

Accommodation Occupancy Survey

Strategic Research and Insight

Q1 2023



Summary and Background



Q1 2023 | Occupancy Survey

Summary

Occupancy levels are higher or similar to 2022 in every sector

- **Guesthouse** room occupancy in Q1 2023 (67%) was significantly higher than in Q1 2022 (54%)
- **B&B** room occupancy (37%) in Q1 2023 was similar to Q1 2022 (34%) – but many B&Bs have still not reopened, so net occupancy comparisons should be viewed with caution
- **Self-catering** unit occupancy in Q1 was 43% – similar to Q1 last year (40%); the sector recovered more quickly than other sectors from the pandemic and so occupancy rates are now stable
- **Hostel** bed occupancy (52%) in Q1 was significantly higher than Q1 last year (45%) – the sector is on a steeper part of the ‘recovery curve’ than some other sectors

Strong international Market

- The guesthouse, B&B and self-catering sectors all saw the proportion of international visitors increase significantly in Q1 2023 compared to Q1 2022, no doubt driven by the absence of COVID restrictions in 2023.
- However, the domestic market is still important at this time of year (January – March), making up more than half of visitors in every sector except for guesthouses

Background

What is the accommodation occupancy survey?

- Strategic Research and Insight (SRI) operates a monthly survey with (non-hotel) accommodation operators
- Data on room/unit occupancy, bed occupancy and split by domestic / international guests is gathered on an ongoing basis online and by telephone
- The table below shows the number of monthly data forms completed by sector during Q1 2023
- Caravan & campsite analysis during Q1 is not reliable due to not enough operators being open

Sector / Month	Population	January sample			Feb sample			March sample		
		Open	Closed	Total	Open	Closed	Total	Open	Closed	Total
Guesthouses	138	17	45	62	19	36	55	20	16	36
B&Bs	916	40	415	455	47	383	430	69	268	337
Self-catering	525	117	110	227	118	98	216	114	59	173
Hostels	98	15	48	63	16	47	63	23	41	64

Individual Sectors



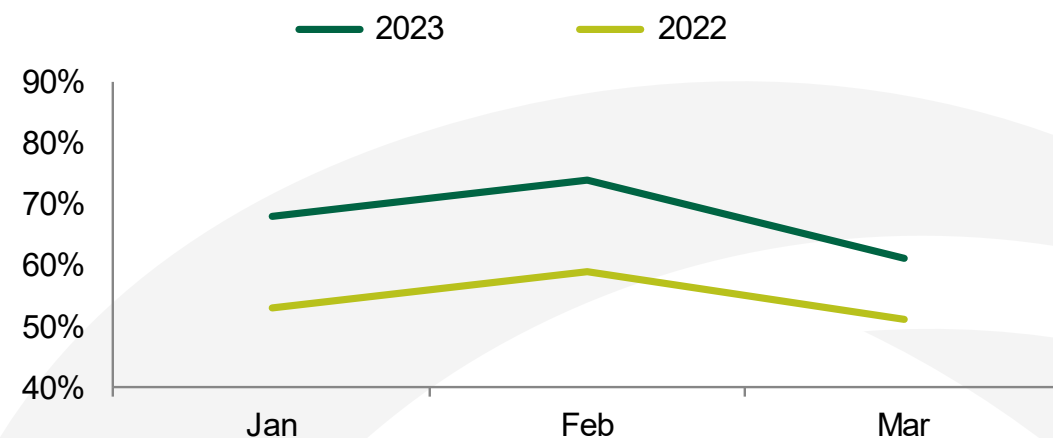
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Guesthouses (1)

