

# Incentive PULSE Survey

NEW DATA | APRIL 2024

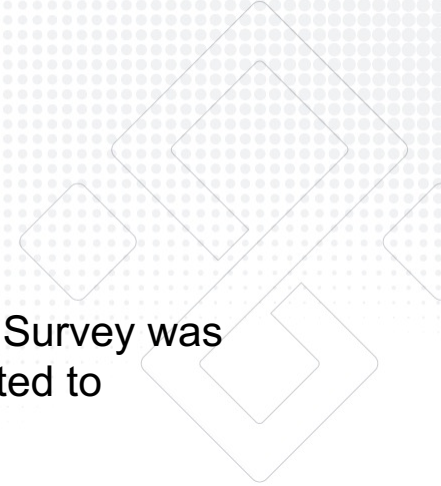




## Incentive PULSE Survey – April 2024

### SURVEY METHODOLOGY

- This cycle of the Northstar Meetings Group/Cvent Incentive PULSE Survey was in the field collecting responses from April 9 to April 24 and was posted to [northstarm meetingsgroup.com](https://northstarm meetingsgroup.com) on April 26, 2024.
- The data comprises 158 responses from qualified incentive travel program planners only.
- As an incentive, respondents participating in the survey and opting into Northstar's privacy policies were entered into a drawing to win a stylish TUMI Bravo Collection backpack, compliments of TUMI.





## Incentive PULSE Survey – April 2024

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Even though new booking activity has abated since last fall, **incentive travel program planners are nearly just as optimistic** as they were last April. Q4 of 2024 is when most of their next programs will be held.
- Whether it's because of costs or other factors, **half of all program planners say their next trip will stay in the United States.**
- Beach destinations remain the top draw, but **the leading region for upcoming incentive travel programs is Northern California.** Southern California and Southeast Florida are a distant second and third.
- **Destination appeal, ease of access, safety and budgets/costs** grow in importance for program planners.
- Most concerns regarding factors that could impact incentive travel – including **increased costs and tightened budgets** – have eased.
- Few planners – only 1 in 5 – are using AI tools today. But the **early adopters are using them to perform a variety of important tasks.**
- As an incentive, respondents participating in the survey and opting into Northstar's privacy policies were entered into a drawing to win a stylish TUMI Bravo Collection backpack, compliments of TUMI.



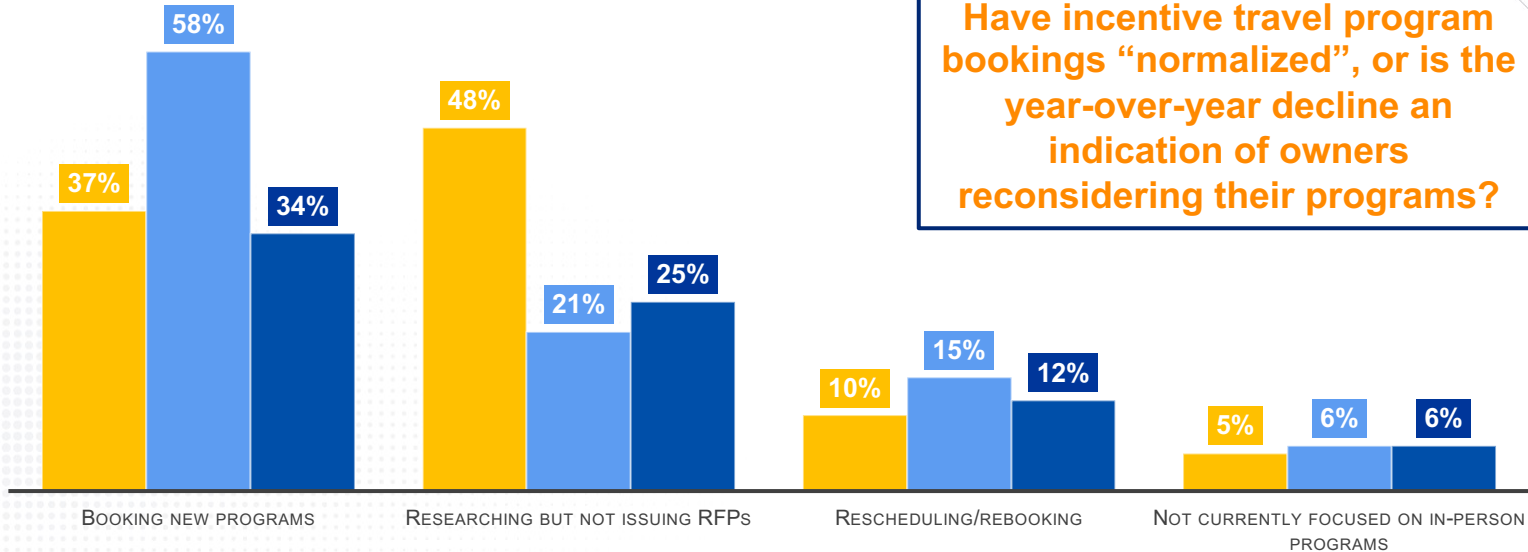
# New Booking Activity Has Abated Since Last May

LAST YEAR'S BOOM IN BOOKING ACTIVITY SUGGESTS NEAR-TERM BUSINESS IS ALREADY PLANNED.

