A scenic view of the Cliffs of Moher in Ireland, showing the rugged, layered rock formations meeting the Atlantic Ocean under a blue sky with scattered clouds. The cliffs are topped with green grass, and the sea is a deep blue with white foam from the waves crashing against the base of the cliffs.

# Accommodation Occupancy Survey

Strategic Research and Insight

Q2 2023





# Summary and Background



Q2 2023 | Occupancy Survey

# Summary

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## Occupancy levels are higher or similar to 2022 in every sector

- **Guesthouse** room occupancy in Q2 2023 (79%) was significantly higher than in Q2 2022 (66%)
- **B&B** room occupancy (61%) in Q2 2023 was higher than in Q2 2022 (53%) – but many B&Bs have remained closed, so net occupancy comparisons should be viewed with caution
- **Self-catering** unit occupancy in Q2 was 65% – slightly higher than in Q2 last year (60%); the sector recovered more quickly than other sectors from the pandemic and so growth in occupancy is starting to level off
- **Hostel** bed occupancy (74%) in Q2 was significantly higher than Q2 last year (56%) – the sector remains on a steeper part of the year-on-year ‘recovery curve’ than some other sectors
- **Caravan & camping** pitch occupancy in Q2 was 48% – similar to Q2 2022 (44%)

## Proportion of international visitors now levelling off

- Only the B&B sector has seen a significant increase in the proportion of visitors coming from overseas; guesthouses and hostels have even seen the balance tip back in the direction of domestic visitors
- This does not mean however that the overseas market is not performing well this year – the [May Tourism Barometer](#) showed that the overseas market is expected to be up this year, but so too is the domestic market

# 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 Q2 2023

Sector / Month	Population	April sample			May sample			June sample		
		Open	Closed	Total	Open	Closed	Total	Open	Closed	Total
Guesthouses	138	33	18	51	36	10	46	33	7	40
B&Bs	916	157	229	386	181	109	290	170	65	235
Self-catering	525	140	35	175	182	38	220	164	33	197
Hostels	98	22	22	44	34	23	57	31	22	53
Caravan & camping	130	36	36	72	59	13	72	45	7	52



