

ISCA & NCA SHOW CAVES BUSINESS SURVEY 2026



GOUFFRE DE PROUMEYSSAC
FRANCE



INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION



ISCA & NCA SHOW CAVES BUSINESS SURVEY 2026

PURPOSE

1

To establish a baseline for the significance of the show cave industry worldwide.

2

To create awareness on how show caves contribute to the global economy.

3

To identify show cave manager's immediate concerns and plans for the future.



METHODOLOGY



Survey link



months



Data analysis



months



Shared results

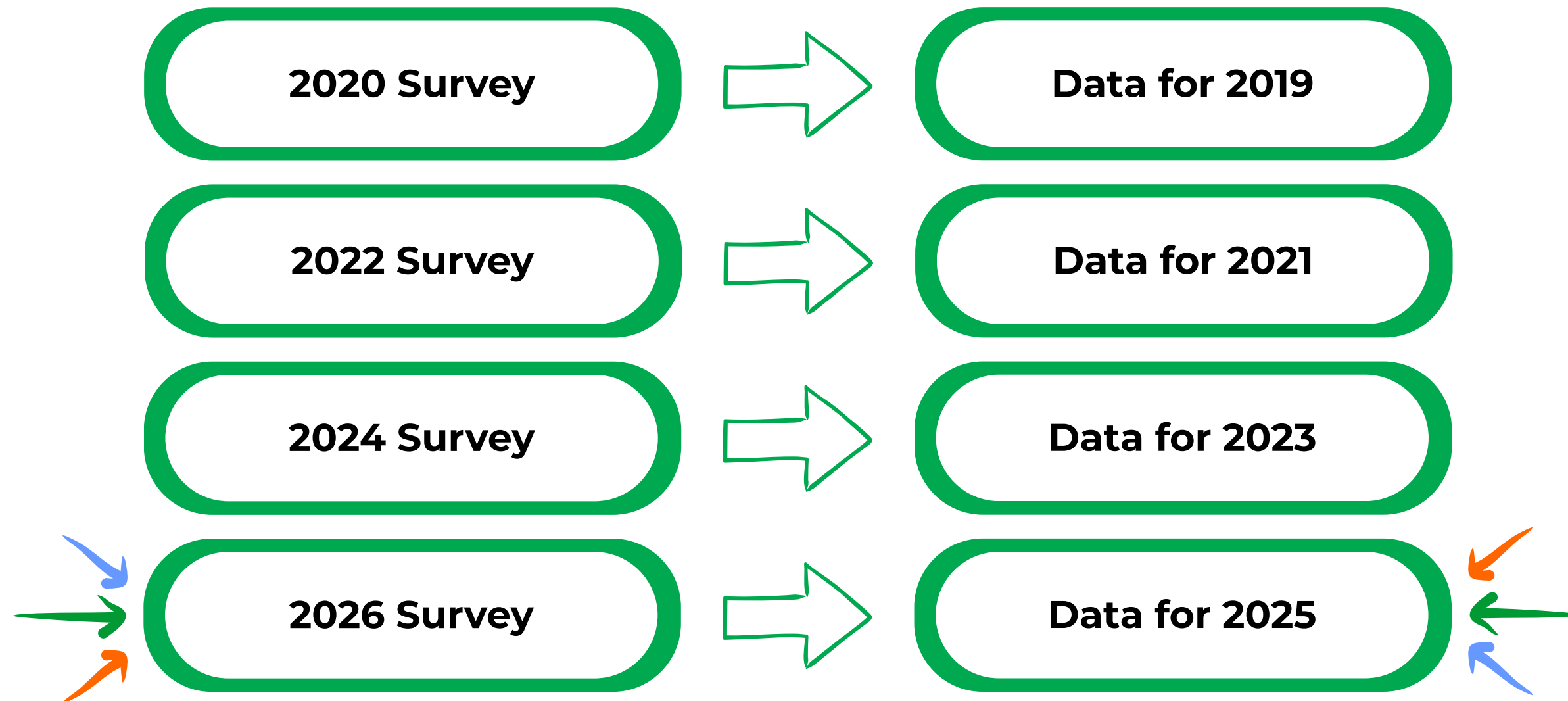


Projections are estimate as there are many variables.
Around 1,500 show caves worldwide. Survey data represents 1/15th of show caves.



