



Solomon Islands

Domestic Expatriate Tourism Market



January, 2019



Method



Online survey ran from 1 October to 8 November 2018



Data collection via expatriate organisations and Google groups



167 responses



For expenditure - responses cover a total of 209 adults and 38 children



Solomon Islands

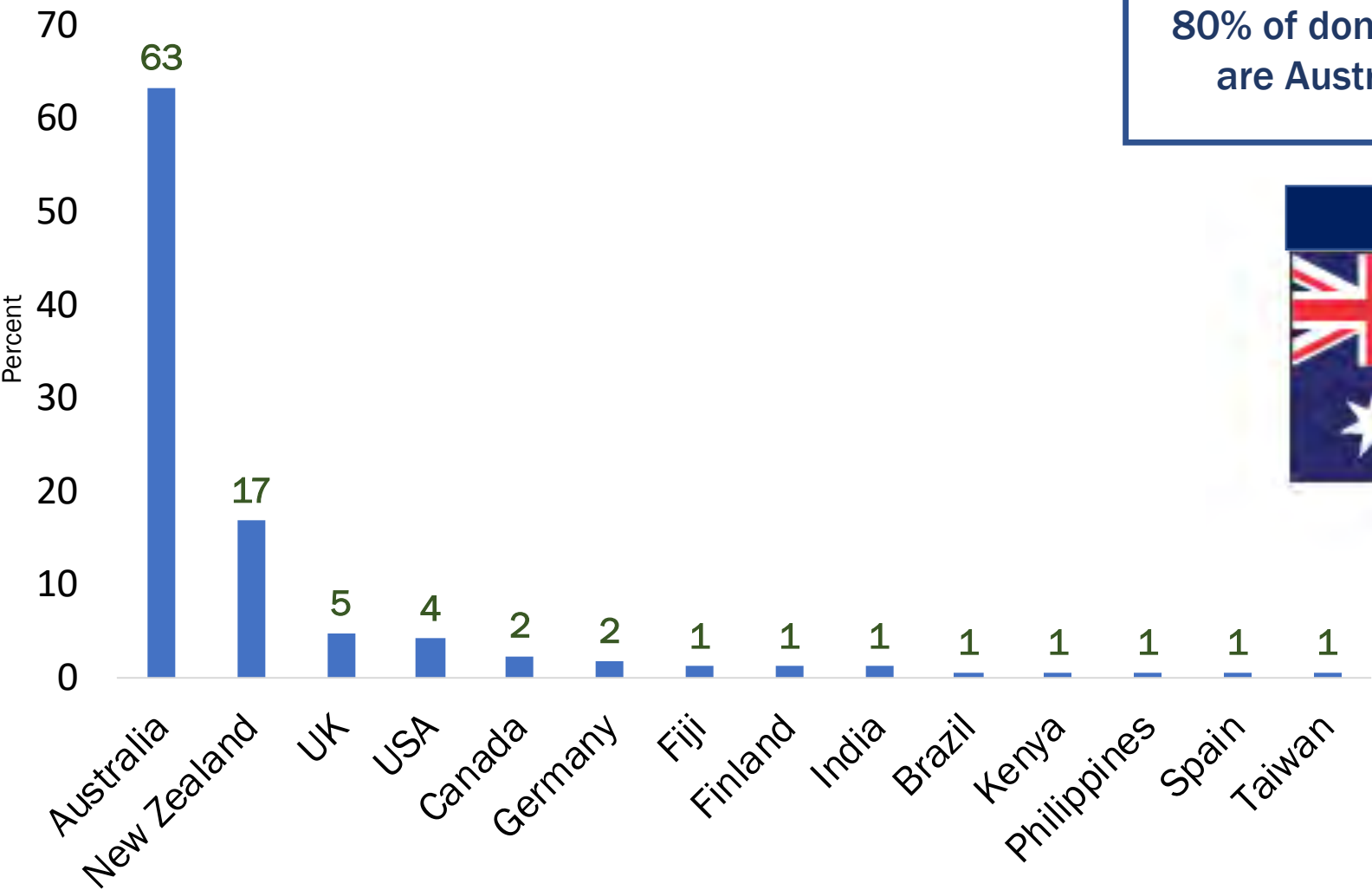
Domestic Expatriate Tourism Market

Domestic Expatriate Tourist Characteristics

Age, education, gender, country of origin, purpose of visit, travelling companions, length of stay, type of accommodation, transport used, information sources, purchasing behaviour.

Nationality of expatriate domestic tourists

80% of domestic expatriate tourists surveyed are Australian or New Zealand nationals



Australia

63%



New Zealand

17%

Demographics

Highest Qualification



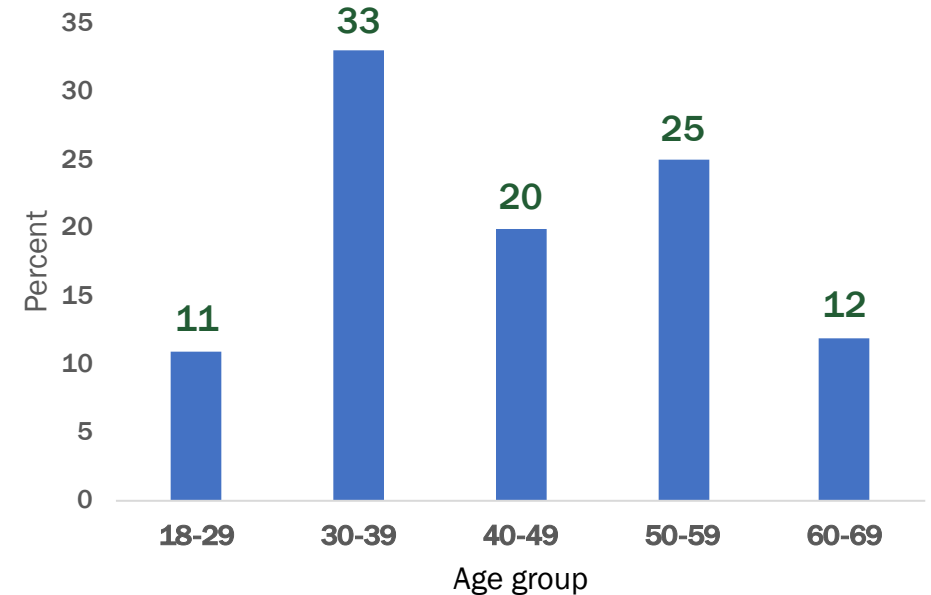
96% Tertiary qualification
4% High school qualification

Employment Status

84% Employed (inc. full-time volunteer work)
7% Not currently employed
5% Employed (inc. volunteer work) part-time
2% Other
1% Student
1% Retired

Over 4 in 5 domestic expatriate tourists surveyed are employed full-time and nearly all have tertiary education

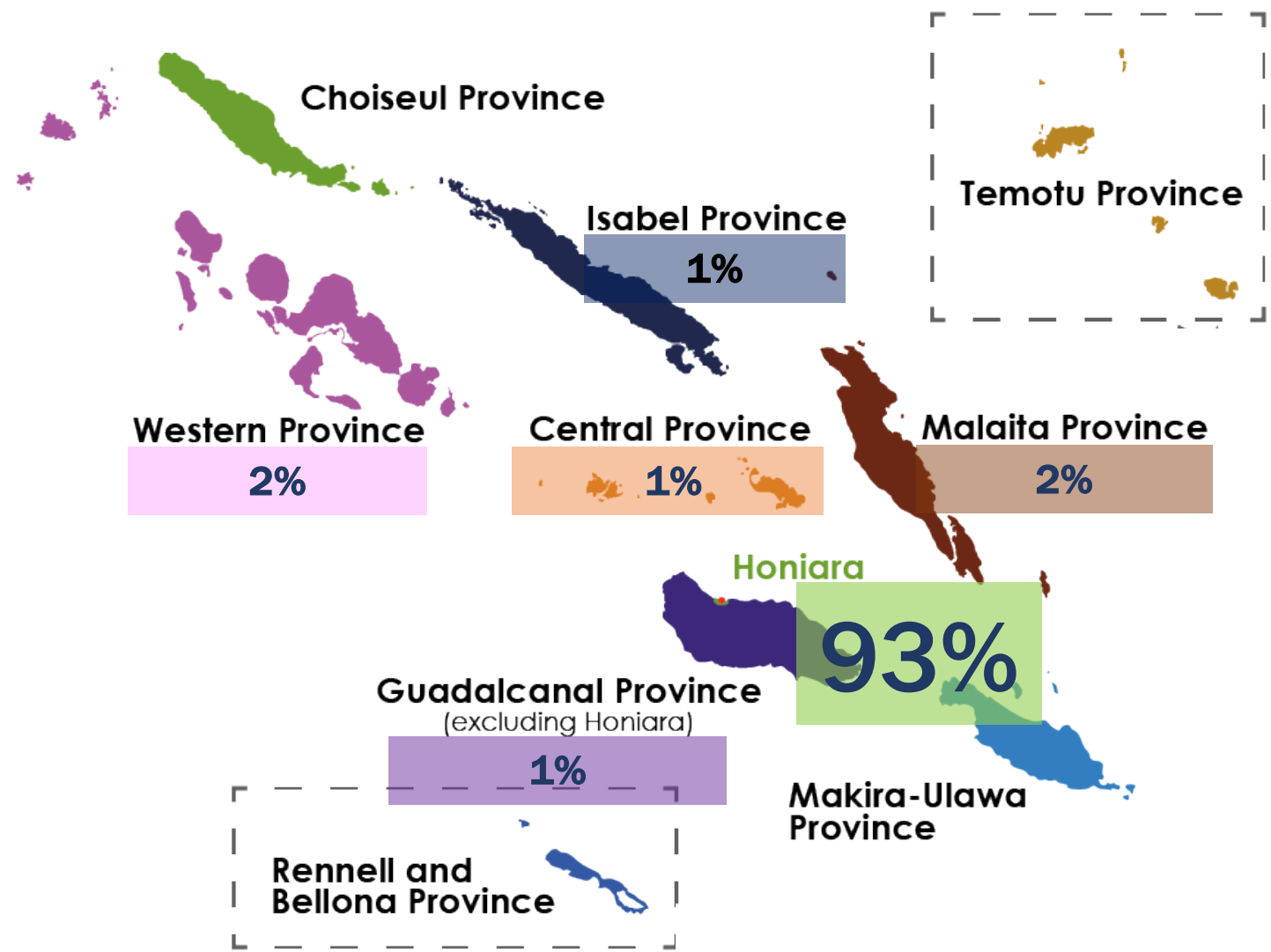
Age Distribution



Gender

55% Female
45% Male

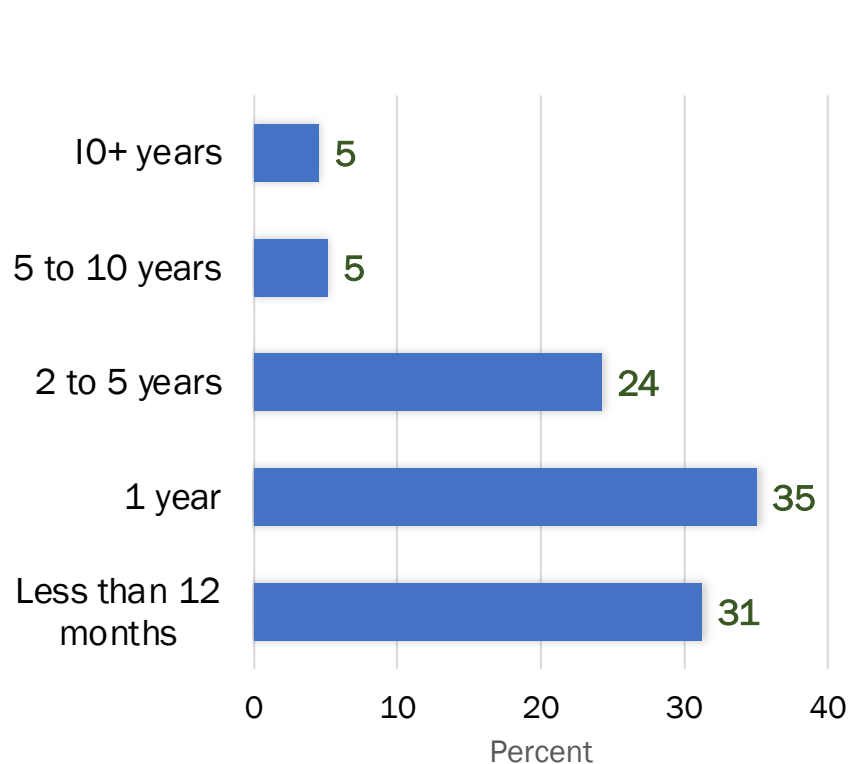
Where do you live in Solomon Islands?



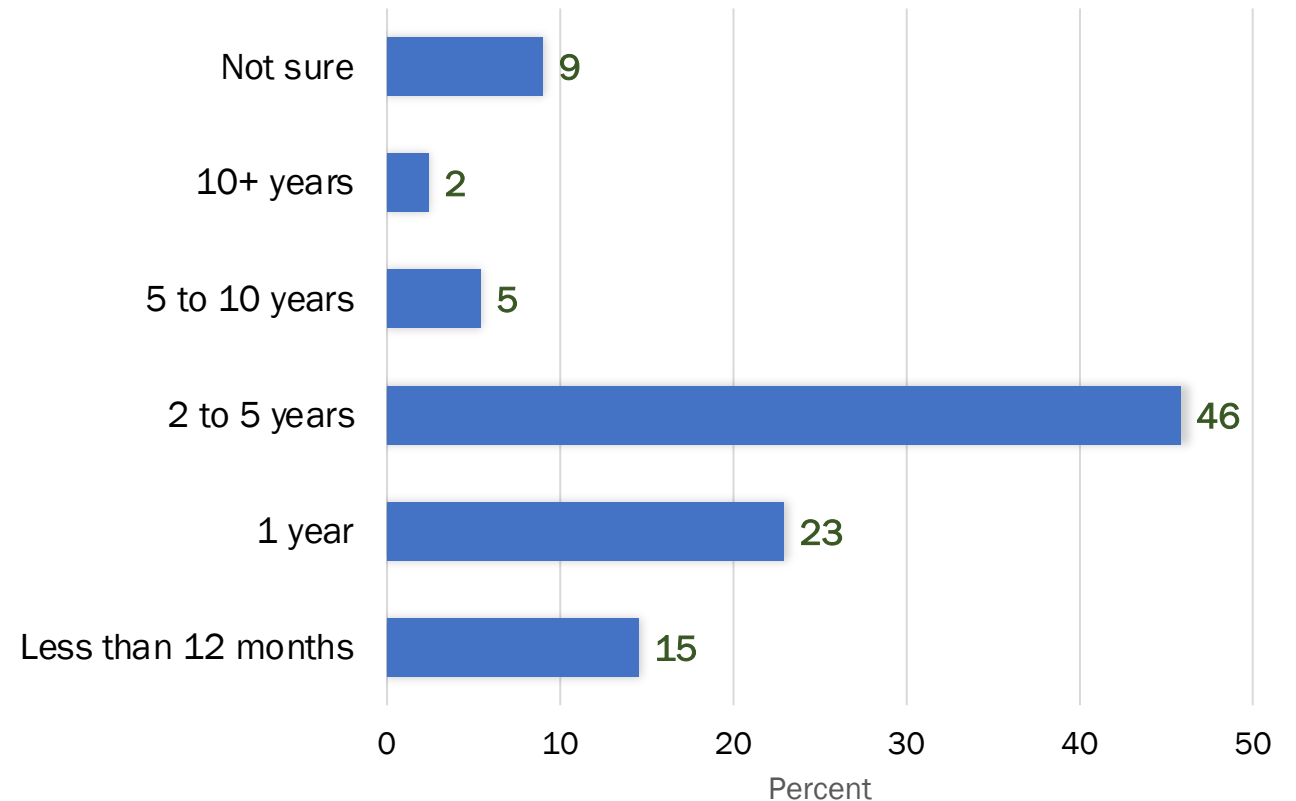
93% of domestic expatriate tourists surveyed live in Honiara

Time in Solomon Islands

How long have you lived in Solomon Islands?



How long do you plan to stay in Solomon Islands?



The majority of domestic expatriate tourists have lived in Solomon Islands for one year or less and almost half plan to stay in the country for another 2-5 years

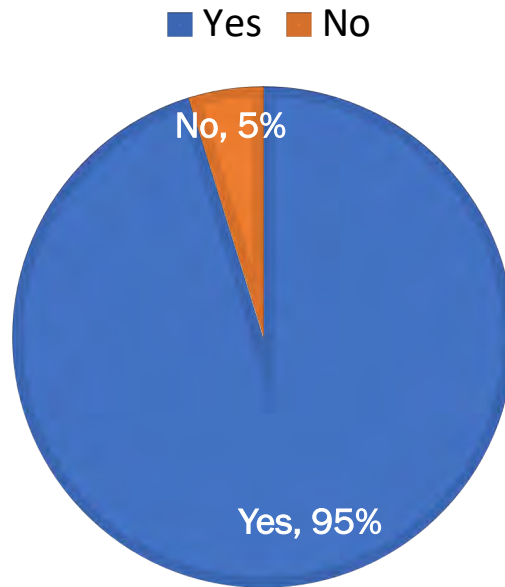
Main Purpose of Visit

- 67%** Holiday /leisure
- 30%** Business, conference, volunteer work
- 1%** Visiting friends or relatives
- 1%** Special event
- 1%** Other

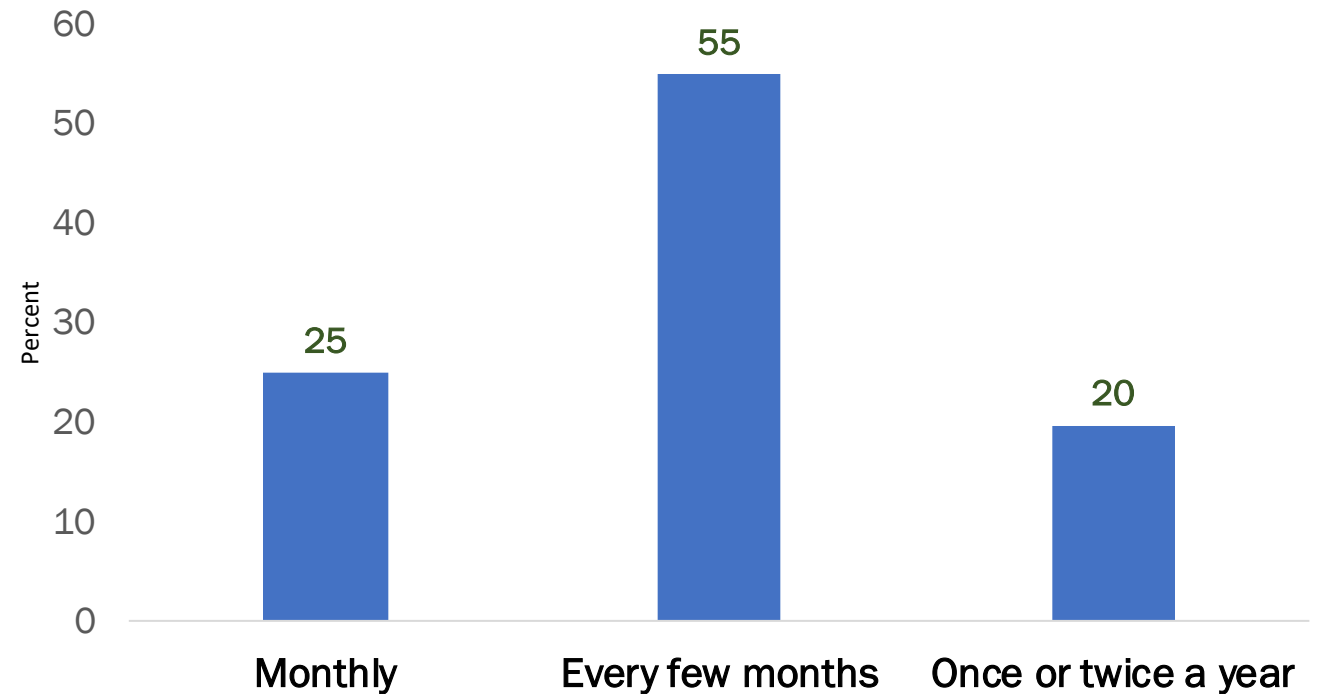
Almost 70% of domestic
expatriate tourists
travelled for
holiday/leisure

ALL VISITORS: Overnight trips in Solomon Islands

Since living in Solomon Islands, have you been on an overnight trip within the country?



