

TRAVEL BUYER SURVEY:  
**TRAVEL POLICY**

BY BCD TRAVEL RESEARCH & INTELLIGENCE



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## ABOUT THE SURVEY

**Goal:** This survey explores modern corporate travel policies and looks at the policy changes happening under the influence of travel buyers' shifting priorities and the new trends shaping business travel.

**Methodology:** The results are based on an online survey of 211 travel buyers conducted from April 3-17, 2024.

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## Respondent profile

**55%**

Of travel managers have global responsibilities.

**64%**

Work for large companies with more than 10,000 employees.

**36%**

Have annual travel spend of US \$50 million and above.

### Top three industries

**22%**

Manufacturing

**11%**

Life sciences

**11%**

Financial services

## Geography

**37%**  
NORAM

**42%**  
EMEA

**16%**  
LATAM

**4%**  
APAC

# Travel policy overview

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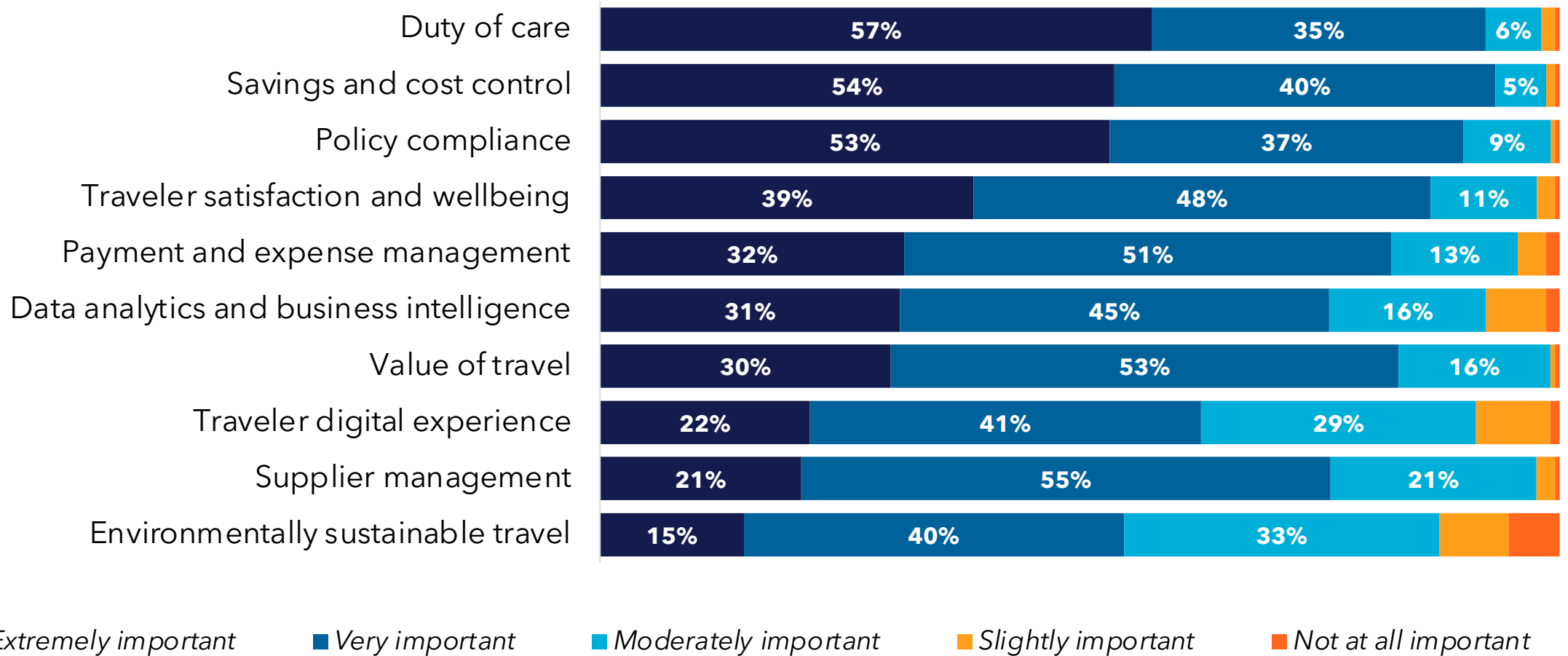
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# Travel program priorities

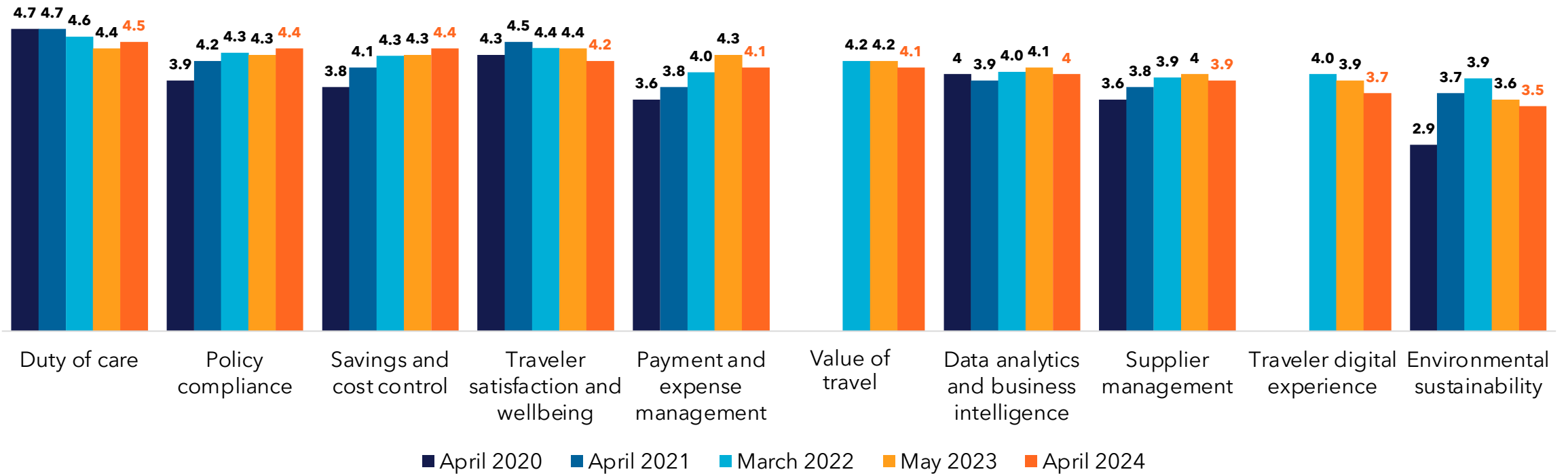
Duty of care tops the list of travel program priorities with 92% of travel buyers rating it extremely or very important.



Q: Please rate your current travel program priorities on a 5-point scale, from "not at all important" to "extremely important."

# Travel program priorities benchmark, 2020-2024

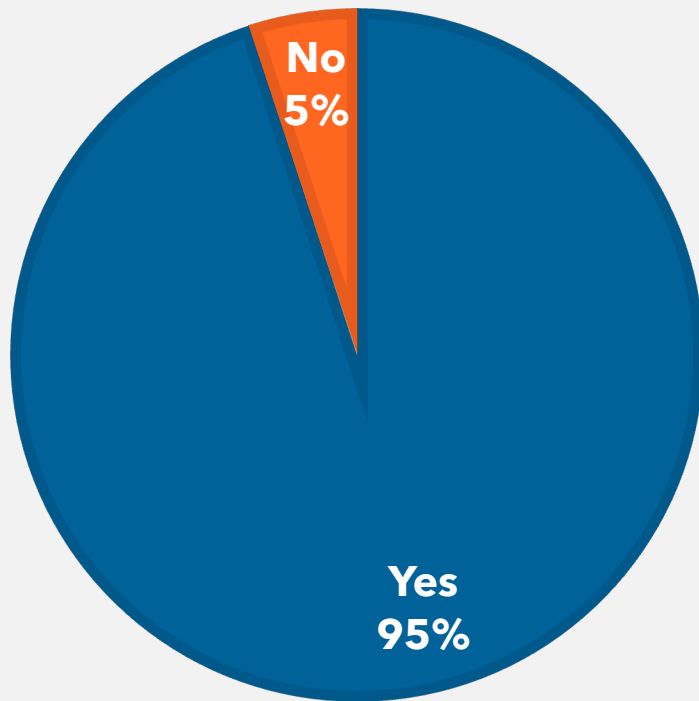
While duty of care, compliance and cost control kept growing importance, traveler satisfaction went down on the list of priorities.