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DATA ANALYSIS



RESPONDENTS

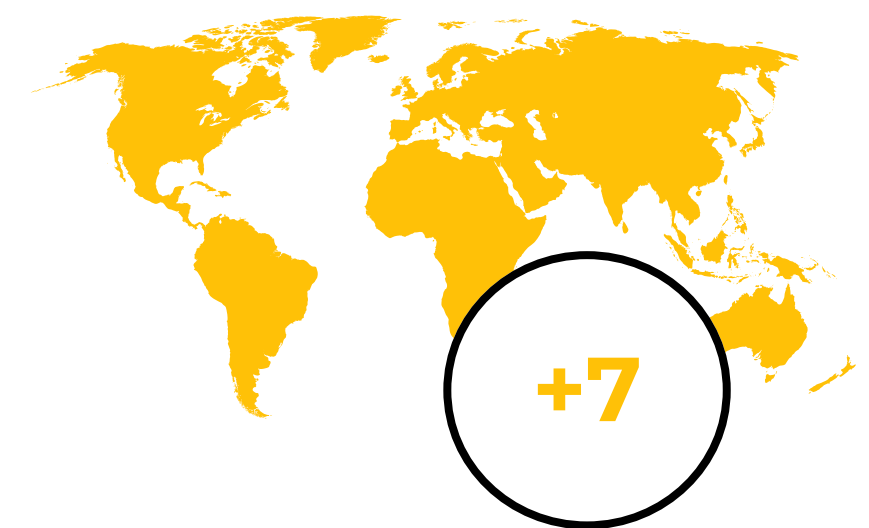
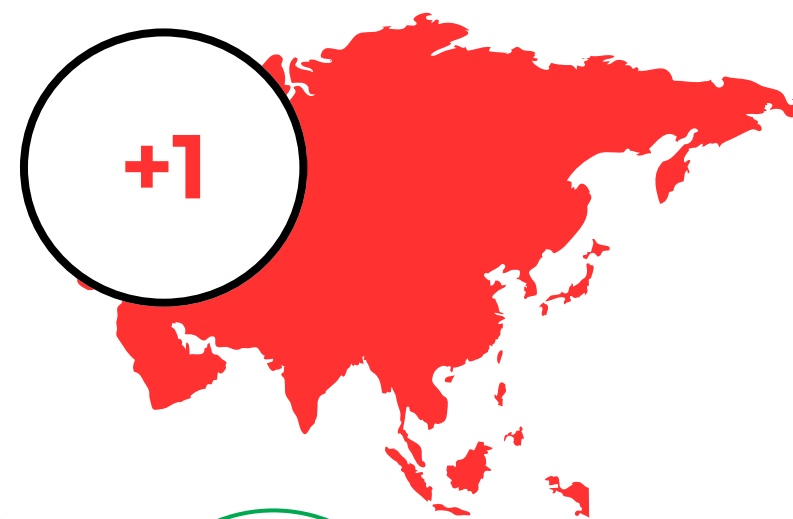
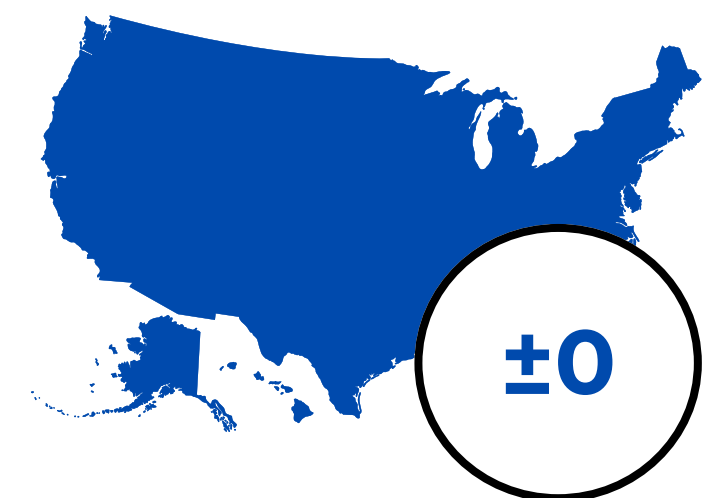
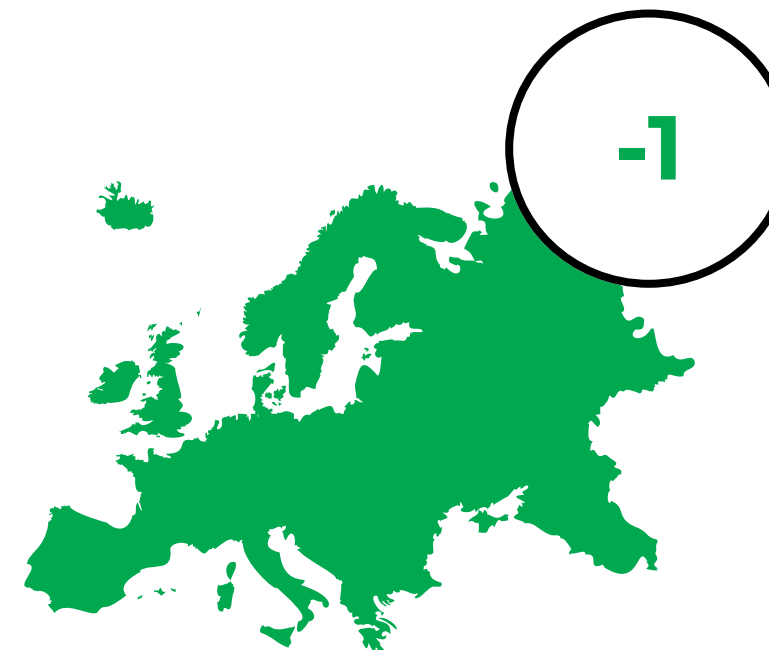
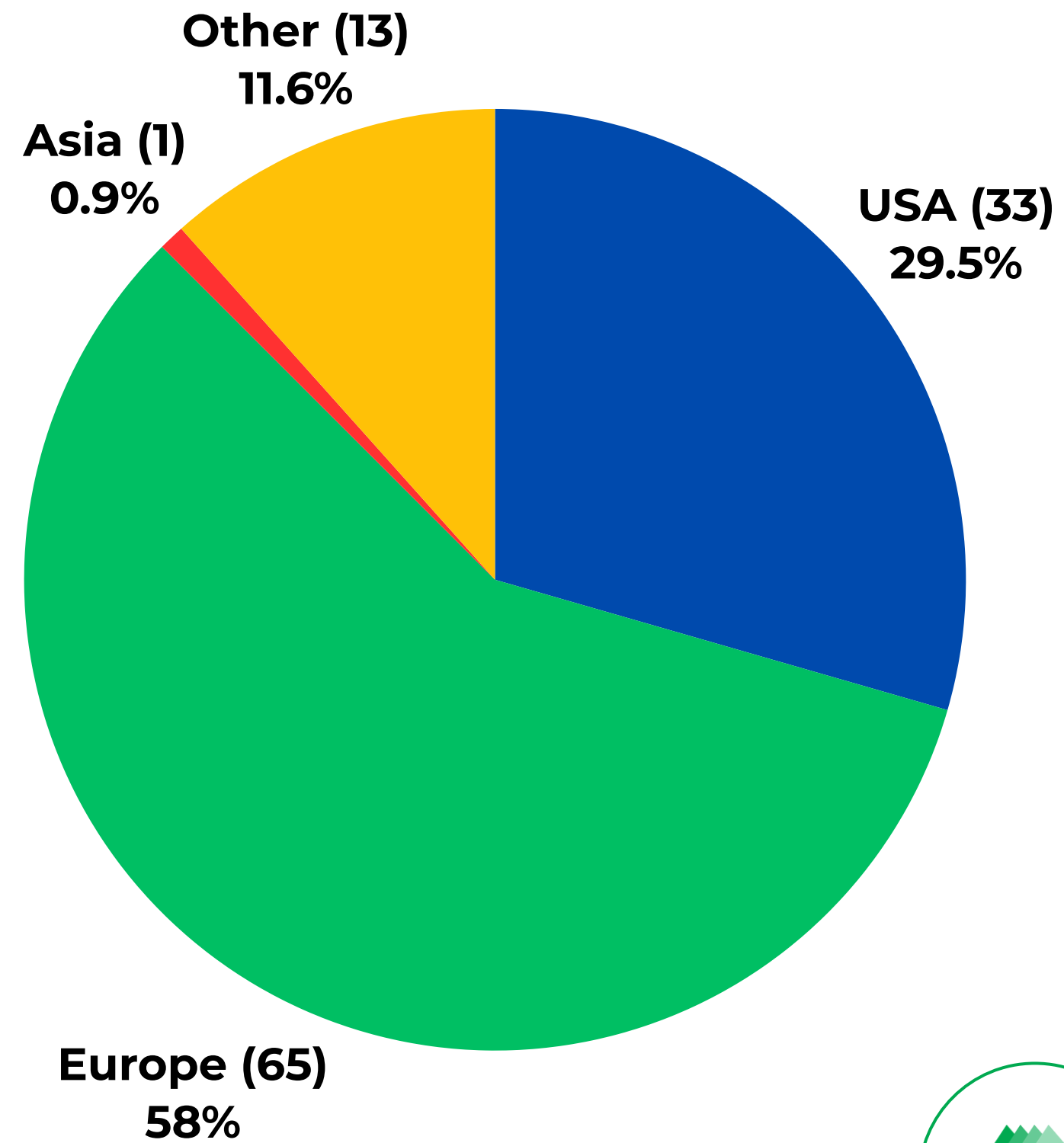


