

Market situation: Belgium & Luxembourg.

[MySwitzerland.com/meetings](https://myswitzerland.com/meetings)

Created by: Myriam Winnepenninckx on 29.8.2019

1 MARKET SITUATION AND OUTLOOK.

1.1 Economic situation

The worldwide economy growth rhythm has seen a distinct slowing down since 2018. This slowing down trend is more visible in the euro zone which, in comparison to the United States, is far more dependent on export. The GDP increase in the euro zone is expected to decrease by 1.1% this year (versus 1.9% in 2018) and to then climb up to 1.4% in 2020. This European wide decrease has also influenced the Belgian economy where the growth has decreased from 1.7% in 2017 to 1.4% in 2018. The Belgian GDP increase is expected to stabilize at 1.3% in 2019 and 2020. Export growth is expected to continue to slow down in 2019 and then to stabilise. It is also expected that internal demand will progress in 2020 under the impulse of private consumers (because of increased buying power). Inflation should gradually decrease to 1.7% in 2019 and 1.5% in 2020 mainly due to the evolution of the energy prices. The employment development in Belgium continues to grow this year (+ 56.000 people) but is expected to decrease to + 39.000 people in 2020. The unemployment figures remain stable at 5.7 %.

Sources : Banque Nationale de Belgique and Bureau Fédéral du Plan June 2019

The Luxembourg economy registered an increase of nearly 3% in 2018, mainly under the influence of the non-financial services. For 2019 a progression of the GDP by 2.7% is expected for 2019 and more than 3% for 2020. Inflation stabilises around 1.9% in 2019 and 1.7% in 2020. Unemployment stands at 5.5%.

Source: Statec Central Service of Statistics and Economic Studies, Luxembourg, note de conjuncture, June 2019

1.2 Situation of the Meeting Industry & Trends.

In the absence of studies or statistics proper to the Belgian market, our analysis is based on the trends observed by our office, following our contacts with various operators in the sector. The situation seems positive, and demand appears to be fairly stable. Our constant contacts with the agencies indicate that they are very busy. In Belgium there are approx. 80-85 incentive houses of which 60% are located in Brussels and Flemish/Walloon Brabant and others mainly in Flanders (Malines, Antwerp and Ghent). The number of PCO's is much less: approx. 5-10 (in Brussels) that deal with large international congresses.

Trends:

- Reductions of costs: hotels and transport. There is a marked preference for investment in the program and the activities: focus on content and experience,

- Short lead time: the time constraints are increasingly compressed, in particular for large groups. (Increasingly short timeframes between the service request being placed and actual delivery, the offer having to be delivered swiftly, whereas the decision will not be made immediately)
- Attraction of closer destinations: easy access & proximity: to minimize travel time and cost.
- Evaluation of the number of “necessary” participants in an event and thus the importance of being able to justify the return on investment, the ‘raison d’être’ of organizing events.
- Average length of stay: 2-3 nights

The American Express Meetings & Events 2019 Global Meetings Forecast (“the Forecast”) states: According to respondents in Europe, internal team and training meetings remain the most prevalent events in the region. Respondents in Belgium and the Netherlands, along with the United Kingdom and Poland, are expecting increased activity in 2019.

Trends:

- Europe as a whole: the numbers of meetings are expected to remain flat.
- Attendance is expected to increase for many European meetings, particularly incentives and customer advisory boards, which are both expected to have larger audiences in 2019.
- Cost expected to remain flat for internal meetings and show modest increases (between 0.5% and 1.02%) for all other meeting types.
- Increase in length, allowing for more time for content, networking, and activities
- Meeting planners in Europe continue to prefer large cities for their meetings, with 78% prioritizing these types of destinations for their events. Twenty percent find second-tier cities optimal instead.
- Planners in Europe place a strong emphasis on safety and security when selecting a meeting location. Recently, safety considerations have expanded to include weather concerns – a topic mentioned frequently by planners in the region.

1.3 RFP situation in Belgium & Luxembourg.

The number of requests for Switzerland in 2019 is approximately similar to those for 2018, the number of RFP’s realised or confirmed in Switzerland as well as the number of actual bookings is slightly similar to 2018.

