

Tourism Barometer

Strategic Research and Insight

September 2025



Headline Findings (1)

Some degree of recovery this summer

- 37% of businesses have increased their revenue this summer compared to last summer and 20% have had the same level; 43% have seen decreased revenue
- Whilst revenue is down on balance overall, the outcome is more favourable than anticipated, especially considering the subdued year to date figures reported in the May Barometer and the cautious outlook for the summer.
- Hotels (54% report being up on revenue) and attractions (46%) are the best performing sectors compared to last summer
- The summer has been particularly difficult for restaurants (64% report being down) and B&Bs (52%)

What are the key factors affecting performance this year?

- Costs continue to dominate concerns, especially energy (52% cite this as a concern), and payroll in some sectors (81% of hotels and food & drink operators)
- 'Cost of tourist accommodation' is the most frequently cited concern among non-accommodation operators (56%) as many cite Ireland's perceived poor value for money as a cause of losing business
- On the positive side, 55% of businesses cite 'positive reviews / recommendations' as a positive factor this year

Headline Findings (2)

What is the outlook for the remainder of the year?

- The industry does not hold high hopes for the remainder of the year – 21% expect revenue to be up, but 44% expect to be down
- Subdued expectations are found in all sectors, including those performing relatively well this summer

Effect of international trade tariffs on investment plans

- 26% say that recent uncertainty around international trade tariffs has had a negative effect on their investment plans
- This compares to 18% saying they had plans and those plans have been unaffected
- Among those with negatively affected investment plans, 39% say plans have been scaled back, 35% have delayed plans and 26% have stopped plans
- Some operators say that uncertainty among US businesses and consumers is a key factor in not taking risks if they are reliant on this market

What is this research about?

Background

- The key aims of this research are to understand:
 - Summer 2025 turnover, occupancy & room yields
 - Expectations for the remainder of the year
 - Reasons to be positive or concerned about business in 2025
 - Effects of uncertainty around international trade tariffs on investment plans

Method

- Fáilte Ireland designed a questionnaire which was set up online by SRI (Strategic Research and Insight), an independent research agency
- Fáilte Ireland distributed the survey link to its trade database on 9 September 2025
- Some sector representative bodies also encouraged their members to respond

Sample

Accommodation sector	Sample size
Hotels	115
B&Bs	69
Self-catering	47
Caravan & campsites	35
Guesthouses	17
Other accommodation	16

- 1,019 responses in total after de-duping by business (compared to 834 in the May wave)

Non-accommodation sector	Sample size
Tour guides	149
Attractions	136
Pubs & bars	80
Activity providers	77
Restaurants	65
Inbound operators and DMCs*	48
Cafés	36
Chauffeur service	28
Event / festival organisers	22
Coach operators	19
Other non-accommodation	60

*Destination Management Companies

Summer Performance



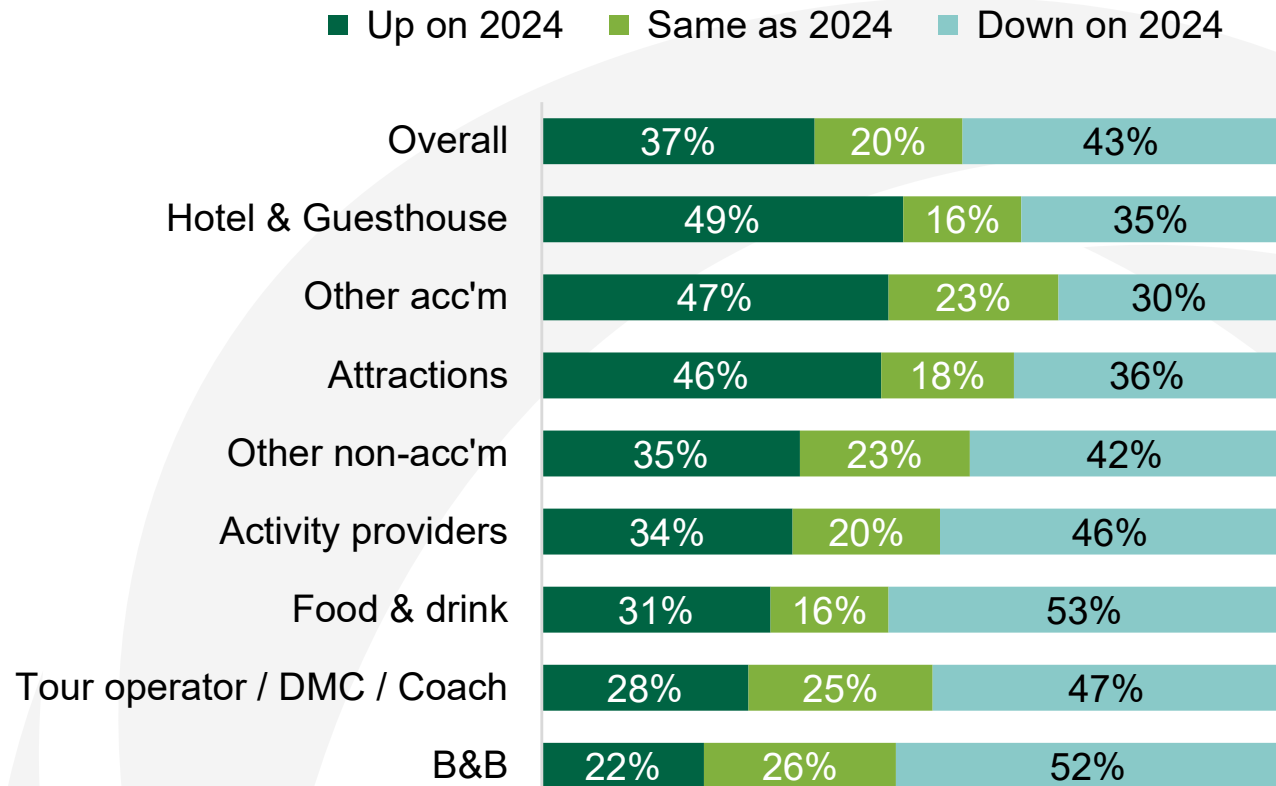
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Summer 2025 Revenue vs 2024 (Sector)