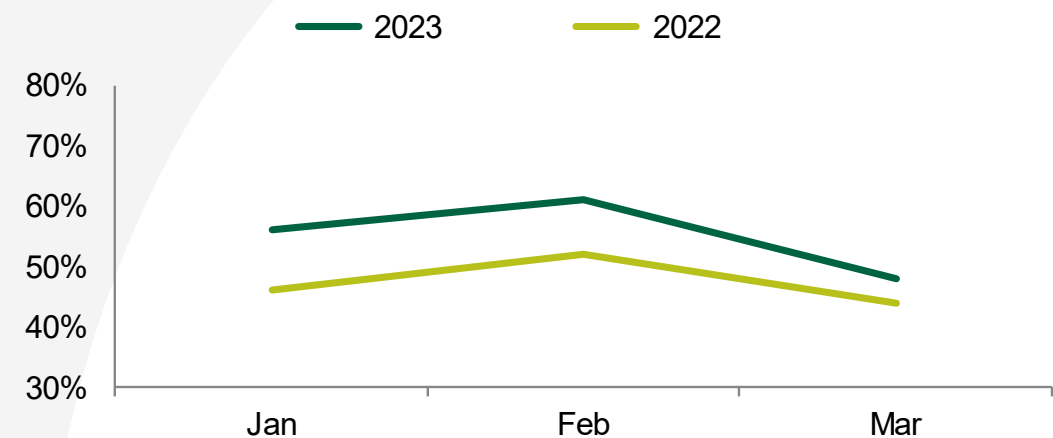
Comfortably ahead of last year

- Guesthouse occupancy levels were significantly up on the same period last year
- Occupancy rates fell in March – as they also did in 2022
- Overall net occupancy rates for January – March were:
 - 67% room occupancy in 2023 vs 54% in 2022
 - 54% bed occupancy in 2023 vs 47% in 2022
- The [May Tourism Barometer](#) showed that 14 out of 18 guesthouses giving data are up or level year to date vs 2022 – with repeat visitors and the return of overseas visitors being the reasons most frequently cited.

Guesthouse % room occupancy



Guesthouse % bed occupancy



Guesthouses (2)

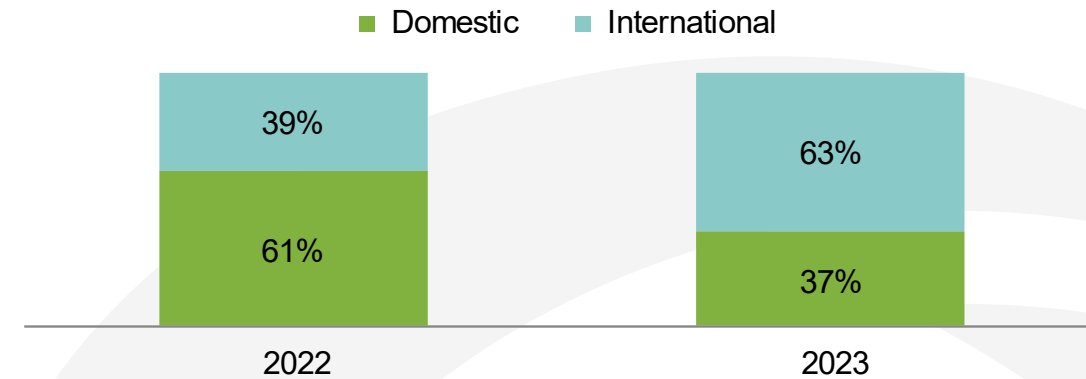
International visitors back in abundance

- International visitors are an important market for Irish guesthouses and they were greatly missed during the pandemic
- In Q1, they made up nearly two thirds of guests – a strong reversal compared to 12 months earlier

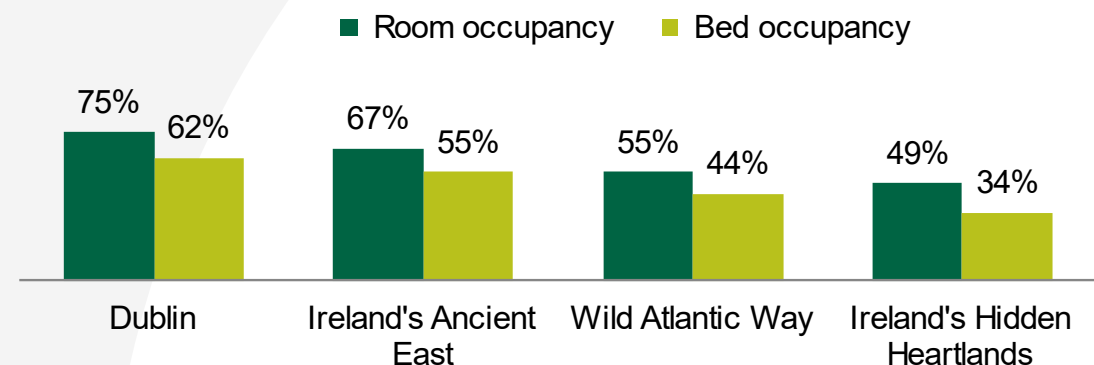
Dublin still ahead, but other regions also doing well

