

# Reflecting Ireland

An insight into consumer behavioural change in Ireland



## Looking Forward to 2025

December 2024

ptsb

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# Executive summary

Heading into 2025, we see more people in Ireland are feeling positive about the year ahead than was the case this time last year, following a steady increase in public mood throughout the year. We are also seeing a more positive attitude towards personal finances.

And while most of our priorities remain the same, we do see some shifts in our hopes and expectations and spending intentions for the year ahead.

## Life in Ireland

- Sentiment towards living in Ireland has improved year on year, with more people having positive feelings about living here.
- More people believe Ireland is a good place to grow up in (seven in ten) than grow old in (six in ten) – however, the latter measure has increased from a score of just over five in ten in 2023.
- Our natural beauty remains our biggest perceived asset, however there is a significant increase in those citing weather as our least appealing feature compared to 2022.
- There has been a significant increase in those who say we embrace different sexualities. Contrasting this, there has been a decline in those who say we look out for people less fortunate – is that sense of community spirit missing for some?
- Our healthcare system continues to be ranked the biggest challenge about living in Ireland. This is no surprise as throughout the year we have seen people cite access to quality healthcare as one of the most important issues in Ireland today.
- We also see an increase in those saying our intolerance of minority groups and our willingness to bend the rules are some of the worst things about life in Ireland. Are inclusion, tolerance and ethics becoming a bigger priority for Irish people?

## Managing our finances in 2025

- There is a more positive attitude towards personal finances for the year ahead, with more people expecting to have money left over at the end of every month, more people feeling they can handle an unexpected expense, and less people feeling like their finances ‘control my life’.
- Our biggest area of spend in 2024 was on grocery shopping. When we look at 2025, there is a real determination to spend less on household expenses and more on experiences such as holidays.
- Irish people are looking to cut back on discretionary spends across all categories in 2025 with the exception of savings or investments. However, our intention to cutback has lessened overall since last year – perhaps we are feeling worn-out by the cost-of-living crisis.
- Our biggest non-essential spends in 2024 were transport, pubs and restaurants and clothes shopping. For 2025, we intend to spend more money on personal care, home décor and entertainment and less on pharmacies and streaming services than we did in 2024.

## What will motivate us in 2025

- Irish people plan on getting fitter/ healthier, spending time with family and taking care of their mental health with less of a focus on cutting spend and upskilling than last year’s results.
- Celebrating events with family and friends, travel and career progression remain the top motivating factors for 2025.

## The public mood in 2025

- Cost of living crisis and energy crisis have less of an impact on planned spending compared to previous years. Overall, significantly less people are looking to cut back on spending. This could be due to spend cutbacks over the past one - two years having the desired effect.
- Significantly more people plan to save regularly in 2025 compared to last year.
- 49% of people are upbeat about living in Ireland, up from 44% last year and 39% two years ago.
- While there is growth in government supports helping people get on the property ladder - there is little hope that either the rental market or housing market will be more affordable in 2025.
- Fewer Irish people plan on implementing eco-friendly behaviours in 2025, compared to last year but still ahead of 2022.

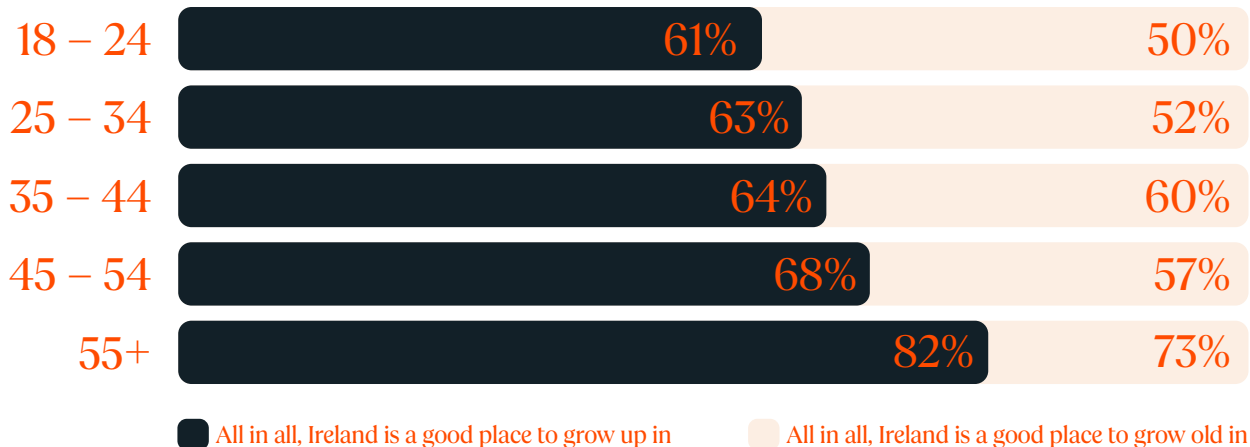




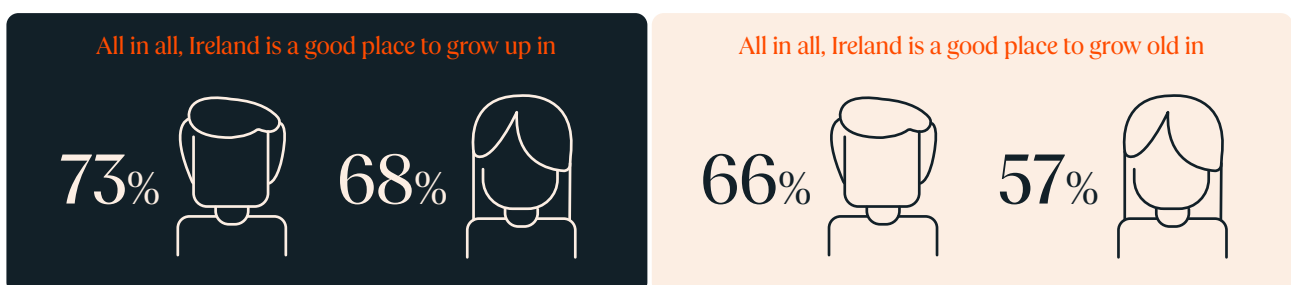
# Ireland remains a good place to grow up and grow old in

Overall, seven in ten believe Ireland is a good place to grow up in, and six in ten a good place to grow old in. Older people are more positive about growing up and growing old in Ireland. While one in two of those aged 18-24 feel Ireland is a good place to grow old in, almost three in four (73%) of those aged 55+ agree. Similarly, six in ten of 18-24 year olds feel Ireland is a good place to grow up in, rising to over eight in ten among the 55+ age group.