Some degree of recovery this summer

- In the May barometer earlier this year, the reported industry performance year to date was poor, and the expectations for the remainder of the year were not very optimistic either
- To some extent, the summer has worked out better than expected
- The hotel and attraction sectors are both up on balance, although other sectors are down on last summer

Q4 "How does your overall revenue this summer compare to summer 2024?"



Base: 930

'Don't know' and 'not applicable' answers have been excluded

Summer 2025 Revenue vs 2024 (Region)

Differences seen in regional performance

- Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland's Ancient East have managed to maintain revenue on balance compared to last summer
- The picture in Dublin and Ireland's Hidden Heartlands is very different
- Ireland's Ancient East in particular has performed well this summer because of the domestic market (41% report it being up vs 32% citing a decrease)
- Dublin on the other hand is down on balance in both the domestic and the overseas markets

Q4 "How does your overall revenue this summer compare to summer 2024?"

■ Up on 2024 ■ Same as 2024 ■ Down on 2024



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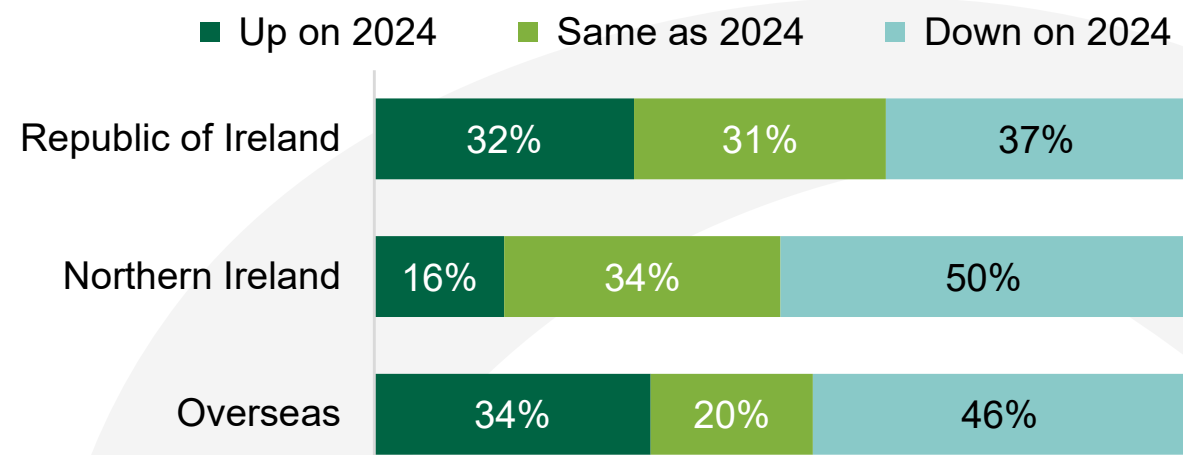
'Don't know' and 'not applicable' answers have been excluded

Revenue by Market

Market performance differs by sector and region

- The domestic market has performed strongest for:
 - Caravan & campsites (57% report being up)
 - Hotels (42%)
 - Ireland's Ancient East (41%)
- The overseas market has performed strongest for:
 - Hotels (46% report being up)
 - Attractions (45%)
- More detail by sector is given in the sector-specific slides at the end of this report

Q5 "How does your overall revenue this summer compare to summer 2024 from each of the following markets?"



Base: variable

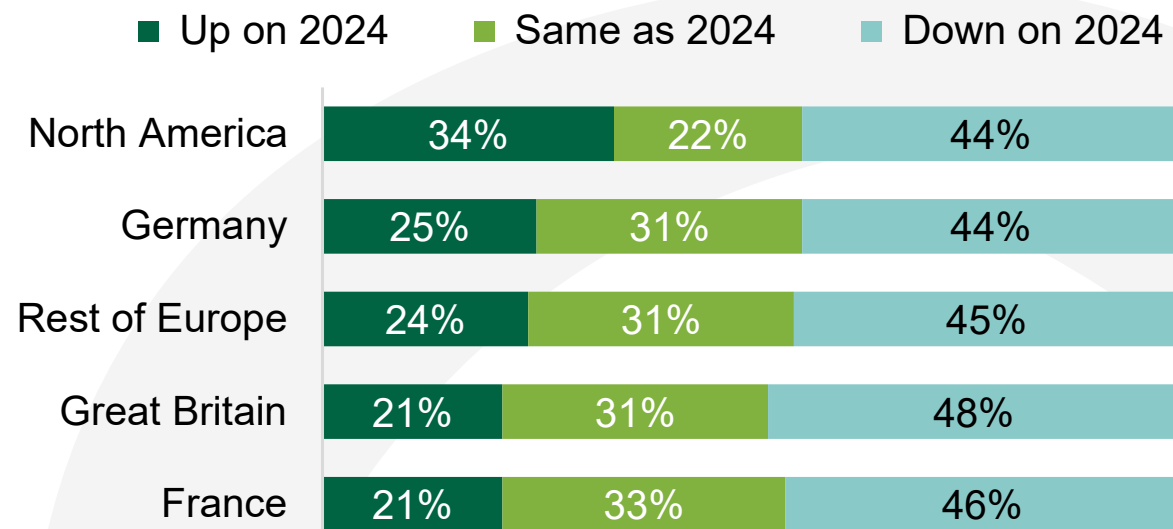
'Don't know' and 'not applicable' answers have been excluded

