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MEETINGS INDUSTRY PULSE SURVEY

NEW DATA

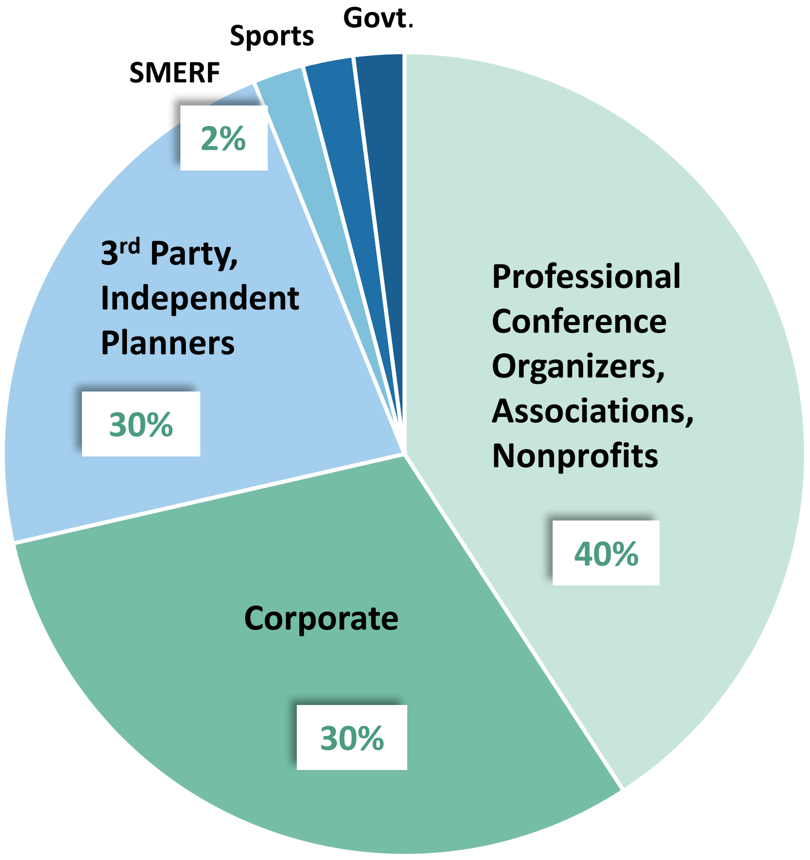
JUNE 2023

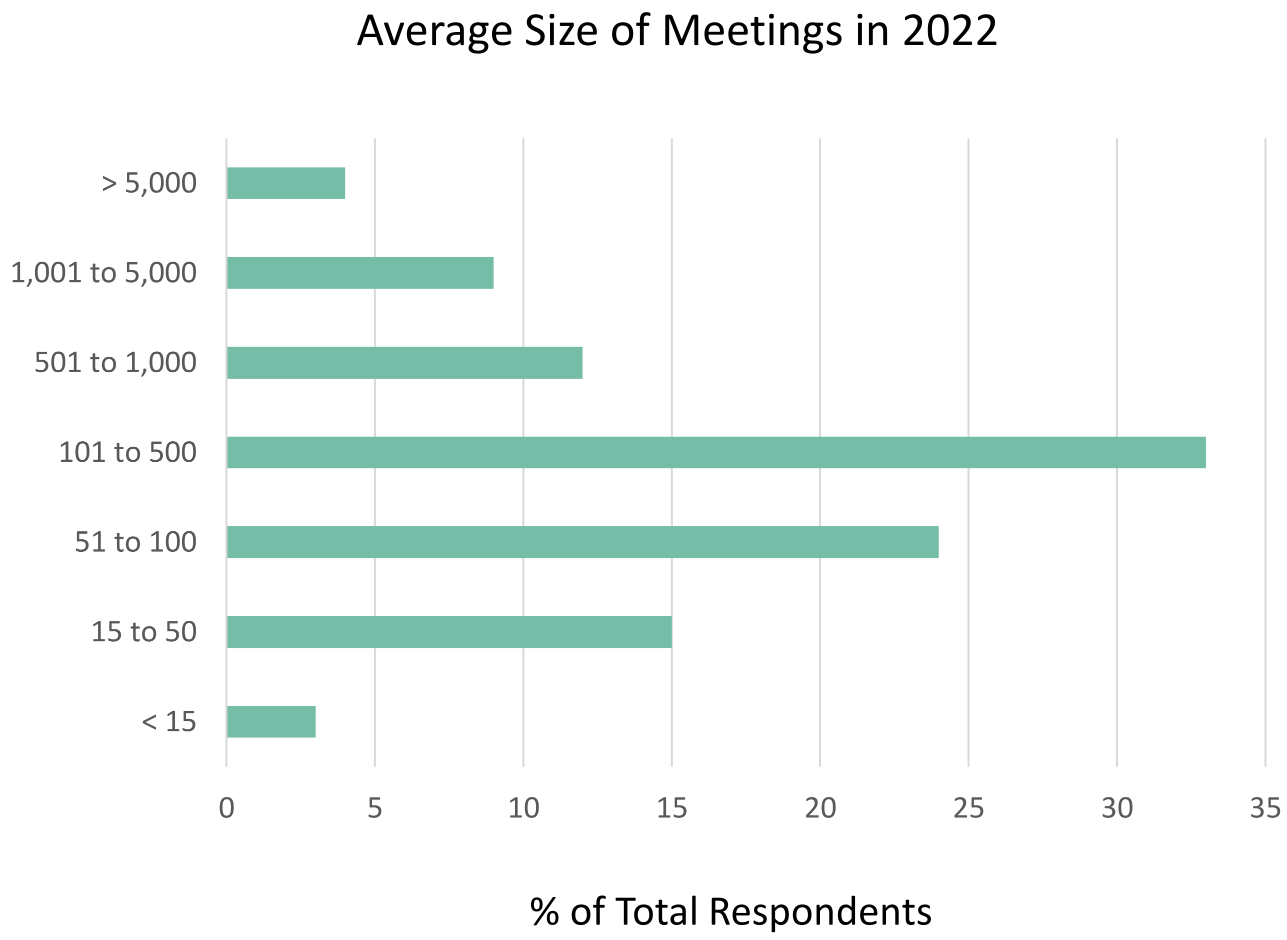
Executive Summary: Have we Entered a Post-Covid "New Normal"?

Optimism remains high, new bookings are strong, attendance is still lagging, and planners appear to be adjusting to inflation and service realities.

- Overall, **planners' outlook remains optimistic, buoyed by continued strong bookings**. However, post-Covid optimism could be waning, as our optimism indicator again ticked down, now down by 10% from January.
- 44% of planners think the growth in demand for meetings will spur **growth in planner jobs**.
- **Time horizons continue to be very tight**. Most planners are booking new meetings between 4 and 12 months out.
- **Inventory remains limited** as events postponed because of Covid are slowly making their way through the pipeline. 1 out of 4 planners reports they still have Covid-postponed events to produce.
- **Attendance levels continue below pre-pandemic levels**. Planners and their stakeholders don't seem to mind though.
- **Face-to-face events continue to reflect high perceived value** among stakeholders relative to other alternatives.
- Many verbatim comments continued to focus on lack of supplier support and high costs. Nevertheless, **the indices tracking planner satisfaction levels have moderated**, indicating planners are accommodating the challenges they're facing with hotels and venues. **A/V and tech providers now bear the brunt of planner frustration.**
- Most planners want **responses to their RFPs in 3 to 4 days or less**. That's not what they're currently getting.

