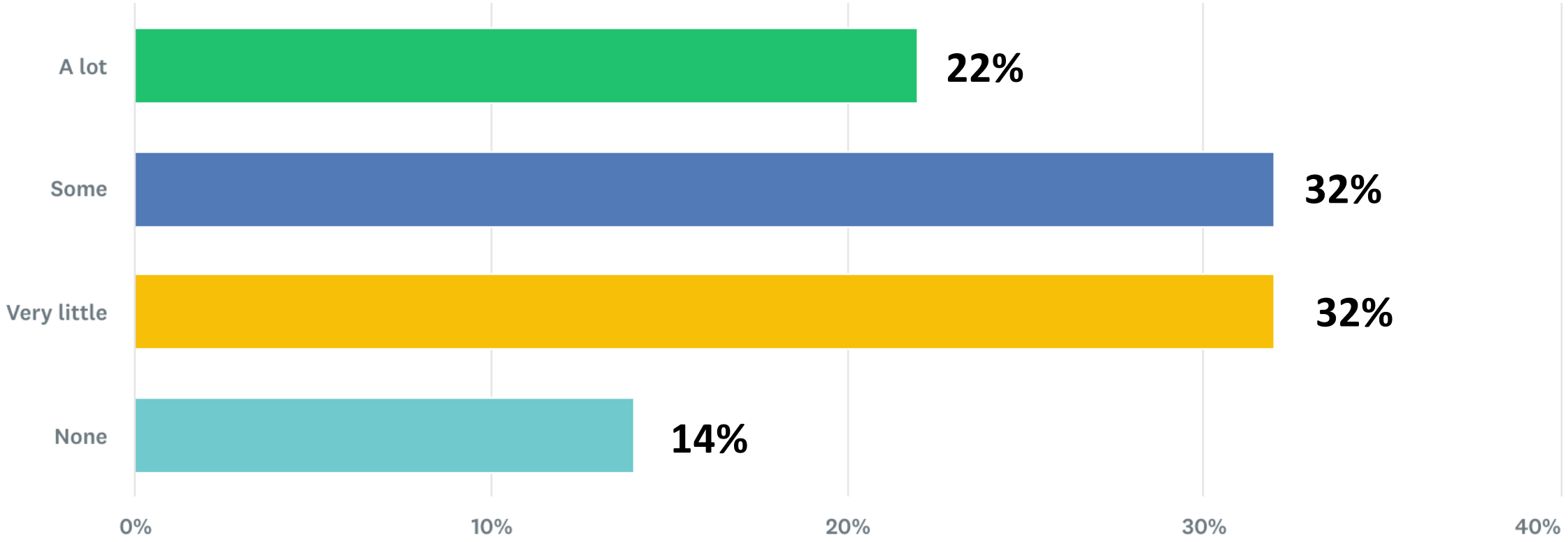
When travelling for work, how often do you:



How often do you pack more luggage than you end up using on a work trip?



Before taking this survey, how much thought had you given to the cumulative impact of small travel behaviours?



Intentional Traveller Behaviour Project: The Plan Ahead

1. **Collect additional information**
   Continue collecting information from suppliers
2. **Baseline Traveller & Hotel Surveys**
   Assess their awareness around wastefulness, and how intentional they are when they travel
3. **Investigate Wasteful Behaviour Psychology**
   Better understand the drivers that lead to wasteful behaviour
4. **Whitepaper & Resources**
   Compile all information into a Whitepaper, and create simple content outlining what constitutes Wasteful behaviour and how to avoid it. Let's take this global!
5. **Follow up surveys**
   Hosted in 12-18 months to gauge traveller improvements in awareness
6. **Monitoring**
   On-going supplier, Buyer & Traveller engagement to gauge improvement





DUTY OF CARE 2.0

Managing risk in a permanently disrupted world

Chantal Coetzee
Assistance Manager
Southern Africa Operations

Dr Chris van Straten
Global Health Advisor
Clinical Governance

Polina Vynogradova
Lead Security Analyst,
Mashreq and Iran

CAPE TOWN CORPORATE TRAVEL WORKSHOP 2026

INTERNATIONAL SOS

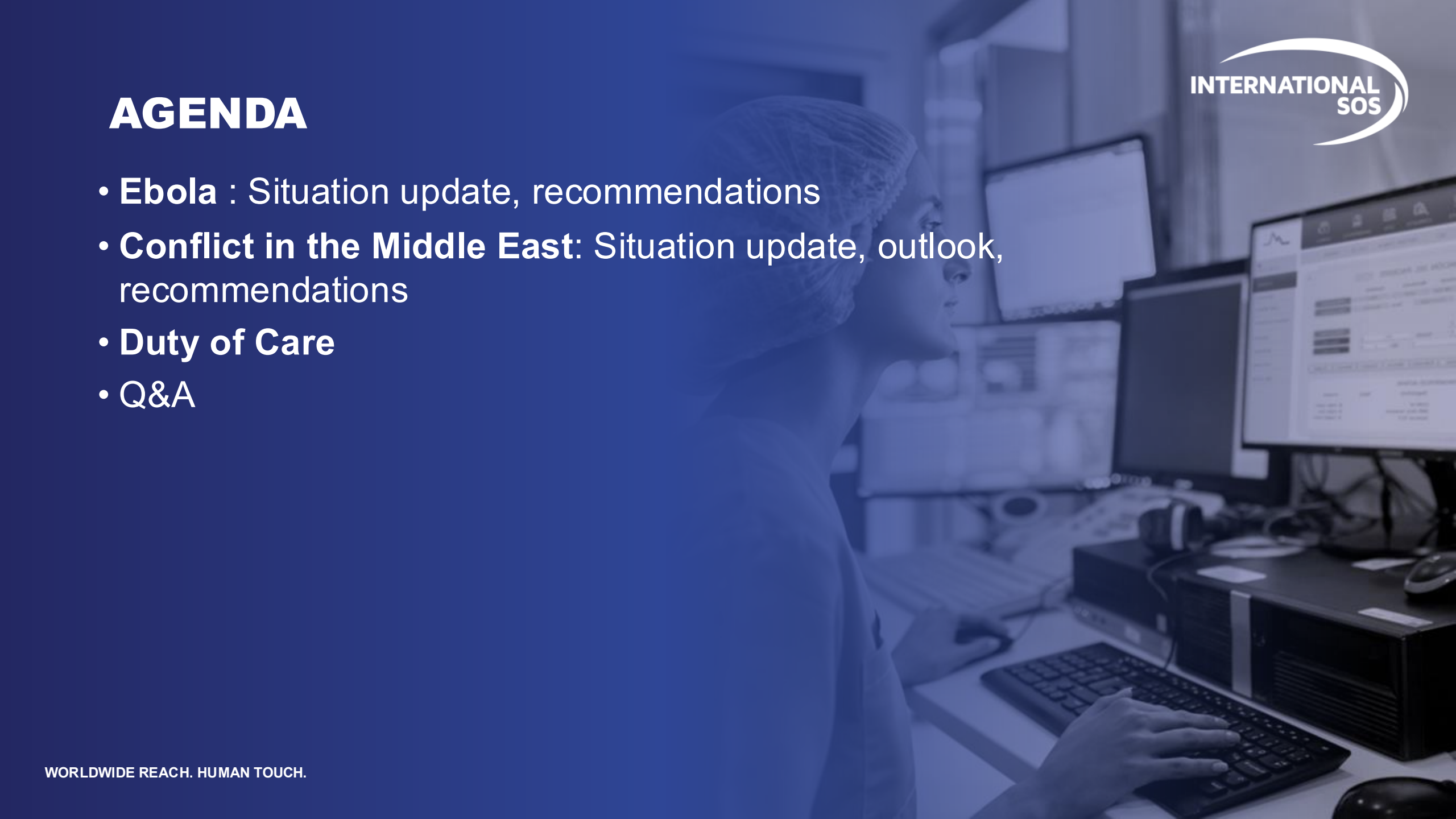


NAVIGATING THE NEW RISK LANDSCAPE IN CORPORATE TRAVEL

WORLDWIDE REACH. HUMAN TOUCH.

AGENDA

- **Ebola** : Situation update, recommendations
- **Conflict in the Middle East**: Situation update, outlook, recommendations
- **Duty of Care**
- Q&A



SPEAKERS



Dr Chris van Straten
Global Health Advisor, Clinical Governance,
International SOS



Polina Vynogradova
Lead Security Analyst, Middle East
International SOS



Ebola Epidemic: Current and Evolving Landscape

Disclaimer: This presentation has been developed for educational purposes only. It is not a or concerns about any topic described here, please consult your medical professional. substitute for professional medical advice. Should you have questions

WORLDWIDE REACH.
HUMAN TOUCH.

DRC

OUTBREAK IN ITURI, NORTH KIVU AND SOUTH KIVU PROVINCES CONTINUES TO GROW

OVERVIEW

15 May – Ebola outbreak was declared in Congo (DRC).
17 May – The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the situation a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) coordinated outbreak response is ongoing.
Infections have been detected in Ituri, North and South Kivu provinces
Testing has confirmed the Bundibugyo strain of Ebola - currently no approved vaccine or specific treatment.

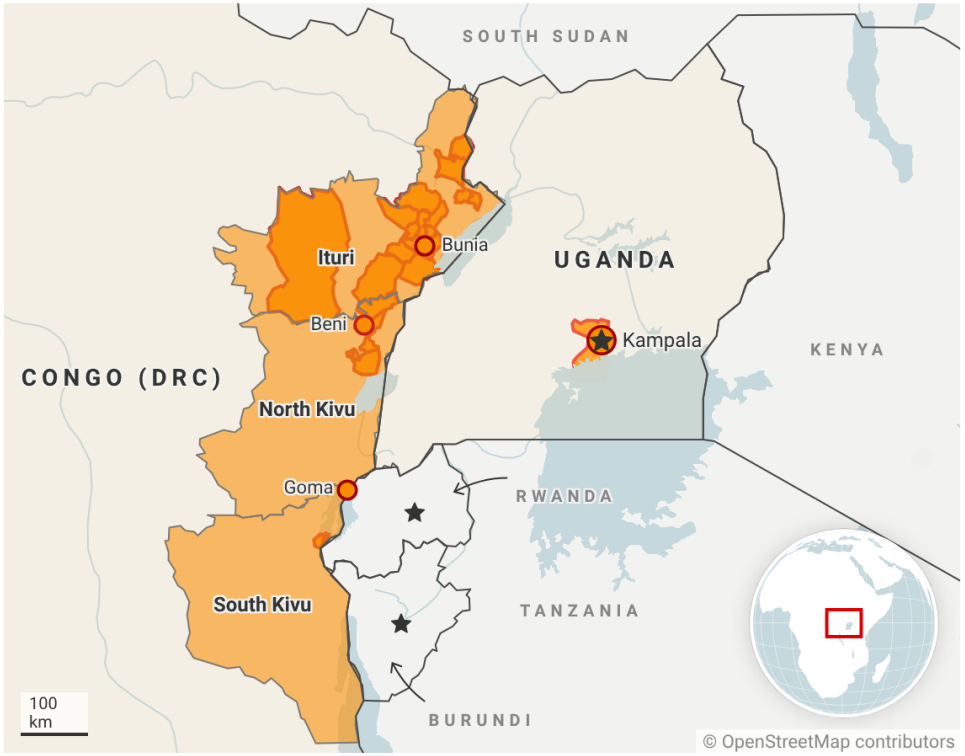
UPDATE AS OF 7 JUNE:

