REPORT

TOURISM INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA

2025 Survey

Prepared by Leger

March 2025

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Project Overview

Background & Objectives

To assist in helping Alberta businesses grow and to understand the top issues affecting the tourism industry, the Travel Industry Association of Alberta (TIAA) has been conducting a semi-annual online survey of tourism businesses across the province.

The surveys assess the current (and future) state of tourism businesses in the province. Results will be used to help educate operators across the province and help businesses adapt over time by creating better understanding of the current situation, anticipated challenges, and available opportunities.

Throughout this report, **Feb 2025** results are compared to previous waves, where applicable. Note that due to wording changes to questions over time, some direct comparisons are not shown.

The research is designed to track against previous waves (where applicable) and to provide up-to-date data on:

- The top issues facing the tourism sector;
- Business viability by year end;
- Business conditions if the market stays where it is;
- Impact of rising costs of inputs;
- Rising costs such as insurance premiums and inflation;
- Labour force challenges; and,
- Finance and debt.

Methodology & Sample

Online 17-minute survey of Alberta tourism operators.

Operators invited via email by TIAA with unique link to complete the survey. Generic open link and social media link also created.

In Feb 2025, a total of 117 responses were received. Wave and regional details are provided in adjacent tables.

Throughout the report, where applicable, comparisons across key regions and sectors are noted. Significant differences between waves are marked as follows:

▲ Statistically significantly higher than previous wave.
▼ Statistically significantly lower than previous wave.

Regional Breakdown Feb 2025	
Canadian Rockies	41%
Calgary and area	33%
Edmonton and Area	39%
Alberta South	25%
Alberta Central	30%
Alberta North	26%

Wave	Feb 2023	Oct 2023	Feb 2024	Feb 2025
Fielding	Jan 13-Feb 3	Sep 25-Oct 31	Feb 26 - Apr 24	Jan 20-Feb 26
Responses	n=173	n=123	n=131	n=117

Key Learnings

Key Takeaways

The overall outlook for 2025 aligns more closely with-late 2023 than 2024. Three-in-five have a positive business outlook in 2025, falling back directionally to 2023 numbers after a lift in 2024 (65% to 60% in 2025). Furthermore, the proportion of Albertan tourism operators who feel uncertain (38%) has returned to October 2023 levels after a slight decline 2024 (34%).

That said, the vast majority of operators estimate revenue growth in 2025- two thirds of businsses predict an increase of up to 20%, while an additional 13% estimate even further growth. A small cohort (11%) expects to see a decline in revenue.

Over three-quarters (77%) of businesses felt they performed better than, or as expected, during 2024. This represents a slight downturn, with directionally fewer performing better than expected compared to 2024.

Inflationary impacts remain the top challenge experienced by organizations in the past year. Following this, labour supply and insurance premiums/coverage were the next most common challenges reported. However, prevalence of labour supply challenges has been trending down over the past two years, while insurance premiums/coverage challenges have increased significantly since last year.

Key Takeaways

The expectation to increase business spending/investment and operational capacity has continued to rise since 2023, with roughly half of businesses anticipating growth in each. At the same time, expectations around product and service price increases have continued to trend downward, while expectations around profit margins have increased with a higher proportion anticipating profit growth.

2024 saw a slight rise in the number of Albertan (51%) and International customers (50%), while the proportion of businesses who claim to be reliant on US or International visitors has trended downwards over the past few years.

At an overall level, Alberta's tourism businesses are increasing their digital adoption across a number of verticals over the past year. Compared to last year, more tourism businesses are using CRM software and integrating AI for operation efficiency. That said, enhancing websites for UX purposes and adopting digital marketing strategies are still the two most common ways the sector has adopted digital technology in 2024.

The vast majority of operators reported insurance premium increases over the past year. When considering the effect of higher interest rates, four-in-five businesses have reported either adjusting pricing in the past 12 months or considering doing so for the next year. Following this, increasing focus on operational efficiency and delaying/reducing investments/expansions are the next most common impacts of rising interest rates for the sector.

Key Takeaways

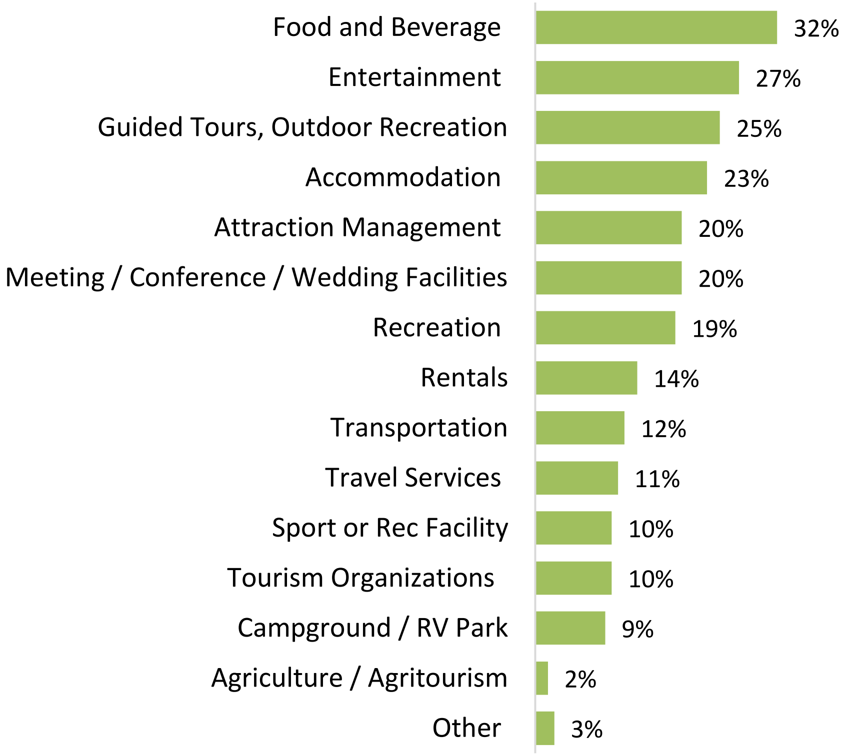
In 2025, a quarter of businesses found hiring for Cooks (25%), followed by Food & Beverage servers (22%), the most difficult to fill.

The biggest staffing challenges continue to be the inability to pay competitive wages, lack of stable year-round employment opportunities, and a shortage of suitable workers/lack of quality applicants. That said, the proportion who mentioned the latter as a challenge this year has decreased significantly (45% vs. 60% last wave), now sitting as the third most common challenge (formerly the most common).

Just under one-in-ten businesses say that a lack of training opportunities significantly affects their ability to attract and retain employees. Businesses' biggest challenges regarding training and development are limited budget and time for training. Over half (54%) believe government incentives/subsidies for training and development is the most effective action for addressing labour and skills gaps in the industry, followed by shifting societal and cultural narratives to highlight tourism/hospitality as a viable career path (52%).

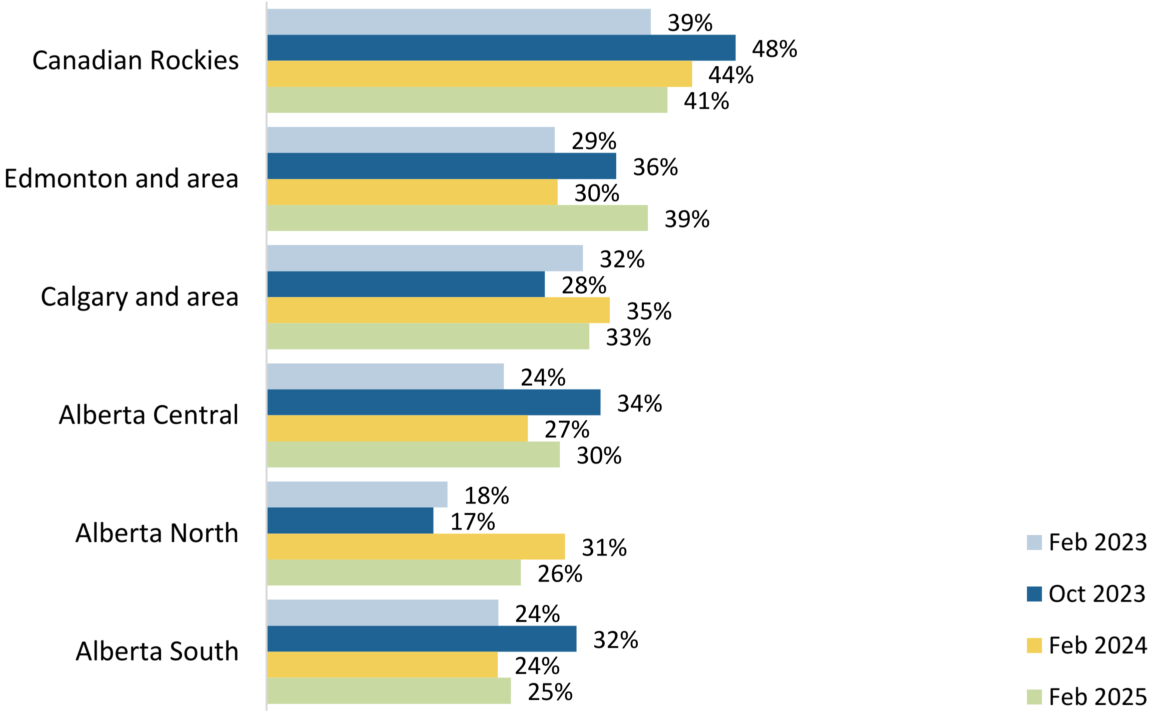
Tourism Operator Profile

Industry Sector



Q20. Which of the following sectors does your business fall under?
Base: All respondents (n=117). New code list in 2025, no tracking

Region of Business Location



Q15. How long has your business been in operation?
Base: All respondents, Feb 2023 (n=173); Oct 2023 (n=123); Feb 2024 (n=131); Feb 2025 (n=117)

Industry by Region Business Location

Feb 2025

	TOTAL	Calgary and area (n=39)	Canadian Rockies (n=48)	Alberta Central (n=35)	Alberta South (n=29)	Edmonton and area (n=46)	Alberta North (n=31)
Food and Beverage	32%	26%	27%	34%	31%	37%	23%
Entertainment	27%	31%	10%	17%	28%	26%	26%
Guided Tours, Outdoor Recreation	25%	26%	27%	23%	24%	24%	29%
Accommodation	23%	13%	33%	11%	24%	15%	23%
Attraction Management	20%	15%	4%	17%	17%	28%	19%
Meeting / Conference / Wedding	20%	18%	13%	14%	28%	22%	16%
Recreation	19%	13%	25%	17%	17%	11%	23%
Rentals	14%	21%	13%	14%	21%	9%	16%
Transportation	12%	23%	15%	14%	14%	15%	10%
Travel Services	11%	23%	19%	14%	14%	13%	19%
Sport or Rec Facility	10%	3%	8%	11%	10%	9%	10%
Tourism Organizations	10%	8%	8%	11%	14%	15%	10%
Campground / RV Park	9%	8%	8%	14%	14%	7%	16%
Agriculture / Agritourism	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	3%
Other	3%	8%	4%	9%	10%	7%	10%

Q20. Which of the following sectors does your business fall under? Values 5% or less are not labelled. Industries that have 5% or less presence across all regions are not included.
Base: All respondents, Feb 2025 (n=117). Note: Regions/Sectors with <20n not shown

