

# Partnering for success



ICCA

Regional insights  
into the global  
association  
meetings  
market



International Congress and Convention Association

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# About ICCA

## Shaping the future and value of international association meetings.

ICCA (the International Congress and Convention Association) is the global community and knowledge hub for the international association meetings industry. Since its establishment in 1963, ICCA has been dedicated to building one single area of expertise: international association meetings. ICCA's founders were a small, visionary group of travel agency friends based across four continents, who saw the potential of internationally-rotating medical association meetings, and consequently set up systems to share information about these meetings, and to introduce their clients to trustworthy contacts in countries where they may not have established a local network. These principles of sharing knowledge and building trust between suppliers and international associations continue to be the foundation of ICCA today.

ICCA now represents over 1,100 companies and organisations in almost 100 countries worldwide, representing all services within the meetings industry. We are headquartered in Amsterdam and operate five Regional Offices in Africa, Asia-Pacific, the Middle East, North America and Latin America.

As of 2020, ICCA encompasses all major stakeholders in the world of association meetings, by opening its doors to associations with the launch of the ICCA Association Community. One of ICCA's five strategic goals is to develop closer business interactions with the association community.



# ICCA Association Partner Programme

Launched in 2016, the Association Partner programme is a collaborative initiative designed to help ICCA deliver an ambitious portfolio of new activities and online services that serve to strengthen our relationship with international associations.

At the same time, this partnership model allows ICCA Members in all regions globally to strengthen their own ties and increase their profile with the international association community.

## Partners as off close of 2021



[Find out more here](#)



# 2022 Incredible Impacts Programme

Celebrating the “beyond tourism” value of international association meetings and shining a global spotlight on associations who have created a positive societal impact through innovative thinking and creativity.

**Top 3 applicants will receive a grant of 7,500USD.**

Deadline 1 June 2022

[\*\*Apply here\*\*](#)

## 2021 Winners

European Aids Clinical Society  
The Garden of Hope Foundation  
Women Deliver

# ICCA Association Community

The ICCA Association Community was launched in 2020 to connect with peers and meetings suppliers globally to forge new partnerships, adapt key learnings and work together to create more sustainable events for the future.

As of February 2022, the ICCA Association Community includes over **300** association executives from over **170** international associations.



[Find out more here](#)

## The ICCA Association Team.

**Frances Van Klaveren, CAE**

Community Engagement Manager, ICCA

**Christine Yu Hsin Hou**

Community Engagement Coordinator, ICCA



# ICCA Association Community



## Patrick Debus

Chief of Cabinet of the President's Office,  
World Federation of Consuls.

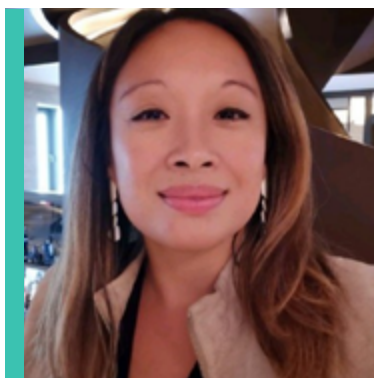
“ Taking care of a global federation of associations, I value the ICCA association community as the most fruitful way to share experiences and learn valuable information from leaders of other associations around the world. ”



## Liliane Yan, CMP, DES

Congress and Meeting Coordinator, World  
Federation of Hemophilia.

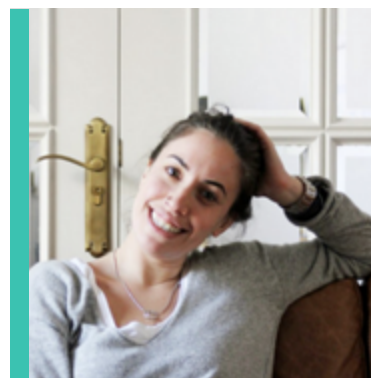
“ As a new member of the ICCA Association Community, I have the opportunity to connect with other association professionals to broaden knowledge, build networks, and access to innovations. ”



## Cathy Persidis

Chair of the ICCA Association Advisory Group.

“ I joined the ICCA Association Community because this is where I can meet like-minded people who have the shared goal of rebuilding communities. ”



## Mireia Iglesias

Communication & Events Coordinator,  
World Leisure Organisation.

“ ICCA Association Community is where I learn, share and connect with a worldwide association community of like-minded people. ”

# The ICCA Association Community

Connecting associations and meeting suppliers globally to create better events.

## CONNECTING WITH YOUR PEERS

Over  
**300**  
association representatives  
in the community across

**155+**  
new associations joined since  
January 2021

**36**  
countries

**85+**  
joined the LinkedIn  
group in 2021



## CONNECTING WITH MEETING SUPPLIERS

**1,000+** meeting suppliers  
to connect with

## MEETING PLANNING INSIGHT

Over  
**250,000** association meetings in  
the ICCA database

**1,500+** meeting destinations  
to compare

**12,500+**  
local expert champions  
to explore

## KNOWLEDGE AND CONTENT PROVIDED IN 2021

**5,000+** attendees globally

**240+**  
expert speakers

**140** hours of content and CAE  
approved professional  
development credits

**30** global events

**10+** associations  
success stories  
published

FREE MEMBERSHIP EXTENDED FOR

**2022**

Figures as of February 2022





ICCA  
Association  
Community



## Why join

- Access ICCA resources to **create top quality meetings** for your association's members.
- **Learn and develop** with access to CAE approved educational programmes and global volunteer opportunities.
- Save time and money by **connecting with the right business partners** through the global ICCA community.
- Apply to **grants and recognition programmes** to elevate your association's brand and receive funding.
- Get **exclusive access** to hosted buyer programmes

[www.iccaworld.org/associations](http://www.iccaworld.org/associations)

## Who can join?

- Non-governmental international associations with rotating meetings
- At least one meeting must rotate across three countries, attract a minimum of 50 participants and be held on a regular basis
- The association must not be managed by third parties

## How to join?

Join today and benefit from free access in 2022, a saving of 250 Euro (regular annual price).

For more information, please use the QR code





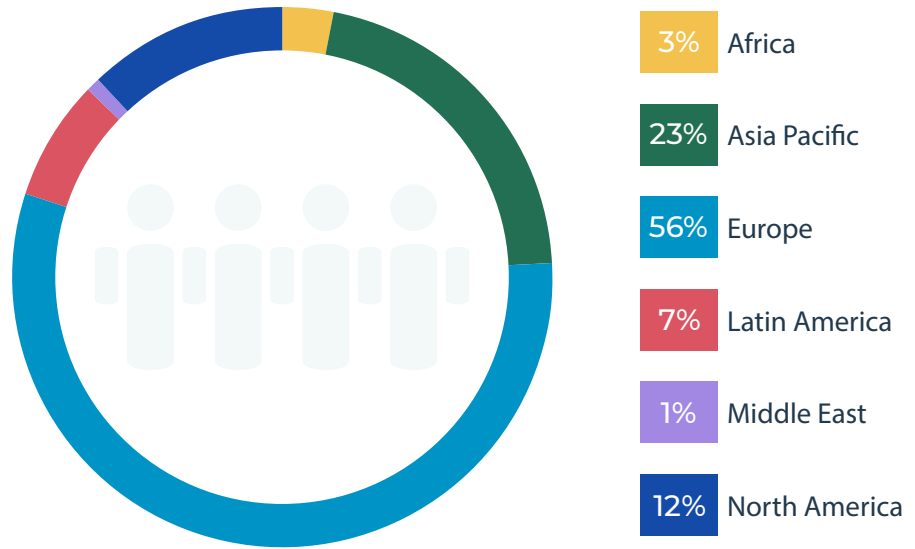
ICCA

# ICCA 61<sup>st</sup> Congress Kraków, Poland

6-9 November 2022

# Global Trends

Global overview for all meetings held in 2020.



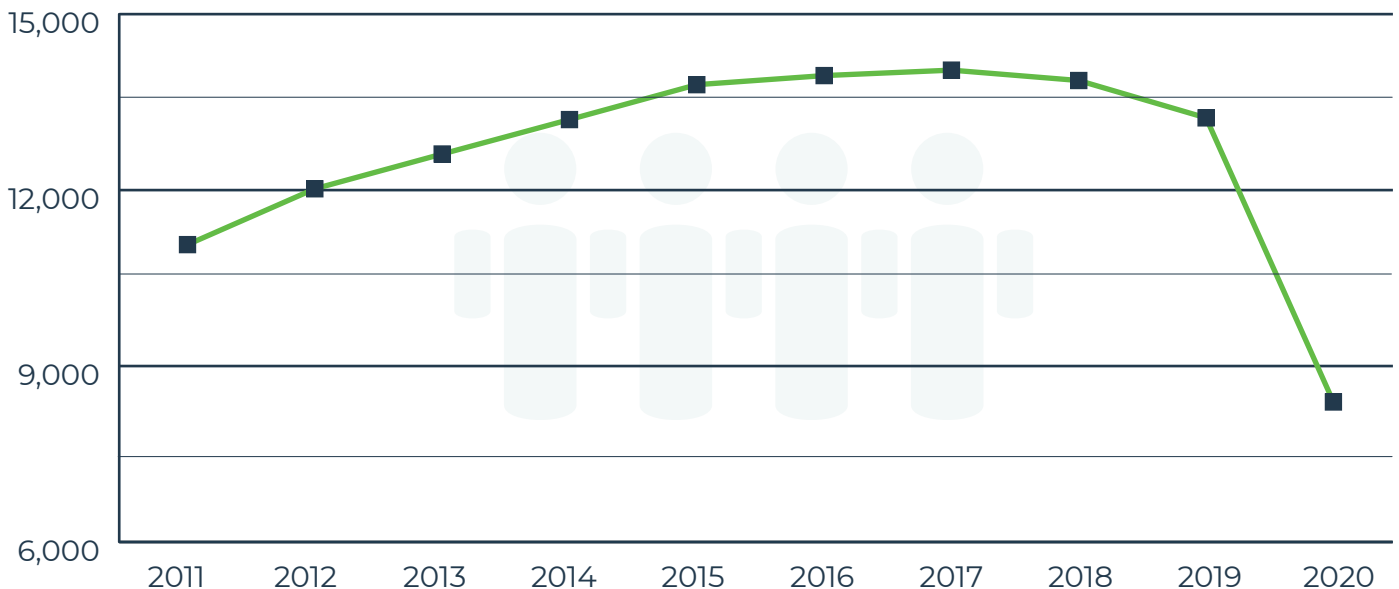
Global ranking based on number of regional meetings held.

Rank	Country	Total
1 st	U.S.A.	618
2 nd	Germany	427
3 rd	Spain	426
4 th	United Kingdom	389
5 th	Italy	336

Rank	City	Total
1 st	Barcelona	121
2 nd	Vienna	121
3 rd	Berlin	115
4 th	Seoul	113
5 th	Lisbon	109

A complete overview of all meetings as known from 2011 to April 2021.



# Africa



**10** countries

**31** members

**3%** of global meetings



**Esmaré Steinhofel**  
Regional Director Africa, ICCA

# Africa Regional Insights

ICCA currently has 31 members in Africa representing 10 countries in Southern, East and West Africa.

