

ERBID How's Business Survey

November 2025



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Sample and supporting information

This month's survey has a sample of 60 businesses, representing a minimum sample of approximately 67 businesses when respondents representing multiple businesses, outlets or sites are also considered.

This latest report also includes data produced by Lighthouse (formerly Transparent Intelligence) for Visit Britain looking at the short term rental* market. This provides useful data across the English Riviera and provides a good comparison to the data produced through the How's Business survey moving forward. Our thanks go to Lighthouse and Visit Britain for making this data freely available for the tourism industry. Please note that at the time of writing this report the November data had not yet been published.

Lighthouse tracks over 35 million vacation rental listings worldwide and maintains a proprietary database of hundreds of thousands of reservations tracked by month. Listings on the four major short-term rental platforms are tracked: Airbnb, Booking.com, Vrbo and Tripadvisor. Listings data is deduplicated when the same property is advertised on more than one platform.

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** The UK Government defines a short-term rental property as 'a dwelling, or part of a dwelling, provided by a host to a guest, for use as accommodation other than the guest's only or principal residence, in return for payment, in the course of a trade or business carried on by the host'.*

At a glance – November 2025

Compared to November 2024 businesses reported that:

November 2025 Visitor levels:

Increased 20% / Stayed the same 20% / Decreased 60%

Estimated actual change in visitors -10%

November 2025 Turnover levels:

Increased 24% / Stayed the same 18% / Decreased 58%

Estimated actual change in turnover -9%

December 2025 Outlook is:

Better than last year 15% / Same as last year 19% / Not as good as last year 67%

Christmas/New Year holidays 2025 Outlook is:

Better than last year 13% / Same as last year 33% / Not as good as last year 54%

January 2026 Outlook is:

Better than last year 9% / Same as last year 35% / Not as good as last year 57%

Optimism:

Optimism score is 4.92 out of a possible 10

November 2025 Key results

November 2025 saw decreases in both visitors/customers (-10%) and turnover (-9%) compared with November 2024 with over half of businesses in each case reporting decreased performance compared with the same time last year (60% and 58% for visitors/customers and turnover respectively).

Looking ahead, business sentiment continues to remain cautious. For December 2025, 67% of respondents expect booking levels to be worse than the previous year, although this decreases for the Christmas/New Year holidays 2025 and into January 2026 where 54% and 57% of businesses respectively anticipate a weaker performance than the same time last year. The overall optimism score for the month dropped to 4.92, a further decrease compared with last month's score of 5.04.

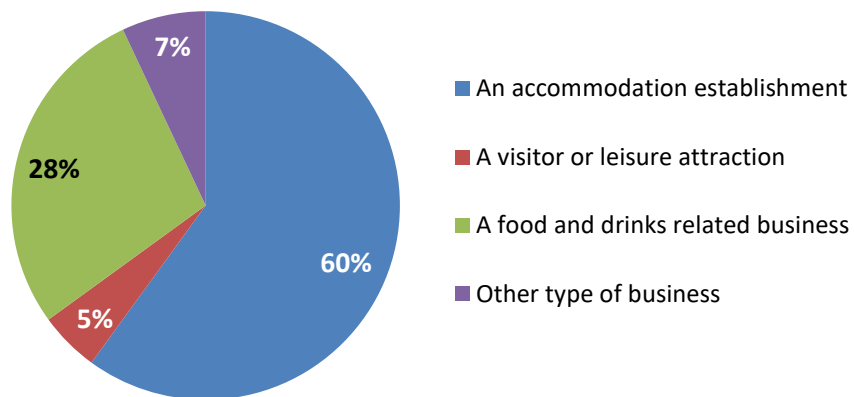
Concerns over increases in other business costs such as food and supplies, cited by 73% of businesses, was the top concern amongst businesses during the month increasing by 19% compared with last month. This was followed by declining visitor numbers (67%, an increase of 6% compared with last month), the increase in the cost of living generally and rising energy/fuel costs (57% in each case and decreases of 15% and 8% respectively compared with last month) and increases in building/maintenance costs (50%, an increase of 4% compared with last month).

A small number of businesses this month noted pockets of stability, such as breaking even during the quietest months, maintaining high standards despite pressures and adapting letting patterns to keep their properties occupied and contributing to the local economy. Some operators expressed continued pride in promoting their area and a desire to support the wider destination, even as conditions tighten.

However, many businesses describe a continuing challenging trading environment dominated by rising costs, steep business rate hikes, new energy surcharges and mounting bureaucracy. Some reported that they feel visitor numbers are falling, booking lead times are shortening and aggressive discounting by large hotel chains is pushing prices to an unsustainable levels leaving smaller guesthouses priced out of the market. Some businesses reported that they are operating at a loss, some have already closed early for the winter or even closed down permanently, while others warn they are close to doing the same. Many businesses continue to be concerned about anti-social behaviour in The Bay which has been a consistent theme for many months and feel that, coupled with the poor economic climate further closures are inevitable as more tourism businesses become financially unviable.