**What is your current primary focus as it pertains to your in-person incentive travel programs?**

■ April '24 ■ April '23 ■ April '22

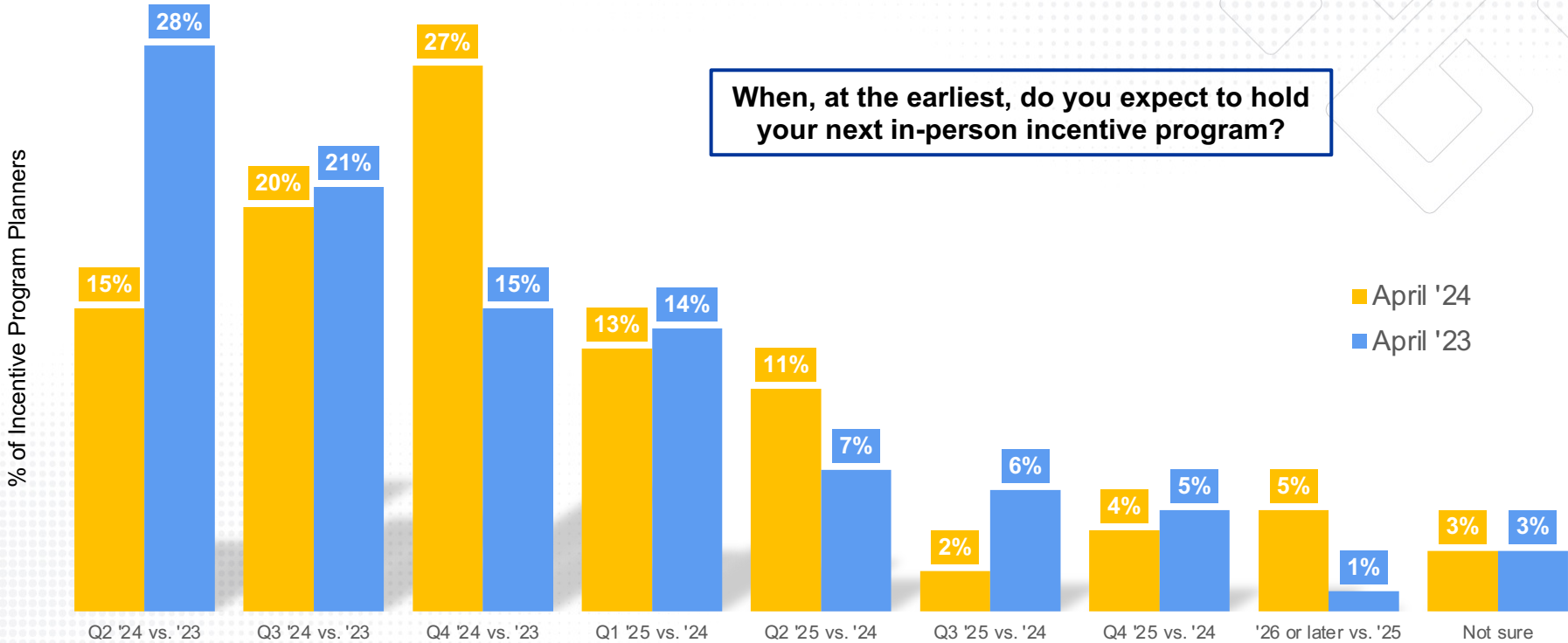
% of Incentive Program Planners



**Have incentive travel program bookings “normalized”, or is the year-over-year decline an indication of owners reconsidering their programs?**

# Q4 2024 In High Demand for Upcoming Programs

AS POST-COVID BOOKING PATTERNS NORMALIZE, Q4 APPEARS TO BE THE OPTIMUM TIME FOR PROGRAMS.

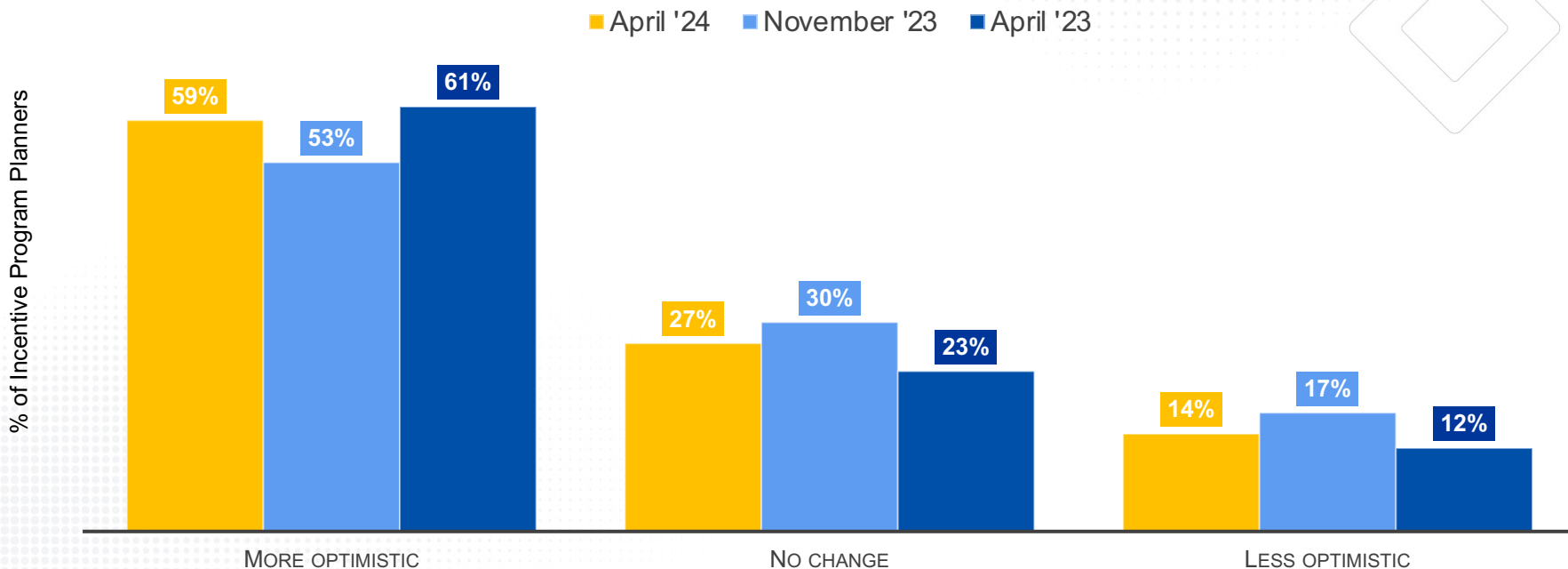




# Optimism Levels Remain High

BOOKING PATTERNS MAY HAVE NORMALIZED BUT THAT HASN'T IMPACTED PLANNER OPTIMISM.