Time in Business

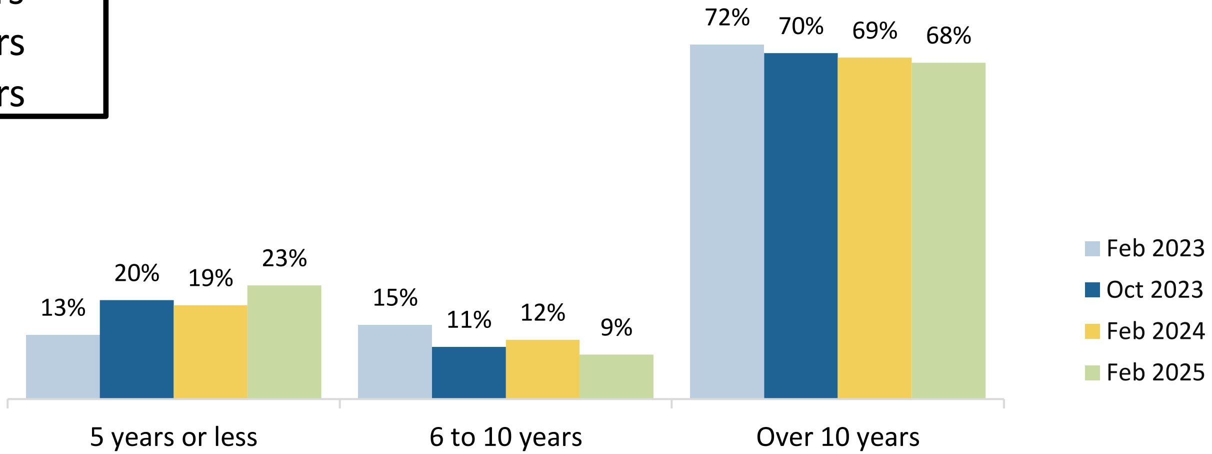
Median Time in Business:

Feb 2023: 25 years

Oct 2023: 20 years

Feb 2024: 20 years

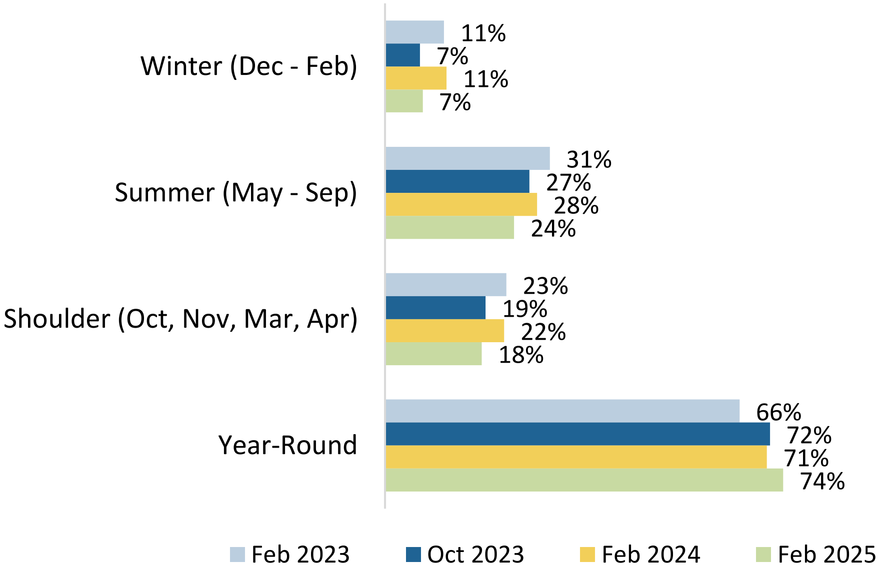
Feb 2025: 18 years

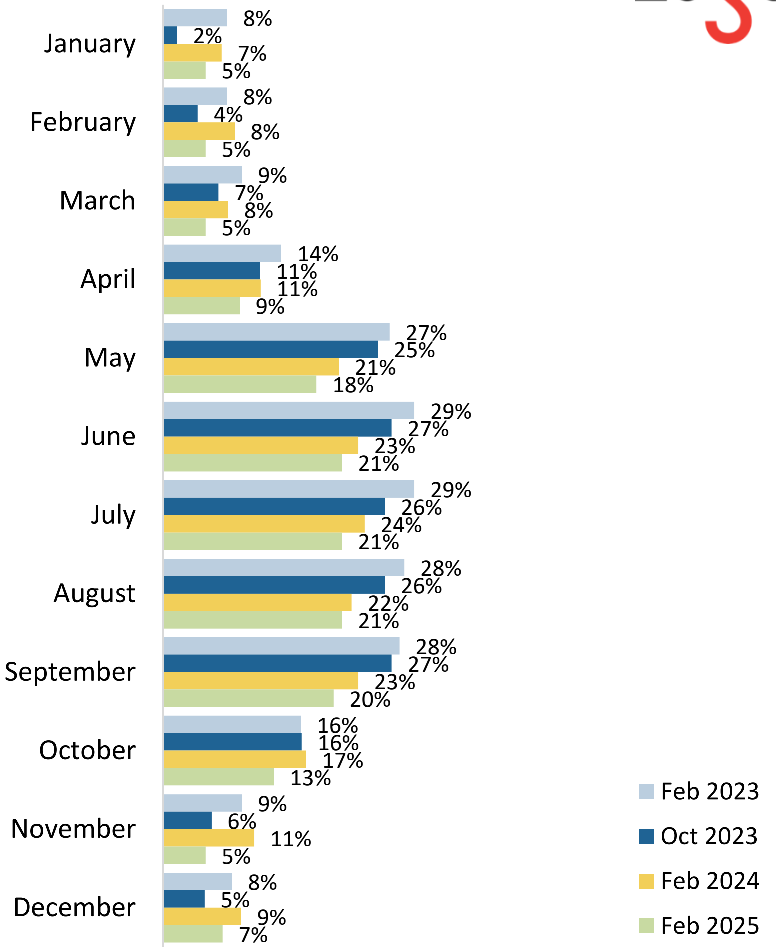


Q15. How long has your business been in operation?
Base: All respondents, Feb 2023 (n=173); Oct 2023 (n=123); Feb 2024 (n=131); Feb 2025 (n=117)

Months of Operation

Almost three-quarters of businesses operate year-round. As seen in past waves, more businesses operate from May to September (24%) – compared to less than 10% in the Winter.

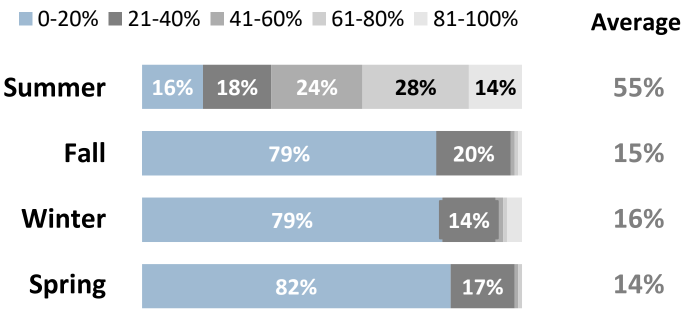




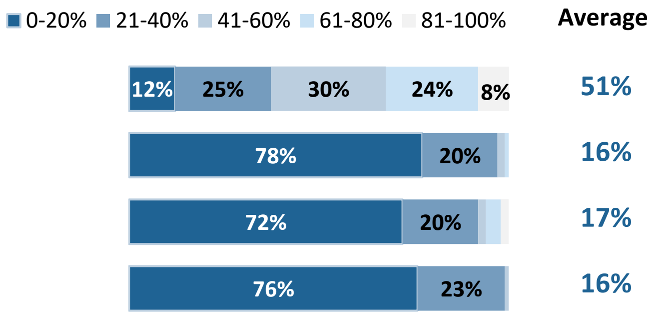
Q18. Which months do you normally operate?
Base: All respondents, Feb 2023 (n=173); Oct 2023 (n=123); Feb 2024 (n=131); Feb 2025 (n=117)

Revenue Generated by Season

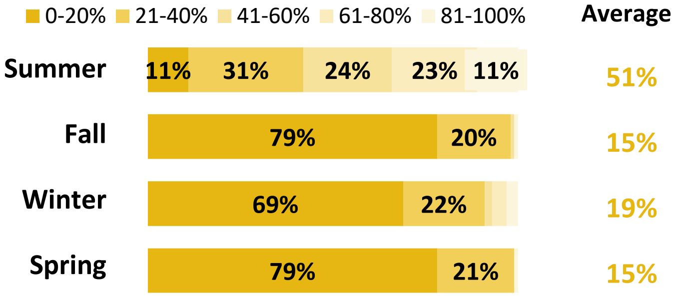
Feb 2023



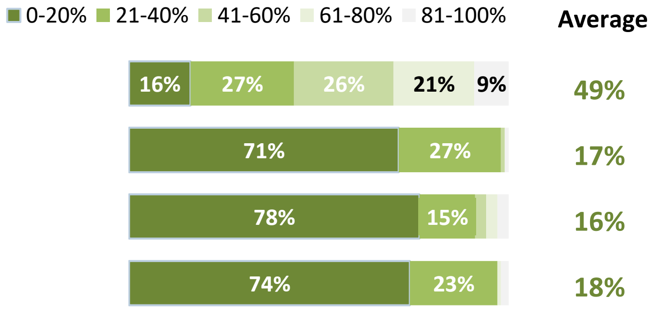
Oct 2023



Feb 2024



Feb 2025

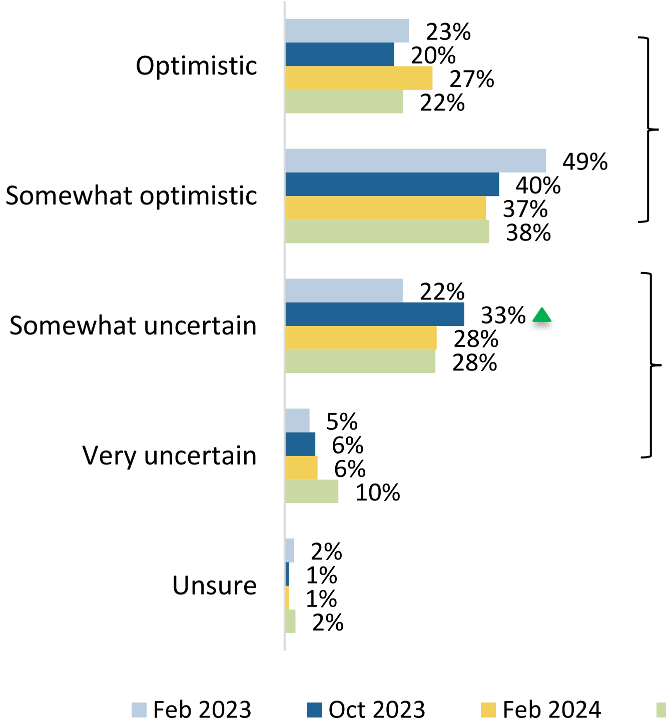


Q19. What percentage of your tourism related revenue is generated in each of the four seasons? (must equal 100%)
Note: Q3 in Feb 2022. Note: 5% and less are not labelled
Base: All respondents, Feb 2023 (n=173); Oct 2023 (n=123); Feb 2024 (n=131); Feb 2025 (n=117)

2025

At a Glance

Outlook for This Year Overall: Tracking



Positive

Feb 2023	Oct 2023	Feb 2024	Feb 2025
72%	60%▼	65%	60%

Uncertain

Feb 2023	Oct 2023	Feb 2024	Feb 2025
27%	39%▲	34%	38%

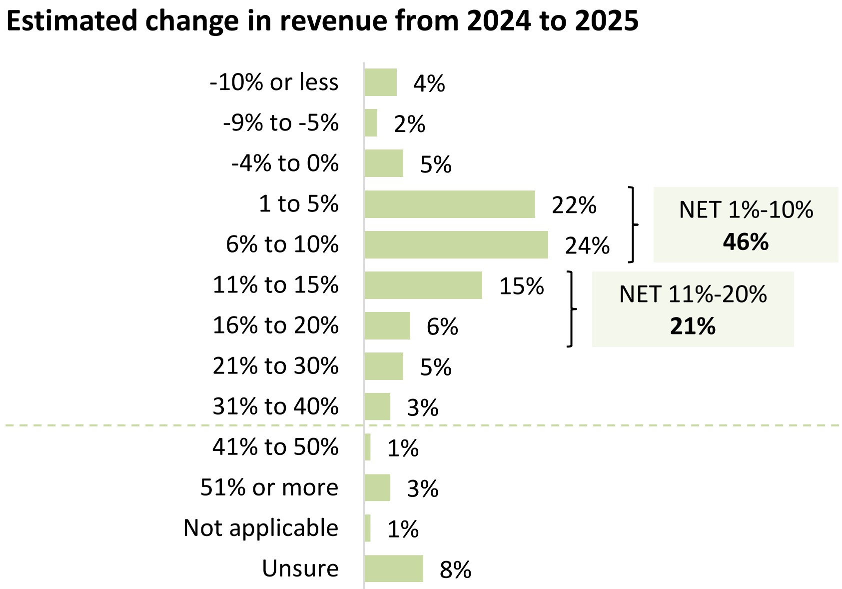
Most tourism operators remain positive towards their overall outlook for 2025, with 6-in-10 feeling this way. Although, there is a directionally increase in those feeling *very uncertain* and a decrease in those feeling *optimistic*. Almost 4-in-10 remain uncertain about the year.