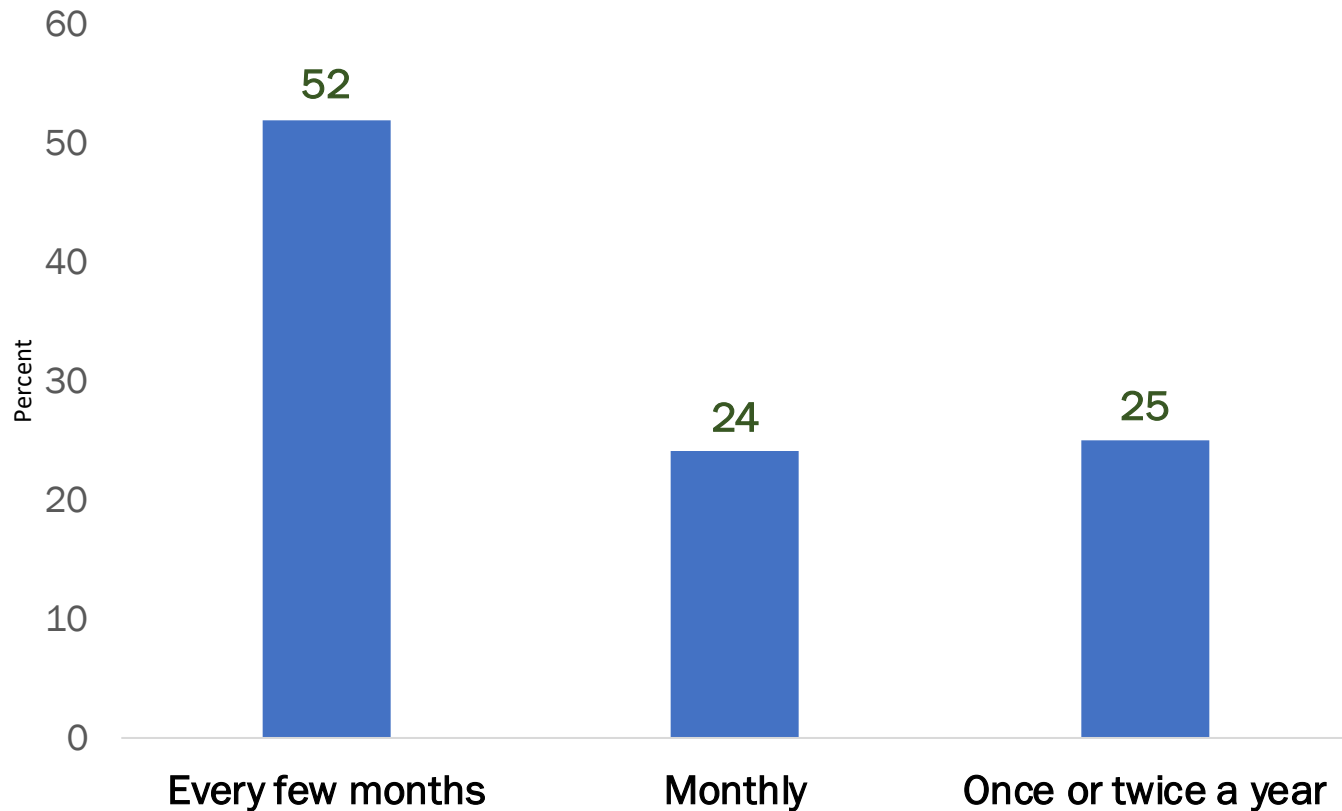
On average, how often would you go on an overnight trip?



95% of domestic expatriate tourists have been on an overnight trip within the past 12 months, and most travel more than twice a year.

HOLIDAY VISITORS: Overnight trips in Solomon Islands

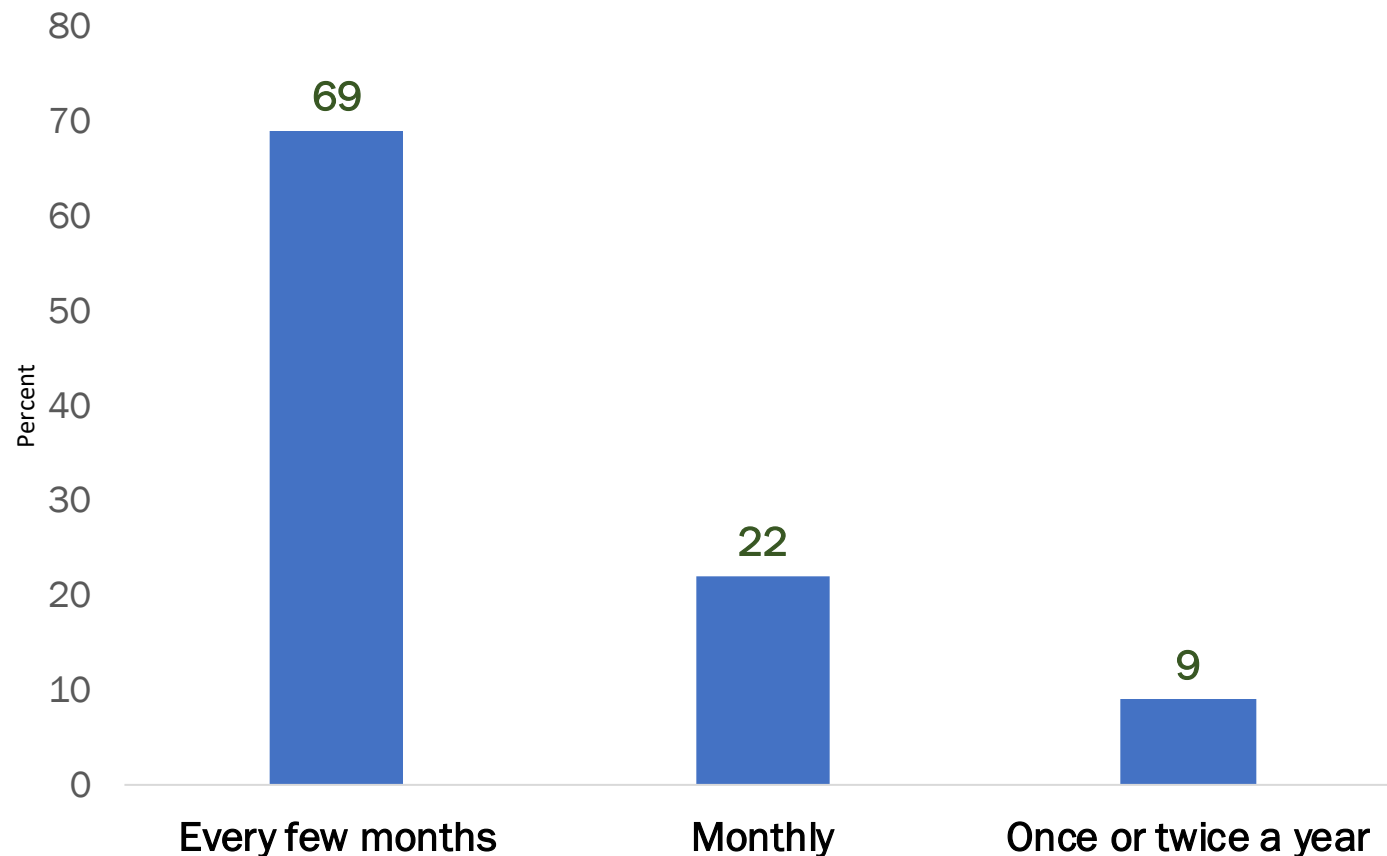
On average, how often would you go on an overnight trip?



All domestic expatriate tourists who travel for holidays in Solomon Islands have been on a previous domestic trip and most travel every few months

BUSINESS VISITORS: Overnight trips in Solomon Islands

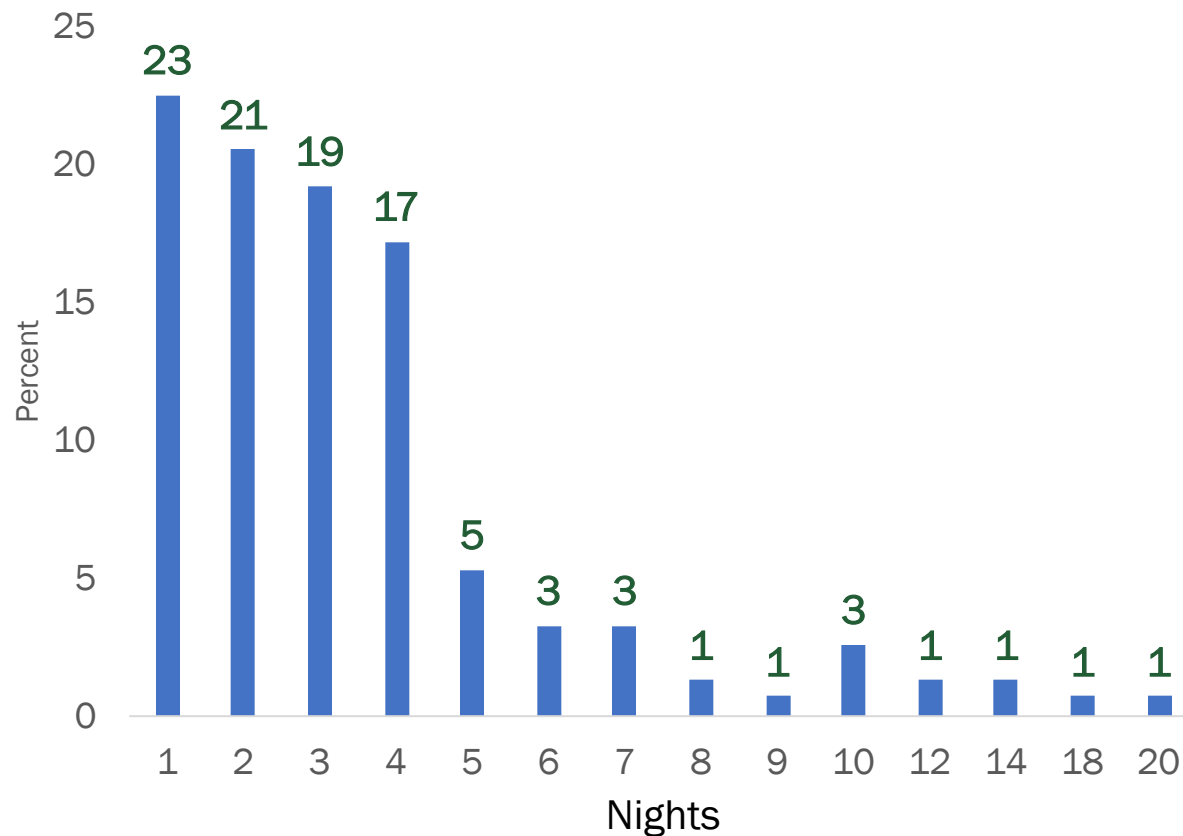
On average, how often would you go on an overnight trip?



All domestic expatriate tourists who travel for business in Solomon Islands have been on a previous domestic trip and almost three-quarters travel every few months

ALL VISITORS: Most recent overnight trip – length of stay

How long was your most recent trip?



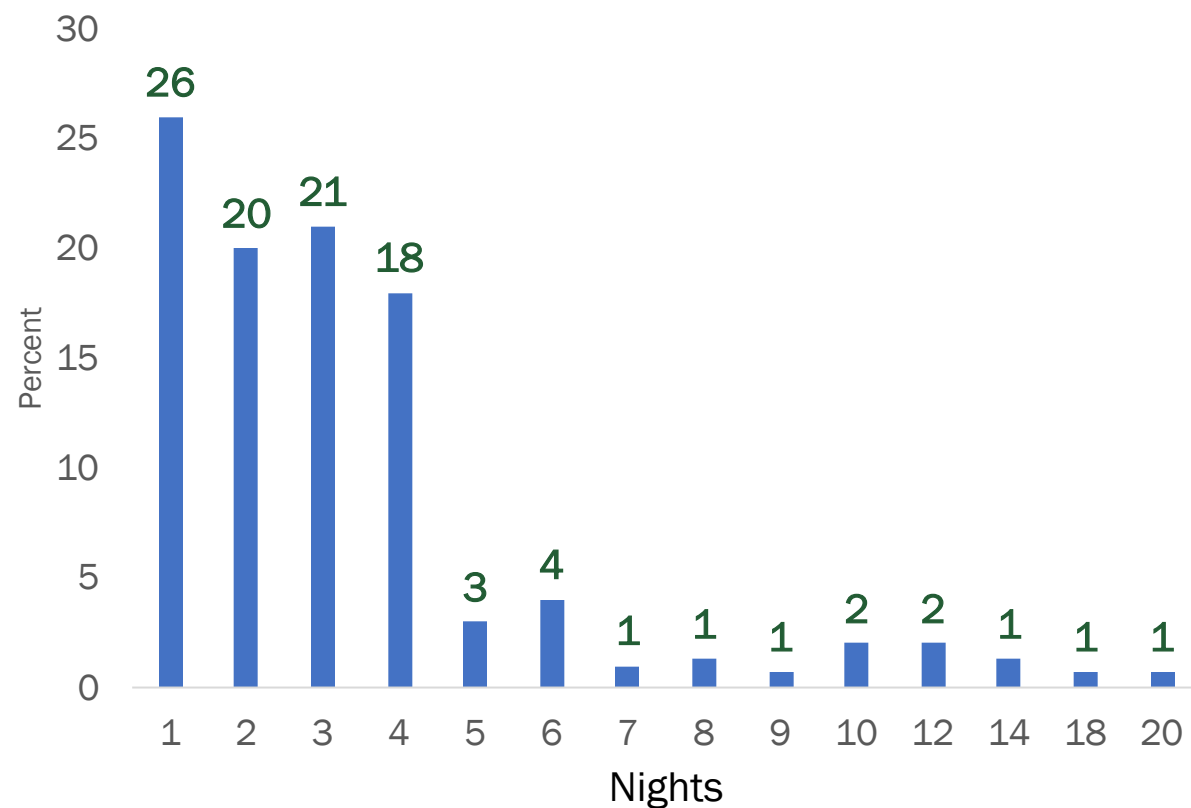
Length of Stay

Average =
3.6 NIGHTS

80% of domestic expatriate tourists go on
short breaks of 1-4 nights

HOLIDAY VISITORS: Most recent overnight trip – length of stay

How long was your most recent trip?



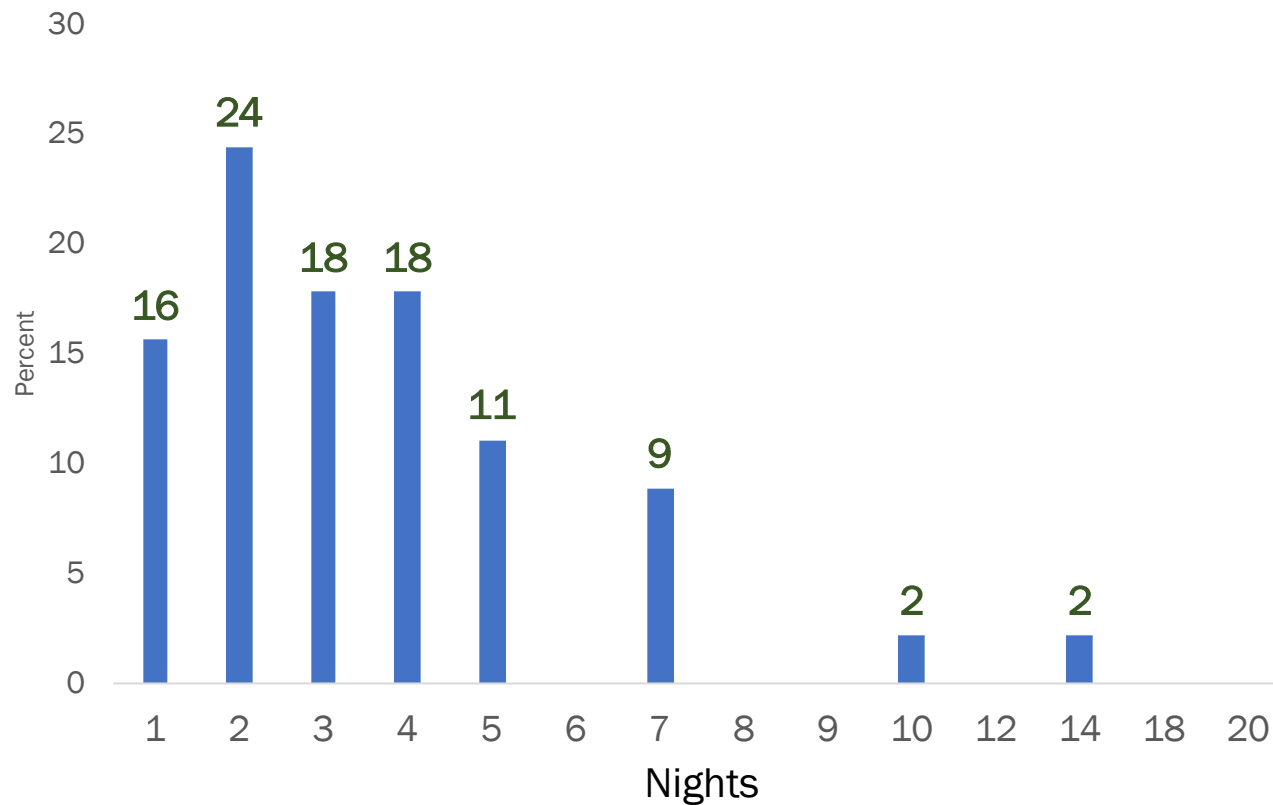
Length of Stay

Average =
3.5 NIGHTS

**85% of domestic expatriate tourists
going for holiday/leisure purposes
take short breaks of up to 4 nights**

BUSINESS VISITORS: Most recent overnight trip – length of stay

How long was your most recent trip?

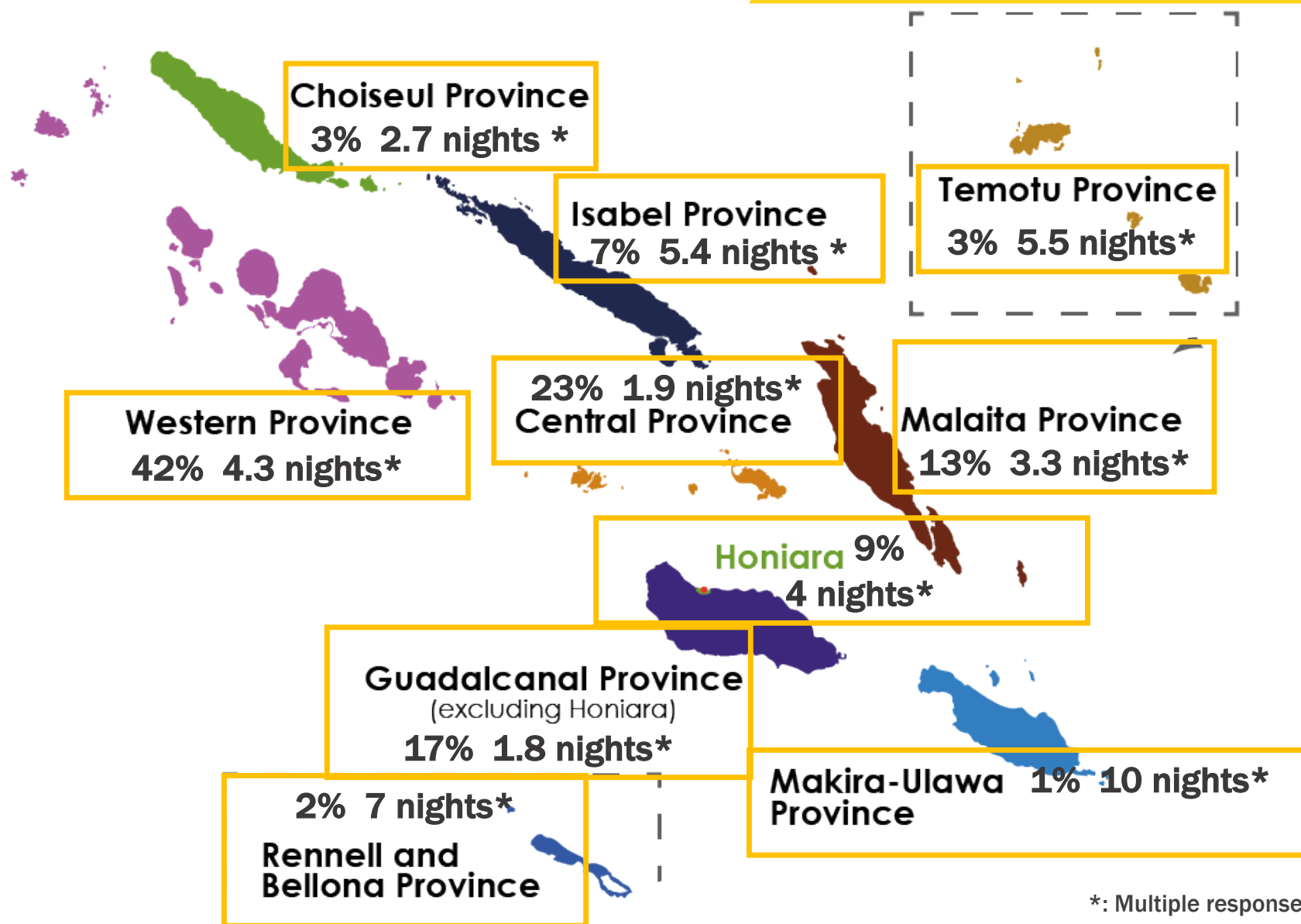


Length of Stay

Average =
3.6 NIGHTS

96% of domestic expatriate tourist
business trips are for one week or less

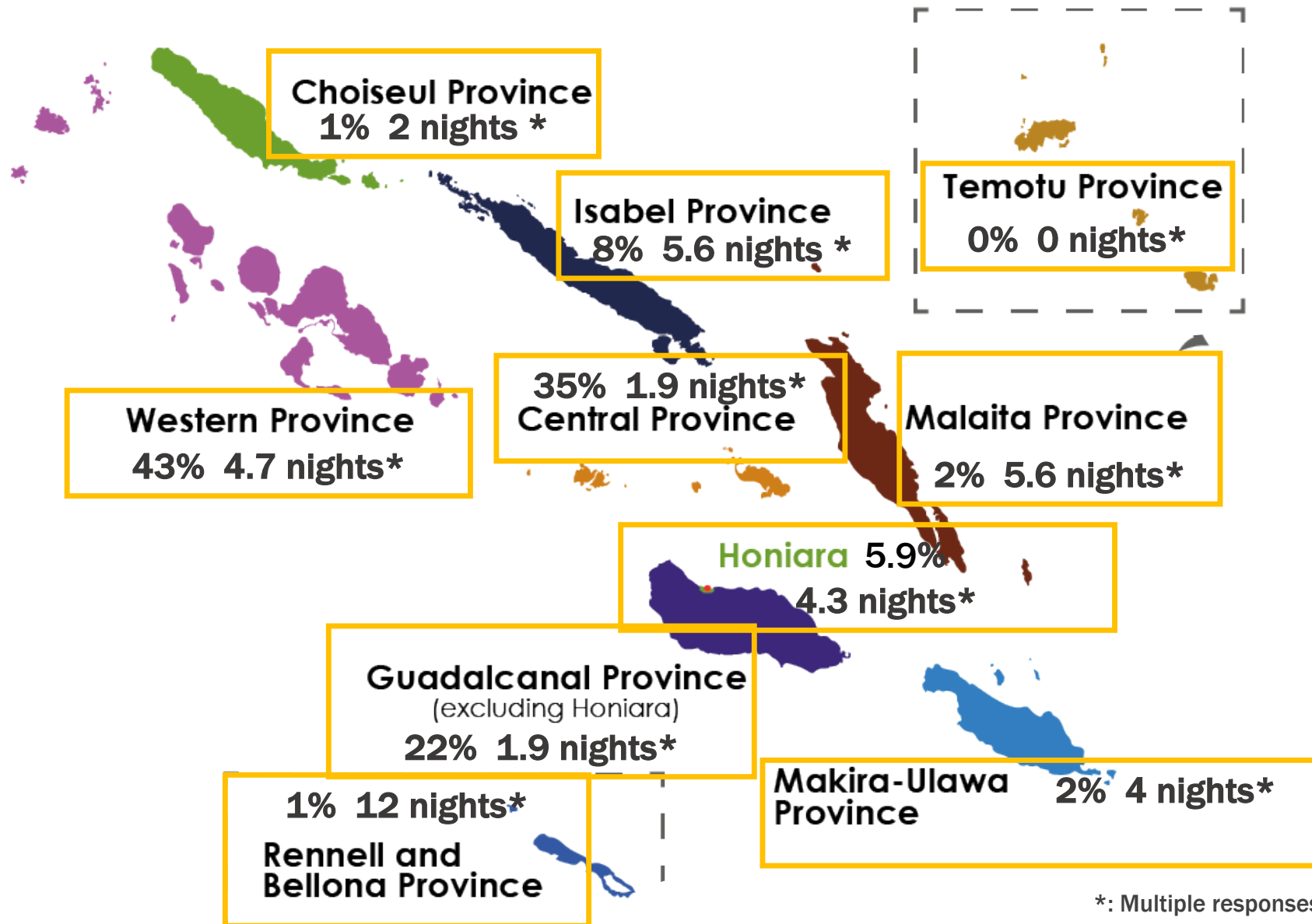
ALL VISITORS: Province visited (%) and length of stay (nights) on most recent trip