How has your outlook for your incentive programs changed over the past six months?



# More Upcoming Programs will Stay in the US

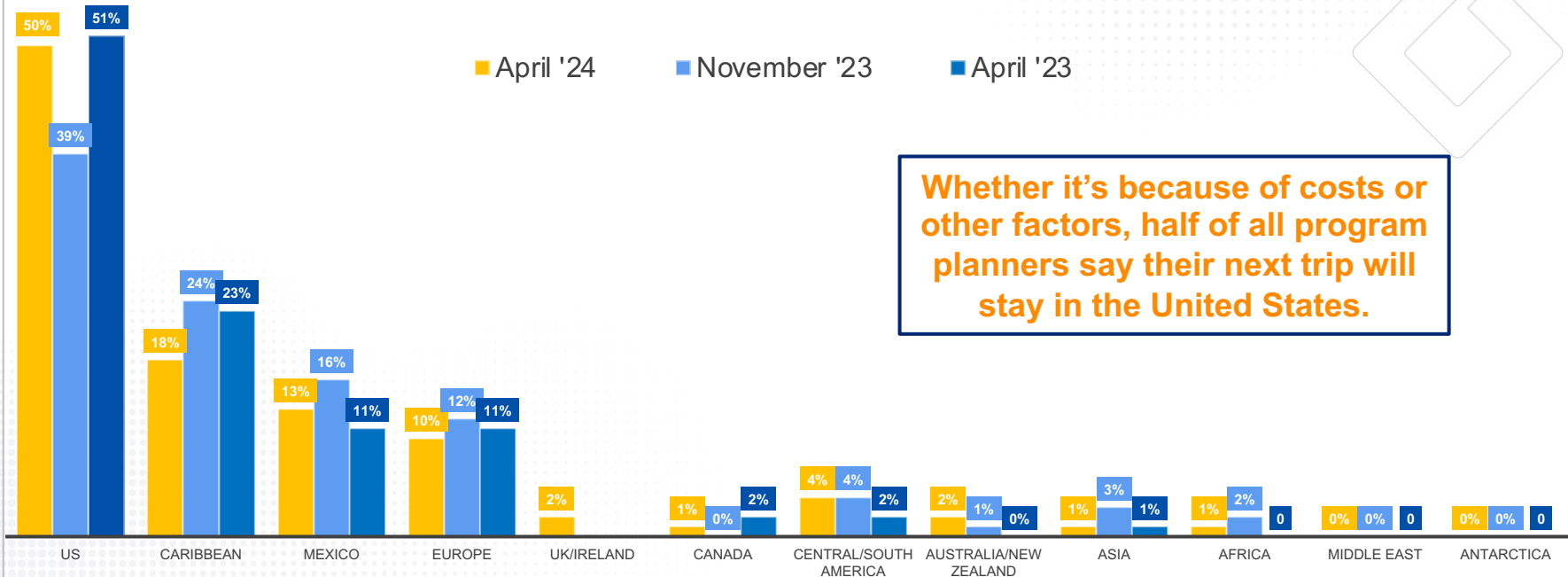
THE UPTICK IN INCENTIVE TRAVEL OUTSIDE OF THE US SIX MONTHS AGO WAS SHORT-LIVED.

**Where will your next incentive program be held?**

% of Incentive Program Planners

■ April '24    ■ November '23    ■ April '23

**Whether it's because of costs or other factors, half of all program planners say their next trip will stay in the United States.**



# Future Programs Are More Likely Stay Close to Home Too

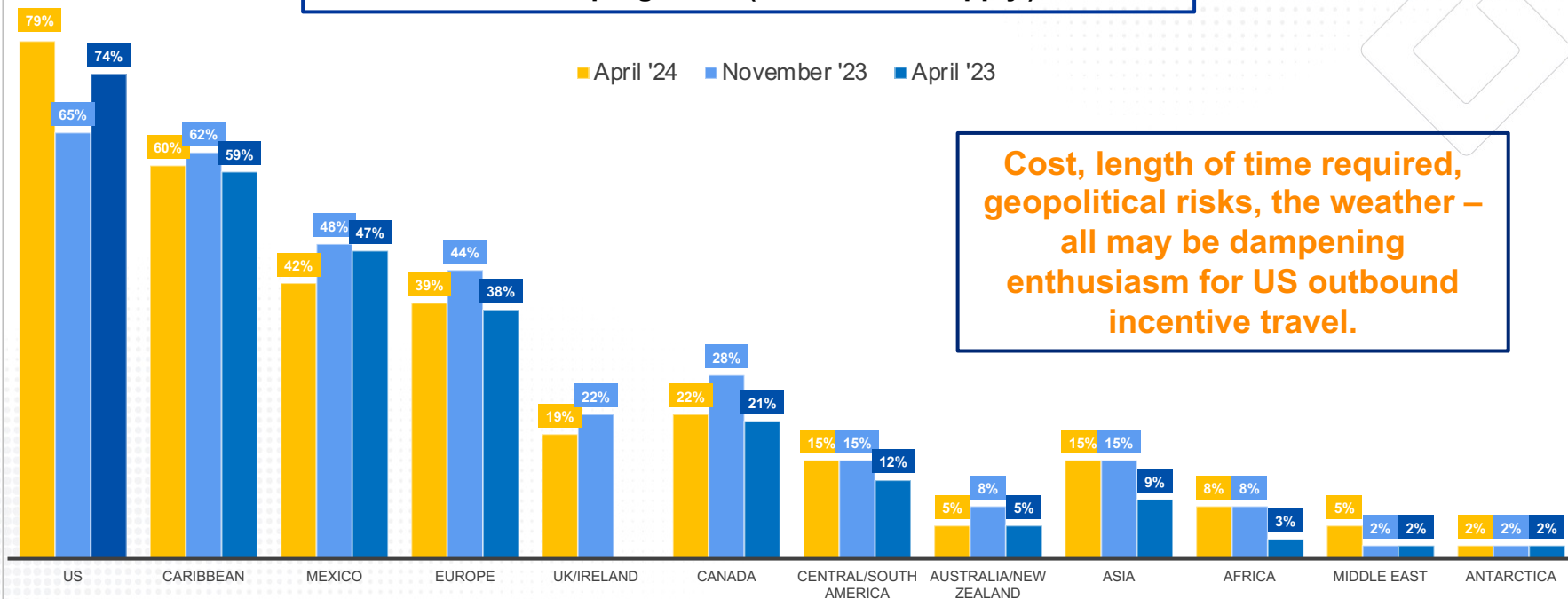
INCENTIVE TRAVEL OUTSIDE OF THE UNITED STATES IS CONSTRAINED BY A NUMBER OF FACTORS.