112 show caves (+7)

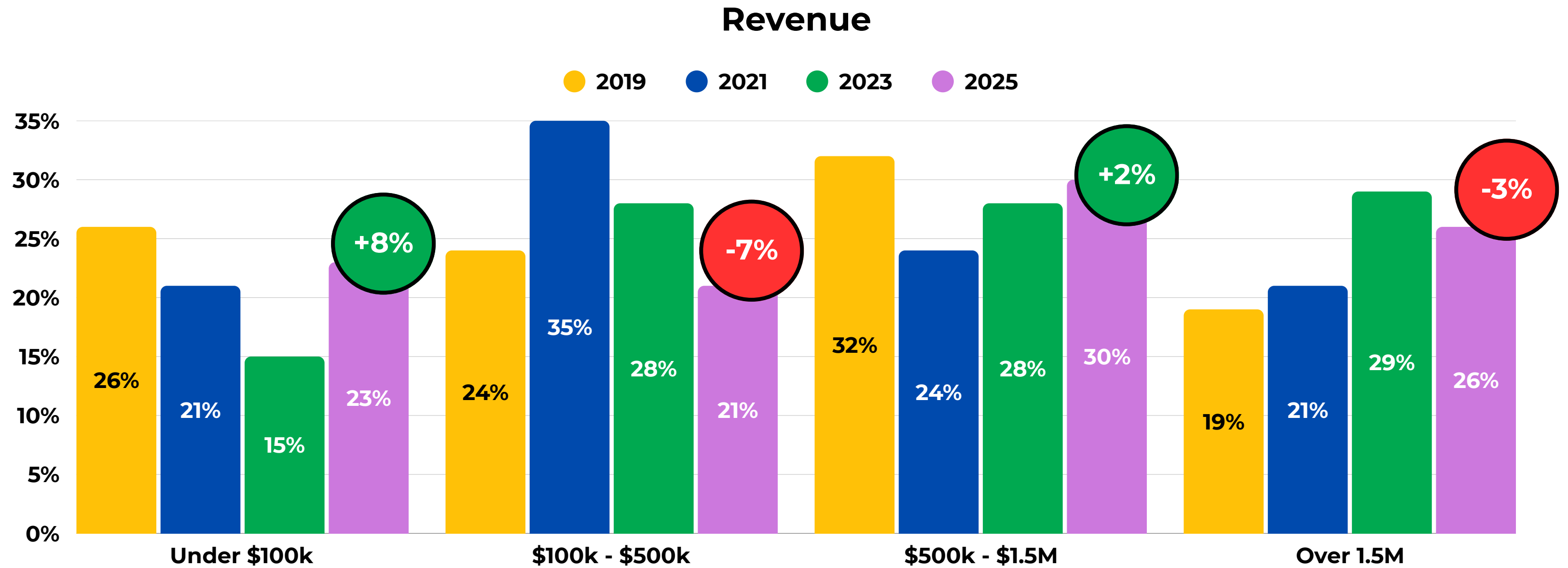
18 countries (-1)



