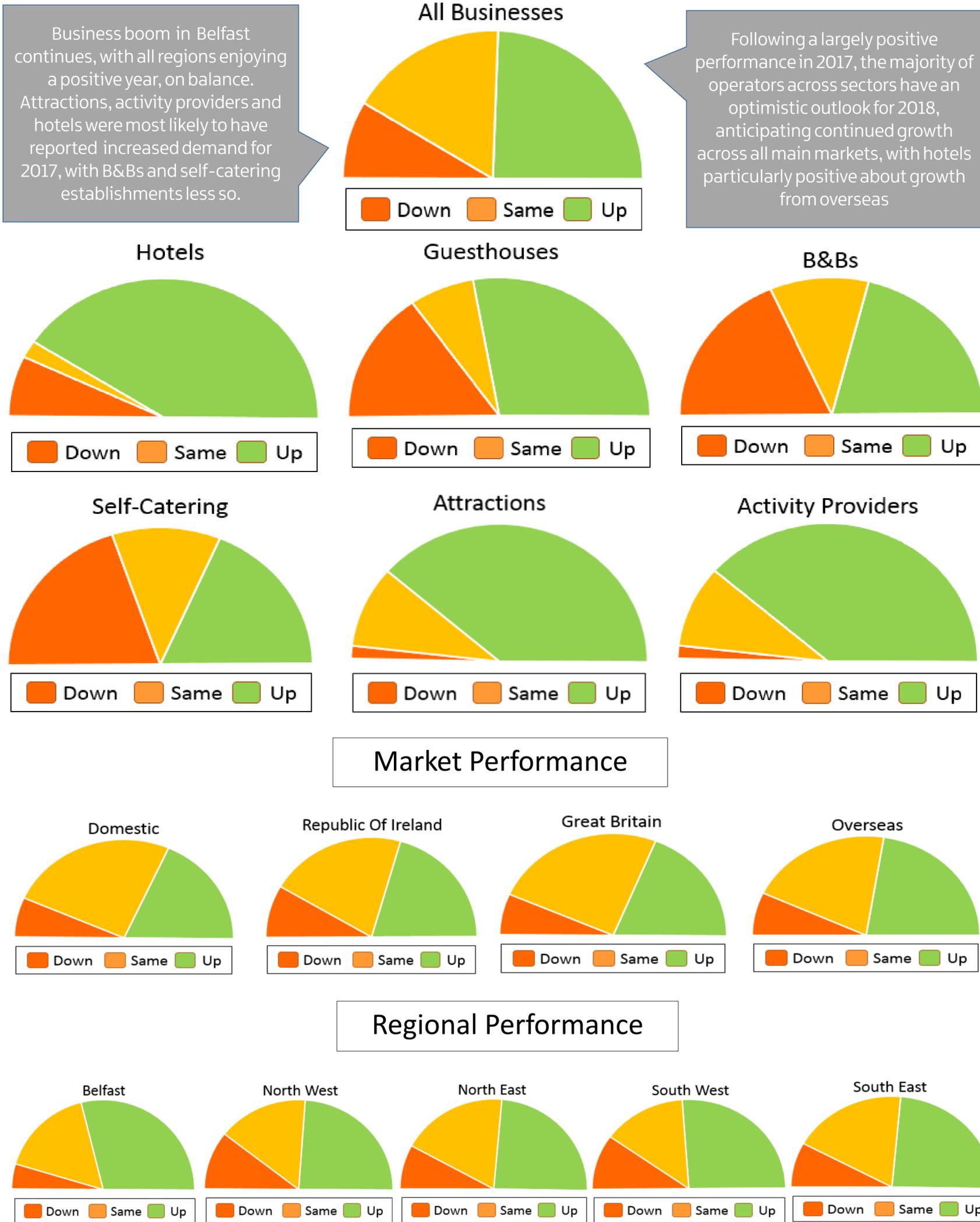




TNI's December Tourism Industry Barometer shows that industry performance during 2017 was positive, on balance, with around half of businesses enjoying growth, across all markets, leaving them optimistic for 2018.