528 Planner Responses (June 14 to July 1, 2023)





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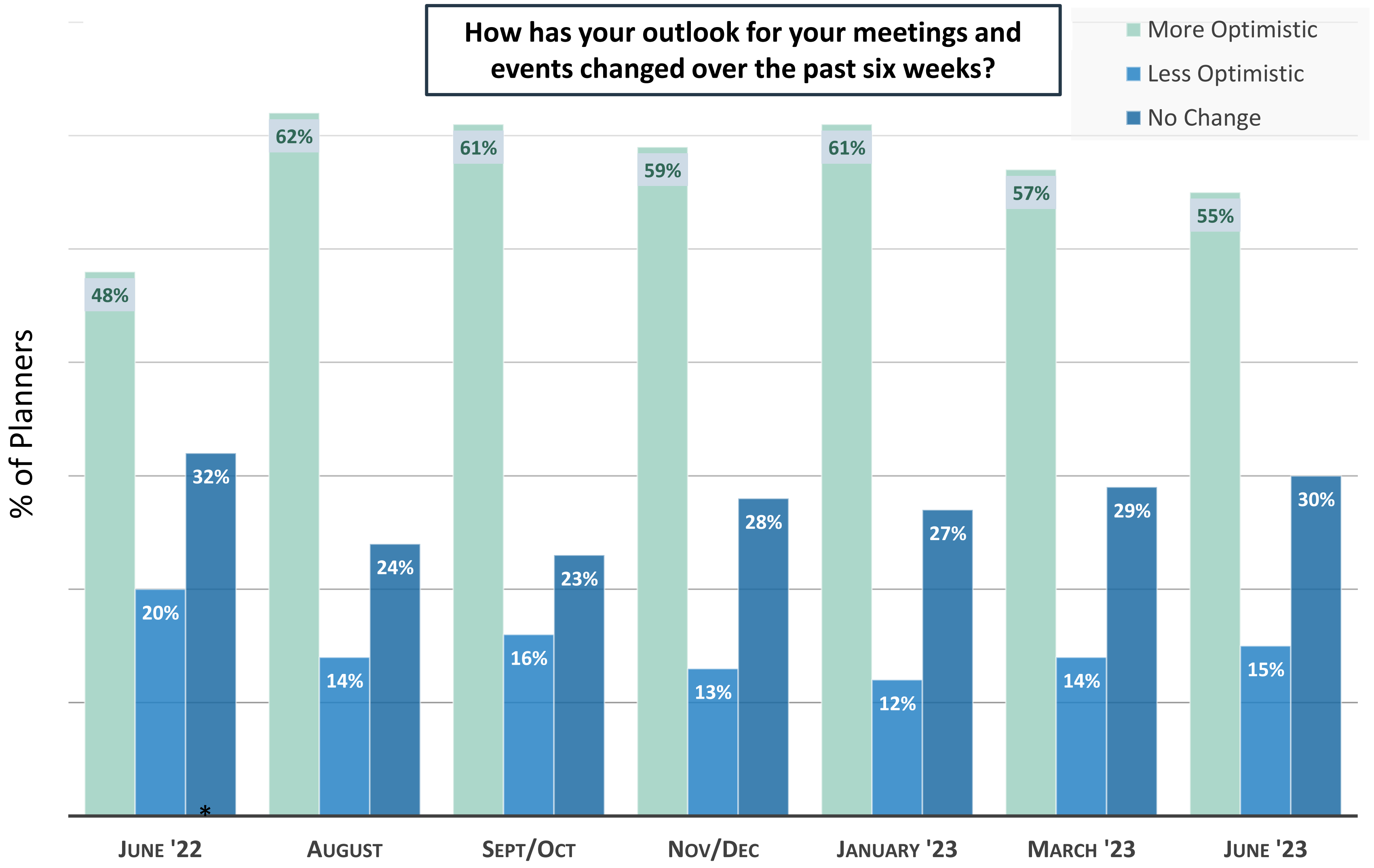
Planner Optimism Levels Remain High

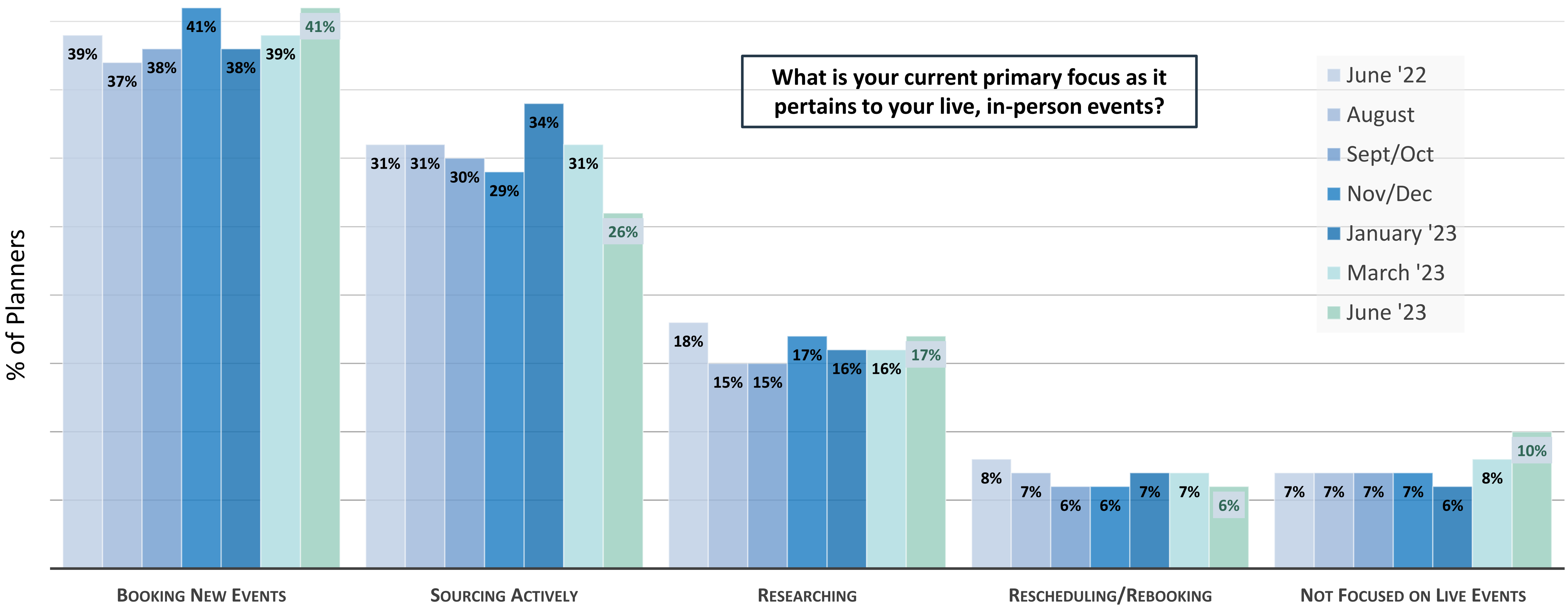
Is post-covid optimism is beginning to wane?
So far, it's not by much.



