

# Annual Convention: Travel Agents Federation of India

25-26 February 2013

## Top Line Summary

Zama Dlamini  
Karen Kohler  
Tourism Information Services Department  
Tourism KwaZulu-Natal  
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# Highlights



- Over 70% of the respondents participated in pre- and post-conference tours thus experiencing what the region has to offer in terms of tourism. Positive experience lead to significant numbers of conference delegates returning to a destination for a holiday at a later stage.
- The respondents were positive about Durban and surrounds as a convention and a holiday destination.
- Over 50% of the respondents would possibly visit Durban and surrounds in the future. Some 25% said they were extremely likely to do so.
- Generally, the respondents were satisfied with Durban as a convention destination.

# Objectives



- To determine the profile of delegates who attended the Annual Convention of the Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI) on 25-26 February 2013.
- To determine what factors influenced their decision to attend this conference and to what degree.
- To ascertain their travel and activity patterns over the period of this conference.
- To determine their perceptions of the overall organisation of the conference, the conference venue and Durban as a tourist destination.

# Methodology

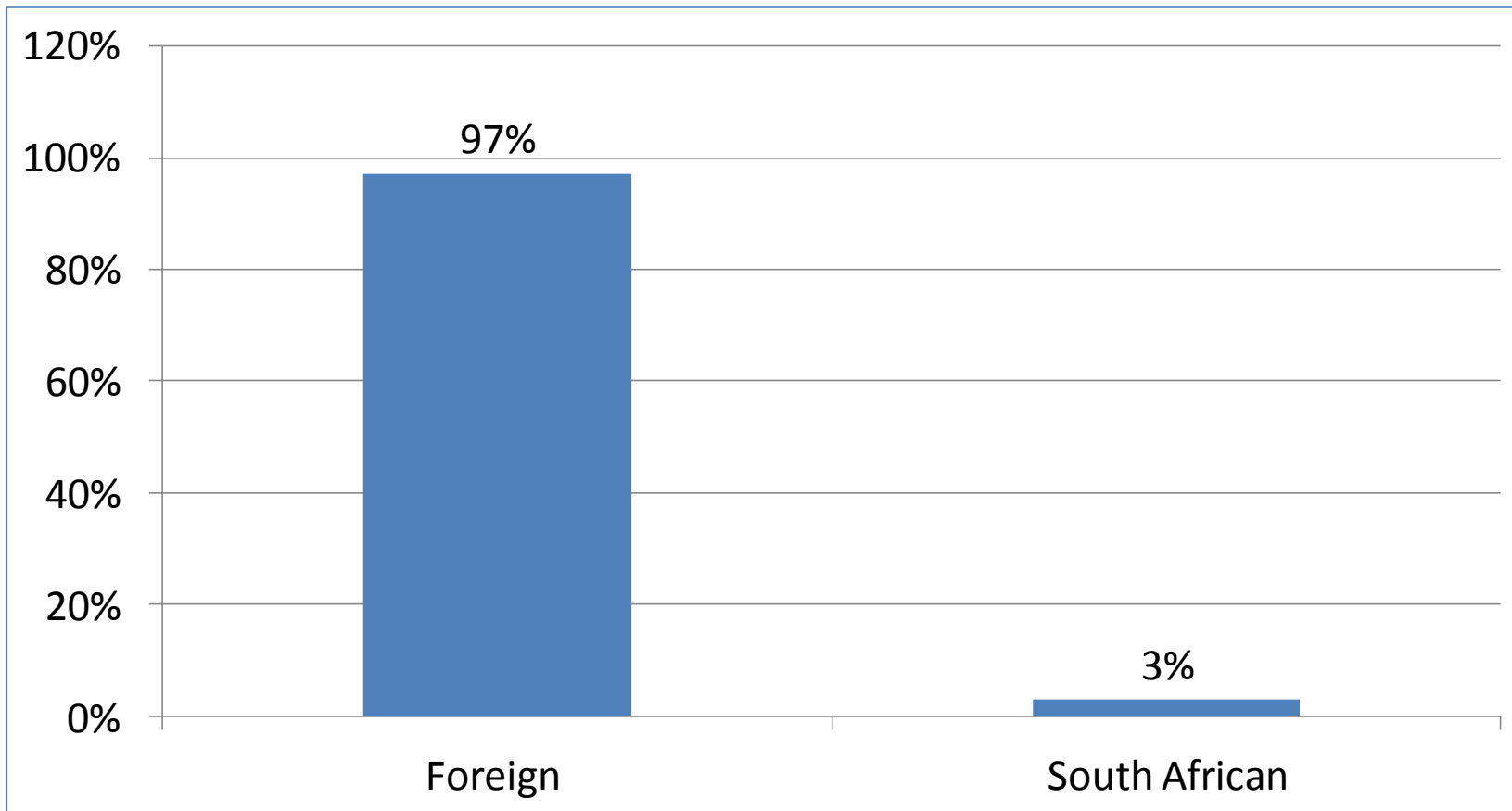


- Face to face survey – 139 respondents.
- Probability sample design.
- Stratified allocation by day.
- Respondents systematically selected.
- Secondary data provided by the organizers.

## Limitations:

- This research did not estimate the total impact of the conference as the majority of delegates were sponsored. In this regard, their personal expenditure in the destination was minimal.
- This survey was only based on respondents who were regarded as conference delegates. It excluded exhibitors many of whom were from the tourism trade from within South Africa.