Confirmed cases: 550
Suspected cases: 117
Deaths among confirmed cases: 101
People recovered: 19
Contacts identified: 5,418 (~50% follow up rate)

- **Affected areas:**
  - **Ituri province is most affected (> 90% of cases):**
    Aru, Aungba, Bambu, Bunia, Damas, Gethy, Kilo, Komanda, Lita, Logo, Mambasa, Mangala, Mongbwalu, Nizi, Nyankunde, Rimba, Rwampara
  - **North Kivu province:**
    Beni, Butembo, Goma, Kalunguta, Katwa, Kyondo, Oicha
  - **South Kivu province:**
    Miti-Murhesa

Ebola outbreak in Congo (DRC) and Uganda

Affected areas as of 6 June 2026



** Congo (DRC) showing affected health zones, Uganda showing affected districts*

Map: Medical Information & Analysis, International SOS • Source: Institut National de Santé Publique • Created with Datawrapper

UGANDA

NO NEW INFECTIONS IN THE LAST 24 HOURS
AND OVER 600 CONTACTS UNDER MONITORING

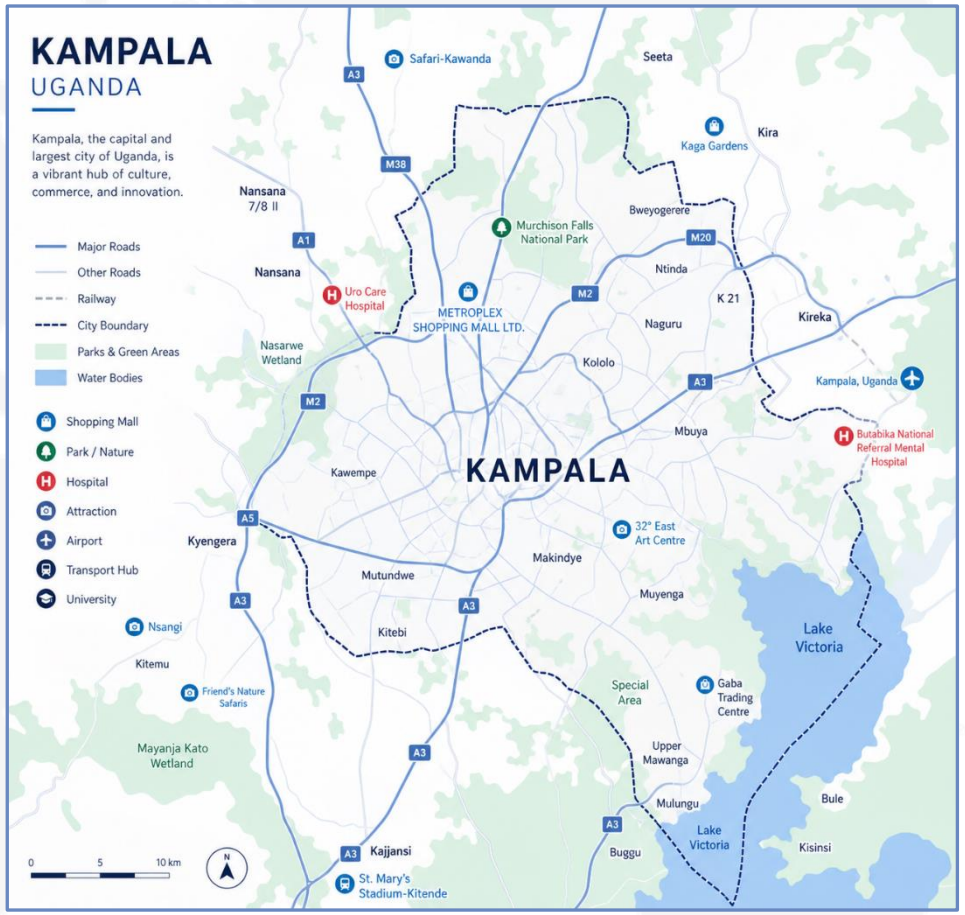
OVERVIEW

15 May - Uganda detected its first case in Kampala, linked to the outbreak in Congo (DRC). Since then, there have been further imported cases, as well as several cases acquired in Uganda, mainly among identified close contacts.

UPDATE AS OF 8 JUNE:

Affected location: Kampala, Wakiso
Confirmed cases: 19, at least 14 imported cases
Confirmed fatalities: 2
People recovered: 5
Contact tracing: At least 792 known contacts

Health authorities have reported that Uganda is assisting the Congo (DRC) outbreak by deploying health workers and setting up 50-bed treatment units. Additionally, two mobile laboratories have been set up in Arua and Bwera to assist with testing and diagnostics.



WHO & AFRICA CDC RESPONSE

Contain outbreak and reduce further spread
Joint continental response plan launched (June to November)
Shared plan – close partnership – coordinated effort
One response approach - one plan, one team
Complements national response plans

Core areas

- Emergency coordination
- Surveillance – quickly identify contacts - > testing
- Laboratory testing – isolation and care
- Infection prevention and control – patients and health care workers
- Clinical care – ETUs
- Community engagement – build trust
- Research and logistics
- Continuity of essential services
- Support preparedness in neighbouring countries

Locations that have implemented enhanced screening, border closures or travel restrictions

- **Argentina:** monitoring of ships arriving from areas at risk of Ebola
- **Bahamas:** enhanced screening, possible quarantine measures
- **Bahrain:** restricted entry for some travellers
- **Belize:** entry screening
- **Botswana:** entry screening
- **Burundi:** enhanced surveillance at entry points
- **Canada:** restricted entry for some travellers, mandatory quarantine measures
- **Congo (DRC):** restrictions in affected provinces
- **Egypt:** enhanced screening
- **Fiji:** enhanced screening
- **Ghana**: entry screening
- **Hong Kong (China SAR):** enhanced screening protocols for flights arriving from Ethiopia
- **India:** entry screening
- **Jamaica:** enhanced surveillance at entry ports
- **Jordan**: travel restrictions
- **Kenya:** enhanced entry screening
- **Liberia**: entry screening
- **Malawi:** entry exit screening
- **Malaysia:** entry screening
- **Mauritius:** entry screening
- **Mexico:** entry restrictions
- **Mozambique:** enhanced surveillance at entry points
- **Namibia:** enhanced surveillance at entry points
- **Nigeria:** strengthened border screening
- **Oman:** enhanced health measures
- **Pakistan:** enhanced screening
- **Rwanda:** border closures with DRC, restrictions for DRC travellers, quarantine for returning nationals
- **Saint Kitts and Nevis:** travel advisory and potential entry restrictions
- **Singapore:** post-arrival monitoring for travellers from affected areas
- **Somalia:** enhanced screening
- **South Korea:** post-arrival monitoring for travellers from affected areas
- **South Sudan:** strengthened border screening
- **Sri Lanka:** enhanced screening protocols
- **Taiwan:** post-arrival monitoring for travellers from affected areas
- **Tanzania:** enhanced entry screening
- **Thailand:** enhanced screening, quarantine measures for travellers
- **Uganda:** border closures with DRC
- **United Arab Emirates**: restricted entry for some travellers
- **United States:** restricted entry for some travellers
- **Zambia:** enhanced screening at border crossings
- **Zimbabwe:** strengthened systems

RISK OF TRAVEL

Where are you travelling to?

- DRC
- Uganda
- South Sudan
- Rest of Africa
- Kenya

Risk Assessment

- Travel – essential / nonessential
- Type of work
- Itinerary
- Travel restrictions at other destinations / home country
  - Enhanced screening
  - Entry restrictions
  - Quarantine
  - Border closures

Plan

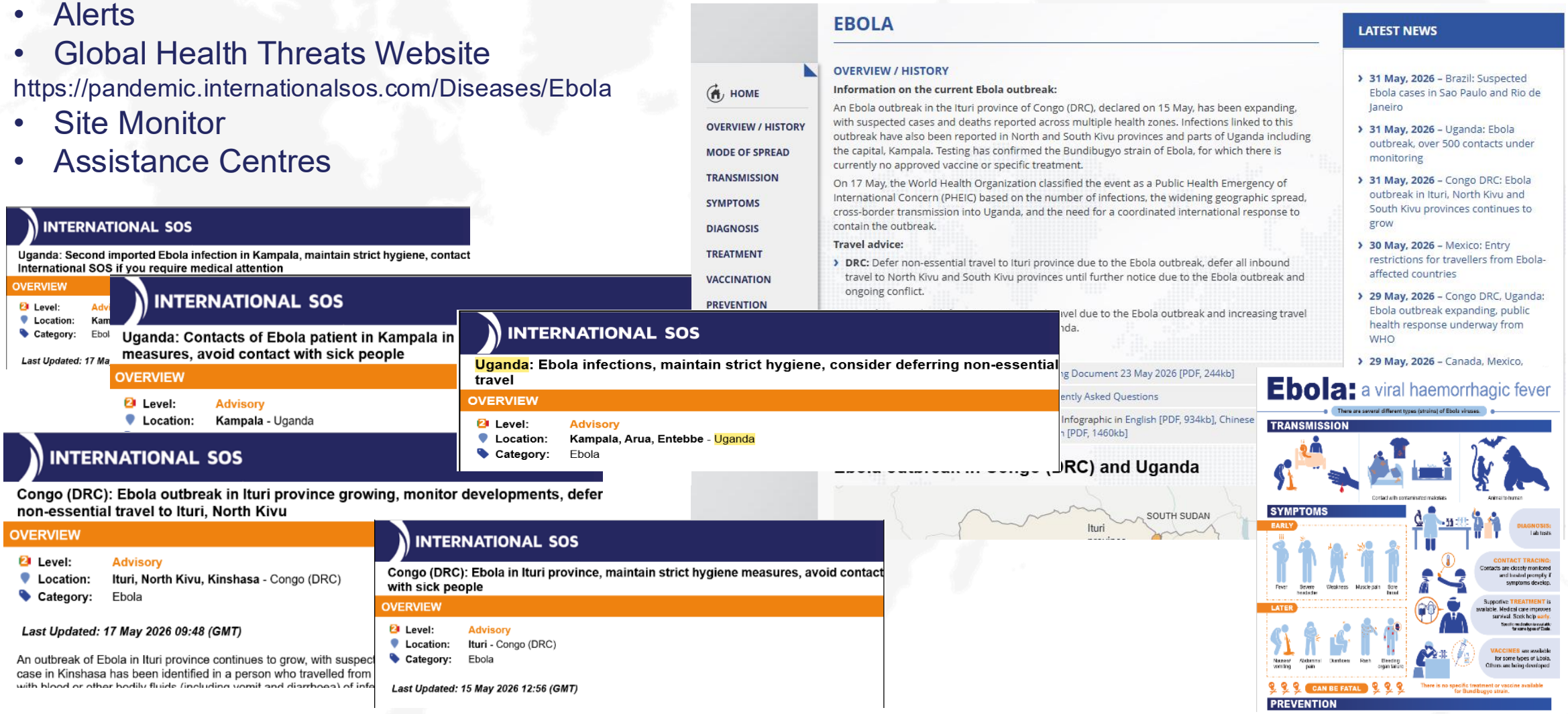
- What to do if you get sick
- Hospitals
- Contacts

