

Galway City Night-Time Economy

Consultation Report

Galway City Night-Time Economy Public and Stakeholder Consultation

Due to limited existing data on Galway City's night-time economy, a comprehensive research and engagement strategy was essential in developing this action plan. A primary goal was to ensure the plan's actions directly reflected the diverse perspectives of stakeholders throughout the city. Galway City Council employed multiple methodologies to gather feedback, which directly shaped our 30 high-level actions aimed at developing Galway's night-time economy.

Research and Engagement Activities

Desk Research:

- » Analysis of existing data, reports, and relevant studies.

Stakeholder Engagement:

- » Galway City Night-Time Economy Consultative Stakeholder Working Group: Collaborative input and development of the action plan.
- » Key Stakeholder Meetings: Targeted discussions to gather specific insights.

Public Survey:

- » Broad community feedback.

Business Survey:

- » Focused input from the business sector.

Ideas Map:

- » Feedback on areas in the city.

Night Walk:

- » Direct observation of night-time activity and ambiance.
- » Consultation with youth groups led by Comhairle na nÓg.

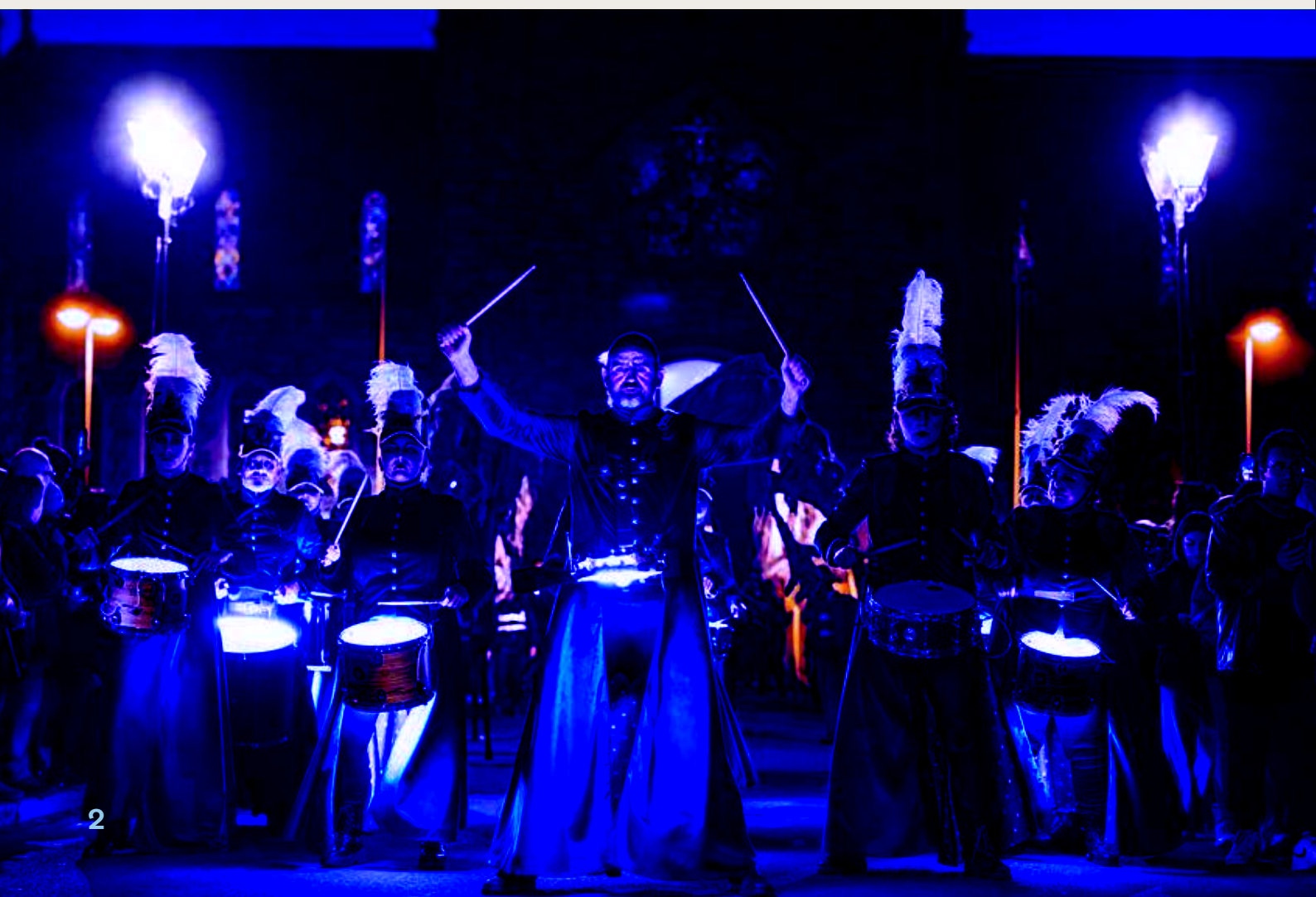


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Galway City Night-Time Economy Stakeholder Consultative Group

As part of the consultation and engagement phase, representatives from the business, cultural, tourism, arts, sporting, and community sectors were invited to participate in a stakeholder consultative group. Over 35 members participated in the workshops. Members also included representation from the various sections of Galway City Council including Economic Development, Planning, Environment, Sports, Community, Culture, and Tourism.

Photographer Ciarán MacChoncarraige



The purpose of the NTE Stakeholder Consultative Group was to bring together key NTE stakeholder representatives to shape the vision and action plan for Galway City's Night-Time Economy. To ensure the action plan accurately reflected stakeholder priorities. Two in-person workshops were held at PorterShed a Dó on February 15th and March 21st, facilitated by Karan Thompson Consulting Limited with support from the Night-Time Economy Advisor.

The first workshop focused on the survey outputs with engagement and input from each of the stakeholders and a working session to prioritise the pillars for development. This also involved:

- » **Environment Analysis – Gaps and Potential (working session)**
- » **Prioritisation of objectives from environment analysis**
- » **Action planning – outlining the next steps for the development of key strategic initiatives for activation of the NTE and identification of who needs to be involved for success.**

The second workshop's objectives included:

- » **Review the key themes and priorities that emerged from the previous workshop.**

NTE Stakeholder Advisory Forum: Ensuring Ongoing Engagement

A Night-Time Economy Stakeholder Advisory Forum will be established to continue guidance and input for the NTE action plan from key stakeholders. The Forum's key roles include:

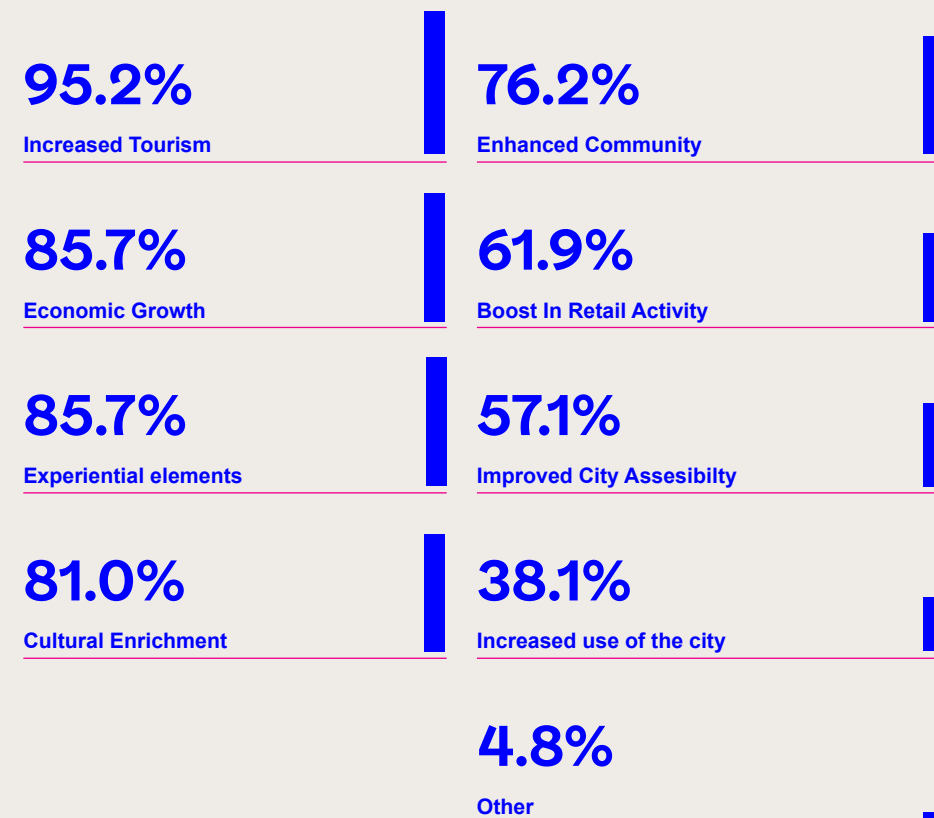
- » **Sector-Specific Expertise: Offering insights to guide implementation.**
- » **Active Participation: Ensuring stakeholder voices are heard throughout the process.**
- » **Strategic Direction: Providing oversight and long-term vision.**

Pre-Consultative Working Group Survey

A pre-consultative working group survey was conducted to which we received 23 responses, seeking insights on the benefits and challenges of a vibrant night-time economy. Their valuable insights directly informed the design of our workshops.

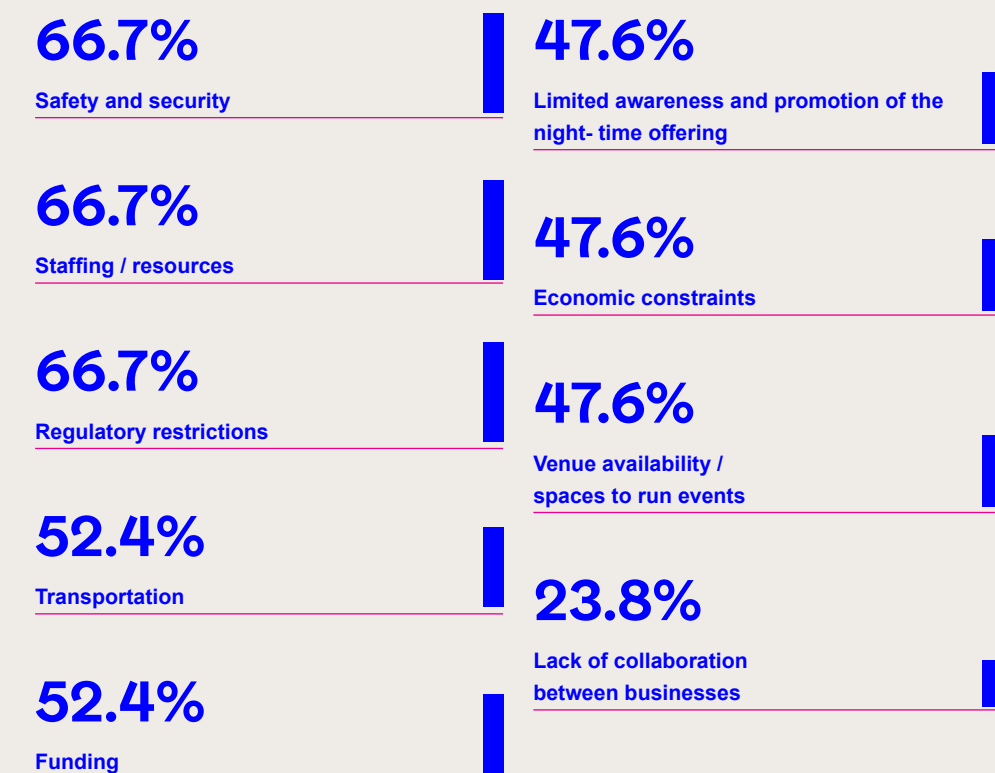
We asked for opinions and how a vibrant night-time economy could benefit Galway City.

We offered a range of responses with an option to select all responses that applied to them.



When asked what the main challenges or potential barriers to developing or participating in the night-time economy are:

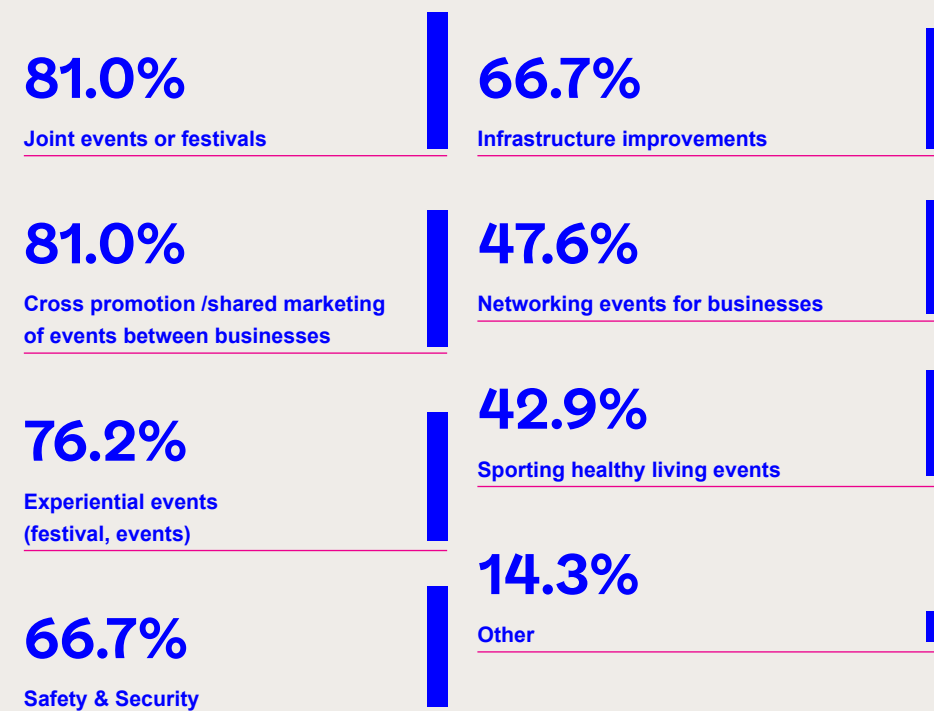
Businesses also cited the focus on alcohol in the NTE as significant and a further challenge for NTE development.



We also asked respondents to advise if they had already explored collaboration opportunities with other businesses or organisations in Galway City about the night-time economy.

A total of 42.9% of organisations indicated that they had already explored collaboration opportunities, with a further 23.8% stating that they had somewhat explored opportunities and the remaining 33.3% indicating that they had not commenced any collaboration potential as yet. Respondents believed increased collaboration between businesses could positively impact Galways night time economy.

