

ANNUAL TOURISM REPORT 2012 IRELAND

1. INTRODUCTION

Council Decision 86/664/EEC of 22 December 1986¹ establishing a consultation and cooperation procedure in the field of tourism foresees that “each Member State shall send the Commission, once a year, a report on the most significant measures it has taken and, as far as possible, on measures it is considering taking in the provision of services for tourists which could have consequences for travellers from the other Member States”.

With the publication of the “Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism”, the Commission announced that “in order to strengthen the collaboration with and among Member States, their current annual reporting through the Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC) will be used to facilitate the exchange and the dissemination of information about how their policies and actions safeguard the sustainability of tourism”.

This Communication was welcomed by the Competitiveness Council conclusions (22nd-23rd November 2007) and by the Presidency Conclusions of the Brussels European Council of 14th December 2007.

The main aims for the reporting process are:

- to be able to monitor the level of implementation of the “Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism” by Member States;
- to facilitate the exchange of experiences among member States with regard to how they tackle issues which are important for the competitiveness and sustainability of European tourism.

MS reports referring to year n shall be sent to the European Commission by the end of February of year $n+1$.

If the reports are sent in English, the deadline is shifted to the end of April.

2. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

This section should provide an overview of the main organisational structure to illustrate how tourism is organised and managed, to identify linkages and to identify the engagement of other organisations/stakeholders.

The information required will only need to be prepared fully in year 1 as it will subsequently only be necessary to provide details of any changes.

¹ Official Journal L 384, 31/12/1986 P. 0052 – 0053.

2.1 Please identify the National Bodies responsible for tourism (Ministry and also any separate/related National Tourism Organisation), including key areas of responsibility, and their relationship to other national bodies. (maximum of 1.000 characters)

The **Tourism Division forms part of the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport** and advises Government on national tourism policy, providing the strategic direction required to support the growth of a competitive and sustainable tourism industry, through the development, implementation and influencing of a range of policy actions and programmes by the Department, its Agencies and other Government Departments, in consultation with industry partners. The tourism agencies, operating under the aegis of the Department, have been established to deal with the administration of that policy.

Fáilte Ireland was established under the National Tourism Development Authority Act 2003, following the amalgamation of Bord Fáilte Éireann and CERT, to encourage, promote and support tourism as a leading indigenous component of the Irish economy. Its principal functions are the development of quality tourism product, domestic tourism marketing, tourism standards, enterprise support, capability building and human resource development for the tourism industry.

Tourism Ireland was formally incorporated on 11 December 2000, following the designation of tourism as an area for cooperation under the Good Friday Agreement (1998), to carry out the promotion of tourism to the island of Ireland. Tourism Ireland is accountable to the North South Ministerial Council, with funding being provided by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment in Northern Ireland and by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport in Ireland. Its primary remit is to promote the island of Ireland as a tourist destination in overseas markets.

Shannon Development which formerly had responsibility for the promotion and development of tourism in Ireland's mid-West region had its tourism functions transferred to Fáilte Ireland in June 2013.

2.2 Please, describe what organisations/agencies are used to deliver services at the national and regional level and the services that they deliver. (maximum 800 characters)

Fáilte Ireland is responsible for the network of Tourism Information Offices around the country. In addition, it provides a broad range of supports to tourism enterprises to help improve competitiveness in the industry. It has recently shifted its focus from training for individuals to training and capability for businesses (mainly SME's) to ensure that businesses become more profitable, more efficient and more competitive. Fáilte Ireland provides businesses with interactive e-based facilities with which to assess their own enterprises' strengths and benchmark their performance against industry norms in key business areas such as energy management performance, guidance and self-audit tests on key environmental topics.

2.3 Please, describe which other bodies and organisations are involved at the national level and the process for involving them. (maximum 800 characters)

The **Irish Tourist Industry Confederation (ITIC)** is the national representative organisation for the tourism sector, encompassing membership from both the public and private sectors. The purpose of the Confederation is to act as a single voice for tourism, to address strategic issues essential to the success of the sector, to influence the regulatory/legislative environment and to influence Government and EU Tourism policies. The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport engages closely with ITIC and other relevant industry representative bodies in relation to the development of tourism policy and industry representatives have been included on the various groups established to implement Ireland's tourism policy.

