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Tourism Ireland welcomes +3% growth for January-May 2017

Tourism Ireland has welcomed the +3% growth in overseas visitors to Ireland for January-May 2017, confirmed by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) today.

Source: CSO	January-May 2017
Total Overseas Visitors	+3.0%
Mainland Europe	+4.0%
North America	+23.6%
Great Britain	-6.8%
Australia & Developing Markets	+21.7%

Commenting on the figures, Niall Gibbons, CEO of Tourism Ireland, said: *“I am pleased to see growth of more than +3% for the five-month period January-May, coming on the back of a record performance in 2016 and years of solid growth in overseas tourism. It is encouraging that this was the best ever month of May for Irish tourism. Particularly welcome is the continued strong performance from North America, with an increase of +23.6%.*

“Visitor numbers from Australia and Developing Markets for the first five months of 2017 are also really strong, up +21.7%. And arrivals from Mainland Europe grew by 4% – with important markets like France, Germany, Spain and Italy continuing to perform well.

“As anticipated, the currency challenge for Irish tourism is very real and the drop in British visitor numbers (-6.8%) for the January to May period reflects that. The decline in the value of sterling has made holidays and short breaks here more expensive for British visitors. Therefore, competitiveness and the value for money message are more important than ever in Britain right now. Tourism Ireland is placing a greater focus on our ‘culturally curious’ audience, who are less impacted by currency fluctuations. We are also undertaking an expanded partnership programme with airlines, ferry operators and tour operators, communicating a strong price-led message.”

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