When asked what types of collaborations businesses would be interested in pursuing to boost Galway's night-time economy (select all that apply)



We surveyed respondents to determine their top priorities for our night-time economy action plan. Here is the breakdown:

1st Priority

Infrastructure, Safety & Accessibility (45%)

2nd Priority (tied)

City Animation & Placemaking (35%) Marketing & Promotion (35%)

3rd Priority

Strategic Direction & Continued Activation (25%)

Additional comments, suggestions and insights for the development of the night-time economy included:

- » Expand pedestrian zones and promote al fresco dining where feasible, creating a more inviting atmosphere.
- » Alcohol-free events that are youth-friendly and accessible.
- » Ongoing collaboration with young people for input and participation.
- » More accessible and affordable transport options to reduce reliance on taxis, particularly for late-night travel.
- » Increased security presence.
- » Training for staff on sexual violence prevention, spiking, and response.
- » Regular meetings between pubs, clubs, Gardaí, and Claddagh Watch to focus on proactive incident prevention.
- » Diverse and vibrant experiences for example - Historical night-time tours, podcast festivals, and later retail hours.
- » Covered outdoor dining spaces.
- » Designated city-centre concert area.
- » Targeted events in May/June to balance out the busy summer season.
- » Large-scale food or traditional music festivals to draw wider interest.

Respondents see opportunities for business growth by improving the practical aspects of the night-time experience (transport, safety) and fostering a more inviting, collaborative environment.

Public Consultation

To ensure a comprehensive understanding of the city's night-time economy we launched online surveys in the form of a questionnaire and an ideas map.

Residents, businesses, and visitors of Galway City alike were invited to contribute their insights, sharing feedback on the challenges and opportunities within the community. This input is integral to our aspiration of positioning Galway City as the preeminent evening and night-time destination, fostering a sustainable, vibrant, culturally rich, and diverse experience. The data gathered from this survey will serve as the foundation for the action plan, guiding us in identifying and prioritising key initiatives.

The survey remained open for 6 weeks, providing an ample window for active participation in shaping the future of Galway City's night-time economy.

Number of respondents - 1010

The overall profile of respondents ;

Live in the city: 50.5%

Work in the area: 26.31%

Study in the area: 11.1%

Commute to the city: 6.8%

Visitors to Galway City: 2.9%

Businesses: 1.76%

Age Breakdown of respondents:

25 – 34: 37.7%

16 – 25: 30.54%

34 – 44: 16.5%

44 – 54: 9.22%

54 – 64: 3.69%

65 – 74: 1.84%

Frequency of visits to the city:

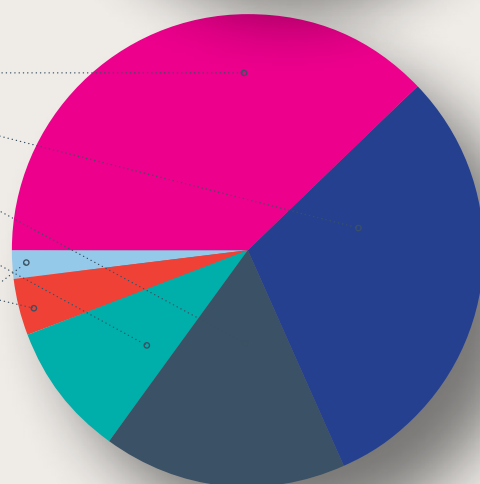
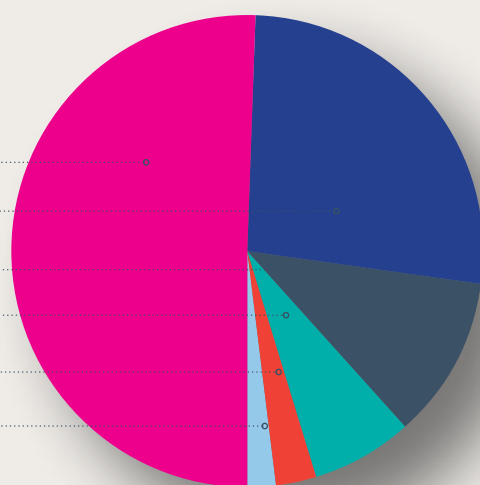
Weekly: 34.4%

2-4 nights a week: 33.07%

Daily: 8.5%

Monthly: 15.01%

Less frequently (every two or six months): smaller percentages



Summary of Resident and Visitor Survey:

Satisfaction with Galway City's Night-Time Economy

47.58% of all respondents rated their experience of Galway's night-time economy as satisfactory.

Night-Time Activity

In terms of preferred nights for a night -time activity, 27% of people stated Friday as their preferred night out followed closely by Saturday night 25% and Thursday on 15%. A total of 14% of people prefer to carry out a night time activity on either a Monday or Tuesday night.

The most popular activities that people like to engage in at least every two weeks:

23.93%

Socialising in pubs/bars

8.42%

Socialising outside of bars/restaurants

18.27%

Restaurants

6.34%

Exercise

15.25%

Live music events/gigs

5.06%

Work

9.17%

Shopping (non-grocery)

4.15%

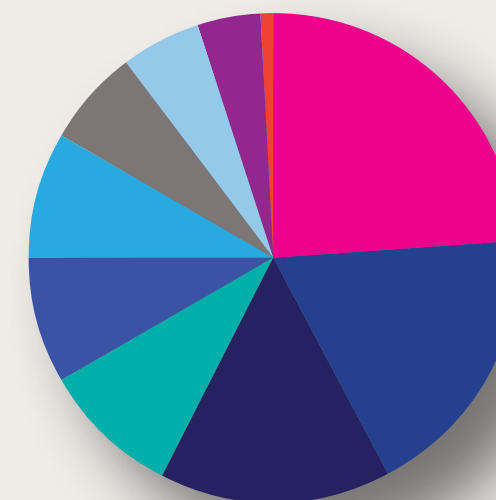
Sporting event

8.38%

Cultural activity (exhibition, theatre)

0.83%

Other



80.28% of people said that they would participate in additional night time activities in the earlier part of the week (Mon-Wed) if they were provided.

Respondents were asked what would incentivise or would encourage them to attend more events at night if they were provided during the week. The following contains a sample of feedback from the public on what they would like to see happen to encourage greater engagement with the city at night:

“More varied options - I’d love to be able to head in to town for an hour or two after work and not feel like the only option is to find a pub or restaurant.”

This sentiment was echoed by many respondents who desired diverse night-time activities beyond the typical pub scene, including options like night markets, later night cafes, cultural events, and late-night shopping.

“Safer spaces and not just a focus on alcohol.”

Some respondents expressed concerns about safety in the city centre at night, suggesting increased Garda presence and better lighting in public spaces.

“Cheaper events tickets/drinks at the venue.”

Affordability was a key consideration for many, with suggestions for free or low-cost events and reasonably priced food and drinks to make night-time activities accessible to a wider audience.

“Late night bus services, extended routes as per transport plan.”

Many respondents highlighted the need for improved public transportation, particularly late-night buses and extended routes to outlying areas, to make nighttime events more accessible.

“Firstly advertising, there is very little info available about events in Galway. This should all be accessible from a quick Google search and include everything from small gigs in local bars to large cultural events. A lot of people don’t even know what’s on until they walk into a place.”

