

# IPSOS B&A CONSUMER CONFIDENCE

March 2026

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Jimmy Larsen

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March 2026 | Public



# INTRODUCTION



# Introduction

1

This report presents the findings of Ipsos B&A's latest Consumer Confidence Barometer, covering March 2026



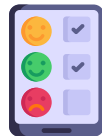
2

Survey results are based on a sample of 1,010 adults aged 16+, quota controlled in terms of age, gender, socio-economic class, and region to reflect the profile of the adult population of the Republic of Ireland.



3

All interviewing was conducted via Ipsos B&A's Acumen Online Barometer.



4

Fieldwork on the latest wave was conducted from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2026.





**Most awarded Irish research agency with 41 Marketing Society Research Excellence Awards, including 8 Grand Prix (latest one in 2023), in 16 years.**

## About Ipsos B&A

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# KEY HIGHLIGHTS





## The situation in the Middle East has tempered our outlook.

This wave of the Ipsos B&A Consumer Confidence Barometer was conducted from the 10th to the 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2026.

This latest survey took place against the backdrop of the Iranian war erupting on the 28<sup>th</sup> February, and the findings reflect public anxiety of what this will mean for the Irish economy. **All metrics have suffered a downturn.**

Overall consumer confidence has **seen a sharp decline in March**, with a net rating of -58 (those feeling downbeat versus those feeling more upbeat). This compares with -45 in February, and signals nearly a year-long low (when the Trump Tariffs were mooted last April, sentiment sank to -61).

69% believe that the country will be **worse off** in the year ahead (up 10 points), while just one in ten (11%) expect the country's economy to improve.

Relatively speaking, **Dubliners** continue to be most upbeat. As seen previously, confidence is lowest among Females and those over the age of 35. Interestingly, the gap between ABC1s and C2DEs has narrowed noticeably; both cohorts are quite similar in their levels of pessimism.

The proportion of households who claim to be **"coping"** with the rising prices now stands at 62% (down four points). Over one in five (22%) say that they are struggling to some extent – the section of the population that are in financial distress has been relatively constant.

**Inflation has also increased from +2.7% to +3.6%.** The largest contributors to the March inflation figures were the *Clothing and Footwear sector (9.0%)* followed by *Education (+8.9%)* and *Utilities and Fuels (7.2%)*.

That said, **unemployment remains below five per cent (4.7%).**

Just over one in five (22%) believe their personal disposable income will increase over the next 12 months, compared to nearly half (46%) expecting it to **decline**.

Those outside the capital are less confident about the next 12 months. Over half (54%) of those living in Conn/Ulster feel their income will be less. However, 43% of 16–24-year-olds expect their income to increase.

In total, over half (51%) think they will **spend less** over the year ahead, versus one in seven (15%) planning to **spend more**. 34% feel that their spending patterns will remain steady, thus leading to a net gap of -37.

In terms of savings, 53% expect to **save less**, with just one in five planning to boost their reserves.

With all this trepidation seeping through the economic psyche, it is not surprising that the proportion of householders who feel that their **net asset wealth will increase over the next year has slipped** – Sentiment toward asset growth over the next 12 months, while still positive, has fallen ten points, and now stands at +6.

# Ipsos B&A Consumer Confidence | A snapshot of the nation – March 2026

March 2026

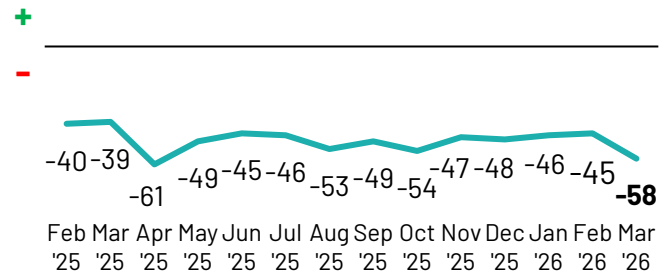
Confidence is calculated based on the NET Difference of positive and negative sentiment.

**OVERALL  
CONFIDENCE**  
For the future

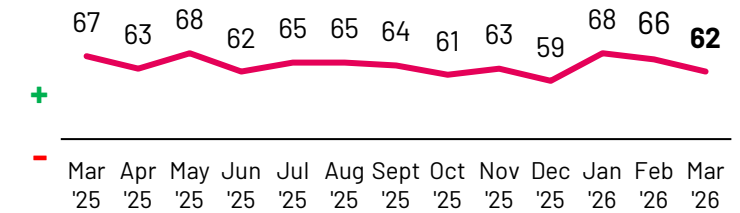
**-58%**  
14 point lower  
vs last month



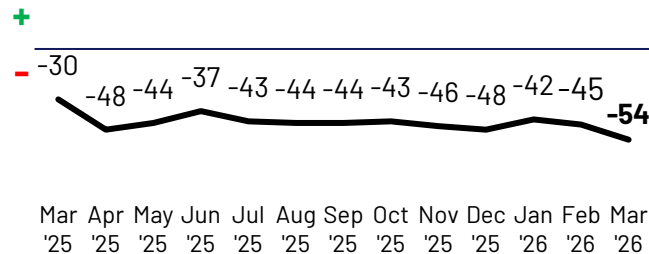
## Overall confidence for the next 12 months



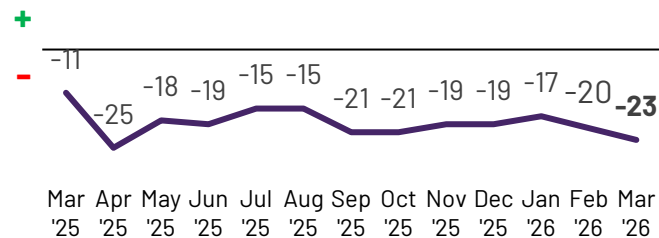
## Ability to cope with rising prices for the next 12 months



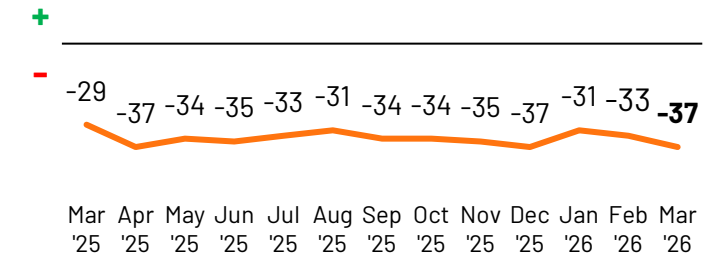
## Are we better or worse off than this time last year?



## Status of disposable income for the next 12 months



## Spending intentions for the next 12 months



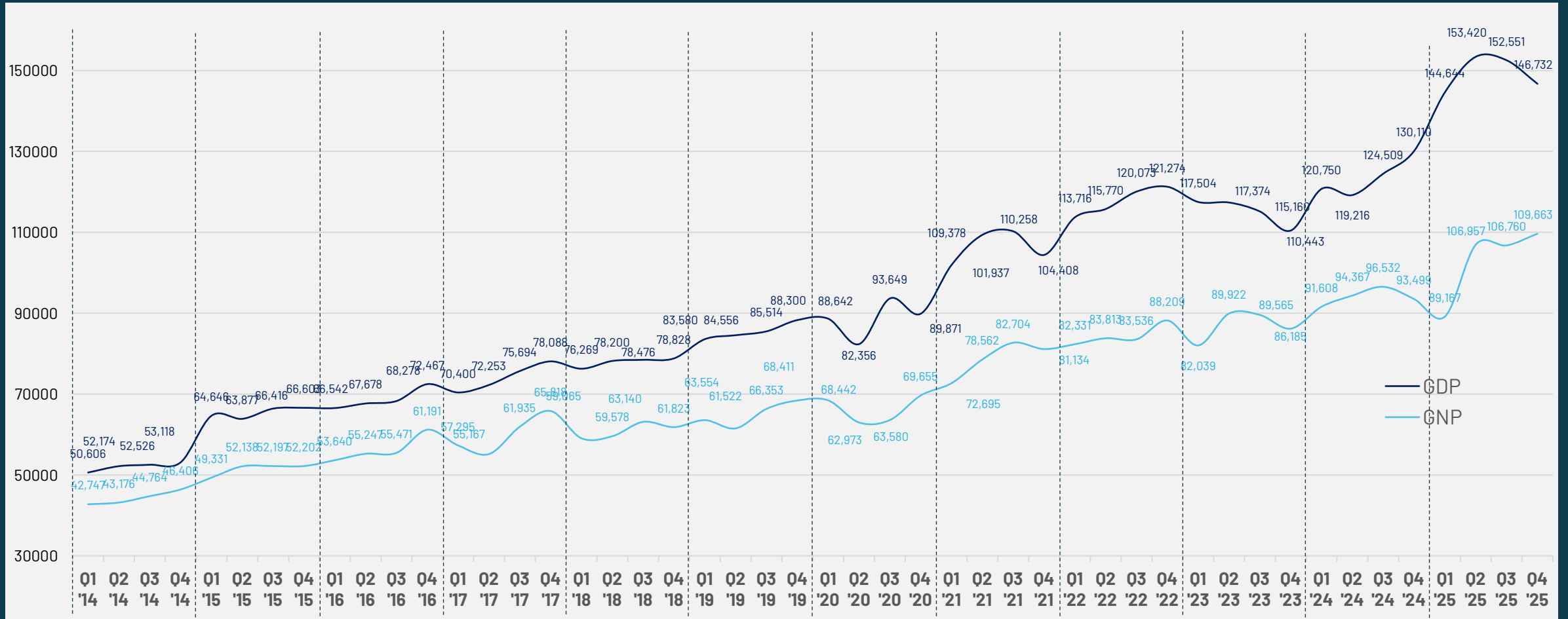
For more information contact:

