



CHINA

KEY FINDINGS

2022

Exploring barriers to travel
among disabled people





BOOKING AND PLANNING TRIPS

A third feel that they shouldn't have to use specialist travel agents or providers.

Over two-fifths of disabled Chinese holidaymakers (43%) use a travel agent to book their holiday, making this more common than just using booking directly with the travel provider (35%) or both a travel agent and a travel provider combined (22%).

Travel agents or providers that specialise in holidays for disabled people are most popular, compared with unspecialised providers. Indeed, 40% opt for specialised providers, over a quarter (28%) use non-specialist agents, and 33% use a mix of both.





Booking and Planning Trips

The reasons for not using disabled specialist agents or providers are more likely to be due to not feeling like they should have to, rather than anything to do with the service they offer.

Of those who do not use specialist agents or providers, a third (32%) say they don't not feel like they should have to.

Additionally, one in five (21%) do not need to use specialist travel agents or providers, and a quarter (25%) didn't know they existed.

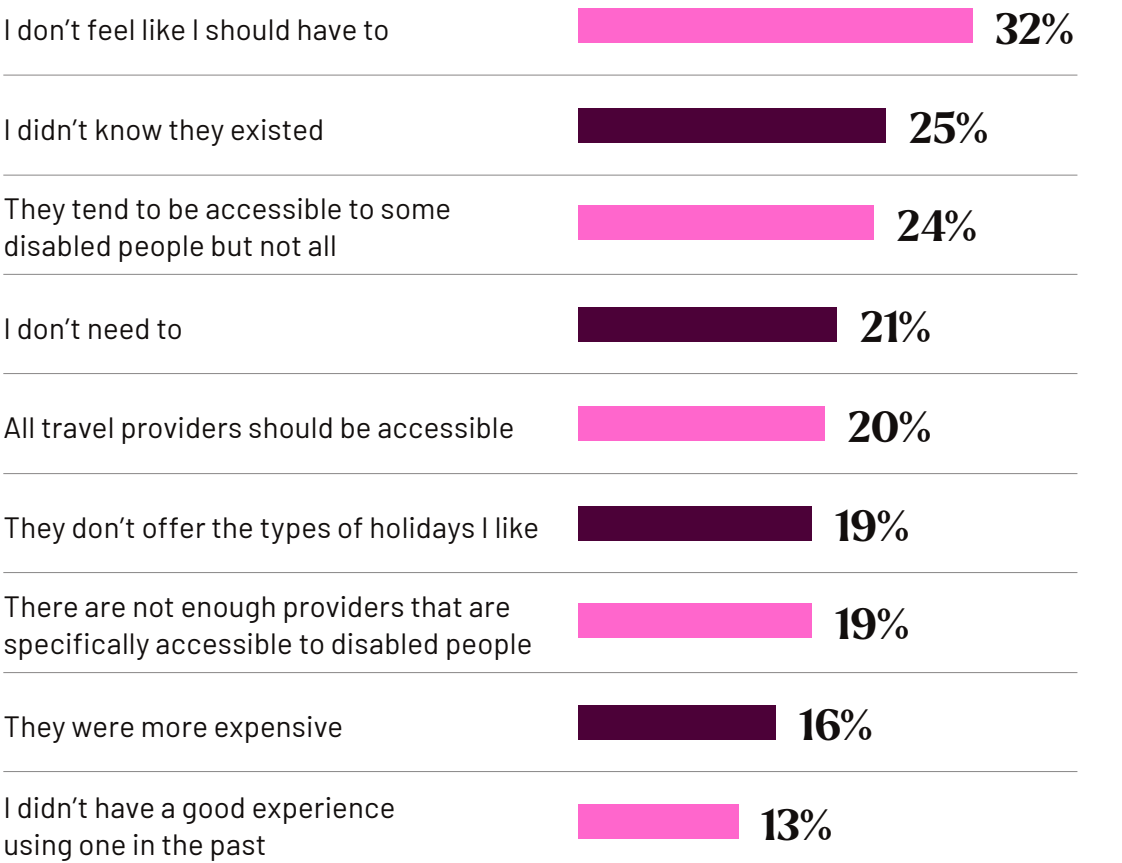
A fifth (19%) said there are not enough specifically accessible providers, and the same proportion said that the providers don't offer the types of holidays they like. 16% said that they are more expensive.