Q13. Based on current economic and geopolitical conditions, what is your organization's outlook for 2025 overall?
Oct 2022 Q13. Based on current market conditions, what is your organization's outlook for the remainder of 2022 overall?
Base: All respondents, Feb 2023 (n=173); Oct 2023 (n=123); Feb 2024 (n=131); Feb 2025 (n=117)

▲ Significantly higher than previous wave.
▼ Significantly lower than previous wave.

Revenue Forecast

Feb 2025



Forecasts for 2025 look positive, with 8-in-10 predicting an increase in their 2025 revenue compared to 2024. A small portion (7%) of businesses have estimated a decrease in revenue, with almost 1-in-10 (8%) unsure about what 2025 will bring.

The majority (46%) of business are forecasting a 1-10% increase, and 21% see a 11%-20% increase and over 1-in-10 (13%*) believe a 20%+ increase in revenue is to come in 2025.

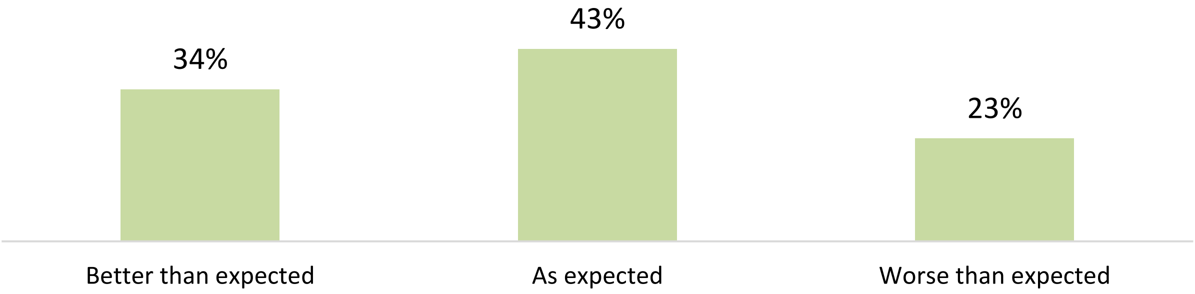
Q14. At this moment, please forecast estimated change in revenues for your organization from 2024 for the upcoming year (2025)
Base: All respondents (n=117) New question Feb 2025. *numbers in chart may not add up to 13% due to rounding.

Business Impact

Business Performance in Past Year

Feb 2024 vs. Feb 2025

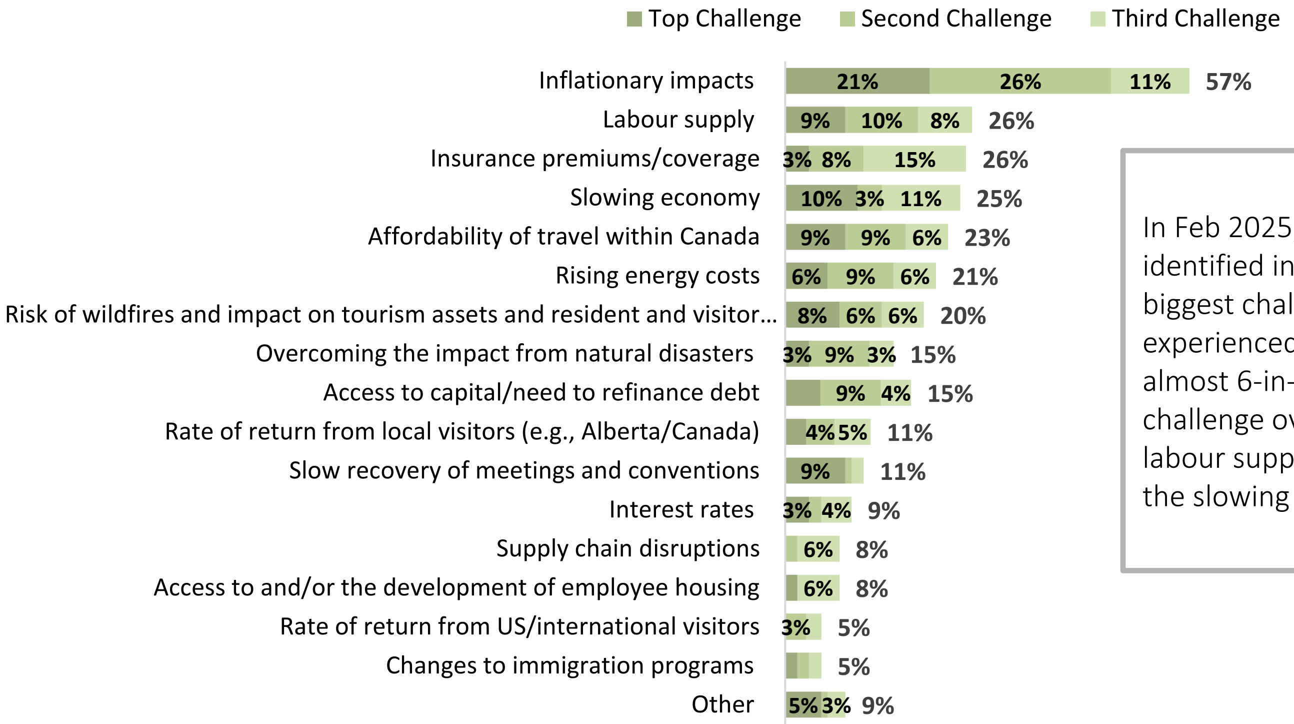
Overall, over three-quarters (77%) of businesses felt they performed better than, or as expected, during 2024- a slight downturn in this with directionally fewer performing better than expected, and more reporting as good or worse than expected.



2024:	**40%**	**40%**	**20%**

N1. Overall, how did your business perform for the entirety of 2024?
Base: All respondents, Feb 2024 (n=131); Feb 2025 (n=117)

Top Challenges Facing Organizations in the Alberta Tourism Industry
Feb 2025

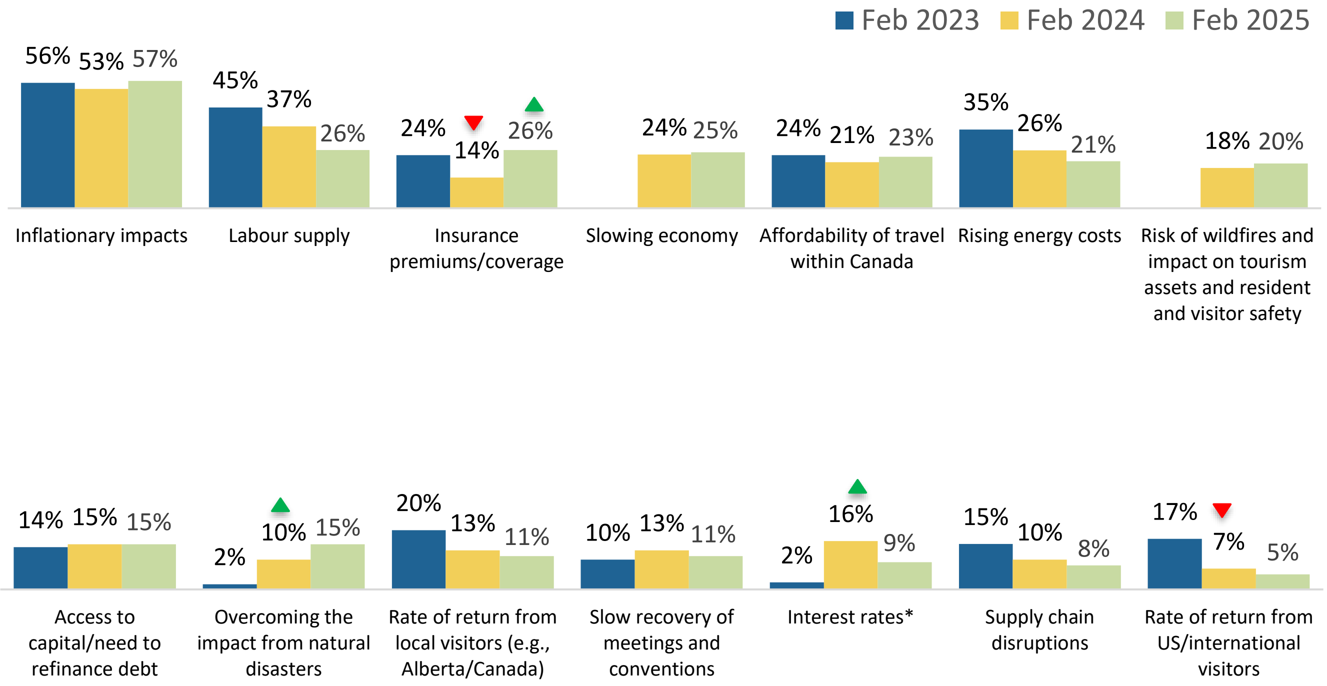


In Feb 2025, just over 1-in-5 businesses identified inflationary impacts as the biggest challenge their organization experienced in the past year, with almost 6-in-10 identifying it as a top 3 challenge overall. This is followed by labour supply, insurance premiums, and the slowing economy.

Q1. What are the top '3' challenges you believe your organization experienced during the past year?
*Added in Oct 2023, Other mentions 2% or less not shown
Note: Responses less than 3% are not labelled
Base: All respondents, Feb 2025 (n=117)

Summary of Top 3 Challenges Facing Organizations in the Alberta Tourism Industry

Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024 vs. Feb 2025



Inflationary impacts remains by far the biggest challenge organizations faced in the past year.

Labour supply as a challenge is trending downwards although still a top 3 issue for over a quarter of businesses.

Insurance premiums saw a significant increase back to 2023 levels in Feb 2025 after a drop in 2024. Slowing economy and affordability follow closely behind.