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# MACRO CONTEXT

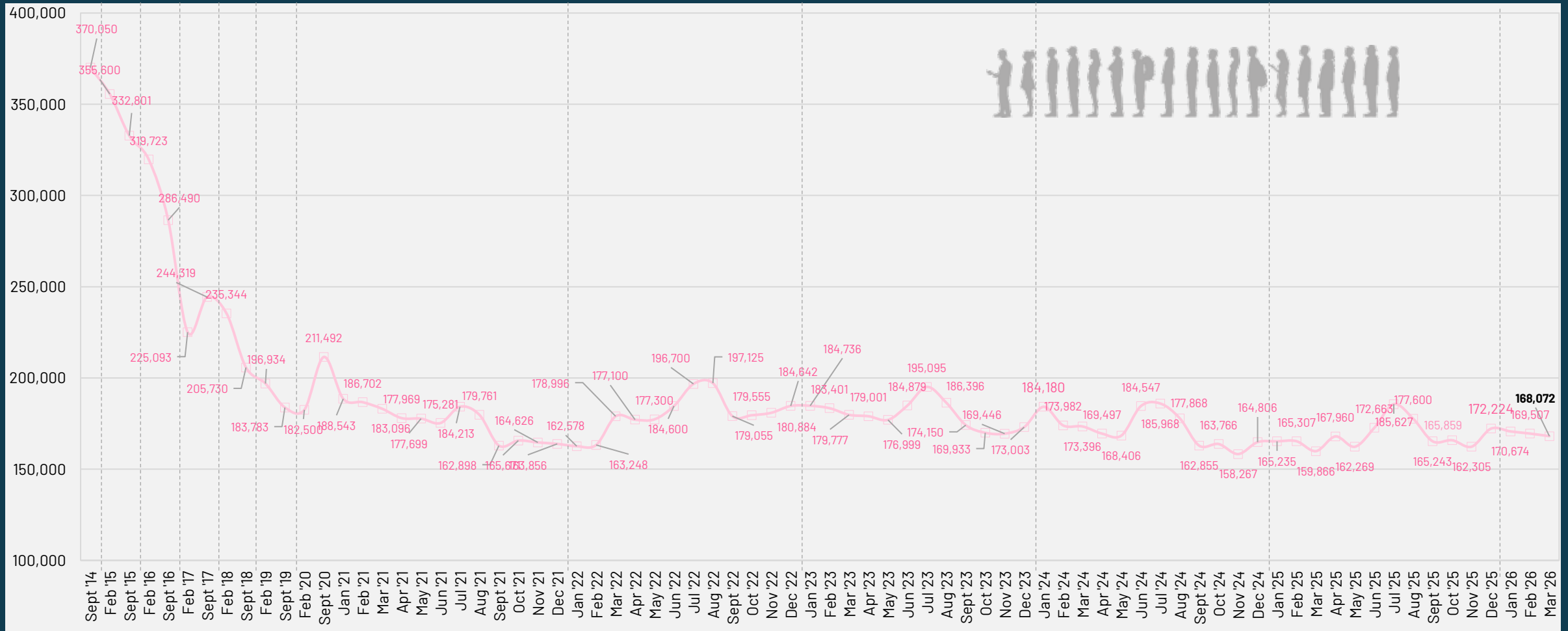


# The most recent CSO data indicates a dip in GDP in Qtr. 4 2025 after a steroid-boosted acceleration to outpace tariffs in early 2025.



Source: [www.CSO.ie](http://www.CSO.ie) Quarterly National Accounts

# The unadjusted Live Register figures have decreased marginally month on month, from 169.5k in February to 168.1k in March. Year on year, the increase is over 8,000.

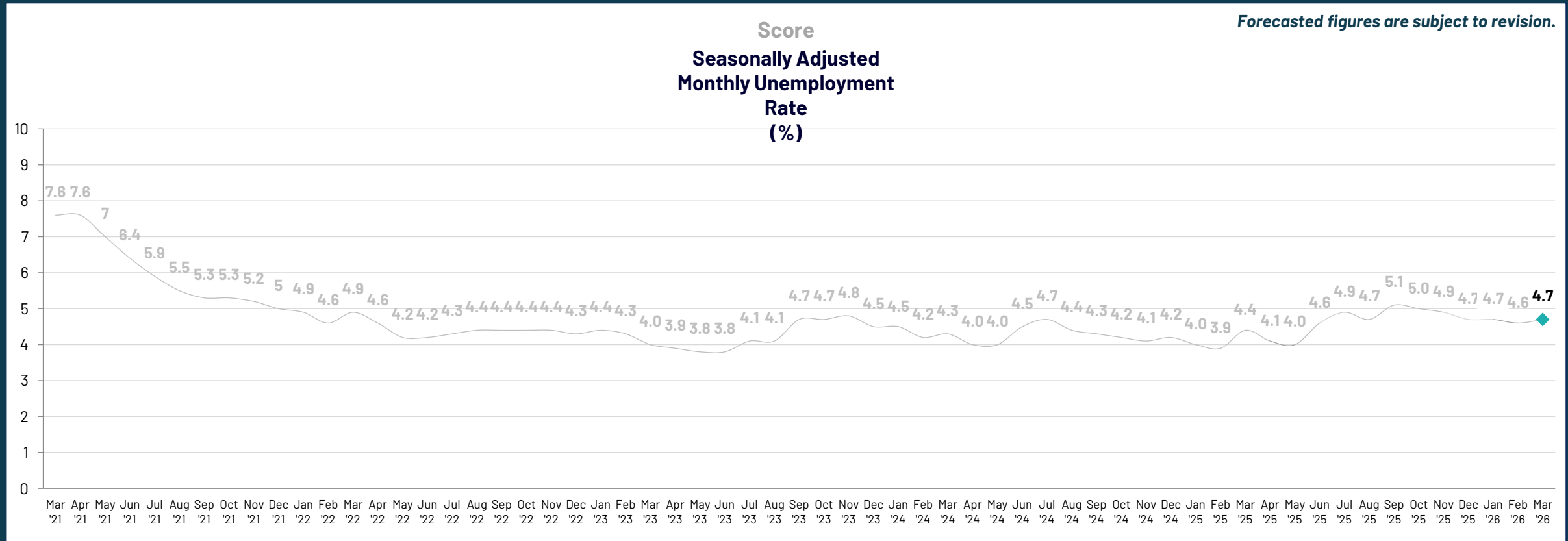


\*The Live Register is not designed to measure unemployment. It includes part-time work e.g. seasonal & casual workers who work up to 3 days per week.  
 Note: Based on unadjusted data.

Source: [www.CSO.ie](http://www.CSO.ie) Quarterly National Accounts

# Estimated unemployment has remained below five percent for the fifth month in a row.

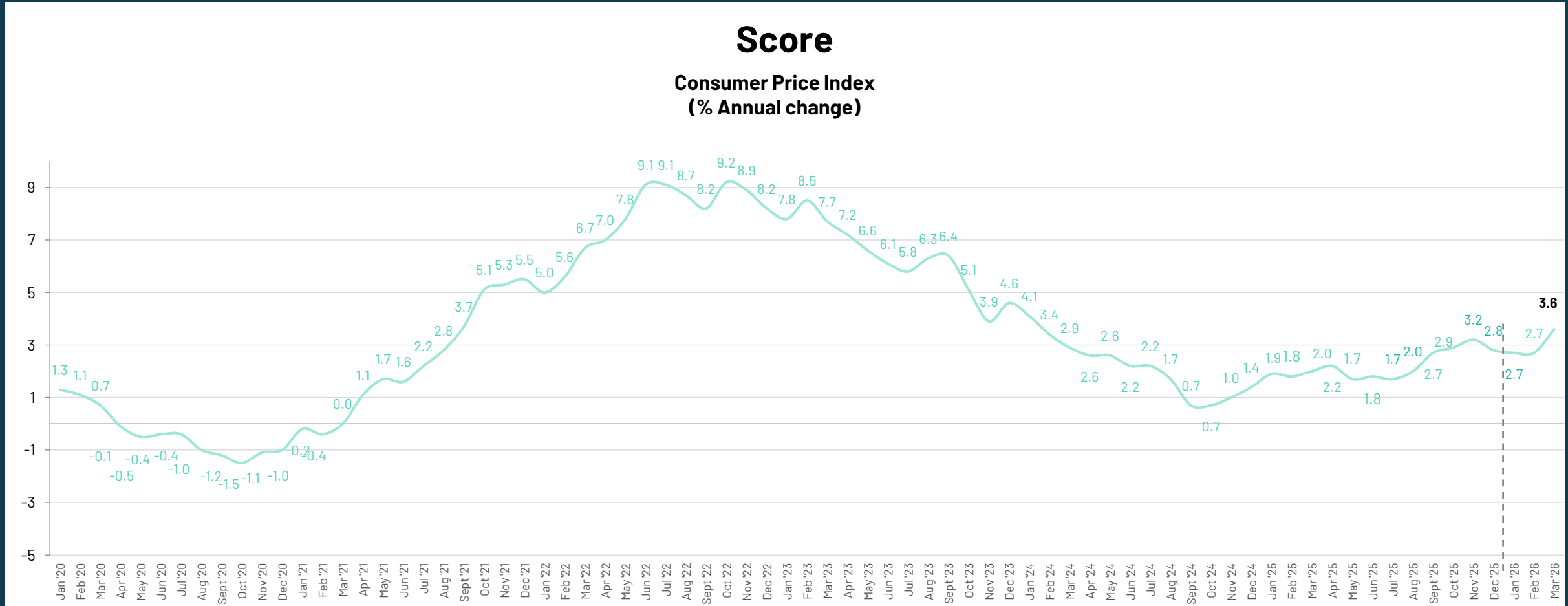
## Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Unemployment Rate



Source: [www.CSO.ie](http://www.CSO.ie) Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Unemployment Rate

The Consumer Price Index rose by 3.6% between March 2025 and March 2026, up from 2.7% in the 12 months to February 2026. This was the highest annual rate of inflation observed since January 2024 when the rate of inflation was 4.1%.

