



Tourism Ireland  
**SOAR**  
(Situation & Outlook Analysis Report)  
June 2019



## 1. Summary Headlines

- Latest figures for **overseas arrivals to Ireland** indicate around 3,986,700 people arrived during January to May this year, an increase of +3.7% on the same period in 2018. North America (+9.1%) and long-haul markets (+7.2%) continue to show consistent growth so far throughout the year. However, Britain and Mainland Europe have shown a weaker pattern as the year unfolds – with Britain down -4.4% and Mainland Europe down -4.6% for the month of May.
- Latest published data for **overseas holidaymakers to Northern Ireland** for the January to December 2018 period shows 794,000 holidaymakers from overseas visited Northern Ireland, recording growth of +12%. Holidaymaker revenue also grew last year, with an increased holidaymaker spend of +13% overall (£92 million).
- Despite a positive start to the year, the **outlook for the year ahead** remains mixed with both overseas market contacts and industry partners across the island of Ireland expressing more subdued sentiment than recent months. The continuing uncertainty surrounding the UK's withdrawal from the EU remains a key concern for partners at home and in some of our overseas markets. Tourism Ireland continues to consult closely with stakeholders at home and overseas and to monitor the situation.
- A number of **access** issues will affect the season ahead. Aer Lingus has adjusted its North American summer 2019 schedule due to an aircraft delivery delay. Ryanair reduced its London Stansted/Belfast service from 22 to two flights a week. In addition, the full impact of the grounding of B737 MAX aircraft continues to remain uncertain.
- Tourism Ireland's 2019 **promotional campaigns** continue across the globe, helping to boost travel and stimulate demand for summer holidays on the island. Our new global marketing campaign, *Fill your Heart with Ireland*, is helping to keep the spotlight on the island of Ireland at this important time. Tourism Ireland continues to work closely with industry partners and our colleagues in Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland to capitalise on all opportunities to promote the island and maximise overseas tourism revenue.

## 2. Global Outlook

The UNWTO's latest World Tourism Barometer reports worldwide growth of +4% in international tourist arrivals for January-March 2019. This rate is in line with long-term norms and comparable to the 2008-2018 average of +4% per year, though below the +6% increase seen in the past two years.

Europe saw +4% more international arrivals in Q1 2019, after its +6% growth last year. The Middle East saw growth of +8%, Asia and the Pacific +6%, Africa +4% and the Americas +3%.

According to the latest UNWTO Confidence Index Survey, confidence in global tourism performance has begun to improve again and the outlook for May-August 2019 is more optimistic than the preceding three periods.



### 3. External Travel Trends

#### Key Markets Economic and Travel Outlook

##### 3.1 Overview

Despite relatively stable expectations in our core markets, the IMF and others are warning of a potential softening of the global economy. The United Nations has recently downgraded its forecast for world economic growth, amid the widening trade war between the US and China. It projects that world trade will grow by +2.7% in 2019, revised down from +3% in January, and below the +3.6% growth achieved last year.

The UN has said that the downward adjustment comes as a result of trade tensions, political uncertainty and a complicated confluence of internal and external factors affecting most of the developed and developing economies.

The prosperity of the global economy has been built on the free flow of trade and investment over past decades and concerns have risen because disrupting the flow of trade between the world's two largest economies is expected to put global growth at risk.

They warned that if big governments continue raising tariffs and ratcheting up the trade war, then less developed economies could suffer too, over and above those whose exports depend in large measure on the bigger economies.

## 3.2 Economic Indicators

### Great Britain

Oxford Economics forecast a modest acceleration in GDP growth from +1.5% this year to +1.7% in 2020. These forecasts assume that the British Government secures parliamentary approval for the Brexit Withdrawal Agreement, allowing the UK to leave the EU before the end of October. The elimination of risk regarding a “no deal” exit should trigger an appreciation of sterling and sustained growth in household spending power, which would support consumption at the expense of exports.

