Partnering for success

Regional insights into the global association meetings market

International Congress and Convention Association
Contents

About ICCA ................................................................. 3
A Focus on Sustainability ........................................... 4
Association Partner Programme ............................ 5
Association Community ........................................... 6
Global Trends ............................................................. 11
Africa ........................................................................ 12
  Regional Insights .................................................... 13
  Trends .................................................................. 14
Asia Pacific ............................................................... 15
  Regional Insights .................................................... 16
  Trends .................................................................. 19
  New Zealand .......................................................... 20
Europe ....................................................................... 22
  Regional Insights .................................................... 23
  Trends .................................................................. 25
  Türkiye ................................................................. 26
  Flanders ................................................................. 28
  Ljubljana ............................................................... 30
  Rotterdam .............................................................. 32
Latin America .......................................................... 34
  Regional Insights .................................................... 35
  Trends .................................................................. 37
  Panama .................................................................. 38
Middle East ............................................................. 39
  Regional Insights .................................................... 40
  Trends .................................................................. 41
  Abu Dhabi ............................................................. 42
  Dubai .................................................................... 44
North America ........................................................ 46
  Regional Insights .................................................... 47
  Trends .................................................................. 49
  Toronto ................................................................. 50
ICCA Events ............................................................. 52
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 1,000 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 strategic goals is to develop closer business interactions with the association community.
A Focus on Sustainability

The pandemic has made associations closely assess their strategic priorities to place more emphasis on delivering sustainable meetings; ensuring diversity, equity and inclusion across their organisations and activities; and creating a positive legacy impact through their events. These are also key strategic areas – pillars - for ICCA, and something we will continue to support our community with.

The ICCA Association Meetings Needs Survey 2022 shows that for 64% of respondents it is very important or fairly important for their association to reduce the environmental impact of their events. With the number of organisations signing up for the Net Zero Carbon Events initiative (ICCA being a founding member of the Net Zero Carbon Events Roadmap), it is crucial for both associations and meeting suppliers to understand how they can work together to make events more sustainable, and to reach carbon zero by 2050.

This edition of the Partnering for Success publication will therefore showcase how destinations – many in their own words - around the world have been working on initiatives to provide sustainable meeting spaces and support associations with creating a positive impact through their events.
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 to strengthen their own ties globally and increase their profile with the international association community.

Destination Partner

Association Partner

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

As of the end of 2022, the ICCA Association Community includes over 370+ association executives from over 210+ 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

Iain Bitran
Executive Director, *The International Society for Professional Innovation Management.*

"Are you serious about events? If so, you must attend the ICCA Congress as this is where you can develop real relationships with real people representing destinations, venues, event suppliers and associations."

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."

Thomas Reiser
Executive Director, *International Society on Thrombosis and Haemostasis.*

"It has never been more important that all partners of the global association community work closely together, understand each other and develop solutions and new opportunities together. The ICCA Association Community is the ideal platform for exchange, learning and co-creation."

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."
Connecting associations and meeting suppliers to create better and more sustainable events

Connecting with your peers

360+ association representatives from 200+ associations

60+ new associations joined in 2022 from Cuba to Denmark Ghana to Singapore

the IAC has members from across 36 countries globally

Connecting with meeting suppliers

1,000+ meeting suppliers, accommodating association meetings of all sizes.

Insights through the ICCA Database

Over 280,000 association meetings in the ICCA database — compare 1,800+ meeting destinations — explore 12,500+ local expert champions

Knowledge and content sharing

1,000+ association executives engaged with ICCA activities throughout 2022

10+ associations success stories published

100+ hours of content

1,541+ attendees globally

250+ expert speakers

5 global onsite events

Figures as of year-end 2022
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.

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 as part of our **Try One Year for Free** offer for 2023, a saving of 250 Euro (regular annual price).

For more information, please use the QR code

www.iccaworld.org/associations
62\textsuperscript{ND} ICCA CONGRESS 2023
12-15 NOVEMBER
BANGKOK, THAILAND
Global Trends

Global overview for all meetings held in 2021

Global ranking based on number of regional meetings held.

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A complete overview of all meetings as known from 2012 to April 2021.
In 2023 we will embrace all the opportunities and challenges and grow.

10 countries

4% of global members

3% of global meetings

Esmaré Steinhofel
Regional Director Africa, ICCA
Africa Regional Insights

ICCA currently has members in 10 African countries in Southern, West, and East Africa. A positive trend shows more countries are starting to establish Convention Bureaus, with the most recent being the Uganda Convention Bureau and the Niger Convention Agency.

The African Chapter closed off 2022 with 38 active members including 2 new members and one branch member who joined during the year. One ICCA Africa Chapter meeting took place in person in February 2022 during Meetings Africa, and a digital meeting in September 2022. Sharing best practices between member countries has been a key focus of these meetings and how to improve collaboration moving forward.

