



EUROPEAN CONVENTION BUREAUS'  
STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE

'BLEISURE'

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# FOREWORD

At the present time, each visitor to our European towns and cities is appreciated more than ever for the important benefits that their trip brings to the destination. And while some of our visitors are travelling on business and others are travelling for leisure purposes, a growing number of them are engaging in Bleisure – a hybrid form of tourism that combines business travel and leisure travel in one trip.

Among our Bleisure visitors are those people whose primary motive is to attend a business event such as a conference, but who prolong their stay for one day or more to enjoy the cultural, gastronomic, sightseeing, and other attractions of our towns and cities. It is clear that most conferences, in particular association and academic meetings, attract some participants who choose, unprompted, to spend extra days in the destination for leisure, before or after their business event. But in the past few years, many European convention bureaus have begun to introduce measures to actively encourage conference participants to spend extra time – and extra money – in their destinations.

This report, based upon the findings of an online survey of European convention bureaus, analyses the various strategies and techniques that those destination marketing organisations are adopting to motivate and inspire more conference participants to engage in Bleisure.

We would like to thank all of the convention bureau managers who responded to our survey and generously agreed to share their ideas with colleagues in other destinations. We hope that all readers of this report will find new ideas to help them to convert more conference participants into Bleisure visitors.

Rob Davidson and Oliver Kesar. July 2022.



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# WHAT IS BLEISURE?

Traditionally, business tourism and leisure tourism have been considered as two different - or even contradictory - forms of visitation. Many destinations brand and promote themselves to these two market segments quite distinctly, through two separate types of destination marketing organisations: tourist boards and convention bureaus.

But it is clear that business tourism and leisure tourism are closely interconnected. Business visitors can create leisure tourism:

- When they extend their business trips for a day or more to engage in leisure activities.
- When they come accompanied by spouses or partners who spend their time in leisure activities in the destination.
- When they participate in leisure elements of the business event, such as excursions to local places of interest.
- When they are inspired to return to the destination with their friends or families for leisure purposes - or encourage others to do so.

A Bleisure ('business + leisure') visitor is someone who adds extra days to their business trip to include free time for leisure activities such as sightseeing, sports, entertainment, or simply relaxation, thus extending their business visit into a holiday experience. Also known as a 'bizcation' or 'blended travel', the concept of Bleisure is not new. The practice of extending a business trip for leisure purposes has already existed for many years. But since the passing of the most severe phase of the Covid pandemic, the Bleisure market has been expanding rapidly in all world regions, including Europe. Conference participants and other business visitors are travelling again, and a growing number of them are choosing to spend extra days to enjoy the cultural, natural, and gastronomic attractions of their destinations. According to a recent report from Switzerland-based consultants EHL Insights, 'The 10 trends that are shaping the hospitality industry in 2022', the top trend for this year is ... Bleisure travellers.

# WHY IS BLEISURE GROWING NOW?

**The Covid pandemic** played an important role in boosting the Bleisure trend in Europe and beyond in three main ways:

- Almost two years of lockdowns and severe **restrictions on travel** brought global business travel to a practical standstill, and the vast majority of conferences were held virtually. During that time, many people's wish to explore other destinations, both locally and internationally, intensified as the pandemic continued. With the relaxing of travel restrictions, that accumulation of latent demand for travel and tourism now finds its realisation partly through the trend of turning conference trips into short leisure breaks and even longer holidays.
- A second impact of the pandemic on the growth of Bleisure is the way in which working remoting and other **flexible work arrangements** have become normalised in many areas of professional life. Many conference participants have quickly understood that they no longer have to be present in their normal place of work to be productive. They can carry out any work-related duties in the conference destination during the days immediately before or after the actual event – leaving them time to enjoy the destination in the evenings and in other free hours during the day.
- A third way in which our experience of Covid has accelerated demand for Bleisure is the way in which the pandemic increased our awareness of the potential **risks to our health** resulting from frequent air travel and the close proximity of our fellow passengers. The ongoing presence of these risks has doubtlessly convinced many people that it makes good sense to combine two different purposes in one trip, thus reducing the number of flights they take and limiting their exposure to health risks while travelling.

But other factors, not directly related to Covid, have contributed to the current growth of Bleisure:

- **The rising cost of flights and holidays** means that it makes good economic sense for participants to spend less on flights by turning their conference trip into a leisure break - particularly in the current financial climate, with growing pressure on personal budgets. This is even more advantageous for those attending corporate business events as they are likely to have all of their travel costs paid by their employer.
- **The natural environment** benefits directly when the volume of air travel is reduced. Bleisure travellers make one return trip by air serve two purposes, instead of making two different journeys, one to attend a conference and another for a holiday. As climate change awareness increases, the opportunity to reduce travel, particularly by air, is attractive to a growing number of people.
- **Generations Y and Z**, the Millennials and their younger colleagues enjoy blurring the lines between work and play, between their professional life and their personal life. They regard this as a means of creating a better work/life balance for themselves. Adding leisure days to a conference trip appeals to these generations, who regard Bleisure as a means of enjoying the type of experiential travel that offers more authentic insights into a destination, through immersion into new cultures and local lives.

# WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BLEISURE FOR CONFERENCE DESTINATIONS?

- The **additional spending** of conference visitors brings direct financial benefits to hospitality, tourism and retail businesses in the destination. Bleisure visitors often spend more freely on activities such as dining, entertainment and tours when their employer has paid for their travel to the destination.
- By spending leisure time in the destination, delegates get a more **authentic and holistic experience** of the town or city. When that experience is positive, the delegates may act as unofficial and unpaid ambassadors for the destination by recommending it to family, friends and colleagues on returning home.
- Focusing on increasing the Bleisure market can help destinations to manage **seasonality and over-tourism** issues by spreading visitation more evenly throughout the year.
- Visitors who turn their conference trip into a holiday are more likely to come **accompanied** by a spouse, partner, or friend to share the leisure experience with them. The spending of these 'plus-ones' while the delegate is attending the conference brings additional benefits to local shops, restaurants and tourist attractions.
- Emphasising the pre- and post-conference leisure opportunities of the destination, can attract **more participants** to the event – in particular, to association and academic conferences, where the touristic appeal of the destination is often a key motivation for attending.

# SURVEY OF EUROPEAN CONVENTION BUREAUS

In the autumn of 2021, a request was sent to 221 convention bureaus in almost every European country, inviting them to complete an online questionnaire: **European Convention Bureaus' Strategies to Promote 'Bleisure' (Business Tourism + Leisure Tourism)**.

A total of 88 responses from 27 countries were received, as shown below. A full list of all participating convention bureaus is given in the Appendix.

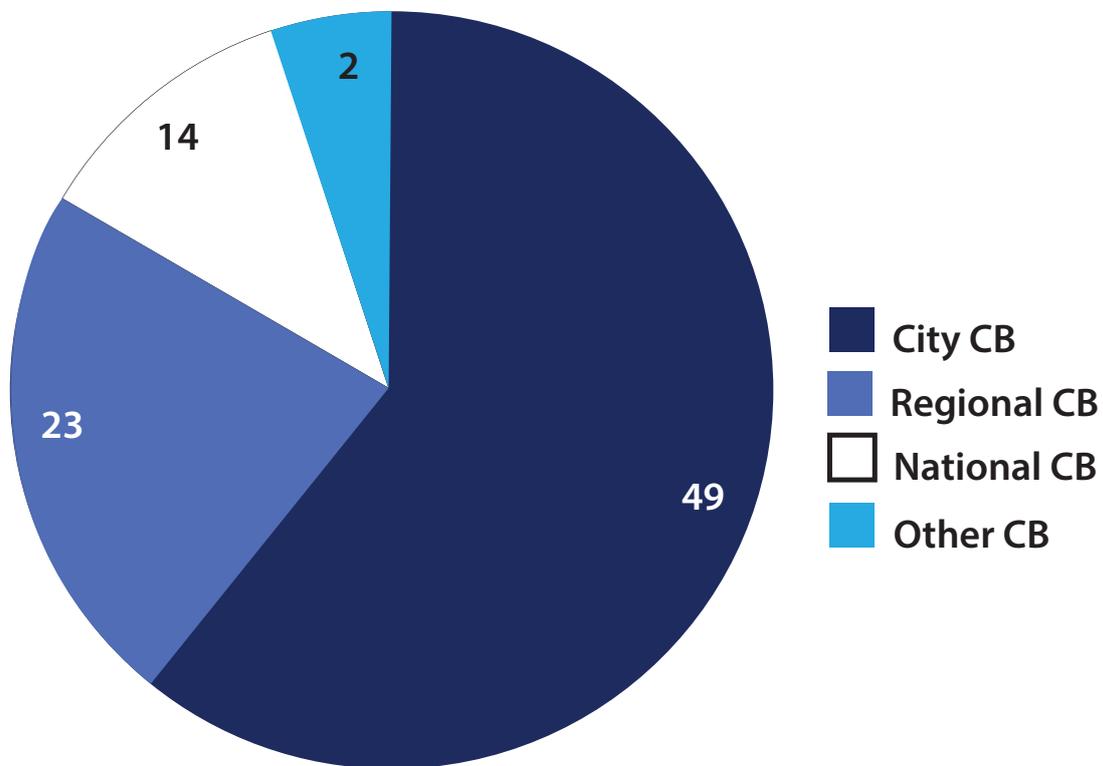
## Countries represented in the survey, showing the number of individual participating convention bureaus from each country

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Austria 3</li><li>• Belgium 2</li><li>• Croatia 6</li><li>• Czech Republic 1</li><li>• Estonia 2</li><li>• Finland 4</li><li>• France 7</li><li>• Germany 2</li><li>• Greece 1</li><li>• Iceland 1</li><li>• Ireland 3</li><li>• Israel 1</li><li>• Italy 4</li><li>• Lithuania 1</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Malta 1</li><li>• The Netherlands 5</li><li>• Norway 3</li><li>• Poland 5</li><li>• Portugal 2</li><li>• Russian Federation 1</li><li>• Serbia 1</li><li>• Slovenia 2</li><li>• Spain 8</li><li>• Sweden 7</li><li>• Switzerland 5</li><li>• UK 9</li><li>• Ukraine 1</li></ul> |
|---|---|

## At what geographical level does your convention bureau operate?

### Question 1

88 responses.



