



# **SUNDAY TRADING SURVEY RESULTS**

# SUNDAY TRADING SURVEY RESULTS

This survey has been conducted with Belfast Chamber Members in May 2026. Responses were obtained over 1 week, from 94 businesses across all sectors.

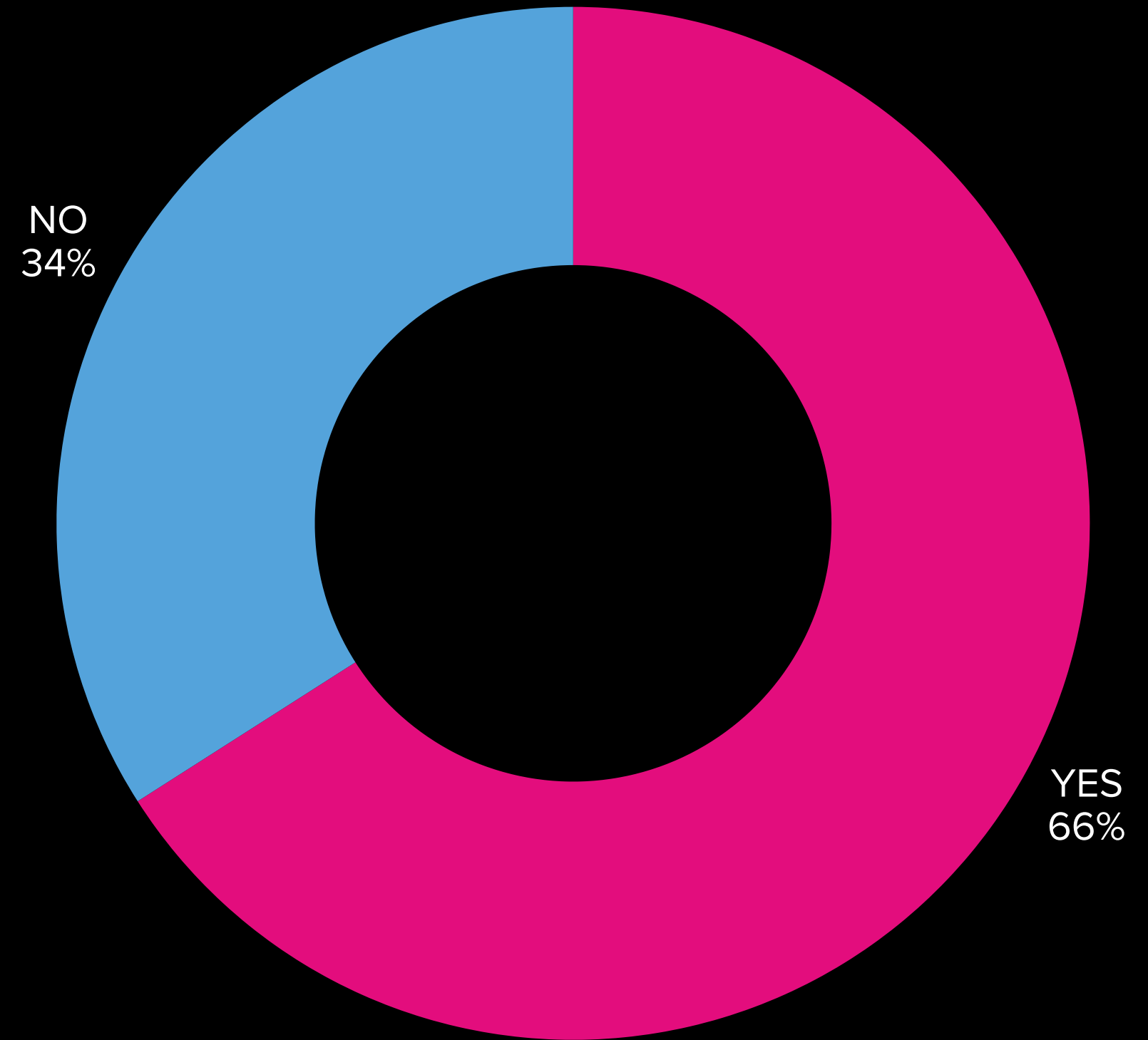
Other feedback has been gathered verbally and the results show overwhelming support for extending Sunday trading.

# SUNDAY TRADING SURVEY RESULTS

Would your business or the city benefit from extending Sunday opening hours?