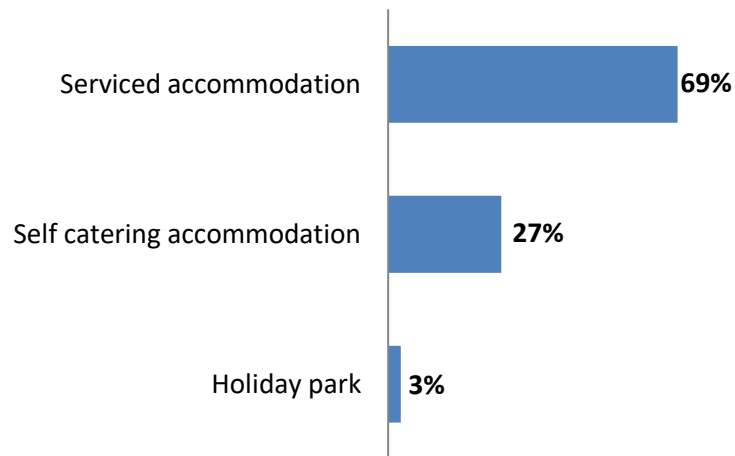
Sample profile, business location and status

BUSINESS TYPE



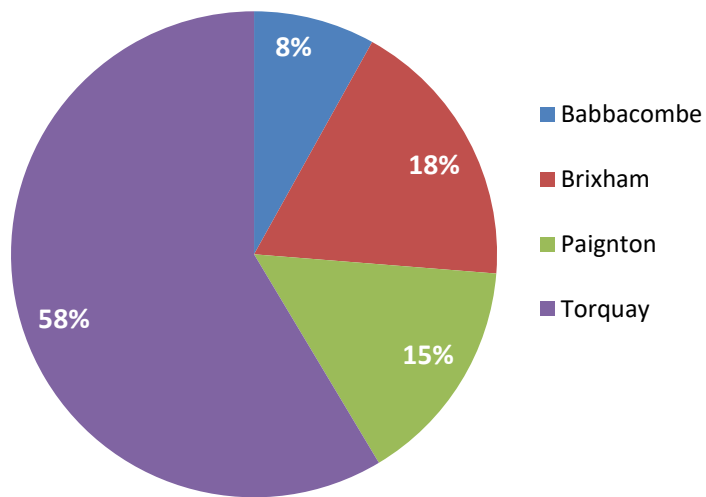
Base: 60

ACCOMMODATION TYPE