Western province is the most popular destination for a short break of 4 nights

*: Multiple responses, therefore total does not add up to 100%

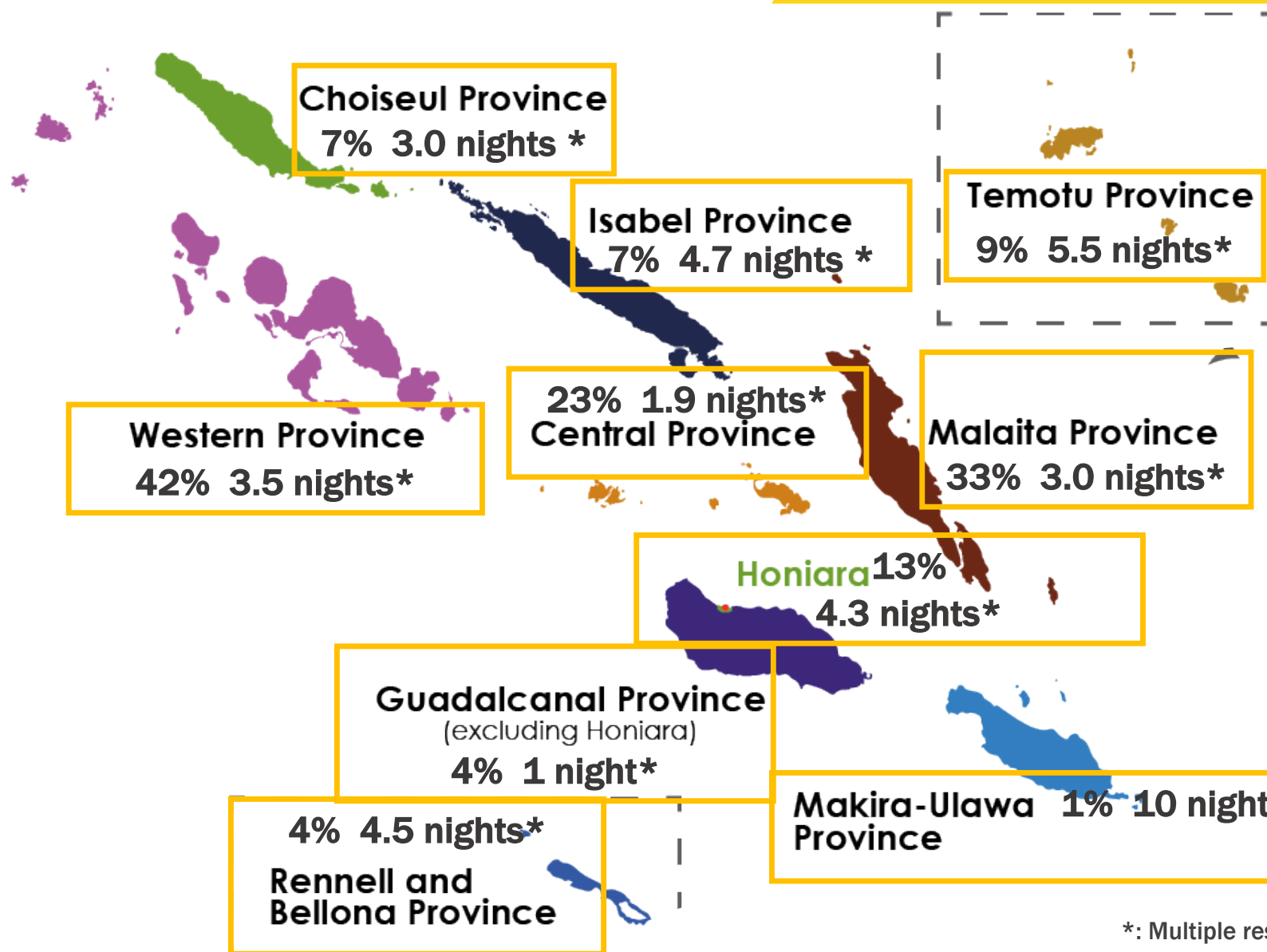
HOLIDAY VISITORS: Province visited (%) and length of stay (nights) on most recent trip



Western and Central Provinces are the most popular destinations for domestic expatriate tourists going on holiday - they stay twice as long in Western than Central Province

*: Multiple responses, therefore total does not add up to 100%

BUSINESS VISITORS: Province visited (%) and length of stay (nights) on most recent trip



Most domestic expatriate business travellers go to Western (42%) and Malaita (33%) Provinces and stay for 3 nights on average

*: Multiple responses, therefore total does not add up to 100%

ALL VISITORS: Travel companions most recent trip

Travel Companions

19% travelled
within Solomon
Islands by
themselves

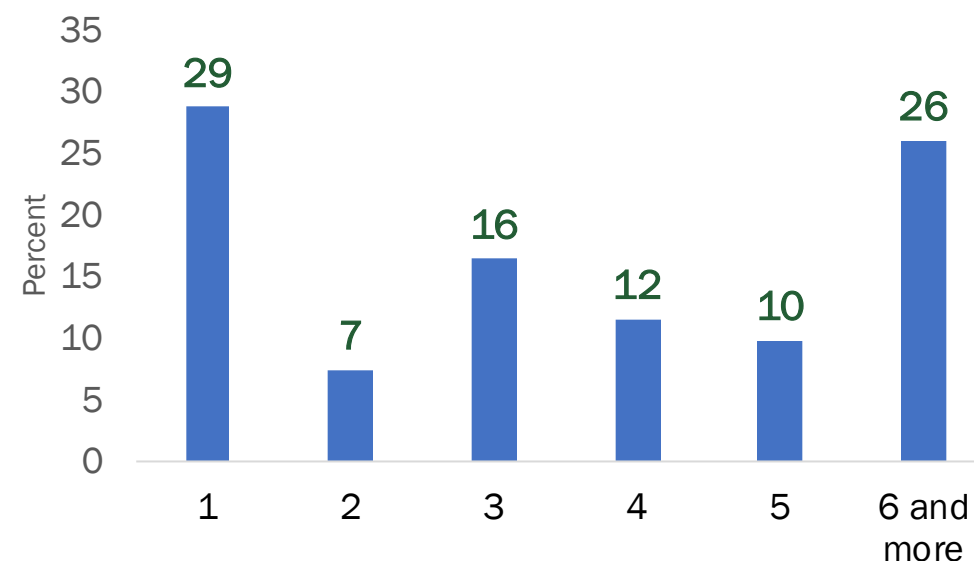
81% with others

Over 80% of domestic expatriate tourists travel with others, and almost half go with a partner/spouse or with friends

Travel with*

49%	Partner/Spouse	13%	Other family members
43%	Friend(s)	3%	Tour group
29%	Work colleagues	2%	Organised group
20%	Children under 16 years		

Number of Companions *



*: Multiple responses, therefore total does not add up to 100%

HOLIDAY VISITORS: Travel companions most recent trip

Travel Companions

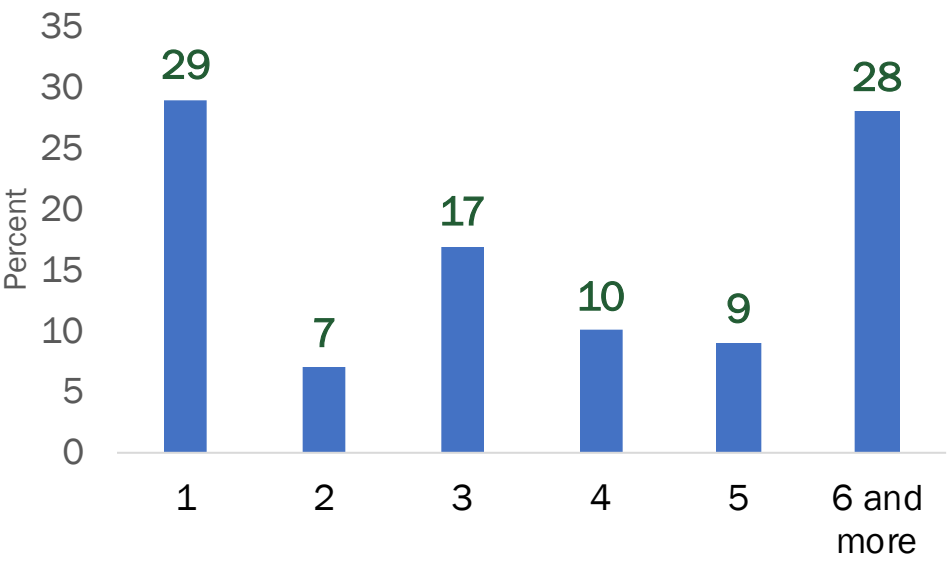
9% travelled within
Solomon Islands by
themselves

91% with others

Travel with*

60%	Partner/Spouse	10%	Work colleagues
53%	Friend(s)	2%	Tour group
24%	Children under 16 years	1%	Organised group
16%	Other family members		

Number of Companions *



91% of domestic expatriate tourists go on holiday travel with others – mostly with family and friends.

*: Multiple responses, therefore total does not add up to 100%

BUSINESS VISITORS: Travel companions most recent trip

Travel Companions

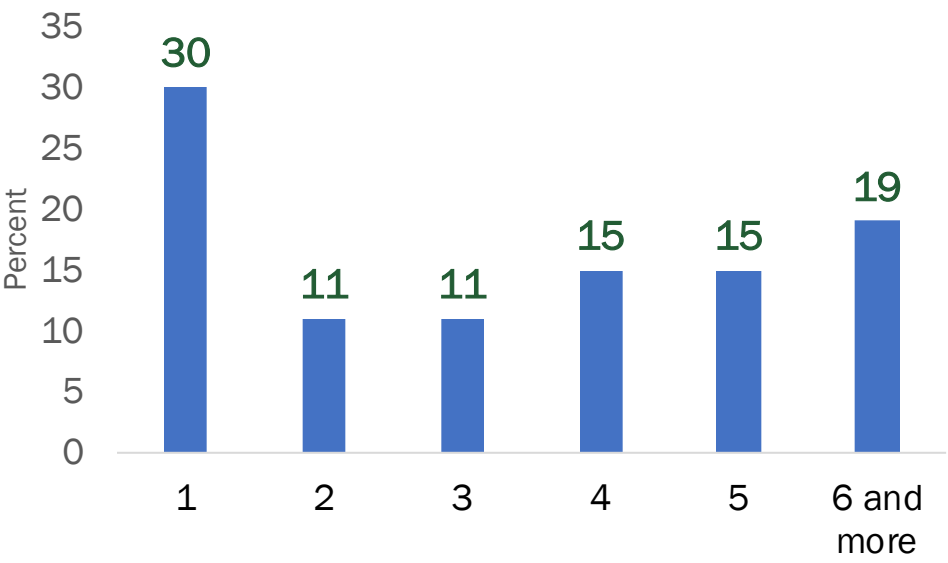
40% of visitors travelled within Solomon Islands by themselves

60% with others

Travel with*

- 89%** Work colleagues
- 15%** Partner/Spouse
- 7%** Friend(s)
- 4%** Children under 16 years
- 4%** Organised group

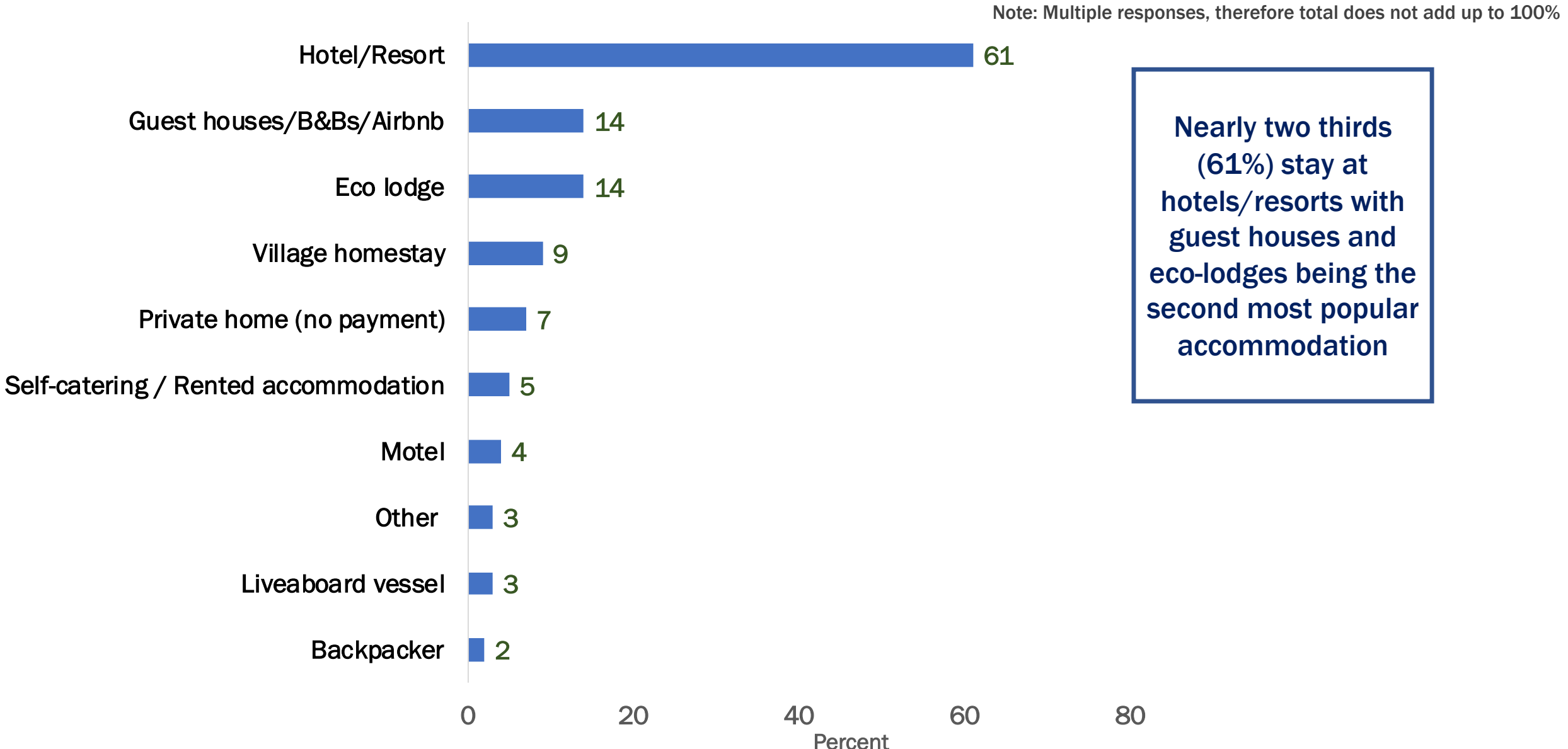
Number of Companions *



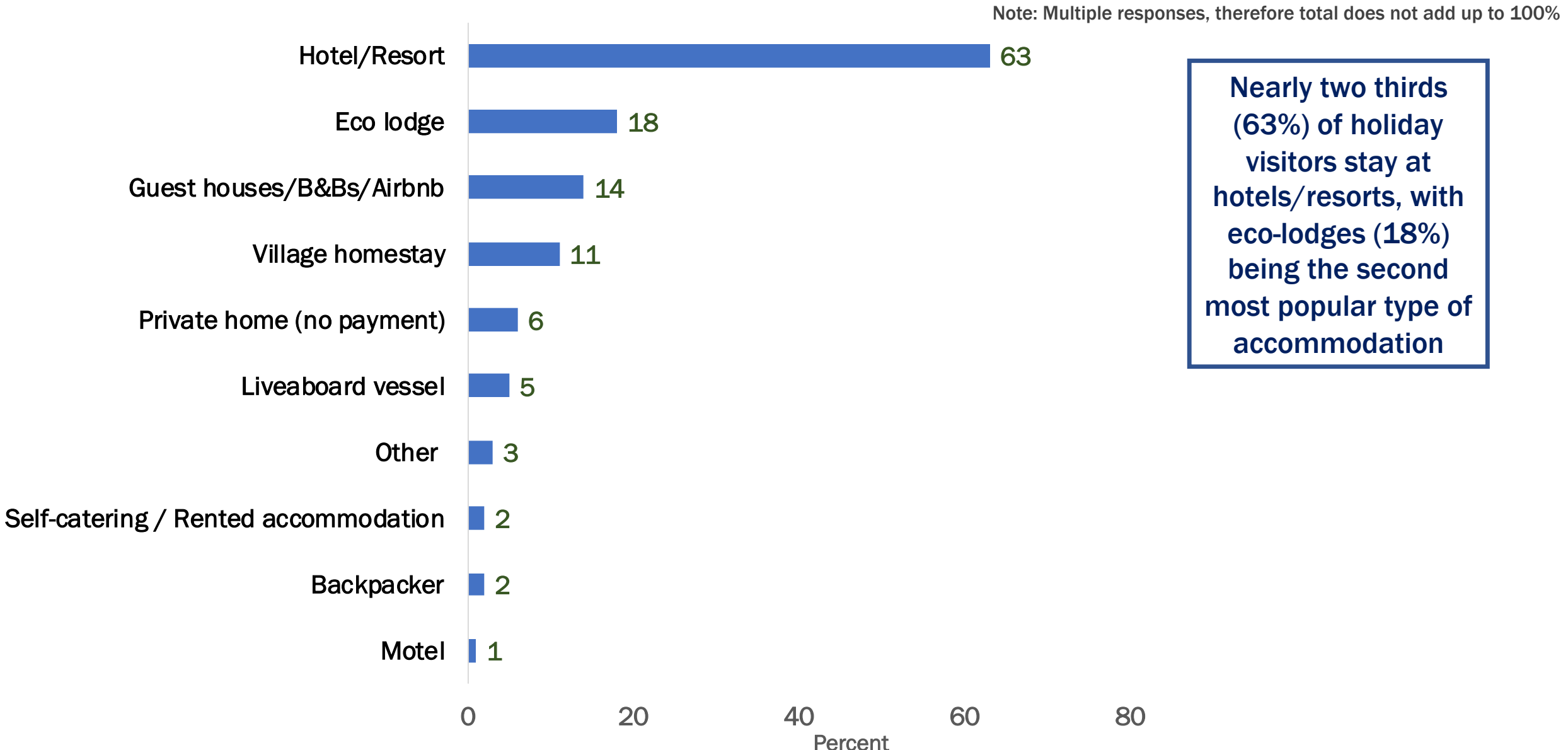
40% of domestic expatriate business visitors travel alone. The majority travelling with others go with work colleagues