Consumer Price Index (% Annual change)

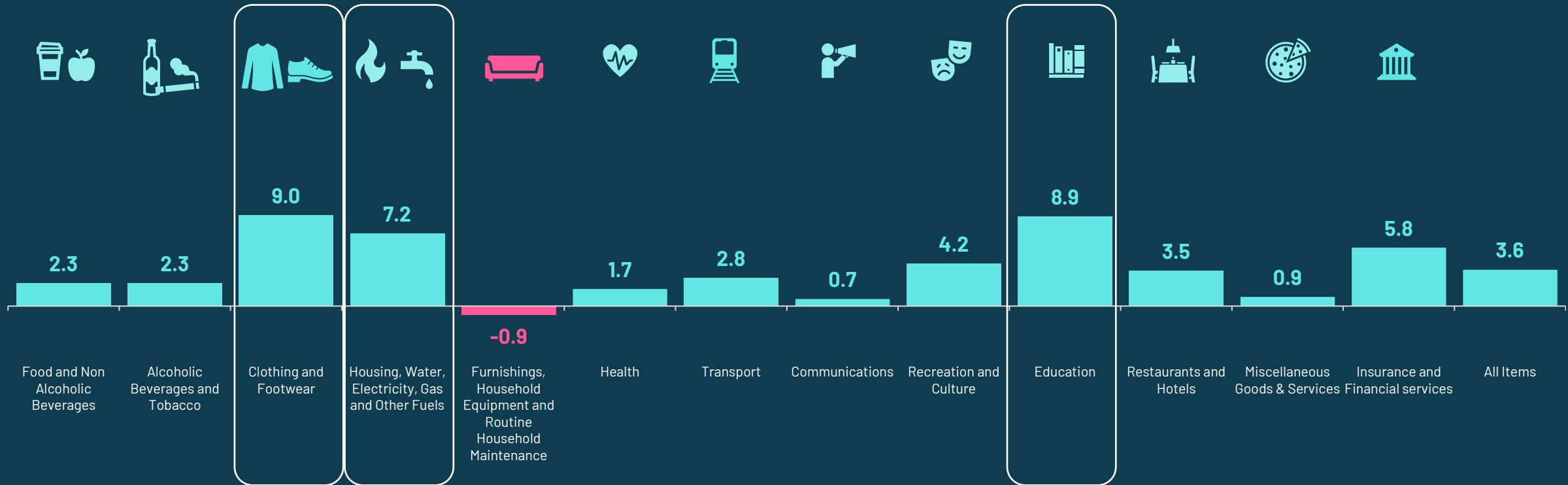


Source: [www.CSO.ie](http://www.CSO.ie)

Consumer Price Index (% Annual change)

**Inflation is highest within the *Clothing and Footwear* sector (9.0%) followed by *Education* (+8.9%) and *Utilities and Fuels* (7.2%). *Furnishings, Household Equipment & Routine Household Maintenance* (-0.9%) was the only division in negative territory.**

Consumer Price Index by Sector (% Annual change)



# The Iranian War, with subsequent fuel price increases and general inflation concerns were the dominant concern in March.

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## ALZHEIMER STARTS SILENTLY

1-4 CORRECT = High Risk  
9-12 CORRECT = Few Warning Signs  
13-16 CORRECT = Average Brain Health  
24-25 CORRECT = Excellent Brain Health


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### 'Worse to come' for Irish consumers as fuel hikes bite and hauliers threaten to 'close down capital'

- Protest action could see supermarket prices rise



**THE IRISH TIMES**

Middle East

## Flames rise over Iranian capital as war with Israel and US continues

Netanyahu promises 'many surprises' for next phase of conflict amid Tehran strikes on US bases in neighbouring Gulf states



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- 'No evidence' found to support criminal allegation linked to Katie Simpson inquiry
- Trump issues fresh warning to Iran; oil prices surge amid ceasefire uncertainty
- Fuel protests: Gardaí advise protesters to 'immediately cease'; latest on traffic disruption in Dublin and countrywide
- Recent fuel price increases 'not in breach of any law', consumer watchdog finds
- Rory McIlroy the headline act as prepares for Masters defence

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## Govt leaders agree cut to excise duties on diesel and petrol

Updated / Monday, 23 Mar 2026 21:42



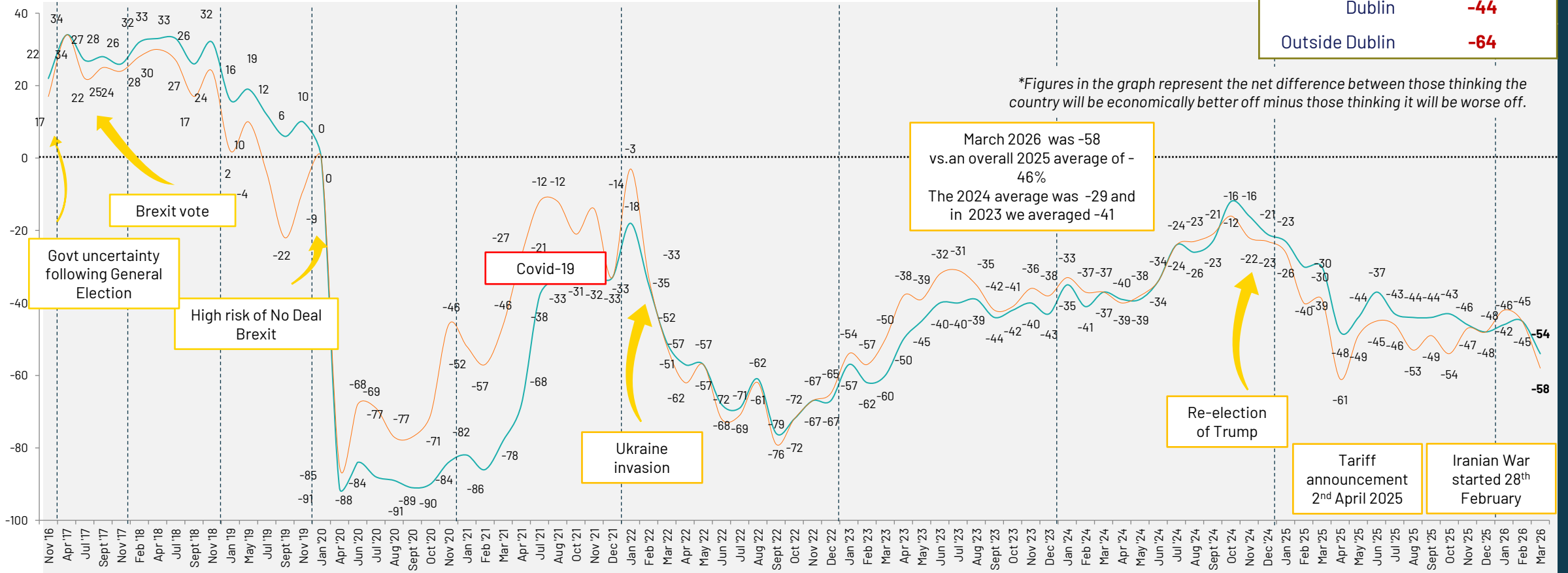
The price of diesel and petrol seen at a petrol station in Dublin

# CONSUMER CONFIDENCE FINDINGS



# There has been a sharp decline in sentiment in March, as the economic ramifications of the war in the Middle East became clearer.

## Current vs. Looking Forward



? Q.1 Thinking about the economy as a whole, do you think that the country is better off, worse off, or about the same as last year?  
Q.2 And what about the coming year, do you think that the country will be better off, worse off or about the same as this year?

Source: Ipsos B&A Consumer Confidence Report

# Females, those aged 35+ and those living outside of Dublin are the most pessimistic in their outlook. The gap between social classes has narrowed.

