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# Introduction

This is the 60<sup>th</sup> edition of this report. Sixty years is a long time even for the UIA, which has been researching and collecting data on international associations since 1907. A good time, we thought, for a change! We asked ourselves: what more interesting data can we take from UIA's unique database on global civil society that will provide insight into the world of international association meetings? An answer to that question can be found in the many new tables throughout this report, but especially in Chapters 2 and 3 and 5.

We also asked ourselves how we could make the report more user-friendly. Here the answer was hyperlinks. The Tables of Contents and the cross-references between tables are hyperlinked to facilitate easy and quick movement through the many pages of this report. We encourage you to use the report digitally, rather than on paper, so as to take advantage of these hyperlinks and of the search functions standard to PDFs.

In keeping with UIA's mission to collect and disseminate information on international associations, the report now begins with a general overview, the "big picture", of international association meetings (Chapter 2), followed by an overview of the last twenty years (Chapter 3). In both these chapters we explore interesting questions which require more than a single year's data to answer, and we see the long-term results of the strategies and efforts destinations have deployed over many years to attract association meetings. The long-term view also smooths out issues related to the more recent data not yet being stabilized.

The report continues to narrow its focus and so arrives at an overview of meetings activity in 2018 (Chapter 4). The final chapters (5 and 6) give the details behind these overviews. What used to be the first table is now the last: Table 6.4, at the very end of this report, gives details by country and by city on the 11,240 meetings held in 2018, as currently recorded in our database.

There are many results worth noting in this report. While Europe maintains its continental ranking as "the place to be", year after year we see the numbers for Asia grow. Just twenty years ago not a single non-European city was to be found in the top ten, and now there are three Asian cities in the top five places.

Another global trend of note is that, while the number of meetings with over 500 participants has been relatively steady over the past twenty years, the number of meetings with under 500 participants has more than doubled. This corresponds with trends indicated by UIA's *Survey on International Meetings Issues* regarding meeting size.

Another trend covered by the *Survey on International Meetings Issues* is the length, or duration, of association meetings. Again, there is a correspondence between the *Survey* results and the data in this report: meetings are on average half a day shorter now than they were twenty years ago.

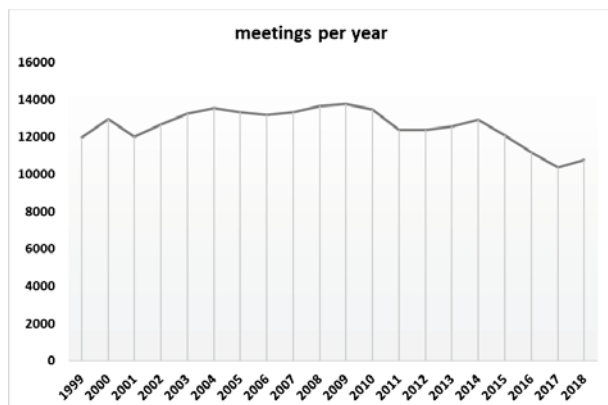
There are many ways of looking at meetings. This report has numerous tables with the "top 30" countries and cities. Each of these tables highlights one of the many different ways in which a destination can be successful in attracting association meetings.

We can say with confidence that the data included in this report can be found nowhere else! UIA's broad definition of what constitutes an international meeting (that it can be non-governmental and intergovernmental, can include any number of participants, takes no account of frequency or rotation) means that a wide range of meetings and of organizations is included. This report takes 453,139 meetings into account, organized in 250 countries, in 12,682 cities, by 29,835 international organizations.

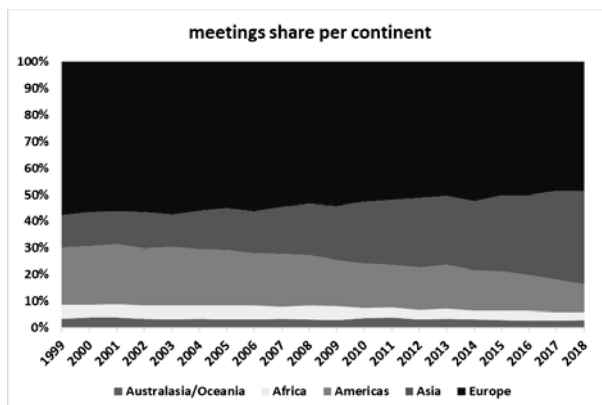
We have more ideas for future editions of this report! We appreciate your comments and suggestions.