# Individual Sectors



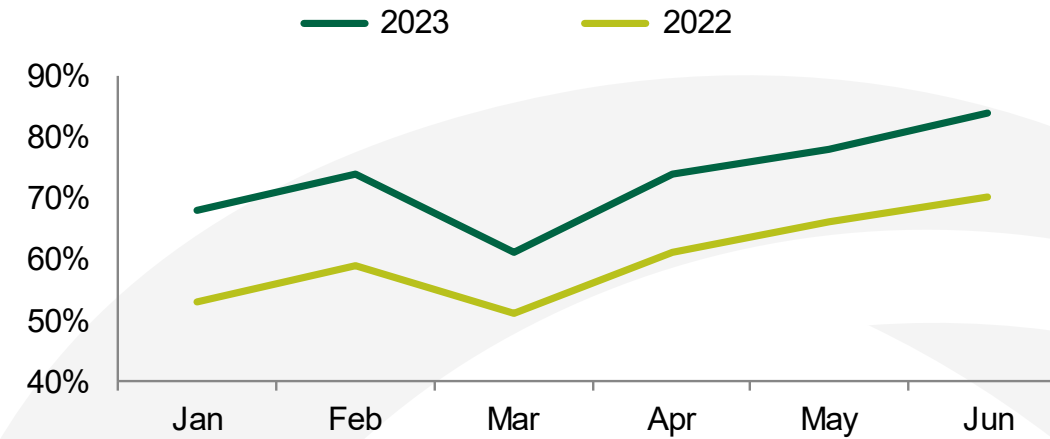
Q2 2023 | Occupancy Survey

# Guesthouses (1)

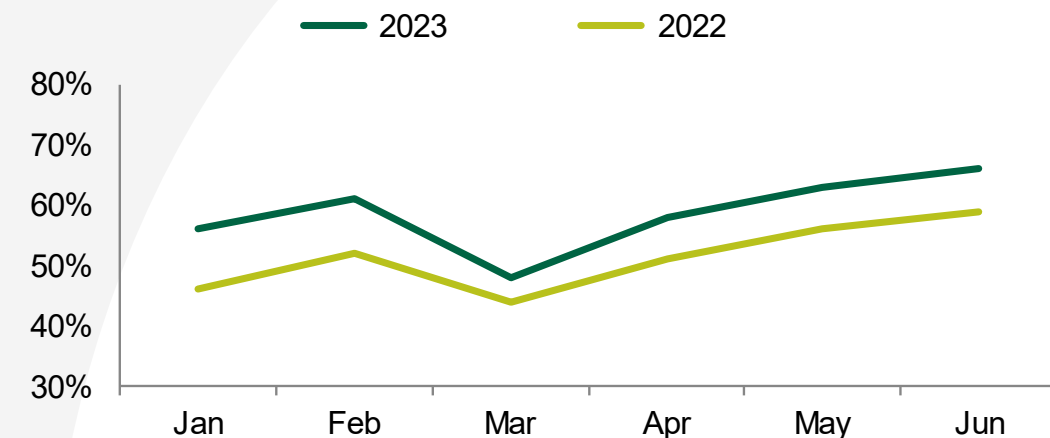
## Remaining consistently ahead of last year

- Seasonal changes in guesthouse room occupancy levels by month have followed a similar pattern to last year but have been consistently 10 – 15% pts ahead
- Overall net occupancy rates for April – June were:
  - 79% room occupancy in 2023 vs 66% in 2022
  - 63% bed occupancy in 2023 vs 55% in 2022
- The [May Tourism Barometer](#) showed that 14 out of 18 guesthouses giving data were 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)

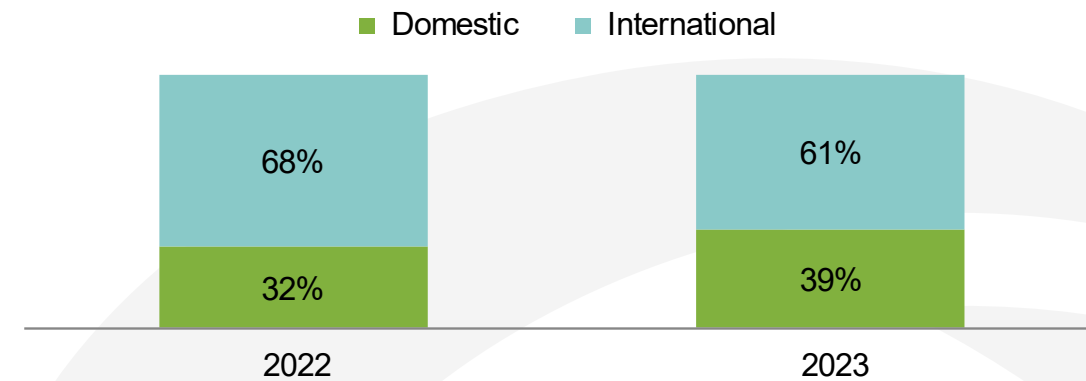
## Slight shift in market balance compared to 2022

- Although the May barometer reported return of overseas visitors as a key reason for buoyancy in the guesthouse sector, the balance for Q2 has shifted in the direction of domestic visitors
- As repeat visitors were also cited as a key positive factor in May, it may be that the repeat domestic market performed well in Q2

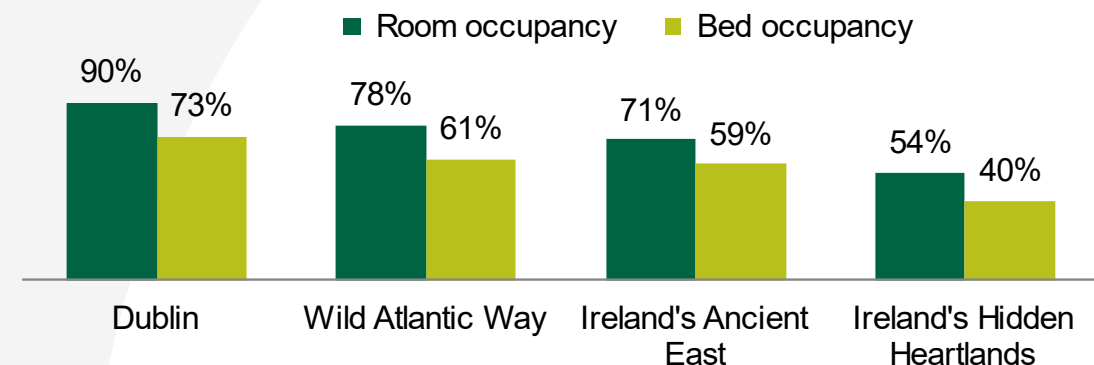
## Dublin still ahead, but other regions also doing well

- Dublin is still ahead on occupancy rates, but all regions are performing much better than they were in the same period last year