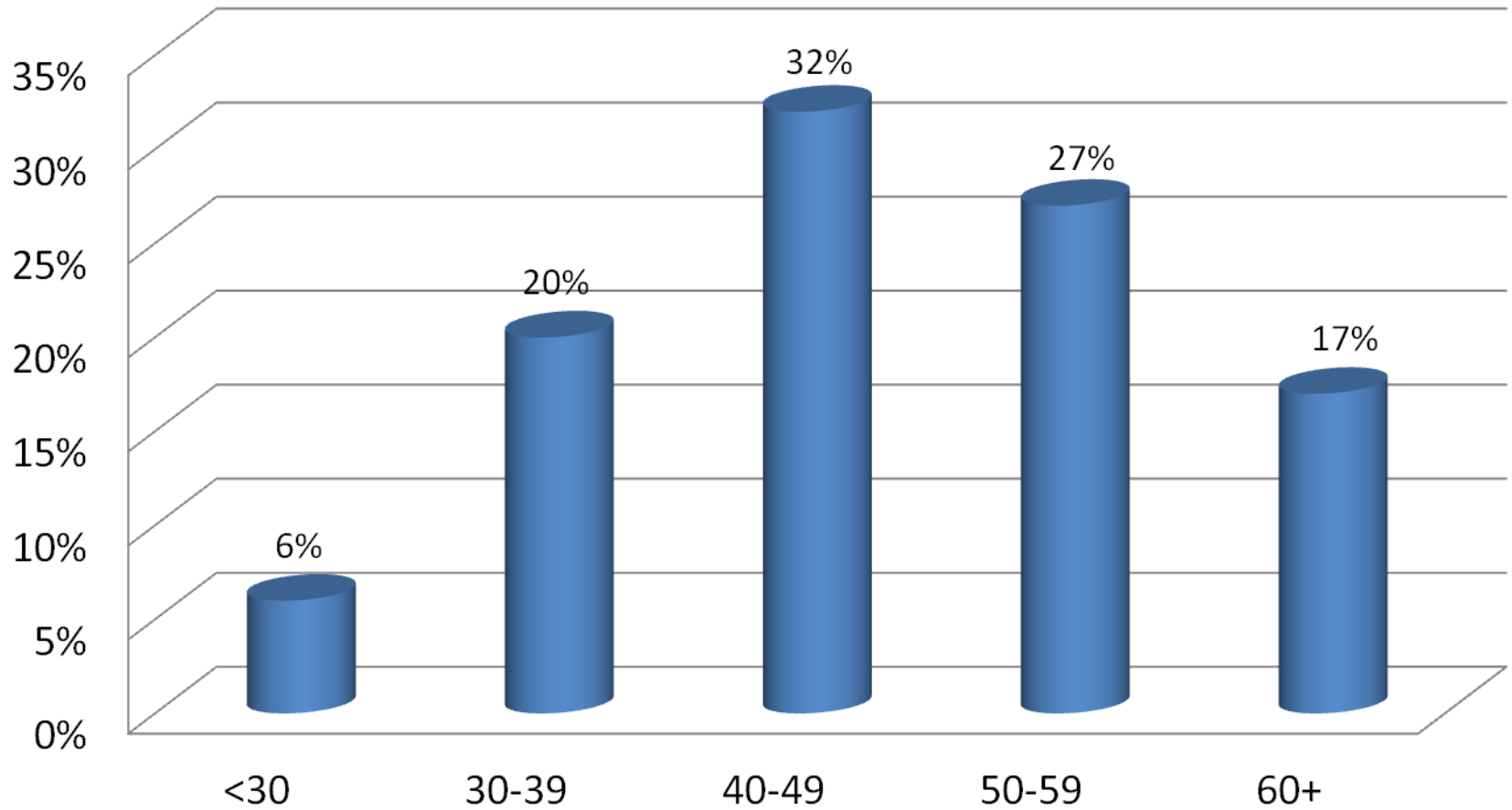
# Respondents



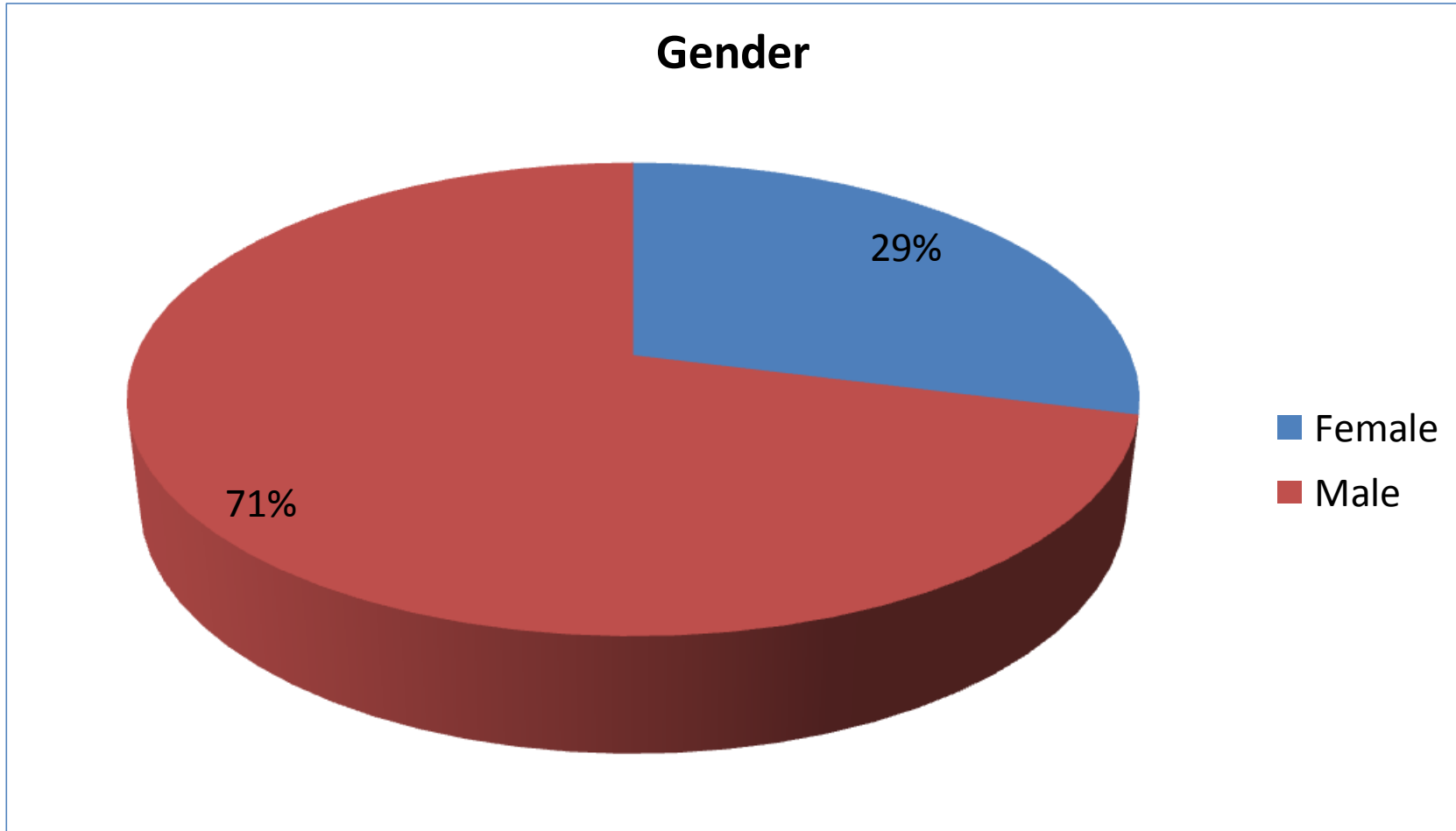
Respondents	n	%
South African	4	3%
Foreign	135	97%
Total	139	100%