	<b>-58</b>	<b>-50</b>	<b>-65</b>	<b>-28</b>	<b>-72</b>	<b>-69</b>	<b>-57</b> ↔ <b>-59</b>	<b>-44</b>	<b>-64</b>	<b>-60</b>	<b>-50</b>	
NET DIFF	Total	Male	Female	16-34	35-54	55+	ABC1F	C2DE	Dublin	Outside Dublin	Irish	Non-Irish
Feb '26	-45%	-32%	-57%	-28%	-53%	-50%	-41%	-49%	-36%	-48%	-46%	-39%
Jan '26	-46%	-31%	-60%	-36%	-47%	-53%	-41%	-51%	-37%	-49%	-47%	-44%
Dec '25	-48%	-36%	-60%	-29%	-56%	-57%	-41%	-56%	-40%	-52%	-47%	-51%
Nov '25	-47%	-35%	-60%	-32%	-54%	-53%	-43%	-52%	-31%	-54%	-51%	-33%
Oct '25	-54%	-42%	-65%	-46%	-55%	-60%	-52%	-56%	-46%	-57%	-55%	-50%
Sep '25	-49%	-39%	-58%	-33%	-58%	-52%	-45%	-52%	-37%	-54%	-48%	-49%
Aug '25	-53%	-44%	-62%	-42%	-53%	-62%	-50%	-56%	-50%	-54%	-54%	-50%
Jul '25	-46%	-34%	-58%	-38%	-51%	-47%	-48%	-44%	-35%	-50%	-47%	-42%
Jun '25	-45%	-38%	-52%	-30%	-54%	-49%	-41%	-50%	-33%	-50%	-46%	-42%
May '25	-49%	-42%	-56%	-24%	-56%	-64%	-45%	-54%	-35%	-55%	-51%	-43%
Apr '25	-61%	-55%	-67%	-61%	-66%	-42%	-64%	-75%	-57%	-65%	-54%	-64%
Mar '25	-39%	-30%	-48%	-24%	-41%	-50%	-36%	-43%	-27%	-44%	-42%	-29%
Feb'25	-40%	-33%	-47%	-35%	-45%	-39%	-35%	-46%	-31%	-44%	-43%	-32%
Jan'25	-26%	-7%	-38%	-21%	-34%	-21%	-23%	-30%	-15%	-31%	-29%	-16%
Dec'24	-23%	-15%	-31%	-26%	-22%	-22%	-18%	-29%	-11%	-28%	-23%	-23%
Nov'24	-22%	-11%	-33%	-23%	-24%	-19%	-18%	-27%	-9%	-28%	-25%	-14%
Oct'24	-16%	-7%	-24%	-4%	-24%	-17%	-8%	-24%	0	-22%	-14%	-23%
Sep'24	-21%	-9%	-33%	-19%	-30%	-14%	-15%	-28%	-15%	-24%	-21%	-22%
Aug'24	-23%	-10%	-35%	-15%	-32%	-21%	-17%	-30%	-11%	-28%	-24%	-21%
Jul'24	-24%	-8%	-39%	-24%	-30%	-17%	-16%	-33%	-12%	-29%	-24%	-24%
Jun'24	-34%	-23%	-46%	-39%	-38%	-26%	-30%	-39%	-26%	-38%	-34%	-35%
May'24	-38%	-30%	-46%	-31%	-50%	-32%	-35%	-41%	-27%	-42%	-37%	-42%
Apr'24	-40%	-24%	-55%	-35%	-50%	-33%	-34%	-46%	-30%	-44%	-39%	-41%
Mar'24	-37%	-28%	-45%	-37%	-41%	-32%	-29%	-45%	-25%	-42%	-37%	-36%
Feb'24	-37%	-29%	-46%	-33%	-46%	-33%	-31%	-44%	-28%	-41%	-37%	-42%
Jan'24	-33%	-21%	-44%	-17%	-40%	-38%	-22%	-44%	-23%	-37%	-33%	-30%
Dec'23	-38%	-28%	-48%	-27%	-46%	-40%	-33%	-44%	-26%	-43%	-39%	-37%
Nov'23	-36%	-26%	-46%	-27%	-46%	-34%	-28%	-45%	-23%	-42%	-37%	-33%
Oct'23	-41%	-33%	-50%	-42%	-46%	-36%	-39%	-44%	-29%	-46%	-43%	-33%
Sep'23	-42%	-28%	-55%	-40%	-50%	-34%	-38%	-45%	-32%	-46%	-41%	-45%
Aug'23	-35%	-23%	-46%	-20%	-46%	-35%	-24%	-47%	-25%	-39%	-35%	-32%
Jul'23	-32%	-15%	-48%	-33%	-38%	-24%	-30%	-34%	-23%	-35%	-31%	-35%

Base: All Adults 16+

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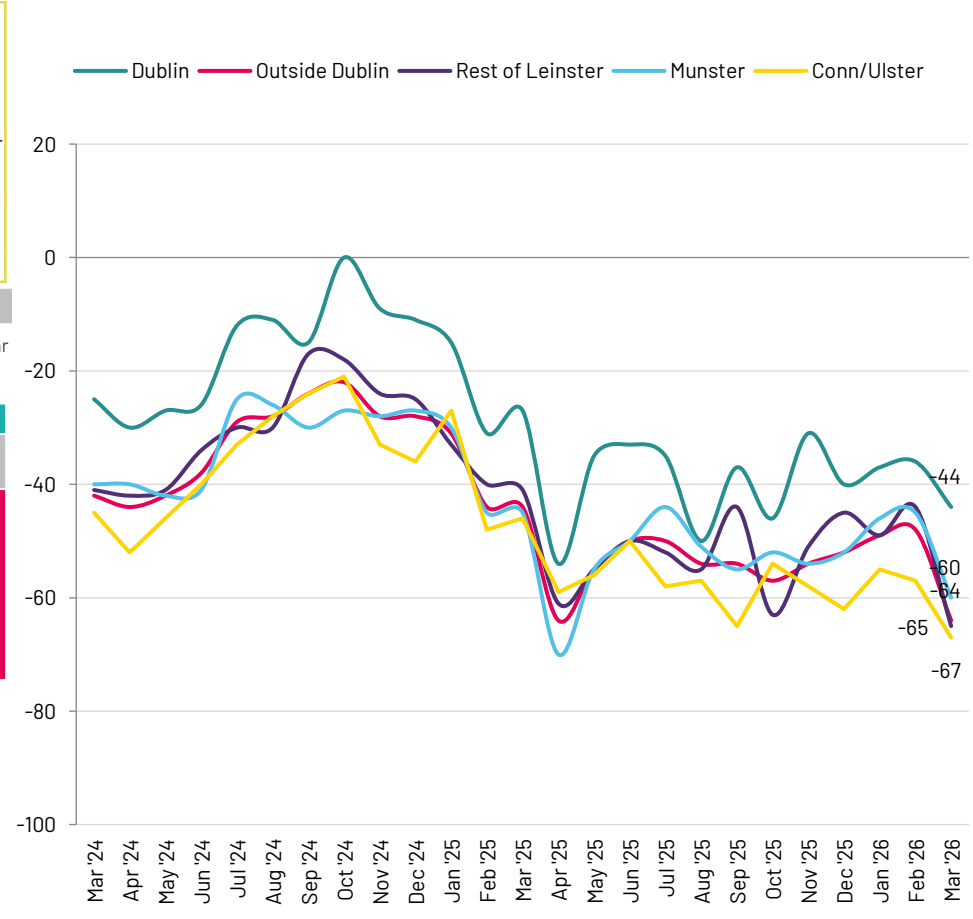
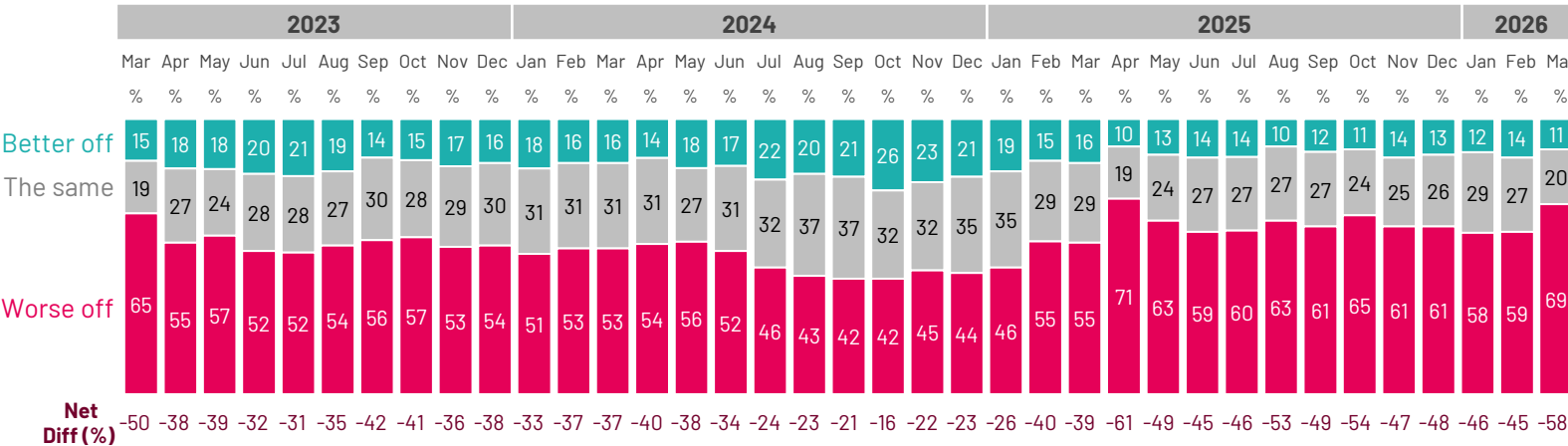
Q.2 And what about the coming year, do you think that the country will be better off, worse off or about the same as this year?



# Nearly seven in ten feel are pessimistic about prospects for the year ahead, just one in ten feeling positive. From a global perspective, we are on a par with international sentiment.

Looking Forward '23      Looking Forward '24      Looking Forward '25      Looking Forward '26

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar												
Dublin	-43	-26	-34	-23	-25	-25	-32	-29	-23	-26	-23	-28	-25	-30	-27	-26	-12	-11	-15	0	-9	-11	-15	-31	-27	-54	-35	-33	-35	-50	-37	-46	-31	-40	-37	-36	-44
Outside Dublin	-53	-43	-41	-35	-33	-39	-46	-46	-42	-43	-37	-41	-42	-44	-42	-38	-29	-28	-24	-22	-28	-28	-31	-44	-44	-64	-55	-50	-50	-54	-54	-57	-54	-52	-49	-48	-64



Better %	2023												2024												2025												2026		
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Jan	Feb	Mar										
	-57	-50	-38	-39	-32	-31	-35	-42	-41	-36	-38	-33	-37	-37	-40	-38	-34	-24	-23	-21	-16	-22	-23	-26	-40	-39	-61	-49	-45	-46	-53	-49	-54	-47	-48	-46	-45	-58	

# Right vs. Wrong Direction Monitor

Over three in five believe we are on the on the wrong track.

