Business Events – Belgium MICE Market

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Country Profile
Country Profile: Belgium

- Population of more than 11 million.
- The country has distinctive regions including Dutch-speaking Flanders to the north, French-speaking Wallonia to the south and a German-speaking community to the east. The majority of those working in business events speak excellent English.
- Most of the Belgian population lives in the Northern parts of the country and the Southeast tends to be more thinly populated. The country is considered to have one of the densest populations in the world.
- According to Trading Economics – Belgium GDP is projected to grow 3.30% in 2022.
- Belgians have an above-average propensity to consider aspects of sustainability and environmentally friendly measures when making their destination choice.
- More than half of Belgian visits to the UK are via the Channel Tunnel by rail or car. A journey on the Eurostar which links Brussels to London non-stop takes around 2 hours. The trains run frequently with roughly 10 trains per day.

Source: Trading Economics, CIA World Factbook 2021; IPS
Doing Business with Belgium
Doing Business with Belgium

Top tips working with Belgium event buyers and organisers

• Belgians do not particularly enjoy conducting business over the phone; personal contact is much more preferred.

• Appointments are mandatory and should be made one month in advance and reconfirmed the day before. Be punctual and allow for flexibility around the duration of the meeting. Preferred times for meetings are mid-morning and mid-afternoon.

• Belgium’s, are often very reserved, especially when it comes to important decisions.

• It is often best to speak English in Belgium, even if reasonably fluent in French (or Flemish), as this maintains neutrality.

• It is not necessary to translate your sales material into Flemish or French but make sure that you use the metric system when describing meeting spaces alongside capacities.

• The Belgium market is a European hub for International Associations. Most are based in Brussels near the European parliament.

Avoid scheduling appointments in July or August, as most people are on vacation during these months.

Source: Expatica, World Business Culture
Event Trends
COVID-19 has changed the way of attending conferences. Not just for Belgium based Associations but across Europe, the booking window has become shorter and attracting attendees requires more effort.

Sustainability and legacy have become factors of decision-making for Associations.

Corporate MICE bookings from Belgium tend to come from agencies specialised in this market or directly from corporates. They mainly book meetings and incentives and include a team building element.

Belgium corporate buyers tend to book short trips with 2-3 day duration in Europe. Direct flight routes/train and air capacity strongly influences destination choice – particularly at the moment where not all air routes have been re-established following the pandemic.

Belgium agencies book both with suppliers directly and also through DMCs.

Corporate group sizes tend to be less than 100 passengers due to airline capacity limits for group bookings on European airlines. Having the Eurostar travelling from Brussels to London is an advantage as its capacity is more flexible for group bookings.

Events are generally booked year round with the exception of July and August. Peak months are from September to November.

Corporate buyers consider the attractiveness of the region / city when choosing a destination for their event. They also consider potential business reasons to travel to a region, e.g. visiting a branch office, access to local customers.
Air Accessibility Update
Non-stop flight connectivity from Belgium to the UK

Based on capacity data from October 2022 to March 2023

From Brussels National to
- Birmingham International with Brussels Airlines
- Edinburgh with Brussels Airlines
- London Heathrow with British Airways, Brussels Airlines or RwandAir
- Manchester International with Brussels Airlines or Ethiopian Airlines

From Brussels South Charleroi to
- Edinburgh with Ryanair
- Glasgow with Ryanair
- Liverpool with Ryanair
- Manchester International with Ryanair

Source: Apex; correct as of October 2022
Belgium MICE Media and Event Associations
# MICE Media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Publication</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Country covered</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MICE Benelux</td>
<td>MICE Benelux is the leading magazine and news platform in the Benelux for buyers and sellers of MICE. This business magazine is the ultimate medium to reach the biggest players in this industry throughout the Benelux market</td>
<td><a href="http://www.micebenelux.com">www.micebenelux.com</a></td>
<td>Benelux</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headquarters Magazine</td>
<td>Headquarters (HQ), the Association Magazine, is a leading resource for meeting planners worldwide, providing diverse content featuring association management and education, destination reports, interviews, customised supplements, as well as the latest MICE industry news and insights</td>
<td><a href="http://www.meetingmediagroup.com">www.meetingmediagroup.com</a></td>
<td>Worldwide - Based in Belgium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boardroom</td>
<td>Boardroom is a niche magazine specialised in association management. Targeting exclusively European and international associations, Boardroom covers a wide spectrum of issues of interest to the associations. It also gives voice to destinations, venues, industry organisations, etc. who can help and partner with these associations</td>
<td><a href="http://www.boardroom.global">www.boardroom.global</a></td>
<td>Europe - Based in Belgium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICE Magazine</td>
<td>MICE Magazine is a news website, with daily articles published. Their communicating provides inspiration and more connection between the messenger and the receiver, focusing on the power of storytelling</td>
<td><a href="http://www.mice-magazine.com">www.mice-magazine.com</a></td>
<td>Belgium and Netherlands</td>
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Below is a list of 4 organisations that work closely with Associations. Many of their members or their colleagues are involved in booking international events. These organisations offer opportunities to network with Belgium based Associations:

- UIA: https://uia.org/
- FAIB: https://faib.org/home/
- ESAE: https://www.esae.eu/
- Association World: https://www.associationworld.eu/
Belgium MICE Agencies
**15 MICE Agencies in Belgium:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Website</th>
<th>City</th>
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<tr>
<td>Event Masters NV</td>
<td><a href="https://eventmasters.eu/">https://eventmasters.eu/</a></td>
<td>Willebroek</td>
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<td>OFCORES</td>
<td><a href="https://ofcores.events/">https://ofcores.events/</a></td>
<td>Brussels</td>
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<tr>
<td>MCI group Europe</td>
<td><a href="https://www.wearemci.com">https://www.wearemci.com</a></td>
<td>Brussels</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCD Meetings &amp; Events - Europe</td>
<td><a href="https://www.bcdtravel.com/country/belgium/">https://www.bcdtravel.com/country/belgium/</a></td>
<td>Antwerpen</td>
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<td>Act-Wise</td>
<td><a href="https://act-wise.be/">https://act-wise.be/</a></td>
<td>Gent</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNIGLOBE B&amp;L Travel</td>
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<td>Aartselaar</td>
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<td>Antwerpen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seauton International</td>
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<td>Amex Meetings &amp; Events</td>
<td><a href="https://www.amexglobalbusinesstravel.com">https://www.amexglobalbusinesstravel.com</a></td>
<td>Sint Stevens Woluwe</td>
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<tr>
<td>BTS Travel</td>
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<td>Antwerp</td>
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<td>ATPI Belgium</td>
<td><a href="https://www.atpi.com/">https://www.atpi.com/</a></td>
<td>Antwerp</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creative Star Incentives &amp; Events</td>
<td><a href="https://www.creativestar.be/">https://www.creativestar.be/</a></td>
<td>Antwerp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Way2Events</td>
<td><a href="https://www.way2events.be/">https://www.way2events.be/</a></td>
<td>Hasselt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fame Travel</td>
<td><a href="https://www.fame-travel.be/">https://www.fame-travel.be/</a></td>
<td>Mechelen</td>
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**Agencies are mainly based in Brussels & Antwerp.**

**Associations tend to be mainly based in Brussels.**
Contact for Further Information

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