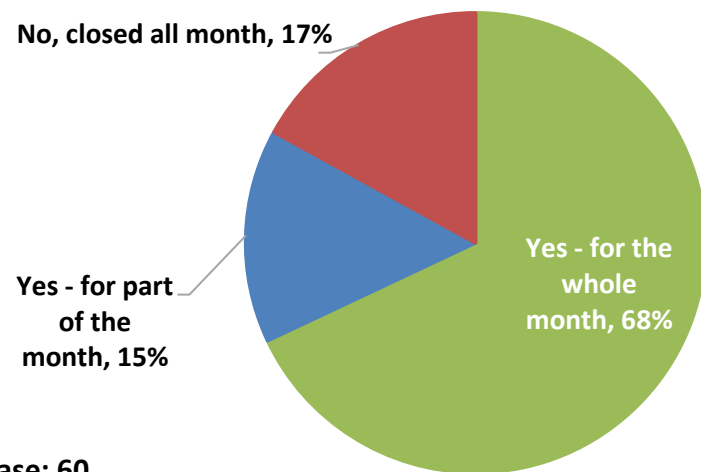
Base: 36

BUSINESS LOCATION



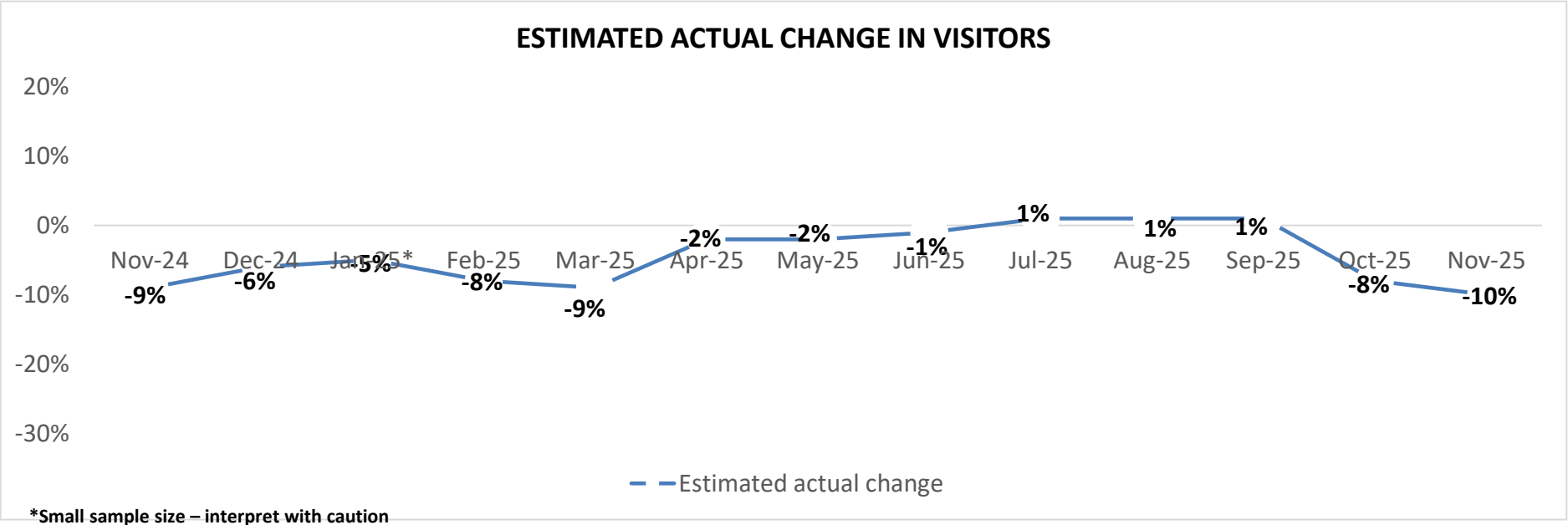
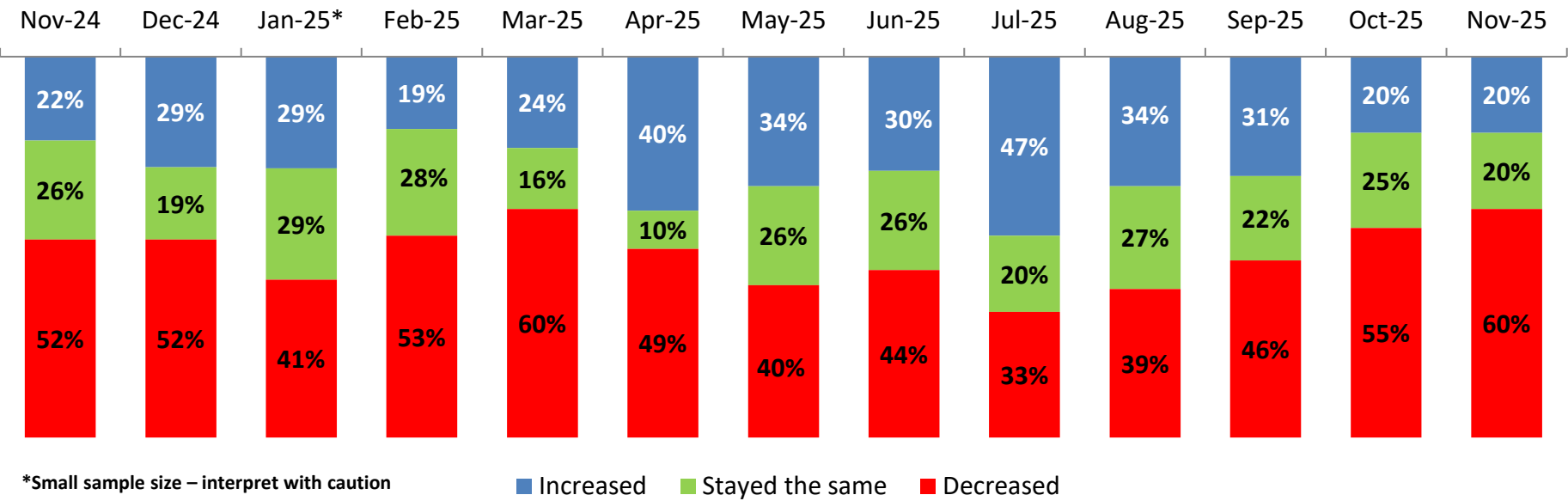
Base: 60