- Dublin guesthouses recovered faster than the other regions when travel restrictions were relaxed
- Dublin is still ahead on occupancy rates, but the other regions are now performing much better than they were in the same period last year

Guesthouse % split by domestic / international (Jan-Mar)



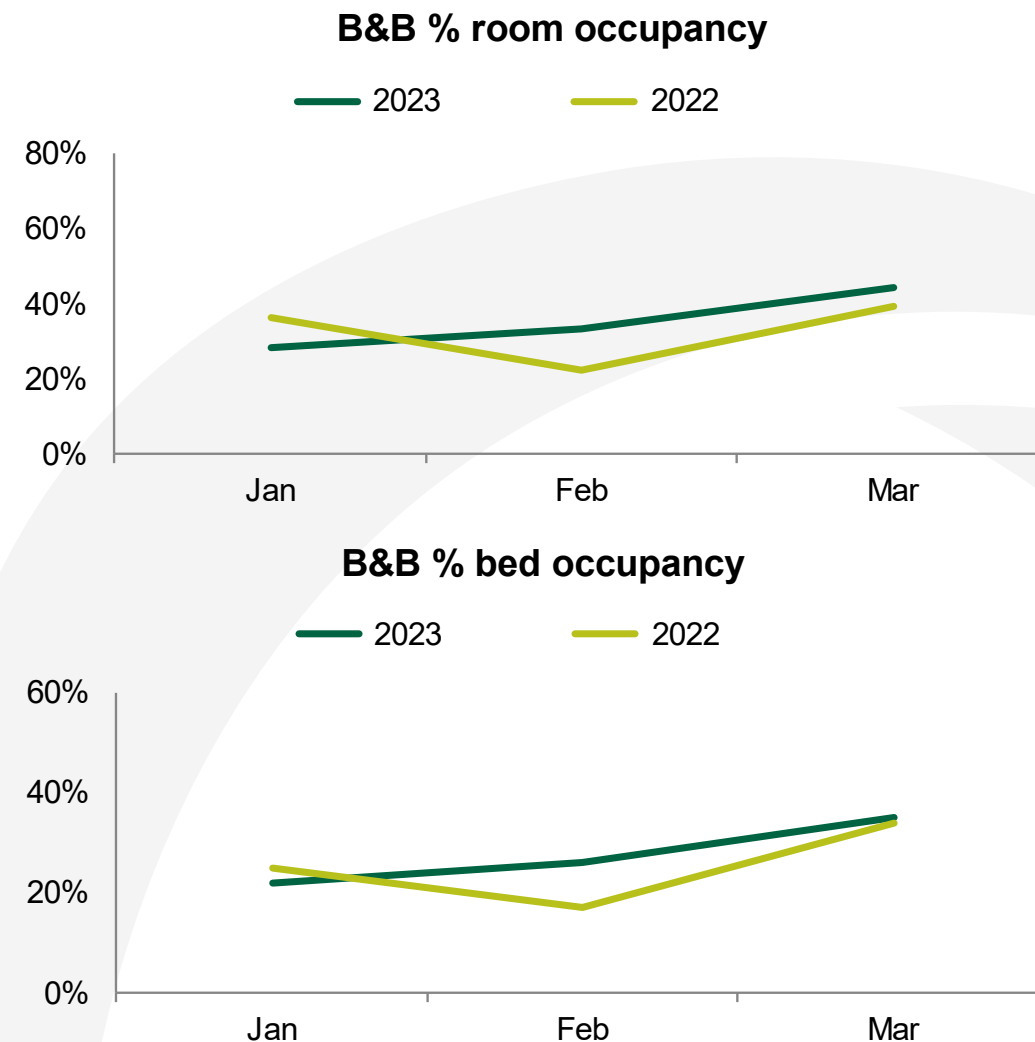
Guesthouse % occupancy by destination (Jan-Mar)



