

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

International Visitor Survey Report
January - December 2025

SOLO



Photo Credit: David Kirkland

Acknowledgements

- ❖ The Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) expresses its gratitude to all contributors to this report on IVS data from January to December 2025, which provides insights into the visitor experience and tourism recovery in Papua New Guinea post-border reopening.
- ❖ Thank you to the visitors for completing arrival and departure information, including via the Papua New Guinea Digital Arrival Card (PNGDAC), which replaced the traditional paper-based arrival card from 1 October 2025, enabling this analysis. Special thanks to the Papua New Guinea Tourism Promotion Authority (PNGTPA) for providing crucial arrival data and visitor emails to enable survey invitations to be dispatched in a timely manner.
- ❖ We also extend our sincere thanks to the New Zealand Government for their support and collaboration.
- ❖ Appreciation goes to the SPTO and PNGTPA researchers and analysts for their meticulous work on visitor profiles, decision-making processes, and expenditure and satisfaction.
- ❖ Further research is needed to refine economic impact estimates, particularly the rate of prepaid expenditure into the local economy. Your ongoing support is highly valued.
- ❖ Thank you to everyone involved.

Executive Summary

- ❖ The survey, conducted from January to December 2025, analyzed 4,827 responses out of 5,139 collected, representing 7% of actual visitors with a 19% response rate. Among the respondents, 41% were first-time visitors, and the average household income was between USD 80,000–99,999.
- ❖ Visitors were primarily attracted by nature attractions, cultural experiences, business opportunities, and connections with family and friends in Papua New Guinea. Historical aspects, such as World War II history, also played a significant role. Overall visitor satisfaction was high, with a rating of 4 out of 5. A substantial 92% of visitors expressed willingness to return to PNG, and 88% indicated they would recommend PNG to others.
- ❖ The average prepaid spend per visitor was USD 2,087, with an estimated 65% (USD 1,356) flowing into the local economy. When combined with in-country spending of USD 995, the total spend per visitor per trip was USD 2,352. Multiplying this by total visitor arrivals generated an *estimated** economic impact of USD 244 million (PGK 1 billion) from January to December 2025.
- ❖ Visitors found the natural beauty, friendly locals, and cultural diversity most appealing. However, safety concerns, high costs, and challenges with domestic flights and infrastructure were the least appealing aspects. To improve the overall visitor experience, suggestions included enhancing cleanliness, improving safety and security, and addressing issues with domestic air travel.

*Note: *based on total visitor numbers of 103,881 for the January - December 2025 period.*

Background

- ❖ The Papua New Guinea International Visitor Survey (IVS), part of the Pacific Tourism Data Initiative, is funded by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (NZMFAT) and implemented by the Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO). Drawing on data collected between January and December 2025, the survey provides insights into visitor experiences and tourism recovery following the reopening of PNG's borders, covering visitor profiles, travel decision-making, expenditure patterns, and satisfaction. Visitor contact details were collected through passenger arrival and departure cards.
- ❖ In 2025, air visitor arrivals increased to 103,881, up from 100,223 in the same period of 2024, reflecting ongoing efforts by the Papua New Guinea Tourism Promotion Authority (PNGTPA) and the Government to raise the country's profile through targeted marketing, improved air connectivity, and regional partnerships.
- ❖ Despite higher arrivals, estimated average spend per visitor fell from USD 3,084 to USD 2,352. Average length of stay among short-term visitors (1-29 days) edged down from 10.2 to 9.9 days, while spend per visitor per day declined from USD 302 to USD 236. This largely reflects a shift toward lower-spending visitor segments, with reductions in both prepaid expenditure (USD 2,613 to USD 2,087) and in-country spend (USD 1,385 to USD 995) contributing to the lower average.
- ❖ An estimated 65% of prepaid expenditure flows into PNG's economy, based on benchmarks from other Pacific Island countries with national carriers, though further research is recommended to refine this estimate. All figures are reported in USD and PGK using average exchange rates for January-December 2025.

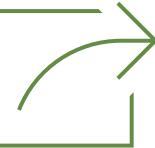
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- ❖ The **survey instrument** used to collect data for the January to December 2025 period was similar, but not exact, to the survey instrument used in the January to December 2024 period. New questions were added, a handful of existing questions were removed, and the response options for some questions were altered.
- ❖ N.B. Our analysis uses IVS respondents, weighted with January to December 2025 arrival data from the Papua New Guinea Tourism Promotion Authority (PNGTPA) to ensure a representative sample. However, as with all sample-based data, some bias may remain. Users should consider this when interpreting the results.
- ❖ Please note that the Pacific Tourism Organization (SPTO) and the Papua New Guinea Tourism Authority (PNGTPA) **do not accept liability for any loss or damage incurred as a result of the use of information contained in this report.** Users are advised to exercise their own judgment in the use of any information provided.

IVS Respondents (January – December 2025)



24,796 TOTAL EMAILS SENT*



4,827 RESPONSES ANALYSED

19%

CONVERSION RATE

Note: 5,139 responses were received. After data cleaning, 4,827 responses remained.

RESPONDENTS REPRESENT**



7,041 ADULTS



456 CHILDREN

7%+

OF ALL VISITORS IN THIS PERIOD

***Based on the Local Spend Question – “How many adults and children were included in your local expenditures?”. *24,796 represents the number of valid emails that successfully reached respondents from a total of 30,834 emails sent.*

+Calculated by dividing the total number of ‘weighted’ people reported in the Local Spend Question by the total actual arrivals to PNG from January to December 2025.

PNG International Visitor Survey

Snapshot January – December 2025

Country of residence



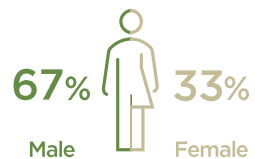
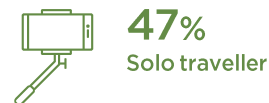
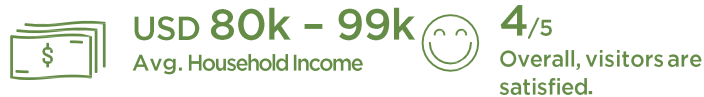
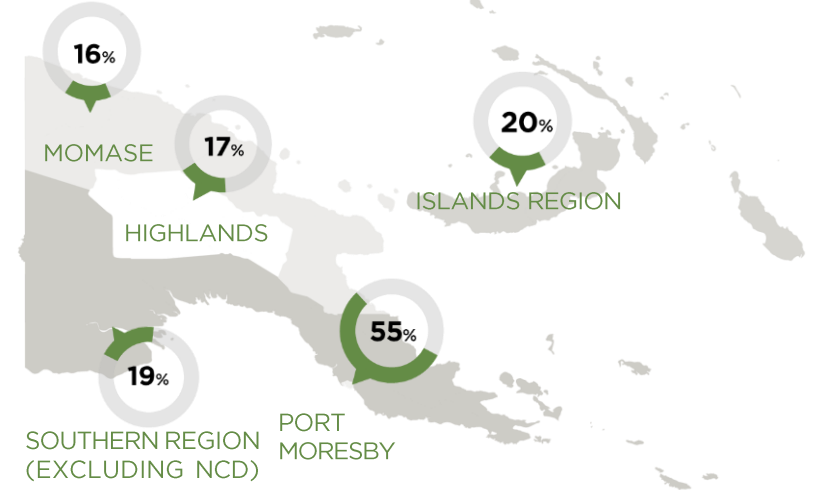
Purpose of visit



Most Participated Activities



Regions visited



Economic impact

USD 1,356
Avg. prepaid spend per person per trip

+

USD 995
Avg. local spend per person per trip

=

USD 2,352
Total Expenditure per person per trip

Note: The estimated flow-back rate into the PNG economy for prepaid spend is 65%. With an average prepaid spend of \$2,087 per person per trip, this equates to \$1,356.

Report Structure



Visitor Profile



Visitor
Characteristics
& Preferences



Information &
Decision Making

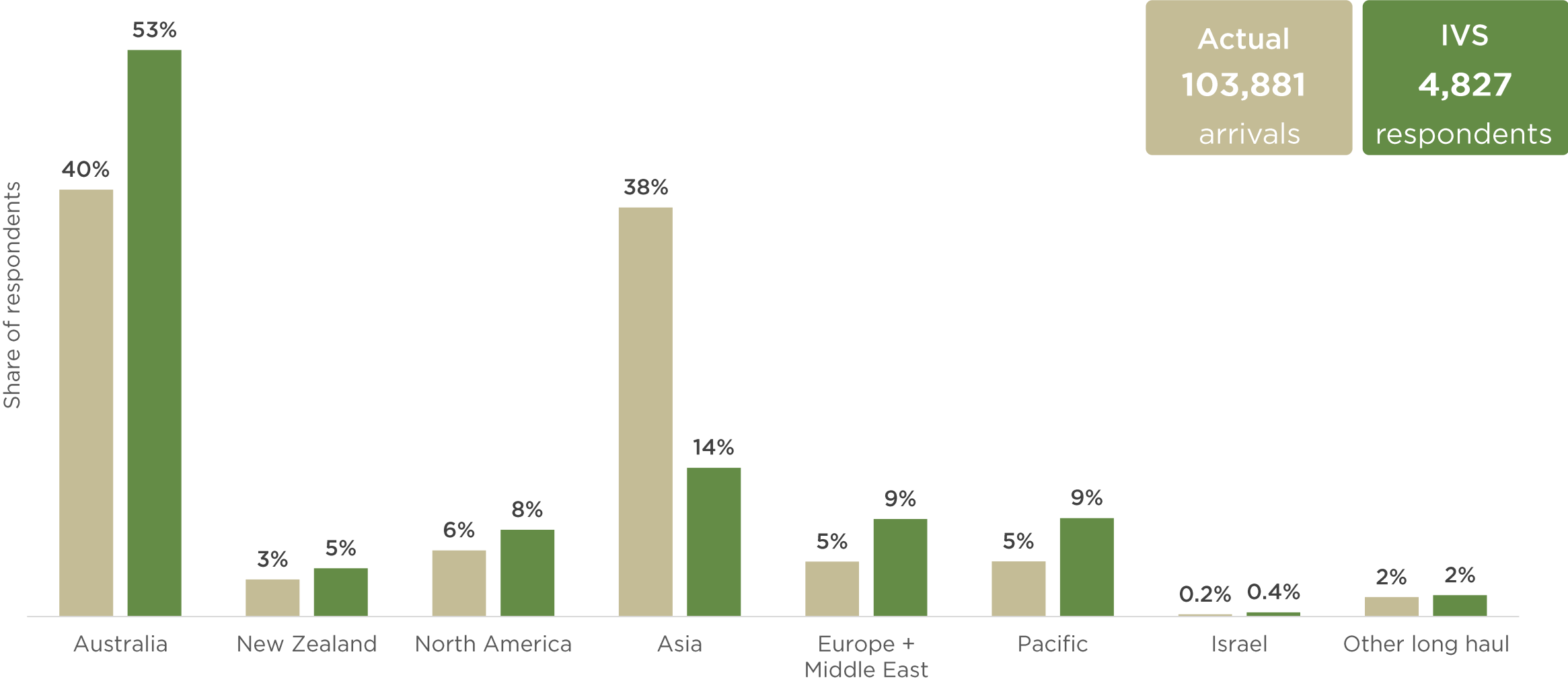


Visitor Spending
& Impact



Visitor
Satisfaction

Source Markets: IVS Respondents vs. Actual Arrival



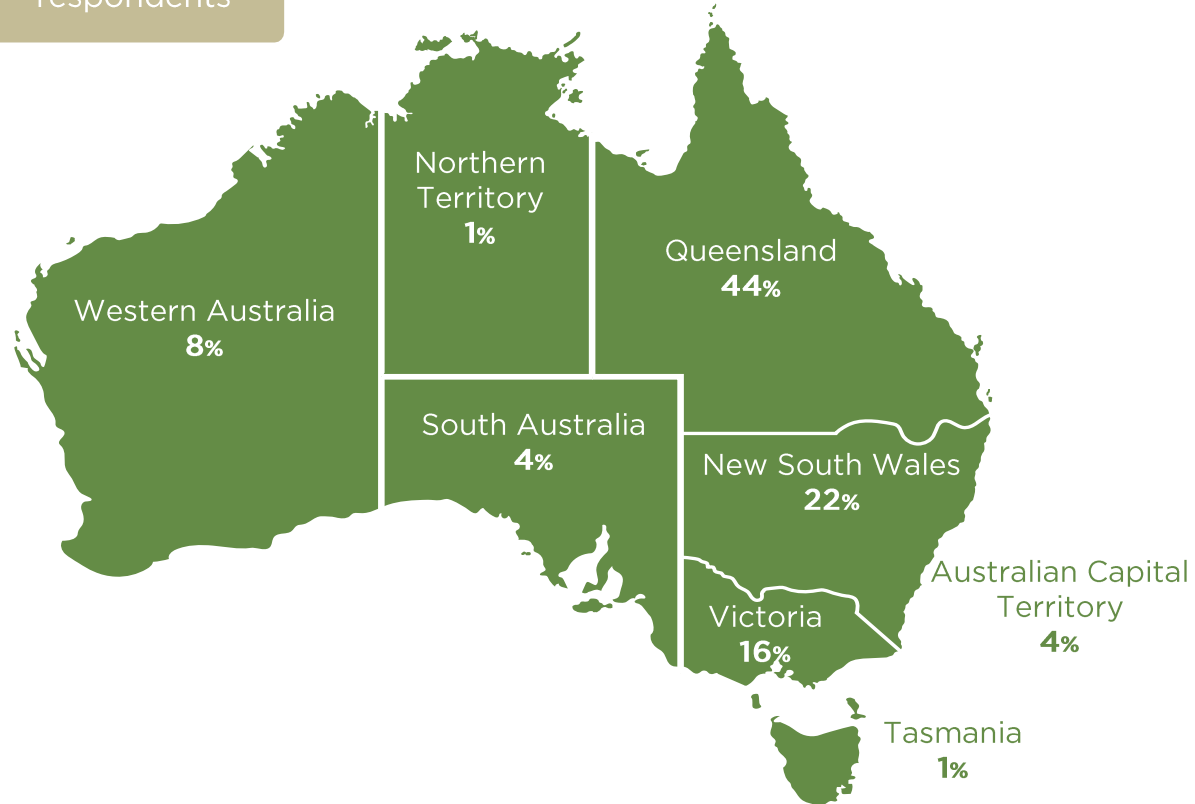
Note: The Middle East has been reclassified, with Israel reported separately to represent the Middle East, and all other Middle Eastern countries grouped with Europe (Europe + Middle East). Results are weighted by source market to correct for under- and over-sampling. This change aligns IVS weighting with PNG's Visitor Arrival System (VAS), which has fixed source-market categories. The adjustment is for weighting consistency only and is not geographically precise.

Top Source Markets – Australia & New Zealand

1,925

Total Australian respondents

Respondents sample is weighted

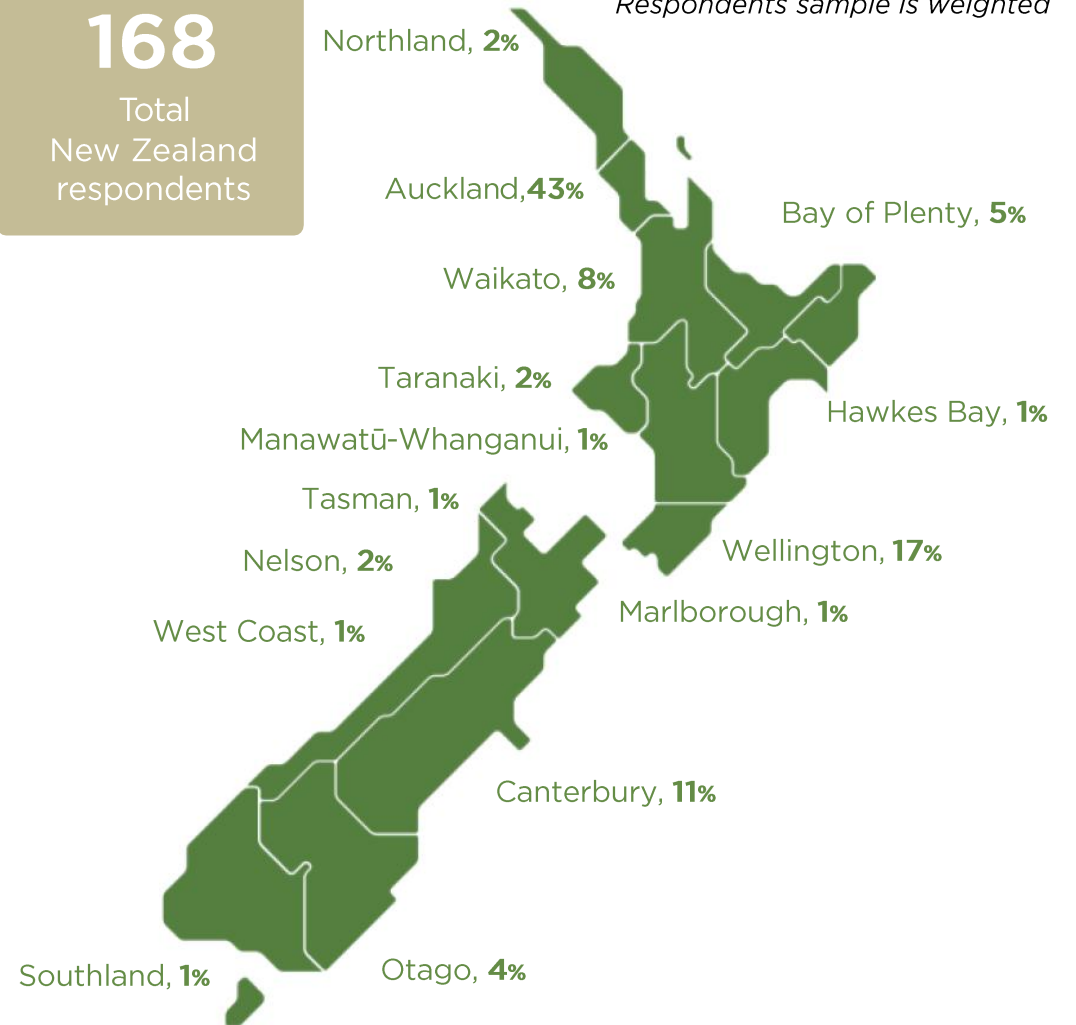


New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria make up **86%** of all Australian respondents