<b>2019 GDP Forecast:</b>	+1.5% (up from +1.4%)
<b>CPI 2019:</b>	+1.9% (up from +1.8%)
<b>Unemployment:</b>	3.9% (down from 4.0%)
<b>Exchange rate (€/£):</b>	€1: £0.89 (up from £0.86)

### USA

Strong GDP growth in Q1, along with solid labour market developments in April, ensured that the US economy is not headed for recession. However, with fiscal stimulus dissipating, economic momentum will cool through the remainder of the year. Oxford Economics believes the economy will grow by +2.6% in 2019 but slower disposable income growth, lacklustre global activity and rising trade tensions remain downside risks.

<b>2019 GDP Forecast:</b>	+2.3% (no change)
<b>CPI 2019:</b>	+2.0% (up from +1.6%)
<b>Unemployment:</b>	3.6% (down from 3.8%)
<b>Exchange rate (€/€):</b>	€1: \$1.12 (down from \$1.13)
<b>Exchange rate (£/\$):</b>	£1: \$1.27 (down from \$1.31)

### France

GDP growth held steady at +0.3% in Q1. While this was slightly below expectation, it still reflects the relative resilience of the economy against persistent external woes and high internal political uncertainty. Looking ahead, Oxford Economics sees household consumption strengthening, thanks to strong fiscal support, lower inflation and rising wages. They maintain their French GDP growth forecasts at +1.4% in 2019 and +1.5% in 2020, slightly above the eurozone average.

<b>2019 GDP Forecast:</b>	+1.4% (no change)
<b>CPI 2019:</b>	+1.2% (no change)
<b>Unemployment:</b>	8.8% (up from 8.4%)
<b>Exchange rate (€/£):</b>	€1: £0.89 (up from £0.86)

### Germany

Despite the economy almost falling into recession during the second half of 2018, hard data has been quite strong overall in early 2019. Unemployment fell to a historic low of 4.9% in March and employment growth could see its strongest quarterly gain in a year in Q1, while wages grew by around +3%. Retail sales are rising markedly, unsurprising in this environment.

<b>2019 GDP Forecast:</b>	+1.1% (no change)
<b>CPI 2019:</b>	+1.5% (no change)
<b>Unemployment:</b>	4.9% (down from 5.0%)
<b>Exchange rate (€/£):</b>	€1: £0.89 (up from £0.86)

*Source: Oxford Economics Briefing and May reports 2019*

### 3.3 Travel Trends in Key Markets

#### Great Britain

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The most recent data from Britain's Office of National Statistics shows a decrease of -2% in UK outbound travel for the period November 2018 to January 2019, representing 12.6 million visits overseas by UK residents. Spend was up +5% (£7.9 billion) on these visits. There were 9.3 million visits to European countries, a decrease of -5% when compared with the same period a year earlier. VisitEngland has reported record staycations over Easter 2019, with 7.4 million Britons opting to holiday at home. The big tour operators are reporting an increase in demand for countries outside the EU this year, with long-haul trips proving more popular. Travel firm Thomas Cook has reported a £1.5 billion loss for the first half of the year and blames Brexit for causing unease and forcing customers to delay their summer holiday plans. easyJet is also reporting a more cautious outlook for the second half of the year and attributes Brexit fears for impacting European travel plans. Despite the sentiment, Heathrow Airport experienced its 30<sup>th</sup> consecutive month of growth in April, with the airport handling 6.79 million passengers, a rise of +3.3% on April 2018. The MAG group (Manchester Airport, Stansted and East Midlands) saw passenger numbers grow by +4% in April, with Belfast amongst the best-performing domestic destinations.

#### North America and Australia

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**The US:** The outbound market to Europe remains strong from the US, with the European Travel Commission forecasting growth to Europe of +10% again this year. Key economic indicators remain positive and supportive of outbound travel, with consumer sentiment continuing to climb to record levels. American Airlines, Delta and United continue to expand both domestic and international operations at a record pace. The Dow Jones Index has rebounded against recent falls and the dollar is holding steady against the euro, despite the current trade tensions with China. Unemployment is at 3.6%, the lowest since 1969. VisitBritain has welcomed a return to growth in North American visitors, with a reported +15% increase in January traffic. Traffic to Iceland has fallen -4.7% in Q1 following several years of robust growth, and US arrivals in France are down slightly in Q1, which is being attributed to the 'Gilets Jaunes' protests. JetBlue announced services to London from Boston and JFK, commencing in 2021.