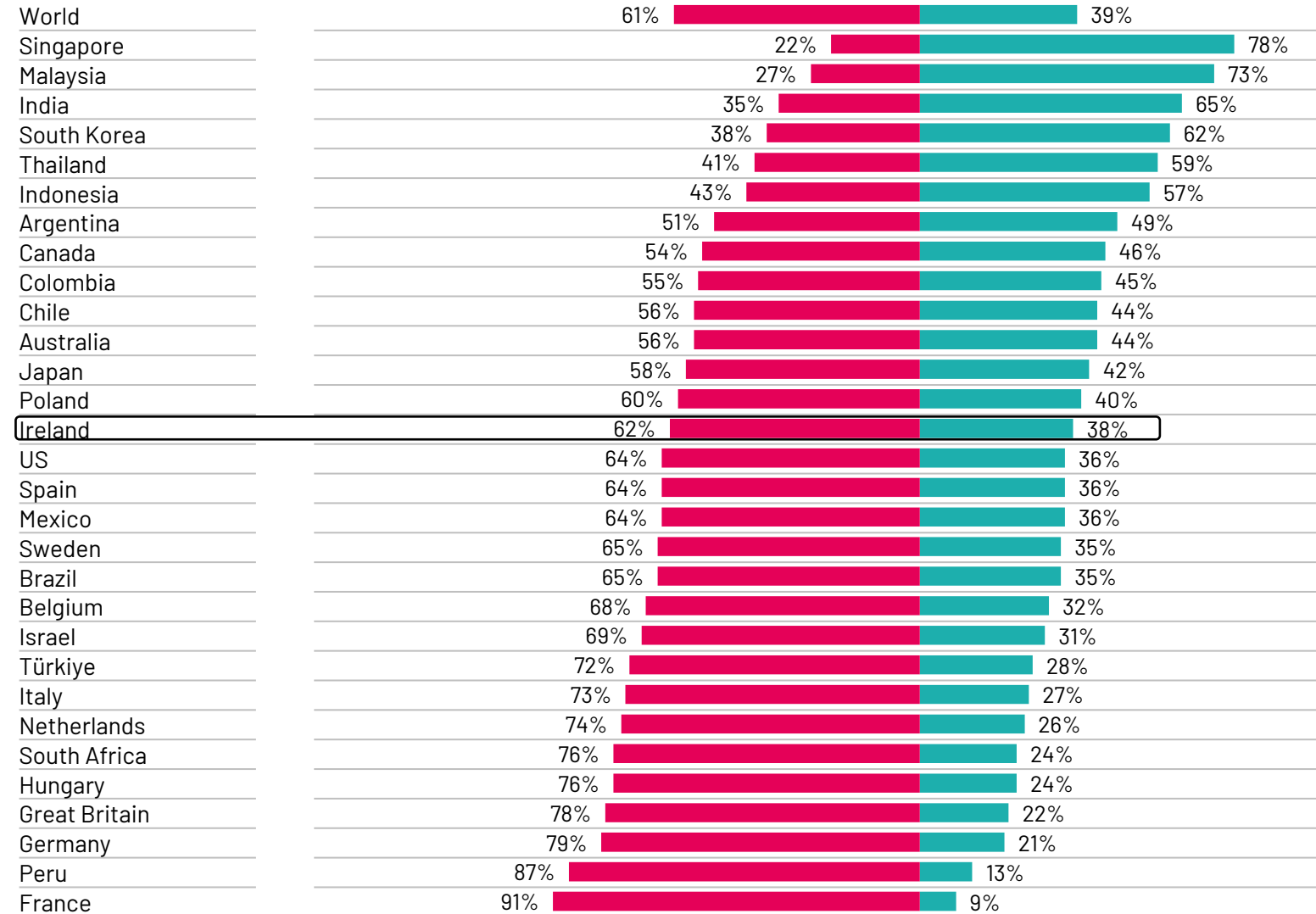
However, in terms of European nations, we are the second most optimistic, marginally behind Poland.

**Base:** Representative sample of 24,695 adults aged 16-74 in 30 participating countries, February 20th 2026 - March 6th 2026.

**Source:** Ipsos Global Advisor. Global score is a Global Country Average. See methodology for details. **Filter:** Country: World | Current Wave: Mar 26

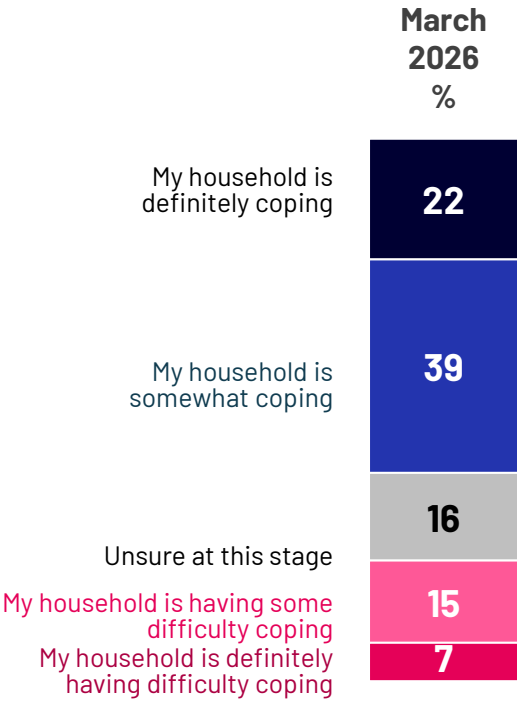
**Q: Would you say things in this country are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track? (March 2026)**

## Country

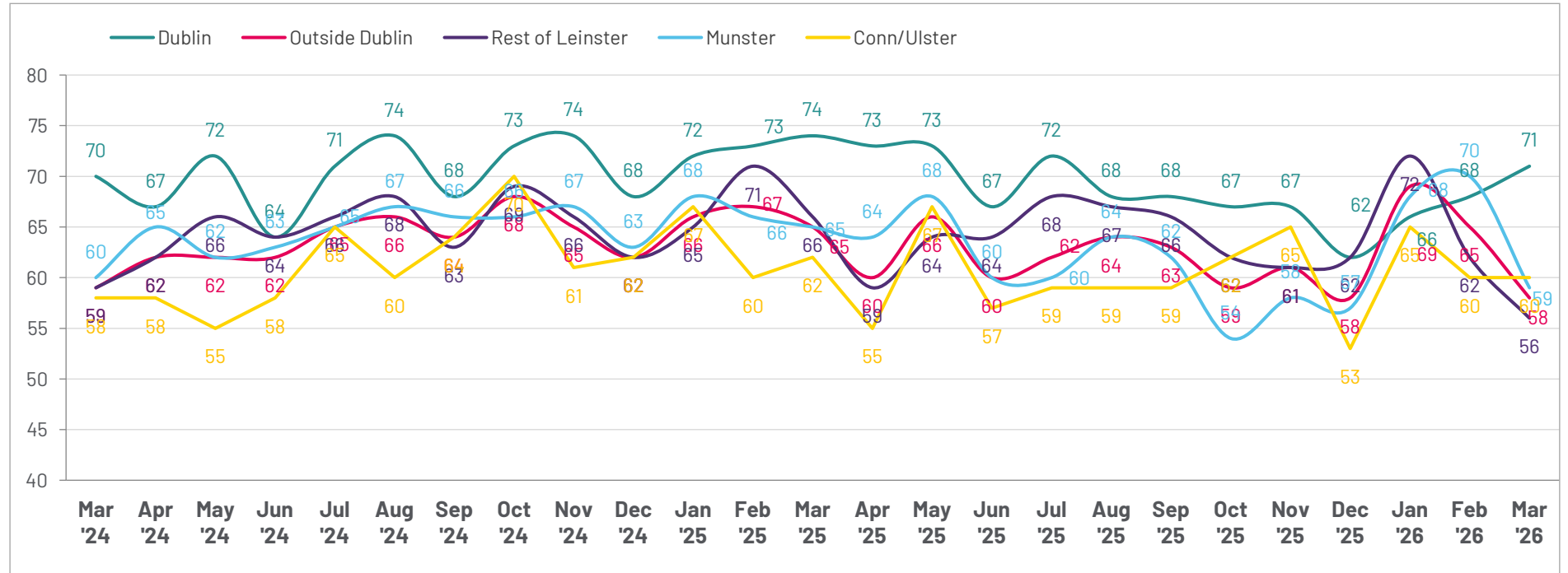
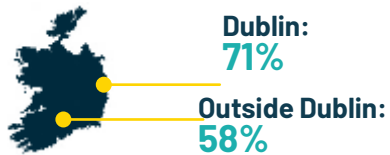


Right Direction  
Wrong Track

# Just over three in five (62%) feel they are coping with rising prices in March – down four points in a month. There is a steady proportion who are not – over one in five (22%)