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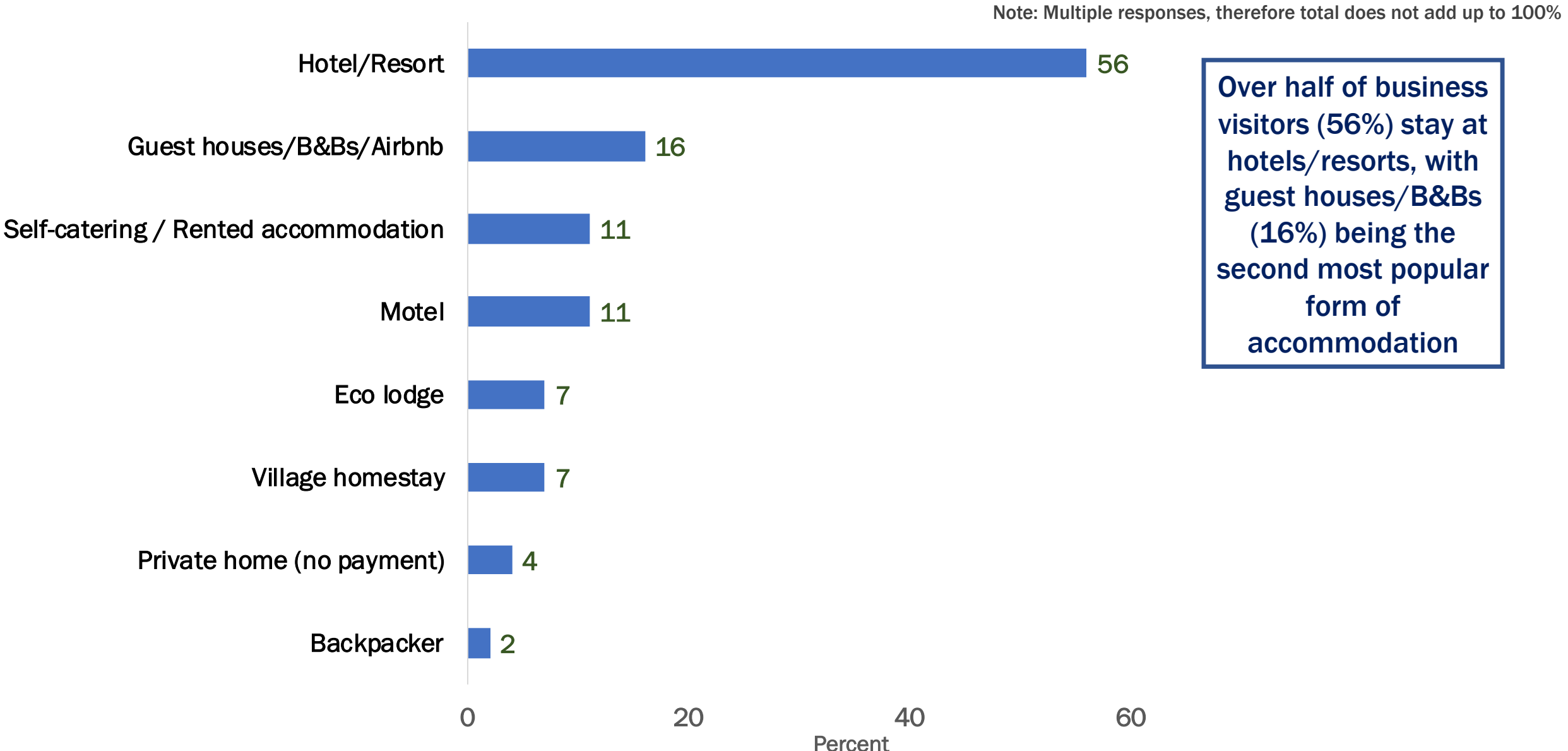
ALL VISITORS: Types of accommodation used on most recent trip



HOLIDAY VISITORS: Types of accommodation used on most recent trip



BUSINESS VISITORS - Types of accommodation used on most recent trip



Over half of business visitors (56%) stay at hotels/resorts, with guest houses/B&Bs (16%) being the second most popular form of accommodation

Transport used on most recent trip

Getting to the destination



- 65%** Solomon Airlines
- 28%** Boat - private
- 20%** Boat – commercial
- 13%** Private vehicle
- 5%** Other
- 3%** Taxi/minibus
- 1%** Rented vehicle
- 1%** Charter plane/helicopter

Boats, walking and private vehicles are main modes of transport at the destination, with airlines and boats being used to get there.



Transport used at the destination



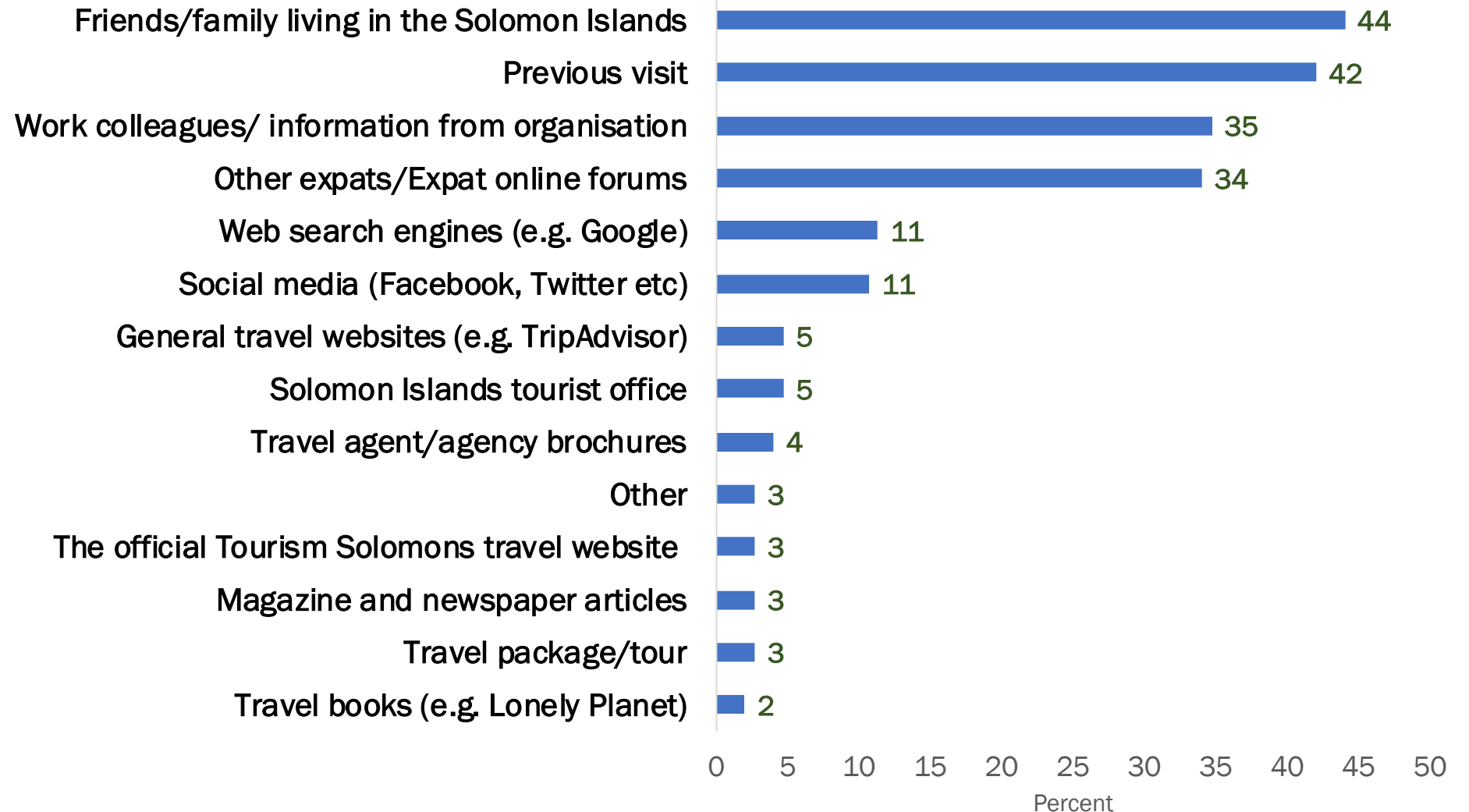
- 46%** Boat - private
- 26%** Other (mostly walking)
- 17%** Private vehicle
- 16%** Boat – commercial
- 12%** Taxi/minibus
- 4%** Rental vehicle
- 3%** Solomon airlines

Note: Multiple responses, therefore total does not add up to 100%

Information sources - how did you find out about the places visited*



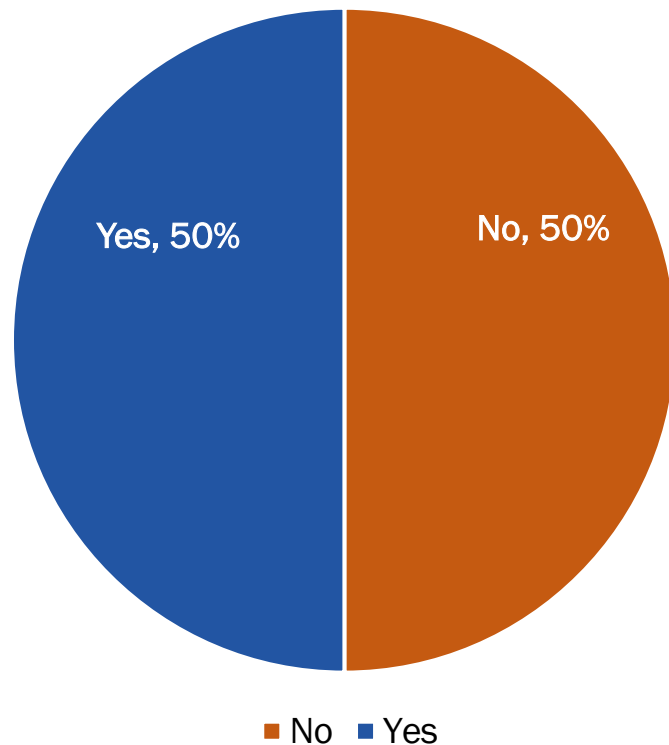
The majority of expatriates find out about destinations in Solomon Islands via word of mouth



Note: Multiple responses, therefore total does not add up to 100%

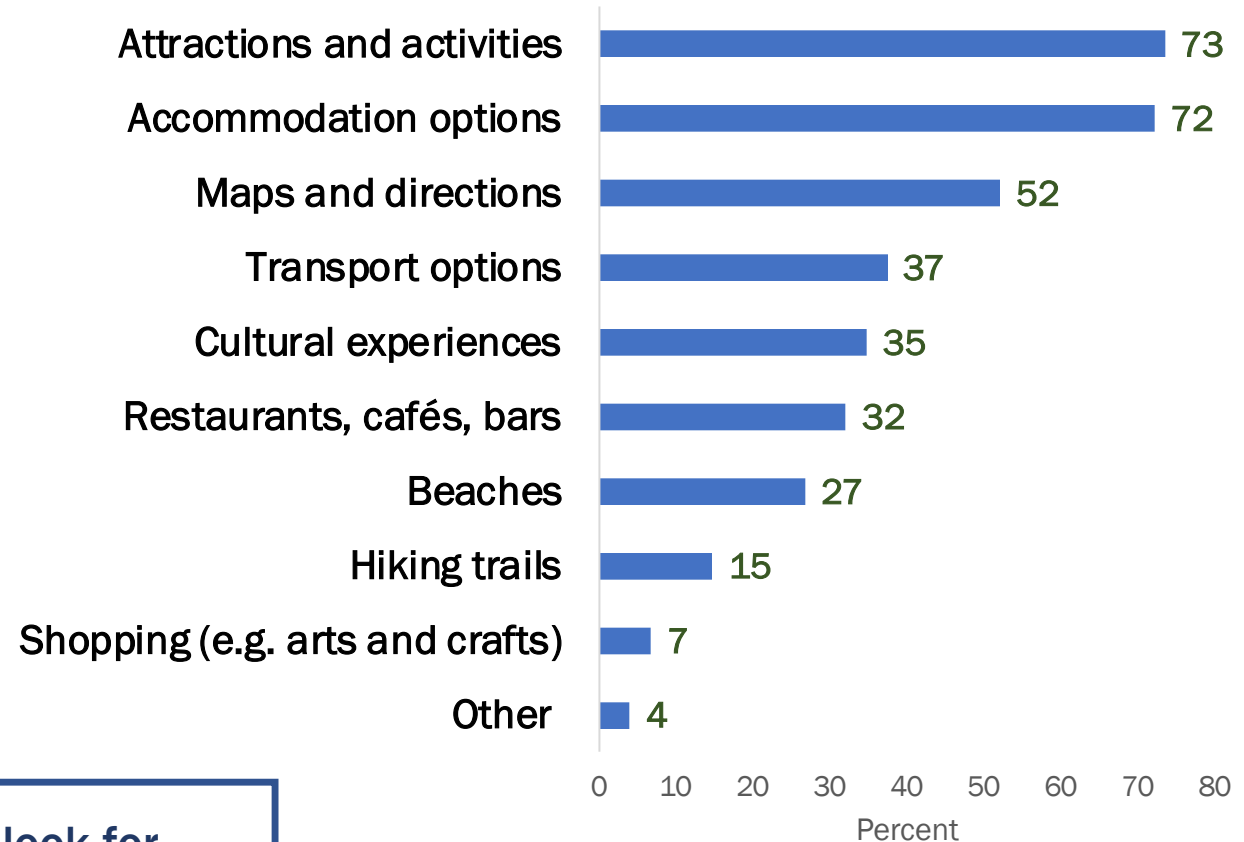
ALL VISITORS: Pre-trip planning – information sources

Did you look for visitor information about the destination before you went there?



Of those that look for information before their trip 70% look for attractions/activities and accommodation options

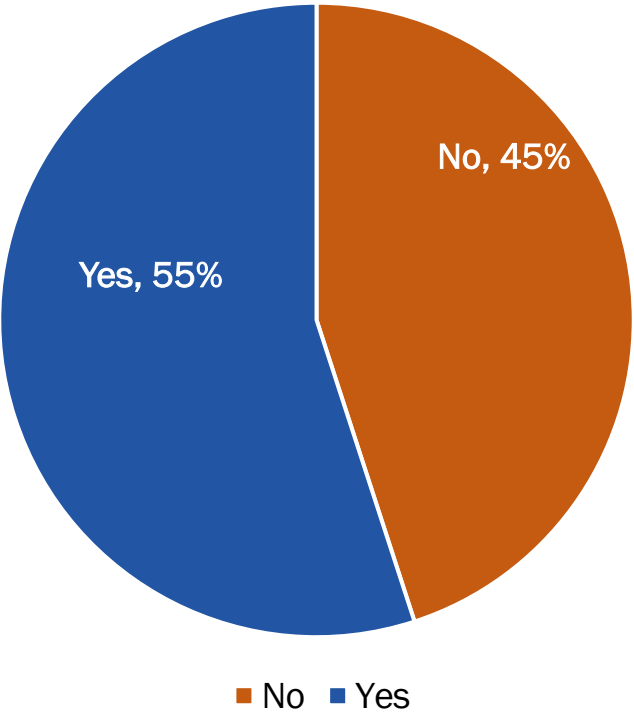
What information did you look for prior to departure?*



*Note: Multiple responses, therefore total does not add up to 100%

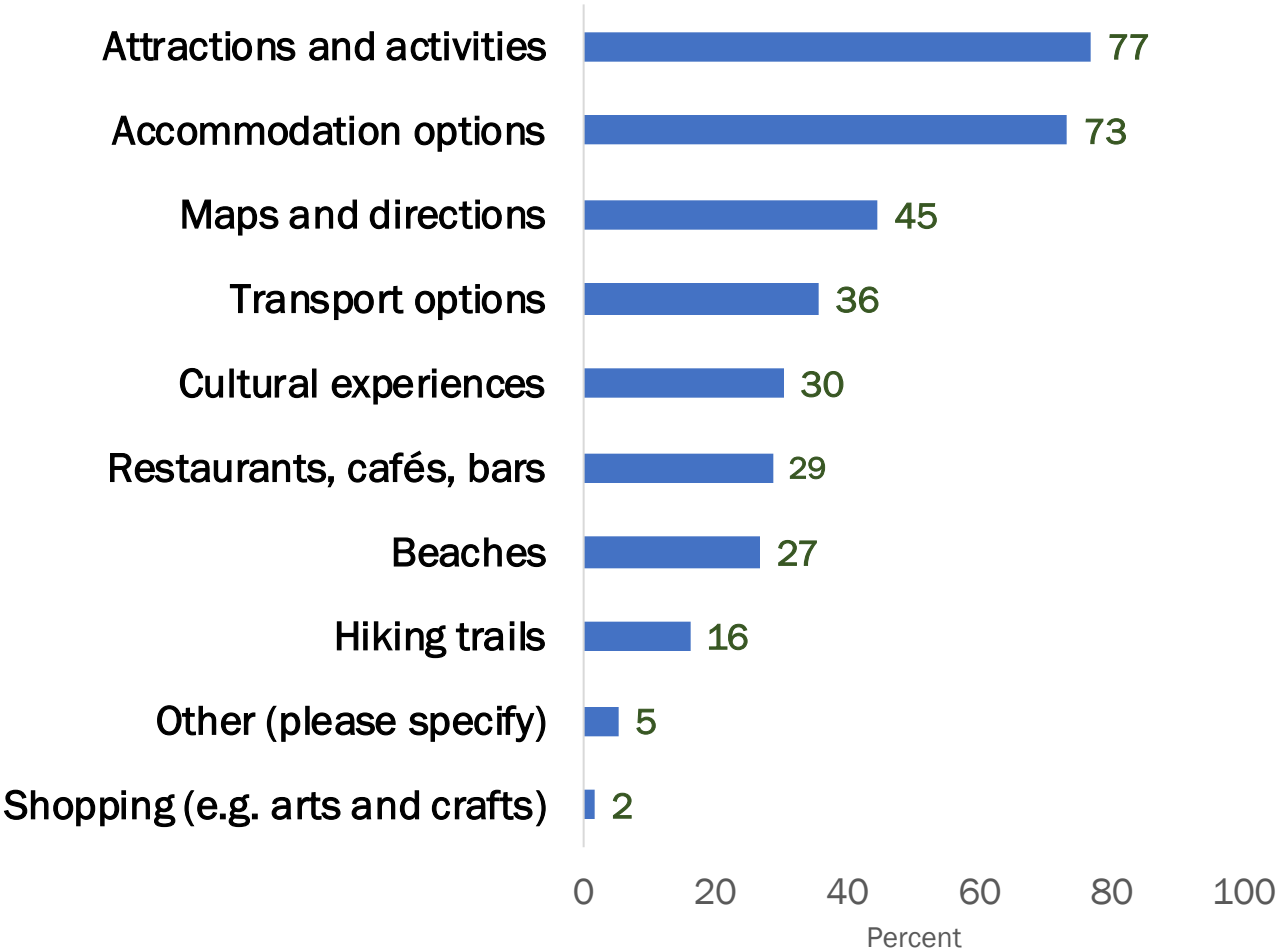
HOLIDAY VISITORS: Pre-trip planning – information sources

Did you look for visitor information about the destination before you went there?



Over half of holiday visitors look for information before they go – with almost 80% of that group looking for attractions and activities

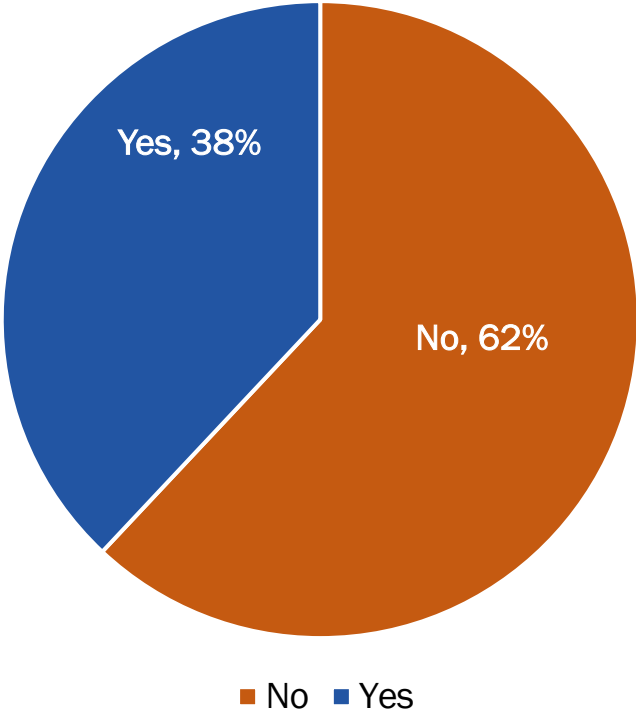
What information did you look for prior to departure?*



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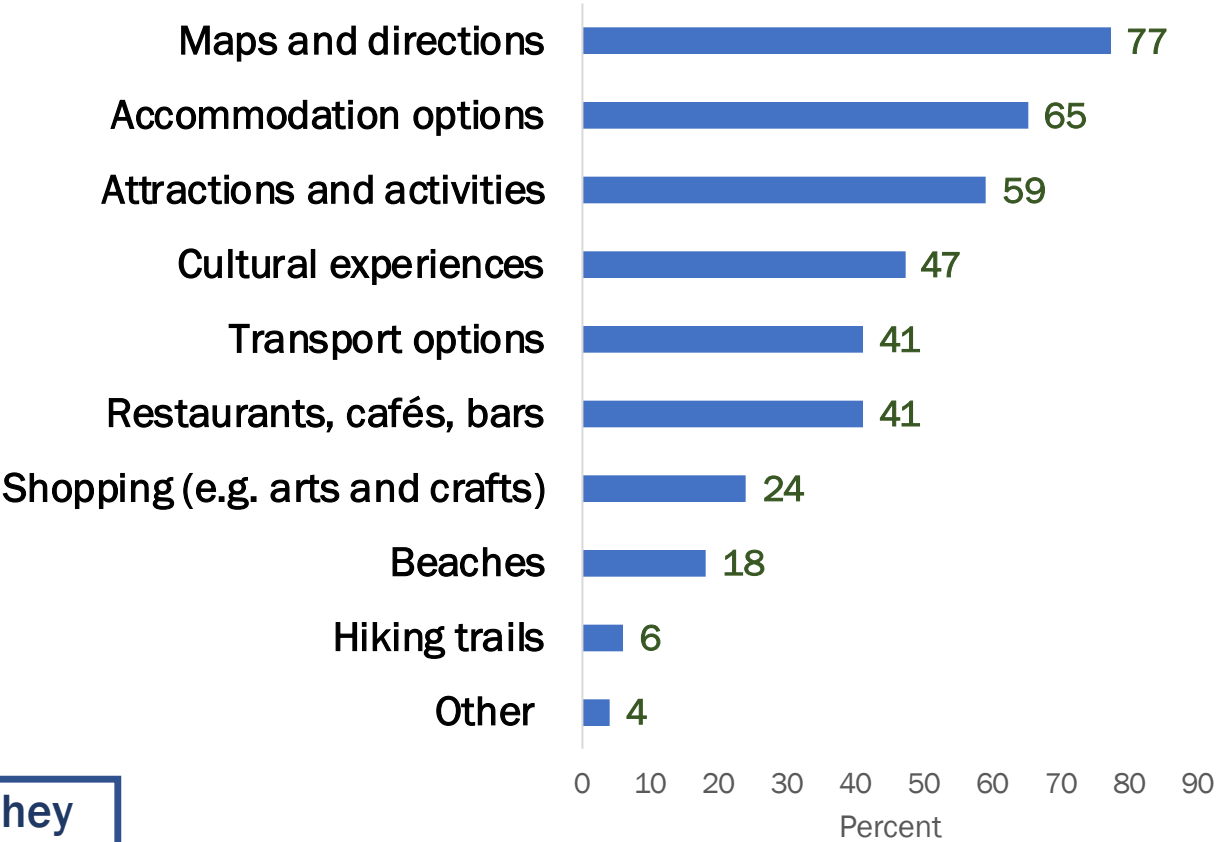
BUSINESS VISITORS: Pre-trip planning – information sources

Did you look for visitor information about the destination before you went there?