168

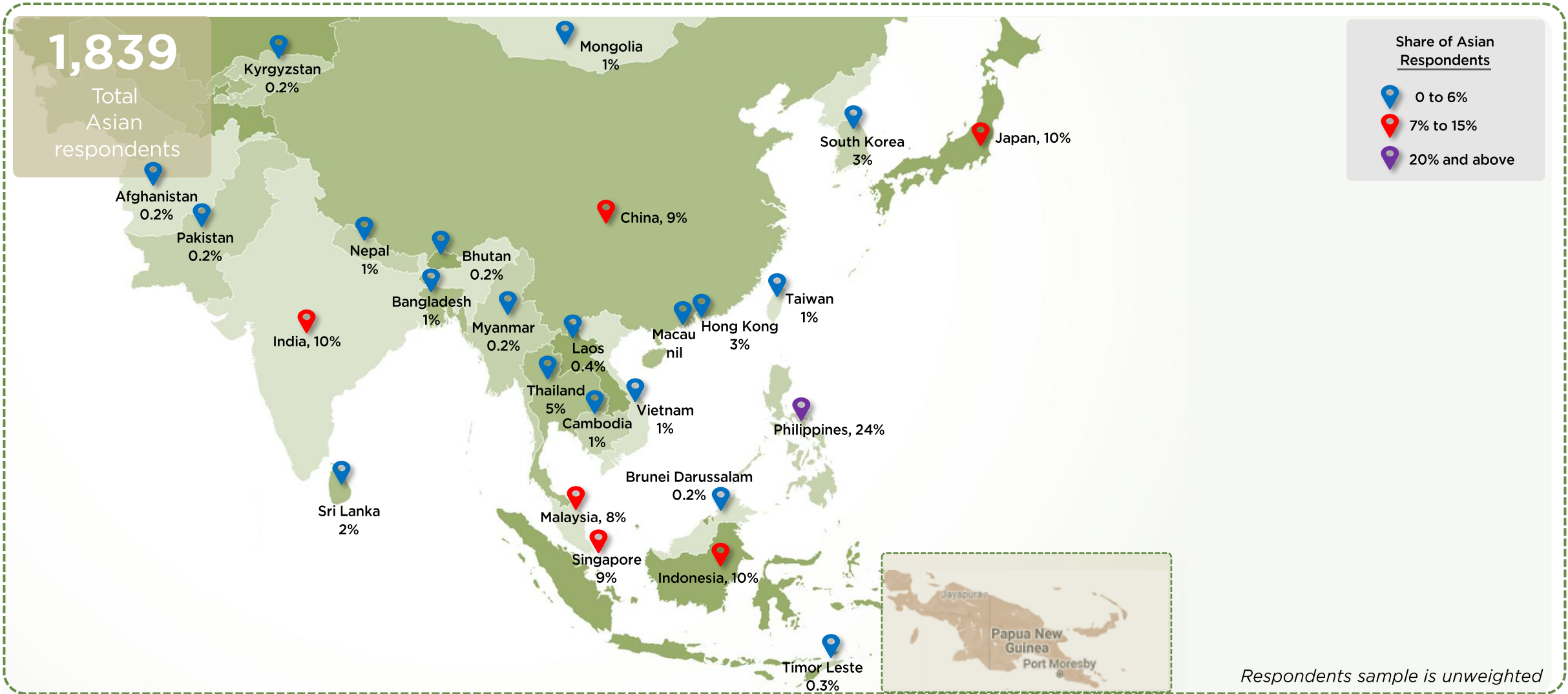
Total New Zealand respondents

Respondents sample is weighted



Auckland, Wellington, Canterbury and Waikato made up **78%** of all New Zealand respondents

Top Source Markets - Asia



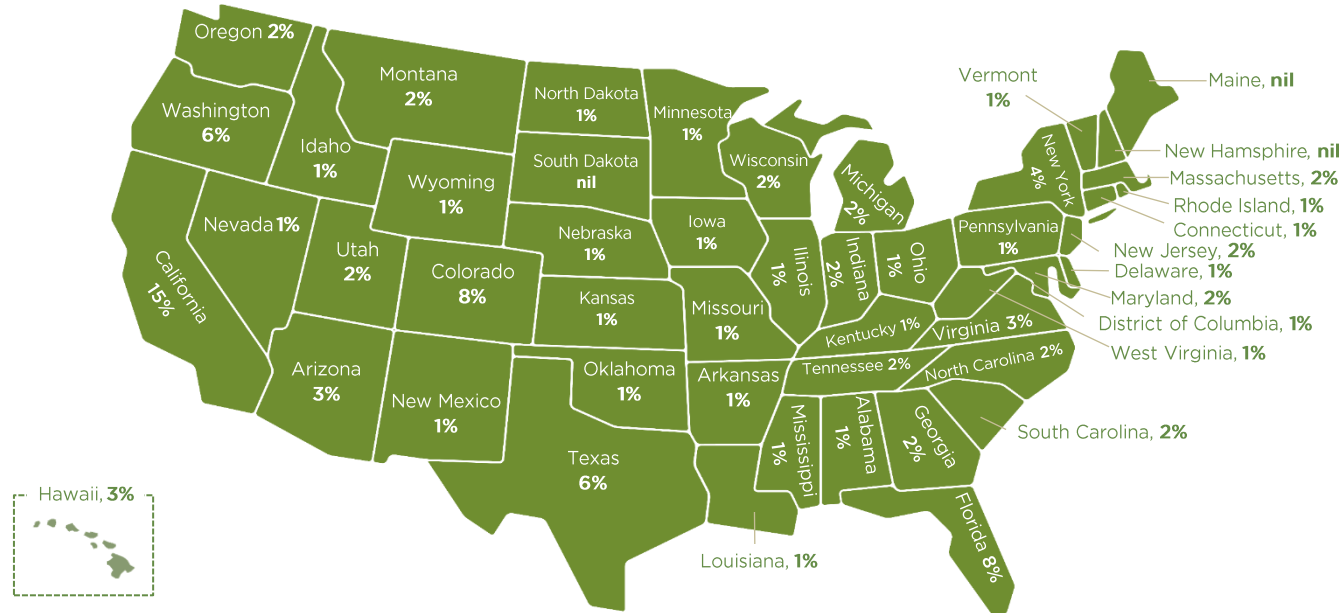
81% of Asian respondents are from the Philippines, India, Indonesia, Japan, China, Singapore and Malaysia.

Top Source Markets – North America (USA & Canada)

247

Total American respondents

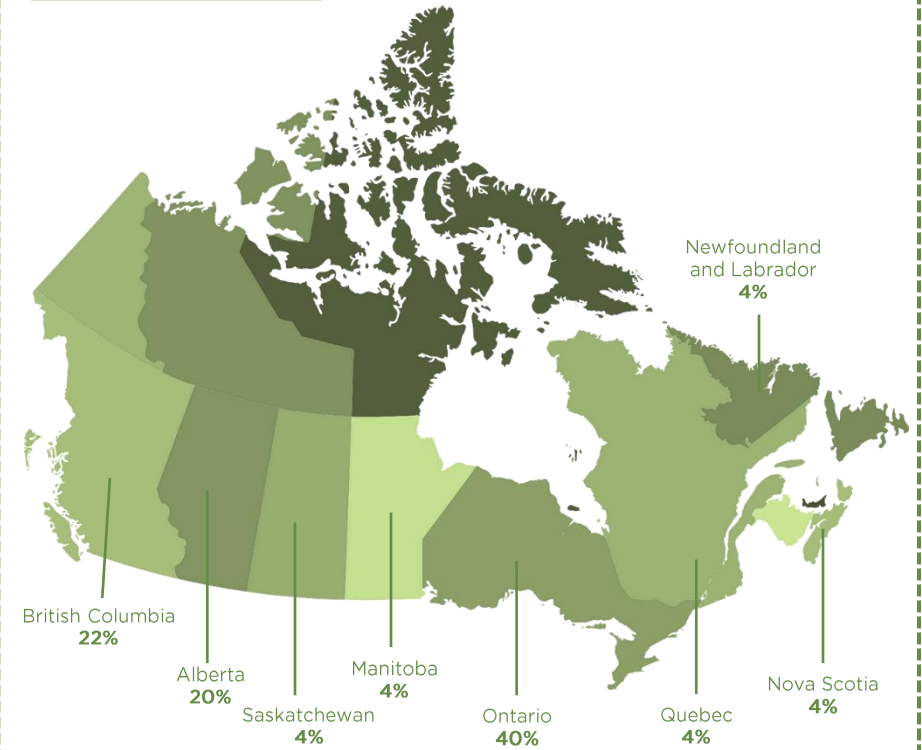
Respondents sample is weighted



50

Total Canadian respondents

Respondents sample is weighted



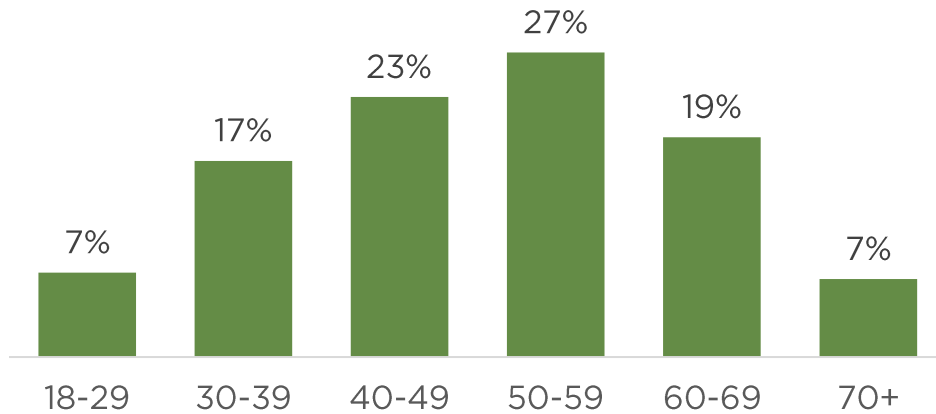
Respondents from 47 US states visited PNG. No respondents from Alaska, Maine, New Hampshire and South Dakota participated in the survey, indicated by 'nil' percentages.

Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia made up 82% of all Canadian respondents

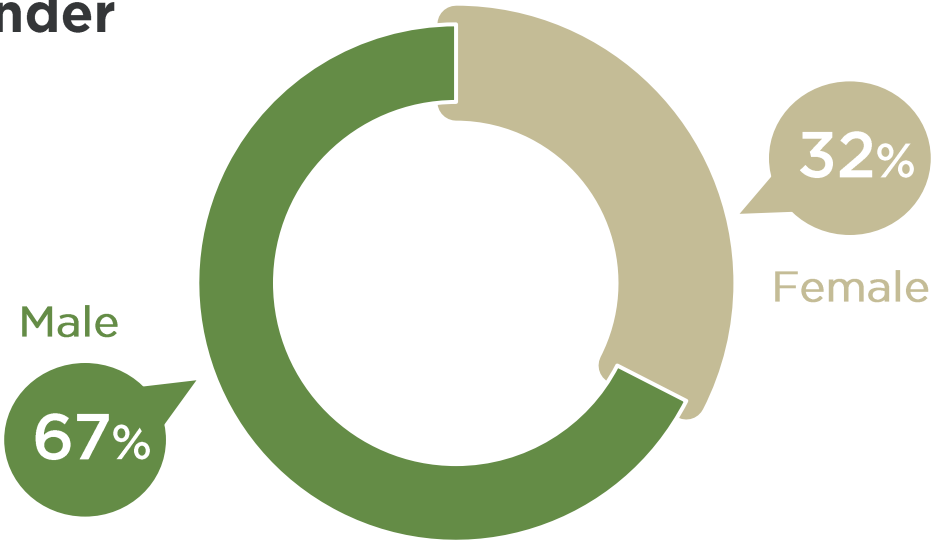
Respondent Demographics

Age

Avg. age group
50-59 years

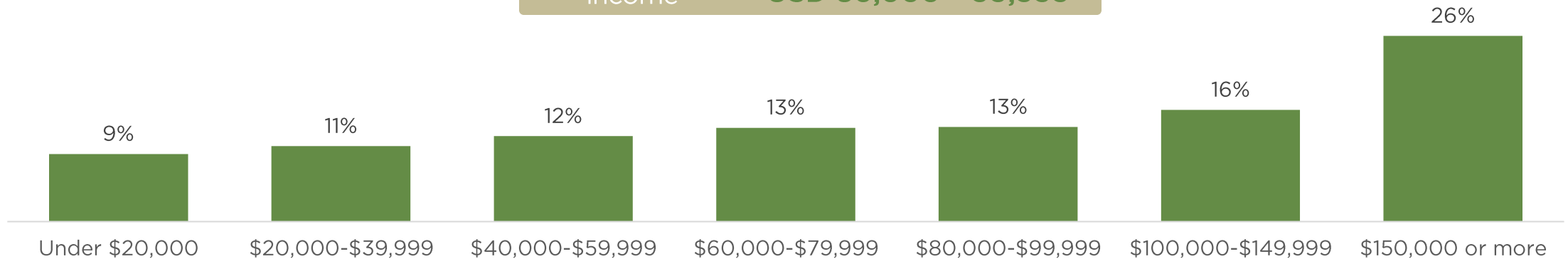


Gender



Annual Household Income

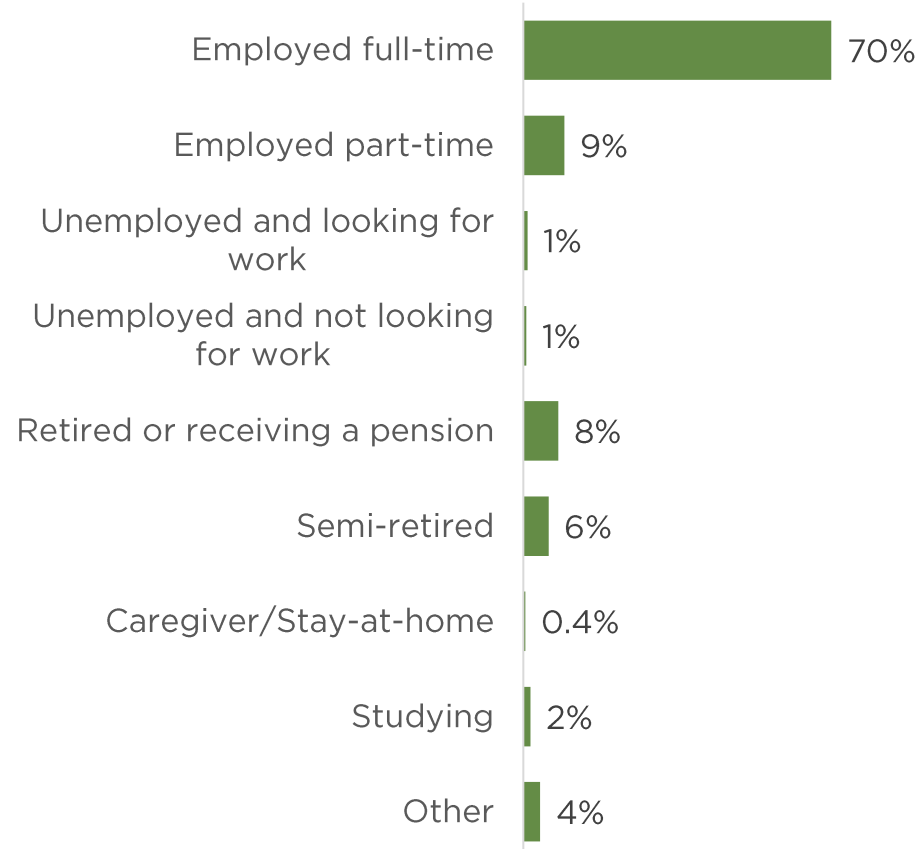
Avg. household income
PGK 327,520 - 409,396
USD 80,000 - 99,999



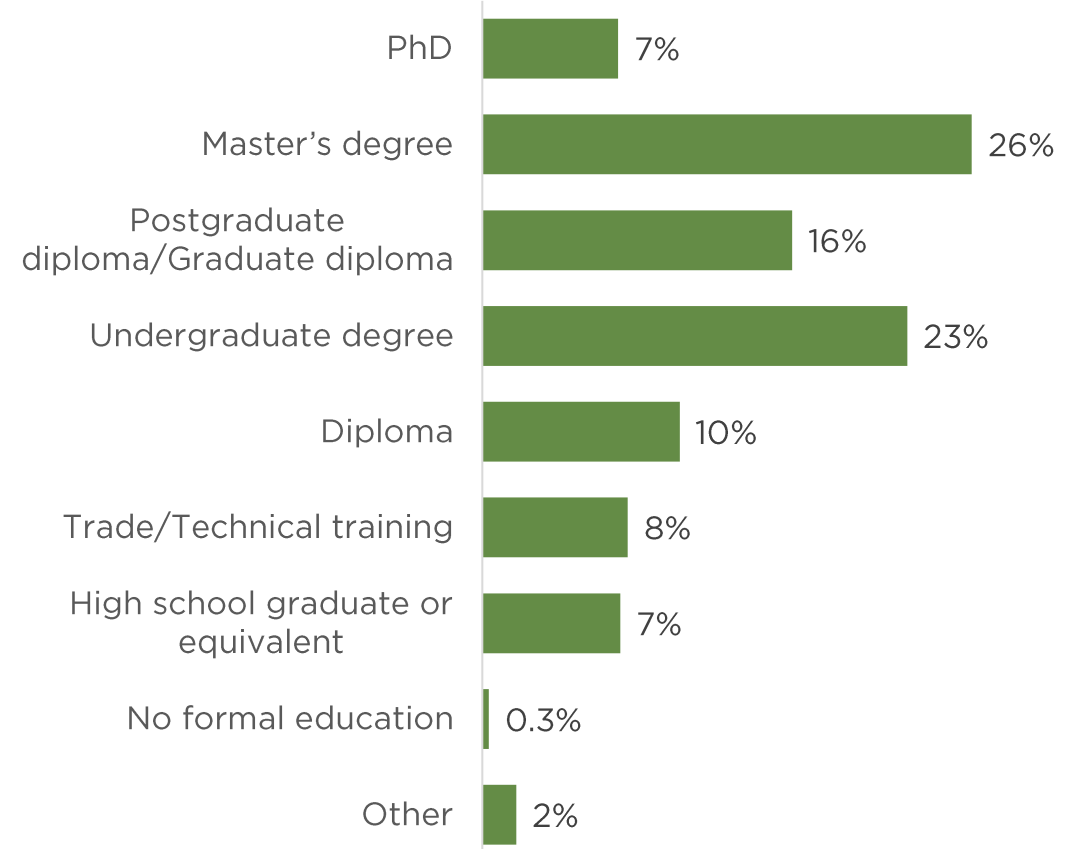
Note: Percentages reflect the share of IVS respondents and are weighted. All dollar values are reported in USD. To encourage greater respondent participation, the question was revised to closed answers, with a maximum option of USD \$150,000 or more. The average exchange rate to PGK and USD for January to December 2025 was applied.

Respondent Demographics

Employment status



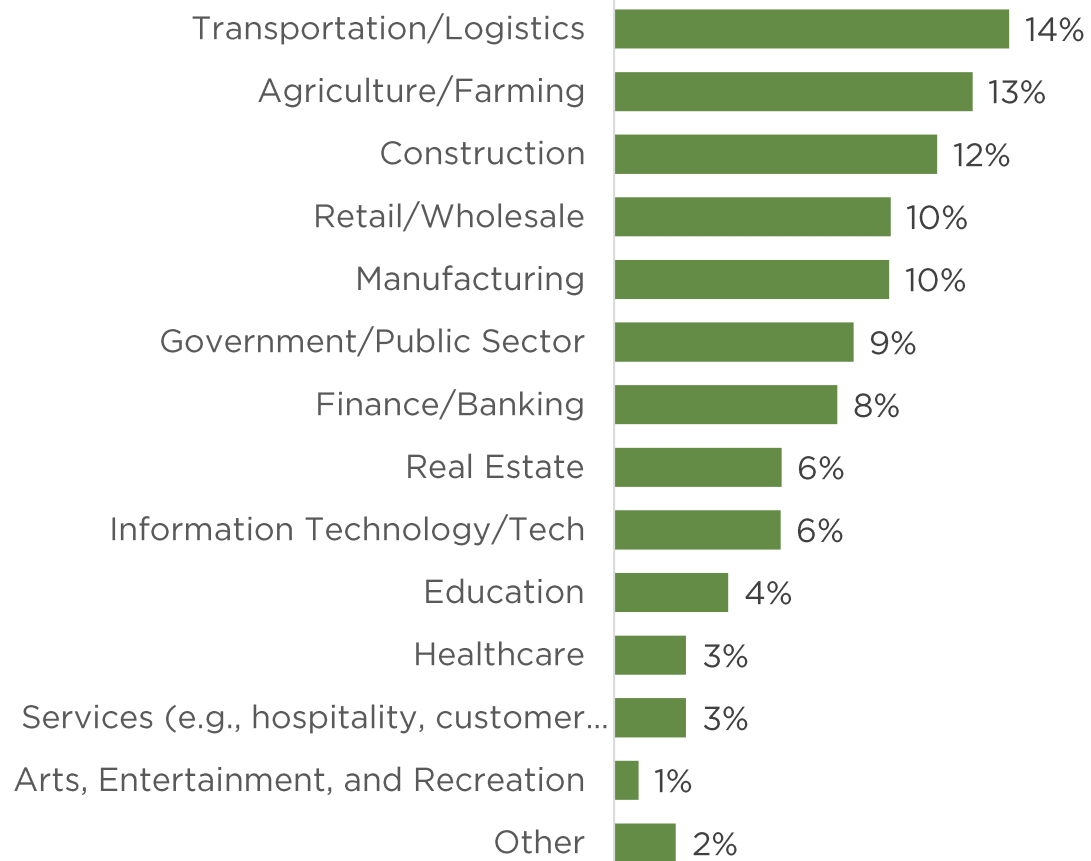
Education level



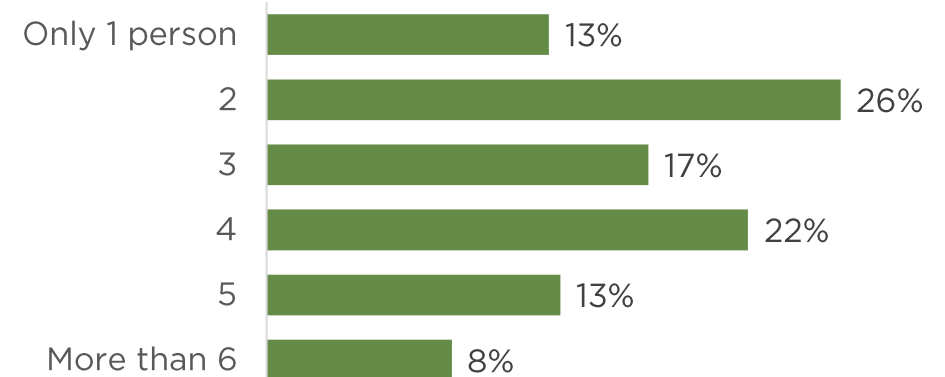
Note: Percentages reflect the share of IVS respondents and are weighted..