**Any Coping 62%**

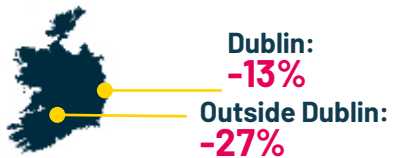
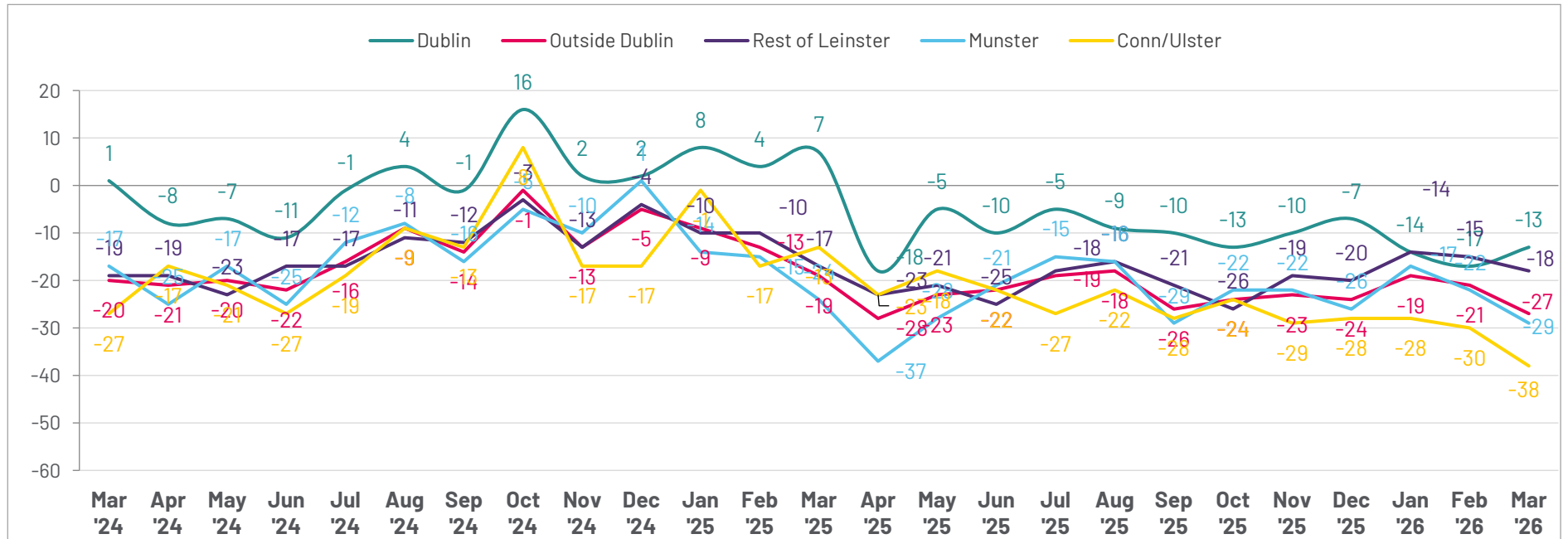
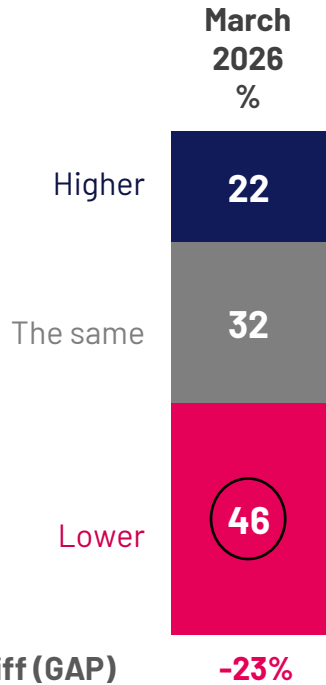


Among those living outside the capital, sentiment is largely uniform. Among those coping, those aged 16-34 are more likely to agree (68%), along with those from Dublin (71%).

	Jun 23	Jul 23	Aug 23	Sep 23	Oct 23	Nov 23	Dec 23	Jan 24	Feb 24	Mar 24	Apr 24	May 24	Jun 24	Jul 24	Aug 24	Sep 24	Oct 24	Nov 24	Dec 24	Jan 25	Feb 25	Mar 25	Apr 25	May 25	Jun 25	Jul 25	Aug 25	Sep 25	Oct 25	Nov 25	Dec 25	Jan 26	Feb 26	Mar 26
ANY Coping (%)	65	64	64	62	62	66	68	65	65	62	64	65	63	67	68	65	69	67	64	68	69	67	63	68	62	65	65	64	61	63	59	68	66	62

# Just over one in five (22%) feel their disposable income will improve this year; Nearly half are less confident. The net gap is at its highest level since June 2023

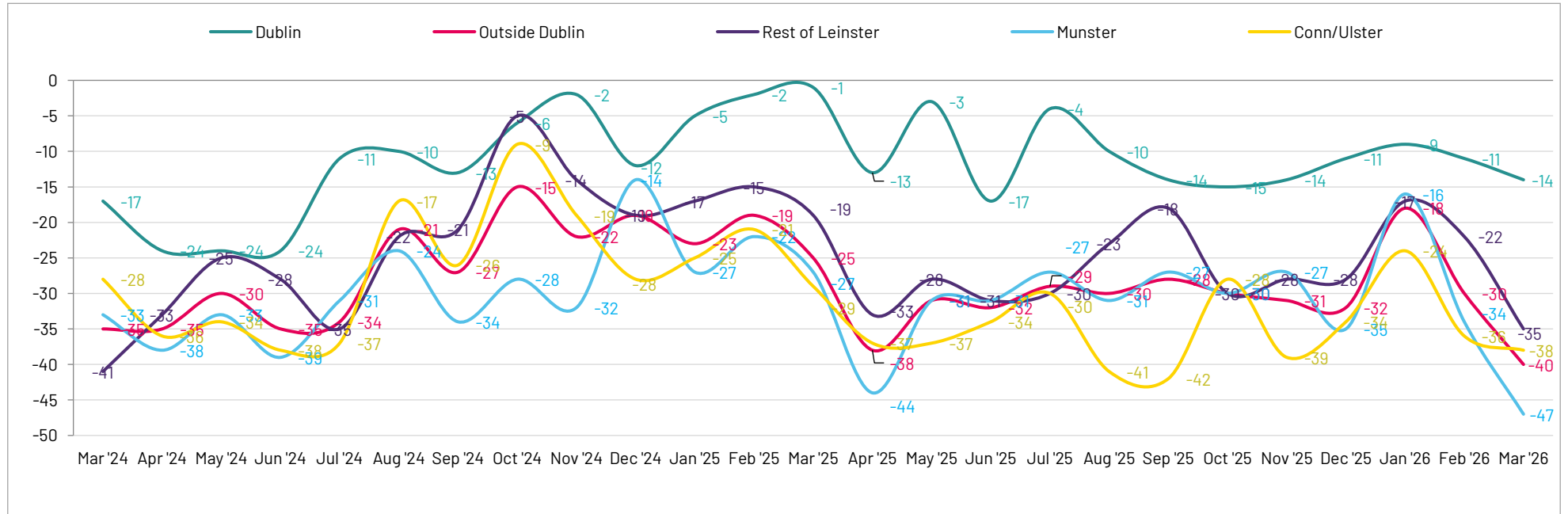
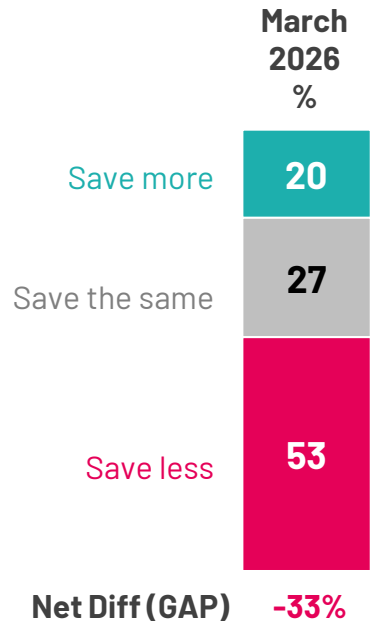
Base: All Adults 16+



Those outside the capital are less upbeat about the next 12 months. Over half (54%) of those living in Conn/Ulster feel their income will be less. However, 43% of 16-24-year-olds expect their income to increase.

Gap (%)	2021			2022									2023												2024												2025												2026					
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar												
	-6	-9	-10	-12	-16	-25	-27	-26	-35	-34	-29	-44	-32	-35	-29	-23	-29	-28	-15	-21	-24	-18	-19	-21	-12	-9	-16	-12	-9	-14	-17	-17	-19	-11	-5	-10	+4	-8	-3	-4	-8	-11	-25	-18	-19	-15	-15	-21	-21	-19	-19	-17	-20	-23

# Mirroring spending intentions, over half will say they will save less, with just one in five planning to boost their savings over the year ahead



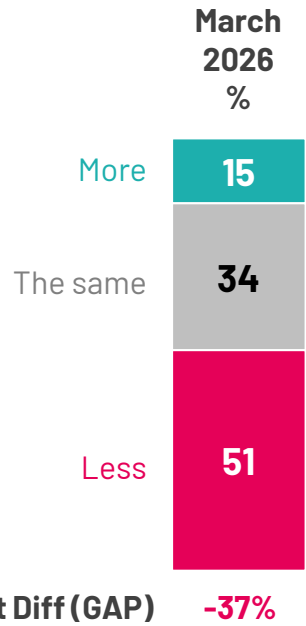
**Dublin: -14%**  
**Outside Dublin: -40%**



Those more likely to save **more** over the next 12 months are 16-24-year-olds (42%), Dubliners (30%) and ABC1s (25%)

Gap (%)	2024												2025												2026																													
	Jul	Aug	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Jan	Feb	Mar																							
	-8	-10	-12	-12	-12	-18	-31	-32	-34	-44	-42	-37	-56	-48	-44	-34	-38	-39	-44	-29	-36	-33	-32	-33	-35	-30	-23	-25	-24	-26	-30	-32	-29	-32	-27	-18	-23	-16	-17	-18	-14	-18	-31	-23	-28	-21	-25	-24	-25	-26	-26	-16	-24	<b>-33</b>