B&Bs (1)

Net occupancy similar to last year

- B&B *net* occupancy levels overall across the quarter are similar to last year, without the dip in February performance this time
- But to say that the sector as a whole is busy would be misleading – most B&Bs have been closed each month in Q1 (see *earlier background for details*)
- Overall net occupancy rates for January – March were:
 - 37% room occupancy in 2023 vs 34% in 2022
 - 29% bed occupancy in 2023 vs 27% in 2022
- The May Barometer showed that 49% of B&Bs are up year to date compared to 2022, whereas only 16% are down – with repeat visitors and the return of overseas visitors being the most frequently cited positive factors



B&Bs (2)

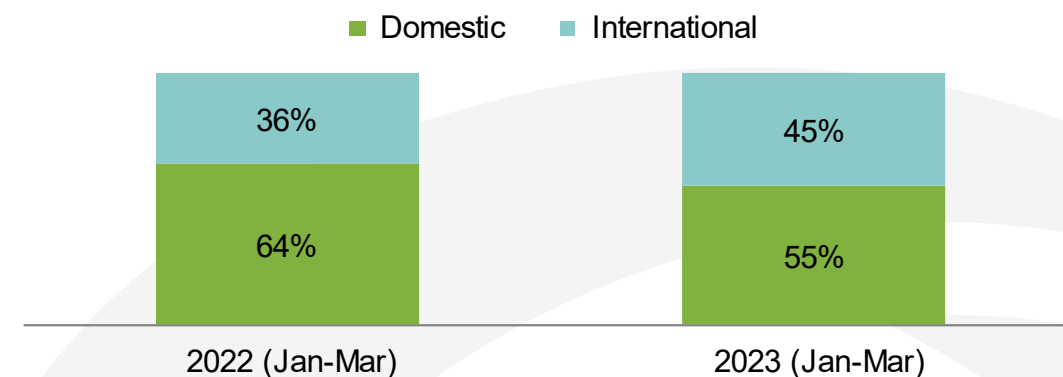
International visitors returning

- International visitors were nearly equal to domestic visitors in terms of volume in Q1 – a different picture from Q1 in 2022
- The May Barometer showed that 54% of B&Bs are up on international visitors year to date compared to 2022, and only 9% are down

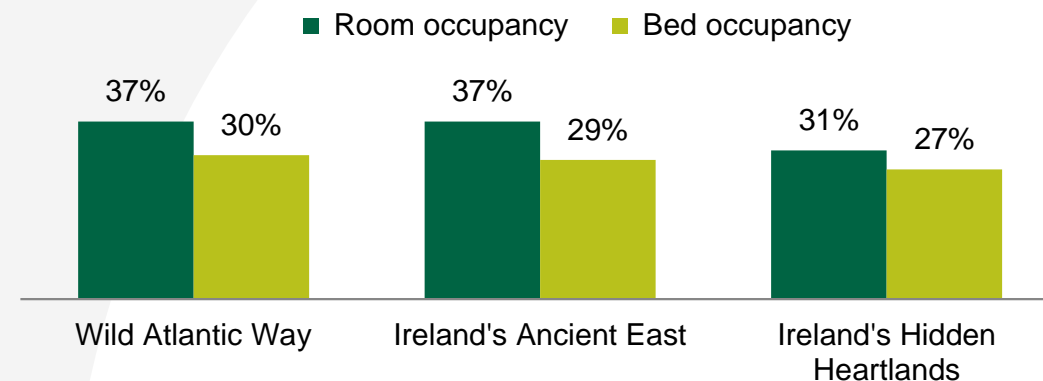
Differences by region are not significant

- B&B performance has been similar across the regions
- The sample in Dublin is too small to analyse