“Take back Eyre Square by adding an open stage for buskers and other entertainers to perform at night.”

Respondents want to see more creative and engaging use of the public realm for night-time activities.

The availability and condition of public toilets were a recurring theme, with 12% of comments specifically mentioning the need for more accessible and well-maintained facilities.

Significant Support Exists for the further development of a NTE.

While just over a third see its direct economic value, a clear majority (over 70% combined) recognise cultural contributions and the need for expansion.

Main Barriers to engaging in night-time activity in Galway City.

Participants were asked to select a maximum of 5 key barriers to them utilising the city at night. The percentage of people selecting these barriers in their top 5 is listed as:

20.69%

It's too expensive to go out

15.7%

It's difficult for me to get home

14.19%

There are too few things on offer that I am interested in

13.04%

Too many places revolve around alcohol

8.28%

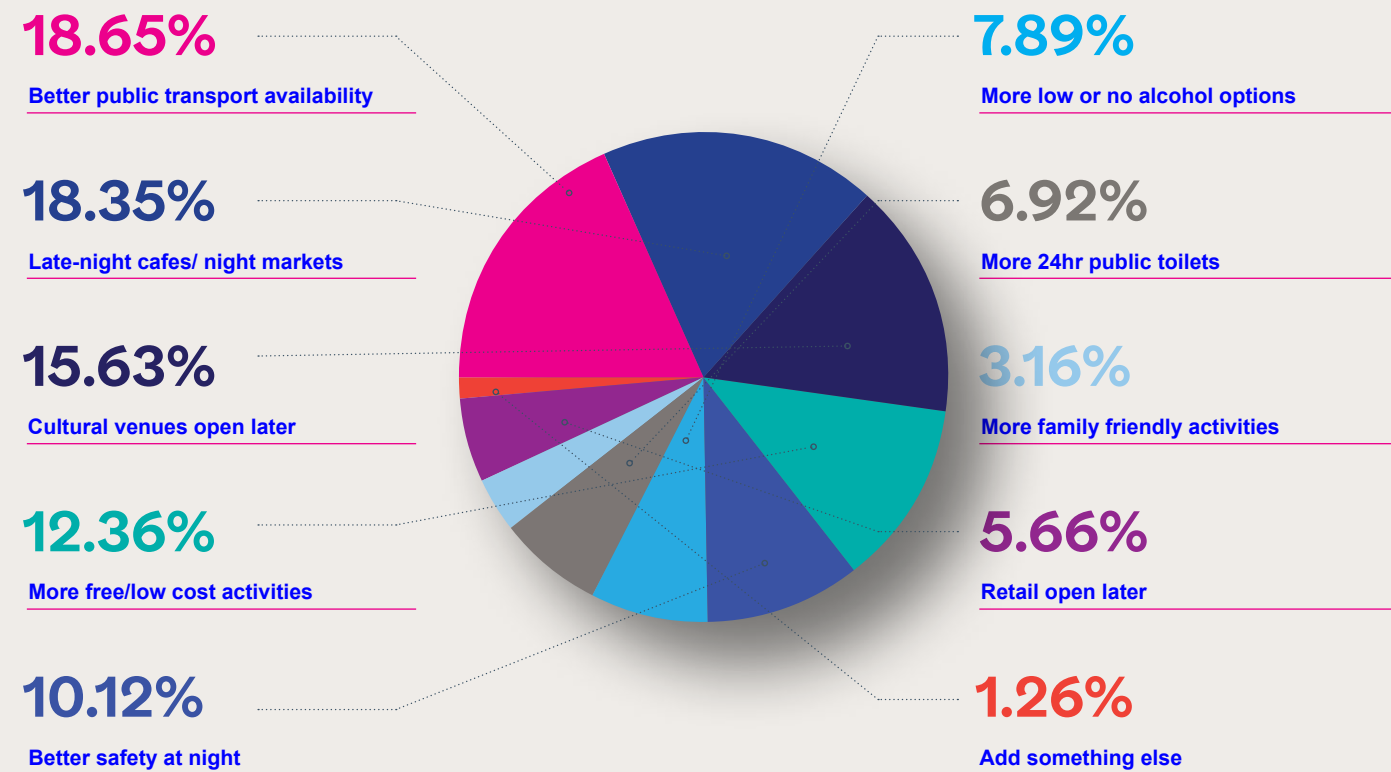
The availability of accessible places and venues or accessible transport

The survey results indicate that cost, transportation challenges, and a diverse nightlife options are the primary obstacles preventing people from engaging in night-time activities in Galway City.

In addition to the statistical data, the open ended responses provided further insights into the barriers to nightlife participation in Galway. Safety concerns, noise levels in pubs, and age restrictions were all mentioned as factors that deterred people from going out at night.

Priorities for the night-time economy in Galway City

Participants were asked to select their top 3 key priorities for the city.



Participants were asked for suggestions for improving or adding to night-time activities in Galway.

The top 5 suggestions included:

- » **More venues/more variety of venues (size & type); 14.51%**
- » **More public transport/24 hr service: 13.4%**
- » **More live music/entertainment/cultural activities: 12.97%**
- » **Improved safety/security/address anti-social behaviour:: 8.90%**
- » **More/better use of public spaces and parks: 8.79%**

How does Galway City compare nationally and internationally?

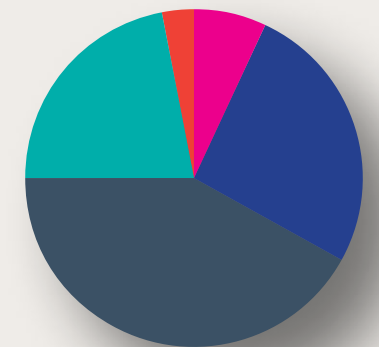
Survey participants were asked how Galway's nightlife offering compares with other towns and city's they have visited within Ireland and abroad.

How does Galway's nightlife offering compare with other towns or cities in Ireland that you have visited?

Scale: 1 (Not at all Satisfied) to 5 (Very Satisfied)

Results

- » **Not Satisfied at All (1): 7.05%**
- » **Dissatisfied (2): 26.14%**
- » **Neutral (3): 41.91%**
- » **Satisfied (4): 21.85%**
- » **Very Satisfied (5): 3.05%**



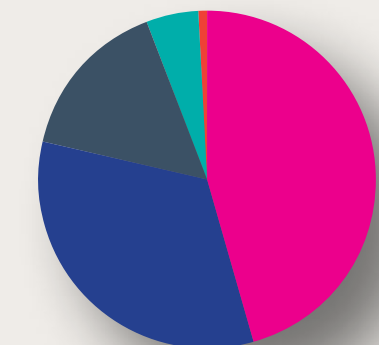
The largest percentage of respondents (41.91%) felt neutral about Galway's nightlife in comparison to other Irish towns and cities. 28.9% expressed satisfaction (either "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied"). Over a third of respondents (33.19%) felt a level of dissatisfaction ("Dissatisfied" or "Not Satisfied at All"). The sentiment towards Galway's nightlife offering is mixed. While the largest group is neutral, there's a relatively even split between those expressing satisfaction and those expressing some level of dissatisfaction.

How does Galway compare to other towns and cities outside of Ireland?