# Travel policy

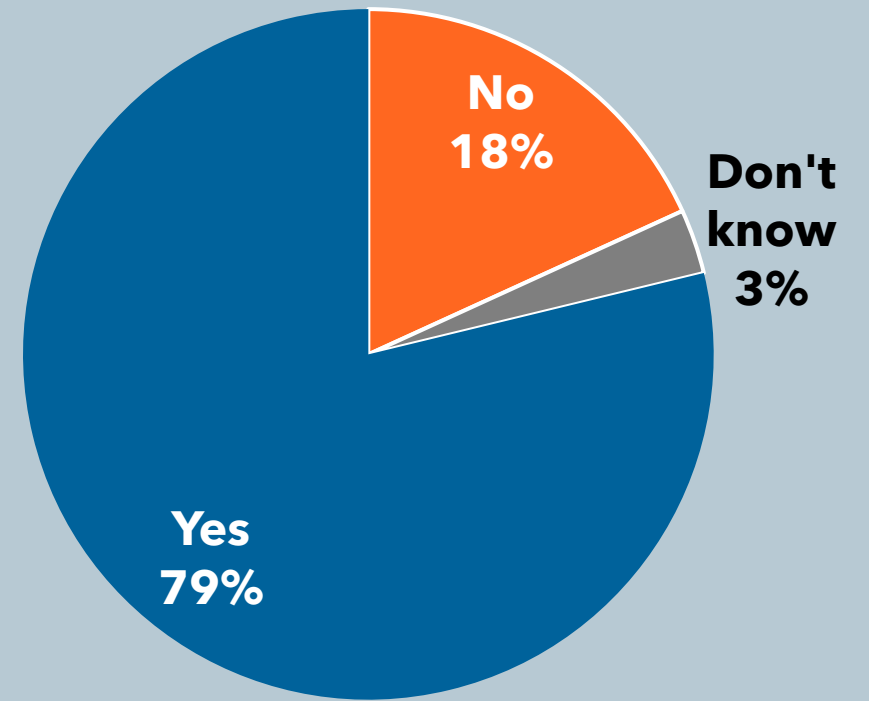
95% of travel buyers say their company has a published travel policy, which is often combined with expense regulations.

## Availability of travel policy



Q: Does your company have a published travel policy?

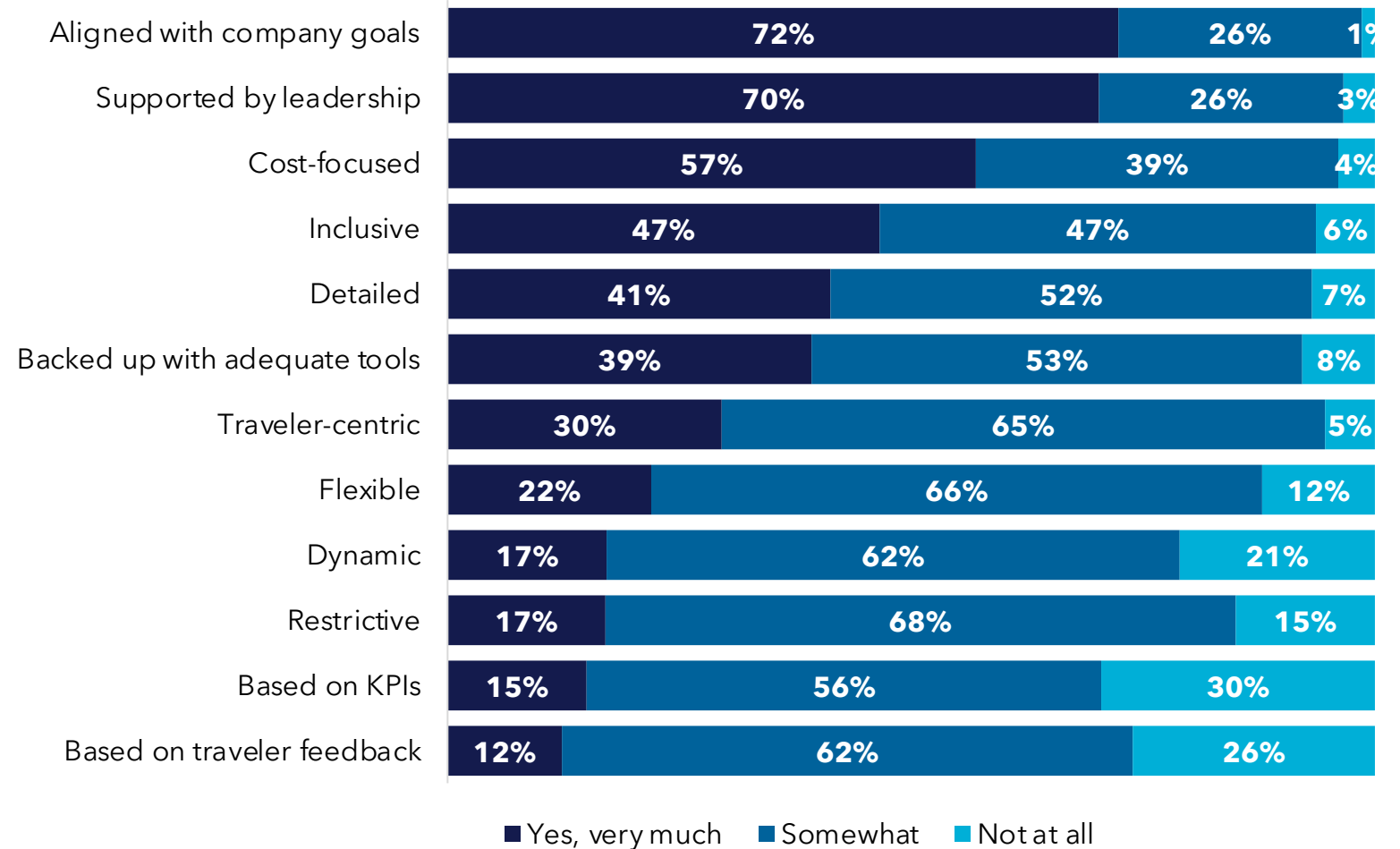
## Combined T&E policy



Q: Is your travel policy combined with your company's expense regulations into one Travel & Expense policy?

# Travel policy overview

While most policies are cost-focused, few are based on KPIs and traveler feedback.

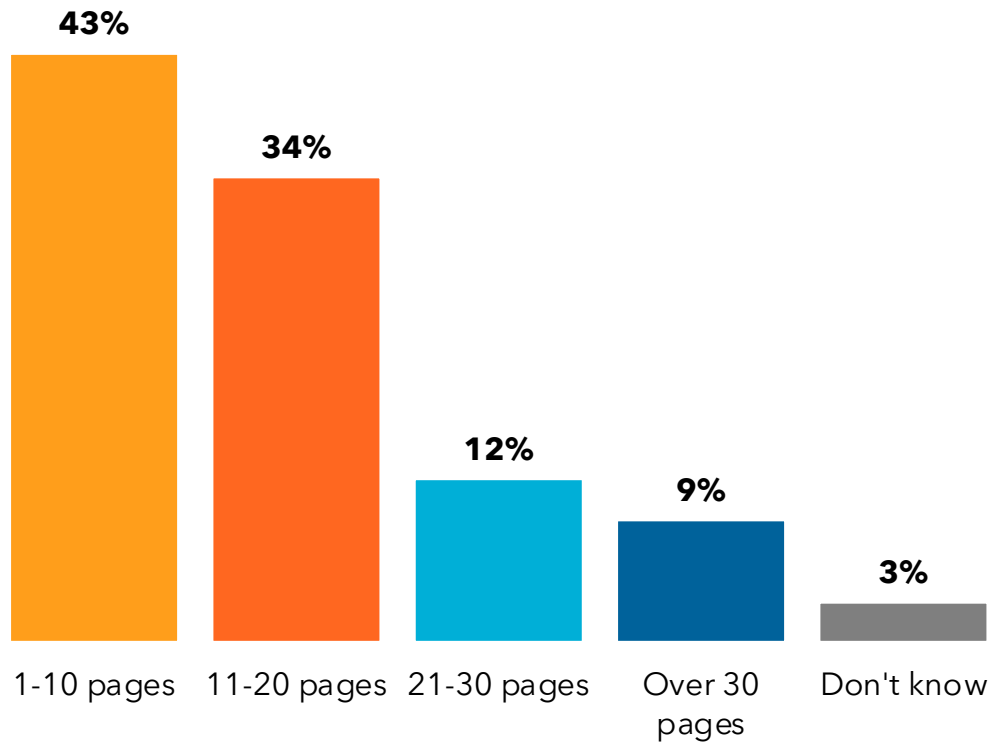


Q: How would you describe your travel policy? Select what applies.



# Travel policy length

Over three-quarters of travel policies are under 20 pages long.