B&B % split by domestic / international (Jan-Mar)



B&B % occupancy by destination (Jan-Mar)

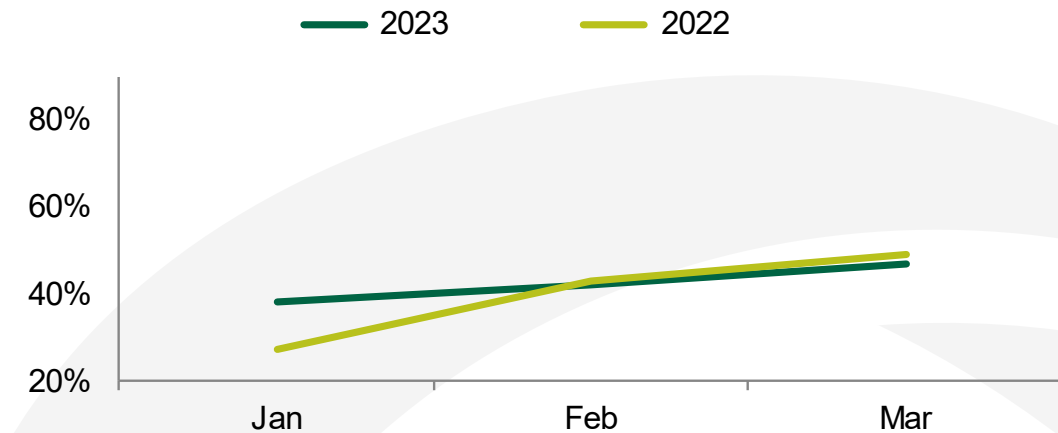


Self-catering (1)

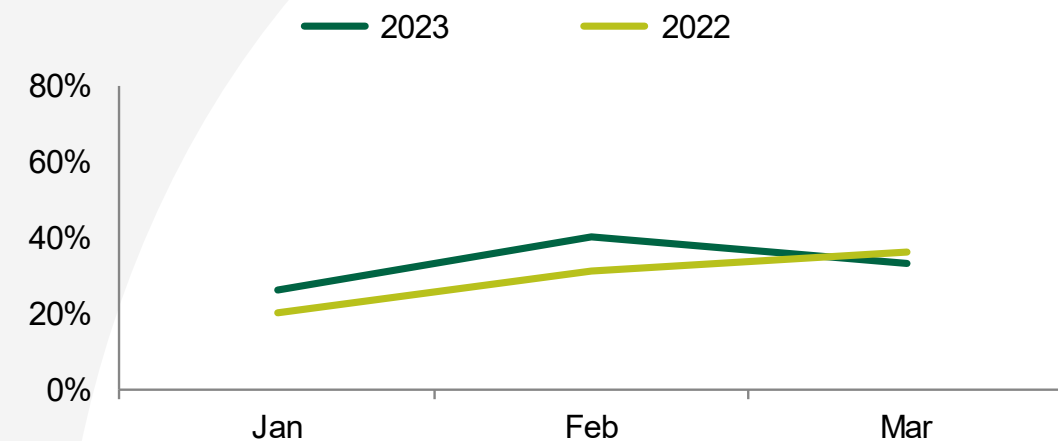
Similar performance to last year

- The self-catering sector recovered faster than some other sectors following the pandemic
- As such, performance somewhat flatlined in Q1
- That said, the May Barometer showed that 42% of operators predict being up in 2023 as a whole, compared to last year, and only 19% expect to be down
- Repeat visitors stand out as a key positive
- Overall occupancy rates for January – March were:
 - 43% unit occupancy in 2023 vs 40% in 2022
 - 30% bed occupancy in 2023 vs 29% in 2022

Self-catering % unit occupancy



Self-catering % bed occupancy



Self-catering (2)