Scale: 1 (Not at all Satisfied) to 5 (Very Satisfied)

Results

- » **Not at all satisfied (1): 45.57%**
- » **Dissatisfied (2): 33.1%**
- » **Neutral (3): 15.51%**
- » **Satisfied (4): 4.99%**
- » **Very Satisfied (5): 0.83%**



Communication

One of the areas identified for improvement by respondents is how Galway City communicates to a local, national and international audience about the night-time activities that are taking place in the city. Of those surveyed, 25.53 % believed that Galways night-time activities are well promoted. 74.47% of respondents believe that Galway could do much better in this regard.

General feedback

As part of the survey, the participants were asked if they had any other comments on the night time economy in Galway City. A number of common themes were identified from the general feedback provided. These include:

Communications

- » Improved communication of activities and late night offering
- » Central source of information for Night-Time Economy
- » Current emphasis on marketing to tourists (perception)

Access, Safety and Security

Over 70% of comments want extended public bus service and later routes to accommodate late-night activities and workers with non-traditional schedules.

- » Addressing antisocial behavior
- » More visible Garda presence
- » Better lighting, and improving the city’s aesthetic.
- » Better public transportation late at night within the city and to outlying towns and villages

‘Limited hours of operation for city public buses act as a de facto curfew, especially on weekends.’

Public Realm

- » Clean, well-maintained streets, parks, public seating
- » Readily available public toilets
- » Improved lighting
- » Upgraded infrastructure (e.g. covered stage/band stands)
- » More outdoor dining opportunities
- » Further pedestrianisation of the city
- » Designated spaces for outdoor performances
- » Unique venue openings to provide alternatives to traditional pubs.
- » Health and wellbeing initiatives at night – indoor and outdoor

Events & Activities

- » Expanded Night-time Offering - evening/late night cafes, late-night markets, family-orientated, alcohol-free, and varied entertainment venues.
- » Music venues (beyond pubs)
- » The promotion or enablement of a café culture at night
- » City centre community space
- » Cultural events for all ages
- » Later opening hours – cultural venues, cafes and retail
- » Health and wellbeing initiatives
- » More use of the public realm for activities – parks
- » Additional events and activities with a focus on family friendly and inclusive events
- » Inclusive and affordable - broader participation

Business and Organisation Survey

The business community has also been consulted in this process and represented within the membership of the stakeholder consultative working group. The survey included 12 questions and 23 businesses or organisations responded to the survey.

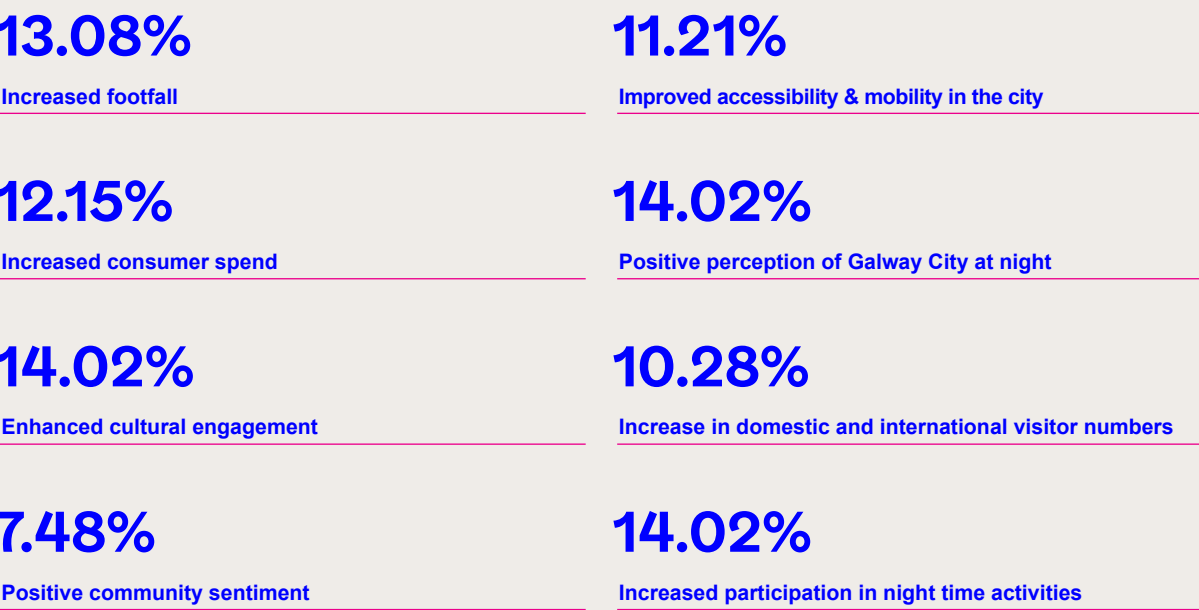
Summary:

Mixed Outlook:
A significant portion of businesses feel neutral (42.86%), negative (19.05%), or unhappy (23.81%) about the current NTE.

Cautious About 2024:
While some are satisfied or happy about their prospects (16.67% each), concerns persist, with 20.83% dissatisfied and 16.76% unhappy.

Contribution of a vibrant night-time economy:

In terms of its contribution to Galway City, the respondents identified several key benefits including: Select one or more options:



Key Challenges to developing a night-time economy:

- » **Security is Paramount: 37.5% of businesses cite security concerns as their top challenge.**
- » **Foot Traffic Worries: Limited foot traffic is a major issue for 25% of respondents.**
- » **Staffing and Regulations: Staffing challenges (12.5%) and regulatory issues (8.33%) hinder operations.**

What measures could be taken to address the challenges faced by businesses operating during the night?

In terms of practical supports that would incentivise businesses and organisations to become more engaged in night- time activities, a number of options were listed and the following were deemed a priority:

- » **Enhanced security measures – 14.12%**
- » **Infrastructure improvements – 14.12%**
- » **Better public transport – 14.12%**
- » **Regulatory reforms – 8.24%**
- » **Training programs for staff on safety and security measures – 7.06%**
- » **Collaborative initiatives with local law enforcement – 12.94%**
- » **Marketing and promotion support for night-time events – 15.29%**
- » **Financial incentives for extending operating hours – 12.94%**

Opportunities

- » **Collaboration for Broader Reach: Businesses see partnerships and promotions as key to attracting new audiences.**
- » **Increased footfall, participation, revenue, positive perception, and cultural engagement were the top benefits cited.**
- » **Focus on Safety and Transport: Partnerships in these areas are seen as beneficial and welcome.**