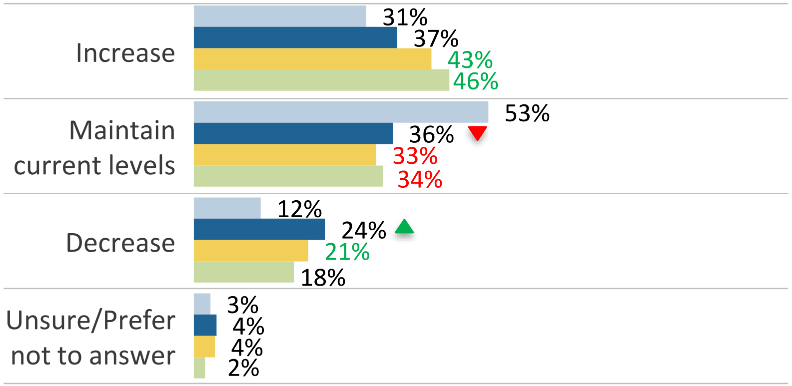
Feb 2024/2025 Q1. What are the top '3' challenges you believe your organization experienced during the past year?
Feb 2023 Q1. Over the coming year, what are the top '3' challenges you believe your organization is likely to face?
Note: this graph only includes the options that were listed in both timepoints. Note: The wording has been modified slightly to match all timepoints.
Base: All respondents, Feb 2023 (n=173); Feb 2024 (n=131); Feb 2025 (n=117) *wording change in 2025

▲ Significantly higher than comparative wave.
▼ Significantly lower than comparative wave.

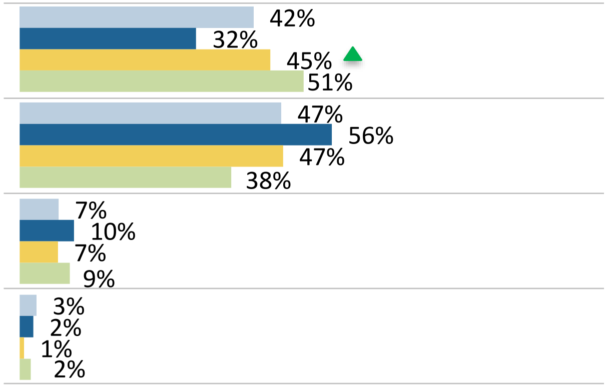
Business Investment and Operational Capacity Intentions: Tracking

Feb 2023 vs. Oct 2023 vs. Feb 2024 vs. Feb 2025

Spending/Investment



Operational Capacity



Business investment intentions for the year have remained relatively consistent compared to Feb 2024.

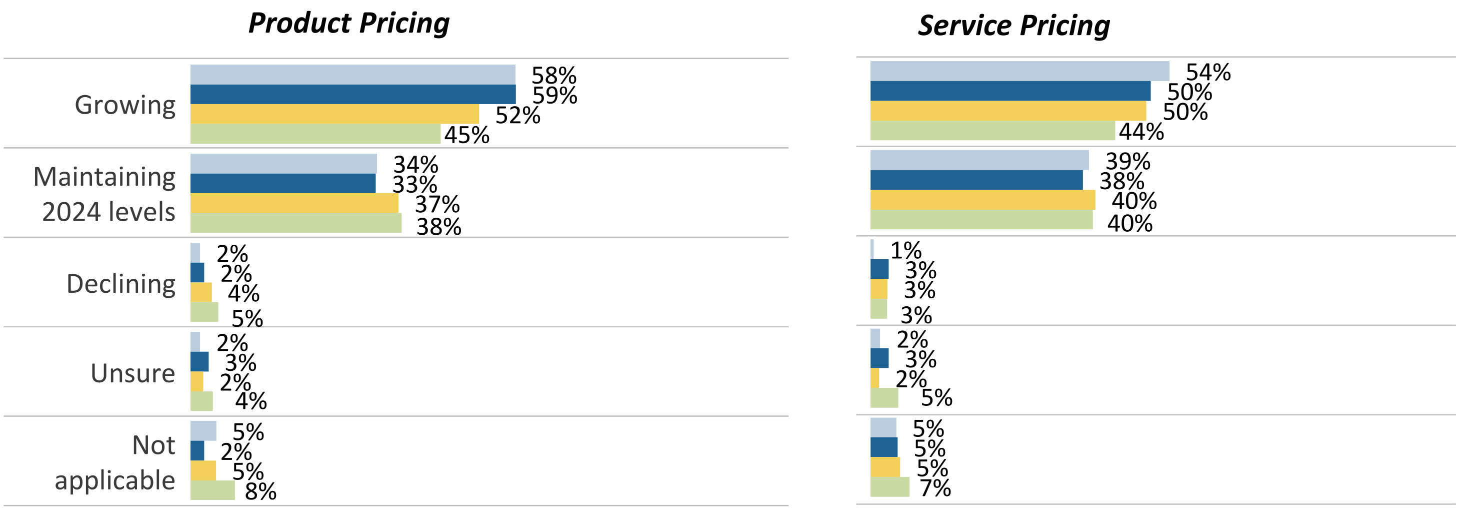
- However, compared to Feb 2023, businesses are significantly more likely to plan to increase investment (46% from 37%) and operational capacity (51% from 32%).

Q2a. What are your business investment and operational capacity intentions for 2025?
Note: Question added Feb 2023
Base: All respondents, Feb 2023 (n=173); Oct 2023 (n=123); Feb 2024 (n=131); Feb 2025 (n=117)

Significantly higher than Feb 2023 wave.
Significantly lower than Feb 2023 wave.
▲ Significantly higher than previous wave.
▼ Significantly lower than previous wave.

Product and Service Pricing Relative to Previous Year: Tracking

Feb 2023 vs. Oct 2023 vs. Feb 2024 vs. Feb 2025



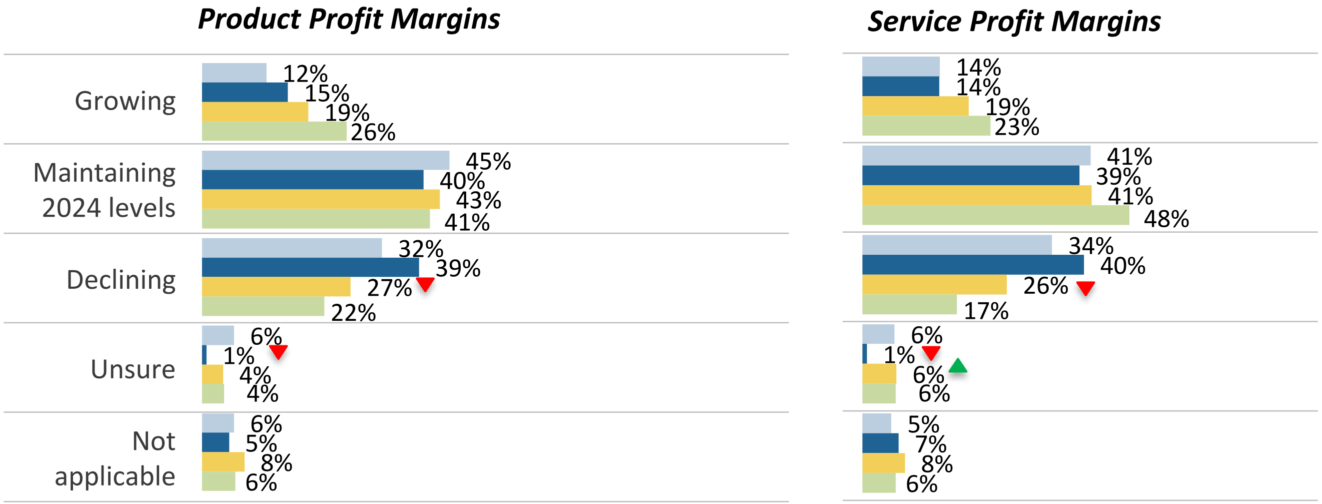
Over 4-in-10 businesses describe their product (45%) and service pricing (44%) as growing relative to 2024, however pricing increases have been trending downwards over the last few years; The gap has continued to close between those growing and maintaining their prices.

Q2b. How would you describe your product and service pricing relative to 2024?
Note: Question added Feb 2023
Base: All respondents, Feb 2023 (n=173); Oct 2023 (n=123); Feb 2024 (n=131); Feb 2025 (n=117)

▲ Significantly higher than previous wave.
▼ Significantly lower than previous wave.

Expectations for Product and Service Profit Margins

Feb 2023 vs. Oct 2023 vs. Feb 2024 vs. Feb 2025



Although product and service pricing growth has been trending downward over the past few years, expected growth for profit margins has been trending upwards during the same period, with around one-quarter of businesses predicting growth in 2025.

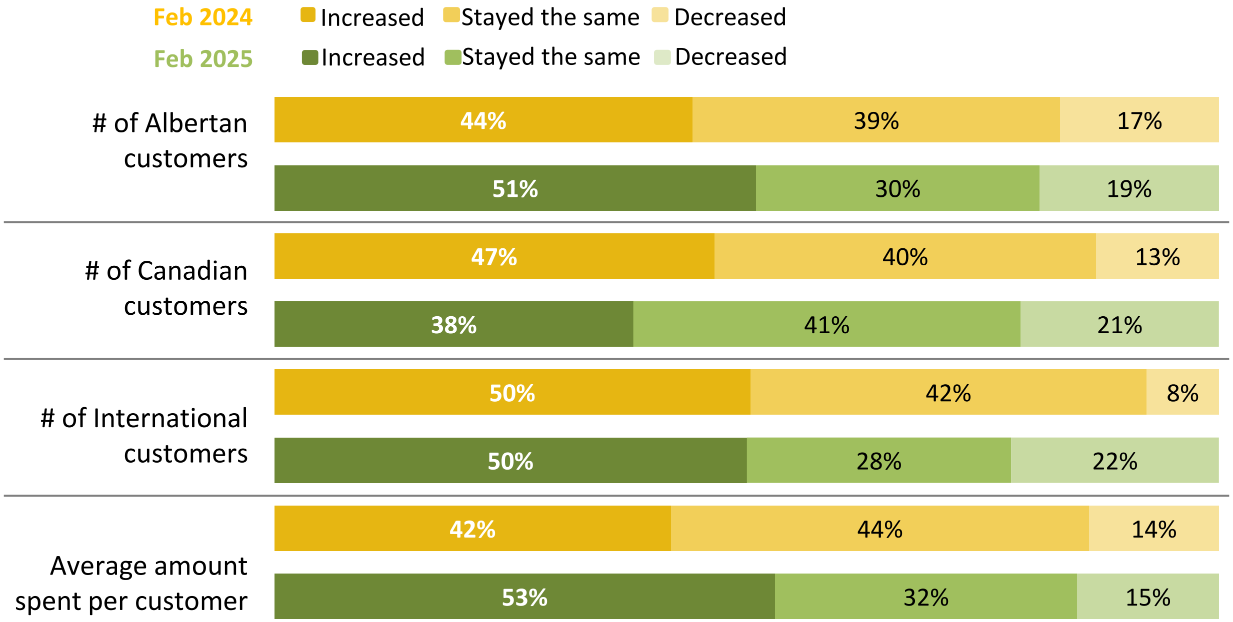
That said, businesses most commonly believe margins will remain the same as 2024.

Q2c. How would you describe your expectation for profit margins on 2025 product and service offerings?
Note: Question added Feb 2023
Base: All respondents, Feb 2023 (n=173); Oct 2023 (n=123); Feb 2024 (n=131); Feb 2025 (n=117)

▲ Significantly higher than previous wave.
▼ Significantly lower than previous wave.

Forward Looking

Customer Changes: Past Year
Feb 2024 vs. Feb 2025



Half of businesses saw an increase in the number of international and Albertan customers in 2024 compared to 2023, with just less than 4-in-10 seeing an increase in the number of Canadian customers.