Meetings Industry Pulse Survey

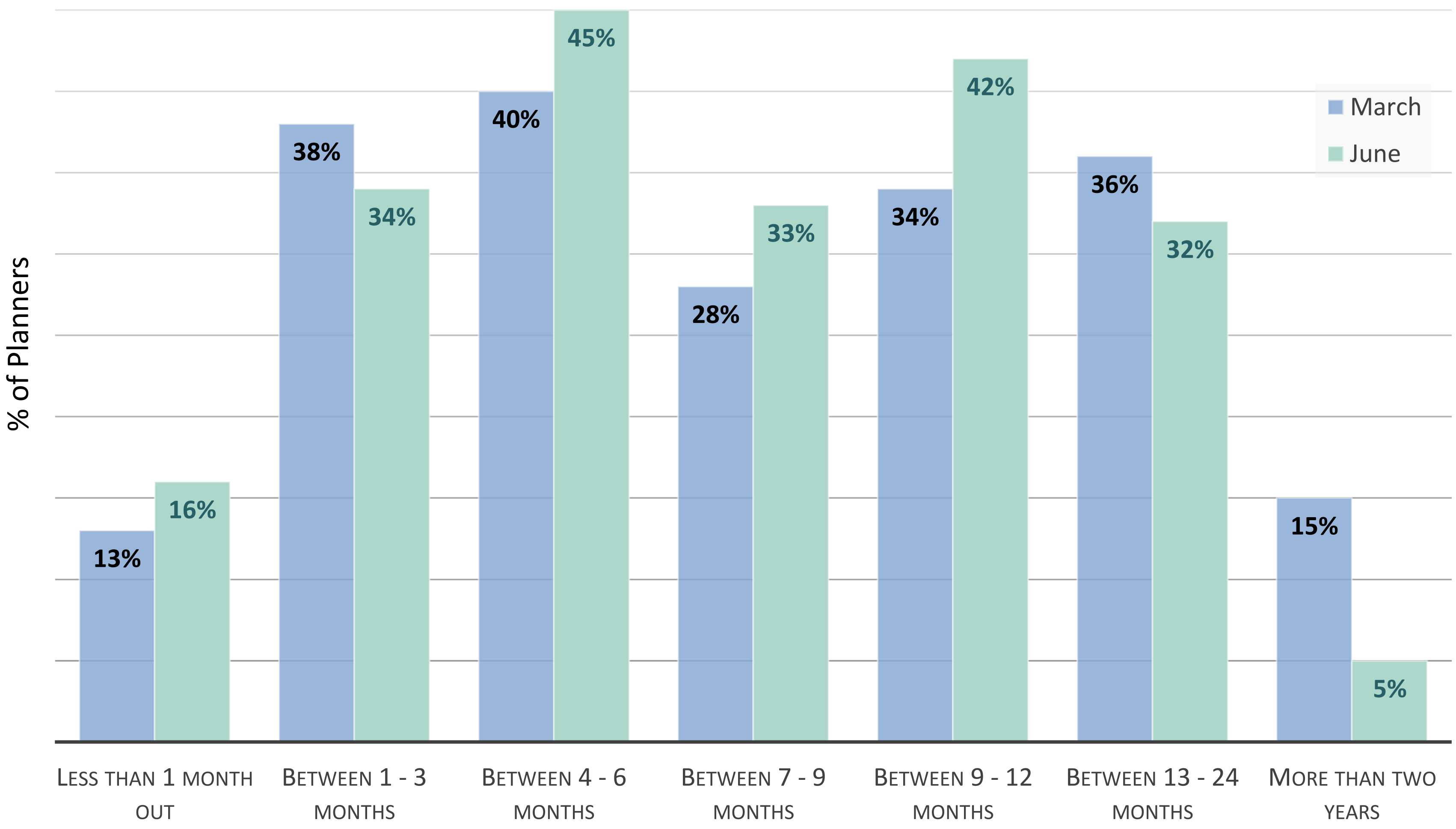
NEW DATA

Booking Activity Ticks Back Up to Previous High



Time horizons tighten as most new meetings are seeking dates between four and twelve months out.

For current events that you are now booking or actively sourcing, when is the expected start date (months out)? (Please select all that apply.)



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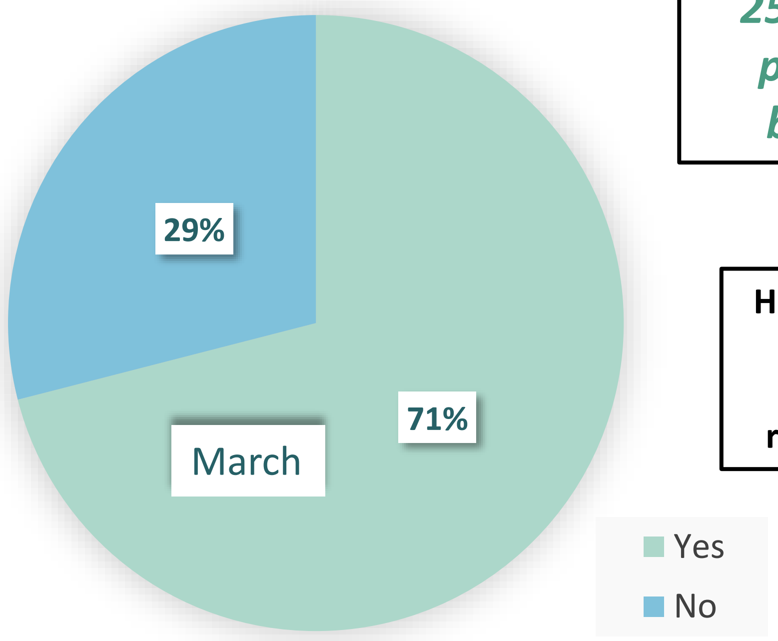
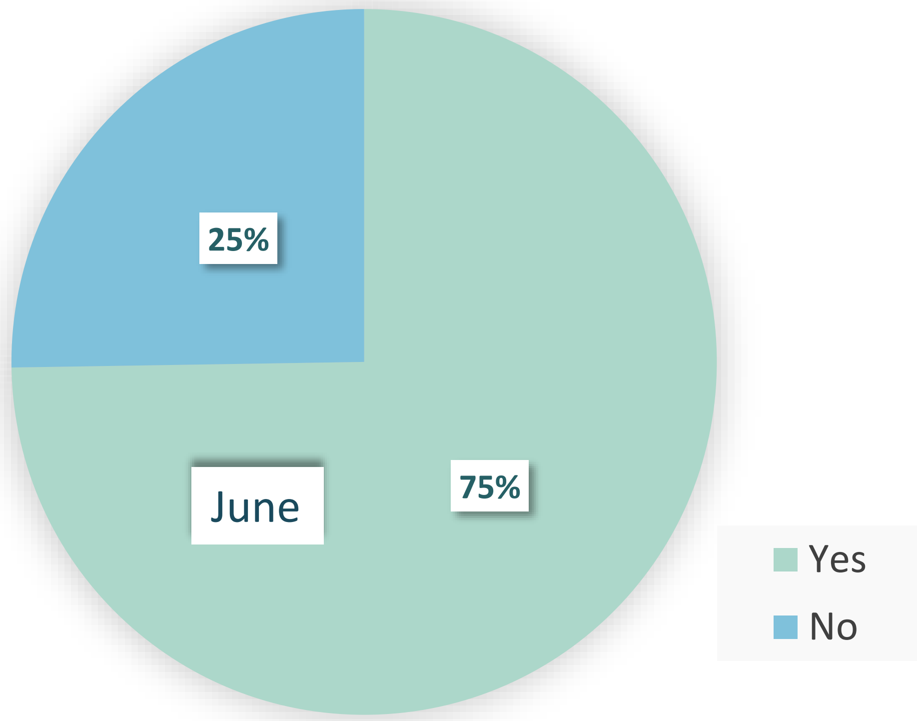
The Backlog of Rescheduled Events is Clearing, Albeit Slowly

25% of planners still need to produce events postponed because of the pandemic.

Have you or your organization now produced all the events you had previously planned and had to reschedule during the pandemic?