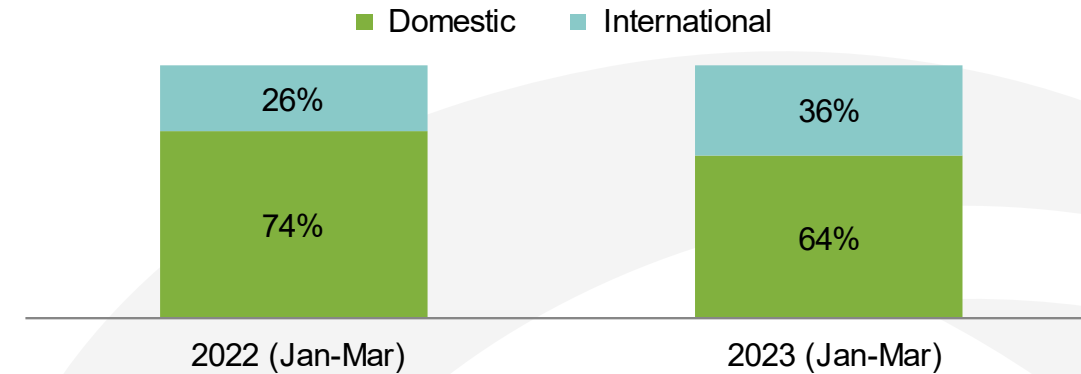
International visitors returning, but domestic market still important in Q1

- The proportion of international visitors in Q1 2023 was significantly higher than in Q1 2022
- However, the domestic market is still playing an important role in this sector, hence repeat visitors standing out as a key positive in the Barometer

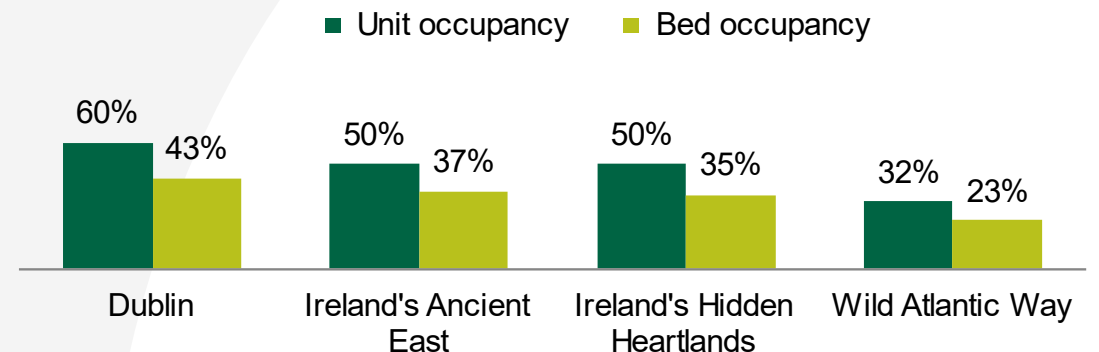
Good unit occupancy in Dublin

- As in some other sectors, occupancy rates in Dublin are higher
- Wild Atlantic Way has lagged behind in Q1 – this was also the case in Q1 2022

Self-catering % split by domestic / international (Jan-Mar)



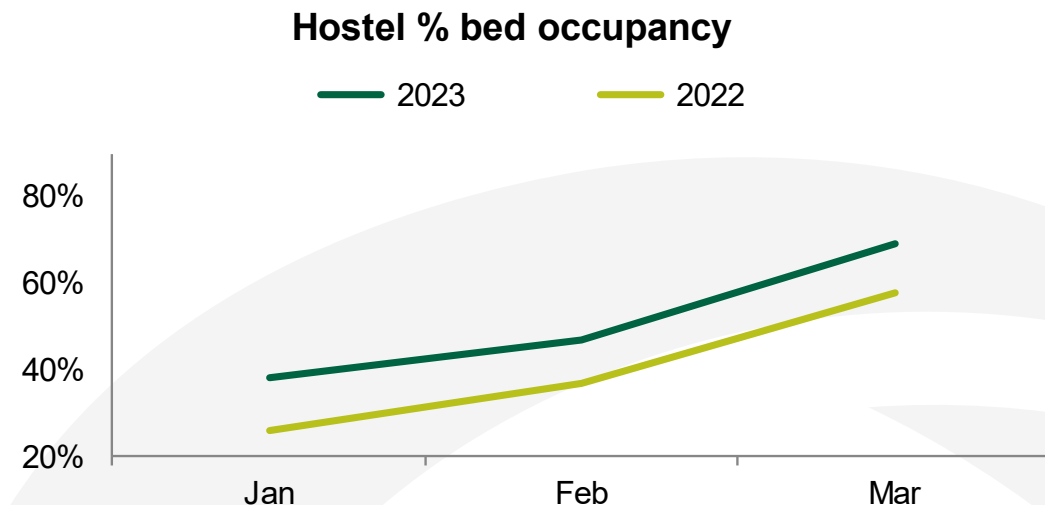
Self-catering % occupancy by destination (Jan-Mar)