The UIA Editorial Team

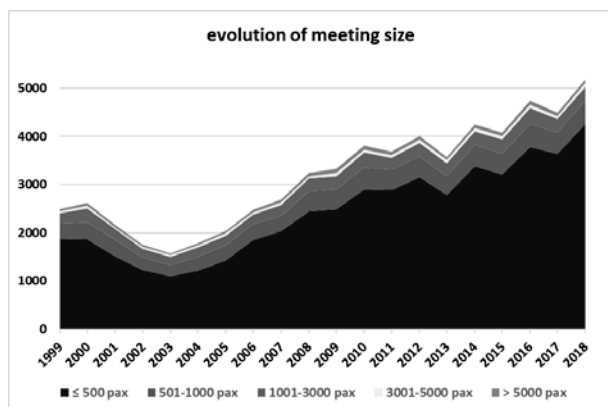
# 21<sup>st</sup> century trends



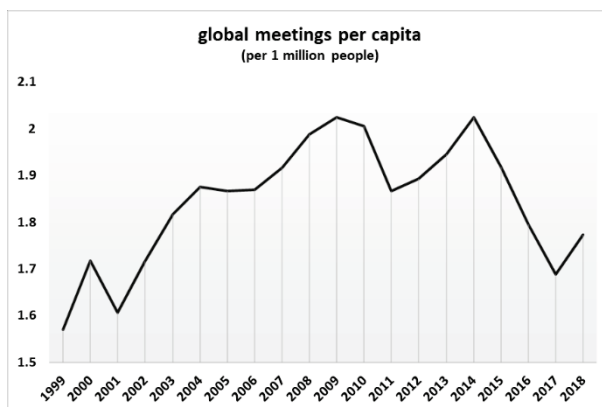
Meeting numbers have been relatively stable at around 12,000 annually.



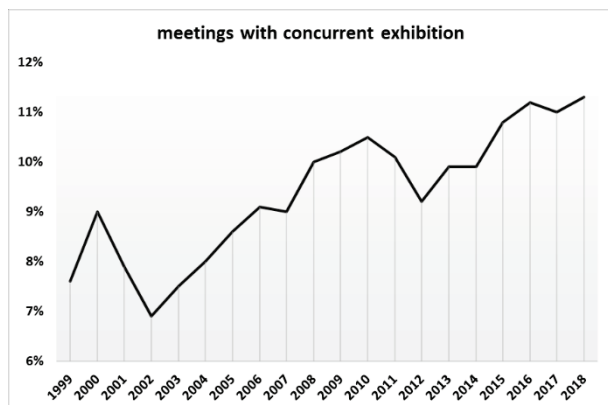
While Europe remains the undisputed old favourite, Asia's market share is growing



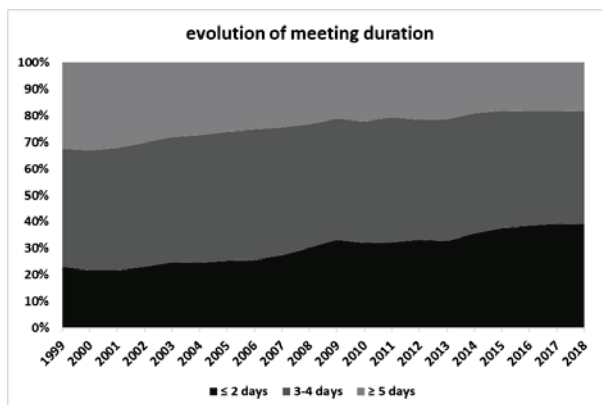
There is significant growth in the number of meetings with under 500 participants.



In 2009, 2010, and 2014 there were over two association meetings per million global



The number of meetings with a concurrent exhibition has risen.



Meetings have become shorter in duration.