WHETHER OPEN FOR BUSINESS FOR THE MONTH

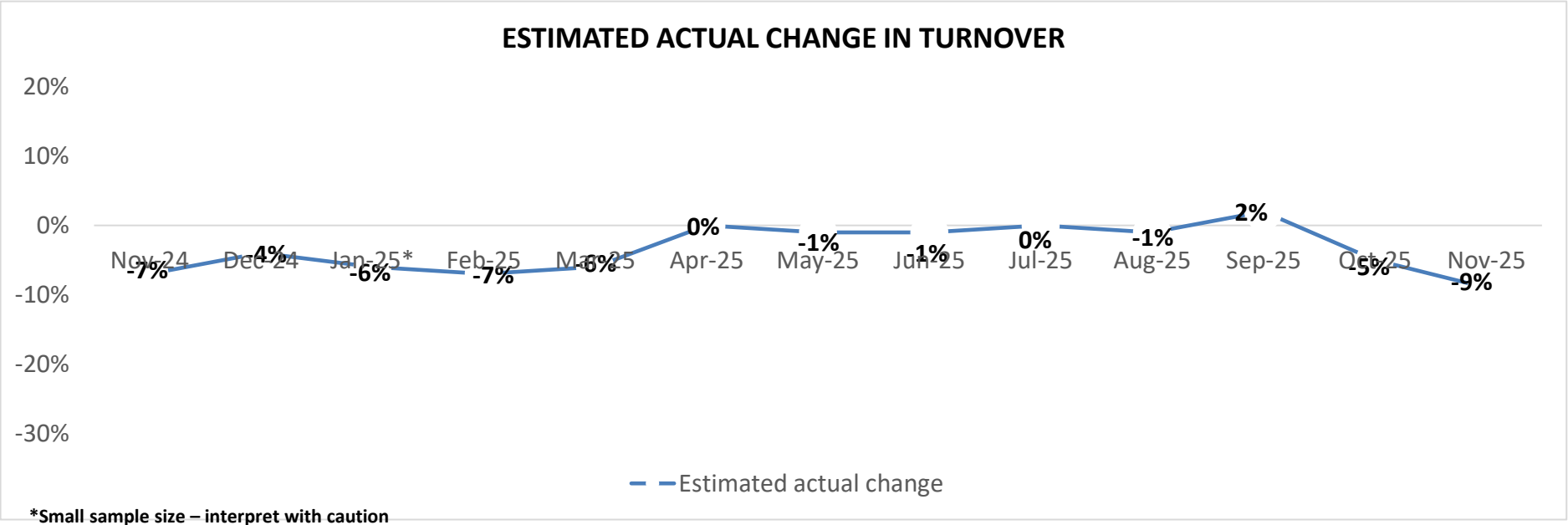
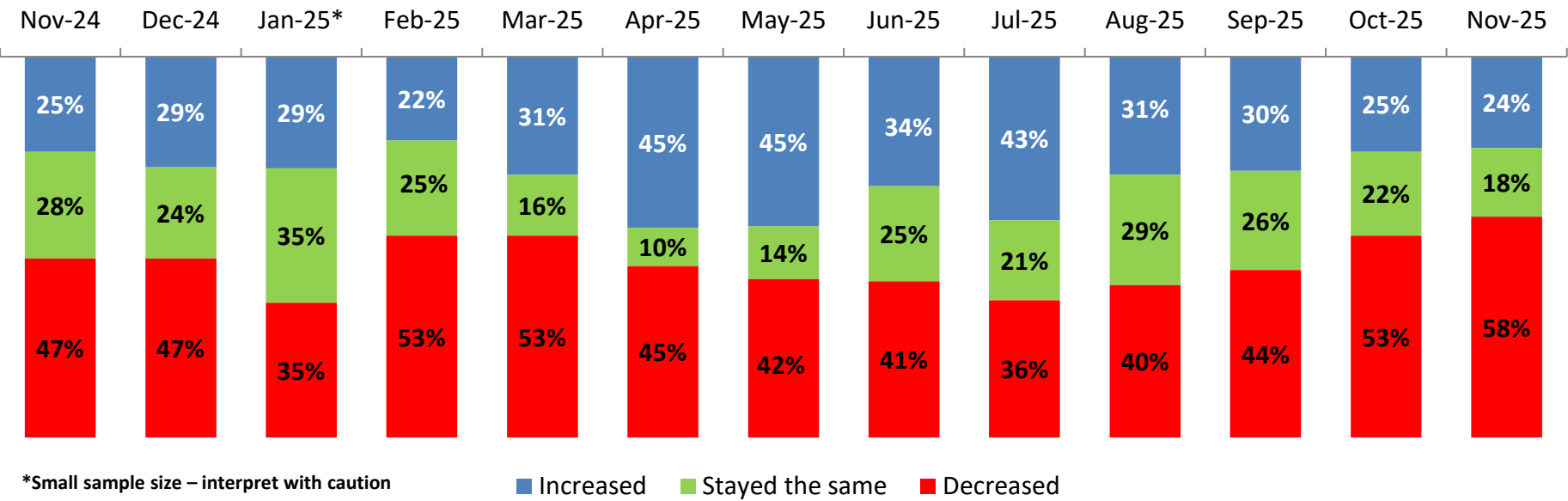