Which destinations are you currently considering for future incentive programs? (Select all that apply.)

% of Incentive Program Planners

■ April '24 ■ November '23 ■ April '23

Cost, length of time required, geopolitical risks, the weather – all may be dampening enthusiasm for US outbound incentive travel.

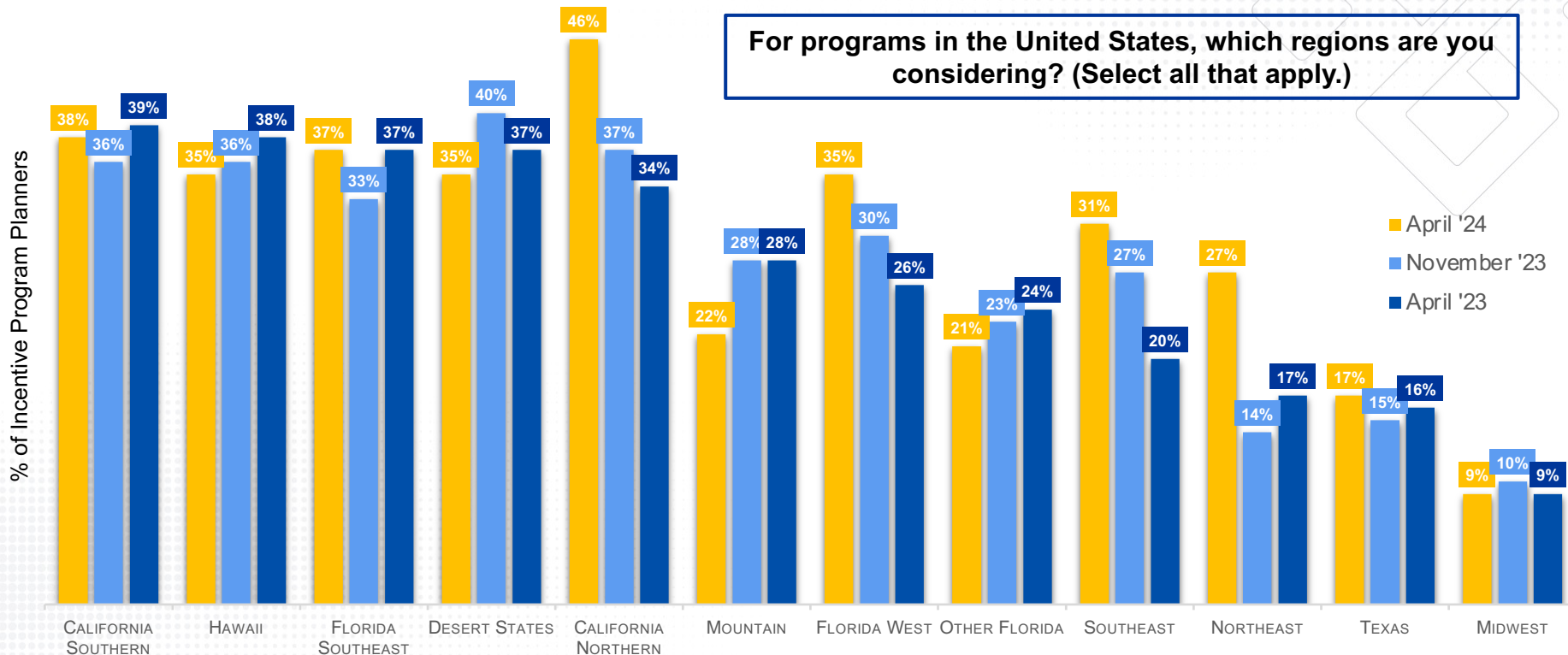






# US Regions Benefit from a Renewed Focus on Domestic Programs

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA SEES A SURGE IN INTEREST AND IS NOW THE TOP REGION ON PLANNER SHORT LISTS.

