

# Journeys for all:

an Expedia Group study  
on inclusion in travel

Produced by APCO.



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# An invitation to action

At Expedia Group, we operate with a core belief: travel is a force for good. We believe that everyone should be able to experience the joy of travel and its unique ability to strengthen connections, broaden horizons and bridge divides.

In 2022, we launched Expedia Group's Open World™ social impact and sustainability strategy to begin addressing inequities across the travel industry and democratizing access for all travellers. Our journey towards a more inclusive travel industry is the focus for this study.

This original research seeks to identify shared travel challenges of underserved groups, including Black, Latino, LGBTQIA+ and travellers with disabilities. By examining the planning and experience of their journeys, we've identified persistent pain points that need immediate attention and action. We've also included recommendations on how to address those pain points, based directly on these firsthand insights.

What we learn in this study invites us as an industry to create more inclusive travel experiences together. Not only is it the right thing to do, it's the smart thing to do. This study demonstrates what we've long known to be true: embedding inclusive practices across our products and services does more than enhance brand appeal and loyalty. It creates significant growth opportunities by meeting the needs of more travellers. Companies and partners that take the time to meet these needs stand to gain the most.

Addressing these issues not only helps those directly affected; it benefits everyone by facilitating a better understanding among people across various backgrounds and cultures. These challenges require a unified industry effort to ensure that travel is enabled, encouraged and championed for everyone, everywhere. And they present the opportunity for us and our partners—in alignment with our Open World™ framework—to innovate across the travel sector.

We invite you to discover how we can drive this change together by visiting <https://www.expediagroup.com/travel-with-us>. As an industry, we can create a more inclusive and accessible global travel ecosystem.

Thank you for joining us on this journey towards a more open world.



**Greg Schulze**  
Chief Commercial Officer and President,  
Travel Partnerships and Media, Expedia Group



# Overview



## Introduction

The travel industry has long been a driver of economic growth and cultural exchange, connecting people from diverse backgrounds and fostering a sense of joy and community. However, not all people have equal access to the benefits of travel. These underserved travellers are individuals or groups who face significant barriers to accessing products or services due to a variety of factors including race, ethnicity, gender and sexual identity, disability, economic status and geographic location. These barriers often intersect and can result from systemic inequalities, discriminatory practices, economic constraints and insufficient or inadequately designed infrastructure.

Although underserved travellers are already exploring the world, the travel industry must recognise the immense potential in enabling more inclusive travel experiences. By addressing the barriers that hinder many from fully participating in travel, the industry can unlock a wealth of opportunities—not only in enhancing their journeys, but also in expanding the traveller base. As underserved populations continue to grow, companies that prioritise making travel more accessible, welcoming and enjoyable for these groups will cultivate lasting loyalty and reap the rewards of a more diverse travel ecosystem.

Recognising this opportunity, as well as gaps in the research—especially in understanding the experiences of travellers with intersectional identities—Expedia Group undertook a comprehensive study to examine the needs, preferences and challenges of underserved travellers and to elevate their perspectives.

With a focus on barriers facing multiple population segments, we sought perspectives from four communities of underserved travellers: Black travellers, Latino travellers, LGBTQIA+ travellers and travellers with disabilities. We also sought to understand the experiences of individuals with intersectional identities, examining race and ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation and disability status to understand how these overlapping identities affect travel experiences.

Finally, this report includes recommendations for the industry based on these insights.

## Approach

To achieve these goals and objectives, Expedia Group partnered with APCO Insight, an independent global opinion research and data advisory firm, to employ a multi-stage qualitative and quantitative study.

- 1. Background research:** landscape analysis revealed that intersectional identities are an under-explored area in travel research, with information about different traveller groups often being siloed.
- 2. Focus groups:** APCO conducted focus groups between February and March 2024 with underserved travellers, focusing on Black, Latino, LGBTQIA+ and travellers with disabilities.
- 3. In-depth interviews:** APCO interviewed travel industry leaders to identify barriers and potential solutions for improving experiences for underserved communities and how to facilitate greater action and collaboration across the industry.

**4. Large-scale survey:** APCO administered an online survey between March and April 2024, among 2,811 respondents to gather data on travel behaviours, preferences, challenges and perceptions of inclusion, focusing on the United States for this initial study.

- This included 2,000 respondents from the general population, selected to reflect the US population according to the US Census based on characteristics such as age, gender and sexual identity, as well as race and ethnicity.
- To deepen understanding of underserved groups, respondents also included Black travellers, Latino travellers, LGBTQIA+ travellers and travellers with disabilities. To gauge how travel experiences differ for underserved travellers, APCO compared their results to that of the general US population (which is referred to as 'general population' in this report).
- The survey was available in both English and Spanish, and data were weighted to be representative of the US adult population.
- Eligible respondents were between 18 and 64 years of age, resided in the United States and had taken a leisure trip within the past 12 months where they were the primary decision-maker or shared in the decision-making process for travel arrangements.

## Definitions

**Code-switching:** involves adjusting one's style of speech, appearance, behaviour and expression in ways that will optimise the comfort of others in exchange for fair treatment, quality service and employment opportunities.

**Gender-expansive:** an umbrella term for those who do not follow gender stereotypes or who expand ideas of gender expression or gender identity. People of any gender identity can be gender-expansive.

**General population:** refers to a sample of survey respondents that is representative of the demographic composition of the US population.

**Diversity:** representing travellers of all abilities, ages, bodies, gender identities, races, religions, sexual orientations and socio-economic status.

**Inclusion:** the practice of allowing diversity and local cultures and communities to thrive, while ensuring equitable access to travel for all. Inclusion also reflects an understanding of the role of intersectional identities, recognising all people as complex individuals with unique experiences.

**Inclusive booking features:** refers to a set of functionalities within travel booking platforms that enhance accessibility and personalisation for diverse user groups. These features are designed to reflect and address the varied needs and preferences of travellers from different backgrounds, ensuring that everyone can navigate and utilise these services effectively.

**Intersectionality:** a concept that examines how overlapping social identities, such as race and ethnicity, gender identity, economic status and sexual orientation interact to create distinct experiences of privilege and discrimination. An intersectional approach helps in understanding the multifaceted experiences of individuals belonging to multiple underserved groups.

**Underserved travellers:** individuals or groups who face significant barriers to accessing products or services due to a variety of factors including, but not limited to, their race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, economic status or geographic location. These barriers can result from systemic inequalities, discriminatory practices, economic constraints and insufficient or inadequately designed infrastructure.



# Executive summary

## Key highlights

# 86%

of underserved travellers prioritise finding destinations where they feel safe.

# 80%

of underserved travellers prioritise destinations where they feel welcomed.

# 70%

of underserved travellers are more likely to plan trips when they see themselves in travel ads and promotions.

# 15%

of underserved travellers feel very well represented in travel ads and promotions.

# 68%

of underserved travellers want advanced filters for accessibility features when booking online.



Underserved communities represent a growing segment of the US population, yet they face issues that make it more difficult for them to reap the benefits of travel.

These travellers plan leisure trips for the same reasons as the general population, sharing the need for rejuvenation and enjoyment through travel. However, these travellers too often encounter challenges that negatively impact their travel experiences. These challenges are augmented among travellers with intersectional identities and include very real concerns about finding safe and accepting travel environments.

This study examines the experiences of Black, Latino and LGBTQIA+ travellers, as well as travellers with disabilities. Though each group has some needs that are specific to their identities, this study identifies a set of common priorities for underserved travellers as a whole:

**Safety and belonging:** underserved travellers prioritise finding destinations where they feel safe and welcomed—and want to choose travel companies whose employees treat them fairly and with respect.

**Authentic representation:** underserved travellers are more likely to plan trips when they are authentically represented in travel ads, yet only a minority currently feel well represented; they also seek diversity among the travel industry employees with whom they interact.

**Accessibility:** while essential for travellers with disabilities, accessibility in terms of physical structures and robust and accurate informative content is also highly sought after by other underserved travellers.

**Co-create with the community:** engage underserved travellers from the start to integrate their insights to shape meaningful solutions.

**Embrace universal design to benefit everyone:** design inclusive products that meet diverse needs, thereby raising the bar for accessibility and enhancing the experience for all travellers.

**Mirror customer diversity:** build diverse teams to better understand and serve the broad spectrum of customers.

**Ensure representation and resonance:** produce content that fosters a sense of connection and understanding among travellers of all backgrounds.

This research highlights a noticeable demand among these communities for greater inclusion throughout stages of their travel, from pre-travel planning to in-person interactions at their destinations. Underserved travellers demonstrate a strong preference for brands that publicly support diversity and inclusion, showing favour towards such brands, higher likelihood of repeat bookings and loyalty programme participation.

The principles outlined in this paper are a starting point to provide data-informed guidance for the industry to work together in providing a universally welcoming travel experience.

By integrating an inclusive focus throughout their operations, travel companies can enhance their brand appeal, deepen customer loyalty and unlock new growth opportunities among these valuable customer segments.

To create meaningful and sustainable change that improves experiences for all travellers requires a collective effort from all corners of the travel industry. This intersectional study—with firsthand insights and actionable recommendations—invites the industry as a whole to address these barriers so more people can experience more joy in travel.

Chapter 1:

# Insights into underserved travellers' journeys

## Key statistics

42%

of underserved travellers feel limited because of their identity when selecting destinations or activities.

5+

hours extra time spent by underserved travellers on researching to ensure that services and destinations are safe, welcoming and accessible.