The **Tourism Recovery Taskforce** is an industry-led taskforce established by ITIC in 2011 to oversee

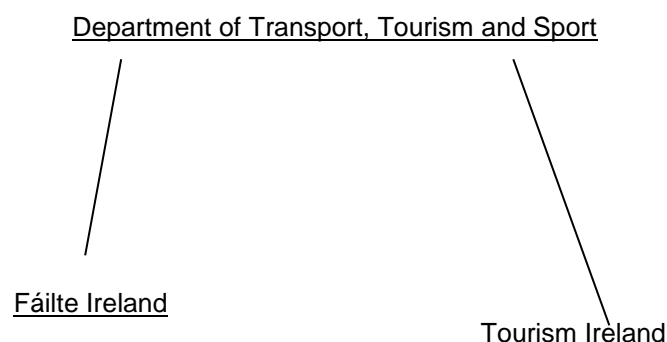
the development and implementation of strategies to deliver growth against defined targets for holiday visitors. It aims to have the tourist industry engage in a more critical analysis of the Irish tourism offering – particularly its marketing – at an operational level, reflecting concerns felt in the face of the sharp fall in overseas visits from 2008-2010. Although not a policy-making body, the Tourism Recovery Taskforce has shared its findings and recommendations with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and the tourism agencies. The taskforce included representatives of the tourism industry north and south, Fáilte Ireland, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and Tourism Ireland. In the marketing sphere, it liaised with Market Partnership Groups in the Ireland's top four markets of GB, the US, Germany and France and has replaced a previous Marketing Partnership group.

There is a wide range of **other bodies**, some with direct roles in developing tourism facilities and some whose role, while not specifically focused on tourism, is critical to the quality of the tourist experience in Ireland. These include:

- National and local bodies involved in planning, providing and managing environmental and transport infrastructure;
- National and local heritage organisations, who are responsible for key attractions;
- Locally-based tourism groups and LEADER companies, and their parent or funding bodies, who are directly involved in supporting small-scale developments; and
- Public and private transport operators – from airlines to local bus operators.

2.4 Please provide a diagram/organogram of the organisational structure for tourism identifying the relationship between national, regional and local bodies. Provide also a short description of the core responsibilities and competencies of each of the organisations. Include also information regarding the direct and indirect links between other departments, stakeholder organisations and unions. Information about mechanisms of decision-making process participation from outsider organisations, e.g. forums, advisory committees is also requested. (maximum of 2,000 characters)

Organisational Structure:



See 2.1 above for responsibilities of the Department and Tourism Agencies.

See 2.3 above for further information on other Departments and stakeholder organisations.

In relation to links, the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport engages with other Government Departments in relation to issues which have an impact on tourism and is represented on relevant interdepartmental committees. The Department also consults widely and maintains a close working

relationship with the tourist industry and other key stakeholders regarding the formulation and implementation of tourism policy and related strategies and programmes. From time to time, the Department establishes cross-cutting working groups to consider specific issues of relevance to tourism but also to other areas by bringing together all relevant stakeholders. Some recent examples include the establishment of a Tourism Signage Working Group and the Culture and Heritage Tourism Group.

Local Tourism Bodies outside of the main State Organisation (e.g. West Cork Tourism, Wicklow Tourism) also play an important role in tourism promotion. Local Authorities and "Local Action Groups" have involvement in Tourism promotion at a local level. Local Action Groups use public funding (including funding under the EU Rural Development Programme) to implement multi-sectoral business plans for the development of their own areas. Although the priority areas vary from area to area, all Local Action Groups have a tourism element in their business plan and other non-tourism actions may also have an impact on tourism.

2.5 Please provide information about financial data, including spend/budget on tourism as a percentage of overall government spend/budget, the level of national funding support for tourism marketing, the amount of EU funding support made available for tourism and data concerning the support to SME's and Destinations. (500 characters)

The overall budget allocated by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport specifically for tourism in 2012 was €143 million. Within this, a total amount of €39.354m was provided for overseas marketing.

