

# ATTENDING AN IN-PERSON CONVENTION OR CONFERENCE

SODEXO INVESTIGATES  
CONSUMER PERCEPTION  
OF THIS IN THE COVID-19  
ENVIRONMENT

in partnership with



CONVENTION & CONFERENCE CENTERS

**sodexo**  
QUALITY OF LIFE SERVICES

At Sodexo, we are convinced that attending a live concert, a match, a conference or visiting a museum, are precious moments. They foster real social bonds between individuals. And real social bonds are essential for the health & wellbeing of everyone.

However, in a Covid-19 environment, is this still true?

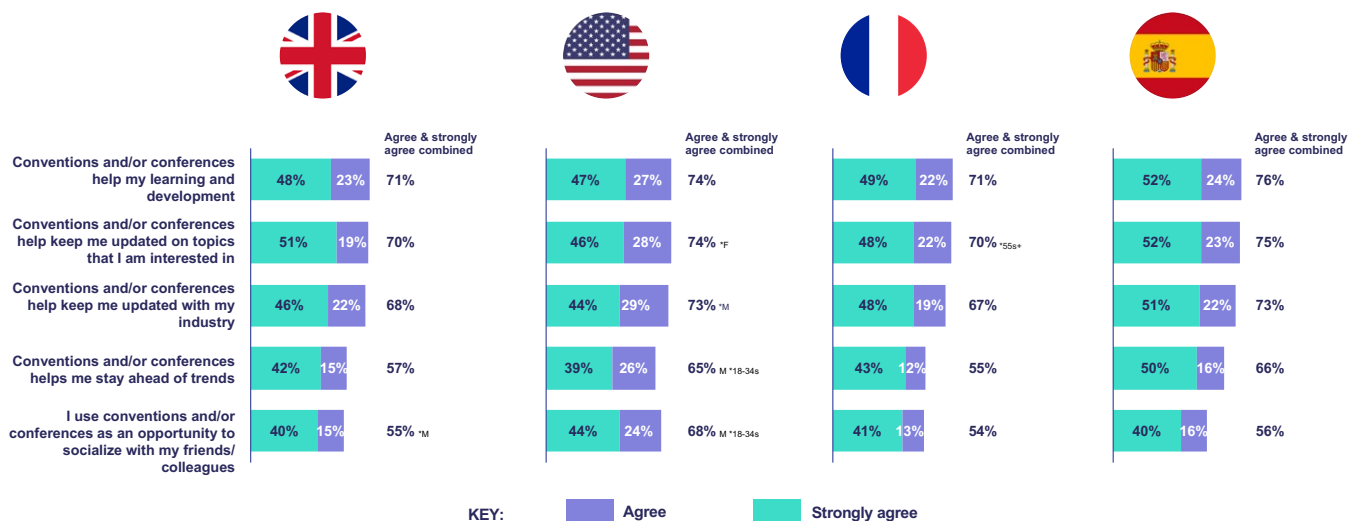
How likely is it that people will attend a convention or conference again in the future (and when)?

This is why we commissioned a piece of primary research with Harris Interactive to understand perceptions of attending live events since the COVID-19 pandemic.

The survey was targeted to a nationally representative sample of people in four markets: the UK, USA, France and Spain and took place in May-June 2020.

Sub-group analysis, between gender and age groups, has also been conducted. These results are shown where significant differences are seen.

## Reasons for attending



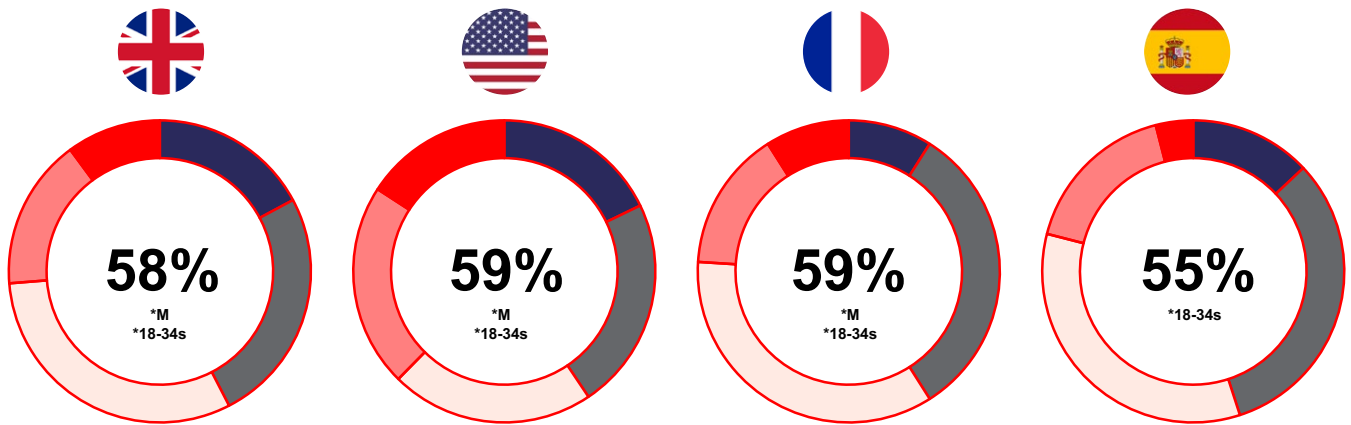
Question: Thinking overall about the reasons you attend conventions and/or conferences, how strongly do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Base: All who have attended a convention/ conference: UK (n=480), USA (n=541), FR (n= 478), ES (n= 592)