70%

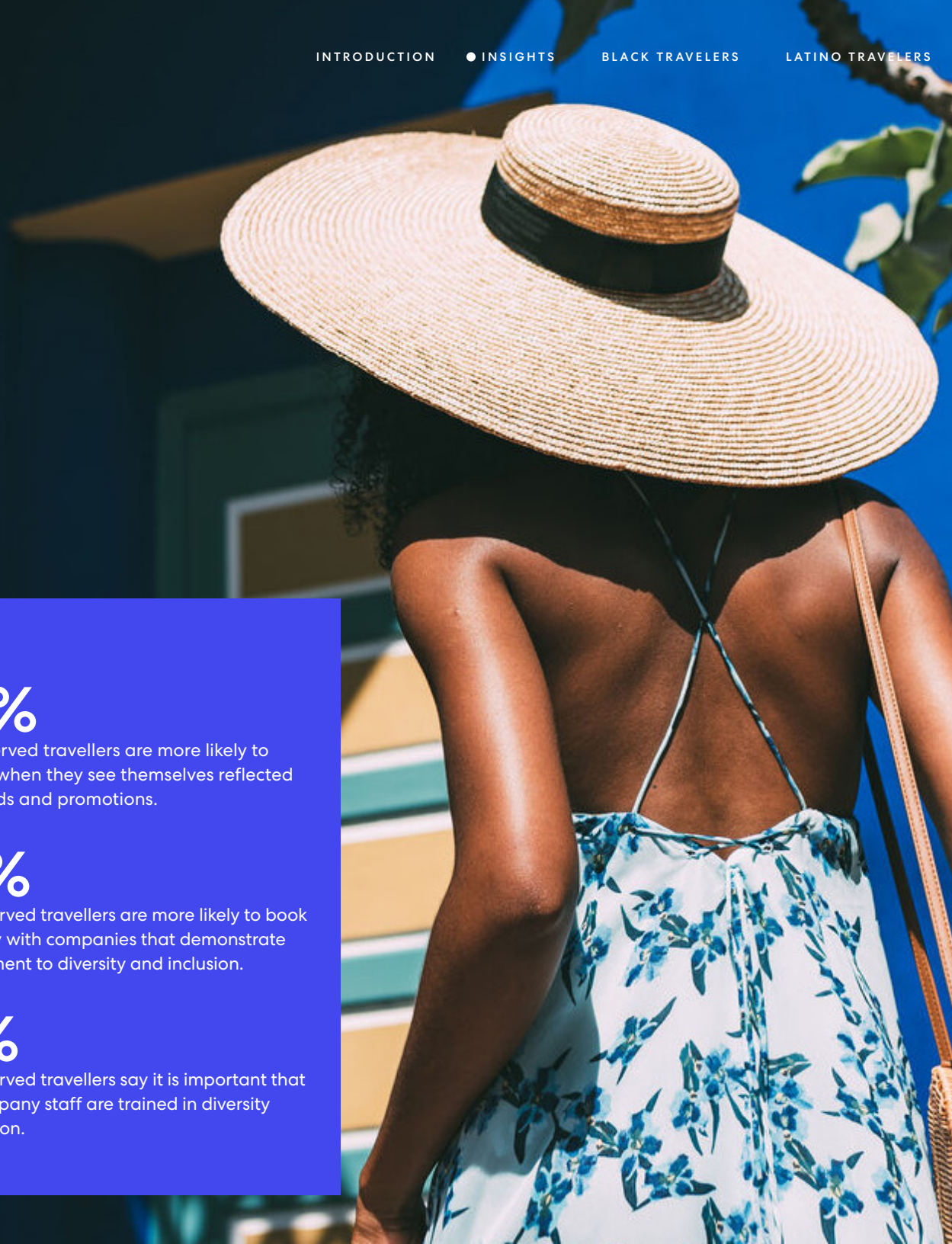
of underserved travellers are more likely to plan trips when they see themselves reflected in travel ads and promotions.

73%

of underserved travellers are more likely to book repeatedly with companies that demonstrate a commitment to diversity and inclusion.

71%

of underserved travellers say it is important that travel company staff are trained in diversity and inclusion.



## Inclusion is good economics

Embracing inclusion is not just best practice—it's smart business.

Underserved travellers make up a larger share of annual travellers and buying power. By 2040, the underserved population in the United States is projected to increase markedly<sup>1</sup>—with a correlating increase in their travel market impact:

- The Black population in the US is projected to reach 50 million by 2040.
- The Latino population in the US is projected to reach 81.6 million by 2040.
- The LGBTQIA+ 18+ population in the US is projected to reach 64.4 million by 2040.<sup>2</sup>
- The 18+ population in the US living with disabilities increased to 73.4 million in 2022.

**'Diverse groups actually make up the average traveller demographic—more than people realise. These travellers are very much part of our core customer base.'**

Lethabo-Thabo Royds, Head of Content & Programme, World Travel & Tourism Council

<sup>1</sup> All demographic data presented here refers to the United States population and is based on projections and characteristics sourced from the US Census, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Human Rights Campaign.

<sup>2</sup> Population segment growth is attributed to multiple factors, including improved methods of data collection and increased visibility and acceptance for queer identities, leading to more young people openly identifying as LGBTQIA+.

Despite these projections, the travel industry is not keeping pace, and it's affecting the experience of underserved travellers. Evolving business strategies to enable more welcoming, inclusive travel experiences will help companies tap into an expanding market, build loyalty and differentiate themselves in a competitive landscape. The result is improved traveller satisfaction and retention, increased market share and future-proofed business.

'It's critical to understand that creating a more equitable and inclusive industry can't be viewed as 'one more thing to do' but, rather, as a foundational through line that informs everything we do as an industry. It's our fundamental responsibility as leaders and good for business'.

Adam Burke, President and Chief Executive Officer, Los Angeles Tourism and Convention Board

### The impact of identity on travel experience

Regardless of identity, all travellers share similar goals for leisure travel. For both the general population and underserved travellers, the top three goals of leisure travel are relaxation, family bonding and adventure.

They're also seeking the same feelings and experiences in travel:

- **Escape:** getting a change of scenery and away from day-to-day life.
- **Cheerful:** feeling happy and having fun.
- **Rested:** unplugging from the daily grind to recharge completely.

However, 42% of underserved travellers say that their identity impacts what travel options they choose and where they feel comfortable travelling, compared to 34% of the general population.

**42%** of underserved travellers say that their identity impacts their travel options and where they feel comfortable travelling.

Half of underserved travellers say that their identity greatly influences their choice of destinations, compared to less than half (44%) of the general population. While identity significantly influences destination choice for underserved travellers, it carries much more weight among those with intersectional identities. At least half of Black (70%), Latino (68%) and LGBTQIA+ (50%) travellers with disabilities note that their identity shapes their destination choices a lot.

**We compared underserved travellers to the general population to identify meaningful differences in their experiences. The general population refers to a group of respondents who reflect the US population in terms of age, gender, race and ethnicity.**

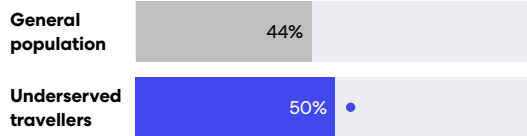
Likewise, with where to stay, nearly half (48%) of underserved travellers say that their identity influences their choice of accommodation, compared to 42% of the general population. Again, this impact is compounded by intersectional identities, with 69% of Black and 67% of Latino travellers with disabilities feeling that their identity impacts where they feel comfortable travelling or their choice of accommodation.

Identity also shapes how travellers move. At least two in five underserved travellers say that their identity influences how they get to and travel around their destination.

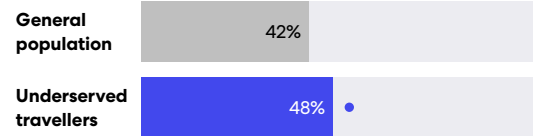
### Influence of identity on travel decisions

Percentage of travellers who say that their identity influences their choices a lot.

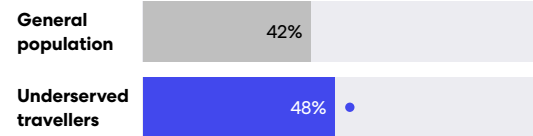
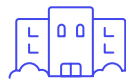
#### Destinations



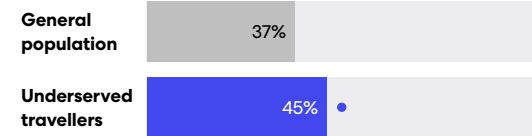
#### Activities and experiences



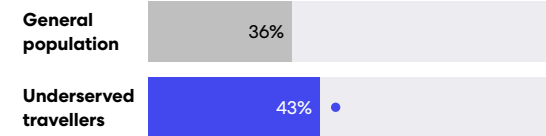
#### Accommodation



#### Transit to and from destination



#### Transit at destination



● Indicates underserved travellers are significantly more likely than the general population.

### Promoting diverse and inclusive solutions

What a company publicly commits to can mean a lot to people. In fact, travellers prefer—and are more likely to stay engaged with—brands that champion diversity and inclusion.

It starts with brand preference. A majority (71%) of underserved travellers state a preference for brands that support diversity and inclusion initiatives, compared to 62% of the general population.

‘You need to be in the spaces travellers are in. Work with the organisations they look to for inspiration. Work with community organisations. Look at social media and prominent voices in travel. That helps a lot because then you’re in front of the audience that you want to be in front of’.

Lethabo-Thabo Royds, Head of Content & Programme, World Travel & Tourism Council

Brand preference leads to repeat business. Nearly three quarters (73%) of underserved travellers are more likely to book again with brands that promote diversity—and so is 62% of the general population.

Taken together, higher brand preference and repeat business result in higher engagement in loyalty programmes. In fact, two-thirds (67%) of underserved travellers are more likely to participate in a loyalty programme if the company actively promotes diversity and inclusion, as compared to 61% of the general population.

‘Providing all who come through our doors with an authentic, warm welcome is at the heart of who we are. Our culture fosters an inclusive environment and a shared sense of belonging. To do good things externally, it’s important to have diverse representation internally. We strive to mirror the diversity of the world we serve, recognising and celebrating differences to create an inclusive atmosphere for our guests—and for one another’.

Apoorva Gandhi, SVP, Multicultural Affairs, Social Impact and Business Councils, Marriott International

### Impact of promoting diversity and inclusion on traveller behaviour



● Indicates underserved travellers are much more likely than the general population.

**What commitment means to travellers**

Through traveller focus groups, we gathered insights into what brand commitments to diversity and inclusion should look like. Underserved travellers—especially Black and LGBTQIA+ travellers—advocate for more people of colour in key decision-making roles. Underserved travellers also call for enhanced diversity training, with a focus on eliminating bias and zero-tolerance policies for service workers that engage in discriminatory behaviour. For LGBTQIA+ travellers, this means equal treatment and a sense of safety and protection throughout all aspects of their journey, especially in feeling welcomed and respected.