Base: 60

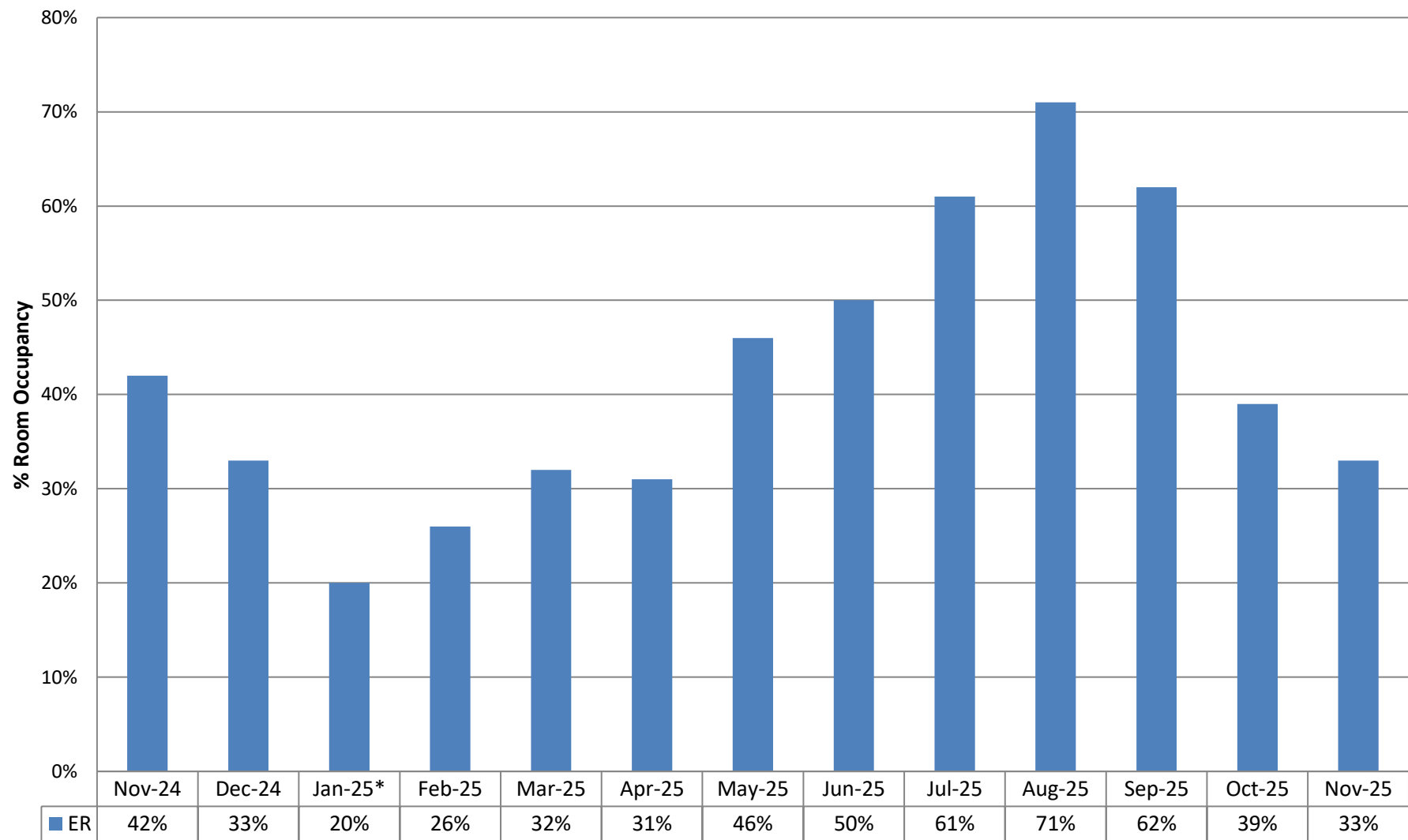
Performance – Number of visitors compared to previous year



