

# ERBID How's Business Survey

## June 2024

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August 2024



# Executive Summary

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**Compared to June 2023 businesses reported that:**

**June 2024 Visitor levels:**

Increased 13% / Stayed the same 20% / Decreased 67%

Estimated actual change in visitors -17%

**June 2024 Turnover levels:**

Increased 14% / Stayed the same 22% / Decreased 64%

Estimated actual change in turnover -17%

**July 2024 Outlook is:**

Better than last year 14% / Same as last year 21% / Not as good as last year 65%

**August 2024 Outlook is:**

Better than last year 14% / Same as last year 16% / Not as good as last year 70%

**September 2024 Outlook is:**

Better than last year 9% / Same as last year 21% / Not as good as last year 70%

**Optimism:**

Optimism score is 4.70 out of a possible 10

## June 2024 – Key results

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The majority of all businesses experienced decreased visitors/customers (67%) and turnover (64%) compared with June 2023, representing decreases of -17% in each case compared with the same time last year.

The majority of businesses anticipated decreased bookings for July (65%), August and September (70% in each case) compared with 2023 levels at the time of writing this report, although these figures may change as we collect data for each of these months.

At 79%, businesses are currently most concerned about decreasing visitor numbers/booking levels (an increase of 4% compared with last month), followed by the increase in the cost of living generally (72%, an increase of 13% compared with last month), increases in other business costs e.g. food and other business supplies etc. (62%, an increase of 16% compared with last month) and rising energy costs (48%, a decrease of -3% compared with last month). The proportion of businesses concerned about the Cryptosporidium outbreak decreased by 34% compared with last month to 26% (60% in May).

At 4.70 out of 10.00, the optimism score has increased for the third consecutive month since a low of 4.34 in April and 4.53 in May but still remains the third lowest score recorded over the last 12 months.

## April – June 2024 – General performance

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The second quarter of 2024 has again been a hugely challenging one for the majority of Torbay tourism businesses with poor, wet weather dominating over the Easter holiday period and beyond impacting negatively on business performance, along with the Cryptosporidium outbreak and the continuing poor economic climate in the UK impacting on the levels of consumer spending on holidays and leisure time. Perhaps the recent reduction in interest rates announced in August will filter through soon and start to have a positive impact on leisure and holiday taking during the latter half of the summer holidays and into the autumn period.

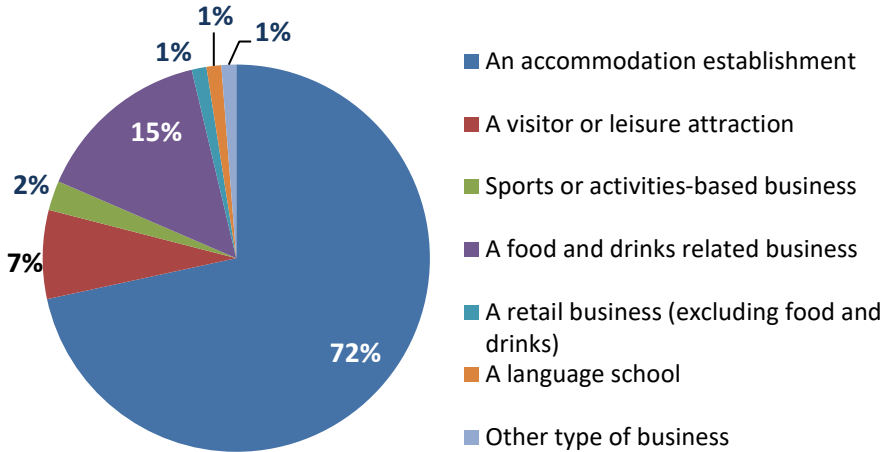
Many businesses have commented on the mix of bad weather, the election, increase in the cost of living, cheaper foreign holidays and the Cryptosporidium outbreak etc. making trading conditions extremely difficult this year in Torbay resulting in many businesses having to discount their prices heavily to attract customers. The roadworks along the harbourside and the rise in the number of homeless people on the streets in Torquay have also featured heavily in the comments.

On a more positive note, some businesses are reporting that their last minute bookings are up and that there is a noticeable increase in the number of overseas visitors visiting the area.

A total of 81 businesses took part in the survey this month.