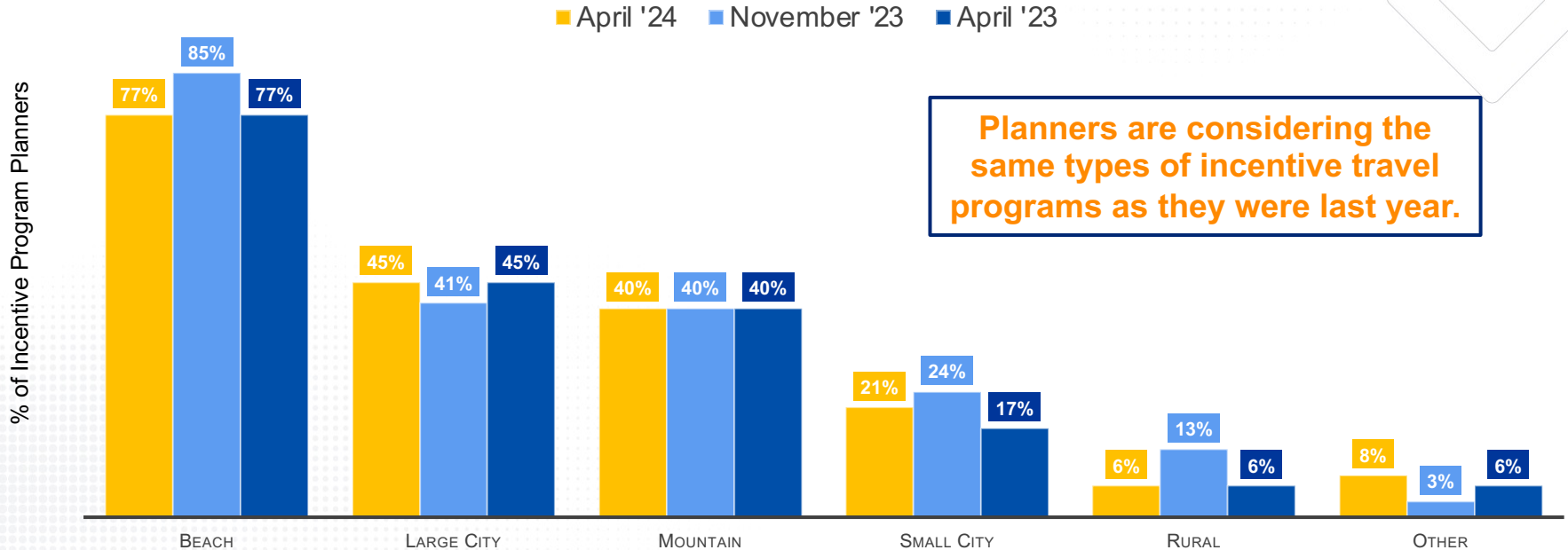




# For Destination Types, Nothing Beats the Beach for Incentive Travel

DEMAND FOR DIFFERENT TYPES OF TRAVEL EXPERIENCES REMAINS CONSISTENT YEAR-OVER-YEAR.

What types of destination(s) are you currently considering for incentive travel programs?





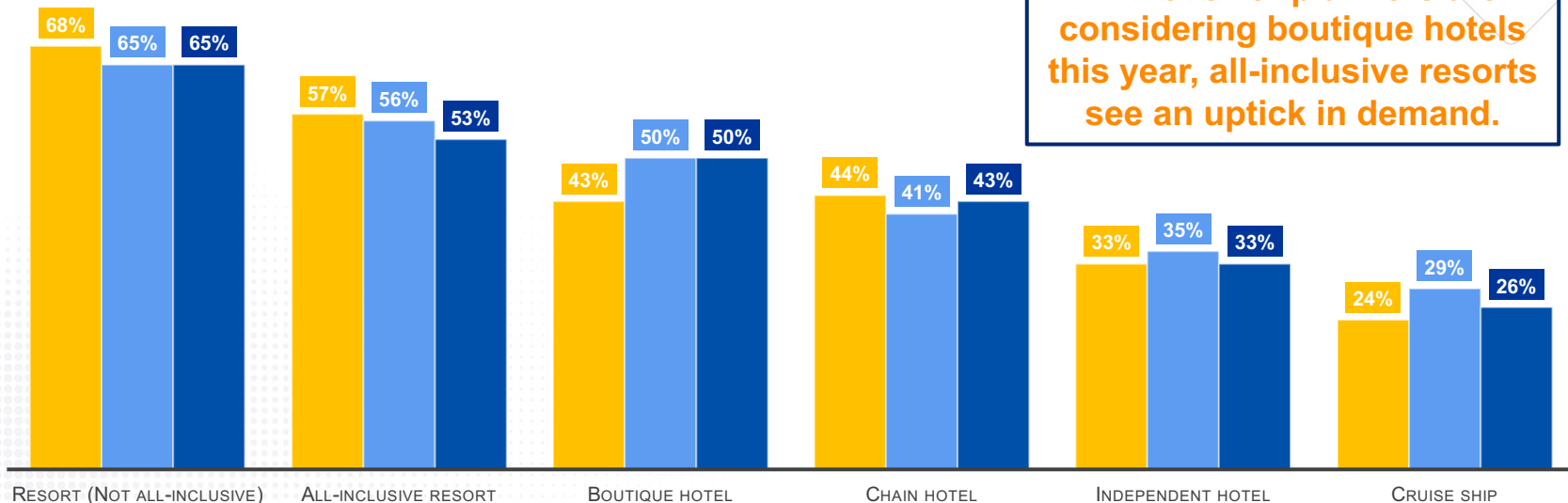
# Resorts Continue to be the Top Draw for Incentive Travel

DEMAND FOR DIFFERENT TYPES OF ACCOMMODATIONS REMAINS CONSISTENT YEAR-OVER-YEAR.

Which type of accommodations are you sourcing for the incentive travel programs you are currently planning? (Select all that apply.)