RESOURCES

- Alerts
- Global Health Threats Website

https://pandemic.internationalsos.com/Diseases/Ebola

- Site Monitor
- Assistance Centres



SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS DURING THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT



CONFLICT IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SITUATION UPDATE

- April US-Iran ceasefire holds undermined by recuring violations
- Recurrent exchanges of hostilities between US and Iran, as well as Israel and Iran:
  - On 9-10 June, US carried out a series of attacks against Iran after accusing Iran of shooting down a US military helicopter on 8 June. Iran retaliated against US bases in Kuwait, Bahrain and Jordan.
  - On 8 June, Israel and Iran exchanged attacks for the first time since introduction of ceasefire.
- Disruption in the Strait of Hormuz

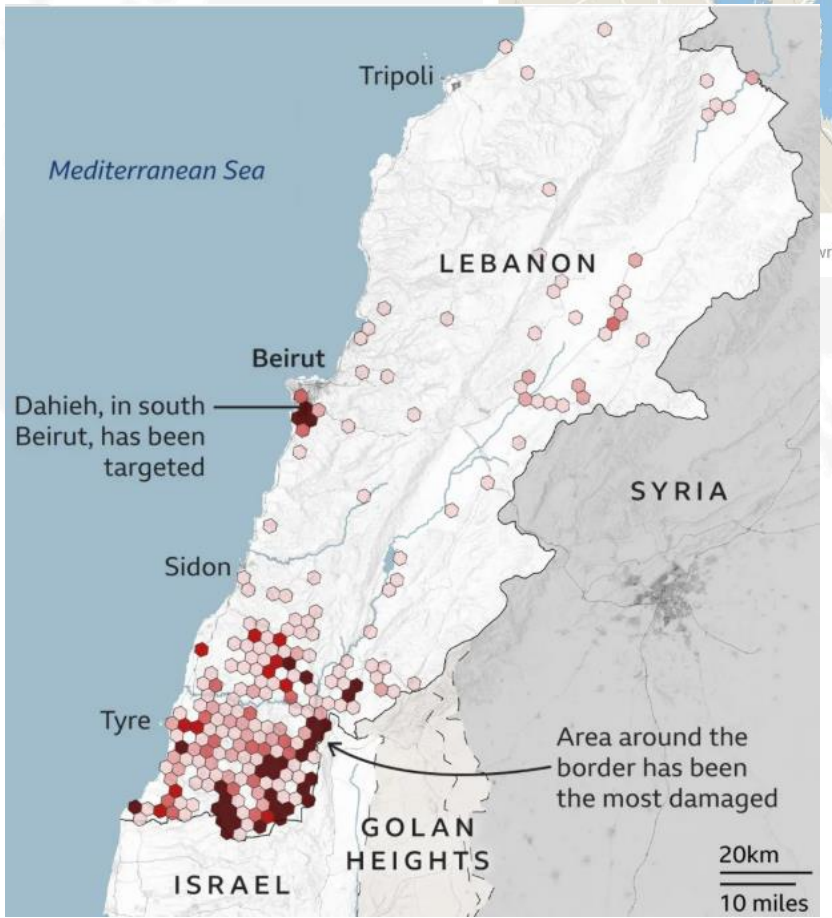


MEDIATION EFFORTS

SITUATION UPDATE

- US-Iran negations over Memorandum of Understanding are ongoing, but remain fragile.
- Key issues include:
  - Iran's nuclear program
  - Strait of Hormuz
  - Lebanon
- Iran demands that Israel stops attacks against its ally Hezbollah in Lebanon
- Israel intends to continue its military operations against the group in Lebanon seeing it as a national security threat.





OUTLOOK

KEY ASSUMPTIONS

- Delays in peace negotiations sustain risk of further exchanges of hostilities between Iran and US/Israel
- This will expose regional countries hosting US interests to the risk of Iranian attacks
- This will be accompanied by airspace and flight disruption across the region
- US seeks to resolve the issue diplomatically, but will escalate pressure on Iran, if it continues to meet its demands



ADVICE

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Our advice remains dynamic and will change in response to the situation in the region.
- At this stage essential travel or transit through the Gulf countries is possible.
- Closely monitor regional developments via verified sources.
- Maintain flexible itineraries.
- Follow advice from authorities.



DUTY OF CARE: ARE COMPANIES DOING ENOUGH?



WORLDWIDE REACH. HUMAN TOUCH.

WHY THIS MATTERS

During periods of conflict or geopolitical instability, organisations must balance employee safety, operational continuity, and leadership decision-making under uncertainty.



DUTY OF CARE

Protecting the safety and wellbeing of employees in affected regions



BUSINESS CONTINUITY

Maintaining operational resilience during periods of disruption



LEADERSHIP DECISION-MAKING

Supporting leadership teams with timely insights and advisory support during rapidly evolving situations



WORKFORCE CONFIDENCE

Providing employees with clear guidance and support during uncertain environments



INTERNATIONAL SOS

RISK OUTLOOK 2026

The corporate travel risk environment has fundamentally shifted. Organisations are no longer managing isolated threats, but multiple, overlapping risks that evolve rapidly and globally. The pace, complexity, and interconnectedness of risk now define the landscape.

- 57% of leaders say new risks are emerging faster than they can manage, and **74%** feel the decision-making window is shrinking. Only **35%** are confident in mobilizing teams quickly.
- While **80%** believe quick risk detection is advantageous, only **20%** are confident in verifying risk information swiftly.
- Nearly **49%** report that risks are becoming more interconnected, necessitating joint security and medical responses.



HOW THE LANDSCAPE HAS CHANGED

GEOPOLITICAL CONFLICTS INCREASINGLY IMPACTING GLOBAL TRAVEL

In 2025, there were 159 state-based conflicts, the highest since the 1940s, disrupting travel routes, airspace, and supply chains.

HEALTH THREATS ARE RISING RAPIDLY

While pandemic urgency has faded, emerging infectious diseases, climate-linked health issues, and reduced global surveillance funding mean outbreaks may be detected later and spread faster, increasing risk for travellers

FREQUENT CIVIL UNREST AND POLITICAL INSTABILITY

Economic pressure, polarisation, and geopolitical tension are increasing protest movements and instability across regions, including countries not historically considered high-risk.

EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS ARE DISRUPTING TRAVEL UNPRECEDENTEDLY

Heatwaves, floods, wildfires, and storms are more frequent and severe, causing immediate infrastructure disruptions and long-term challenges like migration and supply shortages.

CYBERSECURITY RISKS INCREASINGLY FOLLOW TRAVELLERS WHEREVER THEY GO

Mobile working has expanded the attack surface. Cyber incidents (e.g. ransomware attacks up 15% in 2024) now directly affect travelling employees and corporate data security.

SOCIAL MEDIA TURNS LOCAL INCIDENTS INTO GLOBAL CRISES WITHIN MINUTES

Misinformation and AI-generated content are growing rapidly, with an estimated 50% of online content machine-generated, making it harder to distinguish fact from fiction during crises

LESSONS FROM RECENT EVENTS

INTERNATIONAL SOS CONSULTING

Identifying Affected Travellers Quickly

- **74%** of organisations say decision-making timelines are shrinking
- **35%** feel confident mobilising quickly in a crisis
- Lesson: Real-time traveller tracking and visibility tools are essential for effective response.

TRUSTING THE RIGHT INFORMATION IN FAST-MOVING CRISES

- Only **20%** of organisations feel capable of verifying risk information quickly
- Misinformation is a top global risk but often underestimated
- Lesson: Companies must rely on trusted intelligence sources and expert validation, not social media or unverified data.

TIMING TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS EFFECTIVELY

- Acting too early disrupts business
- Acting too late exposes employees to risk
- Lesson: Organisations need clear risk thresholds and predefined triggers supported by real-time intelligence to determine when to restrict or adjust travel.

BALANCING EMPLOYEE SAFETY WITH BUSINESS CONTINUITY

- **64%** report increased security risks and **43%** increased health risks
- Most teams face static or reduced budgets
- Lesson: Agility, prioritisation, and scenario planning are critical as risks increase while resources remain constrained

Communicating Effectively During Uncertainty

- Employees expect timely, clear, and accurate communication
- Crisis communication must be centralised, consistent, and transparent, with frequent updates based on validated information.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Success in today's travel risk environment depends on managing speed, complexity, and uncertainty through real-time intelligence, agile decision-making, and integrated, adaptive risk strategies.

RECOMMENDATION FOR ORGANIZATIONS



1 **THE VALUE OF INFORMATION AND ADVICE** – access to validated and up-to-date information about the legal, tax, health, safety, and security environment within your operational locations is crucial and allows for both legal compliance and confident decision making. This information helps to advise not just business travellers, assignees, and international remote workers, but also local employees and hybrid workers.



2 **TRAINING AND EDUCATION** – disseminating the validated information across your employee groups through in-person and virtual training and workshops will instill confidence in your people to address the risks they may face. They must be aware of the location-specific risks they may face personalised to their individual risk profile. Employees should also know who to contact, 24/7 should they have concerns or in the event of an incident.



3 **DIGITAL TOOLS AND SYSTEMS** – with low and medium-risk locations now presenting with high-risk incidents and crises, it is even more important to adopt digital tools to assist with communicating with and tracking your workforce. This enables a rapid response should an incident occur, prioritising the health and safety of your people.



4 **TEST AND REVIEW POLICIES AND PROCEDURES** – as working environments continue to change, so do the risks. As new legislations get approved, they need to be evaluated on how they may impact your organisation. Organisations should ensure they have comprehensive systems, policies and procedures in place to manage and respond to any incidents or risks that may arise in relation to its mobile workforce, including any physical or psychosocial risks or incidents.

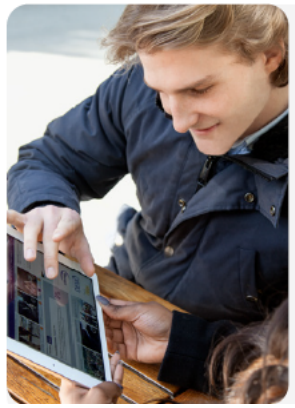
RECOMMENDATION FOR ORGANIZATIONS



5 **INTERNAL COLLABORATION** – involving multiple stakeholders across HR, financial, security, IT, risk, and legal departments will create a more cohesive Duty of Care response. It is pivotal to align on policies and procedures, employee and organisational risks and how they will be measured and reported on.



6 **STRENGTH OF PARTNERSHIPS** – leveraging assistance, legal, and compliance experts to support the growth, diversity, and complexity of your changing environment. Collaborate with experts to help shape, enhance, and test your policies and procedures to ensure their effectiveness.



7 **STRIKING THE RIGHT BALANCE BETWEEN DUTY OF CARE AND EMPLOYEE PRIVACY** – transparency will be key in ensuring employees feel respected and valued. Stakeholders must stay informed on evolving global data protection regulations and assess their impact on Duty of Care programmes. Collaboration with privacy professionals will be essential when reviewing or implementing these programmes. When executed effectively, a Duty of Care programme not only enhances employee safety but highlights your organisation's commitment to protecting their privacy, fostering trust and loyalty within your workforce.

Q&A

Thank you!

INTERNATIONAL SOS CONSULTING

SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS DURING CONFLICT

Organisations can engage International SOS to support throughout the **lifecycle of an incident/escalation**, with advisory services evolving as the situation develops.