Performance by Overseas Market

North America down, but it could have been worse

- The May barometer wave reported a struggling North American market and a poor outlook for the remainder of the year
- This summer has seen a decreased North American market, but the decline could have been more severe
- Performance from key European markets has been poor this summer – lack of available and competitively priced accommodation in Ireland is felt to be a key reason

Q6 "Looking at your overseas business in more detail, how does your revenue this summer compare to summer 2024 from each of the following markets?"



Base: variable

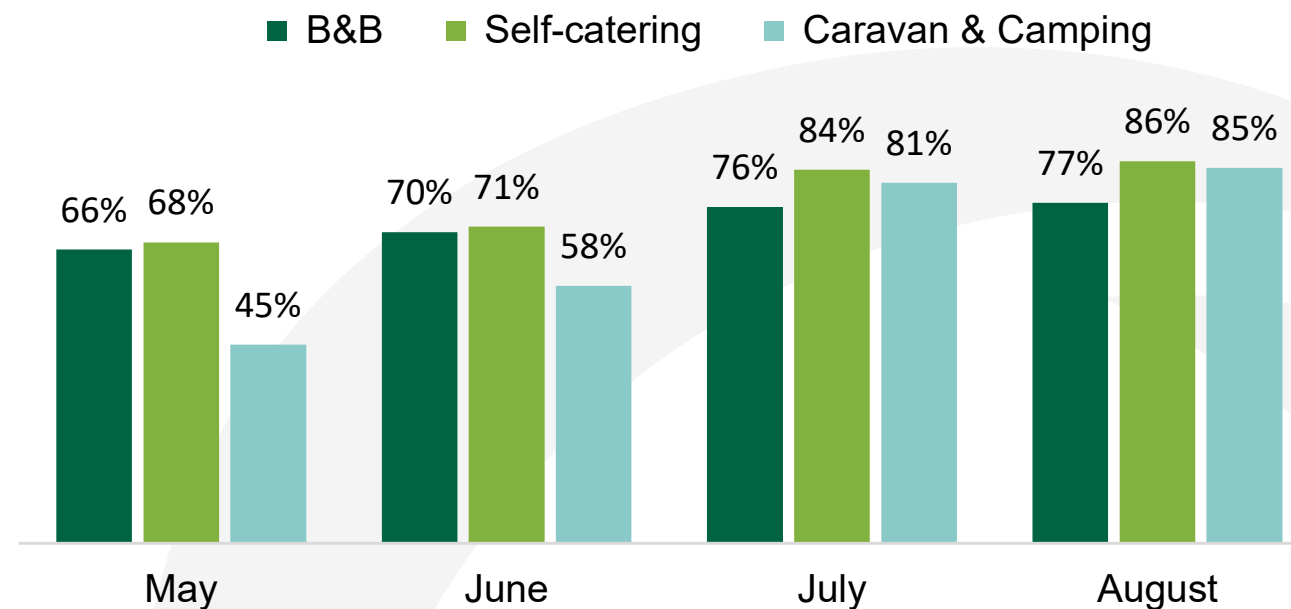
'Don't know' and 'not applicable' answers have been excluded

Summer Occupancy (Accommodation)

New performance measure

- This is the first time that accommodation occupancy has been measured in this survey and the results will become more meaningful over time when year-on-year comparisons can be made
- Average net occupancy rates by sector for the May to August period are:
 - Self-catering – 77%
 - B&Bs – 72%
 - Caravan & camping – 67%

Q8 "How much of your available capacity was booked for...?"



Base: variable

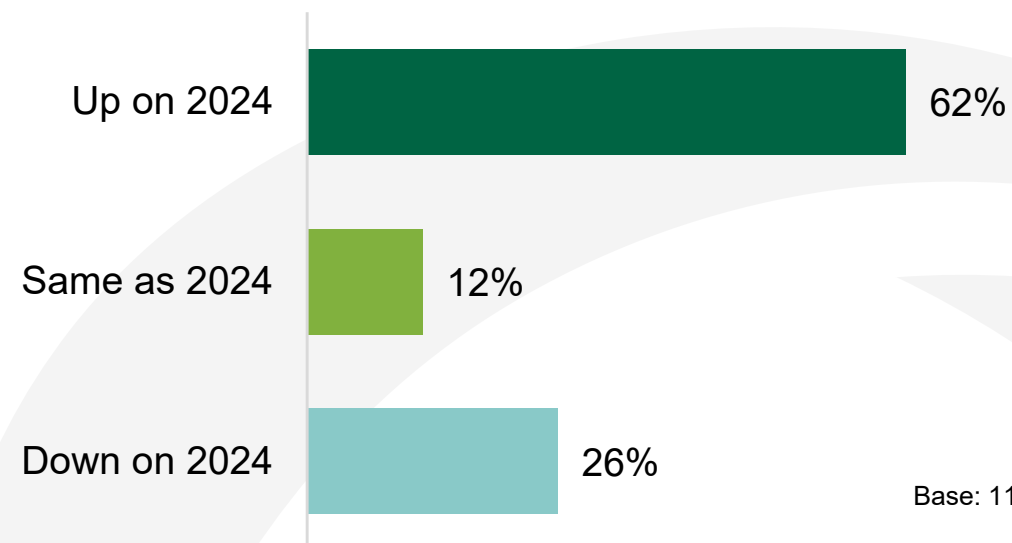
The chart shows average net room / unit / pitch occupancy by sector, weighted to size of business. The sample size for guesthouses and hostels is too small to be reliable, and hotel occupancy is collected through a different survey.