■ April '24 ■ November '23 ■ April '23

% of Incentive Program Planners



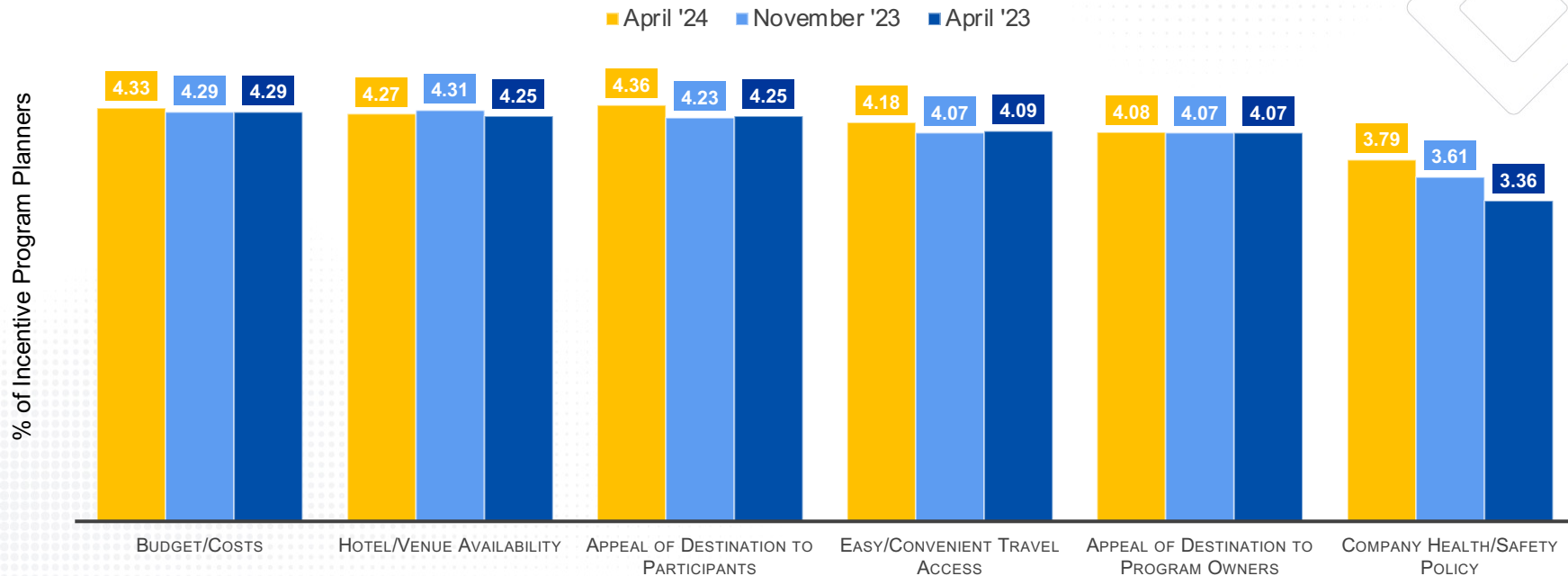
While fewer planners are considering boutique hotels this year, all-inclusive resorts see an uptick in demand.



# The Uptick in Importance of Several Factors is Notable

DESTINATION APPEAL, EASE OF ACCESS, SAFETY AND BUDGETS/COSTS GROW IN IMPORTANCE.

Please rank the relative importance of the following factors for the incentive travel programs you are currently planning (on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being “not at all important” and 5 being “extremely important”).

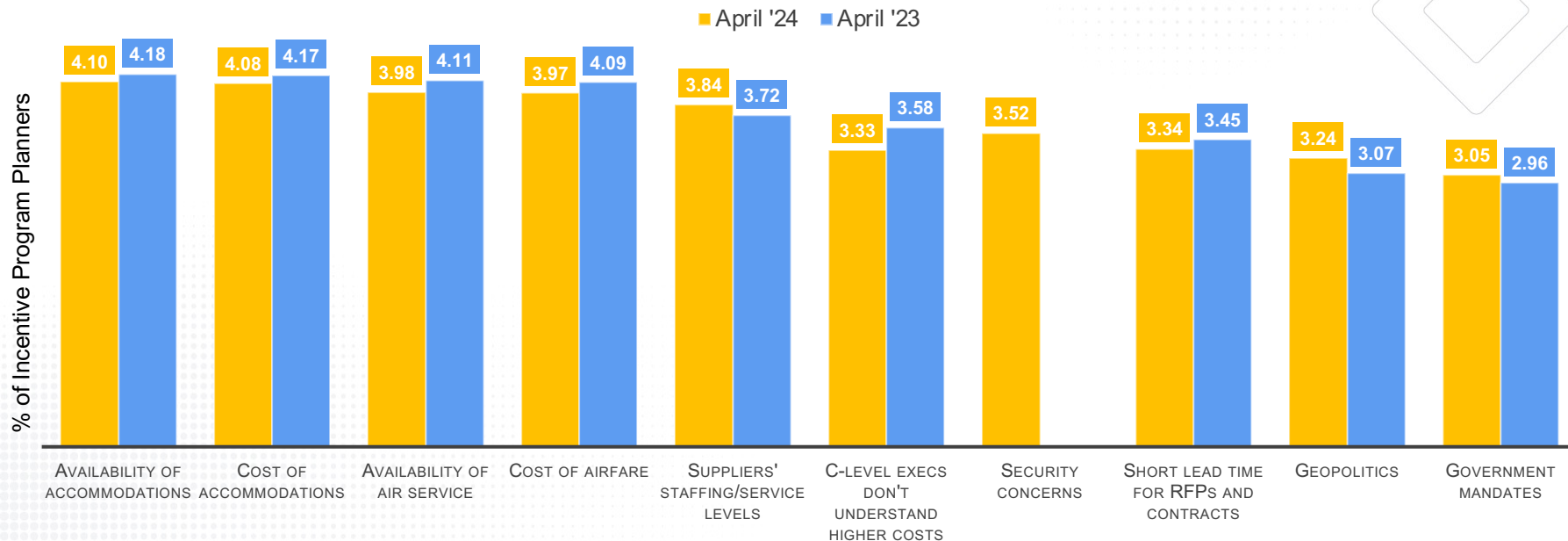




# Most Factors Affecting Program Planning Decisions Have Eased

ONLY GEOPOLITICS, STAFFING AND GOVERNMENT MANDATES HAVE GROWN IN IMPORTANCE, PLANNERS SAY.