There are a total of 204 Regional and International Associations based in Africa (163 Regional and 41 International). ICCA is working closely with AfSAE - the African Society of Association Executives - to grow the number of Africa Regional rotation Association conferences.

The top 3 sectors of association conferences that took place on the continent in 2022 are: Medical Science, Science, and Technology.

Last year saw a return of more face-to-face association conferences since the start of the COVID pandemic, and this year the upward trajectory is expected to continue.

As countries start to have a more strategic approach to Business Events, more infrastructure development is needed and is starting to happen. Air connectivity on the continent is still both a challenge and remains. The same challenges apply to visas, especially for African delegates attending regional conferences.

In 2023 we will embrace all the opportunities and challenges and grow ICCA membership on the continent. We'll focus on regions where we currently do not have members. We will also prioritise – and champion – our pillars of Legacy; Sustainability; and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.
Global overview for all meetings held in Africa in 2021.

Regional ranking based on number of regional meetings held.

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<td>5 th</td>
<td>Kampala</td>
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A complete overview of all Africa meetings as known from 2012 to April 2021.
"Business Events is the fast track to economic recovery."

15 countries

26% of global members

22% of global meetings

Waikin Wong
Regional Director Asia Pacific, ICCA
Between the Falls/Autumn of 2021 and 2022, more destinations started gradually figuring out ways to once again safely reopen their borders to international travellers. Japan reopened in December, and China announced border reopening with a no quarantine requirement on January 8, 2023. This is good news, bringing welcome promises to reinstate international travellers and business opportunities, especially in the internal meeting industry. Regarding destinations reopening in Asia Pacific, the region not only reopened borders, but applied lessons learnt from the resilience they had to display because of the pandemic, and reopened more possibilities to offer greater value to the stakeholders of international association meetings. Especially on the multi-disciplinary/cross-sector synergy approach to connect international business opportunities and diversification of its economy base.

In Asia Pacific, we believe the Business Events industry is the fast track to economic recovery. Business Events are needed more than ever to propel commerce past the Covid-19 crisis, and put economies and societies well on the road towards recovery. Business Events are the meetings and marketplaces of industry. Whether regional, national or international, their purpose is to advance commerce via B2B information-sharing, decision-making, problem-solving and planning. Government help - in the form of support packages - are more flexible and innovative in order to meet association meeting organisers requirements, and stay competitive in the regions.
In 2022, more than 1,350 association meetings were conducted in Asia Pacific. We remain second place among 6 regions in terms of the total number of conferences. This indicates the business activities are active, and organisers are confident with the services/solutions provided by the ICCA Asia Pacific members/business industry. With more relaxed travel policies in many Asia Pacific destinations, more than 50% of the total numbers of association meetings were conducted face-to-face. The destination and meeting providers (e.g. venue, professional congress organisers aka PCOs) are ready and capable of providing the optimum solutions/options to serve organisers’ objectives and budget (e.g. digital/hybrid format, event technology support). We believe there is no single approach to serve all in Asia Pacific, and we must therefore be flexible and provide targeted approaches according to the specific needs.

Asia Pacific keeps up with global industry trends and believes in the shared responsibility of making a better world for the community. Sustainability has become a good and standard practise in Business Events in most of our destinations. National and city bureaus, and meeting venues, offer great initiatives to prevent and manage waste. Event Sustainability; DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion); and Legacy impacts, form the basis of business communications and key discussion points in and around the majority of tradeshows and destination education events supported by ICCA Asia Pacific. During IMEX Frankfurt in May, ICCA and Business Events Sarawak (BESarawak) officiated in the global collaboration on publication of the International Journal of Business Events and Legacies (IJBEL). This is the first journal in South East Asia to cover Business Events as a whole, and the first in the world to merge Business Events and legacy topics under one roof. The objective is to widen the knowledge capacity of the global industry - ranging from practitioners and researchers to consumers and policymakers - by addressing real world issues on business meetings, tourism, and legacy. The first issue was launched in November 2022.
Destinations in Asia Pacific continue to invest in the development of the Business Events industry; from infrastructure to human capital. ICCA has announced the 62nd ICCA Congress this November (12th – 15th) will be held in Bangkok. A number of International Convention Centres opened in our region in 2022, namely Te Pae Christchurch Convention Centre, Christchurch and Queen Sirikit National Convention Center, Bangkok. Their performance has exceeded all opening year expectations. Besides state-of-the-art venues and facilities, Business Events practitioners play a significant role in delivering appropriate solutions: from supporting host and conference organisers to enhancing delegates’ experiences at a global level. Upskilling and reskilling in talent development is fundamental to continue elevating professionalism in the industry.