Funding of **€20.2m** was provided in 2012 for the continued rollout of Tourism Product Development investment support, which will lead to the development of improved tourism infrastructure and new and upgraded tourist attractions and activities.

The Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) launched a call for suitable projects under INTERREG IVA during 2008. It is expected that about €30m (including match funding) will be available for tourism projects during the period to 2013 under INTERREG IVA.

As mentioned in Section 2.4, local tourism bodies also receive public funding to implement multi-sectoral business plans for the development of their own areas.

3. POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

3.1 Is there a current National Strategy for tourism? Yes No

If yes, please, provide information in bullet point format about the key aims, objectives and priorities of the strategy highlighting those that are designed to address sustainability issues in economic, environmental and social terms in particular those related in the six aims included in the Agenda. In preparing the tourism strategy, explain how consideration has been given to the 9 principles set out in the Agenda (para2.3 p5) and given in the appendix. (maximum 1,000 characters)

Tourism is central to the Government's economic recovery programme. Recognising the multiple issues across public policy that impact on tourism, rather than pursue separate stand-alone strategies for the sector, the Government integrated tourism into the broader economic strategic framework.

This overall strategic approach is complemented by the work of the tourism agencies, Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Ireland, assisted by the work of the industry-led Tourism Recovery Taskforce (which includes both tourism agencies). Key commitments in the 2011 Programme for Government were reflected in the Government's subsequent Jobs Initiative, with immediate priority actions set out in the 2012 Action Plan for Jobs.

The Government has already delivered on several measures under the Jobs Initiative to reduce costs, for tourists and for tourism businesses, therefore enhancing Ireland's competitiveness – e.g. reducing VAT on certain tourism services to 9% until end-2013; introducing a new Visa Waiver Programme; and halving employers' PRSI for those on modest wages. Tourism also benefits from the Government's Internship and Work Placement programmes as well as from the significant investment in non-national roads and other transport infrastructure, as part of the Jobs Initiative.

The 2012 Action Plan for Jobs aimed to exploit several specific sectoral opportunities, including tourism and the Green Economy. With regard to the latter, a cross-Departmental Plan for the development of the Green Economy (including Green Tourism as one of the key sub-sectors) was published in November 2012 – "Delivering Our Green Potential: Government Policy Statement on Growth and Employment in the Green Economy" (led by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation). The Action Plan recognises that Ireland has an outstanding natural environment and landscape to support "green" tourism and activities, as well as an established international image as the "Emerald Isle" which could be built upon to promote our "Green" offering. It contained the following green tourism-specific action (Action 7.3.10):

Develop niche markets in green tourism and food, by promoting standards such as the Green Hospitality Award and other initiatives. The 2012 Action Plan for Jobs also set out key policy actions to ensure tourism's contribution to economic recovery, building further on the Programme for Government. These include:

- Supporting the competitiveness of Irish tourism, through minimising the costs of doing business and ensuring the quality of the product is maintained;
- Targeting capital investment in public tourism product and infrastructure;
- Using the Tourism Marketing Fund to support international marketing and advertising programmes.

Another focus of the Action Plan was on developing tourism products where Ireland can gain comparative advantage (such as food, culture, activity breaks, events and festivals). Traditionally, the major attractions of Ireland have been the Irish people and beautiful scenery. More recently visitors have availed of the range of sporting and recreational facilities and events. Golf, angling, walking, cycling, equestrian activities, culture and heritage offer attractive things to see and do, complemented by high standards of accommodation, food and hospitality.

Finally, the Irish Government also launched "The Gathering Ireland 2013", Ireland's biggest ever tourism initiative, taking place throughout 2013. The Gathering provides an opportunity for those with ancestral links and an affinity for Ireland to play a part in – and benefit from – our economic recovery. The initiative is an invitation to the wider world to connect with the people of Ireland in business, the arts, sports, communities and public life.

3.2 Who was the initiator and who is responsible for its implementation? (maximum 200 characters)

The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation has overall responsibility for the Jobs Initiative and 2012 Action Plan for Jobs. It is also the Department responsible for developing the cross-Departmental plan for "Delivering Our Green Potential", the Government policy statement on growth and employment in the Green Economy". The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, with the assistance of the tourism agencies at the operational level, is responsible for the tourism-specific elements under these plans.