Respondent Demographics

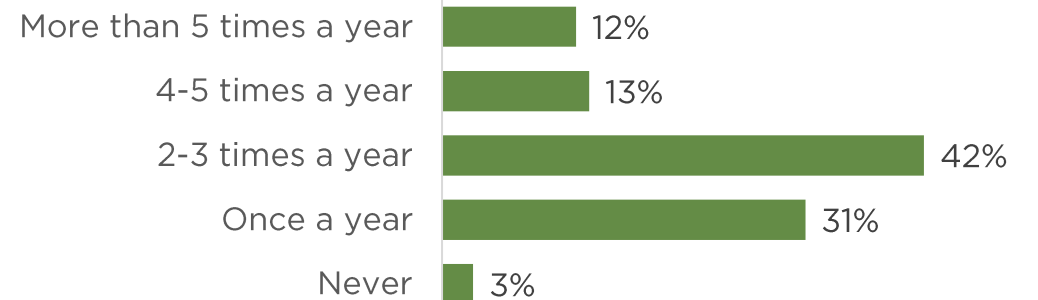
Industry Occupation



Number of Household Occupants



Frequency of Travel for Leisure

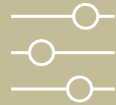


Note: Percentages reflect the share of IVS respondents and are weighted..

Report Structure



Visitor Profile



Visitor
Characteristics
& Preferences



Information &
Decision Making



Visitor Spending
& Impact

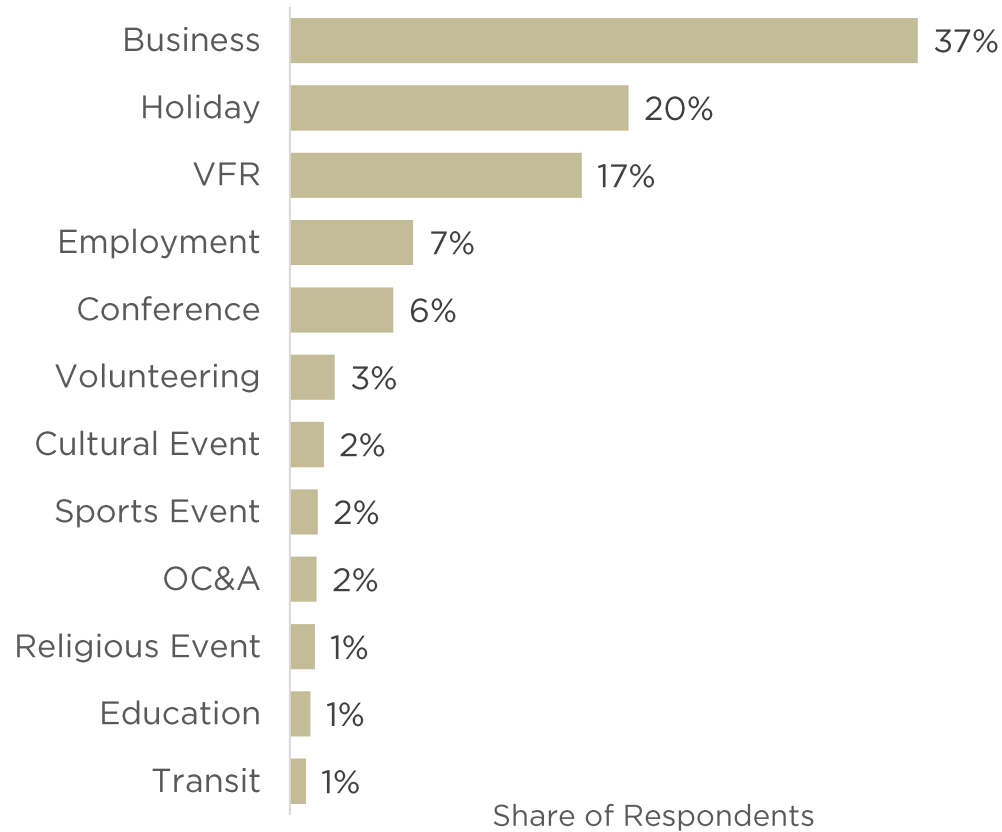


Visitor
Satisfaction

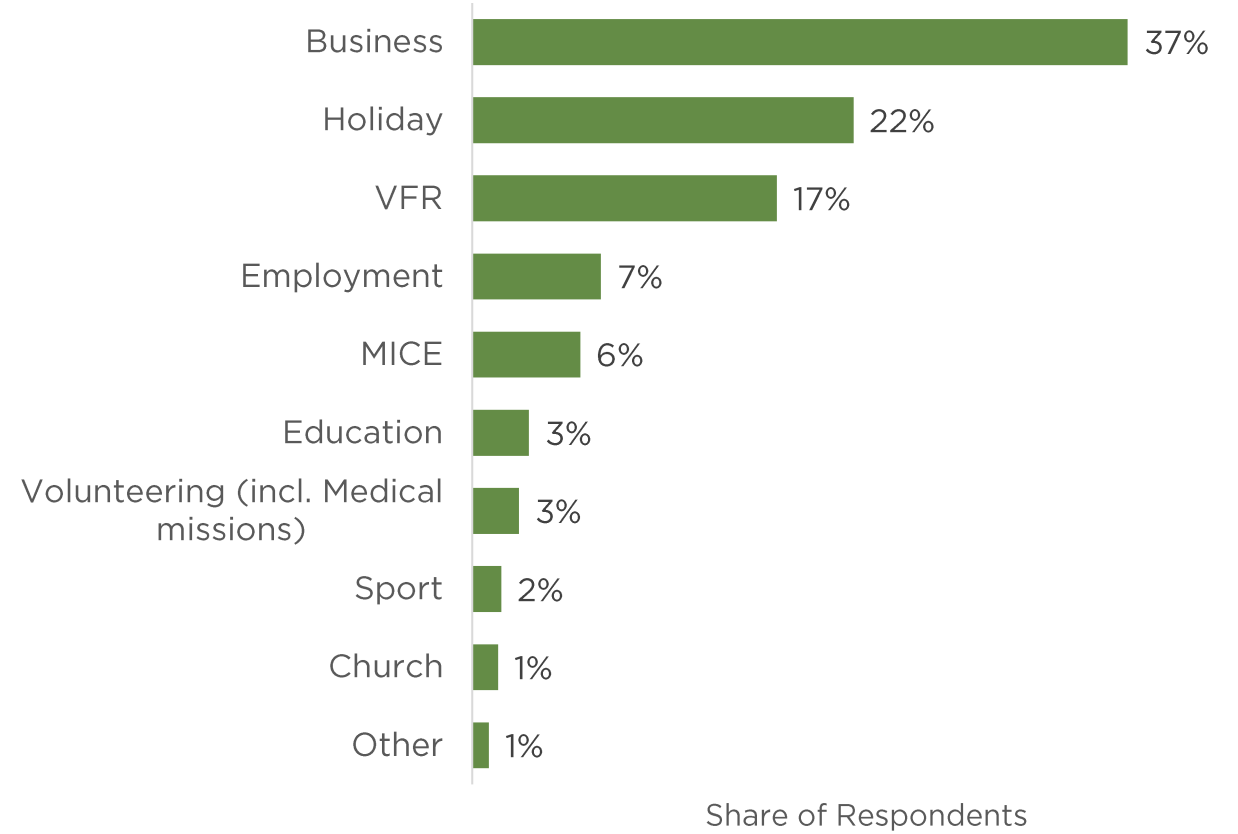
Purpose of Visit

Q What was the main purpose of your visit?

Survey Categories



Merged Categories (to align with PNG Arrival POV Categories)



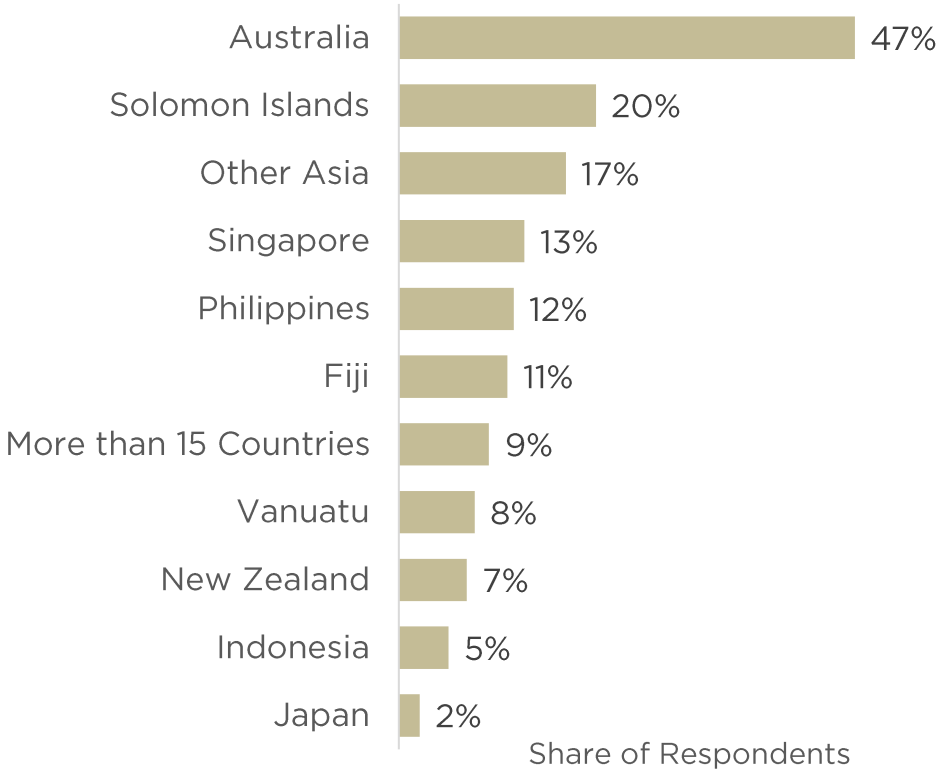
Note: Due to rounding, total may not sum to 100%

1. VFR stands for Visiting Friends and Relatives

2. To ensure alignment with PNG Arrival Purpose of Visit (POV) Categories: "OC&A" ("Ocean Cruise and Adventures") is merged with "Holiday" | "Religious event" is reclassified as 'Church' | 'Medical' is incorporated into 'Volunteering' to capture medical missions | "Cultural event" is merged with "Education" | "Transit" is merged with "Other"

Bigger Trip

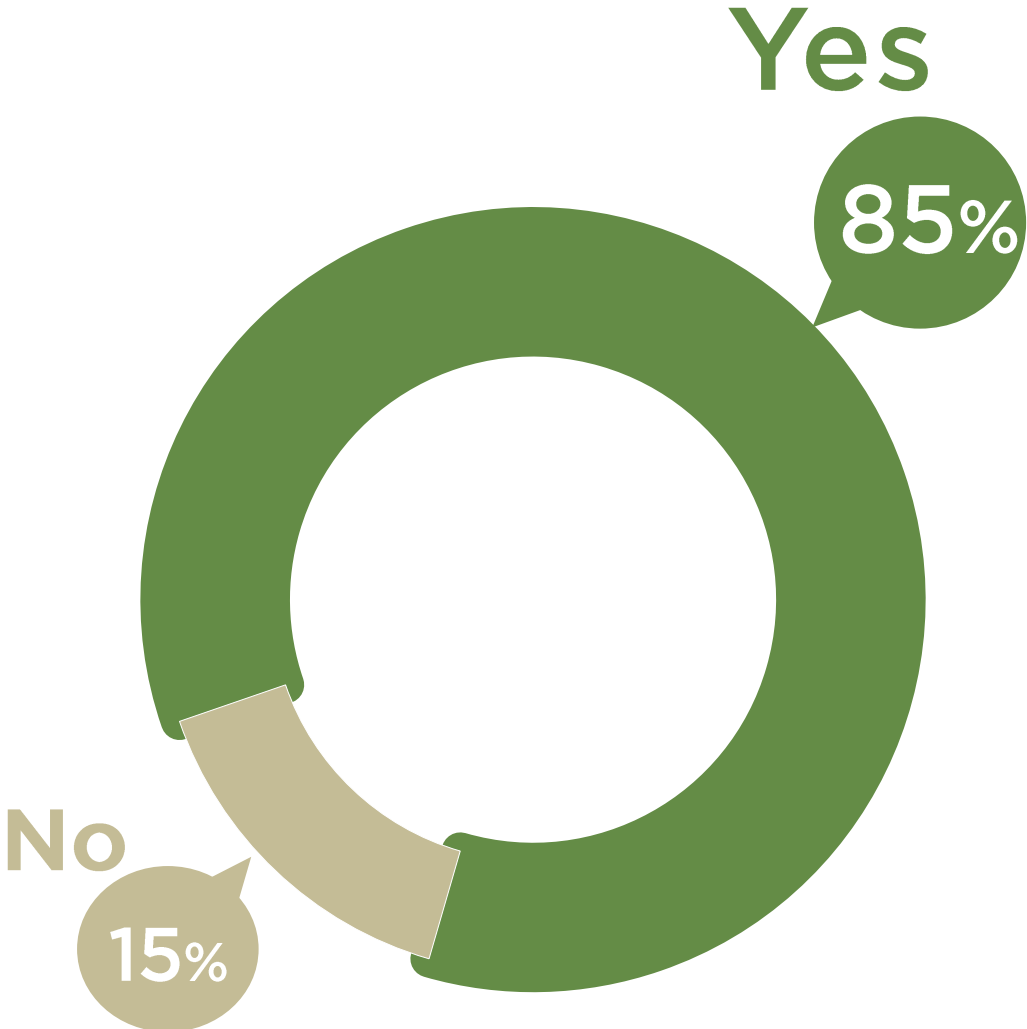
Other Countries Visited On The Same Trip



As part of a bigger trip, 47% of respondents also visited Australia, with 64% visiting Singapore, Solomon Islands, Philippines, Fiji and Vanuatu. 17% visited multiple countries in Asia with 9% having visited more than 15 countries prior to visiting PNG.

Note: Total valid responses for this question N=741.

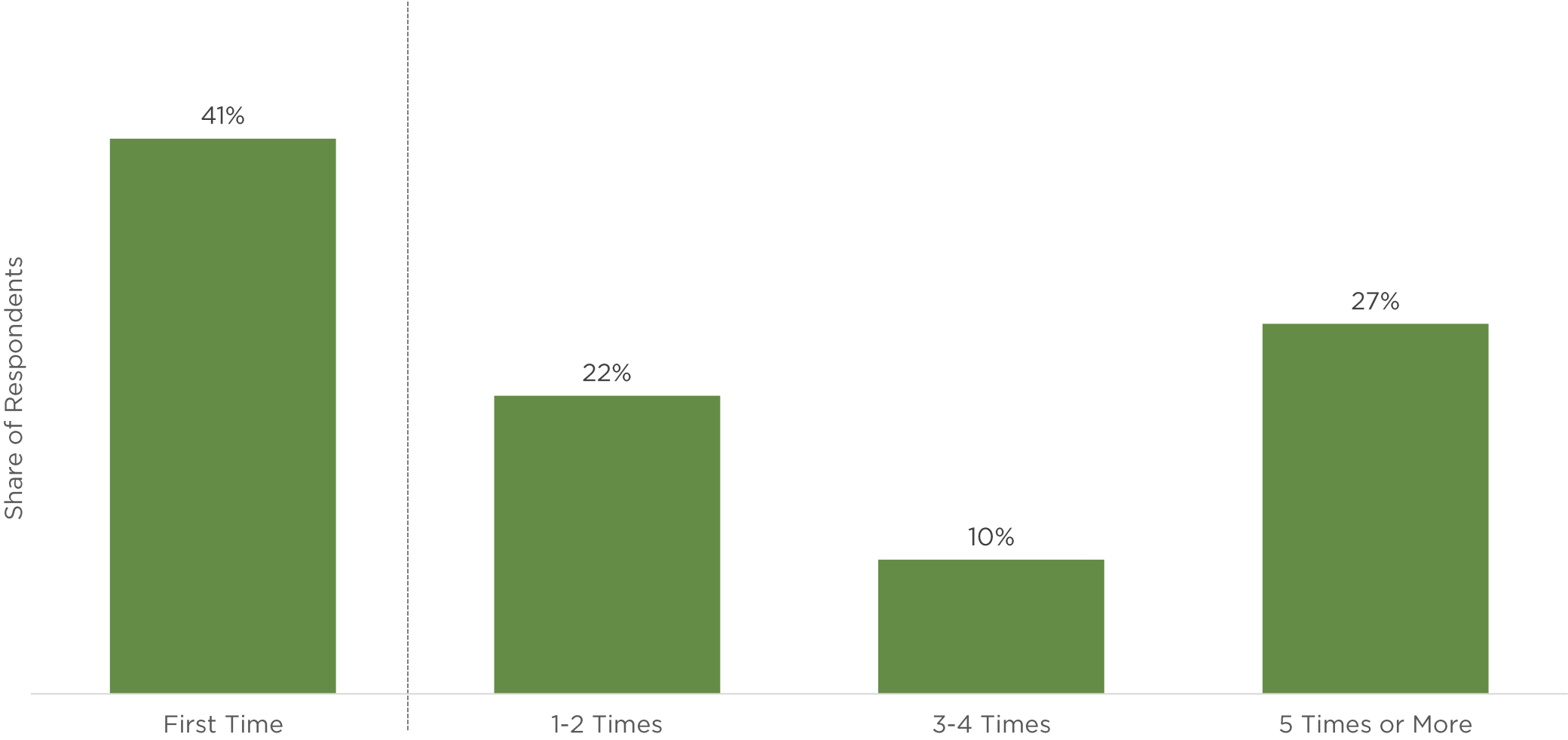
Q Was PNG the only country you visited on this trip?



Note: Total valid responses for this question N=4,739.

Previous Visits

Q How many other times have you been to PNG, not including this trip?