Tourism New Zealand is committed to providing scholarships for the ICCASkills certification programme to local industry partners. An MOU was signed between the Korea MICE Association and ICCA with the purpose of industry development. Goyang Convention and Visitors Bureau launched the first Asia Pacific Business Events Youth Challenges with ICCA Asia Pacific, which took place at Goyang City in August 2022. Other active partners include Penang Convention and Exhibition Bureau. Whilst other emerging destinations like Chengdu, Gyeonggi, Incheon and Yokohama are continuing to invest in enhancing industry capabilities for international association meetings. All this indicates the commitment of Asia Pacific to strengthen its services to international associations meetings.

In Asia Pacific, the international Business Events ecosystem is ready and fully committed to collaborate with you in putting together truly impactful and unforgettable congress/conferences. In 2022, Asia Pacific has 248 active members and all of them are your trusted partners.
**Global overview for all meetings held in Asia Pacific in 2021.**

Regional ranking based on number of regional meetings held.

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**A complete overview of all Asia Pacific meetings as known from 2012 to April 2021.**
New Zealand

Conferences that leave a positive legacy

Tourism New Zealand provides strategic funding and support to bids for - and bringing international conferences to - New Zealand.

As well as offering world-class venues, innovative knowledge sectors, and aspirational activities, we offer advice ensuring your conference contributes a positive legacy across the four well-being pillars, which are:

Nature

In New Zealand, we feel a special connection to the land and believe we have a duty of care to look after it for future generations.

Tourism New Zealand encourages all event organisers coming to New Zealand to make the Tiaki Promise... a pledge to care for people, place, and culture. Free assets are available to communicate this message to your delegates.

Tourism New Zealand also provides information to help you reduce the environmental impact of your event. Our free Sustainability Toolkit includes advice on eco-friendly venues and accommodation, greener transport options, waste management, local food, and maximising community engagement.

For organisations keen to measure and mitigate their event’s carbon footprint, Tourism New Zealand can introduce you to Toitū Envirocare, which provides internationally recognised certification and tools to measure, reduce and offset greenhouse gas emissions.

We have partnered with the conservation charity programme Trees That Count to make it easier for delegates to leave a meaningful legacy by planting native trees in New Zealand. Gifting trees not only protects New Zealand’s flora and fauna, but it also supports efforts to address climate change by removing CO2 from the atmosphere.

Economy

We know the value of international conferences spreads far beyond the dollars and bed nights they contribute to the tourism economy.

Hosting a conference raises the international profile of New Zealand in key sectors and attracts experts to our country. This provides invaluable relationship building and research and investment opportunities, which benefit your membership and add incremental value to the New Zealand economy.

Partner with Tourism New Zealand and we can help with the introductions to industry leaders and academics to increase the return on investment from your event.

We also know the costs of holding your event in New Zealand are an important consideration for associations. That’s why a financial feasibility study prepared by a PCO is part of our support package to establish the costs and benefits from the outset.
Society

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, and the creation of new jobs.

Tourism New Zealand encourages and supports conference organisers to make and measure impact goals to ensure we harness the power of these meetings. In doing so, associations can put long-term outcomes at the core of conference activity, build valuable partnerships, engage with local stakeholders, and broaden their appeal to a wider audience and potential membership.

Culture

Indigenous Māori culture is increasingly being incorporated into conferences held in New Zealand, rewarding those who come looking for deeper, more meaningful connections.

Tourism New Zealand can help you to incorporate Māori culture into your conference for a more authentic, diverse, and inclusive conference experience.

This can range from including Māori representation on your Local Organising Committee, to featuring Māori knowledge or speakers, or activities such as a Pōwhiri (ceremonial welcome) or cultural performance.

Find out more here
Europe

"All elements considered to create better sustainable events."

44 countries

52% of global members

57% of global meetings

Tamara Bernstein
Head of Europe and Partnerships
Many ICCA members in Europe have been taking on the important matter of sustainability, turning their cities, venues and businesses to more sustainable places.

Whilst ICCA has been actively engaging in various sustainability projects and collaborations, the strongest showcase of sustainability in 2022 was achieved through the 61st ICCA Congress in Kraków.

When Kraków was selected as the host destination, it was very clear that we had to achieve a sustainable congress. Ensuring this would be delivered through the measures the destination, the staff, the suppliers, and the attendees all took.

All elements of the congress experience were considered when trying to create a better sustainable event.

Considering ecology and the reduction of CO2 emissions, the Kraków Convention Bureau offered ICCA support in the form of a conference ticket. This ticket entitled all congress participants to free travel on public transportation during the days of congress. Furthermore, on the first evening of the congress all attendees were encouraged to use the tram or bus to attend the formal social event.

The catering focused heavily on locally-sourced ingredients for the food and beverages served throughout the congress days, including many vegetarian options.

