



SPARK TO SCALE

GDS-Index Report 2026



GLOBAL
DESTINATION
SUSTAINABILITY
INDEX

CITY
DESTINATIONS
ALLIANCE





INTRODUCTION

SOMETHING FUNDAMENTAL IS HAPPENING TO SUSTAINABILITY AND SPARK TO SCALE CAPTURES THAT TRANSITION AS IT IGNITES.

For four decades, sustainability has relied on frameworks, targets, reporting systems, standards, and certifications. They were necessary, moving sustainability from the margins into management. The question now confronting us is whether making sustainability more manageable has also made it less transformative. The next phase will be different.

We are moving from what John Elkington calls “soft” sustainability - voluntary, incremental, and individual - towards something more solid, more challenging, and systemic. The challenge is to reshape the markets and systems in which individual organisations operate: changing the rules, incentives, investment flows, and infrastructure that determine outcomes so they can innovate, redesign, restore, and regenerate.

This matters enormously for destinations and for the people responsible for shaping the visitor economy.

Tourism and events do not exist in isolation. They intersect with transport, energy, food, housing, nature, culture, education, infrastructure, communities, and economic development. That gives destinations an extraordinary opportunity: to use the visitor economy as a lever for wider transformation, creating places that are not merely more sustainable, but more resilient, inclusive, and regenerative.

The 2026 GDS-Index offers encouraging evidence that this transition has caught flame. Since 2016, 167 destinations across 38 countries have participated in 705 assessments. Across eleven years, average performance has increased by 45.5%, and 89% of the destinations assessed in both 2025 and 2026 improved. Most importantly, progress is broadening.

The 2026 Top 40 average reached its highest level yet, while the gap between the leaders and the wider field continues to narrow. Designed both as a benchmark and a performance-improvement tool, the GDS-Index is helping to raise the baseline. Yet this year’s data also reveals the tougher journey ahead: moving from the spark of commitment to the scale of delivery.

Strategies and commitments are becoming commonplace. More than 90% of participating destinations now have climate mitigation and adaptation strategies and biodiversity strategies and international greenhouse-gas commitments. Yet implementation is harder as infrastructure takes time, investment is a challenge, and procurement, regulation, and budgets fall outside a tourism organisation’s control.

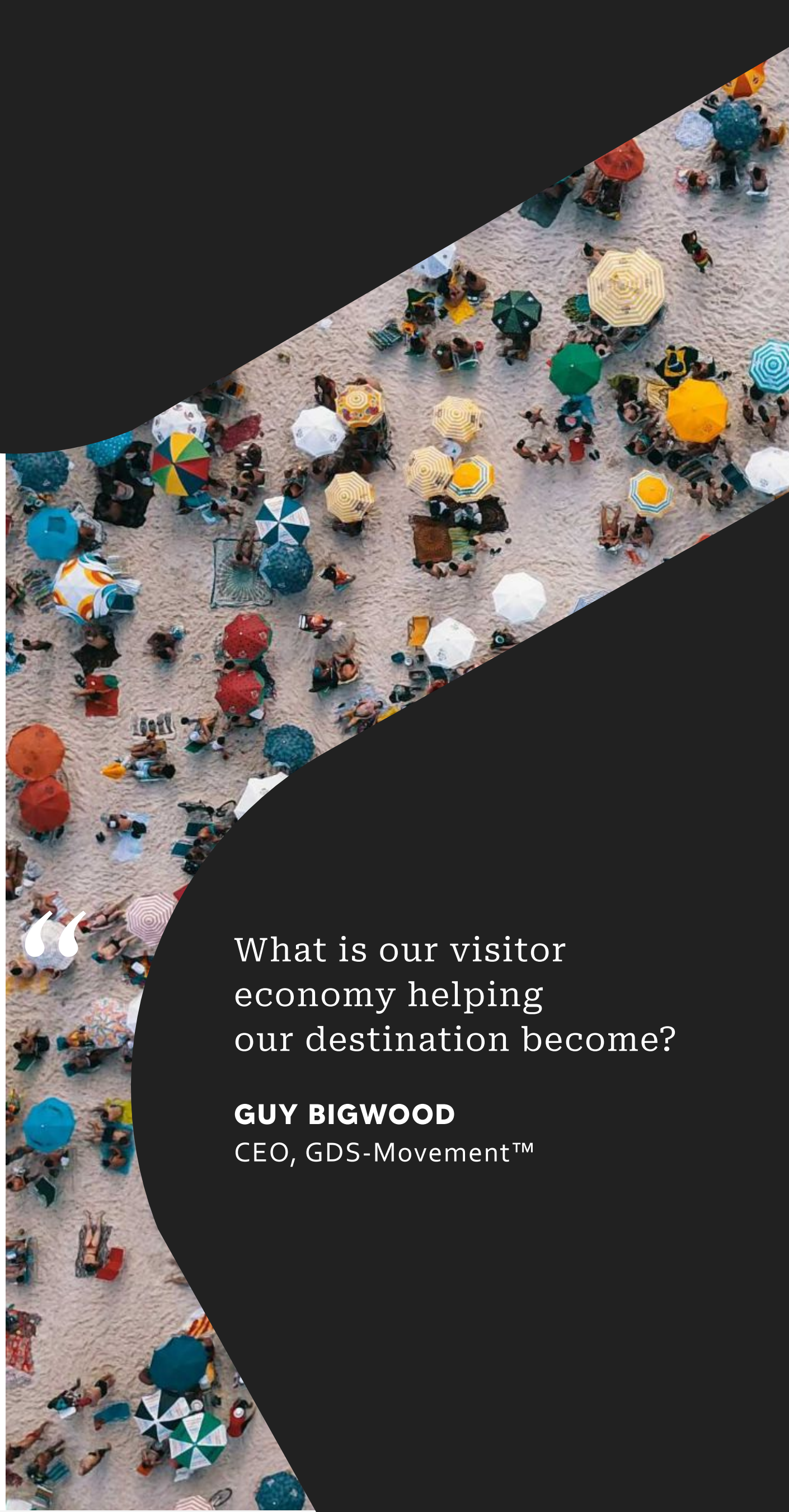
This is the report’s central tension: the spark has caught, but scaling it requires institutions, innovation, and coalitions that reach well beyond tourism.

That is precisely why destination organisations must evolve. Their task is to go beyond communicating stories and measuring progress to convene the systems that make greater progress possible to meet changing needs.

Tomorrow’s leaders will need to become convenors, coalition-builders, and system-shapers: connecting government, business, communities, and capital around a shared direction. Resilience will increasingly sit alongside efficiency as climate disruption, resource constraints, and geopolitical instability reshape the operating environment.

The GDS-Index must evolve as well. A sustainability score remains valuable, but the evidence of transformation lies in what improves because of it: stronger institutions, different investment rationale, more resilient infrastructure, refreshed supply chains, restored ecosystems, and greater value retained by communities. Increasingly, this is what measurement must reveal.

The question for the next decade is bigger than, “how sustainable is our destination?” It is: “What is our visitor economy helping our destination become?” That is the journey from sustainability to regeneration: from benchmarking progress to accelerating transformation at scale.



What is our visitor economy helping our destination become?

GUY BIGWOOD
CEO, GDS-Movement™



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WHAT IS IN THIS REPORT?

This report outlines the results, improvements, and achievements of the committed destinations that used the GDS-Index to benchmark and drive their sustainability efforts in 2026. It identifies key insights and showcases the top Leadership and Most Improved destinations.

PERCENTAGES VS PERCENTAGE POINTS

The data in this report often refers to changes in scores or performance. To interpret these shifts correctly, it is important to distinguish between percentage growth and a percentage-point increase. If a score rises from 40% to 60%, it's a 20 percentage points increase, but it is 50% growth.

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The GDS-Index shows what happens when benchmarking becomes a catalyst for change. As more destinations improve, the opportunity is to turn this momentum into deeper systems transformation. By influencing the interconnected systems behind tourism and events, destinations can accelerate the shift from sustainability to regeneration, creating places that are more resilient, prosperous, and fit for the future.”

JOHN ELKINGTON
Sustainability Pioneer & Author

WHAT IS THE GDS-INDEX?

The GDS-Index is a global benchmarking and performance improvement programme that helps destinations measure, manage, and improve their sustainability performance through a structured, data-driven framework. It assesses environmental, social, supplier, and destination management indicators, enabling cities and regions to benchmark progress and strengthen their competitive edge.

Beyond measurement, the GDS-Index supports destinations to build systems to manage, monitor, and continuously improve their sustainability performance. It helps organisations move from fragmented data and reporting to clear indicators, evidence-based decision-making, and structured sustainability management. The programme also provides a development pathway for Destination Management Organisations (DMOs), guiding them from initial engagement through the implementation of a Sustainable Management System and ultimately towards certification readiness.

HOW WAS THE GDS-INDEX CREATED?

Co-founded in 2016 by the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA), City Destinations Alliance (CityDNA), IMEX Group, and MCI, the GDS-Index offers an unparalleled resource for visitors, DMOs, municipalities, associations, and event planners looking for destinations that provide the best in sustainability performance.

HOW DOES THE GDS-INDEX ACCELERATE POSITIVE CHANGE?

- **Benchmarks performance to drive better decision-making:** Compares destination sustainability performance with peers, translating results into strategic insights and actionable recommendations.
- **Catalyses collaboration and innovation:** Brings stakeholders together around shared goals, strengthening partnerships and inspiring new solutions.
- **Builds brand leadership, reputation, and global visibility:** Helps destinations demonstrate credible progress, communicate their sustainability story and gain international recognition.
- **Saves time and money:** Provides access to a wealth of shared resources and proven practices, allowing destinations to streamline efforts, reduce costs, and avoid duplication.
- **Accelerates the journey to Certification:** Offers structured guidance and hands-on support through the Pathway to Certification, helping destinations prepare for GSTC certification.



11 YEARS OF THE GDS-INDEX

167

destinations have completed a
benchmarking submission since 2016

237 MILLION*

residents have been affected by destination
sustainability contributions since 2016

2.2-3.2 BILLION**

visitors have been affected by
participating destinations' tourism and
events' sustainability efforts since 2016



705

benchmarking assessments
completed since 2016

38

countries have been
represented on the
GDS-Index since 2016

793

users have logged into the Omni
platform since 2016

60

destinations have completed five
or more benchmarking
submissions since 2016

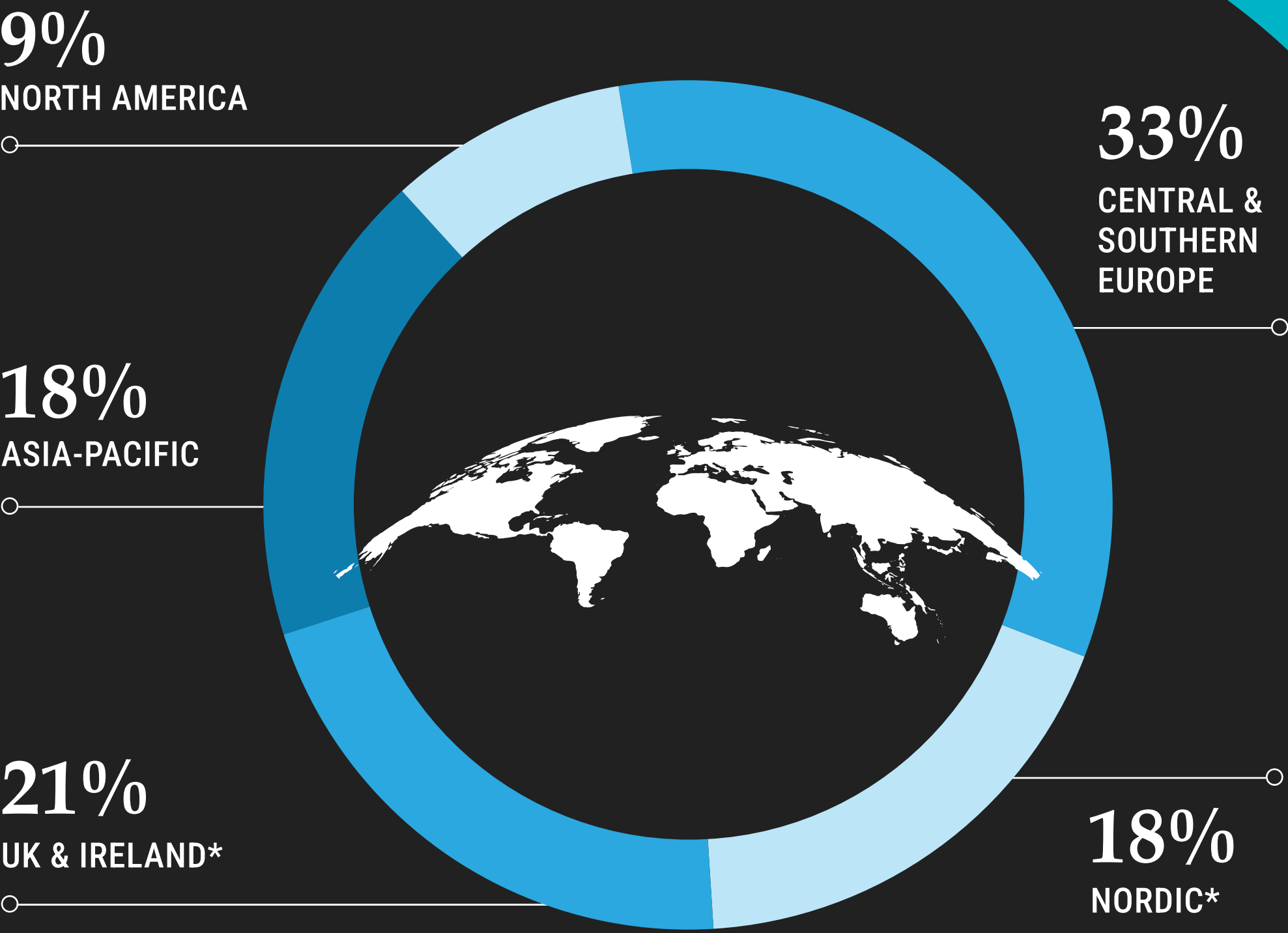
*Estimated. Population figures are drawn from publicly available
data and vary in how each destination's boundary is defined.