Business visitors are less likely look for information before they go (38%). Of those that do, most are looking for maps, directions, accommodation and information on activities.

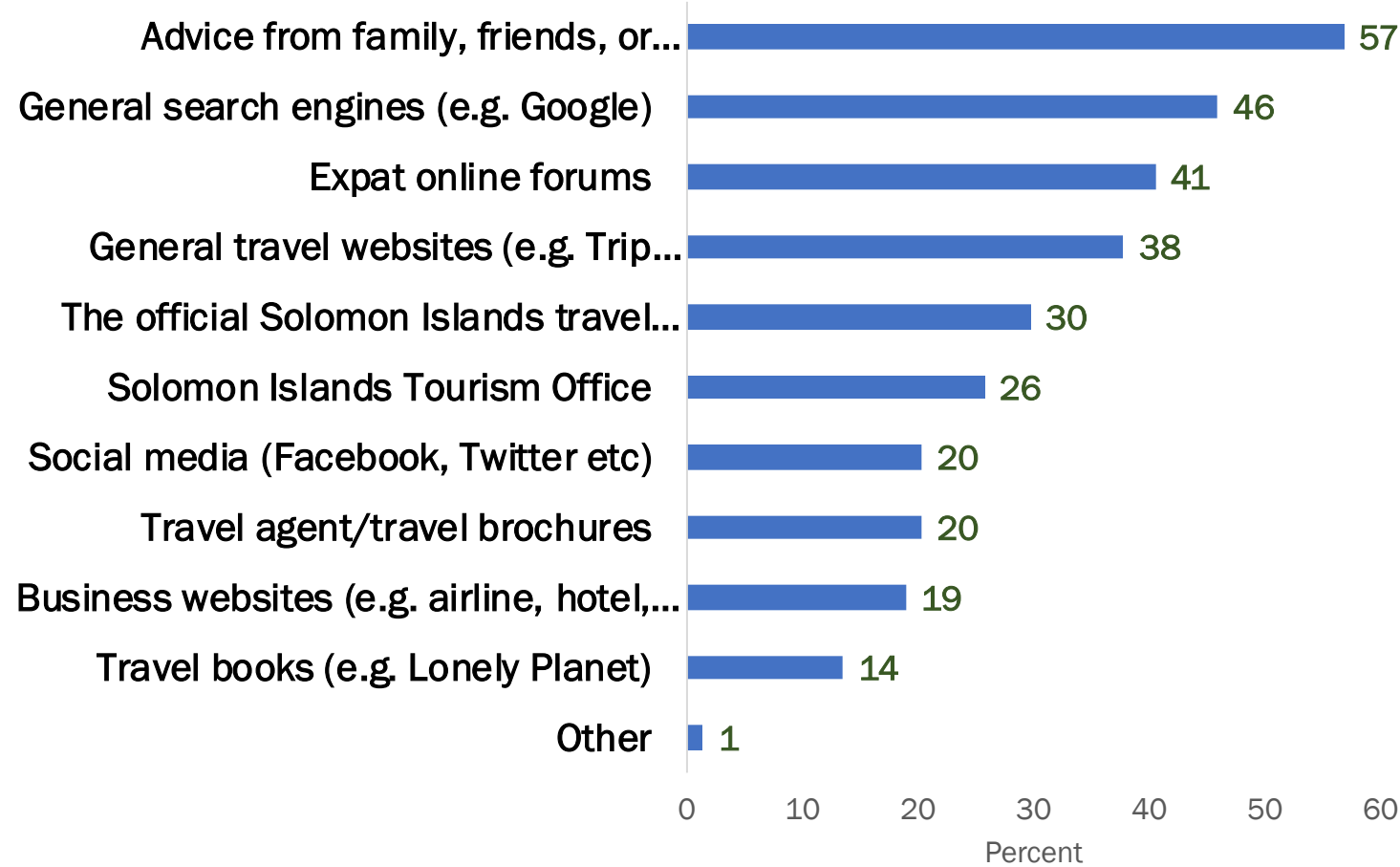
What information did you look for prior to departure?*



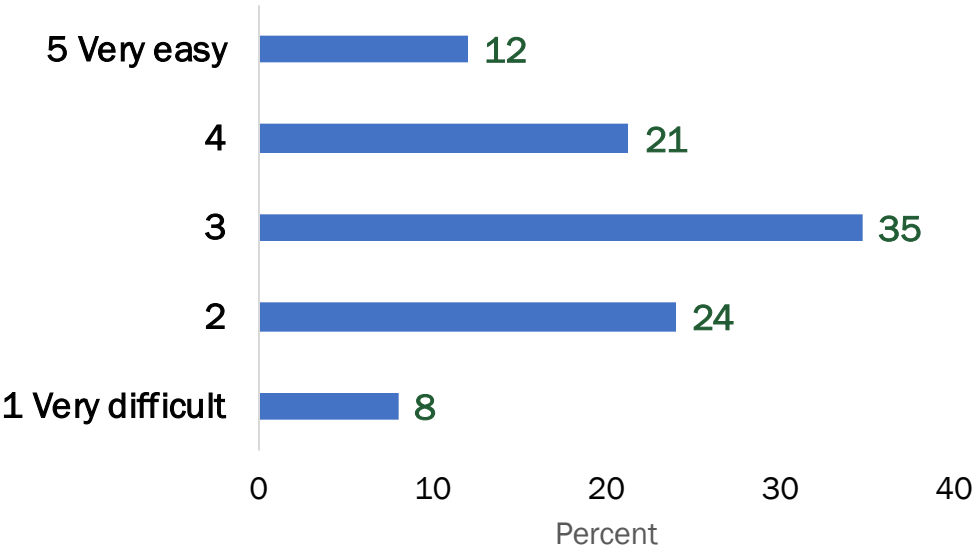
*Note: Multiple responses, therefore total does not add up to 100%

ALL VISITORS: Pre-trip planning – information sources

Where did you look for the information?*



How easy was it to find the information?

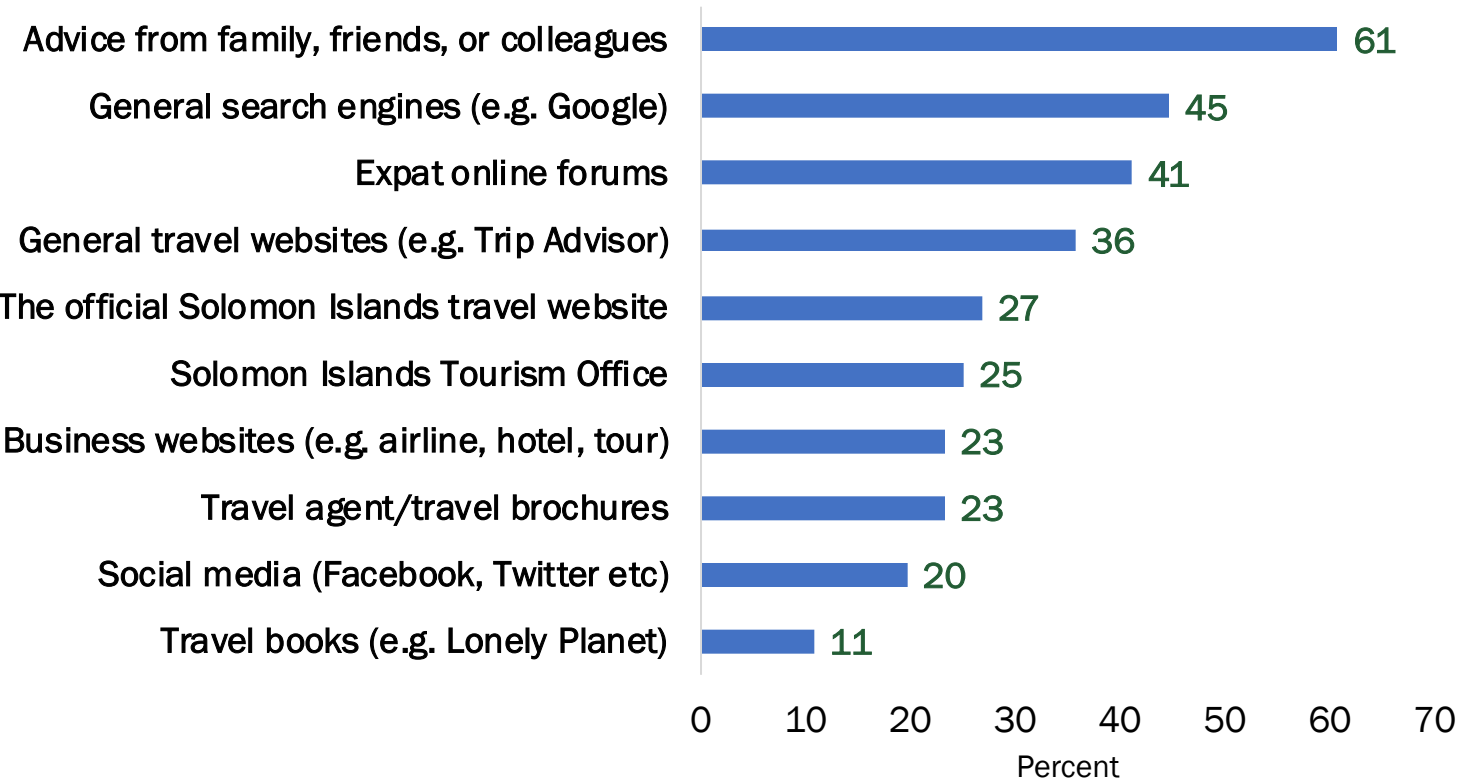


Almost 70% of those seeking information highlight some difficulty in finding it

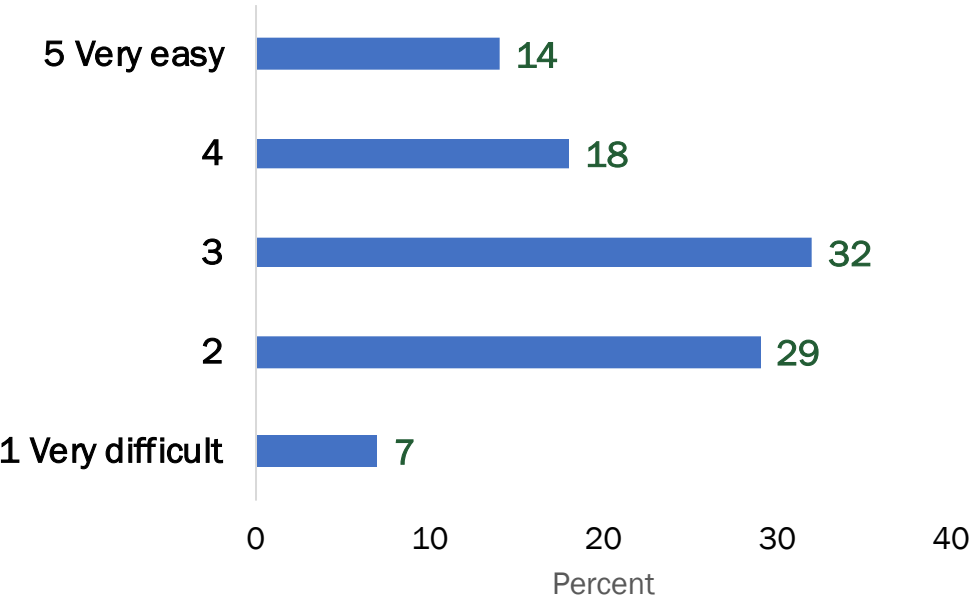
*Note: Multiple responses, therefore total does not add up to 100%

HOLIDAY VISITORS: Pre-trip planning – information sources

Where did you look for the information?*



How easy was it to find the information?

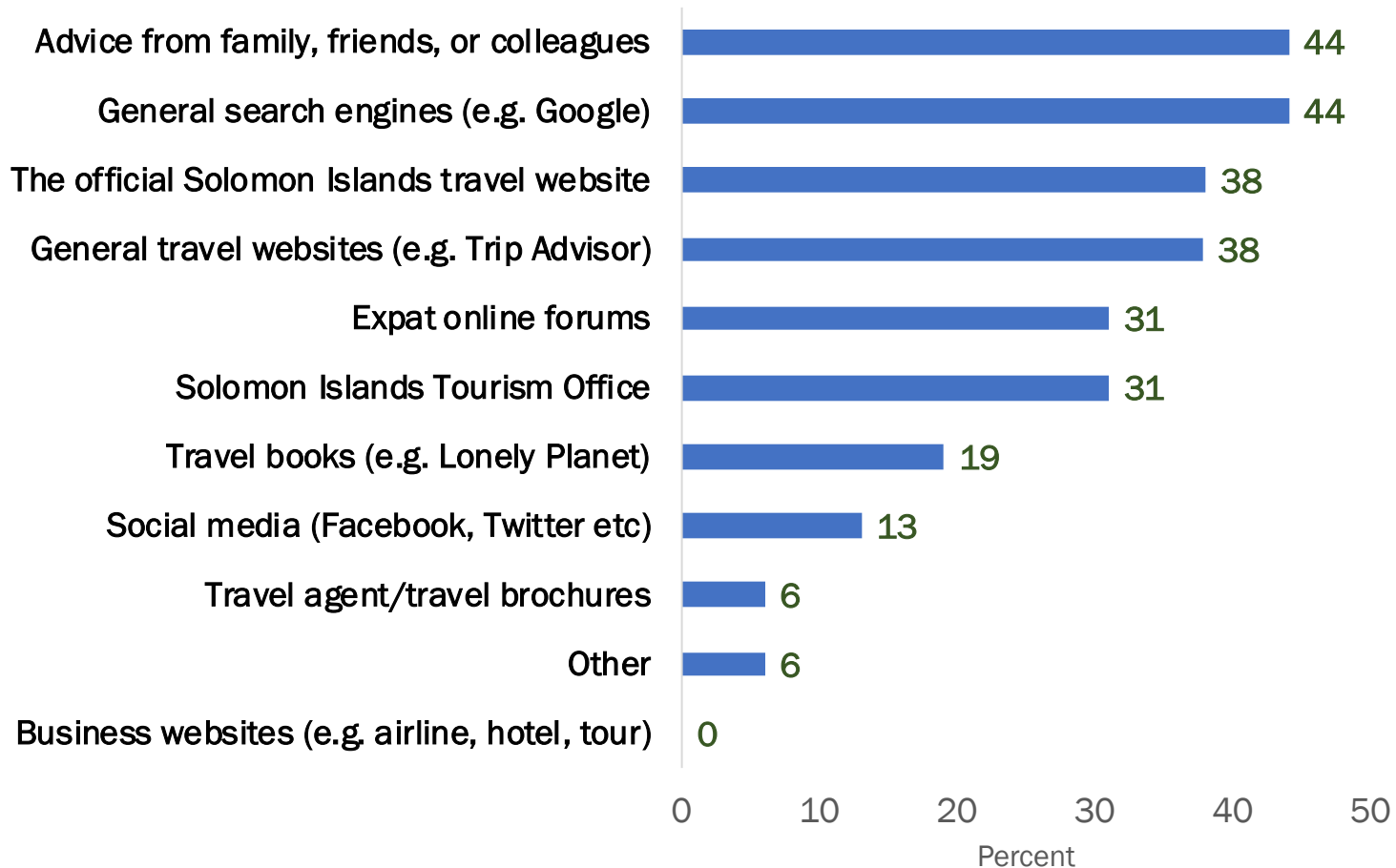


Of those holiday visitors looking for information before their trip over half rely on family and friends, with expat forums and google searches also important sources of information

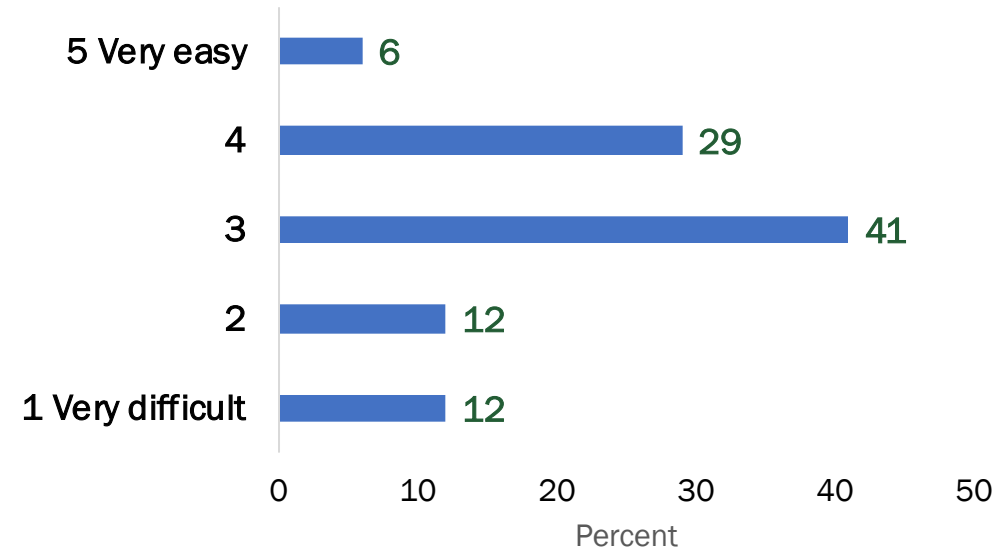
*Note: Multiple responses, therefore total does not add up to 100%

BUSINESS VISITORS: Pre-trip planning – information sources

Where did you look for the information?*



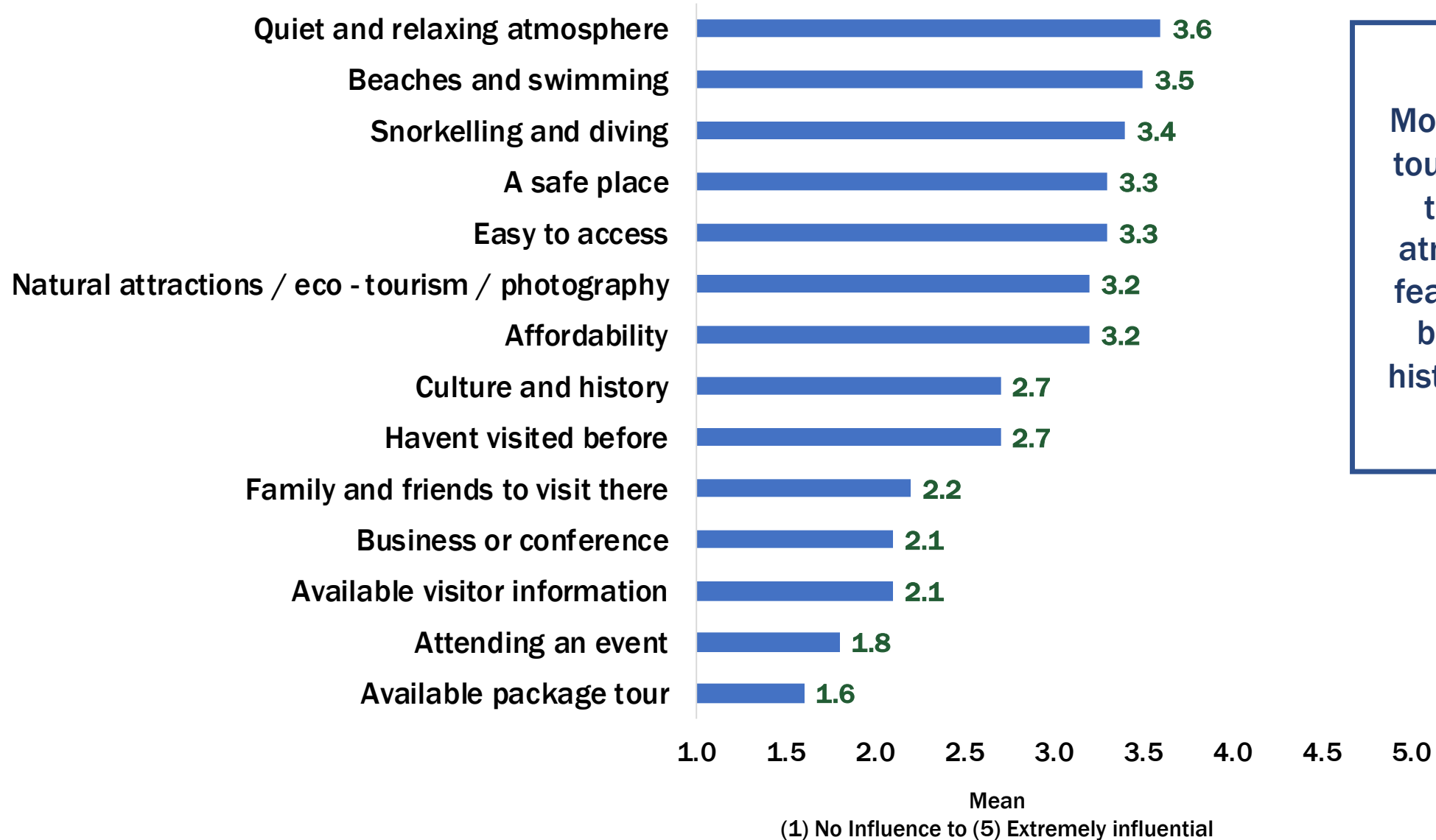
How easy was it to find the information?