To what extent are the following factors affecting your incentive travel program planning decisions (on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being “not at all” and 5 being “very significantly”)?

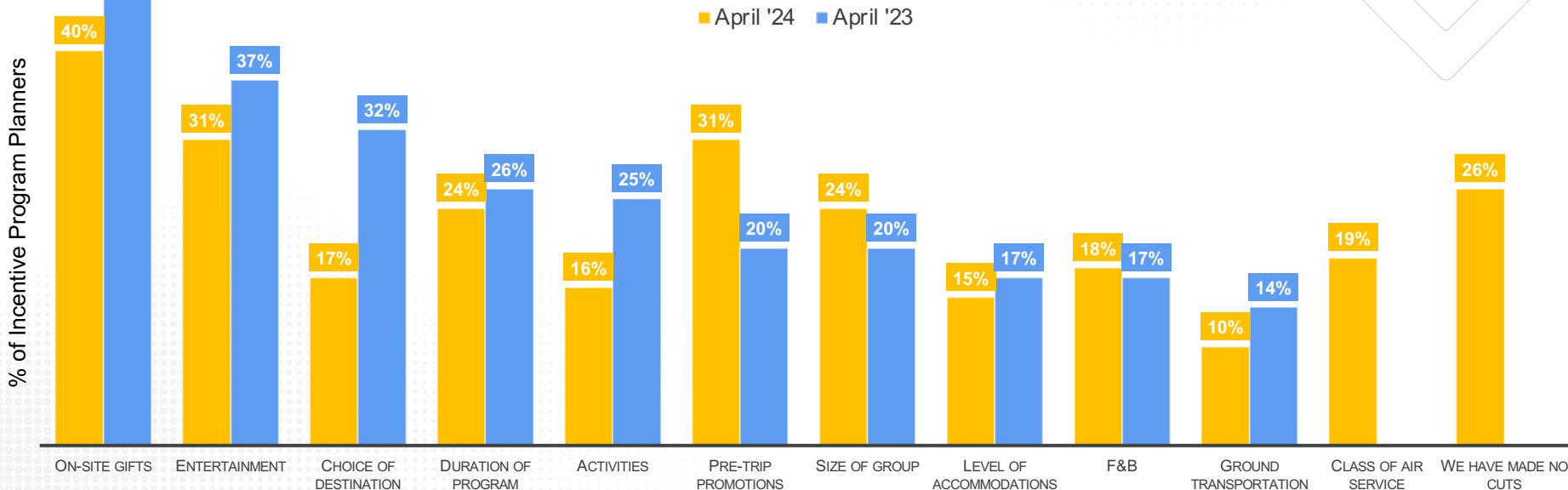




# Fewer Planners Have Reduced Spending Compared to Last Year

ACROSS MOST PROGRAM ELEMENTS, PLANNERS ARE LESS INCLINED TO OFFSET INCREASED COSTS.

Have you cut or reduced spending on any of the following program elements to offset increased costs? (Select all that apply.)





# More Incentive Program are Adding Participants Than Cutting Back

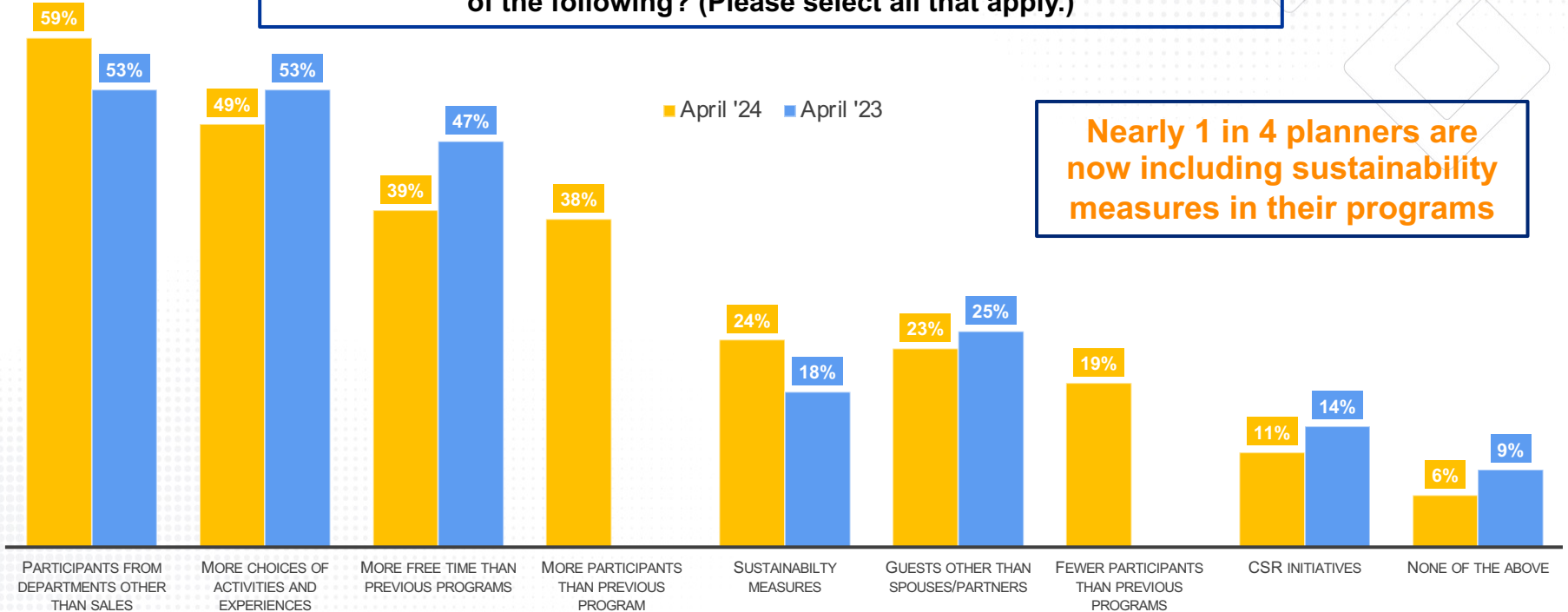
AND MORE PROGRAMS ARE INCLUDING EMPLOYEES FROM DEPARTMENTS OTHER THAN SALES AS WELL.

