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Exceptional +12% growth from overseas for January-August 2015

On track for record year as Tourism Ireland's extensive autumn campaign rolls out around the world

Today's figures from the CSO (Central Statistics Office) indicate that this was the best ever January to August period for overseas visitors to Ireland, with more than 5.8 million arrivals recorded. Overseas visitor numbers have increased by +12% over the first eight months of 2014 – an additional 633,500 visitors. This is good news indeed, with the increase in visitor numbers from overseas helping to boost economic recovery around the country.

Niall Gibbons, CEO of Tourism Ireland, said: ***"Today's figures indicate that we are heading for a record year for Irish tourism in 2015, with more than 5.8 million people arriving during the January to August period – an increase of +12%, or an additional 633,500 overseas visitors, when compared to 2014. I am delighted to see that growth has been recorded from all of our markets around the world, with record numbers coming here from North America (almost +14%), Mainland Europe (+13%) and long-haul markets (+9%). I also welcome the strong increase in British visitors (+11%), our largest market for overseas tourism."***

- Overseas visitor numbers are up +12% between January and August 2015 – 633,500 additional visitors.
- **Great Britain:** 2.35 million arrivals were recorded from GB, our largest market, representing growth of +11%, about 236,700 extra British visitors compared with the first eight months of 2014.
- **North America:** visitor numbers from the United States and Canada are up almost +14%, about 127,600 extra American and Canadian visitors. Ireland now welcomes 10% of all American visitors to Europe – particularly noteworthy given the intense competition from other destinations.
- **Mainland Europe:** it's been another stellar performance from Mainland Europe, with more than 2 million visitors (up +13% or 239,100 extra arrivals) – with markets like Italy, Spain, Germany, France, Benelux and the Nordic countries all recording really good growth.
- **Australia and Developing Markets (ADM):** it's also been another record performance for arrivals from Australia and developing markets – up +9% or 30,000 additional visitors.

Niall Gibbons continued: ***"This was a strong performance and reflects the sentiment we are hearing from our tourism industry partners overseas, including tour operators and carriers, as well as tourism businesses here at home. We are determined to ensure that tourism growth continues. We have a really extensive autumn campaign in full swing right now – aimed at boosting late-season travel to Ireland from around the globe. The period September to December usually yields as much as 30% of our annual overseas tourism business."***

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