**This is a low- to medium-conservative estimate of annual visitors, calculated for each of the
167 destinations, using city size or available public data, and multiplied by the number of years they
have participated in the GDS-Index. Estimates are based on modelling and available data.

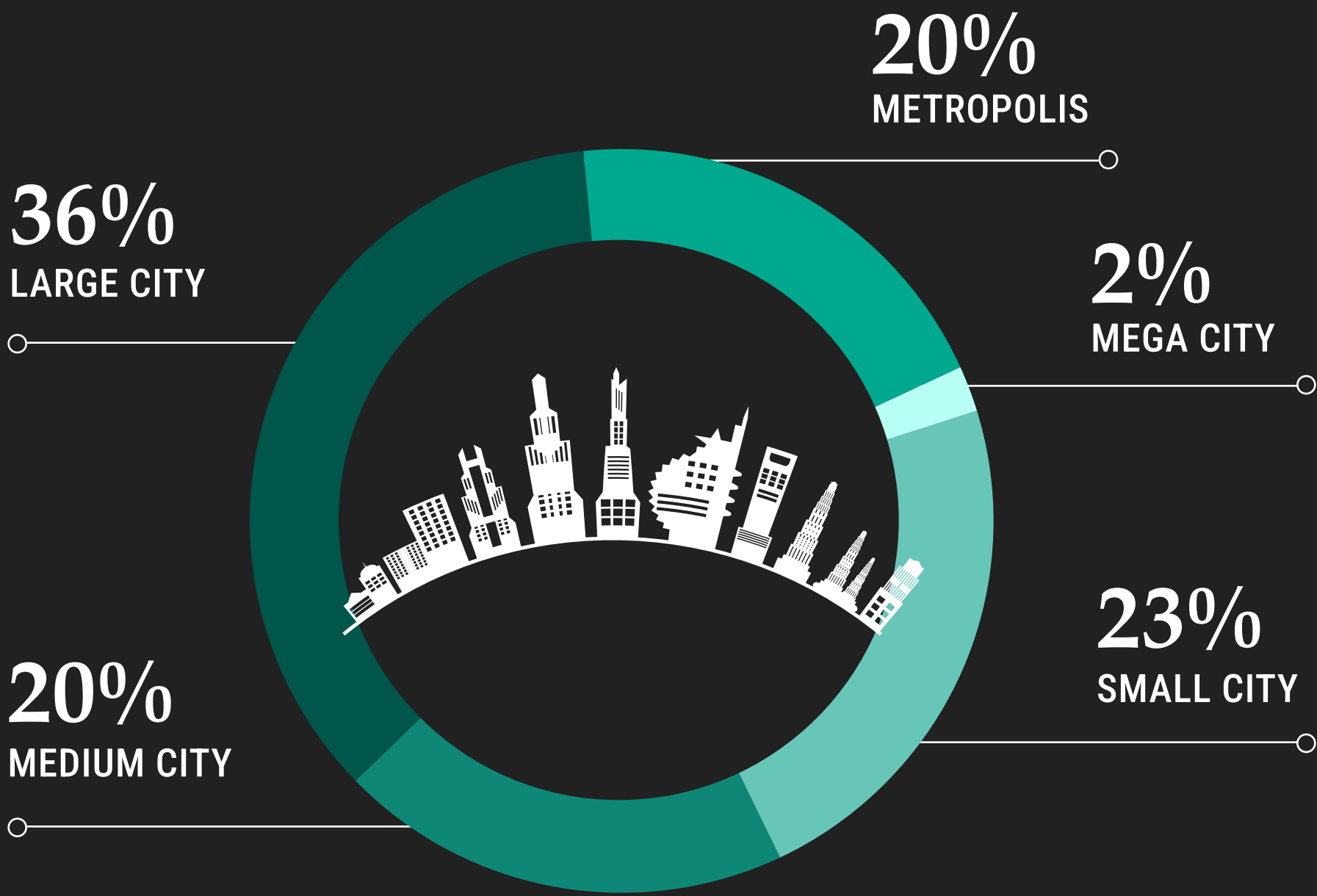
WHO'S IN THE GDS-INDEX

Destinations in the GDS-Index are committed to continually improving the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of their destinations through tourism and events benchmarking. They span 25 countries and four continents, and they are co-creating the global journey towards regeneration through measurement and management.

REGIONAL BREAKDOWN



CITY SIZE BREAKDOWN



*Northern Europe is reported this year as two groups, Nordic and UK & Ireland, which reflects the geography more accurately and gives both a table of their own in the Leaders section.

WHAT DOES THE DATA REVEAL?

ELEVEN YEARS OF MOMENTUM

Over the past eleven years, we have observed a 45.5% increase in average performance across all participating destinations, with a remarkable 49.0% rise in the Top 10.

A FRAMEWORK THAT KEEPS PACE

The Index evolves and improves every year with the input of participating destinations and experts. Four criteria were retired, two were introduced and six were reweighted, leaving the framework slightly leaner than in 2025. One of the new criteria, covering crisis management systems at DMO level, is unscored in its first year, giving destinations time to establish or develop systems before they are measured on their performance.

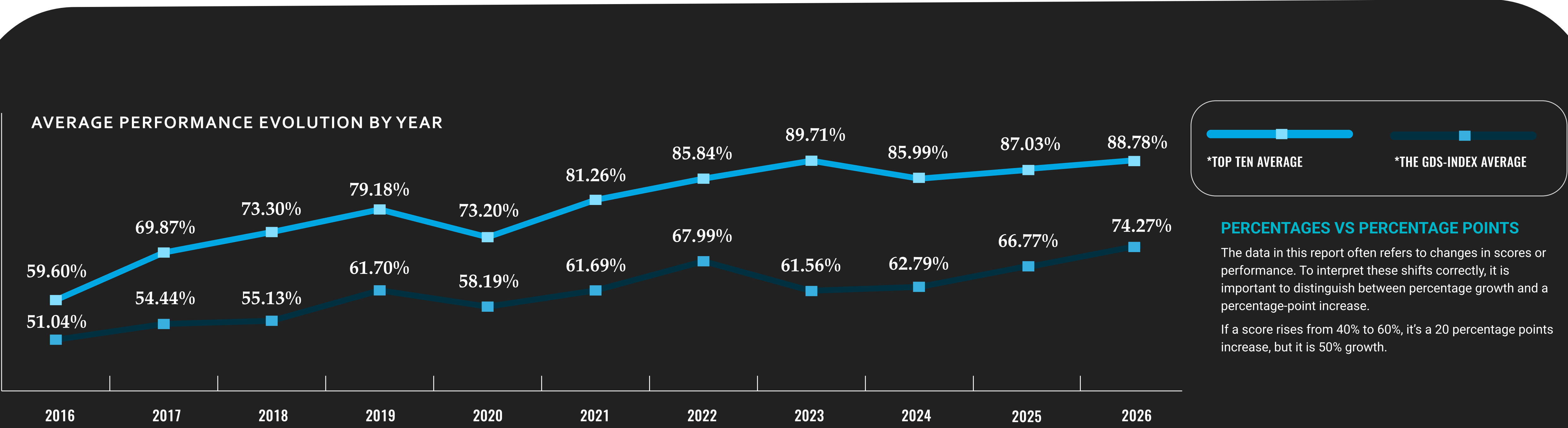
THE GAP CONTINUES TO NARROW

The gap between the Top 10 average and the GDS-Index average narrowed again, from 20.3 to 14.5 percentage points. It has now shrunk for three consecutive years, having peaked in 2023, and is the narrowest since 2016. The distance between the most advanced destinations and the wider field continues to shrink as the majority draws nearer to the leaders.

We discuss the source and spread of this progress, which is uneven, next.

PROGRESS ACROSS ALL FOUR CATEGORIES

All four categories advanced this year. Among destinations assessed in both years, Destination Management led with a gain of 6.2 percentage points, followed by Supplier at 5.1, Social at 3.5 and Environmental at 2.6.



THE 2026 GDS-INDEX TOP 40

	2026	2025		2026	2025		2026	2025		2026	2025
Helsinki* 1	92.94	93.52	Tampere 11	86.35	85.76	Madrid* 21	82.82	63.07	Faroe Islands 31	77.65	76.15
Gothenburg 2	91.29	91.51	Lyon 12	85.88	84.40	Cork 22	82.59	80.08	Limerick 32	75.53	71.34
Copenhagen* 3	90.35	88.76	Bilbao 13	85.41	79.82	Goyang 23	82.12	81.65	Ostersund 33	75.29	72.71
Aarhus 4	90.12	85.15	Berlin* 14	85.18	80.50	Clare 24	81.79	77.24	Manchester 34	75.29	73.79
Aalborg 5	88.24	87.06	Victoria 15	84.24	77.06	Melbourne 25	81.41	83.03	Strasbourg 35	74.59	71.79
Glasgow 6	87.53	86.01	Kerry 16	84.24	82.80	Milan 26	80.71	74.31	Ljubljana* 36	74.35	70.76
Sydney 7	87.06	78.56	Dublin* 17	83.76	80.05	Galway 27	80.47	76.84	The Malvern 37	74.12	60.09
Belfast 8	87.06	84.40	Stockholm* 18	83.53	79.13	Basel 28	80.18	79.59	Sapporo 38	73.18	69.50
Montreal 9	86.59	79.82	Luzern 19	83.06	75.69	Valencia 29	78.35	61.24	Edmonton 39	72.00	64.22
Reykjavik* 10	86.59	83.72	Barcelona 20	83.06	81.88	Amsterdam* 30	78.35	69.72	Flanders 40	72.00	69.49

*Capital cities
Destinations showing the same score are separated at the third or fourth decimal place. No two destinations in the 2026 GDS-Index have exactly the same score.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO MAKE THE TOP 40?

THE BAR HAS NEVER BEEN HIGHER



THE PRICE OF A PLACEMENT

What does a destination need to score to make the Top 40 or the Top 10? It depends on the year, because baselines each year are set by the participants.

This year performance rose in almost all the lists.

Entry thresholds - the score needed to hold a position

YEAR	#1	#10	#20	#30	#40
2022	92.98	83.18	76.55	73.16	66.12
2023	94.64	86.74	80.54	77.06	71.50
2024	92.43	83.13	77.40	75.57	72.87
2025	93.52	83.72	79.82	75.92	69.72
2026	92.94	86.59	83.06	78.35	72.00

The scores required to hold tenth, twentieth, thirtieth and fortieth position all rose this year. Twentieth and thirtieth entry requirements are the highest they have been to date.

PROGRESS SPARKS GREATER COMPETITION

The top of the table has been remarkably steady. First place has sat between 92.43 and 94.64 every year since 2022.

This consistency is notable, given that the GDS-Index is reviewed and strengthened each year, introducing new and evolving criteria that continue to challenge even the highest-performing destinations. Rather than reflecting a static benchmark, the leading destinations’ stability points to their strong foundations and maturity, and their ability to maintain high performance as expectations evolve.

Everywhere below first place, the picture is different.

A score of 83.06 places twentieth this year. That same score would have placed eleventh in 2022, eleventh in 2024 and eleventh in 2025. A score of 78.35 places thirtieth this year, and would have placed seventeenth in 2024 and eighteenth in 2022.

A score that placed eleventh in three of the past four years places twentieth this year. Competition is steepening.

Entering or remaining in the Top 40 has become considerably harder, and the competition has tightened most in the places where most destinations sit.

FOUR RECORDS IN ONE YEAR

Band averages

YEAR	TOP 10	11-20	21-30	31-40	TOP 40 AVERAGE
2022	85.84	80.16	74.27	70.27	77.63
2023	89.71	82.56	78.38	73.79	81.11
2024	85.99	79.64	76.28	74.38	79.07
2025	87.03	81.33	78.03	72.97	79.84
2026	88.78	84.47	80.88	74.40	82.13

The eleventh to twentieth band, the twenty-first to thirtieth band, the thirty-first to fortieth band and the Top 40 average are all the highest in the history of GDS-Index. Only the Top 10 average sits below its record, and only narrowly, behind 2023.

That is the clearest evidence in this report that the standard is being set collectively rather than by a handful of destinations at the top. The leaders have held their position. Everyone behind them is improving.

WHAT THIS JOSTLING MEANS FOR A DESTINATION

In 2026, retaining a place in the Top 40 has become more of a challenge

Destinations that held their ranking this year did so while the score required to hold it went up by between two and three percentage points. Destinations that improved their score and still moved down the table were not standing still: the field moved faster. And destinations entering the Top 40 for the first time did so against the second-highest entry threshold ever recorded.

This is what an improvement programme should look like from the inside. The value of a position is set by how hard it is to hold, and this year it was harder than it has ever been, making the value of a Top 40 ranking matter more than it ever has.



WHERE THE SPARK IS STRUCK



AVERAGE SCORE	ENVIRONMENTAL	SOCIAL	SUPPLIER	DESTINATION MANAGEMENT
All destinations	75.0	77.3	67.2	75.9
Top 40	79.0	83.3	77.4	86.8
Top 10	83.9	87.3	88.0	94.3
Distance, all, to top 10	8.9	10.0	20.7	18.4

FOUR CATEGORIES; TWO VERY DIFFERENT STORIES

Every destination in the GDS-Index is measured across its four categories: Destination Management, Environmental, Social, and Supplier performance. Read the scores side by side and they fall into two distinct groups - Environmental and Social, and Supplier and Destination Management - and the difference between these groups tells us more about destination sustainability than any standalone score can.

Across all destinations, Social leads at 77.3%, with Destination Management at 75.9% and Environmental at 75.0%. Supplier trails at 67.2%.