Yes - 66%

No - 34%

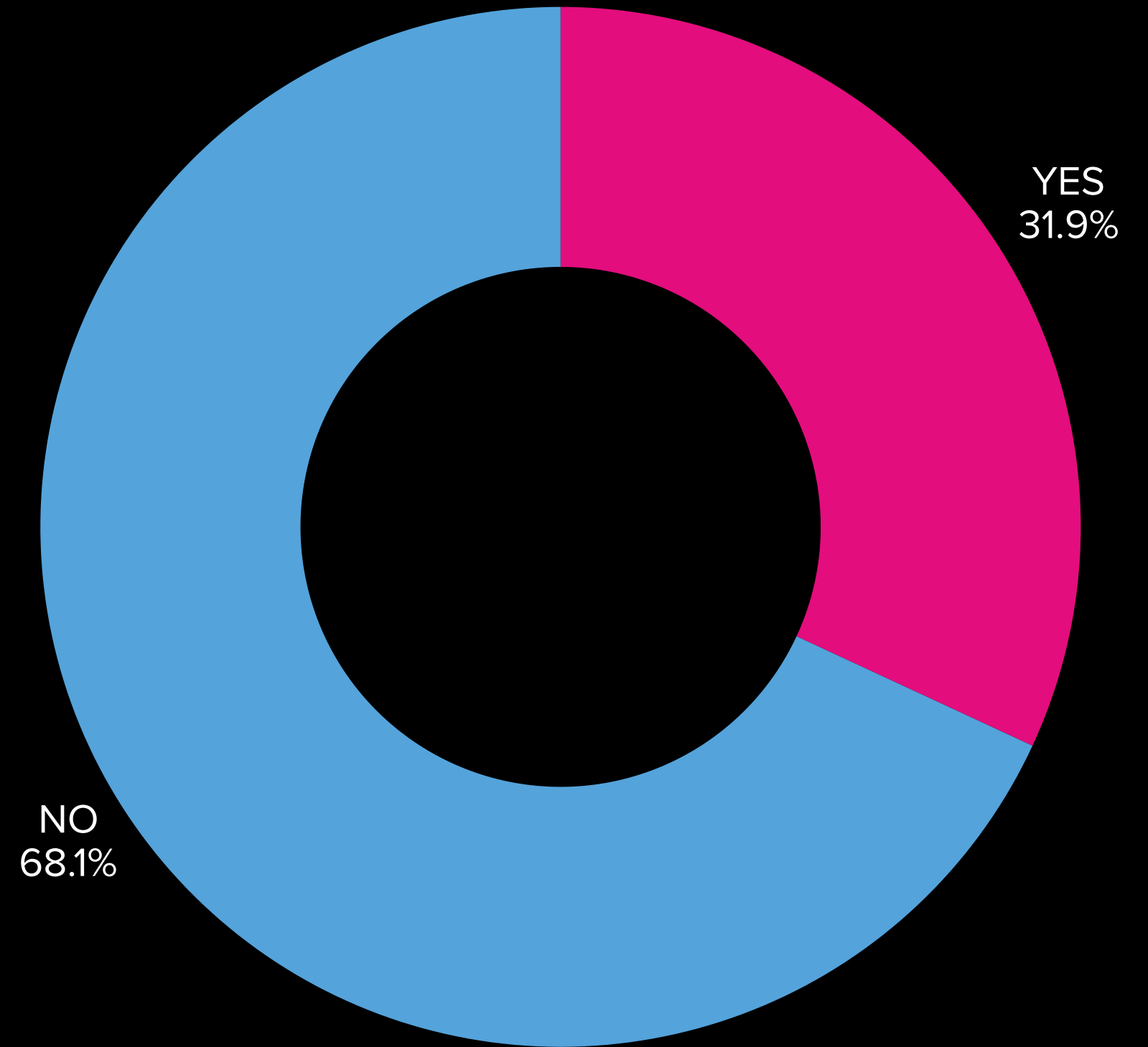


# SUNDAY TRADING SURVEY RESULTS

Do you foresee any difficulty  
with staffing for extended  
Sunday opening?

