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FCM

Considering  
gender preferences  
in business travel

# Welcome

Business travel is changing fast, and so are the needs of travellers. To gain deeper insight about these shifts in traveller behaviour and preferences in the Nordics, FCM Travel conducted an analysis focused on the differences between female and male business travellers.

This report presents key findings from our March 2025 survey, highlighting essential distinctions in travel frequency, preferences, planning habits, and experiences.

Let's explore the data and what it means for modern travel programmes.

## Methodology & survey sample

Our report summarises data gathered by FCM Travel Nordics in March 2025, based on online survey responses from 450 business travellers across the Nordic region. The survey sample consisted of 36% female respondents and 64% male respondents.

*Note: a they/them option was included in the survey but was not selected by respondents.*



# Frequency of travel

Our analysis reveals distinct patterns in how often men and women take on business travel:

A higher percentage of men travel regularly for business. 47% of male respondents travel at least once a month, compared to 32% of female respondents.

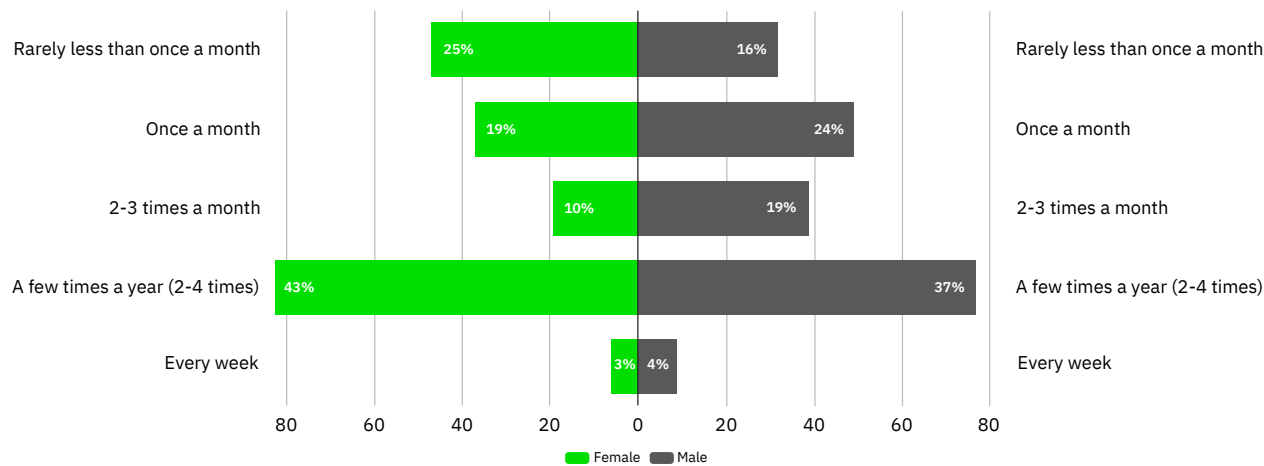
## Similar trip lengths

Despite differences in frequency, the typical length of a business trip is largely consistent between genders. The majority of both women (68%) and men (72%) report being away for 2-3 days per trip. This consistency holds for even longer trip durations.