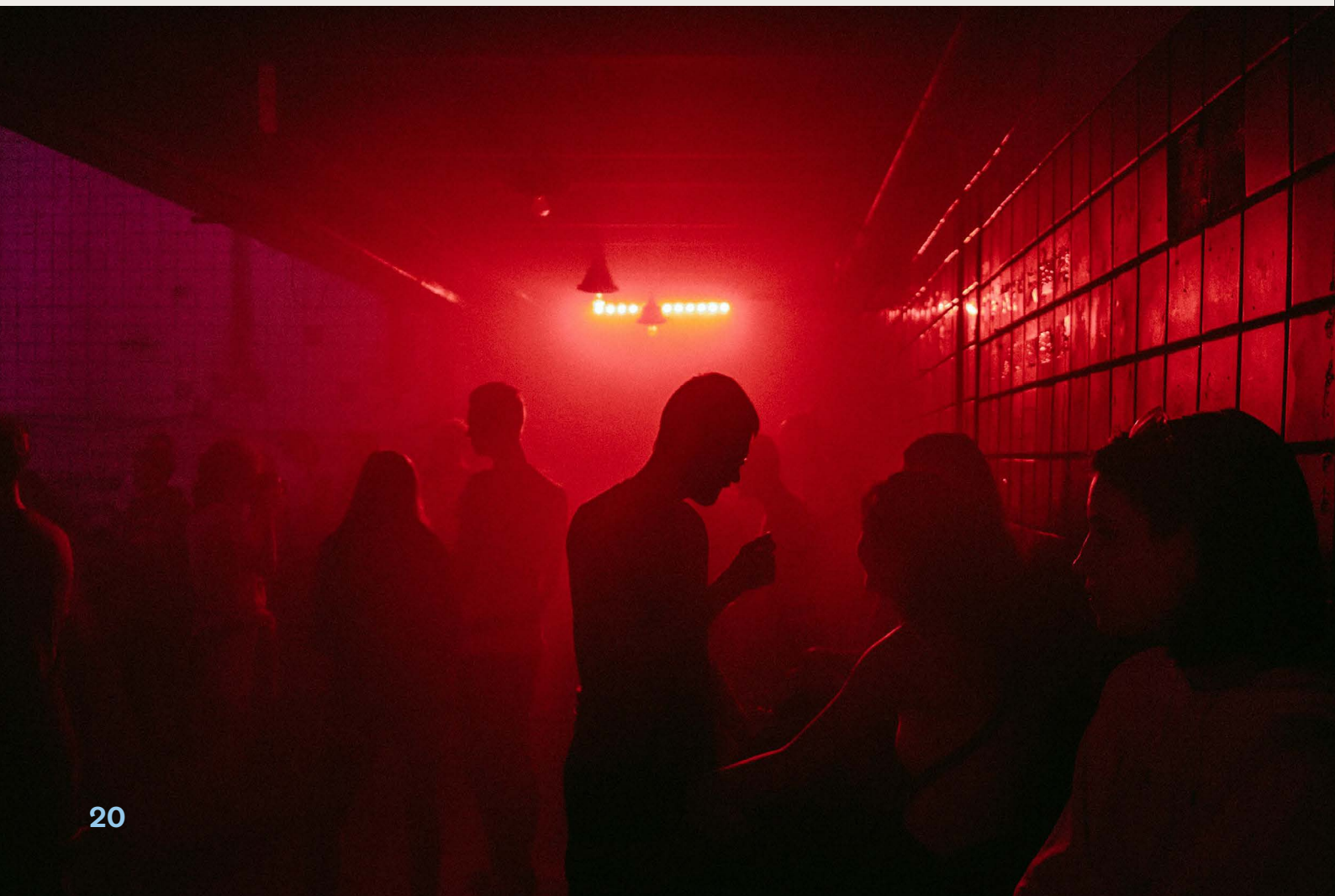
“Existing facilities are used creatively and groups seeking spaces to meet and work be encouraged to engage with existing providers.”
“Provision of alcohol-free spaces with cultural, health & wellbeing events and activities.”
“More late-night entertainment.”

Action Plan Priorities

- » **Safety & Security Dominate: 33.33% of businesses want this to be the top focus.**
- » **Transport Matters: 23.81% emphasise the need for better transport solutions.**
- » **Funding Supports: 19.05% desire grants specifically for late-night activities.**

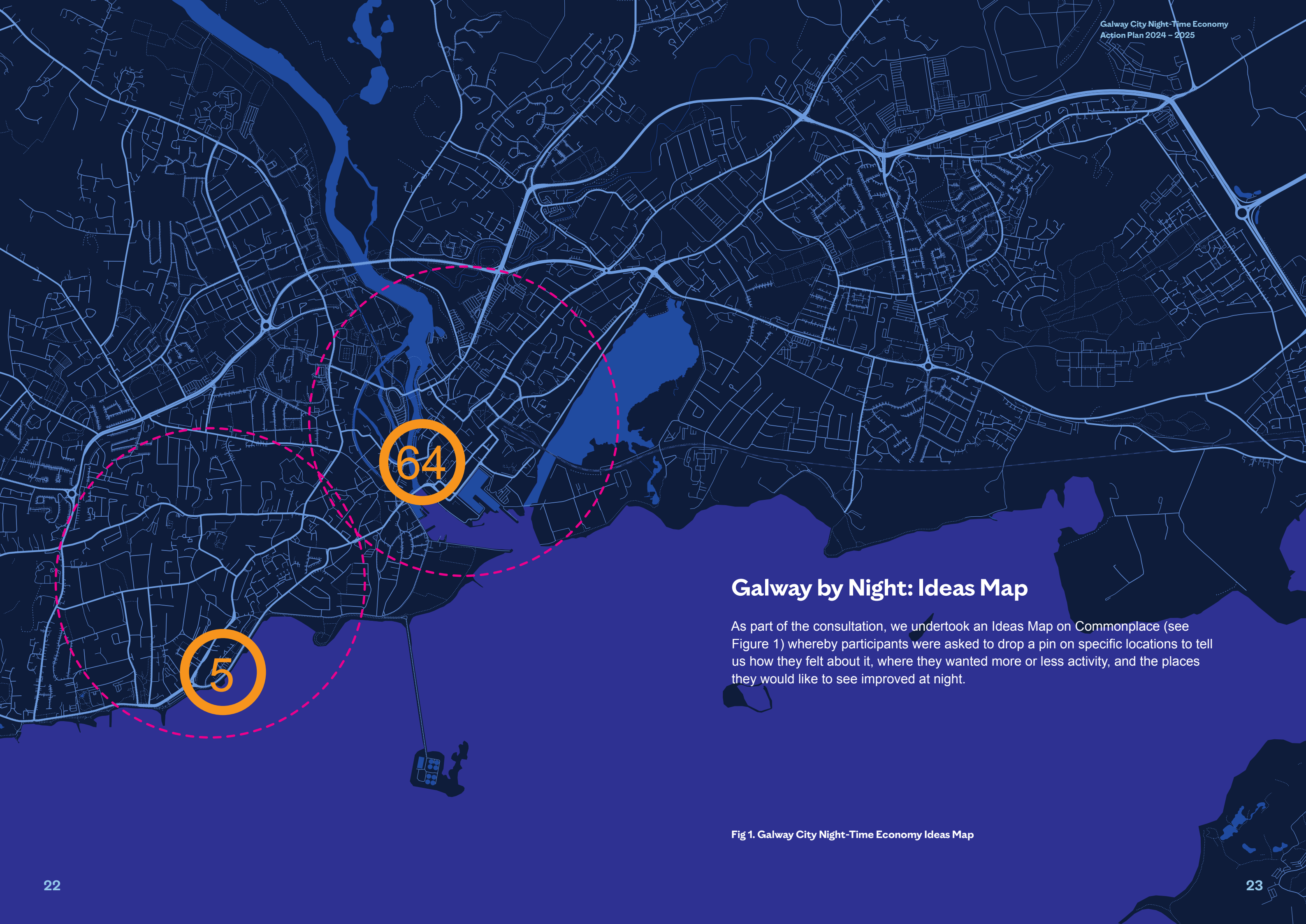
Some of the feedback provided also reflected the priorities and highlighted some of the issues that can arise with the night-time economy;