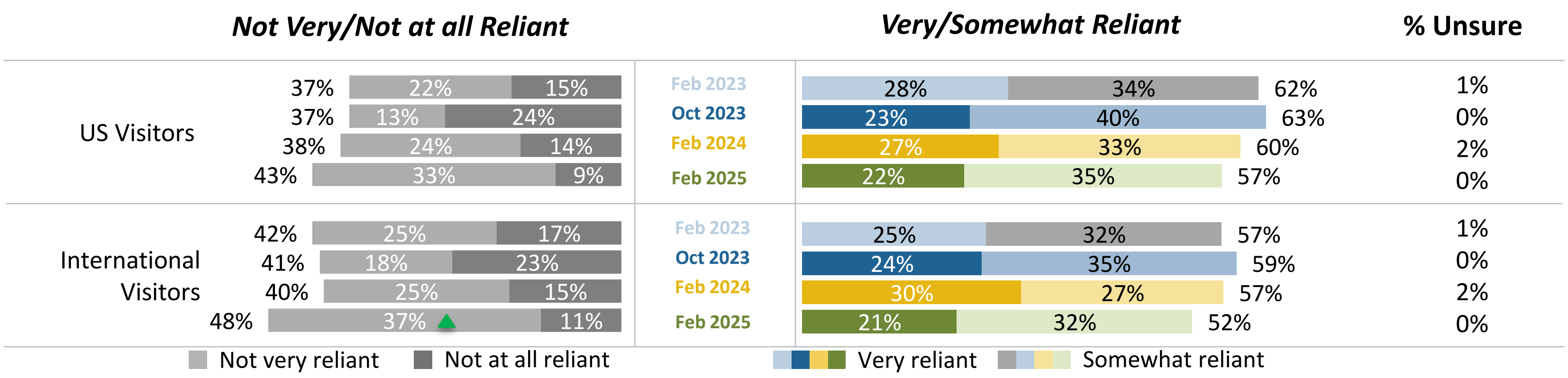
Over half reported an increase in the average amount spent per customer over 2025.

N2. Please indicate if the following increased or decreased in 2024 compared to 2023
Base: All respondents, Feb 2024 (n=131); Feb 2025 (n=117)

▲ Significantly higher than previous wave.
▼ Significantly lower than previous wave.

Reliance on Access to US & International Visitors: Tracking

Feb 2023 vs. Oct 2023 vs. Feb 2024 vs. Feb 2025



The majority of businesses are at least somewhat reliant on US or International visitors, however the proportion of businesses that are reliant on US or International visitors has been trending downwards since Oct 2023.

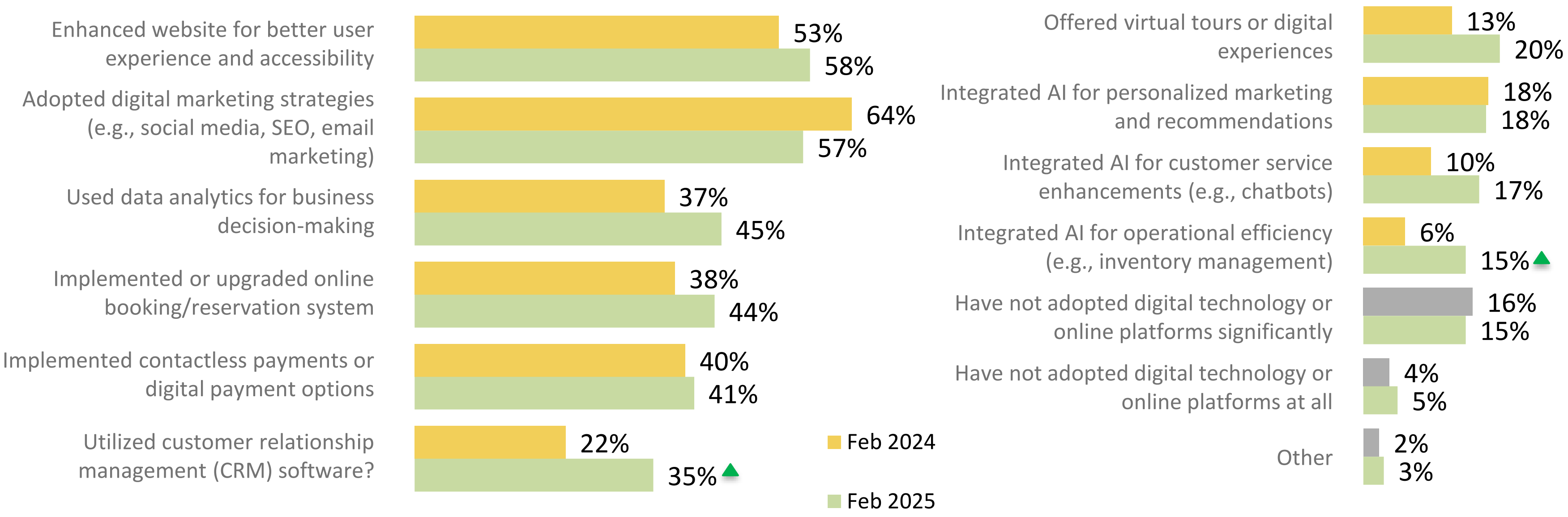
Businesses in the **Canadian Rockies** are significantly **more likely** to be *very reliant* on US visitors versus other regions outside of Calgary.

N3. How reliant or not is your business on access to US & International visitors?
Note: Question added Feb 2023
Base: All respondents, Feb 2023 (n=173); Oct 2023 (n=123); Feb 2024 (n=131); Feb 2025 (n=117)

▲ Significantly higher than previous wave.
▼ Significantly lower than previous wave.

Adoption of Digital Technology: Feb 2024 vs. Feb 2025

Enhancing websites and adopting digital marketing strategies continue to be the most common way Alberta tourism operators adopt digital technology. However, the former has increased directionally in Feb 2025 while the latter has decreased directionally.



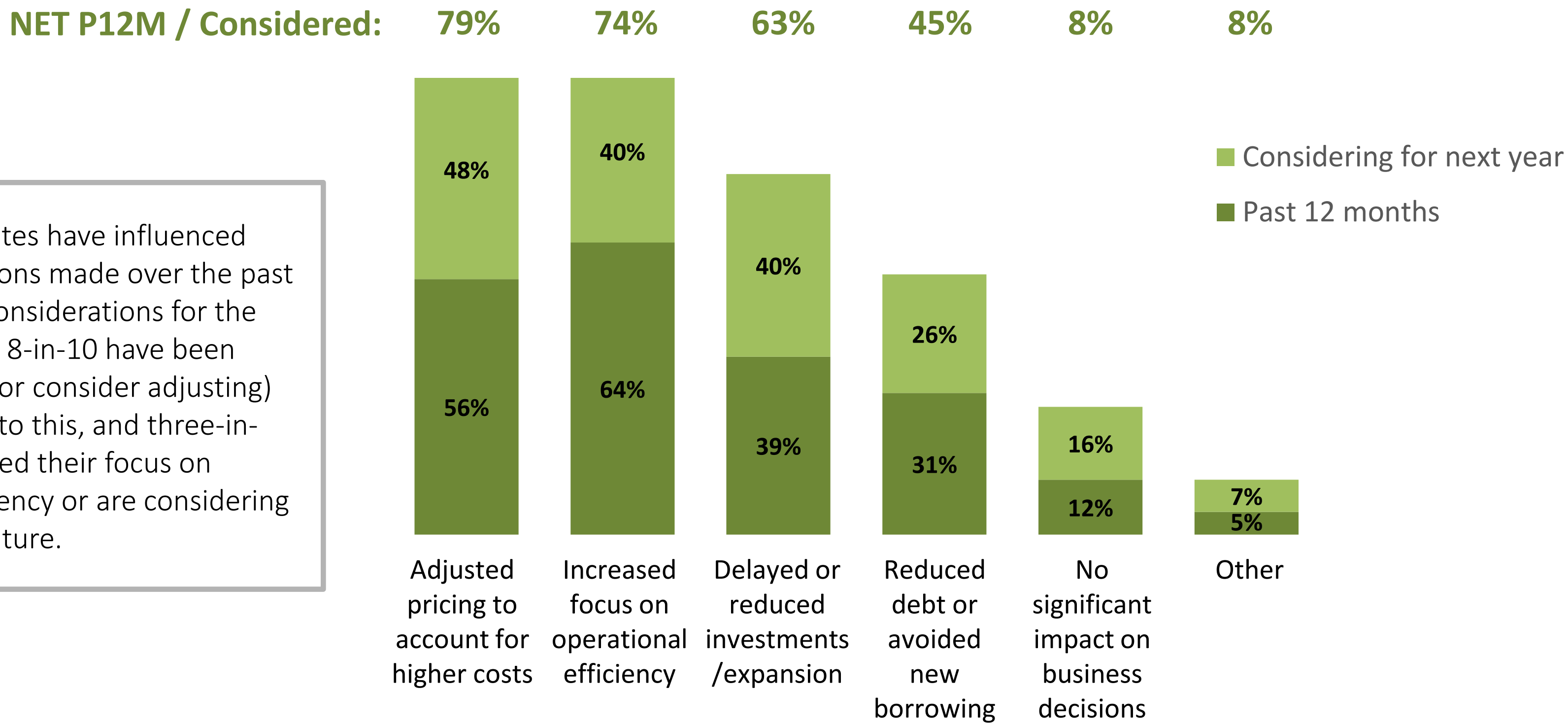
Q10b. How has your business adopted digital technology, online platforms, and artificial intelligence (AI) in 2024 to enhance operational efficiency, customer engagement, and revenue generation?
Question added Feb 2024 Base: All respondents, Feb 2024 (n=131); Feb 2025 (n=117)

▲ Significantly higher than previous wave.
▼ Significantly lower than previous wave.

Managing Risk

The Affect of Higher Interest Rates

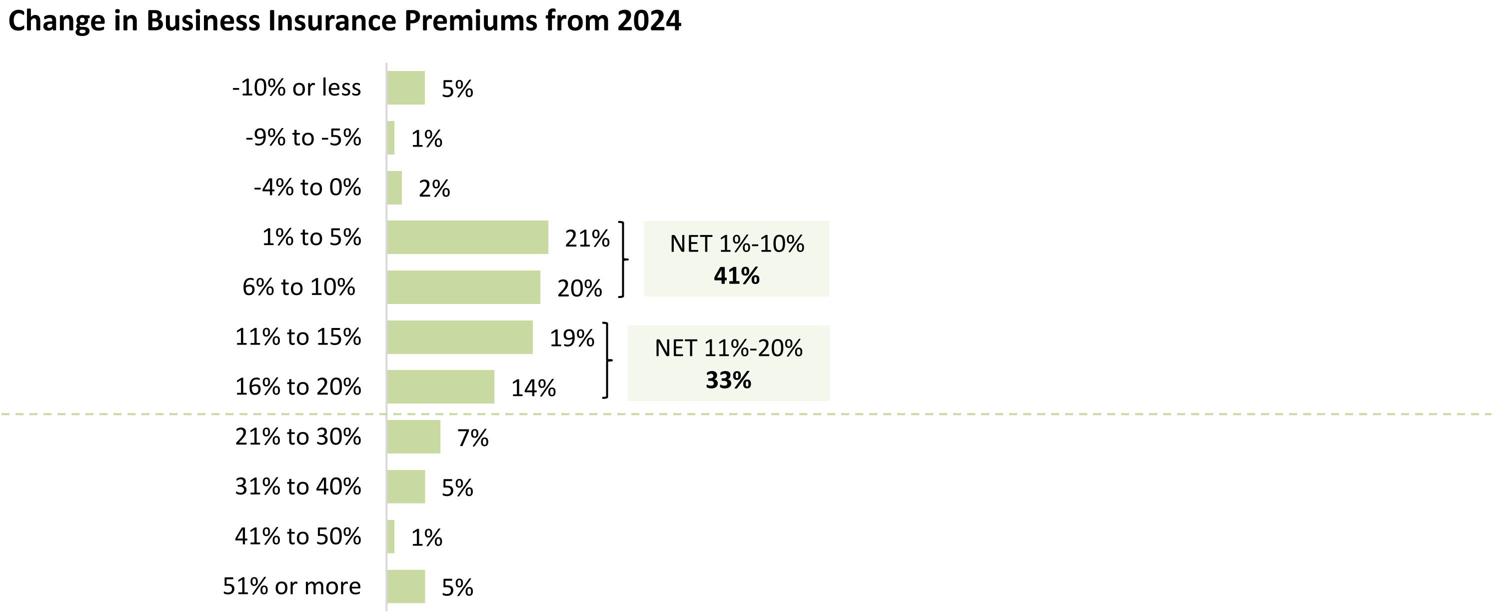
Higher interest rates have influenced businesses decisions made over the past 12 months and considerations for the next year; almost 8-in-10 have been forced to adjust (or consider adjusting) their pricing due to this, and three-in-four have increased their focus on operational efficiency or are considering doing so in the future.