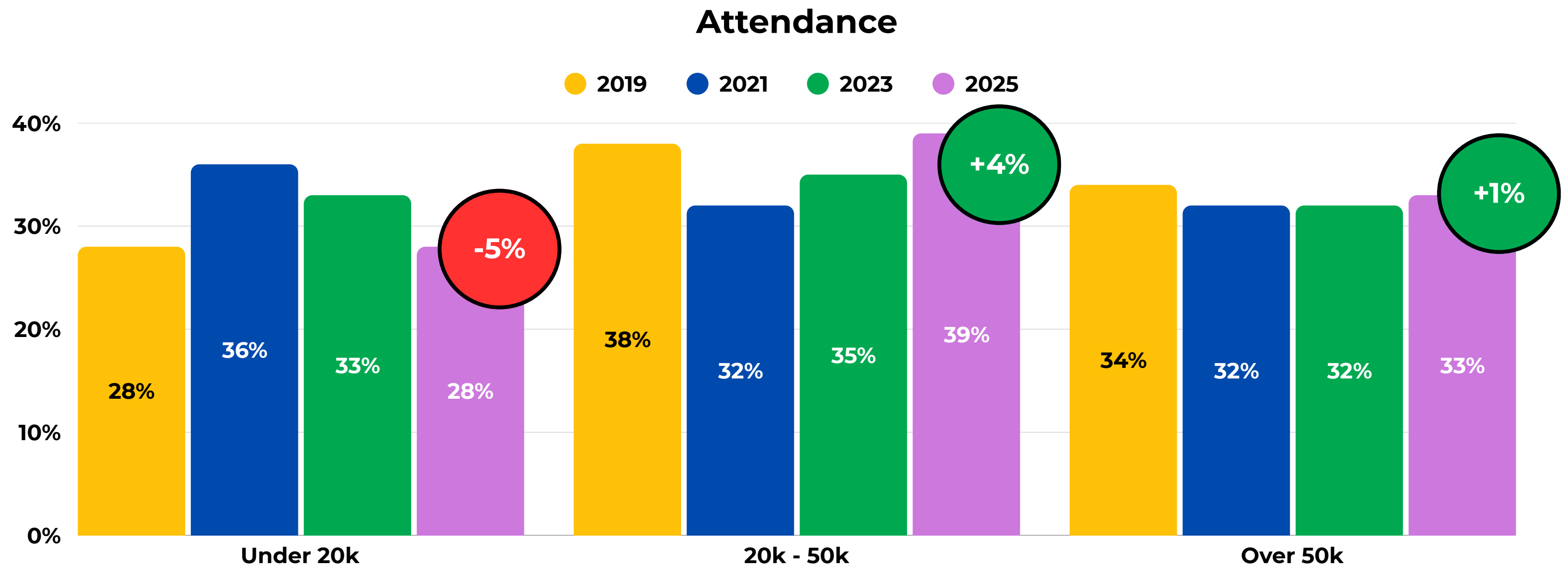
RESPONDENTS



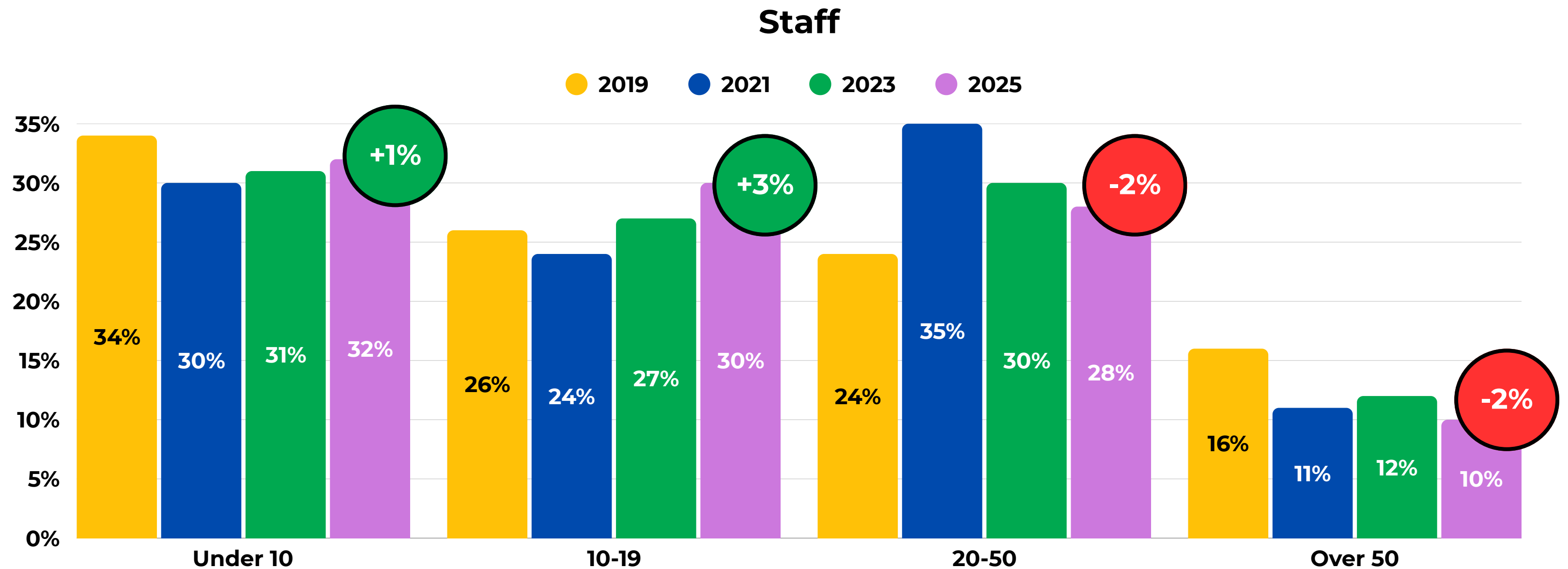
SHOW CAVE REVENUE



SHOW CAVE ATTENDANCE

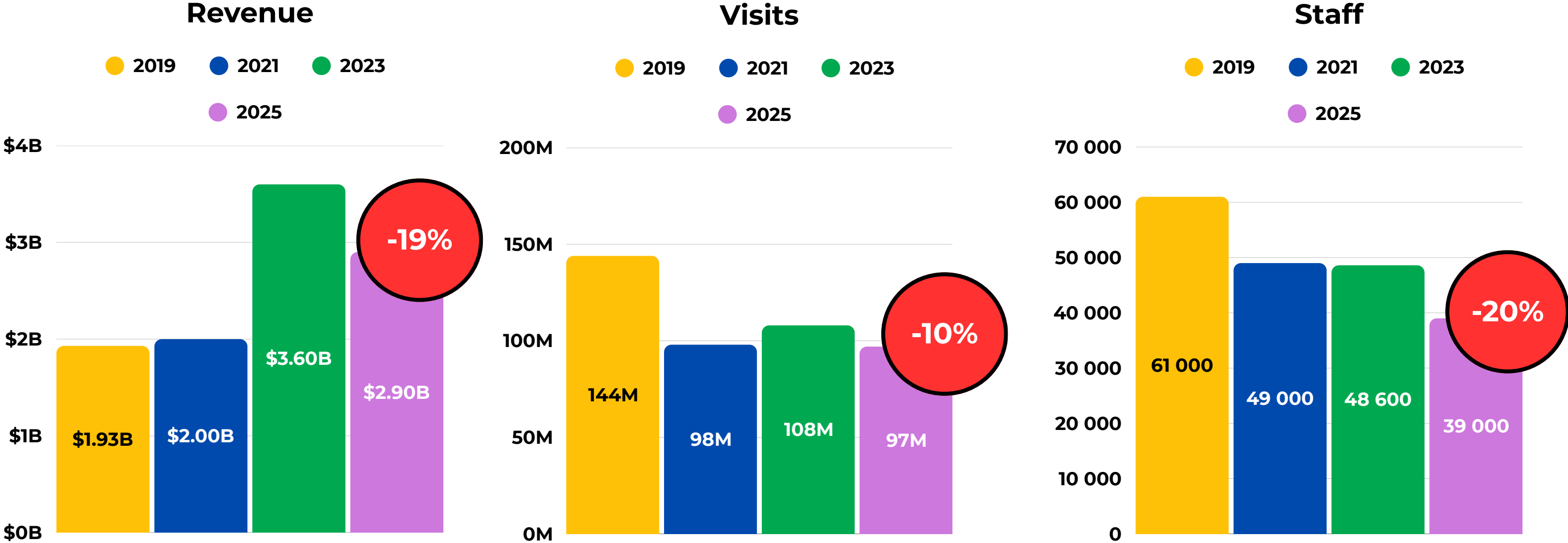


SHOW CAVE STAFF (DURING PEAK SEASON)



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PROJECTIONS* (FOR ALL 1,500 SHOW CAVES)