Interestingly, disabled travellers aged 18-34 are more likely to feel that they shouldn't have to use specialist providers (48%) than those aged 35-54 (38%) and 55+ (25%), suggesting that accessibility for age-related disabilities is expected to be the norm.



Make the movement of the disabled more convenient and solve their worries.

Reasons for not using travel agents or providers that specialise in holidays for disabled people, among those who don't use them.

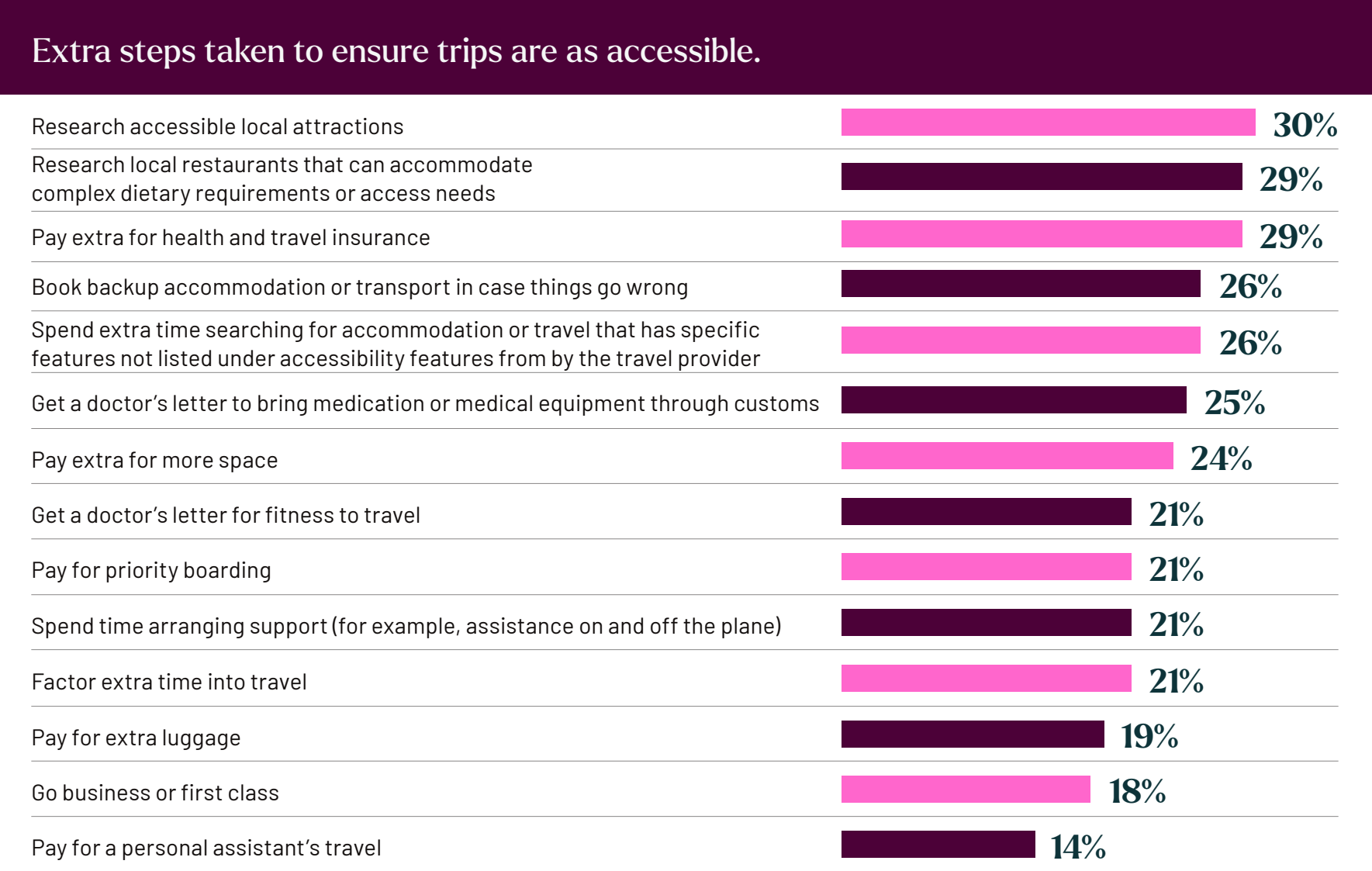




Booking and Planning Trips

One in eight find booking a holiday in person difficult.