**Canada:** The independent research organisation CBOC has reported 446,000 Canadian arrivals in European destinations in the first two months of 2019, representing a year-on-year increase of +1.9%. The national consumer confidence rating was 112 points in April, a -6.4 point decrease from one year ago and a -5.9 point decline from last month. Outbound bookings for Scotland have reportedly slowed in the market, as a result of an increase in pricing. Canadian travel agents are reporting an increase in enquiries for 'off-the-beaten track' European experiences and destinations outside of the traditional 'big three' of Italy, France and Spain.

**Australia:** Outbound travel continues to enjoy modest growth in Australia, with destinations such as New Zealand, Indonesia, the US and the UK proving most

popular. *Luxury Travel* magazine reports that Australians are also increasingly on the lookout for something out of the ordinary for their next holiday, with a rise in searches for adventure travel, small town travel, surprise destinations, abandoned castles, autumn scenery and zero-waste travel. Consumer confidence has increased following the recent Australian Federal Election on 18<sup>th</sup> May and the Australian dollar is steadily holding its value.

## **Mainland Europe**

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**Germany:** Outbound travel continues to grow strongly from the German market, with almost one in three Germans saying they will spend more on holidays this year. German travellers react quickly to any perceived change in the geo-political climate and destinations such as Turkey are already seeing strong rebound growth this year.

**France:** Outbound travel is also seeing good growth from France. Traditional North African holiday destinations are enjoying a resurgence in demand, with their competitive price points proving to be a strong motivator for booking. Distribution channel popularity continues to evolve with an influx of new operators reducing prices by booking directly. The 'Gilets Jaunes' protests continue to cause unease; while these demonstrations are not as disruptive as in the recent past, there is no indication of an end in sight.

**Spain:** The outlook for outbound travel from Spain is positive, with travel insurance specialists ERV forecasting growth of +10% by year end, citing the growth in the youth travel segment and access to low cost flights as the main reasons. The Spanish Airport Authority reports increased traffic in all major airports: Madrid +6.1%, Barcelona +6%, Bilbao +9.1%, Santiago +2.2% and Santander +13%. According to the Spanish Statistics Office, Spanish travel agents reported a +1.1% increase in revenue for the month of March, which is viewed as very positive considering Easter fell in April.

**Italy:** The latest Italian tourism industry report from Confturismo-Piepoli Observatory reports a growing traveller confidence index, rising to a record 67 points for April. The most popular outbound destinations from the market include Spain, France, the Netherlands, Dubai and Malaysia. Bankitalia's annual Italian tourism statistics show that Italian visitors spent €25.5 billion abroad last year (an increase of +3.8% on 2017).

**BeNe:** Research organisation NBTC-NIPO reports that more than 50% of the Dutch population (8.8 million) plan to take a summer holiday abroad this year. Sustainability remains a hot topic in the Netherlands, with the Dutch Government planning to implement a flight tax of €7 per ticket from 2021 onwards. 35% of Belgians plan to take a city break in 2019, with France, the Netherlands and Spain the top three country destination choices for Belgians. Passenger numbers increased to almost 2.3 million at Brussels Airport in April, despite WOWair and Flybmi ceasing operations.

**The Nordics:** Sustainable travel remains a key trend in the Nordic countries and the visibility of climate protests is making closer-to-home destinations more appealing, with growing interest in 'zero-flight' holidays.

## Emerging Markets

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**China:** The family sector of outbound tourism saw +18% growth last year, the largest increase of any sector. There was a +5.1% increase in Chinese arrivals to EU destinations in 2018, according to a recent report from the European Travel Commission. Chinese bookings for overseas educational tours are on the rise according to Ctrip, one of China's largest outbound travel companies, who've seen huge growth in demand and interest for overseas summer vacation study tours.

**The UAE:** Outbound travel is growing from the UAE, with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the UK most in demand currently; other popular destinations include Thailand, Malaysia, India, the US and Australia. The most popular European countries are France, Germany and Switzerland.

