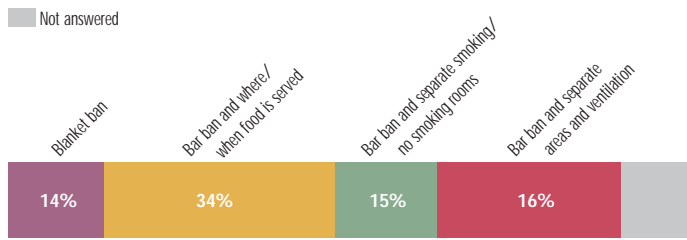


**FRLT**

**SMOKE DAMAGE?  
THE IMPACT OF A SMOKING BAN  
ON NORTHERN IRELAND'S PUBS**

October 2005

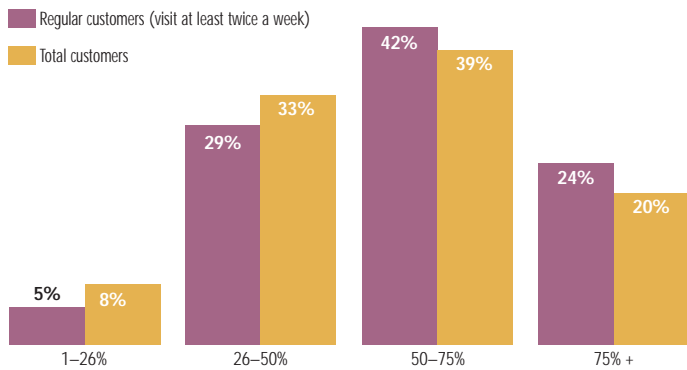
# SMOKE DAMAGE?



Which of the following options do you most support?



How many rooms do you have in your pub?



What proportion of your customers are smokers?

## Introduction

The Government will make a final decision on smoking in public places, including pubs, clubs and bars this Autumn. In August and September 2005, the Federation of the Retail Licensed Trade (FRLT) which represents more than 1200 owner-operated businesses within the licensed trade surveyed its members to find out what they thought.

343 licensees responded to the survey and the results are summarised below.

## Licensees support restrictions but not a ban

Very few licensees support a blanket ban – only 14% of licensees gave that as their first choice as opposed to 65% who supported lesser restrictions. 1 in 3 favoured restrictions when and where food is served, with an additional 27% supporting the proposal for separate areas and ventilation.

## Smoking rooms could be the answer

Over 80% of all respondees said that their premises had 2 or more rooms. This would make the separation of smokers and non-smokers a practical, simple solution that would be viable for the majority of premises, protecting both bar staff and customers from second hand smoke.

## The importance of smokers to pubs

The picture of a pub regular (visiting at least twice a week) with a pint and smoke in hand is not a figment of people's imagination. 66% of licensees believe that over half of their regulars are smokers. The figure for total customers is similar at 59%. A ban would have serious implications especially for the smaller, community and rural pubs that rely on their regulars to stay in business.

## The impact of a smoking ban on jobs

62% of licensees believe that a ban would force them to lay off staff, and an additional 15% believe that they would have to shut down completely. Less than 3% believe that they would have to hire more staff following a ban.

These figures are mirrored by the drop in sales and customers foreseen by licensees if a ban is introduced. More than 80% of licensees believe that turnover and customers will drop following a ban, with just over 10% predicting no change in their business, and only 3% believing more customers will walk through the door.

## The impact of a smoking ban on the local community

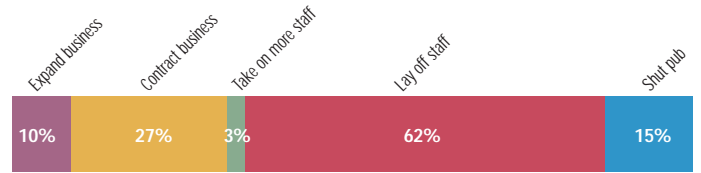
Many landlords expressed concern that a ban would force customers outside, leading to disturbance for the community in general. 66% were concerned about an increase in noise for their neighbours and almost 50% believe there could be an increase in trouble outside pubs.