## The older we are, the more positive we are about living in Ireland

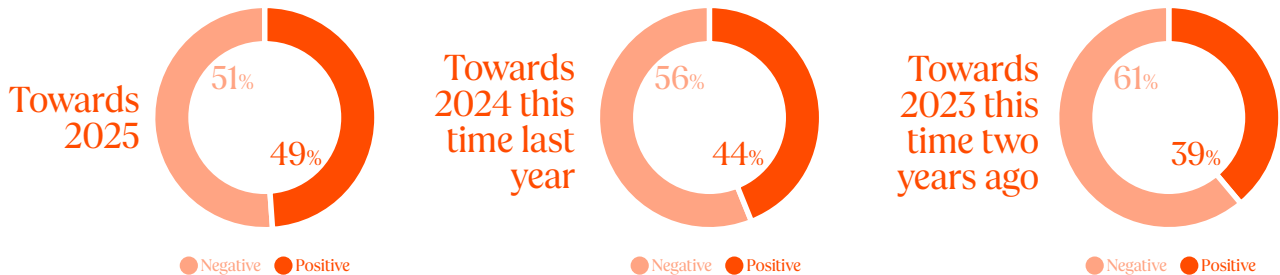


## Men are more positive than women about living in Ireland



## Our mood about living in Ireland as we look towards the year ahead

**As we look towards the year ahead**, more of us are upbeat about living in Ireland than we were this time last year, or the year before. Although half of us feel downbeat as we look towards 2025, the long-term trend is positive. There are fewer of us describing our mood as anxious, pessimistic or depressed, compared to 2022. More of us report feeling happy, calm, relaxed or cheerful than was the case two years ago.



## Older adults are more optimistic about living in Ireland in 2025

Overall, almost one in five (18%) feel optimistic about living in Ireland in 2025. However younger adults are much less likely to feel optimistic, at just 6% of those aged 18-24, compared to older adults. The most optimistic are those aged 55+ at 27%.



## Those aged 45-54 are the most anxious about living in Ireland in 2025. Women are more anxious about the year ahead than men

Overall, just over one in five (21%) feel anxious about living in Ireland in 2025. Those aged 45-54 are the most anxious age group at 27%. Women are significantly more likely to report anxiety than men. Over one in four women are anxious about living in Ireland in 2025 compared to almost one in six men.

## Anxious about living in Ireland in 2025, % agree:





# Managing our finances in 2025

We plan to cut spend on some essentials, invest in savings and set money aside for holidays and home improvements.

Our level of confidence in our ability to manage our finances and the degree to which we expect to get by financially has changed little over the last two years

Over half (56%) feel confident about managing their finances in 2025.



Six in ten (59%) expect to just get by financially over the coming year.

There are indications that financial pressures have eased for some since last year

While one in two feel their finances will control their lives over the coming year, this is fewer than this time last year (56%). More people expect to have money left over at the end of the month in 2025 or to be able to handle a major unexpected expense compared to this time last year.

I expect finances will control my life



Looking towards 2025



Looking towards 2024 this time last year

I expect to have money left over at the end of the month



Looking towards 2025



Looking towards 2024 this time last year

I expect I will be able to handle a major unexpected expense



Looking towards 2025



Looking towards 2024 this time last year



Overall, 45% expect to have money left over at the end of the month in 2025. This rises to 55% among those aged 18-24, a significant increase compared to last year.





### The squeezed middle (45-54 year olds) feel under most financial pressure as they look towards 2025

Those aged 45-54 are the least likely to expect to have money left over at the end of the month, to be able to handle a major unexpected expense or to feel confident about managing their finances in 2025. Along with others aged 35+ they are most likely to say they expect to just get by financially.

	To have money left over at the end of the month	I will be able to handle a major unexpected expense	To feel confident managing my day to day finances	To just get by financially
18 – 24	55%	43%	62%	54%
25 – 34	52%	50%	60%	56%
35 – 44	44%	45%	54%	60%
45 – 54	<b>37%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>59%</b>
55+	42%	49%	62%	61%

### When it comes to spend on essentials, groceries and energy are targets for cutbacks in 2025

Almost half (47%) plan to cut back on energy outgoings and 38% on weekly grocery spend in 2025. Although significant, this is markedly lower than this time last year.

Will cut back on spend % agree:	Looking towards 2025	Looking towards 2024 this time last year	Difference
 Energy outgoings	47%	60%	-13%
 Weekly grocery shopping	38%	53%	-15%

### There is a desire to spend less on all areas of discretionary spend in 2025

People plan to cut back on all areas of discretionary spend next year, although not to the same extent as this time last year. While some intend cutting back substantially, others plan to increase spend, however the overall effect is a net reduction in spend.

### Planned cutbacks in spend will challenge an already beleaguered hospitality industry

One in two plan to cut back on spend in pubs and restaurants, one in four on holidays or weekend breaks in Ireland and one in three on foreign holidays. Although significant, the level of intended cutbacks as we look towards 2025 is lower than it was this time last year or two years ago.

Will cut back on spend % agree	Looking towards 2025	Looking towards 2024 this time last year	Looking towards 2023 this time two years ago
Going to pubs	47%	56%	54%
Going to restaurants	51%	62%	61%
Holidays in Ireland	38%	51%	47%
Weekend breaks in Ireland	38%	52%	50%
Foreign holidays	35%	49%	48%

In recent years, one in two were prepared to cut back on spend on foreign holidays in the year ahead, this has now reduced to one in three.

### Three quarters plan to save regularly next year, an increase on this time last year

Three quarters (74%) plan to save regularly, either each month or whenever money is available, up from 71% this time last year. The intention to save more over the coming year is evident across age groups, but particularly among those aged 35-44 and 55+, up +7% vs. last year in each case. Just over one in five (22%) don't intend to save regularly next year, a decline of -2% vs. this time last year.

**Building a 'rainy day' fund remains the most popular reason for saving, followed by a holiday and home improvements**

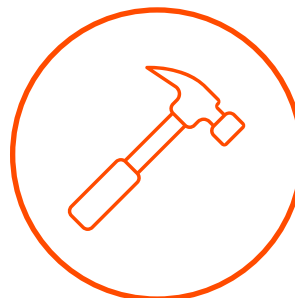
### Top four motivations to save in 2025



Rainy Day



Holiday



Home Improvements



Car



The number one motivation for saving in Ireland is to build a 'rainy day' fund, and although it is prevalent across age groups, motivation increases with age, with more than twice as many over 45s saving for a rainy day compared to 18-24 year olds.

Younger adults are motivated to save for a car or their education. All age groups make saving for a holiday a priority. Although there are plans to cut back on discretionary spend in 2025, people intend spending more on holidays and home renovations than they did in 2024.

Which of the following are you saving for in 2025?