‘Solutions start with training, having the understanding of ‘Let me try to learn from what that culture is experiencing. Let me try to learn the different nuances about them—or the bad experience so I can avoid having a prejudged mentality about that individual.’ It starts with training and diversity’.

Focus group participant (Black, straight man)

‘Just seeing more people of colour, people who are LGBTQIA+, people in the industry as customer service people—more people we can hire into these places that are more representative can help’.

Focus group participant (Native American, white, LGBTQIA+ person with a disability)

**Industry recommendation**

Examine each consumer touchpoint within your brand—from product features and marketing campaigns to community partnerships—and ensure that they consistently reflect your commitment to diversity and inclusion. Actively demonstrate this commitment by showcasing how diverse staffing directly enhances the products and services you offer. Embrace every opportunity to forge authentic, resonant connections with underserved travellers, moving beyond mere transactions to create meaningful, loyalty-building interactions that genuinely reflect the values of these communities.





### Desire for authentic representation in travel ads

Representation matters. And for underserved travellers, it can be the difference between travelling or staying home.

Underserved travellers (76%) are more likely than the general population (69%) to say it's important for travel ads to represent people like them. This affects the bottom line. Most underserved (70%) and general population (66%) travellers are more likely to plan a trip if they see themselves reflected in travel ads. However, only 16% of travellers—both underserved and general population—feel that travel promotions represent them very well. This shows an opportunity to improve representation in ads for all travellers.

This chasm deepens among travellers with intersectional identities. Even though LGBTQIA+ travellers with disabilities say seeing themselves represented in promotions makes them more likely to travel (76%), one in five (20%) say that travel ads do not represent them at all.

**'I usually try to [follow influencers] who are the same gender, around the same age. That way, I know, maybe we'll have some things in common. Maybe I'll feel the same way that they feel'.**

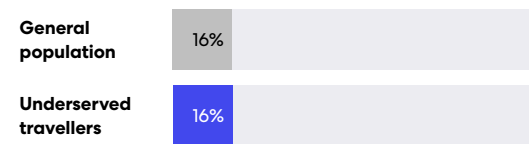
Focus group participant (Latina, straight person)

#### Representation in travel ads

When researching potential destinations, it is important that travel ads and promotions reflect people like me.



Travel ads and promotions represent me very well.



Representation in travel ads and promotions make me more likely to plan a trip.



● Indicates underserved travellers are much more likely than the general population.

While 76% of underserved travellers find it important that travel ads and promotions reflect people like them, only 16% feel that ads represent them very well.

### Industry recommendation

Feature underserved travellers in advertising and promotions more frequently—and authentically. Audiences not only want to see people like them represented in content, but also want these depictions match how they see themselves. All underserved traveller identity groups say that more and better representation will increase their likelihood of planning a trip. That means visibility not only fosters a sense of belonging and validation but will also help boost business.

## Time burden of research and planning

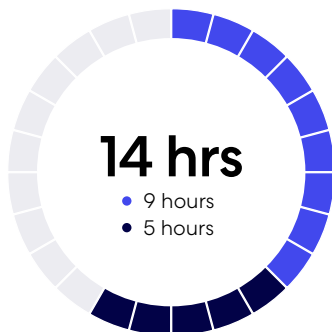
### Time burden

While both the general population and underserved travellers spend a similar amount of time on travel research and planning—nine hours on average—underserved travellers spend, on average, an additional five hours ensuring that their destinations are safe, welcoming and accommodating.

This extended investment is even more pronounced for those with intersectional identities. LGBTQIA+ Latino travellers invest 11 hours in planning, plus an extra nine to ensure that destinations are welcoming. Similarly, LGBTQIA+ women typically spend 14 hours planning, with an additional eight hours vetting welcoming conditions.

### Average time spent by underserved travellers researching and planning for a trip

- Time spent researching and planning for a trip.
- Extra time spent researching to ensure that services and destinations are safe, welcoming and accessible for people with your identity.



This burden also extends to the logistics of accommodating disabilities. Black travellers with disabilities spend roughly 10 hours planning, with an additional eight hours for safety and accessibility checks. LGBTQIA+ travellers with disabilities dedicate around 16 hours to planning—and another eight hours ensuring that travel arrangements are safe, welcoming and accessible. This underscores the urgent need for inclusion in the collection and presentation of travel information to better meet traveller needs.

### Priorities

When it comes to travel planning, the importance of specific information can significantly differ between groups, reflecting the nuanced needs of underserved travellers.

Across all demographics, travellers routinely turn to family and friends, search engines and online booking platforms as their primary sources of information. Yet, underserved populations place a premium on contributions from their community.

Both general population and underserved travellers identify safety, value and a welcoming atmosphere as their top priorities when researching and planning travel. However, the extent to which these factors are prioritised varies considerably. While safety is the top concern across traveller groups, the emphasis on being welcomed is particularly strong among underserved travellers (80%) when compared to the general population (75%). This is even more pronounced for those with intersectional identities, with 86% of Latina travellers and 96% of Black travellers with disabilities indicating that feeling welcomed is important.



The distinct information needs of underserved travellers also extend to the type of content they value. For instance, more than half (56%) of underserved travellers say that it is important to access reviews and recommendations from individuals who share their identity—an opinion that less than half (49%) of the general population shares.

Additionally, finding transit and accommodation that are accessible is important for underserved travellers, with nearly three quarters (73%) indicating as much. The proportion of those who place importance on accessible transportation and accommodation continues to increase among travellers with intersectional identities. In fact, nearly nine in ten (89%) Latino travellers with disabilities say it's important.

Safety, belonging and community support are particularly important among women—especially Black women and women with disabilities—indicating cross-sectional emphasis on ensuring that environments are both safe and identity-affirming. This highlights a critical need for the travel industry to adapt and respond not only to generic preferences, but also to the deeply ingrained necessities that vary across community intersections.

'I would really love to be connected to LGBTQIA+ centres in the areas that I'm travelling to because they are actually going to know all the answers.'

Focus group participant  
(white, LGBTQIA+ person with a disability)

### Importance of each of the following when researching and planning travel

Finding a destination where you know you'll be safe



Getting a good deal



Finding a destination where you know you'll be welcome



Finding transit and accommodation that are accessible



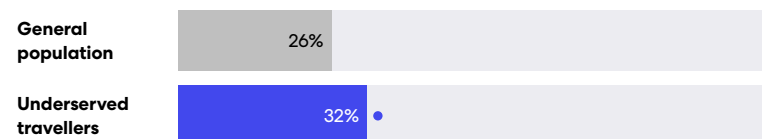
Choosing travel providers who you know will respect your identity



Getting reviews and recommendations from people who share your identity



Finding minority-owned businesses



● Indicates underserved travellers are much more likely than the general population.

### Industry recommendation

To optimise research and planning for underserved travellers, develop user-friendly resources that address the key concerns of safety, belonging and accessibility. Make these resources easy to find, navigate and apply to help minimise the extensive time burden faced by underserved travellers. Strengthen travel search platforms by offering more comprehensive information relevant to underserved travellers, including reviews and recommendations from similar demographic profiles—and ensuring that content on accessibility is accurate.



## Diversity and inclusion on the ground

### Challenges throughout the journey

Underserved travellers face challenges beyond the typical travel stressors when transitioning to or from a destination and while at their destinations.

Latino travellers, more so than other travellers, face long wait times to speak to customer service during transit and when at the destination. More than one in three Latino travellers (35%) say that they experience long wait times to speak to customer service when problems arise during transit, and more than one in five Latinos (23%) face long wait times when problems arise while at their destination. This issue is most common among Spanish-speaking Latinos.

Travellers with disabilities also face significant challenges throughout their journey. One in four (23%) say that they encounter accessibility issues when travelling to and from their destination. Additionally, nearly one in five (17%) report travel providers' lack of awareness of their rights as a common obstacle—something that can significantly impact the travel experience and make these travellers particularly vulnerable to inequity in transit.

### What these obstacles mean for travellers

Through focus group discussions, travellers shed some light on the challenges they face. Underserved travellers recounted instances of feeling stereotyped and incurring unexpected financial burdens due to a lack of industry awareness around disability rights and laws. Specific examples include undue intense security screenings and incorrect charges for service animals.

**'I felt I was singled out one time at the airport. They brought me to the side and because of that, when I got to the hotel—I have a little goatee—I shaved. I shaved and tried to look like everybody else.'**

Focus group participant (Latino, straight man)

**'I get hassled every single time I check in with my service dog. And sometimes, I'll get billed extra because they put the animal on the bill, and then I have to go back and be like, 'It's a service dog. You're not supposed to bill me for that''.**

Focus group participant  
(Asian, LGBTQIA+ man with a disability)

### Authentic expression and safety

For many within the LGBTQIA+ community, the experience of travelling is overshadowed by the uncertainty of whether they can safely express their identity. Only 50% of LGBTQIA+ individuals feel consistently safe to be themselves at travel destinations—a stark contrast to the general population (78%).

The discrepancy highlights significant issues concerning honesty in destination marketing: merely claiming to be open and welcoming without adopting and implementing inclusive policies and practices undermines the credibility of destination marketing. Inclusion must extend beyond surface-level assurances and be reflected in tangible actions and policies. Misrepresentation can lead to disillusionment and safety concerns among travellers who rely on these messages to guide their decisions.

Visible markers of safety and validation are also essential to pre-travel research and during the journey itself. Signs that indicate an environment is safe and inclusive can greatly reassure travellers, affecting their decision-making from research to destination arrival.

**'Safety and representation are crucial factors that the under-represented traveller groups prioritise when researching and planning their experiences. They want to know if the destinations they consider will make them feel secure and if they'll see others who resemble them. Additionally, they look for indicators of a welcoming environment, whether it's through a website, reviews or referrals.'**

Sophia Hyder Hock, Chief Inclusion Officer,  
Destinations International

### Employee diversity and inclusion training

Across all traveller demographics, respect and feeling welcomed are universally valued. However, underserved travellers notably emphasise the importance of fairness, non-discriminatory treatment and interactions with well-trained, inclusive-minded employees. While most of the general population (73%) believes it is important not to be discriminated against based on their identity, this sentiment is even more pronounced among underserved travellers, with 79% emphasising its importance. The importance of not being discriminated against is especially high among Black women travellers (87%), Latina travellers (85%) and Latino travellers with disabilities (94%).