3.3 How is the strategy monitored and how often? (maximum 500 characters)

At official level, there is an inter-Departmental Senior Officials Group on Economic Recovery and Jobs (coordinated by the Department of the Taoiseach). The work of this Senior Officials Group feeds into a Government level Cabinet Committee on Economic Recovery and Jobs. Both Groups meet regularly.

3.4 What tourism specific legislation exists? (maximum 500 characters)

The Tourist Traffic Acts 1939 – 2011 provide for the establishment and corporate governance of the National Tourism Development Authority (Fáilte Ireland) as well as setting out the statutory framework

for the promotion of tourism and the development of tourism facilities and services.

4. MEASURES AND INITIATIVES

This section provides Member States with an opportunity to outline specific initiatives and policies that are or are going to be adopted to manage and develop tourism activity in ways which respond to the key challenges of the Agenda and which fall within the six main aims of the Agenda itself.

1 Economic prosperity

- a. To ensure the long-term competitiveness, viability and prosperity of tourism enterprises and destinations.
- b. To provide quality employment opportunities, offering fair pay and conditions for all employees and avoiding all forms of discrimination.

2 Social equity and cohesion

- a. To enhance the quality of life of local communities through tourism, and engage them in its planning and management
- b. To provide a safe, satisfying and fulfilling experience for visitors, available to all without discrimination by gender, race, religion, disability or in other ways.

3 Environmental and cultural protection

- a. To minimise pollution and degradation of the global and local environment and the use of scarce resources by tourism activities.
- b. To maintain and strengthen cultural richness and biodiversity and contribute to their appreciation and conservation.

4.1 Please set out, briefly, the steps which have been or will be taken, if any, to address the 7 key challenges for the delivery of sustainable and competitive tourism, covered in the TSG report and referred to in the 'Agenda'.

4.1.1 Reducing the seasonality of demand. (maximum 200 characters)

The tourism agencies have been working with industry for a number of years to encourage tourism in the non-peak season, in particular by offering good value packages at these times. It is estimated that the period September to December traditionally yields as much as 30% of overseas tourism visitors to Ireland. With this in mind, Tourism Ireland (the agency with responsibility for the overseas marketing of

Ireland as a tourist destination) undertakes significant Autumn marketing campaigns with a strong focus on the many festivals and events which take place in Ireland in the Autumn off-peak season.

Investment in tourism product and promotion of niche tourism product should also encourage visitors outside of the peak season.

4.1.2 Addressing the impact of tourism transport. (maximum 200 characters)

The Government policy framework for sustainable travel and transport, "Smarter Travel", recognises the need for greater accessibility and efficiency in transport, improving economic competitiveness and minimising its negative impacts on the environment. This in turn assists tourism, since improving access to all parts of Ireland is of clear benefit to the industry. Furthermore, "Smarter Travel" measures in public transport, cycling and walking have the scope to provide a better tourist experience and also to enhance Ireland's credentials as a sustainable destination.

The DiscoverIreland.ie website has an area dedicated to "Green Holidays in Ireland", which includes a "Go Green" section on how to get around Ireland while being kind to the environment (<http://www.discoverireland.ie/Things-To-Do/Green/Go-Green>). This section includes information on our public transport system (with links to the transport operators' websites), as well as highlighting Ireland's excellent network of walking and cycling trails and providing information on other outdoor activities

4.1.3 Improving the quality of tourism jobs. (maximum 200 characters)

Fáilte Ireland provides on-site training to tourism employees as well as accreditation for prior learning (APL) thus improving the service these tourism workers provide in tandem with the quality of their jobs. Fáilte Ireland also supports a number of "Earn and Learn" programmes operated by Institutes of Technology which enable workers to attend college part-time while receiving paid work experience. Tourism has also been identified as a key sector in Government strategies for employment.

4.1.4 Maintaining and enhancing community prosperity and the quality of life, in the face of change. (maximum 200 characters)

Tourism makes an important contribution not just to Ireland's economic development, but also to social and cultural development – nationally and regionally. In addition to generating employment, economic activity and exports, tourism contributes by encouraging social inclusion and access to the labour market. Tourism has also played a vital role in reshaping the relationship between the North and South of Ireland through the joint marketing and promotion internationally of the island of Ireland.