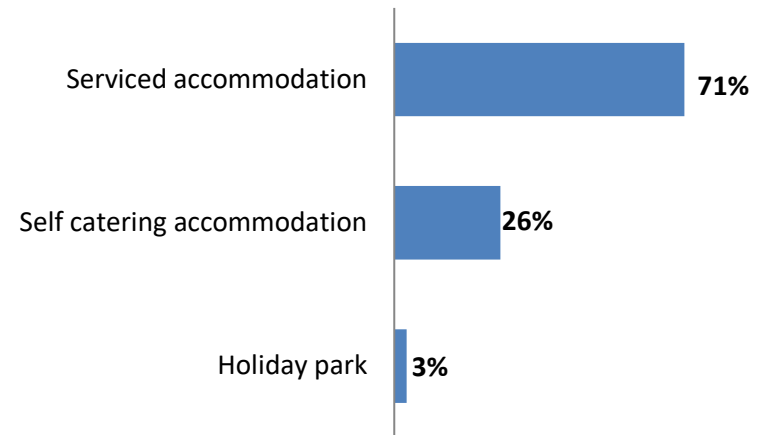
# Sample profile, business location and status

## BUSINESS TYPE



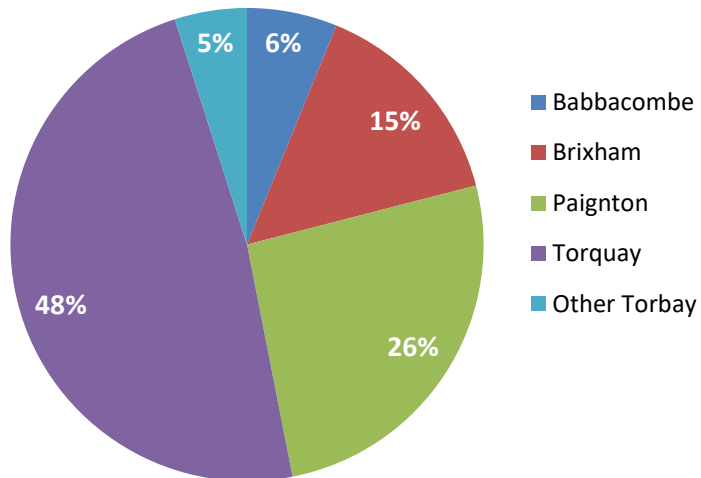
Base: 81

## ACCOMMODATION TYPE



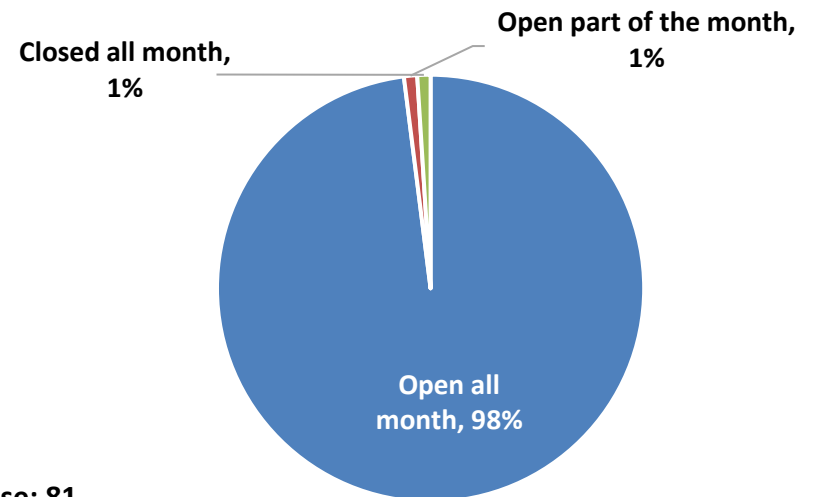
Base: 58