Hotels – Average Room Yield

Room yields are up, but so are costs

- The hotel sector overall has performed well on average room yields this summer
- However, operating margins remain under pressure as costs have continued to rise
- This means that the hotel sector continues to tread a fine line between covering costs and losing competitiveness
- Many non-accommodation operators continue to say that they – and Ireland overall – are losing business because of the country's lack of competitiveness

Q10 "How does your average room yield this summer compare with summer 2024?"



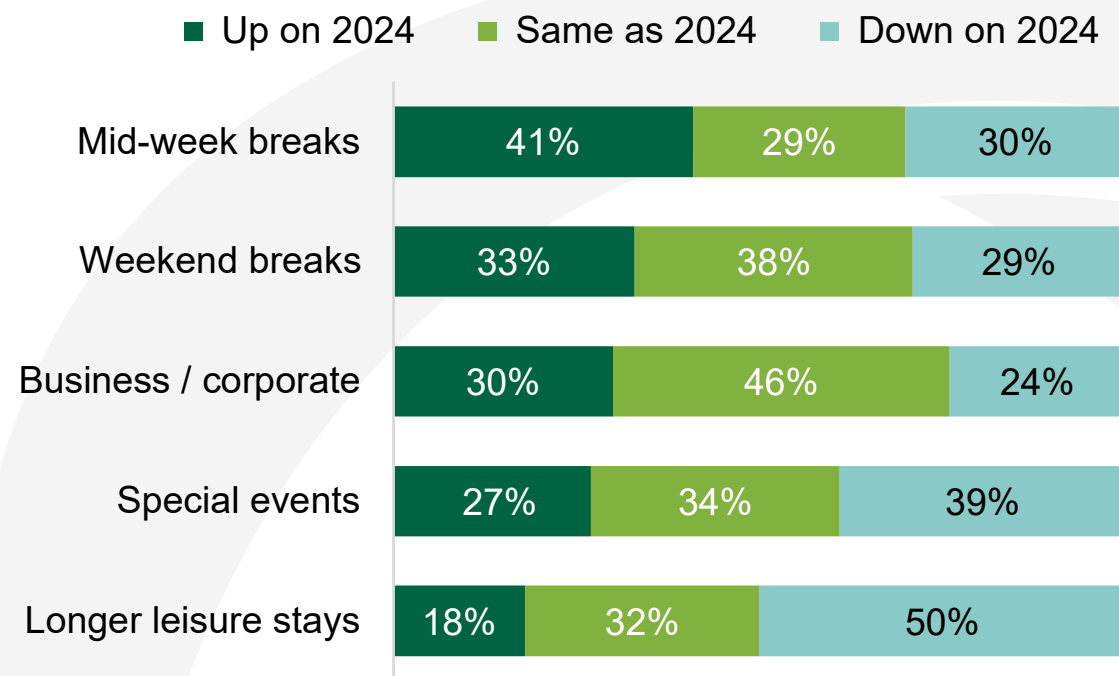
Hotels – Ireland Market



Short stays have bolstered the sector

- Ideally, hoteliers would prefer longer stays than shorter ones because of changeover costs in between guests
- The May barometer reported an unsettled outlook for both longer and shorter stays
- Longer stays have been significantly down this summer, as expected, but shorter breaks are up, which has helped the sector to increase revenue overall

Q11 "Thinking about your Ireland market business this summer, how have each of the following performed compared with summer 2024 in terms of revenue?"



Base: variable

'Don't know' and 'not applicable' answers have been excluded

Expectations



Revenue Expectations (Sector)