Another important element relating to food and beverage was portion control. All meals and coffee breaks were planned carefully in order to ensure that minimum possible wastage would occur.
All water dispensers were positioned throughout the floors of ICE Kraków (host venue), encouraging attendees to reuse their personal bottles. In addition, the coffee break refreshments were served in reusable dishes.

Congress attendees walked to the congress venue, as all hotels were located in the near vicinity to ICE Kraków.

Finally, the flower centre-pieces were all reused flowers and rented for the occasion, adding a pleasant element to the congress design, whilst still considering the environmental impact.

In 2021, the Kraków City Council adopted the document: "A Sustainable Tourism Policy for Kraków in the Years 2021-2028". The document indicates recommendations for 9 areas of action, one of them concerning the development of the meetings industry. Particular attention was given to stakeholder partnerships, mutual exchange of knowledge, and the importance of working with local suppliers.

For Kraków, a milestone on the road to sustainability was joining the GDS-Index this year. This is an initiative that brings together more than 100 cities from around the world, and Kraków is the first participant from Poland.

The above was certainly in line with the ICCA congress sustainability effort. A full sustainability report - in collaboration with GDS - will be shared by ICCA in 2023 with the community evaluating the congress sustainability efforts.
Europe Trends

Global overview for all meetings held in Europe in 2021.

- **3%** Africa
- **22%** Asia Pacific
- **57%** Europe
- **6%** Latin America
- **1%** Middle East
- **11%** North America

Regional ranking based on number of regional meetings held.

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A complete overview of all Europe meetings as known from 2012 to April 2021.
Türkiye

Rich in culture, history, world-class venues and excellent infrastructure.

MEET Türkiye: Where Business Meets Pleasure

As global MICE tourism gets back into full swing, Türkiye becomes a prime destination once again, offering industry-leading event planning services and expertise set in one of the world’s most attractive destinations. From Istanbul and Antalya to Izmir and Bodrum - Türkiye provides a unique blend of enriching experiences, extraordinary meeting locales and great value for all seeking to combine business with leisure.

In 2022 ICCA announced Türkiye as the association’s first Destination Partner in Europe. The partnership indicates ICCA’s endorsement of Türkiye as a premier Business Event destination for Europe and the wider global industry. Türkiye is an ideal hub for connecting diverse audiences. Further, it is a country rich in culture, history, world-class venues and excellent infrastructure. These outstanding qualities have contributed to Türkiye’s fast-paced growth as a meeting destination in Europe.

Istanbul is well-suited to host large-scale international events with a wide array of unique accommodation and purpose-built convention centres. From imperial palaces and waterfront mansions to sleek luxury brands and lifestyle boutique hotels... many options can be found in the most charming neighbourhoods of Istanbul, or directly on the mesmerising Bosphorus, offering a once in a lifetime experience.

Along the Mediterranean coast, known colloquially as the Turkish Riviera, Antalya is known for its stunning mountainous ranges and breathtaking nature. Antalya is an ideal spot for business meetings and gatherings of all kinds. Opulent beachfront resorts, pristinely manicured golf courses, and luxury hotels with glittering ballrooms, all secure Antalya’s place as an unparalleled city for international events.

“Rich in culture, history, world-class venues and excellent infrastructure.”
Izmir, at the heart of the TurkAegean, offers an exquisite fusion of classical history, natural beauty, and unique experiences. The city is home to many top hotels, a variety of international convention centres and social event venues. Excellent climate and exceptional cuisine, making it another popular international destination with event planners.

Bodrum Peninsula stands out as a home to luxury experiences, with its balmy weather and growing number of world-class resorts. Bodrum represents Türkiye’s Turquoise Coast at its most vibrant. In addition to attracting the leisure crowd, Bodrum is a destination in demand for conference clients thanks to their top-notch meeting facilities.

www.GoTurkiye.com provides a one-stop shop for all cultural and touristic values of the country for those who would like to get information about Türkiye.

Raising the Bar in Safety and Sustainability Measures

With its highly-educated and skilled young professionals, world-class universities and techno-parks leading the way as centres of change, Türkiye again makes a difference. The first of its kind “Safe Tourism Certification Program” - led by the Culture and Tourism Ministry of Türkiye - defines an extensive series of measures to be taken across all tourism businesses and hospitality establishments, because safe meetings and events take precedence in all MICE business today.

In addition, Türkiye has taken a major step in signing an agreement with the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), highlighting the country’s strong leadership role in international tourism, and commitment to sustainability. Türkiye becomes the first country in the world to introduce a National Sustainable Tourism Scheme in collaboration with GSTC. All destinations and tourism services in Türkiye will receive sustainability certification by 2030, enabling the country to take the lead in hosting green events, conferences, and meetings with more environmentally friendly practices. In conclusion the Global Sustainable Tourism Conference 2023 will be hosted in Antalya, Türkiye.