**The value of attending a conference or convention:** The majority of people attend a conference or convention for learning and development and to keep themselves updated on what's happening in their industry. Over two-thirds of people in the US and Spain use them as an opportunity to socialize.

## Level of comfort in visiting a convention or conference center

### Somewhat, very and extremely comfortable combined scores



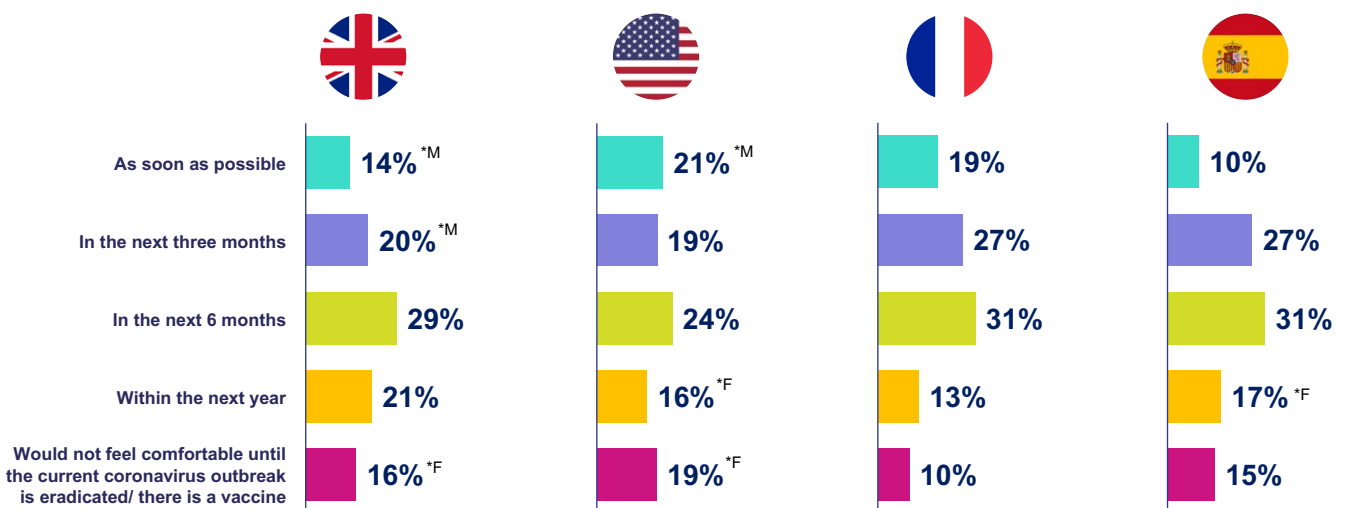
KEY: ■ Not at all comfortable ■ Not very comfortable ■ Somewhat comfortable ■ Very comfortable ■ Extremely comfortable

Question: How comfortable would you feel about visiting a convention and/or conference in a hall or similar venue, as soon as they open again?

Base: All who have attended a convention/ conference: UK (n=480), USA (n=541), FR (n=478), ES (n=593)

Around two-thirds of people would feel somewhat, very or extremely comfortable attending a conference or convention as soon as these venues open again. This is driven primarily by the 18-34 year old age group in all markets and males in the US, France and the UK.