Guesthouse % split by domestic / international (Apr-Jun)



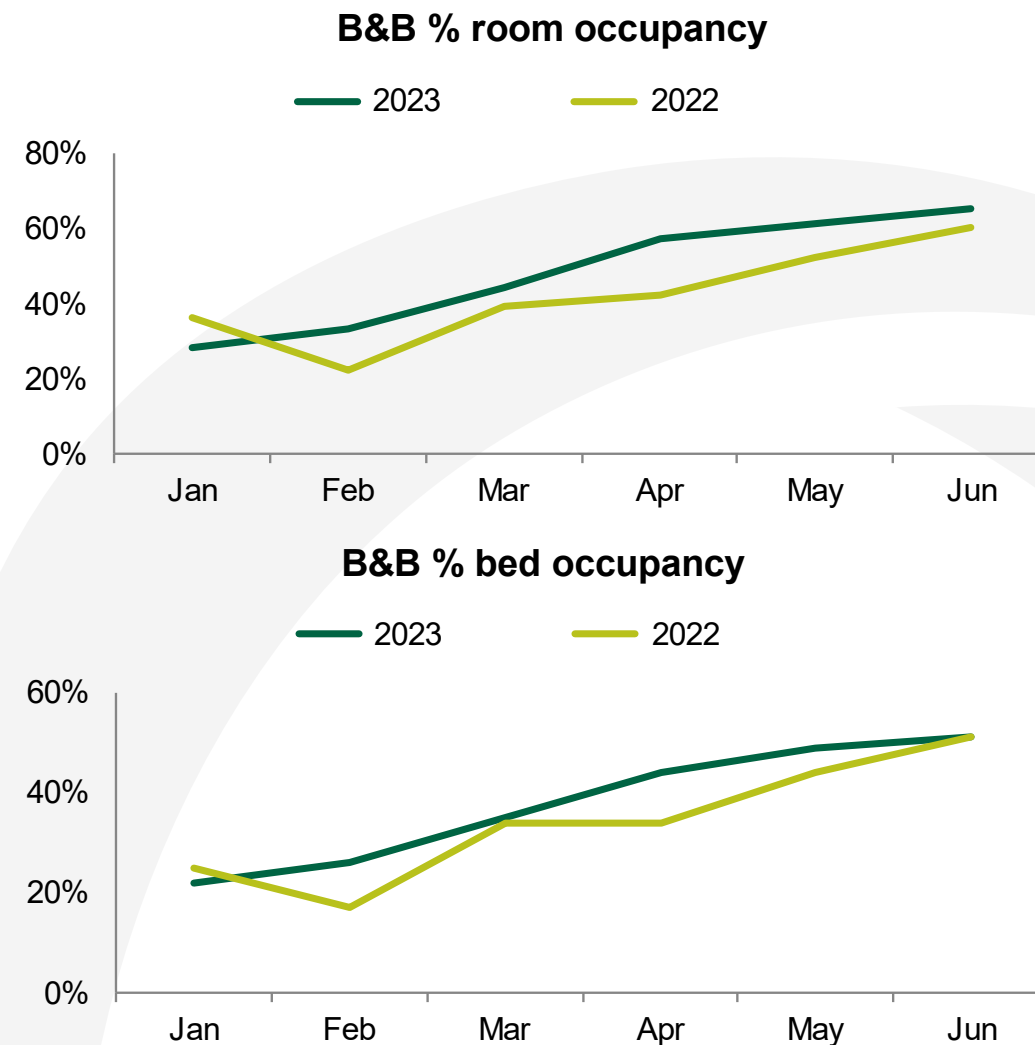
Guesthouse % occupancy by destination (Apr-Jun)



# B&Bs (1)

## Net occupancy slightly ahead of last year

- B&B *net* occupancy levels overall across the quarter were slightly ahead of 2022
- But many B&Bs have remained closed each month in Q2 (see *earlier background for details*)
- Overall net occupancy rates for April – June were:
  - 61% room occupancy in 2023 vs 53% in 2022
  - 48% bed occupancy in 2023 vs 44% in 2022
- The May Barometer showed that 49% of B&Bs were up year to date compared to 2022, whereas only 16% were down – with repeat visitors and the return of overseas visitors being the most frequently cited positive factors