Türkiye has been a popular and experienced host destination for the world’s most important meetings, congresses, events and gatherings. Türkiye is now readier than ever before with new programmes and experiences. Wonderful destinations like Istanbul, Antalya, Izmir, Kapadokya, Bodrum and Ankara are waiting for your participants.
Flanders

How heritage adds an extra dimension to your conference and provides a smart way to boost your delegates' experience.

“These venues have a soul... a spirit of place... a fascinating story.”

How heritage adds an extra dimension to your conference... and provides a smart way to boost your delegates’ experience.

Dozens of studies prove it in black and white, but the best proof is your own experience as an association professional: the venue where your conference takes place has a crucial impact on how your delegates experience that conference. In other words: the choice of your venue largely determines the success of your conference.

After all, a venue can be so much more than just the place where sessions take place. This insight is at the heart of the approach of the official convention bureau in Flanders. We want to add an extra dimension to conferences taking place here, in the northern half of Belgium. How? By welcoming your association and your delegates to heritage venues.

A heritage site is not just another historic building. These venues have a soul – or as UNESCO puts it: a spirit of place – and tell a fascinating story. Both soul and story help shape the experience of your conference. Your delegates are immersed in a unique environment, which becomes a source of storytelling for and about your conference. In other words, they are more likely to talk about your organisation for a long time to come, both among their colleagues and on social media.

Want to read more?

VISITFLANDERS Convention Bureau wrote a complete e-book on the exciting crossovers between heritage venues and key sectors, and on the effect of location on the experience of your conference.

Download our e-book

Download these 64 pages packed with inspiration, insights and information absolutely for free.
A heritage venue for your conference venue too

The beauty of a heritage venue is that it bridges numerous conference domains. Its soul, history and story often have interfaces with other disciplines that are as fascinating as surprising.

Take, for example, the Flemish master Jan Van Eyck. According to historian Prof. Dr. Maximiliaan Martens, it is certain that the painter also had knowledge of musicology and classical philology. Van Eyck’s work even opens the door to sciences such as ophthalmology, chemistry and mathematics. Since the Flemish master worked in Bruges and Ghent, heritage sites in these cities are the perfect place for conferences in these fields.

It goes without saying that heritage is not synonymous with dullness. The heritage venues in Flanders are state-of-the-art venues, equipped with the most modern technologies, ready for both physical and hybrid conferences. The very best venues are brought together in the prestigious network of Flanders Heritage Venues. These venues meet the most stringent requirements in terms of infrastructure and experience. So organising your conference at one of these venues guarantees your delegates a top-notch experience that will leave a long-lasting impression.

An extra dimension for your conference: two examples

C-Mine is a heritage venue located in an old coal mine. It is the ideal setting for a conference on energy, but also on innovation, creativity and art. This is because the former mine buildings now house innovative startups, creative companies and artists. In the plenary hall, the heroes of the past look you straight in the eye. The walls are lined with authentic photos of the miners who descended one kilometre deep into the earth here in search of the black gold.

The baseline of the FMCCA – A room with a Zoo – says it all. Here you host your conference amid lions, great apes and elephants. The venue is a stunning example of art nouveau architecture, is located next to one of the world’s most beautiful train stations, has a conference room with highly sophisticated acoustics and last but not least: all revenues are invested in the protection of endangered species. You see, dozens of conference venues find their perfect
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
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.
At Ahoy, you can dance, do business, sing your heart out, gather knowledge, quietly enjoy the proceedings or cheer at the top of your lungs. At Ahoy, we live in the here and now – because everything we do is live. Our name stands for a legendary past and an inspiring future – and we are duly proud of both!

We may live in the present, but we’re always looking ahead – towards the future, a sustainable future. A future in a healthy, attractive, green city. With 2.3 million visitors each year, we feel the need and responsibility to make our guests aware of their impact and our joint impact on the environment.

To inspire and challenge them to achieve sustainable growth together. So future generations can also enjoy the fine things we have to offer. When it comes to sustainability, you can’t realise all your ambitions on your own. Rotterdam Ahoy is working together with its partners and stakeholders on a range of projects to build a better future. We are also working on ourselves. At being a little more sustainable every year. Have you heard about our very own green oasis? Rotterdam Ahoy borders the largest city park in the Netherlands (430 football fields), the Zuiderpark. A park with deer, buzzards, warblers and bats. Pretty cool! Nature is our neighbour: let’s nurture it!

“A legendary past and an inspiring future.”
Rotterdam Ahoy's sustainability policy is aimed at:

**Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions (CO2)**
We are drastically reducing our greenhouse gas emissions by filtering and offsetting CO2 (greening) and not using fossil fuels.

**Sustainable Energy**
Our investments in solar panels and heat and cold storage mean we are contributing to sustainable events together.