## BUSINESS LOCATION



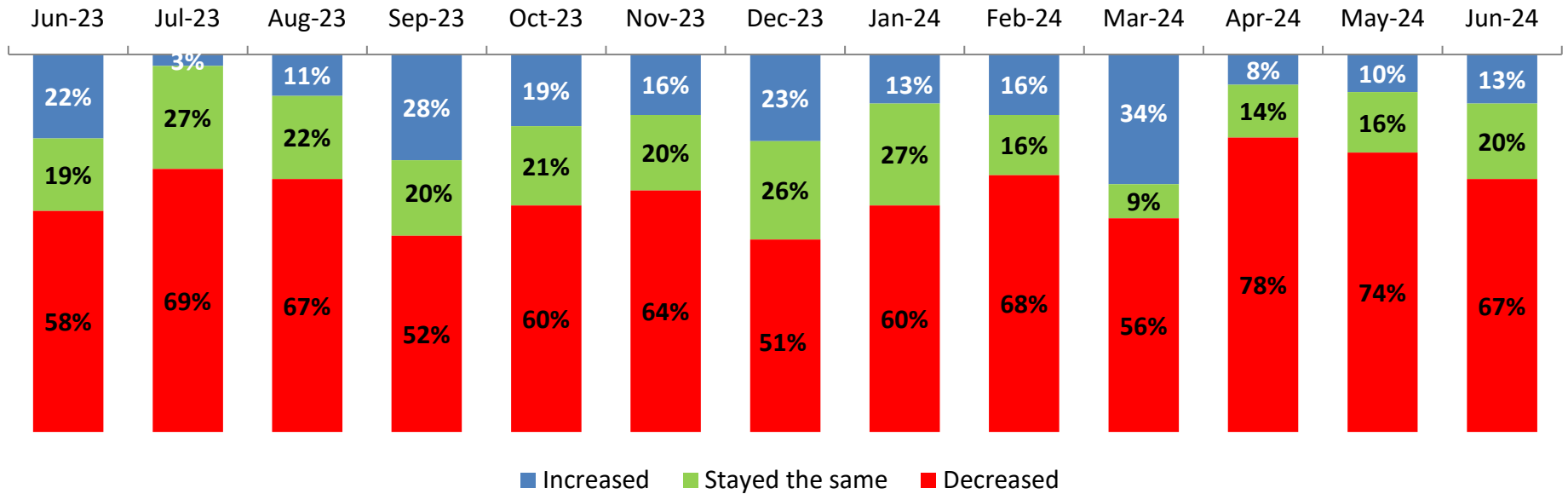
Base: 81

## BUSINESS STATUS

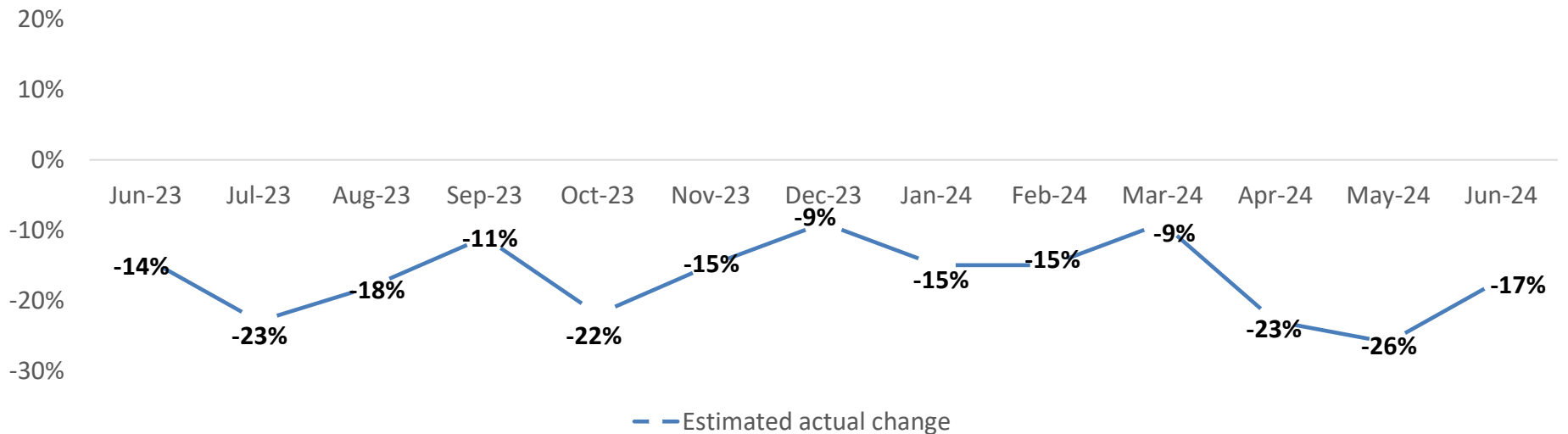


Base: 81

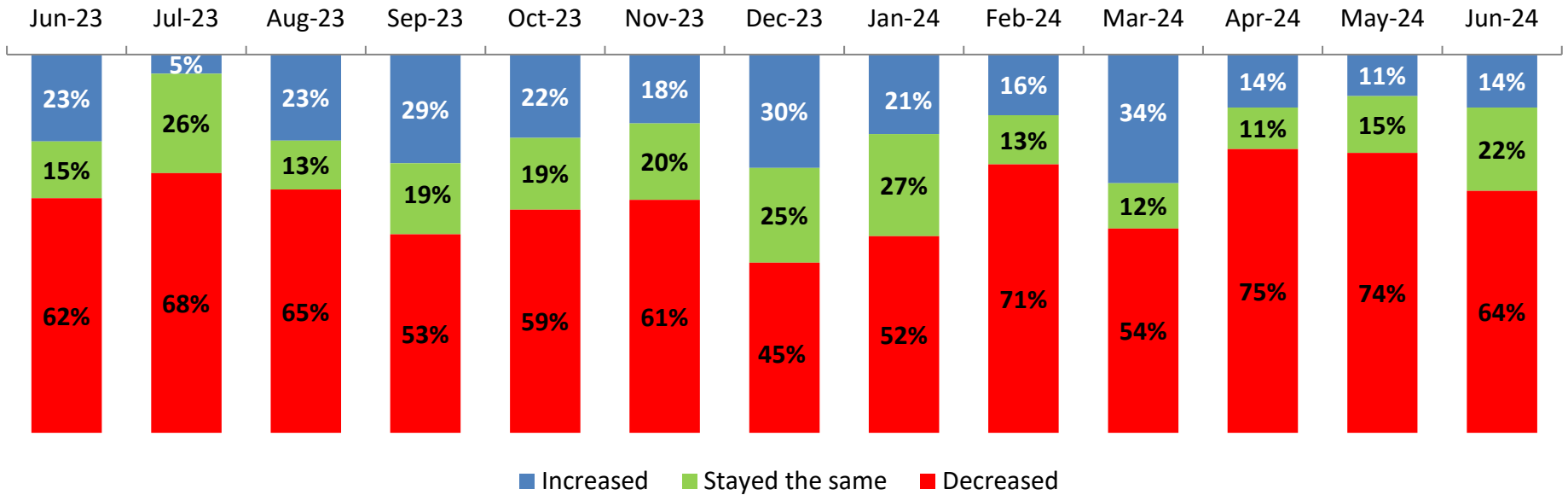
# Performance – Number of visitors compared to previous year