	Conflict Phase 1:	*Conflict Phase 2:*	*Conflict Phase 3:*	*Conflict Phase 4a:*	*Conflict Phase 4b:*
	Escalation / Early Crisis	**Immediate Operational Disruption**	**Sustained Conflict Environment**	**De-escalation and Re-entry**	**Post-Event Review and Strengthening**
TYPICAL CLIENT CHALLENGES	Rapid escalation, missile or drone activity, uncertainty among employees and leadership	Evacuations, movement restrictions, operational disruption	Prolonged instability affecting workforce safety and operations	De-escalation with ongoing uncertainty, safe return of staff to locations, workforce reintegration	Identifying gaps in response, strengthening preparedness for future events
SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE ADVISORY	Crisis intelligence briefings, rapid risk assessments, employee protective safety guidance, crisis communications advisory	Evacuation response advisory support, crisis management advisory, travel risk monitoring, operational risk analysis	Bespoke geopolitical intelligence briefings, ongoing monitoring and alerts, security posture reviews and risk reassessment	Re-entry guidance, residual risk monitoring, and leadership support on return timing	Post-event reviews, crisis framework and governance improvements, scenario planning and exercises
WORKFORCE WELLBEING SUPPORT	Employee reassurance communications, psychological first aid guidance for managers, wellbeing awareness for impacted staff	Mental health support services (EAP), support for relocated or evacuated employees, manager guidance on supporting distressed teams	Ongoing counselling support, stress management sessions, leadership guidance on managing teams during prolonged crises	Support for returning employees, manager guidance on reintegration, continued reassurance and wellbeing support	Post-event wellbeing support, burnout and fatigue mitigation, organisational resilience and recovery support

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AFRICAN BUSINESS TRAVEL ASSOCIATION

BURNOUT, JETLAG & PRODUCTIVITY

The business case for Traveller well-being

Anneli Douglas

Professor: Faculty of Economic & Management Sciences
University of Pretoria



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CAPE TOWN CORPORATE TRAVEL WORKSHOP 2026



Burnout, jetlag & productivity: The business case for traveller well-being

PROF ANNELI DOUGLAS
Department of Marketing Management

12 June 2026

AACSB ACCREDITED

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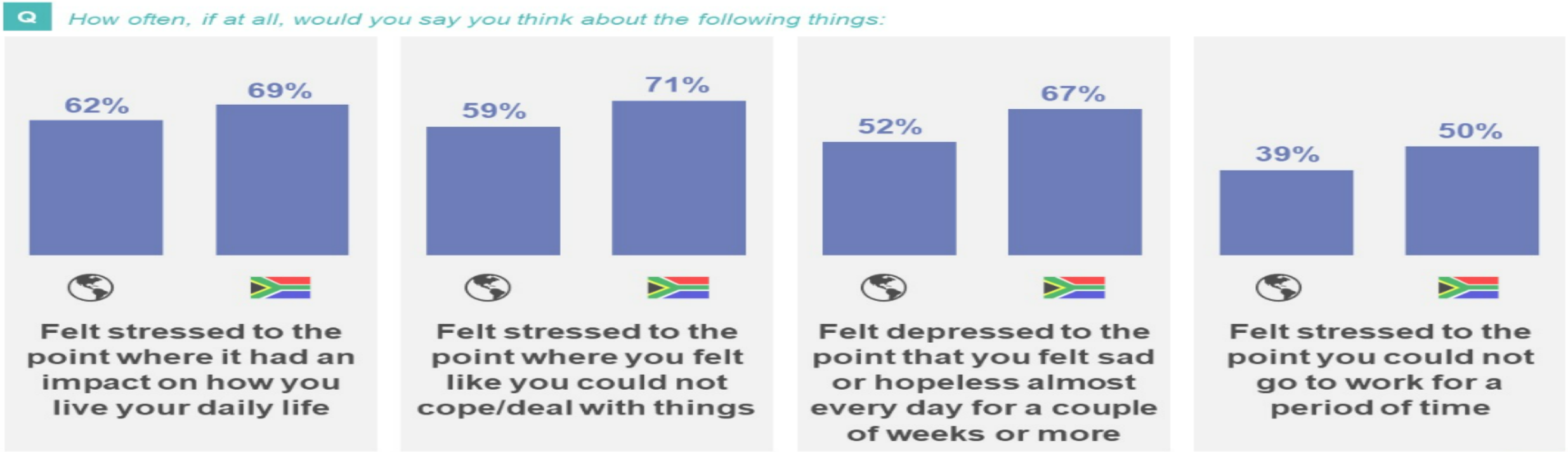
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BACKGROUND

- Half of South Africans have experienced stress levels so overwhelming that they were **unable to attend work for a period.**
- 71% of South Africans have encountered stress levels that made them feel **incapable of coping with life's demands**.



https://www.ipsos.com/en-za/global-discourse-mental-health

INTRODUCTION

- Negative and positive impacts of business travel.
- Influence of business trips on stress: before, during and after a trip.
- Consequences of business travel on family conflicts.
- Travelling affects not only the mind, but also the body.
- Business travel stress can lead to absenteeism, health problems and other negative consequences.
- Is there a relationship between business travel stress and presenteeism?

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WHAT IS PRESENTEEISM?

- Individuals are physically present at work but mentally absent from work.
- While individuals are at work, their cognitive energy is not dedicated to their work.
- ”People turning up to work, who are so distressed by their jobs or some aspect of the organisational climate that they contribute little, if anything, to their work”.
- A result of a negative work environment.
- More probable to make errors, are less creative, give sub-standard service, and their levels of productivity are lower.

(Gilbreath and Karimii, 2012; Cooper 1996; Cooper and Lu,2016; Cooper et al., 1994:2; Gilbreath and Karimi 2012; Johansen et al. 2014; Lohaus and Habermann, 2019; Miraglia and Johns 2016; Knani 2022),

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THE COST OF PRESENTEEISM

- Productivity loss due to presenteeism can vary from 30% to more than 90%.
- Presenteeism increases indirect and direct costs and decreases global performance.
- Cost of presenteeism at R89 billion, for South African companies.
- Employees loose 12.5% of their working hours due to presenteeism.
- This translates into an average loss of 35.6 days of productive time per employee, per year.

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BUSINESS TRAVEL STRESS AND PRESENTEEISM

- Traveling for business purposes could contribute to a negative work environment.
- Business travel stress could decrease employee performance.
- Presenteeism could be a key problem for business travellers, who often face stressful situations before, during and after a business trip.
- The happy-worker productive-worker belief.

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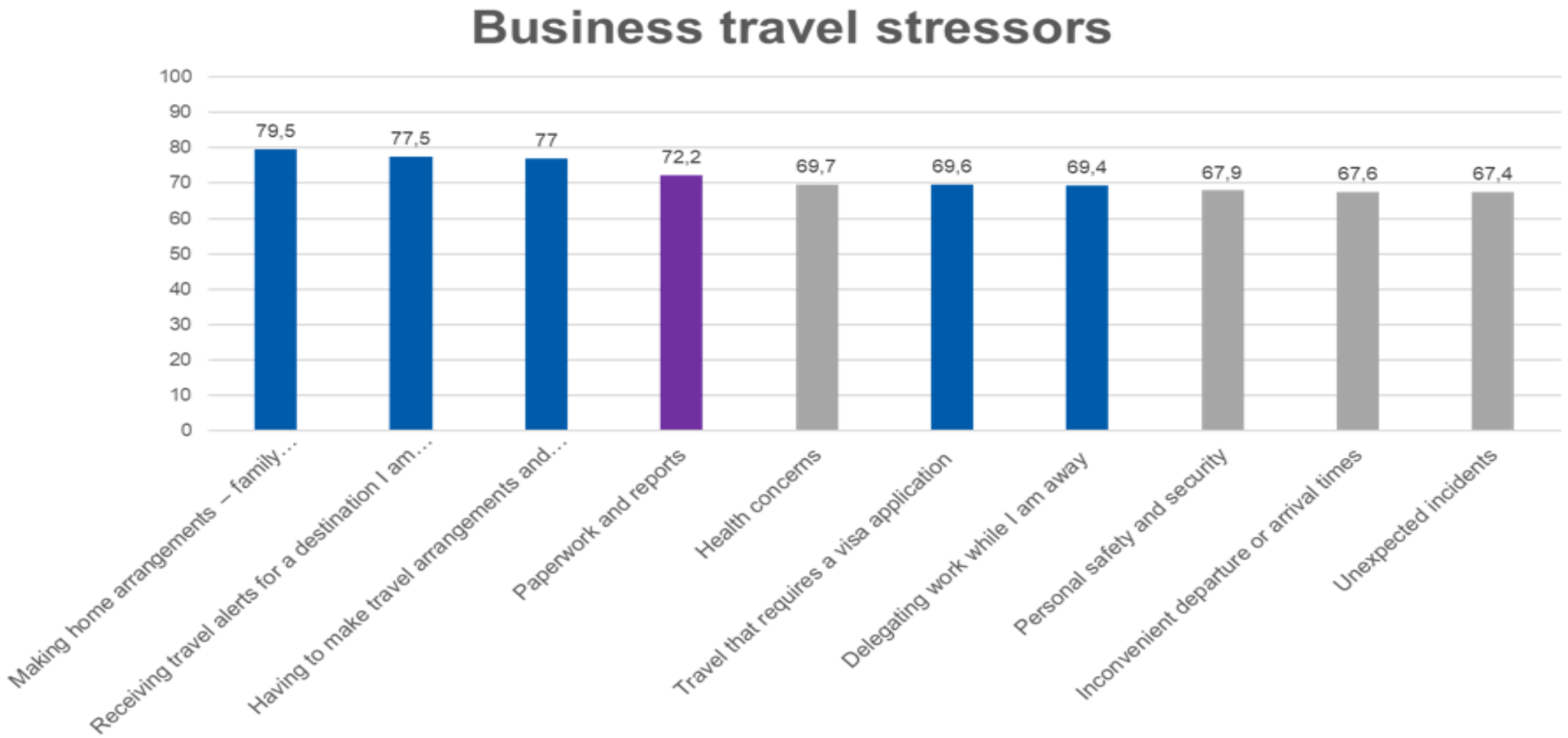
Elstad and Vabo's, 2008; Chen, 2017; Rundle et al. 2018; Ye and Xu 2021; Chen 2017; Ivancevich et al. 2003

PARTICIPANTS

397 responses were collected from business travellers

Demographic variables		Percentage
Gender	Male	44.8
	Female	55.2
Age	18-24	14.7
	25-34	47.6
	35-44	21.2
	45-54	11.4
	55 and older	5.1
Relationship status	Married/Living together	53.7
	Single (not married)	40.5
	Divorced/widowed/separated	5.8
Children	Yes	78.7
	No	21.3
Employment level	Top/Senior Management	38.2
	Middle management	38.0
	Lower management/supervisor	12.2
	Associate (non-management)	11.6
Years of employment	Less than a year	8.6
	1-5 years	45.3
	6- 10 years	29.1
	11 - 15 years	9.1
	More than 15 years	7.8
Number of business trips per year	1-2	23.6
	3-5	42.0
	6-10	22.6
	More than 10	11.8