% of Total Respondents



% of Total Respondents

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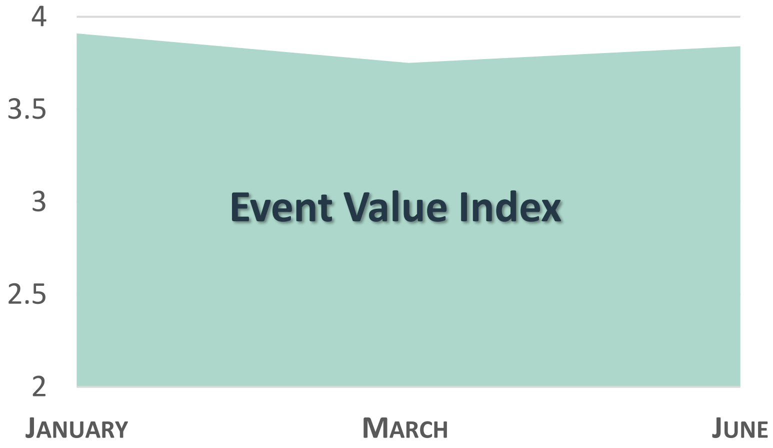
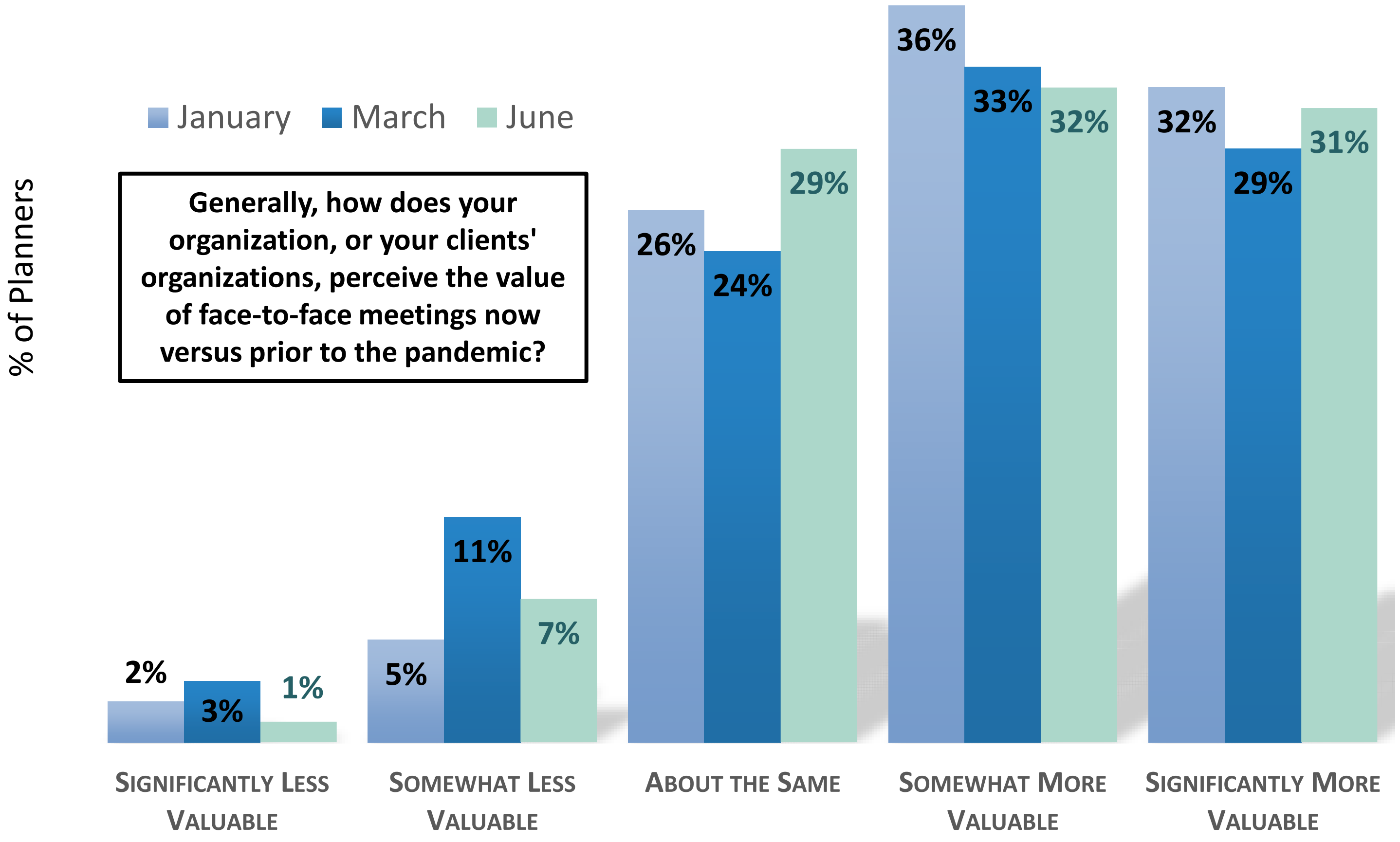
The perceived value of face-to-face events continues to benefit from their prolonged absence.

With 1 being "significantly less valuable" and 5 being "significantly more valuable," face-to-face events score 3.84, down from 3.91 in January.

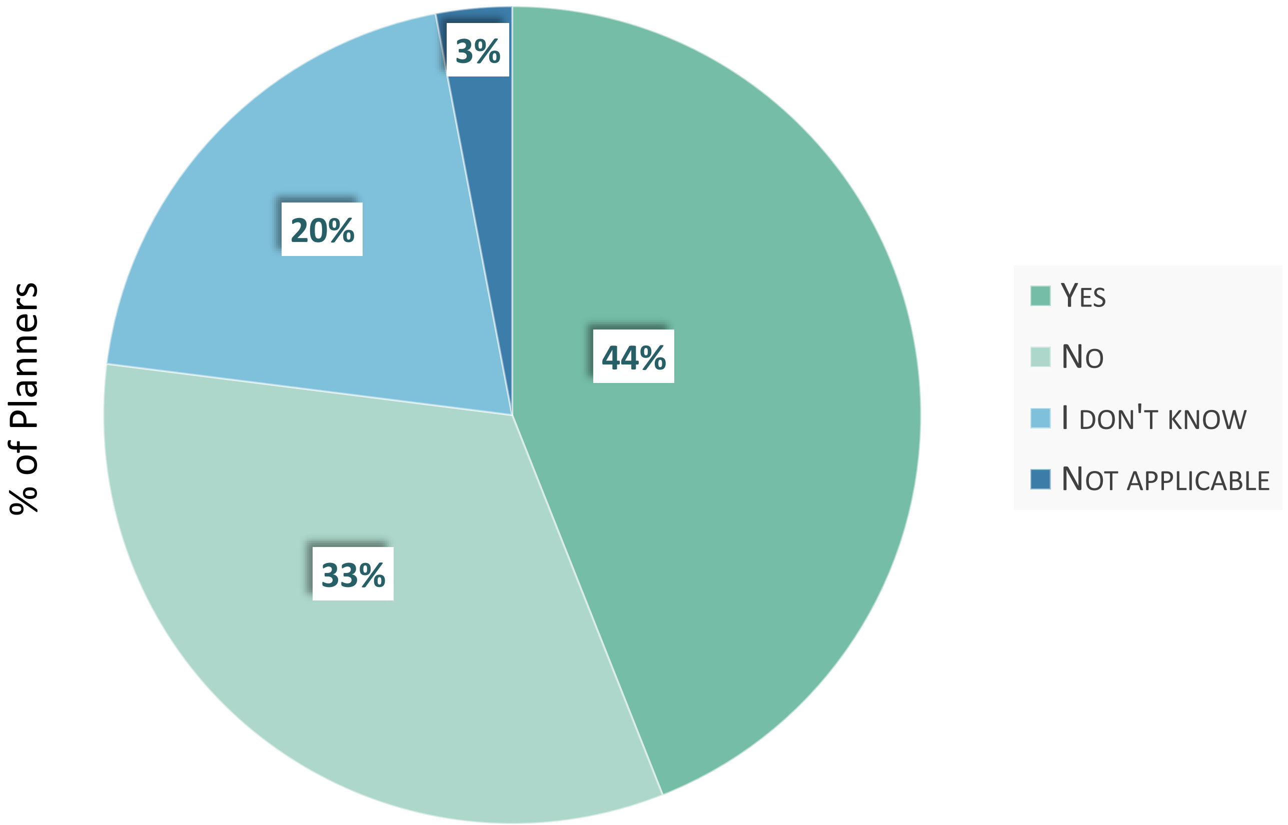




Optimism and Demand Spurs New Planner Jobs

44% anticipate new opportunities with their events teams.

Do you anticipate your meetings and events team will grow in the next year?