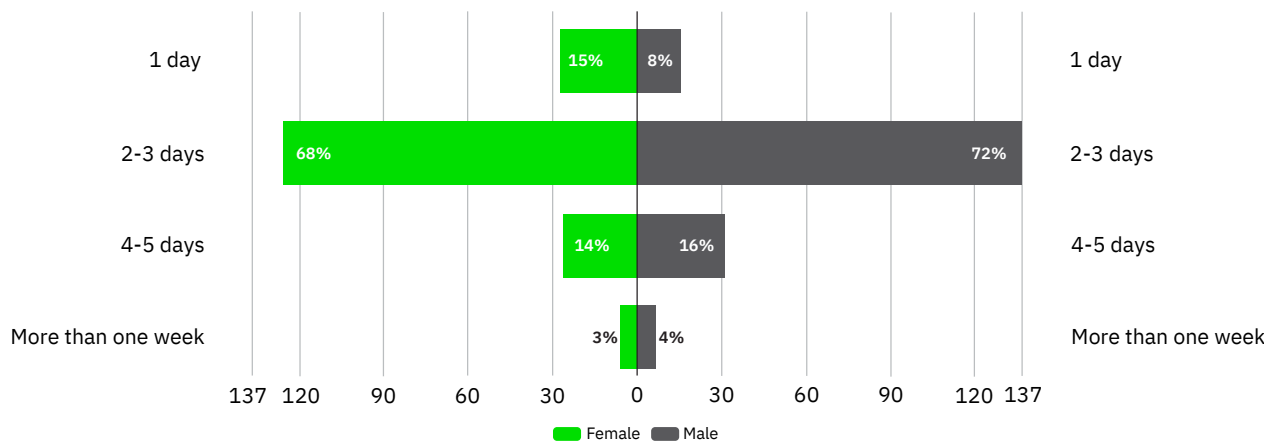
*“Travel programmes should account for the unique needs of both frequent and occasional travellers. Companies with gender-diverse workforces may benefit from adaptive policies that accommodate varying travel patterns.”*

**Bodil Mansson, Managing Director Nordics, FCM Travel**

### How often do you travel for business?



### How many days per trip are you usually away?



# Type of travel

Preferences for modes and class of travel show interesting variations between male and female respondents.

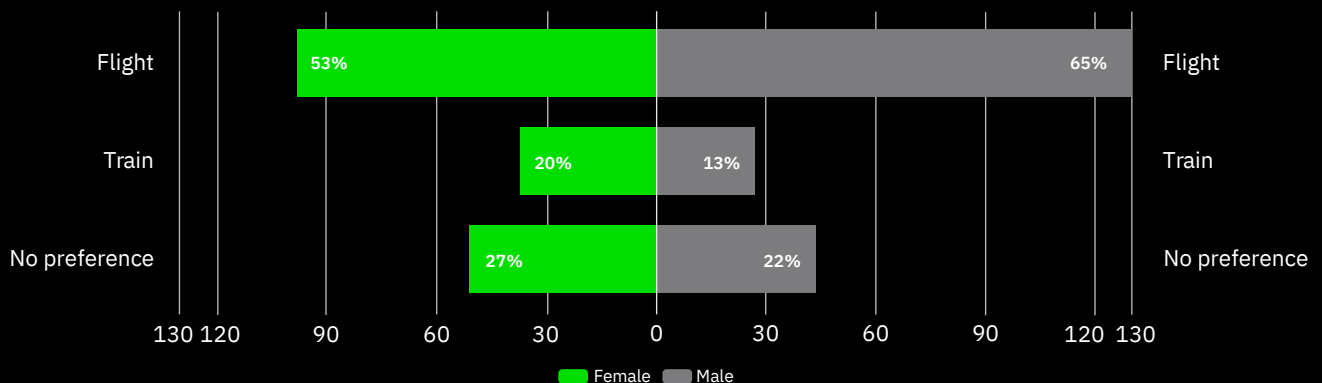
Air travel is the dominant choice for both male and female travellers with 65% of men opting for flights vs. 53% of women. More women choose rail travel by a slight but significant margin, with 20% of female responders preferring trains vs. 13% male.

Class of travel remains largely consistent between genders, with economy class being the dominant choice for 83% of women vs. 82% of men.