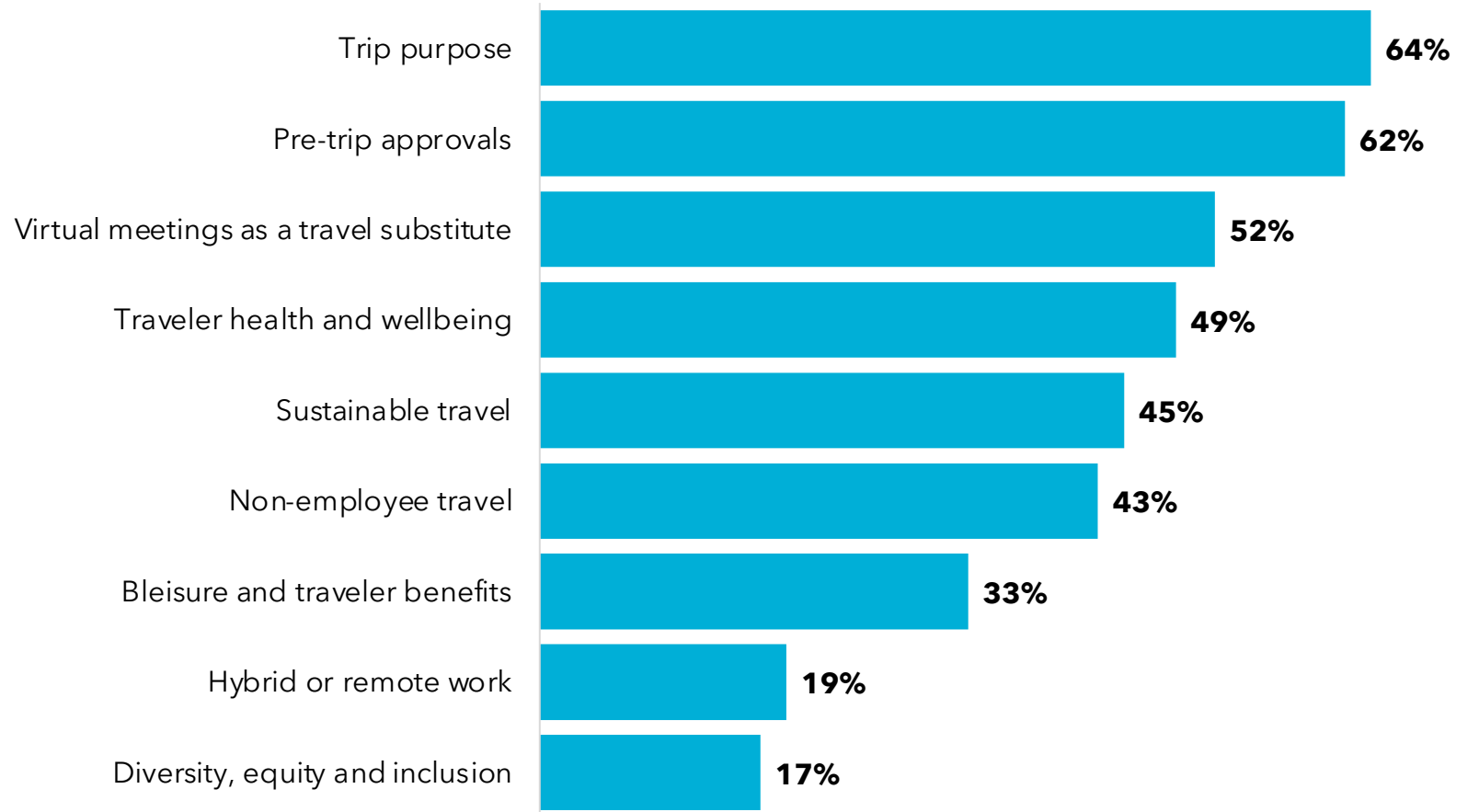


Q: How long is your global travel policy?



# Travel policy themes

Around two-thirds of policies include trip purpose and pre-trip approval, followed by virtual meetings and traveler wellbeing.

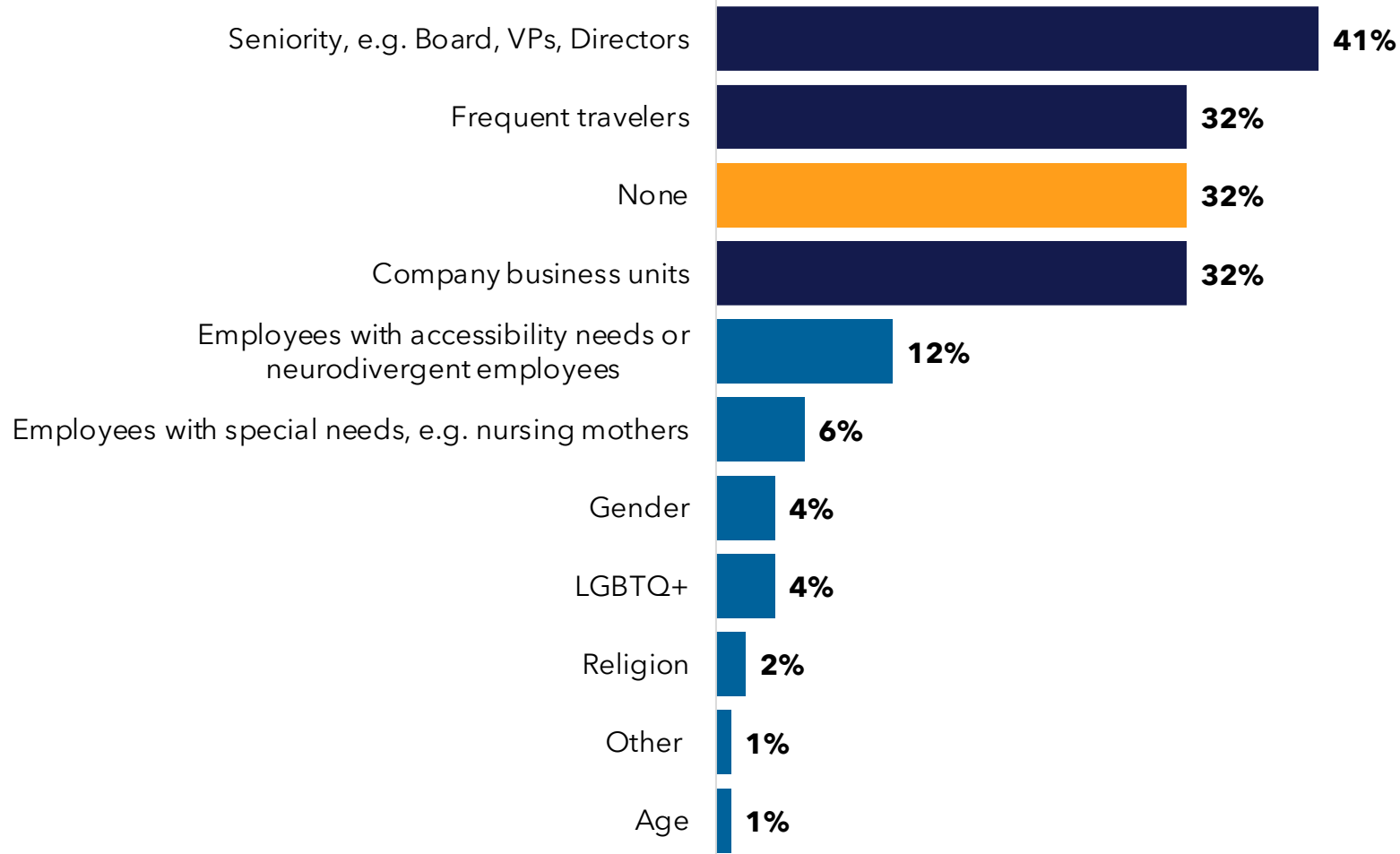


Q: Which of the following topics are covered in your travel policy? Select all that apply.



# Traveler parameters

Companies may have dedicated travel policies for senior employees, teams from specific business units and frequent travelers.

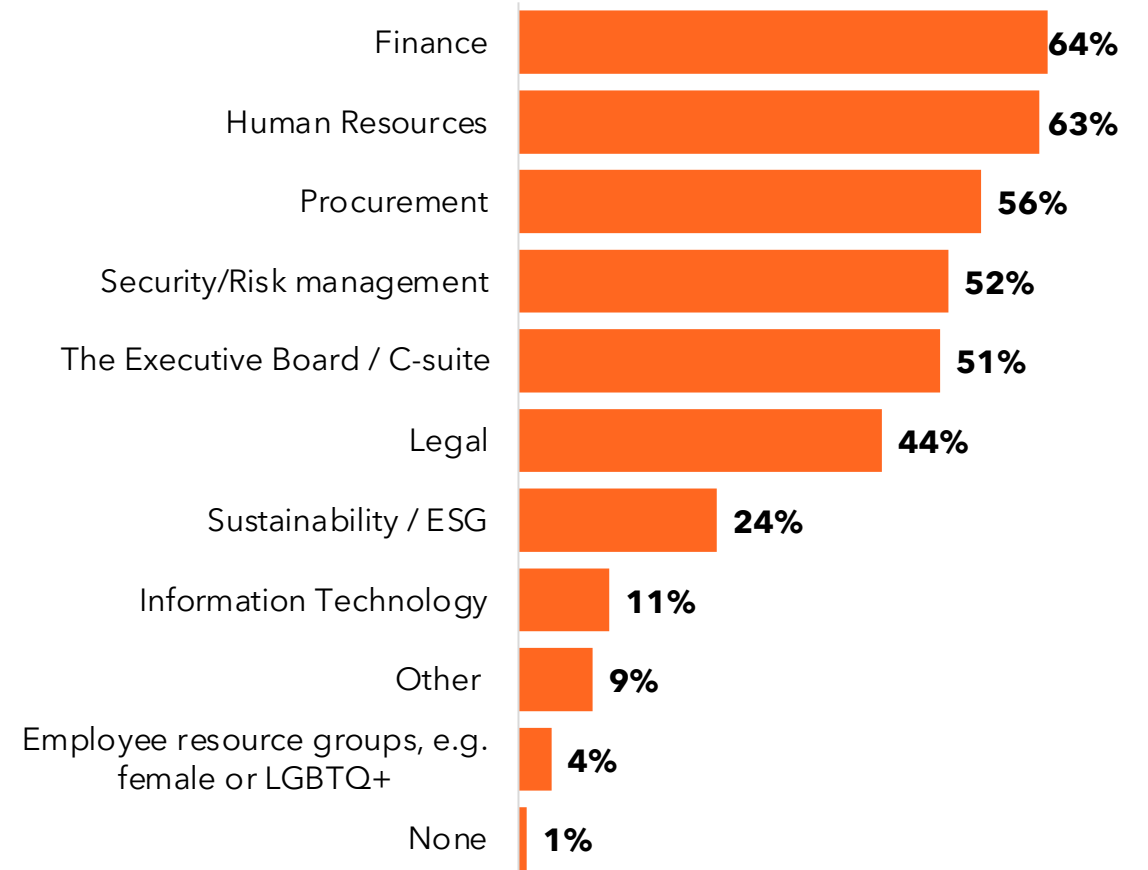


Q: What traveler parameters are addressed in your travel policy? Select all that apply.