Fáilte Ireland and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) funded a three-year project which was initiated in March 2009, implemented in Killarney, Co. Kerry and Carlingford, Co. Louth, and which tested a set of sustainable tourism indicators (ACHIEV) across the following headings: Administration; Community; Heritage; Infrastructure; Visitor and Economics. The project has led to the development of a manual/toolkit for the measurement of sustainability at destination level, and allows a destination/management company to prepare evidence based plans for the development of the destination and then to monitor/measure issues and impacts arising in the destination.

4.1.5 Minimising resource use and the production of waste. (maximum 200 characters)

It is vital that good environmental practice is incorporated into the day to day management of tourism businesses. Such practices not only help the environment but also assist the business itself - reducing consumption of energy, water and waste, reducing overheads and making a business more competitive. There are several agencies offering help to tourism businesses and Fáilte Ireland has developed an environmental guide for tourism businesses outlining all the supports currently available, from tips and advice, assessment and training, eco-label certification and marketing and communications. Many businesses have already taken steps towards improving environmental performance, ranging from simple steps such as reducing energy consumption to becoming fully accredited eco-tourism businesses. These businesses are profiled on the DiscoverIreland.ie/green

section of the consumer website, where green businesses are profiled for the visitor.

There are various eco-labels/accreditation/certification programmes available to sustainable and eco-tourism businesses that wish to attain formal recognition and associated marketing benefit. There are five main labels operating in Ireland and these are:

- Green Hospitality Award and Eco-label run by Environmental Protection Agency (EPA);
- EU Flower label administered here by the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI);
- Green Tourism Business Scheme, run by Green Business UK;
- Sustainable Tourism Environment Programme, run by Sustainable Travel International; and
- Ecotourism Ireland label, run by Ecotourism Ireland Ltd.

Other supports available to help Irish businesses (including those in the tourism sector) make more efficient and sustainable use of resources include guidance available from and programmes administered by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) and by the EPA. Furthermore, there is also a scheme of accelerated capital allowances for energy equipment, a tax incentive aimed at encouraging companies across all sectors to invest in energy saving technology, which was extended in Budget 2010 to include catering and hospitality equipment.

4.1.6 Conserving and giving value to natural and cultural heritage. (maximum 200 characters)

Ireland's natural heritage together with our people and culture, are at the very heart of its appeal as a tourist destination and are important for the further development of tourism in Ireland. Promoting and encouraging interaction with such attractions whilst limiting any unintended damage involves cooperation and coordination between the various Government Departments and agencies involved in tourism, culture and heritage.

Heritage policy is the responsibility of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. At the tourism policy level, as part of its support of the broad sustainability agenda in tourism development, officials from the Tourism Division of the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport have engaged actively in several related high-level and inter-Departmental groups. At the operational level (tourism), Fáilte Ireland advocates a high quality physical environment for tourism and promotes good environmental practice throughout the sector.

Fáilte Ireland will pursue the following actions to promote and achieve greater levels of sustainability within the Irish tourism sector:

- Develop better natural heritage and landscape experiences for our key target markets that serve to raise awareness and appreciation about these assets.
- Promote good stewardship of our natural heritage and landscapes by both tourism businesses and by visitors.
- Continue to support initiatives that seek to achieve greater levels of sustainability within the sector, whilst reducing operating costs for the trade, such as the EPA's Green Hospitality Programme.
- Make sustainability a focus for all tourism businesses, through initiatives such as the Green Marketing Toolkit.
- Undertake a Sustainability Appraisal of all Tourism Destination Plans.
- Maintain an audit of natural heritage and landscape assets that are accessible to the visitor.

4.1.7 Making holidays available to all. (maximum 200 characters)

Ireland is developing its knowledge in this area through Ireland's participation in the EU Calypso Social Tourism Research Project. The National Tourism Development Authority (Fáilte Ireland) continues to monitor progress in this regard and will actively pursue any opportunities which arise as the project advances.