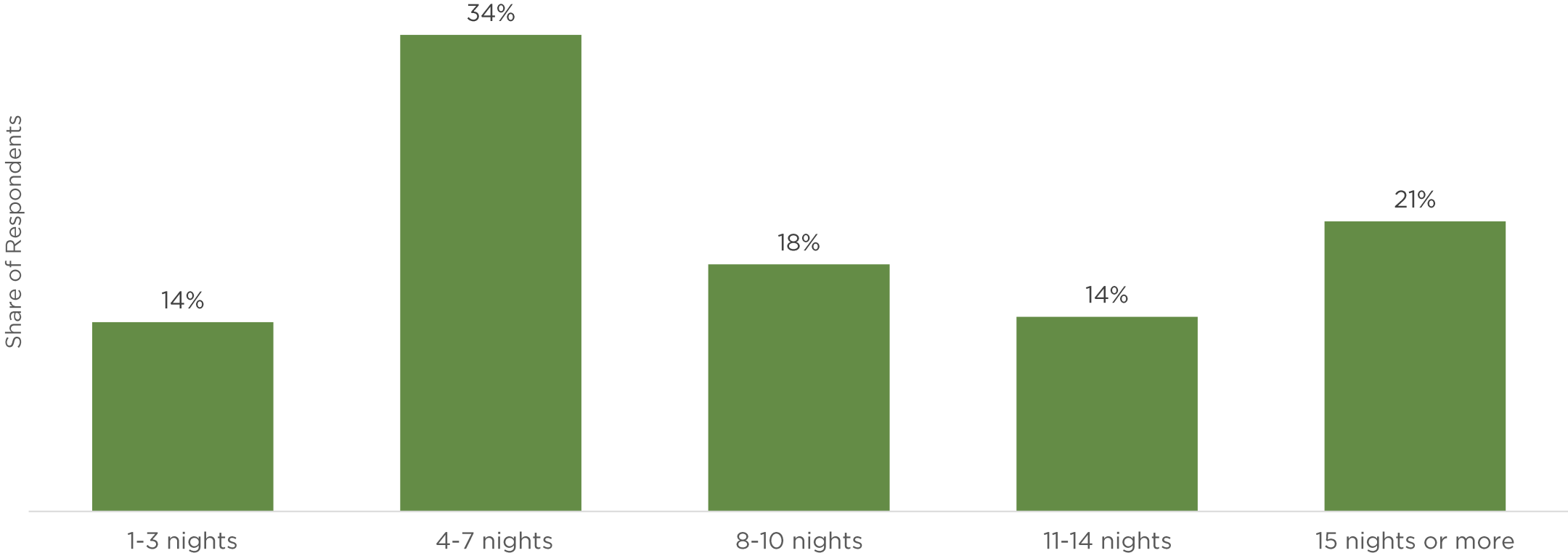


Note: Due to rounding, total does not sum to 100%.

Length of Stay (nights)

Q How many nights did you spend in PNG?

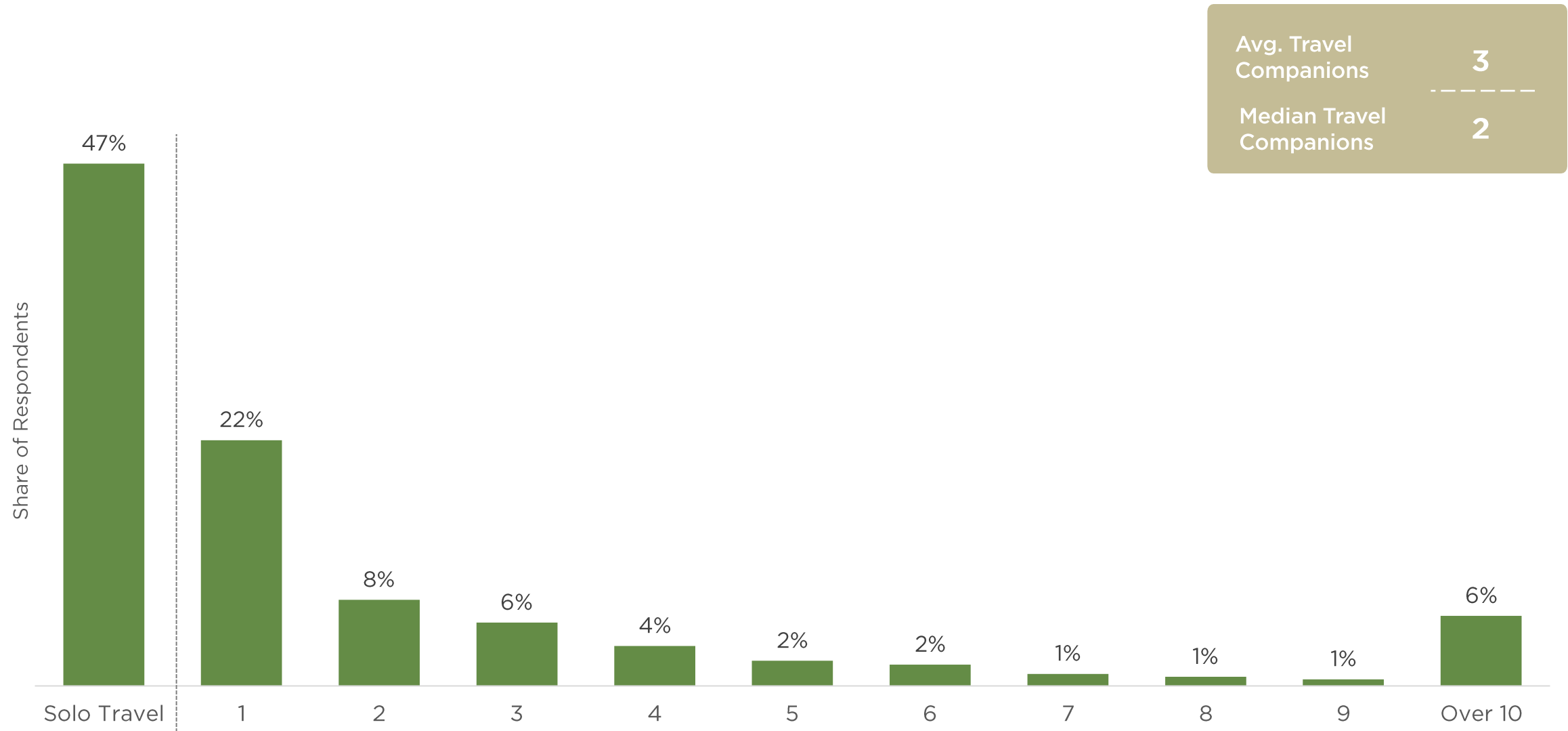
Avg. Length of Stay
10 nights



Note: Stays of 30 nights or more were excluded to focus on short-term visits. A 29-night threshold was set to include full-month stays, even in February.

Travel Group Size

Q How many people accompanied you on this trip?



Note: The distribution shown includes solo travellers (0 companions) to present the full range of travel party sizes. However, the summary statistics are calculated excluding solo travellers and relate only to respondents travelling with at least one other person. Among group travellers, the median number of accompanying persons is 2, indicating the typical travel party size. The mean (3) is higher due to the influence of a small number of large travel groups and should not be interpreted as the usual group size.

Travel Group Type

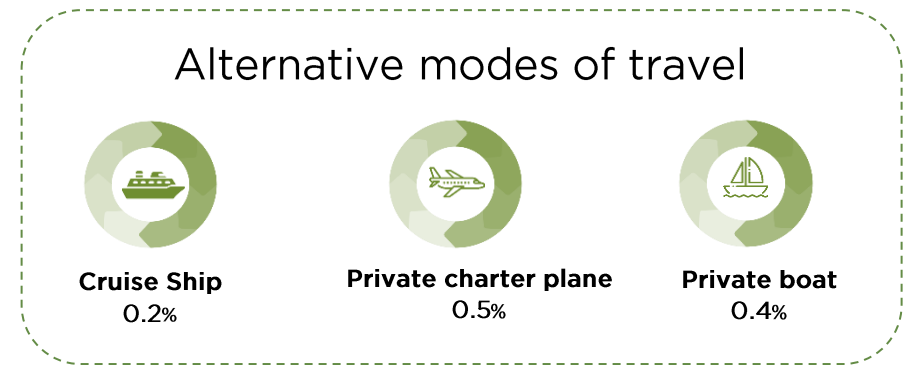
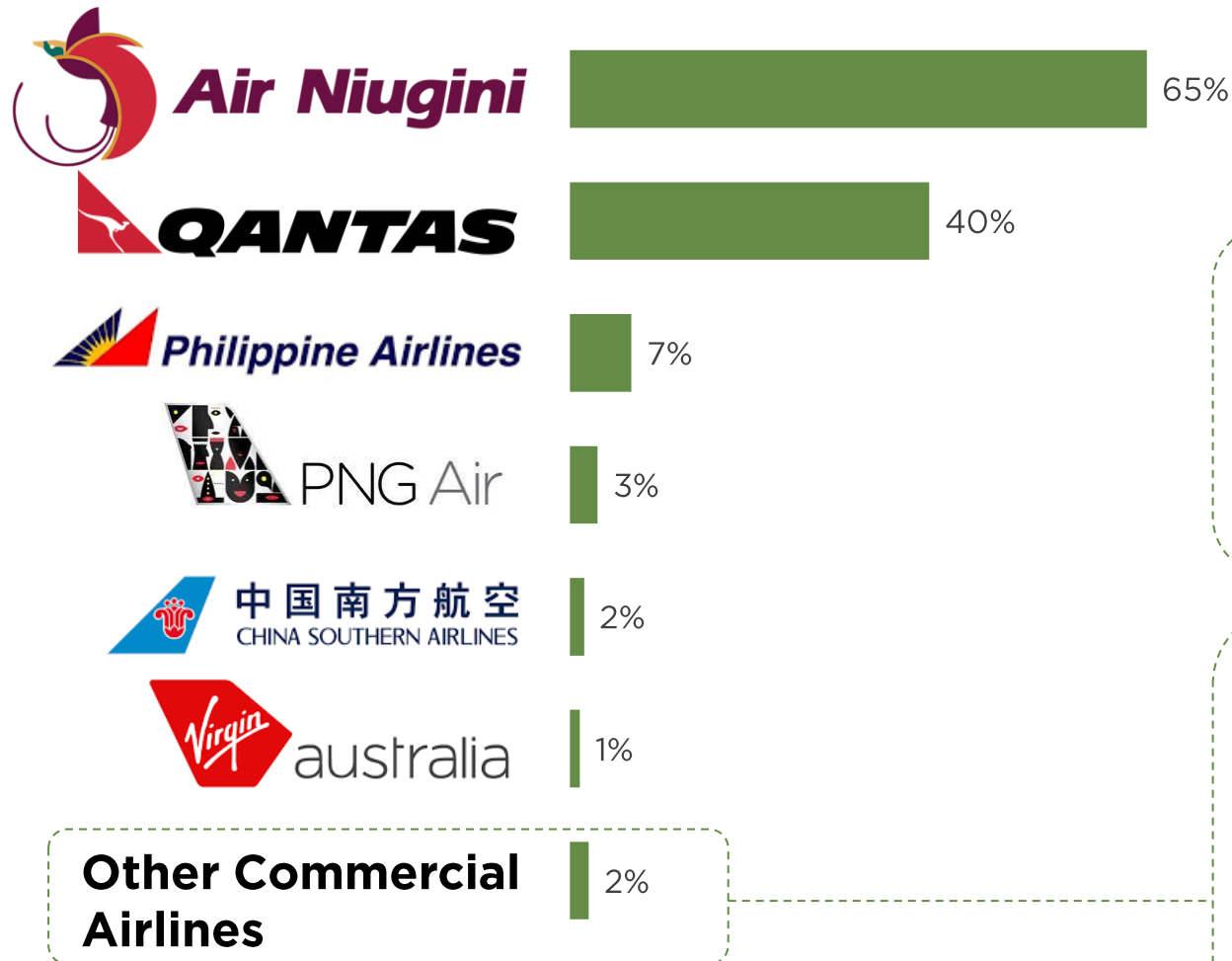
Q Who were your travelling companions?



Note: Percentages reflect the share of IVS respondents and are weighted. Multiple responses may total over 100%. Organised group includes church, school, sports, etc.

Airlines Used for Travel

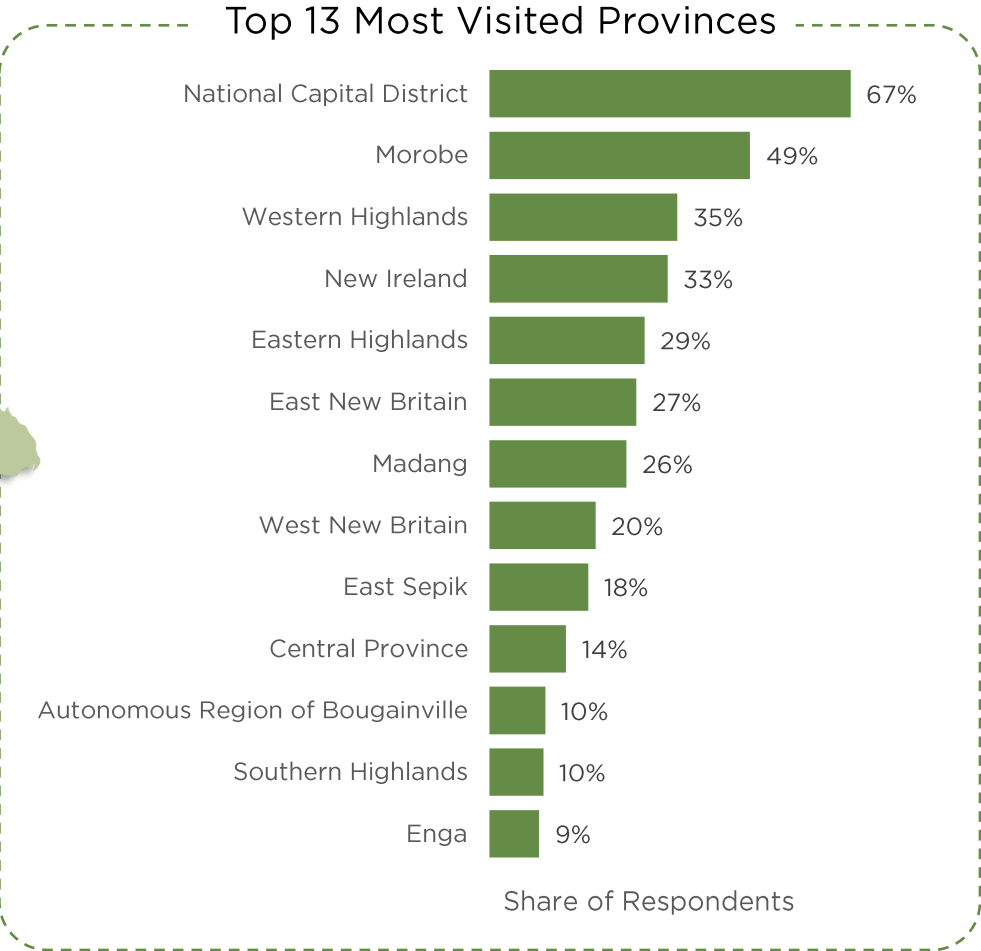
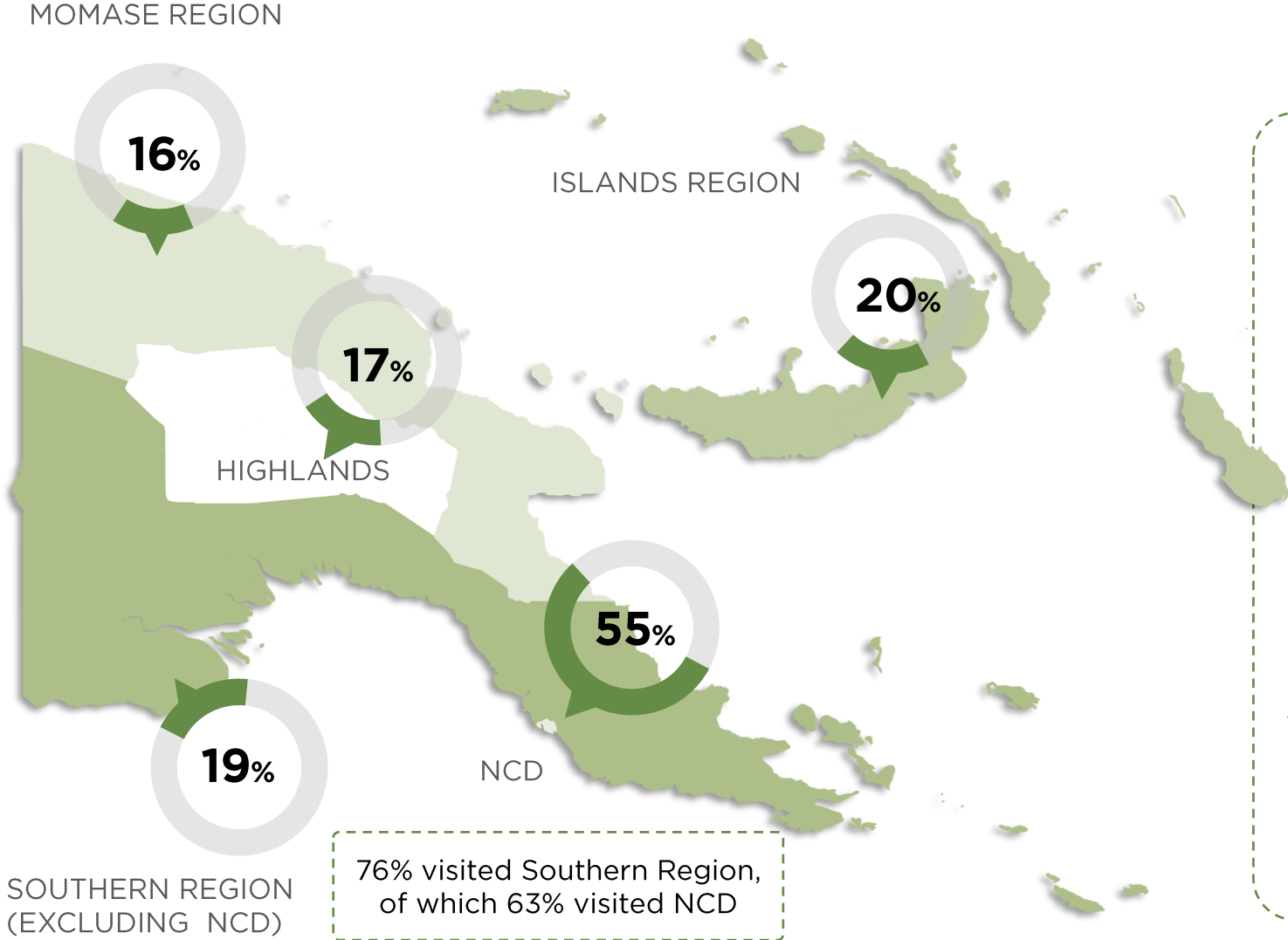
Q How did you travel to PNG?



Note:
 1. Multiple responses, therefore total does not add up to 100%
 2. "Other" modes of travel include Military Defence Aircraft, Medical Ship etc.

Top Region and Provinces Visited

Q Which region(s) did you visit?