**Do the programs you are now planning for 2024 and beyond include any of the following? (Please select all that apply.)**

% of Incentive Program Planners

■ April '24 ■ April '23

**Nearly 1 in 4 planners are now including sustainability measures in their programs**

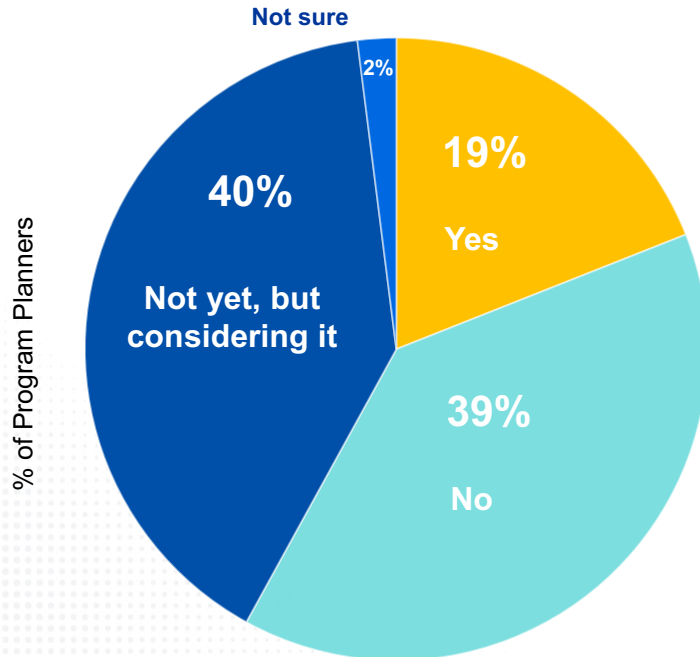




# Incentive Program Planners are Not Rushing to AI

ONLY 19% ARE CURRENTLY USING AI TOOLS TO ASSIST THEIR PROGRAM PLANNING.

**Are you using AI in any aspect of your incentive program planning?**



**Is fear of disruption, lack of tech savvy or lack of trust dampening adoption levels of AI in incentive travel program planning?**





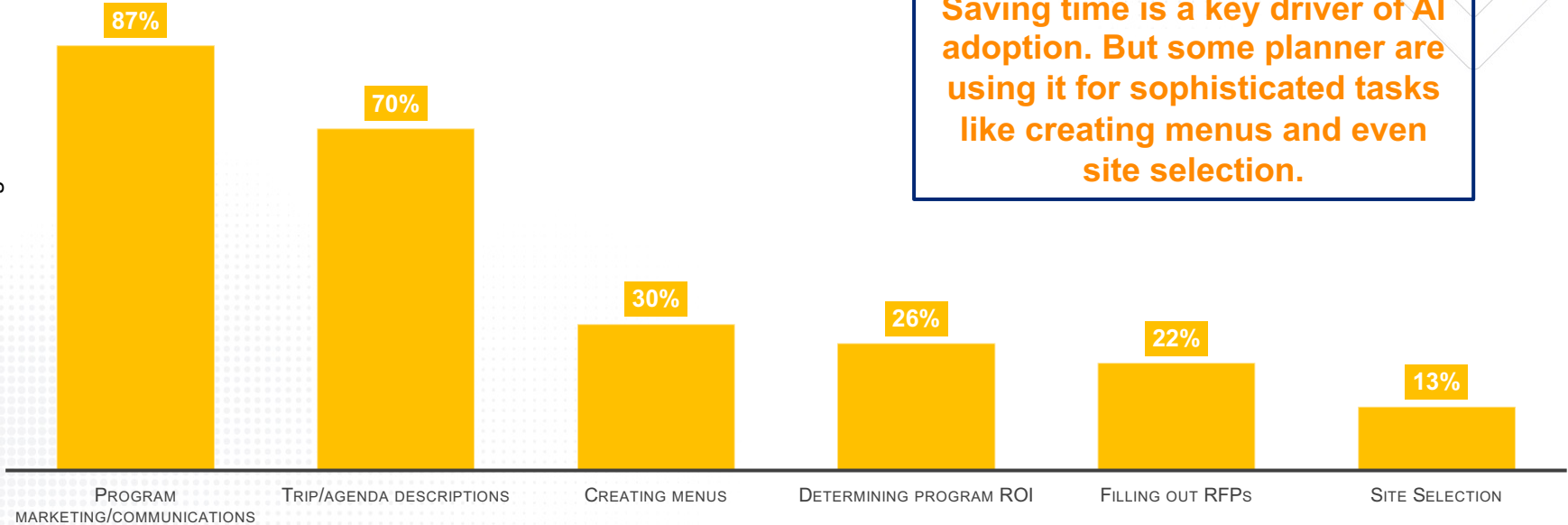
# How are Early Adopters Using their AI Tools?

SAVVY PROGRAM PLANNERS ARE USING AI FOR A RANGE OF ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS.

How are you using AI tools when planning incentive programs? (Select all that apply.)

■ April '24

% of Incentive Program Planners



Saving time is a key driver of AI adoption. But some planner are using it for sophisticated tasks like creating menus and even site selection.