- » **Extended Hours: Longer opening hours for pubs, cafes, and shops. Food options for those working within the NTE.**
- » **Unique Offerings: A night market running from May to September, specifically tailored to be distinct from the existing Saturday market, encouraging more visitors.**
- » **Transportation: Improved late-night public transport, both within the city and to nearby towns/villages, to make movement easier for both customers and workers.**



Community Spaces and Accessibility

- » **Access to safe, well-maintained spaces for community group meetings and events at night.**
- » **Expanding cultural opportunities that cater to families and different age groups at night.**
- » **Prioritising universal design and accessibility in all city planning to ensure inclusivity.**
- » **Support for sustainable community spaces, including social enterprises, resisting privatisation efforts.**
- » **Identifying empty spaces for potential use in artistic projects, events, and initiatives supporting community arts and cultural groups.**
- » **A greater focus on maintaining cleanliness in city streets to make Galway feel safer and more welcoming, at night.**
- » **More places to access affordable food options after 7 pm.**
- » **Ensuring pavements and paths are well-maintained, considering the needs of older visitors.**
- » **Population Balance: Encourage a population shift bringing more residents into the city centre creating a less seasonal and more consistently vibrant NTE.**
- » **Maintaining open channels of communication with businesses and community groups is crucial to keep the NTE responsive to needs.**
- » **Trial initiatives such as an evening/night market or community space use could allow for evaluation and refinement before full implementation.**
- » **Collaboration between city planners, law enforcement, businesses, and community groups to address safety, transportation, and inclusion.**



Galway by Night: Ideas Map

As part of the consultation, we undertook an Ideas Map on Commonplace (see Figure 1) whereby participants were asked to drop a pin on specific locations to tell us how they felt about it, where they wanted more or less activity, and the places they would like to see improved at night.

Fig 1. Galway City Night-Time Economy Ideas Map

Questions

The questions posed to the public for feedback on the night-time were:

- » What area or specific place are you commenting on?
- » What time in the night do you visit this location?
- » How do you feel about this location at night?
- » Do you feel safe here?
- » Why might you feel unsafe at this location at night?
- » How could this location be improved at night?
- » What other suggestions do you have for this location?
- » Is there anything else you would like to add?

Number of respondents - 96

Overall Sentiment: Mostly mixed, leaning slightly negative

19.97%

Negative

18.78%

Mostly Positive

25%

Mostly Negative

9.38%

Positive

27.08%

Neutral

This was to be expected considering the topic of engagement. Due to the nature of the consultation, the questions were more likely to encourage respondents to tell us about the things they were unhappy about and what they would like changed. A large proportion of the respondents either lived in or worked in the location they were feeding back on and the majority used the area between 6pm and midnight. 61.5% of respondents said they felt safe at night.

How could the location be improved at night?

- » Improved lighting: 41
- » More cafes & retail options open later: 39
- » More arts, culture & entertainment events (gigs, performances, comedy etc): 35
- » More outdoor seating: 34
- » Night markets /night tours (cultural, historic): 32
- » More outdoor, cultural, community, sporting options: 30
- » More Garda presence: 30
- » Pedestrianised streets: 29
- » More public toilets: 22
- » Late night grocery stores: 20
- » Better access: 20
- » Less parking options: 13
- » More non-alcohol events: 13
- » More parking options: 7

Photographer Dr Chaosheng Zhang



Key Themes and Solutions from the Public

1. Safety and Security:

- » **Enhanced Lighting:** A consistent theme across all areas was the need for improved lighting to increase visibility and create a safer atmosphere after dark. Specific locations mentioned include poorly lit streets, parks, and alleyways.
- » **Increased Garda Presence:** Respondents expressed a desire for a more visible Garda presence, particularly during peak nighttime hours, to deter anti-social behavior and ensure public safety.
- » **Community Safety Patrols:** Some respondents suggested the implementation of community safety patrols to complement Garda efforts and provide additional support for vulnerable individuals.

2. Vibrancy and Atmosphere:

- » **Extended Hours:** There was a strong demand for cafes, shops, and cultural venues to stay open later, providing more options for socialising, entertainment, and leisure activities at night.
- » **Diverse Events and Activities:** Respondents called for a wider array of cultural and artistic events, including live music, performances, public art installations, night markets, and unique nighttime experiences like outdoor cinema screenings.
- » **Alcohol-Free Options:** The need for more alcohol-free venues and activities was emphasised, particularly for younger people and those seeking alternative forms of entertainment.

3. Public Spaces:

- » **Outdoor Seating:** Respondents expressed a desire for more outdoor seating areas, especially in popular areas like Eyre Square, West End and Spanish Arch.
- » **Pedestrianisation:** The idea of pedestrianising certain streets, such as Dominick Street and most of the West End was raised to create safer and more enjoyable spaces.
- » **Revitalisation of Neglected Areas:** Several respondents highlighted specific locations, such as the Docks, Merchants Rd, Small Crane, Ravens Terrace and the laneway between IMC and Elverys that could be revitalised and transformed into vibrant public spaces with improved lighting, seating, and landscaping.

4. Transportation:

- » **Late-Night Public Transport:** The lack of late-night bus services, particularly to suburban areas, was a significant concern for many respondents. There were calls for 24-hour bus routes and improved connectivity between different parts of the city.
- » **Taxi Availability:** The limited availability and high cost of taxis late at night were also raised as issues to be addressed.

Other Suggestions:

- » **Public Toilets:** The need for better and maintained public toilets, especially in areas with high foot traffic at night, was highlighted by several respondents.
- » **Improved Signage:** Better signage to help people navigate the city at night was also suggested.
- » **Addressing Homelessness:** Concerns were raised about the visibility of homelessness and aggressive begging in certain areas, particularly Eyre Square.
- » **Noise Pollution:** Some residents living near entertainment areas expressed concerns about noise levels from pubs and late-night venues.

Photographer Ciarán MacChoncarraige



Based on the survey responses, here is a breakdown of the findings by location, including reasons for feeling unsafe and suggestions for improvement:

City Centre (Eyre Square, Forster Street, Ceannt Station, Shop Street):

Sentiment: Mixed, with concerns about safety and cleanliness.
Why people feel unsafe: Anti-social behaviour, lack of Garda presence, poor lighting, large crowds, and aggressive begging.

- Suggestions:
- » Increase Garda presence and community safety patrols.
 - » Improve lighting, especially in Eyre Square around the sculpture and Brownes door.
 - » Add creative lighting, seating, and a covered pavilion to Eyre Square.
 - » Schedule regular events and performances in Eyre Square. Make it a designated performance zone.
 - » Extend late-night retail and cafe hours.
 - » Address derelict buildings.
 - » Provide better-maintained public toilets.
 - » Increase ethnic and diverse restaurant and cafe options.
 - » Businesses to invest in noise mitigation measures
 - » Improve safety, security and lighting at Ceannt Station.

West End (Raven Terrace, Dominick Street, William Street West, Fr. Burke Park):

Sentiment: Generally positive, with appreciation for the atmosphere and variety of businesses.
Why people feel unsafe: Some concerns about narrow footpaths, inadequate lighting, and the need for more space for pedestrians.

- Suggestions:
- » Upgrade lighting and widen footpaths.
 - » Enhance Fr. Burke Park with additional services, lighting, power, and water to accommodate events. Not unlike a version of Eyre Square for summer & winter markets to drive footfall to the general area and integrate the Westend more into the City Centre.
 - » Pedestrianise the neighbourhood.
 - » Provide more outdoor seating.
 - » Establish a taxi rank.
 - » Implement noise mitigation measures.
 - » Beautify and activate the Small Crane and Ravens Terrace area.
 - » Encourage businesses to maintain cleanliness around Pump Lane.
 - » Provide more diverse nightlife options for older age groups.