# Age Group

Age Group

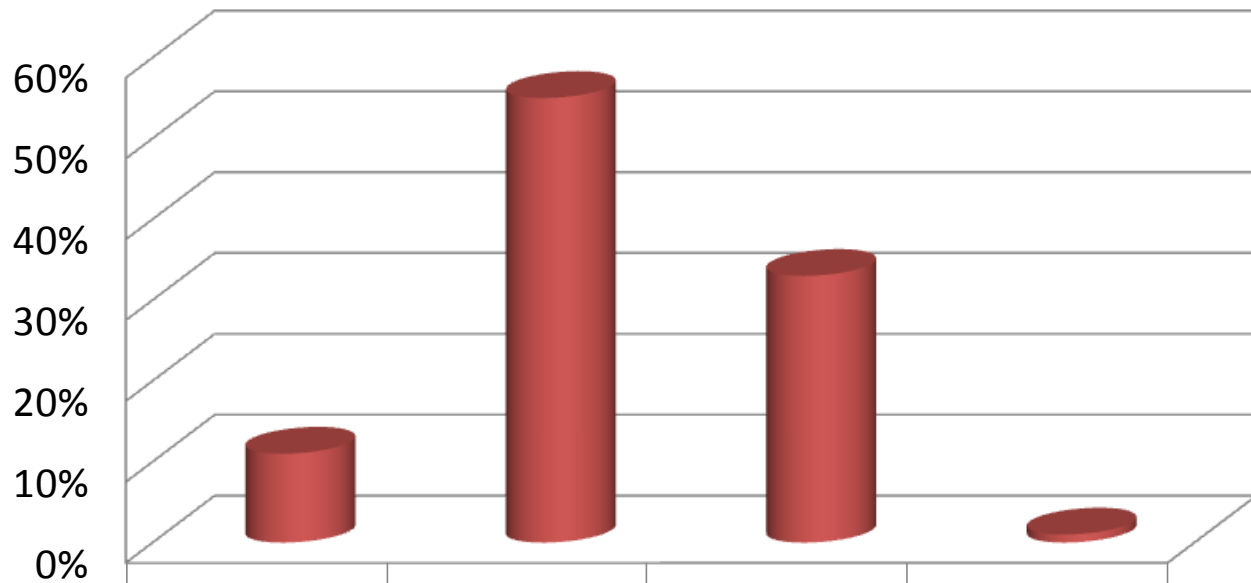


# Gender



# Accommodation

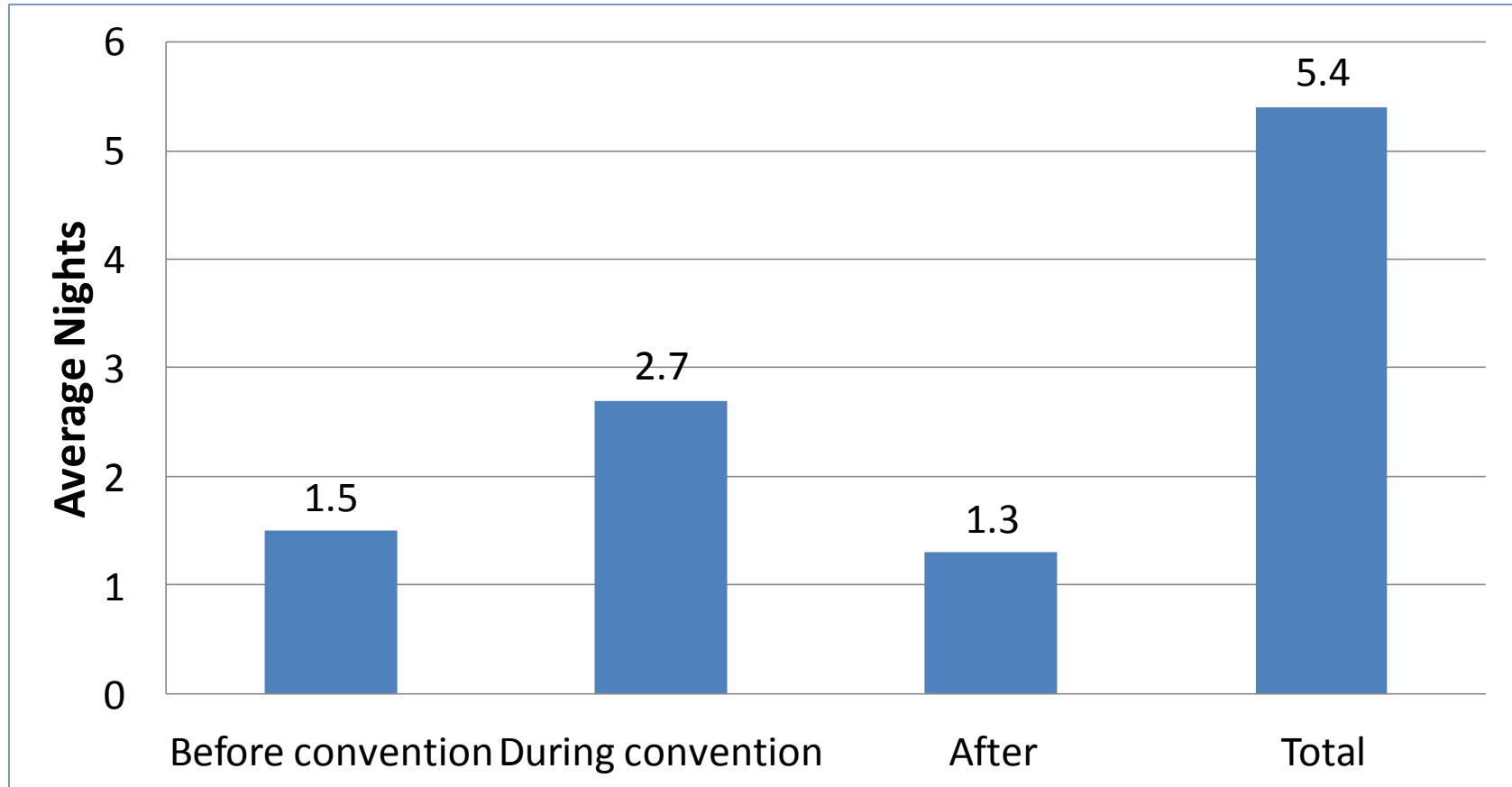
## Accommodation



■ Accommodation	11%	55%	33%	1%
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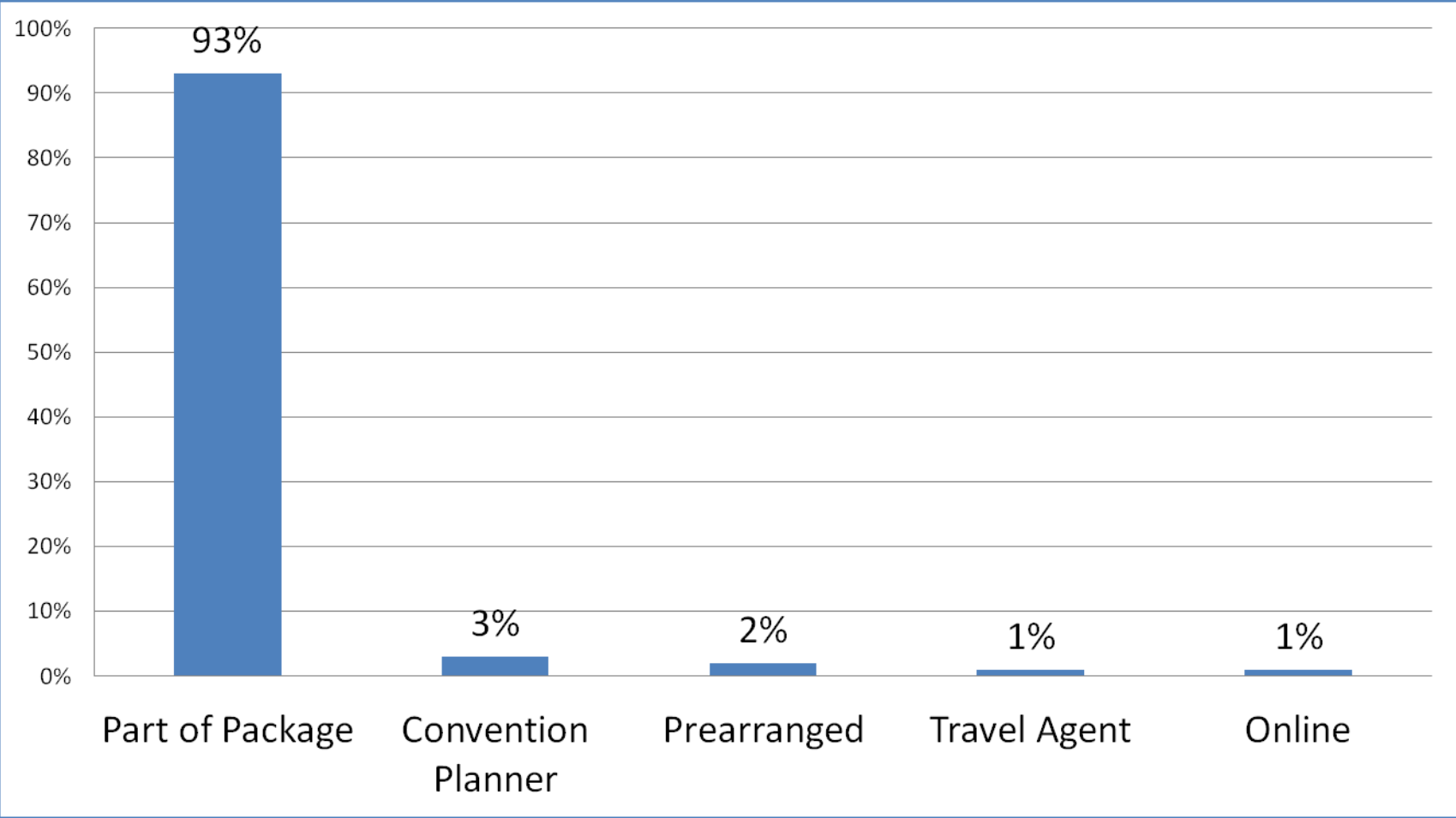
# Length of Stay: Average Nights



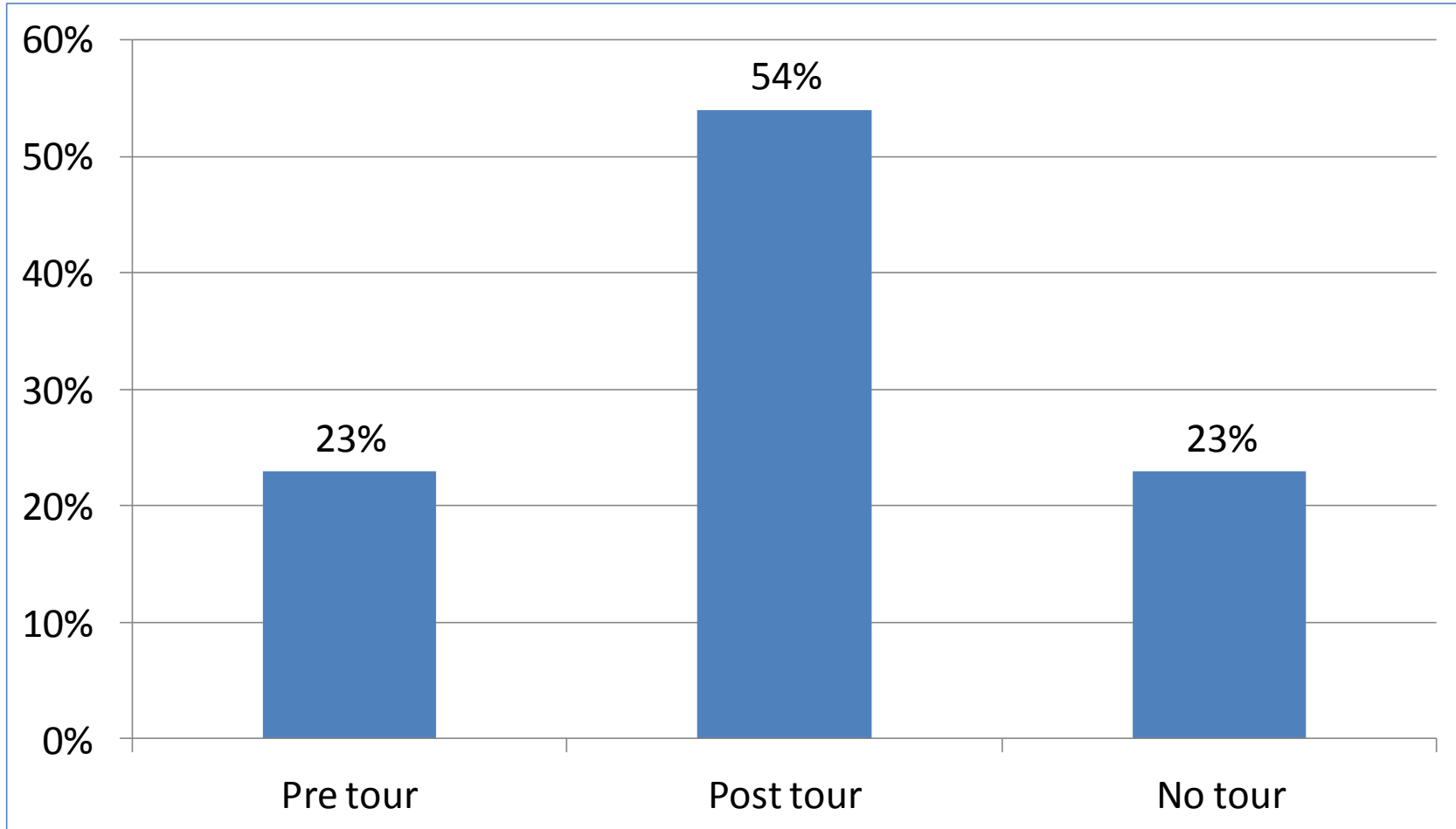
## Total Nights:

Mode: 6 nights  
Median: 5 nights  
Range: 12  
Std Deviation: 2.5

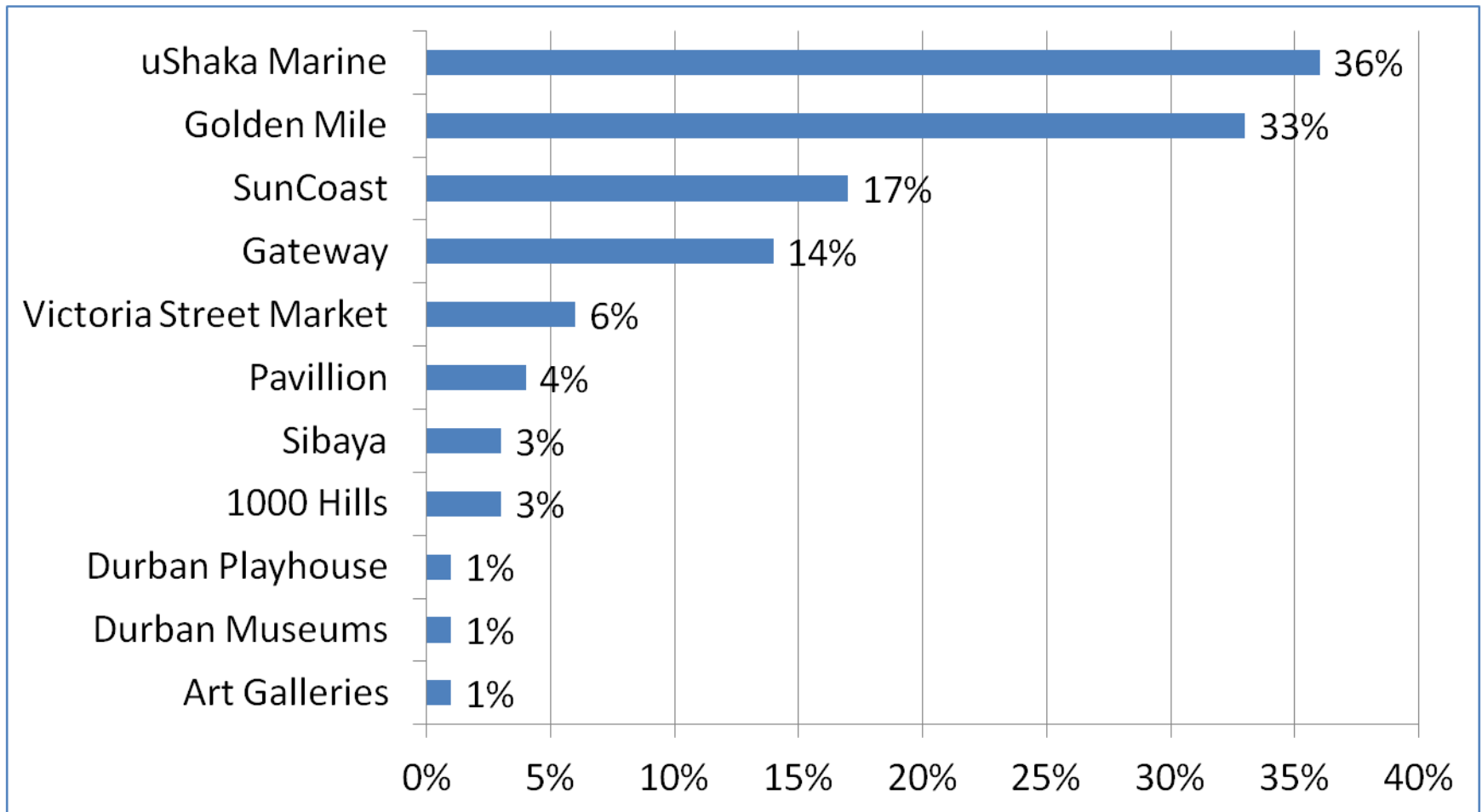
# Accommodation Booking Channel



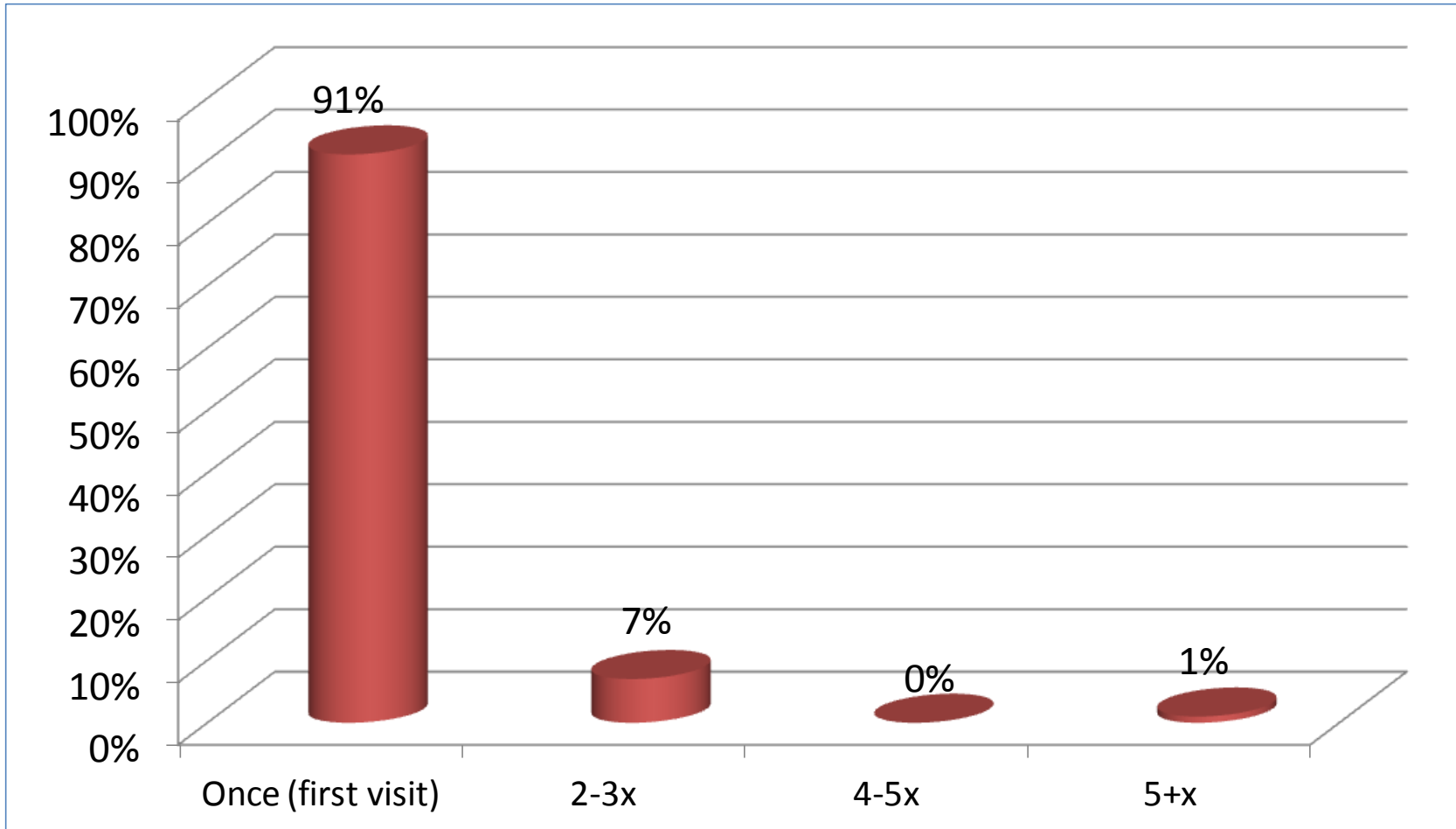
# Pre and Post Tours



# Attractions Visited



# Durban Visits

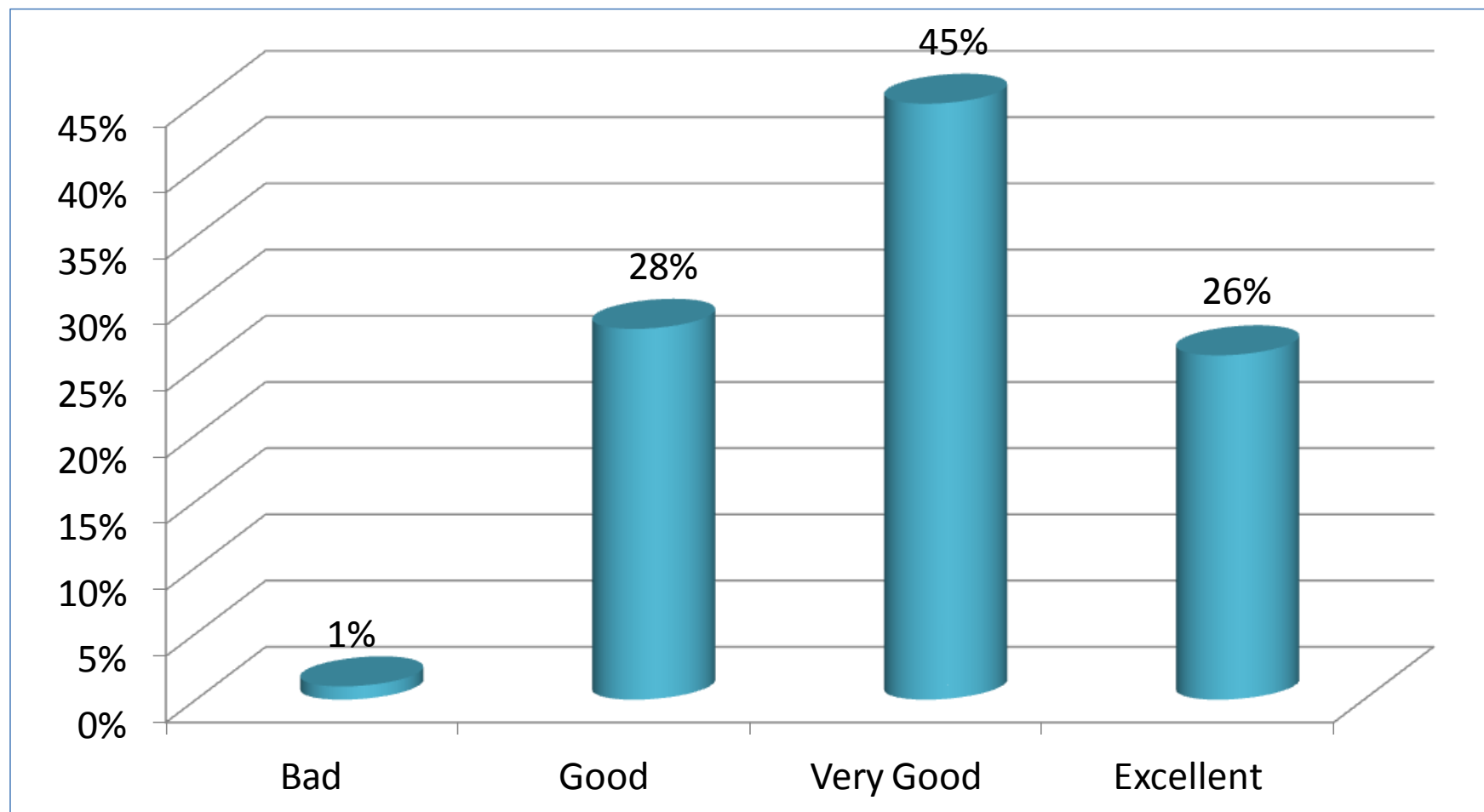


# Primary Purpose of Previous Visits



	Count
Conference/exhibition	6
Business	3
Holiday	1
Other	1

# Rating of Durban as a Convention Destination



# Durban as a Convention Destination: Reasons for Ratings (cont'd)



	TOTAL	BAD	GOOD	VERY GOOD	EXCELLENT
Good/advanced/impressive convention centre	8		2	4	2
Good facilities at the ICC	3		1	2	
Friendly/kind people	<b>14</b>		5	6	3
Beautiful city	<b>18</b>		5	6	7
Good/warm weather	6		2	3	1
Lots to do/see/attractions	5		2	2	1
Sea/beautiful beaches	5			3	2
Scenery/nature	2			1	1