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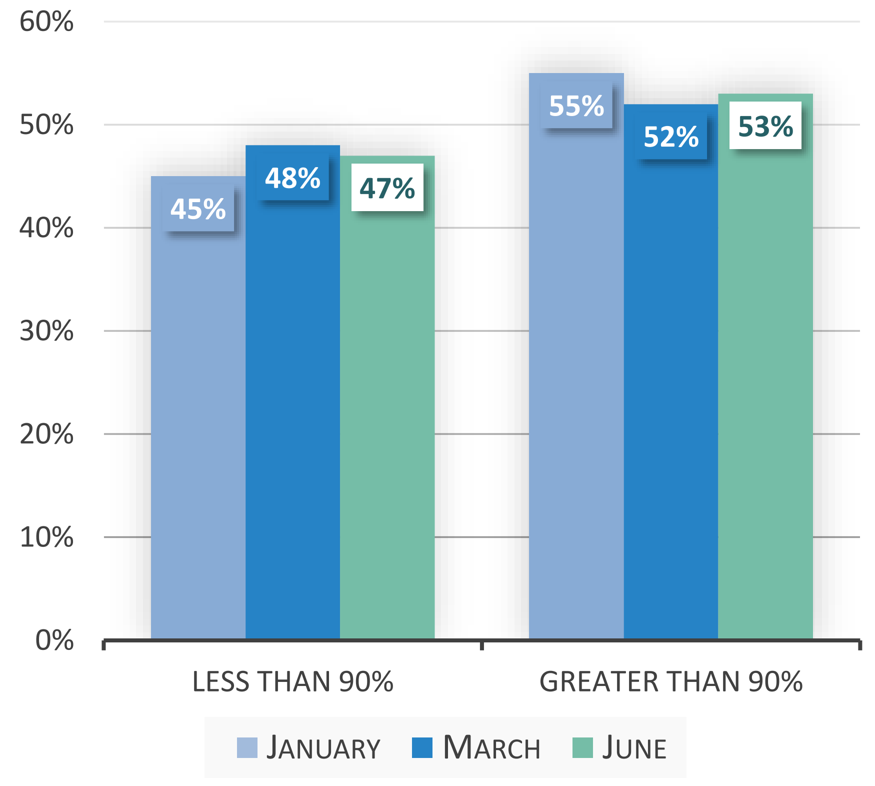
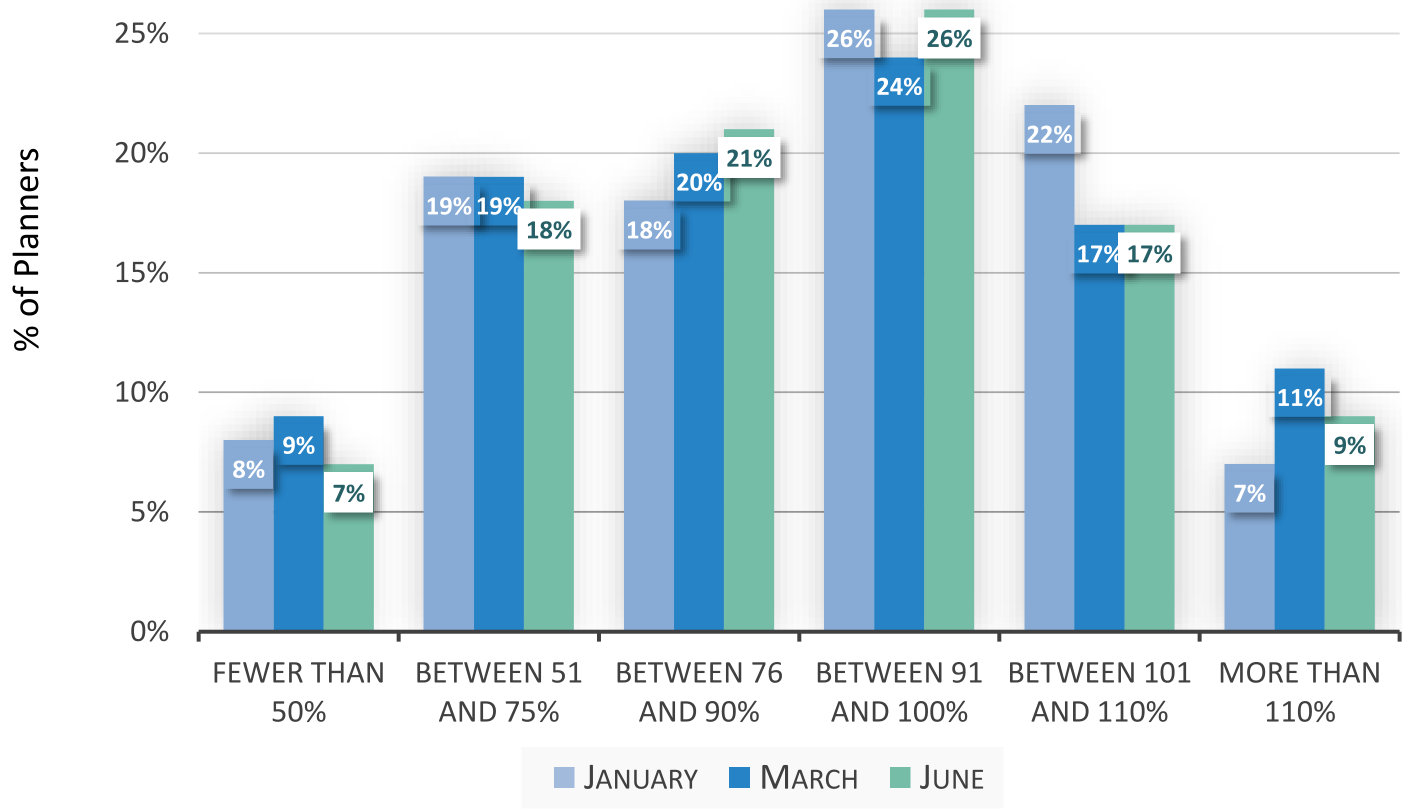
How many in-person attendees do you expect in 2023 for your average meetings vs. your 2022 results?



Are Attendance Levels "Stuck" Below Pre-Pandemic Levels?



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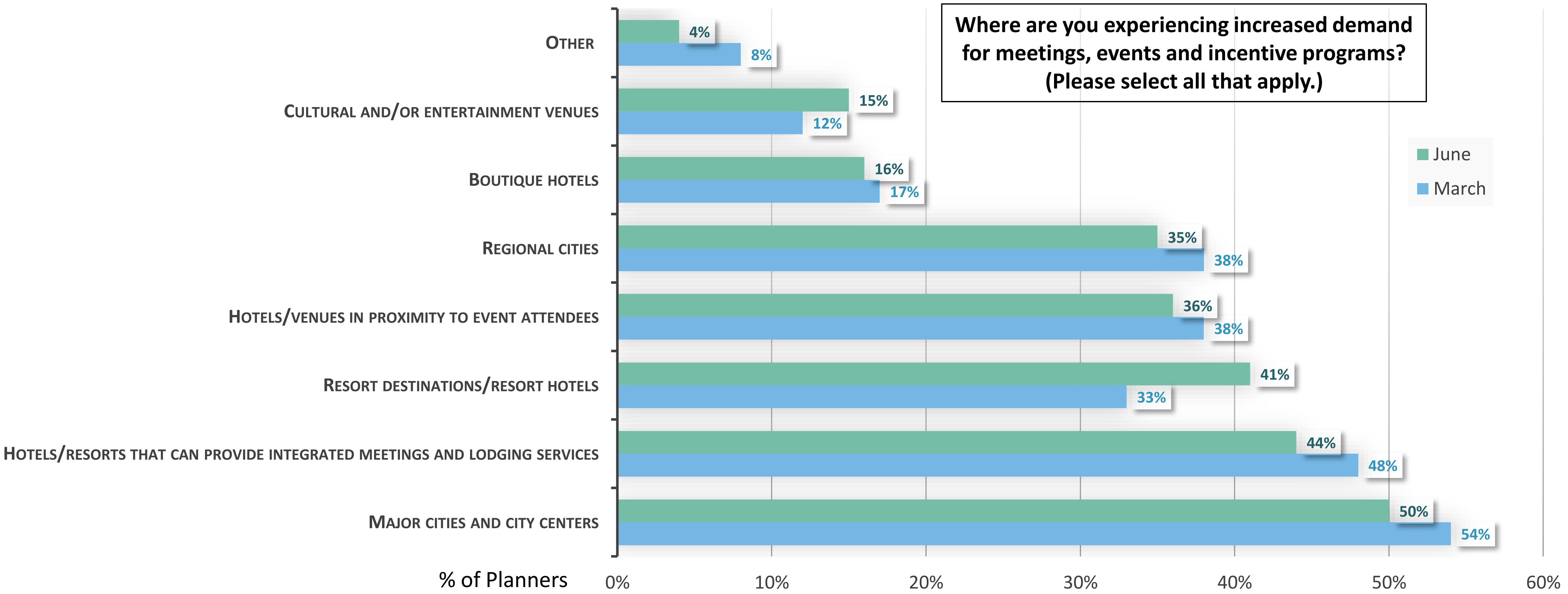
Strong Demand for Cities, Integrated Venues and Resorts