With the current COVID situation there is a clear trend towards regional meetings and the ICCA Africa Regional Office works closely with AfSAE, the African Society for Association Executives to support and grow the African Association fraternity.

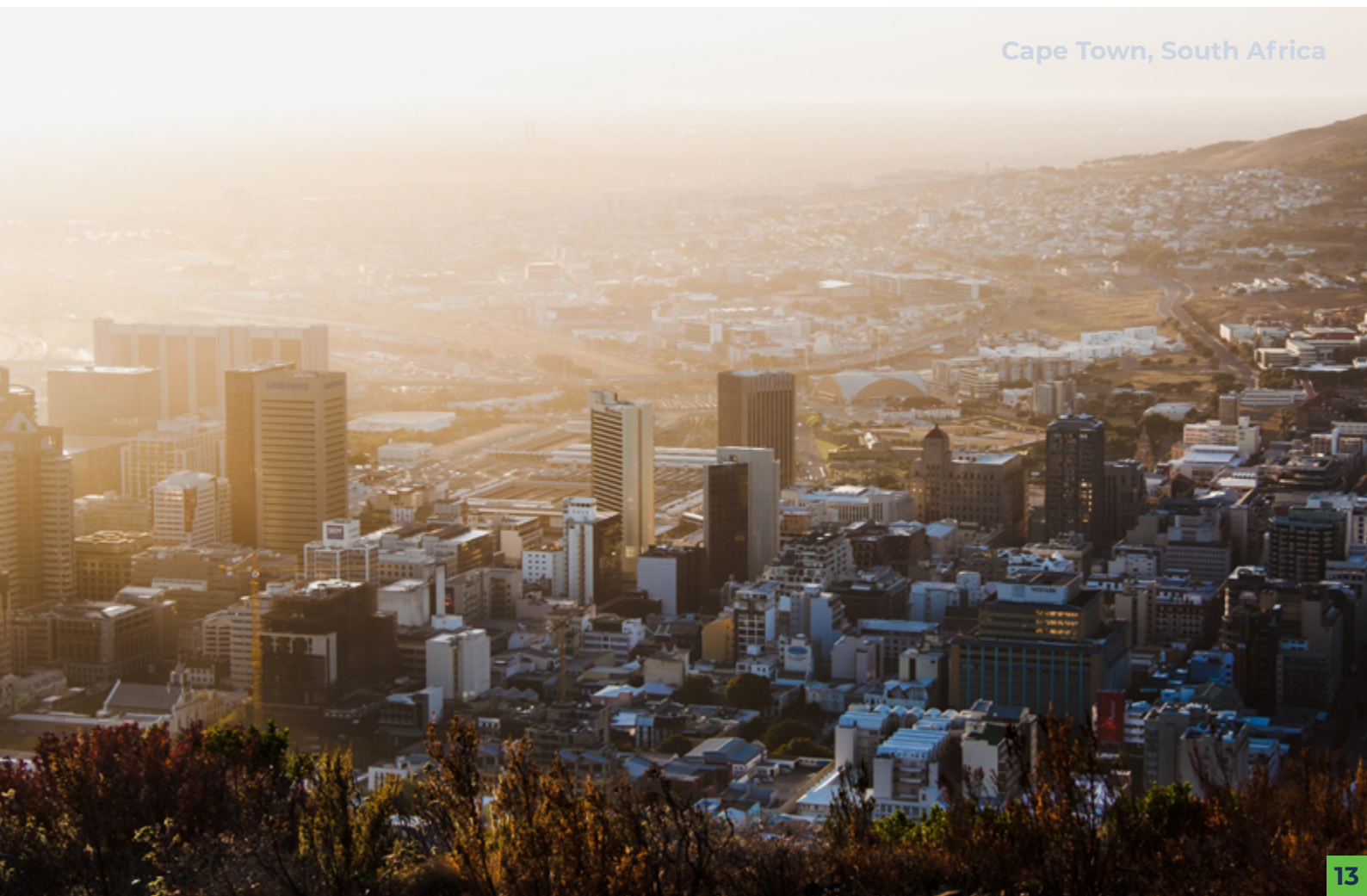
Convention Bureaus are working closely with suppliers in their respective countries to assist regional and international associations hosting hybrid events in their destinations especially around RFP's that are changing requiring assistance with hybrid meeting requirements, flexibility regarding delegate numbers and dates as well as changes to cancellations options and force majeure clauses.

The recent ICCA Global Association Meetings Protocol shows a clear indication that 2022 will be the year of hybrid events and the regional analysis show Africa in the 3rd place regarding hybrid meetings.

Destinations are seeing the long-term benefit of focussing on the Business Events sector and over the last few years there has been ongoing infrastructural developments such as upgraded and new airports, hotel developments and more suppliers focussing on the association meetings segment and this is ongoing.

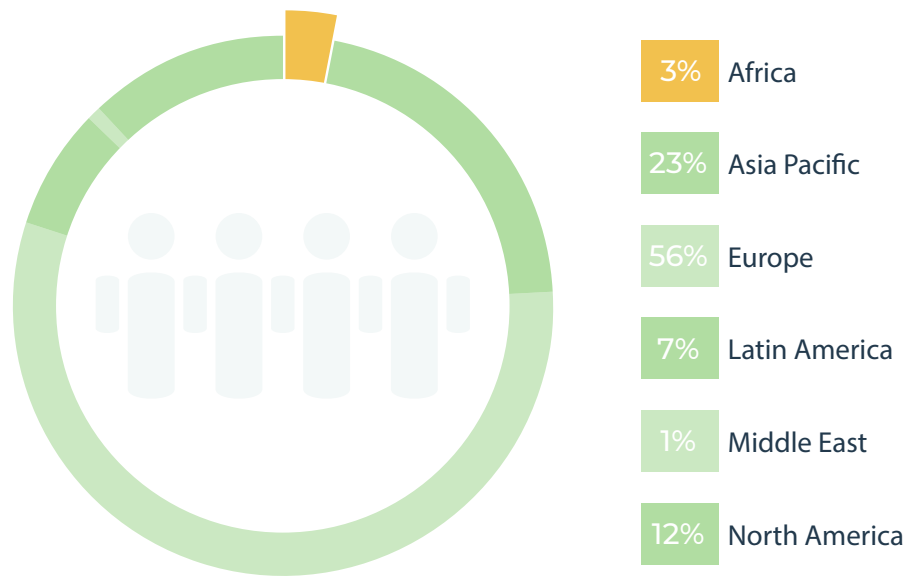
A highlight for the region is the ICCA Meetings Africa Association Day that takes place as part of Meetings Africa tradeshow that will again take place in 2022 as a hybrid event. The event is designed for ICCA Africa members and regional and international hosted buyers as an educational seminar.

Cape Town, South Africa



# Africa Trends

Global overview for all meetings held in Africa in 2020.

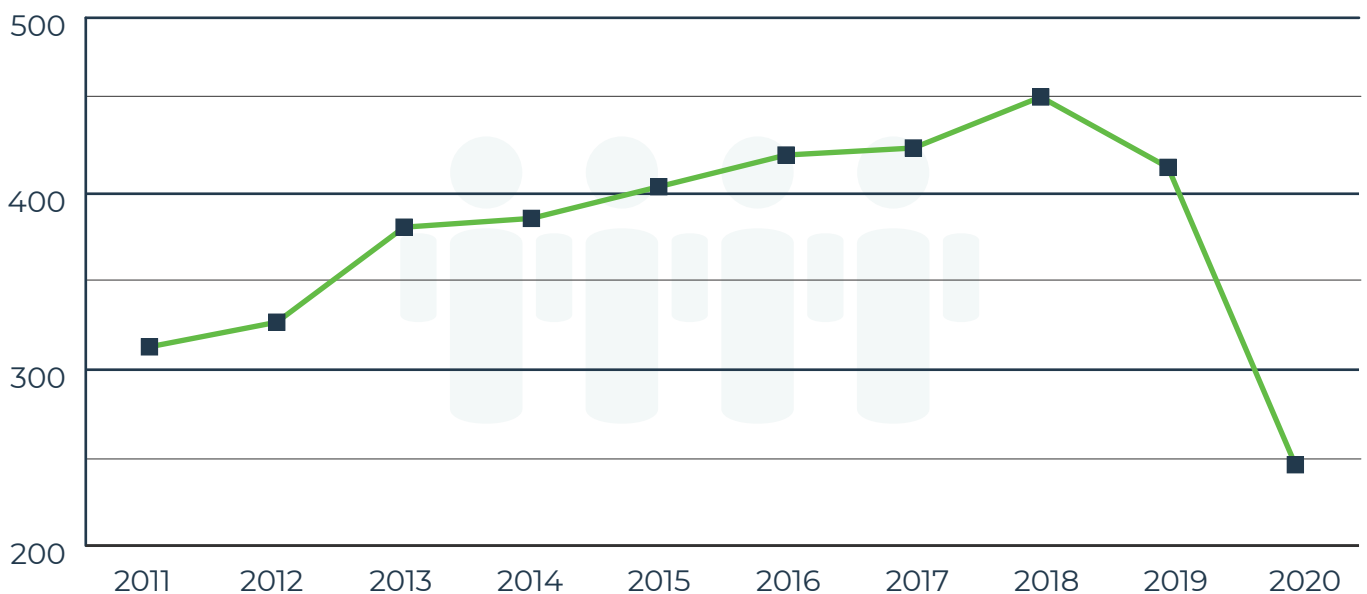


Regional ranking based on number of regional meetings held.

Rank	Country	Total
1 st	South Africa	81
2 nd	Morocco	28
3 rd	Kenya	25
4 th	Rwanda	13
5 th	Tunisia	13

Rank	City	Total
1 st	Cape Town	44
2 nd	Nairobi	17
3 rd	Marrakech	15
4 th	Kigali	13
5 th	Cairo	10

A complete overview of all Africa meetings as known from 2011 to April 2021.



# Asia Pacific



**779** meetings **20** new members **22%** of global meetings



**Waikin Wong**  
Regional Director Asia Pacific, ICCA

# Asia Pacific Regional Insights

The ongoing conversation on recovery and reopening of business events sector is starting to see promising outcomes. With vaccination rates surging and set as a standard requirement across all settings; destinations in Asia Pacific region are preparing for the reopening and resuming of business events sector. Although majority of the destinations are kicking off domestically; as restrictions on international travel is yet to be fully lifted; the region itself has managed to steer resiliently against all odds throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

One of the key factors to overcome these challenges is forging collaboration among industry players within the region. The meetings community has come together to strengthen the voice for advocacy on not only reopening, but sustaining the business events industry, as well as engaging with policymakers and major stakeholders to ensure business continuity and economic resilience. Government support in the form of support packages and marketing campaigns were necessary. For example, the

Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Government has allocated funding to help rebuild major events that were cancelled this year. Singapore launched a global business events funds, the first of its kind, to invest in exhibition and events industry. Business Events Sarawak continues to advocate for convention legacies for sector, communities, economies and governance, under the BELegacy Programme. In September 2021, Asia Convention Alliance, initiated by Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) saw convention bureaus in Asia Pacific forming a unique alliance to promote the region's convention industry.