Top 10 travel stressors for South African business travellers



Comparison of travel stressors

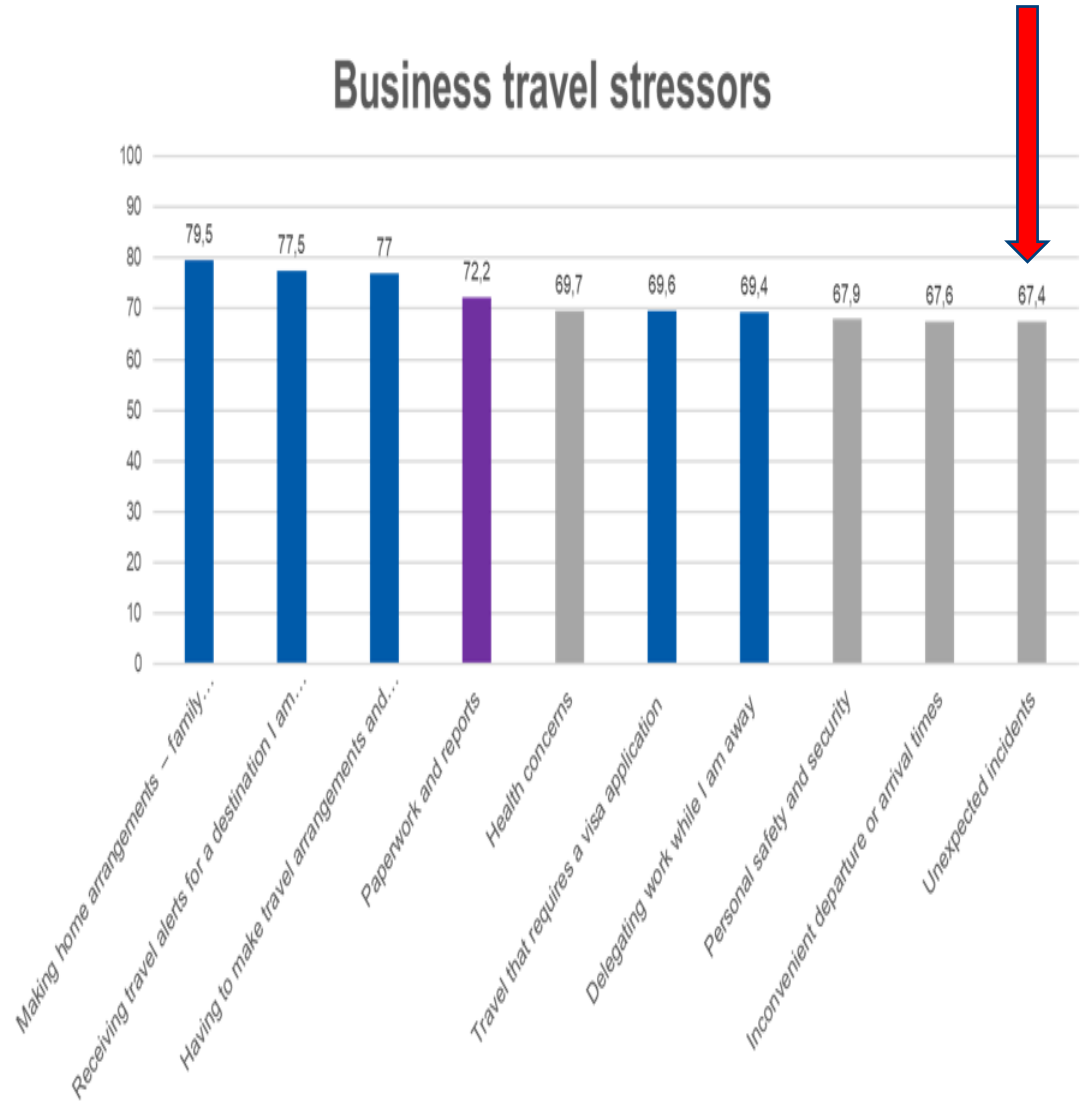


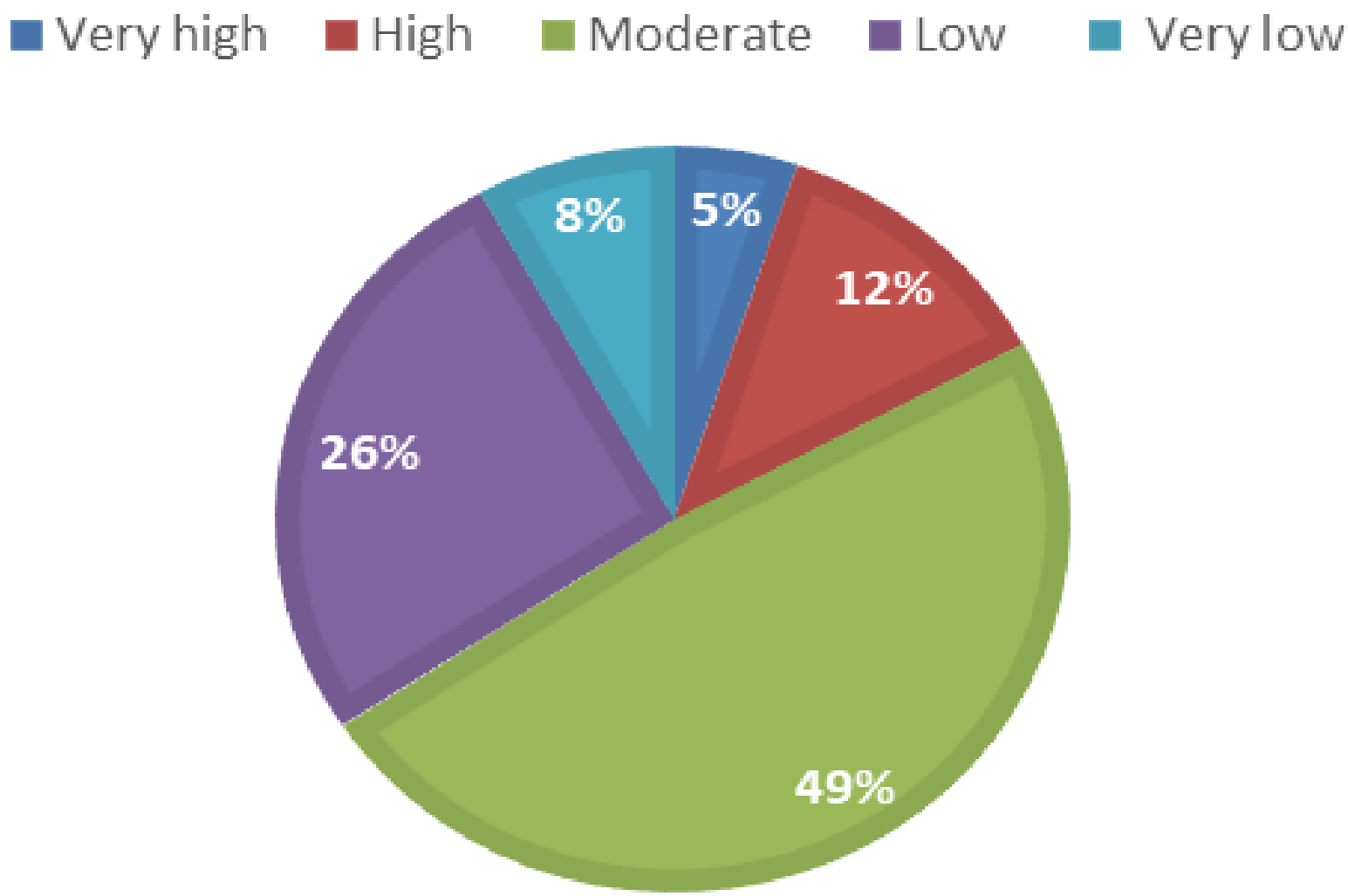
Figure 7: How stressful do the following make you feel before, during or after a business trip?

(Ranking of Travel Stress Factors)

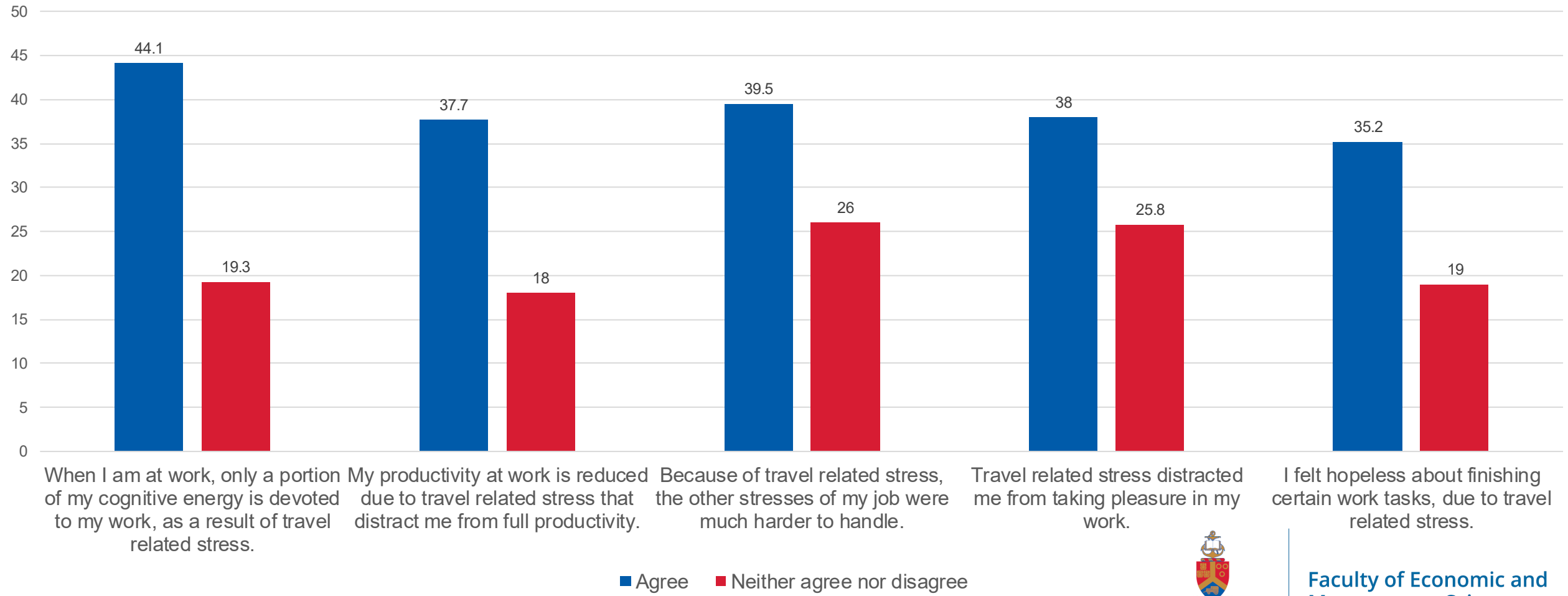
Delayed/Lost Baggage	83.0	Unfamiliar Language	51.0
No Mobile Network	72.0	Restricted Fares	51.0
Poor/No Internet	71.0	Visa Applications	50.0
Flying Economy on Long Haul	71.0	Weekend Trip	49.0
Return Flight Delays	69.0	Immigration & Customs	48.0
Bad Hotel Location	68.0	Long Stay	47.0
Long Trips	67.0	Never Visited Destination	46.0
Unhealthy Eating	67.0	Home to Airport Commute	46.0
Inconvenient Flight Time	65.0	Culture Difference	45.0
Low Category Hotels	65.0	Using Foreign Currency	45.0
Late Flight Arrival Time	65.0	Using Hire Car	43.0
Indirect Flight	64.0	Packing Luggage	43.0
No Exercise	60.0	Using Taxi	41.0
Backlog After Trip	59.0	Booking w/Mobile App	40.0
Geopolitical Tensions	57.0	Using Travel Agent	40.0
Completing Trip Expenses	56.0	Using Online Booking Tool	38.0
Time Zone Charge	54.0	Add-On Services	37.0
Last Minute Trip	53.0	Fear of Flying	33.0
Longer Business Hours	53.0		