More than half (58%) of the general population appreciates staff who are well trained on diversity and inclusion. However, the expectation is higher among underserved travellers, with 71% emphasising its importance. This importance is even greater among Black (85%) and Latino travellers with disabilities (85%), underscoring an urgent need for comprehensive diversity and inclusion training. This training should not only focus on sensitivity but also on actionable knowledge and practices that support inclusion.

'I definitely think [treatment from staff] is totally dependent on your looks, and possibly how you sound'.

Focus group participant (Black, straight woman)

The desire for representation among staff differs significantly between the general population and underserved travellers. Only 41% of general population travellers see the importance of encountering employees who share their identity, compared to over half (53%) of underserved travellers.

### What employee training means for travellers

Feedback from focus groups illustrates the challenges faced by underserved travellers due to insufficient employee training and awareness. Black travellers, who often have to be prepared for potential negative treatment, long for empathy and genuine communication without feeling the need to code-switch.

Travellers with disabilities frequently encounter obstacles—such as feeling as though they are treated as a burden—that stem from a lack of disability knowledge among employees. Despite giving service providers advance notice, these travellers often find providers unprepared, leading to significant inconvenience and unplanned expenses, such as when mobility aids are damaged.

'But you reach a point where you don't want to be that guy who's like, 'Hey, that's against the law', you start to make a scene and whatever. But I have had to do that'.

Focus group participant (Asian, LGBTQIA+ man with a disability)

## Industry recommendation

To enhance safety and belonging, particularly for those with disabilities and from the LGBTQIA+ community, adopt strategies that include rigorous staff training to heighten awareness of the rights and needs of diverse travellers. Recruit a workforce that reflects traveller diversity and may be more likely to better understand their needs. Enforce strict policies that ensure respect and equity, and actively support local organisations that advocate for inclusive practices and underserved communities.

## Expedia Group's inclusion principles in travel

Expedia Group is guided by a purpose to strengthen connections, broaden horizons and bridge divides for our employees, partners, customers and communities. We believe that everyone should have a safe, welcoming and joyful travel experience, no matter who they are or where they come from.

Four principles guide how we work both internally and beyond:

- 1. Co-create with the community:** incorporate insights from underserved travellers at the outset of the planning process to design positive experiences and mitigate previous challenges.
- 2. Universal design benefits everyone:** design products and experiences that genuinely reflect the lived experiences of underserved travellers to not only meet their specific needs, but also enhance the experience for all travellers by setting higher standards of inclusion and accessibility.

**3. Mirror customer diversity:** ensure that team diversity mirrors customer diversity. Teams that bring together varying perspectives are better equipped to identify and mitigate unconscious bias, thereby reaching a broader audience and enhancing service delivery.

**4. Ensure representation and resonance:** develop content that showcases diverse cultures and experiences. This helps travellers from all backgrounds feel connected and understood.

## Chapter 2:

# Black travellers



## Key statistics

### 85%

believe that finding destinations where they know they will be welcomed is a very important aspect of research and planning.

### 71%

are more likely to plan a trip when they see themselves reflected in travel ads and promotions.

### 70%

are more likely to prefer brands that publicly promote diversity and inclusion.

### 84%

believe that user reviews from people like them are an important booking feature.

The travel experience for Black travellers is heavily shaped by how the industry and society respond to their identity. It influences everything—from the selection of travel companies to the importance of representation—as they pursue the joyful memories travel brings.

## The impact of identity on travel experience

Black travellers say that their identity both restricts their travel options and affects all aspects of their travel planning and experience—in selecting a destination, accommodation and transportation.

They report facing challenges related to their identity in the planning phase, most notably in finding information. Nearly three quarters (73%) agree that finding information necessary for planning travel should be easier. Plus, nearly half (41%) feel that their identity limits their travel options and comfort in certain destinations, and nearly a third (31%) believe that their identity prevents them from planning travel more frequently.

Furthermore, identity has a big impact on the decisions they make. More than half of Black travellers say that their identity significantly influences their destinations (54%) and accommodation (52%). In addition, nearly half say that it affects their choice of activities and experiences (49%), as well as means of transportation (44%), once at their destination.

# 73%

agree that finding information necessary for planning travel should be easier.

# 41%

feel that their identity limits their travel options and comfort in certain destinations.

# 31%

believe that their identity prevents them from planning travel more frequently.



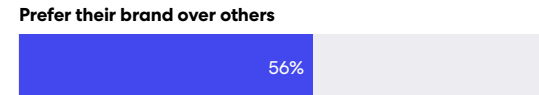
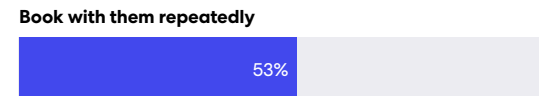
## Promoting diverse and inclusive solutions

When it comes to travel loyalty, diversity and inclusion mean a lot. Black travellers demonstrate a pronounced preference for—and loyalty to—travel brands that explicitly support and promote diversity and inclusion. That brand preference translates into repeat bookings and higher engagement in loyalty programmes.

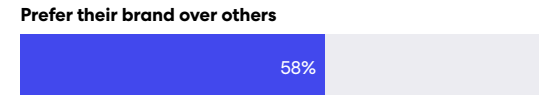
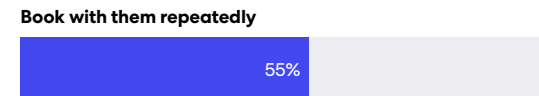
More than two-thirds (70%) of Black travellers prefer companies that publicly support diversity and inclusion, while two-thirds are more likely to join or participate in their loyalty programmes (67%) and book with them again (66%).

### Impact of promoting diversity and inclusion on traveller behaviour

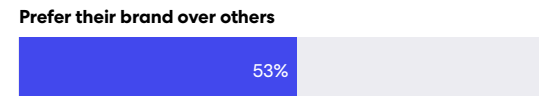
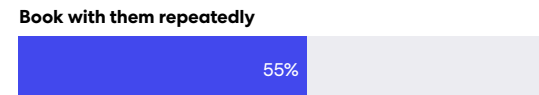
#### Transit provider



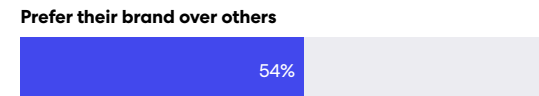
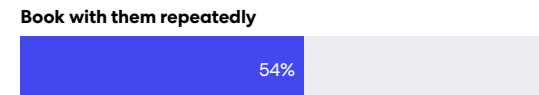
#### Accommodation provider



#### Experience provider



#### Online travel agency provider



**66%**

book with them repeatedly.

**70%**

prefer their brand over others.

**67%**

join or stay active in their loyalty programme.



82%

of Black travellers say it is important that travel ads are reflective of people who share their identities.

18%

feel that travel ads represent them very well.

71%

are more likely to plan a trip if they see themselves represented in travel ads and promotions.

**Desire for authentic representation in travel ads**

When researching potential destinations, more than four out of five (82%) Black travellers say it is important that travel ads are reflective of people who share their identities. However, fewer than one in five (18%) feel that travel ads represent them very well.

A [2024 Nielsen report](#) reveals that many Black audiences view the portrayals of their identities as one-dimensional. From skin tone and language to urban or rural settings, Black travellers are looking for content that reflects their own experiences. This affects the bottom line—nearly three quarters (71%) of Black travellers are more likely to plan a trip if they see themselves represented in travel ads and promotions.

**Time burden of research and planning**

Black travellers invest significant time and effort into planning their trips, focusing on ensuring that destinations are safe and welcoming. They prioritise safety and feeling connected to their heritage. While many of these travellers report that some information is hard to find—such as locating minority-owned businesses—they are closing this information gap themselves by taking to social media.

**Time burden**

On average, Black travellers spend about eight hours researching and planning their trips, with an additional six hours spent ensuring that their travel destinations are safe, welcoming and accessible for people with their identity.

For Black travellers with intersectional identities, this investment is even greater. For example, Black women spend nine hours researching and planning their trips, and six hours checking that destinations are safe, welcoming and accessible. Meanwhile, Black travellers with disabilities spend 10 hours researching and eight hours confirming safety and accessibility.

**Priorities**

For Black travellers, going to a place where they will feel safe (89%), feel welcome (85%) and get a good deal (80%) are the most important considerations. A safe destination is especially emphasised among Black women travellers, where 92% believe this is important.

Other priorities include:

- **Respect:** 71% prioritise travel providers that will respect their identity.
- **Accessibility:** 69% believe that finding accessible transit and accommodation is important.
- **Representation in reviews:** 61% want reviews and recommendations from people who share their identity.
- **Minority-owned businesses:** 39% say that it is important to find minority-owned businesses when planning travel.

**Looking at the intersections**

9

hours spent by Black women researching and planning for a trip.

10

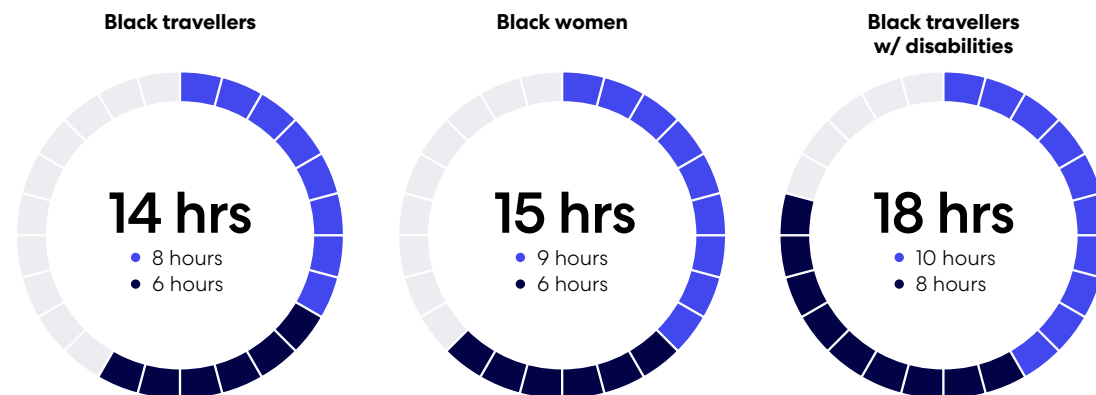
hours spent by Black travellers with disabilities researching and planning for a trip, and eight additional hours spent researching to ensure that services are safe, welcoming and accessible.