TWICE THE DISTANCE

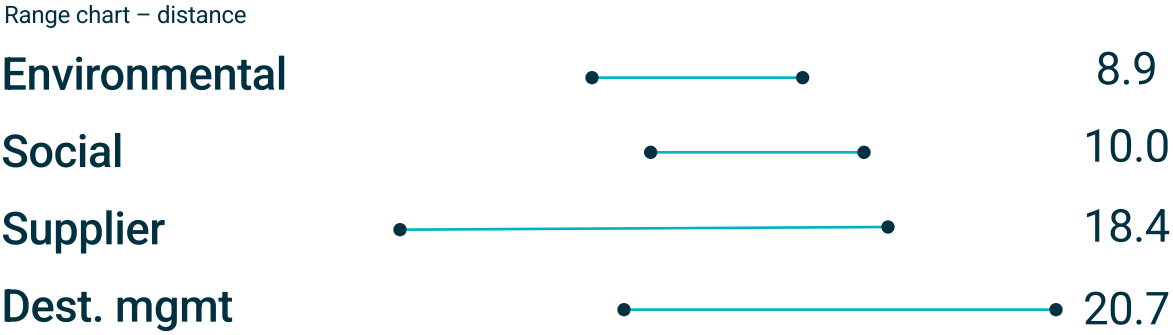
There’s more to the story than averages. The distance from each category’s average to that of the Top 10 average tells us much more. In the Environmental category that distance is just 8.9 percentage points*. In Social, it’s 9.9, both narrow bands. A destination at the average and a destination in the Top 10 are, on these measures, not far apart.

By contrast, the Supplier and Destination Management categories behave quite differently. Supplier stretches 20.7 percentage points, from 67.2% to 88.0%. Destination Management stretches 18.4, from 75.9% to a notable 94.3%. That is the highest category average any group has recorded in the index in any year, ahead of the previous best of 91.9% set in 2023.

In Supplier and Destination Management, more than 20 and 18 percentage points separate the average destination from the Top 10 average. In Environmental and Social, the same distance is under 10.

A destination arrives with much of its Environmental and Social score already written.

DISTANCE BETWEEN AVERAGE INDEX TO TOP 10



WHAT A DESTINATION CHOOSES

While a destination arrives with much of its Environmental and Social score already written, Supplier engagement and destination management offer more agency as it’s based on the organisation’s actions and, in many cases, its KPIs and mandate. These include empowering hotels, venues, and agencies to achieve sustainability certification, developing a sustainability strategy, measuring what matters, and holding itself publicly accountable for the results. These are choices, made year by year, by teams with limited budgets but considerable ambition.

That is why the leaders pull so far ahead in these two categories, and it is why these are the categories to watch. They are where a destination's contribution is indisputable.

WHERE THE WORK IS BURNING BRIGHT

PROGRESS IS CONCENTRATED WHERE
DESTINATIONS HAVE AGENCY

COMPARING LIKE WITH LIKE (AND YEAR BY YEAR)

Comparing scores between years is rarely as simple as it looks. Criteria evolve, categories are refined, and the index changes because it must. A benchmark that stands still quickly ceases to be useful. To see genuine change, we compared destinations assessed in both 2025 and 2026.

Destination Management rose by 6.2 percentage points and Supplier by 5.1. Social gained 3.5, and Environmental 2.6.

The same divide we see across the categories, we see over time. Destinations are moving quickly on what they control directly, and slowly on what they inherit.

CHANGE ON LAST YEAR

Destination management	+6.2
Supplier	+5.1
Social	+3.5
Environmental	+2.6

THE SLOW WORK OF INFRASTRUCTURE

Why is this? Environmental scores move slowly because grids decarbonise slowly, transport networks are rebuilt over decades, and a DMO cannot legislate its way to cleaner energy. Environmental progress depends on investment and policy decisions taken well beyond tourism, and destinations may not reap the benefits of extensive efforts in the short term but will be rewarded in the long term, as efforts scale impacts.

MANAGEMENT MATURES

What has changed, and changed fast, is management. Impact programmes were among the fastest-rising criteria this year, with destination performance rising from 50.5% to 65.9%. Employee management processes gained 11.3 percentage points and destination-level visitor management, 10.1. On the supplier side, the protection of naturally and culturally sensitive sites climbed 12.9 percentage points to 77.0%, and destinations moved decisively on bringing professional congress organisers into their sustainability policies, up 10.9.



WHAT IT MEANS FOR BUYERS

A strong Supplier or Destination Management score tells you that the organisation you would be working with takes its commitments seriously. A strong Environmental score tells you a great deal about the city's management and may positively influence delegates' perceptions of your event.

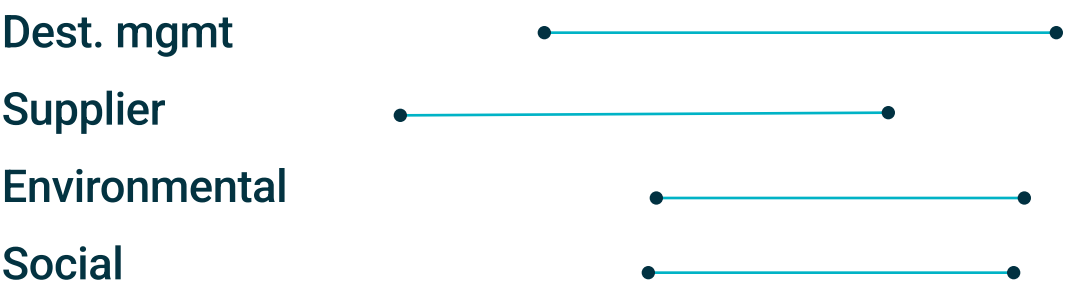
Certification remains a challenge. Third-party certification among professional congress organisers rose 8.1 percentage points to 40%, and among the hotel room inventory assessed in each destination it reached 59%. The direction of change is unmistakable, with considerable distance left to cover.

Certification among professional
congress organisers rose 8.1
percentage points this year, but still
covers only 40% of them.

THE FLOOR IS RISING

MOMENTUM IS BUILDING
ACROSS THE INDEX

A QUARTER OF DESTINATIONS SCORE BELOW	2025 > 2026
Destination management	60.3 > 71.2
Supplier	50.3 > 59.3
Environmental	66.6 > 71.1
Social	66.4 > 70.3



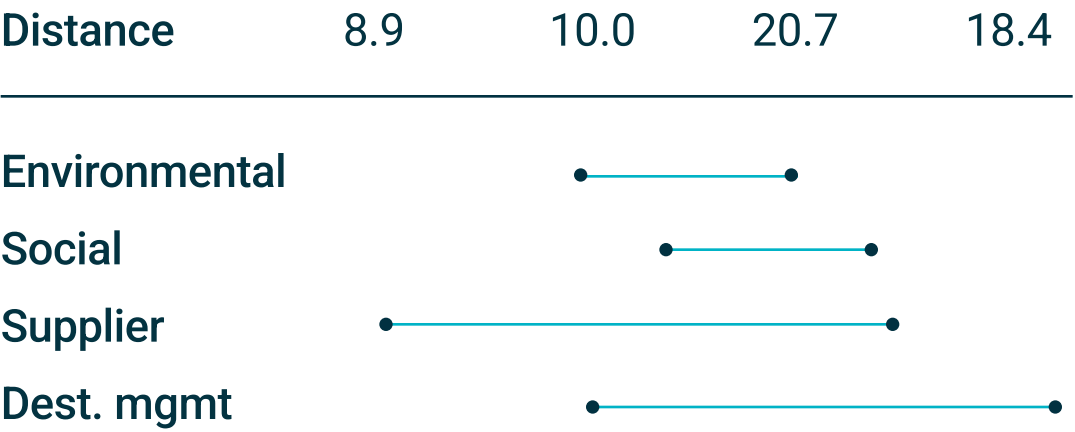
IMPROVEMENT IS BROAD

The most encouraging finding in this year's data is not at the top of the table. It is how widely the gains are spread. Of the destinations assessed in both 2025 and 2026, a whopping 89% improved their score. The average gain across the group was 4.4 percentage points. More telling is where that improvement landed. Destinations with the most headroom gained the most, an average of 8.2 percentage points, while those already close to the ceiling gained 1.5. It's encouraging that progress this year was strongest where there was most room to grow.

89% of destinations assessed in both years improved their scores.

A NARROWING FIELD

Across the index as a whole, the distance between the highest and lowest scores narrowed from 59.4 to 49.7 percentage points. The destinations at the front have less room left to move and others are still climbing. **This is the intention of a true improvement programme: to move the whole field, take what the most advanced destinations proved possible in the previous years and make it the baseline for all.**



X FACTOR EXAMPLES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

While these better practices fall outside of the GDS-Index criteria and ranking, they offer powerful support in the journey to greater regenerative destination management, which is an ongoing, iterative, integrative and strategic process.



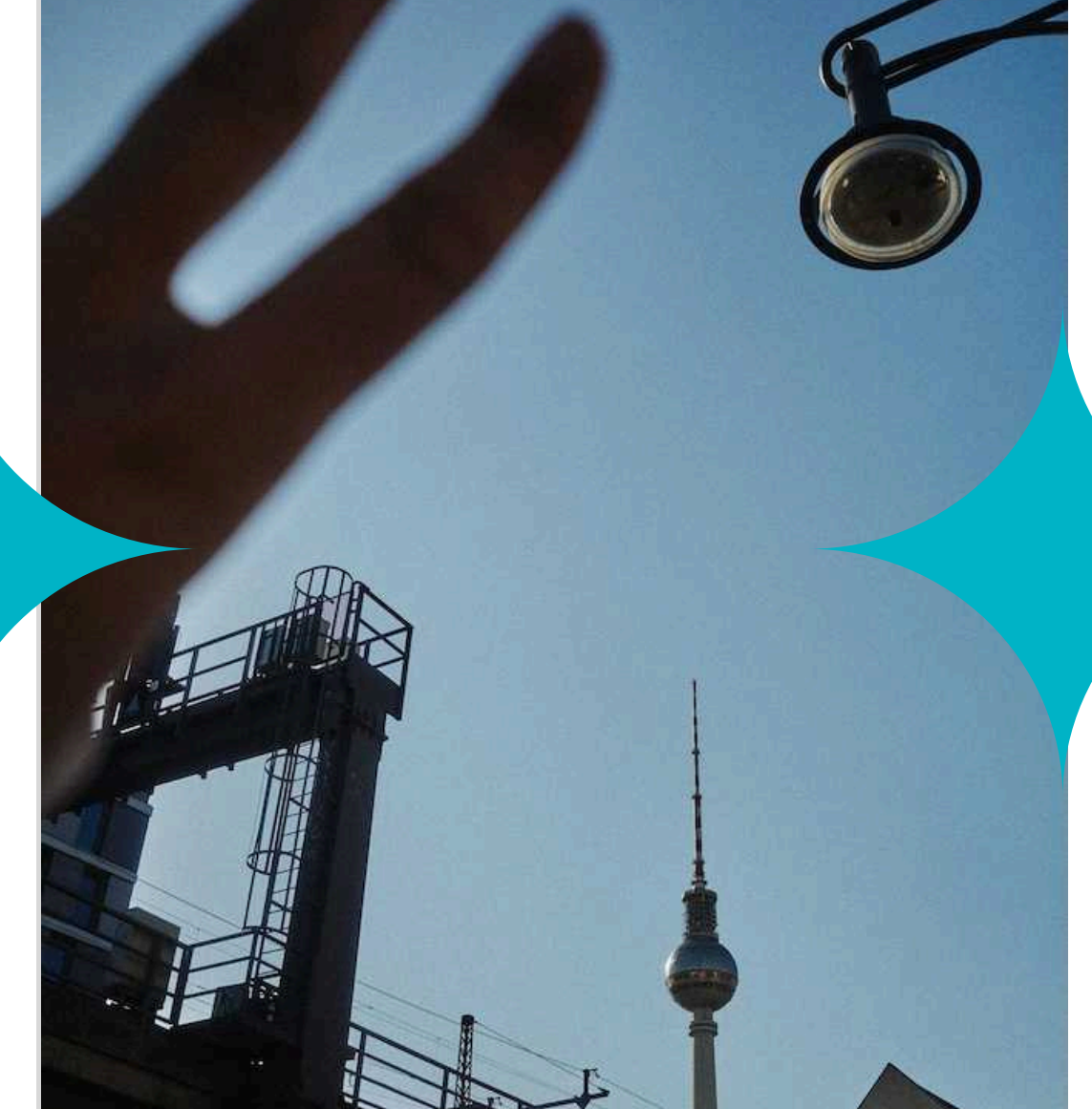
FAROE ISLANDS - SELF-NAVIGATING CARS

Visit Faroe Islands' answer to a problem every destination shares: how to guide visitors, spread pressure, and help people experience a place well. "Curated journeys take travellers on hidden detours across the islands, one spot at a time — and the twist: you don't get to choose where you are going!" It has already earned international recognition, and sits alongside Closed for Maintenance, which won Best Marketing Award at the ICCA Congress in Porto this year. Another initiative, 'Please Visit Responsibly', follows shortly, helping visitors travel with care and be mindful of the communities hosting them. "When you visit, you don't have to be perfect. You don't have to know everything. A little thoughtfulness goes a long way. Knowing where it's safe to walk. Remembering the gate behind you. A quiet hello when you pass someone. We notice. And listening when the weather changes its mind. This is how respect works here."



WASHINGTON DC, UNITED STATES - NEXTDC

Destination DC's affiliated nonprofit works with high school students in DC Public Schools academies of hospitality, culinary science and mass media, on the premise that young people leave the industry before they enter it, simply through lack of familiarity. NEXTDC provides instruction support, guest speakers, networking, internship placements and scholarships, and takes 15 to 20 students as interns inside Destination DC itself each year, working across photography, advertising, sustainability, and finance. It is one of very few DMO-affiliated nonprofits operating at this level.