As of 30 September 2021, a total of 779 meetings took place this year in Asia Pacific. 110 meetings were not affected and carried on as scheduled, in a face-to-face setting. 480 meetings were conducted virtually, while 189 were conducted in a hybrid format. 372 meetings have been postponed, and perceived on an encouraging note that they are likely return to the host destination, in a hybrid format.

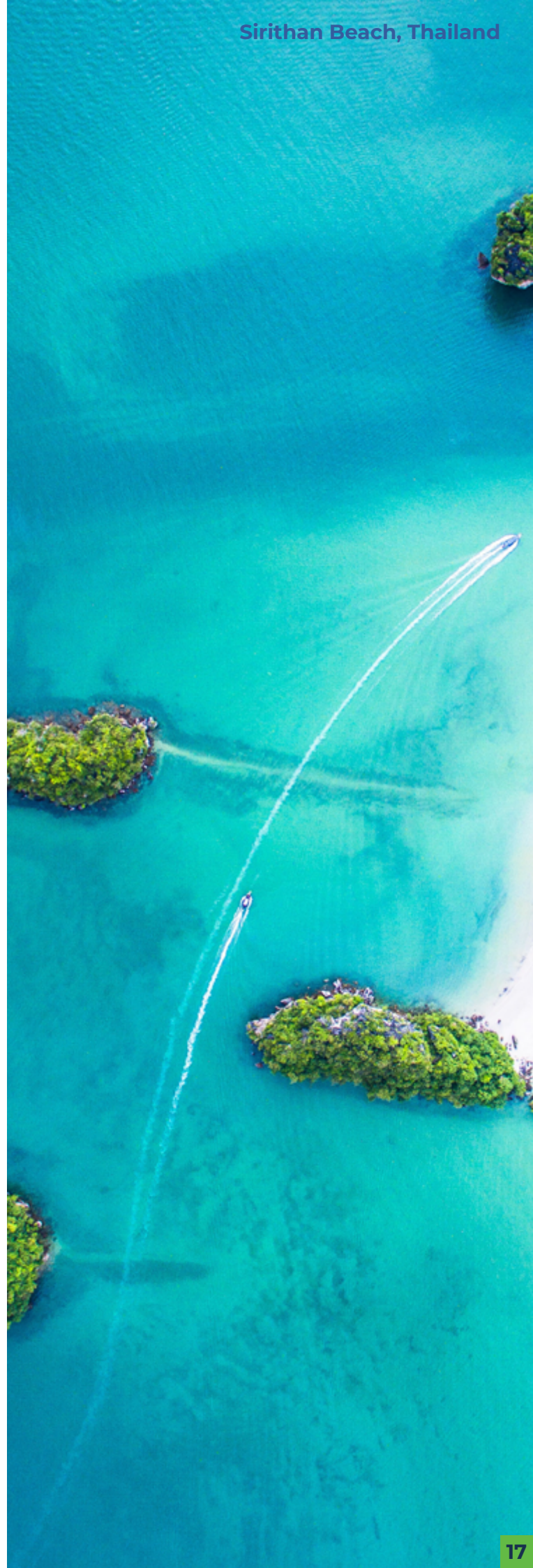




Alongside the successful hybrid, multi-hub experience with Seoul and Nagasaki as host cities for the 60th Annual ICCA Congress Hubs in Asia Pacific; meeting suppliers are also observing diversification of business models incorporating digital elements into their events. More venues are investing in technology facilities such as virtual studio (green rooms) while professional congress organisers (PCOs) are developing virtual platforms to further accommodate the associations market. Other initiatives include revamping destination marketing. For example, Seoul Tourism Organization launched Virtual Seoul 2.0, an upgraded #3D MICE event platform that allows planners to view customized virtual spaces easily.

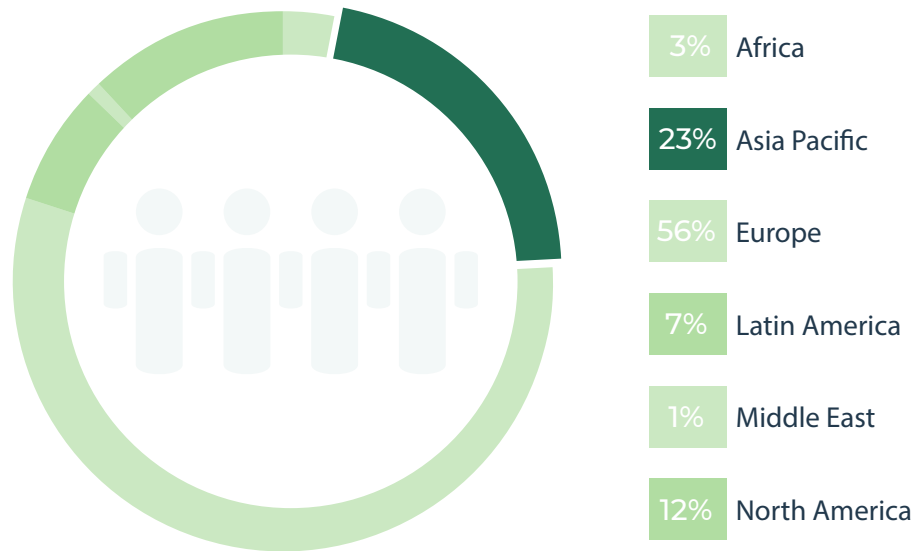
Meanwhile, events taking place onsite are focusing on tightening Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) on health and safety, and developing agile yet flexible risk management components for event planning, considering the unpredictable business landscape whilst travel bubbles are being established. The focus has shifted to workforce trends such as re-skilling and upskilling team-members, including program design revolving around inclusivity and diversity.

It is undeniable that the meetings industry is actively taking measures to revive the business events sector. While ICCA membership in Asia Pacific region has seen a decrease in its retention rates, it has also seen an increase in new memberships, welcoming more than 20 member-organisations this year – an encouraging prospect for the region.



# Asia Pacific Trends

Global overview for all meetings held in Asia Pacific in 2020.



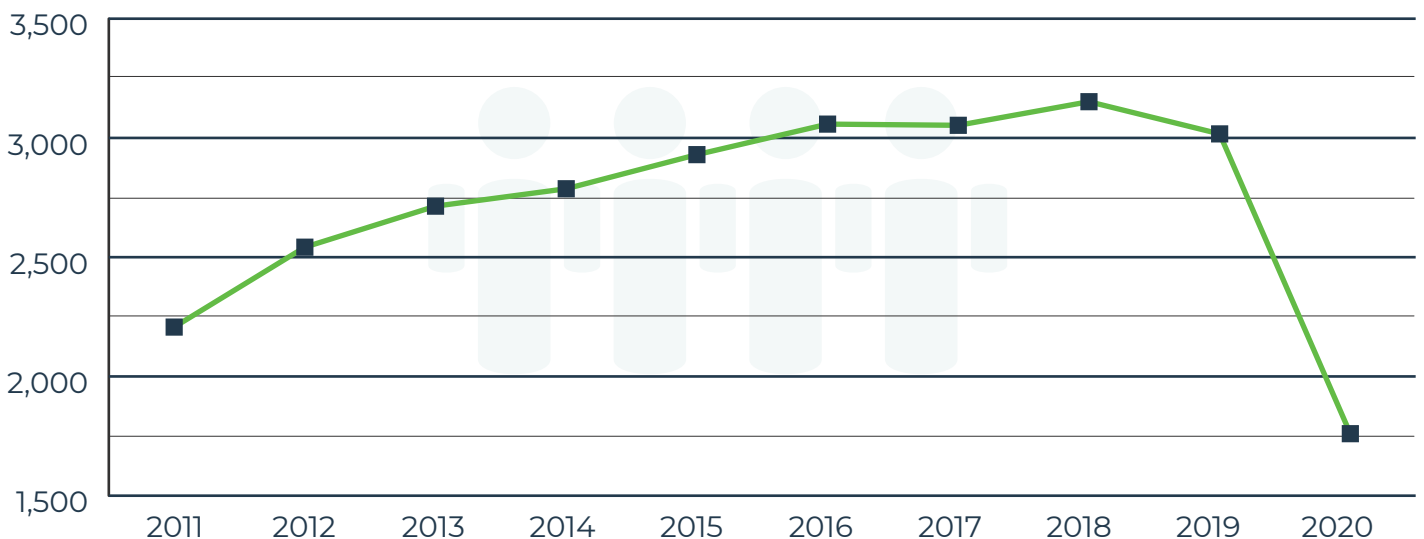
Regional ranking based on number of regional meetings held.

Rank	Country	Total
1 st	Japan	309
2 nd	Republic of Korea	223
3 rd	China-P.R.	215
4 th	Australia	195
5 th	Thailand	111

Rank	City	Total
1 st	Seoul	113
2 nd	Singapore	105
3 rd	Bangkok	72
4 th	Taipei	62
5 th	Hong Kong	55

A complete overview of all Asia Pacific meetings as known from 2011 to April 2021.



# New Zealand

New Zealand is supporting associations to make a positive impact and demonstrate their effectiveness through its new Conference Impact Aotearoa (New Zealand) programme. Tourism New Zealand Business Events Bid Manager Leonie Ashford says: “Conferences are a catalyst for social change. The information shared and decisions taken can profoundly change communities, impacting areas from policy and legislation change, to public health initiatives, environmental action, economic growth, or the creation of new jobs.

Through the Conference Impact Aotearoa (New Zealand) framework, associations will be able to enhance the strategic focus of their conferences and put long-term outcomes at the core of their conference activity. It provides a measurement tool that aligns with global standards and gives organisations the ability to benchmark and report outcomes.

This initiative will also help associations to build valuable long-term partnerships and engage with stakeholders, further broadening their appeal to a wider audience and potential membership.

New Zealand will work directly with each association to shape support to achieve their goals.

*“ Supporting conference organisers to make and measure impact goals ensures we harness the power of these meetings and make a real, positive difference to economy, nature, society and culture. ”*

*Leonie Ashford*, Tourism New Zealand Business Events Bid Manager.

Convention & Exhibition Centre, Tākina–Wellington



## Bigger and better.

This strategic focus on association business is being bolstered by new investment in New Zealand's conference capability and capacity. Opening this year Te Pae Christchurch Convention Centre will be the first of New Zealand's new generation of convention centres. Its 28,000 sqm of flexible space in central Christchurch includes: a 1,400 seat tiered auditorium, divisible into two 700-seat venues; a 1,000 seat banquet space overlooking the Avon River; expansive exhibition space, and leading hybrid and virtual meeting capability. As part of ASM Global, Te Pae Christchurch is leveraging

the knowledge and experience of the worldwide venue management company, while delivering New Zealand's famed local welcome and hospitality.

Meanwhile, construction continues on two more major convention venues: Tākina – Wellington Convention & Exhibition Centre will provide 18,000sqm of event space in the capital city, and the New Zealand International Convention Centre will offer multipurpose event space, suitable for conference, exhibitions or dinners for 3,000 people, in the heart of Auckland city.