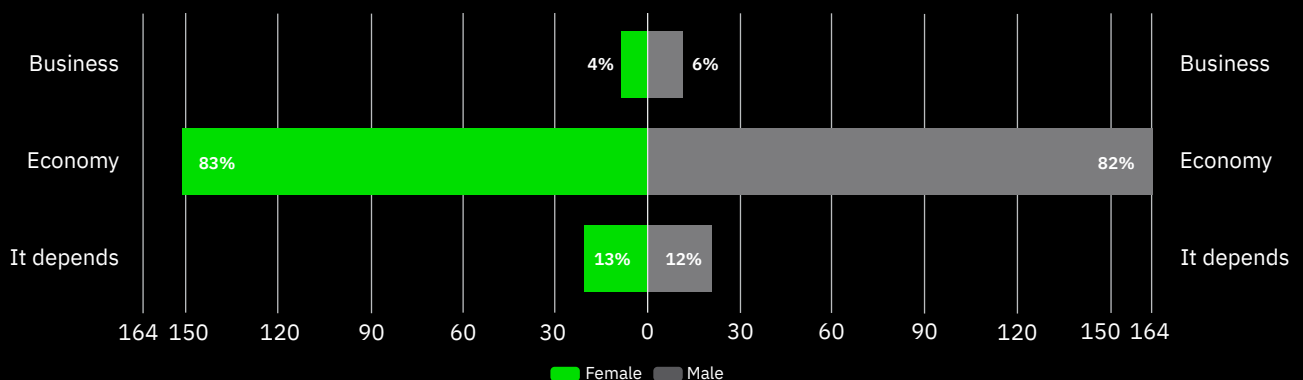
*“These preferences present an opportunity to advance corporate sustainability goals and reduce programme costs by encouraging rail options where viable, particularly for shorter routes where air and rail are competitive alternatives.”*

**Hege K. Bergslokken, Head of Account Management Nordics, FCM Travel**

## Do you prefer to travel by train or flight?



## Do you usually travel in business or economy class?



# Booking preferences

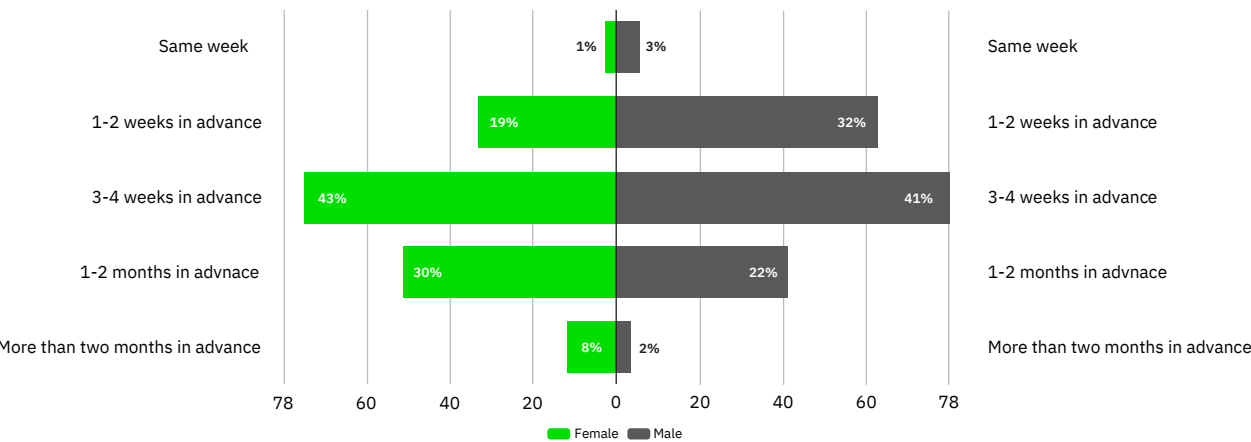
Analysis of booking behaviours shows some variance in the way male and female travellers approach trip planning. There seems to be no discernible difference between males and females in booking morning, afternoon, or evening departure times.

A slightly higher percentage of women seem more likely to book 3 weeks or more in advance of travel. More men make advanced bookings of 2 weeks or fewer at a rate of 35% to 20%.