# Stakeholders

In addition to travel management, Finance, HR and Procurement are typically involved in creating and updating travel policy.



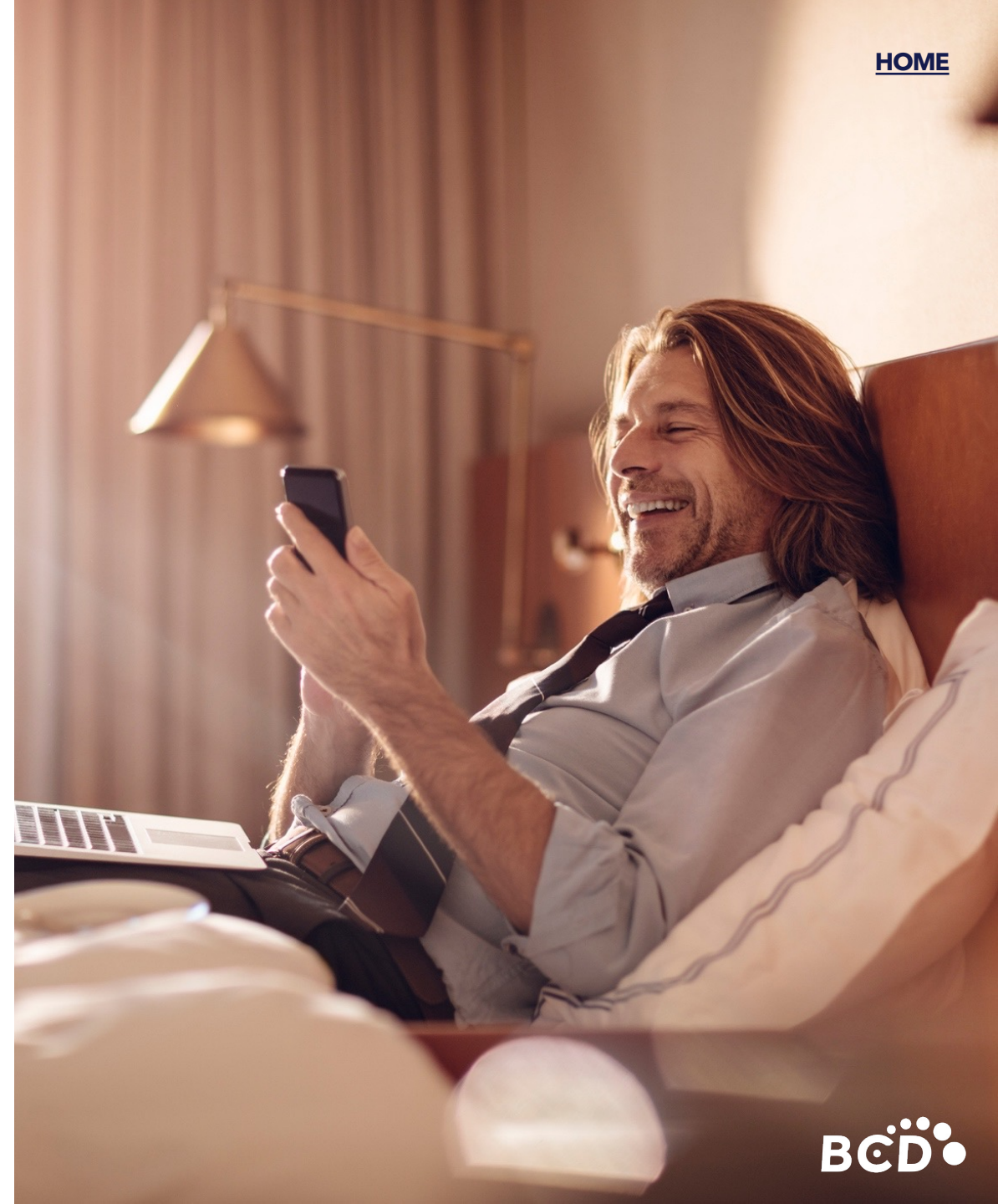
Q: What company stakeholders are involved in updating your travel policy in addition to travel management? Select all that apply.

# Travel policy priorities

Educating travelers is the top priority of travel buyers when it comes to managing travel policies: Over half agree.

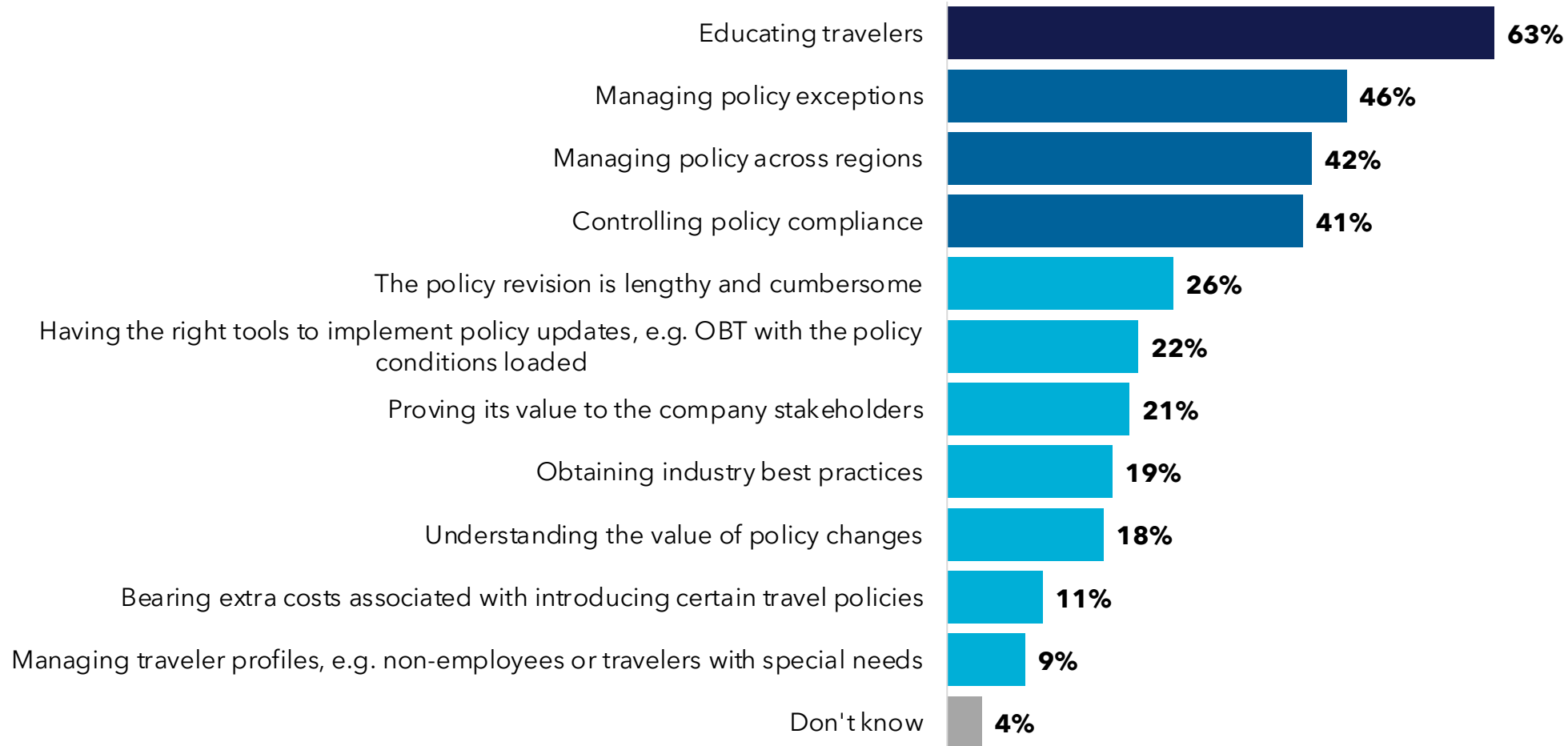


Q: What are your current priorities related to the travel policy? Select the top three.



# Travel policy challenges

Among the top-three challenges, buyers mention traveler education, working with policy exceptions and managing travel policy across regions.



Q: What challenges do you come across when updating the travel policy? Select the top three.