New question Feb 2025
Q7C. How have higher interest rates influenced your business decisions in the past 12 months and what actions are you considering for the next year?
Base: Total respondents (n=117)

Insurance Premiums

Feb 2025



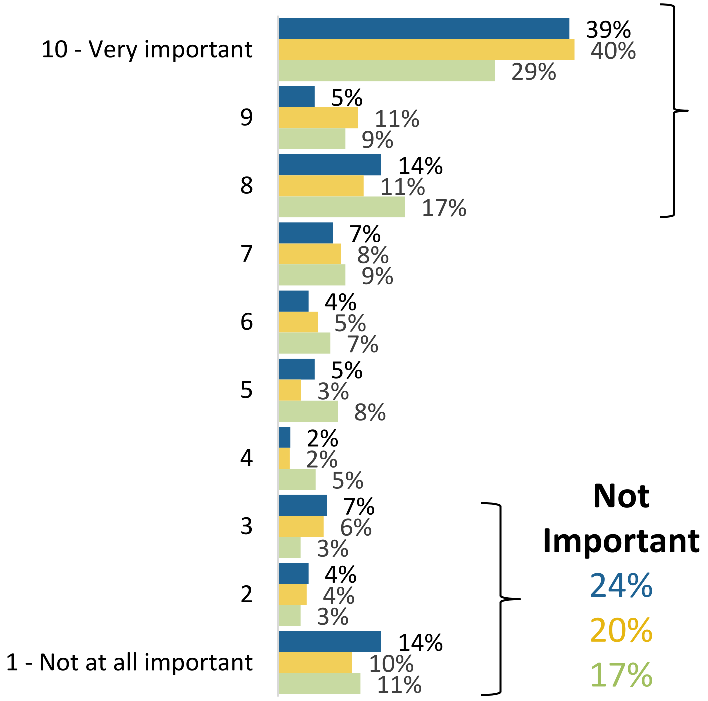
Three-in-four businesses experienced an increase of up to 20% in the cost of Insurance Premiums in 2024. Approximately a fifth of operators (18%) claim their premiums increased beyond this, while 8% claim their business' premiums decreased from 2024.

Q6b. How much have your business insurance premiums increased or decreased from 2024?
Base: Total respondents (n=117) Previously Q6a with updated scale in 2025, no tracking.

Labour Force

Importance of Housing in Your Community

Oct 2023 vs. Feb 2024 vs. Feb 2025



In 2025, 58% of businesses think it is important (8,9,10/10) to have housing in their community to attract and retain workers. This is consistent with previous waves, however the proportion who believe it is 10/10 in importance has decreased.

Businesses significantly **more likely** to rate **access to housing as important** (8/9/10) include:

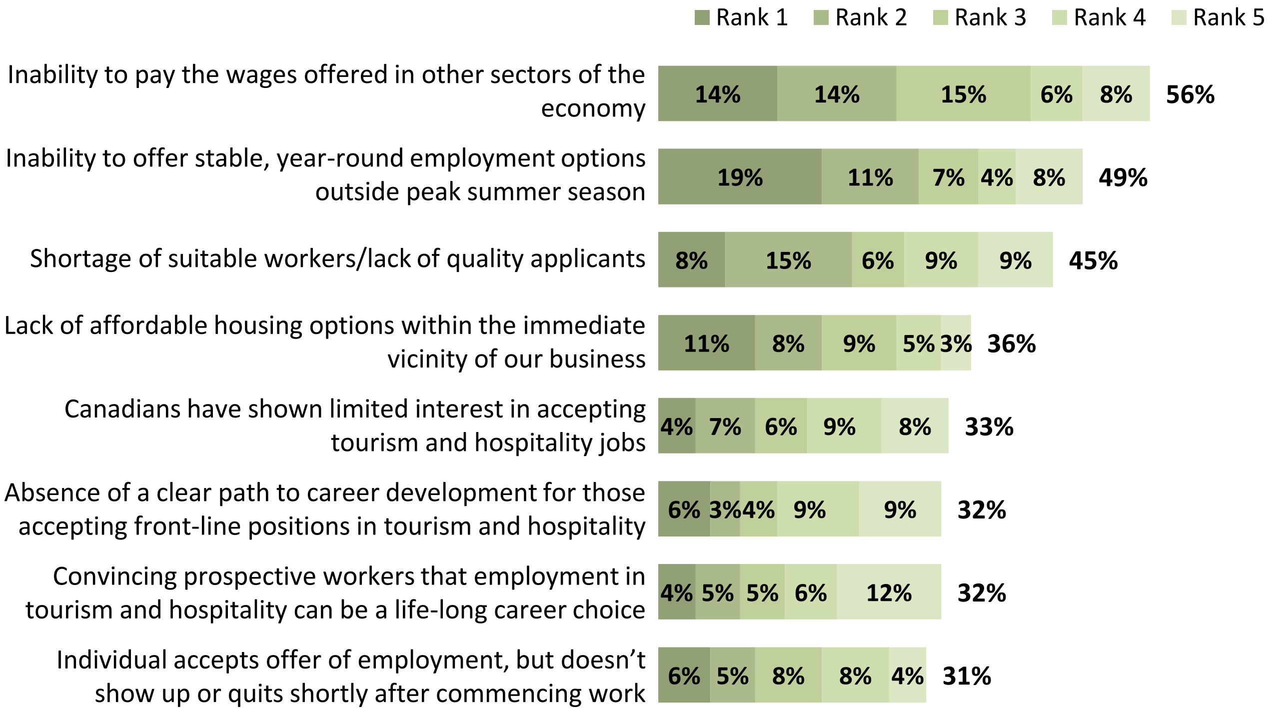
- Those in **Canadian Rockies** (63% vs. 33%-35% among those in Alberta South and North and Edmonton).

Mean: 6.9 7.3 6.9

Q8a. How important is having access to housing in your community to meet your business' ability to attract and retain workers?
Note: Question added Oct 2023
Base: All respondents, Oct 2023 (n=123); Feb 2024 (n=131); Feb 2025 (n=117)

Staffing Challenges

Feb 2025



Overall, inability to pay competitive wages is the most common challenge businesses faced to maintain their employee workforce.

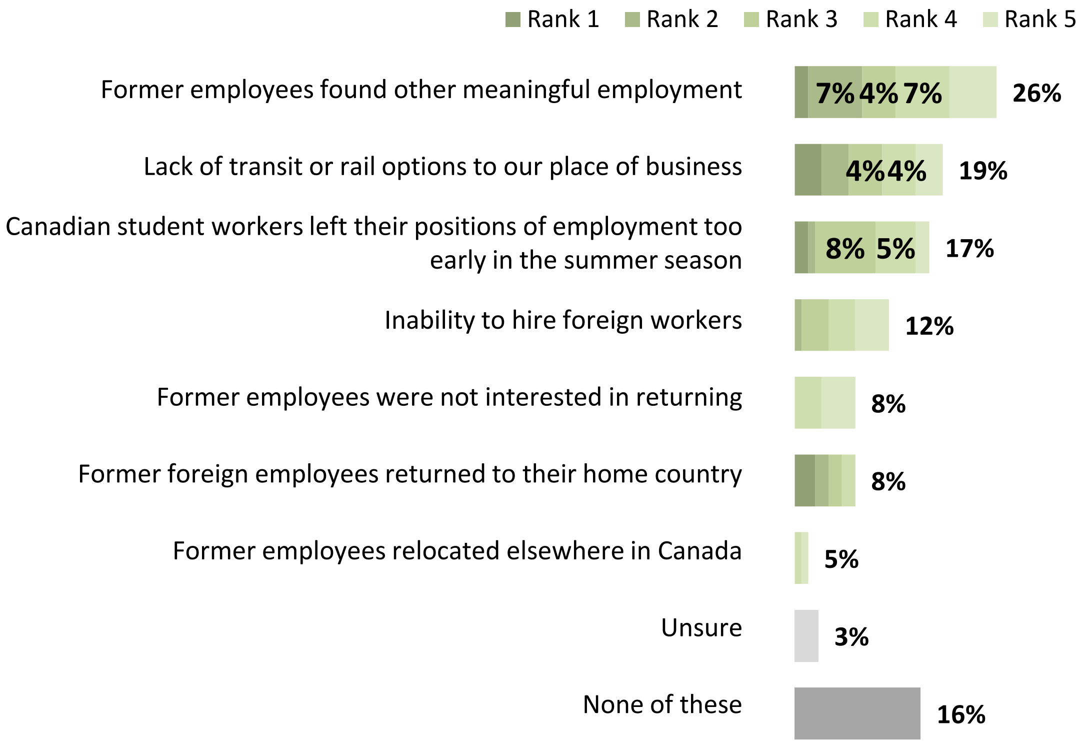
Followed by the inability to offer stable, year-round employment, with close to 1-in-5 businesses ranking it their top challenge.

Shortage of suitable workers or lack of quality applicants is another challenges faced by many.