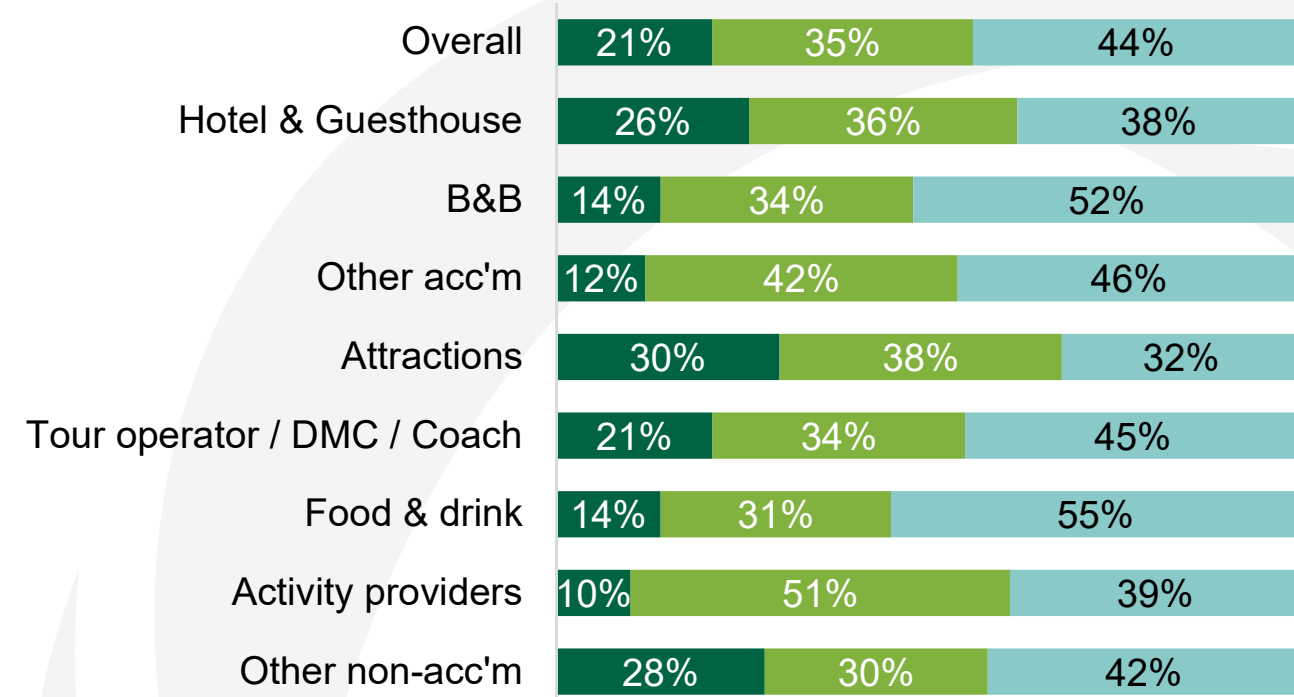


Q14 "How do you expect the revenue of your overall business to perform during the remainder of this year compared to the same period last year?"

■ Up on 2024 ■ Same as 2024 ■ Down on 2024

Outlook is not positive

- Operators do not hold high hopes for the remainder of the year, including in sectors which have performed relatively well this summer



Base: 904

'Don't know' and 'not applicable' answers have been excluded

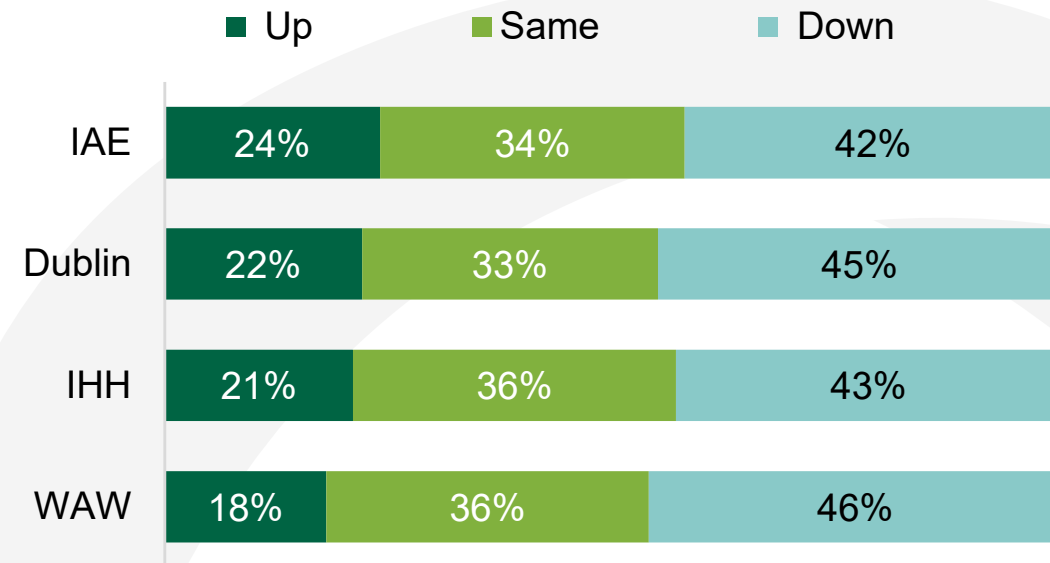
Revenue Expectations (Region)



Q14 "How do you expect the revenue of your overall business to perform during the remainder of this year compared to the same period last year?"

All regions face challenges

- Although the summer has seen some significant differences in performance by region, expectations do not differ significantly by region



Base: 904

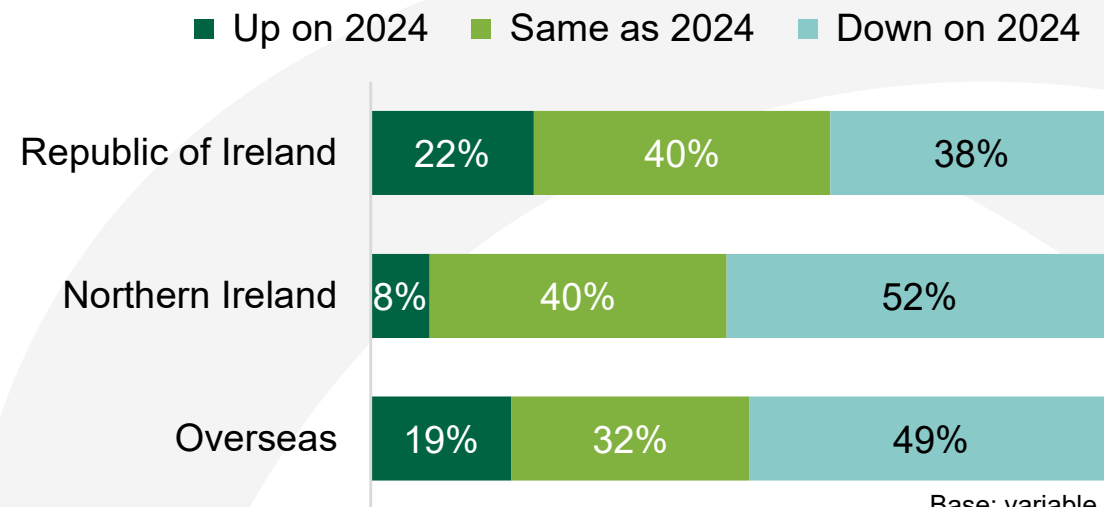
'Don't know' and 'not applicable' answers have been excluded

Revenue Expectations by Market

Q15 "How do you expect the revenue of your business to perform during the remainder of this year compared to the same period last year from each of the following markets?"