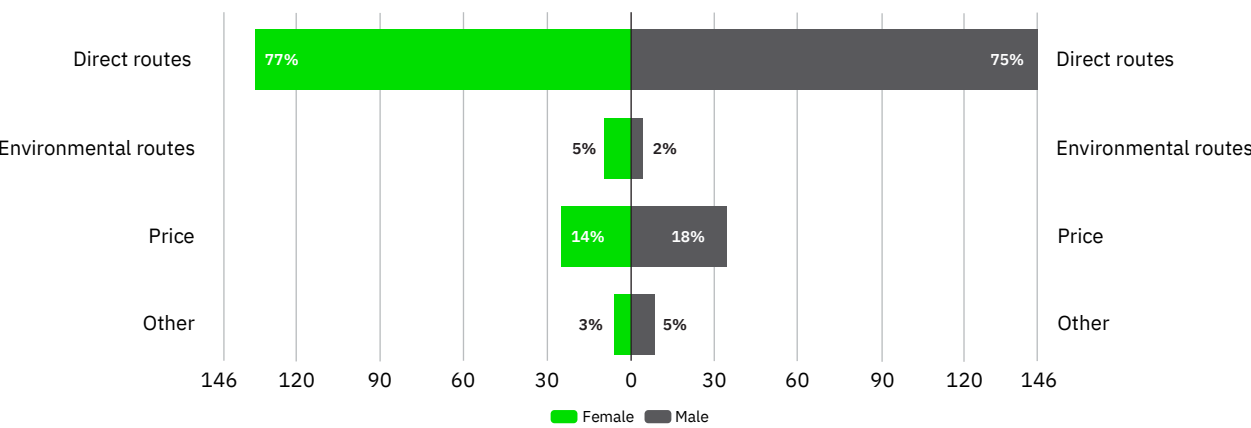
## Direct routes are key

Not surprisingly, a strong preference for booking flights with a direct route takes priority for more than 75% of both men and women. Price and environmental impact are cited as factors by a smaller percentage of responders

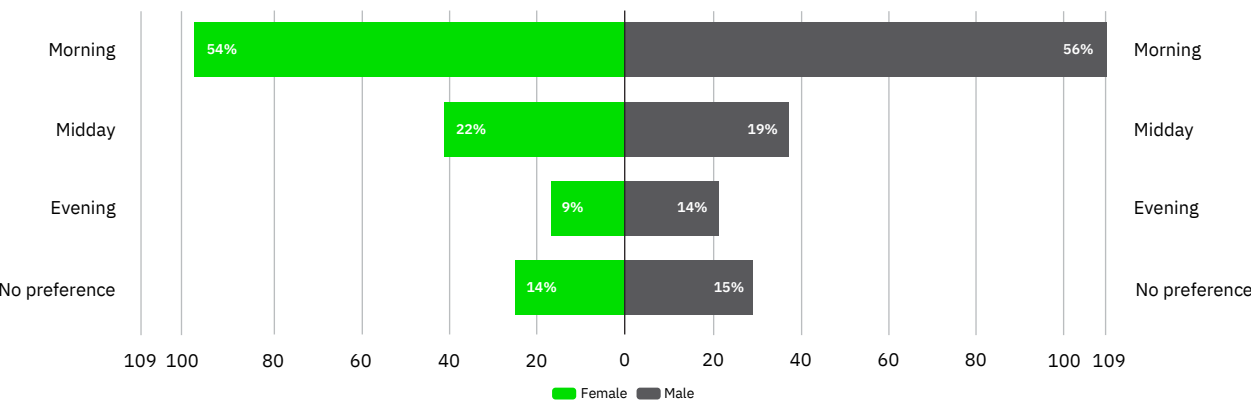
### How far in advance do you usually book your business trips?