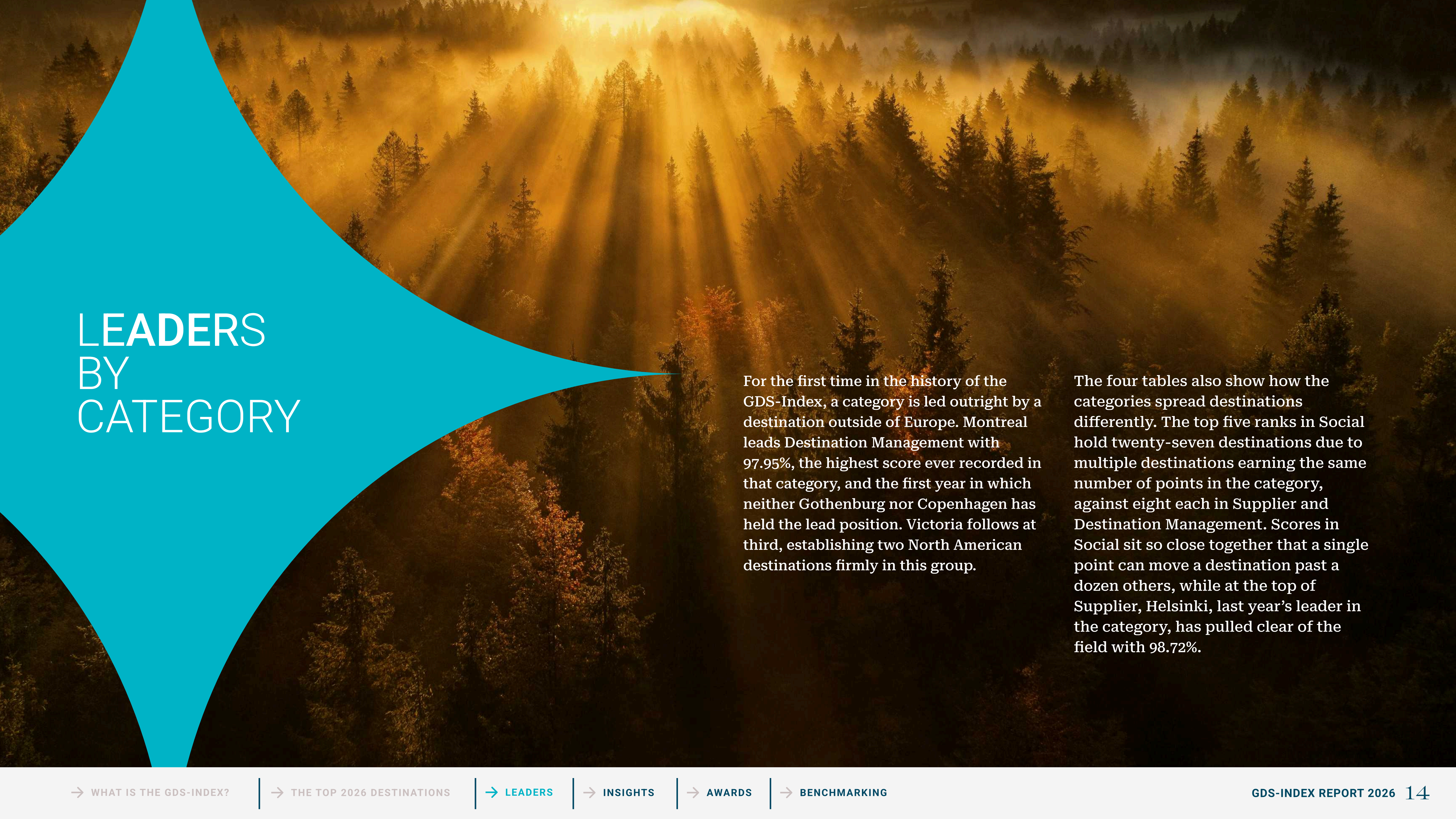


BERLIN FREEDOM WEEK

Launched in November 2025, and initiated by visitBerlin, Berlin Freedom Week treats sustainability as reaching beyond the environmental into democratic resilience, social cohesion, and civic participation.

It was designed as an open ecosystem rather than a single event, so partners and citizens could contribute their preferred formats: more than 150 events across 90+ locations, 10,000+ participants from 60 nations, and a mobile stage that took the conversation into residential neighbourhoods rather than keeping it in institutions.

It is now an annual format with public funding.



LEADERS BY CATEGORY

For the first time in the history of the GDS-Index, a category is led outright by a destination outside of Europe. Montreal leads Destination Management with 97.95%, the highest score ever recorded in that category, and the first year in which neither Gothenburg nor Copenhagen has held the lead position. Victoria follows at third, establishing two North American destinations firmly in this group.

The four tables also show how the categories spread destinations differently. The top five ranks in Social hold twenty-seven destinations due to multiple destinations earning the same number of points in the category, against eight each in Supplier and Destination Management. Scores in Social sit so close together that a single point can move a destination past a dozen others, while at the top of Supplier, Helsinki, last year's leader in the category, has pulled clear of the field with 98.72%.



LEADERS BY CATEGORY



ENVIRONMENTAL



Berlin 88.98



Copenhagen 88.98



Helsinki 88.98



Aarhus 86.61



Göteborg 86.61



SOCIAL



Reykjavik 94.59



Aarhus 91.89



Basel 91.89



Kumamoto 91.89



SUPPLIER



Helsinki 98.72



Göteborg 94.87



Barcelona 93.59



Glasgow 93.59



Tampere 93.59



DESTINATION MANAGEMENT



Montreal 97.95



Helsinki 96.58



Victoria 95.89



Copenhagen 95.21

Tables show complete ranks, so the number of destinations differs by category. Environmental and Social show ranks 1 to 2, Supplier ranks 1 to 3, Destination Management ranks 1 to 4. New to a category top rank this year: Berlin and Aarhus in Environmental; Kumamoto, Aarhus and Basel in Social; Barcelona in Supplier; Montreal and Victoria in Destination Management.

LEADERS BY REGION

Northern Europe is reported this year as two groups, Nordic, and UK & Ireland, which reflects the geography more realistically and gives both a table of their own.

The change makes visible what a combined table obscured. Glasgow and Belfast place sixth and eighth in the Index overall, and three of Ireland's six destinations sit in the UK & Ireland top five.

North America produced the largest gains anywhere in the index this year: five of its leading destinations improved by an average of 7.6 percentage points.

Sydney leads Asia-Pacific with 87.06%, a higher score than any destination in the region last year, having jumped 20.5 percentage points in Supplier alone.

In Central and Southern Europe, the top three are separated by a mere seven tenths of a point, the steepest competition overall, suggesting that while there is always room for improvement there's certainly not much room to move here!

LEADERS BY REGION

NORTH AMERICA

1	Montreal	86.59
2	Victoria	84.24
3	Edmonton	72.00
4	Banff	66.35
5	Washington DC	59.76

NORDIC

1	Helsinki	92.94
2	Göteborg	91.29
3	Copenhagen	90.35
4	Aarhus	90.12
5	Aalborg	88.24

UK & IRELAND

1	Glasgow	87.53
2	Belfast	87.06
3	Kerry	84.24
4	Dublin	83.76
5	Cork	82.59

CENTRAL & SOUTHERN EUROPE

1	Lyon	85.88
2	Bilbao	85.41
3	Berlin	85.18
4	Luzern	83.06
5	Barcelona	83.06

ASIA-PACIFIC

1	Sydney	87.06
2	Goyang	82.12
3	Melbourne	81.41
4	Sapporo	73.18
5	Songkhla	71.29

LEADERS BY CITY SIZE

City size matters, but it does not determine performance. Aarhus leads the medium city band with 90.12%, ahead of every metropolis in the index and behind only three large cities. Victoria and Kerry share the small city lead on 84.24%, a score that would place either of them fourth among metropolises.

The large city band returned the same five destinations in the same order as in 2025, the only ranking in this section that did not change. In a year of considerable movement elsewhere, it's a key consistency. The metropolis band moved furthest, with Sydney, Montreal and Stockholm all entering the top five.

LEADERS BY CITY SIZE



SMALL CITY

1	Victoria	84.24
2	Kerry	84.24
3	Luzern	83.06
4	Clare	81.79
5	Galway	80.47

Population size: 0-199.999



LARGE CITY

1	Helsinki	92.94
2	Göteborg	91.29
3	Copenhagen	90.35
4	Glasgow	87.53
5	Lyon	85.88

Population size: 500.000-1.499.999



MEDIUM CITY

1	Aarhus	90.12
2	Aalborg	88.24
3	Belfast	87.06
4	Reykjavik	86.59
5	Tampere	86.35

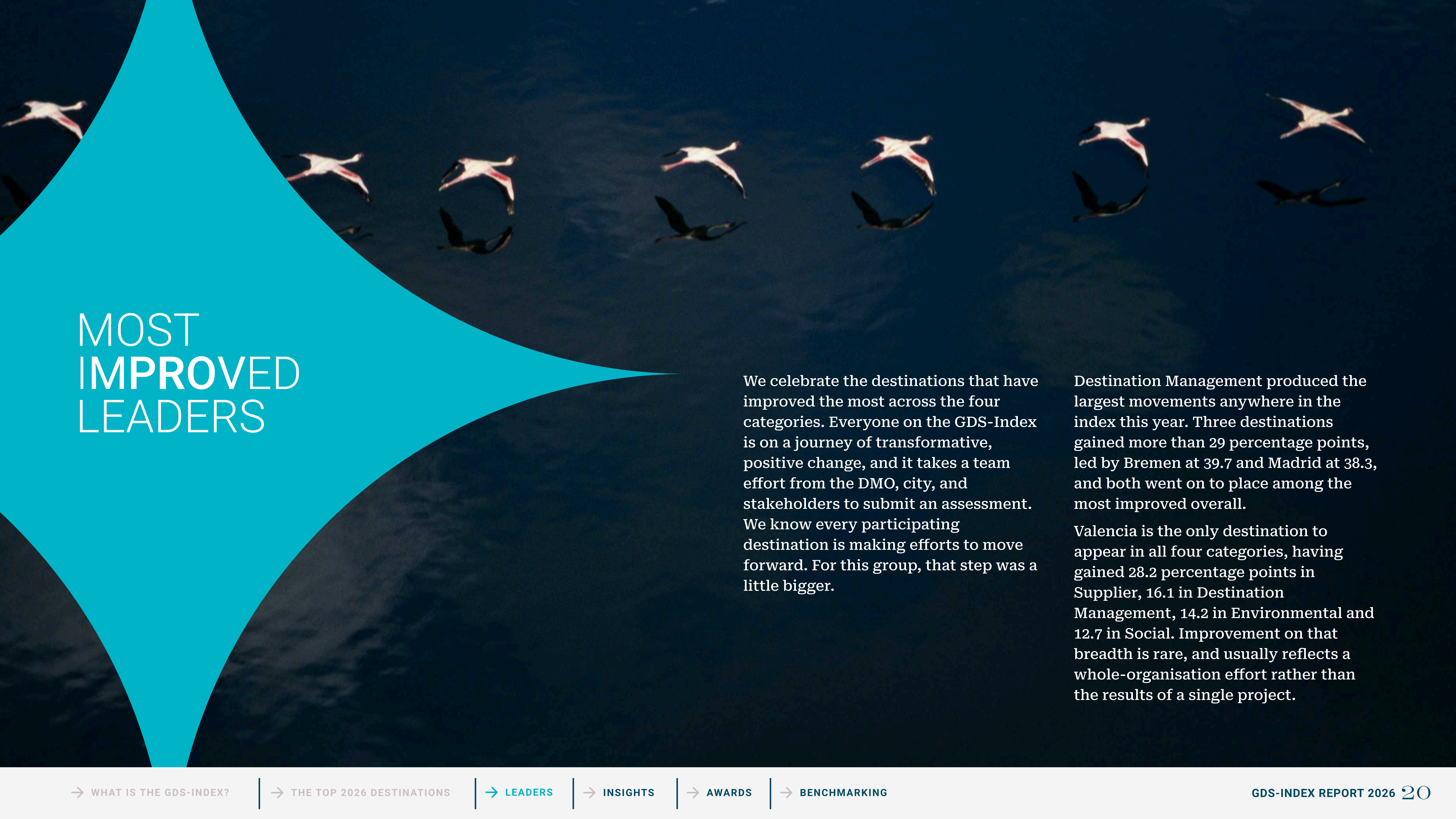
Population size: 200.000-499.999



METROPOLIS & MEGA CITY

1	Sydney	87.06
2	Montreal	86.59
3	Berlin	85.18
4	Dublin	83.76
5	Stockholm	83.53

Population size: 1.500.000-25.000.000



MOST IMPROVED LEADERS

We celebrate the destinations that have improved the most across the four categories. Everyone on the GDS-Index is on a journey of transformative, positive change, and it takes a team effort from the DMO, city, and stakeholders to submit an assessment. We know every participating destination is making efforts to move forward. For this group, that step was a little bigger.

Destination Management produced the largest movements anywhere in the index this year. Three destinations gained more than 29 percentage points, led by Bremen at 39.7 and Madrid at 38.3, and both went on to place among the most improved overall.

Valencia is the only destination to appear in all four categories, having gained 28.2 percentage points in Supplier, 16.1 in Destination Management, 14.2 in Environmental and 12.7 in Social. Improvement on that breadth is rare, and usually reflects a whole-organisation effort rather than the results of a single project.

MOST IMPROVED LEADERS



ENVIRONMENTAL

1	+20.0	The Malvern	6	+8.8	Sydney
2	+15.9	Bremen	7	+8.5	Luzern
3	+14.2	Valencia	8	+8.3	Canmore & Kananaskis
4	+11.8	Madrid	9	+8.1	Wroclaw
5	+9.7	Takamatsu	10	+8.0	Skelleftea



SUPPLIER

1	+28.2	Valencia	6	+18.0	Gdansk
2	+23.1	Abu Dhabi	7	+16.7	Flanders
3	+21.8	The Malvern	8	+16.7	Edmonton
4	+20.5	Sydney	9	+15.4	Bilbao
5	+19.2	Montreal	10	+11.5	Banff



SOCIAL

1	+15.4	Clare	6	+12.0	Bath
2	+12.7	Bremen	7	+10.2	Cork
3	+12.7	Flanders	8	+10.0	Strasbourg
4	+12.7	Valencia	9	+10.0	Amsterdam
5	+12.7	Limerick	10	+9.9	Krakov



DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

1	+39.7	Bremen	6	+19.3	Amsterdam
2	+38.3	Madrid	7	+18.2	Abu Dhabi
3	+35.8	Szczecin	8	+18.0	Bangkok
4	+29.0	Banff	9	+16.1	Valencia
5	+19.9	Liverpool	10	+14.6	Limerick

Figures are percentage points gained between 2025 and 2026.