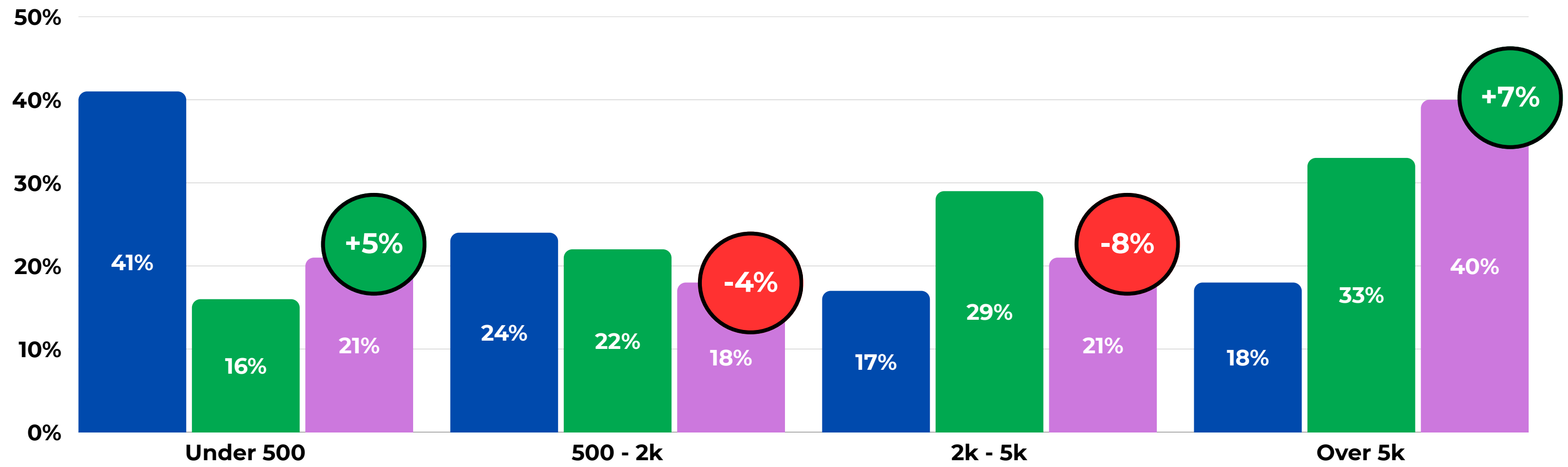
*ESTIMATE AS THERE ARE MANY VARIABLES



STUDENT VISITS*

Student visits

● 2021 ● 2023 ● 2025

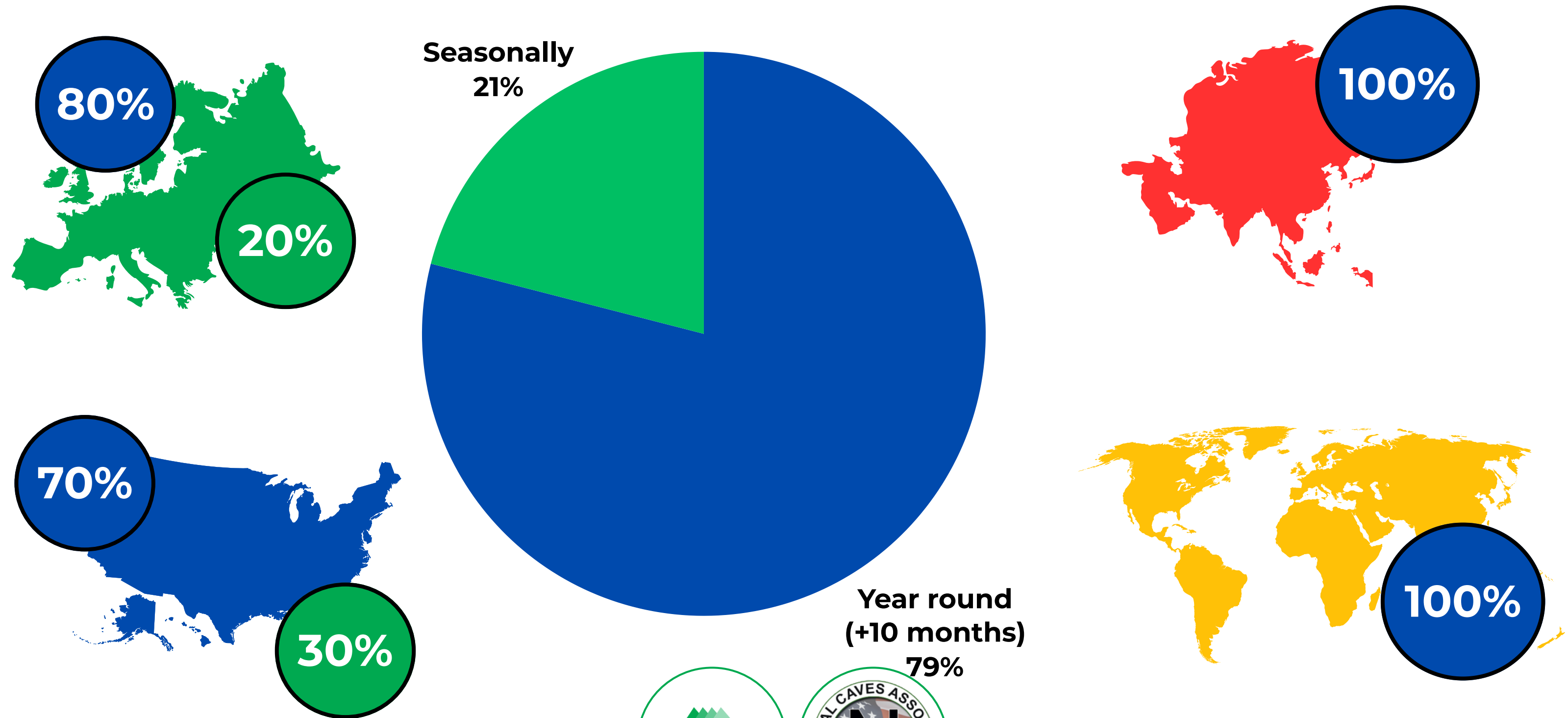


*NO DATA FROM 2019

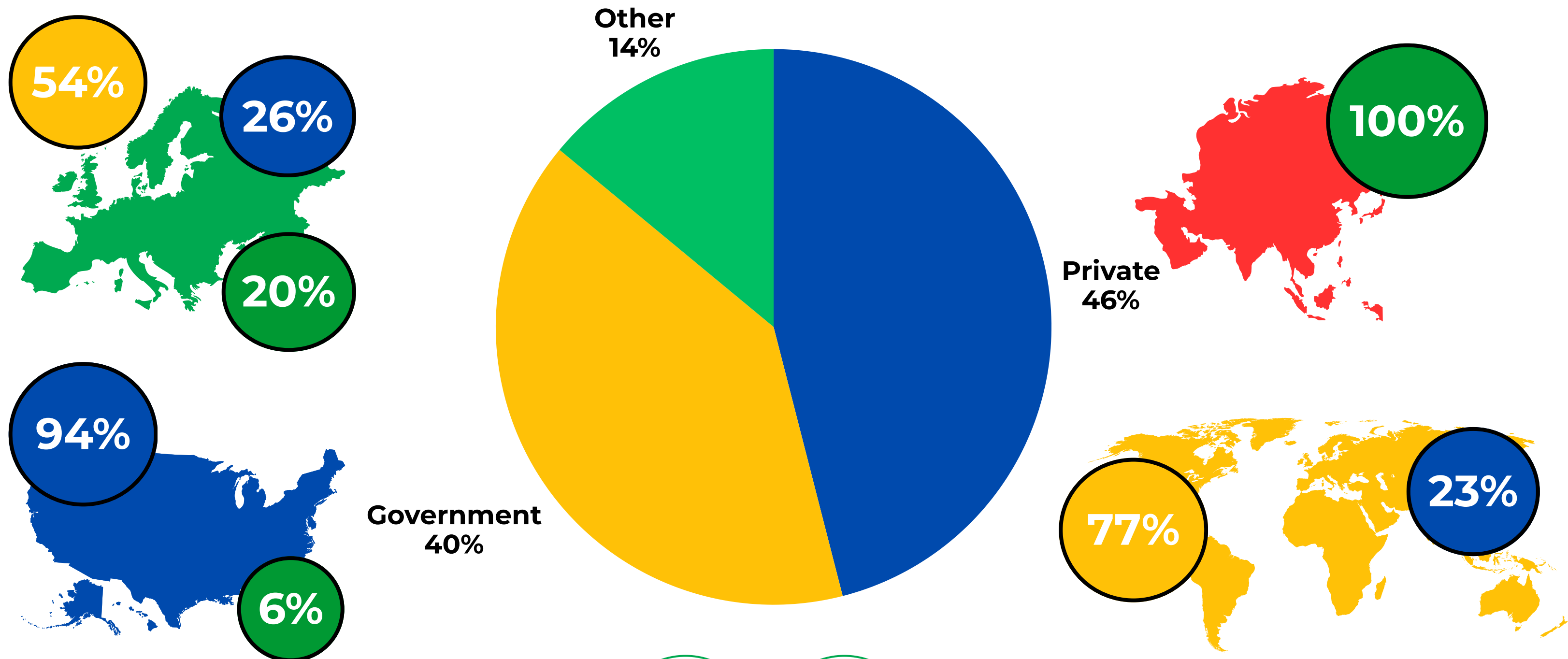


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SEASONALITY



OWNERSHIP/OPERATION TYPE BY REGION



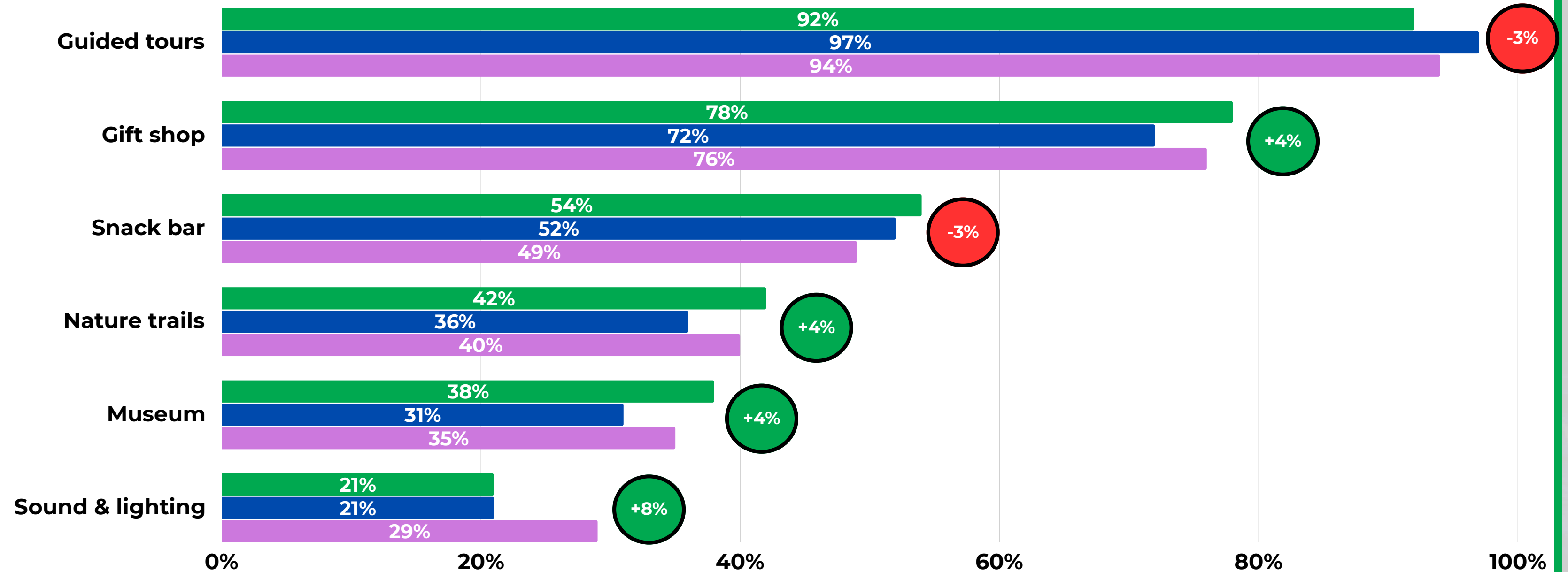