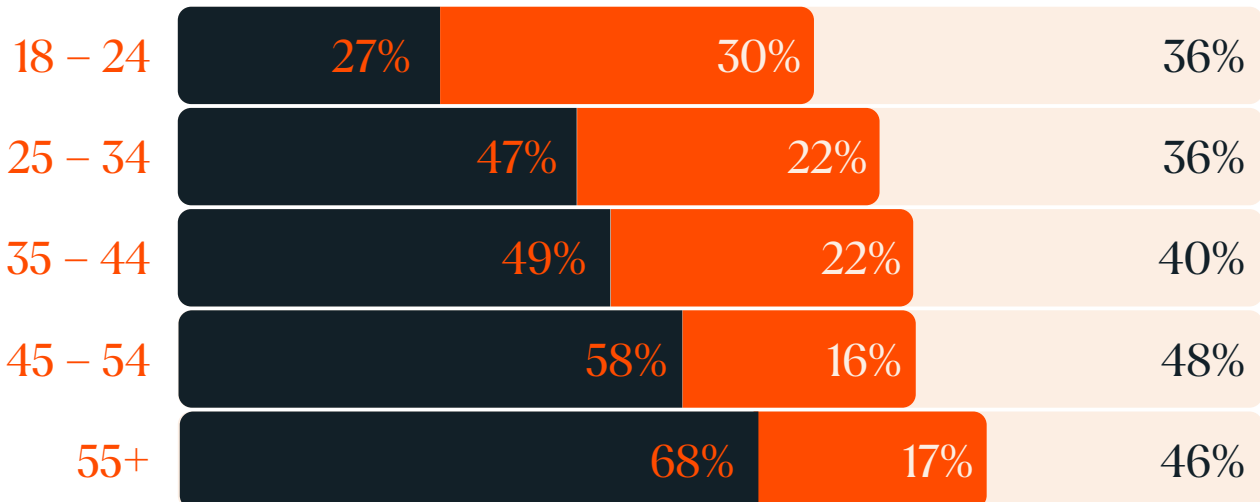
% Rainy Day



% Car



% Holiday

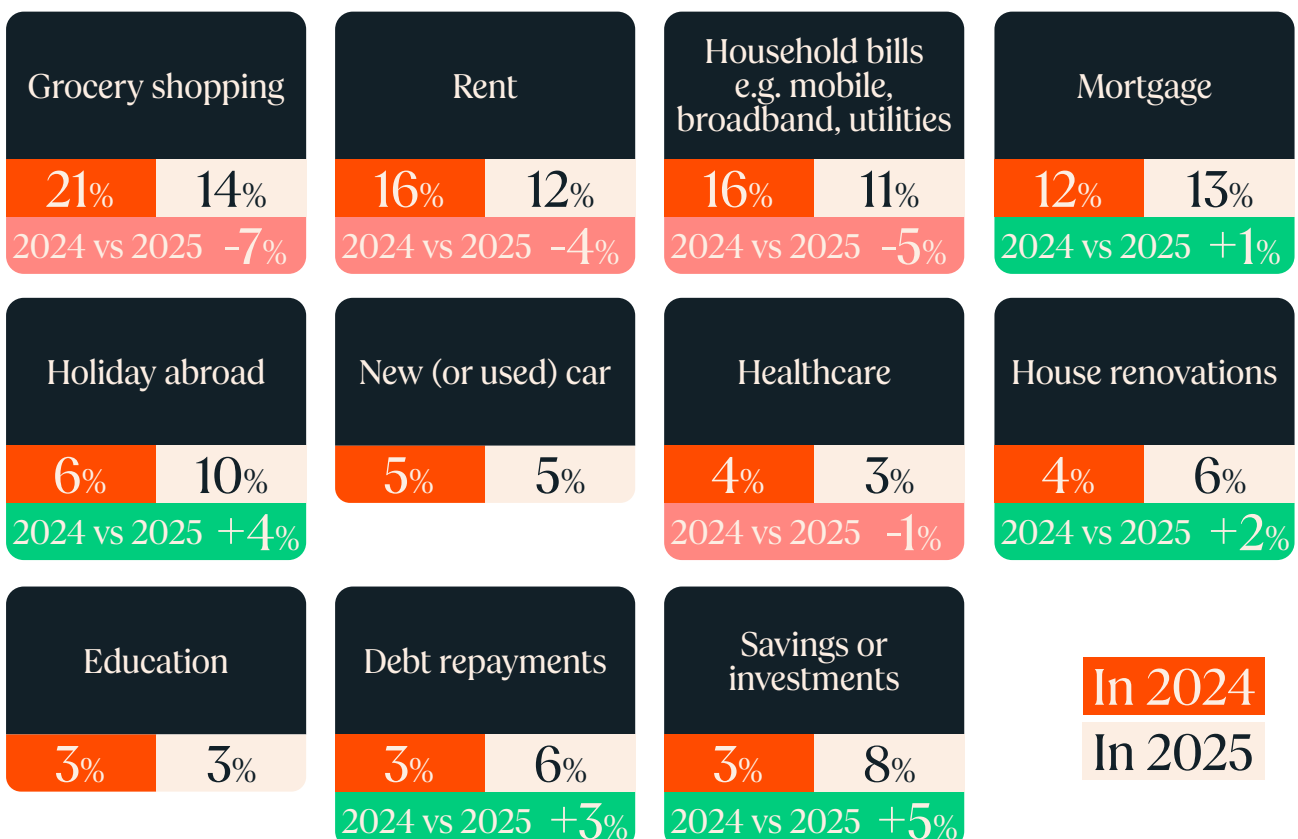




# Biggest spends of 2024 & 2025

One in five say grocery shopping was their biggest spend in 2024, this was followed by rent, household bills and mortgage. Grocery shopping will be an area many people look to cut down on with only 14% saying this will be their biggest expense next year. Reflecting what we have seen in our last report, perhaps people are prioritising 'living' - spending less on essentials like groceries, rent and bills and spending more on holidays and savings/investments.