Google searches and advice from others are equally important sources of travel information for domestic expatriate business visitors that do pre-trip planning

*Note: Multiple responses, therefore total does not add up to 100%

Factors influencing the decision to travel within Solomon Islands



Most domestic expatriate tourists are influenced to travel by the relaxing atmosphere and natural features (marine life and beaches). Culture and history are less influential

ALL VISITORS: How did you book your most recent travel?



I made my own travel bookings directly with providers

53

Travel bookings were made by others (business, friends, relatives)

30

Travel bookings were made through a travel agent

11

Travel bookings were made by a mix of travel agent and online bookings

5

Other

1

0 10 20 30 40 50 60
Percent

Very few domestic expatriate tourists use travel agents – over half of bookings are done directly with providers

HOLIDAY VISITORS: How did you book your most recent travel?



I made my own travel bookings directly with providers

67

Travel bookings were made by others (business, friends, relatives)

18

Travel bookings were made through a travel agent

9

Travel bookings were made by a mix of travel agent and online bookings

6

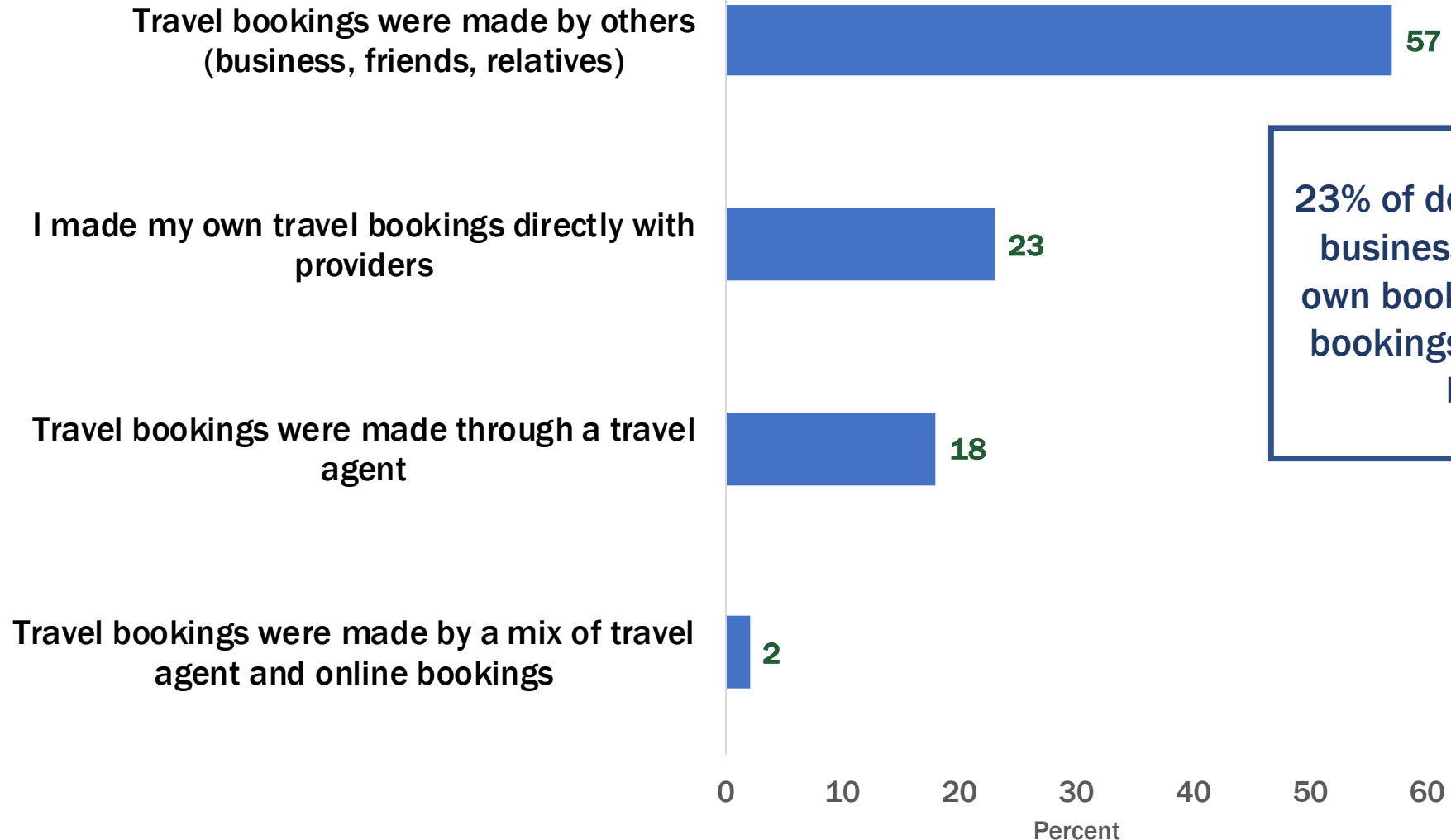
Other 0

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80

Percent

Almost 70% of domestic expatriate holiday visitors book directly with providers, very few use travel agents

BUSINESS VISITORS: How did you book your most recent travel?



23% of domestic expatriate business visitors do their own booking directly, most bookings (57%) are made by others.



Solomon Islands

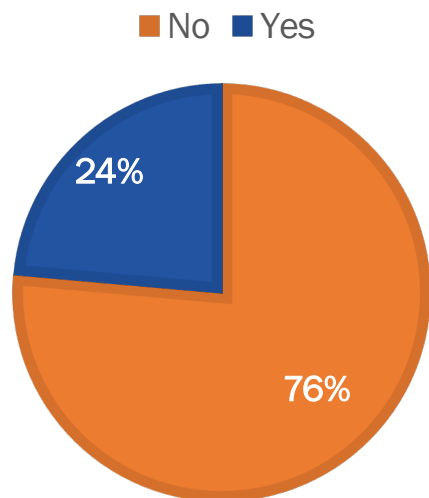
Domestic Expatriate Tourism Market

Domestic Expatriate Tourist Expenditure

Money spent on pre-paid packages, and a breakdown of spending once at the destination within Solomon Islands.

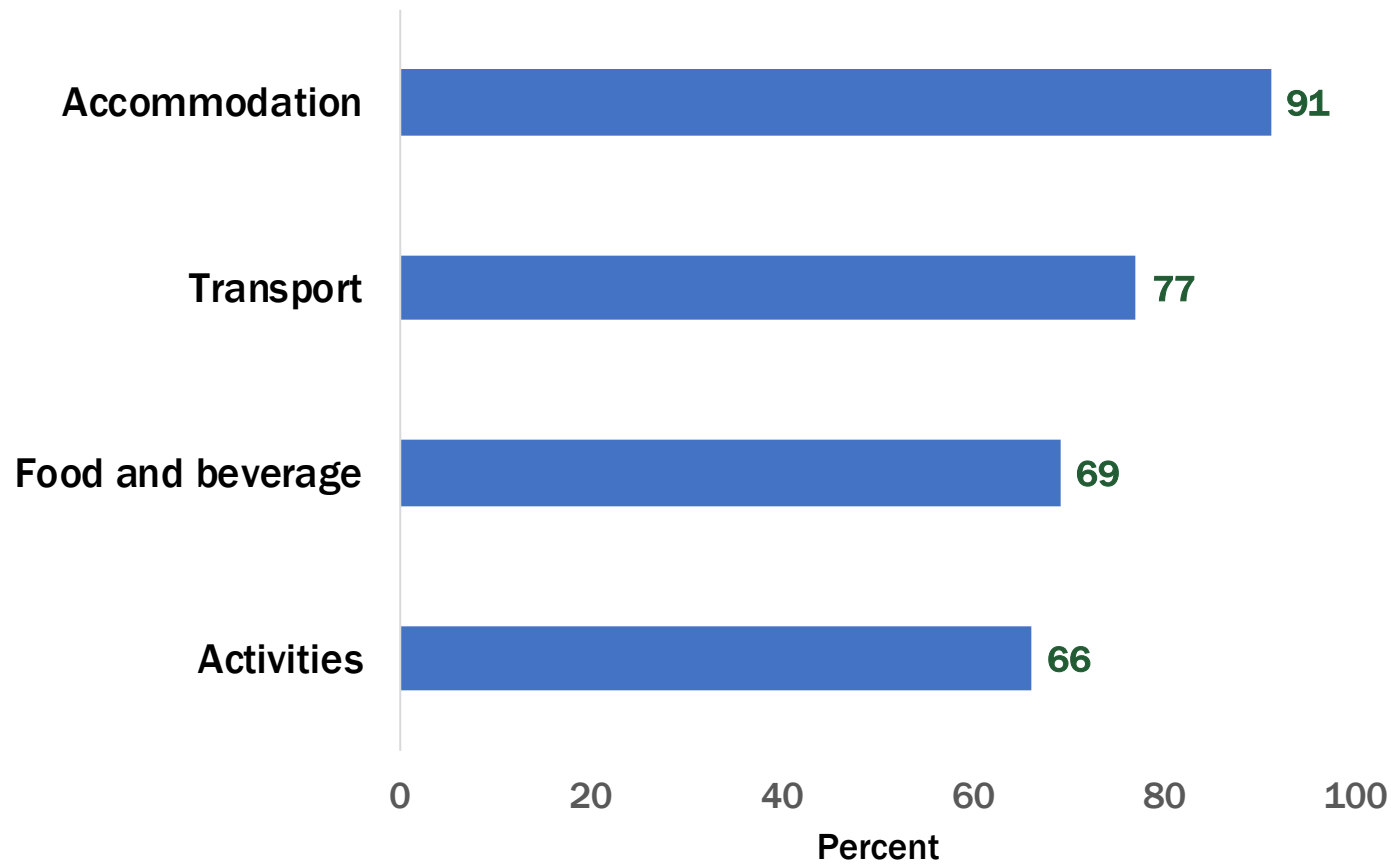
Pre-paid package expenditure

Did your recent overnight trip include any pre-paid (package) spend?



Average pre-paid package spend per visitor
(all visitors)
SBD 1,188

Pre-paid (package) items*



* Only those that paid before leaving and/or purchased a package.

Expenditure during travel (per person)*



Expenditure Item	Per person per day	Per person per trip	Percentage
Domestic flights	270	976	34
Accommodation	259	939	33
Restaurants, cafes & bars	104	376	13
Water-based transport (ferry, outboard, charter boat)	46	166	6
Water based activities	38	139	5
Groceries	15	53	2
Vehicle rental	7	25	1
Petrol	7	24	1
Public transport	3	13	1
Shopping (e.g. souvenirs, handicrafts)	11	39	1
Tours and sightseeing	10	38	1
Land based activities	7	24	1
Other	6	20	1
Internet cost	4	13	0
TOTAL	787	2,845	100

Each expatriate domestic tourist spends on average a total of **SBD 787** per day during travel

An average spend of **SDB 2,845** per person per trip during travel

Almost 70% of expenditure is on air travel and accommodation

*Spend covers a total of 247 people

ALL VISITORS: Average total spend (per day and per trip)

Average pre-paid package spend

Per Person
Per Trip
SBD 1,188



Per Person
Per Day
SBD 330

Average during travel spend

Per Person
Per Trip
SBD 2,845



Per Person
Per Day
SBD 787

**Per Person Per Day
SBD 1,117**

**Per Person Per Trip
SBD 4,033**

Footnote: Based on average length of stay of 3.6 nights

HOLIDAY VISITORS: Average total spend (per day and per trip)

Average pre-paid package spend

Per Person
Per Trip
SBD 1,378



Per Person
Per Day
SBD 394

Average during travel spend

Per Person
Per Trip
SBD 2,322



Per Person
Per Day
SBD 663

Per Person Per Day
SBD 1,057

Per Person Per Trip
SBD 3,700

Footnote: Based on average length of stay of 3.5 nights

BUSINESS VISITORS: Average total spend (per day and per trip)

Average pre-paid package spend

Per Person
Per Trip
SBD 456



Per Person
Per Day
SBD 127

Average during travel spend

Per Person
Per Trip
SBD 4,902



Per Person
Per Day
SBD 1,362

**Per Person Per Day
SBD 1,489**

**Per Person Per Trip
SDB 4,902**

Footnote: Based on average length of stay of 3.6 nights

Estimated economic impact per 1000 domestic expatriate overnight trips

Expatriate domestic tourists	Per person per trip	Economic impact per 1000 trips in Solomon Islands
Holiday	SDB 3,700	SDB 3.7 million
Business	SDB 4,902	SDB 4.9 million
All	SDB 4,033	SDB 4.0 million

The estimated contribution of the domestic expatriate market per 1000 overnight trips is over SBD 4 million



Solomon Islands

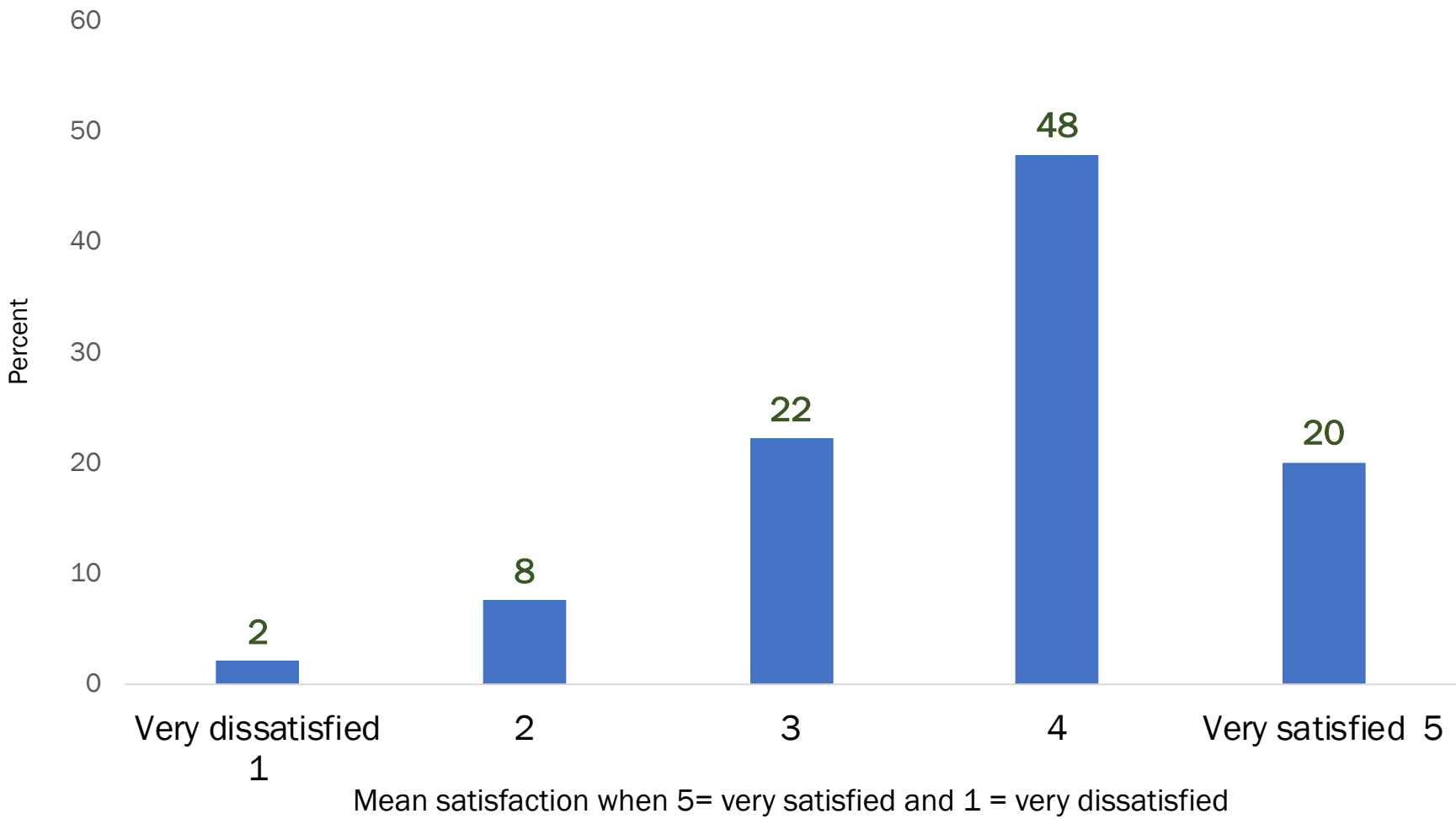
Domestic Expatriate Tourism Market

Domestic Expatriate Tourist Satisfaction

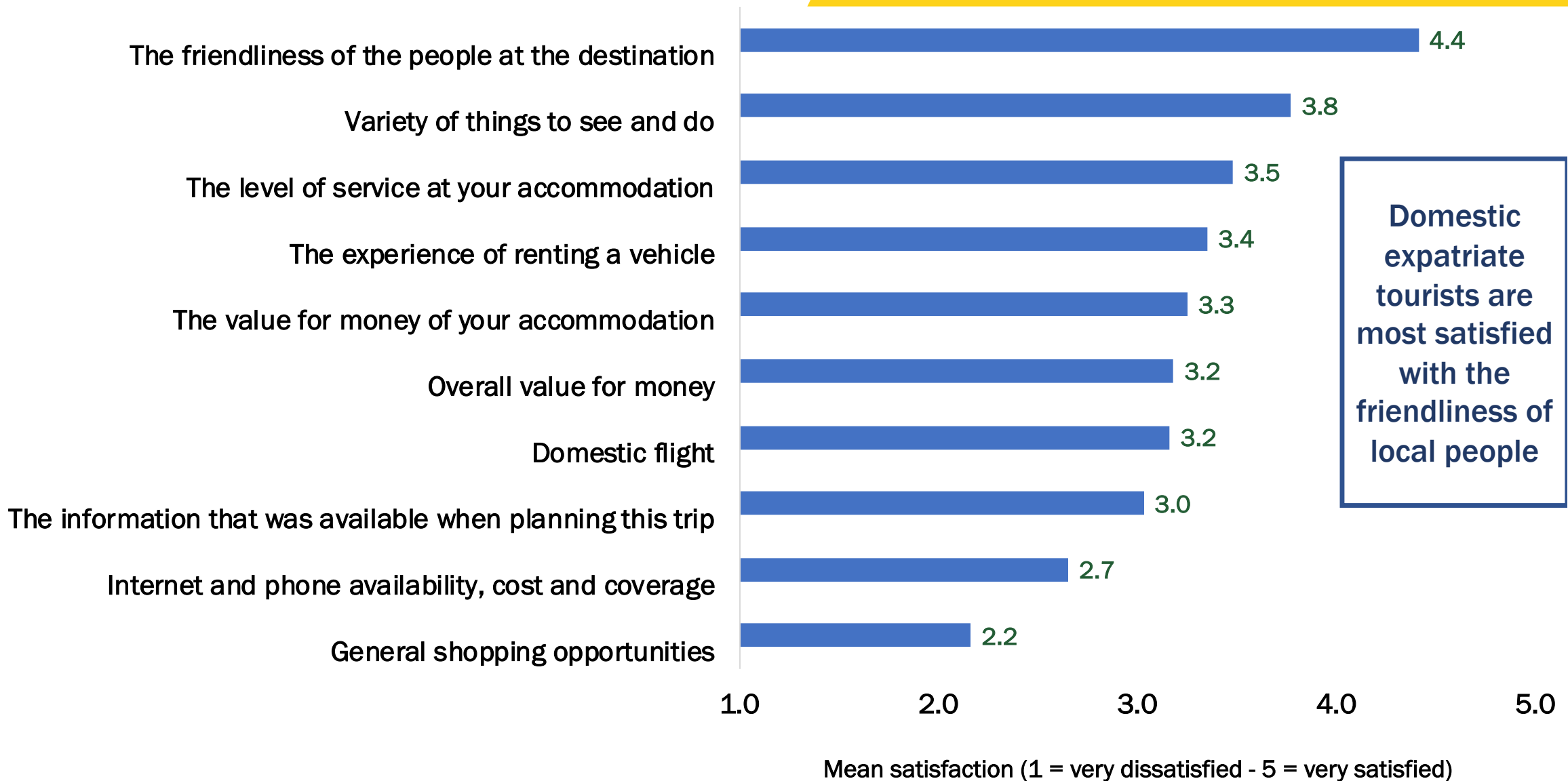
Most and least appealing elements of the trip, overall satisfaction, intentions to recommend and improvements.