92%

of Black women travellers emphasise that a safe location is important.

**Average time spent researching and planning for a trip**

- Time spent on researching and planning for a trip.
- Extra time spent researching to ensure that services and destinations are safe, welcoming and accessible for people with your identity.



Beyond finding a destination where they feel welcome, Black travellers are seeking affiliation. In focus group discussions, Black travellers shared that they research and prioritise destinations where they are likely to find connections to Black culture and heritage. In addition, 59% of Black travellers consider identity-specific guides important when planning their travel.

They want other information to be more easily accessible, too. Finding minority-owned businesses is identified as a challenge, with 38% of Black travellers reporting difficulty in locating this type of information. One in five (19%) Black travellers find it difficult to access reviews from people who share their identity.

They are working to fill this information gap themselves by using social media—73% of Black travellers share positive travel experiences on social media and 56% share negative experiences.

‘Especially with TikTok, it’s really easy to find anecdotes of, ‘Don’t go here if you look a certain way; you’re going to get treated a certain way if owners of certain businesses aren’t doing the right thing’.

Focus group participant  
(Black, straight man)

### Booking features

Inclusive booking features are important to Black travellers and travel platforms should pay attention. By integrating inclusive elements into their booking processes, travel platforms can better engage Black travellers.

User reviews are the most important, with 84% of Black travellers reporting that they value reviews from people like them when booking travel.

Additionally, inclusive booking features such as language options, accessibility search functions and seeing themselves represented in imagery are important for most Black travellers. These features are designed to reflect and address the varied needs and preferences of travellers from different backgrounds, ensuring that everyone

can navigate and use these services effectively. Almost three quarters (74%) of Black travellers value advanced filters for assistive technology compatibility and 56% found gender-inclusive filters important.

‘What motivates me is just being able to feel comfortable. Wherever I am, being able to feel some type of safety’.

Focus group participant  
(Black, LGBTQIA+ woman with a disability)

‘I don’t want to spend money that I work really hard for to go to a place where I’m not even wanted. That just wouldn’t be good for me mentally or emotionally’.

Focus group participant  
(Black, straight woman)

#### Importance of inclusive booking features

User reviews from people like me



Language options that match my preferences



Advanced filters for accessibility features



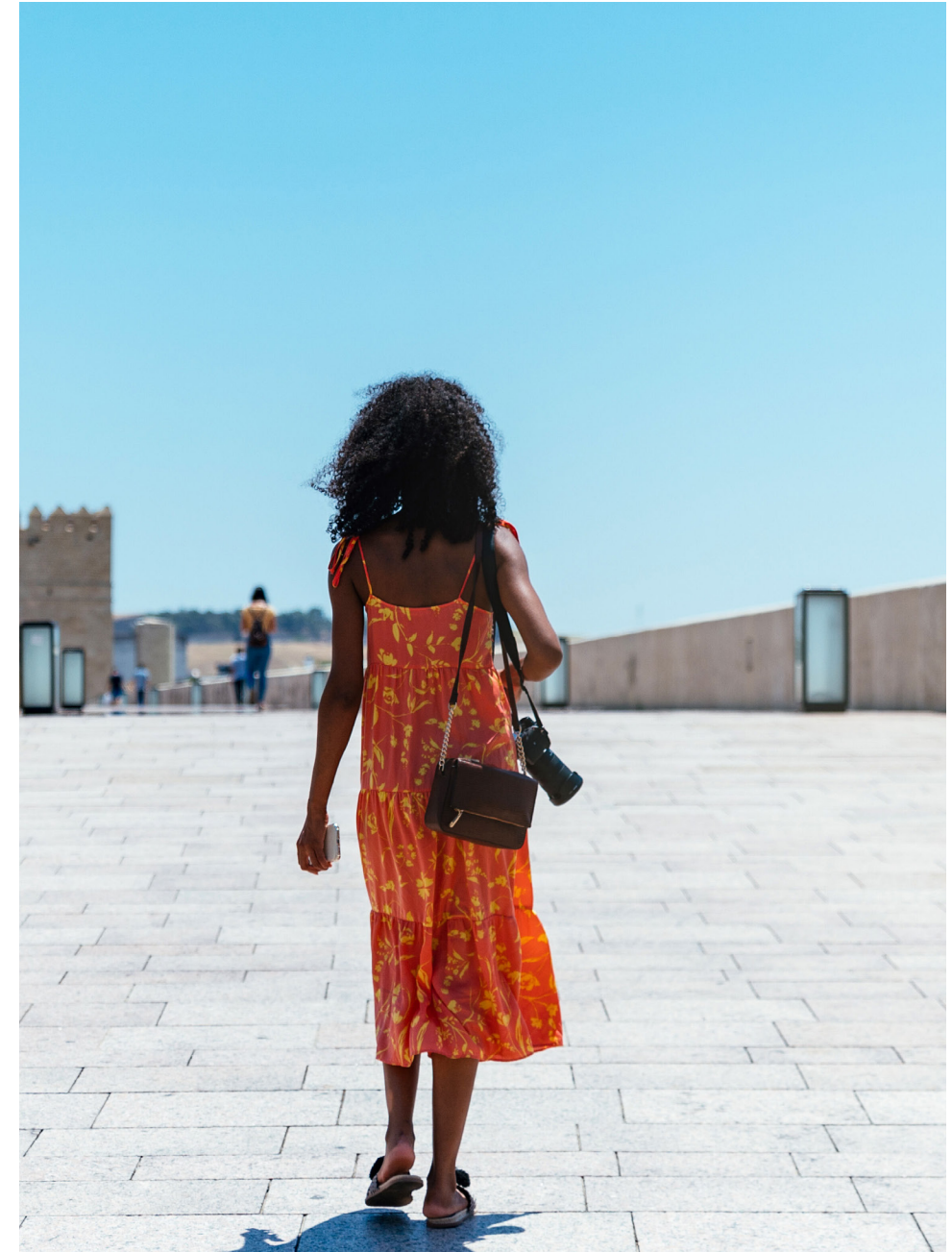
Imagery/pictures depicting people like me



Compatibility with assistive technology



Advanced filters for gender-inclusive features



## Chapter 3:

# Latino travellers

## Key statistics

### 82%

believe that finding destinations where they know they will be welcomed is a very important aspect of research and planning.

### 78%

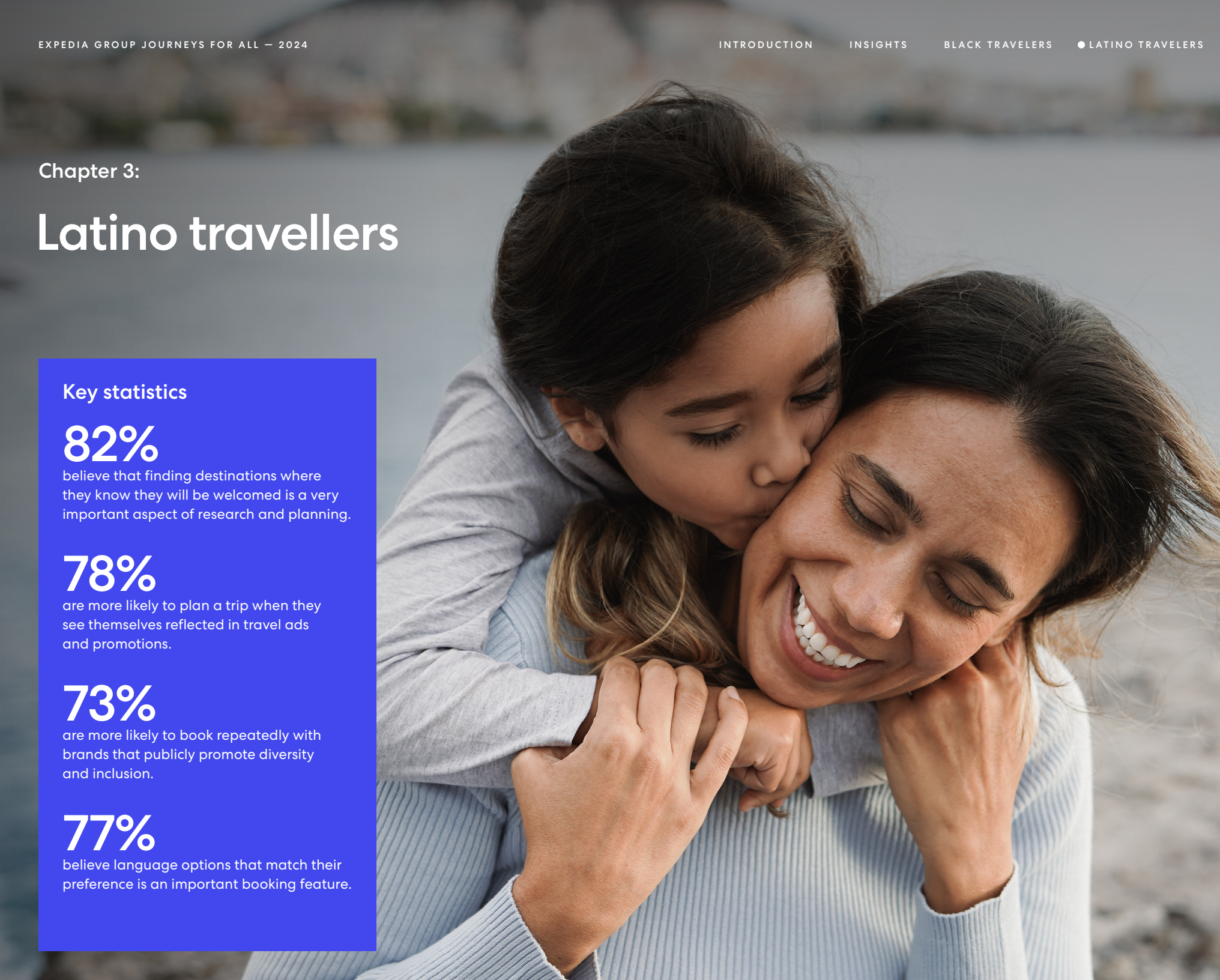
are more likely to plan a trip when they see themselves reflected in travel ads and promotions.