The participating convention bureaus were a mixture of national, regional, local and 'other' destination marketing organisations. But the majority of them were responsible for representing individual towns and cities.

## Question 2

### Describe the role of Bleisure in your marketing activities

86 responses.

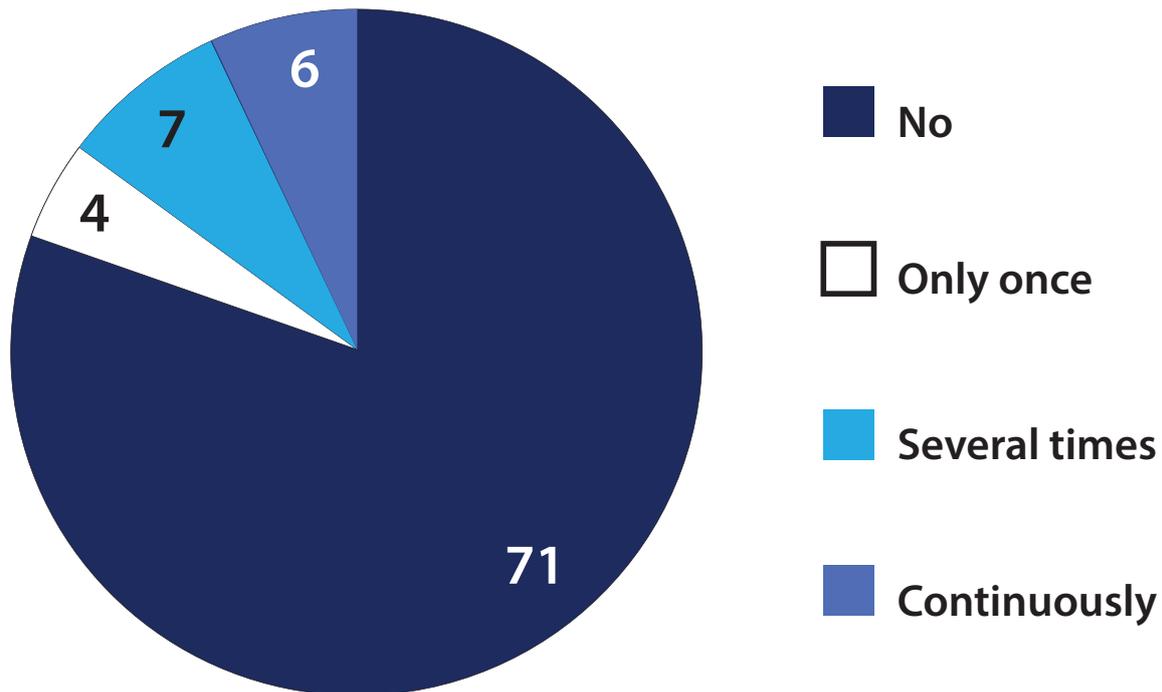


The responses to this question showed that the vast majority of convention bureaus in the sample are familiar with the concept of Bleisure. Among those convention bureaus, almost half of them already have a strategy to encourage business visitors to spend more time in their destinations, while 41 convention bureaus see the advantages of Bleisure but lack knowledge about how to generate it. Only 2 convention bureaus are of the opinion that Bleisure does not offer sufficient advantages for their destinations.

## Have you done any research on the impacts of Bleisure tourism in your destination?

### Question 3

88 responses.



Research is a key activity of most convention bureaus, but the responses to this question showed that only a small minority of those participating in this survey have done any research on the impacts of Bleisure tourism in their destinations. It is clear that research specifically to measure the economic impacts of Bleisure is very rare, and regular surveys of delegates often omit to take into account the added benefits that arise from them spending extra time in the destination. Jennifer Jensen, Head of Business Tourism at Marketing Liverpool highlights this challenge:

*We often have the number of room nights for a conference based only on the number of days the conference takes place, and there is limited data on how many delegates come early or stay later, so it makes it difficult to measure. Even the event organisers themselves don't seem to collect this information.*

However, as can be seen from the examples below, some convention bureaus track factors related to Bleisure in their delegate surveys by including questions that relate to this aspect of their visits. At a time when many convention bureaus are under pressure to demonstrate the value they add, it makes perfect sense to measure the full benefits that conferences bring to our destinations, including the additional spending from Bleisure activities.

10 years ago, we began conducting annual research across different sectors of association meetings held here in the various business events regions of Ireland, including of course Dublin, where the vast majority of such events take place in our country. For this research, we used a third-party company, IPSOS MRBI. We only interviewed international delegates as that is what our KPIs are based around –the amount of ‘new’ money that association meetings bring into the country. It is essential that the data that we get from the survey is of a very high standard, because as a government agency we must have it validated by our relevant colleagues (including our Chief Economist) before we can use it or indeed talk publicly about it.