The main reason for a request not being realised in Switzerland, is the lack of availability of dates requested and specifically the number of available rooms for those dates. Most of the hotels cannot offer a sufficient number of rooms and organisers do not want to split the participants over more than 2 hotels.

The second reason is the budget. Many companies have clear guidelines and maximum rates for rooms that cannot be exceeded. Prices in Switzerland are unfortunately often higher than these limits. It is increasingly difficult to find competitive offers in Switzerland.

The requests received are not just RFP’s for rooms and hotels, but also ask for a little more research, more detailed themes for visits, activities etc....Thinking out of the box!

Recommendations to destinations and partners: react really fast to any inquiry; make the life of the agencies easier by including a maximum of information, ideas and suggestions for activities, visits... Showcase the strong selling points of your destination and remember that most people do not know your destination. In a nutshell: show them you want their business!

Recommendations to the hotels and venues: quote your best rates from the start, you only get one shot at proposing! Be flexible (price strategy, terms and conditions, all-in packages)

As for tourism in general, 2018 ended with an increase (+3.9%) in overnights from Belgium and Luxembourg for a total of 704'808 overnights.

2 TARGETS.

The Belgian market, and more specifically Brussels, is one of the major European hubs for international and European associations/conferences. It is important to underline the importance of the Belgian market for its decision-making power and influence. Being the seat of the European parliament, international and European associations/conferences naturally gravitate to and establish their headquarters in Belgium. That is why we have set ourselves the following objectives:

- Deepening our connections and establishing close relationships with 300 international associations based in Belgium by analysing the potential for Switzerland, the decision-making process and specifications so as to be able to present Switzerland as a candidate, emphasizing its best features.
- More targeted activities and communications aimed at corporate clients.
- Pursuing an active advertising policy vis-à-vis Swiss companies or companies which have an affinity with Switzerland.
- Maintaining a strong market presence and remaining aligned with market needs and developments.
- Generating new awareness and keeping existing clients interested in Switzerland.
- Market penetration with several key partners.
- Continuing to provide a quality service to professional organizers.
- Updating our database on a continuous basis and regular reporting on our relationships with associations.

3 CURRENT DATABASE SITUATION.

Type of business	Number of Contacts
Agencies	614
Corporates	1305
Associations	1030
Media	25

4 DETAILED MARKETING ACTIVITIES.

Further details of past, present and future marketing activities can be found on www.stnet.ch , which can be accessed by using your personal username and password.



Switzerland.

MarketingActivities SCIB

BENELUX

01/01/2020 – 31/12/2020	Belgium: eNewsletter 6 eNewsletters are planned through the year. Short and attractive new ideas sent to 1200 clients of our database. eNewsletters will be sent out in January, March, May, September, October and December.	Comments News and original ideas from the Swiss partners are always welcome!	Cost CHF 0 News (with pictures) and original ideas from the Swiss partners are always welcome!
01/01/2020 – 31/12/2020	Belgium: www.MySwitzerland.com/meetings Total Number of visits.	Comments	Cost CHF
01/01/2020 – 31/12/2020	Belgium: Stand alone-eNewsletter Special Edition of eNewsletter in SCIB Belgium format about your destination. Content provided by partner and edited by SCIB. Goes out to approximately 1500 buyers.	Comments Content provided by partner and edited by SCIB. Max 2 partners/year. First come, first served.	Cost CHF 500 Content provided by partner and edited by SCIB. Max 2 partners/year. First come, first served. Price not including VAT.
01/01/2020 – 31/12/2020	Belgium: Communication on the portal for the management assistants: Assistant Club.be AssistantClub.be is an online platform for assistants and secretaries in Belgium. The purpose of AssistantClub is to bring assistants together with information, interaction and networking. Every week, they make a selection of articles that assistants should read about career, office, travel, meetings, incentives, tools and wellbeing at work. For each category they suggest interesting websites. SCIB started a collaboration in 2016 and will be present in their communication on a regular basis throughout the year: articles on their website, dedicated eNewsletters, teaser in their eNewsletter The website has an average of 8'000 unique visitors a month, unique readers 200. For partner: - teaser in their monthly eNews sent to ± 4800 emails: introduction to an article and link to their or your website - one editorial/article on their website in 3 languages	Comments - teaser in their monthly eNews sent to ± 4800 emails: introduction to an article and link to their or your website - one editorial/article on their website in 3 languages. Content delivered by the Swiss partner	Cost CHF 500 - teaser in their monthly eNews sent to ± 4800 emails: introduction to an article and link to their or your website - one editorial/article on their website in 3 languages. Content delivered by the Swiss partner