Stress (max score of 100)

OVERALL STRESS LEVEL RELATED TO BUSINESS TRAVEL



Presenteeism

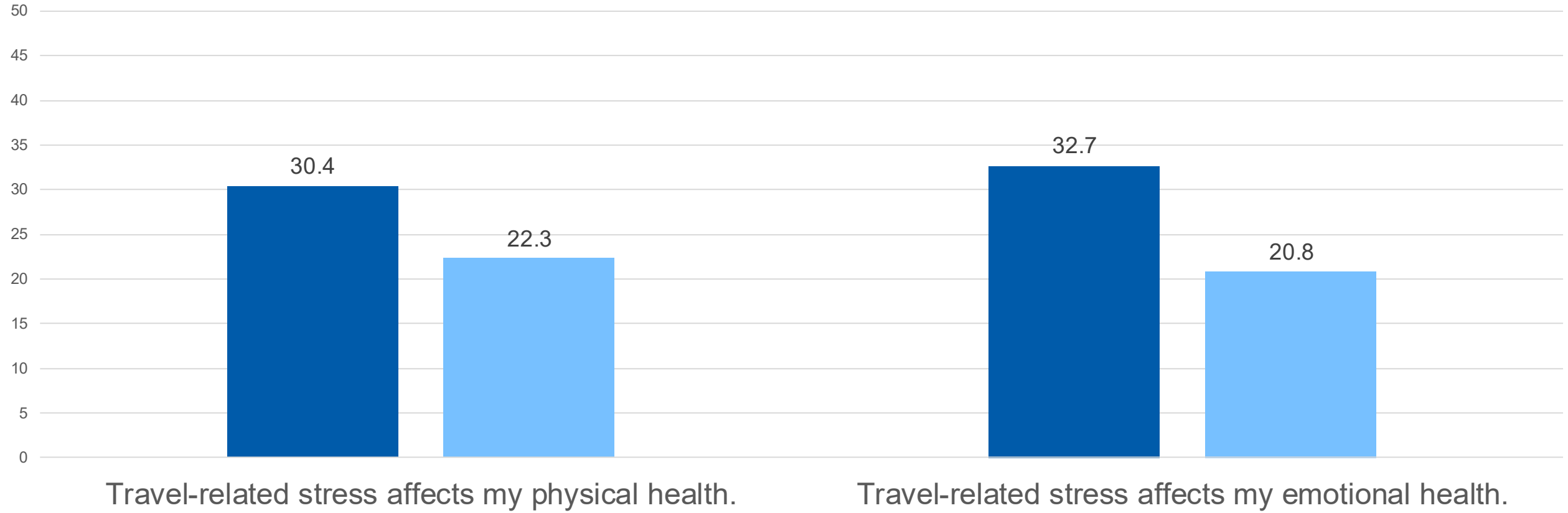


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Health Outcomes

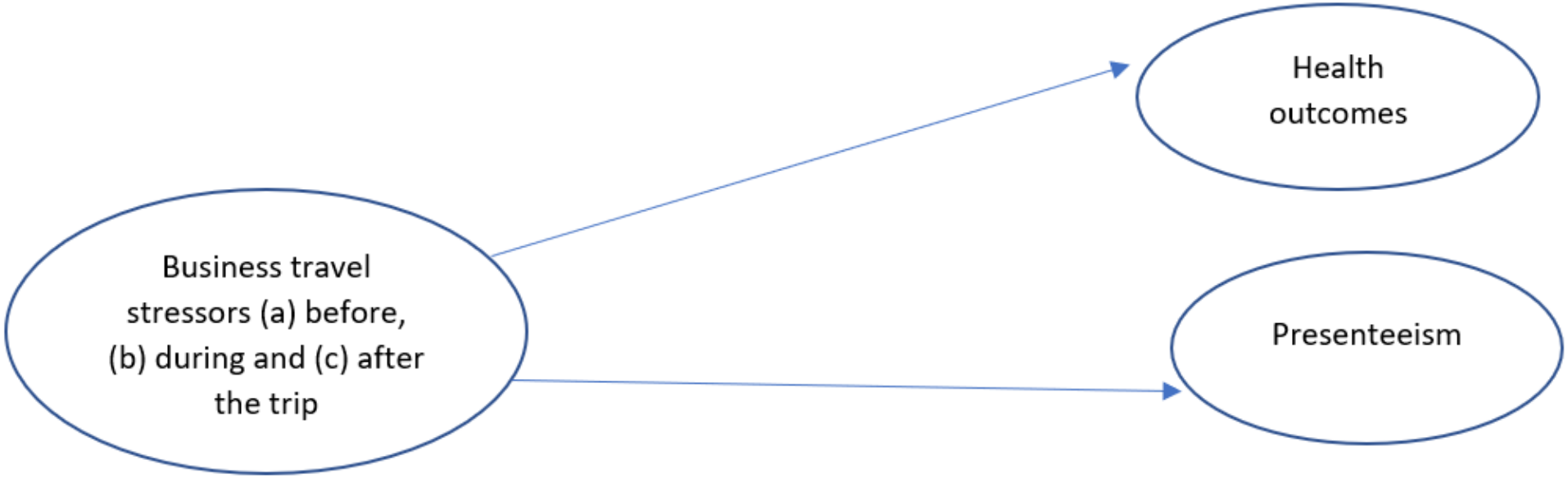


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Model


Health outcomes
Business travel stressors (a) before, (b) during and (c) after the trip
Presenteeism

	Decision
H_{1a}: There is a relationship between business travel stressors before a business trip and a business traveller's presenteeism.	Support
H_{1b1}: There is a relationship between unfamiliar routine and environment during a business trip and a business traveller's presenteeism.	Support
H_{1b2}: There is a relationship between workload and safety concerns during a business trip and a business traveller's presenteeism.	Support
H_{1b3}: There is a relationship between the inconvenience of business trips and a business traveller's presenteeism.	Support
H_{1c}: There is a relationship between business travel stressors after a business trip and a business traveller's presenteeism.	Support
H_{2b1}: There is a relationship between unfamiliar routine and environment during a business trip and health outcomes.	Support
H_{2c}: There is a relationship between business travel stressors after a business trip and health outcomes.	Support

- Business travellers lose an average of 2.3 days per month.

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RESULTS

- Top stressors were in the pre-travel phase.
- Relationships between business travel stressors and presenteeism.
- Relationships between business travel stressors and health outcomes.
- Business travel stress lead to adverse outcomes for organisations.
- A measurement of business travel stress in three travel phases.
- Business travel stress in the Global North vs. Global South.

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FINANCIAL LOSS

(2.3 DAYS PER MONTH)

- Field Technician - R25 000 p/m (Junior)

R2875

- Regional General Manager – R80 000 p/m (Mid)

R9200

- CEO – R150 000 p/m (Senior)

R17250

Jane Smith

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jane@propelp.co.za

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OTHER COSTS

- Replacement Costs: advertising, agency fees, interview time, training.
- New hires typically take 3-6 months to reach full productivity.
- Other staff take on work leading to inefficiencies, remaining staff feeling overloaded.
- Loss of knowledge and experience.
- Risk of “Turnover Contagion”.

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MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

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ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT

- **Organisational support and coordination** will assist travellers in managing travel stressors.
- Policies are typically **developed within functions other than HR**.
- **Cooperation between the different functions** should be strengthened.
- **Working conditions** should support work–life balance.

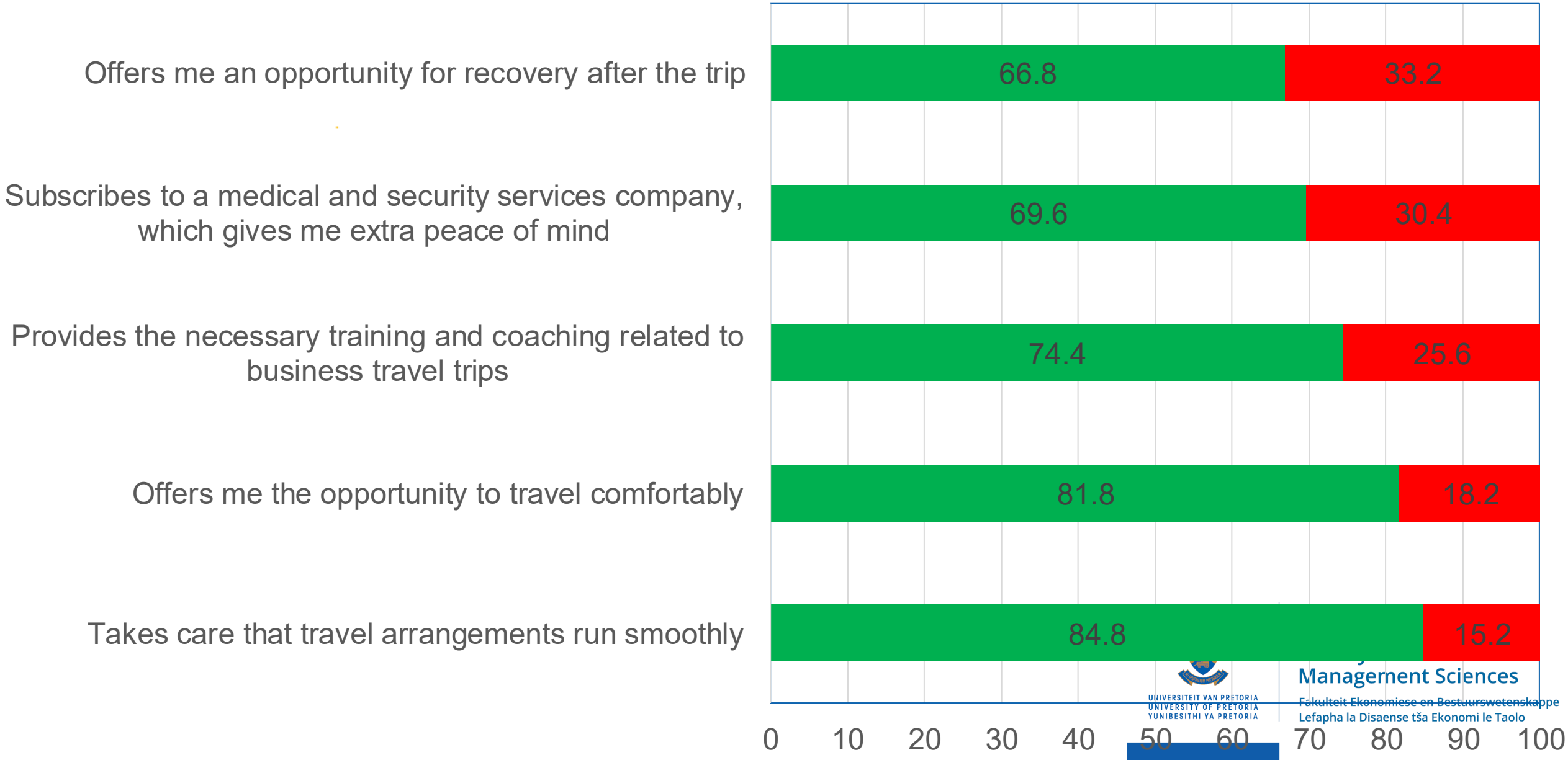
(Ambrose et al. 2021).