**Sustainable Water Use**
By using water sustainably and reusing water from a water reservoir on our premises, we are taking important steps to minimise the scarcity of good quality water.

**Waste & Plastics**
We are approaching waste from a circular perspective as much as possible—minimisation and high-quality recycling.

**Food & Beverages**
We are focusing on minimising waste, providing healthy alternatives, limiting food miles and striving for circularity in the field of catering.

**Mobility**
We are increasing our accessibility through co-operation with partners and optimising our communication about alternative transport.

**Partnerships**
We choose partners who pursue the same sustainability ideals and help strengthen ours and are entering into new partnerships with community projects.

**Take it a step further.**

**Sustainable Events**
Rotterdam Ahoy is not just an event location, we also organise events of our own – from trade fairs to public events. Here too, we do everything we can in terms of sustainability for each production. And we take it a step further. We specifically organise and host fairs and congresses in the field of sustainability because we believe we can make an extra contribution to something we need to achieve together. We organised Recharge Earth for the first time in 2021, a fantastic example of an annual congress in the field of sustainability. And similarly, we are incredibly proud to be hosting the World Energy Congress in 2025.

The city of Rotterdam aims to be climate neutral by 2050 and, especially given its port and energy-intensive economy (logistics, chemistry etc.), is at the centre of Europe’s energy transition.
Latin America

14 countries 7% of global members 6% 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 64 members representing 14 countries. Destinations at a city/country level, venues, hotels, professional congress organisers, industry providers and tourism consultants are all represented in our regional chapter. Our ICCA regional membership has 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 go 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.
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 sectors 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 organiser. 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 (organiser, 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 2021.

Regional ranking based on number of regional meetings held.

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A complete overview of all Latin America meetings as known from 2012 to April 2021.
In 2020 Panama re-launched its Sustainable Tourism Master Plan, which bets on innovation and attracting the discerning traveler, highlighting Panama’s natural and cultural heritage, a safe value in the current and uncertain world environment, from which our country responds with the strength of its authenticity. The Sustainable Tourism Master Plan incorporates the TCI Model (Tourism-Conservation-Research) which has been updated since it was first developed by the prestigious ecologist, Dr. Hana Ayala 20 years ago. The Sustainable Tourism Master Plan’s Vision is “to be recognised as a world-class sustainable tourist destination, aiming to attract the discerning traveler, one that is known to seek and take care of natural resources, making a positive impact when they visit, in addition to being demanding in terms of the experiences they are looking for (authentic and well preserved) and how they are delivered (overall quality of experience)”. The Discerning Traveler is the “spark” that ignites the potential of the TCR Model, creating financial feasibility for conservation and research efforts, and inclining local communities towards conservation efforts.

In the Master Plan, Meetings and Conventions are qualified as strongly positioned in our objective markets, mainly because PANAMA’s natural beauty, accessibility, and long list of prestigious well-known hotel brands, as well as venues, provide endless activities a stone’s throw away from its international airports: historical sites, ethnic communities reached by a river boat, hiking and natural parks for bird watching, beaches and, of course, the Panama Canal. In terms of the MICE strategy, we have an Incentive Plan for groups that offers, among other added values, experiences and tourist benefits in local services and emblematic places of the country, as well as the support of PROMTUR for the promotion of the event. All these incentives for event organisers are consumable in Panama for the benefit of local communities. On top of that, we have assigned a budget for associations, based on the number of attendees which come to the country, to facilitate site inspections, presentations, and transportation, to name a few examples.” In the case of major events, we have raised the importance of them leaving a positive impact on the communities they visit, a legacy. Furthermore, it has shown us that we have to be resilient, flexible and combine virtual as well as face to face meetings to increase our outreach and encourage the exchange of ideas with people around the world.
"Taking steps to be sustainable and environmentally conscious."

6 countries
3% of global members
1% of global meetings

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Anju Gomes
Regional Director Middle East, ICCA
The Middle East has proven to be the closest to the pre-pandemic numbers compared to the rest of the globe. Credit goes to the FIFA World Cup for the most part of it.

The Middle East has been leading the recovery as inbound visitors have increased tremendously. If the numbers continue to go up at the current pace, then the arrival levels may be back to normal in 2023. Overall 2023 looks promising, despite high inflation in key source markets.

As per the Skift report, The Middle East is also attracting more premium travellers than in 2019, the travel analytics firm noted with Saudi Arabia showing the greatest growth. Qatar, Jordan, and Lebanon are also showing growth, with a regional average of 11% above 2019. Airlines in the Middle East saw a 114.7% in passenger traffic in October compared to the same period last year, according to a report by the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

The major development in the region is expected to create huge number of jobs for the tourism sector and hospitality and leisure services. Dubai received $29.4 billion in tourism receipts in 2022 topping the list of cities with the highest spending by international visitors, according to a World Travel and Tourism Council (WTCC) report.