[Find out more here](#)

Te Pae Christchurch, New Zealand



# Sri Lanka

## Strategic decision taken by Sri Lanka Tourism to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on the tourism industry.

Sri Lanka Tourism strategized on a first move advantage and successfully launched the innovative bio bubble concept when we initially re-opened the country in January this year. Same was recognized at ITB Berlin and many international media outlets for our innovative idea and strategic approach which did boost traveller confidence. As part of this concept, Sri Lanka Tourism introduced the Safe and Secure certification in adherence to health protocols after an audit by KPMG and Ernst & Young which enabled the industry and even smaller establishments, and travel guides benefit from tourism activities conducted under the bio bubble.

Sri Lanka Tourism have studied the market, observed best practices and with the assistance of partners and donor agencies have developed strategies to capture and develop emerging market segments. Wellness and Ayurveda, Digital Nomad, Cruise, Film, Adventure and Sports Tourism are segments that have been identified as having potential for the industry and currently strategies are being implemented in the key identified areas. Despite the pandemic Sri Lanka Tourism has made progress in strategic areas of technology, sustainability, branding & promotions, and efficiency improvement. Also Sri Lanka Tourism has identified importance of incorporating technology into the sector to remain competitive in the digital era.

With new strategies in place, country is being positioned as the ultimate experiential destination. With this new positioning, in addition to existing audience start to attract a new segment of traveller who will be savvier in technology and have high holiday expectations.

In order to cater to the demands made by the new age traveller, it is important to raise the bar of the service standards in the industry. The ability to anticipate what a guest desires without them having to request for it and learning the art of observing guests and choosing instances to over deliver on a service promise will really differentiate Sri Lanka Tourism product.

Consistently developing tourism infrastructure is imperative for a world-class product and Sri Lanka Tourism has identified several key areas that need urgent attention. There is a need to develop more connectivity. The 16 domestic airports in the country which will allow easy access for tourists to visit sites without being bogged down in lengthy commutes by road. Considering excellent geographical locations along the main sea routes and access to the ocean, Sri Lanka is also targeting cruise liners to make Colombo or Galle a key stopover. Sri Lanka Railway too can be a critical pillar for the industry. To leverage on the sustainable tourism trend, the country has embarked on a National Sustainable Destination Certification (NSDC) programme with UNDP Sri Lanka, where 9 destinations in 9 provinces are identified, and Sri Lanka Tourism working together with respective provincial councils to transform them into sustainable destinations.

Sri Lanka Tourism has true potential to attract the experiential traveller and that with the launch of the integrated global communication campaign country will be able to highlight to the world the treasure trove of adventures Sri Lanka has in store for them.



**Find out more here**

# Europe



**500** active members   **30** new members   **56%** of global meetings



**Tamara Bernstein**  
Regional Director Europe, ICCA

# Europe Regional Insights

2021 started with uncertainty and ended with a great achievement of hosting another successful and highly attended annual congress which went hybrid for the second year running. We attended IMEX America and IBTM World and were delighted to see our industry friends, members and associations back on the floor, busy as always and remaining positive.

We closed off the year with nearly 500 active members in Europe, including 30 new members who joined during the year. 2021 was a year filled with activities in Europe; four ICCA Chapter Meetings took place onsite and were attended by an average of 40 members per meeting, as well as hosted associations. Being able to come together in person offered a wonderful opportunity for members to meet again and network, share thoughts

and ideas and create grounds for successful collaborations.

2021 was also a year of collaborations; ICCA launched new and successful collaborations with various members and organizations, offering new services, products and knowledge to our community. ICCA collaborated with the GDS movement to support the GDS academy, bringing sustainability education to the next level. We partnered with Explori to bring members high level data and research, based on first hand information collected from our community. We also partnered with the German Convention Bureau on the future meeting space project: a high level in depth study and research on the future of meetings, how the needs will change and what will shift in our industry.



Cinque Terre, Italy



It was not just ICCA taking on new partnerships, our members in Europe were doing the same. 2021 was the year of new alliances to be formed, creating opportunities for destinations to bring together their knowledge and experience, offering associations new and different formats to work with, when it comes to selecting destinations, creating hybrid events and more. Some of these include the Hybrid City alliance, The EU CVB network and more.

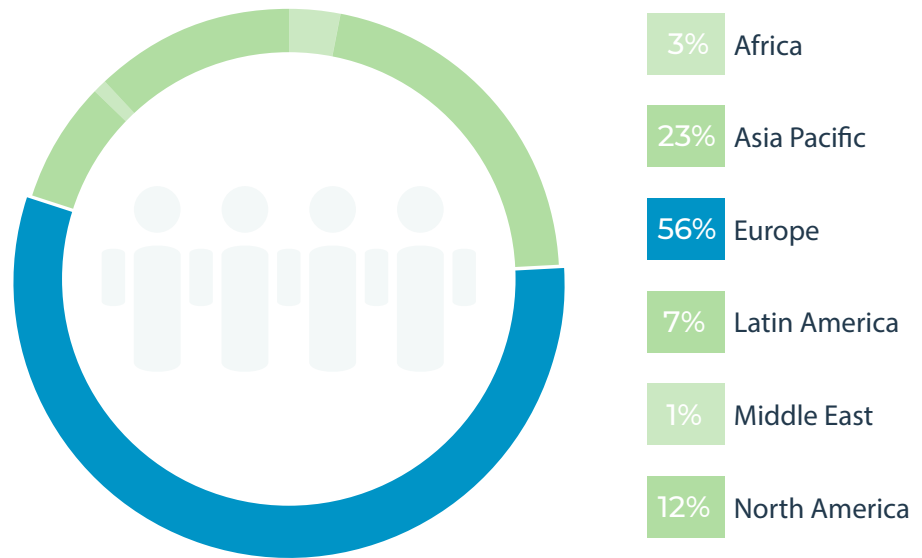
Our members also took a fresh look and new approach on how to promote their activities, their venues and their destinations. 2021 was the year where sustainability met technology. Many ICCA members implemented new technology and hybrid formats, adopting platforms for their events and thus creating a sustainable way to hold events and showcase their beautiful destinations and conference centers.

With 2022 just beginning, we hope to embrace new challenges and opportunities, as we learn and grow from them. Our industry is ever changing and we hope to continue serving our members and associations community in the years to come, even better.



# Europe Trends

Global overview for all meetings held in Europe in 2020.



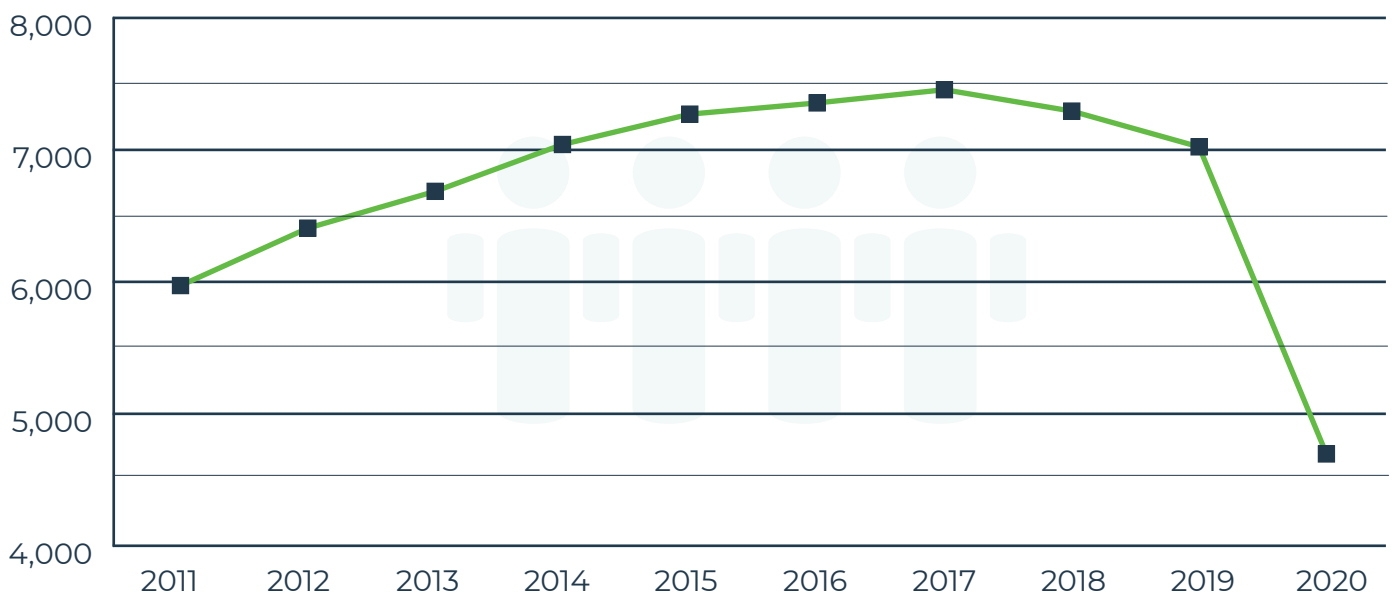
Regional ranking based on number of regional meetings held.

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2 nd	Spain	426
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4 th	Italy	336
5 th	France	322

Rank	City	Total
1 st	Barcelona	121
2 nd	Vienna	121
3 rd	Berlin	115
4 th	Lisbon	109
5 th	Madrid	100

A complete overview of all Europe meetings as known from 2011 to April 2021.



# Brussels

## Where associations create good vibes.

Wherever you are based, wherever you come from, Brussels is an ideal place for associations and visit.brussels is an experienced partner. Cosmopolitan, boasting plentiful green and urban areas and still possessing active industry on its territory, the capital of Europe is a hub of research, networking, business and culture.

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## The place to be for the association community.

Associations are part of Brussels' DNA. The city has evolved steadily and has always been home to local craftsmen guilds, social organisations and scientific societies. For over a century it has also benefitted from a special legal status for international associations, and currently hosts more than 2,300 international associations' headquarters.

Hosting international organisations, like the European Union institutions or NATO, as well as being a major diplomatic, international press and freelancers hub, Brussels has the perfect setup for connections and international development.

With the European Association Summit, the city's seasonal discovery programme run by visit.brussels and regular events organised by association organisations, associations can quickly grow their knowledge, capacities and network, thanks to the ease with which they can exchange with their peers.

Together with Dubai, Singapore and Washington DC, Brussels is also a member of the Global Association Hubs Partnership – which groups together the world's leading cities for international associations – and a leader of association meetings in Europe.



# A meeting place for all audiences.

Easy to reach by transport – plane, rail, road, bicycle – the city also boasts a well-developed telecommunications infrastructure, allowing it to stay permanently connected with the world. Moving around the city is also made easy thanks to relatively short distances, an extensive public transport network and constant investments in mobility.