# B&Bs (2)

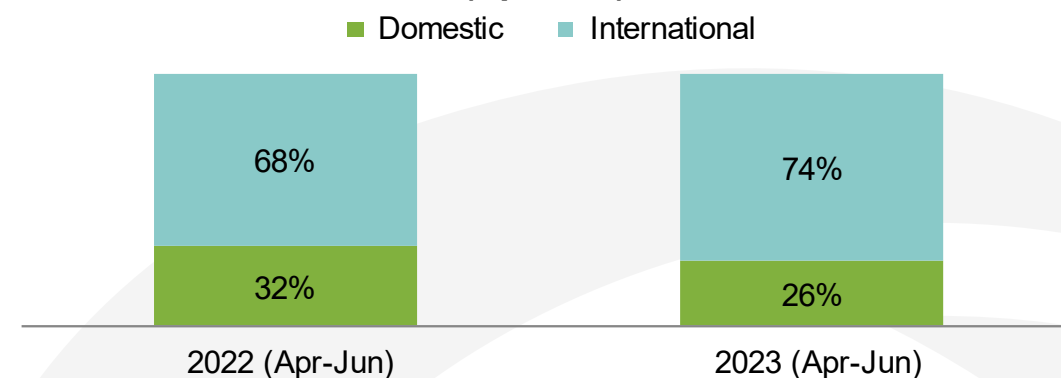
## International visitors underpinning business

- International visitors made up about three quarters of the business in Q2 – a proportional increase compared to Q2 in 2022
- The May Barometer showed that 54% of B&Bs were up on international visitors year to date compared to 2022, and only 9% were down

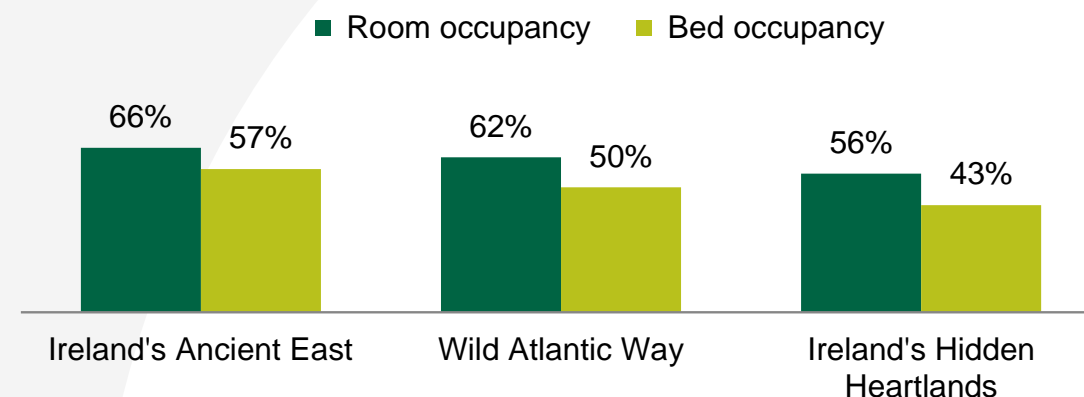
## Some differences by region

- B&B performance in Ireland's Ancient East has been slightly ahead in Q2
- All regions have performed better than in Q2 last year

B&B % split by domestic / international (Apr-Jun)



B&B % occupancy by destination (Apr-Jun)



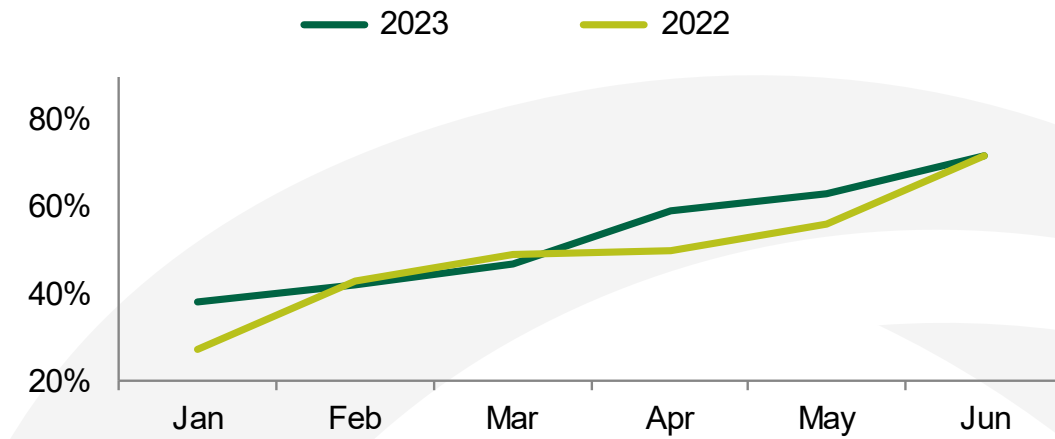
*The sample size for Dublin is too small to analyse reliably*