**India:** A recent study of outbound travel by CAPA India & Expedia reports that traditional group packages to Europe took in five to eight destinations in a couple of weeks; however, millennial travellers are now expressing a preference for visiting fewer destinations on a single trip.



## 4. Market Intelligence

### 4.1 Arrivals and Visitors

#### Preliminary Estimates

Visitor Origins	2019		2018		2018	
	Ireland Direct Arrivals January-May 2019	%YoY	Northern Ireland Holidaymakers Jan-Dec 2018	%YoY	* Island of Ireland Holidaymakers Jan-Dec 2018	%YoY
Total	3,986,700	+3.7%	794,000	+12%	5,639,000	+11%
Great Britain	1,482,600	+0.8%	352,000	+10%	1,680,000	+5%
Mainland Europe	1,462,600	+3.2%	165,000	+5%	2,128,000	+11%
North America	812,600	+9.1%	187,000	+22%	1,484,000	+18%
Rest of World	229,300	+7.2%	90,000	+14%	347,000	+10%

Source : CSO, NISRA

Note : **Arrivals** are all overseas trips into an Ireland port, including transfers, overnights and day-trips.

**Ireland (Direct) Overnight Visitors** – only includes those that leave through ports in the RoI.

**Visitors** only include those who overnight in the destination.

\*Current estimates, to be agreed before external publication

Results from the CSO indicate that there were 3,986,700 overseas arrivals to Ireland in the months January to May this year, an increase of +3.7% on the same period in 2018. North America (+9.1%) and long-haul markets (+7.2%) continue to show consistent growth so far throughout the year. However, Britain and Mainland Europe have shown a weaker pattern as the year unfolds – with British arrivals down -4.4% and Mainland Europe down -4.6% for the month of May.

Latest data for Northern Ireland, for January to December 2018, shows strong overseas holidaymaker growth of +12%. British holidaymakers increased by +10%, North American by +22%, Mainland European up +5% and emerging markets grew by +14%. Overseas holidaymaker spend also increased last year, with growth of +13% recorded. Spend by Great Britain was up +6%, North America spending was up +33%, Mainland Europe was up +11% and emerging markets was up +16%.

Latest estimates for the island of Ireland in 2018 show holidaymaker growth of +11% for the year. Great Britain saw holidaymaker growth of +5%, North America was up +18%, Mainland Europe grew by +11% and emerging markets was up +10%. Holidaymaker revenue also grew, with an increase in spend of +13% year-on-year. Great Britain holidaymaker revenue was up +3%, North America grew by +19%, Mainland Europe was up by +10% and emerging markets increased by +13%.

## 4.2 Air and Sea Connectivity

Air Access Seat Capacity Estimates	Summer 2019 vs. Summer 2018			
	YOY % Change	Ireland	NI	Island of Ireland
Great Britain		NC	+1%	NC
Mainland Europe		+6%	NC	+5%
North America**		NC	-100%	-1%
Rest of World		+15%	NA	+15%
<b>Overall</b>		<b>+3%</b>	<b>NC</b>	<b>+3%</b>

*Source: Based on the TTC Summer Access Inventory Report 2019 - Sourced from OAG/airlines scheduled direct one-way weekly seat capacity July 2019. NA= Not applicable. NC= No change*

The air access outlook for the summer 2019 season is positive overall. Latest estimates suggest that available air seat capacity to the island of Ireland over the peak summer months is forecast to grow by +3%, when compared to the same period a year ago.

The worldwide grounding of the Boeing 737 MAX aircraft continues. Services to Ireland by Norwegian continue to be suspended from Cork and Shannon, while Dublin services are operated by substitute aircraft. Air Canada and WestJet have adjusted their operations on two routes from Canada. WestJet is launching its Calgary service in June, using a 787 aircraft.

Ryanair has reduced its London Stansted/Belfast service from 22 to two flights a week (Friday and Sunday) since 2<sup>nd</sup> June. Aer Lingus expanded its operation with CityJet, to add a Birmingham/Dublin service twice weekly from 4<sup>th</sup> May to 28<sup>th</sup> September.