## Biggest Spend (1<sup>st</sup> Rank)





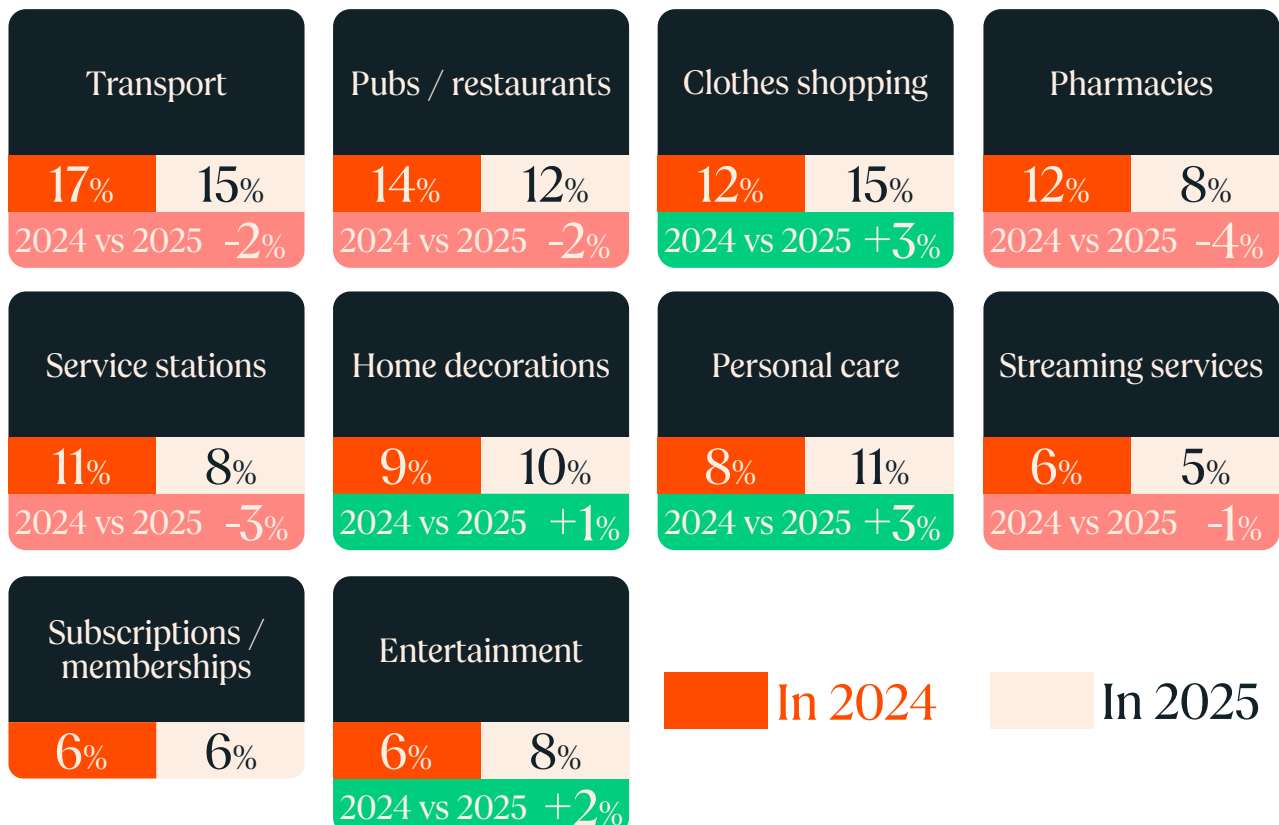
# Biggest non-essential spends of 2024 & 2025



Our biggest non-essential spend in 2024 was on transport, this was followed by clothes shopping and going to pubs and restaurants. Males are more likely to have spent the most money on going to pubs/restaurants & streaming services while females spent more on clothes shopping & personal care. Spending on entertainment was highest amongst under 25s.

Looking at non-essential spending in 2025, females see spending on clothes shopping to continue while males will continue to spend on going to pubs/restaurants.

## Biggest Spend (1<sup>st</sup> Rank)



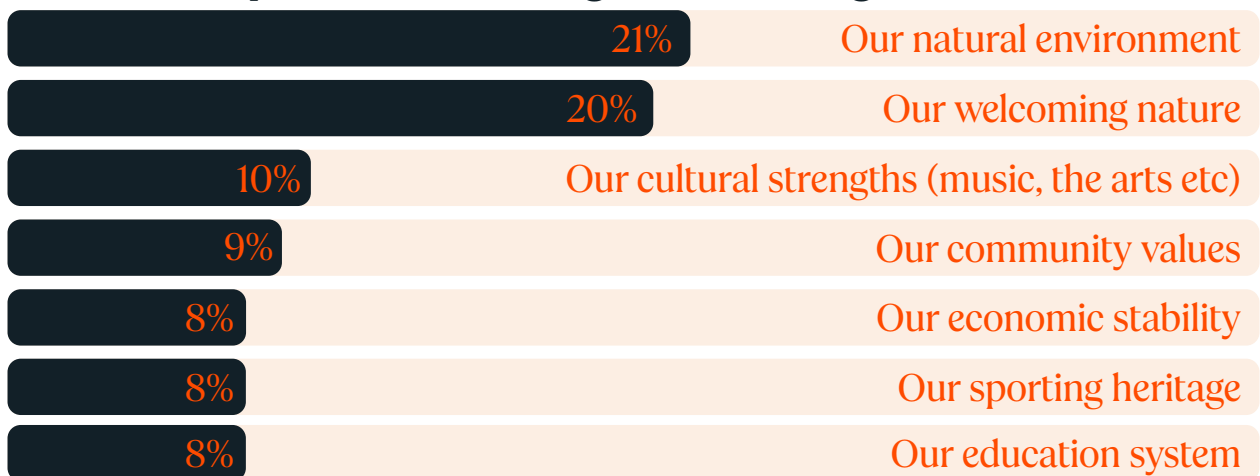




# The path to a sustainable future is paved with good intentions

Our natural environment is the best thing about living in Ireland today, ranked number one by one in five (21%) and one of the top three by one in two (51%). Those aged 18-24 appreciate it most, with one in four (25%) ranking it number one.

## Top seven best things about living in Ireland



## Climate change is important, but it's not the most important thing right now

As we look towards 2025, climate change is an important issue for seven in ten (71%) and considered very important by just over half that group (37%). Those aged 55+ are most likely to consider it a very important issue.

However, when asked about the most important issues that need to be addressed in Ireland now, only one in seven (14%) mention climate change as one of the top three, and just 3% cite it as number one. It ranks behind the cost of living, housing, healthcare, homelessness, immigration, rents and crime. When looked at in the round, climate change fades to the background.

Looking towards 2025, how important is climate change to you personally?

37%

Very Important

34%

Important

71%

Total

Which of these are the most important issues to be addressed in Ireland (today)?



3%  
Climate change  
number one



14%  
Climate change one  
of top three

We're happy to behave in a sustainable way, as long as it is easy and doesn't cost us

Just over half of us (53%) intend to do more to reduce our carbon footprint in 2025 particularly those aged over 55 (58%) and women (57%).

When we look at the detail behind this however, we are prepared to do more of the everyday behaviours that cost us nothing or save us money - like recycling, using public transport or buying second hand clothes. We are less enthusiastic about investing for a greener future: buying an electric or hybrid vehicle, retrofitting our home or installing solar panels. In these areas those that don't intend to invest significantly outnumber those that do. More than twice as many homeowners don't intend to install solar panels or retrofit their home, and three times as many don't intend to invest in an electric or hybrid vehicle as those that do.