Good hospitality	5			2	3
Good/useful convention	2				2
Excellent convention destination	3			2	1
Good infrastructure	<b>10</b>		1	7	2
Good facilities	<b>22</b>		7	7	8
Good transport system	1				1

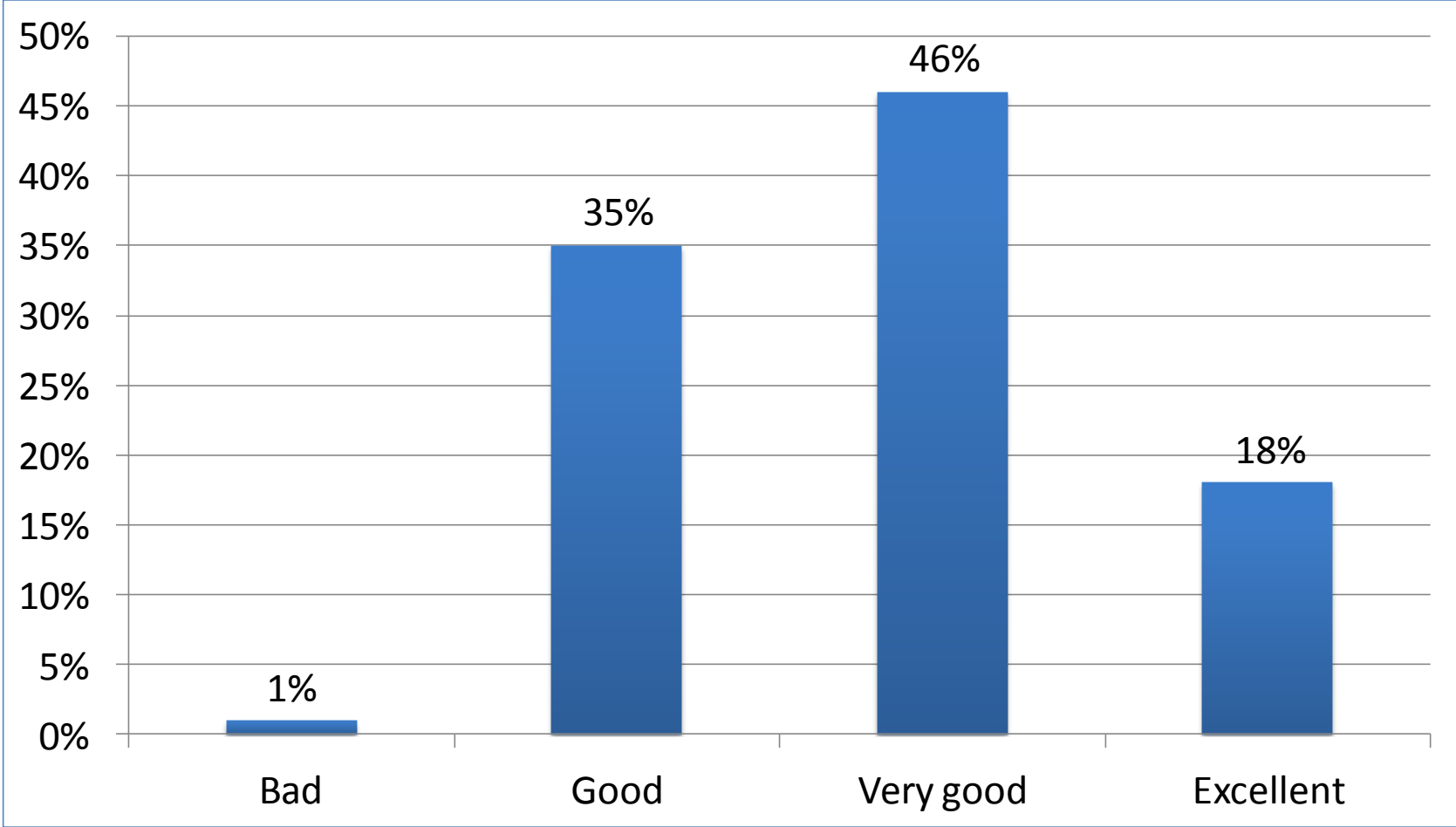


# Durban as a Convention Destination: Reasons for Ratings (cont'd)



	TOTAL	BAD	GOOD	VERY GOOD	EXCELLENT
Long travelling time/very far from home	1		1		
Not much to do/see	1		1		
Less traffic	3		1	2	
Enjoyable stay	1		1		
A beautiful/lovely country	1			1	
Good hotels	2			2	
Everything is within a short distance	2			1	1
Nice/peaceful place	2		1		1
Accessibility/location	2		2		
The ability of the ICC/Durban to host conventions	1				1
It is clean	<b>18</b>		5	10	3
It is not easy to navigate around the city	1		1		
Not one's ideal place	1	1			
Good service	1			1	
Everything is well organized	7			4	3