The meetings districts in Brussels have a diverse character, thanks in no small part to their architecture and the history of their establishment. A combination of art and history in the area surrounding the city centre, a modern and corporate district close to Brussels North station, a functional business

character around Louise, a focus on trade fairs and large conferences on the former universal exhibition plateau of Heysel, and the evolution of former industrial buildings into event venues in the west and south of Brussels.

Hosting conferences ranging from youth organisation meetings, scientific congresses, trade federation assemblies, or hackathons for researchers, Brussels has everything required for a successful event. The visit.brussels Convention and Association Bureau welcomes and assists other event organisers and releases its annual Let's Meet guide to highlight all the possibilities for meetings.

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## Safety, sustainability, digital innovation.

Events and venue safety is treated with the utmost attention, with a protocol contained within the Brussels Health and Safety Label. Digital education and investments are foremost in the minds of all the city's event organisers. Brussels' concern for sustainability and the great efforts it has made to improve it have been recognised by the GDS-index. Our capital occupies a top ten place in the index.

As an international capital and a wonderful place to live, Brussels is uniquely positioned on the European and world tourism map and has a genuine balance between business and leisure activities. It is a true laboratory of cultural diversity in Europe - its creativity being an attraction in itself - and it has become a mecca for gastronomy, contemporary art, comic culture and all kinds of guided tours.

Let the visit.brussels team guide you through the evolution of this multifaceted city.



[Find out more here](#)

Place Flagey, Belgium



# Flanders

## Future-proof destination for State-of-the-Art Conferences & Events.

Due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, many meeting and conference organizers were forced to make the switch from physical to hybrid events. With a growing focus on sustainable travel many experts believe these changes are here to stay. ICCA's survey on Association managers conducted in May 2020 shows that 84% of planners will include hybrid and digital elements in events in the future, based on a belief that will lead to increased attendance. As a leading region of innovation, Flanders has invested heavily in education, tech platforms and digital infrastructure to meet this growing need.




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## Hybr.

VISITFLANDERS has developed a new digital platform for hybrid congresses and events: Hybr.

This platform was developed in cooperation with the Leuven Innovation Festival and Technopolis, the Flemish center for science and technology.

Hybr. is unique and set to become the standard for hybrid conferences, congresses and networking events in the post-Covid era. Central to the platform is the live experience and connecting visitors both in person and online.

VISITFLANDERS' platform goes beyond combining the best practices of existing event platforms. The creators developed an "all-in-one" system and drew inspiration from the world of gaming and social media. This approach enables them to place "connecting" at the centre of the platform rather than viewing. This technology introduces a digital balance between the networking experience and the experience of physical meetings.

“ Flanders has been a leading region in the conference and event sector for years. The many specialised fairs, congresses and sporting events attract hundreds of thousands of visitors from all over the world to our region every year. With the development of a state-of-the-art digital platform, Flanders can maintain its reputation as a global player for congresses and events post-Covid. This will enable us to reinforce our role in the field of hybrid congresses and events and contribute to the digital transformation and sustainability of the sector. And most importantly: we want to offer this platform in a user- and budget-friendly way to associations and conference organisers. ”

*Peter De Wilde*, CEO, VisitFlanders

## A digital transformation for the Flanders' Heritage Venues.

"Flanders Heritage Venues" are a series of 21 congress & event locations, where you can welcome your delegates in a building with a unique story and offer them an amazing heritage experience. The location has exceptional architectural value, is situated in the historic city centre, and is within walking distance of all of Flanders' cultural, artistic, and culinary assets. In that sense, you are really creating the legacy of tomorrow in today's heritage, while offering your guests an unforgettable experience. VISITFLANDERS has launched a plan to re-establish healthy levels of activity and accelerate the digital transformation of the Flanders Heritage Venues & Meeting Venues.



**Discover the Flanders Heritage Venues here**

## A transformative travel experience.

In Flanders, craftsmanship, innovation and passion have gone hand in hand for centuries: they are the pillars of our heritage. We foster intellectual engagement, knowledge and cultural exchange and stimulate scientific debate. When hosting a conference in Flanders, you tap into the shift towards experiential travel that focuses on experiencing the destination by actively and meaningfully engaging experts and visitors with Flanders' rich heritage, people, food, culture and unique expertise. Conferences become more unique experiences with memories that carry far beyond the conference hours and walls.



**Find out more here**



*“ We strongly believe the way forward is cocreation and sharing expertise, leading to a more professional, futureproof and humane meetings industry. Flanders delivers unique and meaningful conference experiences to both ‘live’ and ‘virtual’ delegates. ”*

*Peter De Wilde, CEO of VisitFlanders*

# Ljubljana

## A boutique capital city with sustainability in its DNA.

With 295,000 residents, Ljubljana – the Slovenian capital – is a compact, walking city often depicted as a welcoming lounge by conference delegates. It features a wealth of history, style, arts and culture, and an atmosphere that is both Central European and Mediterranean. The city was named European Green Capital 2016 for its excellence in sustainable development.

Ljubljana provides an array of meeting facilities that can welcome up to 2,200 delegates in the largest hall, encompassing two congress centres, convention and seminar hotels, and academic venues, most of which are conveniently located in the city centre. In one of the larger venues, a new hall for up to 3,500 delegates will be completed by 2024, offering new possibilities for welcoming events in our green destination.

As Ljubljana is within one and a half hour's drive to many of Slovenia's natural and cultural attractions, a business stay in our city can be topped by exploring at least some of our country's "icons". Slovenia is becoming a culinary hotspot – also with its own Michelin guide since two years. Many caterers and restaurants take pride in using seasonal, fresh, locally sourced produce to create a genuine taste in their cuisine. With the support of dedicated and creative destination partners, Ljubljana strives to deliver a professional and authentic experience with a strong personal touch and high value for money!



[Find out more here](#)

Triple Bridge & Preseren Square, Ljubljana



## The power of education in Ljubljana.

Ljubljana has a strong presence in the education sector with many notable institutions in diverse areas – from engineering, to technology, life sciences, research and artificial intelligence. This year saw the International Research Centre for Artificial Intelligence (IRCAI), operating under the auspices of UNESCO, established in Ljubljana, with the Jožef Stefan Institute (IJS), the leading national research organisation, being one of the two local stakeholders.

## Expanded tourist offer.

In 2021, new boutique and lifestyle hotels have opened, some of which are completely refurbished old buildings set in the Old Town's top locations. In spring 2022, two new downtown properties will add 520 rooms to the city 4 and 5-stars hotel portfolio, and further investments are in the pipeline in the coming years. Furthermore, Ljubljana's cultural venues selection has just been enhanced by Cukrarna – a former 19th century sugar factory turned into a large gallery space and an exclusive special event venue. We are also very proud that the legacy of architect Jože Plečnik in his native Ljubljana has been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in summer 2021.

## Leave a long-lasting legacy.

The Ljubljana Convention Bureau, which operates within Ljubljana Tourism, is happy to support all associations aspiring to leave a long-lasting legacy in the destination by connecting them to interesting and relevant partners, also helping to identify CSR programmes and promote a sustainable approach to event organisation.



Association events represent an important element to our long-term strategy as we are becoming a knowledge-based society that strongly focuses on science, aiming to develop and operate according to the principles of environmental protection, circular economy and social justice. By being a part of the Association Partner Programme we strive to promote and strengthen these values.



# St Petersburg

## St Petersburg's Expoforum welcomes ICM 2022.

The International Congress of Mathematicians (ICM) will be held on July 6-14, 2022 at the Convention and Exhibition Center EXPOFORUM (operated by Expoforum-International) in St. Petersburg, Russia by the decision of the International Mathematical Union made at the Congress in Brazil in 2018.

This is the most significant and largest meeting in the field of fundamental and applied mathematics around the world and one of the oldest scientific congresses (the first ICM was held in 1897 in Zurich, Switzerland).

In the entire history of ICM, Russia will host the Congress for the second time, and the first time was in Moscow 1966. The Moscow Congress set a new high score for the number of participants at that time — 4,280 delegates.

The application was submitted by Russia (St. Petersburg) and France (Paris) – Russian bid has received a massive feedback on a national level and joined efforts of Russian mathematicians, governmental, scientific and educational institutions, as well as business community, including Expoforum team. St. Petersburg won with an advantage of 83:63 votes.



*“ Holding the Congress in Russia is intended to enhance the integration of our international mathematical centers into the world scientific community, to support collaboration between Russian and international specialists and researchers. ”*

*Andrei Okounkov*, Russian mathematician, ambassador and the Fields Medal 2006 winner.



Royal village, St Petersburg

Expoforum-International was appointed as an official PCO&DMC for ICM 2022: "The Mathematical Congress is the best proof of the fact that in recent years St. Petersburg has become the capital of business congress and scientific tourism. It is ahead of Moscow in terms of the quantity of officially registered association meetings and its delegates. Next year we plan to host 4 global congresses, and in this regard ICM is the highlight. Thousands of its participants at the end of the day will be travelling around the world, sharing their impressions of St. Petersburg and Russia, our hospitality and high level of infrastructure to the business and scientific elites", - commented Sergey Voronkov, CEO.

On July 6 in St. Petersburg a solemn opening ceremony of a new art-object "Pythagoras' theorem" was held and a series of events "One Year to the Congress - Countdown" was launched.

*“ Guest speakers at ICM are mathematicians of the highest level, capable of presenting current research trends to a wide audience. The ICM program includes a very wide range of activities, including plenary and invited lectures, panel discussions, public lectures, educational events for a wide audience, short messages, poster presentations and more. ”*

**Stanislav Smirnov**, Russian mathematician and the Fields Medal 2010 winner.

We look forward welcoming mathematicians from around the globe and dear guests to engage, enjoy and inspire together during this wonderful journey of ICM St. Petersburg 2022.