Performance – Turnover compared to previous year



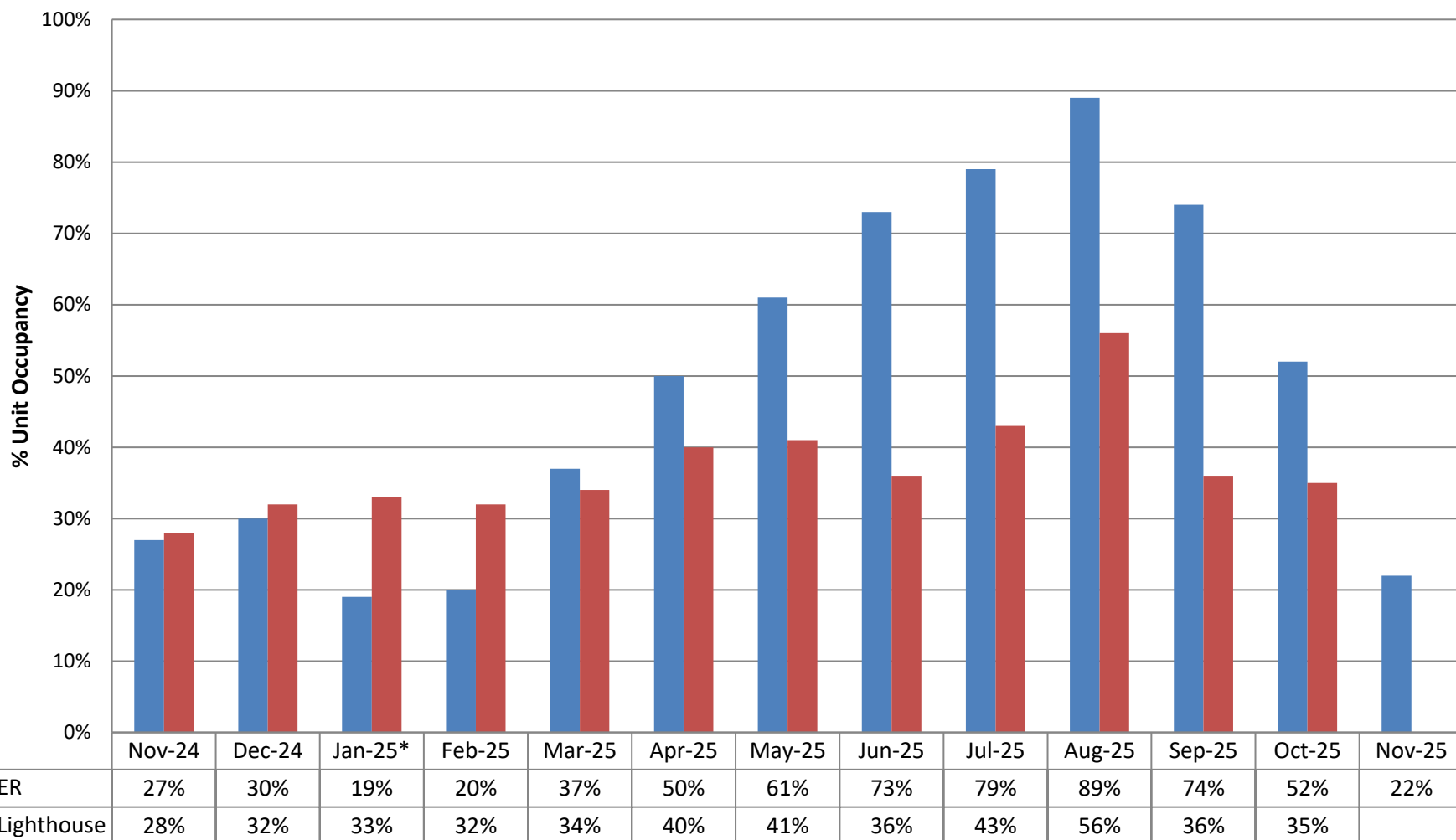
Performance – Serviced Room Occupancy



*Small sample size – interpret with caution

It should be noted that the figures provided represent the occupancy rates for those responding to this survey and the results are not weighted to represent regional and county accommodation stocks.

Performance – Self Catering Unit Occupancy



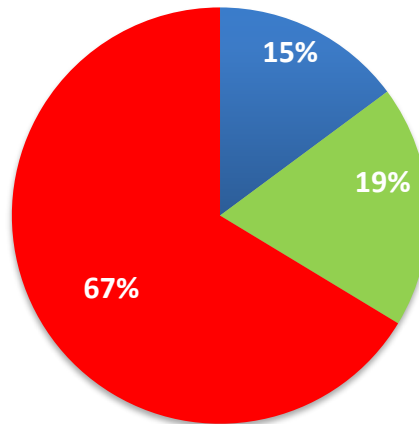
*Small sample size – interpret with caution

It should be noted that the HB figures provided represent the occupancy rates for those self catering businesses responding to this survey and the results are not weighted to represent regional accommodation stocks.

Lighthouse data represents the short term rental market on the English Riviera.

Outlook – Based upon forward booking levels

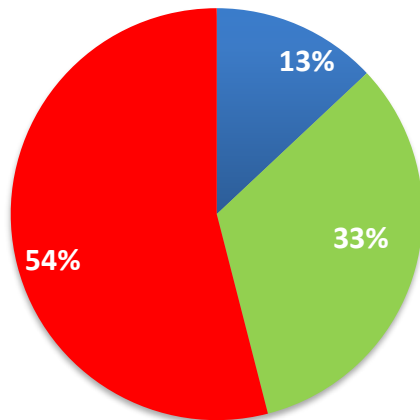
DECEMBER 2025



■ Better than last year ■ Same as last year
■ Not as good as last year

Base: 27

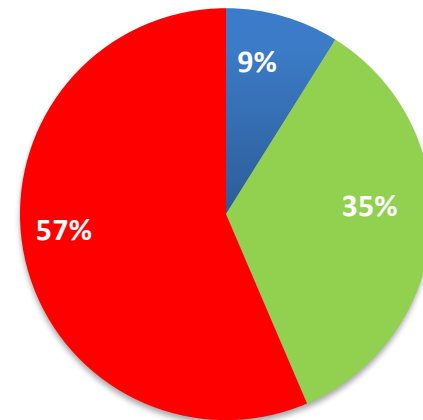
CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR HOLIDAYS 2025