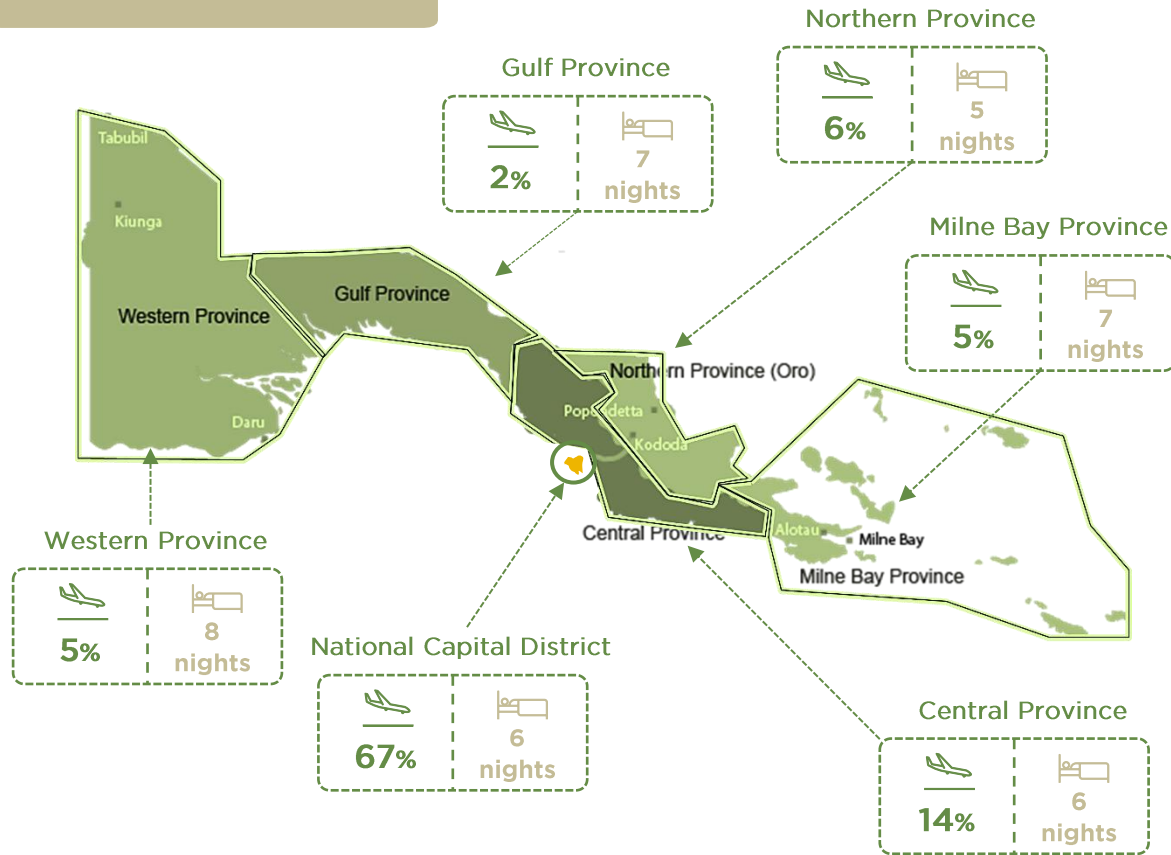
Note: Visitors can visit and stay in more than one region and province, so both diagrams use multiple response analysis. The first diagram shows the share of all visitors who visited each region (totals exceed 100%). The second shows the distribution of visits across provinces within each region (e.g., among visitors to the Southern Region, 85% visited NCD). NCD = National Capital District (Port Moresby); ARB = Autonomous Region of Bougainville.

Provinces Visited - Avg. Length of Stay

Q How many nights did you spend in each province?

Southern

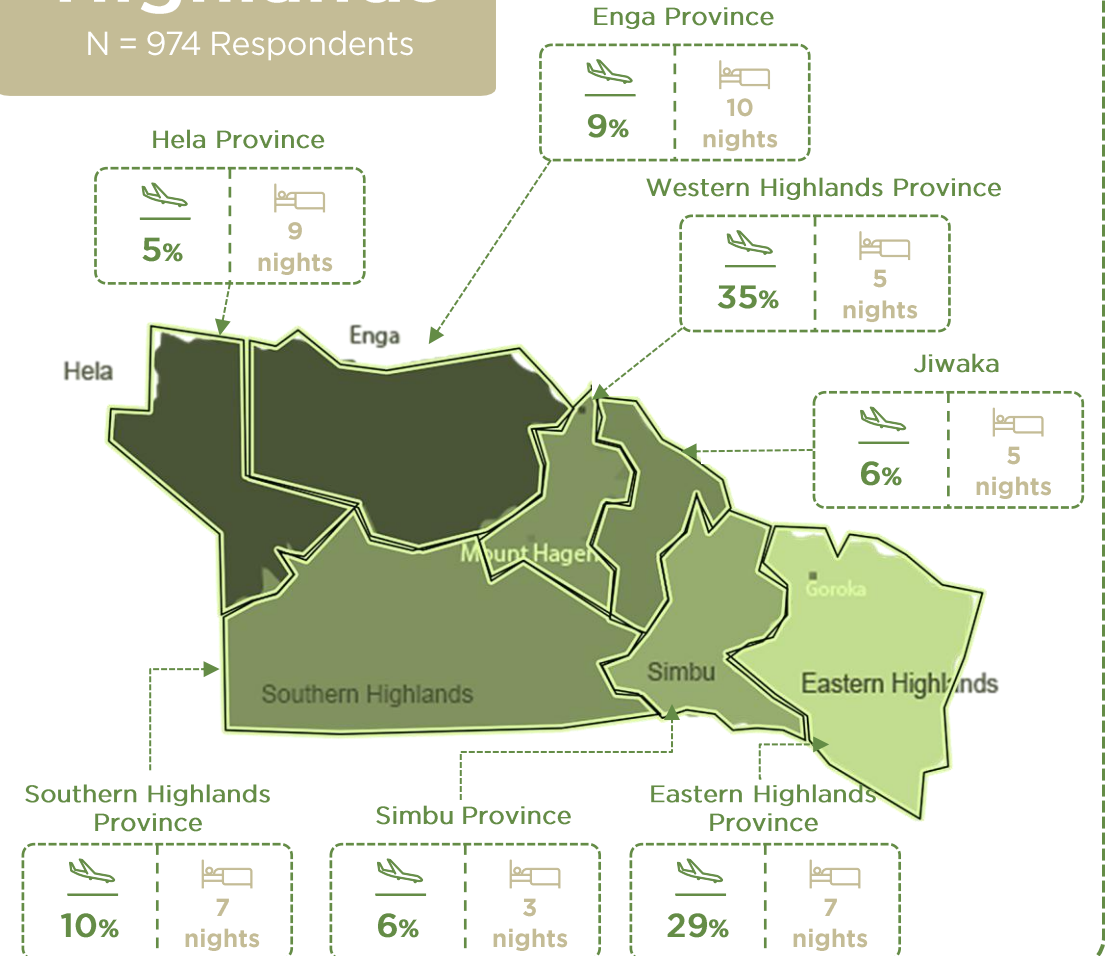
N = 3,928 Respondents



Overall Avg. Length of Stay for Southern Region = 6 nights

Highlands

N = 974 Respondents



Overall Avg. Length of Stay for Highlands Region = 7 nights

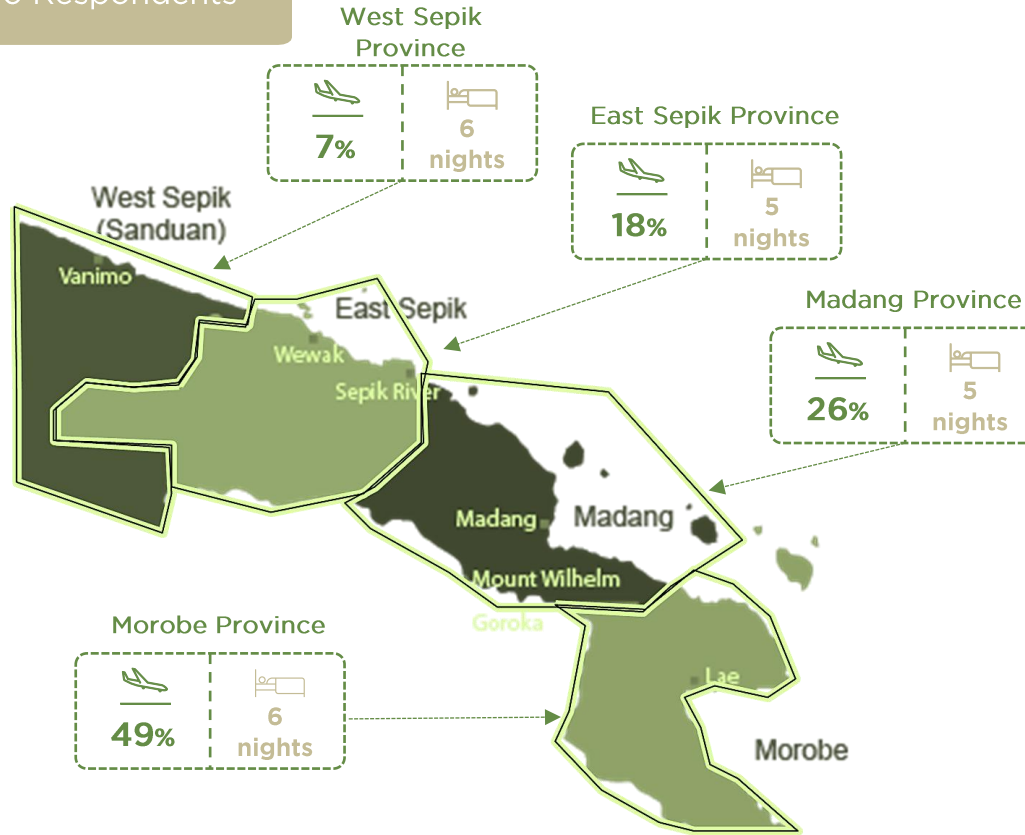
Note: Multiple responses, therefore total does not add up to 100%. Stays of 30 nights or more were excluded to focus on short-term visits. A 29-night threshold was set to include full-month stays, even in February.

Provinces Visited - Avg. Length of Stay

Q How many nights did you spend in each province?

Momase

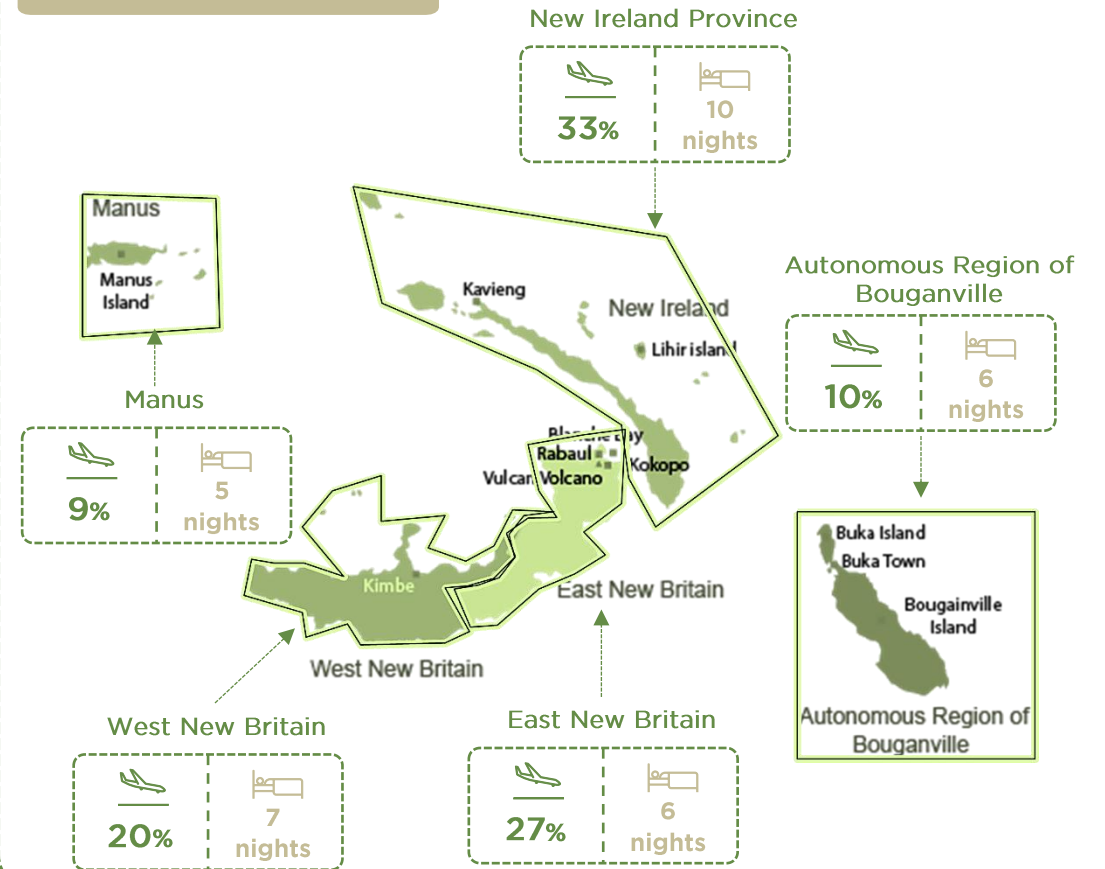
N = 830 Respondents



Overall Avg. Length of Stay for Momase Region = 6 nights

Islands

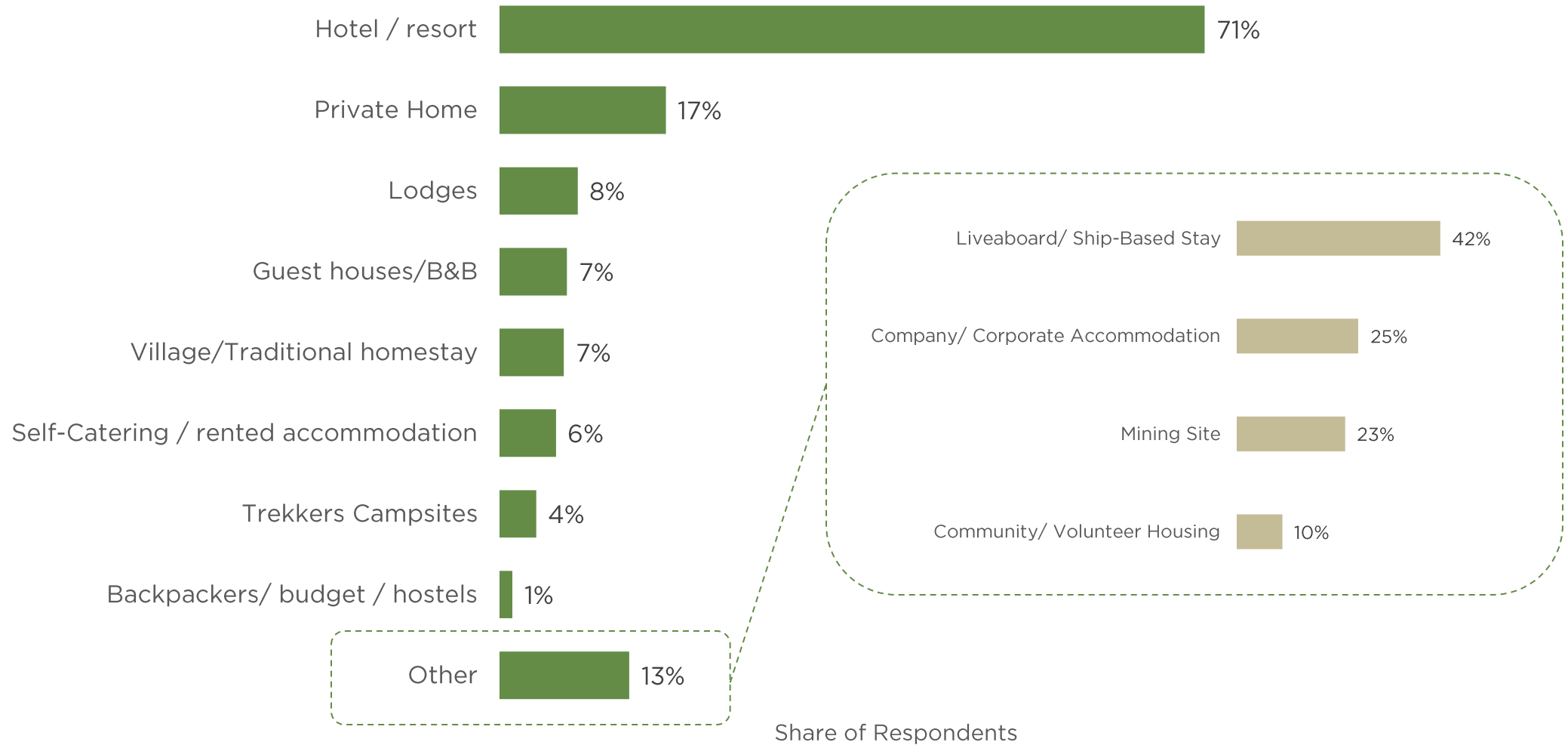
N = 1,111 Respondents



Overall Avg. Length of Stay for Islands Region = 7 nights

Type of Accommodation Stayed

Q What type(s) of accommodation did you stay in?

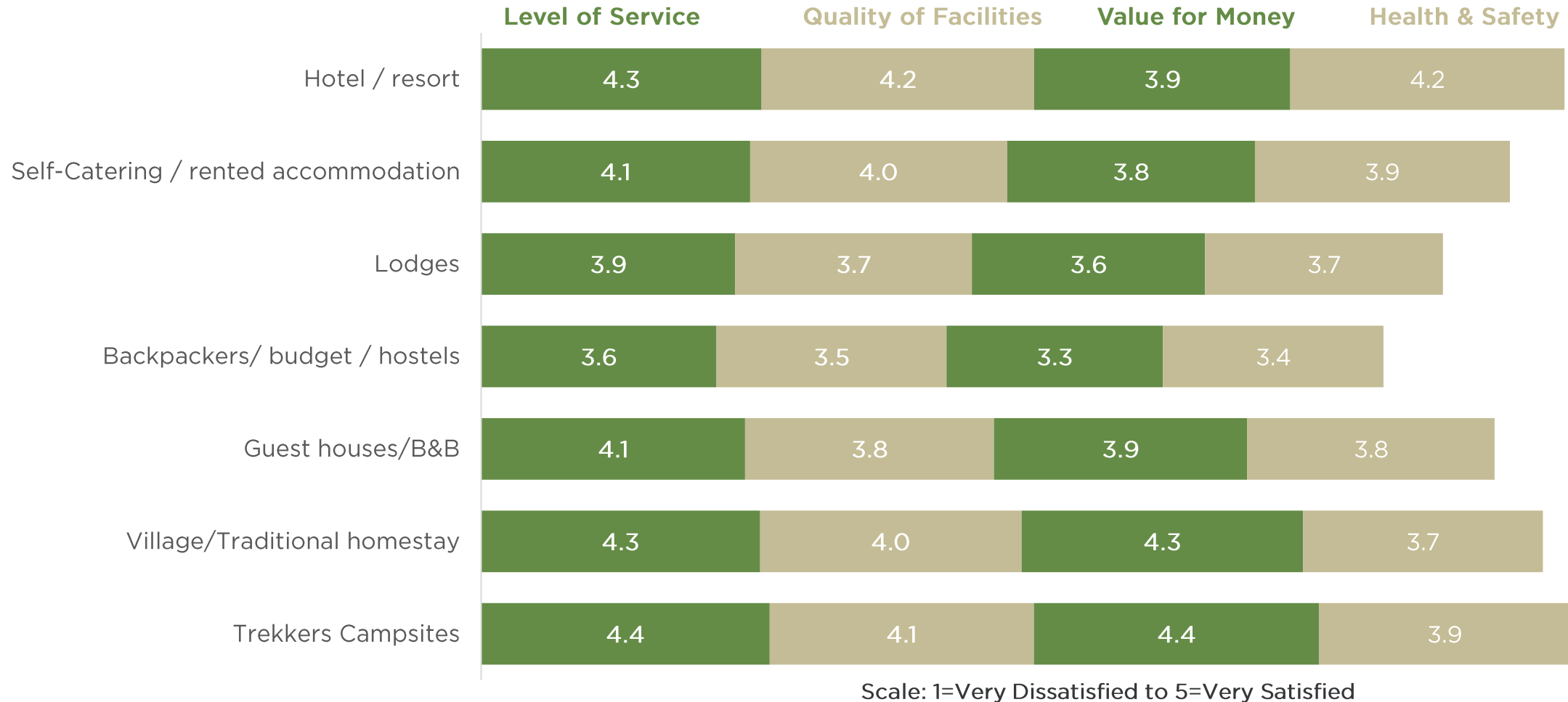


Share of Respondents

Note: Totals may not add up to 100% due to multiple responses. Respondents noted in 'Others' non-standard accommodation types such as mining campsites and liveaboard/ship-based stays, that are mostly sponsored by third party. Respondents may use multiple accommodation types in a single trip.

Accommodation Satisfaction

Q How satisfied are you with the following aspects of the accommodation you stayed in?



Note: Score is the average of all the scores to each stated aspect of the accommodation.