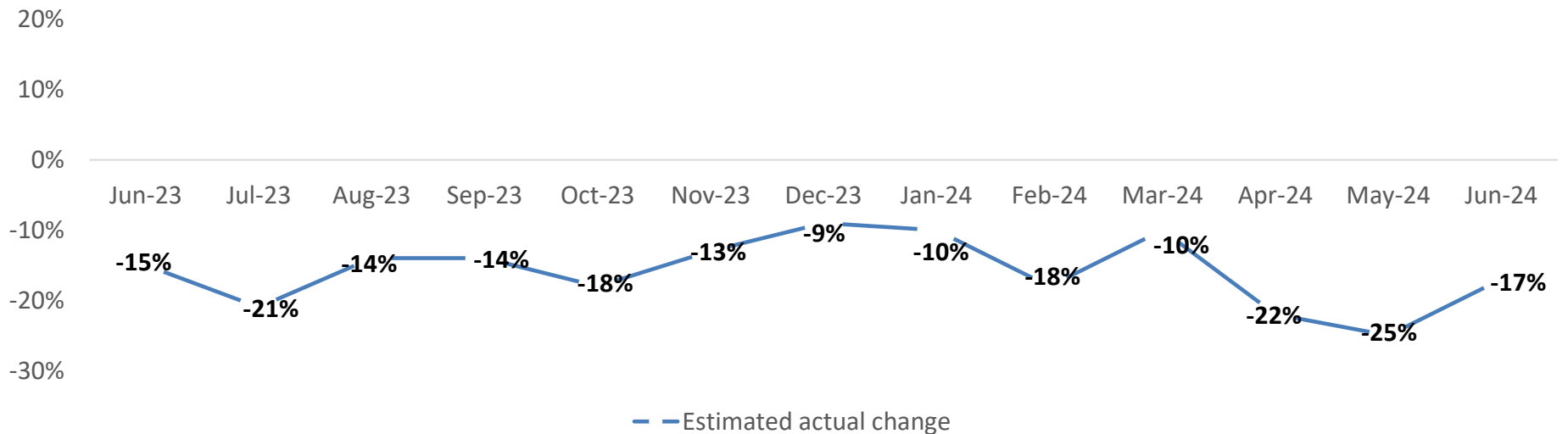
## ESTIMATED ACTUAL CHANGE IN VISITORS



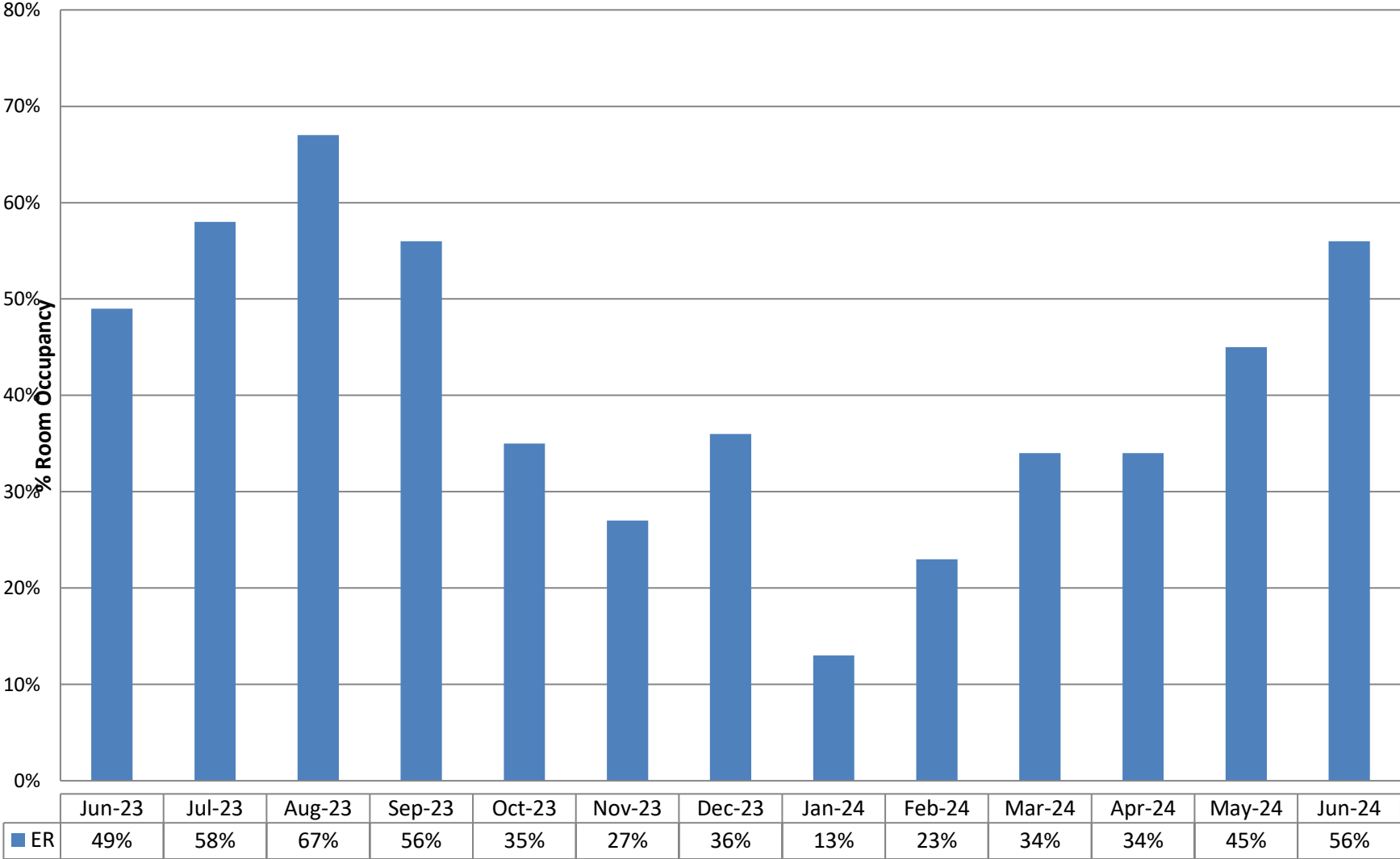
# Performance – Turnover compared to previous year



