restaurant association of new zealand

As the Country moved to Level 2 our industry was back open for business to hungry diners enthusiastic to get back into their favourite establishments. However, level 2 restrictions and last minute changes to rules created further complexity for the industry which is doing its best to keep up to speed with its responsibilities.

The Public Health Order that came into force the night before we went into Level 2 indicated that our industry is now no longer able to offer counter service unless it is for a takeaway order. Single server was previously stated as 'where possible' but has since become mandated. This rule is particularly challenging, given the changeover of staff between shifts, rest breaks and serving larger groups. The additional costs required to lay on more staff is increasing wage bills and with fewer tables to serve, for many it's making the cost of reopening too high.

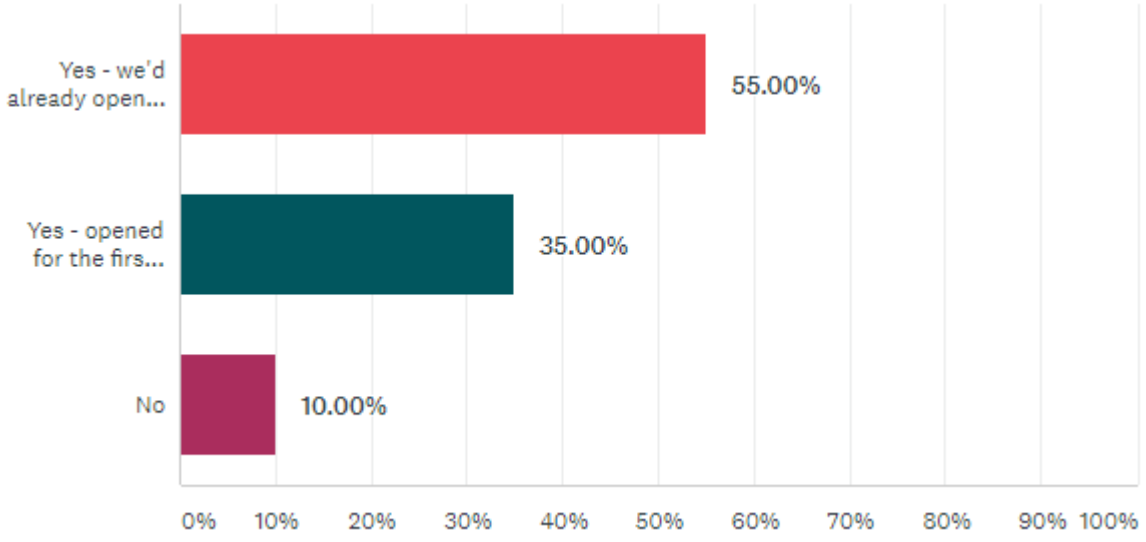
Feedback from our businesses has shown that these two rule changes are proving extremely restrictive. Many cafes are just not set up for full seated table service and this is restricting their revenues.

A last minute rule change around contact tracing also means it appears that restaurants do not have to collect details of takeaway customers and a variation in the distancing of rules for takeaway has also not been made clear. This is confusing for both businesses and diners, many of whom have expectations of our businesses that in some cases are not correct. Again, we seek further clarification on this.

The industry is committed to doing its part to make sure we keep this virus under control but we cannot do this with constant rule changes.

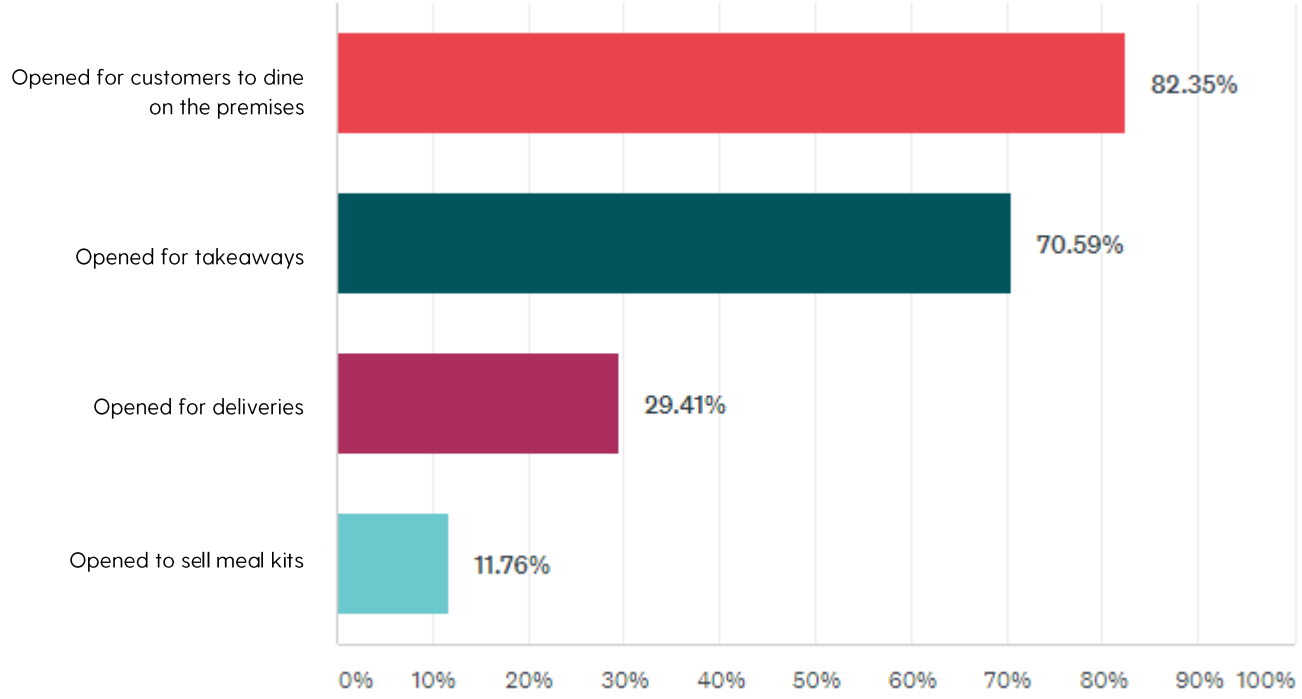
Q1. When New Zealand moved to Level 2 last Thursday, did you open your business at this level (choose ONE)?