MarketingActivities SCIB – Budget SCIB – BENELUX

01/01/2020 – 31/12/2020	<p>Belgium: Ad-hoc Events: Networking events at existing platforms</p> <p>SCIB Brussels will regularly check the events calendar with a link to Switzerland: music or culinary festivals, exhibitions... and analyze the possibilities to take advantage of those platforms and offer additional opportunities to our partners to meet clients. Event like MPI, SITE, IMA Inspiration Seminar will be suggested on an ad hoc basis.</p>	<p>Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Events will be suggested on an ad hoc basis. - SCIB Partners are welcome to join depending on the opportunities. - Participation at the event - Set up depending on the event format 	<p>Cost CHF</p> <p>1'000</p> <p>Events will be suggested on an ad hoc basis. SCIB Partners are welcome to join depending on the opportunities. Costs: depending on the real cost.</p>
01/01/2020 – 31/12/2020	<p>Belgium: Individual study trips</p> <p>Employees of agencies have the possibility to discover Switzerland on an individual basis. Offers are placed on MySwitzerland.com/meetings.</p>	<p>Comments</p> <p>Partners to cover the costs for the land arrangement.</p>	<p>Cost CHF</p> <p>0</p> <p>Partners to cover the costs for the land arrangement.</p>
01/01/2020 – 31/12/2020	<p>Belgium: Databasemanagement/Télémarketing and RFP Management</p> <p>Ongoing update of our database, qualifying of prospects and maintenance of existing contacts.</p>	<p>Comments</p>	<p>Cost CHF</p>
01/01/2020 – 31/12/2020	<p>Belgium: Sales Calls</p> <p>Sales Calls to incentive houses, PCO's, corporates and associations. In-house presentation for large agencies : breakfast meeting or business lunches. Related travel expenses.</p>	<p>Comments</p>	<p>Cost CHF</p>
01/01/2020 – 31/12/2020	<p>Belgium: Association Marketing Research</p> <p>As a long term strategic process the aim is to focus more on the association market. The leads are researched and quantified via the ICCA database to attract potential association conferences to Switzerland. There are more than 550 associations with HQ in Belgium, organizing congresses with more than 300 participants abroad.</p>	<p>Comments</p> <p>Aim is to qualify 30 ICCA leads and follow-up leads and contacts from past research.</p>	<p>Cost CHF</p>
01/01/2020 – 31/12/2020	<p>Belgium: Prospect and develop Swiss-affine companies</p> <p>Ongoing update and develop new contacts with societies in Belgium and Luxembourg having an affinity to Switzerland.</p>	<p>Comments</p> <p>Swiss- and Swiss-affine companies :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - receive our eNewsletter - are invited to our events 	<p>Cost CHF</p>
15/01/2020 – 31/03/2020	<p>Belgium: Study Trip: “Winter” study trip</p> <p>Organization of a study trips for Belgian PCO's and incentive houses. Participation of 10 meeting planners from PCO's and incentive houses in a winter destination. Duration: 3 days/2 nights. Idea is to combine if possible a city and a mountain destination close to the city.</p> <p>Invitation will be sent out via BBOnline. Online media release will be published after the trip.</p>	<p>Comments</p>	<p>Cost CHF</p> <p>0</p> <p>Partners to cover the costs for the land arrangement. Total 10-12 people, 3-4 nights. Combination of 2 destinations: city+ winter destination.</p>