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Company Support



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TRIP ARRANGEMENTS

- Companies should assist travellers in terms of making arrangements for the trip (**before the trip**), satisfying personal and job needs while travelling (**during the trip**) and supporting them when they return to the office (**after the trip**).
- In addition, companies must provide **relevant information** to travellers about to undertake a trip (for example, cultural customs, vaccinations needed, accommodations and what to wear).
- Regular **risk assessments** of destinations to keep travellers updated on emerging risks in destinations.
- Capability of the traveller to **connect with their employer** (and the other way around) non-stop. A mobile app could be used for this purpose.

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COPING MECHANISMS

- Travellers are prepared to **respond to a range of potentially stressful events**.
- For example, employees will strive to **build up a social network** at work.
- Moreover, they can **build up a network of helpers** for child care solutions.
- **Stress management programmes should be offered** to travellers, which will result in a reduction in presenteeism and adverse health outcomes.
- Pro-social behaviour.

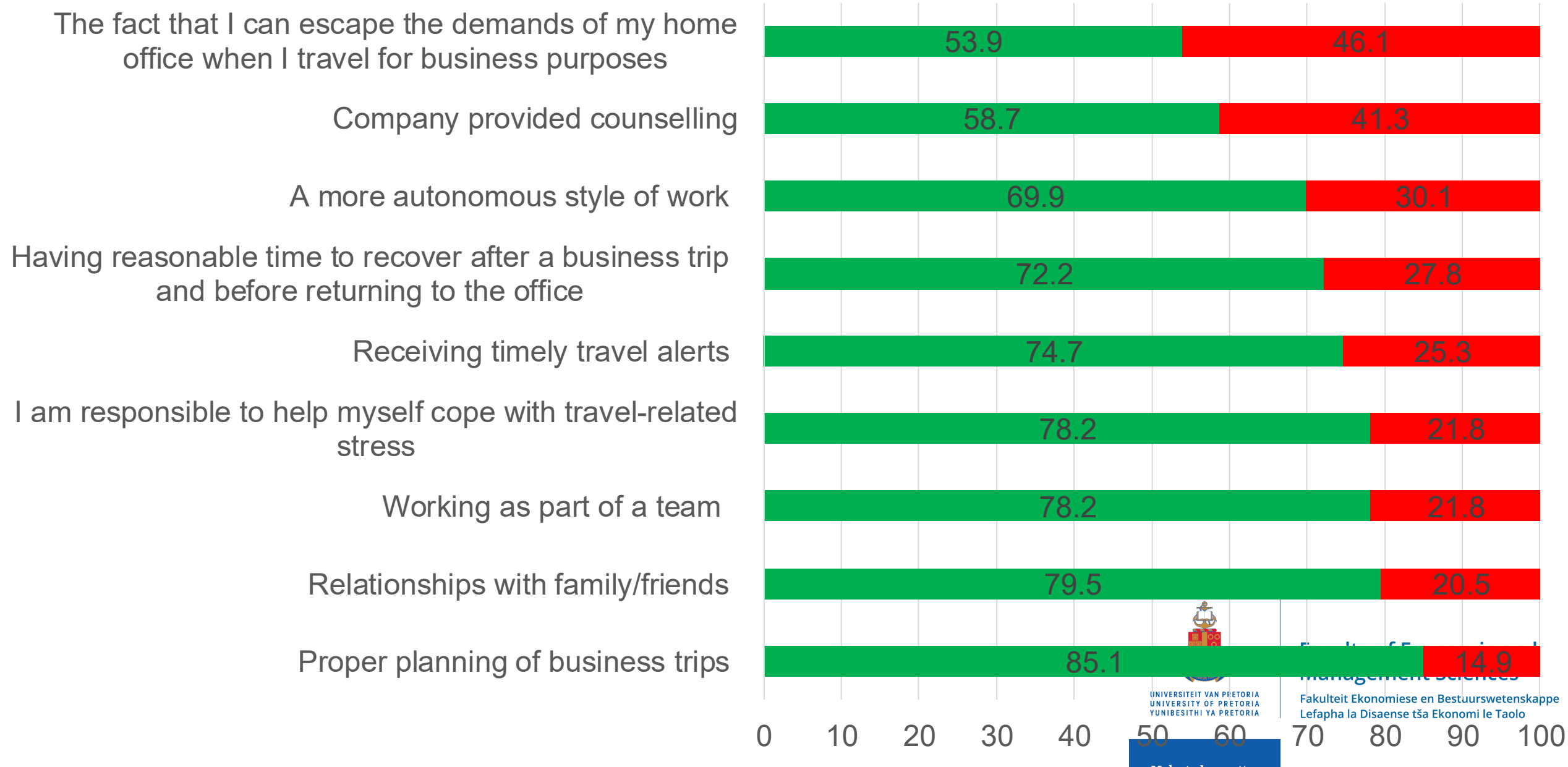
(Schwarzer and Taubert, 2002)

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Coping mechanisms



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TRAVEL POLICY

- Monitor the systems introduced and policy changes to **avoid adding another burden to travellers**.
- **Physical activity** can be reinforced by workplace practices and policies.
  - Employers can encourage regular physical activity among their business travellers by picking short-term stay rental apartments or hotels with well-appointed gyms.
  - An alternative approach could be offering travellers memberships to gym clubs with a national presence.
- Moreover, if access to **virtual communication** technology exists, companies should also evaluate if and when a business trip is vital.

(Egencia, 2020; Rutherford, Ambrose and Waguespack, 2023; Rundle et al., 2018; Weiss and Zacher 2024).

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RECOVERY TIME

- This could be in the form of (1) time available to **recover** from jet lag and long haul flights (2) **relaxation** time whilst on a business trip through leisure or (3) **time to catch up** on tasks when returning home (e.g., laundry, shopping).
- Minimum rest period.
- Frequent breaks.

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ENGAGING IN BLEISURE

- Can **reduce damage from travel strain** and improve job satisfaction.
- Bleisure activities could **satisfy travellers, incentivise them, and prevent burnout**.
- **Cultural/natural attractions and social leisure activities** reduce the negative influence of travel stressors.
- The **commonality** between these two leisure types is that they are both socially and cognitively active, **aligning with business travel motivation**.
- Provide **comprehensive information about travel destinations**.

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TRAINING

- Supervisor training.
- Self-management, stress relaxation, trip preparation and educational workshops.
- Interventions could also train and discuss **coping strategies.**
- Counselling business travellers on how to **protect themselves and their families** from the hardships of frequent travel.
- Resilience training.

(Mäkelä et al., 2015; Ivancevich et al., 2003)

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NEW RESEARCH

- The bright side of the suitcase: work family enrichment.
- Business travel and elite sport athletes.

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Thank you

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AFRICAN BUSINESS TRAVEL ASSOCIATION

TABLE TOP SHOWCASE

Table 1

Paying for Stays: Navigating complexity in hotels and guesthouses (Absa)

Table 2

Managing Travel Risk – Back to Basics (International SOS)

Table 3

Getting more from your Hotel Program: Timing, value & negotiation levers (Sun International)

Table 4

Virtual cards versus Lodge cards – Which is winning and why? (Amex)

Table 5

Separate or Strategic? Rethinking MICE in Managed travel (TTS)

Table 6

Exploring Africa's under-served air routes, and what to do about it (ABTA)

TEA BREAK

See you back here at 11.00

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AFRICAN BUSINESS TRAVEL ASSOCIATION

TABLE TOP DISCUSSIONS

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NDC

Where it is failing the industry, and how to close these gaps

David Cronje

National Sales Manager: Technology – TravelIT

Royston Clark

Head: Human Capital Service – Old Mutual

CAPE TOWN CORPORATE TRAVEL WORKSHOP 2026



New Distribution Capability (NDC)

How airline retailing is being rebuilt and why it's harder than it looks.

TravelitGlobal
Simple yet Powerful

TOURVEST
Travel Services

What is NDC?

An IATA XML standard (launched 2012) that lets airlines distribute rich, dynamic offers directly to travel sellers, instead of filing static fares through legacy GDS channels.



The Legacy Model

Fares filed via ATPCO, sold through GDSs (Amadeus, Sabre, Travelport)

↓

Cryptic EDIFACT messaging from the 1980s

↓

Hard to sell ancillaries, bundles or personalised offers

The NDC Model

Airline builds the offer: price, seat, bag, Wi-Fi, fare brand, etc.

↓

Modern XML APIs straight from airline systems

↓

Foundation for “Offers & Orders” retailing (replacing PNRs and e-tickets)

The Promise

Richer Retailing

Sell the full product



with images & branded fares, not just a fare class letter.

Dynamic & personalised pricing



Offers computed in real time for the specific request, enabling continuous pricing and tailored bundles.

Channel control and lower cost



Airlines reach sellers directly, reduce GDS distribution fees, and keep ownership of the customer offer.

Consistency across channels



The same offer logic on airline.com, in agencies and via aggregators, one source of truth.

The Reality:
A Long Hybrid Era

10+ Years since launch

Adoption still uneven, slowest in corporate travel.

3 Channels

EDIFACT, NDC and Direct Content now run in parallel on most platforms.

Carrots and Sticks

GDS surcharges and NDC-only fares (LH Group, AA, AF-KLM, etc.) used to force the shift.

Booking via NDC mostly works; the surrounding ecosystem — servicing, tooling, data — is still catching up.

The hybrid model will be with us for years.



The Complications



Fragmentation

Every airline implements its own schema version and capability set — ten airlines can mean ten integrations.



Broken Corporate Workflows

Unused tickets, negotiated rates, duty-of-care feeds and mid-office automation often don’t flow through NDC.



Servicing Gaps

Changes, refunds and disruption handling lag far behind booking — agents fall back to manual workarounds.



Content Fragmentation

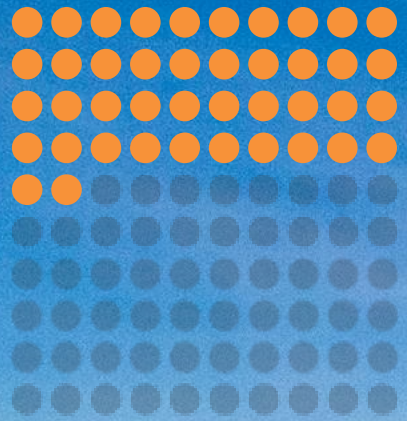
No single channel shows all fares. Comparison shopping and lowest-fare compliance become genuinely difficult.

Plus: Clunky multi-airline/interline support, slower agent workflows, and shifting economics for agencies and GDSs.