Fáilte Ireland carries details on its consumer website <http://www.discoverireland.ie/Where-To-Stay/Accessible-Accommodation> of premises that have been awarded the ABLE Tourism Q Mark for

accessibility. In addition it carries links to a number of accommodation representative bodies who will provide details of accessible accommodation available from their members.

4.2 As key challenges may change over time, please identify any other areas that are becoming a new challenge. (maximum 600 characters)

Global and national economy: Any growth in visitor numbers will depend to a large extent on improved economic conditions and consumer confidence.

Climate Change remains a key challenge, including its potential to alter the traditional character of Ireland's habitats and biodiversity, thus presenting further challenges in terms of protecting our landscape, environment and heritage and associated tourism and amenity value. There are also knock-on indirect impacts and challenges – e.g. ensuring our mitigation strategies do not undermine the environment we are trying to protect.

Another general challenge is the level of access (particularly air access) to Ireland, including anything that makes travel more expensive – e.g. rising oil prices, environmental taxes. More than most other EU Member States, the island of Ireland relies heavily on air transportation for tourism purposes (Ireland is one of only three Member States with no land or tunnel connection to the European mainland). For this reason, maintaining and growing direct, competitive and convenient air access to the island of Ireland is of critical importance to our tourist industry - anything that makes travel more expensive will reduce demand among price-sensitive consumers, leading to reduced capacity, fewer services and routes and, therefore, reductions in visitor numbers and tourism revenue.

Overcapacity – Another challenge is to deal with the legacy of previous investment in accommodation stock which was not market based and hence does not necessarily match demand patterns.

4.3 Please identify and describe a specific initiative, which is related to the 7 key challenges, that is innovative/ successful and which would be of interest to or of help to other Member States. (maximum 2,000 characters)

Over the past number of years Fáilte Ireland has made significant investment in tourism infrastructure around the country, to allow the industry and all tourism stakeholders to make the most of the natural/green asset and allow the visitor to experience and engage with natural Ireland. Such investment aims to maximise opportunities to grow rural tourism in a sustainable manner based on the sustainable use of our natural assets, with a focus on creating, retaining and diversifying jobs in the rural economy on the back of this infrastructure development.

The Great Western Greenway in Mayo is one of the best examples of such sustainable tourism growth in Ireland in recent times. This Greenway, which runs along the route of the disused Midland and Great Western railway (closed in 1937), has been recognised as a European Destination of Excellence (EDEN award) under the category of 'Tourism and the Regeneration of Physical Sites'. The Greenway is the longest off road walking and cycling trail in Ireland, and allows visitors connect not just with the natural environment but also with the story of the local community.

In an economic impact study, 30 businesses indicated that the Mayo Greenway has had some impact in either creating or sustaining employment in their enterprises. There has been a fairly balanced mix of full-time and part-time positions, though most new jobs created have tended to be seasonal rather than year round. When expressed as full-time equivalents (FTEs), the figures suggest that about 38 new FTE jobs have been created, with a further 56 existing FTE jobs sustained. Therefore, the Greenway appears to be playing a positive economic role in terms of employment, not only by creating new jobs but also, in a challenging economic climate, by protecting existing jobs that otherwise might be lost.

5. MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Three mechanisms for implementing the Agenda were identified in the “Agenda”: sustainable destinations, sustainable businesses and responsible tourists.

5.1 Sustainable destinations: What support is given to strengthen destination management at the regional/ destination level (supportive policy environment, knowledge networks, training programmes, establishment of measures/indicators for benchmarking, etc.)? (maximum 600 characters)

As part of its support for tourism businesses, Fáilte Ireland assists with destination development. On the “Developing your Locality” section of its website (<http://www.failteireland.ie/Develop-Your-Business/Work-with-Local-Partners.aspx>), Fáilte Ireland encourages business to work with other local businesses to capitalise on the special qualities of their locality and outlines 5 steps for developing a destination plan that links local products and creates an image, vision and brand for their area.

As outlined under 4.1.4, a project funded by Fáilte Ireland and the EPA, which tested a set of sustainable tourism indicators (ACHIEV), has led to the development of a manual/toolkit for the measurement of sustainability at destination level.