In 2025 I intend to

Everyday behaviours that cost nothing / save money:



Do more recycling

66% Agree | 8% Disagree



Use public transport more

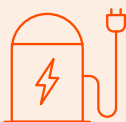
40% Agree | 31% Disagree



Buy more  
second-hand clothes

36% Agree | 37% Disagree

Investments for a greener future:



Buy an electric  
or hybrid vehicle

18% Agree | 55% Disagree



Retrofit my home  
(homeowners)

21% Agree | 48% Disagree



Install solar panels  
at home (homeowners)

22% Agree | 51% Disagree



# Spotlight on young adults

In many ways the circumstances that young Irish adults find themselves in today are unique to their generation. They are living through a period of economic prosperity that previous generations couldn't have imagined. Despite headwinds of uncertainty following the US election, Ireland has a buoyant labour market and a healthy predicted GDP growth rate of 4% in 2025 (1). However, a shortage of housing and rising house prices (2), coupled with spiralling rents, conspire to make it more difficult for young adults to find a home and begin enjoying independent living. The high cost of bills and rent payments eat into savings for a deposit towards a first home. According to the latest census, over half a million adults in Ireland still live with their parents. This includes 41% of 18-34 year olds (3).

## Young adults see life in Ireland through a less positive lens

Those aged 18-24 are the least likely age group to feel that Ireland is a good country to grow up in or to grow old in and are the least optimistic about living in Ireland in 2025. They are also the most likely to feel that things in Ireland are generally going down the wrong track.

All in all, Ireland is a good place to grow up in

18 – 24 61%

Average 70%

All in all, Ireland is a good place to grow old in

18 – 24 50%

Average 61%

Feel optimistic about living in Ireland in 2025

18 – 24 6%

Average 18%

Things in this country are generally going down the wrong track

18 – 24 59%

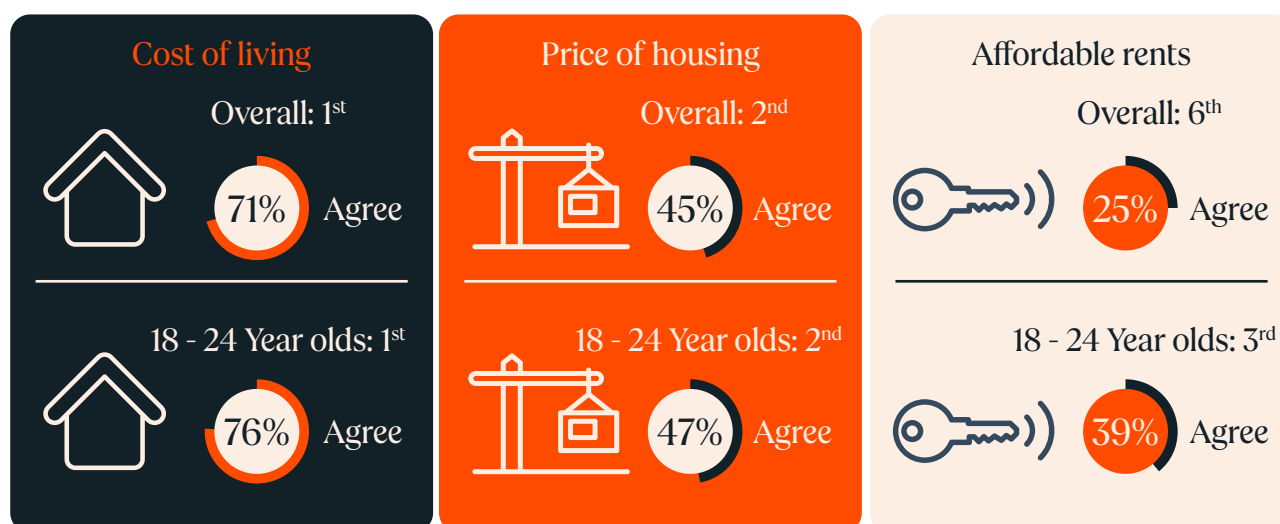
Average 52%



## The cost of living, price of housing and affordable rents are all more important to younger adults than older

In terms of the top three issues to be addressed in Ireland today, the cost of living ranks number one across all age groups but is particularly important for those aged 18-24. The price of housing is also important across the board, but relatively more so for younger adults. Affordable rents ranks sixth for the nation as a whole, but is a top three issue for those aged 18-24.

### Most important issues to address in Ireland today



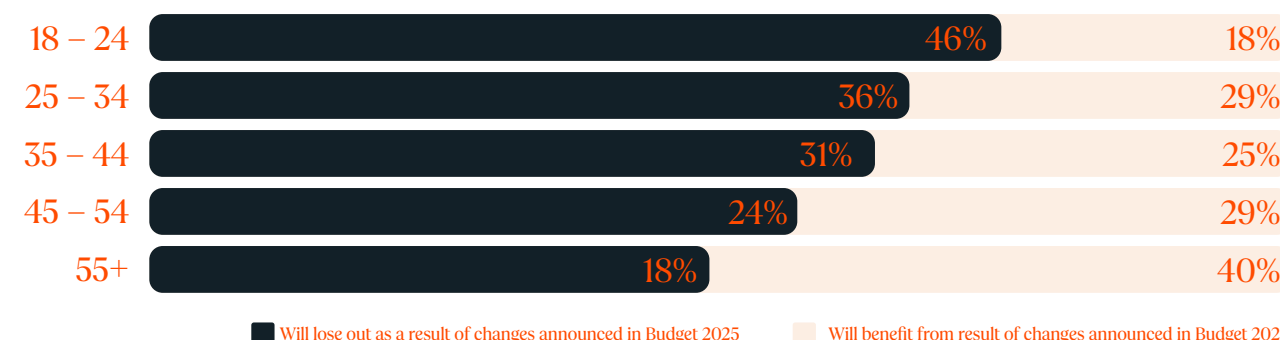
## Looking towards 2025, availability of housing is the most important issue for young adults

Across the overall population the standard of healthcare is the most important issue to people personally, however for young adults, availability of housing is the most important:



## Young adults feel they will lose out as a result of Budget 2025, while older adults feel they will benefit

Those aged 18-24 are the most likely age group to feel they will lose out as a result of Budget 2025. They are two and a half times more likely to feel they will lose out compared to those aged 55+.