Chinese disabled holidaymakers find it generally easy to book their holidays, with bookings made online on a computer (12%) and in person (12%) scoring the highest level of difficulty. Booking holidays on their smartphone is difficult for just 11% while booking over the phone is difficult just for 10% of disabled holidaymakers.





Booking and Planning Trips

Three in ten have to pay extra for health and travel insurance, amounting to ¥8060.

Three in ten (30%) disabled people in China said they have to research accessible local attractions before a holiday to make sure it is accessible for them.

For disabled people, extra steps most commonly involve having to factor extra costs and extra time into their trip.

Nearly three in ten (29%) said they have to pay extra for health and travel insurance, paying on average ¥8060 to ensure they're covered. One fifth (25%) also have to arrange a doctor's letter to bring medication or medical equipment through customs.

The same proportion (21%) said they have to factor extra time into travel and 19% spend more money on extra luggage.

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Treat customers with more patience and don't deliberately discriminate.



30%
of disabled people in China said they have to research accessible local attractions before a holiday to make sure it is accessible for them.

A holiday costs a disabled person ¥12902.

A disabled person in China spends on average ¥12902 on a single trip. Disabled travellers aged 55+ tend to spend slightly less, with an average of ¥11745, and those aged 18-34 spend ¥14020.

Those who self-describe their disability as impacting their day-to-day life a lot spend even more on holidays, with an average of ¥13399, as compared to those whose disability impacts them a little (¥12284).



Booking and Planning Trips

Shanghai considered the most accessible city.

Of those who have visited the most travelled cities in the world, disabled people in China said that Shanghai was the most accessible.

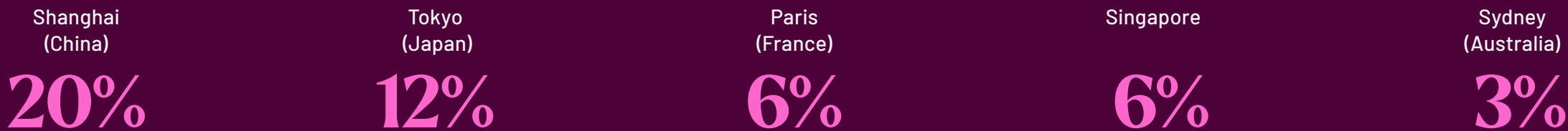
Two-fifths (39%) said that Shanghai is accessible because there are accessible public transport links and there is a wide variety of accessible accommodation (38%) and signage is displayed clearly (35%). However, as it's known for its bustling city life, Shanghai visitors can't avoid city crowds, as only 7% of the respondents said they think it's accessible because it has fewer crowds than other cities.

The top five accessible cities, as voted by the survey participants of China are listed below.

- Shanghai (China) - 20%
- Tokyo (Japan) - 12%
- Paris (France) - 6%
- Singapore - 6%
- Sydney (Australia) - 3%



Cities voted the most accessible:



Booking and Planning Trips

Four in five have been left in a difficult situation while travelling, causing stress and discomfort.

Four in five (83%) listed at least one challenge they faced while travelling due to the agent or provider they were using not being accessible to disabled people.

A quarter (24%) recall staff not being told about their accessibility needs, whilst others say transport or accommodation was not accessible as expected (23%).

A similar proportion say they missed transport links (22%) whilst others report on the challenges of accessible transport cancellations.

83%

listed at least one challenge they faced while travelling due to the agent or provider they were using not being accessible to disabled people.

One-fifth (20%) of those who experienced something happening to them due to the travel agent or provider not being accessible, said this caused them stress. The same percentage said 'the situation caused them embarrassment (20%).

Concerningly, around one in six (17%) reported feeling unsafe and 18% scared.



Booking and Planning Trips

Over a quarter of those caught in a negative experience had to get out of the situation on their own.