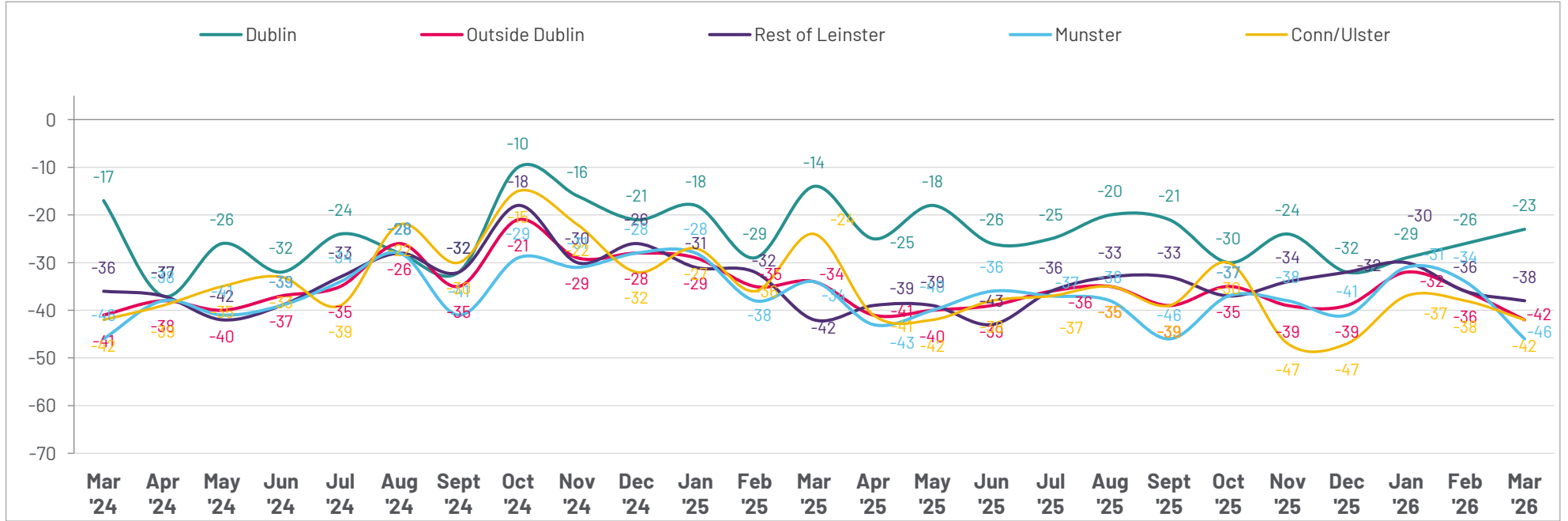
# Over half expect to spend less in the coming year



**Dublin: -23%**  
**Outside Dublin: -42%**

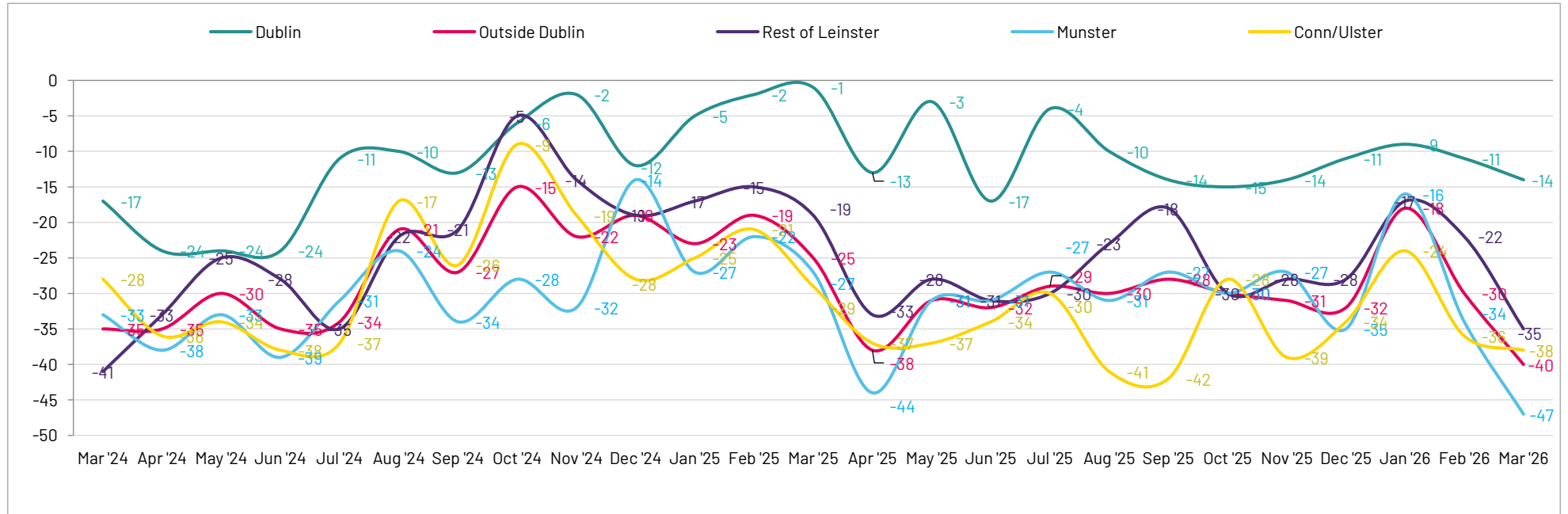
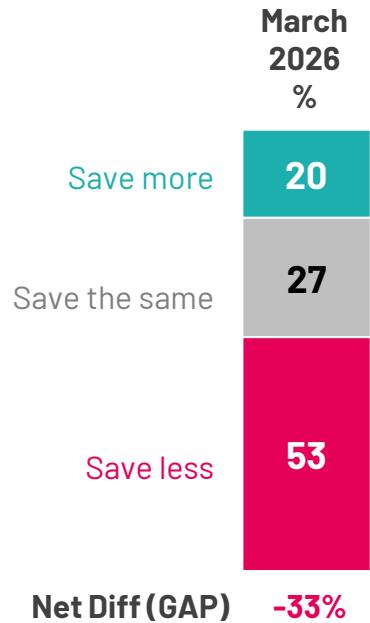


Spending intentions are lower among those living outside of Dublin.



	2021				2022												2023												2024												2025												2026		
	Aug	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Gap (%)	-13	-14	-14	-21	-19	-25	-35	-45	-37	-51	-48	-42	-61	-53	-55	-47	-46	-46	-50	-38	-38	-41	-36	-36	-42	-36	-31	-36	-35	-37	-34	-38	-36	-36	-32	-27	-34	-18	-25	-26	-26	-33	-29	-37	-34	-35	-33	-31	-34	-34	-35	-37	-31	-33	-37

# Mirroring spending intentions, over half will say they will save less, with just one in five planning to boost their savings over the year ahead



Dublin: **-14%**  
 Outside Dublin: **-40%**



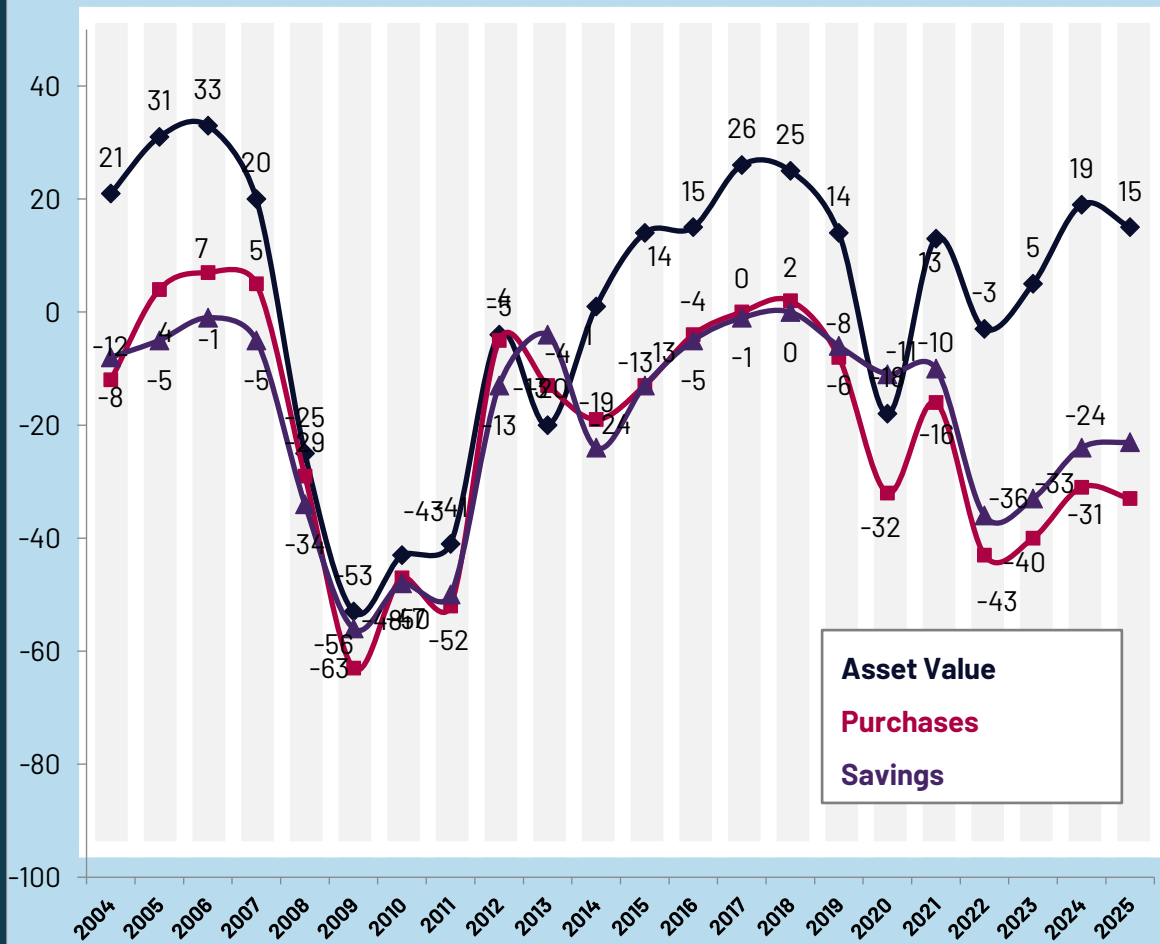
Those more likely to save **more** over the next 12 months are 16-24-year-olds (42%), Dubliners (30%) and ABC1s (25%)