# Self-catering (1)

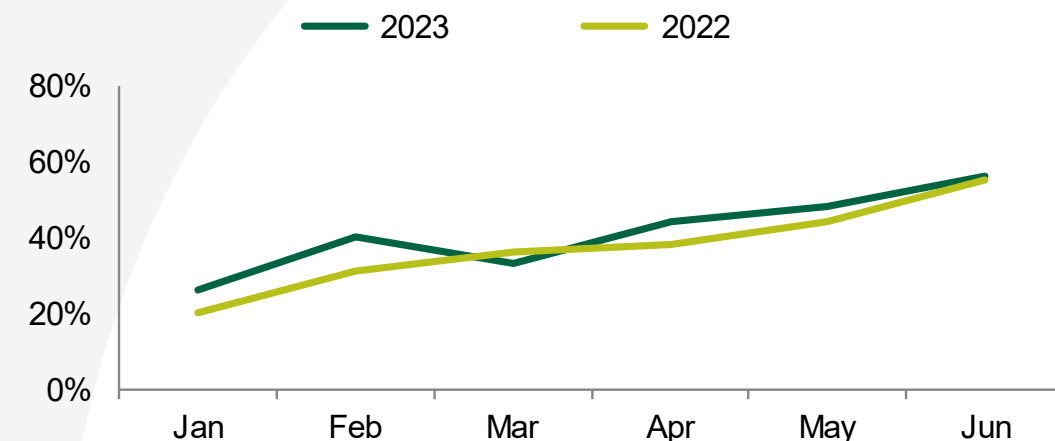
## Q2 slightly ahead of last year

- The self-catering sector recovered faster than some other sectors following the pandemic
- As such, performance has somewhat flatlined during some months in 2023, and year-on-year growth has not been as strong as in the other sectors
- The May Barometer reported that repeat visitors stand out as a key positive in self-catering this year
- Overall occupancy rates for April – June were:
  - 65% unit occupancy in 2023 vs 60% in 2022
  - 49% bed occupancy in 2023 vs 46% in 2022

Self-catering % unit occupancy



Self-catering % bed occupancy





# Self-catering (2)

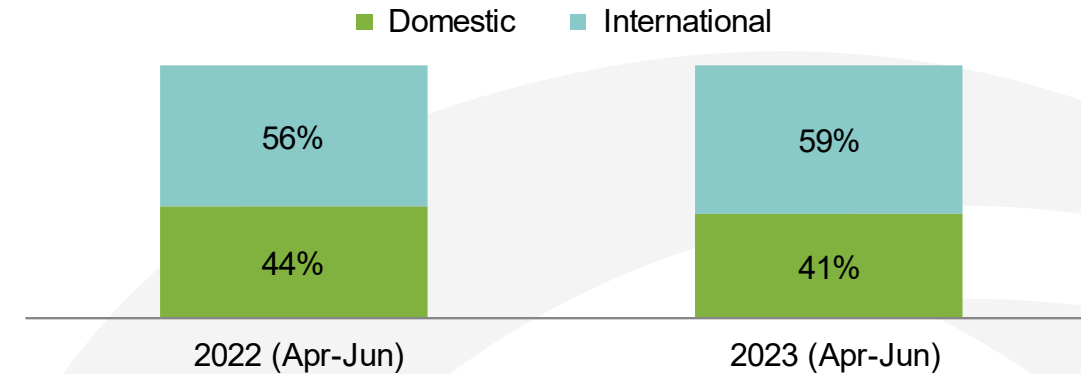
## International and domestic markets both important

- The proportion of international visitors has somewhat stabilised in Q2, following significant growth in Q1
- International visitors represented about three fifths of self-catering business in Q2
- However, the domestic market also plays an important role in this sector, with repeat visitors standing out as a key positive in the May Barometer