### What matters most to you when booking: price, direct routes, or environmental impact?



### Do you prefer to depart morning or evening?



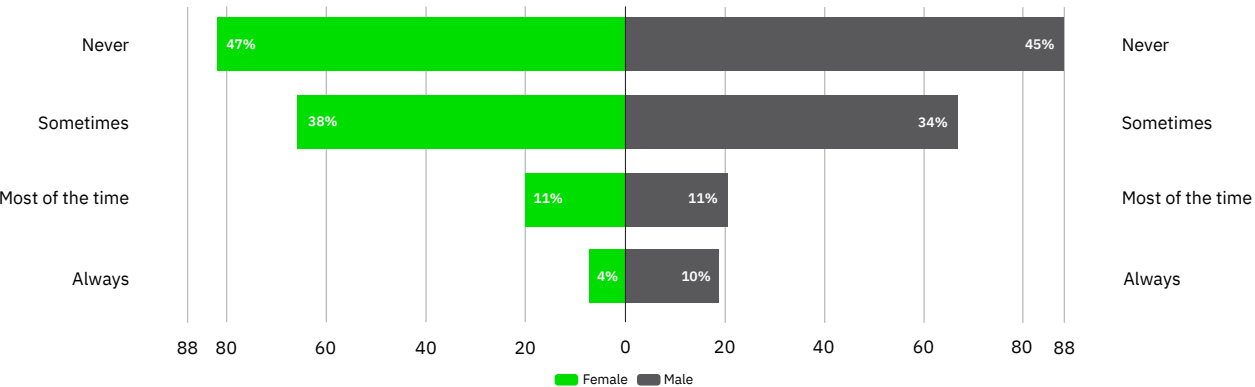
# Preferences at the airport

Men tend to use airport services more than women. Men are slightly more likely to utilize airport fast track services, and 10% of men report always using airport lounges, vs. just 4% of women.

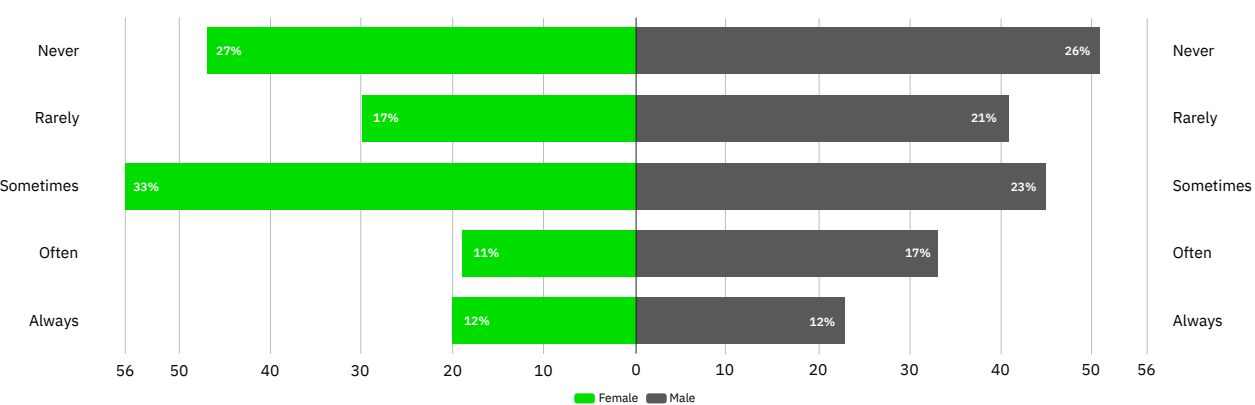
*“Travel programmes could benefit from encouraging advance booking behaviours across all demographic groups, through policy incentives or elements that reward efficient planning. Advanced booking not only secures better rates, but also enables more comprehensive pre-trip support and reduces stress for travellers.”*

**Bodil Mansson, Managing Director Nordics, FCM Travel**

## How often do you use the airport lounge?



## Do you use fast-track services at airports?





# Leisure and downtime

How do travellers look at their downtime when not actively engaged in their business travel requirements? There are some notable differences.