Brittany Ferries expects to be back to full service in mid-June, following delays to the repair of its flagship vessel on the Roscoff/Cork route; while Irish Ferries' Cherbourg/Dublin route sees its WB Yeats boosting available car capacity from Mainland Europe.

### 4.3 Total Passenger Numbers

	Total Pax 2018*	% change 2018	April 2019	May 2019
<b>ROI sea passengers</b>	3m	-2%	+9%	n/a
<b>NI sea passengers</b>	2.1m	-1%	+10%	n/a
Dublin Airport	31.5m	+6%	+7%	+4%
Shannon Airport	1.9m	+6%	-7%	n/a
Cork Airport	2.4m	+4%	+13%	+9%
Ireland West Airport Knock	0.8m	+3%	+4%	+2%
<b>All ROI Airports</b>	36.2m	+6%	+7%	n/a
Belfast International Airport	6.3m	+7%	+9%	+9%
Belfast City Airport	2.5m	-2%	+3%	-4%
City of Derry Airport	0.2m	-4%	+6%	n/a
<b>All NI Airports</b>	9m	+4%	+7%	n/a

Sources: CAA, DAA, Shannon Group, IWAK, Fáilte Ireland, Annaero, Ferrystat, TTC, Anker Report

\*Total Pax 2018 is the total traffic (two-way) at the airport(s)/seaports

n/a = not available

Latest published data shows air passenger traffic growth of +7% was recorded at airports in Ireland for the month of April 2019. Sea passenger numbers to and from Ireland grew by +9% YOY for the same month. Latest published sea passengers to and from Northern Ireland for the month of April were up +10%.

## 4.4 Accommodation

### Hotel accommodation data estimates

Hotel Accommodation					
January - April 2019					
	Occupancy		Room Sales	ADR	
	%	% change v 2018	%	Average Daily Rate	% change v 2018
Island of Ireland	70%	0%	+3%	€111.07	0%
Northern Ireland	64%	-6%	+4%	£70.33	-4%
Ireland	71%	0%	+2%	€115.36	+1%
Scotland	68%	-1%	+3%	£67.39	-3%
England	72%	0%	+2%	£85.35	0%

Source: STR Hotel reports – Properties across the island of Ireland are included, with a strong representation from Dublin and Belfast.





The hotel data specialist STR reported a continuing pattern of increased room sales for the island of Ireland. Northern Ireland has seen increases in the January to April period (+4%), with a moderate reduction in occupancy (-6%) and average daily rate (-4%) due to the additional room capacity.

Hotels across Ireland experienced slight growth in terms of average daily rate (ADR) between January and April this year (+1%), with occupancy on par with the same period last year. Room sales increased by +2% for the period. An analysis by STR reports that regional Ireland is keeping pace with Dublin over the summer months. Dublin has seen a flat start to the year, with supply growth outweighing demand growth so far in 2019.

Across Europe, hotels are continuing to see positive growth YTD with an ADR of €103.68 (+2%) and on-par average occupancy of 65.8%.



