

## **Workers concerned about future of retail and hospitality jobs**

### **Almost nine out of 10 workers in retail and hospitality say that their employer has taken all reasonable steps to protect their health at work.**

Sixty percent of workers in the retail and hospitality industries are concerned about the security of their job in the weeks and months ahead, according to new research by recruitment platform [Jobs.ie](https://www.jobs.ie).

The results demonstrate the deep concern of workers in the retail and hospitality industries, the two sectors most impacted Covid-19 pandemic.

For workers in these sectors, a shared concern arises around the future of the industry, with six in 10 expressing worry for the security of their job. When asked if the pandemic forced them to reconsider a future career in the industry, all retail and hospitality workers surveyed (100pc) said yes.

### **Lasting damage to vital sectors of Irish economy**

Nearly 40pc of respondents working in the retail industry said that they could not be certain of future job security, while a further 27pc said they don't think that there will be enough opportunities to progress their career in the sector.

In hospitality, over half (54pc) of workers said that they could not be certain of their job security, and two in 10 (21pc) said they will not earn enough to live if they stay working in the industry. Opportunities to progress were less of a concern for this sector, with just 17pc citing this as a factor in their decision to reconsider careers.

"Retail and hospitality are without doubt two of the most impacted sectors of our economy due to the Covid-19 pandemic," said Christopher Paye, general manager at Jobs.ie.

"For many businesses, the last eight months have been some of the most trying times that they have ever experienced, with restrictions forcing them to change their business model to continue trading, - and where that hasn't been possible - to close completely.

"For workers in these sectors, the concern around the future is clearly evident, and only exacerbated by the uncertainty surrounding the direction of the pandemic and its impact on the reopening of hotels, cafés, restaurants and pubs and bricks and mortar retail.

“Today’s data suggests that there is a high risk of many retail and hospitality workers leaving the industry, as the fallout from the Covid-19 pandemic has forced them to reconsider their choice of career. This is extremely worrying and could spell a potential future skills shortage if not addressed,” he added.

### **Working through the pandemic**

The effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and the restrictions in place have led to the majority of businesses in both sectors changing their business models in order to comply with the Covid-19 guidelines.

Of those who have returned to work, 34pc of workers in hospitality and 22pc of workers in retail have been asked to work shorter hours to facilitate the new changes, however, the majority of workers in retail (64pc) and hospitality (55pc) say that they are happy to facilitate these changes.

Of those surveyed who were able to return to work, almost nine in 10 workers in hospitality (89pc) and retail (87pc) said that their employer has taken all reasonable steps to protect their health and safety at work.

In some cases, the changing restrictions have prevented employers from offering sufficient hours for workers to sustain a living, with 13pc in retail and 20pc in hospitality unable to return to full-time work for this reason.

“As we approach the Christmas period, continued restrictions and reduced capacities will further intensify these concerns, hampering what is typically the busiest season for both sectors. However, we must remember that retail and hospitality will not be closed forever.

“Collectively, both of these sectors support almost 330,000 jobs, accounting for approximately 16pc of total employment. To safeguard this level of employment and maintain viability within the sector, Government and industry must continue to work together to ensure that current supports remain in place – but more importantly, that they are revised and updated in line with any further Covid-19 developments,” Paye finished.

*By Stephen Larkin*

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