The region is taking required steps to be sustainable and environmentally conscious. The decision makers are making a framework to have net zero carbon events by 2030. Key objectives of the region have been to galvanise the MICE industry towards post-pandemic recovery, develop solidarity within the industry, foster collective visioning and strategy building, educate MICE industry practitioners/contributors—all to aid capability development and encourage adoption of new ideas and innovative practices among the industry.

ICCASkills - the newly launched education programme - has gained tremendous interest and having one of the live training hubs here will mark its entry into the region. This will only increase the number of skilled professionals available to support the growing market share of the region.
### Region on number of regional meetings held

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### City Total

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A complete overview of all Middle East meetings as known from 2012 to April 2021.
Abu Dhabi Convention and Exhibition Bureau (ADCEB) provides strategic funding and support for bids bringing international conferences to the emirate through its Advantage Abu Dhabi incentive programme.

As well as offering world-class venues and infrastructure, a thriving commercial environment, and a wide range of unique entertainment and leisure activities, Abu Dhabi is working to ensure that all its visitors can feel good about visiting and doing business in a destination that is focused on a sustainable future.

“A destination focused on a sustainable future.”

Mangrove forest, Abu Dhabi
A green footprint

Abu Dhabi established its Environment Vision 2030 with an aim to preserve and enhance the emirate’s natural heritage and promote the efficient use of resources within its communities. While the programme primarily aims to minimise the impact of climate change, contribute to clean air, conserve water resources, safeguard biodiversity and manage waste, it relies heavily on public participation. Abu Dhabi government agencies have worked in close collaboration with local partners to develop initiatives that invite residents and visitors to join in the cause for the environment. Some of these include:

**Single-use Plastic Bag Ban**

Spearheaded by the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD), a ban on single-use plastic bags has been in effect in the emirate since June 2022. To complement the new policy, the EAD has organised a programme of clean up events and awareness campaigns, which encourage community members to play a role in protecting the environment whilst educating people on the damage done by single-use plastics and litter to beaches and marine habitats.

**Cleaning up the Oceans**

Over five trillion pieces of plastic currently litter the ocean and Abu Dhabi is doing its part by developing cleaning strategies. Companies for Good offers ocean clean up experiences that involve collecting litter while scuba diving, snorkelling or boating – a great way to get the public involved whilst enjoying a fun day out.

**Protecting the Mangroves**

The Abu Dhabi Mangrove initiative, which is being implemented by the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi, and has formed its first partnership with conservation charity the Zoological Society of London, provides a platform for innovation in mangrove research, climate change mitigation, and community engagement.

Under the Abu Dhabi Mangrove initiative, the Etihad Mangrove Forest is the culmination of multiple joint programmes between Etihad Airlines, the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi, Jubail Island, The Storey Group, EcoMatcher and Emirates Marine Environmental Group, to support mangrove conservation projects in the UAE, aiming to develop new carbon sinks and natural resources to remove carbon from the atmosphere.

Through this project, Etihad offers its guests the chance to adopt a mangrove tree. Adoption fees include planting and maintenance of a tree, alongside access to an innovative digital platform that allows satellite tracking of the tree through its GPS coordinates. The mangrove forests will be monitored through EcoMatcher for 10 years, with carbon sequestration and geographic allocation updates shared through the digital platform.

**Sustainable Venues**

The Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC), the largest venue in Abu Dhabi, has adopted sustainability practices as part of its ongoing global commitment towards net-zero carbon events. The venue recycles its food outlets’ used cooking oil to create biofuel to power all onsite diesel powered engines; such as buses, cherry pickers and forklifts. Food waste is composted, which resulted in over 75 tons of organic waste being diverted from landfill in 2021 alone. ADNEC has also invested in solar panels and water saving technology for the venue.
Dubai

A host city for safe, impactful association events.

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 as it builds on the legacy of Expo 2020 and prepares to host more global events, including COP28 in 2023, Dubai is setting new standard for making an impact through meetings.

“Setting a new standard for making an impact through meetings.”

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 a highly developed tourism infrastructure, it is equipped to handle events of all sizes. As a melting pot of over 200 nationalities, it’s a city that provides warm hospitality to all visitors.

The success for Expo 2020 Dubai (October 2021-March 2022) demonstrated the city’s ability to not only host world-class events, but inspire attendees and create an impactful platform for networking and the sharing of knowledge and innovation.
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 Chambers, 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 region – and aid them in growing their membership.
"Taking steps to be sustainable and environmentally conscious."

3 countries
8% of global members
11% of global meetings

Ksenija Polla
CMP Regional Director
North America, ICCA
The transformation of the meetings landscape has never been faster than in this post-pandemic world. While sustainability and legacy are still at the forefront for meeting planners and delegates alike, new trends are emerging and not all of them positive in nature.

