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Tourism Ireland welcomes strong +10% growth in overseas visitors between December 2014 and February 2015

Positive start to the tourism year as Tourism Ireland rolls out its promotional programme around the world

2015 is off to really a positive start, with today's figures from the CSO (Central Statistics Office) indicating growth of +10% in overseas visitors to the Republic of Ireland between December 2014 and February 2015. That means we have welcomed an additional 134,300 visitors over the same three-month period last year. This is good news indeed, with the increase in visitor numbers from overseas helping to boost employment and economic recovery around the country.

- Overseas visitor numbers are up over +10% between December 2014 and February 2015 – 134,300 additional visitors.
- **Great Britain:** GB, our largest market, recorded growth of +7.7% for the three-month period – 49,200 extra British visitors.
- **North America:** visitor numbers from the United States and Canada are also up +6.6% – 10,900 additional visitors.
- **Mainland Europe:** visitor numbers from Mainland Europe grew by over +18% – 73,600 extra arrivals, with markets like Italy (+39%), France (+28%), Germany (+15%), Benelux (+20%) and Spain (+12%) turning in particularly strong performances.
- **Australia and Developing Markets (ADM):** arrivals from other areas were fairly flat when compared with the same three months last year (up almost +1%).

Niall Gibbons, CEO of Tourism Ireland, said: *“Today's figures represent a really positive start to 2015, as we roll out our promotional programme around the world. Our promotions received a tremendous boost earlier this month, with our Global Greening initiative for St Patrick's Day – which was even bigger and better than ever before. Vast positive coverage was generated around the world in print, broadcast, social and online media – as the 'greenings' captured the imaginations of people everywhere at a key time for holiday planning and decisions. St Patrick's Day traditionally marks the real start of the tourism season for us and we took every opportunity to capitalise on Ireland's heightened profile. Our aim is to ensure that 2015 is the best year ever for Irish tourism when we expect to welcome 7.74 million visitors – surpassing the previous record year of 2007.”*

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