## ESTIMATED ACTUAL CHANGE IN TURNOVER



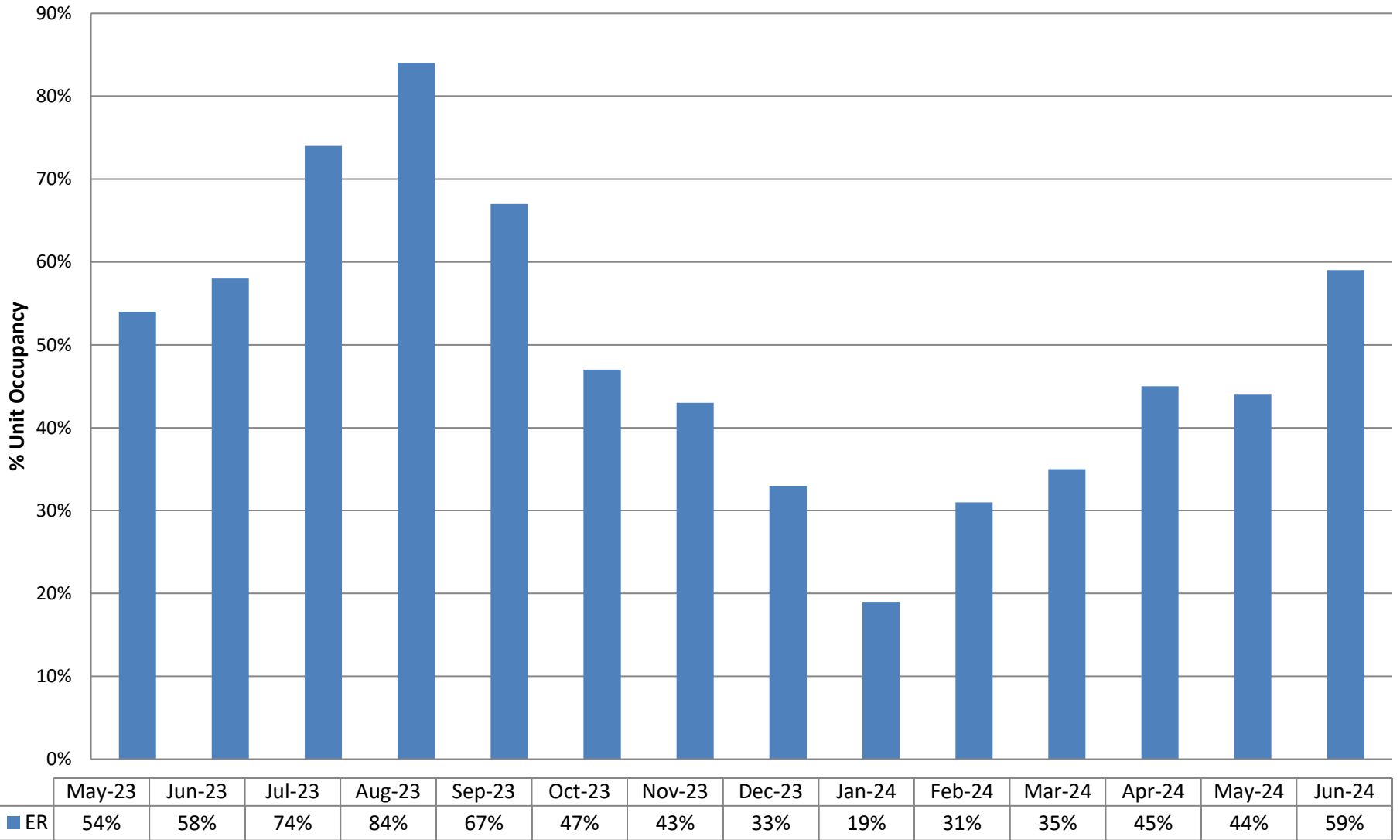
# Performance – Serviced Room Occupancy



**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.**



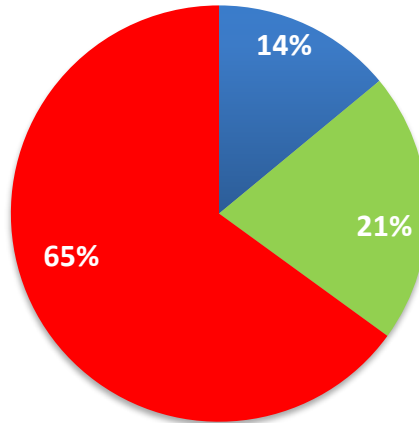
# Performance – Self Catering Unit Occupancy