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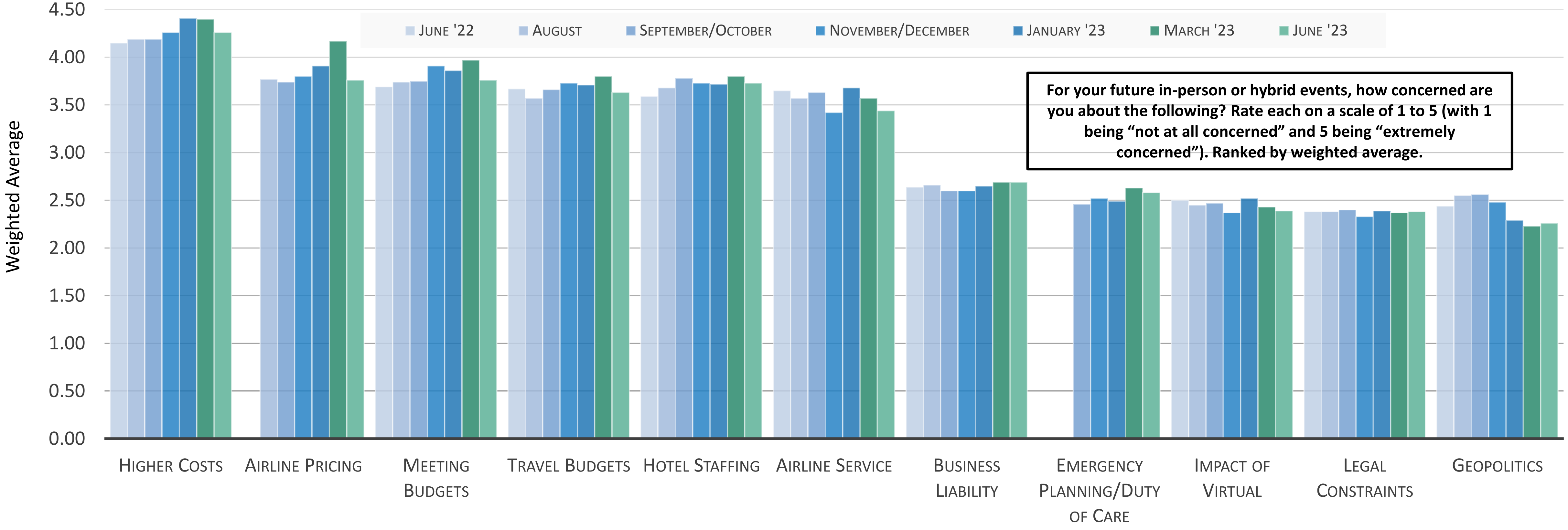
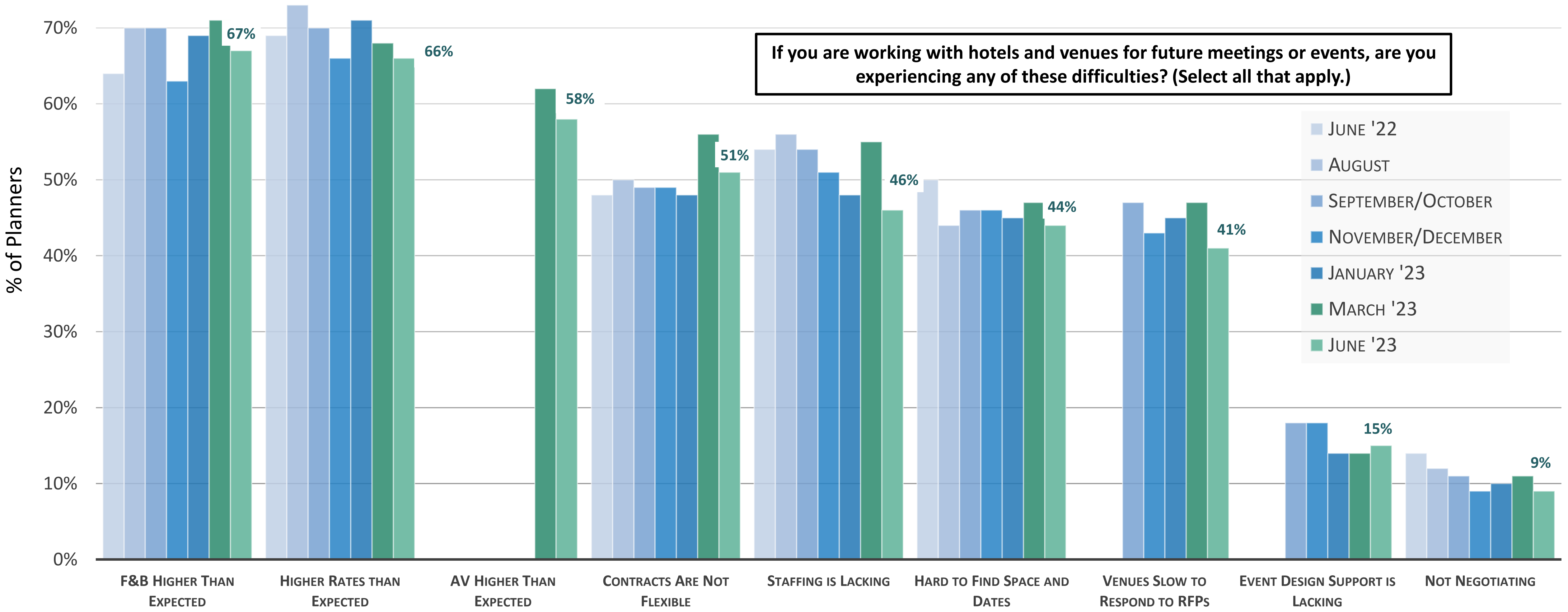
Though Still High, Concerns Over Costs, Budgets, and Service Levels Decline

Although geopolitics and emergency planning/duty of care were noted by some planners in the verbatim comments, they remain of lesser concern to most planners.



Across the Board, Difficulties with Venue Partners Decline



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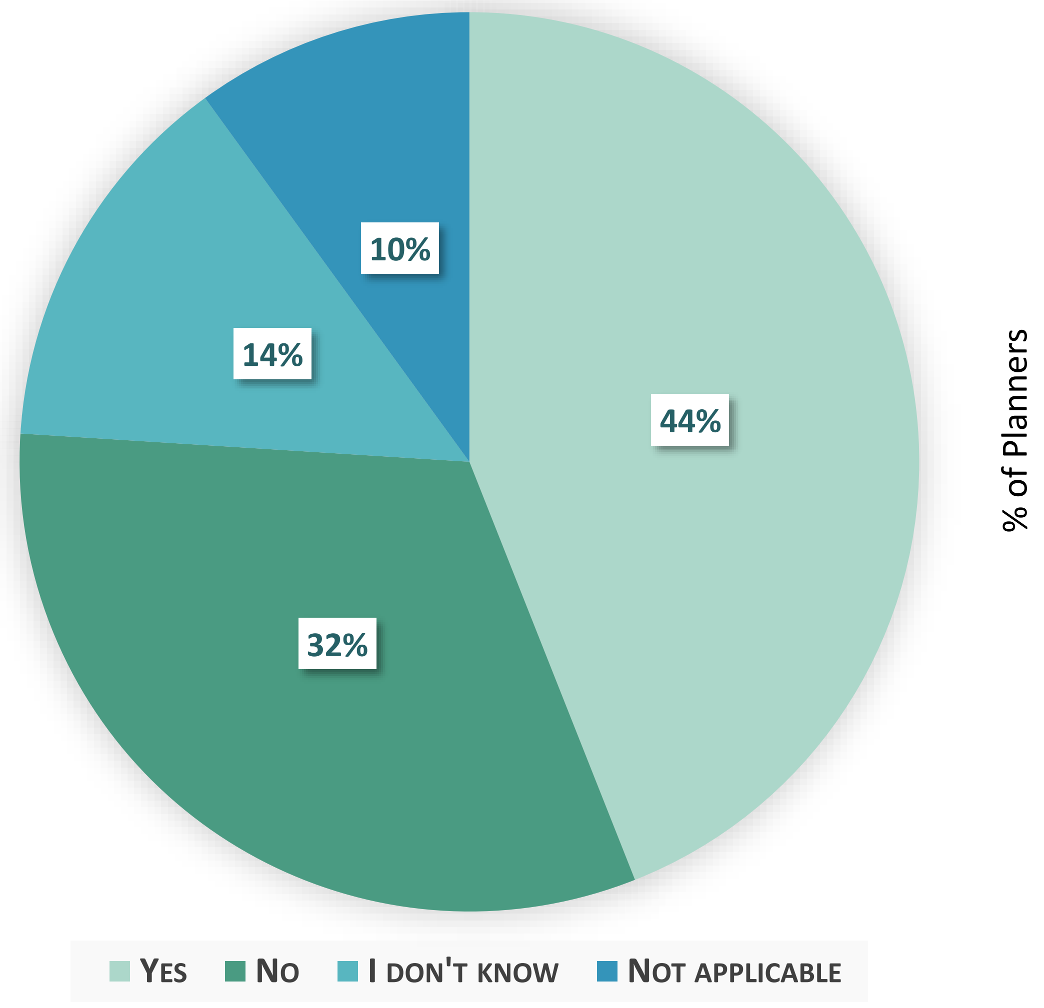
Loss of Partner Relationships Are a Factor For Most Planners