Report Structure



Visitor Profile



Visitor
Characteristics
& Preferences



Information &
Decision Making



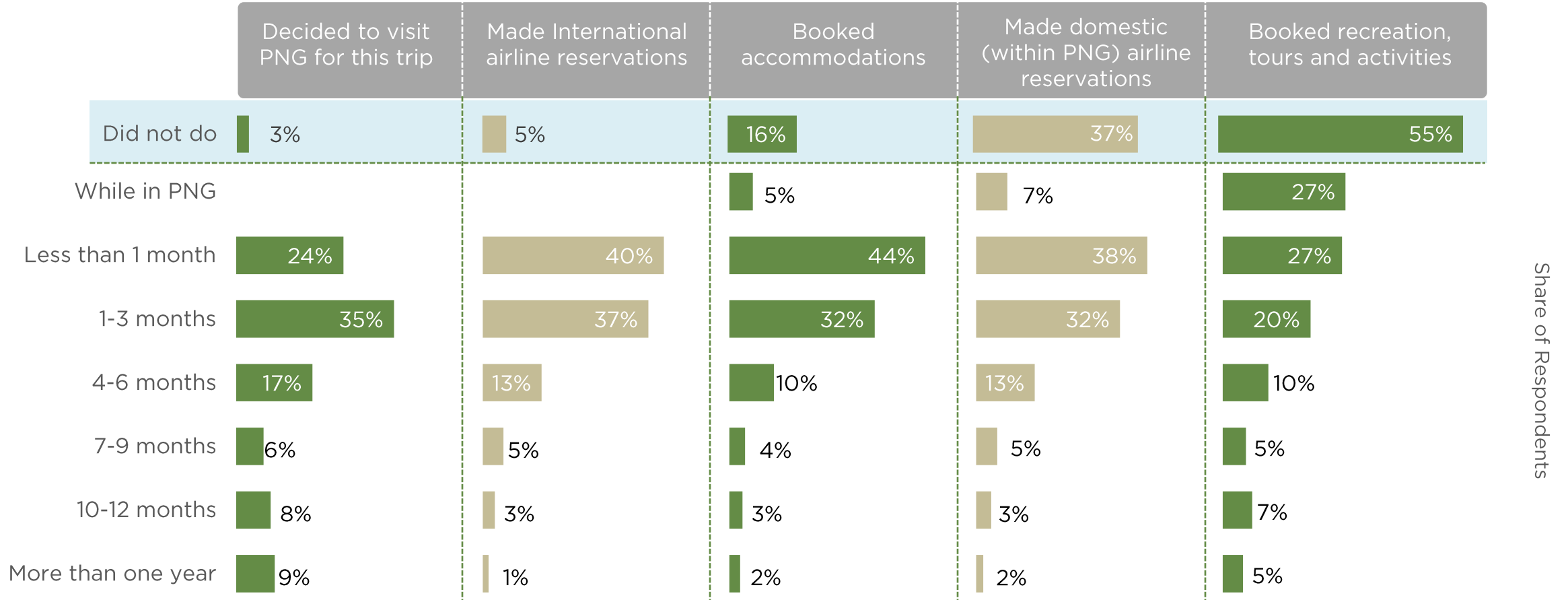
Visitor Spending
& Impact



Visitor
Satisfaction

Trip Planning and Booking Window

Q When did you start planning and making the below arrangements for your trip to PNG?



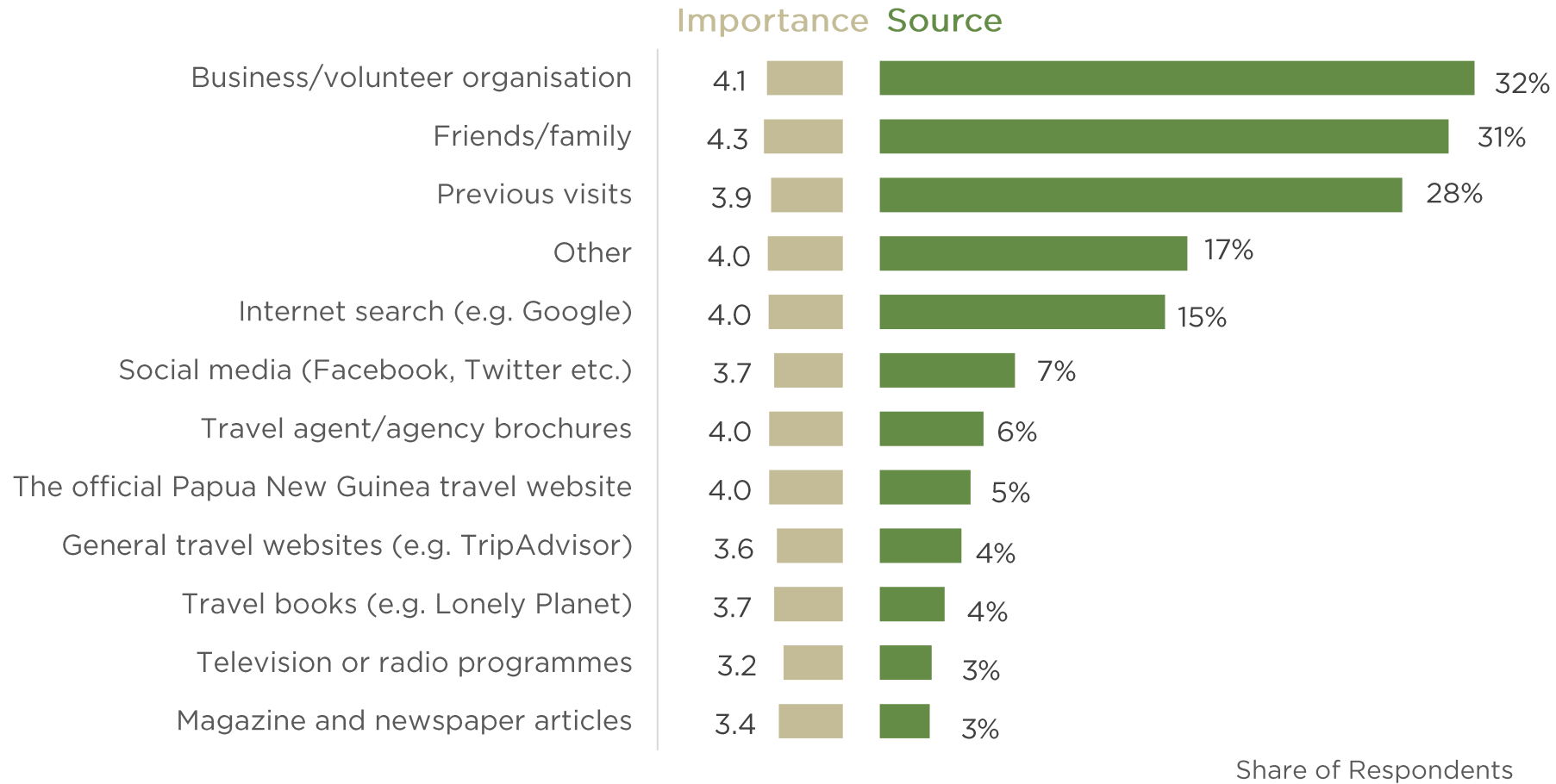
Note: The "Did not do" category was overwhelmingly predominant, making other categories appear relatively small. To clarify, frequency analysis was conducted twice: once including and once excluding this category. The second analysis, excluding the "Did not do" category, ensures that the remaining data totals add up to 100%, offering a clearer view of the proportions of the other categories.

Source of Information

Scale: 1=extremely unimportant to 5=extremely important

Q How did you find out about PNG as a destination?

Q How important was the information source?

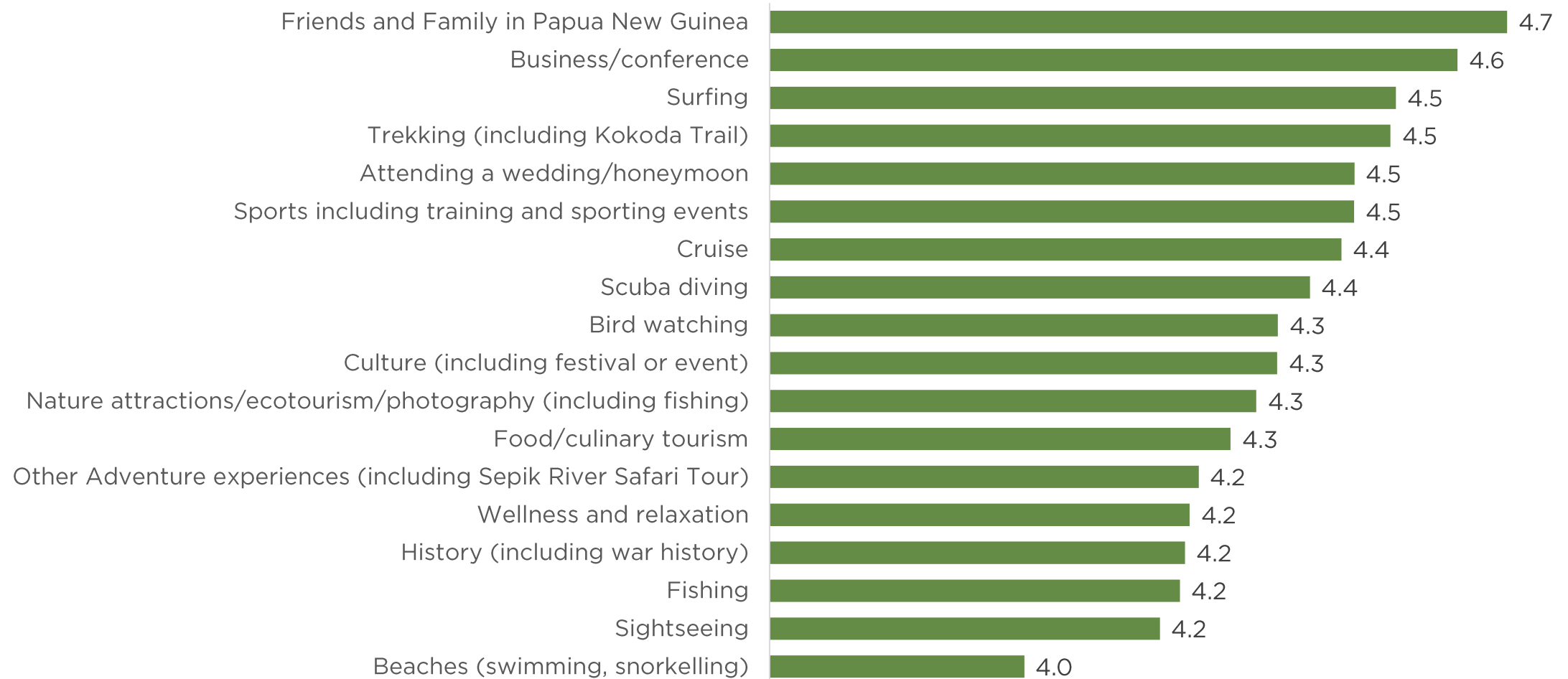


Note: Totals may not add up to 100% due to multiple responses. Ratings are shown with up to 1 decimal place to accurately reflect differences. Rounding could obscure important variations.

Influential Factors in Choosing PNG

Scale: 3=Some influence to 5=very influential

Q How influential were the following factors?



Note: Ratings are shown with up to 1 decimal place to accurately reflect differences. Rounding could obscure important variations.

Methods of Travel Bookings

Q How did you purchase your travel to PNG?



Share of Respondents

Note: Totals may not add up to 100% due to multiple responses.

Report Structure



Visitor Profile



Visitor
Characteristics
& Preferences



Information &
Decision Making



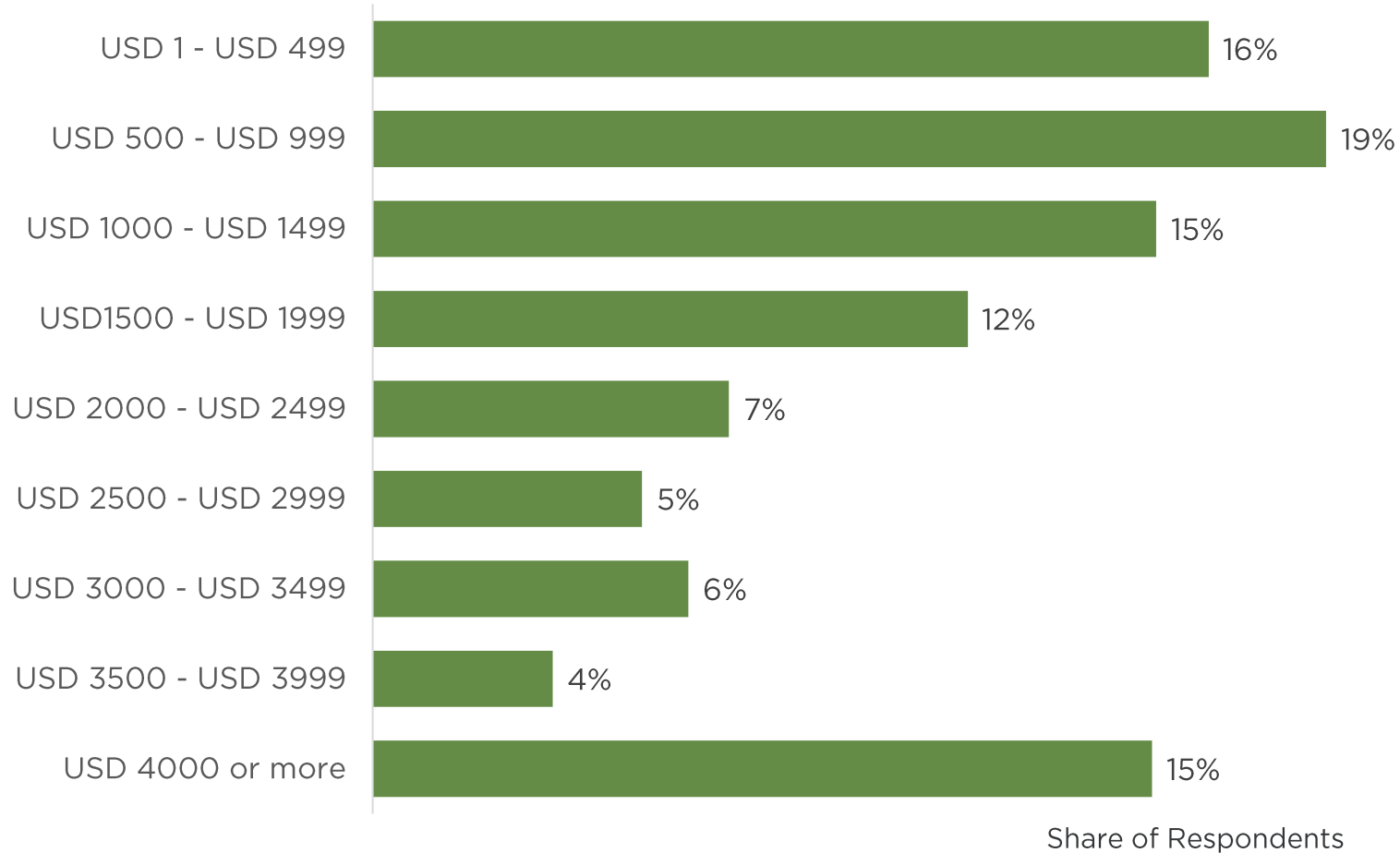
Visitor Spending
& Impact



Visitor
Satisfaction

Prepaid expenditure per person

Q How much did you pay prior to your arrival?



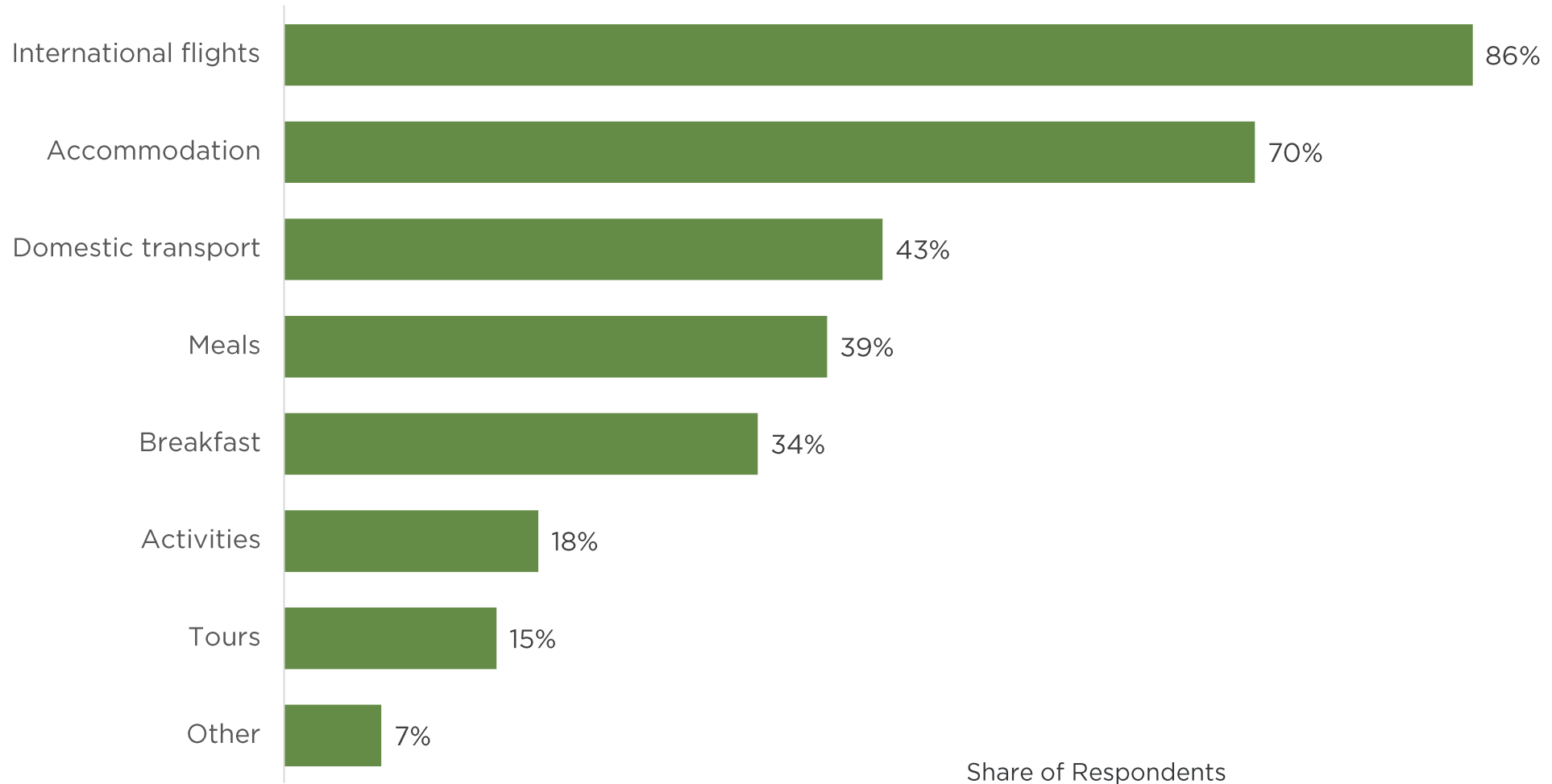
Avg. prepaid spend
USD 2,087

Avg. prepaid spend
PGK 8,561

Note: The average exchange rate to PGK and USD for January - December 2025 was applied.

Prepaid items

Q What did your prepaid expenditure include?



Share of Respondents

Note: Totals may not add up to 100% due to multiple responses. Respondents may not necessarily prepay for all the listed items and may not necessarily know the cost breakdown of their prepaid packages

In-country Spend Per Person Per Day While in PNG

	Local Spend Per Person Per Day		
	<u>% of sector</u>	<u>USD</u>	<u>PGK</u>
Accommodation	42	42	176
Food & Beverage	21	21	85
Domestic Travel	7	7	31
Retail	1	1	10
Souvenir	2	2	26
Tour	3	3	14
Local Transport	5	5	19
Other	18	18	51
Internet & Service	1	1	4
TOTAL	100	100	416

Note: Total Economic Impact-Per Trip and Per Day are per-person expenditures and can be used to estimate the total economic impact, through extrapolating to the total number of visitor arrivals during the surveyed period.