*DATA ALSO AVAILABLE BY REVENUE AND BY ATTENDANCE



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'TOP 6' ACTIVITIES

● 2021 ● 2023 ● 2025



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OTHER ACTIVITIES

Sluice



Adventure tours

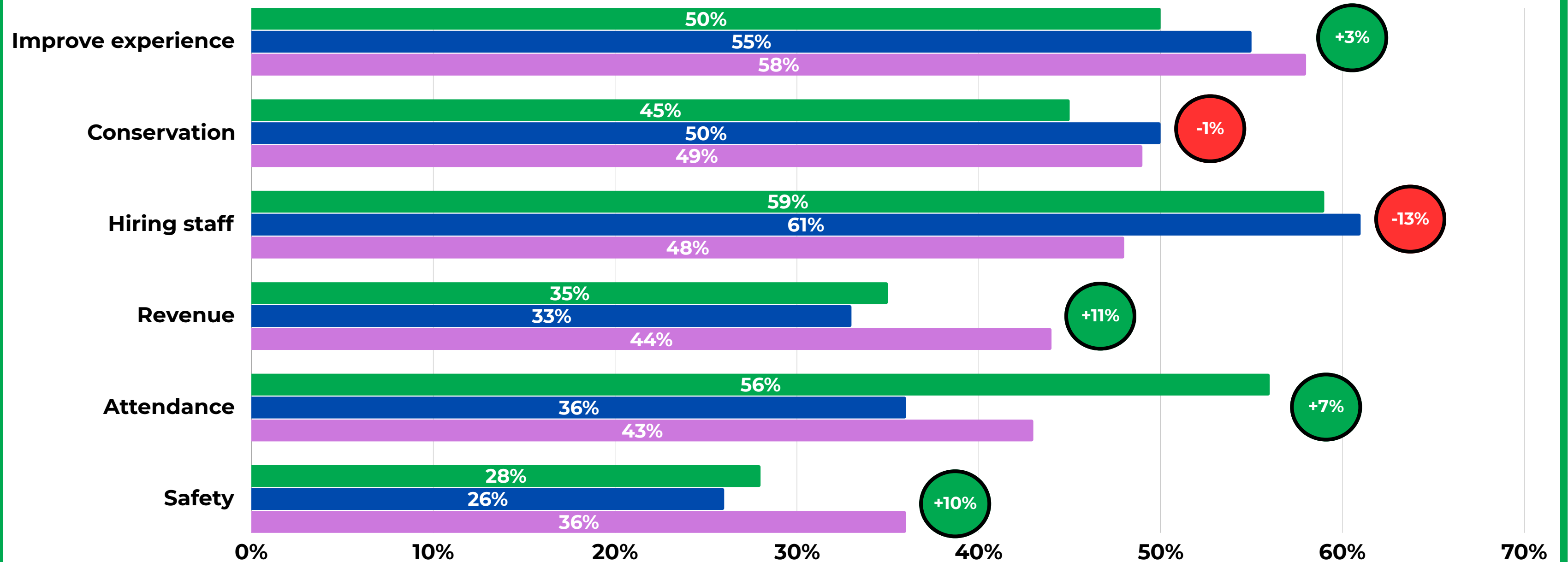


Playground



'TOP 6' ISSUES AND CONCERNS

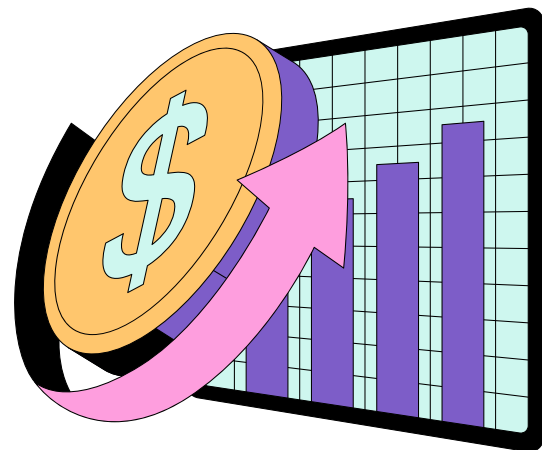
● 2021 ● 2023 ● 2025