Overall satisfaction with most recent overnight trip

Expatriates are satisfied but there is room for improvement – the average satisfaction rating is 3.8 out of 5 (5= very satisfied / 1 =very dissatisfied)

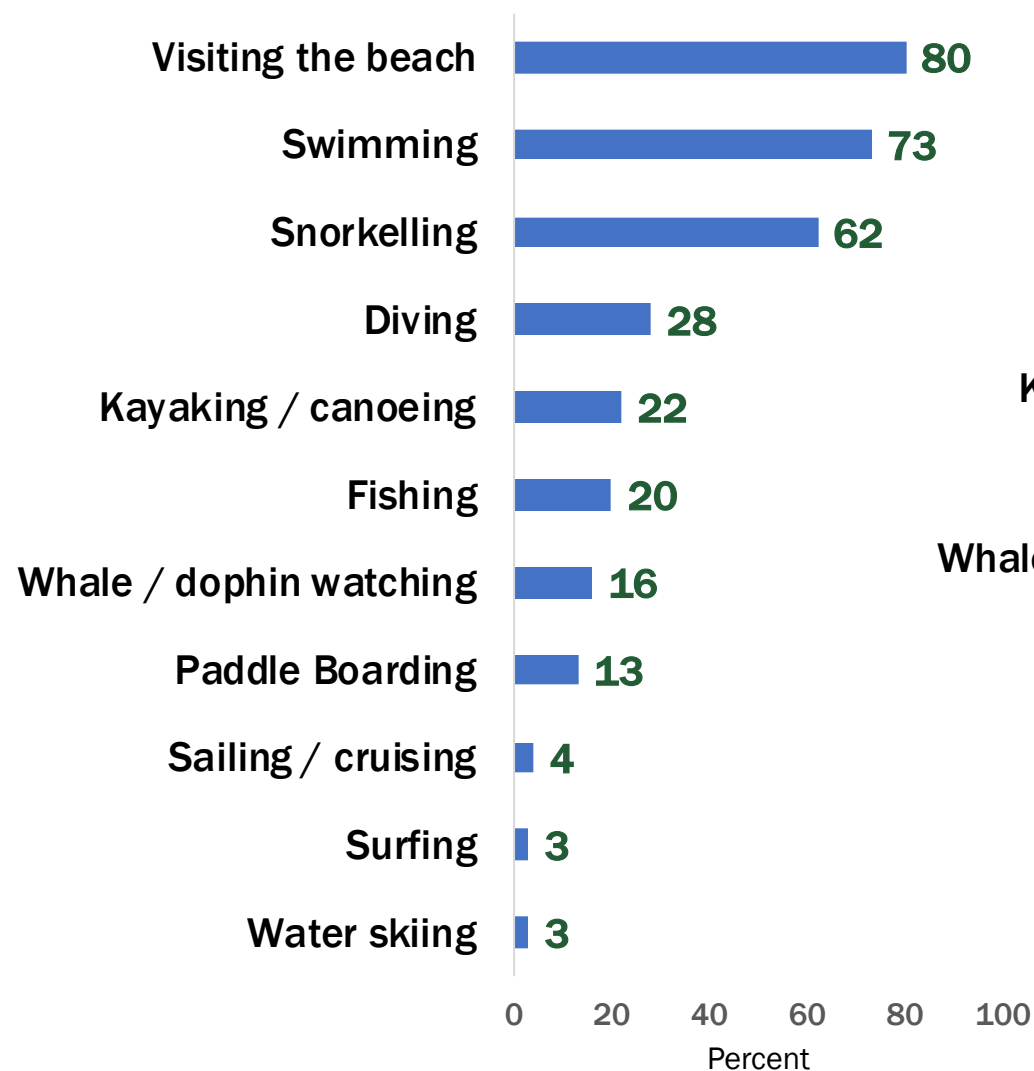


Satisfaction – general (most recent trip)

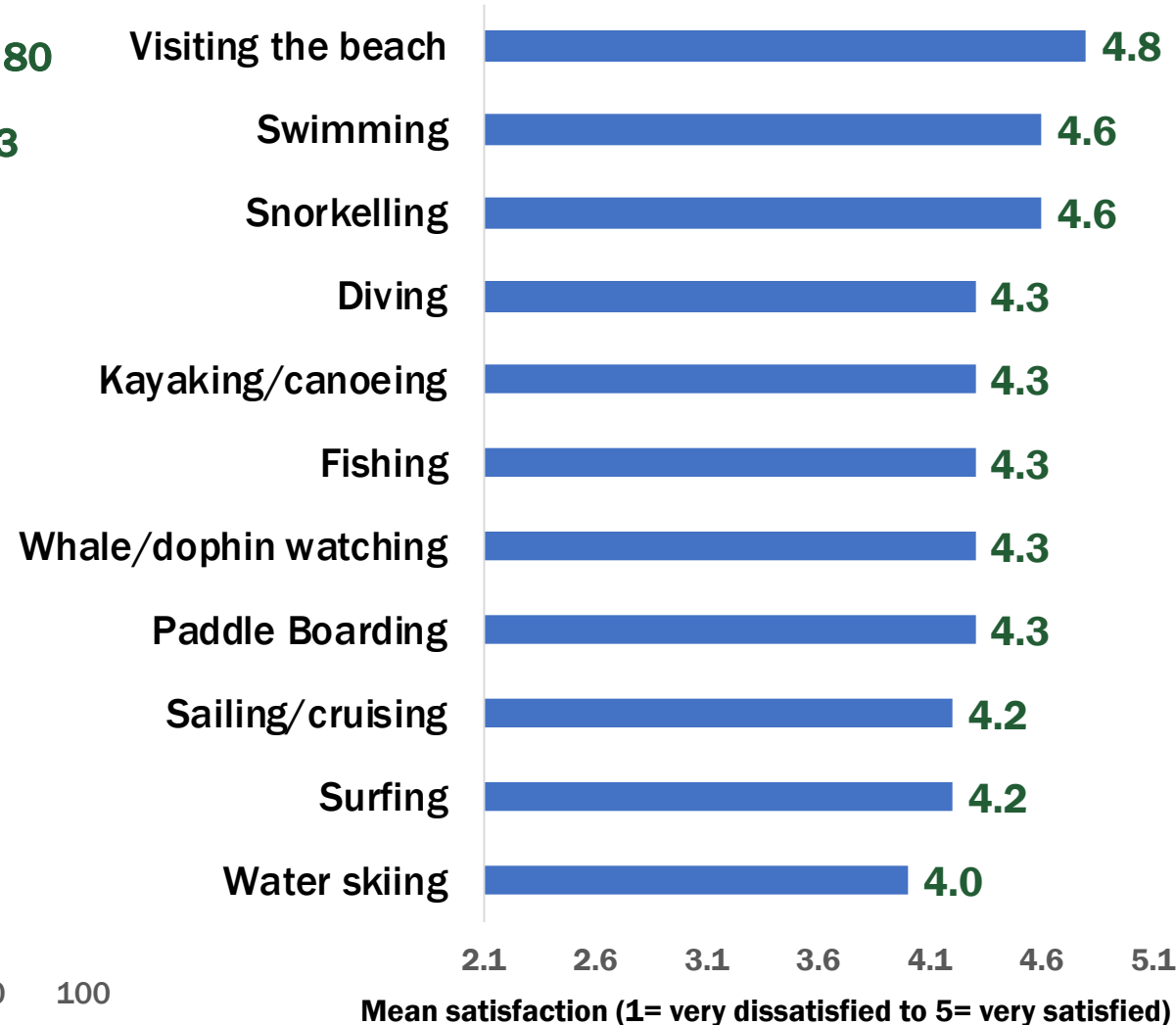


Water-based activities

Participation*



Satisfaction

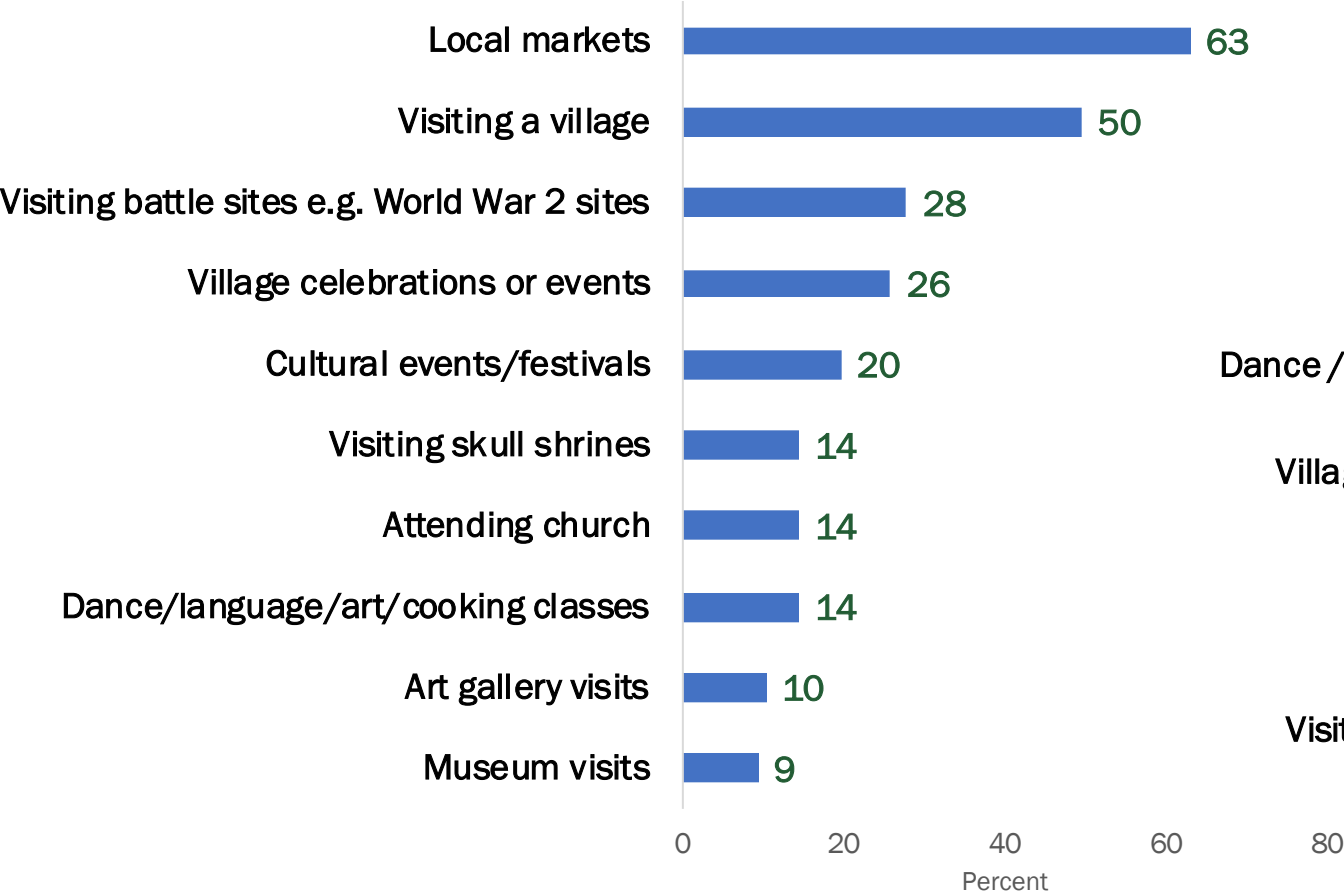


High percentages of visitors participate in water-based activities and are very satisfied with the experiences

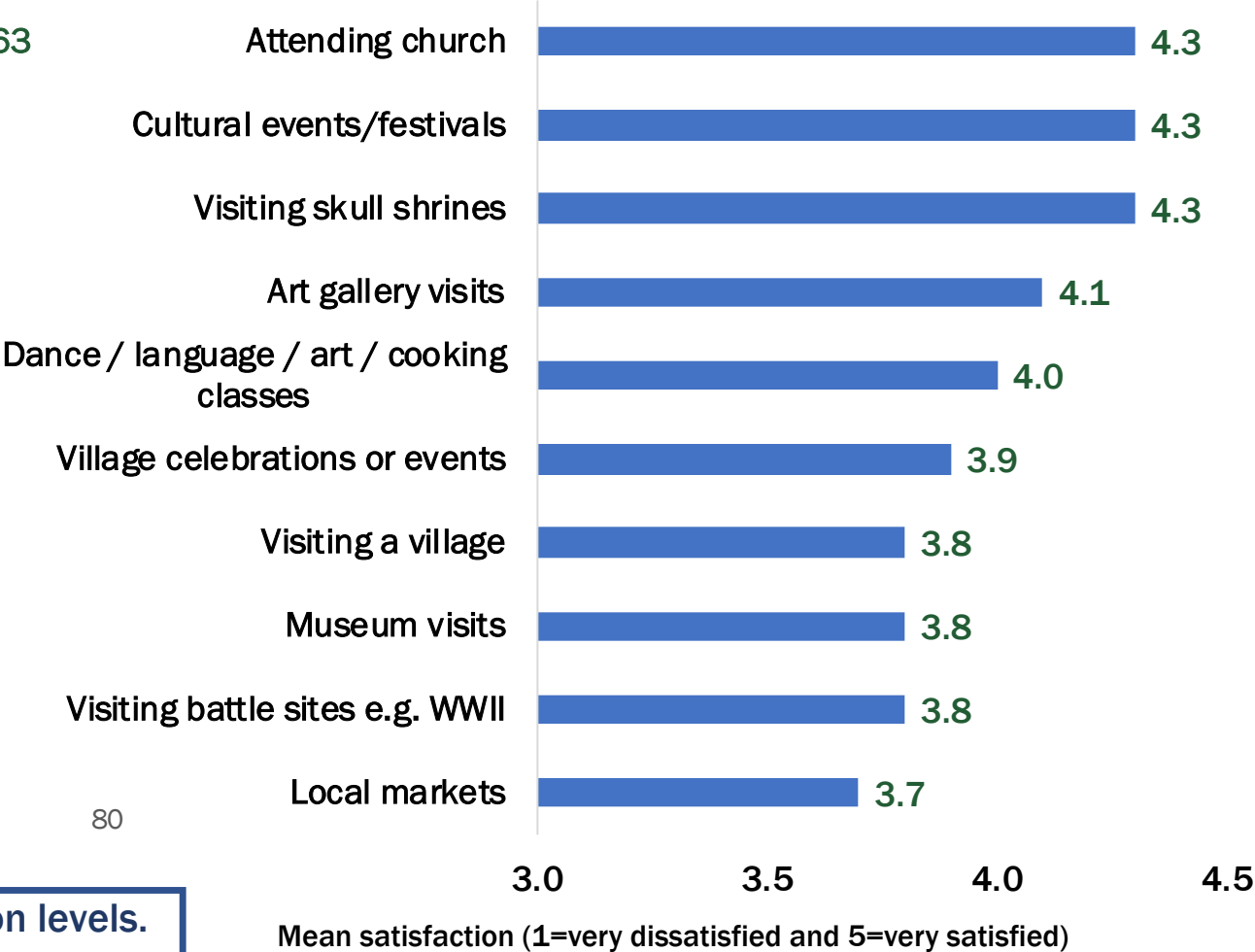
*Note: Multiple responses, therefore total does not add up to 100%

Cultural interaction activities

Participation*



Satisfaction

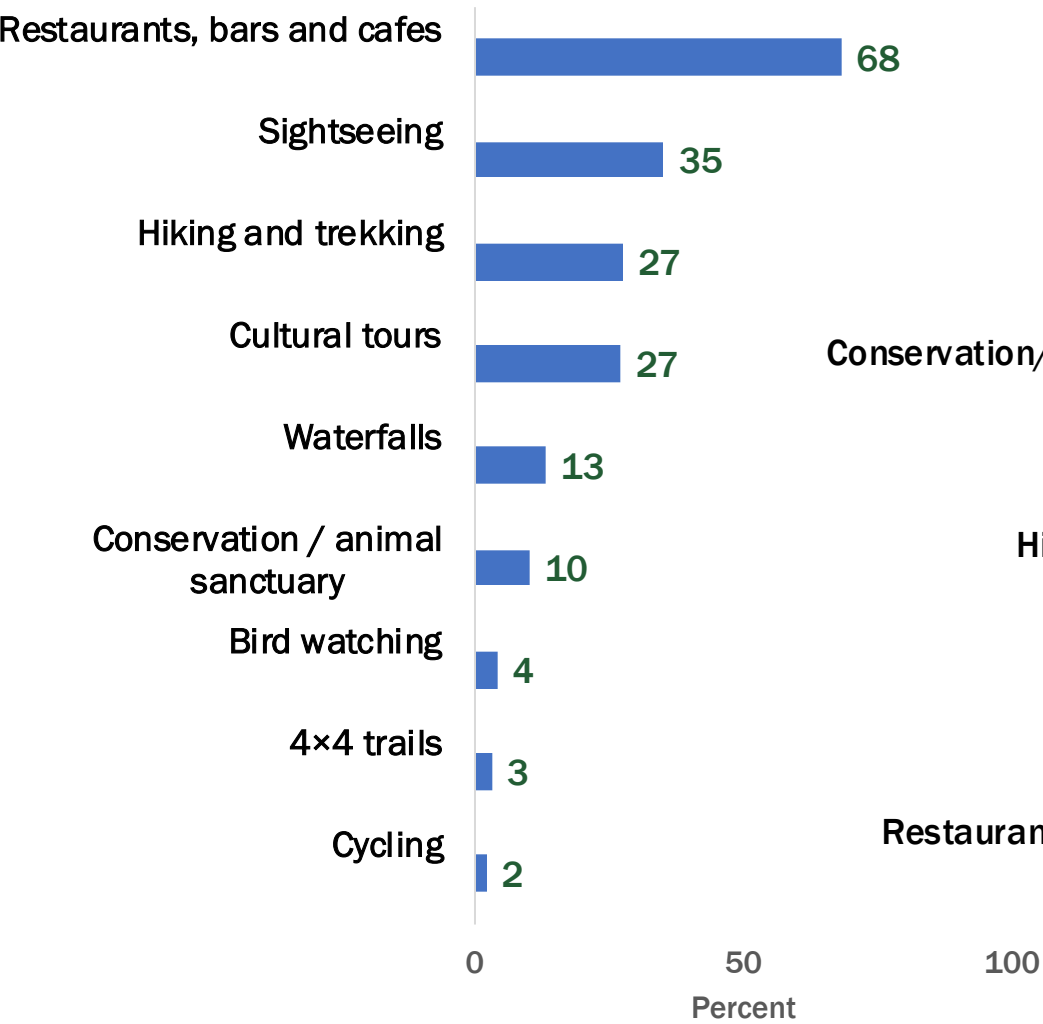


Local markets have high participation but the lowest satisfaction levels.
Domestic expatriate tourists are most satisfied with attending church
however only 14% participate

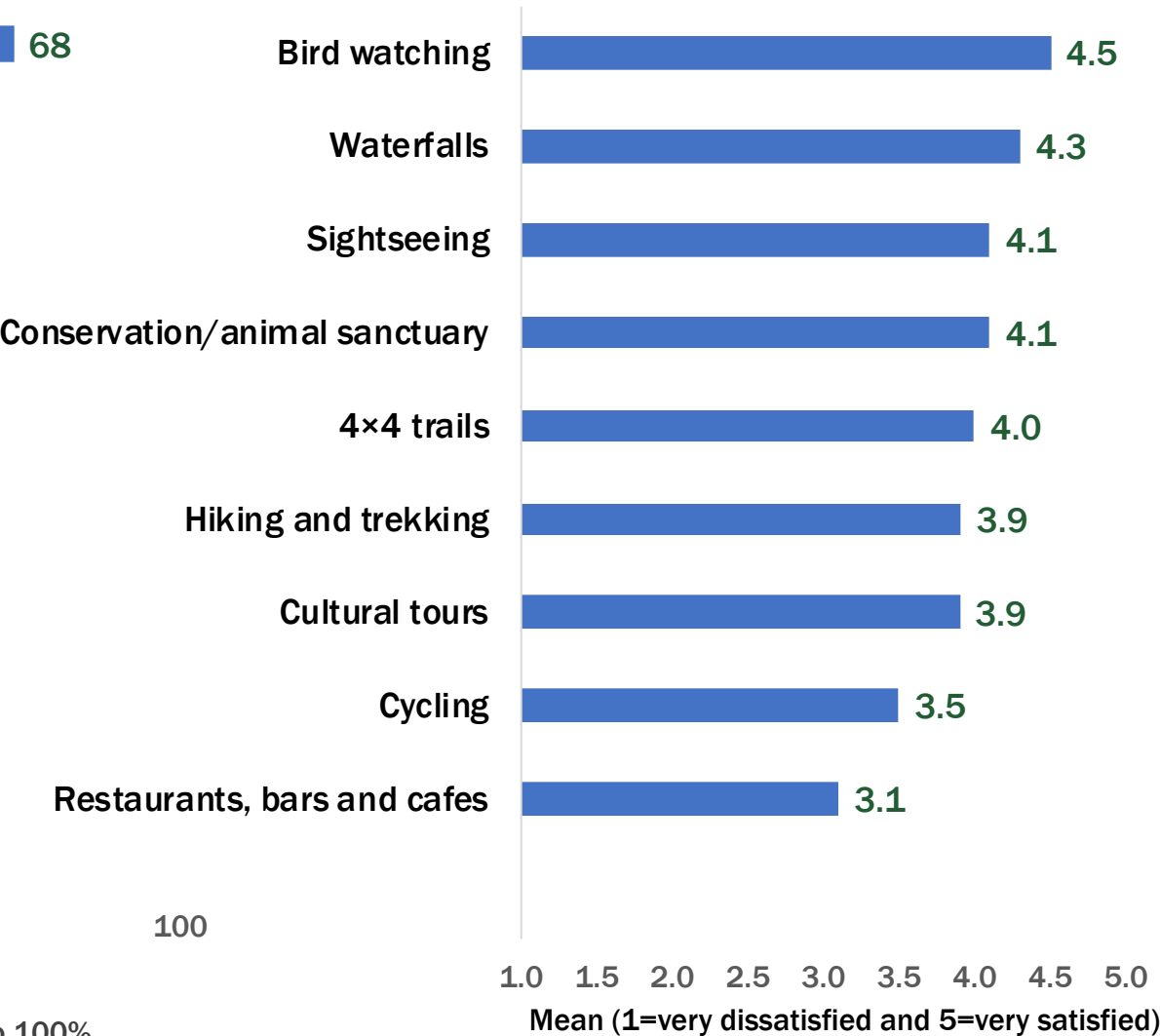
*Note: Multiple responses, therefore total does not add up to 100%

Land-based Activities and Touring

Participation*



Satisfaction



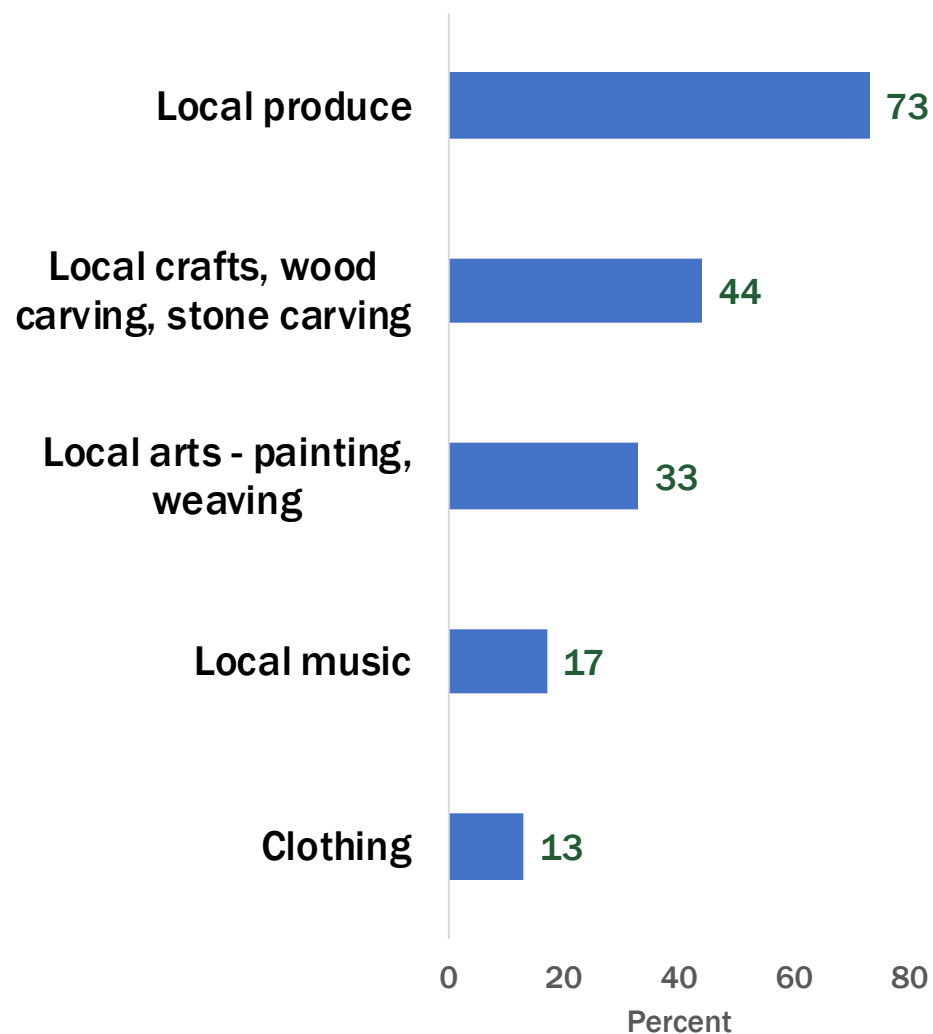
Restaurants, café, bars have the highest level of participation and lowest levels of satisfaction.