The qualitative and quantitative data from this research helps us to evaluate many aspects of delegates’ experience of Ireland, such as their level of satisfaction with our country as a destination, their likelihood of recommending Ireland as a holiday destination to friends, colleagues, family et cetera, and whether they would return to Ireland for a holiday. We are also able to track other factors more closely related to Bleisure, through the responses to questions about delegates’ average length of stay, including arriving before or extending beyond the conference itself, how much they spent while in Ireland, and whether or not they were accompanied by others who were not attending the conference.

Since this research was repeated every year, we were able to identify trends over time. Due to financial restraints we did not conduct this research in 2018, but we started it again in 2019, only to stop again the following year due to the Covid pandemic. However, it is highly likely that we will resume next year.



**Sam Johnston**  
Manager,  
Convention Bureaux of  
Ireland





**Jan Oršič**

Head of Convention Bureau,  
Ljubljana Tourism

In Ljubljana we have been analysing the expenditure of congress delegates for several consecutive years. In 2017, 2018 and 2019, we interviewed over 1000 delegates who were participating in various association events that took place throughout those years. The interviews were done by students on site during conferences with the permission of the organisers. The survey included questions about their expenditure related to participating at the event and their activities in the destination (participation fees, transportation, overnights, food and beverage, personal expenditure, transfers in the destination, trips and excursions, entertainment and culture).

The last four questions in the interviews focused on the Bleisure part of their stay. From the results, it was clear that delegates' expenditure on Bleisure activities was steadily increasing. For example, their spending on trips and excursions was 26,45% higher in 2019 in comparison with the averages of the two previous years. We expect to resume this research in 2023.

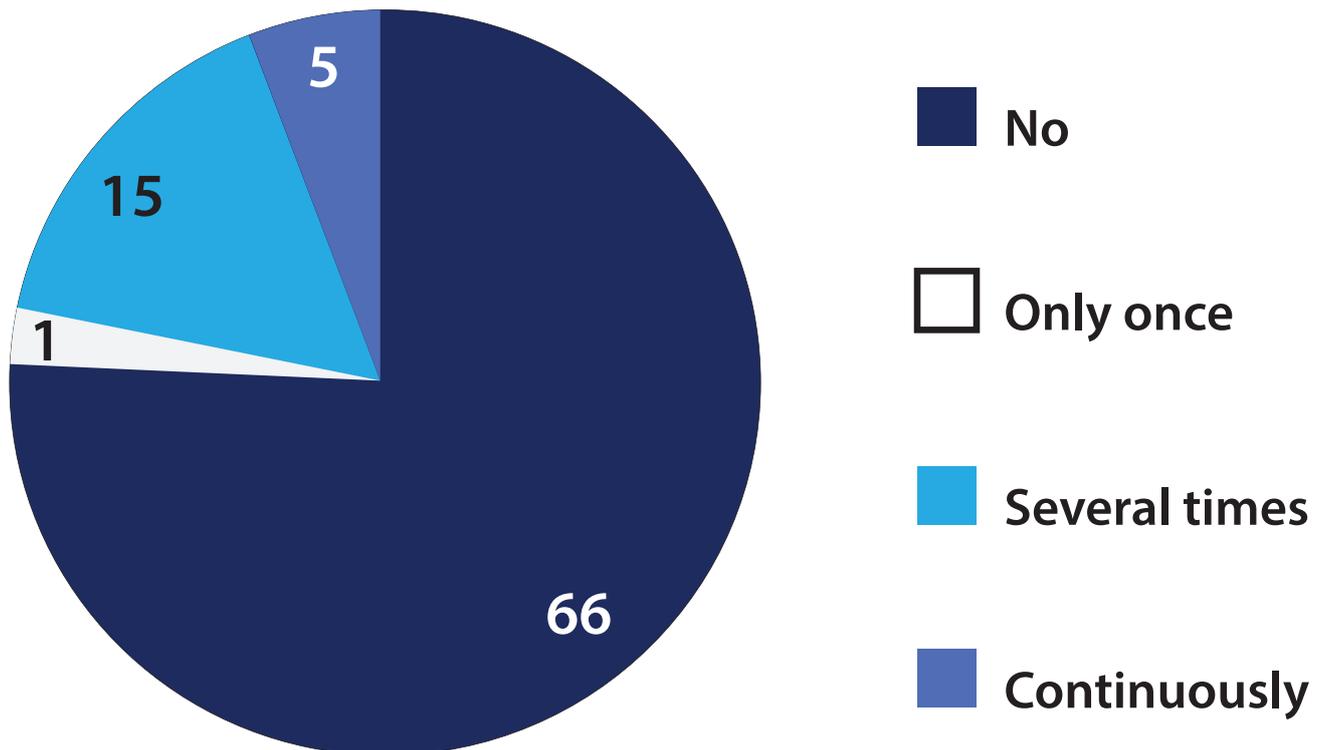
The logo for Ljubljana Tourism is located in the bottom right corner of the page. It features a large, stylized red letter 'L' that forms the shape of the city of Ljubljana. To the right of the 'L', the word 'Ljubljana' is written in white text on a red rectangular background. Below the 'L' and 'Ljubljana', the words 'Ljubljana Tourism' are written in white text, following the curve of the 'L' shape.