SPARKS: INSIGHTS FROM THE GDS-INDEX

THE STRATEGY IS **WRITTEN**. THE **DELIVERY** IS DIFFICULT.

THE CITY-LEVEL PLANNING IS ESSENTIALLY DONE

Climate mitigation and adaptation strategies now score 91.8%, with more than three quarters of cities achieving full marks. International greenhouse gas (GHG) commitments stand at 92.4%, biodiversity strategies at 90.5%. On each of these, most cities score full marks and almost none score zero.

This is what a decade of collective effort looks like at city level. The strategies exist, the commitments are signed, the frameworks are adopted. The spark has caught.

PLANS & COMMITMENTS

What the city has committed to



THE STRATEGY IS WRITTEN. THE DELIVERY IS DIFFICULT.

THE DELIVERY GAP

Almost every city has set a 2030 emissions target. Against those targets, cities report an average reduction of 39% so far. Only 6% achieve full marks on delivery, and a quarter score nothing at all.

Measured against their own targets, only a quarter of the cities are more than 60% on the way there. A third are less than halfway, with four years left.

That is the gap this report is named for, measured in a single pair of criteria. It is not a failure of ambition or of intent. It is the point at which sustainability stops being a document and becomes an infrastructure issue, a procurement problem, and a budget challenge, most of which sit outside a DMO's direct control.

WHERE STRATEGY HASN'T REACHED

Some of the underlying physical measures moved backward this year.

Waste is where the field is furthest from the standard. Cities collect an average of 464 kg of municipal waste per person each year, and only 2% have reduced it to below 200kg per person per year to score full marks. On average just under 40% of that waste is recycled. Across all indexing cities fine particulate concentrations (PM2.5) average 11.1 micrograms per cubic metre, just above the 10 µg/m³ annual limit the EU has set for 2030, and above the World Health Organization's guideline of 5.

These are citywide systems. Waste collection, recycling infrastructure and air quality are shaped by municipal investment and national policy over years and decades, and a DMO cannot retrofit or rebuild them by itself. They are also where visitors and residents experience a destination, which is why the GDS-Index measures the city alongside the organisation that manages tourism within it.



WHERE SCALING IS ALREADY HAPPENING

One result cuts against the pattern, and it is the most encouraging number in the environmental category. Sector-level climate action rose sharply this year. 62% of cities now have a published climate action plan for tourism or events, up from 36%. Measuring the sector is harder but 39% of cities do measure and report on the carbon footprint of tourism or events as a whole sector, up from 28%. More destinations are taking responsibility for what tourism and events contribute to climate change, and setting out what they intend to do about it. Delivery is the next test.

WHAT IT MEANS

Cities have overwhelmingly put the policy foundations in place: climate strategies, biodiversity strategies, and international commitments all sit above 90%. The picture changes, however, when the focus shifts from commitments to measurable outcomes. On carbon emissions, for example, a quarter of cities have achieved reductions of more than 60%. These results should be understood in context. Many environmental outcomes depend on long-term infrastructure, investment, and policy decisions that extend beyond the direct control of destination organisations. For the next few years, the challenge will be to demonstrate environmental progress as clearly as it is planned. The GDS-Index measures both commitments and delivery across climate action, biodiversity, and waste. Expanding this outcome focused approach across a wider range of environmental issues will be an important part of the next phase of measurement.



CERTIFICATION

THE CLEAREST MARKER OF HOW FAR A DESTINATION HAS JOURNEYED

Certification rises with a destination's position in the index. For hotels, venues and agencies, the share certified falls at every step from the Top 10 to outside the Top 40.

Average certification by GDS-Index ranking tier

SUPPLIER CATEGORY	TOP 10	11-20	21-40	OUTSIDE 40
Venues	100%	86%	70%	58%
Hotels	82%	72%	55%	48%
Agencies	59%	57%	42%	22%

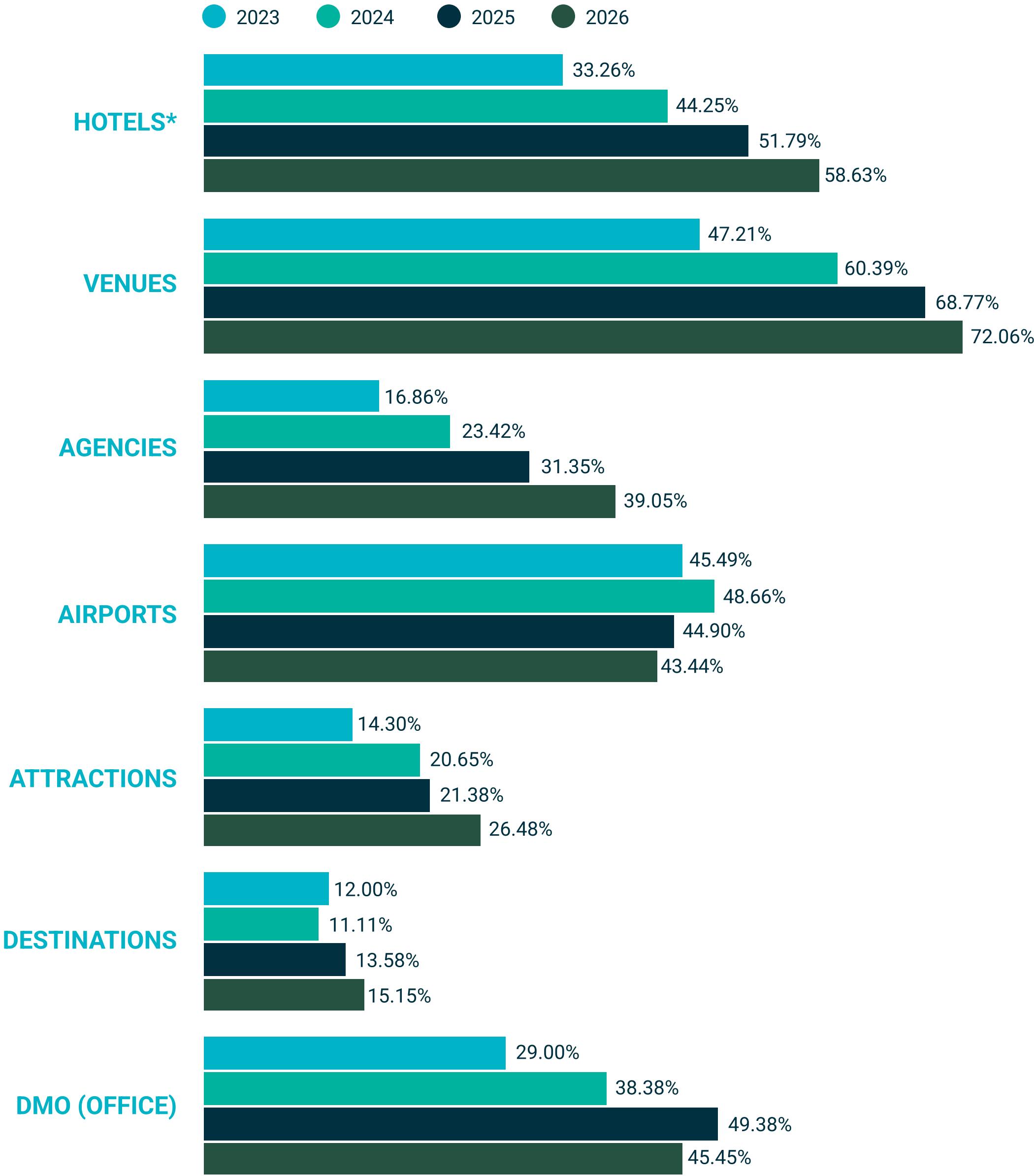
Every destination in this year's Top 10 has full certification across the convention venues assessed in the index.

Certification has gone beyond ambition. In Top 10 destination, all assessed convention venues and 82% hotel rooms hold third-party sustainability certification. Certification rates for both fall steadily below the top tier. Where a destination sits in the index increasingly reflects how far its supply chain has come with it.

*Hotels: The GDS-Index certified hotels data (criterion SU-1) reflects only those properties above a minimum room threshold (>25, >50, >75 rooms relative to the size of the destination). As a result, the reported percentages do not represent the city's entire hotel population, but rather a filtered subset.

CERTIFICATION: 2025 TO 2026

- Hotels moved in both directions for the first time. 27% of destinations reported lower certified coverage than last year, even as the average reached a new high of 58.63%.
- Venues barely moved. Almost four in five destinations recorded no change since the last Index, and more than half have not changed at all since 2023. Most destinations report either all or none of their assessed convention venues as certified, and the middle ground is thinning.
- Agencies were the fastest-moving supplier category, up 8.1 percentage points, with 45% of destinations improving.
- Attractions remain the hardest category, and the most uneven. The GSTC Attractions Standard is beginning to give this area a framework it previously lacked.
- Airports are the one supplier category not rising. Most destinations submit a single main airport, so the answer is usually all or nothing: just over half report no certified airport, and just under four in ten report theirs as certified. Only five destinations fall anywhere in between.
- DMO certification (the organisation's own operations) moved both ways this year. Three destinations no longer hold one, two are re-certifying, and two achieved it for the first time.
- Destination certification (the whole destination, assessed against a global standard) remains rare. 15% of destinations hold it, one destination (Luzern) moved from "in progress" to "achieved" this year.
- Barcelona, Helsinki, and Tampere simultaneously passed 80% on hotels, venues, and agencies. No destination has reached 100% on all three.
- Montreal's supply chain certification rose 40 percentage points, the largest single-year movement, in the same year it took first place in Destination Management.



EMPCO: FROM SUSTAINABILITY CLAIMS TO CREDIBLE ACTION

From 27 September 2026, the EU’s Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition Directive (EmpCo) will bring a significant change to the way any organisation communicates publicly about sustainability in the European Union. The new rules are designed to tackle greenwashing by ensuring that environmental claims made to consumers are clear, accurate and supported by evidence.

For destinations, tourism businesses, and event organisations, this means that sustainability claims made through websites, marketing campaigns, bids, brochures, social media, branding and other consumer-facing communications will increasingly need to reflect demonstrable performance.

The change is important beyond compliance. It is an opportunity to communicate sustainability with greater coherence, confidence, and credibility and allow destinations demonstrating due diligence to shine.

- Generic environmental terms are risky
- Claims must be specific
- Environmental claims require evidence
- Claims must not exaggerate
- Environmental labels require evidence

FROM ASSERTING TO PROVING

1. Generic environmental terms like “sustainable”, “green” or “eco-friendly” are risky.
2. Claims must be clear about whether they apply to a particular product, service, event, activity, or aspect of an organisation’s operations.
3. Environmental claims must be substantiated with evidence, meaning organisations need reliable data, documentation, and other supporting information to demonstrate that the claim is accurate and reflects actual performance.
4. Claims must not exaggerate, including through visuals, labels, logos or other communications that suggest stronger environmental performance than the evidence supports.
5. Where certification or an environmental label is used, organisations should be able to demonstrate that it is based on credible criteria and, where required, independent third-party verification.



EMPCO: FROM **SUSTAINABILITY** CLAIMS TO CREDIBLE **ACTION**

THE GROWING ROLE OF CERTIFICATION AND LABELS

Certification can play an important role in this new environment, particularly where organisations want to demonstrate that their performance has been assessed against a recognised standard.

Nevertheless, EmpCo does not introduce a blanket requirement for every sustainability claim to be certified. However, it does set clear mandates. Certification schemes will now have to involve third-party verification, with objective monitoring carried out by a competent and independent body. Sustainability labels must be based on a recognised certification scheme or established by public authorities.

AN OPPORTUNITY TO BUILD TRUST

Organisations that make unsupported or misleading claims may face increased legal and reputational exposure. But there is another risk worth considering: greenhushing. Choosing not to communicate sustainability progress because the organisation is concerned about getting its claims wrong means potentially missing an opportunity to demonstrate genuine work and leadership.

For destinations, tourism businesses, and event organisers, this means connecting sustainability strategy, data, operations, and communications. Marketing teams need access to reliable evidence. Sustainability teams need to understand how their work is being communicated. Leaders need confidence that claims can withstand scrutiny.

Ultimately, EmpCo raises the bar for sustainability communication. The organisations best placed to respond will be those that move from claims to evidence, from labels to assurance, and from aspiration to demonstrated performance. In doing so, compliance can become more than risk management: it can become a driver of credibility, differentiation, and long-term competitiveness.

NEED MORE HELP?

To help destinations and business tourism organisations navigate these changes, GDS-Movement has developed a practical guide to EmpCo, providing a clear, step-by-step approach to understanding the new requirements. We have also developed a 6-step framework to help organisations assess where they are now and identify the steps needed to consolidate their approach towards compliance. If you would like further support, get in touch to find out more: info@gds.earth.

WHEN THE PLAN IS TESTED

MEASURING DESTINATION READINESS FOR CRISIS

The GDS-Index adds criteria when the industry needs them, not when they are comfortable to answer.

This year we began asking a question we have never asked before: does the DMO have its own formal crisis management system specifically covering tourism and events?

Until now, we asked whether the city had a crisis plan, and whether that plan mentioned tourism. That was the right question when the risk was occasional. It is no longer sufficient, and it can no longer be optional. A city emergency plan written for residents does not tell a DMO how to reach forty thousand delegates at short notice when wildfires are approaching or there's a terrorist attack, how to advise inbound operators when the power grid is down or the city is flooding, or who speaks for the destination when international media call about lost or imperilled visitors.