# Regional challenges

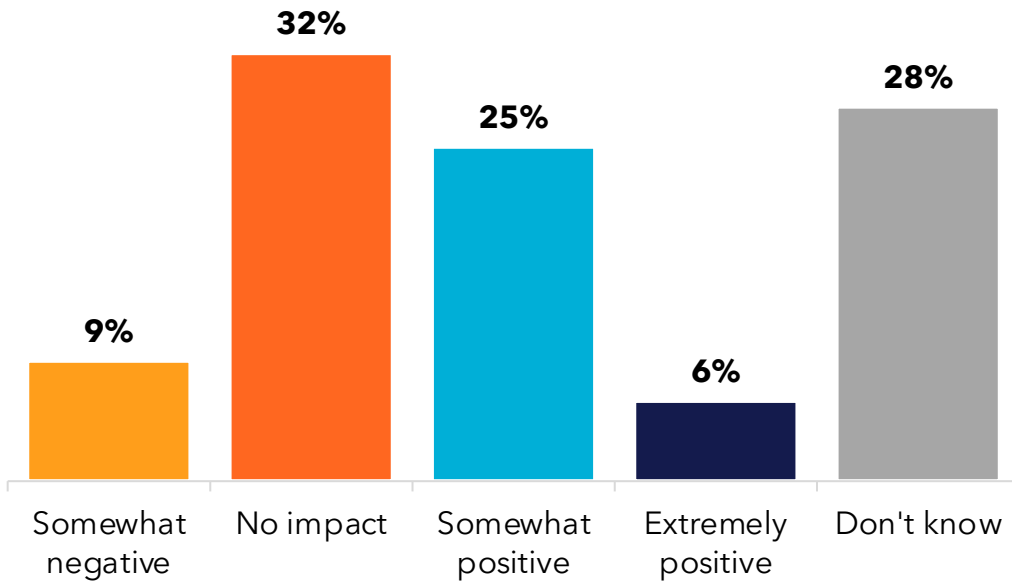
Local laws and regulations prove to be a major complexity when it comes to managing policies across regions.



Q: What complexities do you encounter when managing travel policy in various countries or regions? Select all that apply.

# Impact of policy on talent

According to three out of 10 travel buyers, travel policy has a positive impact on attracting and retaining talent.



Q: What's the impact of your travel policy on attracting and retaining talent?





# Travel policy regulations

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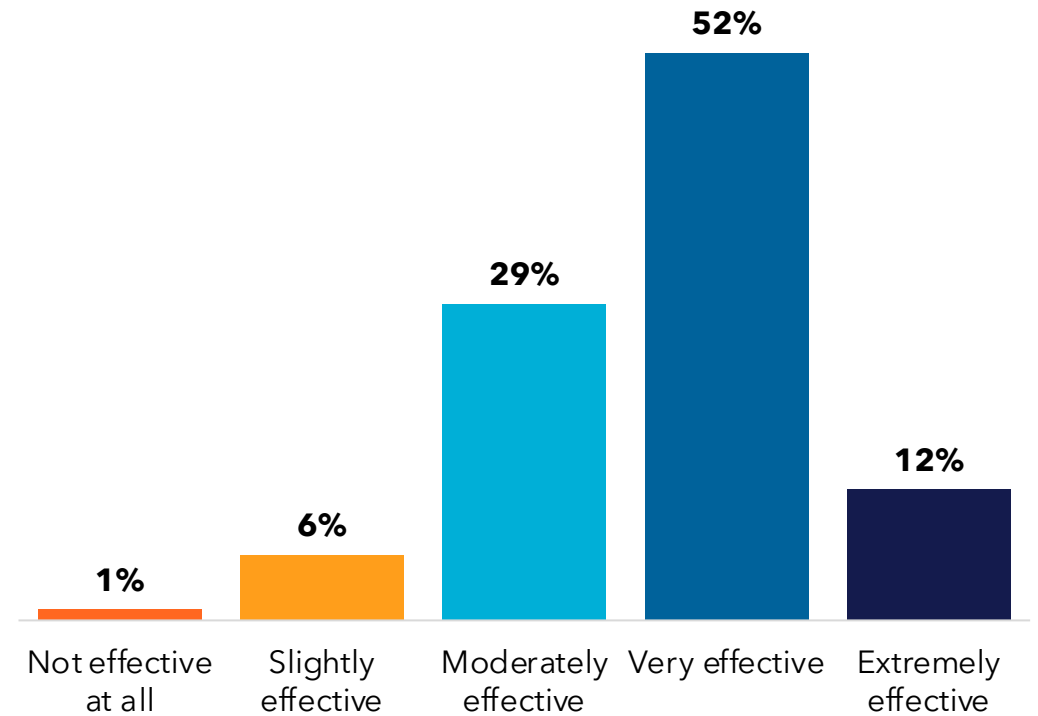
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# Effectiveness of travel policy

Two-thirds of travel buyers consider their travel policy to be extremely or very effective.

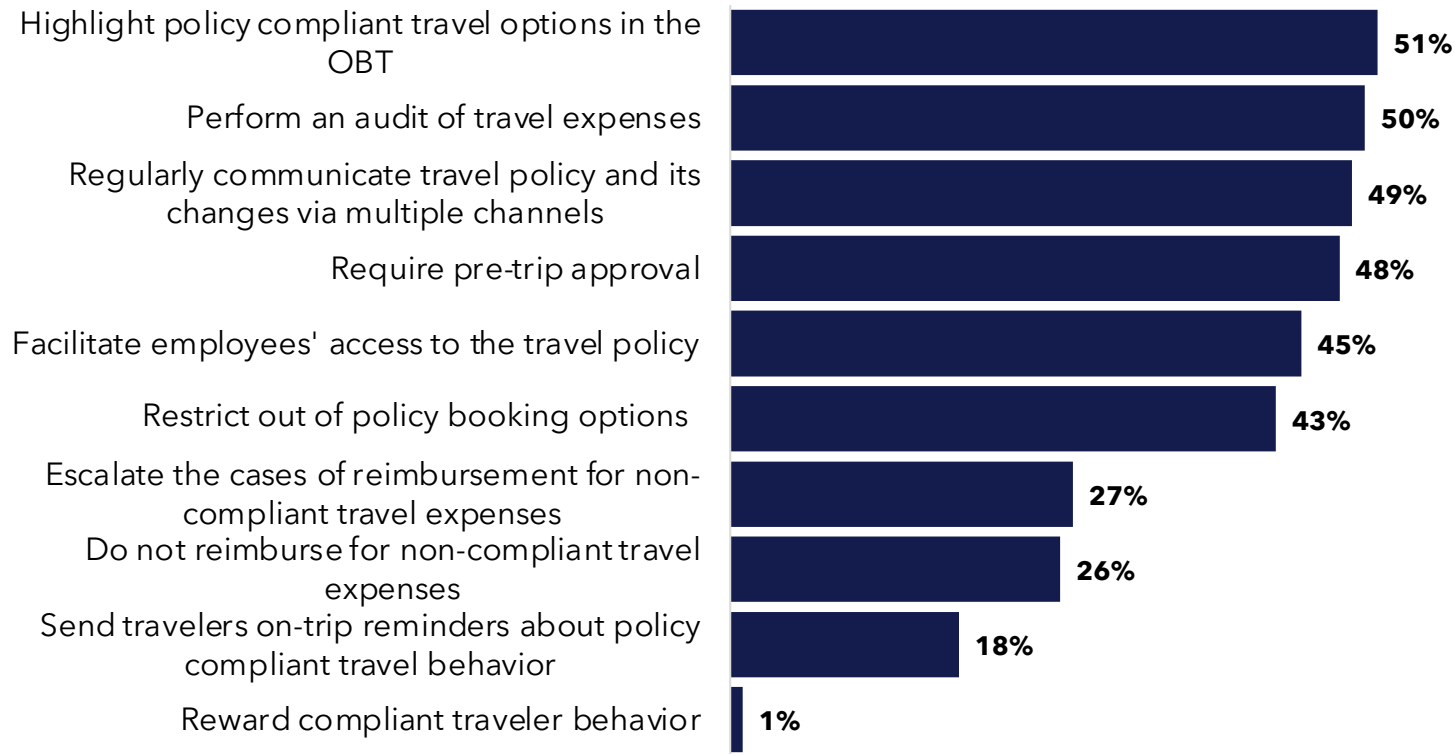


Q: How effective is your current travel policy? Select one.



# Enforcing travel policy

Most employers enforce travel policy applying rules in online booking tools, improving traveler communication or managing travel expenses. Rewarding compliant behavior isn't common.