Ljubljana  
Ljubljana Tourism

## Question 4

Have you ever run a special campaign to promote opportunities for business visitors to prolong their stay in your destination?

87 responses.



Despite the widespread awareness of Bleisure among European convention bureaus, the vast majority have never run a special campaign to promote opportunities for business visitors to prolong their stay. Of the 20 convention bureaus that reported that they have run a Bleisure marketing campaign either several times or continuously, 15 represented local level DMOs (towns and cities), 4 represented regions, and only one was a national convention bureau. Taking into account the fact that conference delegates who extend their trips for leisure often travel far beyond the actual city where their event took place to explore the destination more widely, there may be a case for a greater Bleisure campaigning role for national convention bureaus, since the economic benefits of Bleisure are frequently spread throughout the country in which the conference city is located.

Several convention bureaus reported that they are currently developing Bleisure campaigns in recognition of the potential benefits for their destinations. Two examples are shown below.



## Rachael McGuickin

Director of Business Development,  
Sustainability and Transformation,  
Visit Belfast

Our new Bleisure campaign at Visit Belfast has been created as the consequence of several factors that came to our attention. Firstly, it is clear to us that in the post-Covid era we need to work harder to get more benefits from the visitors we have. One way to do that is to increase the length of stay and the spending of incoming business visitors. Secondly, we recognise that business visitors are now more open to Bleisure extensions than they were pre-Covid, partly due to the emerging cost-of-living crisis: it makes financial sense for conference participants to turn their business trip into a holiday, saving expenditure on additional flights. Another factor is linked to sustainability: we are aware that longer-staying, higher-spending visitors have a lower footprint on the natural environment.

By making their journey by air serve two different purposes, business and leisure, they may reduce the number of flights they take over the year. Finally, we regard Bleisure as a key element of our destination management: a means of directly offering more value to event organisers and delegates while also maximising business opportunities for our partners in Belfast and in Northern Ireland more widely.

We have three broad Bleisure propositions for business visitors:

1. Extend your stay in Belfast for a city break – before or after your conference.
2. Extend your stay and explore Northern Ireland – use Belfast as a base and make daytrips to other Northern Ireland destinations; or stay in other Northern Ireland destinations before or after your conference.
3. Return to Belfast or Northern Ireland for a leisure break in the next 12 months (with friends / your partner / your family).

**visit  
Belfast**

The campaign is based around two principal actions:

### **1. Working with our partners to develop attractive Bleisure packages:**

- \* For those delegates who wish to stay longer, pre/post conference, in the same Belfast hotel: discounts or value add [% discount of best hotel rate].
- \* For those delegates who wish to experience a different Belfast hotel: spa/wellness packages / free upgrades.
- \* For those delegates who wish to explore Northern Ireland beyond Belfast: day trip offers/experiences, and also special offers in other Northern Ireland destinations.

### **2. Working closely with conference organisers to make sure they get the information about these packages and share it with their delegates:**

Our strategy is to send them a link to a dedicated Bleisure landing page on our website and to encourage them to share this link with their delegates as far in advance of the conference as possible – for example by putting it on the official conference website. By clicking on the link, delegates will be taken directly to our Bleisure landing page, where they will find details of all the packages and special offers listed above.

How will we measure the effectiveness of our Bleisure campaign?

We will conduct a review of the campaign after 6 months and after 12 months.

First, we will measure the number of 'click-throughs' to our Bleisure landing-page. Second, we will ask our partners and suppliers for data on the number of Bleisure bookings they have received from delegates.

We are optimistic that our new Bleisure campaign will be instrumental in helping us achieve our objective of increasing the benefits of hosting conferences in Belfast in a manner that is sustainable while giving business visitors a deeper and more holistic experience of our beautiful country.

Wonderful Copenhagen is currently working on a campaign with the goal of attracting more delegates to Copenhagen as well as inspiring them to stay longer and/or return at a later point as tourists. Working closely together with selected associations and congresses to be held in Copenhagen, the campaign will target potential delegates across different digital channels and platforms and with a range of content. Deliverables include a free-to-use content package for all congresses coming to Copenhagen, paid marketing and media activities.

We have embarked on this campaign because we believe there is a great potential in promoting Copenhagen as a tourism destination to potential congress delegates. Not just for Copenhagen, but also for associations wanting to boost the number of people attending their congress. Our hope is that we can help associations raise awareness about their upcoming congress in Copenhagen, while also promoting Copenhagen and its wide array of leisure activities.