Birdwatching has the highest satisfaction rating but only 4% participate

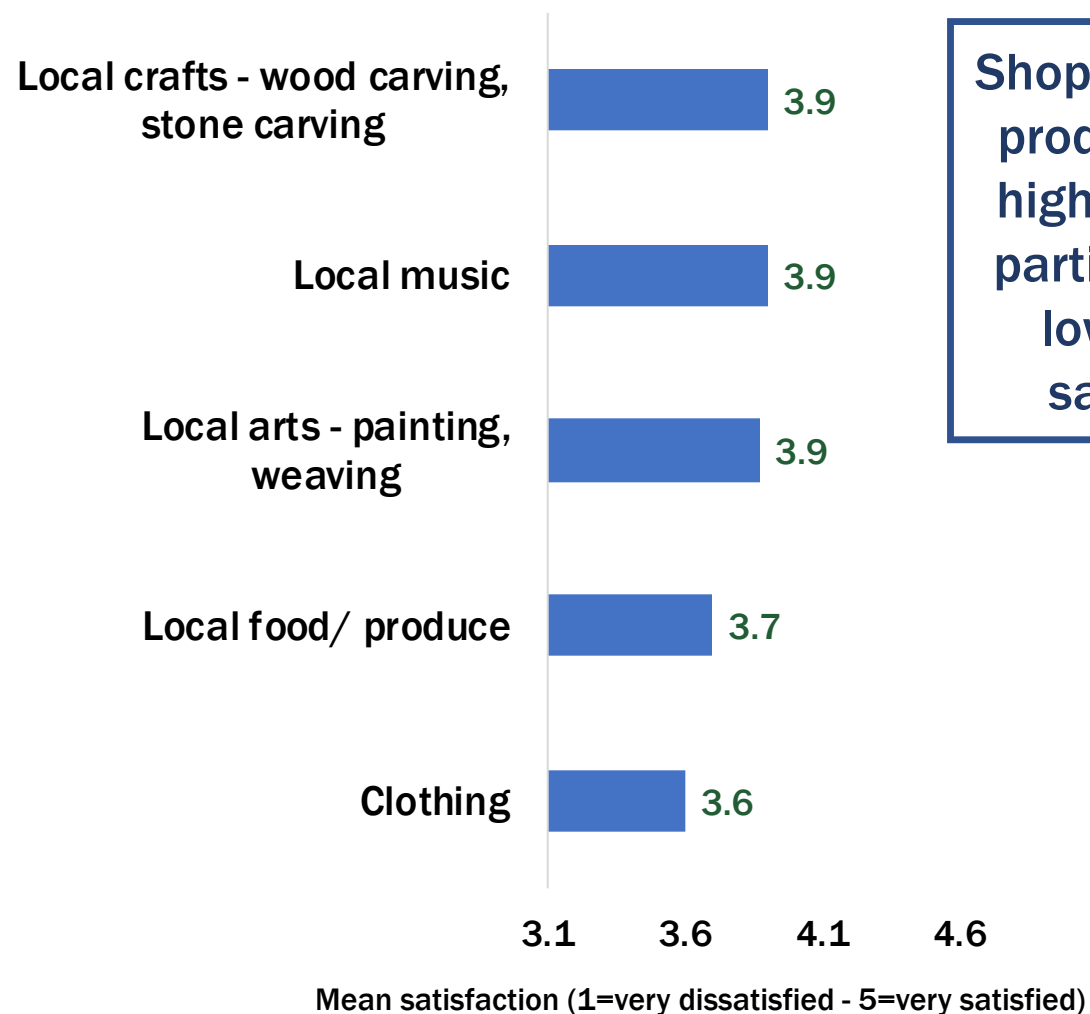
*Note: Multiple responses, therefore total does not add up to 100%

Shopping activities

Participation*



Satisfaction



Shopping for local produce has the highest levels of participation but low levels of satisfaction

*Note: Multiple responses, therefore total does not add up to 100%

What activities would you have liked to participate in that were not available?



Water sports (30%) – kayak rental, boat, jet ski, fishing, guided snorkelling, guided tours, small island visits



Cultural activities (30%) – craft/weaving workshops, cooking classes, listening to music and dancing, local food, handicraft and arts, locally guided walks, home-stay



Land-based activities (14%) – guided walks, shopping, motorbikes, 4x4, spa, cinema



Food and beverage (6%) – cold drinks, local food, quality meals

Domestic expatriate tourists would like to see more water sports and cultural activities developed

Footnote: n=55. Multiple responses therefore total does not =100%. Some respondents chose to comment that not having structured activities was appealing, allowing for time to relax.

What activities would you have liked to participate in that were not available?

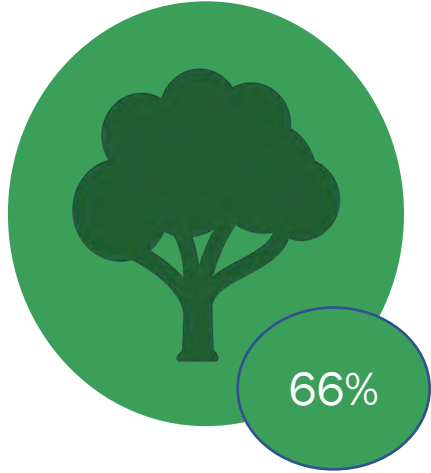
“It would have been nice if there had been more available water-based activities, like kayak rental or a fishing rod, or even a local guide to take us on a fishing trip or guided snorkelling/spear fishing.”

“Guided walks around the local area”

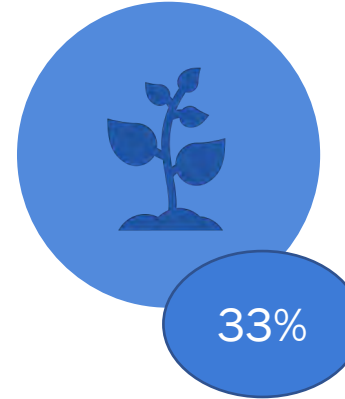
“A cultural activity such as listening to panpipes, or dancing, and eating/preparing local food”

“A lot - from having nice meals and cold drinks at a nice place to any kind of water related activity, but as nothing is offered...”

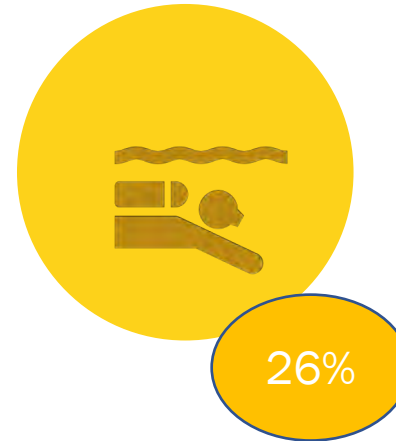
Most appealing aspects (based on visitor comments)



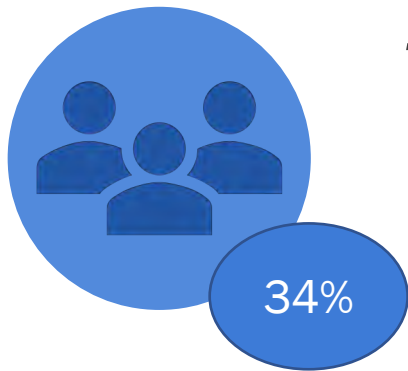
#1. Unspoiled nature – beautiful, beach, pristine, clean environment (air & water)



#3. Remote, secluded, peaceful and relaxing



#4. Marine life and activities – snorkelling, diving, swimming



#2. Experiencing the local way of life, warm welcoming people

Most Appealing Aspects – other themes

- Escaping Honiara
- Spending time with friends
- Pleasant accommodation
- Good food – fresh local produce
- Good service at accommodation
- Adventurous journey to destination
- Closeness to Honiara (ability to access easily)

Most appealing aspects – sample of relevant quotes

#1. Unspoiled nature – beautiful scenery, beach, clean environment (air & water)

“Getting away from Honiara, **clean water, clean air**, relaxing with friends, safety”

“The **physical beauty** of the ocean and beaches.”

“The **beautiful island** and **water scenery**.”

#2. Experiencing the local way of life, warm welcoming people

“Seeing villages not seen before, being able to walk around and **see how locals really live**.”

“The **people and the scenery are amazing** in the Solomon Islands.”

“The **beauty of the lagoon, the friendliness and openness of the people**.”

“**Solomon Island people and our interactions with them were a real highlight**.”

Most appealing aspects - quotes

#3. Remote, secluded, peaceful and relaxing

“Just the **solace**, the **ambiance**.”

“**Peace and quiet** and **undeveloped, non-touristy**.”

“Great scenery, **alone on the beach**, beautiful snorkelling.”

#4. Marine life and activities – snorkelling, diving, swimming

“Locally supported dive operation relying entirely on village resources.”

“I love water sports and Solomon Islands always provides the **best ocean conditions** - warm water, clear visibility.”

“Diving/Snorkelling, **interaction with sea life**.”

“The **untouched and healthy marine** life is the biggest drawcard of Solomon Islands.”

Least appealing aspects (based on visitor comments)



24%

#1. Poor accommodation standards and facilities – cleanliness and basic facility provision



17%

#2. Poor Value for money (cost of accommodation and transport for value received)



16%

#3. Poor service and communication – airlines and accommodation



11%

#4. Unreliable scheduling of flights and ferries – hard to plan trip

Least appealing aspects – other themes

- Expensive – price of travel (domestic flights and accommodation)
- Hard to access:
 - not enough information and poor communication about how to get there and back
 - poor infrastructure - road infrastructure, long boat journeys on small vessels, poor state of domestic airports/planes - limited/no phone/internet
- Limited food options, expensive
- Safety – transport by air and sea. Personal safety.
- Rubbish on the beach, on the streets and in the water
- Lack of things to do at the destination



Least appealing aspects - quotes

#1. Poor accommodation standards and facilities – cleanliness and basic facility provision

“**Poor facilities** - water ran out, toilets not able to be flushed.”

“Absurdly high cost, **bed-bugs, dilapidated facilities.**”

“Lack of amenities. **Lack of suitable accommodation and facilities** such as decent showers, quality beds. A general **lack of "value added" service.**”

#2. Poor Value for money (cost of accommodation and transport for value received)

“Expensive (accommodation, food, transport) compared to other comparable destinations. **Level of service and facilities low for what you pay.**”

“Paying **high Australian prices for low quality** transport, accommodation and food.”

“The costs and **value for the money** is prohibitive.”

Least appealing aspects - quotes

#3. Poor service and communication – airlines and accommodation

“**Poor service**, no consistent and no sense of being in a service industry.”

“Very **poor communication** from both the airlines and hotel.”

“**Staff not appearing to pre-empt requirements** or plan ahead.”

#4. Unreliable scheduling of flights and ferries – hard to plan trip

“Travel agent was **not very responsive, so it was hard to organise**. Solomon Airlines flight was **cancelled the day before and we received no notification**.”

“Solomon Airlines continues to be **unreliable, schedules change frequently** and the flights are often overbooked.”

“I really was **not sure flights would actually leave** until the last minute, so a **general uncertainty** that the holiday was actually going to happen.”

Suggestions for improvements



When asked if there was anything that could have improved their visit to the Solomon Islands, **73%** of respondents said 'yes'.

- Improve the standard of accommodation– rooms, services (18%)
- Improve customer service – both for accommodation and transport providers (17%)
- Lower prices for accommodation and transport (17%)
- Improve organisation– booking services, tourist information, reliability of scheduling (16%)
- Infrastructure – transport (air/boat), improve roads, telecommunications coverage, domestic airport terminals, power/water supplies to accommodation
- Improve food and beverage– quality and variety (11%)
- Improve safety and security – air/boat transport and personal security (8%)
- Clear up rubbish (6%)
- More things to do – activities, and shopping (6%)

Suggestions for improvements

“To travel extensively in the Solomons all aspects of travel must be upgraded. Air transport air terminals, more good quality places to stay.”

“More activities, more organisation and ease of travel, less expensive.”

“Currently your market is for travellers than can travel like backpackers, but with the price of expensive high-end hotels.”

“Air Safety needs to be addressed.”

“Better booking; ferry schedule; improved rooms and services. Better information provided at the resort.”

Recommending Solomon Islands



87%

of expatriate domestic
travellers said that they
would recommend
travelling within Solomon
Islands to others

Who would you recommend to?

- Friends and family (31%)
- Adventurous travellers (16%)
- Anyone (13%)
- Other expats (9%)
- Divers (8%)
- Co-workers (5%)

Reasons Not To Recommend (13% of travellers)

- Poor value for money
- Expensive (accommodation, and transport)
- Hard to get around and to plan a trip
- Poor standard of facilities and customer service
- Rubbish (dirty)

Multiple responses therefore total does not =100%

Reasons *not* to recommend Solomon Islands

“It's beautiful but it's **really really expensive and difficult** with young children. **Airlines are often delayed or cancelled.** It's very hard to convince friends to visit when they can **go to Fiji or Indonesia for a tenth of the price.**”

“Honestly, **Fiji and Vanuatu offer better value for money.** Solomons is good for adventurous travellers though.”

“**Very expensive, lack of proper facilities / standards. Lack of any tourism promotion activities in the provinces** (local guides, travel agent etc.). No value for money spent.”

“No, not unless you are a diver. It's **dirty, accommodations are lacking, not many services, customer service is very poor.** Of course, I love it here because I live here but I wouldn't recommend as a tourist destination.”

Respondents - further comments

A lot of potential but **value for money** should be improved:

- Improve the **standard of accommodation** – better quality, more hygienic, provide basic services well (mosquito nets, fans) and more options of where to stay

“Travelling here is amazing. Myself and my family do not need luxury resorts but when travelling with kids, **clean safe places** are always nice.”

- Better **tourist information** – **availability of visitor information on all levels** in print, online and in person at tourism offices, and at accommodation providers

“It would be good to have a **one-stop-shop for accommodation and activities** on the islands.”

Respondents - further comments

- Improve **customer service** – more training for both hospitality and tourism service providers such as Solomon Airlines

“**Investment into local Solomon Islanders with regards to building capacity** relating to hospitality, this would also include much capacity building with local nature base tourism operators in how to manage and look after tourists.”

- Improve **access**: more reliable, affordable and safer transport

“Solomon Islands is a stunning adventure tourist destination, however it is **hard work and expensive and often dangerous** to travel around by sea or air.”

Recommendations – based on report findings

Accommodation infrastructure upgrade – basic maintenance and small upgrades to accommodation to improve standards and provide a better experience for expatriate domestic tourists making the Solomon Islands a strong value proposition in comparison to competing destinations.

Customer service upskilling across the industry at all touch points– especially in terms of communication, importance of notifying passengers when things are not running to schedule, providing alternatives where possible, minimising inconvenience caused to passengers and guests. Up to date timetable information, better communication between airlines and passengers – via text message, phone or email, and between hotels and travellers about costs, services and facilities.

Safety and reliability of transport – a barrier to travel is unreliable transport – boat and planes. Several people mentioned they felt unsafe on both forms and upgrades are needed to vessels/crafts.

Recommendations – based on research findings

Visitor Information provision – work to [enhance visitor information](#) for domestic travel, including how to get there, what to do when you get there (including how to book), and what to expect across all visitor touch points:

- Increase information available online, for example add ‘travelling around the provinces section’ on Tourism Solomons official travel website or link with Solomon Airlines to provide information about getting to / from Honiara to provinces.
- Encourage accommodation providers to have visitor information on their business website, including what to do in the province and how to get there from Honiara.
- Offer more travel agent package deals –improve the ease of travel for expatriates.

Products and services – some simple activities such as [guided walks](#), [kayak/stand up paddle board hire](#), [snorkel tours](#) could be provided by operators. Other [activities that link to local culture](#) – food, crafts and nature. Delivering them with a high level of customer service input would be essential for ongoing success. [Food and beverage selection and quality](#) in and around destinations could be enhanced.

Take-away messages

Inbound tour operators

- Water sports are most popular – build and expand and consider guided tours (fishing/snorkelling).
- Trained local guides. Interest in local tours and cultural activities – learning more about Solomon Island culture via tours of the local area, nature tours, learning about carving/weaving or local food.
- Expatriates want travelling to be easier - create packages/bundled experiences of 1/2/3 days for couples/families/groups of friends – include airfares/accommodation/activities.
- Word of mouth is key - Invest in training and customer service as it is this that makes a memorable experience worth telling others about.
- Credit card bookings, and reliable online booking systems.

Transport providers (domestic airlines/ferries/boats)

- Expatriates feel transport is often unsafe – undertake regular maintenance, servicing and safety checks.
- Improve customer service – notify of delays, cancellations, and provide alternatives.
- Keep facilities clean (i.e. boat seating areas/toilets and domestic airports).
- Have up to date timetable information clearly on web-sites and visitor touch points.
- Make travel accessible and safer – for elderly, those with disabilities, those travelling with children.

Take-away messages

Accommodation providers

- Update visitor information – online and onsite about – things to do, how to book, times. Also have directions and ‘how to find us’ on the website. Link to national tourism portal.
- Visitors feel facilities are not offering value for money:
 - Upgrade facilities – fans, mosquito nets, hot showers, locks on room doors. Ensure maintenance is completed. Upgrade to solar.
 - Ensure cleanliness – ensure toilets, showers, beds are clean (free of bed bugs) before guests arrive.
- Visitors feel they get poor value for the money paid: include extra products and services, and/or consider off-peak rates and special pricing.
- Increase variety of food and beverage on offer – use fresh local produce where possible
- Visitors hear about you from others - Customer service – meet or exceed expectations for positive word of mouth.
- Quiet and relaxing atmosphere is highly valued – consider switching generator to solar to reduce noise pollution.
- Visitors love water sports – consider offering kayaks, snorkels, stand-up paddle boards
- Keep beaches and reefs clean and healthy – clear up rubbish and move to sustainable forms of packaging

Take-away messages

Government and public agencies (city council, provincial government, DMO/Strongim Bisnis)

- Cleanliness is key – rubbish collection, keeping ocean and reefs clean, keeping city clean
- Support customer service training schemes throughout the tourism sector. Mentorships could be developed with more developed operators and new ones starting out
- Support training of local tour guides
- Support basic / greener upgrades to accommodation – e.g. solar power
- Better road signage and maps – help expatriates find their way around
- National tourism portals update to have more detailed information on provincial travel both practical (how to get there, what to expect) and promotional (what can you do, where can I go, see, eat).
- Help local communities engage with and gain from tourism. Supporting the training of local tour guides, cooking classes, weaving/carving workshops
- Facilitate greater networking and information sharing between tourism operators in each province
- Oversee the safety of transportation – domestic airlines, ferries and visitor boat transportation
- Build community awareness and engagement with tourism for locals to benefit

WORK TOGETHER TO CREATE A GREAT VISITOR EXPERIENCE



Thank You

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