



Switzerland.

Market situation France.

Switzerland Convention & Incentive Bureau (SCIB).

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

1 MARKET SITUATION AND OUTLOOK

1.1 Economic situation

French GDP has grown by 0.9% in 2023 and is expected to grow moderately, by 0.9% annually in 2024.

The business tendency surveys suggest that growth remains hesitant. The business climate declined throughout 2022 and H1 2023 due to inflationary shock and monetary tightening. It has stabilized since, at a little below its long-term average.

Overall, prospects are expected to brighten slightly in early 2024: disinflation is indeed confirmed (+3.1% in January; +2.6% expected in June), which should bolster households' purchasing power. Their confidence is gradually improving, and consumption looks set to be the main driver of activity in H1 2024.

The employment climate, which had managed to remain well above its long-term average throughout H1 2023, fell back continuously at the end of the year: in January 2024, it dropped slightly below its long-term average for the first time since spring 2021. In services, the business climate in January was just above the long-term average, while in industry it was a little below. However, this situation accompanies an unprecedented variation in short-term economic diagnoses for each industrial branch.

(Source Insee economic outlook Feb 2024)

1.2 Meetings industry situation & trends

In Spring 2023 the **Coach Omnium Study “Tendances MICE 2022 et les Perspectives 2023”** got published again after 4 years with no survey.

Its headline is *“MICE in France gets back stronger, greener and less virtual”*.

- **stronger**: as from June 2022 events picked up again and this trend continued. Compared to 2022, when a majority of events took place in France, the demand to go abroad took up again as well.

- **greener**: CSR criteria get integrated more often in RFPs than before. 29% do it regularly, 23% occasionally. Among the criteria 52% concerns short-distance supplies, 51% environmental friendly activities, 37% means of transportation (train), 35% close destinations and 25% certification of suppliers.

- **less virtual**: as clients can meet again in person the 100% virtual events are less common than during Covid.

The venue search is done via internet (59% of responding panel). 88% of them use key words in navigators, 36% go directly to specialized platforms like Cvent, 1001salles.com etc. Social Medias for inspiration are important for 24% (only 2% 5 years ago...) and Convention Bureaus

are considered by 20% (only 3% 5 years ago). Agencies and Venue Finders (if request comes from corporates) are also mentioned by 20%.

But there are also still almost half of the respondents who say that they have their habits or follow recommendations from colleagues, peers or friends.

The study also mentioned that events get shorter with a majority of 1–2-day events and in average smaller groups. Hotels and unusual event locations are booked the most.

(Source: « Les grandes tendances de la demande en MICE 2023 par Coach Omnium »)

A major challenge of the industry remains the lack of employees. During the pandemic a lot of persons have changed activity. They left Paris to go live in a smaller town or at the countryside. We estimate the loss of qualified workers in the Tourism and Event Business to around 25-30%. As a result, Event agencies are extremely busy, and it is not easy to have them participate to study trips or industry events.

We continue to observe changes within the Event Agencies in France: EGG keeps growing worldwide and in France, WMH Project (a merge of FC2, Mondial Events) continues to integrate other agencies (one of the last acquisitions in early 2024 is “Phénomène”), AMEX M&E is restructuring etc.

Trends

Digitalisation in the event industry is not gone. The power of online meetings (**full digital or hybrid**) avoiding unnecessary travelling or giving the opportunity to enlarge one’s public cannot be neglected. 25% of organisers use full digital events and 43% of organisers hybrid events (source: client questionnaire 11/2023).

We recommend **venues to update and increase their use of technology**, with high-speed internet, secure Wi-Fi and in-house broadcasting studios.

CSR / sustainability is getting one of the most important topics in the event industry. Pressure is coming from CAC40 corporates who need to show their CSR engagement and actions to their stakeholders. They will increasingly choose venues who are committed to CSR...

LEVENEMENT, the French association of event agencies, has decided that all their members should be certified ISO 20121 asap. Thus, France has the biggest number of ISO 20121 certified suppliers and events and will increase its number in the upcoming months, also in perspective of the Olympics Paris2024. The French government has been involved in this process as well.

Tools to easily measure and evaluate the carbon impact of a meeting are developed and promoted in France and the LEAD-label has been launched.

We highly recommend all players in the Swiss meetings industry wishing to show their commitment towards CSR to have a look at these tools and labels, but also to communicate on their efforts (whatever they are) in sustainability more clearly and proactively. “Swisstainable” which ST/SCIB promotes should absolutely be considered and integrated in the panel of CSR actions.

AI (Artificial Intelligence) is a topic in the media and among event professionals. Seen more as a help to design and set up events faster and with integration of VR (Virtual Reality), AR (Augmented Reality) or MR (Mixed Reality), than a real threat, as creativity is still a human value.

1.3 RFP situation in France

Despite of a strong Swiss Franc - which makes us a lot more expensive than the EURO countries - we get a good number of RFPs. We finished 2023 with 181 requests and have already handled 34 requests since January.

Our advantage is the proximity to France with easy and above all **sustainable** access by TGV. A big part of new RFPs come indeed because of an increasing demand in France on destinations accessible by train.

We also get much more RFPs for bigger groups (>100 participants) from agencies, but the one's that get confirmed or are carried-out in Switzerland are still mostly smaller than 100 participants...

With the trend towards "train destinations" we could mainly source bigger cities (Geneva, Lausanne, Zurich, Montreux) and ski resorts (Villars-Diablerets, Crans, Davos...).

2 TARGETS

- We keep our strong market presence and our quality approach towards buyers (agencies, corporates, and venue finders) of the meetings sector in France; we want to stay in their mind and make them consider Switzerland for their in-person events.
- The inbound marketing strategy we have developed over the past years, through content production (blog) which is very well indexed by google and our presence on social media (mainly LinkedIn) help us achieve our targets. We generate awareness for Switzerland with empathy.
- We put emphasis on venues for smaller groups (>50/100 pax), on sustainability and target also corporates (especially "assistantes de direction") in border regions.
- We go meet clients (new and existing ones) at different platforms (our own or Third-Party platforms) in Paris and "Province" (special focus on Lyon).
- Ongoing updates of our client database, in order to be able to invite the clients with the highest potential to our trips and events.
- Presence online and offline through KMM and participation in Meeting Industry Associations
- Convert RFIs and RFPs into overnights and consistent ROI

3 CURRENT DATABASE SITUATION

Kind	Contacts
Agencies	1564
Corporates	796
Association	159
Media	20

4 DETAILED MARKETING ACTIVITIES

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