**Tine Kastrup-Misir**

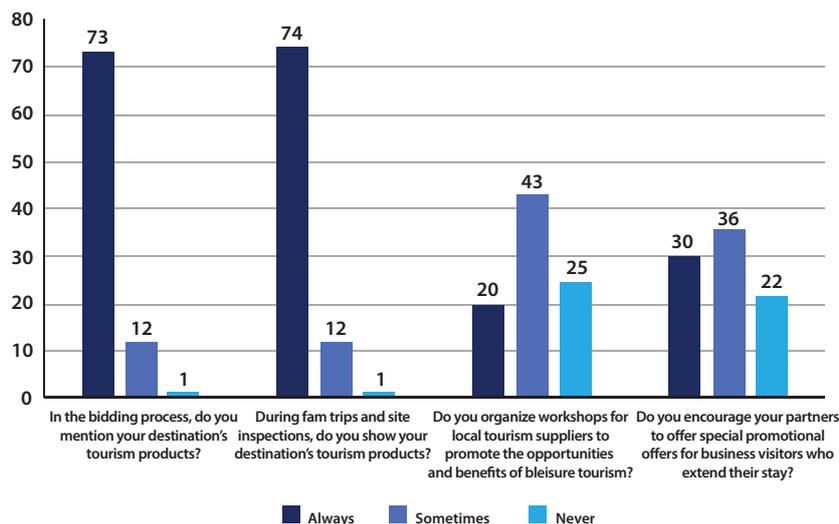
Director of Communications,  
Wonderful Copenhagen

**WONDERFUL<sup>®</sup>  
COPENHAGEN**



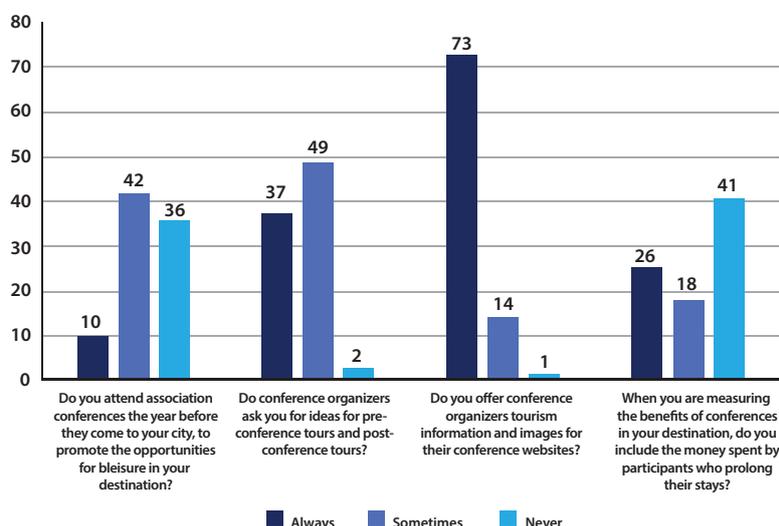
## Question 5

# What actions have you taken to promote Bleisure in your destination?



In terms of individual actions taken by convention bureaus, the chart above shows that a very high proportion of respondents harness their destinations' tourism products early in the process of competing to win conferences by showcasing them to the organisers during fam trips and in bid documents. Bleisure-related actions with convention bureaus' own partners were also frequent, but to a lesser degree. There is clearly scope for more convention bureaus to inform their partners about the potential advantages – to them – of Bleisure and to encourage local suppliers to create special offers for this market segment.

Further Bleisure-related actions undertaken by convention bureaus are shown in the chart below. Of particular interest is the effort made by over half of the respondents to promote Bleisure opportunities directly to future delegates by attending association conferences the year before they are to be held in their own destinations. Acting in this way to inspire future business visitors to extend their conference trip gives delegates sufficient time to plan the Bleisure elements of their stay.





**Agnieszka Szymerowska**  
President of the Board,  
Convention Bureau – Wrocław

## Convention Bureau

## Wrocław

For selected congresses and conferences that have been scheduled in our city, we try to persuade the Local Organising Committees to offer extra optional excursions, tours et cetera to encourage participants to stay longer in the city or even in the region. This process starts at the early stage of bidding. Within the bid document, we communicate details of what there is to do before and/or after the main event. Sometimes we prepare an extra presentation focusing on the possibilities for excursions, or we ask hotels for special price offers for participants who stay longer in the city. If the Local Organising Committee is interested, we organise, together with local partners, dedicated tours for participants (additional fee required). We are fully aware that Bleisure is an important trend for the travel industry and an opportunity for destinations to have more business travellers extending their trips for leisure purposes.

Examples of the type of post-conference tours proposed to delegates are shown here on a page from the website of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions World Library and Information Congress that was held in our city from 19–25 August 2017.

**IFLA World Library and Information Congress**  
83rd IFLA General Conference and Assembly  
19–25 August 2017, Wrocław, Poland  
*Libraries. Solidarity. Society.*

Navigation: About WLIC | Programme | Registration | Exhibition & Sponsorship | Travel, Accommodation & Tours | Newsletter

### Post Congress Tours

The Post-Congress Tours can be booked directly with the tour operator:

You may book tours online now or during the Congress at the designated Travel Agent counter which will be located within the registration area at the Wrocław Congress Center

All tours will depart from the Centennial Hall. Please be at the departure location no later than 30 minutes prior to the departure.