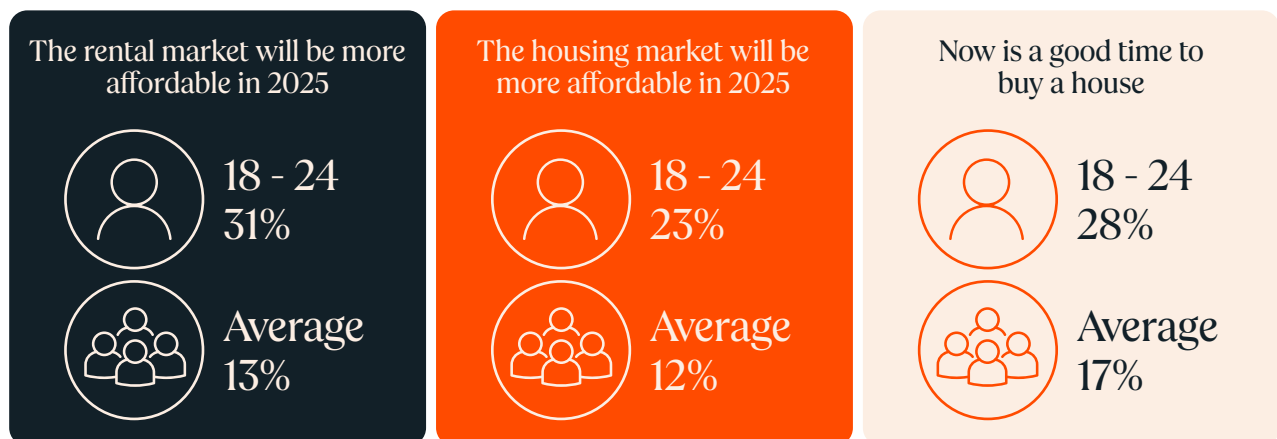


## Four in ten young adults will consider moving abroad in 2025



## Despite the challenges, young adults are the most optimistic among us that the housing situation will improve

Perhaps influenced by a combination of natural optimism and how important the housing situation is to them, those aged 18-24 are more optimistic than other age groups that the housing situation is about to get better.





## Spotlight on older adults (55+)

People born in the 1960s or earlier have never seen Ireland enjoy such economic prosperity. Perhaps it is for this reason that a higher proportion of older adults rate their overall life satisfaction as high. According to the Central Statistics Office (CSO) over a third (36%) of those aged 65 and over rate their overall life satisfaction as high compared to an average of 29% (4).

### Those aged 55 and over are the most positive about life in Ireland

Those aged 55+ are the most likely to believe Ireland is a good place to grow up and grow old in, that the country is generally going in the right direction. They are the most optimistic about living in Ireland in 2025.

All in all, Ireland is a good place to grow up in

55+ 82%

Average 70%

All in all, Ireland is a good place to grow old in

55+ 73%

Average 61%

Feel optimistic about living in Ireland in 2025

55+ 27%

Average 18%

Things in this country are generally going in the right direction

55+ 40%

Average 33%

Adults aged 55+ are the most likely to believe they will benefit as a result of changes announced in Budget 2025 at 40%, over twice the proportion of 18-24 year olds that believe so (18%).



### The standard of healthcare in Ireland is a key issue for all but particularly older adults






Looking to 2025, the standard of healthcare is the most important issue for people in Ireland, particularly for older adults. It is the number one issue for over one in three of those aged 55+ compared to one in five of 18-24 year olds. For approximately two thirds of older adults, more than any other age group, it is the worst aspect of life in Ireland.

%agree	To me personally, the standard of healthcare in 2025 is ...		Our healthcare system is the worst thing about living in Ireland today
	Very important	The most important issue	
18-24	51%	20%	39%
25-34	64%	20%	47%
35-44	69%	29%	61%
45-54	71%	29%	57%
55+	<b>83%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>64%</b>

### Those aged 55+ are the most determined to take proactive steps to protect their health and wellbeing in 2025

Perhaps partly as a result of their concern about the standard of healthcare in Ireland, older adults are the most determined to take proactive steps to look after their health and wellbeing in 2025.

### Which of the following will you do to look after your day-to-day health and wellbeing in 2025?

	 Exercise	 Eat Well	 Get enough sleep	 Spend time outdoors in nature	 Take supplements
18 - 24	55%	65%	60%	34%	24%
25 - 34	64%	60%	59%	43%	32%
35 - 44	61%	54%	51%	44%	32%
45 - 54	66%	63%	57%	54%	33%
55+	<b>68%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>39%</b>

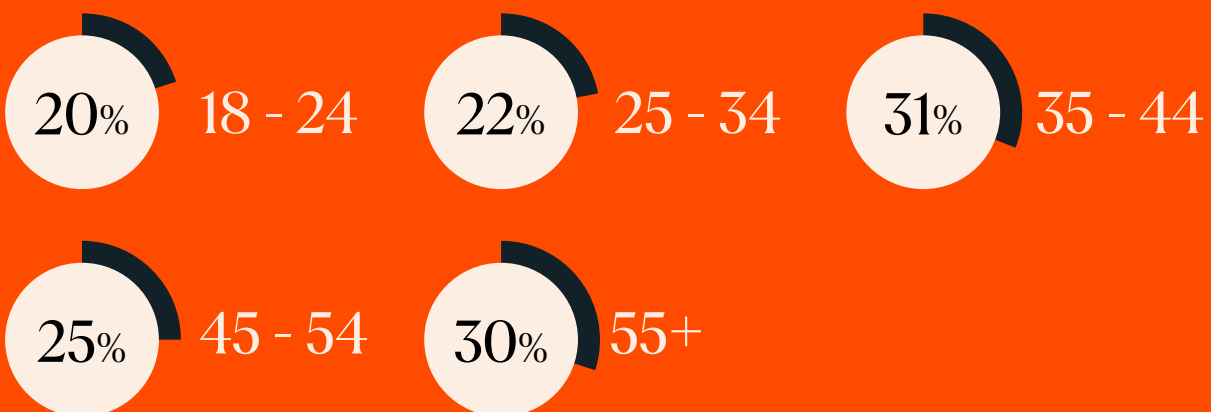
# Connecting with each other keeps us positive



For the third year in a row, looking forward to celebratory events with family and friends is what will motivate us most throughout the year ahead

Over one in four (27%) say celebratory events with family and friends will motivate them most in 2025, particularly women and older adults.