Follow us on [icm2022.org](https://icm2022.org)



**Find out more here**



# Latin America

Bogota, Colombia



**15** countries

**57** members

**7%** of global meetings



**Andrés Escandón**  
Regional Director Latin America  
and the Caribbean, ICCA

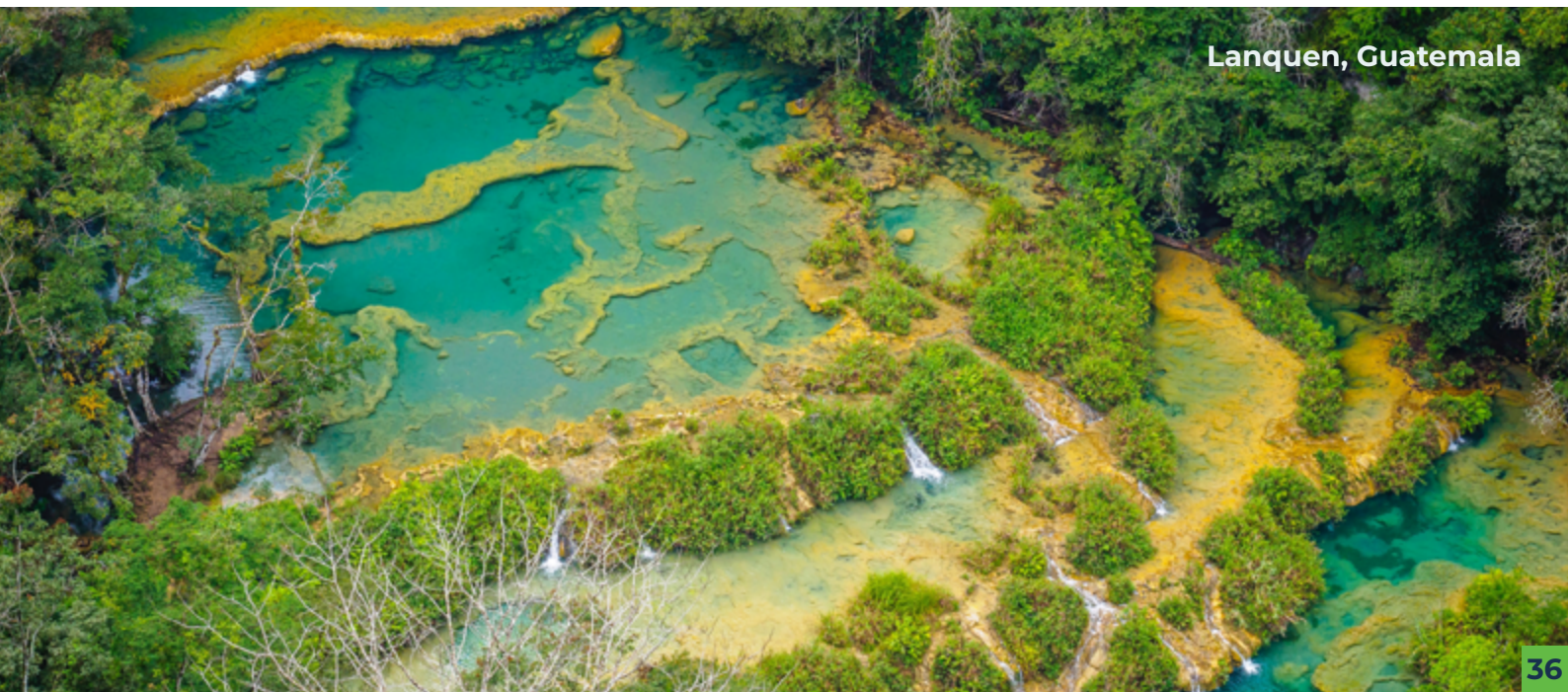
# Latin America Regional Insights

The Latin America and Caribbean ICCA community is comprised of 57 members representing 15 countries. Destinations at a city/country level, venues, hotels, professional congress organizers, industry providers and tourism consultants are all represented in our regional chapter. Our ICCA regional membership have been growing steadily for the past 5 years, with the only exception of 2020, in which the regional meetings ecosystem was affected by the global pandemic. However, in 2021 new members were welcomed to our association, a trend that shows the recovery pace of the meetings and events industry in the region.

As most of the world, 2020 saw a complete shutdown of meetings related activities. During this period, our entire meetings industry value chain came together to work on developing health procedures that would guarantee the safe return to in-person conferences. At the same time, tailored-made, high-quality technology tools were implemented all over the region to provide international associations with state-of-the-art services for hybrid meetings. As a result of this, Latin America and the Caribbean was

one of the first regions in the world to slowly get back to in-person events in October 2020, always maintaining digital capabilities to enhance the events experience.

By 2021, the region saw an exponential increase of in-person events. Local associations, working hand in hand with the entire meeting ecosystem at a country/city level, were able to carry out congresses and conferences with all the health protocols in place, with remarkable results not only from a health perspective, but also from a logistical aspect. In fact, ICCA held its 60th Annual Congress in Cartagena, Colombia, where the entire region gathered face to face to showcase to the international associations market that Latin America and the Caribbean are fully prepared to host international congresses. The ICCA Annual Congress welcomed 200 international visitors, and 25 international associations coming from all over the world. Currently, most of the countries in the region are welcoming back congresses and business events from all over the world, with no travel restrictions in place, always maintaining health protocols and enhancing the value of the meetings with new tools and resources.



Lanquen, Guatemala

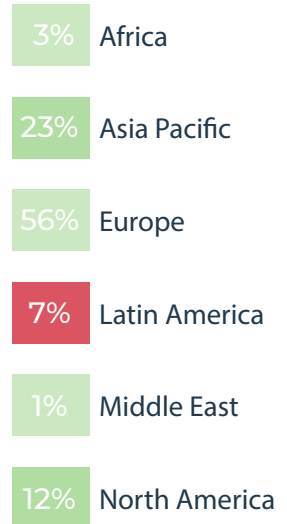
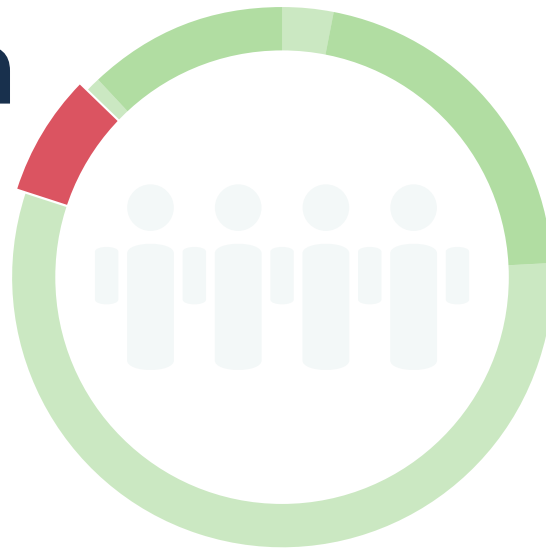
Latin America and the Caribbean understood from the very beginning that the regional meetings industry needed to adapt, to become more flexible and to enhance the value proposition to host international congresses. Today, there are more synergies among the different meetings actors when bidding for a congress, a more robust portfolio of services, an improved offer in terms of sustainability and inclusion, a more proactive approach towards additional benefits for associations, all of which helps to create a tailored-made bidding for each congress, providing unique added value to the organizer. This association-centered approach has resulted in major congresses confirmed for the region in the past 6 months, particularly because the region aims to understand the need of the association and provide concrete value accordingly.

On behalf of the ICCA members in Latin America and the Caribbean, we would like to share with the international associations ecosystem that the region is fully committed towards working hand in hand to achieve the specific goals of the associations, to collaborate in putting together a remarkable congress/conference, safe for everyone and with tangible return of the investment for all participants (organizer, attendees, sponsors, partners, etc.) and to create a lasting impact in the destination.



# Latin America Trends

Global overview for all meetings held in Latin America in 2020.



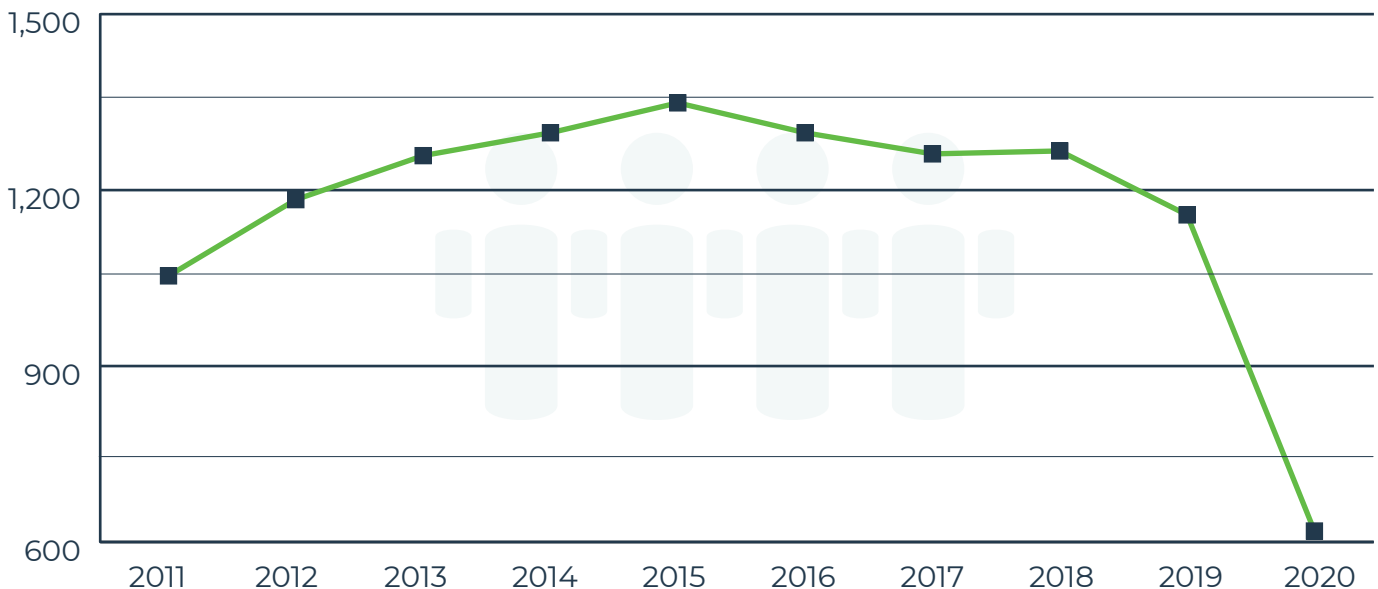
Regional ranking based on number of regional meetings held.

Rank	Country	Total
1 st	Brazil	133
2 nd	Argentina	95
3 rd	Colombia	72
4 th	Peru	55
5 th	Chile	54

Rank	City	Total
1 st	Buenos Aires	57
2 nd	Lima	42
3 rd	Rio de Janeiro	40
4 th	Sao Paulo	31
5 th	Bogota	27

A complete overview of all Latin America meetings as known from 2011 to April 2021.



# Middle East



Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, Abu Dhabi

**5** countries

**27** members

**1%** of global meetings



**Anju Gomes**  
Regional Director Middle East, ICCA

# Middle East Regional Insights

The 2020 pandemic upended how we engage with the digital world. Every click, swipe, share, or like tells you something about the attendees and what they expect. As of July 2021, the internet was accessible to 65% of the world's population and now represents 5.17 billion people.

Post-Pandemic times has seen an extensive upswing and splurge on the Middle East Domestic Tourism. Hospitality and travel sector, and almost all possible resorts/ hotels and few destinations have been sky high on occupancy - some even better than pre 2020. The consumption and demands are still there and will continue to be.

Though we have learnt to live with COVID we are still facing tremendous threats from new variants coming into existence.

However, the business events are returning slowly, and Middle East has kick started with preparations for various big activities such as Dubai Expo 2020, 2022's World Cup in Doha Qatar, IPL 2021, FIFA club, Book Fair, launch of Qatar Travel Mart, Riyadh season, Arab Travel Market etc.

Expo 2020 Dubai which opened from 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022 – was postponed a year due to the pandemic, but as of November 2021, more than 6 million visitors have filed through its portals dedicated to the event's themes of mobility, sustainability and opportunity. Sustainability initiatives will help identify avenues to drive efficiencies, mobilize climate financing, and deploy technologies to meet our vision for the future. Middle east countries have been working closely to achieve SDGs through innovation, digital transformation and investments.





