

For release April 12th 2023

Industry body's Q1 estimate of tourism industry performance

- January-March estimates show 1.7 million international visitor arrivals came to Ireland, down 16% compared to Q1 2019
 - Preliminary estimates suggest US and European markets performing well but British market soft and long-haul markets lagging
 - Q1 traditionally accounts for 20% of annual tourism volume
 - Business support fund needed for non-accommodation tourism businesses – industry leaders express concern that over a third of all tourism beds in regional Ireland contracted to Government for humanitarian purposes

Ireland – April 12th, 2023: The Irish Tourism Industry Confederation (ITIC) has today issued an estimate for international visitor arrivals for the period January to March 2023. In the continued absence of CSO data ITIC Quarter 1 estimates show that 1.7 million international visitors came to Ireland during the first 3 months of the year, down 16% compared to the same period in 2019.

ITIC's tourism volume estimates are published in association with AIB and compare performance versus 2019, the last normal year for the Irish tourism industry. Using carrier and port data ITIC extrapolates inbound visitor numbers based on past performance and current trends.

Preliminary indicators suggest that demand from mainland Europe and North America is to the forefront of the tourism recovery rate as has been the case in the latter part of last year, while demand from Britain, the largest volume source market, remains soft.

Looking forward ITIC expressed concern that recovery would be threatened by continued cost inflation and supply shortages across tourism accommodation and car hire.

ITIC's analysis shows that over one third of all tourism beds in regional Ireland are now contracted to Government to accommodate Ukrainian refugees and international asylum seekers. Elaina Fitzgerald Kane, Chairperson of ITIC, said *"The number of tourism beds no longer available to the tourism economy is of great concern. There will be tourism towns up and down the country with a shortage of tourism beds and therefore with very little tourism activity."*

Eoghan O'Mara Walsh, CEO of ITIC said *"Fáilte Ireland have estimated that the impact of Government's over-reliance on tourism beds will cost the tourism economy €1.1 billion this year. Downstream tourism businesses such as attractions, cultural experiences, inbound operators, restaurants and vintners will be the ones to suffer."*



Irish Tourism Industry Confederation

PRESS RELEASE

For release April 12th 2023

ITIC is calling for a business support fund for non-accommodation tourism businesses who are impacted by Government contracts and has also repeated its call for a comprehensive 2-year plan to be published by the Department of Taoiseach as to how and where refugees are to be accommodated.

ENDS

For further information contact:

Eoghan O'Mara Walsh, Chief Executive, ITIC: 086 6057909

Michael Moriarty, Fleishman Hillard: 087 2432550

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.

Tourism is Ireland's largest indigenous industry and is a critical component of the export economy. Key tourism facts in 2019:

- 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