Gap (%)	2024												2025												2026																														
	Jul	Aug	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	My	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Jan	Feb	Mar																								
	-8	-10	-12	-12	-12	-18	-31	-32	-34	-44	-42	-37	-56	-48	-44	-34	-38	-39	-44	-29	-36	-33	-32	-33	-35	-30	-23	-25	-24	-26	-30	-32	-29	-32	-27	-18	-23	-12	-16	-17	-18	-14	-18	-31	-23	-28	-21	-25	-24	-25	-26	-26	-16	-24	<b>-33</b>

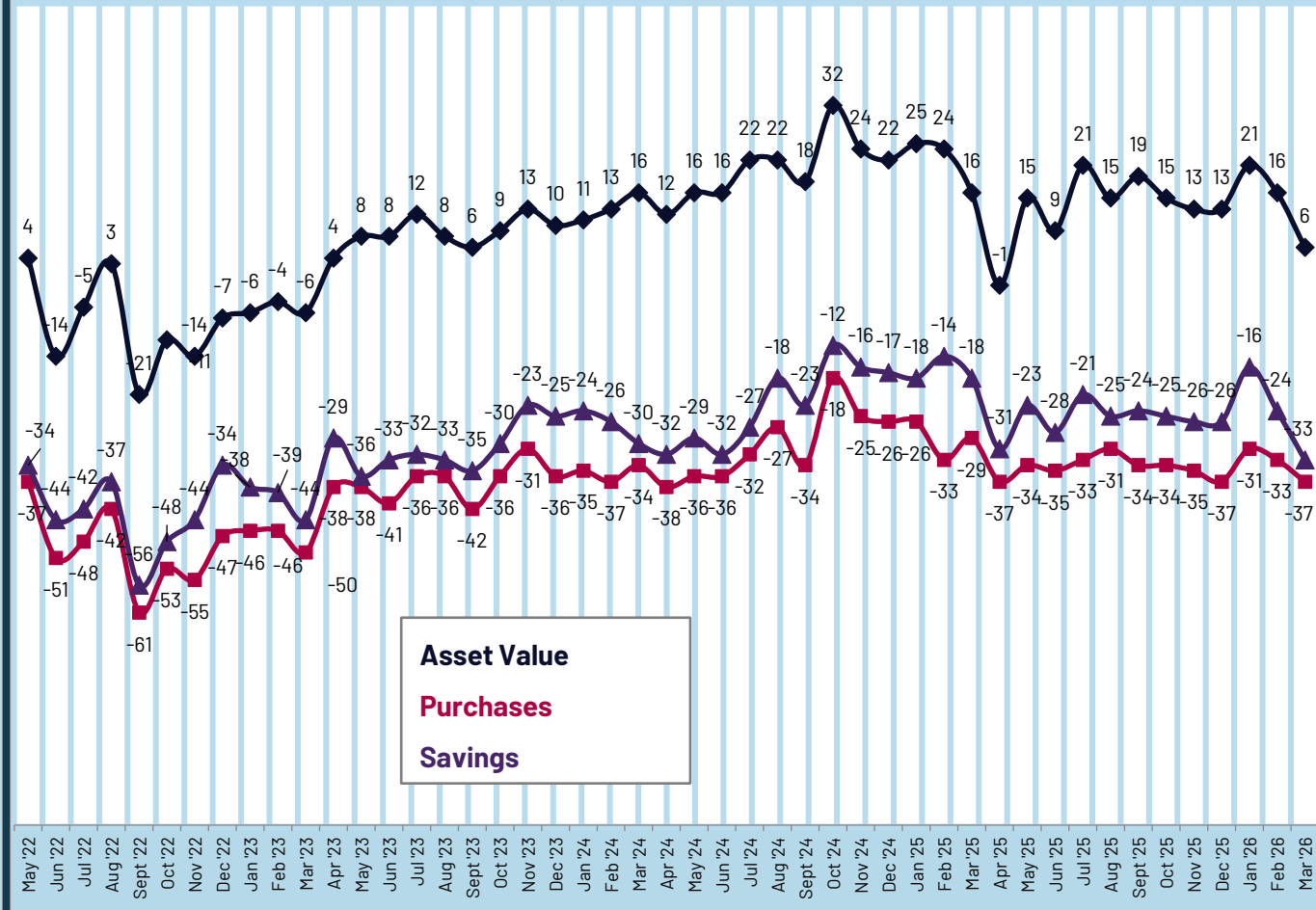
# Balance Of Opinion in Summary – The Year Ahead

An overview of expectations towards asset value, purchases, and savings

## Long Term



## Short Term



0.6 Do you expect your assets (your house, shares, pension entitlements, savings) in the next year to be higher, lower or the same as in the past year?

0.7 In the year ahead, do you expect to purchase more, less or the same amount of goods and services as in the past year?

0.8 Do you expect to save more, less or the same amount in the year ahead compared with the last twelve months?

# What worries Ireland?

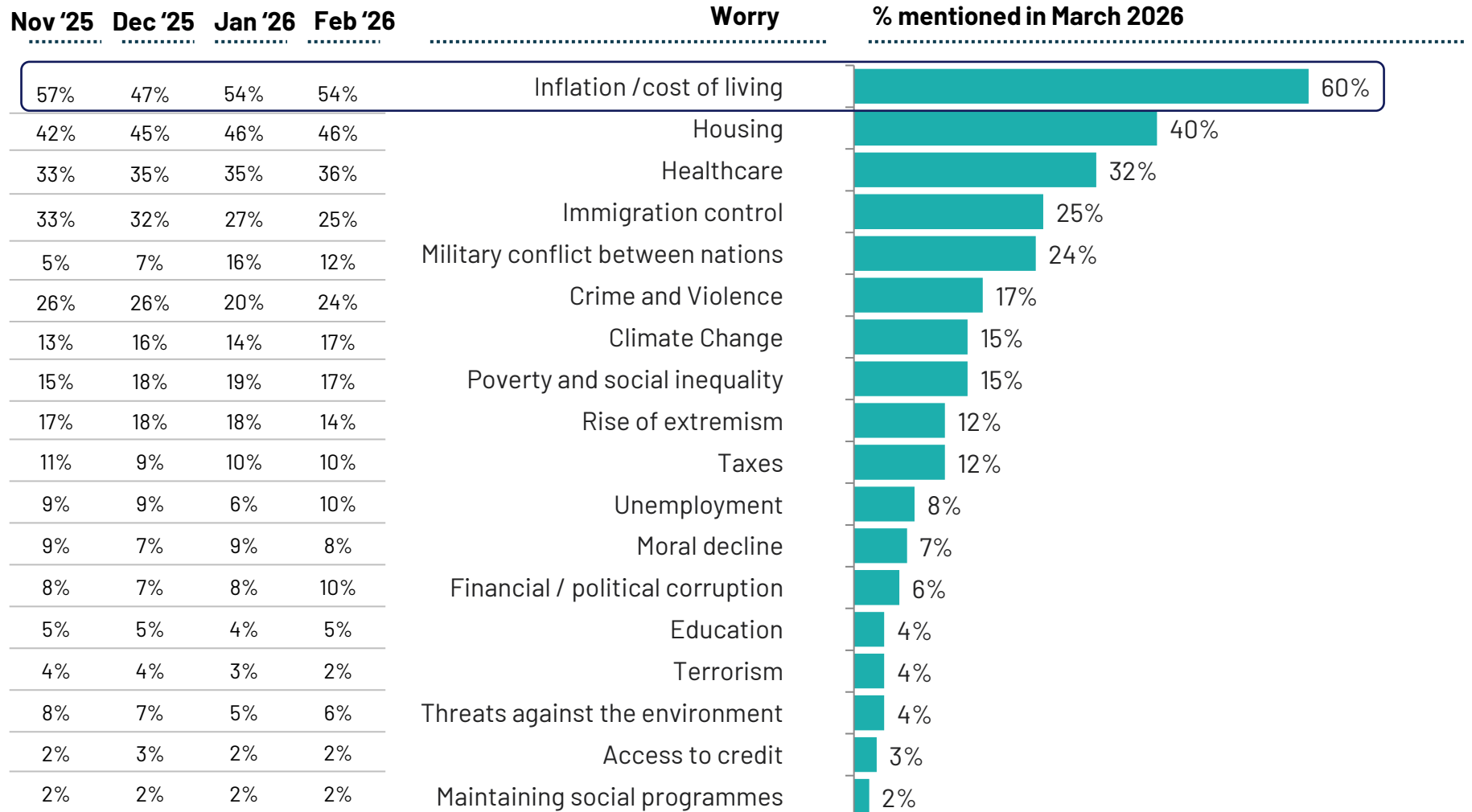
The cost of living and housing are by far the most pressing issues in Ireland. Both are cited across most demographics.

The impact of the Iranian War is beginning to seep through into public consciousness, with concerns about the cost of living increasing to its highest level seen.

Base: All adults N = 1010

Source: Ipsos B&A Consumer Confidence February 2026

## Q: Which three of the following topics do you find the most worrying in your country?



# THANK YOU

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