Is the loss of relationships with hotels/venues impacting your planning?



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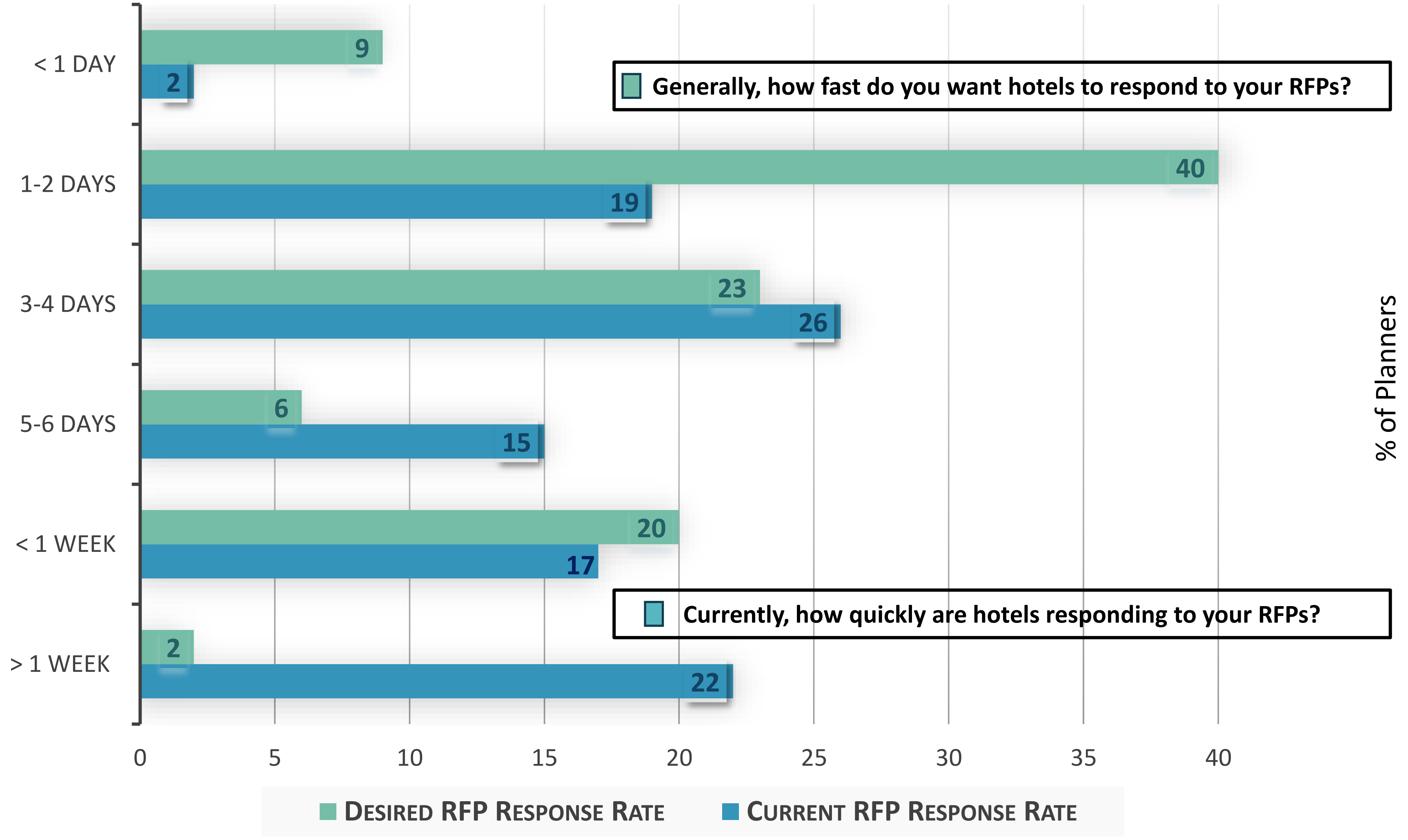
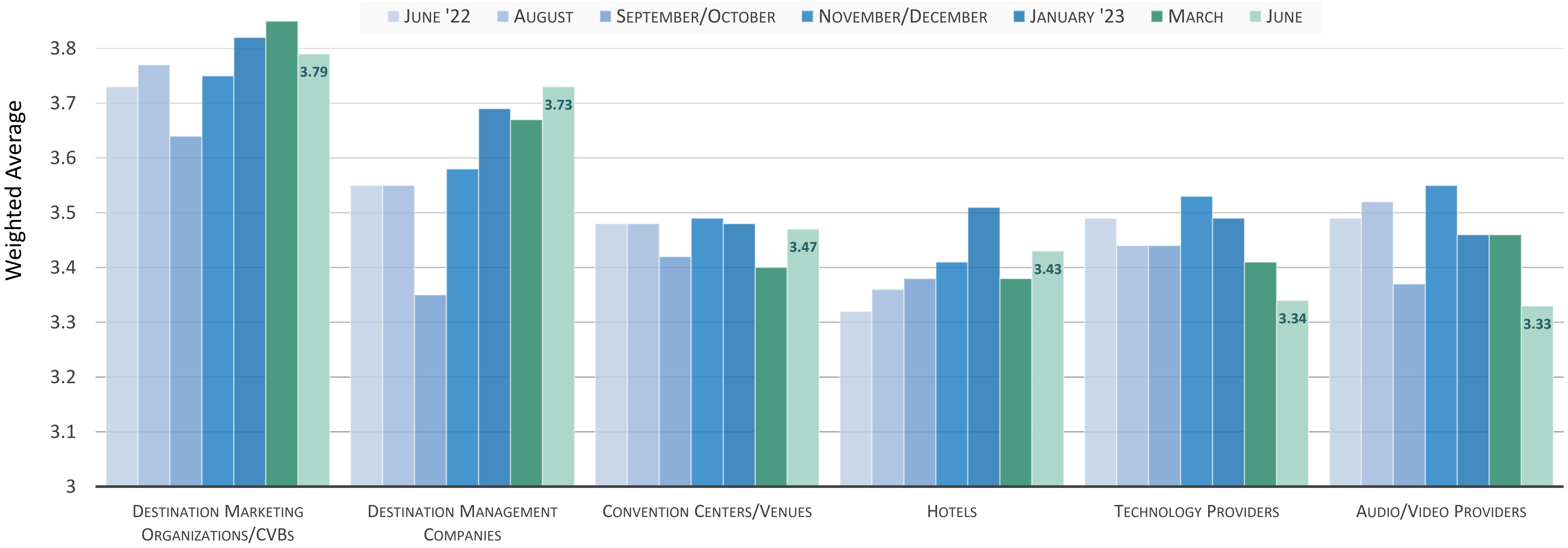
Are RFP Response Expectations Realistic?