Q8. What were your 5 biggest challenges you faced in 2024 to maintain your employee workforce?
Base: All Respondents, Feb 2025 (n=117)

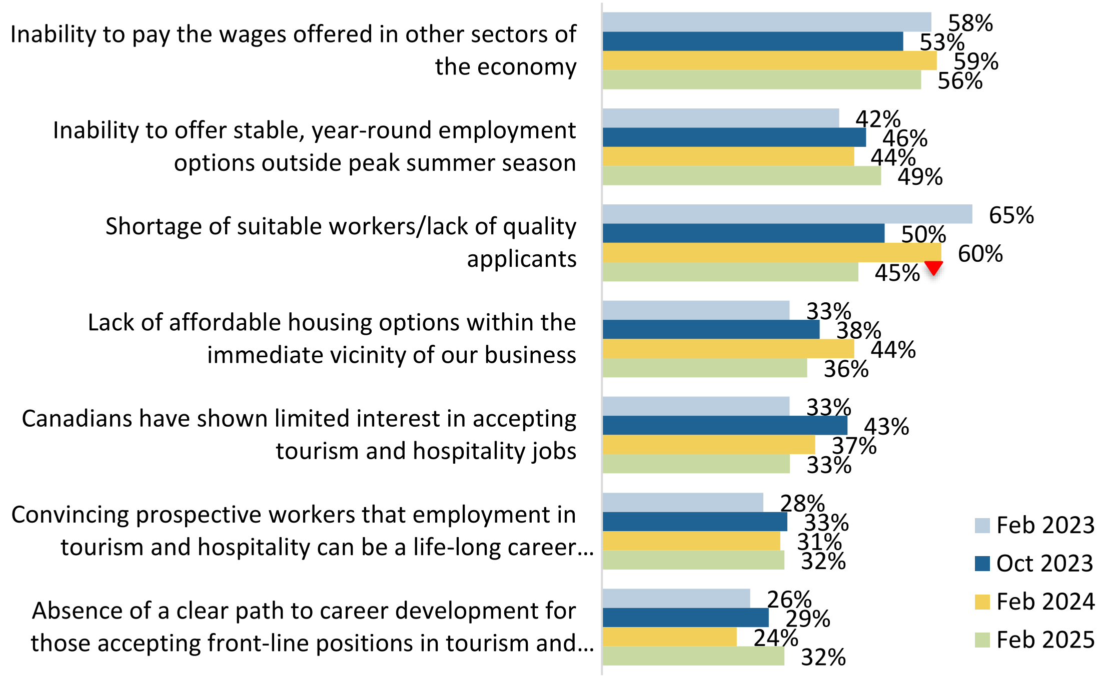
Staffing Challenges (Cont'd)

Feb 2025



Q8. What were your 5 biggest challenges you faced in 2024 to maintain your employee workforce?
Note: Responses 3% or less are not labelled
Base: All Respondents, Feb 2025 (n=117)

Staffing Challenges: Tracking



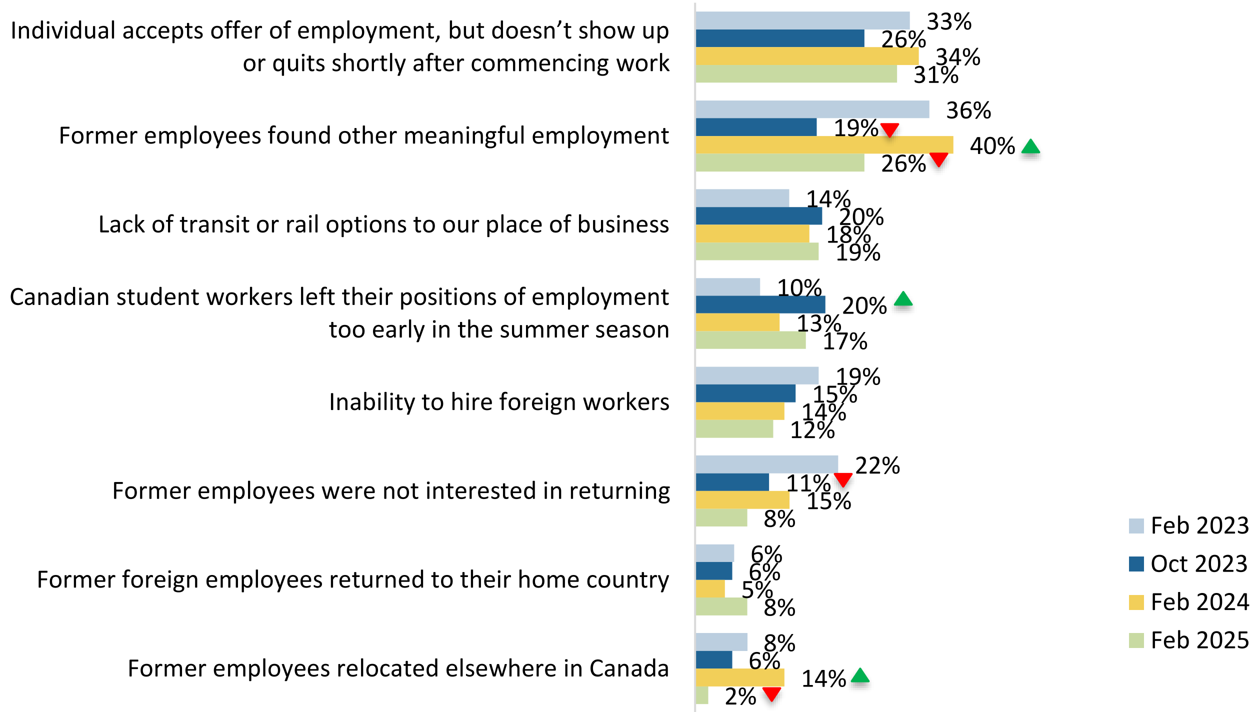
A significant drop this year in the *shortage of suitable workers* results in this challenge falling from the top to third, with *inability to pay competitive wages* moving to the top spot.

Inability to offer stable, year-round work remains a top concern and *lack of affordable housing*.

Feb 2025 Q8. What were your 5 biggest challenges you faced in 2024 to maintain your employee workforce?
Feb 2024 Q8. What were your 5 biggest challenges you faced to maintain your employee workforce?
Oct 2023 Q8. What were your 5 biggest challenges you faced this summer (May-September 2023) to maintain your employee workforce?
Feb 2023 Q8. What were your 5 biggest challenges in 2022 to maintain your employee workforce?
Note this graph only includes the options that were listed in all timepoints.
Base: All respondents, Feb 2023 (n=173); Oct 2023 (n=123); Feb 2024 (n=131); Feb 2025 (n=117)

▲ Significantly higher than previous wave.
▼ Significantly lower than previous wave.

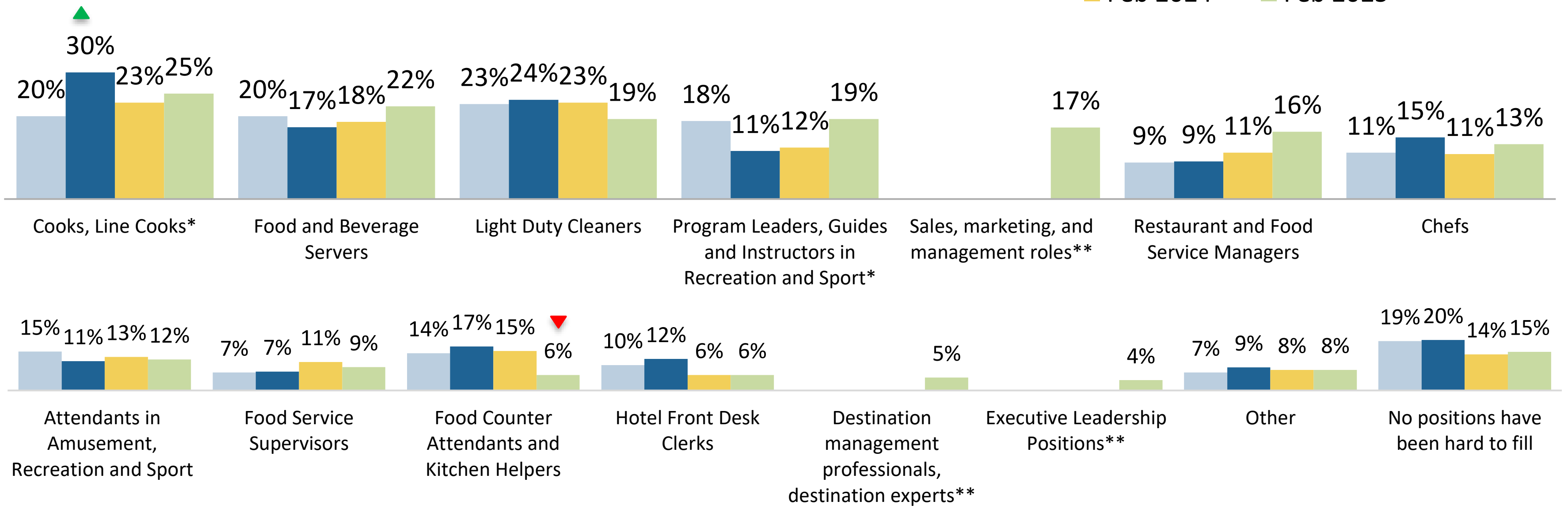
Staffing Challenges: Tracking



Feb 2025 Q8. What were your 5 biggest challenges you faced in 2024 to maintain your employee workforce?
Feb 2024 Q8. What were your 5 biggest challenges you faced to maintain your employee workforce?
Oct 2023 Q8. What were your 5 biggest challenges you faced this summer (May-September 2023) to maintain your employee workforce?
Feb 2023 Q8. What were your 5 biggest challenges in 2022 to maintain your employee workforce?
Note this graph only includes the options that were listed in all timepoints.
Base: All respondents, Feb 2023 (n=173); Oct 2023 (n=123); Feb 2024 (n=131); Feb 2025 (n=117)

▲ Significantly higher than previous wave.
▼ Significantly lower than previous wave.

Job Positions That Have Been Hard to Fill: Tracking



The three most challenging positions to fill continue to be cooks and food and beverage servers, with a significant drop for food counter attendants this year, dropping from the 4th most difficult to the 10th. Light duty cleaners, Program leaders/guides/instructors and sales/marketing roles are also in the top 5 hardest to fill positions.

Feb 2025 Q10. What job positions have been the hardest to fill during 2024?
Feb 2024 Q10. What job positions have been the hardest to fill during 2023?
Oct 2023 Q10. What job positions have been the hardest to fill this summer season (May – September 2023)?
Feb 2023 What job positions have been the hardest to fill in 2022?
Base: All respondents, Feb 2023 (n=173); Oct 2023 (n=123); Feb 2024 (n=131); Feb 2025 (n=117)

Positions 3% or less are not shown.
** indicates added in Feb 2025
* Wording update in 2025

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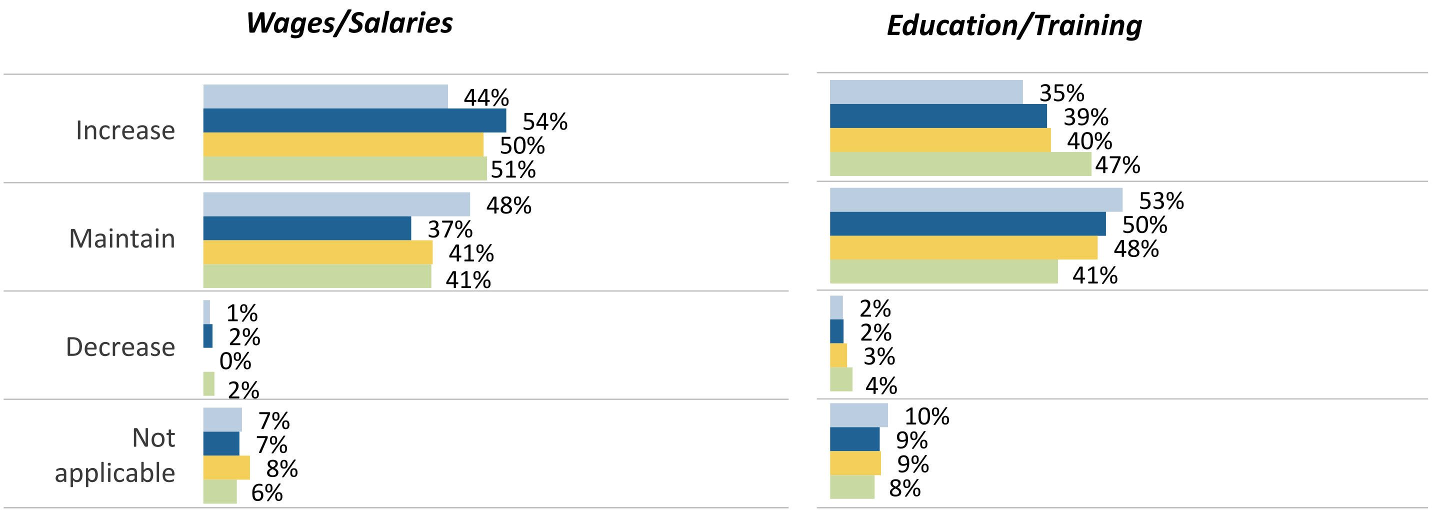
Intentions for Employees

Feb 2023 vs. Oct 2023 vs. Feb 2024 vs. Feb 2025



Businesses' intentions for wages/salaries in 2024 remains consistent with previous years, with the vast majority intending to increase or maintain wages (51% and 41%, respectively). For education/training, the proportion of businesses who intend to increase this has trended upwards since Feb 2023 (47% from 35%), stemming from a downward trend in the proportion who intend to just maintain this for their employees.