Two-fifths (42%) of those who had a bad experience had someone travelling with them to help them. Travel providers (33%), family members / friends (31%) and strangers (27%) also helped those with a disability when they faced disruption. Nevertheless, over a quarter (26%) got themselves out of the situation. One percent of people said there was nothing they could do.

42%

of those who had a bad experience had someone travelling with them to help them.

Of those who said they experienced something due to a provider or agent not being accessible just 3% said it was not resolved. Three in ten (30%) said it was resolved, albeit slowly, and almost the same percentage (34%) said it was resolved quickly, showing a diverse experience. Furthermore, one in eight (12%) of those who said the situation was resolved said they were unhappy with the outcome, including 1% who were very unhappy. A majority (60%), however, were happy with how the situation was handled.



I hope more hotels accept disabled people, otherwise, there are really very few choices.

Two-fifths turned to social media to write about their experience, whilst others left a review online (both 40%). One-third (30%) complained to the provider.

These findings suggest a clear need for travel providers and agents to make improvements to not only resolve but also prevent situations occurring that cause stress and discomfort to disabled people.

This is ever more important given that 38% of those who have had bad experiences with travel agents or providers have told other people about their experiences, and a quarter (25%) have stopped using the provider altogether.



MAKING IMPROVEMENTS

Being treated with respect is the most important consideration for disabled people, but they also expect travel agents and providers to improve accessibility.

While accessibility factors, such as having a range of accessible transport or accommodation (38%), or an accessible website (26%), are important to disabled people when choosing a travel agent or provider, the most important factors influencing choice are more centred around how they're treated.

Two-fifths (42%) of disabled people say they choose a travel agent or provider based on whether they treat disabled people with kindness and respect. Furthermore, two-fifths (40%) say they choose based on whether they understand their needs.



Making Improvements

However, while these factors are important when choosing a travel agent or provider, they're not necessarily the areas travel agents need to improve on the most. While 42% said they choose a provider based on whether the staff treat them with kindness and respect, only 35% said they need to improve on this.

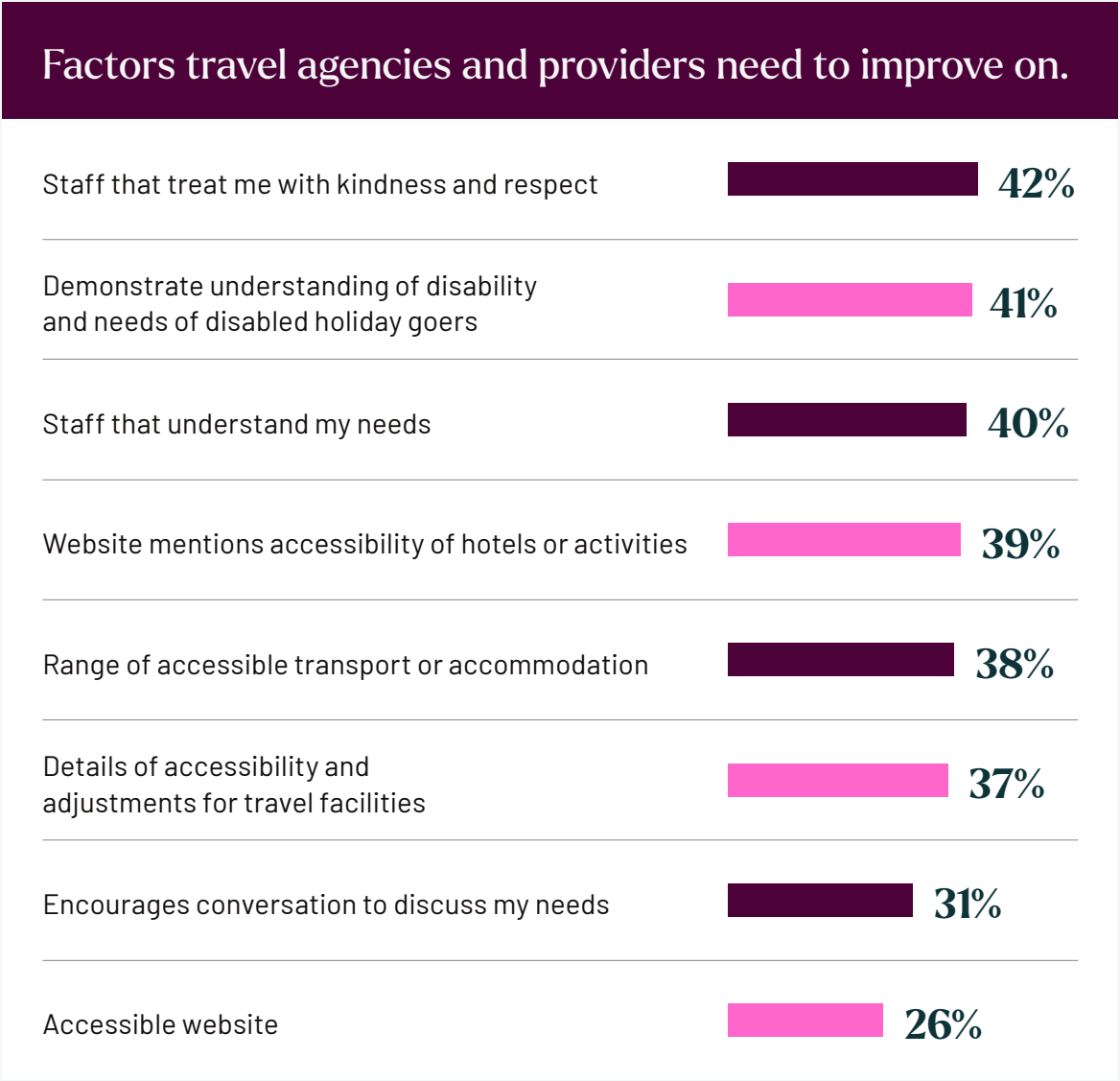
Respondents were more concerned with travel agents and providers having details of accessibility and adjustments for travel facilities along with a demonstrated understanding of disability and the needs of disabled holiday goers (both 37% and 41%). Similarly, others say a range of accessible transport or accommodation (38%) and staff that understand their needs (40%) are things that travel providers and agents should improve on.