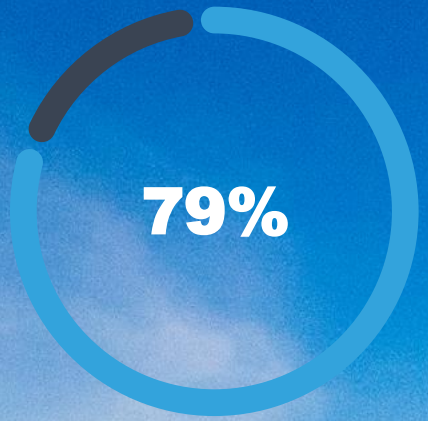
The Buyer’s View: Survey Snapshot

Travel Buyers Webinar survey, May 2026 — 24 leading corporate travel buyers (incl. Ericsson, Cummins, BAT, FirstRand, TFG)

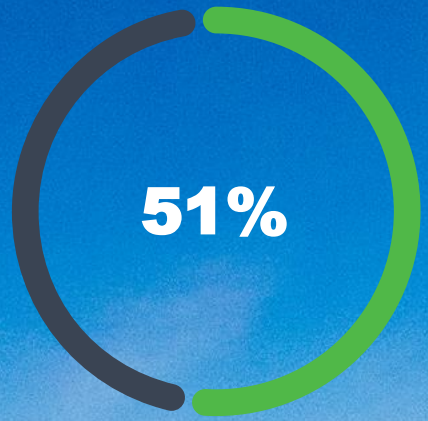
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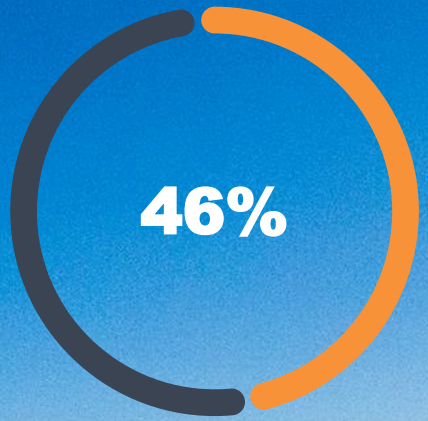
average self-rated NDC knowledge — awareness is still low



not confident they can compare NDC vs non-NDC content fairly



see better pricing or value at least sometimes — 42% simply aren’t sure



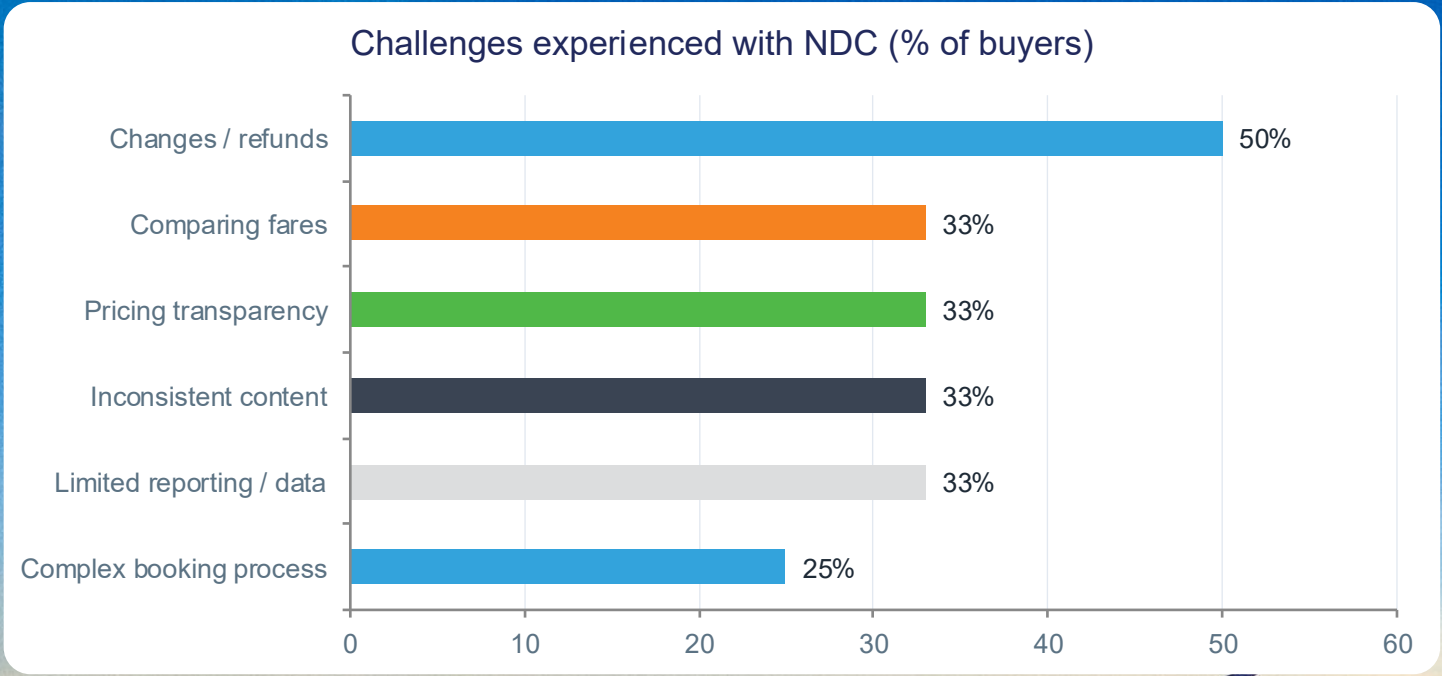
expect NDC to replace the GDS only partially; 38% say it won’t

Sentiment is lukewarm: only 21% report positive NDC experiences, 33% negative, 46% neutral — and just 54% can correctly describe what NDC actually is.

Buyers' Biggest Pain Points

Bright spot: 74% did not experience NDC negatively during the Middle East disruptions.

Source: ABTA / Tourvest Travel Buyers survey, May 2026 (n=24)



Why comparing fares is so hard:

67%

different fare structures (bundled vs unbundled)

54%

content not displayed in one place

33%

inconsistent airline offerings

Top commercial concerns:

46%

loss of negotiated fares

38%

hidden costs & lack of transparency

33%

difficulty tracking total spend

The New Wildcard:
Agentic AI & MCP

Model Context Protocol (MCP) gives AI agents a standard way to connect to airline systems and also assist traveller behaviour.

"Different layers"

NDC solves a content problem; MCP solves a connectivity problem

↓

AI agents become a new access channel on top of NDC offers

↓

Aggregation & normalisation matter more, not less

"MCP enhances NDC"

AI agents can absorb messy, airline-specific interfaces, no shared schema needed

↓

Airlines could expose MCP servers and bypass GDSs entirely

↓

Real pressure on the GDS transaction-fee model

Open questions: agent identity & payment liability, servicing maturity, data privacy, and the risk of deferring NDC investment while waiting for AI.

Takeaways



NDC is direction, not destination

The shift to airline-controlled offers and orders is happening — but slowly, and unevenly.



Servicing is the battleground

Whoever fixes changes, refunds and disruption at scale wins the next phase.



Hybrid is the operating reality

EDIFACT + NDC + direct + (soon) AI-agent channels must be managed side by side.



Watch agentic AI closely

MCP won’t excuse deferring NDC decisions — but it may reshape who sits between airline and traveller.

MCP: The Adoption Accelerator

Model Context Protocol hides NDC's plumbing problems and opens an AI-agent channel.

AI agents · OBTs · Travel Sellers

MCP layer

One integration · normalizes all schemas

Airline NDC APIs (v18.2 → 24.4+)

Kills schema fragmentation

Universal adapter normalizes every NDC version into one harmonized interface - integrate once, not per carrier (e.g. TPConnects Astra).

Slashes integration cost & time

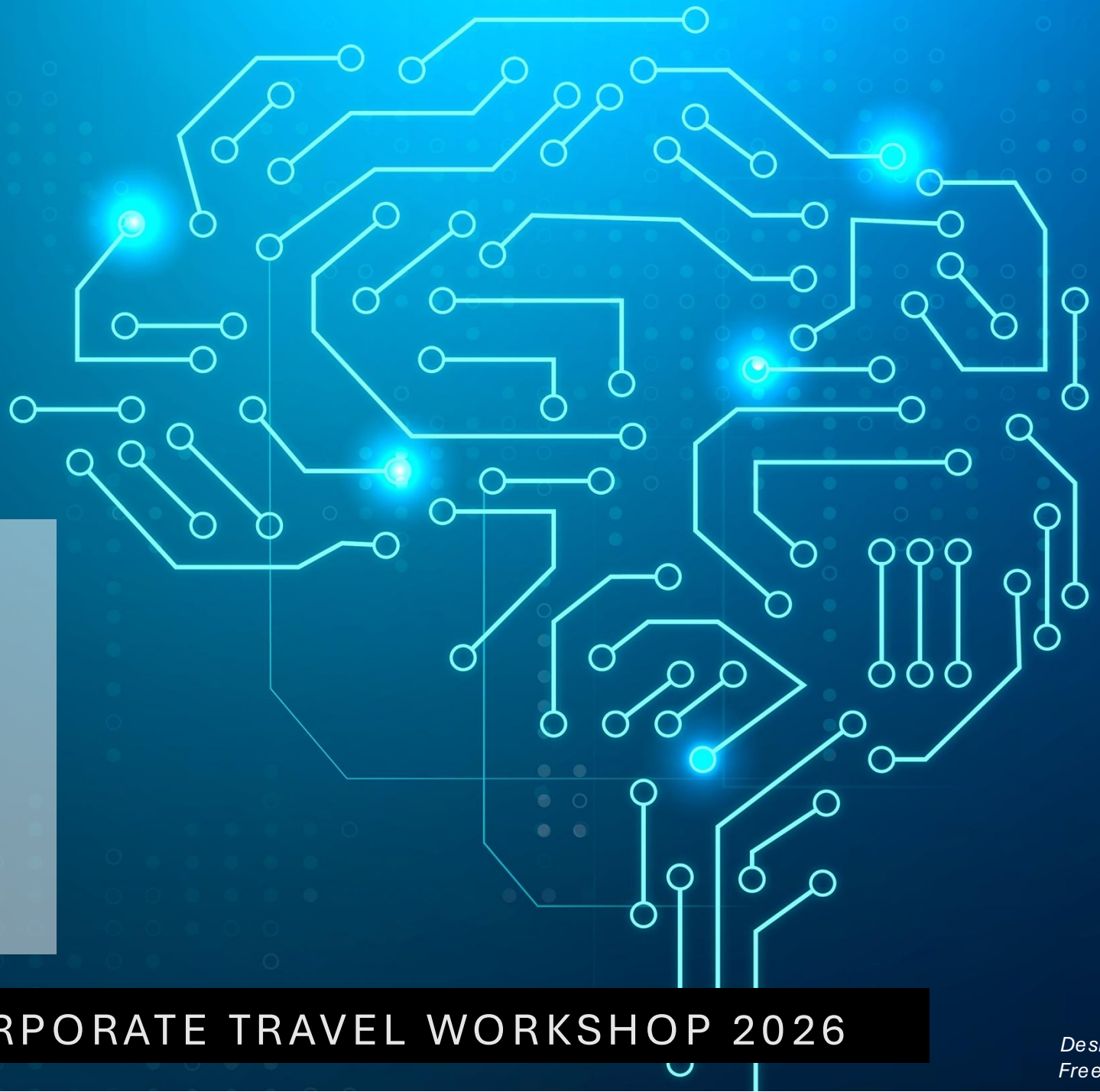
Low/zero-code connections, automated version upgrades, and apples-to-apples offer comparison across airlines.

Opens the AI-agent channel

Exposes NDC content to agentic booking—and AI can absorb imperfect standardization, mapping differences automatically.

"Content problem" (NDC) + "connectivity problem" (MCP)—different layers, designed to coexist.


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