**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.**

# Outlook – Based upon forward booking levels

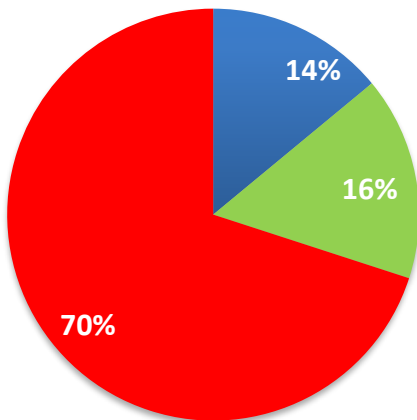
**JULY 2024**



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

Base: 57

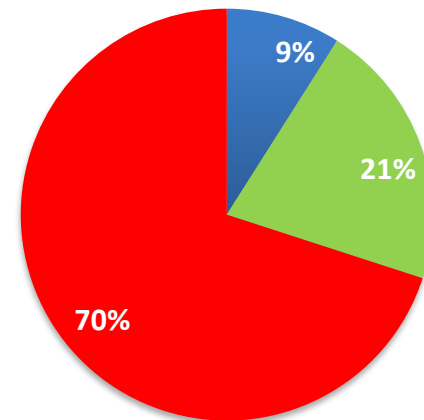
**AUGUST 2024**



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

Base: 57

**SEPTEMBER 2024**

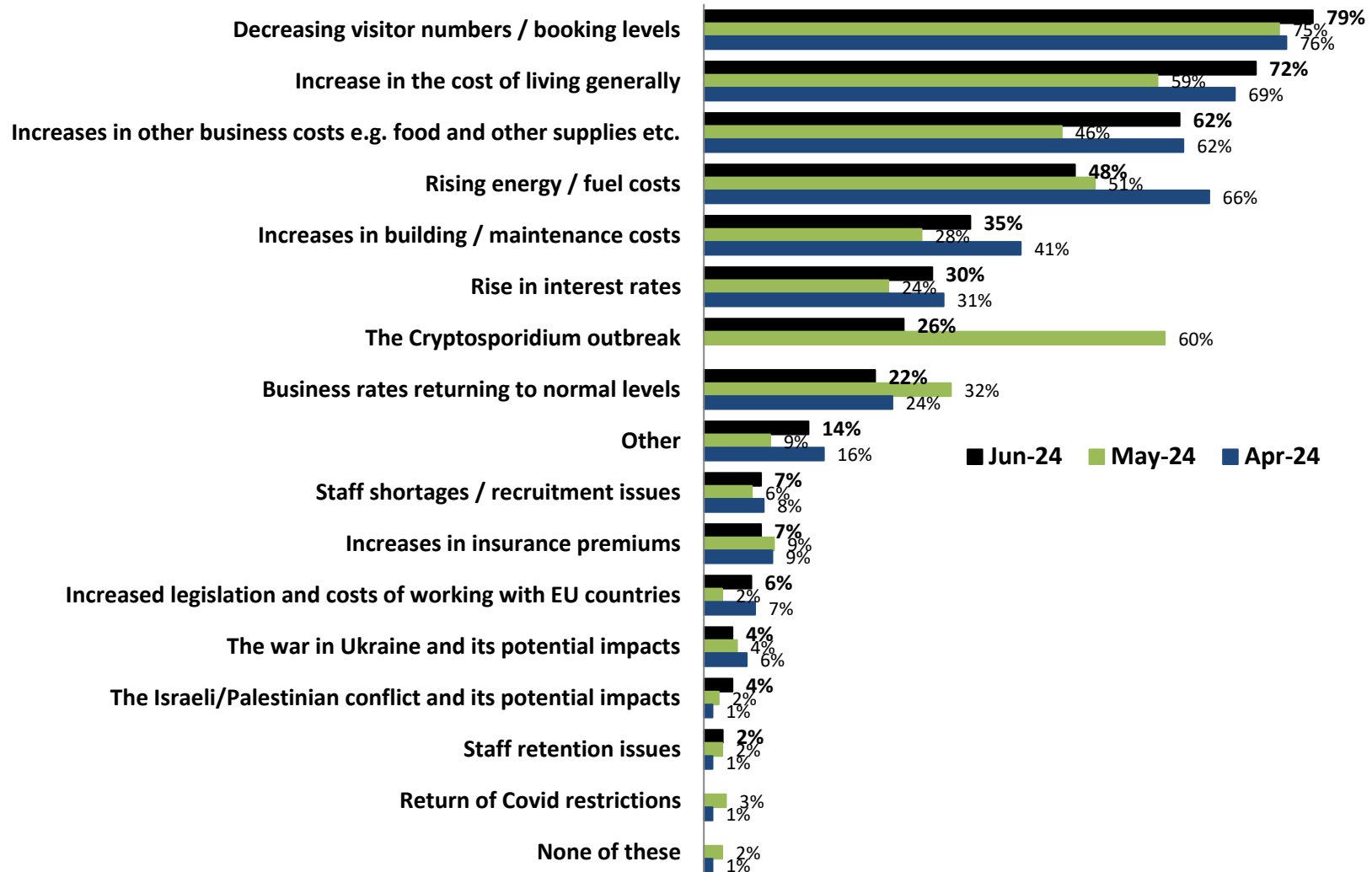


■ Better than last year      ■ Same as last year  
■ Not as good as last year

Base: 56

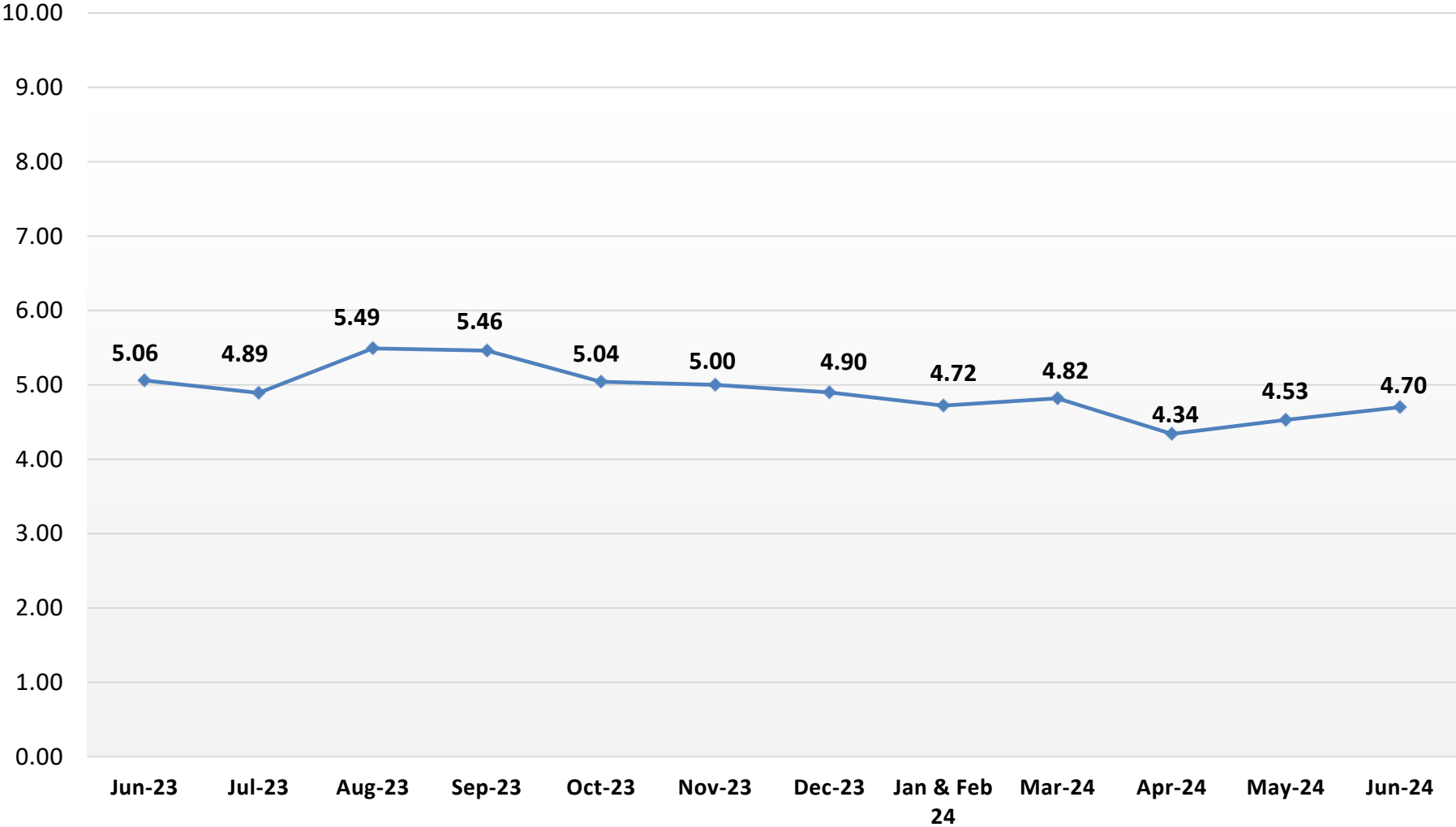
# Top 5 business concerns (pre-defined list)

## 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

The awful summer weather does not help with bookings. The booking channels are killing us with their commissions but unfortunately one has to have them. The town centre is looking poor with all the construction but hoping this will be over very soon.

Road works/ noise/ still expected to pay for pavement license on the harbourside.

After a marked drop in visitor numbers during the height of the Crypto outbreak our trade levels recently have been more positive. Cautiously optimistic. We have seen local customers and also plenty of visitors to the area, lots of European tourists around again.