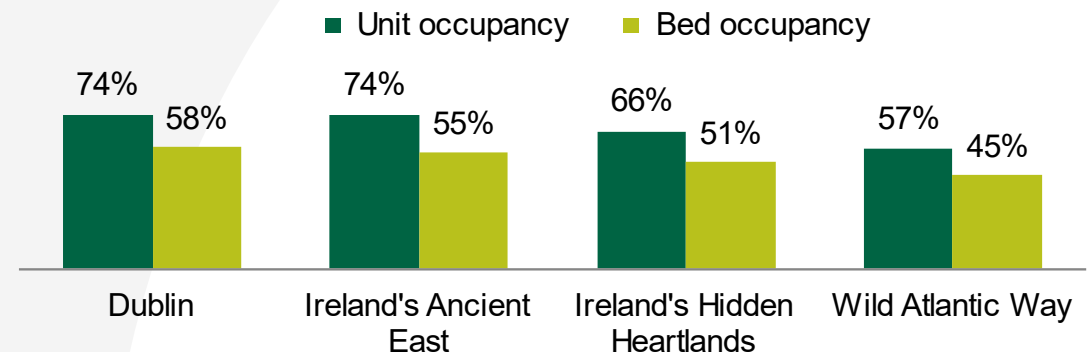
## Dublin and IAE the strongest regions

- Occupancy growth in the sector has come from Dublin and Ireland’s Ancient East – their unit occupancy is more than 10% pts up on Q2 in 2022
- In contrast, occupancy in Ireland’s Hidden Heartlands and Wild Atlantic Way has remained about the same as last year

Self-catering % split by domestic / international (Apr-Jun)



Self-catering % occupancy by destination (Apr-Jun)

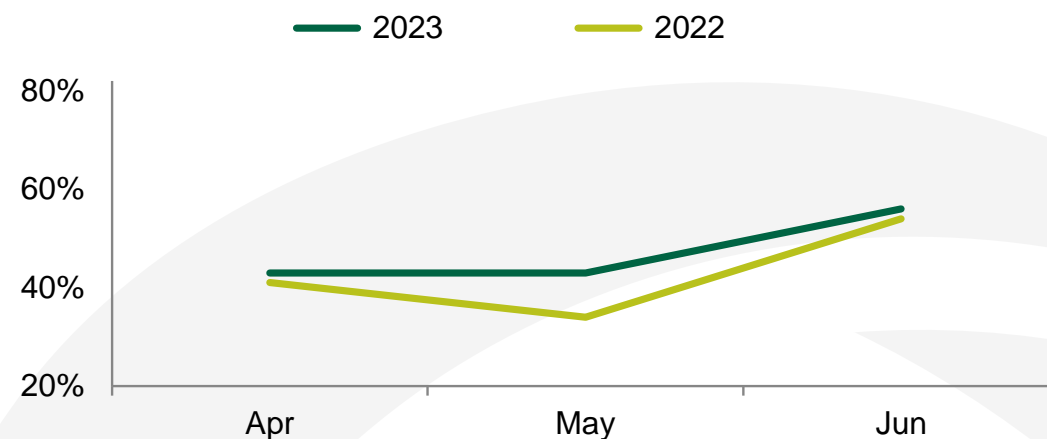


# Caravan and Camping (1)

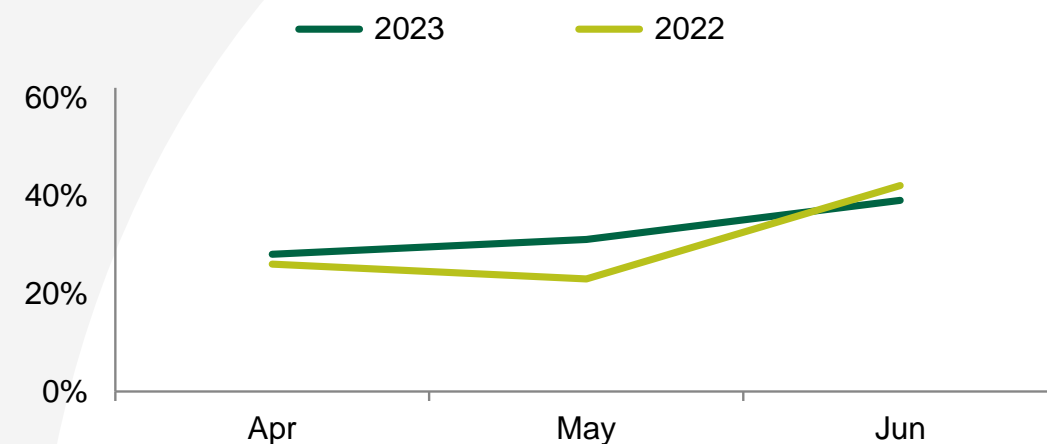
## Similar occupancy to last year

- April and June saw very similar occupancy levels to last year, whereas May pitch occupancy was up 9% pts
- Overall occupancy rates for April – June were:
  - 48% pitch occupancy in 2023 vs 44% in 2022
  - 34% guest occupancy in 2023 vs 32% in 2022
- The May Barometer showed a similar picture, with 25% of caravan & camping reporting to be up year to date vs 21% citing being down
- Repeat visitors were cited by 80% of caravan & camping in May as being a positive factor this year