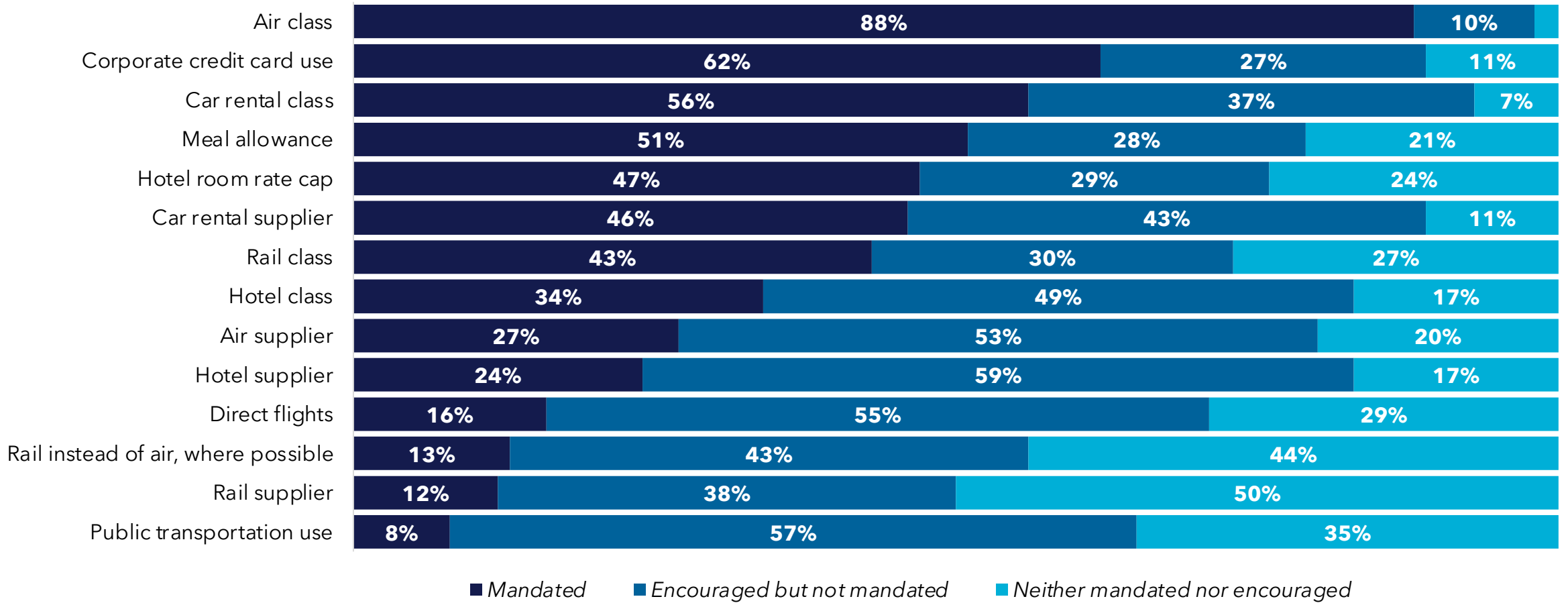


Q: How do you enforce your travel policy? Select all that apply.



# Mandated policy elements

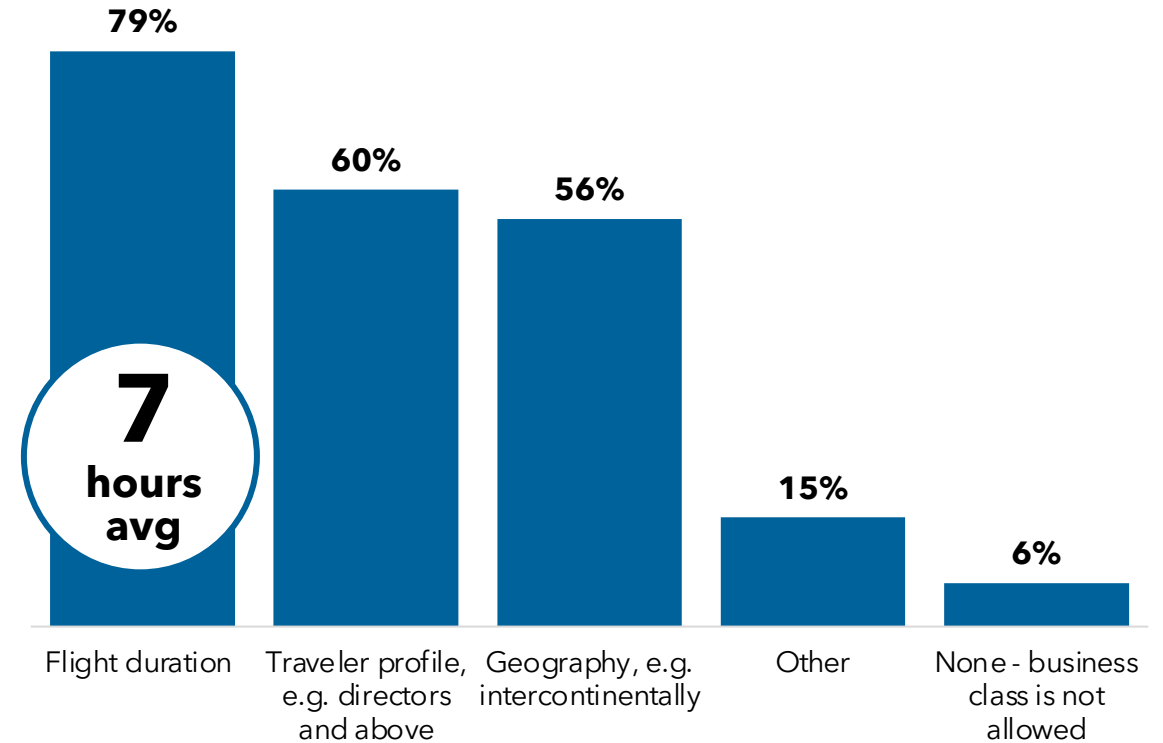
Among the travel policy elements, air class is mandated most frequently: Nine in 10 travel buyers say so. Over half mandate use of corporate cards, car rental class and meal allowance.



What travel policy elements do you mandate? Select what applies.

# Business class rules

Most travel policies factor in flight duration when defining the rules around traveling business class. On average, business class is allowed on flights over seven hours long.



Q: When are your employees allowed to travel business class?  
Select the parameters that apply.



# Prohibited travel suppliers

Eight in 10 travel buyers say their policy doesn't allow the use of sharing economy accommodation.

**27%**

Chauffeured  
cars

**34%**

Serviced  
apartments

**80%**

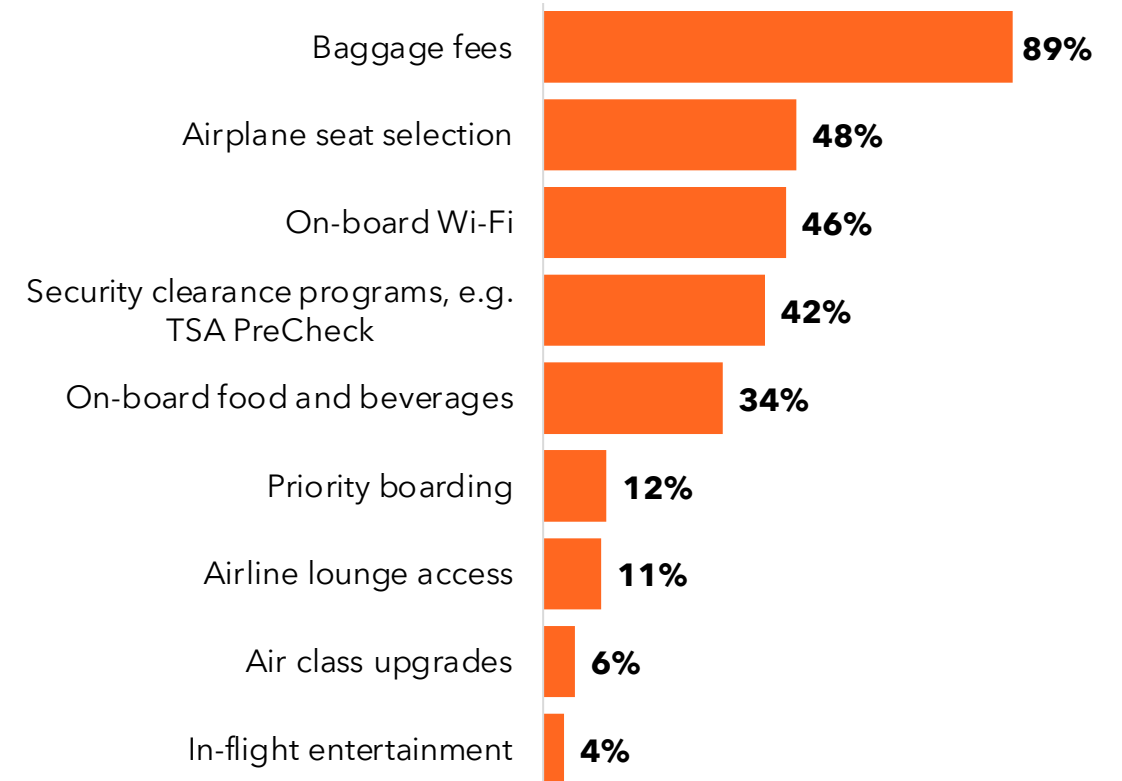
Sharing economy  
accommodation

*Q: Which of the following travel suppliers does your policy prohibit? Select all that apply.*