# Rating of Durban as a Holiday Destination



# Durban as a Holiday Destination: Reasons for Ratings



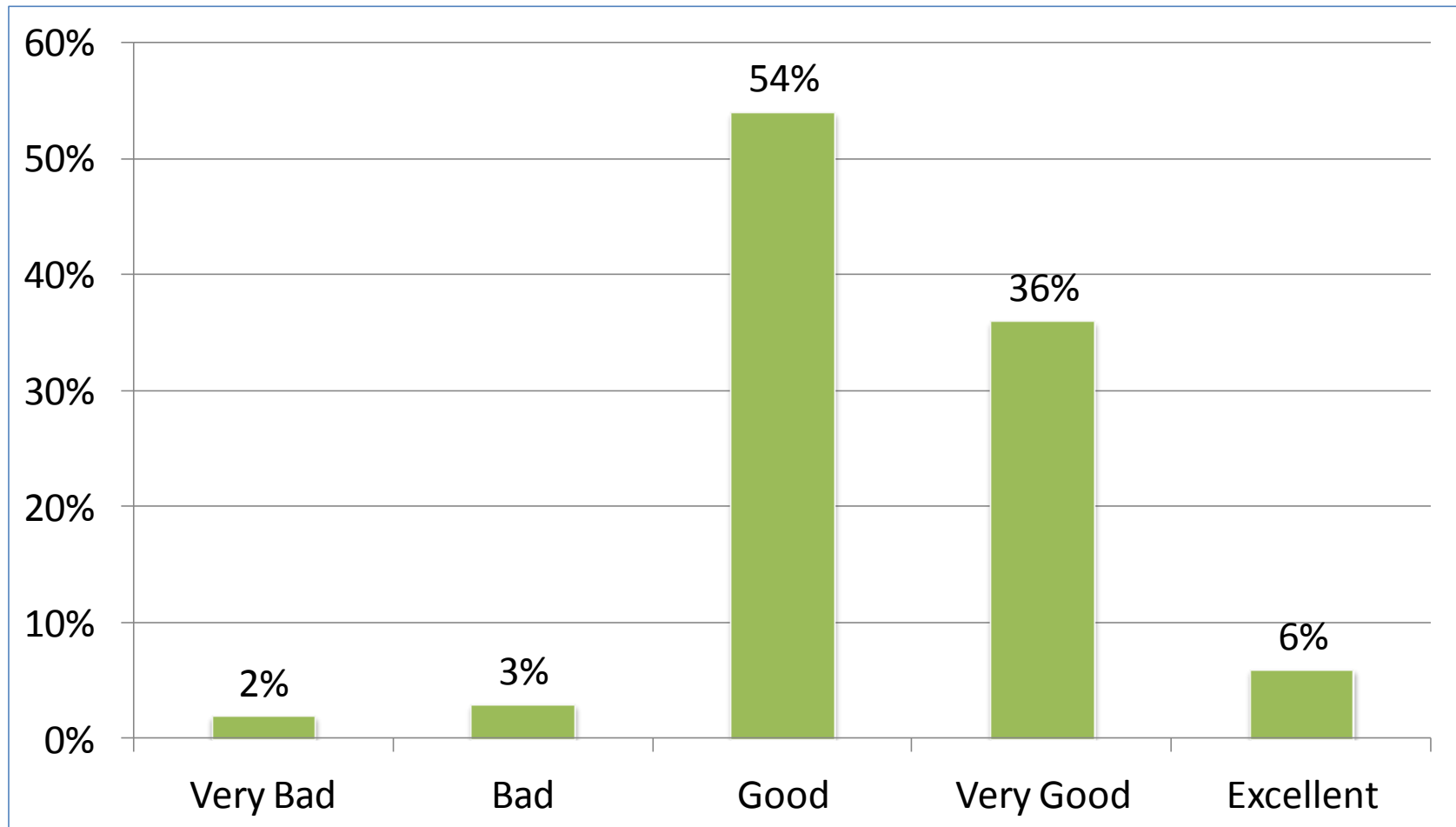
	TOTAL	BAD	GOOD	VERY GOOD	EXCELLENT
Friendly/kind people	2		2		
Beautiful city	<b>20</b>		4	13	3
Good/warm weather	<b>17</b>		8	5	3
Reasonable prices/cheap	3		2	1	
Sea/beautiful beaches	<b>32</b>		9	18	5
Lots to do/see/attractions	<b>23</b>		9	9	5
Scenery/nature	9		2	5	2
Wildlife	7		1	4	2
Good infrastructure	3			3	
Not much to do/see	2		2		
Enjoyable experience	1			1	
Lovely attractions	1				1
A holiday/tourism destination	4			2	2

# Durban as a Holiday Destination: Reasons for Ratings (cont'd)

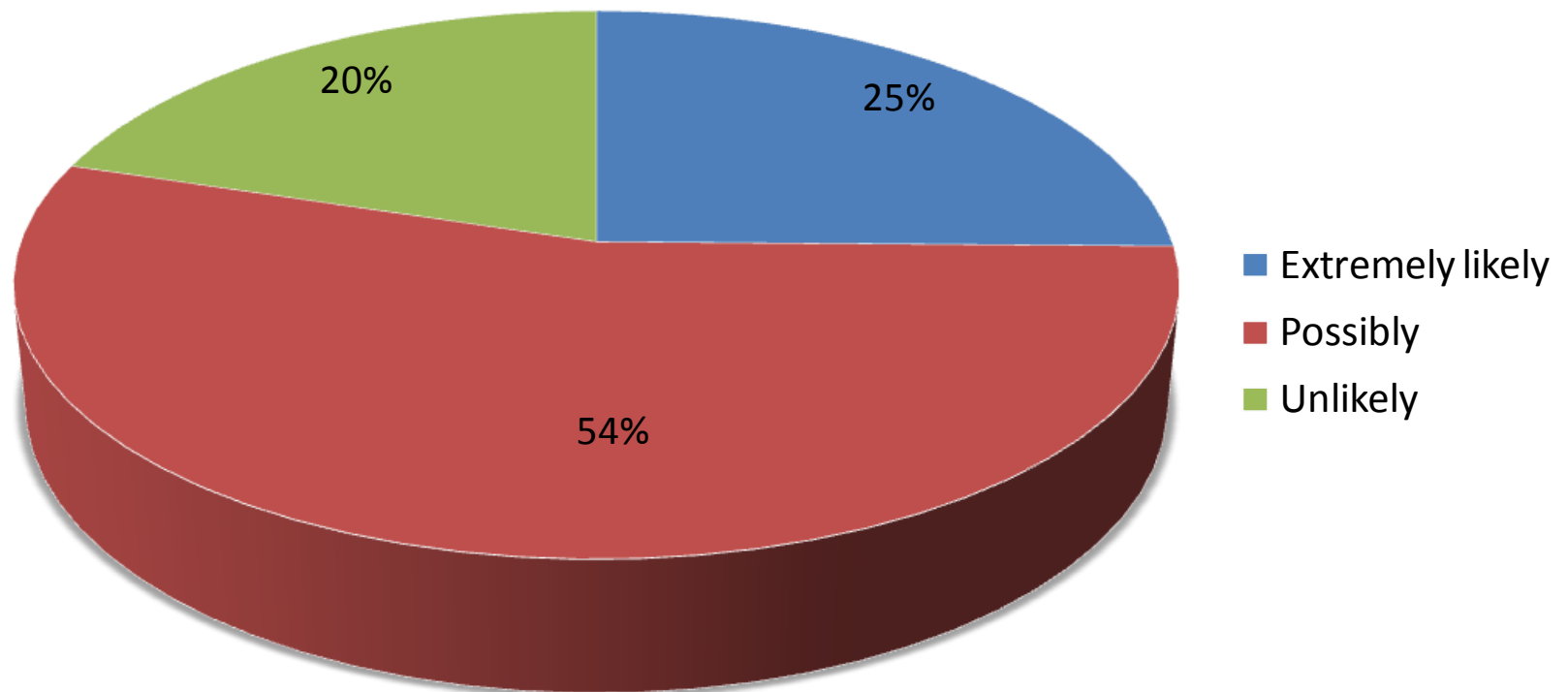


	TOTAL	BAD	GOOD	VERY GOOD	EXCELLENT
Nice/peaceful place	1		1		
Good atmosphere	2		1	1	
Accessibility/location	1		1		
It is clean	6		3	2	1
Good service	1		1		
Golden Mile	1			1	
It is safe	1			1	
Casinos	3			3	
Good shopping malls	1		1		
Lack of information/too busy	2	2			