For further information and tour booking, please click the respective tour name:

No.	Post-Congress Tours	Date	Time	Fee
2	PEARLS OF LOWER SILESIA	26 August 2017	08:00-17:30	70 EUR
3	CZĘSTOCHOWA, CRACOW AND NAZI CAMP AUSCHWITZ - 2 DAYS TOUR	26 - 27 August 2017	07:00 (day1) - 14:30 (day2)	220-260 EUR
4	WARSAW - CAPITAL OF POLAND - 2 DAYS TOUR	26 - 27 August 2017	07:00 (day1) - 14:30 (day2)	220-260 EUR

In Glasgow we are keen to encourage delegates to 'come early or stay late'. Extending the length of stay for both a national or international delegate resonates with our responsible tourism drive: to travel with purpose for your meeting and stay longer to enjoy the destination at your leisure. Convention bureaus have their part to play to help make this decision easier for delegates when planning their visit. Of course, the main driver of delegate travel is the content and connections made at the conference. But giving delegates the opportunity to engage with what else is on offer, and making this easy during the planning process, benefits the wider destination. This focus on 'slow tourism' is considered to be more sustainable; it blends work and leisure into one trip, not two, potentially cutting down on the amount of travel. It also delivers more benefits to the wider community, beyond the convention centre campus.



**Aileen Crawford**

Head of Tourism & Conventions,  
Glasgow Convention Bureau

Glasgow Convention Bureau's **Meeting Planners Toolkit** gives conference organisers a range of useful information that can be sent to delegates throughout their booking journey via social media, email, or used on the conference website to give practical tips on what to see and do in the city and its surroundings.

One of the most effective tools is our **Next Stop Glasgow** promotional video, which presents the city's many cultural and gastronomic attractions. The video may either be used in its generic form or personalised using the conference logo and bespoke wording on title slides or by adding a commentary specific to a particular event. For example, the Next Stop Glasgow video was adapted in this way for the 2022 Congress of the European Paediatric Neurology Society.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ttzPZ\\_sJM-8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ttzPZ_sJM-8)

This is a cost effective, yet much appreciated way to welcome delegates to the city and encourage them to spend more time there.

**GLASGOW  
CONVENTION  
BUREAU**

However, several respondents described the challenges they face when attempting to promote Bleisure opportunities directly to future delegates. For example, Anna Lindstrom, Director of the Uppsala Convention Bureau remarked:

*We have a strategy and activities towards the Swedish meeting delegates. Our efforts are directed towards encouraging national business visitors to re-visit later in the year, not prolonging their business visit. This is because we find it hard to influence unknown visitors before they register for the business events.*

However, one factor that makes direct contact with future business visitors far easier is when they book their accommodation through the convention bureau. This arrangement gives the convention bureau a clear advantage in being able to communicate Bleisure opportunities directly to delegates, using their contact details. For instance, Jennifer Jensen, Head of Business Tourism at Marketing Liverpool notes that:

*We contact people who have booked accommodation through us to let them know what is happening in the city during their visit that they might be interested in, for example, what exhibitions are on at local galleries or if there is a concert or special event that may be happening that could encourage them to come a few days earlier.*

In cases where the convention bureau has a near monopoly over handling the booking of delegates' accommodation, the advantages are even greater, as shown in this example from the Destination Florence Convention & Visitors Bureau.



**Carlotta Ferrari**

Director, Destination Florence  
Convention & Visitors Bureau



As all conference participants reserve their stay in Florence through our dedicated accommodation booking platform, we are able to communicate directly with each attendee and encourage them to stay longer in our city. The possibility of setting up a dedicated booking platform was born thanks to the strong cooperation with our hotel members. They agreed to offer on our platform super-competitive and special rates, which are always the best rates available as they are even lower than those offered by the other online travel agencies. Thanks to this, participants willingly book through our systems, as that is where they find exclusive rates dedicated to the congress or event they are attending. The booking platform dedicated to events is in a reserved area of our Destination Florence.com website, the official platform of the city of Florence (realised in partnership with Florence Municipality) which represents the whole leisure offer of our destination.

The booking system dedicated to congresses and events is located within the Destination Florence.com website, but it is accessible only with a dedicated code which can be personalised by the organisers. They can even insert a dedicated widget on to their event website. All participants can then easily access the system, where they will find a wide range of choice in terms of accommodation, ranging from B&B to 5-star properties, with special rates that show at least a 5% discount compared to the best available rate online. This is of course a win-win situation as participants find the best rates and organisers can keep track of reservations. On our side, once delegates land on our system, we have access to their contact data, so we can immediately begin our marketing actions encouraging them to plan their whole stay in the city through our Destination Florence platform. Our marketing actions can help them in selecting the best experience, visit or restaurant to enable them to enjoy a 360° experience of our destination, even including special promotional codes throughout the year.

Last but not least, this activity aimed at boosting Bleisure in our destination is carried out with the full support of the Firenze Fiera Congress & Exhibition Center, as even for those events we are not directly involved in, they also promote the system as the perfect tool for booking accommodation. Thanks to the support of this venue, we can also reach participants attending exhibitions and trade shows organized on a regular basis in the Firenze Fiera Congress & Exhibition Center.

This is the Florence way of persuading our conference and exhibition visitors to combine business and leisure, for a great and efficient Bleisure experience.