New criteria are usually unscored in their first year. Destinations are told what will be measured next year and given a cycle to build it before it counts. That is deliberate, and it is the difference between a benchmark that supports and a benchmark that sabotages.

HOW DESTINATIONS ARE PREPARING

Around three quarters of destinations answered, and this is the first baseline of its kind.

Of those who responded:

- **68%** have a written, formal crisis management plan, or a documented crisis role within a city crisis plan, addressing crises affecting tourism and events
- **68%** cover readiness, response, and recovery rather than response alone
- **68%** have external communication protocols in place for visitors and stakeholders, aligned to official sources
- **67%** have internal communication protocols
- **62%** have conducted a documented risk assessment that explicitly considers the tourism or event sectors

Among the destinations that answered, **seven in ten have all five elements above in place.** A small group have only one, and none of those is the plan itself.

READINESS BECAME A NECESSITY

By early July 2026, more than 155,000 hectares had burned across Europe and over 1,000 wildfires had been recorded, well above the average for that point in the year. Western Europe recorded its hottest summer on record, as did the United States. France and Spain saw mass evacuations during peak season. Wildfires also raged in Canada and USA, destroying livelihoods and homes, and affecting air quality far from source, and more than 1200 lives were lost in a glacial flash flood in the Himalaya mountains across Tibet and Nepal. A destination does not need to be drowning or burning to need a plan.

It's about more than flood and fire; the same system should address a transport strike during a congress, a public health incident during high season (e.g. due to heatwaves), and a security alert. What the criterion asks is whether somebody in the DMO understands their role and responsibility, and has an answer before the phone rings.

Roughly a third of destinations do not yet have a documented crisis management role for tourism and events. This criterion is unscored in 2026 but will be in 2027.





BEYOND THE EVENT

LEGACY PROGRAMMES ARE BEING BUILT FASTER THAN THEIR RESULTS ARE BEING REPORTED

THE FASTEST-BUILDING AREA IN DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

Impact and legacy programmes were the second-fastest rising criteria group in the GDS-Index this year, behind the leader, sector-level climate action. Every impact and legacy component moved.

Share of destinations offering	2025	2026
Formal, non-industry partnerships to help clients create long-term impact	65%	77%
An impact or legacy framework and tools for event clients	51%	73%
Incentives to increase the positive impact of events	54%	73%
Training on impact and legacy for the DMO's own team	51%	61%
Training on impact and legacy management for event clients	38%	50%

The largest movements are the framework and the incentive, both up around twenty percentage points. Destinations have gone from talking to event clients about legacy to handing them the tools and paying them to use them.

Underneath that, the practical resources are close to standard practice. Around eight in ten destinations now offer clients a food donation programme, three quarters, a list of local organisations for volunteering and social support, and seven in ten, a programme for surplus event materials and a carbon-offsetting option.

THE NEW IMPACT AND LEGACY QUESTION WE ASKED

This year we added a sixth element to the criterion: does the destination publish the outcomes of its impact and legacy programme?

Nearly fifty percent do.

In this baseline, it is the gap that matters. A destination can have a framework, incentives, partnerships, a trained team and trained clients, and still leave the results undocumented. Legacy that is not reported cannot be learned from, verified, or built on by the next organiser in the next city, and it cannot attract more of the kind of business that sustainability-minded destinations love.

WHERE THE GAP IS WIDEST

Publishing outcomes divides the field more sharply than any other part of the sub-category. Eight in ten destinations in the Top 10 publish, but in destinations outside the Top 40, fewer than one in five do.

The programmes themselves show the same shape. Destinations in the Top 40 score above 80% on impact and legacy provision. Outside it, the figure falls to around 30%.

That gap is not really about ambition. Building a legacy framework takes a strategy and a willingness to ask clients to do more. Publishing the outcomes takes measurement, a reporting cycle, and the confidence to show results that may be modest in the early years. It is the harder half, and it is the half that turns individual projects into something the sector can learn from.

Approximately three quarters of destinations now give event clients a legacy framework and the incentives to use it. Just under half publish what came of it.

WHAT BETTER LOOKS LIKE

The strongest programmes this year share a pattern: they are embedded in a national or city strategy rather than run as a service, and they close the loop with reporting.

Fáilte Ireland's Impact and Legacy programme sits inside the Business Events 2030 strategy and was co-created with industry, incorporating conference frameworks, intentional impact projects, capacity building, training, and storytelling. It won the Impact Award in collaboration with #MEET4IMPACT at the GDS-Forum in June 2026, topping the shortlist including Barcelona Convention Bureau, Bogotá Convention Bureau, and Göteborg Convention Bureau.

Barcelona classifies legacy projects into defined impact categories with a dedicated team. Gothenburg's bid for EVS38 ran on its own legacy framework with eighty stakeholders involved.

The common spark is that destinations follow an integrative approach that extends beyond their organisation and the end of an event.



WHO A DESTINATION SERVES

THE SOCIAL CATEGORY ASKS TWO QUESTIONS: WHO CAN USE A PLACE, AND WHO DOES IT BELONG TO?

Accessibility improved more than any other part of the social category this year. The results show that high levels of accessibility are achievable across destinations at different stages of their sustainability journey.

ACCESSIBILITY PROGRESS MOVES BEYOND THE LEADERS

Among destinations assessed in both years, accessibility in public transport rose 7.5 percentage points to 87.6%, and accessibility in public spaces 8.6 points to 87.6%. Roughly two thirds now report every element of each, and just over half report every element of both.

The gains came from a substantial minority making real progress rather than the whole field drifting upward. Around a quarter of destinations improved on each measure, and ten reached full marks on transport and thirteen on public spaces for the first time.

Every destination in the Top 10 reports full accessibility provision in public transport, and almost all do in public spaces. Outside the Top 40, the figures are still between three quarters and four fifths. Accessibility is one of the few areas where destinations across the whole index score similarly.

RESIDENTS ARE CONSULTED EVERYWHERE, BUT RARELY GIVEN CONTROL

The second question - about who a place belongs to - is harder, and the answer is less comfortable.

89% of destinations now have a system to measure and monitor resident sentiment, and 89% facilitate public participation in co-creating the destination's tourism strategy. 71% maintain a mechanism for continuous dialogue with the community.

But only 58% run a participatory budget.

What’s more, consultation has become close to standard practice. Inclusive governance has not. And while community engagement did rise this year, by 4.4 percentage points among destinations assessed in both years, the gain came from 15 destinations rather than the field as a whole: 41 recorded no change at all, and 6 declined. While community engagement indicators improved overall, some measures of deeper resident participation moved backwards.

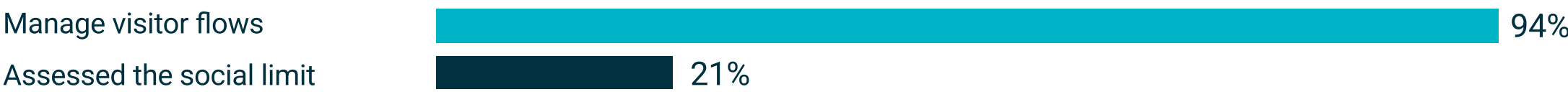
89% of destinations measure resident sentiment. 58% let residents direct a budget.

FOR THE RESIDENT HALF - THE STEP DESTINATIONS DON’T TAKE

Listening to residents



Managing visitor pressure



What most destinations do The harder step

MANAGING PRESSURE WITHOUT MEASURING CAPACITY

The state of social carrying capacity is one of the more revealing findings in this year's data.

94% of destinations take proactive measures to manage visitor flows. Only 21% have assessed the maximum level of tourism a place can absorb before social impacts occur. By contrast, 35% have done the equivalent assessment for environmental impact, and 17% have done both.

Almost every destination is managing the symptoms of visitor pressure. One in five has established what the threshold is.

That matters because the debate about tourism in European cities has moved beyond dispersal and timed entry. Residents are asking how much is too much, and destinations that cannot answer with evidence are negotiating blind.

Encouragingly, visitor flow management rose 10.1 percentage points this year, one of the larger movements in destination management, so the capability is being built.

WHAT IT MEANS

The data sets for accessibility and social carrying capacity describe the same shift. Accessibility has moved from a compliance question to a design question, and destinations are treating it as part of what makes a place worth visiting. Resident engagement has not made the same move: it is still largely consultation about decisions rather than inclusion in defining them. Strong performance against the current accessibility measures is a positive sign, and an opportunity to review whether the criteria continue to reflect the appropriate level of ambition. Resident engagement is nowhere near its ceiling.

AWARDS

CONGRATULATING COMMITMENT AND SCALE

Each year, we celebrate destinations for continuously contributing to greater sustainability in tourism and events. This year, we're focusing on scale as we recognise cities and regions keeping time with the steepening need for more rapid, positive change.

The GDS-Index houses the Most Improved and Leadership destinations based on results and ranking, while the applications- or nominations-based GDS-Awards, held during the GDS-Forum in Szczecin, Poland, on 17 June 2026, houses the GDS-Movement Innovation, and the GDS-Movement and #MEET4IMPACT Impact awards, and the new Changemaker Award voted for by the audience. We're pleased to introduce you to the winners, shortlists, and their superlative projects here.



MOST IMPROVED DESTINATION **AWARD** GDS-MOVEMENT

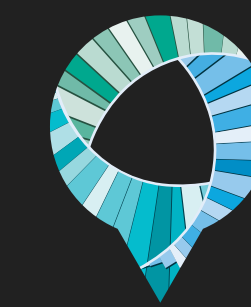
The Most Improved Destination is recognised for the greatest year-on-year increase in sustainability contributions, based on GDS-Index's benchmark.



LEADERSHIP **AWARD** GDS-MOVEMENT

The Leadership Destination is recognised for making the greatest overall contributions to social, environmental, and economic well-being, based on our independently validated data set.

MOMENTUM SHIFT: THE TOP 3 MOST IMPROVED DESTINATIONS IN 2026



MOST IMPROVED
DESTINATION
AWARD
GDS-MOVEMENT

BREMEN, GERMANY

Bremen achieved the greatest improvement with a 22.3 percentage points gain, rising from 48.3% to 70.6% and climbing 22 rank positions in its second year.

HIGHLIGHTS

Destination Management Score: Bremen's standout leap was 39.7 percentage points, the largest single-category movement of any destination this year, taking it from 27.5% to 67.1%. The DMO moved from having no sustainability strategy for the visitor economy to sustainable tourism development and resilience being embedded in its new Tourism Strategy 2030+. The strategy also aligns with Bremen's overall development agenda, and was developed in consultation with hotels, venues, agencies, clients, city departments, residents and visitors.

Environmental Score: Up 15.9 percentage points to 75.6%, ranking 15th globally, thanks to Bremen's up-to-date integrated mobility plans, with targets, baseline data, monitoring of walking and cycling improvements and investment in low-carbon public transport, which is now fully evidenced in the assessment.

Social Score: Gained 12.7 percentage points to 83.8%, placing 5th in the category, with progress in accessible public spaces and resident engagement.



MADRID, SPAIN

Madrid climbed 19.8 percentage points, from 63.1% to 82.8%, rising to 21st in its second year of participation. Its 28-place climb is the largest of any destination this year.

HIGHLIGHTS

Destination Management Score: A 38.3 percentage points rise to 86.3%, placing 12th globally. Madrid has strengthened its measurement and monitoring of tourism's economic, social, and environmental impacts. It has also expanded existing initiatives, including its tourism strategy, by developing a detailed action plan linked to clear KPIs and objectives. Building on its Social Inclusion Plan, Madrid has further strengthened its commitment to DEI by introducing a formal commitment and developing a best-practice DEI guide for the tourism sector.

Environmental Score: Up 11.8 percentage points to 82.7%, ranking 6th globally, with a strengthened climate mitigation and adaptation strategy, sector-level climate action for tourism and events, and a publicly available circular economy strategy.

Supplier Score: A 10.3 percentage points improvement to 73.1%, supported by destination-wide initiatives targeting restaurants as well as working with local associations to promote and support hotels' commitments to sustainable food.



VALENCIA, SPAIN

Valencia rose 17.1 percentage points, from 61.2% to 78.4%, gaining 26 rank positions to reach 29th. All four Spanish destinations in the GDS-Index now sit inside the Top 40.

HIGHLIGHTS

Supplier Score: The largest gain of the three at 28.2 percentage points, nearly doubling from 33.3% to 61.5%, with progress in hotel initiatives and academic institution certification. Through an EU funded project, they introduced new initiatives targeting hotels and restaurants to create a more circular economy, with a focus on food waste reduction programmes.

Environmental Score: Up 14.2 percentage points to 72.4%, with a strengthened climate strategy, a defined 2030 carbon reduction target and an integrated mobility plan.

Destination Management Score: Gained 16.1 percentage points to 89.7%, the strongest destination management result of this year's three most improved destinations and 9th in the world. Progress came through new event impact monitoring, enhanced event impact measurement, and an impact and legacy programme for events.





MOMENTUM SHIFT: THE TOP 3 **MOST IMPROVED** DESTINATIONS IN 2026

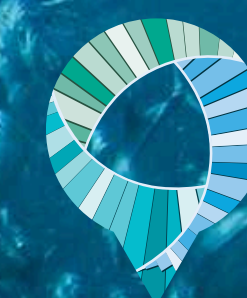
WHAT CHANGED FOR THESE DESTINATIONS BETWEEN 2025 AND 2026?

Strategy came first. All three built or substantially rebuilt the foundations: a sustainability strategy, the systems to measure impact, and the governance to involve stakeholders in both. In each case Destination Management was the largest or second-largest category gain. They effectively built on existing initiatives, using the recommendations from the Performance Improvement Report as a guide for further development.

Measurement followed close behind. Bremen and Madrid both went from no impact measurement system to full marks on monitoring the economic, social and environmental effects of tourism. It is difficult to improve what is not measured, and these destinations started measuring.