# In-policy air ancillaries

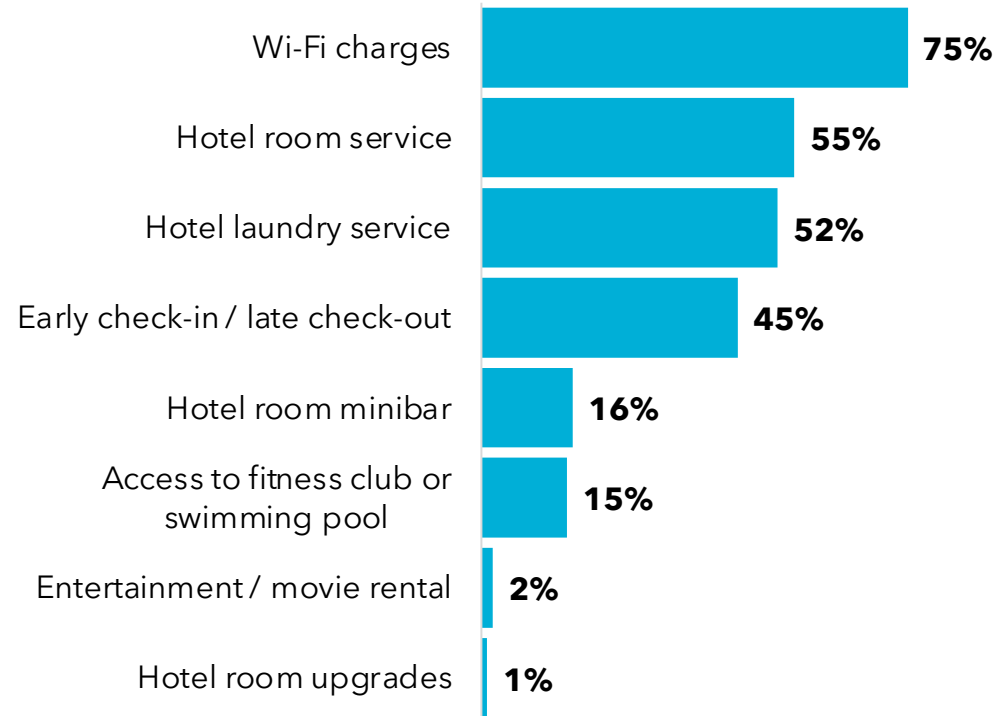
Travel policies rarely include airline priority boarding, lounge access or class upgrades.



Q: According to your policy, what air service charges do you reimburse for?  
Select all that apply.

# In-policy hotel ancillaries

Among in-policy hotel ancillaries, Wi-Fi charges are covered most often, while room upgrades aren't included.



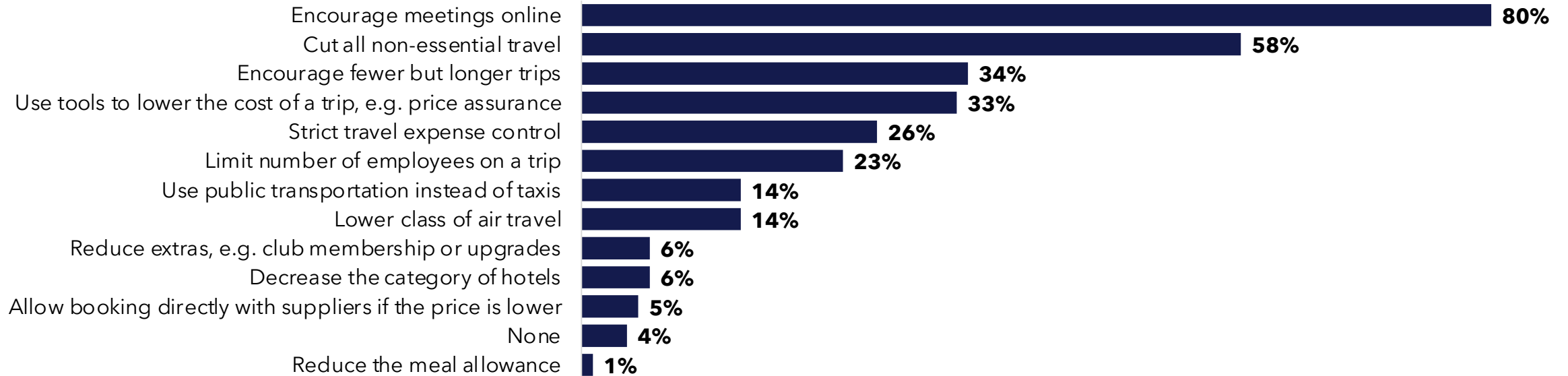
Q: What hotel service charges do you reimburse for? Select all that apply.





# Cost-control measures

Six in 10 travel buyers say their company reduced its travel budget in the past few years, and 96% introduced cost-control policies, most popular aiming to reduce the travel volume.



Q: What cost-control measures did you introduce in the past few years? Select all that apply.

## Recent travel budget reduction

**41% NO**

**59% YES**

Q: In the past few years, did your company reduce its travel budget?

# Travel policy updates and communication

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[Last policy update](#)

[Communication channels](#)

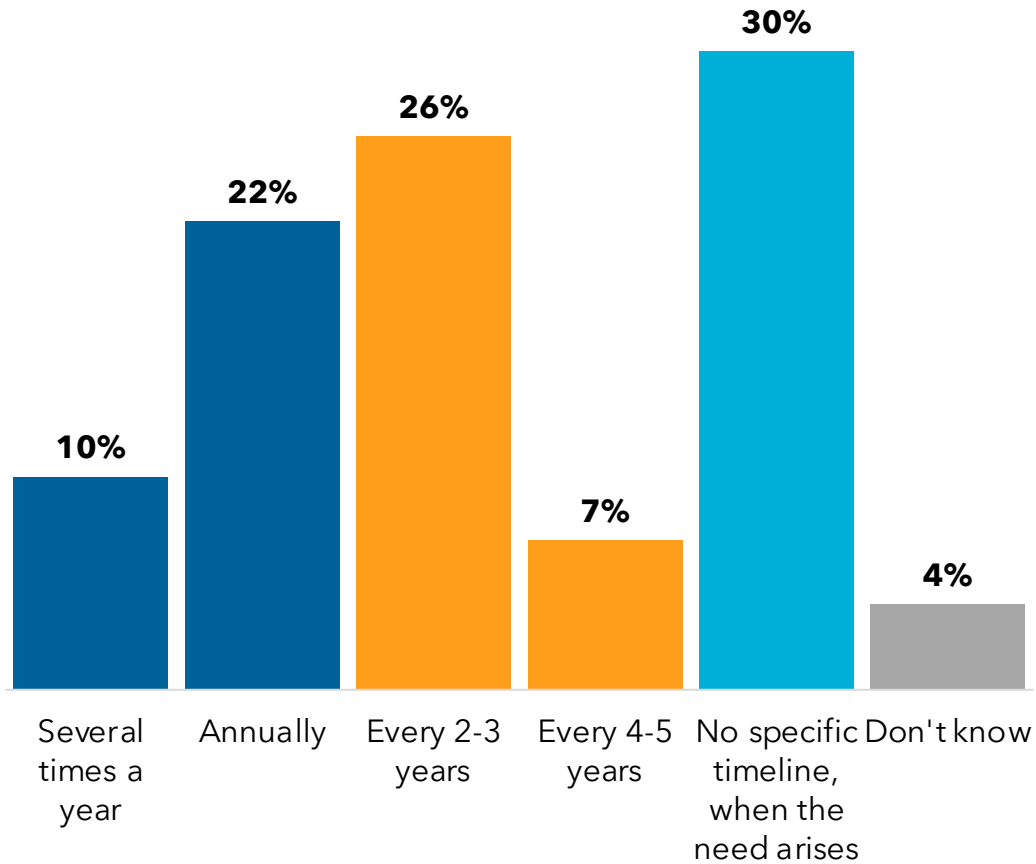
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# Frequency of policy updates

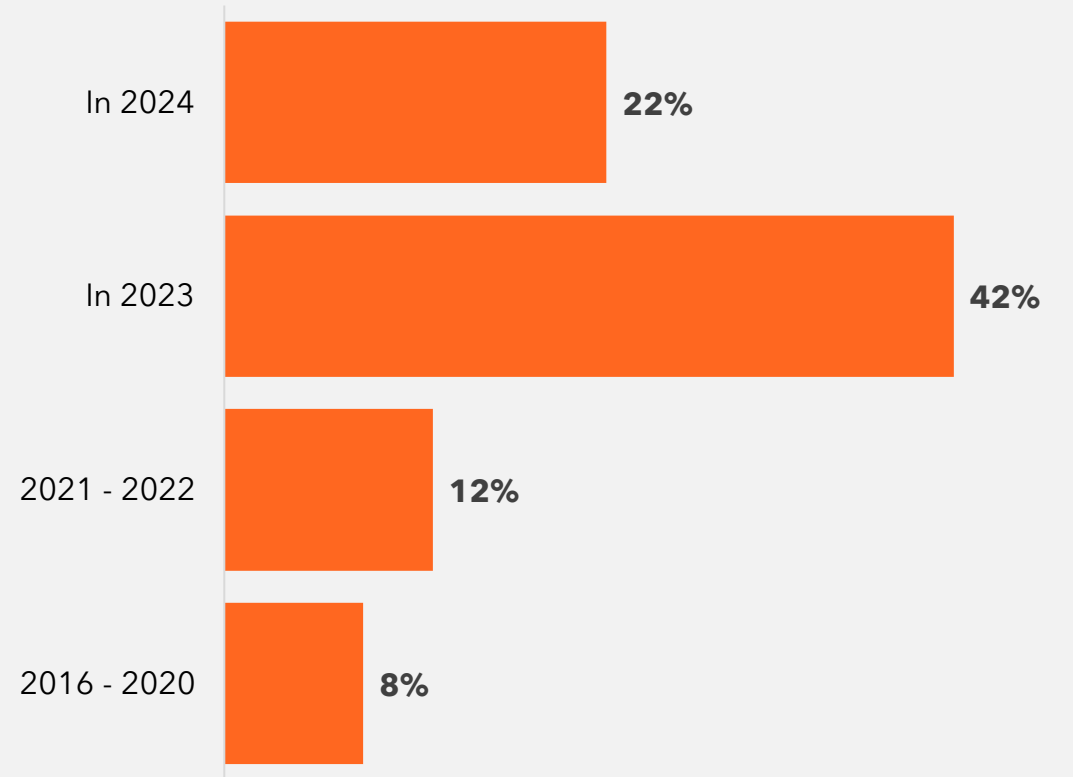
Over half of buyers revise travel policy every couple of years or more often, while three in 10 do this when needed.



