



14 March 2025

## **Pints and Plug-Ins: 'Surge' in spend in pubs and Electric Vehicle charging in February, AIB Spend Trend reveals**

- 1 February the biggest day for spend in pubs so far this year
- Dry January kicked for touch with St Brigid's Day and Ireland -v- England rugby game
  - Cavan leads the way with increased pub spending and overall spending
  - Storm Éowyn dampens spending on Friday 24 January, transactions fell 38%
- Spend on Electric Vehicle (EV) charging increased by a massive 83% year-on-year

The AIB Spend Trend has revealed that customers were eager to return to socialising after a quiet January with spend in pubs up by almost a third (+32%) and spend in restaurants up 16% in February when compared with the previous month.

This was likely driven by the St Brigid's Day long weekend, the Six Nations rugby matches and the end of Dry January. Saturday 1 February was the busiest day for spending so far this year in pubs, which was also the day of the highly anticipated Ireland versus England rugby match in the Aviva Stadium, Dublin. The biggest increase in spending in pubs was in Cavan (+42%), Monaghan (+38%) and Wexford (+37%).

It wasn't just pubs that felt a surge in activity. Spend on EV charging points across the country increased by 12% month-on-month and a massive 83% year-on-year, as more customers turn to greener modes of transport. Spend in service stations increased by 9% in the same period (February 2024-February 2025).

Storm Éowyn led to an exceptionally quiet day on Friday 24 January, the number of in store transactions was down 38% compared with an average day in 2025. In Donegal, it was the lowest spending day of the year so far. However there was a quick recovery in the county; in store spending in Donegal was +9% in February, month-on-month.

Following Storm Éowyn, spend in Hardware stores was up 8% in February, month-on-month, with significant increases in Mayo, Leitrim (+17%) and Kerry (+15%). Spend on utilities was also down in Mayo (-13%), Sligo and Kerry (-7%).

The data was compiled from almost 67 million card transactions carried out by AIB customers in store and online during February 2025 and has been anonymised and aggregated. Data provided by AIB features one of the most comprehensive and accurate data sets on consumer spending in Ireland.

- Overall card spend in February increased by 5% month-on-month and 10% year-on-year. Online card spending was a significant driver of this, up 15% year-on-year, reflecting growing trends in online and digital transactions. The biggest increase in overall spending month-on-month was in Cavan (+11%), Roscommon (+10%) and Monaghan (+9%).

- Cinema spend peaked for the year to date on Saturday 15 February, the day after Valentine's Day and following the release of *Bridget Jones: Mad About the Boy*.
- The best day of the year so far for event ticket sales was Friday 31 January, the day Forbidden Fruit tickets went on sale.

**Speaking about the data, Adrian Moynihan, Head of Consumer at AIB said** "it's very welcome to see overall spending up 5% in February and such strong spending across a number of sectors in February, particularly the hospitality sector which would have had a quiet January after the Christmas festivities. Rugby fans enjoying Ireland's Six Nations success provided a great boost to the industry, along with the bank holiday weekend at the start of the month.

The impact of Storm Éowyn was evident on the day it hit but also in the aftermath, with increased spend on hardware and decreased spend on utilities in some of the worst affected areas.

It's particularly heartening to see the significant increase in spend on EV charging over the last 12 months, up 83%, as customers choose more sustainable modes of transport and we continue to transition to a low carbon economy. AIB's robust data insights help our customers to plan their spending and help businesses best support their customers, when and where they need it most."

**ENDS**

Note: 'Spending' refers to average daily spend unless otherwise stated.

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# AIB Spend Trend February 2025



'Surge' in spend in pubs and Electric Vehicle charging in February, AIB Spend Trend reveals



Spend in pubs up  
32% month on  
month



## Dry January

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Storm Éowyn dampens  
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Spend on Electric Vehicle  
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year-on-year