### 73%

are more likely to book repeatedly with brands that publicly promote diversity and inclusion.

### 77%

believe language options that match their preference is an important booking feature.

A photograph of a woman and a young girl hugging on a beach. The woman is smiling broadly, and the girl is leaning her head against her. They are both wearing light blue clothing. The background is a blurred beach scene with water and sand.

Travel—and the relaxation, beauty and happiness it can bring—is something that everyone should be able to experience. However, for the Latino community, identity is something that significantly shapes their experience, from where they travel to how easy it is to find relevant planning information.

## The impact of identity on travel experience

For more than half of Latino travellers, identity affects choices around destination, accommodation transportation and activities. They also report finding travel planning information difficult to access—and how big of a factor language and content relevance plays into this inaccessibility is a potential area for future exploration.

Three quarters (74%) of Latino travellers agree that finding travel planning information should be easier, while two in five (41%) feel that their identity limits their options and comfort in certain destinations. Two-thirds (34%) of Latino travellers also feel that their identity prevents them from travelling more often.

# 74%

agree that finding travel planning information should be easier.

# 41%

feel that their identity limits their options and comfort in certain destinations.

# 34%

feel that their identity prevents them from travelling more often.



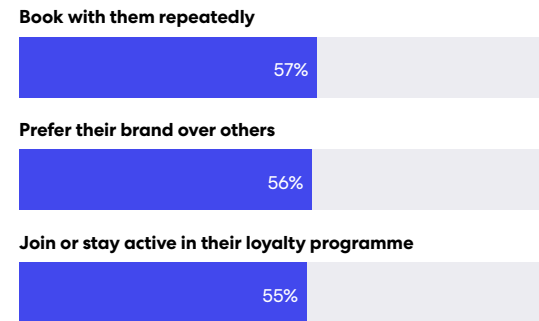
## Promoting diverse and inclusive solutions

A company’s public promotion of diversity and inclusion goes a long way in building loyalty among Latino travellers. Nearly three quarters (71%) of Latino travellers prefer travel service providers that explicitly support diversity and inclusion. This preference spans the sectors of transit, accommodation, experiences and online travel agencies, with over half expressing a preference for companies that uphold diversity and inclusion principles.

The same is true for both brand preference and repeat bookings. Around three quarters of Latino travellers express a preference for—and are more likely to book again with—travel service providers that support diversity and inclusion.

### Impact of promoting diversity and inclusion on traveller behaviour

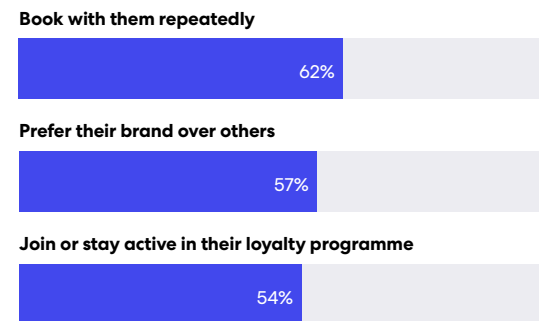
#### Transit provider



#### Accommodation provider



#### Experience provider



#### Online travel agency provider



**73%**

book with them repeatedly

**71%**

prefer their brand over others

**67%**

join or stay active in their loyalty programme





### Desire for authentic representation in travel ads

While four in five (81%) Latino travellers say that it is important to see themselves in travel ads, only one in five (21%) feel they are actually well represented. However, our findings show that, among Latino travellers, representation can make all the difference in travel choices. In fact, 78% of Latino travellers are more inclined to consider planning a trip when they see individuals like themselves featured in travel promotions.

**81%**

say it is important that travel ads reflect people like them when researching potential destinations.

**21%**

feel that travel ads and promotions represent them very well.

**78%**

are more likely to plan a trip if they see people like them in travel ads and promotions.

### Time burden of research and planning

Latino travellers, especially those with intersectional identities, consider their identity through all aspects of travel planning, from ensuring that destinations are safe and welcoming to prioritising accessibility and supporting minority-owned businesses. They also believe in paying it forward, sharing their travel experiences on social media to support other Latino travellers in finding the right options for them.

#### Time burden

Latino travellers typically spend around seven hours planning trips, with an additional four hours researching safety, accessibility and how welcoming their destination is. Bilingual Spanish speakers tend to invest more time in research—averaging around seven hours—compared to Latino non-Spanish speakers, who spend about five hours on average. Latino travellers with intersectional identities spend even more time planning. LGBTQIA+ Latino travellers spend an average of 11 hours researching their trip, plus nine additional hours ensuring that their destinations are safe, welcoming and accessible to them—that's 20 hours in total.

#### Average time spent researching and planning for a trip

- Time spent on researching and planning for a trip.
- Extra time spent researching to ensure that services and destinations are safe, welcoming and accessible for people with your identity.

#### Latino travellers



#### LGBTQIA+ Latino travellers



**Priorities**

When it comes to what’s important for Latino travellers, safety is at the top of the list (88%), particularly among Latina women (92%). This is followed by getting a good deal (88%) and finding a welcoming destination (82%).

Other priorities include:

- **Accessibility:** 82% feel that finding accessible transit and accommodation is important.
- **Respect:** 73% prioritise choosing travel providers that will respect their identity.
- **Representation in reviews:** 61% find it vital to get reviews and recommendations from people who share their identity.
- **Minority-owned businesses:** 34% say that it is important to find minority-owned businesses when planning travel.

More than half (58%) of Latino travellers prioritise identity-specific guides or signs in their travel planning. Yet, many find it challenging to access such information. Nearly a third (32%) struggle to find details on minority-owned businesses and one in five (20%) have difficulty locating reviews from individuals who share their identity.

In focus groups, Latino travellers shared that they do not rely on traditional travel resources—like guidebooks and tourism board websites—to find information. Instead, they rely on multiple

platforms to locate difficult-to-find details, bouncing between Google, social media and elsewhere to piece together what they need. Latino travellers are also acting proactively to close the information gap, with most sharing their experiences on social media, whether positive (79%) or (62%) negative. Other Latino travellers perceive that these reviews as credible and rely on them for valuable information.

**Booking features**

Inclusive booking features, such as advanced filters, are highly valued among Latino travellers. Across the board, more than half of Latino travellers report that tools such as user reviews, representative imagery, assistive technology compatibility and gender-inclusive features are important to them. Language options that match their preferences were particularly valued by Latino travellers (77%).

‘It’s just really specific things that aren’t as available. But between Google and social media—and other websites like Reddit—you’re able to find, for the most part, a starting point from which to build on. I look for things that I can identify with, and now, with social media, you can see people that look like you or kind of fit the bill. That also helps to figure out what to stay away from or what to look out for’.

Focus group participant (Latino, straight woman)

**Importance of inclusive booking features**

User reviews from people like me



Language options that match my preferences



Advanced filters for accessibility features



Imagery/pictures depicting people like me



Compatibility with assistive technology



Advanced filters for gender-inclusive features



## Chapter 4:

# LGBTQIA+ travellers



## Key statistics

### 84%

believe that finding destinations where they know they will be safe is a very important aspect of research and planning.

### 73%

are more likely to plan a trip when they see themselves reflected in travel ads and promotions.

### 83%

are more likely to book repeatedly with brands that publicly promote diversity and inclusion.

### 80%

believe that user reviews from people like them is an important booking feature.

LGBTQIA+ travellers seek comprehensive information and resources to help them plan unforgettable trips. Their identity profoundly influences decisions across all aspects, from selecting destinations and accommodation to planning activities and transportation.

## The impact of identity on travel experience

Nearly three quarters (71%) of LGBTQIA+ travellers express frustration with finding essential travel information. Almost half (45%) believe that their identity limits travel options, while nearly a third (30%) feel that it prevents them from travelling more frequently.

Identity strongly shapes the travel decision-making process too. Half of LGBTQIA+ travellers note that their identity affects where they choose to travel, and nearly half say that it affects how they choose accommodation, activities and experiences. This extends to transportation and transit decisions too, with around two in five LGBTQIA+ travellers reporting that their identity affects both how they get to a destination and how they travel within it. This is felt even more acutely by those with intersectional identities, with two-thirds of LGBTQIA+ Latino travellers saying that their identity affects where they go—and nearly three quarters saying that it affects what they do once they get there.

# 71%

think that finding the necessary information for planning travel should be easier.

# 45%

think that identity limits their travel options and comfort in certain destinations.

# 30%

think that identity prevents them from planning travel more frequently.





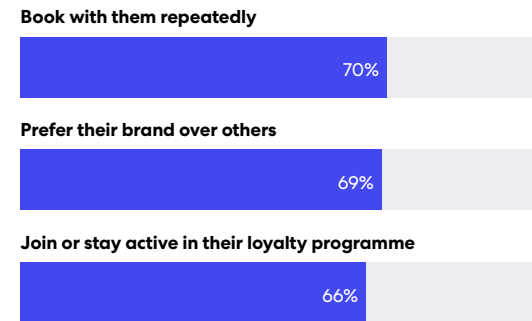
### Promoting diverse and inclusive solutions

A company's public support of diversity and inclusion wins big with the LGBTQIA+ community. From the booking process to ongoing engagement via loyalty programmes, LGBTQIA+ travellers actively seek out brands that demonstrate a strong commitment to these values.

