

TOURISM ACTION PLAN 2016 -2018



Progress Report September 2017



**An Roinn Iompair
Turasóireachta agus Spóirt**

Department of Transport,
Tourism and Sport

No.	Action	Suggested Date for Completion	Responsible Stakeholder(s)	Progress at September 2017
1.	<p>The Tourism Leadership Group highlights the critical importance of ensuring that there is an adequate supply of skilled staff in the tourism sector, including key roles such as chefs, food service, accommodation services, and tour guides. Fáilte Ireland, the tourism industry and the education and training sector will work to implement the recommendations in the report of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs in the hospitality sector, and participate in the national oversight and advisory group established to oversee skills development and promotion in the tourism sector.</p>	2016-2018	<p>SOLAS, Higher Education Authority (HEA), Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), Fáilte Ireland, Education and Training Boards Ireland, Institutes of Technology Ireland, Tourism Industry.</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>The Hospitality Skills Oversight Group, of which Fáilte Ireland is a member, is driving and overseeing skills development and promotion in the sector across a range of initiatives in line with EGFSN recommendations.</p> <p>The new Commis Chef Apprenticeship secured formal QQI accreditation in July 2017 with initial roll out in Sept/Oct 2017.</p> <p>The industry-led consortium is also continuing to plan for progression through the further stages of culinary apprenticeship</p> <p>Following an independent review of its investment in education, Fáilte Ireland has commenced an orderly withdrawal [over the next few years] from its funding of college-based education. Future investment will focus on strategic, innovative, flexible approaches to tourism education and training, informed by labour market and skills information.</p>
2.	<p>In Spring of 2016, Fáilte Ireland will publish an analysis of visitor</p>	2016	<p>Fáilte Ireland, Department of Transport, Tourism</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Assessments indicate that there</p>

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	<p>accommodation capacity issues in Dublin City for the period to 2020 with recommendations on how to address any shortfalls. An official estimate of the shortfall, if any, in hotel capacity will be published on a regular basis. Furthermore, an analysis of why hotels which have planning permission granted but are not being developed will be undertaken and any recommendations arising from this analysis will be pursued.</p>		<p>and Sport (DTTAS), Dublin Local Authorities.</p>	<p>should be sufficient stock to meet projected demand after 2018, with c.5,500 bedrooms due to come on stream by 2020.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>To address capacity concerns and to assist tourism competitiveness, Fáilte Ireland will review the appropriateness of allowing accommodation not regulated or listed by the Agency to be referenced on its website and through the Tourist Information Office network. Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Ireland will incorporate any such changes in their respective business plans as appropriate.</p>	<p>2016</p>	<p>Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland, Tourism Industry.</p>	<p>Complete.</p> <p>Failte Ireland's website database of accommodation providers now lists all providers with some form of quality accreditation.</p> <p>With regard to enterprise supports/training or support for festivals, Fáilte Ireland does not discriminate between approved and non-approved accommodation providers, instead favouring those operations that align with the overarching tourism strategy.</p> <p>This policy change also allows Fáilte Ireland engage with key players in the accommodation sharing economy to try to align their messaging and activities with tourism strategic priorities and experience brand propositions.</p> <p>Fáilte Ireland is reviewing its</p>

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				own suite of quality schemes for the accommodation sector, with a view to increasing sector participation, and is also working with external parties with a view to approving certain independent, industry-specific Quality Assurance schemes.
4.	Regulations governing visitor accommodation will be reviewed and updated to address changing market needs, and developments such as the growth of the sharing economy. An expert group from the Fáilte Ireland executive and the tourism industry will make recommendations to the National Tourism Development Authority.	2016	Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Industry.	<p>Complete.</p> <p>Revised hotel regulations (signed and sealed by Fáilte Ireland and the Minister) came into force on 1st August 2016¹.</p> <p>The two biggest changes are the reduction in minimum double bedroom size (aligned with European norms and modern consumer preferences) and the removal of the requirement to provide meals between 07:30 and 22:00.</p> <p>These changes should allow hotel operators provide more rooms and operate at a lower cost base, therefore improving hotel capacity, competitiveness and profitability.</p>
5.	Recognising the contribution of tourism to employment growth, the Minister, in consultation with Cabinet colleagues, will seek to restore Ireland's share of voice in key overseas tourism markets through restoring	To be phased in from 2016	DTAS	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Overseas marketing fund increased from €34m in 2015 to €35m in 2016, to €35.853 in 2017.</p> <p>Discussions currently underway</p>