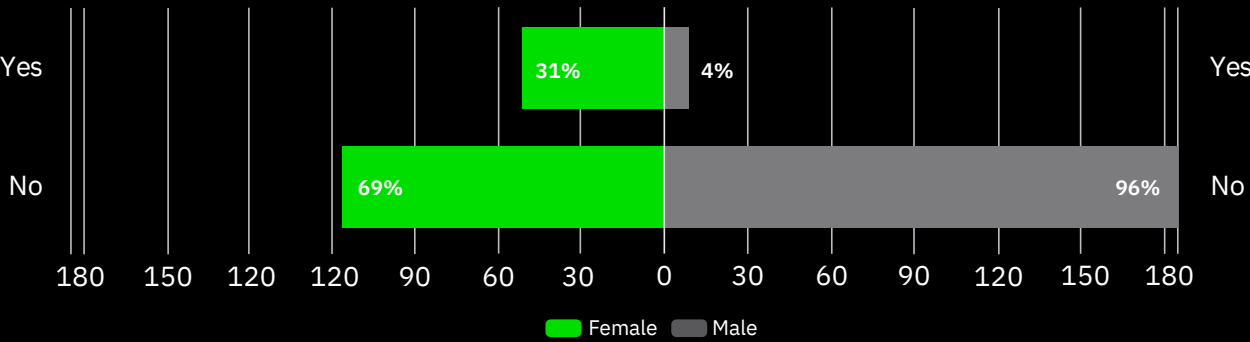
## Safety considerations

Safety emerges as a critical factor with dramatic differences in traveller sentiment. 31% of female respondents have felt particularly vulnerable at a specific destination during a business trip. Only 4% of male respondents report similar

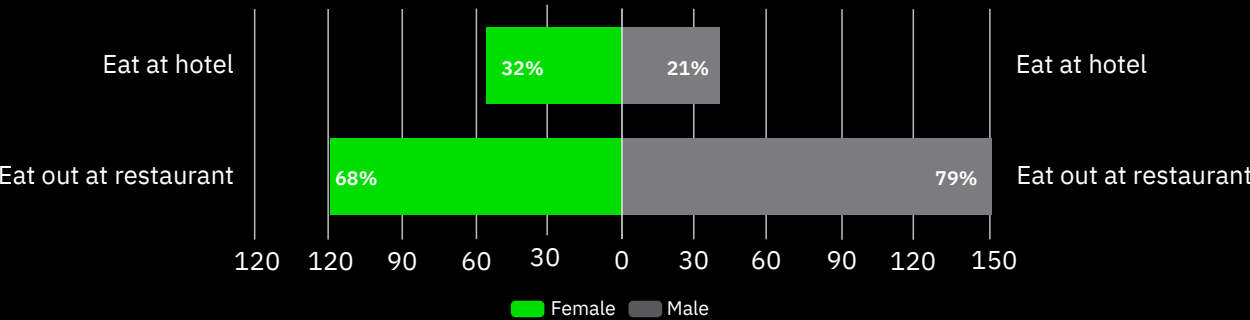
feelings. This gap represents one of the most significant findings in our analysis, highlighting the importance of robust duty of care provisions that account for varying traveller concerns.

The preference for dining location might also be influenced by comfort levels. Though the vast majority of both males and females prefer eating out at a restaurant during travel, a sizable 32% of females prefer to dine at their hotel vs. 21% of males.

### Have you ever felt particularly vulnerable as a woman/man at a specific destination?



### Do you prefer to eat out at a restaurant or at the hotel when you are traveling?



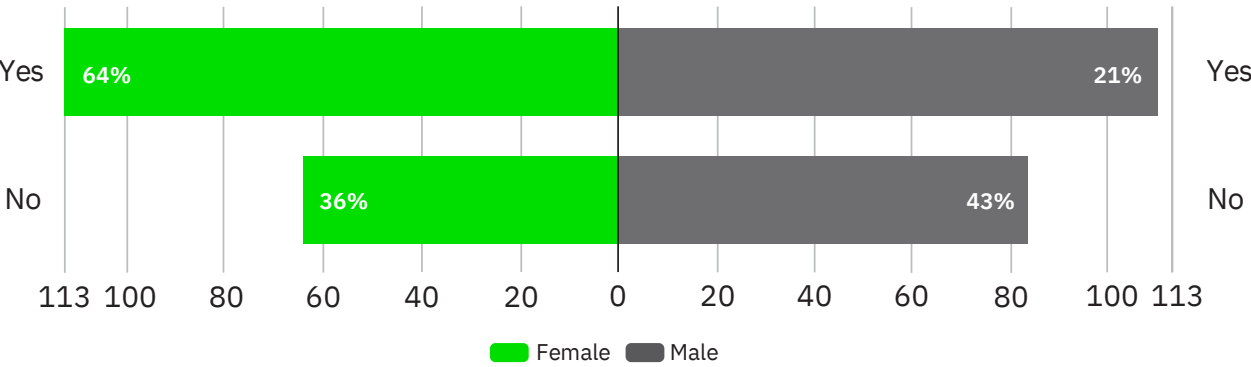
# Bleisure

Women are slightly more likely to combine business trips with personal vacation time (“bleisure”). 64% of female respondents have extended a trip for leisure, compared to 57% of male respondents.