Quay Street, Spanish Arch, Augustine Street:

Sentiment: Mixed, with appreciation for the festive atmosphere but concerns about safety, cleanliness, and accessibility.
Why people feel unsafe: Anti-social behavior, drug activity, lack of Garda presence, and poor lighting on Augustine Street.

Suggestions:

- » Increase Garda presence, especially on busy nights.
- » More cultural events and activities.
- » Relocate public bins and benches during winter due to flood barriers – Spanish Arch.
- » Introduce outdoor screenings or art exhibits.
- » Address issues on Augustine Street: improve lighting, remove access obstructions, and enhance bike parking safety.

Eyre St, Woodquay, Abbeygate Street, Bowling Green

Sentiment: Negative due to concerns about anti-social behaviour and noise.
Why people feel unsafe: Anti-social behaviour, excessive noise from late-night activity and early morning deliveries, lack of Garda presence, and property damage.

Suggestions:

- » Increased Garda presence and community safety patrols.
- » Noise mitigation measures for late-night venues and early morning deliveries.
- » Addressing issues with people gathering around fast food premises in Eyre Square.
- » Implementing measures to address homelessness and associated issues.
- » Promoting a more diverse range of nighttime activities to reduce the concentration of rowdy behaviour in specific areas.
- » Encouraging responsible alcohol consumption and promoting awareness of the impact of noise on residents.
- » Working with businesses to ensure they are taking steps to minimise noise and disturbance to residents.
- » Exploring the use of CCTV and other security measures to deter anti-social behaviour and property damage.

Salthill:

Sentiment: Generally positive, but quieter at night.
Why people feel unsafe: Lack of late-night transportation and limited venues.

Suggestions:

- » Increase late-night buses and taxis.
- » Encourage more late-night bars, entertainment, and retail options.

Other Areas:

- » Roscam: Lack of amenities and public transport; suggestions for a local pub and improved bus service.
- » The Docks: Underutilised space; potential for development into a pedestrian-friendly area with markets, cafes, and outdoor seating.
- » Terryland Forest Park: Improve lighting, address litter, and deter anti-social behavior.
- » Bohermore/Tuam Road: Increase Garda presence and improve lighting.
- » Renmore, Mervue, Ballybane, Roscam: Lack of late-night offering.

Night Walk

Methodology

A night walk was conducted on Friday, February 23rd, from 9 pm to 11 pm, to gather direct feedback on Galway's night-time under a number of key headings. The walk followed a predetermined route, including Prospect Hill, Eyre Square, Eyre St, Woodquay, Abbeygate St, Shop St, Augustine St, Flood St, Long Walk, Spanish Arch, Westend, Dominick St, Cross St, High St, and Mainguard St.

Over ten participants, comprising stakeholders, councillors, and city council staff, assessed the city under four key areas:

- » **Wellbeing (Welcoming & Safe): Perceptions of safety, lighting, and overall atmosphere.**
- » **Movement (Mobility & Accessibility): Ease of navigation, transportation options, and accessibility.**
- » **Broad Appeal (Nighttime Experience & Activities): Range of businesses and activities, observed footfall, and vibrancy.**
- » **Place (Public Realm): Signage, wayfinding, public spaces, and maintenance of the built environment.**

Key Observations

Safety and Wellbeing: General feeling of safety with no anti-social activity experienced or witnessed. Some areas lacked adequate lighting, particularly around Prospect Hill, Eyre Square, Augustine St, Long Walk and O'Brien's Bridge. Eyre Square's landmark sculpture was unlit, affecting the overall ambiance. Enhanced shopfront illumination was suggested.

Movement: Bollards, though useful in preventing illegal parking, may impede accessibility. Public transport and taxi availability at Eyre Square and O'Brien's Bridge were active and busy with ample supply.

Broad Appeal: Foot traffic was moderate, concentrated around bars and restaurants. Streets parallel to Shop Street were quieter, highlighting the potential for improvement in Middle Street. Limited event advertising and the presence of two open cafés were noted.

Place (Public Realm): Improved signage and wayfinding were identified as a need, particularly in Eyre Square, Woodquay, Spanish Arch, Mainguard Street, and the Westend. The Westend's festoon lighting created a positive atmosphere, and several vacant properties were observed along the route. Eyre Square showed potential for increased animation through the programming of more performances and events. Derelict buildings across the city and general maintenance and enhancement of businesses.

Summary and Recommendations

Participants found the night walk to be a valuable exercise in observing the city at night, identifying both successful aspects and areas for improvement. The feedback highlighted the importance of this initiative in understanding the issues that prevent Galway City from fully maximizing its night-time offering. While the city was generally perceived as safe, the following improvements are recommended:

- » **Enhanced Lighting: Improve lighting in key public spaces to enhance safety and aesthetics.**
- » **Clearer Wayfinding: Implement comprehensive signage for easier navigation.**
- » **Diverse Offerings: Explore a wider range of night-time activities and businesses beyond the current focus.**
- » **Further night walks at different times and days are suggested to gather more comprehensive data.**
- » **Future development plans should prioritise lighting and wayfinding improvements in the identified areas.**



Photographer Ciarán MacChoncarraige

Galway City Comhairle na nÓg Youth Consultation: Safe Spaces in Galway City

The Galway City Comhairle na nÓg hosted a consultation on May 17th, 2024, in the Portershed, where students from city secondary schools shared their views and recommendations on two crucial topics:

Safe Spaces and Routes in Galway City: A Dedicated Youth Space/Hub in Galway City:

Safe Spaces and Routes: In Their Words

“We need more Gardaí in Eyre Square, especially at night.”

“We need better lighting in places like Knocknacarra. It’s really dark at night.”

“Bus Eireann should make a video about how to stay safe on the bus.”

Young people identified key safety issues, including:

- » **Lack of protection near water**
- » **Public intoxication and antisocial behavior**
- » **Dangerous driving**
- » **Poor street lighting in certain areas**
- » **Accessibility concerns for those with disabilities**

Their solutions included:

- » **Increased Garda presence and trained volunteers in key areas**
- » **Improved lighting and safety measures near water**
- » **Educational campaigns on bus safety**
- » **Creating safe route maps and promoting safe spaces**

A Dedicated Youth Space: In Their Words

“We need a place where we can just hang out without having to spend money.”

“The youth space in Prospect Hill is way too small.”

“I’d love a place with a stage where we could have bands and open mic nights.”

Young people voiced a strong need for a dedicated youth center, highlighting issues like:

- » **Lack of free spaces to socialize**
- » **The existing youth space being too small**
- » **Feeling unwelcome in many businesses**
- » **Their vision for a youth hub included:**
- » **Multi-purpose indoor and outdoor spaces**
- » **Music, dance, and gaming areas**
- » **A café and study areas**
- » **Support services like counselling and childcare**

The Next Steps

The Comhairle na nÓg committee is currently compiling a report on the consultation, including the asks from young people. They are eager to meet with decision-makers to discuss these recommendations and advocate for positive change.



Image courtesy of Comhairle na nÓg, photographer Siobhan Lynch



Galway City Night-Time Economy

Action Plan 2024-2025