¹
http://www.failteireland.ie/FailteIreland/media/WebsiteStructure/Documents/2_Develop_Your_Business/4_Quality_Assurance/Hotel-Regs-2016-01-August.pdf

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	overseas tourism marketing funds to pre-recession levels on a phased basis.			between DTTAS and Dept. of Public Expenditure and Reform, ahead of Budget 2018.
6.	The dedicated Dublin tourism marketing fund, initially established in 2015 to fund the launch of the new Dublin experience brand 'Dublin – A Breath of Fresh Air' will be continued as a platform to fund additional overseas marketing of the Dublin region as a tourist destination. Tourism Ireland will execute the overseas marketing activity on behalf of Fáilte Ireland and the Grow Dublin Tourism Alliance.	2016	Fáilte Ireland, Grow Dublin Tourism Alliance (GDTA), Dublin tourism industry and business community, Tourism Ireland.	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Since the launch of the Dublin experience brand in October 2015, there have been 2 highly-targeted overseas marketing campaigns to raise brand awareness.</p> <p>A third overseas marketing campaign is now live and will run for the duration of Q4 2017.</p> <p>This campaign is jointly funded by the 4 Dublin Local Authorities, Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland, IHF Dublin Branch and a selection of Online Travel Agents and airlines.</p>
7.	To support direct access by overseas visitors, the Regional Co-operative Market Access Scheme to promote air and sea access to the regions outside of Dublin will be extended until 2018. The fund will be administered by Tourism Ireland with matching funding by airports and ports and regional tourism stakeholders including Local Authorities.	2016-2018	Tourism Ireland, DTTAS, airports and port companies outside Dublin, Local Authorities, local tourism interests.	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Regional Co-operative Market Access Scheme rolled out successfully in 2016 and continued in 2017.</p>
8.	DTTAS will arrange for an independent evaluation of Ireland's overseas tourism	2017	DTTAS	<p>To be commenced in 2017.</p> <p>A Value for Money Review of the Tourism Marketing Fund will</p>

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	marketing expenditure, and the findings of this evaluation will be shared with the tourism industry.			<p>be undertaken in 2017 by the Strategic Research and Analysis Division (SRAD) of DTTAS</p> <p>SRAD expects to have a final report by Q1-2018.</p>
9.	<p>The tourism agencies, in collaboration with DTTAS and tourism industry stakeholders, will draw up a shortlist of suggested themes (including the possibility of a successor to The Gathering) for a focused tourism marketing initiative. A decision will be made by Government in the first half of 2016, with the initiative to take place in 2018 or a subsequent year. In looking at potential themes, priority will be given to those that are likely to maximise the potential overseas tourism revenue. In addition, the scope for all-island themed years will be examined in association with tourism authorities in Northern Ireland.</p>	2016	Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland, Tourism Industry.	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Officials have been engaging with Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland with regard to the possibility of a themed year. A number of possible themes have been put forward and further consideration is being given to the timing of a themed year. Ideally, a themed year would be timed to avail of spare capacity, particularly with regard to accommodation, and also with regard to access to Ireland through our air and sea ports. Officials will continue to monitor the tourism trends, along with wider developments (including the impacts of BrExit) and feed that into their consideration of the timing of a themed year.</p>
10.	<p>Supports for festivals and events will be updated to reflect changing market needs, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a review by Fáilte Ireland of the structures and procedures that are used to target significant visiting 	2017	Fáilte Ireland, Local Authorities, Cultural Agencies.	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Fáilte Ireland launched their 2017 National Festivals and Participative Events Programme² in August 2016 and their Regional Festivals and Participative Events</p>

² <http://www.failteireland.ie/Supports/Identify-Available-Funding/National-Festivals-and-Participative-Events.aspx>