5.2 Sustainable businesses: What support is given to strengthen the sustainability and competitiveness of businesses (supportive policy environment, orientation of business support services to sustainability, training, financial incentives, etc.)? (maximum 600 characters)

Recent years have proven to be amongst the most difficult that the tourist industry has faced for many decades. The downturn in demand and the significant private investment in tourism capital- such as hotels - in that period has placed enormous demands on tourism businesses many of which continue to experience trading and operational difficulties. This has led to Fáilte Ireland investing heavily in providing practical and tailored business supports to individual tourism enterprises across the country. Fáilte Ireland provided direct business supports to 4,000 businesses or 10,000 individuals in 2012. Services provided included mentoring support, web supports, skills development, sales connect and continuous professional development programmes.

See 4.1.5 for information on supports available to improve environmental sustainability (thus improving competitiveness).

5.3 Responsible tourists: What support is given to promote responsible choices by tourists (e.g. sustainability in education, national marketing and media campaigns, promotion of certification schemes)? (maximum 600 characters)

The DiscoverIreland.ie website has a section dedicated to “Green Holidays in Ireland” (<http://www.discoverireland.ie/green>) where all providers listed have a recognised third party eco-certification and have taken steps towards a greener future, including reducing their energy and water consumption, improving their waste management and ensuring they source fresh seasonal produce from local suppliers. This includes a “Green TV” section, with videos showcasing some of Ireland’s eco-friendly offerings; and an interactive “Green Map” of green tourism businesses; and “Green” filters in the search facility to help identify eco-certified providers. There is also information on the Leave No Trace code of outdoor ethics in Ireland and on a wide range of outdoor and eco-activities.

6. DATA AND INDICATORS

Eurostat will provide, as an annex, the key statistical data required to support the reporting process covering around 20 indicators². These are mainly related to the aim of ‘economic prosperity’.

² These indicators have been selected from the 50 TSG indicators on the basis of the possibility to calculate them at the European level.

Please, identify indicators that are being used or developed which could add to the range of information being provided by Eurostat, particularly in relation to social and environmental issues (other indicators from the TSG report, visitors/ residents satisfaction, etc.). (maximum 500 characters)

As outlined in 4.1.4 (and mentioned again under 5.1), Fáilte Ireland and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) funded a three-year project that tested a set of sustainable tourism indicators (ACHIEV) across the following headings: Administration; Community; Heritage; Infrastructure; Visitor and Economics. The project has led to the development of a manual/toolkit for measuring sustainability at destination level, which Fáilte Ireland intends to make available to other destinations allowing them to use the same indicators to undertake evidence-based (indicator-led) destination management plans.

7. COMPLEMENTARY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If necessary use the following box to provide additional complementary information that has not already been covered.

APPENDIX

Principles of sustainable tourism:

- **Taking a holistic and integrated approach**

All the various impacts of tourism should be taken into account in its planning and development. Furthermore, tourism should be well balanced and integrated with a whole range of activities that affect society and the environment.

- **Planning for the long term**

Sustainable development is about taking care of the needs of future generations as well as our own. Long term planning requires the ability to sustain actions over time.

- **Achieving an appropriate pace and rhythm of development**

The level, pace and shape of development should reflect and respect the character, resources and needs of host communities and destinations.

- **Involving all stakeholders**

A sustainable approach requires widespread and committed participation in decision making and practical implementation by all those implicated in the outcome.

- **Using best available knowledge**

Policies and actions should be informed by the latest and best knowledge available. Information on tourism trends and impacts, and skills and experience, should be shared across Europe.

- **Minimising and managing risk – the precautionary principle**

Where there is uncertainty about outcomes, there should be full evaluation and preventative action should be taken to avoid damage to the environment or society.

- **Reflecting impacts in costs – user and polluter pays**

Prices should reflect the real costs to society of consumption and production activities. This has implications not simply for pollution but for charging for the use of facilities that have significant management costs attached to them.

- **Setting and respecting limits, where appropriate**

The carrying capacity of individual sites and wider areas should be recognised, with a readiness and ability to limit, where and when appropriate, the amount of tourism development and volume of tourist flows.

- **Undertaking continuous monitoring**

Sustainability is all about understanding impacts and being alert to them all the time, so that the necessary changes and improvements can be made.