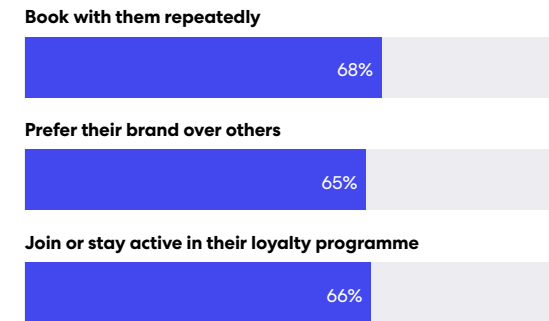
Nearly four in five LGBTQIA+ travellers choose providers that champion diversity and inclusion. This holds true across sectors, with a strong majority favouring companies in transit, accommodation, experiences and booking that show public commitment. A similar proportion of LGBTQIA+ travellers are also more likely to book again with these companies, while over three quarters are more likely to participate in a loyalty programme with a company that shows diversity and inclusion values.

### Impact of promoting diversity and inclusion on traveller behaviour

#### Transit provider



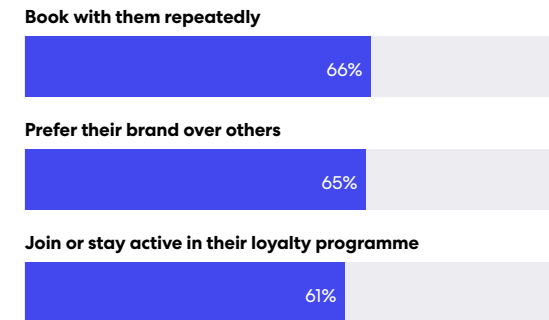
#### Accommodation provider



#### Experience provider



#### Online travel agency provider



**83%**  
book with them repeatedly.

**78%**  
prefer their brand over others.

**76%**  
join or stay active in their loyalty programme.

**70%**

say that it is important to see themselves represented in travel ads when researching potential destinations.

**11%**

feel that travel ads and promotions represent them very well.

**73%**

are more likely to plan a trip if they see people like them in travel ads and promotions.

**Desire for authentic representation in travel ads**

Representation means a lot to LGBTQIA+ travellers but it is currently lacking. More than two-thirds (70%) of LGBTQIA+ travellers say that it is important to see themselves represented in travel ads. Yet only a fraction of LGBTQIA+ travellers—one in ten (11%)—feel that they are currently well represented.

For many, the gap can prevent them from making travel plans, with nearly three quarters (73%) of LGBTQIA+ travellers reporting that they are more likely to plan a trip when they see themselves in travel ads. This gap is even wider among LGBTQIA+ travellers spending a lot on their trip. Of those spending at least \$7,000 annually, 88% are more inclined to plan a trip when they see their community represented in ads. This holds true for 71% of those spending between \$3,000 and \$6,000, and 65% of those spending less than \$3,000 annually.

**Time burden of research and planning**

LGBTQIA+ travellers—particularly those with intersectional identities—invest significant time in travel planning, more so than any other group.

LGBTQIA+ travellers prioritise inclusive booking features that highlight LGBTQIA+-friendly destinations, including filters for reviews from the LGBTQIA+ community. The LGBTQIA+ traveller community actively contributes to these features by sharing their experiences through online reviews.

**Time burden**

Planning is a substantial investment for LGBTQIA+ travellers, as they spend an average of 12 hours researching travel and an additional six ensuring that their destinations are safe, welcoming and accessible. This investment is even greater among LGBTQIA+ travellers with intersectional identities.

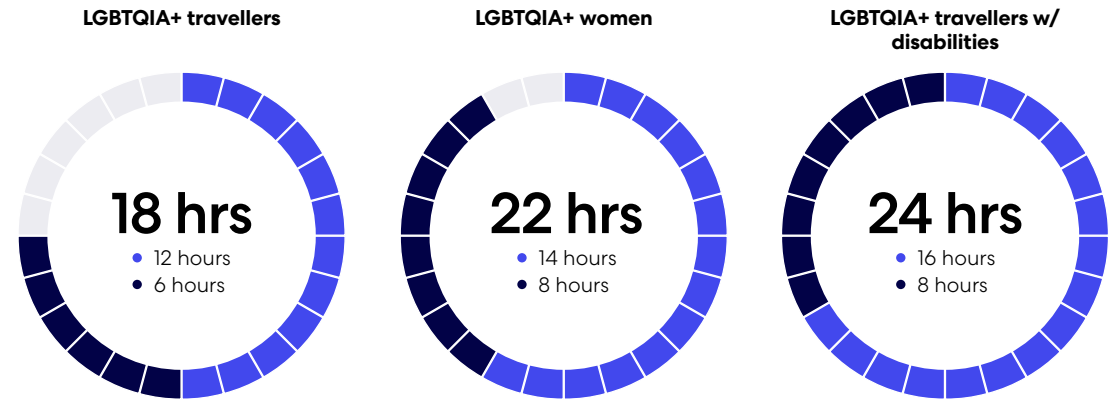
LGBTQIA+ focus group participants shared that, in particular, they take time to familiarise themselves with local customs and laws, so they understand whether they need to conceal aspects of their identity for safety.

‘One thing I try to do is look at if the country or place has any rules or regulations or things I might be aware of. Especially maybe if it’s a place that isn’t considered as friendly’.

Focus group participant  
(Black, LGBTQIA+ woman)

**Average time spent researching and planning for a trip**

- Time spent on researching and planning for a trip.
- Extra time spent researching to ensure that services and destinations are safe, welcoming and accessible for people with your identity.





### Priorities

What matters most to LGBTQIA+ travellers is safety, belonging and respect. In fact, 84% of LGBTQIA+ travellers rank safety among their top priorities—and nearly as many said that finding a welcoming destination (80%) and getting a good deal (80%) are important too.

Other priorities include:

- **Accessibility:** 70% believe that finding accessible transit and accommodation is important.
- **Respect:** 68% prioritise choosing travel providers that will respect their identity.
- **Representation in reviews:** 55% find it vital to get reviews and recommendations from people who share their identity.
- **Minority-owned businesses:** 32% say that it is important to find minority-owned businesses when planning travel.

Safety, feeling welcome and respect are primary concerns for good reason—LGBTQIA+ travellers conduct extensive research in these areas to understand where their identity might not be accepted in order to mitigate risks of violence, harassment and surveillance. Additionally, LGBTQIA+ travellers may alter their presentation—from code-switching to modifying their appearance—to avoid discrimination and feeling unsafe while travelling. Perhaps as a result, 73% of LGBTQIA+ travellers believe that specific guides identifying LGBTQIA+ hosts or businesses, as well as signs showing LGBTQIA+ people are welcome, are important travel-planning tools.

Nearly half (45%) of LGBTQIA+ travellers find it difficult to find information on minority-owned businesses, while nearly a quarter (23%) have trouble finding reviews from individuals who share their identity. This challenge is heightened among gender-expansive LGBTQIA+ travellers, with nearly half (48%) experiencing difficulty finding reviews from peers who share their identity.

Likewise, 21% of LGBTQIA+ travellers find it challenging to identify destinations where they feel welcome. This difficulty is more pronounced among gender-expansive LGBTQIA+ travellers, with over half (54%) reporting struggles. Respect from the travel provider is an issue too, as 19% of LGBTQIA+ travellers—and 56% of genderqueer LGBTQIA+ travellers— find it difficult to choose travel providers they know will respect their identity.

The LGBTQIA+ community is remedying these challenges themselves, using social media to make information easier to find. Nearly three quarters (73%) of LGBTQIA+ travellers will share their positive experiences—and 60% their negative experiences—on social media.

**‘I used to be much more genderqueer presenting... so when I travelled during that time period, I would be more careful about where I was going and how I dressed. I have been assaulted on the street in certain places because of the way I was dressed and presenting.’**

Focus group participant,  
(Asian, LGBTQIA+ person)

**‘I stay almost exclusively at hostels, so when I’m in a dorm and somebody lets everybody know they’re queer, then you get to find that unity together and get to have that little layer of safety. It makes the experience much more enjoyable because I don’t have to keep the wall up and I don’t have to be on the lookout 24/7, and I get to be myself around those people and not be as fearful anymore.’**

Focus group participant (Middle Eastern/  
North African, white, LGBTQIA+ woman)

**Booking features**

An inclusive booking experience is a strong preference among LGBTQIA+ travellers, with four in five particularly valuing language options and user reviews. Representative imagery, assistive technology compatibility and advanced filters for accessibility and gender

inclusivity also rank as important features for most LGBTQIA+ travellers. Specifically, 69% of gender-expansive LGBTQIA+ travellers find gender-inclusive filters important.

**Importance of inclusive booking features**

User reviews from people like me



Language options that match my preferences



Advanced filters for accessibility features



Imagery/pictures depicting people like me



Compatibility with assistive technology



Advanced filters for gender-inclusive features



## Chapter 5:

# Travellers with disabilities

## Key statistics

### 72%

emphasise the importance of finding transit and accommodation that is accessible.

### 83%

of travellers with disabilities believe that user reviews from people like them is an important booking feature.

### 59%

are more likely to plan a trip when they see themselves reflected in travel ads and promotions.

### 68%

are more likely to book repeatedly with brands that publicly promote diversity and inclusion.



According to the [CDC](#), about 73.4 million adults are estimated to have a disability in 2022, representing a considerable proportion of the US population. Travellers with disabilities—especially those with intersectional identities—face added and unexpected costs in time and money, such as increased expenses for ground transport and airport gratuities. Nevertheless, they continue to plan trips, explore global destinations and build communities along the way.

67%

think that finding the necessary information for planning travel should be easier.

41%

think that identity limits their travel options and comfort in certain destination.

28%

think that identity prevents them from planning travel more frequently.

### The impact of identity on travel experience

For travellers with disabilities—particularly those with intersectional identities—identity shows up in every travel decision, particularly around ensuring accessibility. Despite obstacles, travellers with disabilities seek inclusion, while their companions actively seek solutions to facilitate shared memorable experiences. Half (50%) of travellers with disabilities travel with family, and 58% travel with their spouse or partner.