Our business is going to struggle financially this year, the winter months are going to be a real challenge.

A lot of last minute cancellations I think due to the cost of living and guests either going abroad for better weather and package deals or looking for cheaper deals here.

Last minute bookings are up. Weather impacting. Most guests comment on some aspect of the town being "run down", whether it's derelict buildings on Avenue Road or in town or the state of the shopping area/castle circus.

Lots of overseas visitors - not sure where they are staying though. Coaches for older guests are booking into larger hotels. New Hotels have bigger and better 'buying power' for the OTA's so are always able to be 'higher profile' and can negotiate better utility & cleaning 'deals'.  
Our profit margins have been severely squeezed.

We are blighted in Torquay with street dwellers, druggies etc.. plus countless visits from travellers who scare off locals and visitors! We've had them on our doorstep in Torwood Street for 2 weeks now.. police and council are NOT doing enough to prevent them showing up. NO number plates on vehicles.....why aren't they seized?

Not sure we will be operating next year, I could earn more money delivering food for one of the supermarkets and not have the worry and stress of competing for the dwindling visitors who come to the area, I fear it will get a lot worse before it gets better.

Weather forecasting can be a hindrance for impulse stays. Overseas holidaymakers and cost of travel in UK are all deterrents along with the awful condition of roads and time it now takes to get places by car.

Continuing work on The Strand is putting visitors off staying in Torquay. This work should have been done over a 2 month period using extended shift systems. Continuing issues around connectivity also compound the issue around getting visitors from A to B.

The decrease in visitor numbers is so bad, the state of Paignton and Torquay and the prices have trebled. Lack off parking, rough sleepers, shops boarded up, lack of attractions and the affordability for what there is.

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