Expected downturn across markets

- The subdued outlook for the remainder of the year applies to both the domestic and the overseas markets
- Some operators have also commented that they are not optimistic for 2026



'Don't know' and 'not applicable' answers have been excluded

Section 3

Reasons to be Positive or Concerned



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Reasons to Be Positive

Positive feedback and repeat visits bring some degree of stability

- Positive reviews, recommendations and repeat visits are vital as operators need some stability in a challenging climate
- These positives rank highly in every sector
- 'Own marketing' is the most frequently cited positive among inbound tour operators & DMCs (50%) and attractions (49%)

Operators striving to provide the best experience

- Some operators are less focused on macro-economic factors that they can't influence and just try and provide the best product / service they can for the customers they attract

Irish weather may start to become an asset

- Ireland is not renowned as a fine weather destination but some operators say they are noticing a trend in more overseas tourists coming for the cooler weather and avoiding the heat of southern Europe in the summer

Q16 "Are there any particular reasons to be positive about business this year?" (prompted)

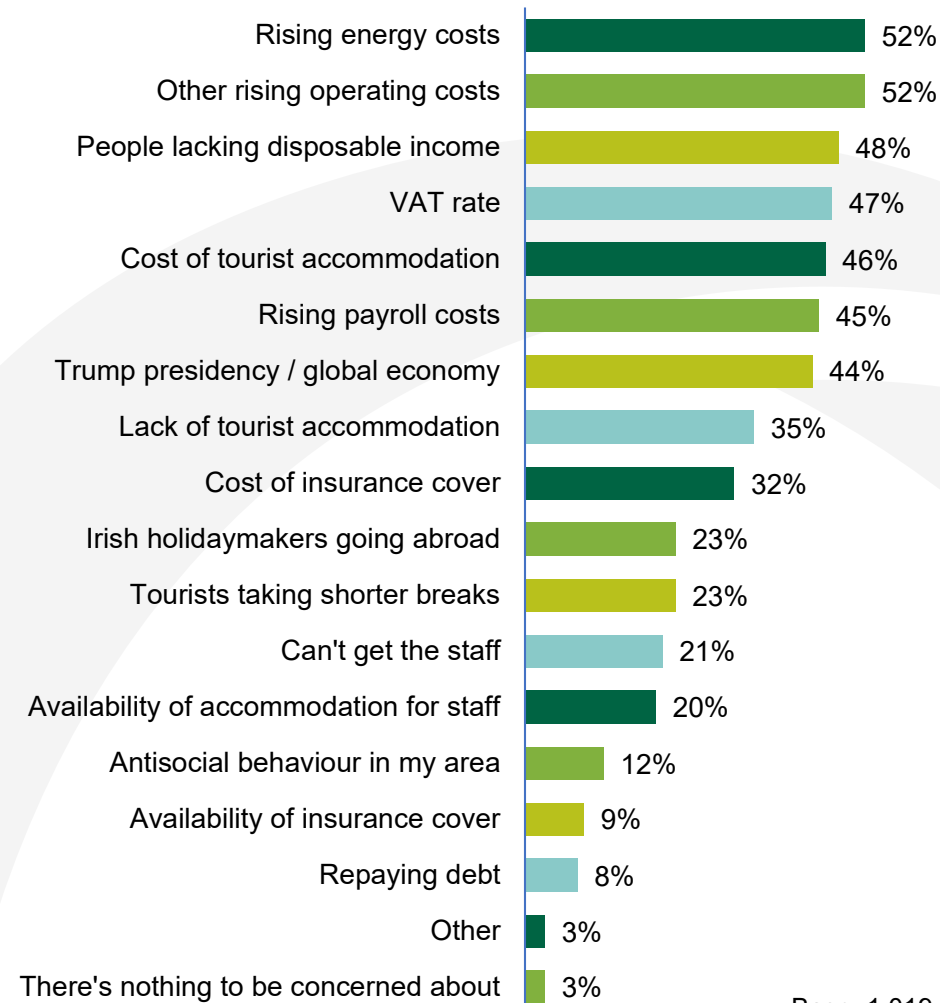


Reasons to Be Concerned

Softening of some concerns from earlier this year

- In the May barometer, 'Trump presidency / global economy' topped the concerns as it was cited by 60% of operators
- This concern has by no means gone away, but the proportion citing it has fallen significantly to 44%
- High costs and lack of disposable income among consumers continue to make running a tourism business challenging
- 'Cost of tourist accommodation' is the highest ranked concern among non-accommodation operators – cited by 56%

Q17 "Are there any particular causes for concern regarding business this year?" (prompted)