20/01/2020 – 20/01/2020	Belgium: Associations Event / Dinner by Meeting Matters	Comments	Cost CHF
	The idea is to create a social group of mice oriented tourist offices/convention bureau's (liked the Oysters in London). Malta, Ireland, Switzerland, France are joining forces and will be hosting an event for association planners in Brussels: 10 different countries and 25 various convention bureau's. The event will take place at the Film Museum in Brussels.	Participation at the event. Networking aperitif followed by a walking-diner. In order to have a good balance between meeting planners and suppliers, the participation will be limited to max 2-3 Swiss Partners. Number of expected guests: 70	1'800 In order to have a good balance between meeting planners and suppliers, the participation will be limited to max 3 Swiss Partners. Price not including travel cost, nor accommodation nor VAT. First come, first served. Registrations were closed in August.
01/05/2020 – 31/05/2020	Luxembourg: Business Lunch in Luxembourg	Comments	Cost CHF
	SCIB Belux will invite corporate clients for lunch in Luxembourg City. Swiss Partners will have the possibility to join. Event will take place at a special venue or in a famous restaurant and if possible in the presence of the Swiss ambassador in Luxembourg.	A short presentation during the aperitif will be followed by a typical Swiss 3 courses menu. We expect ± 20 corporate clients mainly from Switzerland or companies with affinity for Switzerland. Possibility to be represented by a local partner. Local partners are welcome to join depending on the total number of partners. Max 5 partners. Priority to the destinations. First come first served.	1'000 Open to Subpartner Possibility to be represented by a local partner. Local partners are welcome to join depending on the total number of partners. Maximum 5 partners. Priority to the destinations. Price not including travel cost, nor accommodation nor VAT
25/06/2020 – 28/06/2020	Belgium: 16th Switzerland Meeting Trophy	Comments	Cost CHF
	16th edition of the Meeting Trophy, rally through Switzerland. Recruiting and guidance of the Belgian team (director or senior account managers from incentive houses and PCO's). Participation of a media representative. Follow-up including i.e dinner after the event. Date & Route tbc		
29/06/2020 – 29/06/2020	Belgium: BBT online : speed dating workshop	Comments	Cost CHF
	BBT online will organize a B2B event, speed date workshop for the Belgian meetings and incentives agencies. 80 suppliers and 120 planners are expected. Speed date workshop followed by walking dinner. Mainly agencies. 120 participants expected. Good opportunity to meet the major agencies. There is also a second workshop on Tuesday at lunch time for corporate & association planners (only possible in combination with the workshop on Monday evening) Date and venue tbc	Possibility to book a table. Local partners are welcome to join.	1'600 Open to Subpartner Possibility to book a table. Cost between 1475 € and 1575 €. Local partners are welcome to join. Special price as from 5 tables/Swiss partners through SCIB. Not including VAT.

12/10/2020 – 29/10/2020	Belgium: Annual Networking Events in Brussels. Organization of our traditional Networking Event for our clients and new potential clients. First evening dedicated to corporate & association meeting planners, second to the incentives houses & PCO's. Number of participants expected: 80 Dates & theme: tbc	Comments - Local partners are welcome to join depending on the total number of partners in order to maintain a balance between suppliers and clients. If a destination could not make it and is interested to take part, there will be a possibility to be represented by a local partner - Number of local partners : max one local per destination	Cost CHF 2'500 Open to Subpartner Local partners are welcome to join depending on the total number of partners in order to maintain a balance between suppliers and clients. If a destination could not make it and is interested to take part, there will be a possibility to be represented by a local partner. Maximum one local per destination. Price not including travel cost, nor accommodation, nor VAT
07/12/2020 – 07/12/2020	Belgium: BBT online : speed dating workshop BBT online will organize a B2B event, speed date workshop for the Belgian meetings and incentives agencies. 80 suppliers and 120 planners are expected. Speed date workshop followed by walking dinner. Mainly agencies. 120 participants expected. Good opportunity to meet the major agencies. There is also a second workshop on Tuesday at lunch time for corporate & association planners (only possible in combination with the workshop on Monday evening) Date and venue tbc	Comments	Cost CHF 1'600 Open to Subpartner Possibility to book a table. Cost between 1475 € and 1575 €. Local partners are welcome to join. Special price as from 5 tables/Swiss partners through SCIB. Not including VAT.
01/01/2020 – 31/12/2020	Belgium: Key-Media Management - eNewsletters sent to dedicated media recipients (special interest media, daily press, trade media..) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integration of "Meetings" related articles in the regular media mailing of ST - Integration of a media representative on study trips in order to get best editorial coverage. The main "meetings" magazines are : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headquarters Magazine : 8500 copies /6x year + online • Boardroom Magazine: new magazine (specialized in association management & events) 8000 copies/5x year + online Online : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associationplanner.eu : dedicated newsletter annex portal site targeting over 1995 associations executives headquartered in Brussels .10 times a year. Online article:7000 visitors/year • Corporateplanner.be:dedicated newsletter annex portal site targeting over 2'000 meetings planners in Benelux and France.10 times a year. Online article: 8000 visitors/year • BBT online : Take 5 E-Newsletter: circulation 19'000/every 3 weeks • Meeting Media Company : E-Zine, bi-monthly e-news sent to 17'000 association and corporate planners worldwide; 11'000 in Europe; Average number of webvisitors: 9'500 per month. • Boardroom eNewsletter sent to 16'000 contacts. 	Comments	Cost CHF