For the full TNI Tourism Industry Barometer Report, December 2017 [click here](#)



## Positive year for Northern Ireland Tourism Industry in 2017

All sectors report a generally positive performance in 2017 with growth reported across all the main markets. Notably, this highly positive picture from industry is confirmed by the latest tourism data released by NISRA for the first nine months of 2017, which also reports strong growth across all the main markets. Industry feedback in the December Barometer indicates that this growth continued over the final quarter of the year.

### Hotels experience a busy 2017 benefiting from growth across all main markets

Hotels have enjoyed an excellent 2017 with the vast majority (82%) reporting an increase in visitor bednights compared with the previous year. **This is marginally lower than the figure who had reported growth (87%) this time last year and therefore suggests, whilst remaining highly positive, the rate of growth may have slowed slightly.** Notably, the most recent NISRA occupancy data also indicate that there has been a buoyant 2017 for NI hotels with room occupancy for the January to December period up two percentage points and total rooms sold up 9% on the same period in 2016.

This increase level of business can be attributed to growth across all the main markets with almost three quarters of hotels reporting growth from overseas business and over two thirds experiencing increased levels of business from GB. Hotels also reported on a very robust domestic market with almost two thirds experiencing growth. The continued positive impact of the favourable exchange rate has also helped to deliver continued growth in the ROI market (64%, **compared with 68% reporting growth at this point last year**).

Business Trips in particular have shown significant levels of growth as reported by over two thirds of responding hotels (68%) with half also experiencing a significant rise in weekend breaks (50%). This excellent year that hotels have enjoyed is reflected in an increase in profitability and room yield as reported by over two thirds of hoteliers.

### Good year for NI Guesthouses and some positive signs for B&Bs but little change for Self-catering

Guesthouses have also enjoyed a successful 2017 with over half reporting an increase in visitor numbers compared with the same period last year (56%). All markets performed well with almost half of proprietors reporting growth, in visitors from ROI (49%) Overseas (48%) and GB (46%). A strong domestic market is also evident with 42% reporting an upturn in NI visitors. Just over two fifths of B&Bs also report growth (42%) **with a strong performance from overseas, albeit at a marginally lower rate than that enjoyed in 2016.** On balance, self-catering had a broadly similar performance to last year.

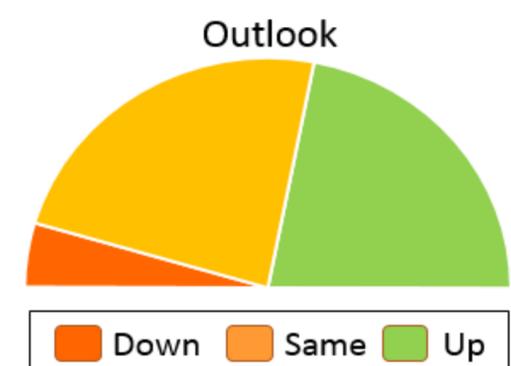
### Strong growth for Attractions and much improved scene overall for Activity Providers

Overall, attractions have enjoyed a positive 2017, with 77% reporting an improvement in visitor numbers compared with the previous year. Attractions have benefited not only from a strong domestic market but have also seen increases across the other main markets with a notable increase in ROI, overseas and GB visitors being reported compared with 2016.

In total 60% of activity providers reported an increase in business, **marginally higher than the 52% who had experienced growth in 2016.**

### Industry optimistic for 2018

Overall, given the positive performance in 2017 it is perhaps not surprising that tourism operators across sectors have an optimistic outlook for the year ahead, reflecting anticipated continued growth across all main markets, with hotels particularly positive about growth from overseas.



**ROI Benchmark:** Failte Ireland's December Tourism Barometer indicated that 2017 had been a positive year for industry as a whole, with every sector experiencing increased or the same level of visitors compared to the same period last year. Two thirds of the PSA sector reported growth (67%), reflecting in particular a strong performance from hotels, with the strength of the North American market proving an important factor in making up for the reported shortfall in visitors from GB. Guesthouses and B&Bs also had a positive year with the German market in particular performing strongly. ROI Attractions also reported a good year with almost two thirds (63%) experiencing increased visitors.