ICCA Middle East hosted its first global Hybrid Event of 2021: in-person and virtual. We celebrated the latest global developments in the fight against the pandemic, the “glocal” focus of the industry, our constant advanced skills expansion and the government initiatives.

It has been reported by Oxford economics that Gulf Countries was one of the major regions globally to grow faster than other regions. Middle East air travel improved compared to other regions. Companies have resumed business travel, although it remains below 2019 levels. Planning for future events has improved in the Middle East.

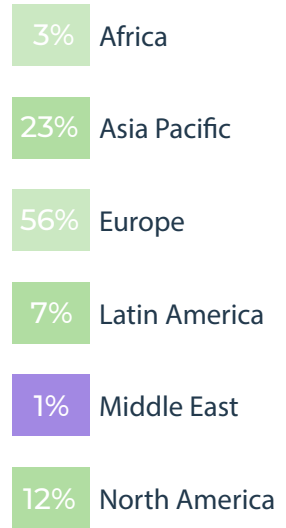
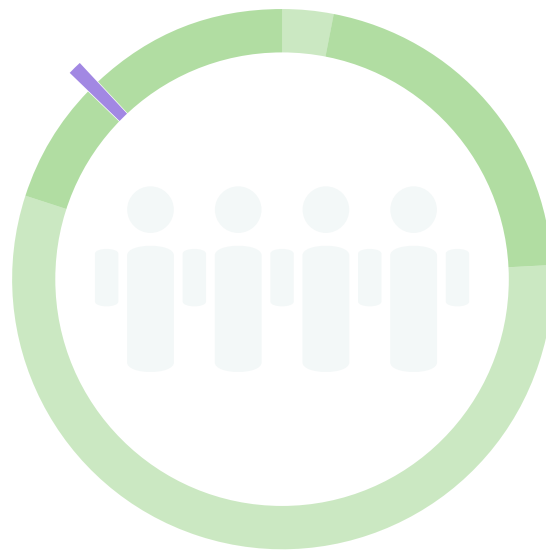
Business events have been driving the benefits such as raising the profile of a destination for expansion and partnership opportunities, knowledge transfer and skill building, strategic business opportunities, economic impacts of visitor spending and support transport networks.

Middle East started the year on a stable footing. As per World Travel & Tourism Council report Middle East will lead the business travel recovery with a 49 percent return to pre-Covid levels by 2022.



# Middle East Trends

Global overview for all meetings held in the Middle East in 2020.



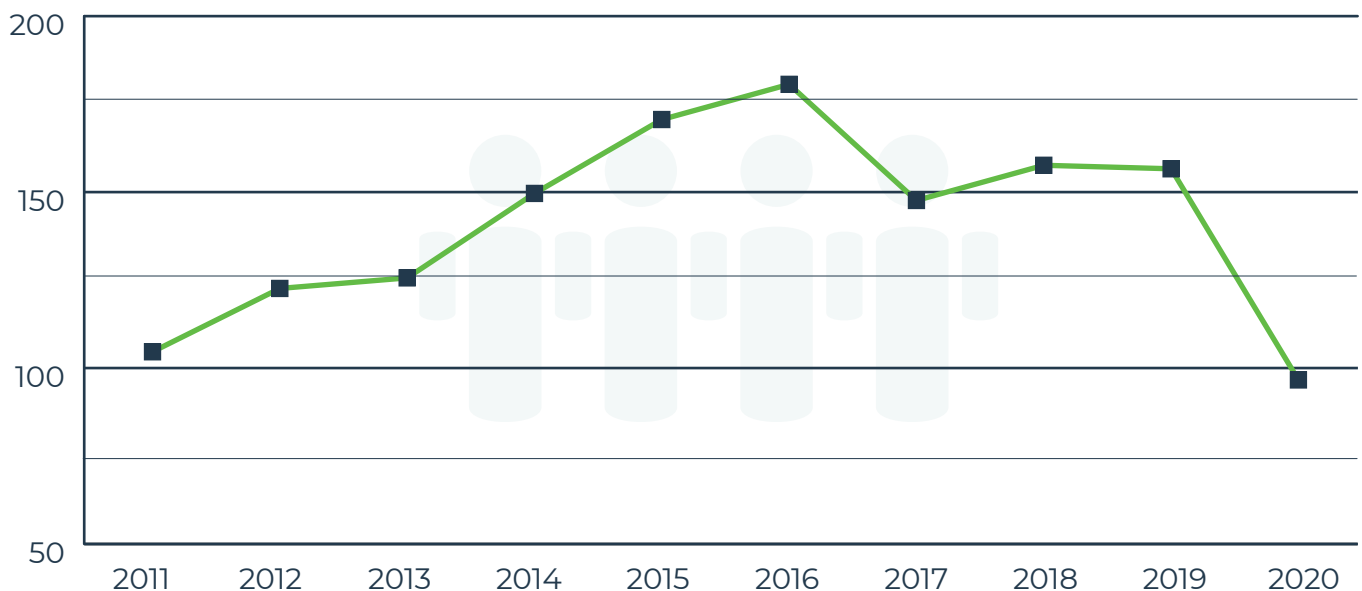
Regional ranking based on number of regional meetings held.

Rank	Country	Total
1 st	United Arab Emirates	61
2 nd	Oman	10
3 rd	Lebanon	6
4 th	Qatar	6
5 th	Saudi Arabia	6

Rank	City	Total
1 st	Dubai	34
2 nd	Abu Dhabi	22
3 rd	Muscat	10
4 th	Beirut	6
5 th	Doha	6

A complete overview of all Middle East meetings as known from 2011 to April 2021.



# Abu Dhabi

## A Leading International MICE Destination.

Abu Dhabi Convention and Exhibition Bureau aims to champion Abu Dhabi as the MENA regional hub for business events

The MICE industry in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has grown significantly over the past decade, which reinforces business events' catalytic effect on trade and knowledge exchange. This growth is expected to be more robust, especially

with the Emirate's skilled navigation of the COVID-19 pandemic and recent decision to welcome all vaccinated tourists and residents from all countries worldwide and unvaccinated visitors from 'Green List' countries with no quarantine measures. Mubarak Al Shamisi, Director at Abu Dhabi Convention and Exhibition Bureau (ADCEB) elaborates on the factors that had helped develop the sector in the Emirate.

## Providing base to numerous international organisations.

Abu Dhabi has been building on its base of skills and research strength to grow key sectors of the economy. This is evident in the Emirate's reputation as a global knowledge and innovation hub. It is home to some of the best universities in the region, which are undertaking pioneering research and development in several fields including energy, space, aerospace, autonomous robotic systems, genomics, artificial intelligence and more. In addition, numerous international organisations have based themselves in Abu Dhabi, including the

International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). Some of the most established industries in the capital of the UAE today include the oil and gas industry along with energy, financial services, innovation and healthcare, as well as arts and culture. Emerging industry clusters include aviation, aerospace and tourism, with focus being put on additional sectors like metals, pharmaceuticals, biotechnology and life sciences, transportation, trade and logistics, education, media and telecommunication services.



## Initiatives to support growth of business events.

A range of initiatives were rolled out to help propel the economy over the past few years, one of them being the Ghadan 21 initiative, which comprises a variety of financial and governing schemes that support businesses in various sectors. The Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi (DCT Abu Dhabi)

created a fund of 600 million dirhams to develop entertainment, festivals and business events in the capital as part of the Ghadan 21 programme. This was paired with ADCEB's Advantage Abu Dhabi programme, unveiling additional areas of support to encourage the launch and growth of business events.



## **Global associations creating local impact.**

To create an impactful, long-lasting legacy locally, ADCEB connects global associations with local industry stakeholders to foster relationships with academic, professional and other key members of the community, whilst appointing local ambassadors to support in creating and nurturing such networks.

## **Abu Dhabi's readiness for safe; large-scale events.**

The past year has specifically been challenging for the business events sector globally, and Abu Dhabi was no different. However, the exemplary effort and cross collaboration across both the government and private sector has fast tracked the emirate's return to normal activities. In January, the capital successfully and safely rolled-out its first large on-ground event – IDEX since the pandemic, which hosted hundreds of attendees from various destinations. And today, Abu Dhabi is recognised as the safest city in the MENA region according to The Economist safest cities index 2021, it features one of the world's most vaccinated population against COVID-19 and has unveiled a series of new projects and developments as part of the destination's plan to expand its portfolio of tourism offerings.

With such preparedness ADCEB has major plans underway for the coming years, working alongside key partners and industry experts, including ICCA to achieve its vision for the local business events sector.



**Find out more here**

# Dubai

As a city built on a culture of collaboration across the public and private sectors, Dubai understands the value global associations can bring not just through their events, but as a result of a sustained presence and rich engagement with their respective sectors and professions. And with the city leading the global recovery in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic – underlined by the hosting of Expo 2020 Dubai (1 October 2021 and 31 March 2022) – it continues to prioritise its partnerships with associations.

## A host city for safe, impactful association events.

Sitting at the crossroads of East and West, and with easy accessibility through the world's busiest airport for international passenger traffic, Dubai is a well-established host city for association events, able to attract delegates from around the world, and especially the proximity markets – Asia, Africa and the Middle East – that are so vital to their long-term growth. Home to world class venues, a diverse portfolio of hotels and highly developed tourism infrastructure, it is equipped to handle events of all sizes and, as a melting pot of over

200 nationalities, it's a city that provides warm hospitality to all visitors.

Having resumed international business events in October 2020, the city's stakeholders have had over a year of post-Covid experience in collaborating with planners and hosting delegates from around the world, ensuring safety while at the same time providing platforms for a more impactful face-to-face knowledge exchange and networking.

Dubai, United Arab Emirates



## A leading knowledge hub.

With an emphasis on diversification in recent decades, Dubai's economy spans across multiple key sectors, with established expertise in trade, finance, aviation, manufacturing and logistics. And as a result of the UAE National Innovation Strategy – focusing on space, water, transport, renewable energy, education, healthcare and technology – knowledge clusters have quickly developed around these sectors of the future, providing associations with the opportunity to tap into local and international talent and cutting-edge innovation.

Dubai Business Events (DBE), the city's official convention bureau, offers associations and organisers a wide range of free services, from liaising with venues and hotels and connecting them with local service providers, to introductions to local industry and government contacts and assistance

in developing and funding delegate recruitment strategies. And through its experienced teams in Dubai and offices around the world, it is always on hand to offer assistance and advice to associations.

DBE also puts a strong emphasis on legacies when bidding for and assisting in the planning of events, aware that their impact should resonate well beyond the handful of days of their duration, and works closely with global and local partners to ensure legacy is embedded throughout the journey. Through the Dubai Association Centre, a joint collaboration between DBE, Dubai World Trade Centre and Dubai Chamber, associations also have a platform through which they can establish and grow a permanent presence in the city – providing a launchpad to expand their reach into to the wider the region – and aid them in growing their membership.



