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Tourism Ireland welcomes +1% growth for January-March 2017 ~ 11,500 additional overseas visitors ~

Commenting on today's CSO figures for overseas visitors to Ireland between January-March 2017, Niall Gibbons, CEO of Tourism Ireland, said: ***"I am pleased to see growth of +1% for the three-month period January-March 2017, coming on the back of six years of solid growth in overseas tourism. Particularly welcome is the continued strong performance from North America with over +23.2% in the first three months. Tourism Ireland has prioritised North America for 2017 as a market which offers a strong return on investment. A number of factors are working in our favour, including more airline seats than ever, from more gateways across the US and Canada.***

"Visitor numbers from Australia and Developing Markets for the first three months are also really strong, up +16%. We're seeing the benefit of our sales missions to Australia/New Zealand, China, India and the Middle East in 2016. Tourism Ireland's 2017 sales mission to China is currently underway in a bid to increase our share of this rapidly-growing tourism market.

"While visitor numbers from Mainland Europe were flat during the January to March period – it is encouraging to see important markets like France (+9.8%) and Spain (+4.5%) continue to perform well.

"The fall in British visitors (-6.5%) reflects the economic situation. The drop in the value of sterling has made holidays and short breaks here more expensive for British visitors; and economic uncertainty is making them more cautious about their discretionary spending. This is impacting on travel to Ireland.

"Tourism Ireland will continue to monitor developments around Brexit closely, to better understand and plan for its implications and will be meeting tourism industry leaders again next week. Competitiveness and value for money will be a more important message than ever throughout 2017."

Read our full statement [here](#)

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