

## **ITIC publish *Tourism Call to Action* calling for urgent Government support**

### **All key tourism and hospitality business groups agree 5 key policy asks**

### **Loss of international tourists costing industry €27 million per day and 200,000 jobs in danger if no Government intervention**

**Ireland – September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020:** The Irish Tourism Industry Confederation (ITIC) has published a *Tourism Call to Action* that all stakeholders within the sector are supporting and endorsing.

The industry has agreed and coalesced around 5 key policy asks including a rapid Covid-19 testing regime to allow for international travel and tourism to recommence safely, an improved employment wage subsidy scheme, a multi-million euro package of business continuity grants, Vat reduction to 9%, and a waiving of commercial rates to April 2021.

Eoghan O'Mara Walsh, CEO of ITIC, said *"Tourism is facing an existential crisis and Government must listen to industry's concerns and take proactive action otherwise widespread job losses and business closures are imminent"*.

Last month the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation projected that there will be up to 200,000 industry job losses over the next year which would cause devastation to families and households particularly in regional Ireland where tourism is so important to the social fabric of communities.

ITIC have countered that 50% of these job losses can be saved with the right Government intervention.

Elaina Fitzgerald Kane, President of the IHF and Director of Woodlands House Hotel in Adare, Co. Limerick said *"The Irish economy greatly depends on an active and robust tourism sector and support is badly needed to ensure that businesses up and down the country can survive this immensely challenging time. We fully support the Tourism Call to Action and it needs to be implemented in full."*

O'Mara Walsh sharply criticised the confusion over international arrivals and called the 14-day quarantine rule blunt, ineffective and flawed and was *"akin to a 'closed sign' above Ireland for inbound tourism"*. He went on to say *"The green list of countries does nothing for inbound tourism and needs to be replaced by a comprehensive and rapid Covid-19 testing policy so that tourists can enter Ireland freely and safely"*

ITIC, whose members include Aer Lingus, Emirates, daa and Shannon Group all of whom have endorsed the Tourism Call to Action, has estimated that the loss of international tourists has cost the industry €27 million every day over the summer months.

Adrian Cummins of the Restaurants Association of Ireland said *"It is vital that hospitality enterprises are supported and we endorse ITIC's Tourism Call to Action which includes the Vat reduction to 9% which is critically important for business survival"*

**Irish Tourism Industry Confederation**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**September 2<sup>nd</sup> 2020**

Helena Healy, of B&B Ireland, said *"Tourism is unique in that it can provide jobs and regional economic balance quickly given the right enabling factors and policies. The industry has seen a shattering 80% fall in business this year and we urge the Government to act now to support such a labour-intensive sector."*

The Tourism Call to Action has been supported by all ITIC members organisations and has been submitted to Government. Meetings have been requested with Tourism Minister Catherine Martin and Business Minister Leo Varadkar.

O'Mara Walsh noted that within the Programme for Government, it is stated that "tourism will be placed at the centre of the National Economic Plan" and he said that it is high time that Government matches words with deeds. He expressed frustration that recommendations from the Government's own Tourism Recovery Taskforce and Aviation Recovery Taskforce had so far been ignored.

**ENDS**

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**Notes to Editor**

**About the Irish Tourism Industry Confederation:**

The Irish Tourism Industry Confederation was founded in 1984 and is the umbrella group representing the leading tourism interests in Ireland. Its members come from key tourism stakeholders across the public and private sector and include Aer Lingus, Irish Ferries, daa, Shannon Group, Irish Hotels Federation, Incoming Tour Operators Association, Guinness Storehouse, Restaurants Association of Ireland, Vintners Federation of Ireland and Association of Visitor Experiences & Attractions amongst others. A full list of member organizations can be seen on [www.itic.ie](http://www.itic.ie).

Tourism is Ireland's largest indigenous industries and is a critical component of the export economy. Key tourism facts:

- Worth €9.2 billion annually
- 9.68 million international staying visitors in 2019
- Tourism employed 265,000 nationally in 2019
- 1 in 9 jobs nationally are in tourism & hospitality sector
- According to Fáilte Ireland, for every euro spent by tourists 23c is generated in tax

For further information and full details on ITIC's *Tourism Call to Action* see [www.itic.ie](http://www.itic.ie).