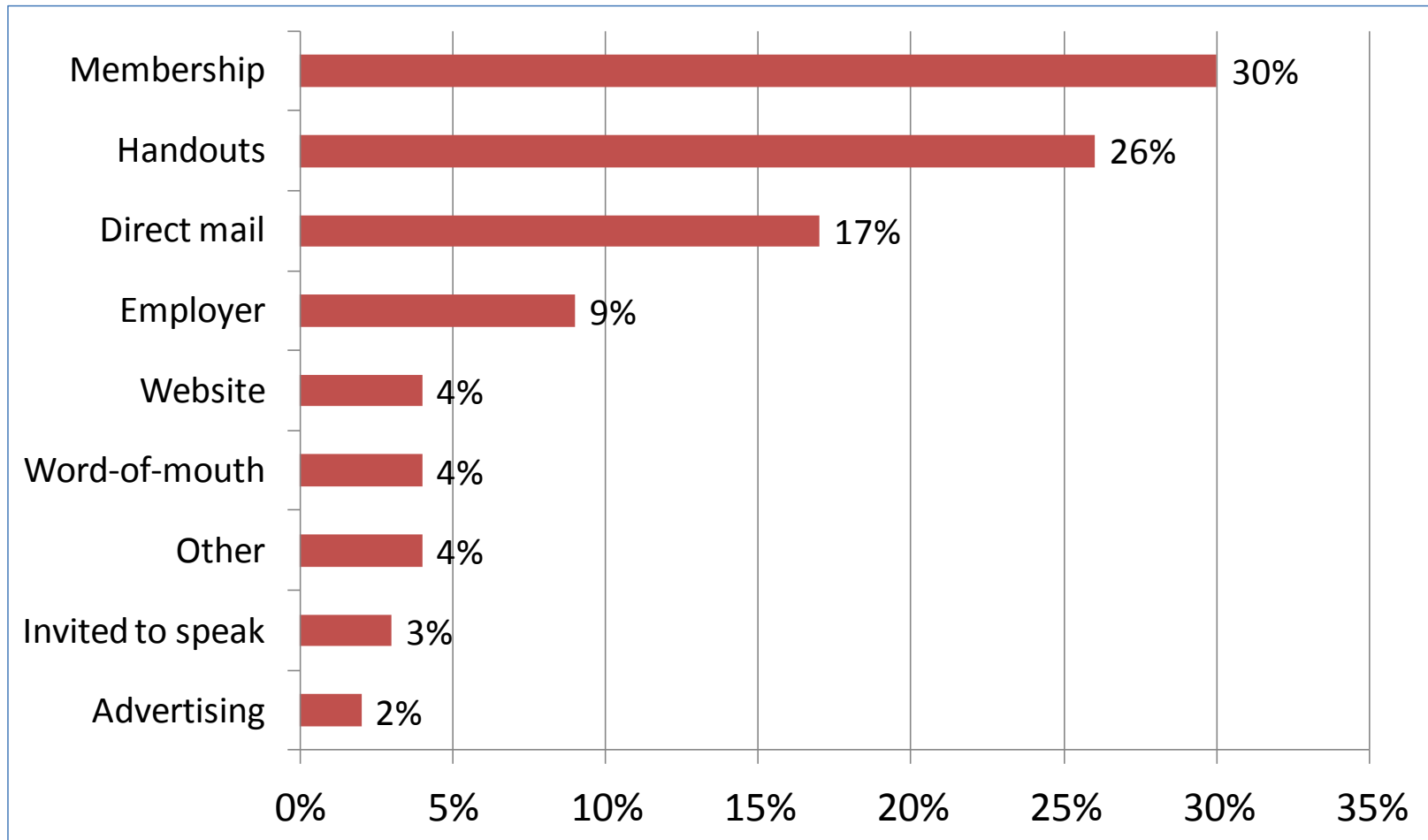
# Rating of Durban as a Value for Money Destination



# Likely to Visit Durban & Surrounds in Next 5 Years?



# Convention Awareness



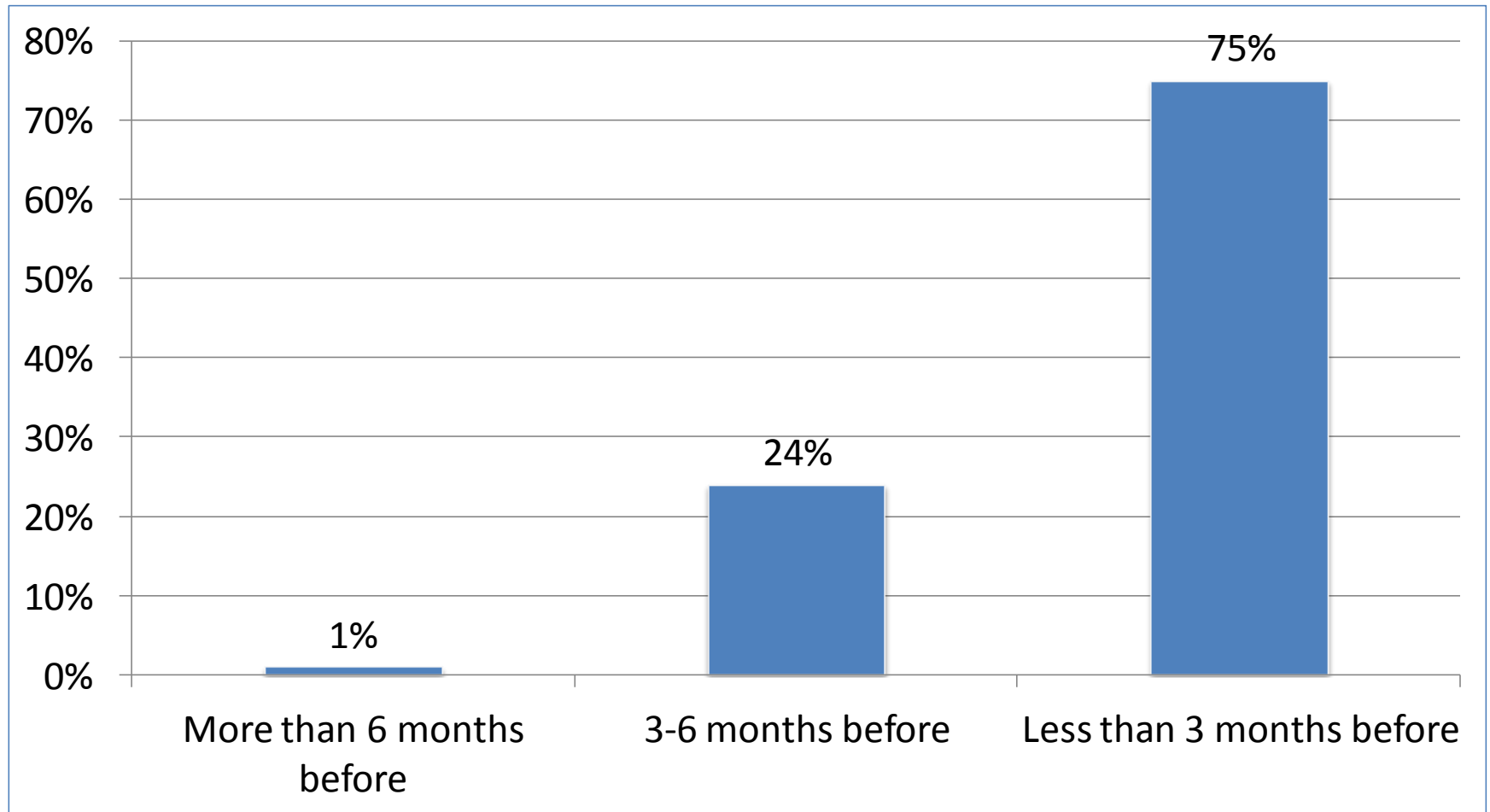
# Factors that influenced decision to attend