Caravan & camping % pitch occupancy



Caravan & camping % guest occupancy





# Caravan and Camping (2)

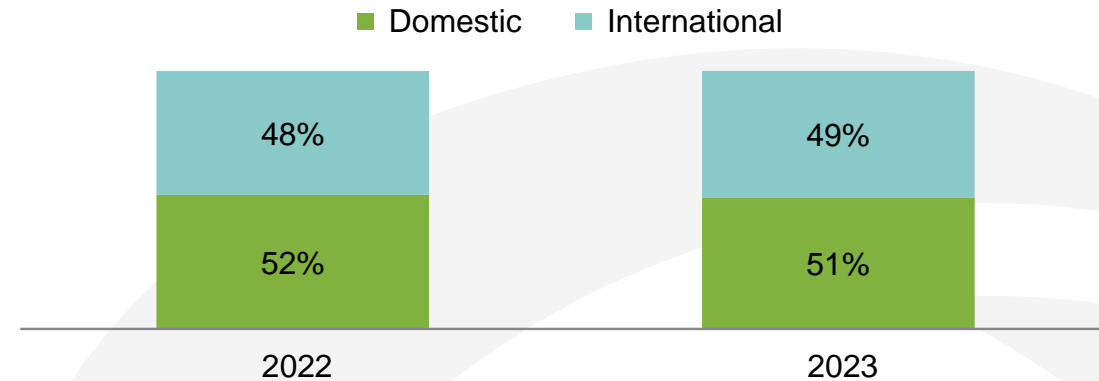
## International visitors have stabilised

- The balance between the domestic and international markets was about 50/50 in Q2 – as was the case in 2022
- 2022 saw a resurgence in international visitors, but this market now seems to have stabilised

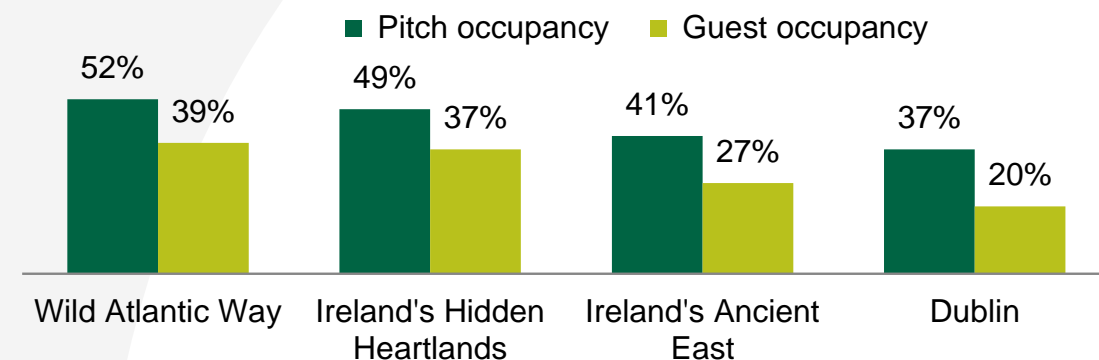
## Some differences by region

- Wild Atlantic Way performed well in Q2 with an average pitch occupancy of 52% (up 5% pts from Q2 in 2022)

Caravan & camping % split by domestic / international (Apr-Jun)



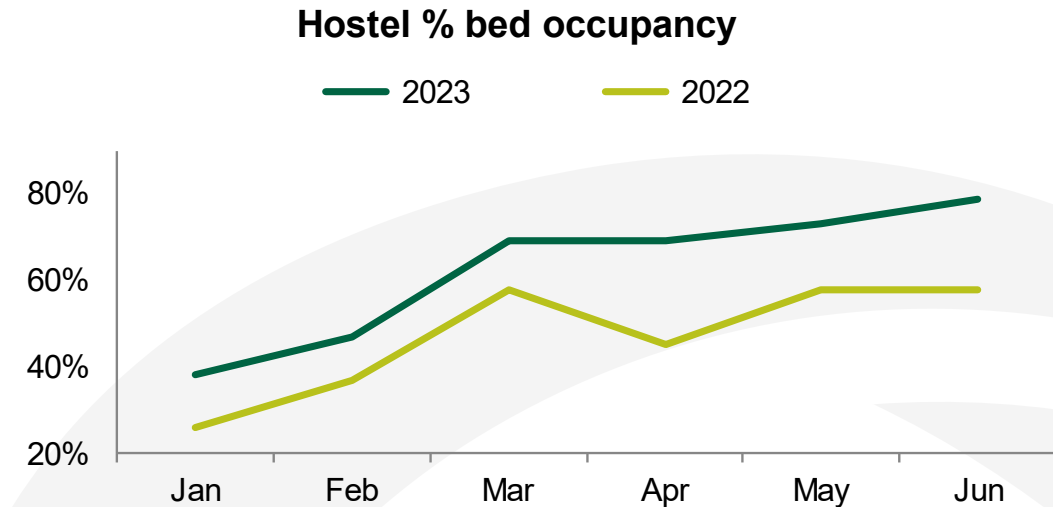
Caravan & camping % occupancy by destination (Apr-Jun)