Yes - 31.9%

No - 68.1%

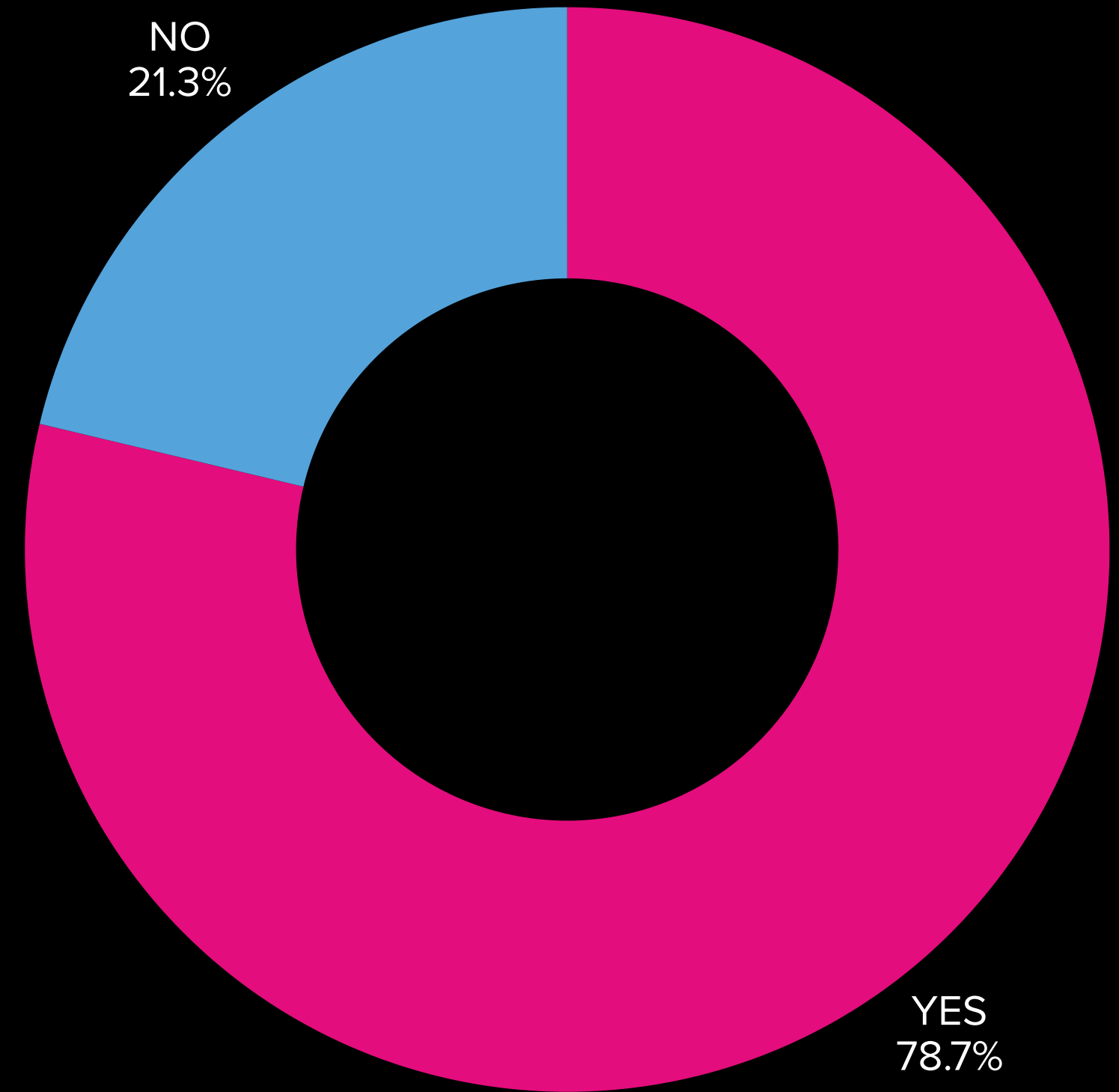


# SUNDAY TRADING SURVEY RESULTS

Do you agree with opening  
before 1pm on a Sunday?