# CONCLUSION

Whether Bleisure is regarded as an emerging trend, an expanding market segment, or a relatively new type of hybrid tourism activity, it is clear that when conference delegates spend extra days enjoying the leisure attractions of our towns and cities, there are many important benefits for the destinations, for the conference organisers, and for the delegates themselves. This is a win-win-win situation, with additional potential gains for the natural environment.

Convention bureaus can play a significant role in winning these benefits for the destinations they represent, due to their central coordinating position in the complex network that includes their partners, conference organisers, and delegates, as well as tourism organisations representing their destination. But the results of this survey have shown that across Europe, convention bureaus' efforts in this aspect of their work are very uneven, ranging from minimal involvement to full commitment to maximising the benefits of Bleisure.

The objective of this report is to inspire all convention bureaus to be a part of this growing trend, by considering what they can do to increase Bleisure in their destinations, using the various techniques described in these pages: creating a specific strategy for Bleisure; measuring the extent of Bleisure activity in the destination; educating local partners about the advantages of Bleisure and working with them to develop specific products and packages for this market; and promoting Bleisure opportunities through conference organisers or directly to future delegates.

Bleisure is a rapidly growing trend which looks likely to grow even faster in future years as the younger generations of conference delegates expand in importance and influence, as flexible, remote working becomes more widespread, and as frequent flying looks less attractive, due to the rising costs of air travel and growing concerns for the natural environment.

Now is the time for all European convention bureaus to take full advantage of the Bleisure phenomenon.



# APPENDIX :

## CONVENTION BUREAUS

### PARTICIPATING IN THE SURVEY

Ålesund	Helsinki	Osijek
Amsterdam	Ibiza	Paris
Barcelona	Italy	Poland
Belfast	Jönköping	Porto
Bergen	Karlstad	Prague
Bern	Kerry	Reykjavik
Borås	Kraków	Rimini
Bristol & Bath	Lake Como	Salzburg
Burgenland	Lausanne	Serbia
Cambridge	Leuven	Seville
Cannes	Limerick	Sheffield
Catalonia	Lisbon	Sitges
Champagne	Liverpool	Skellefteå
Cologne	Ljubljana	Slovenia
Croatia	Lodz	Split-Dalmatia County
Dublin	London	St. Gallen
Dubrovnik	Lucerne	Tallinn
East Sweden	Lviv	Tampere
Ekaterinburg	Lyon	Tel Aviv
England	Maastricht	The Hague
Espoo	Malta	The Netherlands
Estonia	Marseille	Thessaloniki
Finland	Nantes	Ticino
Florence	Newcastle upon Tyne	Uppsala
Gdansk	Nice Côte d'Azur	Vienna
Gent	Noordwijk	Vilnius
Gijón	Norway	Wroclaw
Girona	Nuremberg	Zagreb
Glasgow	Opatija	Zaragoza
Halmstad		

# BIOGRAPHIES

## Dr. Rob Davidson

Dr Rob Davidson is the Managing Director of MICE Knowledge, a London-based consultancy specialising in research, education and training services for the meetings and events industry.

His main areas of expertise are conferences and MICE marketing, and he has written seven books on these themes, including his latest publication, *Business Events* (<https://www.routledge.com/Business-Events/Davidson/p/book/9781138735767>). He has carried out research projects for a number of major organisations including the Poland Convention Bureau, the Ireland National Tourism Development Authority, and the Society for Incentive Travel Excellence. He is regularly invited to speak at international conferences on themes linked to business events, in particular to present the results of his ongoing research into conference industry trends. Dr Davidson also teaches as a visiting professor in three universities: the University of Greenwich; l'Università della Svizzera Italiana; and IMC Fachhochschule Krems.

In 2015, he was awarded a Doctorate from the University of Greenwich for his thesis, entitled 'Technological and Demographic Factors as Agents of Change in the Development of Business Events'. In 2016, he won the Best Conference Speaker award at the Global Event Awards. In 2017, he was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award at the IBTM WORLD exhibition in Barcelona.

## Prof. Oliver Kesar

Professor Oliver Kesar is a Full Professor at the Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Zagreb, Croatia, and a tourism expert with over 24 years of experience. Apart from being the Vice Dean for Human Resources and Infrastructure, from October 2022 he has held the position of the Head of Department of Tourism. He also serves as a visiting professor of tourism-related courses at the University of Dubrovnik, Croatia. During his career, he has proved himself as a teacher, researcher, consultant and active tourism practitioner. The main areas of Professor Kesar's expertise are tourism economics, tourism consumption, special interest tourism, visitor attractions, and collaboration networks in tourism. He actively carries out scientific and professional projects and serves as a member of several scientific committees of international conferences, all in the field of tourism. He regularly publishes scientific papers in textbooks, journals, and conference proceedings, either solely or in co-authorship. Currently, Professor Kesar serves as an editorial board member of two international scientific journals - *Tourism and Hospitality Management* and the *Zagreb International Review of Economics and Business*. He is also a member of the Croatian Society of Economists (CSE) and the Croatian Meeting Professionals Association (CMPA).

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