Q10a. What have been your intentions with your employees in 2024 on the following?
Question added Feb 2023
Base: All respondents, Feb 2023 (n=173); Oct 2023 (n=123); Feb 2024 (n=131); Feb 2025 (n=117)

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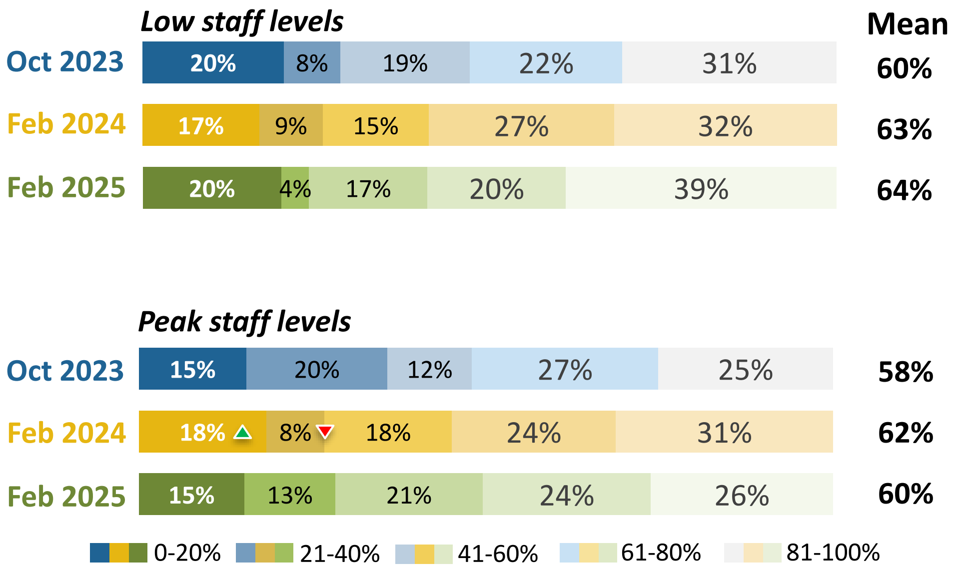
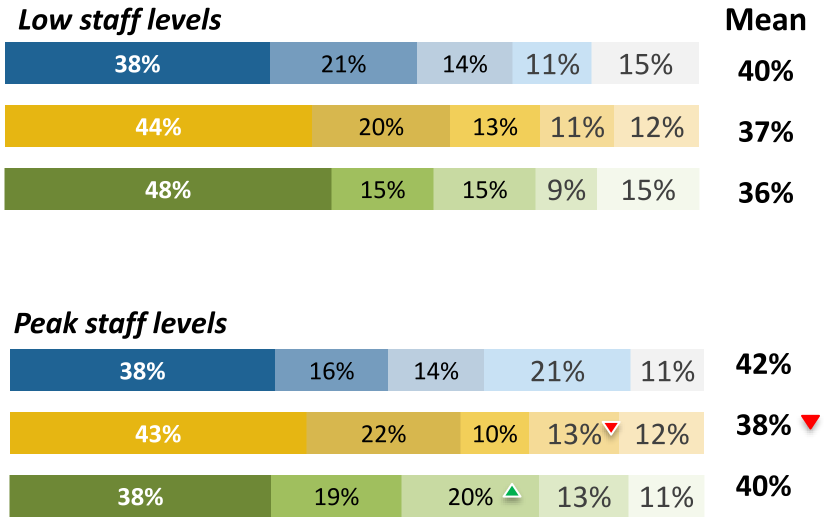
Seasonal Staffing: Oct 2023 vs. Feb 2024 vs. Feb 2025

Despite the seasonal nature of the tourism sector, during both low and peak staff levels, ~3-in-5 employees were full time while 2-in-5 were part time. These results were fairly consistent compared to previous waves.

FULL TIME EMPLOYEES



PART TIME EMPLOYEES



Q21. We are interested in the seasonal impact on your staffing with respect to the number of full-time and part-time employees. In the boxes below, please enter a number between 0 and 100 to reflect the percent of total full-time staff and part-time staff during peak staff levels and low staff levels? Base: All respondents, Oct 2023 (n=123); Feb 2024 (n=131); Feb 2025 (n=117)

▲ Significantly higher than previous wave.
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Training and Development

Training opportunities

Feb 2025

The lack of post-secondary or vocational training opportunities mostly has either a moderate or minimal effect on the organizations ability to attract and retain employees, with a quarter saying it has no effect at all and only 9% claiming it has a significant effect.

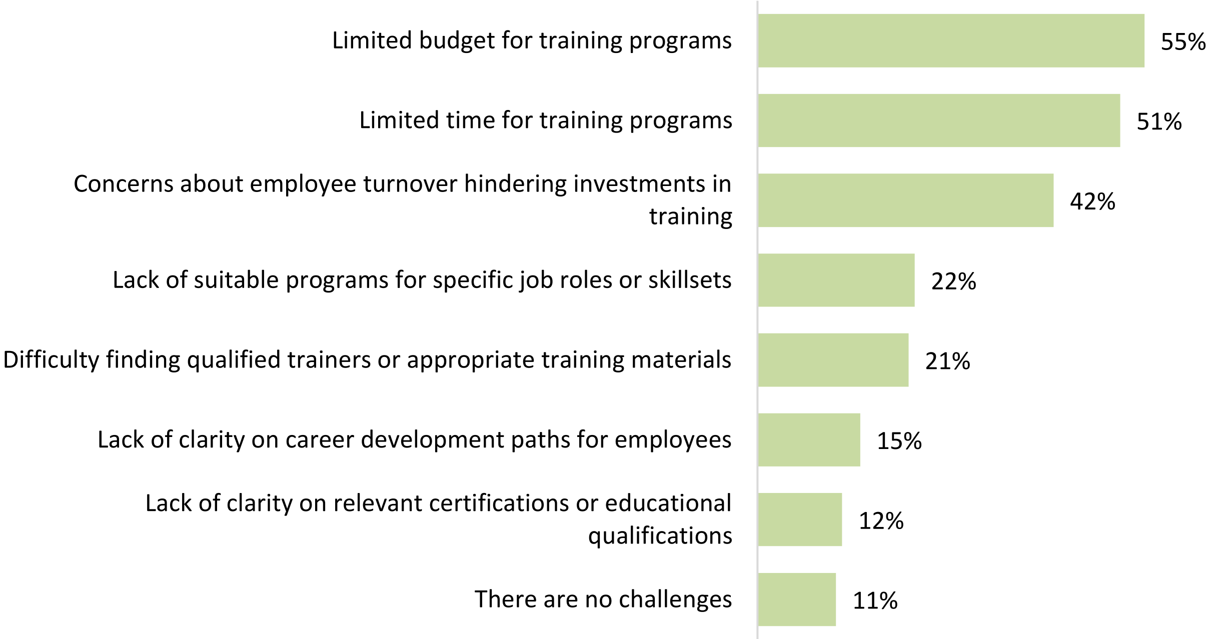
New question Feb 2025

Q26. To what extent does the lack of post-secondary or vocational training opportunities affect your organization's ability to both attract and retain qualified/skilled/accredited employees?

Base: Total respondents (n=117)

Challenges with training and development

Feb 2025

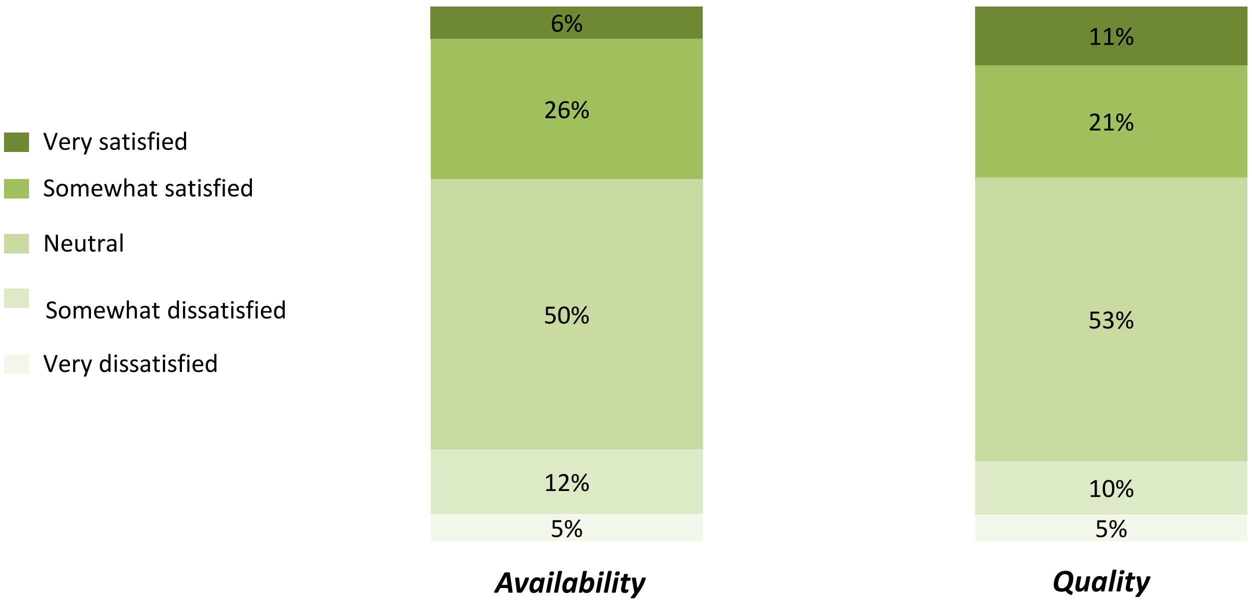


Almost all (89%) businesses face one or more challenge when it comes to trying to provide effective training and development. The main issues are limited budget, limited time, and concerns about employee turnover hindering their ROI on training.

New question Feb 2025
Q26A. Which of the following are the biggest challenges your organization faces when trying to provide effective training and development?
Base: Total respondents (n=117)

Satisfaction with Availability and Quality of Training

Overall, the majority of organizations tend to feel either neutral or satisfied with both the availability and quality of post-secondary or vocational training programs relevant to tourism and hospitality.



New question Feb 2025
Q25B. How satisfied is your organization with the current availability and quality of post-secondary or vocational training programs relevant to tourism and hospitality?
Base: Total respondents (n=117)

Addressing labour and skill gaps in the market

Overall, *government provided incentives or subsidies for training and development* is the top action operators think would be most effective to address labour and skills gaps in their industry, followed by *shifting the social and cultural narratives to highlight tourism/hospitality as a viable career path* and *increasing awareness of professional career pathways in the sector*.

New question Feb 2025
Q25C. From the list below, please rank the top three actions you believe would most effectively address labour and skills gaps in tourism and hospitality.
3% or less not labelled
Base: Total respondents (n=117)

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