## When people feel comfortable again visiting a convention or conference

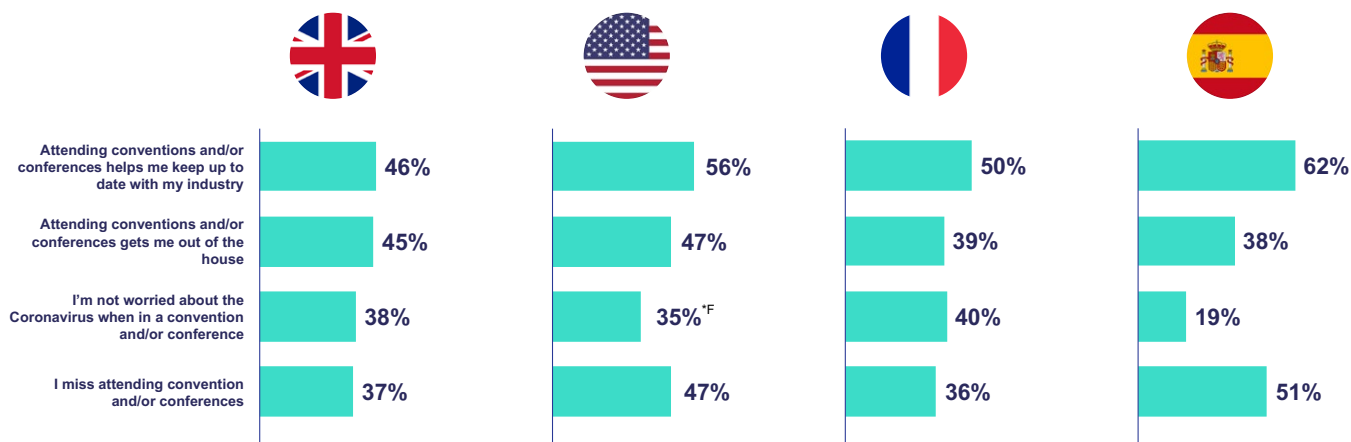


Question: And when would you feel comfortable attending a convention and/or conference in a hall or similar venue again?

Base: All who have attended a convention/ conference: UK (n= 480), USA (n= 541), FR (n= 478), ES (n= 592)

Most people would feel comfortable attending a conference or convention in the next three to six months. In the US and France, one-fifth of people would feel comfortable attending as soon as possible.

## Of those who feel comfortable enough to visit - reasons why



Question: You've mentioned that you would feel comfortable attending a convention and/or conferences in a hall or similar venue, as soon as they open again. Which of the following reasons best describe why you feel this way?

Base: All who feel comfortable attending a convention/ conference: UK (n= 126), USA (n= 201), FR (n= 114), ES (n= 126)

Of those who feel comfortable enough to attend, keeping up to date with their industry and getting out of the house are the primary motivators. Around two fifths of people in the UK, US and France are not worried about getting the Coronavirus when attending a convention or conference.

## Factors that would make people more comfortable to visit

	UK	USA	FR	ES
Proper social distancing guidance (e.g. spacing between people/ groups)	55%	53%	46%	54%
Mandatory use of hand sanitizer at every entrance	52%	50%	52% <sup>*F</sup>	55%
Compulsory wearing of a mask when inside the venue	46%	46%	57%	62%
Event staff wearing masks and gloves	45%	49%	40%	56%
Transparent dividers between seats	40%	35%	39%	36%
No cash payments within the venue (contactless only)	38%	26%	23%	30%
Compulsory wearing of gloves when inside venue	34% <sup>*M</sup>	38% <sup>*M</sup>	29%	38%
None of these would make me feel more comfortable	11%	12% <sup>*55s+</sup>	11% <sup>*55s+</sup>	9% <sup>*55s+</sup>

Question: Which of the following factors would make you feel more comfortable when attending a convention and/or conference again?

Base: All who have attended a convention/ conference: UK (n= 480), USA (n= 541), FR (n= 478), ES (n= 593)

Percentages highlighted in blue are the top three factors for each country.

People would feel more comfortable attending a conference or convention if certain factors were adhered to – including proper social distancing guidance, mandatory use of hand sanitizers, staff wearing masks and gloves, and the compulsory wearing of masks at the event. Still, around 1 in 10 state nothing would make them feel more comfortable and this is particularly prevalent in the over 55 age group in the US, France and Spain.

## Key takeaways

### WHY?

The majority of people attend a conference or convention for learning and development and to keep themselves updated on what's happening in their industry. Over two-thirds of people in US and Spain use them as an opportunity to socialize.

### HOW LIKELY?

Around two-thirds of people would feel at least somewhat comfortable attending a conference or convention as soon as these venues open again.

### WHEN?

Most people would feel comfortable attending a conference or convention in the next three to six months. In the US and France, one-fifth of people would feel comfortable attending as soon as possible.

### HOW?

People would feel more comfortable attending a conference or convention if certain factors were adhered to: proper social distancing guidance, mandatory use of hand sanitizers, the compulsory wearing of masks and, in some countries, staff wearing masks and gloves.



Sodexo Sports & Leisure operates and manages prestigious venues and major events around the world. Combining technique and creativity, our turnkey solutions cover ticketing, travel, foodservices, logistics, marketing and technical organization. In this digital age, Sodexo helps clients integrate new technologies into their events offering innovative and personalized services. Sodexo contributes to the success of prestigious events such as Royal Ascot, the Super Bowl, the Tour de France and the Rugby World Cup, and makes exceptional places shine like the San Diego Convention Center, Las Vegas Convention Center, Orange County Convention Center, Les Salons du Pré Catelan, the Etoile business center in Paris, the Crystal in London and the ACC in Liverpool.