

Country Information

Population: 4.1 million
GDP Real Growth Rate: 4.7% (2005 est.)

Entitled Leave: 20 days
Languages: English & Irish
Currency: Euro

Major Cities: Dublin (1.0 million)
(by population) Cork (0.2 million)

Direct transport links to Scotland:

Air: Belfast, Cork, Donegal, Dublin, Galway,
Londonderry & Shannon

Sea: Larne & Belfast

Summary Statistics

Irish visitors in 2005 generated:

- 156,000 trips (79,000 in 2004)
- £59 million spend (£37 million in 2004)
- £378 spend/trip
- £70 spend/night

The UK was 1st in the rankings for top actual destination, this was followed by Spain, France, US & Italy to complete the top 5 holiday destinations for Irish travellers.

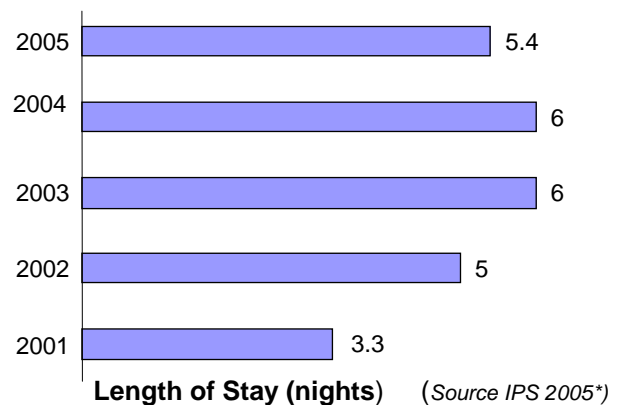
(Source IPS 2005*)

Economic & Political Review

A small, modern and trade-dependent economy and one of the fastest growing economies in the developed world. Ireland has experienced unprecedented growth over the past decade of which EU membership, low corporate tax rates, more stable public financial position and a large multinational presence have all contributed.

GDP increases at an annual rate in excess of 4%, while unemployment remains under 5% of the labour force and consumer confidence continues to rise. However, there is concern over an increasing level of private indebtedness.

Average length of stay



Irish Leisure Visitors

32% of Irish visitors to Scotland in 2005, according to IPS 2005* figures, were aged 25-34 followed by 21% 35-44 years old (17% of Irish visitors were 16-24 years). 40% of Irish visitors travelled alone, followed by 23% as a family group. A further 16% travelled with a partner/as a couple.

Visiting friends and relatives (44%), and an independent holiday (30%), were the main reasons for Irish visitors to Scotland in 2005 (while 6% were on business).

Visits from July to December account for 94% of visits to Scotland for Irish travellers (October-December marginally higher with 48%). April-June are the least favoured months (1%). In previous years July-September have accounted for over 80% of visits.

49% of holiday visitors stay in a hotel or guesthouse, whilst 27% stay with friends or family as a free guest. They like a friendly welcome, expecting to stay in a "home from home" and with lots of local information when they get here. There are many traditional family links between Ireland and Scotland, encouraging frequent trips to be made. The Irish visitors to Scotland want a high standard of accommodation and excellent facilities. Value for money is important especially where accommodation & ferry/airfares are concerned.

The trend is to take shorter, more frequent breaks throughout the year (such as weekend breaks). The visitors are "cash rich" and "time poor" so will demand attention to detail and speedy responses to enquiries. Culture, shopping and events are the main motivation for Irish visitors.

51.2% of the population are online, according to the ETC (2005), but broadband take-up is slightly slower than average. The Irish are a confident market for internet booking and are happy to book their travel and accommodation directly (64% search for flights and 68% book accommodation online).

*Please note IPS 2005 figures now include Prestwick airport
Source IPS 2005, The Economist, VisitBritain 2006, ETC 2006.