Most planners want RFP responses within 3 to 4 days or less. Fewer than half of all planners are achieving that now.



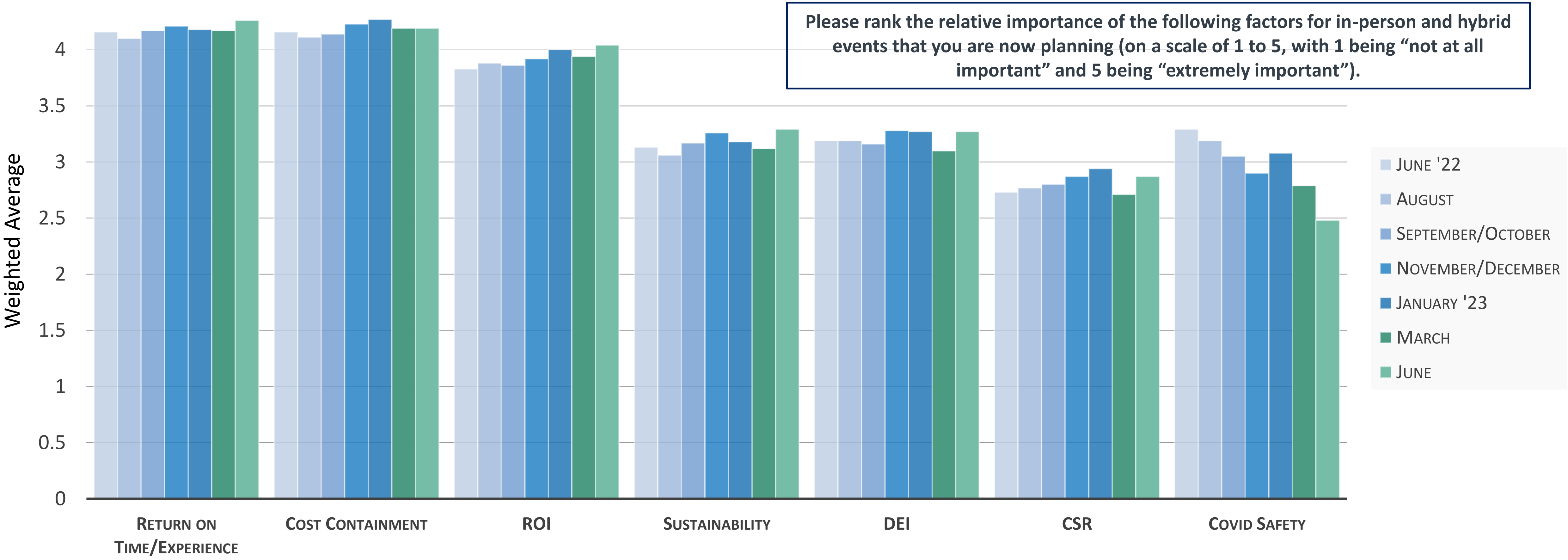
Audio/Video, Technology Providers See Big Drops in Satisfaction Levels

Given current circumstances, how satisfied are you with the level of support you are getting from the supplier organizations with whom you are planning your meetings or events (on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "not at all satisfied," and 5 being "extremely satisfied")?



Although Cost Containment Remains a Priority, Other Factors Gain in Importance

Please rank the relative importance of the following factors for in-person and hybrid events that you are now planning (on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "not at all important" and 5 being "extremely important").



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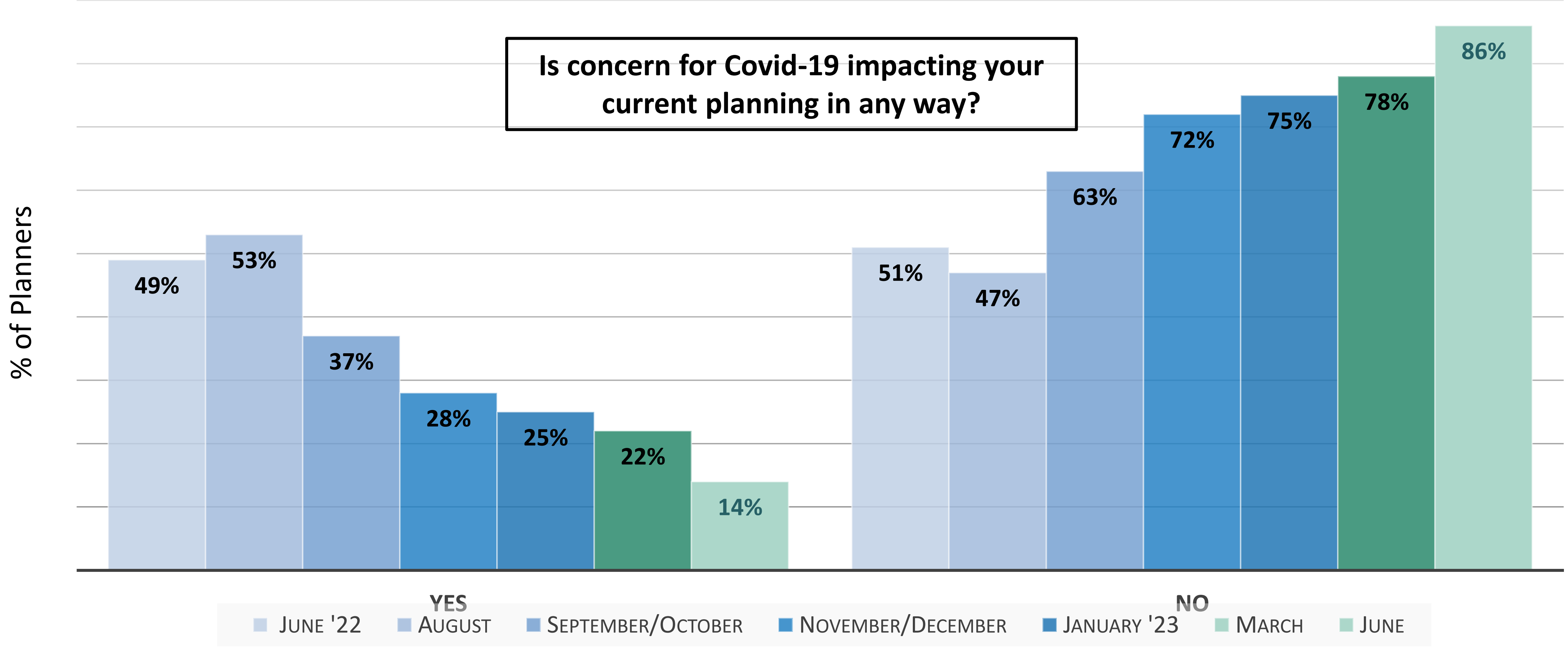
Fewer and Fewer Planners Factor Concern for Covid in their Planning



Selected Verbatim Comments:

- “My repeat clients are still reimagining their event suite and trying to find the delicate balance for their budgets and ROI. The future is bright, but it looks different than anyone expected.”

- “As a member organization, being face-to-face is important to our members. Fortunately, I was able to add headcount to my team this year given the increased number of in-person and virtual events, plus additional training programs.”

- “Many companies from both the client side as well as the provider side are still short staffed, my own included. Everything is taking longer now and there is real burnout in our industry. The job is more stressful now than ever before.”

- “We are finding a much slower response time from all our suppliers and a lack of interest in maintaining a relationship.”

- “Thank goodness business is leveling off. 2022 was one of the most difficult of my career due to all the compressed business. We have also staffed up this year so moving forward we'll have more of a work/life balance.”

- “Even though COVID-19 is “over” for 80% of people, it is not over for the folks who are immunocompromised or at high-risk. I wish that continuing to implement some forms of public health was on meeting planners’ minds. We can normalize health and sanitization, we can normalize increased ventilation, we can normalize the continued use of masks for anyone who would be more comfortable.”

- “The lack of training and experience on the supplier side is an issue. It feels like many suppliers have forgotten they work in hospitality. It’s hard to take high-level groups to high-priced hotels when I cannot guarantee my clients’ expectation of service.”