Section 4

Effects of Uncertainty on Investment Plans



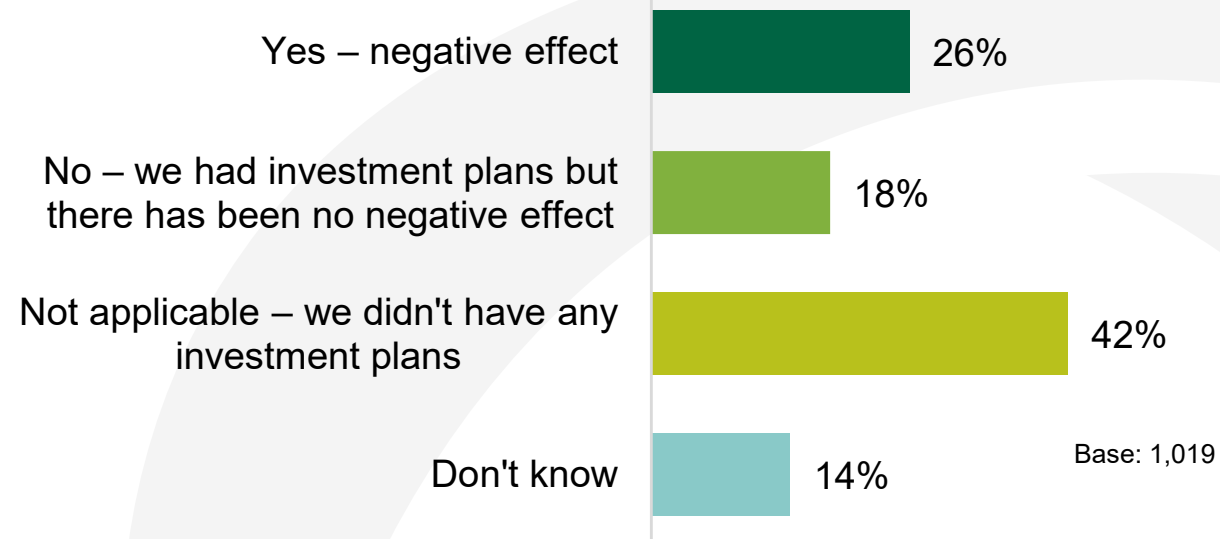
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Uncertainty around Trade Tariffs

Impact on many investment plans

- Earlier this year at the start of the Trump presidency, international trade tariffs suddenly became very uncertain
- Many Irish businesses did not have investment plans, but if they did, it is more likely than not that the uncertainty has negatively affected those plans
- The highest proportions of businesses answering that the uncertainty has negatively affected investment plans are found among:
 - Food & drink operators (36%)
 - Inbound tour operators & DMCs (35%)
 - Hotels (35%)

Q12 "Has the recent uncertainty around international trade tariffs had a negative effect on your business' investment plans?"

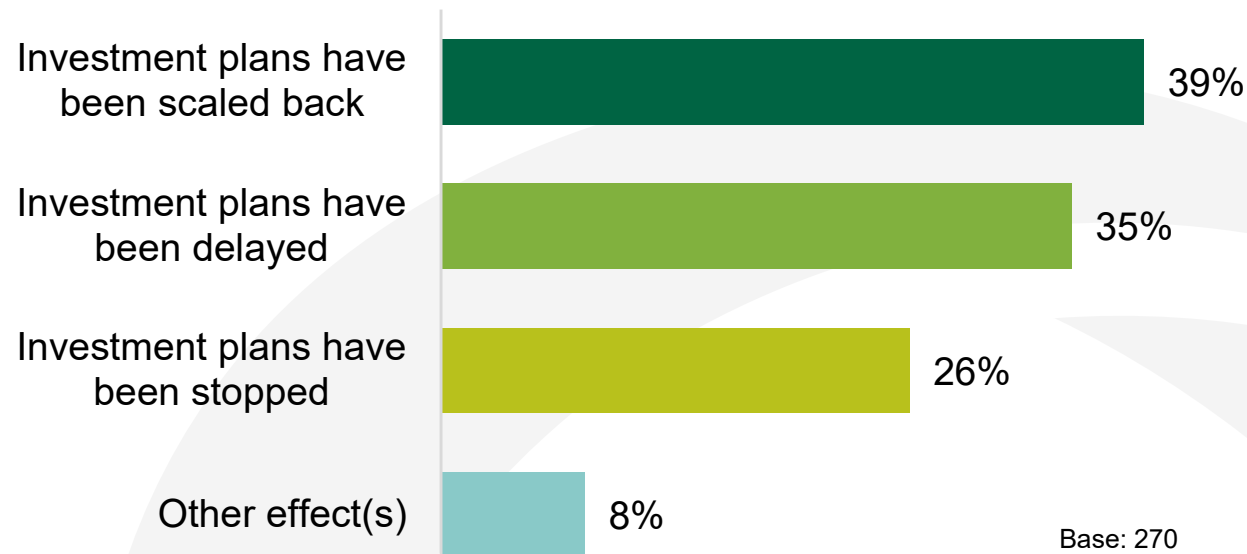


Effects on Investment Plans

Range of effects

- The uncertainty has affected investment plans in range of different ways, with some businesses delaying or scaling back plans but others stopping plans completely
- Some say the negative impact has come from their US customer base – uncertainty among businesses and consumers there has made Irish businesses relying on this market feeling less confident about taking risks

Q13 "What has the effect been?"