# Hostels (1)

## Going from strength to strength

- 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 and the gap in performance between the two years has widened in Q2
- Overall bed occupancy rates for April – June were:
  - 74% in 2023 vs 56% in 2022
- The May Barometer backs this up – 9 of the 13 responding hostels expected to be up in 2023 compared to 2022, and the other 4 expected to be level





# Hostels (2)

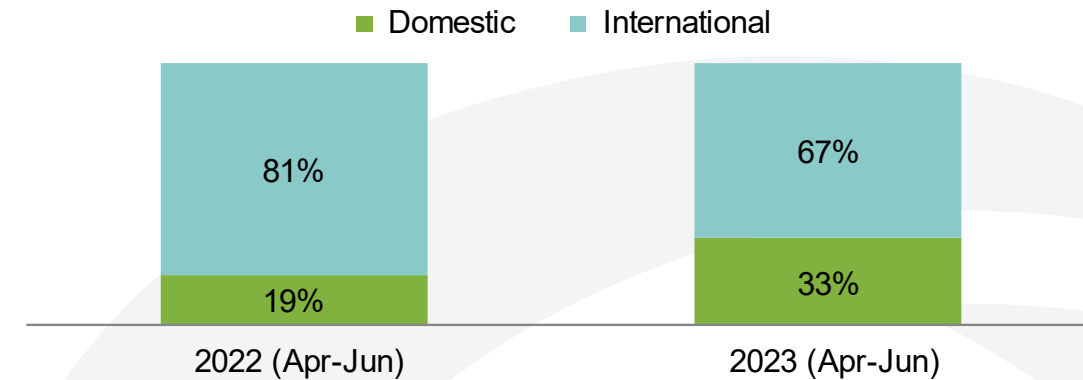
## Balance tipped back towards domestic visitors

- The proportion (33%) of domestic visitors in Q2 this year was significantly higher than in Q2 last year (19%)
- The May Barometer findings suggested that this does not necessarily mean that the international market weakened; rather, the domestic market has performed well also

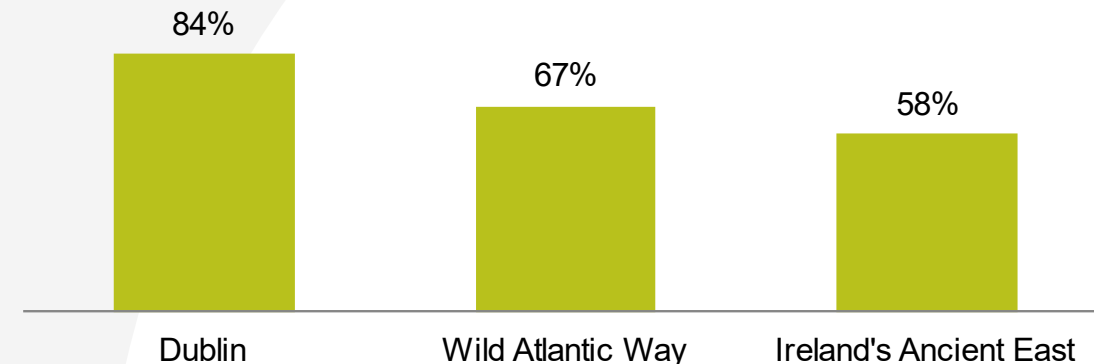
## Some significant differences by region

- Hostels in Dublin were very busy in Q2
- Hostels in Wild Atlantic Way outperformed Ireland's Ancient East on occupancy rates, as was also the case in Q1

Hostel % split by domestic / international (Apr-Jun)



Hostel % bed occupancy by destination (Apr-Jun)





# Thank you

**Strategic Research and Insight**

August 2023