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	<p>international events, with a particular focus on offsetting seasonality;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identifying key indigenous events with the greatest potential for attracting international visitors and offsetting seasonality, to be supported by a multi-annual funding framework; - funding decisions to be provided to organisers with sufficient lead time so that their respective events can be programmed by tour operators in their overseas marketing; - a review of arrangements for regional and community festivals to ensure maximum value for money in terms of incremental overseas visitors. 			<p>Programme in December 2016.</p> <p>Fáilte Ireland is preparing a proposal to redesign the National/Regional Festivals and Participative Events Programmes in the context of their preparation for the 2018 programme. Fáilte Ireland is exploring options for a role for Local Authorities in administering grant allocations to regional festivals.</p> <p>The County and City Managers' Association (CCMA) has agreed to Fáilte Ireland's funding proposal for the 2018 regional festival funds to be transferred to Local Authorities.</p>
11.	<p>Within the framework of the forthcoming National Cultural Policy, and the new DAHG-led Strategic Partnership Steering Group on Heritage, relevant Government Departments and agencies will collaborate to improve promotion of, access to, and presentation of Ireland's cultural heritage and State owned natural and built heritage sites.</p>	2016-2018	<p>Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Office of Public Works (OPW), DTTAS, Tourism agencies.</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Update from Department Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht awaited following reconfiguration in 2017</p>
12.	<p>DTTAS and the tourism agencies will also identify those State agencies (outside of the tourism and cultural sector) with potential to</p>	2016	<p>DTTAS, Tourism agencies.</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>Fáilte Ireland has entered into strategic partnerships with the National Parks and Wildlife</p>

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	contribute to the quality of the visitor experience, and will develop Memoranda of Understanding with these agencies as appropriate.			Service, Coillte and the OPW and has made capital investments in the assets of each of these State agencies in order to maximise their tourism potential.
13.	Fáilte Ireland and Bord Bia will collaborate on the development of food-related experiences for tourists, including the promotion of food, beverages and marine trails that highlight the very high quality of Irish food and beverages for visitors. The food experiences will align closely with the three tourism experience brands (Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland's Ancient East, and Dublin - A Breath of Fresh Air).	2016-2017	Fáilte Ireland, Bord Bia, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Local Authorities.	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>In relation to Bord Bia, Fáilte Ireland have collaborated on co-creation workshops to explore the development of whiskey trails, collaborated on media requests for food and tourism pieces to ensure a consistency of message and share resources, and consulted with them in the development of our next Food in Tourism strategy. In relation to BIM, the first phase of "Taste the Atlantic" is in place, which has created significant enthusiasm from both industry and visitors.</p> <p>Currently, further development has paused pending the final drafting and subsequent approval of the Food in Tourism 2017-2020 strategy by the Authority.</p>
14.	The Government, in collaboration with the Northern Ireland Executive, will strongly support the Irish Rugby Football Union bid to host the 2023 Rugby World Cup.	2016-2017	Irish Rugby Football Union, supported by DTTAS, Northern Ireland Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment, Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland, and the tourism industry.	<p>Ongoing. Ireland submitted its bid on on 1st June 2017. World Rugby's Council will make their ultimate decision on hosting in November 2017. There is a very competitive field with France and South Africa also submitting bids,</p>
15.	Fáilte Ireland will engage with relevant sporting and	2016	Fáilte Ireland, sporting and cultural	Ongoing

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	cultural bodies to explore how to make uniquely Irish sporting/cultural experiences more accessible to overseas visitors.		bodies.	<p>Fáilte Ireland is engaging with the relevant bodies to explore how to make uniquely Irish sporting/cultural experiences more accessible to overseas visitors:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As part of the experience development plans; 2. Within its Events Strategy; and 3. as part of the 'What's the Big Idea' initiative underway with festivals and events to drive innovation.
16.	The forthcoming National Sports Policy, to be published in 2016, will include specific objectives with regard to sports-related tourism.	2016	DTTAS	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>National Sports Policy expected to be published before end 2017.</p>
17.	Fáilte Ireland will assist tourism enterprises to maximise their online engagement with potential visitors. This will be particularly important given the forthcoming upgrade to next generation broadband which is expected to reach 85% of all premises in the country by 2018 and 100% of premises by 2020.	2016-2018	Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland.	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Tourism Ireland plans to increase the number of digital opportunities for the Irish tourism industry on its platforms in the period up to 2019.</p> <p>Fáilte Ireland's Business Performance Team provides a wide range of digital capability-building supports, using a range of on-line and face-to-face approaches to delivery, as well as offering a library of webinars delivered by industry experts .</p> <p>The broad range of topics</p>

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				<p>covered include optimisation of on-line presence; web internationalisation (to improve website localisation to reflect overseas target market); and maximising opportunities through effective use of social media.</p> <p>Fáilte Ireland is currently developing a series of 'Grow Digital' workshops, to be rolled out in 2018, targeting the very small Tourism SMEs. These will provide practical tips and techniques to implement good digital practices, supported by a brief review of their digital presence to identify areas for improvement.</p>
18.	The provision of Wi-Fi connectivity at outdoor locations, particularly at the signature points along the experience brands, will be encouraged to support visitors in sharing their images of Ireland through social media.	2016-2018	Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland, Local Authorities.	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>The Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment is liaising with Local Authorities to facilitate the roll-out of broadband infrastructure in order that next-generation broadband services would become widely available, which would enhance the local tourism offering.</p> <p>Fáilte Ireland provides free wifi for visitors to its Tourist Information Offices.</p>
19.	Within the framework of the brand architecture, Fáilte Ireland will examine the capital investment and	2016	Fáilte Ireland	<p>Complete.</p> <p>New Fáilte Ireland Tourism Development & Innovation - A</p>