Q13 has been asked to those experiencing a negative effect (Q12)

Section 5

Individual Sectors



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Revenue up again, but cost pressures continue

- 54% of hotels report higher revenue this summer compared to last summer, compared to 32% citing being down
- Many operators in other sectors say that high hotel prices are hindering Ireland's competitiveness internationally, but hoteliers feel they have little choice because of high operating costs
- 81% of hotels cite 'payroll costs' as a concern – one of the highest proportions in any sector to say this
- 74% cite 'rising energy costs' as a concern
- On the positive side, 56% of hotels cite 'repeat visitors' as a positive factor this year, and 55% cite 'positive reviews / recommendations'

Year has continued as reported earlier

- The previous barometer wave in May reported a very difficult year to date for the B&B sector, and the summer has continued in this way
- 22% of B&Bs have had higher turnover this summer compared to last summer, but 52% report being down
- Both the domestic and the overseas markets are down

Factors affecting performance

- 55% of B&Bs cite 'positive reviews / recommendations' as a reason to be positive this year, and 38% cite 'repeat visitors'
- However, 'rising energy costs' (cited by 55%), 'rising operating costs besides energy or payroll' (51%) and VAT rate (45%) top the concerns

Self-Catering

More positive summer than earlier reports suggested

- The May barometer reported a poor start to the year for the self-catering sector, but the summer turned out to be quite stable compared to summer last year
- 40% report revenue being up this summer vs 36% reporting to be down
- The sector has seen a fairly stable performance by both the domestic and the overseas markets

Importance of positive reviews and repeat guests

- Two thirds (66%) cite 'repeat visitors' as a positive factor this year – the second highest proportion in any sector to say this
- The same proportion (66%) cite 'positive reviews / recommendations' as a positive
- 36% cite 'tourists taking shorter breaks' as a concern – the highest proportion in any sector to say this

Caravan & Campsites

The sun came out for campers

- The caravan & camping sector has enjoyed a good summer, with 56% seeing higher revenue, compared to only 15% being down
- Favourable weather compared to last summer has played a key part in the upturn, particularly in the domestic market – 57% report higher revenue from the domestic market
- The caravan & camping sector has the highest proportions in any sector to cite the following positives:
 - Positive reviews / recommendations (80%)
 - Repeat visitors (77%)
 - Irish people holidaying in Ireland (37%)

Attractions

Slightly up on balance for both domestic and overseas

- The May barometer reported a challenging start to the year for attractions because of lower overseas visitor levels, but the summer has seen recovery
- 45% report higher revenue from the overseas market this summer, compared to 32% being down
- 39% have seen higher revenue from the domestic market this summer vs 31% seeing lower revenue

Positive feedback and own marketing offsetting concerns

- 65% cite 'positive reviews / recommendations' as a positive this year, and 49% cite 'own marketing'
- The top concern is 'people lacking disposable income (51%)

Activity Providers

Summer not quite as hoped for some

- The May barometer reported expectations in the activity provider sector being up this summer, but the reality has been mixed
- 34% have achieved higher revenue than last summer, but 46% have experienced a decrease
- The domestic market has not quite performed as hoped, with 30% of operators seeing increased revenue vs 35% being down
- 32% are up on overseas revenue, but 46% are down

Factors affecting performance

- For those seeing increased business, favourable weather has played a key part
- However, many operators feel hampered by accommodation – 66% cite ‘cost of tourist accommodation’ as a concern and 55% cite ‘lack of tourist accommodation’

Pubs & Bars

Some further decline in performance

- 34% of pubs & bars report higher revenue this summer but 47% cite being down
- Although this is a decline on balance, the decline is less sharp than results reported in recent years by this sector

Factors affecting business

- On the plus side, 31% cite 'local festivals / events' as a positive influence on business
- However, the sector continues to face many cost challenges, especially energy (cited by 78%), payroll (73%) and insurance (59%)
- One of the significant issues caused by high operating costs is that this forces operators to raise their prices to remain viable as a business, but their customers don't always understand this

Restaurants

Significant challenges continue

- 23% of restaurants have achieved increased turnover this summer, but 64% have seen a decline
- The decrease comes from both the domestic and overseas markets – 74% cite decreased revenue from overseas visitors
- The situation is consistent with earlier results this year and is not expected to improve for the remainder of 2025

Payroll costs and VAT continue to top the concerns

- In spite of significant cost challenges, 25% cite ‘investing in the business’ as a positive factor
- However, 92% cite ‘VAT rate’ and 91% cite ‘rising payroll costs’ as concerns – the highest proportions of any sector to say this
- Therefore even the minority of restaurants with good turnover are finding it hard to remain viable

Inbound Tour Operators & DMCs

Mixed summer

- Inbound tour operators & DMCs were Ireland's best performing sector in 2024 in terms of revenue and volume growth
- This summer's performance has been mixed – 31% report increased revenue but 42% have seen a decline

Lack of competitiveness is hampering performance

- 81% cite 'cost of tourist accommodation' as a concern – the highest proportion of any sector to say this
- Numerous inbound operators and DMCs continue to say they are finding it hard to compete in the international marketplace with the hotel prices they have to work with
- The US market has continued to perform well for some operators this year, but as lead times are long, much of that business was already booked before the change in US presidency and subsequent rise in economic uncertainty

Tour Guides

Overseas market down for many this summer

- Tour guides performed well in 2024, partly as a result of a buoyant North American market, but this summer has not gone well for many
- 26% of tour guides have increased their revenue this summer, but 54% have seen a decrease

Cost and availability of accommodation

- Similarly to inbound operators & DMCs, tour guides continue to see Ireland lose out on business because of high accommodation prices
- 67% cite 'cost of tourist accommodation' as a concern, and 54% cite 'lack of tourist accommodation'
- On the plus side, 48% cite 'positive reviews / recommendations' as a positive this year