Economic Impact - Per Person and Total

Visitor Expenditure Per Person & Total		
Average Spend Prior to arrival	USD	PGK
Per Person Per Trip	2,087	8,561
<i>Flowing into local economy rate</i>	<i>estimated 65%</i>	
Per Person Per Trip	1,356	5,565
Per Person per Day	136	559
<hr/>		
Average Local Spend		
<i>Length of Stay (nights)</i>	<i>mean 10 nights</i>	
Per Person Per Trip	995	4,141
Per Person per Day	100	416
<hr/>		
Total Economic Impact-Per Trip	2,352	9,706
Total Economic Impact-Per Day	236	975

Note: Total Economic Impact-Per Trip and Per Day are per-person expenditures and can be used to estimate the total economic impact, through extrapolating to the total number of visitor arrivals during the surveyed period.

JAN - DEC 2024

USD 309 MILLION

FROM 100,223 VISITORS



\$2,613

Prepaid per visitor per trip

\$136

In-country spend per day

65%

Flowing into local economy rate



x 10.2 nights
Average length of stay

\$1,699

Prepaid per visitor per trip

\$1,385

In-country spend per trip



\$3,084

 per visitor per trip

\$302

 per visitor per day

JAN - DEC 2025

USD 244 MILLION ▼

FROM 103,881 VISITORS ▲



\$2,087 ▼

Prepaid per visitor per trip

\$100 ▼

In-country spend per day

65%

Flowing into local economy rate



x 10 nights
Average length of stay

\$1,356 ▼

Prepaid per visitor per trip

\$995 ▼

In-country spend per trip



\$2,352

 per visitor per trip ▼

\$236

 per visitor per day ▼

Note: US dollars. All amounts are per person. Weight adjusted.

Report Structure



Visitor Profile



Visitor
Characteristics
& Preferences



Information &
Decision Making



Visitor Spending
& Impact

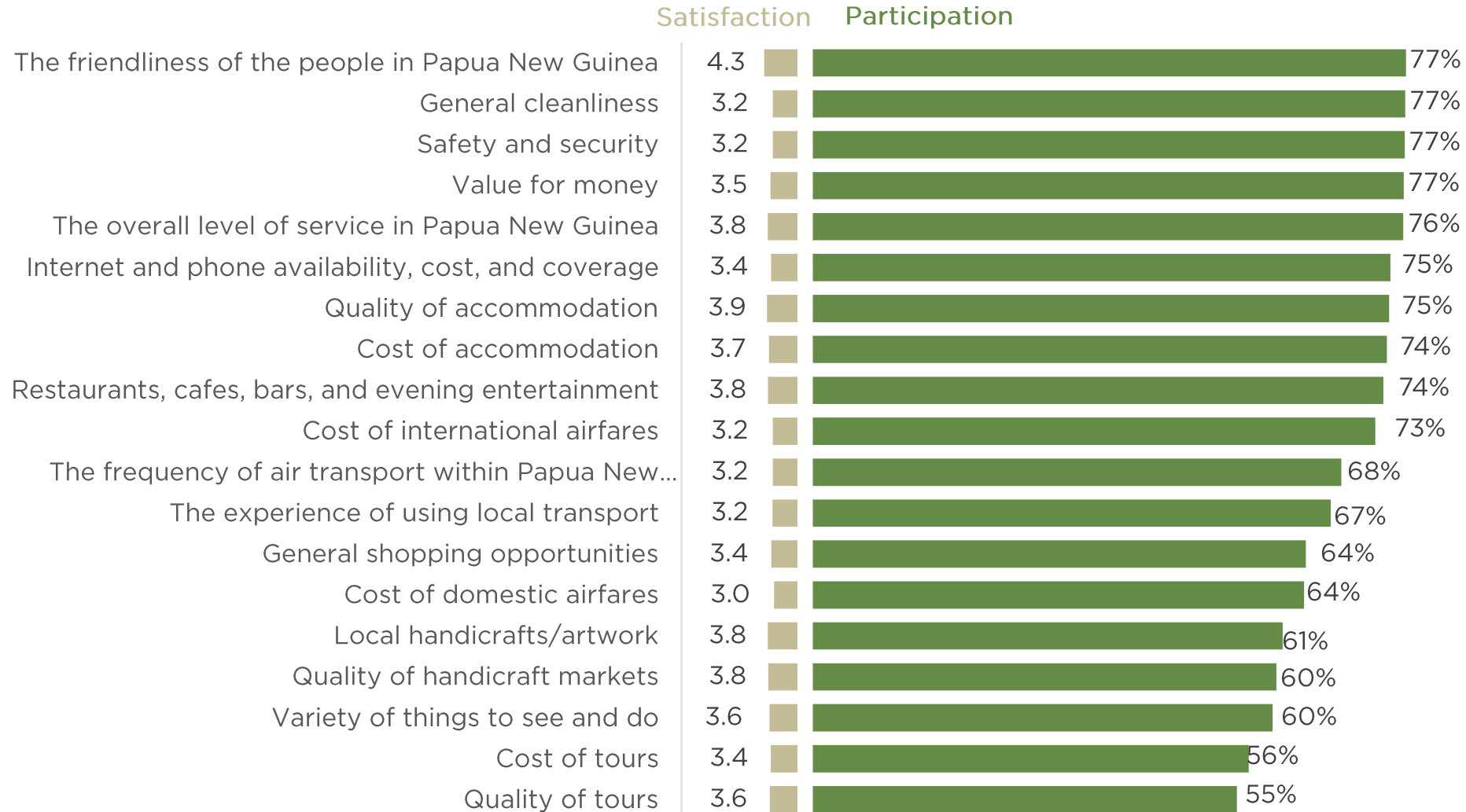


Visitor
Satisfaction

Satisfaction with Travel Experience

Scale: 1=very dissatisfied to 5=very satisfied

Q How satisfied were you with the following?

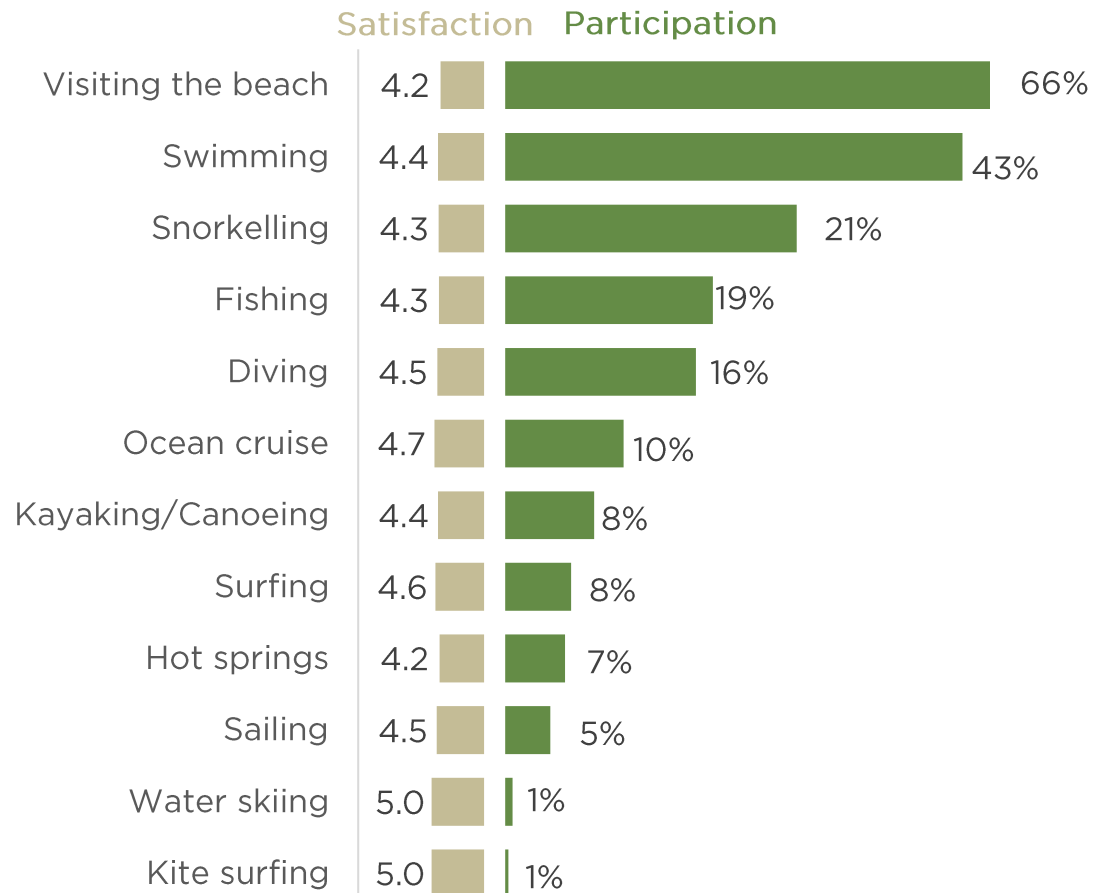


Note: Totals may not add up to 100% due to multiple responses.

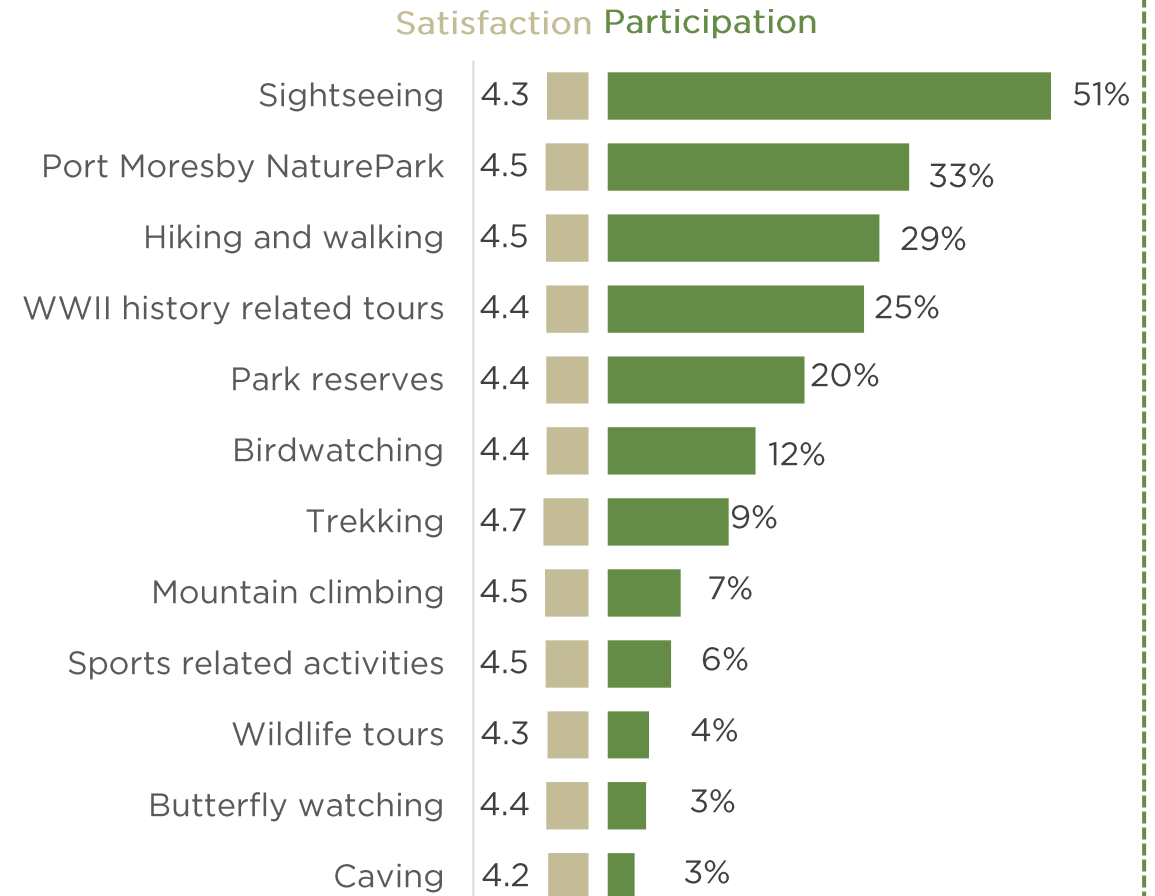
Satisfaction with Activities

Q How satisfied were you with the following?

Water-based activities



Land-based activities



Scale: 1=very dissatisfied to 5=very satisfied

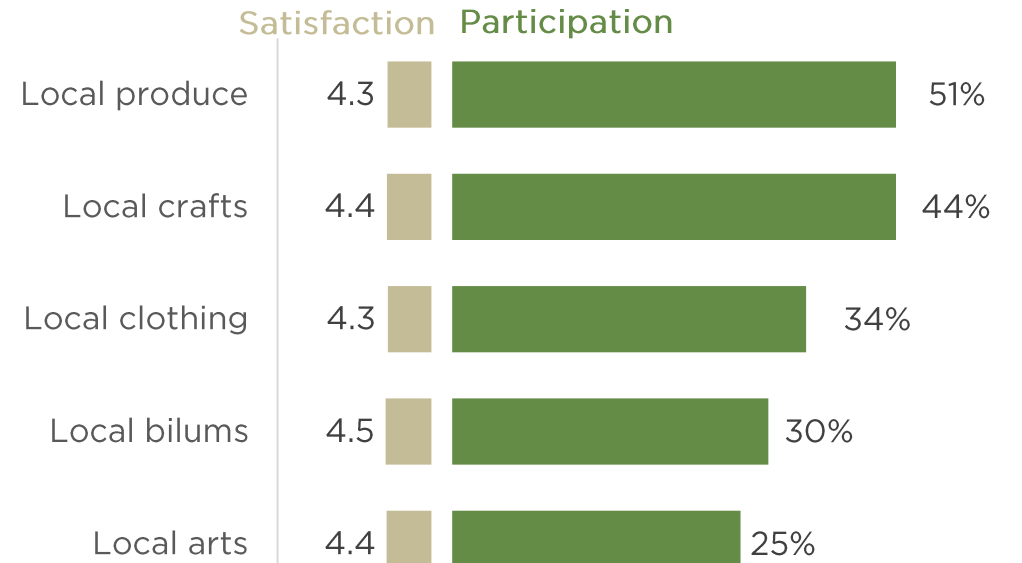
Satisfaction with Activities

Q How satisfied were you with the following?

Cultural activities



Shopping activities

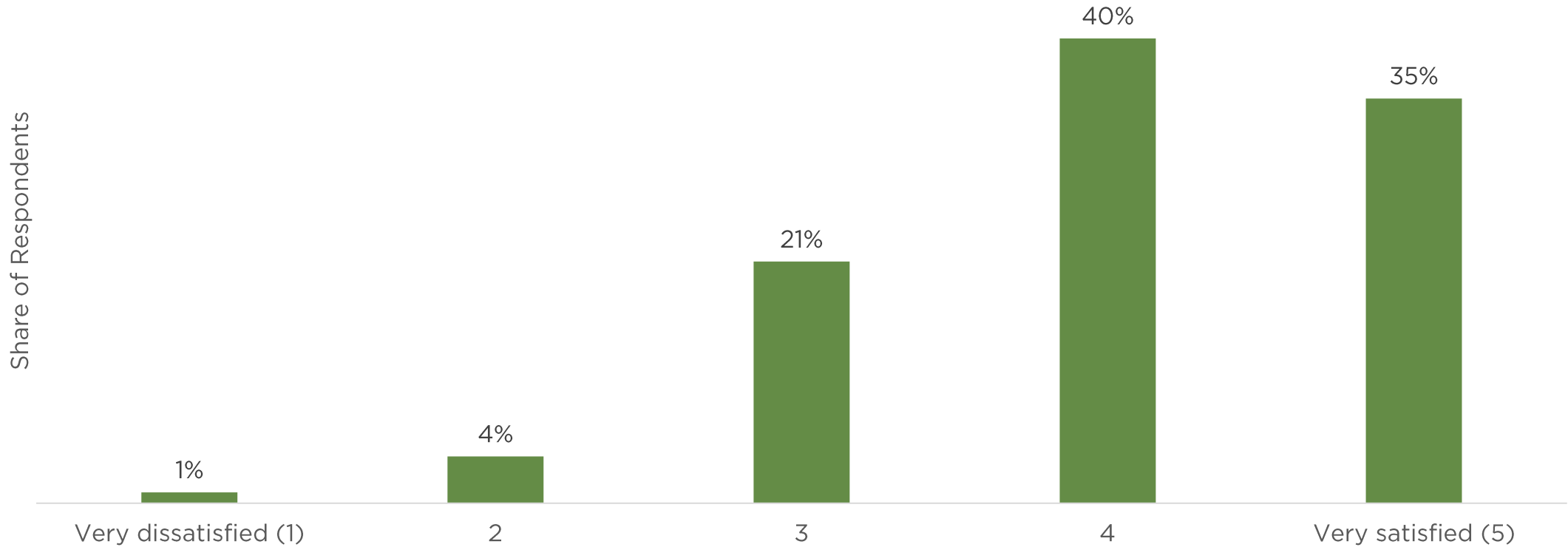


Scale: 1=very dissatisfied to 5=very satisfied

Visitor Overall Satisfaction

Q How satisfied were you with your overall experience of PNG?

Avg. Overall Satisfaction	4
Median Overall Satisfaction	4



Note: The mean overall satisfaction rating is 4, while the median rating is also 4. The median rating of 4 indicates that at least half of respondents reported high levels of overall satisfaction. Together, these results suggest a generally positive and evenly distributed satisfaction experience among respondents.

Most Appealing Aspects of PNG

Q What did you find most appealing about PNG?

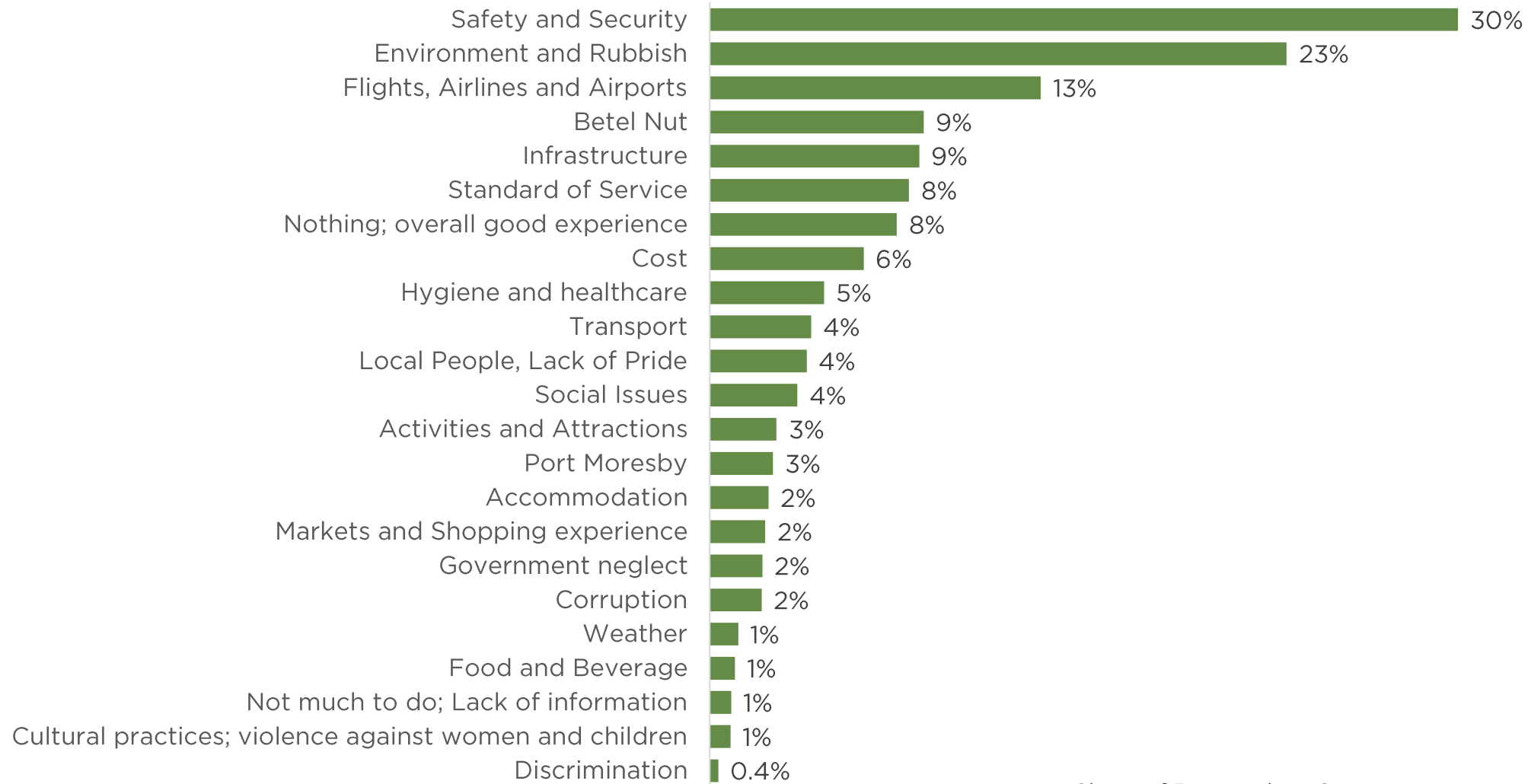


Share of Respondent Comments

Note: Total response N=2,972. Multiple response analysis, so total does not add up to 100%

Least Appealing Aspects of PNG

Q What did you find least appealing about PNG?