[Find out more here](#)

Ain Dubai, United Arab Emirates



# Ras Al Khaimah

**Ras Al Khaimah, a nature driven destination of sprawling deserts, beaches and stunning mountain landscapes with world-class facilities.**

The fastest growing destination in the Middle East, Ras Al Khaimah promises an authentic and safe travel experience. Stunning natural topography combined with world-class tourism infrastructure, a portfolio of global hospitality brands as well as accessibility and connectivity make Ras al Khaimah the ideal destination for meetings and incentive travel.

Ras Al Khaimah promises year-round sunshine, pristine beaches, lush mangroves and terracotta dunes, as well as dramatic vistas of the majestic Hajjar mountains, including the UAE's highest mountain peak – Jebel Jais – known as the adventure hub of the region.

World-class attractions include Jebel Jais Flight: The World's Longest Zipline, the world's first Bear Grylls Explorers Camp, the highest restaurant– 1484 by Puro – and the highest meeting room – the Sky Room – in the UAE. Furthermore, four sites in Ras Al Khaimah have been included in UNESCO's tentative list of World Heritage Sites and the Suwaidi Pearl Farm – the only pearl farm in the UAE – offers guests a glimpse into the city's pearling industry through experiences such as pearl diving and shucking.

Meanwhile, its hospitality offering includes world-class, global brands including Hilton, Accor, Ritz-Carlton and many others, offering three-, four- and five-star accommodation. Most recently, the world's largest Hampton by Hilton opened in the Emirate with over 500 rooms.

Ras Al Khaimah, UAE



## Seamless connectivity between East and West.

Ras Al Khaimah's popularity also stems from the increasing ease with which it can be reached. Ideally located between the east and the west, Ras al Khaimah is within close proximity to Europe, Asia and Africa, located just 45-minutes from Dubai International Airport by road. Ras Al Khaimah International

Airport is also enhancing its operations and is currently undergoing its biggest expansion strategy since 1976. Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority is constantly adding new strategic airline partnerships to make the Emirate even more accessible to key source markets.



## A certified safe destination for travel and events.

Named the Gulf Tourism Capital for both 2020 and 2021 by the Gulf Cooperation Council, Ras Al Khaimah set a global benchmark in becoming the first city in the world to secure the Bureau Veritas Safeguard Label and World Travel and Tourism Council's Safe Travel Stamp.

Al Hamra International Exhibition & Conference Centre, Ras Al Khaimah Exhibition Centre, the region's only versatile meeting facility located

by the beach has a strong track-record in hosting global events, with robust measures in place to ensure the safety of guests and participants. The Emirate recently hosted the Arab Aviation Summit 2021, one of the first in-person events in the region this year. Other prestigious events include Arabian Hotel Investment Conference (AHIC), the Belgian Travel Summit, and the World Travel & Tourism Council Middle East & North Africa Leaders Forum, and many more.



# North America



Diablo Lake, Washington

**3** countries

**66** members

**12%** of global meetings



**Ksenija Polla**

CMP Regional Director  
North America, ICCA

# North America Regional Insights

The international association meetings market has always been classified as resilient – and with associations being such a stronghold for the North American region it will come as no surprise that this very same resilience has yet again proven true in today’s “new” world in the region.

Many destinations and associations have adapted to the new reality and returned to in-person events wherever safely possible. This included the meetings industry tradeshow IMEX America which was the first of its kind in the region to bring back planners and suppliers alike to discuss business and more forward.

The conversations have changed in nature, the lead-time of association meetings has been shortened and associations are looking for possible host destinations for next year or two years out at the most, while in the past host destinations were confirmed many years in advance.

Collaboration has become another key ingredient in this new world. Buyers and suppliers are working together as partners, but also different associations are collaborating on engaging with their members and amplifying each other’s messages.

**Alberta, Canada**



Sustainability and legacy are not only buzz words anymore but a firm staple of bids and RFPs. In an era where every single individual is looking at their impact on the environment and people have learned to do business online, the in-person meetings are focused on delivering impact for local and global communities and unique experiences for the delegates they would not be able to have in the online world.

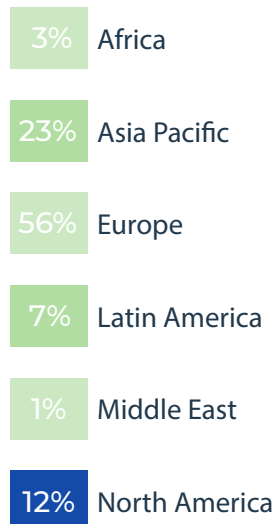
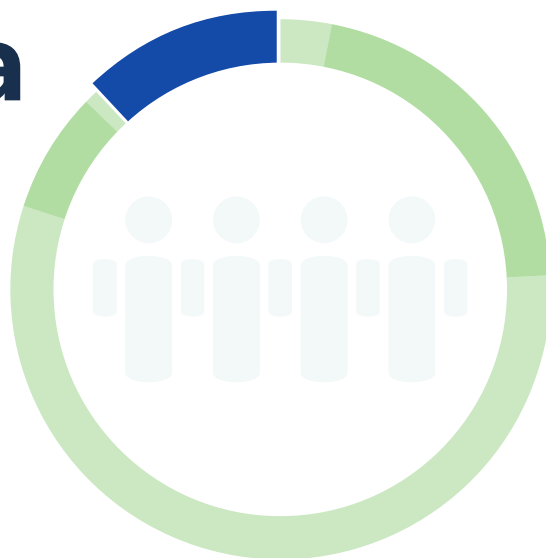
But most importantly diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility are taking center stage in all meetings, whether we are talking about online, hybrid or purely in-person events. New technology and innovation have made online meetings more accessible and inclusive for previously forgotten audiences, but how to keep this for the in-person events and as part of every organizations culture will be the focus for many years to come.

While our industry and membership in the North American region has been decimated over the past 18 months, we have been able to implement lots of new ideas and innovative ways to engage with the supplier and the association community alike. This leaves us hopeful for the future years to come, that there is a strong and resilient spirit in the ICCA community which will help forge a path to a new and stronger ICCA association meetings future in North America.



# North America Trends

Global overview for all meetings held in North America in 2020.



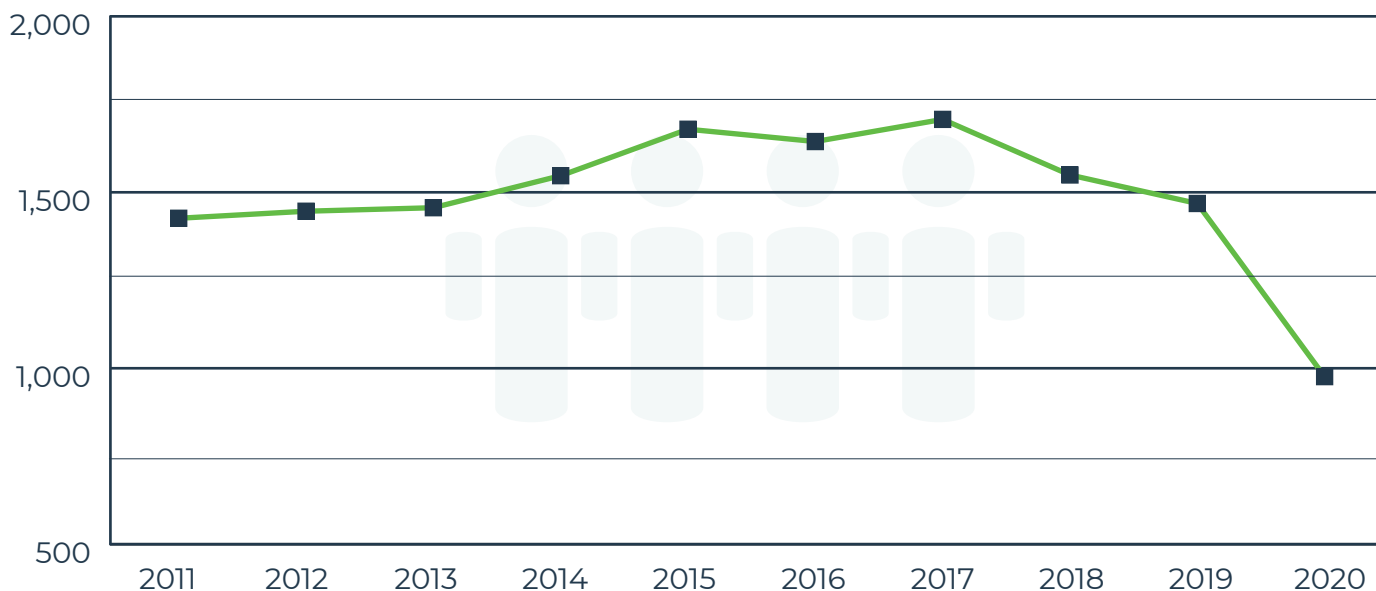
Regional ranking based on number of regional meetings held.

Rank	Country	Total
1 st	U.S.A.	618
2 nd	Canada	240
3 rd	Mexico	119

Rank	City	Total
1 st	Montreal, QC	67
2 nd	Toronto, ON	48
3 rd	Vancouver, BC	42
4 th	New York City, NY	31
5 th	Mexico City	29

A complete overview of all North American meetings as known from 2011 to April 2021.



# Events Highlight Calendar



Global Influence, Regional Insight, Local Impact.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ICCA Global Insights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ICCA Meetings Africa Association Day</li> <li>ICCA Global Business Exchange</li> <li>ICCA Thought Leadership Session</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ICCA Global Insights</li> <li>ICCA Middle East Summit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ICCA Association Expert Seminar</li> <li>IMEX Frankfurt</li> <li>ICCA Plenary</li> <li>ICCA European Summit</li> <li>ICCA Regional Business Exchange</li> <li>IBTM Asia Pacific</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ICCA Venue International Business Workshop, Ljubljana, Slovenia</li> <li>ICCA Association Partner Event</li> <li>ICCA Asia Pacific Workshop</li> <li>ICCA Global Insights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ICCA Destination Marketing European Business Workshop, Bordeaux, France</li> <li>ICCA-AC Forum Healthcare Meetings of the Future</li> <li>FIEXPO Latin America</li> <li>ICCA North America Summit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ICCA Asia Pacific Researcher Round Table Workshop</li> <li>ICCA Africa Summit</li> <li>ICCA Global Insights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ICCA Latin America Business Exchange</li> <li>ICCA Latin America &amp; the Caribbean Meeting Summit</li> <li>ICCA Regional Business Exchange</li> <li>IBTM Americas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ICCA Destination Marketing Small Business Workshop Stavanger, Norway</li> <li>ICCA Thought Leadership Session</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IMEX America</li> <li>ICCA Regional Business Exchange</li> <li>ICCA Venue European Business Workshop, Bologna, Italy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ICCA 61<sup>st</sup> Congress</li> <li>ICCA General Assembly</li> <li>ICCA Forum for Young Professional</li> <li>IBTM Barcelona</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ICCA Regional Business Exchange</li> <li>ICCA Asia Pacific Summit</li> <li>ICCA Thought Leadership Session</li> </ul>

\*Subject to change, please visit the ICCA website for latest information



# Global Association Community Forum

Creating meetings that matter.

Lausanne, Switzerland  
5 - 7 September 2022

save the date

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