A first benchmark reveals as much as it measures. Bremen and Madrid are both in their second year. A meaningful part of any second-year gain comes from an organisation locating evidence that already existed, particularly on city-level criteria such as mobility, climate and waste, where the work sits with municipal departments rather than the destination organisation. That is not a lesser achievement. Connecting a tourism organisation to the city data, strategies and departments it needs is one of the harder pieces of work a DMO does, and it is what makes the second cycle possible.

And it does not stop after year two. Valencia has benchmarked since 2021 and posted the third-largest gain in the index, including the largest supplier improvement of the three. Building on years of index participation, Valencia leveraged EU-funded projects and worked closely with stakeholders to strengthen policies and develop new initiatives.



MOST IMPROVED
DESTINATION
AWARD
GDS-MOVEMENT

MOST IMPROVED DESTINATION

BREMEN

Bremen gained 22.3 percentage points in a single year, the largest improvement in the GDS-Index

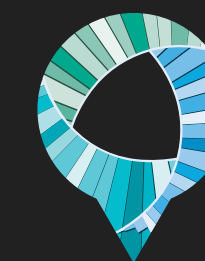
Bremen rose from 48.3% to 70.6% and climbed 22 rank positions in its second year of benchmarking. Its Destination Management score moved 39.7 percentage points, the largest single-category movement recorded by any destination this year.

What happened in Bremen was not simply incremental progress across existing initiatives. Bremen's first benchmark took place just as it was beginning to develop a new tourism strategy. Over the following year, it used the GDS-Index criteria as a framework to help strengthen the strategy and address many of the elements that had previously been missing.

IT EMBEDDED SUSTAINABILITY IN ITS TOURISM STRATEGY

Rather than creating a separate sustainability strategy, Bremen embedded sustainable destination development and resilience within its overarching tourism strategy. Covering both tourism and events, the strategy extends beyond three years, connects with the city's wider development agenda and integrates the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The GDS-Index process helped Bremen consider the elements of a strong strategy and begin embedding sustainability and broadening its objectives beyond tourism's economic contribution to include its environmental and social impacts. The strategy was also developed with broad stakeholder participation, earning Bremen full marks for its scope and collaborative approach.



MOST IMPROVED
DESTINATION
AWARD
GDS-MOVEMENT





MOST IMPROVED DESTINATION

BREMEN

From zero to full marks on strategy, on stakeholder involvement, on tourism impact measurement, on event impact measurement, and on integrated mobility. All in one year.

IT BUILT THE SYSTEMS TO MEASURE PROGRESS

Bremen also moved from having no qualifying impact-measurement system to full marks for measuring the economic, social, and environmental impacts of both tourism and events.

By considering measurement while the strategy was still taking shape, Bremen began putting the foundations in place to track its objectives and progress. Its significant improvement therefore reflects the ambitious creation of a more coherent destination management framework across many criteria that had not been addressed the previous year.

AND IT CONNECTED TO THE CITY

Part of Bremen's environmental rise, to 15th globally, comes from work the city had already done and the destination organisation had not yet been able to evidence. Its integrated mobility plan, with targets, baseline data, monitoring of soft mobility and investment in low-carbon public transport, is now fully documented in the assessment.

That is a familiar pattern in a second benchmarking cycle, and an underrated one. Getting a tourism organisation connected to the right municipal departments holding the data, the strategies and the plans is slow work, and most of the gains that follow depend on it.

IT IS ALREADY SUPPORTING ITS SUPPLIERS

Less visible than the headline gains, and arguably more telling: Bremen has also increased the coaching and consulting support it provides its supply chain, financial incentives, marketing support, and tools to improve performance, scoring full marks. It supplies or supports training for tourism operators, event agencies and meeting planners.

A destination in its second year of benchmarking is usually still fixing its own house. Bremen is already helping its suppliers fix theirs.

AND IT HAS NOT FINISHED

Bremen's next steps are already visible in its own plans: deepening its impact and legacy work for events, and widening resident participation beyond consultation.



MOST IMPROVED
DESTINATION
AWARD
GDS-MOVEMENT



HOLDING THE FLAME: COMPARING THIS YEAR'S TOP 3 DESTINATIONS

Helsinki, Gothenburg and Copenhagen have held the top three positions, in the same order, since 2024. What has changed is where their advantage now comes from. Helsinki, Gothenburg, and Copenhagen have moved in different directions across the four categories, and for the first time in several years the leading position in two of those categories sits outside this list, elsewhere in the index.



OVERALL SCORE COMPARISON

CITY	2025 TOTAL	2026 TOTAL	CHANGE
Helsinki	93.52%	92.94%	▼ -0.58
Gothenburg	91.51%	91.29%	▼ -0.22
Copenhagen	88.76%	90.35%	▲ +1.59

Copenhagen was the only one of the three to gain ground this year, closing to within 0.94 percentage points of second place. Helsinki and Gothenburg eased slightly, in a year when the framework tightened and the field they lead moved forward sharply. The gap between first and third has narrowed from 4.76 percentage points to 2.59, the closest this group has been since it formed.

ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

CITY	2025 EN Score	2026 EN Score	CHANGE
Copenhagen	87.31%	88.98%	▲ +1.67
Helsinki	91.04%	88.98%	▼ -2.06
Gothenburg	87.31%	86.61%	▼ -0.70

Copenhagen and Helsinki now share the leading environmental score, over 80%. Copenhagen's gain reflects strengthened climate action and improved municipal waste performance. Helsinki's decline sits almost entirely in waste and air quality, where the underlying city measures moved against it rather than any change in strategy did: its climate mitigation and adaptation work continues to score full marks.

HOLDING THE FLAME: COMPARING THIS YEAR'S TOP 3 DESTINATIONS

SOCIAL

CITY	2025 SO SCORE	2026 SU SCORE	CHANGE
Gothenburg	92.11%	89.19%	▼ -2.92
Copenhagen	89.47%	89.19%	▼ -0.28
Helsinki	92.11%	86.49%	▼ -5.62

Gothenburg and Copenhagen now score ahead of Helsinki. All three diminished in score, for two reasons outside their control: the externally sourced Social Progress Index measures for safety, health and corruption moved against them, and the city crisis management criterion was retired from the category this year. Everything the destinations themselves act on held steady or improved.

SUPPLIER

CITY	2025 SO SCORE	2026 SU SCORE	CHANGE
Helsinki	94.87%	98.72%	▲ +3.85
Gothenburg	92.31%	94.87%	▲ +2.56
Copenhagen	76.92%	84.62%	▲ +7.70

Helsinki holds the strongest supplier performance in the entire GDS-Index at 98.72%. Its supply chain is close to fully certified: 99% of assessed hotel rooms, every convention venue, 92% of professional congress organisers and 90% of its top attractions.

Copenhagen made the largest gain of the three, up 7.70 percentage points, driven by progress across hotel and venue certification, though it remains furthest from the front. Gothenburg has achieved certification for 96% of assessed hotel rooms and all of its convention venues, with professional congress organisers the clearest remaining opportunity at 50%.

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

CITY	2025 DM Score	2026 DM Score	CHANGE
Helsinki	95.77%	96.58%	▲ +0.81
Copenhagen	95.95%	95.21%	▼ -0.74
Gothenburg	94.59%	94.52%	▼ -0.07

Helsinki takes the leading position among the three. All three remain within just over two percentage points of one another, and all three sit above 94%.

Montreal leads the destination management category with 97.95%, the highest score ever recorded in that category, and the first year in which neither Gothenburg nor Copenhagen has held the top of it.

That is the clearest signal in this year's data that leadership in destination sustainability is no longer concentrated in one part of the world.

LEADING DESTINATION

HELSINKI

Helsinki holds the top spot in the GDS-Index for a third consecutive year

Helsinki scores 92.94%, achieving maximum points in all but twelve of the 74 criteria. It leads the Supplier category outright with the highest score recorded anywhere in the index this year, shares the leading Environmental score, and places second in Destination Management. Its strength is concentrated in the areas a DMO controls.

IT RAISED ITS OWN BAR

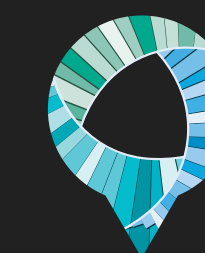
Rather than working toward an existing target, the City of Helsinki made the target harder. Its 2025 city strategy lifts the 2030 goal to an 85% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions against 1990 levels, commits to net zero by 2040, and extends the commitment to indirect emissions from construction and public procurement.

Progress against it is measurable and public. Helsinki's emissions in 2024 were 54% below 1990 levels, putting it roughly two thirds of the way to a target it has just made steeper.

DRIVING CERTIFICATION ACROSS THE SUPPLY CHAIN

Helsinki's supply chain is closer to full certification than any other participating destination. 99% of assessed* hotel rooms, 100% of convention centres, 92% of professional congress organisers and 90% of its top attractions hold third-party sustainability certification.

*The GDS-Index certified hotels data (criterion SU-1) reflects only those properties above a minimum room threshold (>25, >50, >75 rooms relative to the size of the destination). As a result, the reported percentages do not represent the city's entire hotel population, but rather a filtered subset.



LEADERSHIP
AWARD
GDS-MOVEMENT

Helsinki

LEADING DESTINATION

HELSINKI

Helsinki Sustainability Certification: 99% of hotel rooms. 100% of convention centres. 92% of event agencies. 90% of top attractions. No destination in the GDS-Index has brought its supply chain further.

EMPOWERING BETTER CRISIS MANAGEMENT

In May 2026 Helsinki published Crisis Management in the City of Helsinki Tourism Network, setting out how readiness, response, and recovery are organised across the city, national authorities, interested parties, and the tourism network.

The Plan clearly defines the DMO's role and the responsibilities of the organisations involved in crises. While many destinations have crisis management plans in place, fewer have documented and communicated these roles so clearly across the wider destination network. Making the framework publicly available adds a further layer of transparency and accountability.

RESIDENTS AS A PROGRESS INDICATOR

Resident involvement has moved from principle to programme. Helsinki has an action plan for citizen involvement in tourism and events running from 2025 to 2027, with residents named as a core development area in the tourism and events programme and specific measures and indicators attached to it.

EXCELLENCE IN CLIMATE ACTION

Helsinki continues to demonstrate leadership in climate action in tourism, scoring maximum points across all climate-related criteria. A signatory to the Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism, the city has assessed the risks that climate change poses to the tourism and events sector, published a climate action plan, and measures and reports the sector's carbon footprint. It continues to build capacity among both suppliers and staff while strengthening regional collaboration through leading a climate action programme involving destinations across the Baltic Sea region.

SHORT TERM RENTALS - MONITORING FOR READINESS

Not all destinations struggle with issues related to short-term rentals but they are worth monitoring closely to be able to act accordingly, as Helsinki demonstrates. It monitors short-term rentals closely and reports that they are not currently a pressure on the city: supply of apartments exceeds demand, apartment prices have fallen over four years, and rental volumes are low relative to population. It treats the sector as a way for residents rather than international hotel groups to benefit from tourism.



LEADERSHIP
AWARD
GDS-MOVEMENT

Helsinki

INNOVATION AWARD

The Innovation Award recognises destinations that are developing new approaches, tools, or programmes to improve sustainability performance in measurable and scalable ways. Applications are assessed based on innovation, outcomes, storytelling, engagement, and leadership. Finalists are evaluated by an independent panel of experts.

GÖTEBORG & CO

The Gothenburg Meal project reimagines how a city creates its signature dish by opening the process to the entire community. This multi-stakeholder project, led by Göteborg & Co, invited citizens, chefs, and food enthusiasts to co-create a sustainable alternative to the city's iconic shrimp sandwich. The result, Gothenburg Royale, features more sustainable crabs and mussels, other local, future-friendly ingredients and circular thinking. Designed for broad use, it promotes sustainable food habits while redefining culinary identity through collaboration, innovation, and community-driven change.

OTTAWA TOURISM

À la Carte is Canada's first destination-led food recovery programme. Introduced in 2024, it is the first partnership between La Tablée des Chefs and a DMO. The programme connects 23 hospitality partners with community organisations to safely and efficiently recover surplus food and redirect it to those facing food insecurity. À la Carte makes food donation easy to implement, supports strong community partnerships, and reduces food waste. A destination-wide dashboard tracks collective metrics, allowing partners and event hosts to demonstrate their impact.

VISITAARHUS

"So Much to Enjoy, So Close to You" is an international campaign by VisitAarhus that proves tourism growth and lower carbon emissions can go hand in hand. Targeting environmentally conscious travellers in Paris, Hamburg, and Amsterdam, the campaign positions the Aarhus region as a high-value, low-distance destination. It introduces a replicable framework integrating sustainability across strategy, creative production, media delivery, and measurement. Developed with industry partners, it has already received international recognition.

WINNER: GDANSK TOURISM ORGANIZATION

Gdansk Tourism Organization's accessibility audits and communication cards project, launched in 2022, redefines destination accessibility through a regenerative lens, guided by the principle of "nothing about us without us." Auditors are interested individuals with visual, hearing, mobility, and intellectual challenges who conducted 184 human-centred audits across 17 venues, mapping the full visitor journey. Their insights shaped 16 Communication Cards, co-created with Deaf communities, now in use at over 10 venues, enabling barrier-free communication between visitors and staff. The project transforms accessibility from a compliance exercise into systemic, inclusive practice: shaping places with people, not just for them. It is open-access, scalable, and has the potential to become a European standard.

This award was presented at the GDS-Awards ceremony in Szczecin on 17 June 2026.

IMPACT AWARD IN COLLABORATION WITH #MEET4IMPACT

The Impact Award recognises DMOs that are actively building structured approaches to legacy and long-term societal impact through business events. It highlights destinations that are embedding economic, social, and environmental outcomes into their event strategies, moving beyond isolated initiatives towards integrated impact systems. Finalists are evaluated by an independent panel of experts.