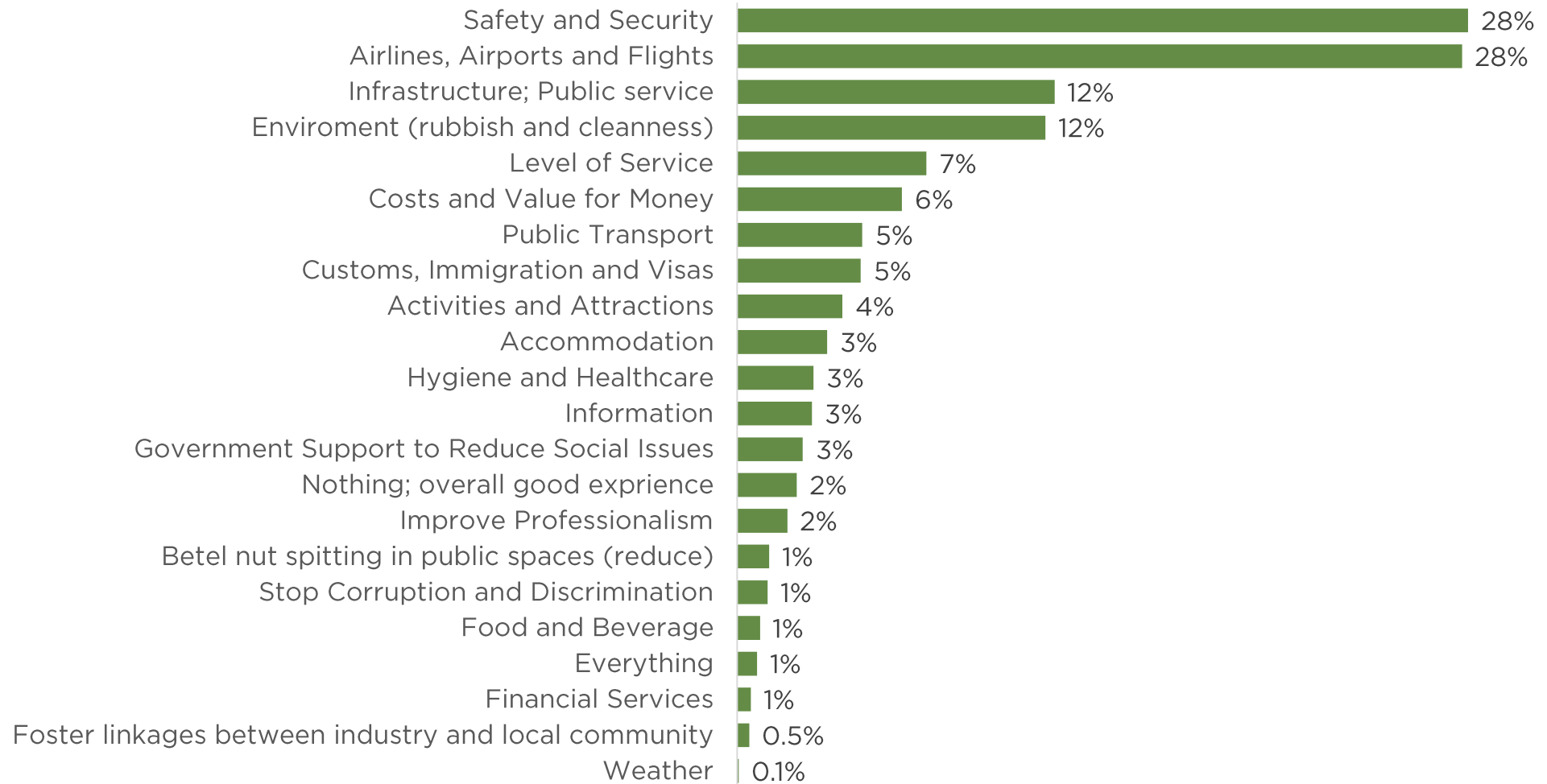


Share of Respondent Comments

Note: Total response N=2,844. Multiple response analysis, so total does not add up to 100%

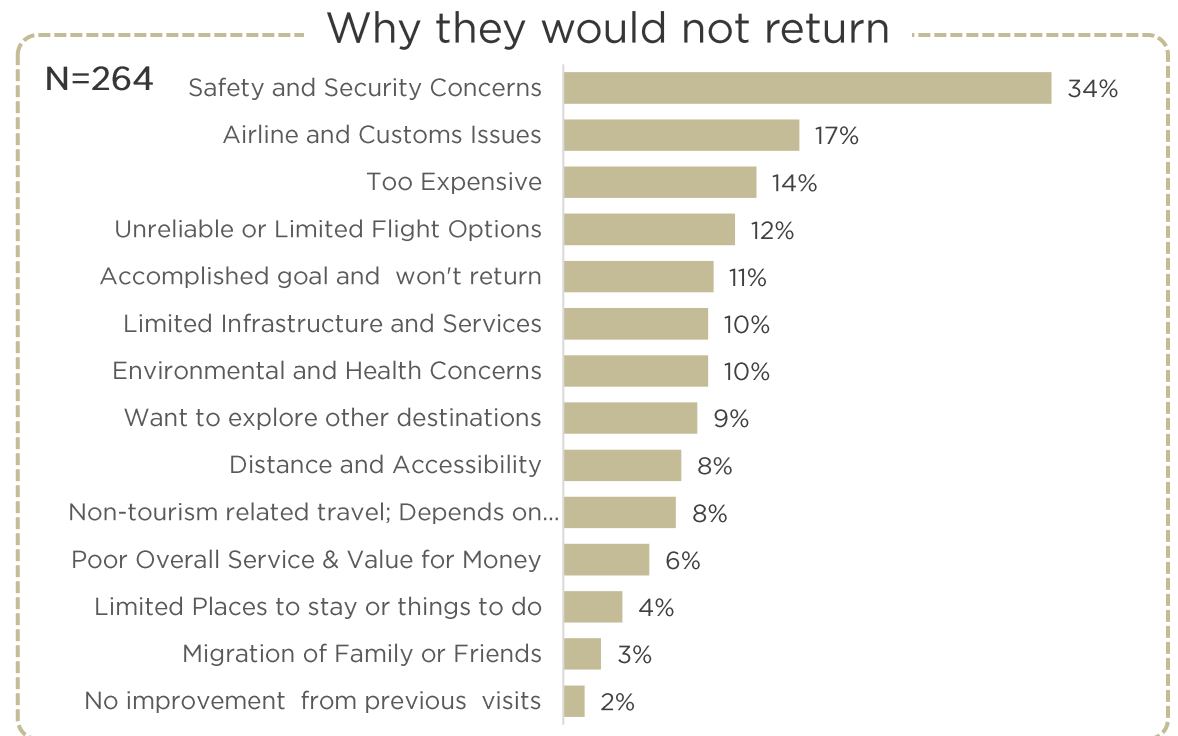
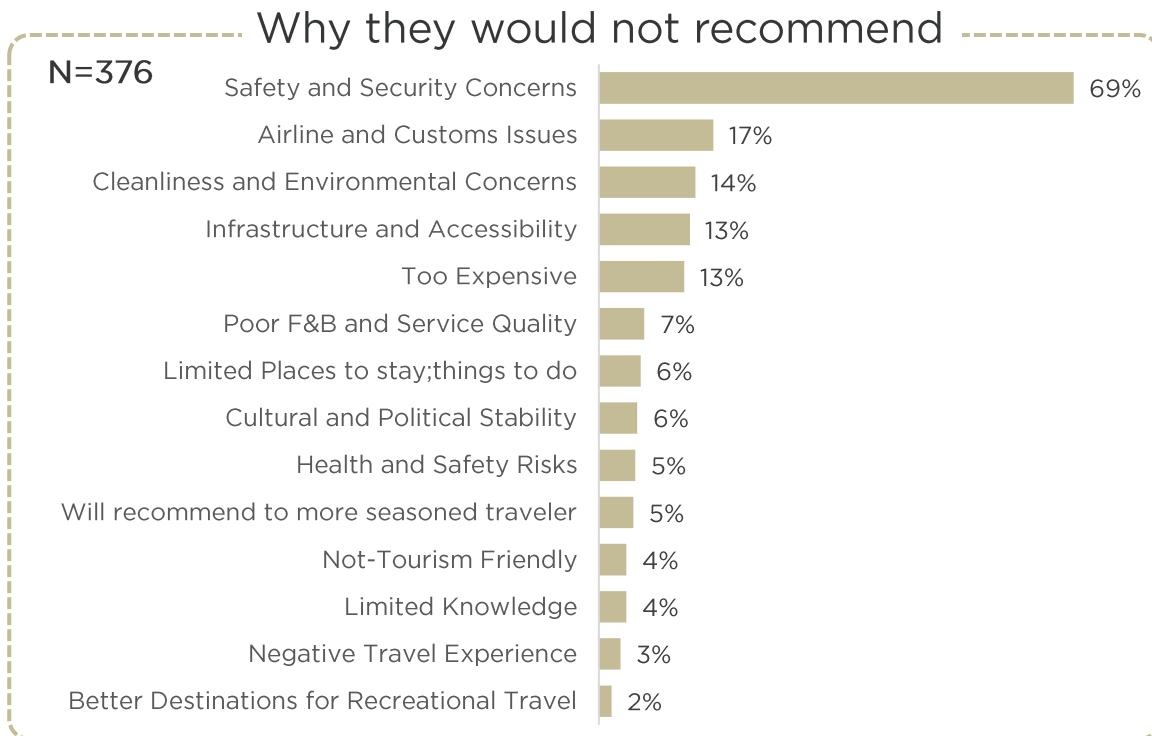
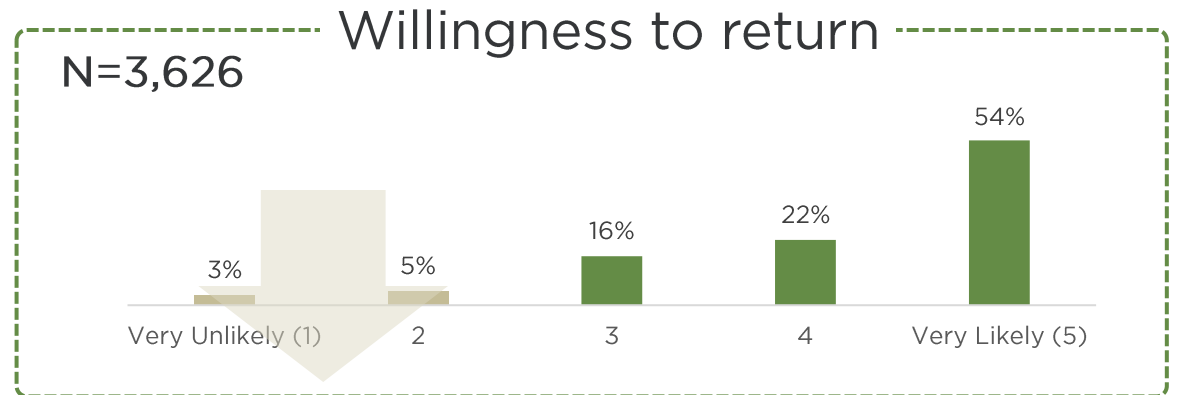
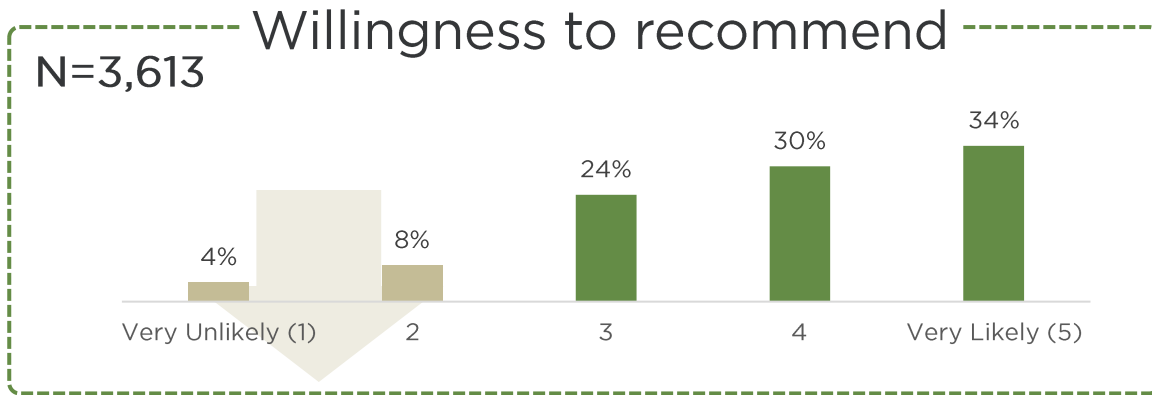
Suggestions for Improvement

Q Is there anything that could have improved your visit to PNG?

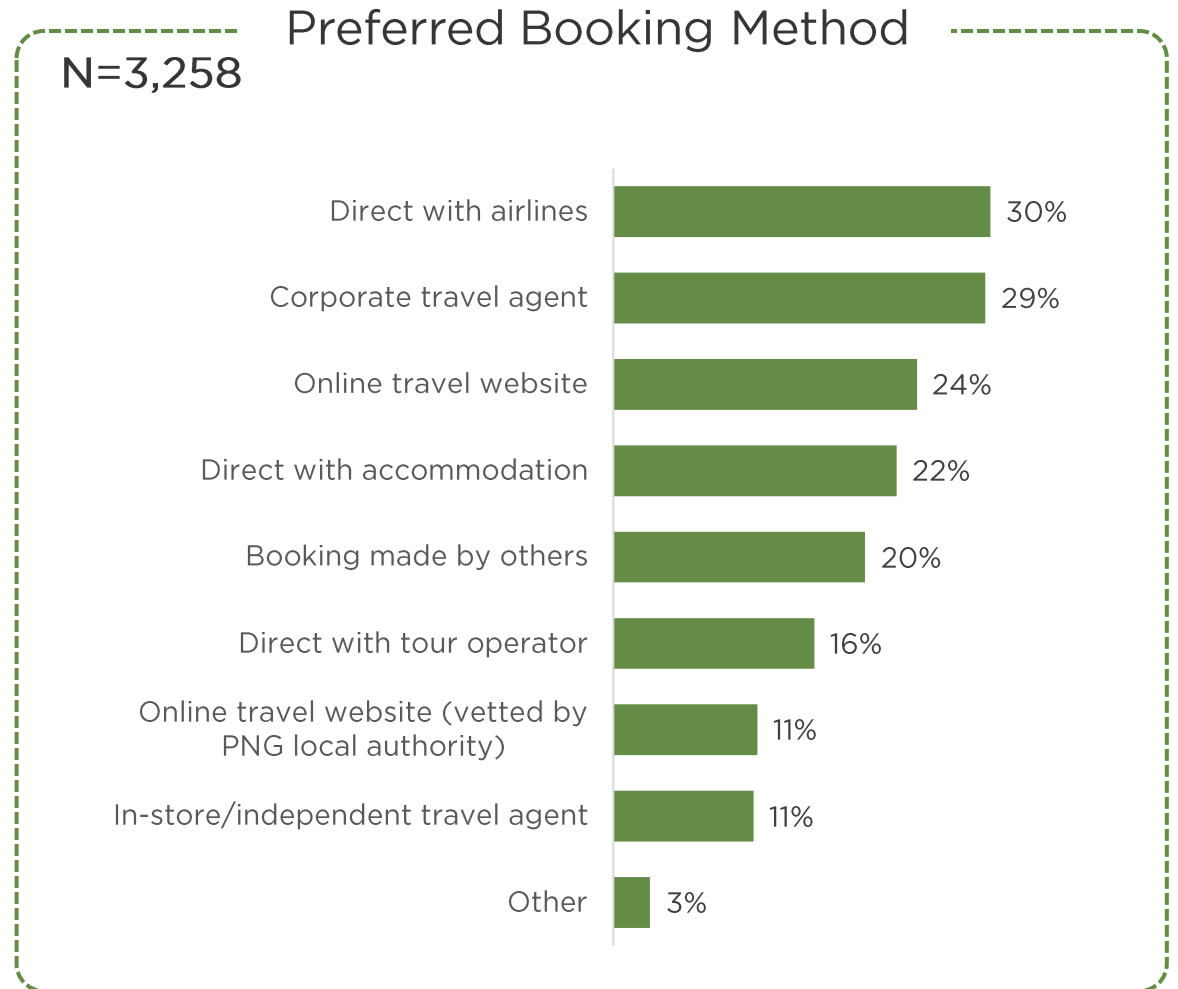
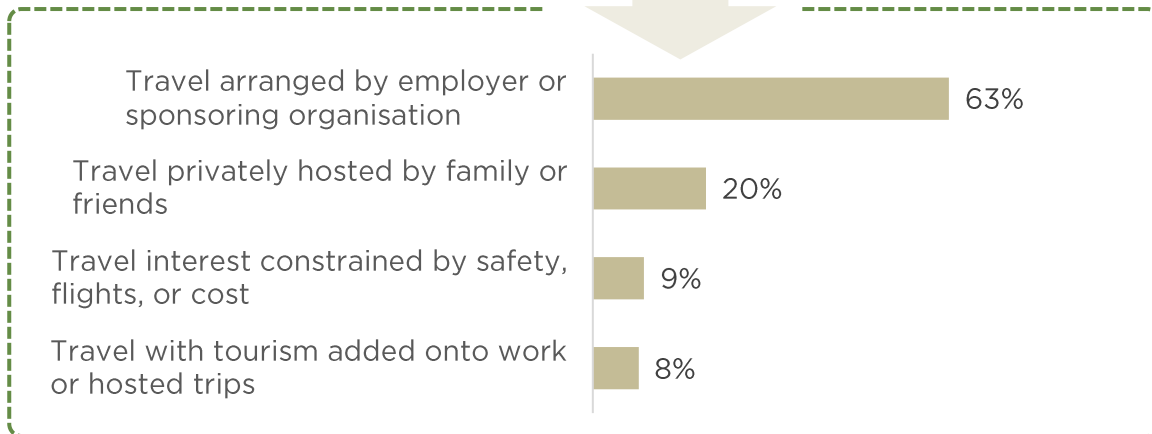


Share of Respondent Comments

Future Travel Intentions



Willingness to Return – Next Trip to PNG



The figure summarises respondents' intended future travel arrangements to Papua New Guinea by travel packaging preference and booking method. Independent, self-organised leisure travel is most common (47%), followed by customised leisure arrangements (18%) and fully organised leisure packages (15%), while 21% report context-driven, non-leisure arrangements, largely organised by employers or sponsoring organisations. Booking methods span direct bookings, online platforms, corporate and retail agents, and arrangements made by others, indicating that multiple booking channels are often used within a single trip.



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FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE
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This report was prepared at SPTO by the Pacific Tourism Data Initiative team, in collaboration with the Papua New Guinea Tourism Promotion Authority and the New Zealand Government.

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Photo Credit: David Kirkland