90% reopened (national average = 89%).



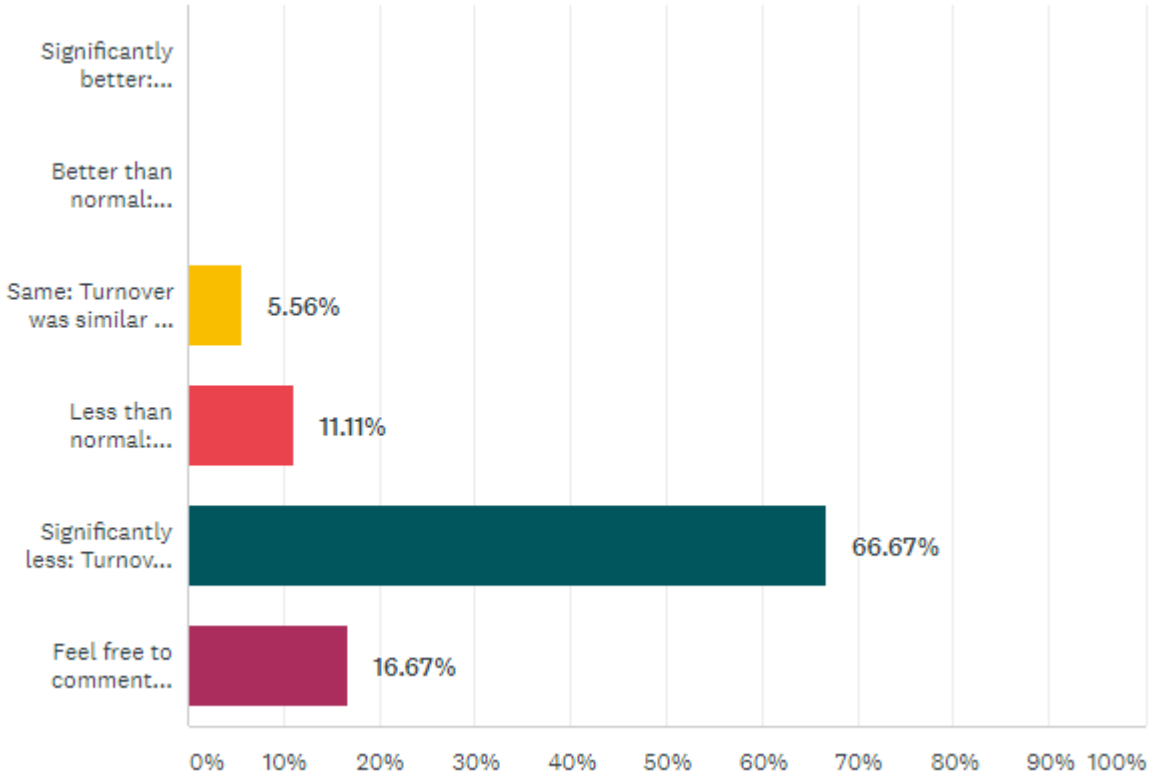
Q2 In what capacity did you reopen your business last week (choose ALL that apply)?

National average = opened for customers to dine on the premises = 88%, opened for takeaways = 65%, opened for deliveries = 26%, opened to sell meal kits = 7%



Q3 How was your first few days of trading (compare to the same time last year)? Skip this question if you're not open yet.

National average = significantly less = 45%



Q3 How you are finding managing the current, changing, requirements?

We're focused on complying with the requirements for operating business.

There's a lot of information to be familiar with, heaps of paper for posters etc.

Pretty confusing.

Extremely difficult. Very scared of our future!

Stressful.

We are quite small so it's not that hard for us.

I liked it better before Covid.

It's manageable from a business owners' point of view as we are ready to roll with the punches. Team members are finding it overwhelming and stressful even with the support of documents etc.

The social distancing put int place has severely limited the ammount of guests we can accommodate.

Fine although identifying who has to contact trace a bit opaque.

Extremely difficult. Takes the same amount of staff to do half the amount of tables. Single server system is inefficient. Ate somewhere else today and three people serve my table. Frustrating.

Frustrated by lack of consistency in operating regulations between Govt departments, PM and final legislation changes. For example "what is counter service" we feel nobody can answer that right now.

We have reduced our operating hours.

Stressful.

Difficult.

Scary.

GENERAL MEMBER COMMENTS

Business model development needs time and market. At the moment the requirements to operating restaurant and market are very challenging to fit in new idea. Particularly when your business operations aren't breaking even. I believe there are lots of good ideas out there, however it's easy to say, when keeping your business going is already a risk than how much more risks the business owners can manage to place a good idea on the ground. Remember there's no blood in stones. Government should support us in business financial relief. A positive way to rebuild our economy.

We feel it is extremely urgent that we get more financial assistance from either the banks (like Australian banks did - rental relief for either tenants or landlords) or the government for the foreseeable future!

Unless we get rent relief we are FUCKED. The next instalment of the subsidy relief is not applicable to everyone & that's not really helpful. Help with rent would've been far more appreciated.

Some customers are really concerned about their separation while others please themselves.

Rent seems to be the biggest issue now, if turnover is still low and costs are going up, ($18.9 miminum wage!!), how businesses are