01/01/2020 – 31/12/2020	Belgium: Communication package: Focus on Associations	Comments	Cost CHF 4'000
	<p>SCIB Brussels always tries to get media coverage in the Belgian magazines and to integrate the partners where it's possible.</p> <p>With this "communication" package, we will provide the interested partners a detailed annual communication plan featuring their destination and key selling points through different specialized media in the meetings or congress business.</p>	<p>- Detailed annual media/communication plan at the beginning of the year and complete reporting at the end of the year. Content delivered by the partner.</p>	<p>Content delivered by the partner. Price not including VAT</p>
	<p>Media Package with focus on associations</p>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Advertorial 2 pages in Boardroom Magazine circulation 8'000 (you will pay for 1) •Insert in the e- Zine of Boardroom sent to 16000 contacts •Insert in the Associationplanner.eu e-news sent to 1'995 contacts and online content on the website: 7'000 visitors/month •Insert in the Corporatepanner.be e-news sent to 2'000 contacts and online article on the website 8'000 visitors/month. 		
01/01/2020 – 31/12/2020	Belgium: Communication package: Focus on corporate meetings & incentives	Comments	Cost CHF 2'000
	<p>SCIB Brussels always tries to get media coverage in the Belgian magazines and to integrate the partners where it's possible.</p> <p>With this media package, we will provide the interested partners a detailed annual media planning featuring their destination and key selling points through different specialized media in the meetings or incentive business.</p>	<p>- Detailed annual media/communication plan at the beginning of the year and complete reporting at the end of the year. Content delivered by the partner.</p>	<p>Content delivered by the partner. Price not including VAT</p>
	<p>Focus on corporate market:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article with pictures, logo during one month on the website Meeting Media Company. • Insert in the E-Zine bi-monthly e-news sent by Meeting Media Company targeting 17'000 contacts worldwide (11'000 in Europe) • Insert in the Corporatepanner.be e-news sent to 2'000 contacts and online article on the website : 8'000 visitors/month • One insert/teaser about your destination in one of the eNewsletter of AssistantClub sent to 4000 management assistants in Belgium. 		
01/01/2020 – 31/12/2020	Belgium: SITE and MPI Meetings Communities	Comments	Cost CHF
	<p>SCIB is SITE and MPI member in Belgium and aims to actively attend their chapter meetings and benefit from their educational sessions and overall networking opportunities.</p>		
21/04/2020 – 23/04/2020	Belgium: IMEX Frankfurt	Comments	Cost CHF
	<p>Attendance on the Switzerland booth. Meet and greet clients from Belgium. Active communication in the market prior to the event in order to drain as much qualified visitors to the booth as possible</p>	<p>Registration via SCIB HQ.</p>	
15/11/2020 – 30/11/2020	Belgium: IBTM World Barcelona	Comments	Cost CHF
	<p>Attendance on the Switzerland booth. Meet and greet clients from Belgium. Active communication in the market prior to the event in order to drain as much qualified visitors to the booth as possible</p> <p>Dates tbc</p>	<p>Registration via SCIB HQ.</p>	