Celebratory events with family and friends will motivate me most in 2025, % agree

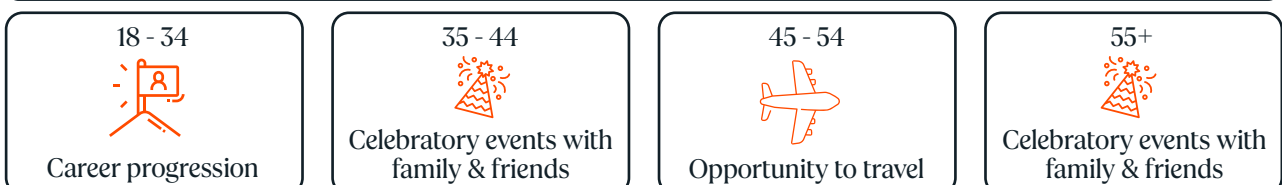


Women find them more motivating than men:

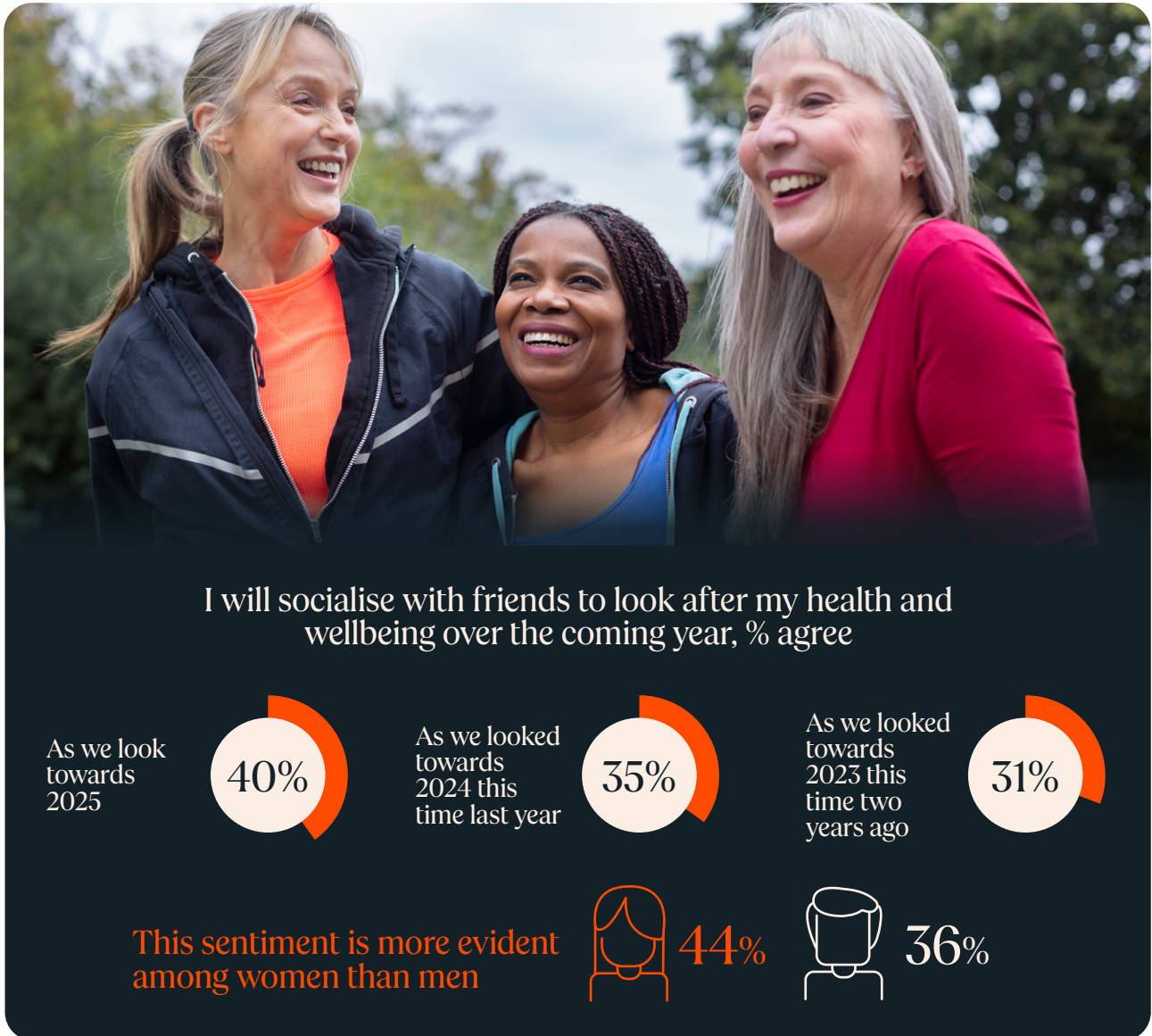


What will motivate us most in 2025 varies by age. Career progression is top for those under 35, travel for those aged 45-54 and celebratory events with family and friends for others

What will motivate you most in 2025?



Older adults are more likely to make spending more time with family and friends their top New Year resolution for 2025. Those aged 45-54 are three times as likely to do so than those aged 18-24. We also increasingly appreciate the important contribution socialising with friends makes to our health and wellbeing.





# Improving our physical and mental health tops our new year resolutions for 2025

## Our top resolutions for 2025

The top five New Year resolutions focus on improving our physical health and mental health.



## Women prioritise physical health, men prioritise mental health



## Our top five resolutions reveal our shifting priorities over time

Some resolutions such as getting fit and taking more exercise are consistently in our top five for all age groups. Others come or go with age. As we get older our interest in making New Year resolutions fades. 5% of under 35s don't do New Year resolutions, this quadruples to 20% among those aged 55+.

## How our top five New Year resolutions evolve by age group

18 – 24	Looking for a new job Taking care of physical health (exercise and diet) and mental health Expanding horizons (travel, new hobbies, sports or other interests)
25 – 34	Managing finances   Losing weight Spending less time on social media
35 – 44	Spending more time with family and friends
45+	Managing finances



# Sporting predictions for 2025

From Men and Women's Rugby Six Nations, Soccer World Cup qualifiers and Golf events, it's all kicking off in the new year! One in two are confident that Ireland will retain the men's Six Nations while people think Clare and Armagh remaining All-Ireland Senior Hurling Champions is much less of a certainty.

50%



Ireland will retain  
the Men's Six  
Nations

46%



Ireland will do better  
than last year's sixth  
place in the Women's  
Six Nations

32%



The Lions will win  
their series tour in  
Australia

32%



Europe will win  
the Ryder Cup in  
New York

24%



Ireland will qualify  
for World Cup 2026

20%



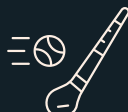
England will win the  
Women's Rugby  
World Cup

19%



Rory McIlroy will  
win The Open in  
Royal Portrush

18%



Clare will remain the  
All-Ireland Senior  
Hurling Champions

16%



Armagh will remain  
the All-Ireland Senior  
Football Champions

# Our view on the Irish economy

## Positive economic outlook for the year ahead has declined

There has been some movement since our report last quarter when looking at how people feel about the economy. Those who believe the situation will improve has declined since its peak in July 2024, though it remains significantly higher than last year.

## Do you think the economic situation of the country is likely to improve, remain the same, or get worse over the next twelve months?