Association meetings are used to support or speak up against beliefs and ideologies. Instead of promoting positive aspects of meetings featuring innovation and showcasing inclusion and acceptance, meetings are used for polarisation purposes. This is a trend which is very dangerous, and the industry needs to jointly ensure that meetings are used for good and furthering the society.

Lead-time for events has become even shorter and delegates are registering last minute, evaluating numerous elements such as: content and speakers, who is attending, availability of flights, health, and safety considerations and much more. It is very difficult for planners and suppliers to respond effectively to this new trend.

Hence flexibility is the name of the game – whether we are talking about the meeting planner or supplier side. Accommodating larger or smaller delegate numbers, room set-up, venue choice, F&B... just to name a few or the pain-points giving both parties a headache.
Hybrid/digital is probably the biggest challenge for all parties. The associations have built a totally new audience which may or may not travel to their in-person events. How can one keep growing their audience and not leave them behind without adding insurmountable costs to the event is the biggest question.

Some association meeting planners believe it is the venue’s responsibility to offer all commodities of hybrid meetings at no extra charge, while venues are coming out of a pandemic trying to recuperate funds and are very prudent in their investments. Collaboration is still the only way to go. It must be a shared risk and cost exercise as that will be the only way for all to survive the coming years.

Finally, one of the key considerations for meeting planners is designing event experiences. It is not sufficient anymore to make in-person meetings happen and hope that people will be starved for human connections and not want to have more from their event. Content can be absorbed in the digital space however what makes delegates leave the comfort and safety of their home and travel to a destination will be the main motivator. Those events which are designed in a meaningful way, allowing structured networking, creating unique connections and idea exchanges with peers, those providing tangible outcomes and staying true to the association’s mission will be events attracting the biggest number of delegates.

People are happy to be back to in-person meetings but soon they will start questioning and wanting more.
North America Trends

Global overview for all meetings held in North America in 2021.

Regional ranking based on number of regional meetings held.

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Toronto is more than a meeting place. It is North America’s fourth most populous city, making it Canada’s largest and most visited destination. The city is built on a collection of diverse communities that thrives on economic, innovative and cultural inspiration, and is open to embracing rising talent and opportunities. Find yourself surrounded by towering skyscrapers, artistic alleyways and stunning venues that contribute to the charm of the city, making it an ideal destination for associations.

There is much to explore; from big-ticket events, top attractions, award-winning restaurants, and Canada's leading business sectors... including, technology, life sciences and financial services. Toronto is a place associations can convene, connect and create. Destination Toronto is ready to provide powerful partnerships, event resources, and local expertise for a successful meeting.

Toronto is the driving force in key business sectors, including life sciences, technology, and financial services. Toronto ranked first in North America for both high-tech job creation and population growth, and first in the world for working women. It was also named the globe’s second-safest city, its sixth-best for remote workers, and ranks among the top in international smart-city rankings. An established business powerhouse, the city is home to more than a quarter of Canada’s largest businesses that have set their headquarters in Toronto, and a thriving start-up culture.

“The place to collaborate, experiment and create.”
The Discovery District, a 2.5 km downtown Toronto research park and health innovation hub, comprises 7 million square feet of facilities representing Canada’s largest concentration of hospitals, research institutes, business incubators, and venture capital organisations, along with the University of Toronto. The city hosts countless international events in premier venues such as the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, with 442,000 square feet of exhibition space, and Enercare Centre, offering over 1 million square feet of space, at the historic Exhibition Place.

Multiculturalism is the root of Toronto’s inclusive and collaborative spirit. The city owes much of its success to its diverse communities — more than 50 percent of the population is foreign-born, representing 250 ethnicities and 180 dialects spoken. The result: a perfect foundation for collaboration to initiate new and engaging experiences. Toronto’s mosaic of cultures is indeed unique and inspirational, creating a space that promotes and cultivates ideas and perspectives to launch the next great idea that will change our world. Diversity is the key to fuelling innovation and bold new ideas that have the power to make an impact. Toronto’s progressive culture makes it the place to collaborate, experiment and create.

Experience iconic and quintessentially Canadian experiences like hockey, Canadian art and not to mention Toronto’s diverse culinary scene. In 2022 Toronto was the first Canadian city to be MICHELIN-recognised, bringing new light to the city’s distinct flavours.

Easily accessible with two international airports that serve over 180 global destinations in 55 countries, Toronto serves as the gateway to Canada. Getting to the downtown core is easy, the UP Express train quickly connects Toronto Pearson International Airport (YYZ) to the downtown Union station by a 25-minute direct transit.

Find out more here
Events Highlight Calendar 2023
Global Influence, Regional Insight, Local Impact.

The Future of Healthcare Meetings
A joint ICCA and AC Forum event
6-8 June, 2023 | Istanbul, Türkiye

SAVE THE DATE