■ Better than last year ■ Same as last year
■ Not as good as last year

Base: 24

JANUARY 2026

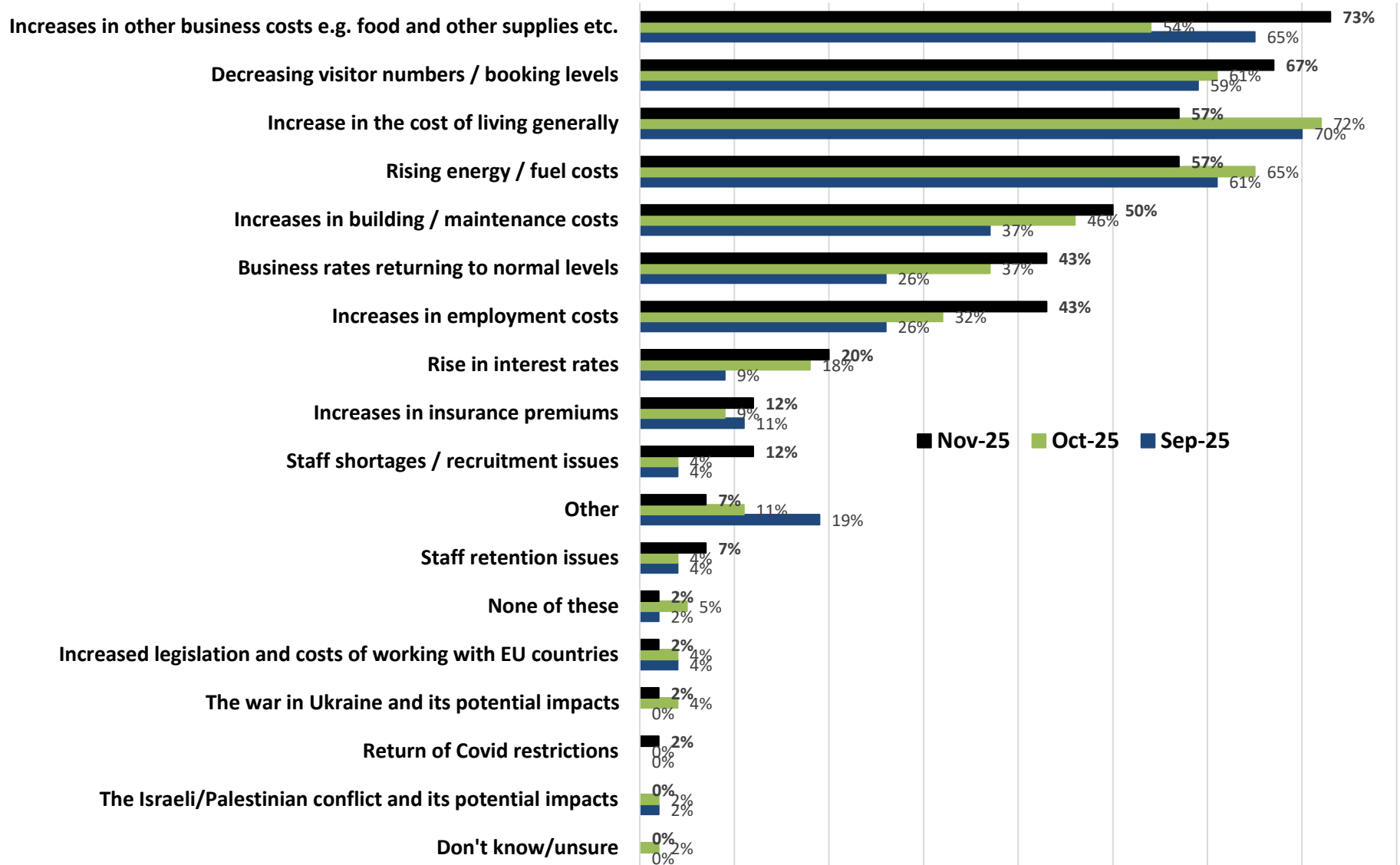


■ Better than last year ■ Same as last year
■ Not as good as last year

Base: 23

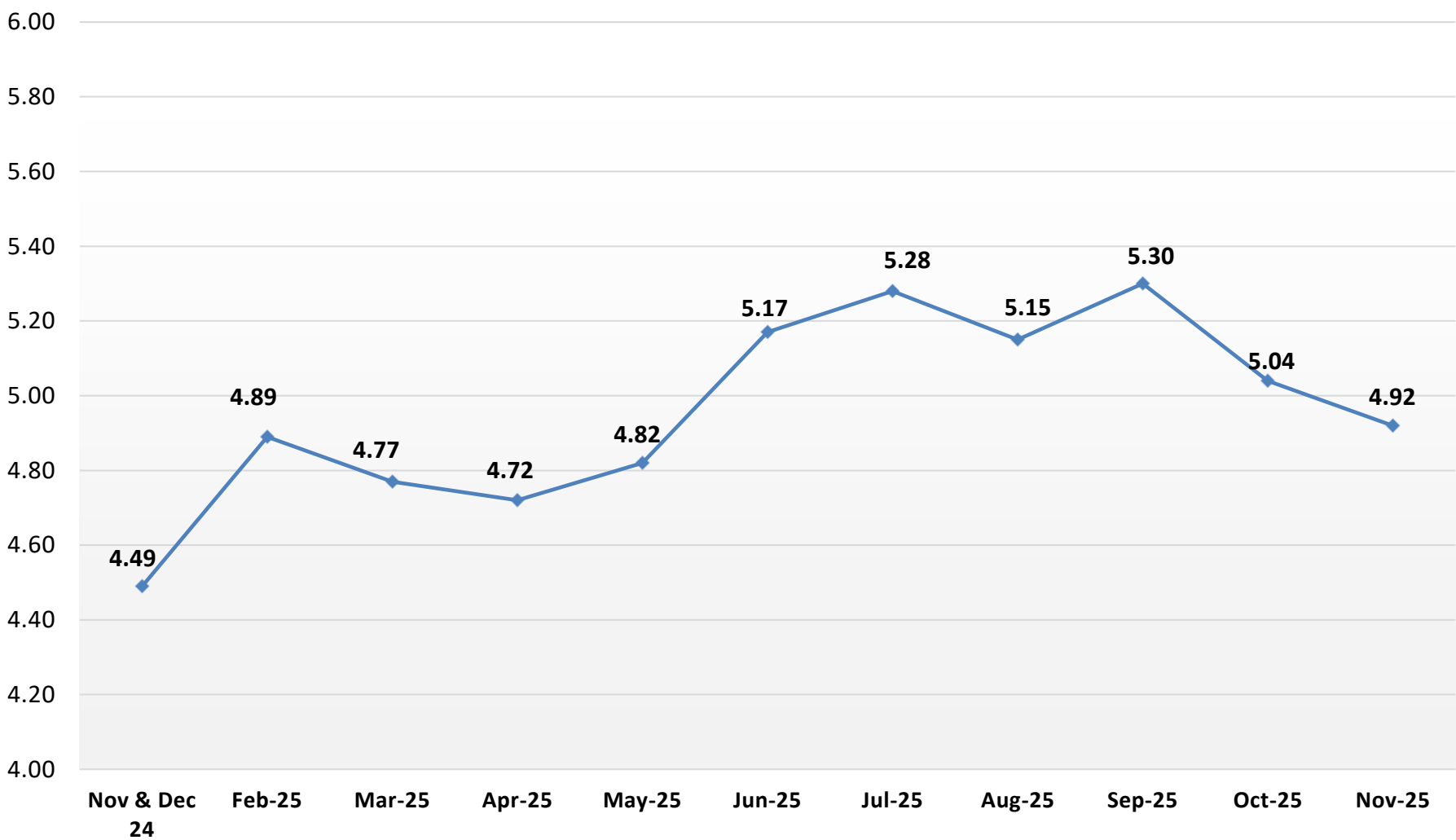
Top 5 business concerns (pre-defined list)

TOP 5 MOST CONCERNING FACTORS FOR BUSINESSES IN THE COMING MONTHS



Business optimism

BUSINESS OPTIMISM (MAXIMUM SCORE OF 10)



Key results – Sample of other comments on impacts

No bookings yet for 2026 going to be another abysmal year, small guest houses are struggling to compete with the bigger hotels, the smaller businesses will be extinct in a few years time

Our quietest time of the year... November is not a month to make money. In this context it was fine, we broke even.

We are doing as much as we can, keeping standards high but we cannot sustain this level of ..non-business for much longer.

Very short lead times, guests looking for deals put pressure on pricing, at the same time as costs generally are increasing. And business rates revaluations look set to rise despite much lower rates and occupancy than before. It's looking like the perfect storm for disaster.

Impact of Business Rate changes is a real challenge for most hoteliers and needs to be carefully considered in ERBID's decision on levy increases

Overall bookings this year were down compared to the past years. We understand that many other B&Bs and Guest Houses are experiencing the same.

Rising costs - no-one has any money for holidays - visitor numbers down, income down, expenditure continually rising. Another winter without heating and a downward spiral with only one potential outcome - financial ruin.

We were closed partially in November and due to a lack of bookings for December, have decided to close for all of December including New Year. It is impossible to compete with the chains, especially when they are able to have particular hotels temporarily run at a loss. Whilst it was lovely to see the Bay so busy for the Bay of Lights (and we are delighted for the bars and restaurants), it has not had any impact for us in terms of business.

We are very worried about the economic climate at the moment. There are less customers visiting the bay and with the increased number of hotels, everyone is competing at ridiculous prices to secure trade and survival. I could understand if there was a shortage of beds in the bay at the time of these hotels being built but there was not and both our sites are suffering with a lot less trade through all of this and last year. We have seen major companies introducing as much as £20 a night for Bed and breakfast per person which is not economically viable for any business. If this continues then a lot of businesses will go bust.

Our Business is making a loss for the third year in a row. I am trying to sell but unsuccessfully.

Tourist numbers are down across the country not just the South West. Torbay is blighted by anti social behaviour which is now being mentioned by guests.

There needs to be a general plan for the whole tourist economy in the area not one that benefits one sector or business size over another because that is how it seems right now.

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