*“Travel programmes should review their duty of care policies to addressing traveller safety concerns. This might include enhanced communication, location tracking, vetted transportation and accommodations, and clear emergency protocols.”*

**Torben Nygaard, Senior Business Development Manager, FCM Travel**

Have you ever extended a business trip for personal vacation time?





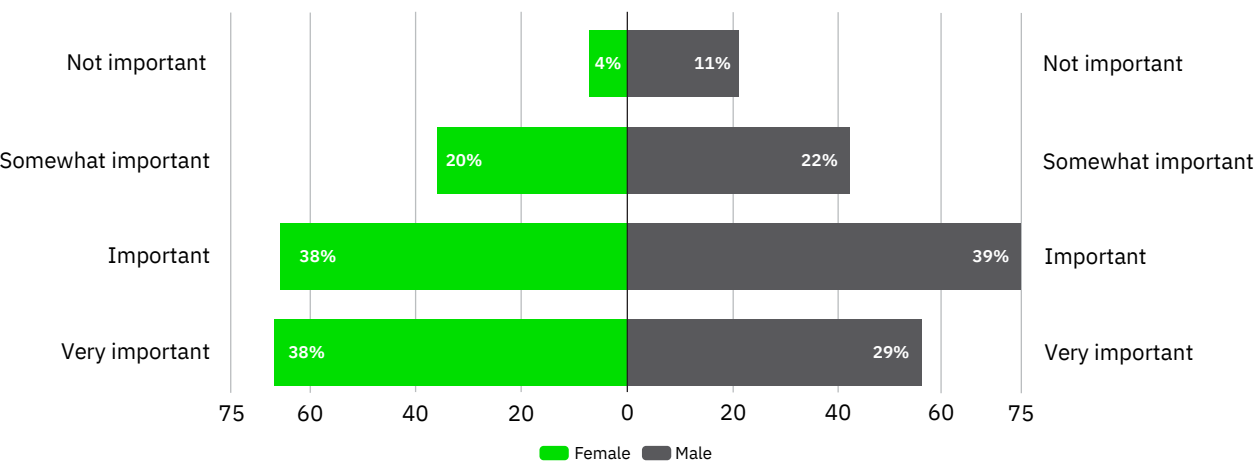


# Health, wellness, and the environment

The survey uncovered meaningful differences in how business travellers approach wellness and their overall sentiment towards travel.

Women prioritise health more highly during business travel. 38% of women consider it "very important", compared to 29% of men. Conversely, more than twice as many men (11%) as women (4%) state that staying healthy and active is "not important" during business travel.

## How important is it to you to stay healthy and active while traveling?



*“Travel programmes can support traveller wellbeing through thoughtful supplier selection, such as hotels with fitness facilities, healthy dining options, and locations that enable walking or active transportation. Policy allowances for wellness activities can further support traveller health across demographics, enhancing the overall travel experience and potentially improving productivity.”*