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OTHER ISSUES

**Lack of financial
support**



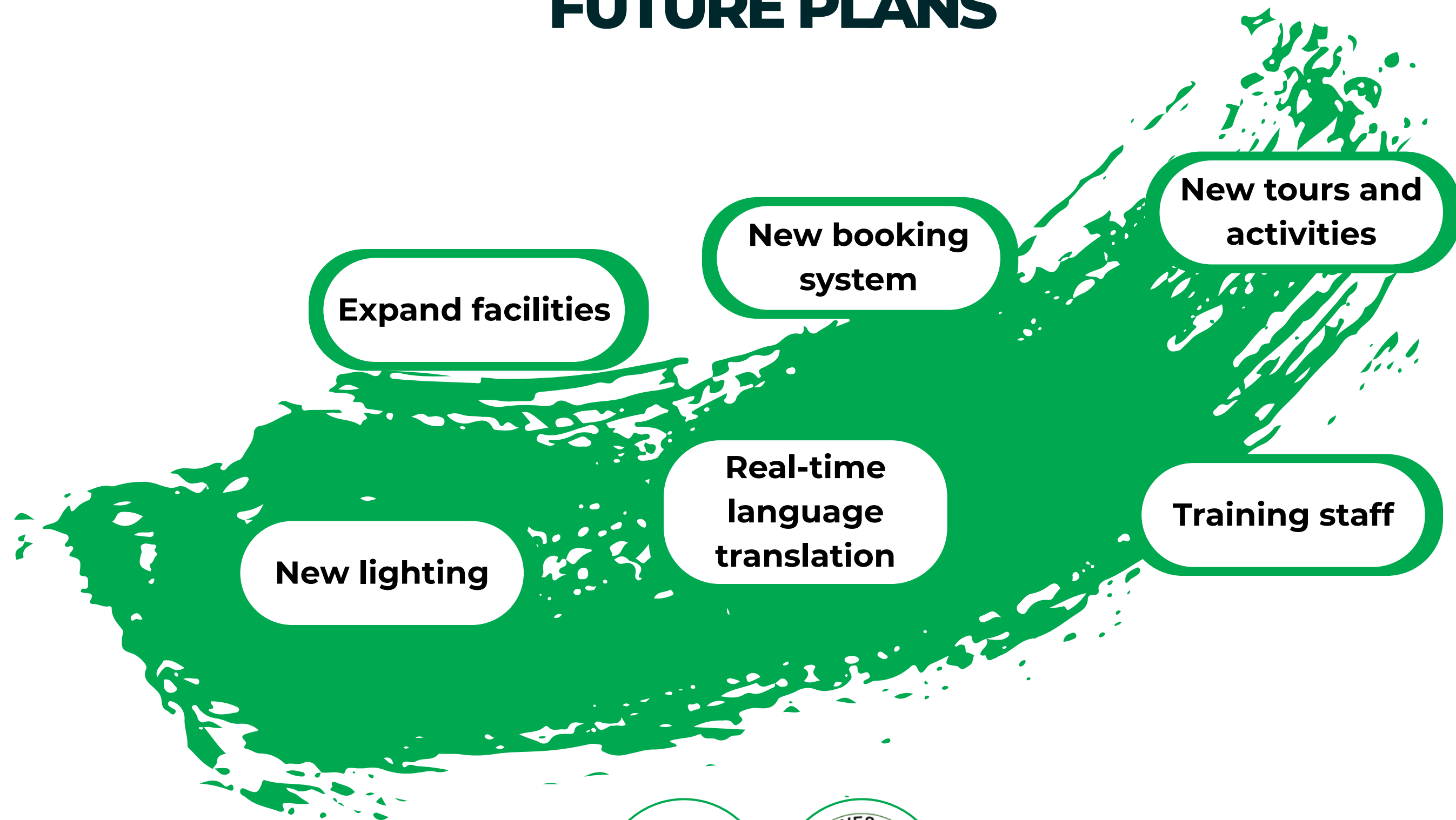
Extreme weather



Radon



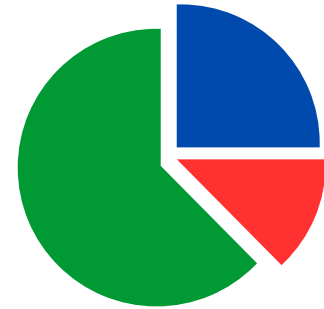
FUTURE PLANS



FINDINGS

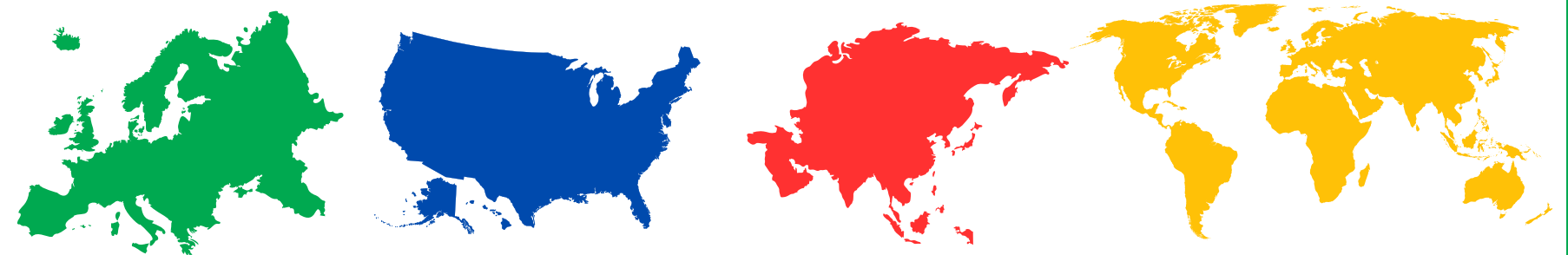
1

Stable results



2

Differences by region



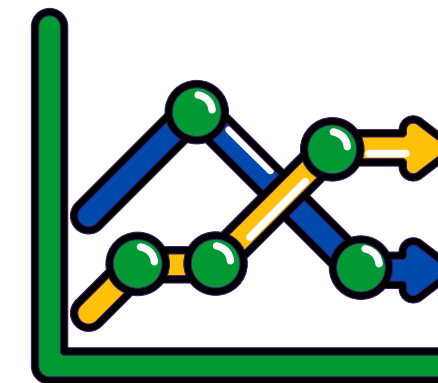
3

Educational tourism



4

Data analysis & variables



THE REAL 'THING'