Hostels (1)

Positive performance

- The hostels sector was hit particularly hard during the pandemic due to the nature of the accommodation (not easily segregated) and its reliance on international visitors
- 2023 is looking significantly better than 2022
- Overall bed occupancy rates for January – March were:
 - 52% in 2023 vs 45% in 2022
- The upward trend looks set to continue
- The May Barometer showed that 9 of the 13 responding hostels expect to be up in 2023 compared to 2022, and the other 4 expect to be level



Hostels (2)

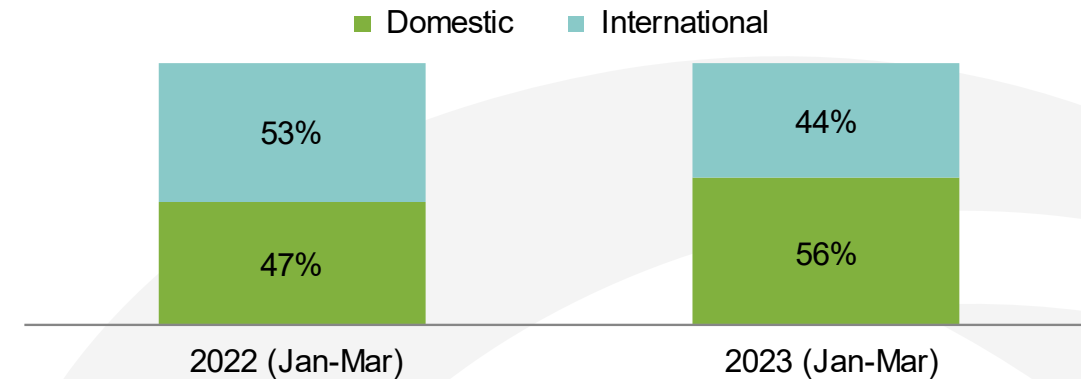
Balance tipped back towards domestic visitors

- Hostels are the only sector to see the balance of visitor origin tip back towards the domestic market
- The May Barometer findings suggest that this does not necessarily mean that the international market weakened; rather, the domestic market has performed well also

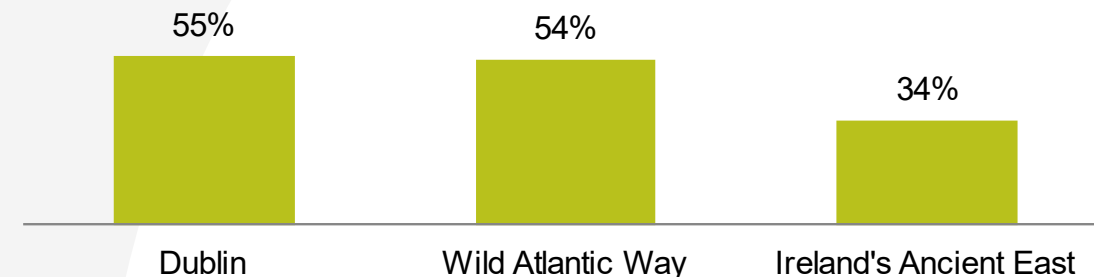
Some significant differences by region

- Hostels in Dublin and the Wild Atlantic Way have been busy, whereas performance in Ireland's Ancient East has been softer

Hostel % split by domestic / international (Jan-Mar)



Hostel % bed occupancy by destination (Jan-Mar)





Thank you

Strategic Research and Insight

May 2023