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	<p>enterprise supports that will be required in the tourism sector in order to meet the 2025 targets set out in the Tourism Policy Statement, and the agency will produce an updated strategy in this regard.</p>			<p>Strategy For Investment 2016-2022 launched in June 2016³.</p> <p>With regard to its enterprise supports in the key destinations of WAW, IAE and Dublin, Fáilte Ireland aims to assist tourism businesses focus at a destination level on how they can best position their offering within the geographical location - through alignment with the experience brands; championing their destination and helping bring the brand to life for visitors; and taking a cluster approach, developing key business relationships and cross-selling in order to increase visitor dwell-time in the area.</p> <p>Fáilte Ireland's new 'Get Brexit-Ready' industry support programme (launched on 12 September 2017) offers a suite of targeted supports for Irish tourism operators.</p>
20.	<p>A new targeted strategy to increase visitor numbers and revenue from new and developing markets will be developed. The strategy will focus not only on marketing but also on the training and up-skilling that is required for the tourism industry here to meet the needs of visitors from these markets. The results of the research will be reported back to the Tourism Leadership Group.</p>	2016-2017	Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland, Tourism Industry, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Strategy developed and presented to Ministers and Tourism Leadership Group in January 2017</p>

³ http://www.failteireland.ie/Failteireland/media/WebsiteStructure/Documents/2_Develop_Your_Business/6_Funding/FI-Tourism-Investment-Strategy-Final-07-06-16.pdf

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21.	<p>In recognition of the importance of tourism to local economies and the contribution of Local Authorities to tourism development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local Authorities will, under the auspices of the County and City Management Association, convene a Tourism Strategy Sub-group, whose primary objective will be to facilitate the sharing of best practice on developing tourism. - Guidelines, including a draft template for Local Authority tourism strategies, consistent with the policy objectives in 'People, Place and Policy - Growing Tourism to 2025', will be developed. - Following approval of the template, each Local Authority will be required to produce a tourism strategy (or update its existing strategy) within this common template. - The tourism agencies will engage with individual Local Authorities that have developed / are developing links with the diaspora from their respective counties in order to examine the opportunities for collaboration. - A conference addressing best practice in the Local 	2016-2018	Local Authorities, DTTAS, Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland.	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>The Local Authorities Tourism Conference “Collaborate Locally to Compete Globally” was held on the 29th & 30th of March 2017. Each of the 31 Local Authorities, together with Minister Patrick O Donovan, launched their Tourism Statement of Strategy at the Conference.</p> <p>The CCMA has established a Tourism Strategy Sub-Group.</p>

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	Authority / Community tourism field will be organised in 2016 in order to bring together the varied stakeholders in local tourism to exchange best practice.			
22.	A review of the effectiveness of existing supports available to new tourism enterprises will be undertaken, including the potential to establish a start-up fund to support innovative tourism projects, involving collaborative approaches at Local Authority and community levels.	2016	DTTAS, Fáilte Ireland, Local Authorities.	<p>Fáilte Ireland recently brought together all its business and operational performance support teams under a new, consolidated Enterprise Development Division.</p> <p>As part of a cluster approach to local enterprise supports, Fáilte Ireland collaborated with LEOs and ETBs to deliver a community-based shared knowledge and business supports programme that included one-to-one mentoring in marketing, business development and cross-selling.</p> <p>Recent innovations include the new 'Get Brexit Ready' Programme and Web Portal</p> <p>Furthermore, Fáilte Ireland in conjunction with IMI launched a Senior Executive Programme tailored to action learning and project solution, particularly in terms of Brexit, and also has a series of key business modules delivered on-line through Cornell University.</p>
23.	The Fáilte Ireland Visitor Attitudes Survey will be updated to reflect the wider range of factors influencing visitor satisfaction. The findings of this research will inform future public investment decisions.	2016-2018	Fáilte Ireland, DTTAS.	<p>Complete.</p> <p>Updated VAS deployed by Fáilte Ireland in 2016 summer season. An updated version of the Survey of Overseas Travellers (a year-round survey) will roll out from</p>

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