Press Release

September 29th 2017

Tourism decline from Britain continues - industry body urges Government to retain competitiveness and invest in tourism

The Irish Tourism Industry Confederation (ITIC) have said that today's tourism figures are a reminder that the Brexit impact on Irish tourism is "real and material" and that the Government needs to introduce urgent measures in the Budget to arrest the decline in British tourists. The latest CSO numbers have confirmed a 2nd consecutive month of tourism decline driven by a 7.1% fall in British arrivals for the year to date.

Commenting on the new figures, Eoghan O'Mara Walsh, CEO of ITIC, said: "Today's figures are a stark warning to the Government that our tourism industry is already being hit by Brexit and unless something is done the number of visitors coming to our country from our largest market will continue to decline. Tourism is Ireland's largest indigenous industry employing 228,000 people nationwide and our UK tourists are vital as they visit all year and travel throughout the country. The Government must introduce new measures in the upcoming Budget that will both defend the UK market and help diversify into new markets".

ITIC has called on a €20 million investment fund to help Brexit proof the sector. O'Mara Walsh also stressed that the Government must stay competitive and Ireland's 9% tourism VAT rate was an important policy saying that the rate "puts Ireland's tourism VAT rate in line with the rest of Europe and any change would damage our competitiveness and damage value for money at the worst possible time".

Tourism employs 1 in 10 people throughout the country and the sector last year contributed €1.9 billion to the exchequer in direct tourism related taxes.

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For Further information
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