Break % Respondents	Total	Regions			Visitation			Total revenue			
		USA	Europe	Other	under 20K	20-50K	over 50K	under \$210K	\$210K-\$225K	\$225K-\$1.7M	over \$1.7m
Base	104	33	64	7	34	35	33	19	19	18	18
What activities does your show cave offer?											
Guided tours (101)	97.1%	93.9%	98.4%	100.0%	94.1%	100.0%	97.0%	94.7%	94.7%	100.0%	94.4%
Gift shop (76)	73.1%	97.0%	62.5%	57.1%	41.2%	91.4%	84.8%	47.4%	78.9%	83.3%	88.9%
Snack Bar, Café, or Restaurant (55)	52.9%	60.6%	48.4%	57.1%	26.5%	60.0%	75.8%	36.8%	52.6%	61.1%	77.8%
Nature trails (38)	36.5%	42.4%	28.1%	85.7%	38.2%	42.9%	30.3%	47.4%	21.1%	33.3%	38.9%
Adventure Caving Tours (off trail with helmets and headlamps) (35)	33.7%	36.4%	29.7%	57.1%	17.6%	37.1%	48.5%	31.6%	21.1%	44.4%	33.3%
Special event space (34)	32.7%	42.4%	25.0%	57.1%	2.9%	40.0%	54.5%	15.8%	15.8%	55.6%	55.6%
Museum (32)	30.8%	21.2%	37.5%	14.3%	32.4%	22.9%	36.4%	26.3%	36.8%	11.1%	38.9%
Sluice (panning for gems, fossils, etc.) (30)	28.8%	81.8%	4.7%	-	8.8%	40.0%	39.4%	5.3%	21.1%	55.6%	55.6%
Live Music or Concerts (outside or inside the cave) (26)	25.0%	15.2%	31.3%	14.3%	2.9%	25.7%	45.5%	15.8%	21.1%	33.3%	27.8%
Souvenir Photos (22)	21.2%	39.4%	12.5%	14.3%	5.9%	11.4%	45.5%	10.5%	-	16.7%	55.6%
Other (22)	21.2%	30.3%	15.6%	28.6%	14.7%	34.3%	12.1%	21.1%	21.1%	38.9%	11.1%
Sound and light show (21)	20.2%	12.1%	26.6%	-	11.8%	17.1%	33.3%	15.8%	10.5%	22.2%	27.8%
Playground (21)	20.2%	36.4%	14.1%	-	11.8%	22.9%	24.2%	26.3%	5.3%	33.3%	27.8%
Lodging (hotel, cabins, RV park, campgrounds) (17)	16.3%	30.3%	7.8%	28.6%	11.8%	17.1%	21.2%	10.5%	10.5%	16.7%	27.8%
Ride in or out of the Cave (elevator, train, tram, funicular, conveyor, vehicle, boat) (13)	12.5%	9.1%	15.6%	-	2.9%	2.9%	33.3%	-	5.3%	22.2%	33.3%
Audio-guided tours (12)	11.5%	3.0%	17.2%	-	8.8%	8.6%	18.2%	10.5%	-	11.1%	11.1%
Ropes course (10)	9.6%	18.2%	3.1%	28.6%	2.9%	11.4%	15.2%	-	10.5%	5.6%	16.7%

Break % Respondents	Total	Regions			Visitation			Total revenue			
		USA	Europe	Other	under 20K	20-50K	over 50K	under \$210K	\$210K-\$225K	\$225K-\$1.7M	over \$1.7m
Base	100	33	60	7	33	33	32	19	18	18	18
Which issues are the most challenging at your show cave n...											
Hiring staff/staff turnover (61)	61.0%	78.8%	51.7%	57.1%	57.6%	63.6%	62.5%	42.1%	50.0%	72.2%	77.8%
Increasing attendance (57)	57.0%	66.7%	51.7%	57.1%	51.5%	60.6%	56.3%	63.2%	50.0%	61.1%	61.1%
Improving our visitor's experience (49)	49.0%	45.5%	50.0%	57.1%	30.3%	57.6%	56.3%	42.1%	55.6%	44.4%	66.7%
Conserving our cavern environment (44)	44.0%	33.3%	50.0%	42.9%	45.5%	45.5%	40.6%	47.4%	55.6%	33.3%	44.4%
Increasing revenue (35)	35.0%	39.4%	33.3%	28.6%	36.4%	36.4%	31.3%	47.4%	27.8%	50.0%	27.8%
The safety and/or health of our visitors and/or employees (27)	27.0%	12.1%	36.7%	14.3%	27.3%	24.2%	31.3%	31.6%	27.8%	22.2%	33.3%
Inflation/recession (21)	21.0%	39.4%	11.7%	14.3%	3.0%	15.2%	43.8%	10.5%	16.7%	11.1%	55.6%
Lack of financial support (from Government) (20)	20.0%	-	30.0%	28.6%	33.3%	12.1%	12.5%	47.4%	11.1%	5.6%	5.6%
Government regulation (19)	19.0%	18.2%	20.0%	14.3%	18.2%	15.2%	21.9%	26.3%	11.1%	11.1%	33.3%
Extreme weather (15)	15.0%	15.2%	16.7%	-	24.2%	15.2%	3.1%	36.8%	16.7%	16.7%	-
Liability and/or property insurance (14)	14.0%	33.3%	1.7%	28.6%	3.0%	21.2%	18.8%	-	-	22.2%	22.2%
Radon/cave radiation (11)	11.0%	-	18.3%	-	6.1%	9.1%	18.8%	-	16.7%	5.6%	11.1%
Other (8)	8.0%	-	10.0%	28.6%	6.1%	15.2%	3.1%	10.5%	22.2%	11.1%	-
War/civil unrest (1)	1.0%	-	-	14.3%	3.0%	-	-	-	-	-	5.6%



THANK YOU!



**QUESTIONS & FULL SURVEY RESULTS:
ISCA WEBSITE
SECRETARY@I-S-C-A.ORG**



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