Rather than a ban being a health benefit, landlords believe that people will increasingly smoke and drink at home, exposing family members to second hand smoke. 75% believe that people will choose to smoke at home more, and almost 90% think people will increasingly drink at home.

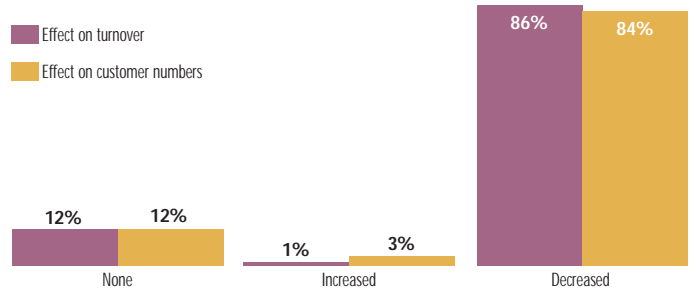
## What are the alternatives?

Our members are convinced that action is required and 85% of licensees said they would be willing to take action to avoid a ban. Our members would prefer to spend £3000 installing ventilation, or to ban smoking in one room as well as at the bar.

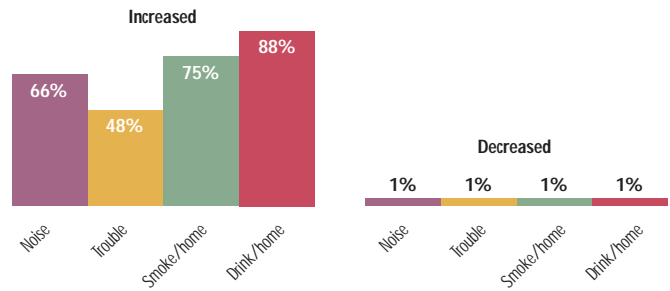
Only 14% of those asked said that they would prefer a ban, supporting the industry-wide conclusion that the ban in the Republic of Ireland has cost livelihoods and jobs.



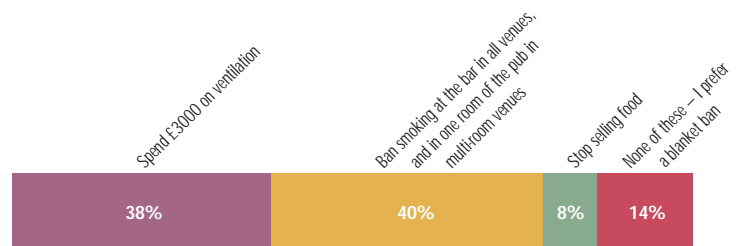
If there were a blanket ban do you believe that you would:



What would you estimate to be the effect of a blanket ban on turnover and customer numbers?



Would a ban lead to increased or decreased noise, trouble, smoking and drinking in your local community?



Would you take one of the following actions if there were an alternative to a ban?

## THE FRLT POSITION

The smoking ban in public places is being promoted as giant step forward for the nation's health. We believe that a ban will threaten many peoples' jobs and livelihoods and have no significant benefit for Northern Ireland's health.

We believe that exposure to second hand smoke can be limited by far more practical steps such as banning smoking at the bar and having separate smoking/no smoking rooms where possible.

We believe that smoking should be banned at the bar counter (supported by 65% of our members) and in at least 50% of any food service area.

More than 80% of the licensees who responded to this comprehensive survey said that they had two or more rooms in their venue. We believe that separate rooms would allow pubs to continue in business, whilst protecting bar staff and non-smokers from second hand smoke.

We believe that taking such a measured, sensible step will allow Northern Irish pubs to continue trading, whilst taking practical steps towards improving the health of the nation.