Q: How often do you revise your travel policy?

# Last policy update

Two-thirds of travel buyers have recently revised their policy.

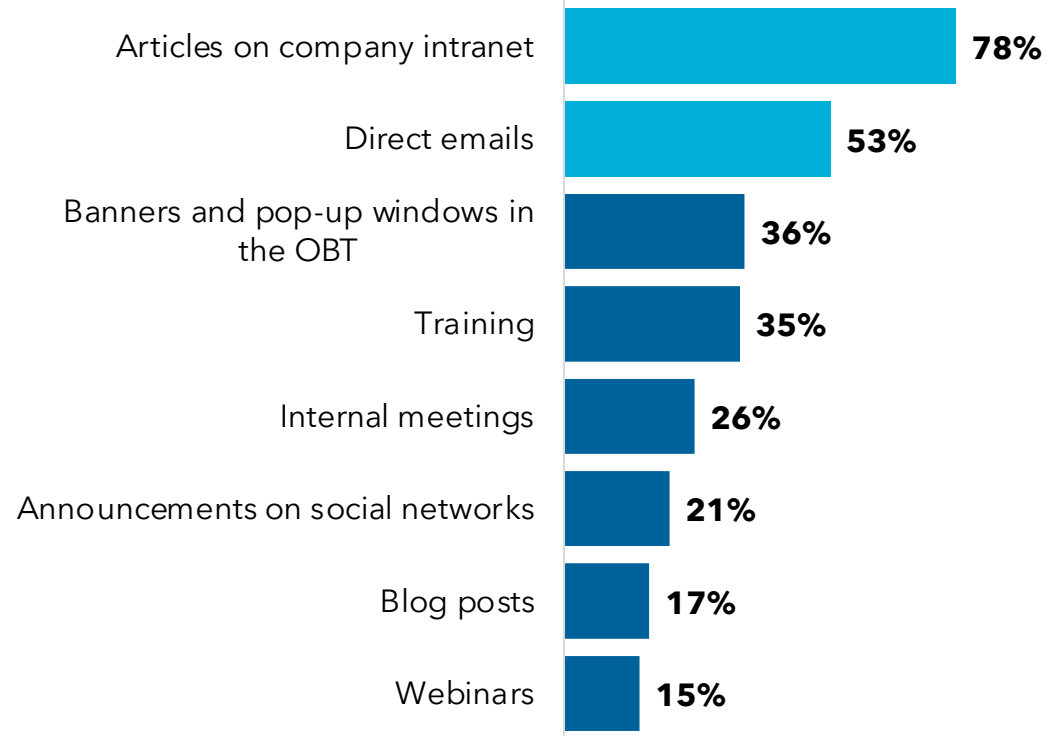


Q: When was the last time you updated your travel policy?



# Communication channels

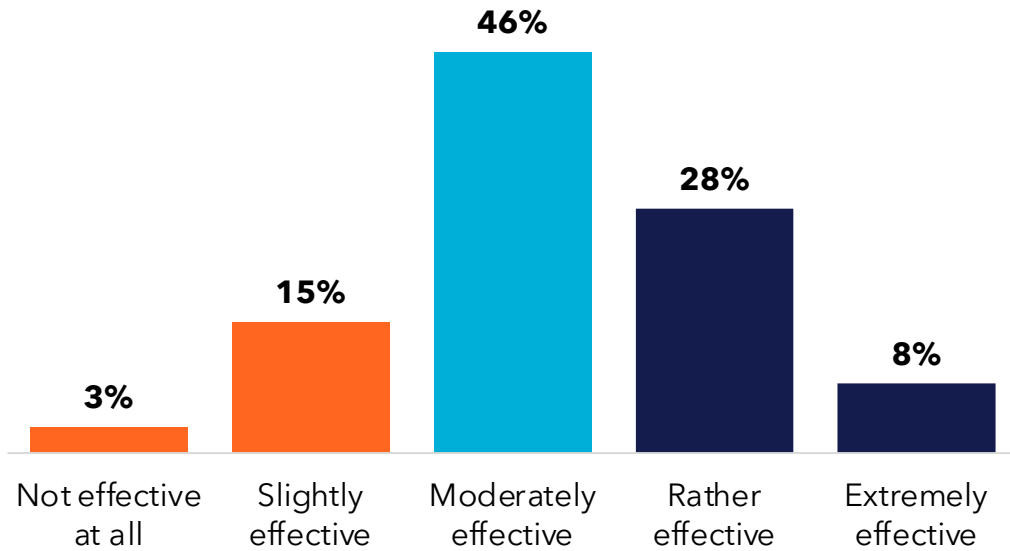
Intranet is the primary instrument for communicating policy updates to company employees: Three-quarters use this method, followed by half using email.



Q: What communication channels do you use to update your employees about the travel policy? Select all that apply.

# The effectiveness of communication

Buyers' views are split over the effectiveness of travel policy communication.

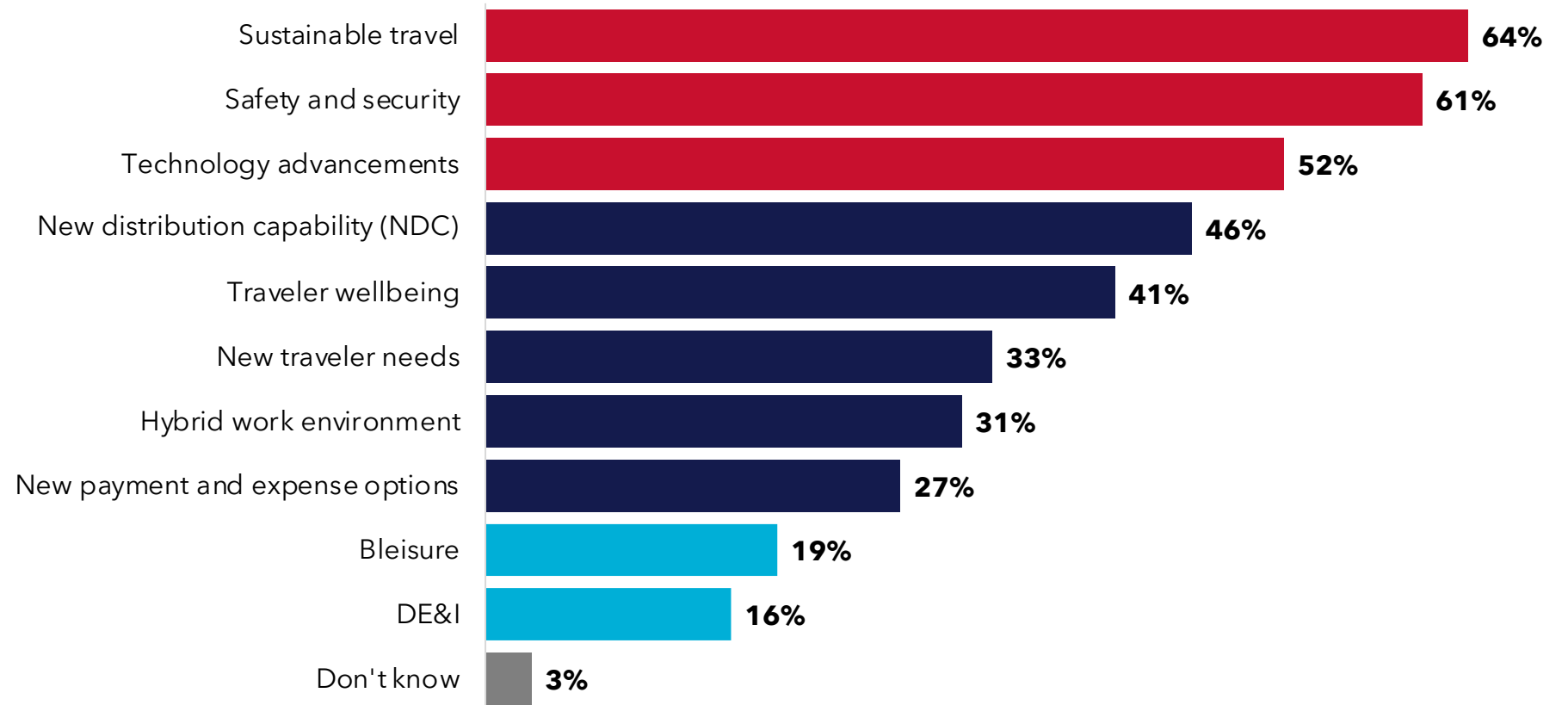


Q: How effective is your communication of travel policy news and updates?



# Trends shaping travel policy

Sustainability and duty of care are expected to keep shaping travel policies in the near future.



Q: What trends do you expect to shape your travel policy? Select all that apply.



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