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Revenue at France’s traditional restaurants fell 9.7% in the third quarter

Data presented at a Dunkirk industry congress showed a broader downturn across bars, quick-service outlets and hotels

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Average revenue per company at France’s traditional restaurants fell 9.7% in the third quarter of 2026 from a year earlier, a decline that industry data showed was part of a broader slowdown across much of the country’s hospitality sector.

The figures, presented by the French hospitality trade group UMIH at its annual congress in Dunkirk, showed that the downturn extended beyond full-service restaurants. According to the economic observatory data cited at the event, average revenue per company at bars fell 9.3% year over year in July through September, while quick-service restaurants declined 7.7%. Hotels posted a smaller drop of 4.6%, and catering services were down 2.8%.

The congress opened on Monday, November 23, and runs through Wednesday, November 25, as UMIH seeks to sharpen its policy demands ahead of France’s presidential election. The revenue figures gave the gathering a more urgent tone, with the group arguing that business conditions are worsening in several parts of the hospitality market.

The data came from the Observatoire économique de la restauration, based on the Ordre des experts-comptables’ Image PME barometer and the Statexpert database. The source said the five business samples covered 48,402 company observations and measured changes in average revenue per company on a constant-scope basis in the third quarter of 2026 against the third quarter of 2025.

For hospitality operators, the main signal was that the weakness was not limited to one niche. UMIH said traditional restaurants, quick-service outlets and bars all showed declines across the country, with traditional dining posting the sharpest contraction among the main segments tracked. Hotels and caterers were less affected overall, but the impact varied by region, with some areas still showing improvement.

UMIH officials said the pressure on traditional restaurants, quick-service operators and bars had intensified since the start of 2026. The report also pointed to large regional and departmental differences, suggesting that the downturn is broad but uneven.

In quick-service restaurants, the Grand Est region recorded the smallest decline at 1.1%, while Occitanie had the largest regional drop at 10.8%, according to the figures presented at the congress. At the departmental level, the spread was much wider. Nièvre was down 32.7%, while Haut-Rhin rose 27%.

Traditional restaurants also showed clear geographic gaps, though the range was less extreme. Île-de-France posted the steepest regional decline at 13.4%, while Normandy had the mildest drop at 5.8%. At the departmental level, 93 of 98 territories were in decline, the data showed, ranging from a 19.8% fall in Seine-Saint-Denis to an 8.7% increase in Vienne.

The weaker hotel figures were accompanied by signs of caution from within the industry. UMIH President Franck Chaumès said delegates from the Grand Est region had warned of a notable slowdown in bookings in Strasbourg ahead of the Christmas market season. He also said the group was concerned about the lack of last-minute reservations, which usually help offset softer demand.

Those comments reflected a broader worry inside the sector that slower sales are beginning to affect business confidence, hiring plans and investment decisions. At the congress, UMIH used the revenue data to support its argument that hospitality companies need more predictable operating conditions and lower labor-related costs if they are to withstand a prolonged period of weaker demand.

The group said it planned to press four main priorities with presidential candidates. Those include higher net pay for workers without increasing the tax burden on companies, easier conditions for business transfers and investment, tougher action against what it describes as unfair competition in lodging and food service, and greater visibility for companies making recruitment and capital spending decisions.

Valentin Prudon, UMIH’s confederal vice president, said at the congress that the industry wanted to narrow the gap between gross and net wages, arguing that consumer purchasing power also matters directly to restaurants and hotels because households are their future customers.

UMIH also used the Dunkirk meeting to underline the sector’s weight in the national economy. Prudon said cafés, hotels, restaurants and related tourism activities account for 4.5% of France’s gross domestic product and 40% of national tourism revenue.

The congress marked UMIH’s 74th annual meeting and the organization’s 80th year. Alongside policy workshops and roundtables, the event was intended to show unity in a period of softer trading conditions. But the third-quarter data placed the focus on a more immediate issue: a continuing decline in revenue in key hospitality segments, with full-service restaurants facing the largest average drop and bars and quick-service chains also under pressure.

Because the figures measure average revenue per company on a constant-scope basis, they are intended to show underlying business performance rather than changes caused by additions or removals in the sample. That makes the third-quarter declines especially relevant for restaurant and hospitality operators trying to judge demand trends heading into the final weeks of the year.

The numbers presented in Dunkirk do not point to uniform conditions across France, and some territories still showed gains. Even so, the broad pattern described by the observatory was one of contraction in much of the market, especially in food service, at a time when industry representatives are trying to influence the policy debate before the presidential campaign intensifies.