## Are we on the right track?

Similar to our feeling towards the economy, there has been an increase in uncertainty and a drop in positivity since July 2024. In total, 33% of people say we are moving in the right direction – which is down 6% on the last quarter – while 52% say we are on the wrong track which remains the same since the last quarter.





# How we describe our personal finances

## A decrease in those who say they are better off compared to a year ago

This quarter, we see a decrease from 23% to 21% for those who said they were better off compared to this time last year. However, those who feel they are worse off compared to a year ago has also decreased slightly from 43% to 42%.

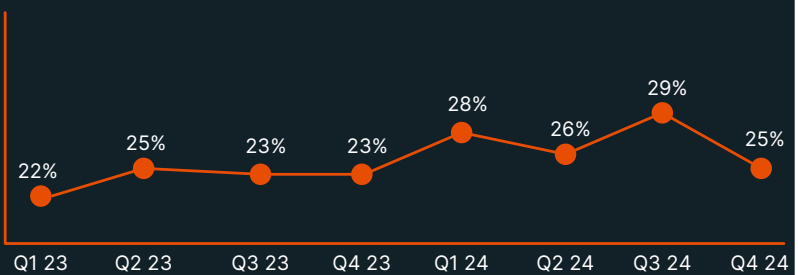
**Better off compared to twelve months ago**

July 2024 **23%** vs **21%** November 2024

## Where do we see ourselves in twelve months?

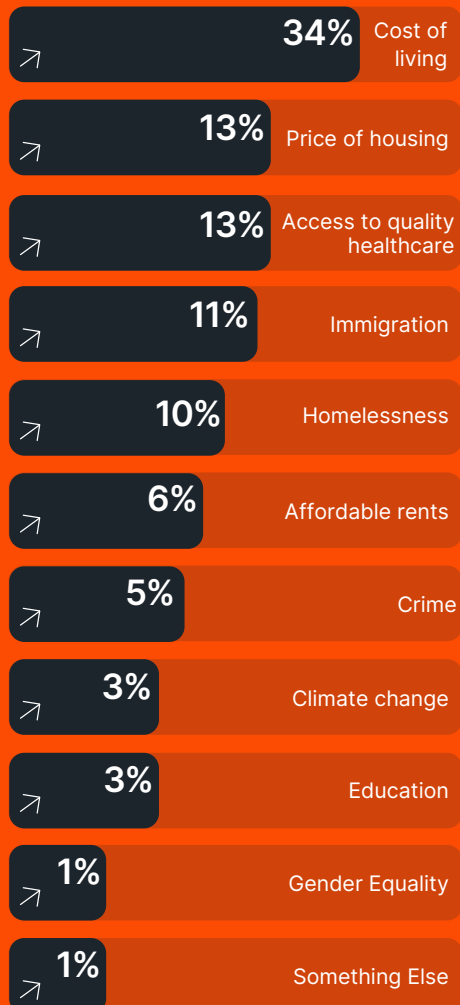
When looking ahead to this time next year, there has been a slight reduction in those who expect to be better off, now at 25% versus 29% three months ago.

### Expect to be better off in twelve months

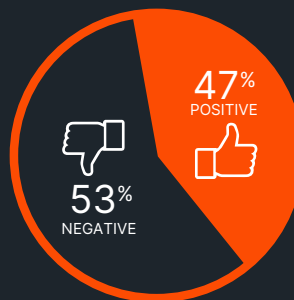


# How do we feel about living in Ireland today?

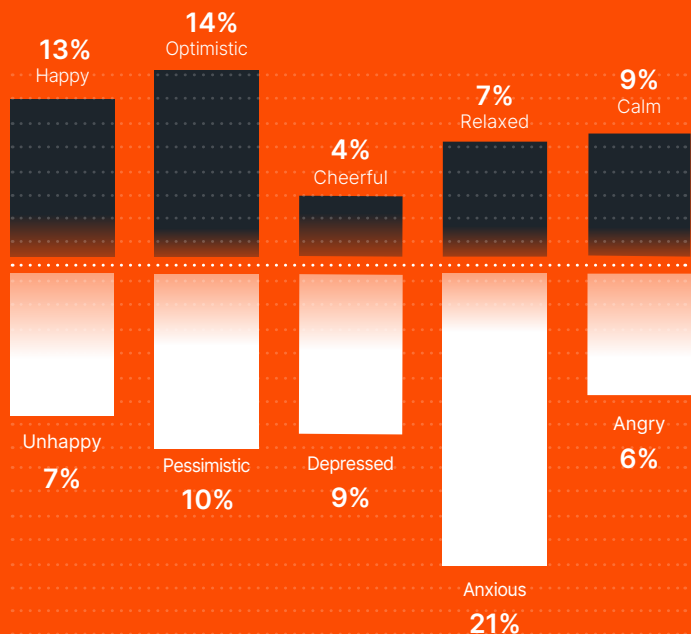
## Top eleven most important issues to be addressed



## How do we feel?



## Nation's emotions



Note: Due to rounding, the total percentage may not add up to 100%

# Reflecting the Nation

## A regional view of what people of Ireland are intending to do to combat climate change in 2025

Taking a look at regional differences, we get a sense of what changes people would make to fight against climate change in 2025. Residents in Munster (68%) are most likely to do more recycling in 2025. People in Dublin (38%) are most likely to buy more second-hand clothes instead of new while residents in Connaught & Ulster (30%) are least likely to cut back on using public transport in 2025. People living in the rest of Leinster (25%) are the most likely to install solar panels on their homes in 2025.

### How likely are you to do any of the following in 2025 to combat climate change?



#### Connacht and Ulster

I intend to buy more second-hand clothes instead of new	36%
I intend to use public transport more in 2025	30%
I intend to install solar panels on my home in 2025	16%
I intend to do more recycling in 2025	66%

#### Dublin

I intend to buy more second-hand clothes instead of new	38%
I intend to use public transport more in 2025	49%
I intend to install solar panels on my home in 2025	22%
I intend to do more recycling in 2025	65%

#### Rest of Leinster

I intend to buy more second-hand clothes instead of new	36%
I intend to use public transport more in 2025	40%
I intend to install solar panels on my home in 2025	25%
I intend to do more recycling in 2025	63%

#### Munster

I intend to buy more second-hand clothes instead of new	33%
I intend to use public transport more in 2025	38%
I intend to install solar panels on my home in 2025	22%
I intend to do more recycling in 2025	68%



# Methodology

In the fifteenth edition of Reflecting Ireland, we take a look at what people are expecting from 2025.

## Survey information

- An online survey was conducted of one thousand people in the Republic of Ireland
- Sample was nationally representative of the population based on gender, age, social class and region
- Fieldwork was carried out between the 23rd of October - 3rd of November 2024.
- The margin of error for this research is +/- 3.02%

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