Hege K. Bergslokken

# Overall traveller sentiment

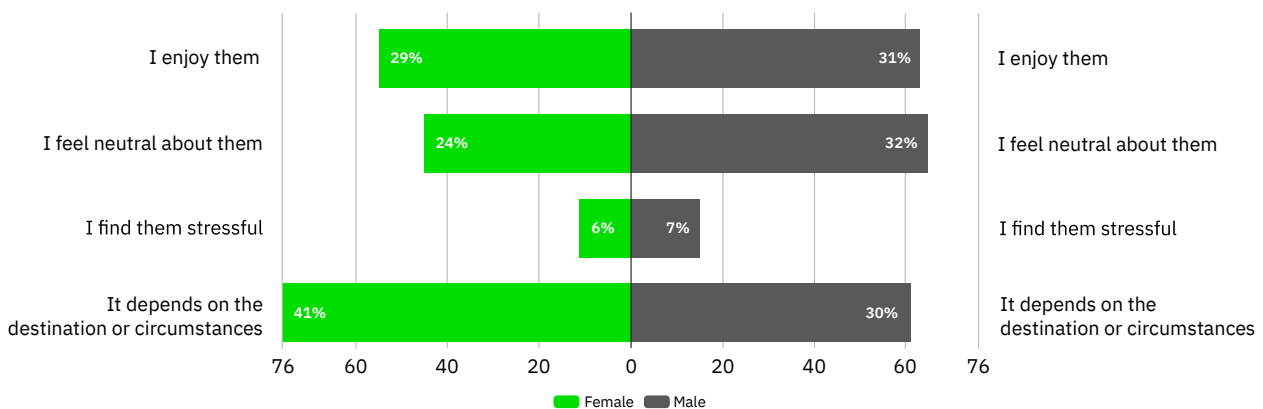
## To summarise the findings of these survey:

- Travel frequency varies, with men generally travelling more than women
- Travellers prefer to fly, though females prefer rail options more than males.
- Advance planning is more likely for female travellers
- Safety concerns vary, requiring thoughtful duty of care
- Wellness priorities show meaningful differences that should influence supplier selection
- Context matters

Encouragingly, fewer than 10% of both women and men report finding business travel stressful. A slightly higher percentage of men report enjoying business trips (31%) or feeling neutral about them (32%) slightly more often than women (29% enjoy, 24% neutral).

Both men and women indicate that their feelings depend on the specific trip details. This is more pronounced for women, with 41% stating "It depends on the destination or circumstances", compared to 30% of men.

## How do you generally feel about business trips?





## Key takeaways and recommendations

With all of this in mind, what can travel programmes do to address the differing preferences of a gender-diverse workforce? Here are a few ideas:

- **Revise** travel policies to accommodate different traveller preferences
- **Enhance** duty of care provisions to address traveller safety concerns
- **Encourage** advanced booking across all traveller segments
- **Support** sustainable choices through policy incentives aligned with corporate goals
- **Work** with suppliers that offer wellness options and safe environments
- **Implement** personalised communication that addresses specific traveller concerns



# Building an inclusive travel programme

The insights from this analysis set the stage for a nuanced travel programme that considers the needs and preferences of travellers of all genders.

As Bodil Månsson, Managing Director of FCM Travel Nordics notes, *"These insights are important because they show how travel policies can be adapted to different needs and behaviours. To ensure safe, efficient, and sustainable business travel, it is necessary to understand what motivates and concerns travellers - regardless of gender."*

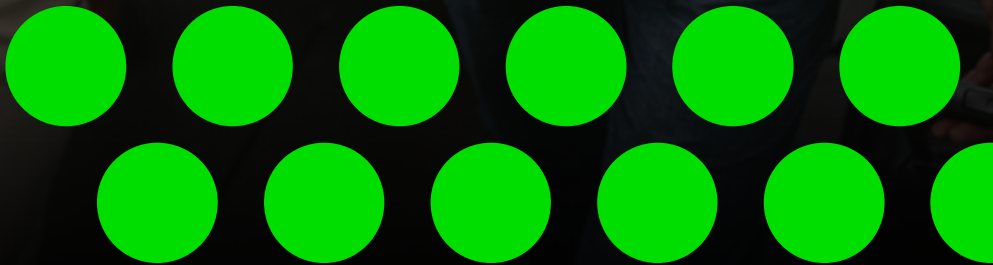
This data can help travel managers design programmes that not only meet business objectives but also create positive, supportive experiences for all travellers.

"We help companies use data like this actively," adds Månsson. "It's not about creating special treatment, but about offering flexible and inclusive solutions that reflect employees' real needs. In the end, this will lead to more satisfied travellers and better results for both people and the bottom line."

FCM uses data from customer feedback and surveys like this one, to create and enhance travel programmes that meet the challenges of today and are positioned for the future.

**Want to find out more?**  
Visit [fcmtravel.com](https://fcmtravel.com)





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