Two-thirds (67%) of travellers with disabilities believe that it should be easier to access necessary information, and 28% agree that their identity hinders them from travelling more frequently. While less than half report that their identity restricts their travel decisions, those with intersectional identities do find it to be a limiting factor, with 72% of Latino travellers with disabilities feeling restricted by their identity when planning trips.

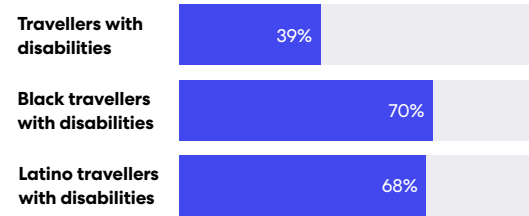
More than two-thirds of Black and Latino travellers with disabilities report that their identity influences their choices of destinations, accommodation, activities and experiences. More than half report that it also affects their transportation and transit decisions—both for travelling to their destination and once they arrive.

'A lot of my travel is shaded because I'm an individual with a disability, so a lot of my plans and trips are always coordinated around accessibility and knowing what's available for me to do and get to.'

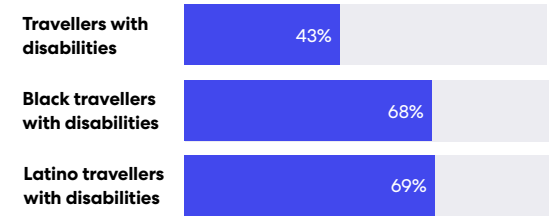
Focus group participant (Black, straight man with a disability)

### The influence of identity on travel decisions

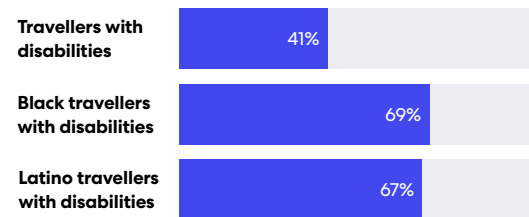
#### Destinations



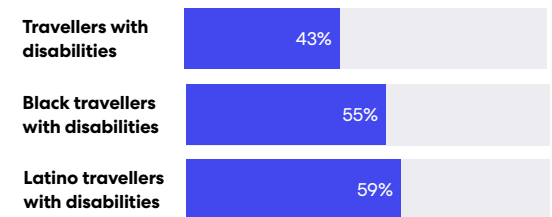
#### Activities or experiences at destinations



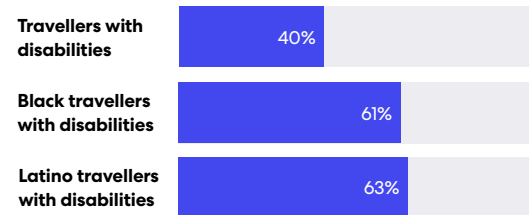
#### Accommodation



#### Transit/transportation when at destination



#### Transit/transportation to and from destination



## Promoting diverse and inclusive solutions

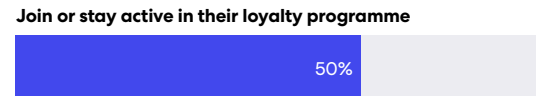
Travellers with disabilities notice a company’s public position on diversity and inclusion —and they exercise their buying power accordingly. Two-thirds (65%) of travellers with disabilities prefer travel providers that publicly support diversity and inclusion; around half state this preference across each type of provider, including transit, accommodation, experiences and online booking companies.

This preference translates into repeat business, with 68% of travellers with disabilities more likely to rebook with companies that showcase diversity and inclusion. Around half prefer this across transit, accommodation, experiences and online booking companies.

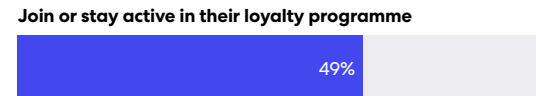
For more than half of travellers with disabilities, a provider’s public promotion of diversity and inclusion could also earn them a loyal customer, with 58% saying they are more likely to engage in a company’s loyalty programme.

### Impact of promoting diversity and inclusion on traveller behaviour

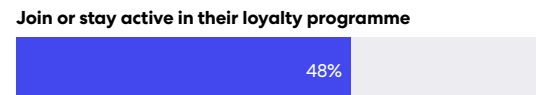
#### Transit provider



#### Accommodation provider



#### Experience provider



#### Online travel agency provider



**68%**

book with them repeatedly.

**65%**

prefer their brand over others.

**58%**

join or stay active in their loyalty programme.



71%

say it is important that travel ads reflect people like them when researching potential destinations.

12%

feel that travel ads and promotions represent them very well.

59%

are more likely to plan a trip if they see people like them in travel ads and promotions.

### Desire for authentic representation in travel ads

Improving representation in travel ads can inspire travellers with disabilities to plan more trips. Nearly three quarters (71%) of travellers with disabilities say it is important that travel ads reflect people like them. Among Latino travellers with disabilities, this sentiment is even stronger, with 93% agreeing. However, just 12% of travellers with disabilities feel that ads represent them well.

Insufficient representation in travel ads significantly impacts the industry. Over half (59%) of travellers with disabilities—and 61% of Latino travellers with disabilities—are more likely to plan trips when they see themselves represented in promotions.

### Time burden of research and planning

#### Time burden

For travellers with disabilities, travel is complex, requiring comprehensive research, trusted sources and contingency plans. They seek firsthand insights into accommodation accessibility and avoid services that previously overlooked their needs.

Travellers with disabilities spend, on average, nine hours planning their travel, plus an additional four ensuring that destinations are safe, welcoming and accessible. LGBTQIA+ travellers with disabilities invest even more time, averaging 16 hours on research and an additional eight hours verifying safety, accessibility and inclusivity.

‘I have back and nerve problems, so [...] I can walk for maybe five, 10 minutes. I did a lot of research with how the cruise lines will help you access everything’.

Focus group participant (White, straight man with a disability)

#### Average time spent researching and planning for a trip

- Time spent on researching and planning for a trip.
- Extra time spent researching to ensure that services and destinations are safe, welcoming and accessible for people with your identity.

#### Travellers with disabilities



#### LGBTQIA+ travellers with disabilities



#### Cost burden

Inaccessibility doesn't just limit options and complicate trip planning. It also results in higher costs for travellers with disabilities, such as increased fees for ground transportation when they can't use traditional ride-sharing services, paying extra gratuities for additional assistance and/or incurring surprise charges for service animals.

‘We expect that Plan A is not going to work and that we're going to have to go to our guaranteed Plan B because it's happened before. We have ended up without a place to stay, for instance. Or travel providers are like, ‘We're going to charge you an exorbitant amount for the service dog’, stuff like that. I always have a Plan B whenever I do anything or plan to go anywhere’.

Focus group participant (Asian, LGBTQIA+ man with a disability)

‘I've found solutions for problems I've encountered while at my destination, but it has cost more money and was not refunded back. It cost me money to hire a car and drive eight hours to get home, stuff like that. It always costs more money’.

Focus group participant (Black, straight woman with a disability)

**Priorities**

Travellers with disabilities’ top three priorities are getting a good deal (86%), ensuring safety (82%) and feeling welcome at a location (74%).

Other priorities include:

- **Accessibility:** 72% believe that finding accessible transit and accommodation is important.
- **Respect:** 68% prioritise choosing travel providers that will respect their identity.
- **Representation in reviews:** 46% find it vital to get reviews and recommendations from people who share their identity.

Travellers with disabilities do not feel that it is important to find minority-owned businesses when planning travel, with only 23% indicating this is a priority.

Among travellers with disabilities and intersectional identities, priorities varied. For example, 89% of Latino travellers with disabilities said that finding accessible transit and accommodation is essential or very important. Female travellers with disabilities are more likely than their male counterparts to say that it is essential or very important to find a destination that is safe (93% versus 70%) and

welcoming (85% versus 62%). Nearly all Black travellers with disabilities (96%) say that it is essential or very important to find a destination where they will be welcome.

Identity-specific guides are important to about half of travellers with disabilities, and more so for Black, Latino and LGBTQIA+ travellers with disabilities (72% of Black, 79% of Latino and 82% of LGBTQIA+ travellers with disabilities prioritise them). Additionally, two in five (42%) find it difficult to locate information on minority-owned businesses, while one in five (21%) struggle to find reviews from people who share their identity.

Travellers with disabilities are bridging information gaps by sharing their experiences. 68% share positive experiences on social media, and over half (54%) share negative ones. Latino travellers with disabilities are particularly active, with 93% sharing positive experiences and 75% sharing negative ones.

**‘For me, I’d go to my friends that travel as much as I do, and I ask their opinions because, a lot of times, they’ve stayed there already. What they’ve seen and observed, stuff like that. But even with that, you cannot get a full picture because it might not occur when they were there’.**

Black, straight woman with a disability

**Booking features**

Inclusive booking features go a long way for travellers with disabilities, with our insights underscoring just how important it is for the travel industry to incorporate them. Compared to other inclusive booking features, travellers with disabilities rely most heavily on user reviews, with 83% saying that these are important. Travellers with disabilities also value language options, with more than three quarters (77%) indicating that they value content in a range of languages.

Accessibility features and assistive technology compatibility are important to about two-thirds of travellers with disabilities. Around half also value representative imagery and gender-inclusive features.

Intersectionality influences how travellers with disabilities prioritise inclusive booking features. While 75% of men value user reviews from people like them, nearly 90% of women do. Likewise, 84% of Latino travellers with disabilities consider compatibility with assistive technology important.

In addition to inclusive booking features, travellers with disabilities rely heavily on accurate and specific information in the planning phase. This includes access to live customer service representatives and up-to-date, high-quality photos to make informed decisions about their travel arrangements.

**‘I think the sites that we do use to book through, I feel like they should at least maybe check into the properties for an update or just make sure policies are up to date, or make sure events are accurate and phone numbers haven’t changed’.**

Focus group participant (Asian, LGBTQIA+ man with a disability)

**Importance of inclusive booking features**

User reviews from people like me



Language options that match my preferences



Advanced filters for accessibility features



Imagery/pictures depicting people like me



Compatibility with assistive technology



Advanced filters for gender-inclusive features



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