	Mentions
South Africa as a holiday destination	79
South Africa's wildlife/scenery	64
South Africa's beaches	59
South Africa's culture/heritage	55
South Africa's weather	51
Opportunity to network with business colleagues	45
South Africa's adventure	37
South Africa's shopping	33
Topics presented at convention	32
Invited to attend	32
Low registration cost	27
Durban & surrounds as a holiday destination	26
Membership of group holding convention	22
Travel time to Durban	19
Employer decision	11
Sponsorship/availability of funding	8
Social events and other arrangements	7
Speaker at/organiser of convention	6



# When Registered



# Satisfaction Levels: Convention Related Issues (Scale of 1 – 6) 6 =Very Satisfied

Mean	
Accommodation quality and service	4.8
ICC decoration and fittings	5.2
Meeting rooms	5.2
Food and beverages	4.3
ICC service	4.8
Technical equipment	4.8
Convention programme	4.9
Overall satisfaction	4.9

# Satisfaction Levels: Durban and Surrounds as a Tourist Destination (Scale of 1 – 6)

6 = Very Satisfied



Mean	
Access	4.3
Reception in South Africa (respondents from outside of SA only)	4.5
Safety	4.1
Cleanliness	4.8
Banking	3.1
Sightseeing	4.2
Public Transport	3.2
Restaurants	4
Price of accommodation	3.9

# General Comments



No.	POSITIVE COMMENTS
1	Great experience
2	Durban – a beautiful city/place
3	Warm/friendly people
4	Excellent hospitality
5	Good infrastructure
6	Durban – a lot to offer
7	Durban has a great potential as a destination for tourists from India
8	Beautiful beaches
9	Durban has a good weather
10	Everything was excellent
11	The convention was good
12	Excellent trip/experience in South Africa
13	Good accommodation
14	Restful and fun holiday
15	A very good package

No.	POSITIVE COMMENTS
16	Good convention – would come again
17	A useful trip for both pleasure and business
18	A useful convention
	<b>NEGATIVE COMMENTS</b>
19	TAFI should improve on transport arrangements
20	Local tours to be more organized
21	Public transport –a problem
22	SAA Hostesses must be more polite
23	Improve on vegetarian food option
24	The organization of the conference was appalling
25	Very poor service in a certain accommodation establishment
26	Two delegates were robbed at OR Tambo during a transfer
27	The city tour was terrible – the bus had no aircon
28	Food was a problem

# Conclusion/Main Findings



- 1) This research focused on the delegates from India who had come for the Annual Convention of the Travel Agents Federation of India. This took place in Durban on 25-26 February 2013 and was followed by the post-conference tours throughout the province of KwaZulu-Natal. However, there were tours which took place during the course of the convention. As a result of this, 139 delegates were interviewed which was less than what was planned by the researchers for this study.
- 2) The conference was also opened to South African delegates. However, as it was primarily a convention for the Indian delegates, it was expected that the majority of those interviewed would be foreign. In this regard, 97% of the respondents came from outside of South Africa, particularly India, and only 3% were domestic respondents.
- 3) In terms of the age groups, the majority of respondents were between the age categories of 40-49 (32%), 50-59 (27%) and 30-39 (20%). These were business people (travel agents), hence the high number in the so called 'mature' age brackets.
- 4) In terms of gender, 71% of the respondents were male while the rest were female. This could suggest that travel agents in India and in many areas of employment there are possibly dominated by males. However, this cannot be taken as conclusive as it would require more in-depth research which is beyond the scope of this study.

# Conclusion/Main Findings



5. As regards accommodation, 55% and 33% of those interviewed said they stayed in 4 and 3 star hotels, respectively. The process of block booking the hotels was undertaken prior to the conference and the majority of these hotels were largely in these categories. The results thus explain such a concentrated number in these groups.
6. The majority of respondents arrived in Durban one day before the convention and stayed for the duration of the convention. On average, the delegates stayed for 5 nights which include the days on which the post-conference tours were undertaken.
7. The respondents indicated that they did not make accommodation bookings, but that those were part of the package. This was highlighted by 93% of those interviewed. Some 3% of the respondents indicated that accommodation bookings were made by the convention planner.
8. Some 77% of the respondents were either involved in pre- or post-conference tours. TKZN has conducted approximately 44 conference delegate surveys at the Durban ICC. The results of those surveys show that, on average, 75% of the respondents did not undertake any tours whilst in Durban. The results for the TAFI conference, particularly, suggest that the majority of delegates were able to experience what the region has to offer in terms of tourism. They received first hand experience of what they could sell in India as travel agents.

# Conclusion/Main Findings (cont'd)



9. The results concerning conference tours can be seen in a good light as 91% of those interviewed were in Durban for the first time. Research suggests that the majority of business tourists do return to the destination if they had had good experience. Only some 7% mentioned that they had been to Durban about 2-3 times before.
10. The respondents were positive about Durban as a convention destination. They rated the city as **very good** and **excellent** in this regard. They rated in this manner for the following reasons:
  - They were of the view that Durban was **beautiful city**.
  - They indicated that Durban had good facilities and infrastructure
  - Friendly/helpful people
  - They were also of the view that Durban was a clean city

Delegates from other conferences surveyed by TKZN have stressed the issue of Durban being an unclean city. It is interesting to note that the TAFI delegates felt otherwise. This illustrates that sometimes the respondents respond by making comparisons with the environments they come from.

11. Similarly, Durban was viewed as a very good holiday destination for the following reasons:
  - Beautiful city
  - Good/warm weather
  - Sea/beautiful beaches
  - Lots to do/see/attractions



# Conclusion/Main Findings (cont'd)



12. Some 96% viewed Durban positively in terms of value for money. They felt that prices were reasonable/affordable.
13. Over half of those interviewed (54%) said it was **possible** that they would visit Durban in the next five years. A quarter of them indicated they were **extremely likely** to do so. This is encouraging for Durban in the sense that these were travel agents with an opportunity to sell various destinations.
14. As this was an annual convention, it was not surprising when the results showed that 30% of the respondents were made aware of the convention through their membership. Some 26% and 17% said it was through handouts/notification at a previous convention and direct mail, respectively.
15. The respondents were asked about the factors that influenced their decision to attend the convention. The responses varied. The main five factors were:
  - South Africa as a holiday destination (79 mentions)
  - South Africa's wildlife/scenery (64 mentions)
  - South Africa's beaches (59 mentions)
  - South Africa's culture/heritage (55 mentions)
  - South Africa's weather (51 mentions)

The 'opportunity to network with business colleagues', which is usually the dominant influencing factor, only received 45 mentions. These factors provide an indication that the respondents' decision factors were tourism-based. They applied more to the views of a typical holiday tourist rather than a business one.

# Conclusion/Main Findings (cont'd)



16. In terms of registration, 75% of those interviewed said they had registered less than 3 months before the convention. This has been the trend in many conference delegate surveys undertaken by TKZN where the majority of respondents register late/close to the start of the conference. The TAFI convention was thus not an exception.
17. This research asked the respondents to rate their satisfaction levels with regards to convention-related matters such as meeting rooms, ICC service and technical equipment. These were rated on a scale of 1-6 with 6 denoting 'very satisfied'. The responses ranged mainly between 4-5 with meeting rooms and ICC decoration and fittings receiving the highest (5.2) ratings.
18. As regards Durban and surrounds as a city/metropolitan area, the respondents were also generally satisfied. However, 'banking' received the lowest rating of an average of 3.1.
19. The respondents made both positive and negative comments. Positive responses were made with regards to the following:
  - Durban has a great potential as a destination for tourists from India
  - Excellent hospitality
  - Warm/friendly people
  - Durban – a lot to offer

# Conclusion/Main Findings (cont'd)



Some of the negative comments related to the following:

- The organization of the conference being viewed as appalling
- Food being a problem
- The city tour being viewed as terrible
- Theft at OR Tambo airport

# Recommendations



The following recommendations are based on the findings which were discussed previously:

- Improvement on the organization of the entire convention is of paramount importance. This should be the case with all aspect of the convention. The areas that were particularly raised were transport arrangements and food options. As regards the latter, there should be an assessment of what was offered during the 2013 convention so that appropriate improvements can be made for any similar event.
- As TKZN and other relevant stakeholders contributed resources towards the convention, it is important that measures are put in place to monitor the extent to which such contributions yield any benefits for the destination.
- Although the theft incident that happened did not take place within the KZN borders, it however had a negative impact on the image of the trip. Therefore, it is important that TKZN and other relevant authorities continue to work together to deal with these situations should they occur, but particularly to prevent them occurring in the first place.
- The city tour was viewed, although by a small number, as terrible as the bus did not have air conditioning. This highlights the fact that a minor expected feature failure could deter tourists from an enjoyable experience. It is therefore recommended that delegates/tourists should be made aware in advance of the nature of the trip and transportation.