Yes - 78.7%

No - 21.3%

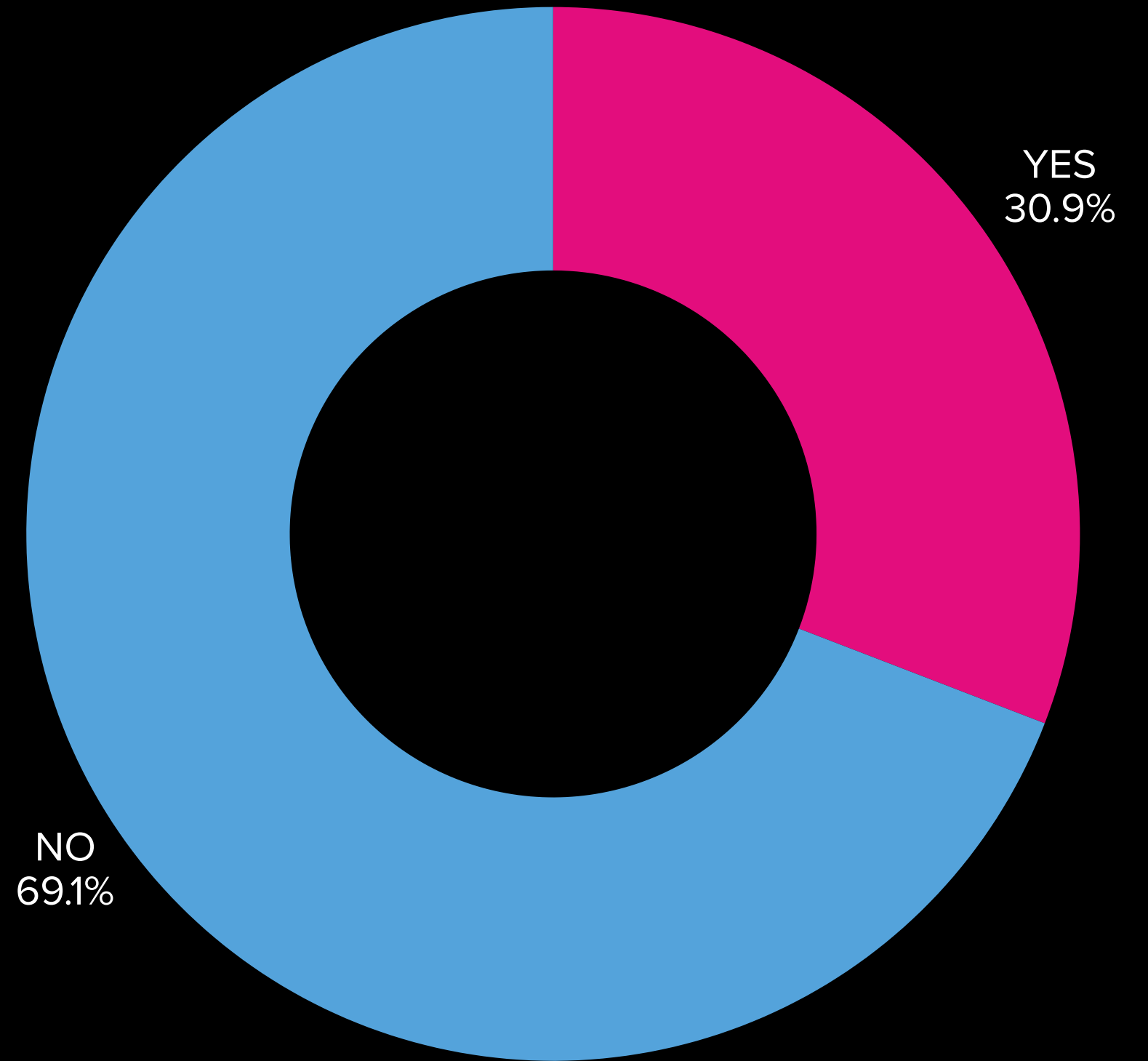


# SUNDAY TRADING SURVEY RESULTS

Is your store/business premises above the Sunday trading size threshold of 280 square m?

Yes - 30.9%

No - 69.1%



## Additional Comments Feedback

Free-text responses were largely supportive of extending Sunday opening. Respondents cited benefits for tourism, city-centre activity and business flexibility.

There were a minority of concerns around staffing, employee wellbeing and keeping Sunday distinct as a day of rest.

**For change:** better visitor experience, stronger footfall, and a more active city on Sunday mornings.

**Conditions:** fair staffing, employee choice, and practical implementation.

**For caution:** protect family time and day of rest.

## Patterns Across the Feedback

**Tourism and visitors** - Many comments say Belfast feels too quiet before 1pm and that earlier opening would better serve tourists, weekend visitors, and city-centre footfall.

**City vitality and revenue** - A recurring view is that longer opening would make the city feel more active, support spending, and help retail, hospitality, and related services.

**Choice for businesses** - Several respondents argue that businesses should decide their own trading hours rather than having restrictions set centrally.

**Staff wellbeing and family time**- A small minority of the comments (4%) concern is that extended hours could worsen staffing pressure, add strain on workers or reduce protected rest time. Some see Sunday as a distinct day for family time, quiet, or religious observance.

## Selection of Comments

There is a negative impact on tourism especially those on weekend breaks to the city. We want people to stay for the full day and spend money in shops, cafes and bars.

Sunday opening hours are significant for tourism, and it is strange for a large city not to come to life in the shopping district until 1pm. Walking through the city centre before 1pm, with the low footfall and individuals that hang around the streets at that time, can be intimidating. I'm sure it doesn't give a safe and welcoming atmosphere to visitors, nor for many Belfast people themselves.

As a customer - our business is not affected by Sunday opening - I am fully supportive of extended hours which I believe will add to the economic output of the city, both in retail as well as hospitality and services. Appropriate remuneration for employees of course, with infrastructural improvements (eg more bus services) but new changes require new thinking!

We support full Sunday opening  
The biggest complaint from tourists and visitors is nothing to do on Sunday mornings.

We're a service business and operate 7 days a week. It's what our clients expect. Retail should be treated no differently and it should be up to the business owner to decide trading hours. At the end of the day, we're here to satisfy supply and demand.

As a charity the opening hours doesn't affect the running of the business. However, if you look at the carparks and traffic around the city from noon on a Sunday it is apparent this is a busy shopping day.

Our business does not trade with the public but I fully support earlier opening times for personal convenience and additional revenue opportunity for such businesses

I believe the current trading hours are adequate. From a wellbeing perspective, it is essential to have a designated time when all family members are free from work obligations, allowing them to spend quality time together.