42%

of disabled people say they choose a travel agent or provider based on whether they treat disabled people with kindness and respect.

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Understand the needs of customers in advance and treat them accordingly.





Making Improvements

Travel providers need to provide better accessibility contact information on their websites.

While disabled people found accessing websites on their smartphone the easiest platform for booking a holiday (77% said it was easy) it's important that adjustments are made to ensure the process is accessible for all.

Of those who said it was difficult booking a holiday online, 31% said this was due to there being limited or no contact options to ask questions. The same proportion said that complex or confusing language on information pages makes the process difficult for them. Twenty-nine percent say that they were being directed to accessibility helplines that are not in use.

Accommodation providers need to improve on making their ground floor facilities more accessible.

A strong majority (98%) of disabled people think that accommodation providers need to improve on at least one feature to be more accessible to disabled people.

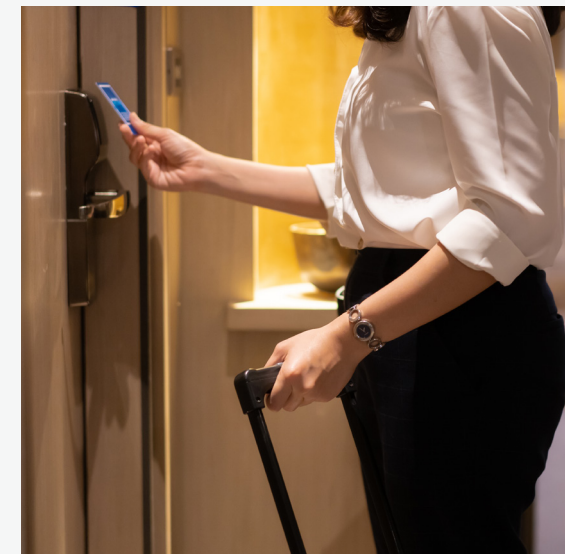
The improvement most commonly highlighted is around emergency call options (21%), closely followed by accessible public transport links (21%) and medical support available locally (20%).



I hope that travel agencies can provide personalised services according to different disabilities.

98%

of disabled people think that accommodation providers need to improve on at least one feature to be more accessible to disabled people.



Respect every disabled person because they are also a part of society.



Making Improvements