BARCELONA CONVENTION BUREAU

The Barcelona Convention Bureau Legacy Programme is a strategic initiative launched by Turisme de Barcelona in early 2025. It aims to generate long-term positive effects in the city and region through the congresses and events it hosts, by creating synergies between local stakeholders and associations. Projects are divided into five impact categories: economic diversification, community, knowledge-sharing, environmental, and sectoral. A dedicated Legacy Team delivers these in collaboration with local actors, ensuring events leave a measurable and lasting footprint.

GÖTEBORG & CO, GOTHENBURG CONVENTION BUREAU

EVS 38 Gothenburg 2025 was the result of a strategic bid backed by approximately 80 stakeholders to strengthen the region's role in sustainable transport, and position Gothenburg as a leader in electromobility. Using the Gothenburg Way to Legacy framework, the project brought together industry, academia, the public sector, and civil society. Activities included demonstration projects, education and talent initiatives, and international communication, strengthening collaboration, skills, and long-term innovation.

INVEST IN BOGOTÁ

Beyond the Event is Bogotá Convention Bureau's holistic impact programme, the first of its kind in Latin America. Through a three-dimensional calculator covering environmental, social, and economic impact, organisers can measure and act on their footprint. Pilot events have been fully carbon-compensated in Andean forest reserves while supporting rural livelihoods. The programme also connects congress expertise with vulnerable communities, delivering tangible social impact. Measurement drives awareness, which drives action, transforming Bogotá beyond the event.

WINNER: FÁILTE IRELAND

Ireland's Business Events Impact and Legacy Programme was co-created with the national industry and is embedded in the Business Events 2030 strategy. It transforms how conferences deliver economic, social, and environmental value through impact frameworks, pilot projects, training, storytelling, and funding incentives. Aligned with government priorities and the UN SDGs, it strengthens communities, supports jobs, and positions Ireland as a global leader in purposeful, sustainable business events.

#MEET
4IMPACT

This award was presented at the GDS-Awards ceremony in Szczecin on 17 June 2026.

CHANGEMAKER AWARD

The Changemaker Award is a new category recognising individuals driving regenerative transformation within destinations. It highlights professionals who are translating ambition into implementation, enabling cross-sector collaboration, and embedding regenerative thinking into destination practice.

Unlike the other categories, the winner was decided through a live community vote during the GDS-Awards ceremony.

MATTI POLLARI

**Development Manager for Sustainable Tourism
Visit Tampere**

Matti Pollari is Development Manager for Sustainable Tourism at Visit Tampere and a key changemaker in turning sustainability strategies into action. He has embedded tourism into city-level climate policy, coordinated stakeholders, and helped position Tampere among leading destinations in the GDS-Index. He leads carbon-neutral tourism development and coordinates the Sustainable Travel Finland programme, supporting businesses and delivering practical, scalable solutions with lasting impact.

JAC CALLAN

**Senior Manager, Sustainability and Impact
Visit Belfast**

Jac Callan is a driving force behind Belfast's transformation into a leading sustainable tourism destination. As Senior Manager of Sustainability and Impact at Visit Belfast, she has helped build a regenerative, city-wide programme that brings together venues, businesses, communities and policymakers around a shared vision of better tourism. Her leadership, drive and collaboration have played a key role in shaping the destination's progress and earned Visit Belfast the GDS-Movement Innovation Award in 2022.

PETRA STUŠEK

**Chief Executive Officer
Tourism Ljubljana**

Petra Stušek, CEO of Tourism Ljubljana, is reshaping tourism as a force for better living. Under her leadership, Ljubljana has become a recognised sustainable destination where tourism supports community, culture, and daily life. She has introduced regenerative approaches, tackled seasonality, and embedded residents into decision-making. Her work is redefining how destinations approach tourism and its role in society.



WINNER: FANNY BEAULIEU CORMIER

**Senior Sustainable Development Advisor
Tourisme Montréal**

Fanny Beaulieu Cormier works in regenerative tourism and has led the development of a sustainable tourism strategy for Montréal. She has trained over 400 participants, built strategic alliances, and supported funding for projects that benefit the destination and local communities. Her role focuses on shaping a clear strategic vision and influencing both partners and her organisation to increase long-term impact.

This award was presented at the GDS-Awards ceremony in Szczecin on 17 June 2026.

BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK

GOVERNANCE AND CRITERIA DEVELOPMENT

The criteria are reviewed annually. A draft is developed by the GDS-Index team following consultation and input from participating destinations. These draft criteria undergo an in-depth revision by the GDS-Index Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). After a series of discussion and revision meetings with the TAC, the GDS-Index product team integrates all changes, and seeks further stakeholder feedback where relevant. Final changes are made, the completed draft is reviewed and signed off by the TAC, and published in advance of the opening of benchmarking season.

ALIGNMENT WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

To ensure the continued quality and relevance of the GDS-Index, we work to align the criteria with the following internationally recognised standards and initiatives:

- UN SDGs: The GDS-Index is committed to the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda, and we strive to mainstream the integration of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the management of destinations, globally.
- GSTC Destination Criteria: We use the GSTC-D V2 criteria to inform the development of the GDS-Index criteria, ensuring that we continue to serve the evolving needs of business and leisure tourism.
- UN Tourism: We are an official partner of the UN One Planet Sustainable Tourism Programme and integrate key components of the One Planet Vision into the criteria.

AN ALIGNED, REFINED METHODOLOGY

In 2024, the GDS-Index underwent a comprehensive update to deliver a more accurate assessment of both current performance and future-proof strategies. This evolution was guided by the TAC and driven by the growing need for sustainability benchmarking to keep pace with global trends and rising environmental, social, and economic challenges. Emphasising regeneration and positive impact, the update expanded climate action measurements and refined the scoring system. In 2025, the methodology was further refined through clearer criteria and guidance, redesigned accessibility measures, and the integration of third-party datasets to streamline data collection. In 2026, minor updates introduced crisis management readiness as the need became indisputable.

The ongoing development of the GDS-Index Methodology is also informed by relevant principles and recommendations from the ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Sustainability Systems, supporting continued improvements in the credibility, transparency, and robustness of the GDS-Index.

THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

The TAC is a team of experts in sustainable destination management, from diverse sectors and areas of City, tourism, events, and not-for-profit organisations. Its role is to provide constructive criticism and new ideas on the development of the GDS-Index benchmarking criteria, reporting indicators, technical development platform and GDS-Movement research.



City Environmental Performance

- Climate, Energy and Emissions
- Circularity and Waste
- Water
- Air Quality
- Transportation
- Biodiversity
- Alignment with Tourism

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

13 CLIMATE ACTION

15 LIFE ON LAND



City Social Performance

- SDGs Alignment
- Corruption
- Personal Safety
- Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity
- Health, Safety, and Wellness
- Accessibility
- Resident Engagement
- Funding Mechanisms

1 NO POVERTY

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

5 GENDER EQUALITY

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



Supplier Performance

- Hotels
- Airport
- Agencies (PCOs & DMCs)
- Restaurants
- Venues
- Attractions
- Academia
- Tourism and Event Businesses

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

13 CLIMATE ACTION

14 LIFE BELOW WATER

15 LIFE ON LAND



Destination Management Performance

- Destination Strategy
- Governance and Reporting
- Policy and Certification
- Capacity Building
- Impact Measurement
- Marketing and Communications
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Mobility
- Climate Action

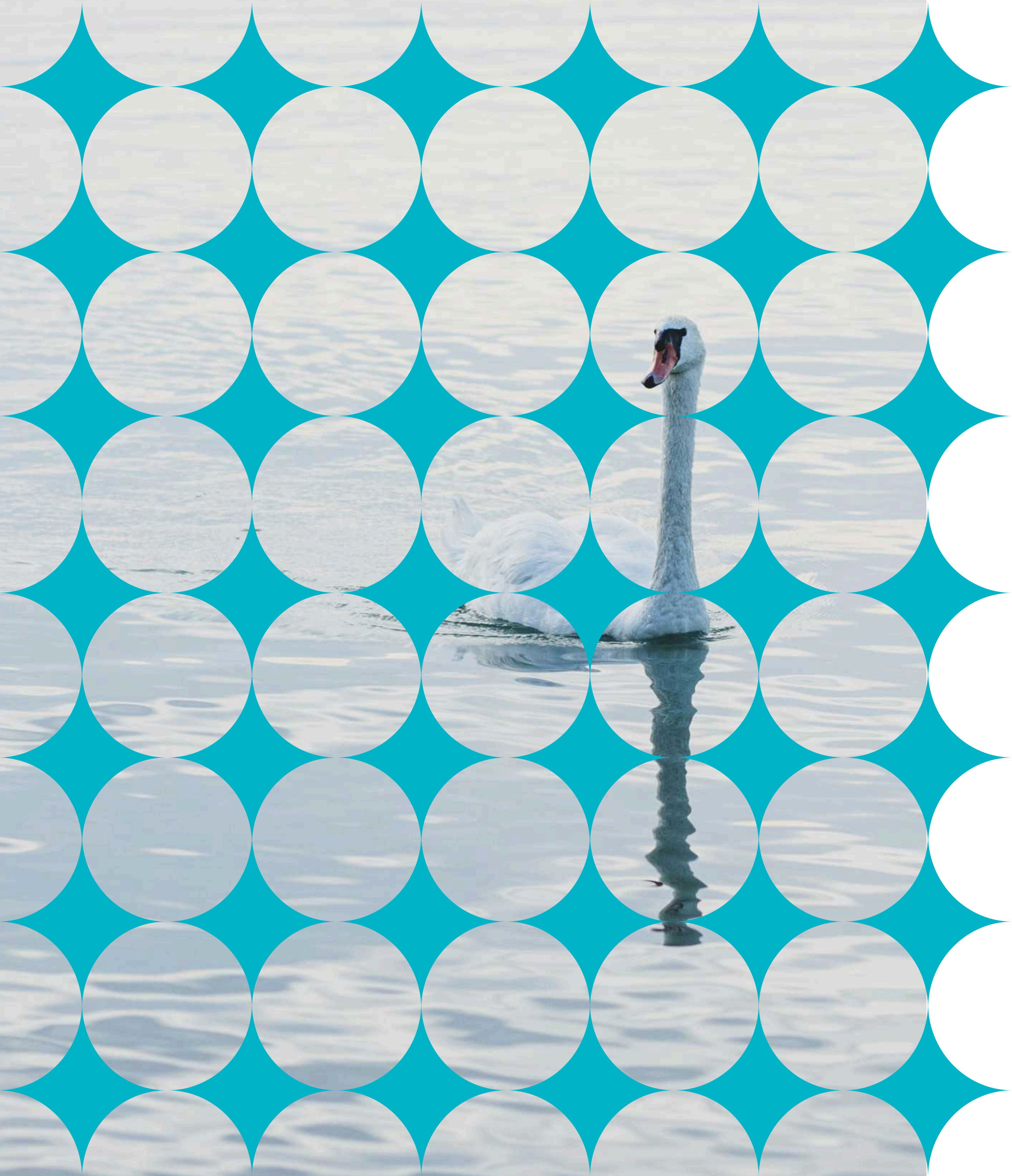
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



DATA PROCESSING

DATA COLLECTION AND VERIFICATION

Once signed up as a member of the GDS-Index, the municipality or DMO gathers data from interested parties and completes an online questionnaire using the Omni data portal. It answers the questions using locally available data alongside supporting evidence. Consultants from the GDS-Index then evaluate the submission, looking for errors in the data, before verifying it. Credible evidence must be submitted to qualify each criterion's answer. Failure to provide such evidence can result in a loss of points. Only after this assessment can the benchmarking results be released to the destination and, for those in the Top 40, made available to the public.

There is an in-depth, quality-assurance process to ensure the accuracy and consistency across GDS-Index, irrespective of the assessor conducting the evaluation. Annual assessor calibration supports a shared understanding and consistent application of the criteria. The process includes a second-assessor review and cross-checking assessment decisions and quantitative data, with any differences discussed and, where necessary, referred for further review.

After benchmarking, and the publication of the year's data, each destination receives a Performance Improvement Report (PIR). This report details the destination's GDS-Index score and ranking, benchmarks it against averages and other destinations, provides recommendations to improve the destination's strategy, implementation, and performance, and offers relevant better practices from other destinations.

DATA SOURCES

The GDS-Index criteria evaluate quantitative data points such as recycling/landfill rates, or percentage of third-party, sustainability certified hotel rooms, and qualitative concepts such as the destination's commitment to sustainability, the existence of a destination sustainability strategy, or the maturity of its reporting practices.

The quantitative data submitted by destinations should originate from official sources, such as the city or the country's statistics office, or from publicly-available data from credible sources such as Transparency International. Where there is no comparable city-level data, a regional or national value is taken. As for qualitative indicators, information is usually collected by the DMO, Convention Bureau (CVB), or City, with the help of partners (City departments, hotel associations, etc.).

SCORING

Each performance indicator is assigned a maximum number of points, and based on how well the destination fulfils each indicator, it can obtain some of these points, no points, or all points (a full score). The points for each category are then aggregated to arrive at the category score. This is explained in detail in the Methodology.

Destinations are then ranked by performance and the Top 40 data is made public to reflect their ranking.

OUR PARTNERS

We'd like to thank the following organisations, without whom the dream of launching a destination sustainability index would not have been possible.

Through our collaborative partnerships with these founding partners, we've been able to co-create informative and exciting workshops, research papers, and events that unite the global tourism and events industry behind a common cause to transform the places we live, travel, and do business in.

This includes two recently added data partners: BeCause supplies hotel certification data, and Murmuration supplies environmental data.

**CITY
DESTINATIONS
ALLIANCE**



CONTRIBUTORS

This report was written and edited by Anne Seeberg and Jess Henson, supported by Claudia Bustinza and Janie Neumann, with contributions from Guy Bigwood, Marta Mills and Antonia Alomar, and with graphic design by Steve Hanzic.

We would like to thank all contributors, GDS-Index partners, and our participating destinations for their feedback and contributions.

DISCLAIMER

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the material in this document, neither the GDS-Movement™ nor any of the partners of the GDS-Index will be liable for any loss or damages incurred by the report.

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