## 4.5 Island of Ireland Industry Feedback

Barometer	What they said ...
<p>Mixed</p> 	<p><b>Accommodation providers</b></p> <p>While the feedback remains mixed, Northern Ireland hotels are cautiously optimistic overall as the market adjusts to the increased supply of hotel rooms (+26% YTD). Indications for summer 2019 remain generally positive, with promotional initiatives helping to stimulate business.</p> <p>In Ireland, hotel and guesthouse sources are cautious but positive as room sales continue to grow. Regional sources outside the big cities are also seeing moderate growth overall. However, concerns remain about the impact of the VAT hike on business. Feedback from the self-catering and B&amp;B sectors is somewhat muted, with reports of a quieter than usual season so far. B&amp;B sources are reporting declines from France but a more positive performance from other key markets such as Germany and the US.</p>
<p>Mixed</p> 	<p><b>Air and sea carriers</b></p> <p>Feedback from air carriers is moderately positive with a mixed outlook from some partners. Competitive pressures, rising fuel costs, recent Boeing aircraft issues, uncertainty in markets and slowing economies are all contributing to a more cautious mood.</p> <p>Ferry feedback is subdued, with significant competitive pressures in the market. Main concerns relate to declining yields and the potential impact of the UK's proposed withdrawal from the EU. However, the recent agreement between the Irish and British Governments to continue with, and formalise, the Common Travel Area is welcomed. While indications for the summer are not yet clear, there are expectations that demand from GB will soften.</p>
<p>Mixed</p> 	<p><b>Attractions</b></p> <p>Feedback from attractions across Ireland is mixed. While the majority of partners saw growth for the first five months, some express caution in their outlook for the coming months, with the potential impact of Brexit and the increase in the VAT rate remaining key concerns.</p> <p>Sources in Northern Ireland report a good performance overall from overseas visitors so far this year. While the month of May was slightly softer in performance terms, when compared with previous months, partners remain cautiously optimistic as the summer season further unfolds.</p>
<p>Mixed</p> 	<p><b>Tour Operators</b></p> <p>There is mixed sentiment for 2019 among tour operator partners in all markets. The uncertainty of the UK withdrawal from the EU, increased VAT in Ireland and capacity and rate challenges all continue to cause some concern. Local market issues are also negatively affecting some source markets.</p>

Source: Based on feedback from Island of Ireland industry sources, May 2019

## 4.6 Tourism Ireland Market Outlook

### Great Britain

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The outlook from GB is subdued but somewhat optimistic. While Q1 results were mixed, overall year-to-date numbers are steady and slightly ahead of 2018, though political uncertainty continues to have an impact on sentiment. Sea carriers to Northern Ireland are continuing to report a slight upward trend, with joint marketing initiatives with Tourism Ireland having a positive impact and helping to stimulate demand. While a leading air carrier has reported a decrease in demand from GB, it's expected that forthcoming joint marketing campaigns will have a positive effect. Positive sentiment prevails in the coach and group sector where bookings are picking up and selling well, with regional programmes proving especially popular, particularly those featuring the North-West and West regions.

### North America and Australia

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**The US:** Outlook is positive overall from the US, with indicators predicting modest growth in the months ahead. While leisure demand is good, the growth rate has softened when compared to last year. Carriers are trading strongly, and tour operators are reporting another year of growth for the island of Ireland. FIT and chauffeur drive programmes are performing especially well this year, while escorted tours are less buoyant with flat or single-digit growth.

**Canada:** The outlook remains positive from Canada, with strong carrier and operator sentiment, and growth predicted.

**Australia:** The outlook from Australia is positive overall, following a slow start to 2019. While the timing of Easter, ANZAC Day and Australian school holidays had a negative impact on early bookings, the market has rebounded well. Indications for the 2019-2020 season are now strong, with more bookings for big trips in July and August and a later booking trend emerging. The island of Ireland is performing better from Australia than Europe overall.

### Mainland Europe

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**Germany:** Our main trade and carrier partners in Germany remain cautious. Coach travel via Britain continues to be impacted by Brexit concerns and the lack of any additional air connectivity means that the very strong growth seen last year will be difficult to replicate in 2019. The roll-out of Tourism Ireland's new advertising campaign has been well received by trade and consumers alike.

**France:** There is a mixed outlook from France. While traditional tour operators are reporting a slowdown in bookings for the island of Ireland and citing reduced demand and increased prices as reasons for this, newer direct-booking operators and OTAs (online travel agents) are performing well. Demand for off-season trips is also reportedly strong. Access from France remains solid, with both air and sea carriers reporting good bookings with no signs of a slow-down. Key partners remain cautiously optimistic. Accommodation price concerns persist, however.

**Spain:** OTA partners in Spain have seen strong growth year-to-date and targeted co-operative campaigns with Tourism Ireland have reportedly helped to stimulate demand. Bookings to Northern Ireland, in particular, have seen very strong growth versus last year. Carriers are also seeing good bookings growth to the island of Ireland. Partner feedback shows a strong April, helped by Easter, which has continued into May, though some softening is expected during the main summer season.

**Italy:** The outlook for the season ahead is cautiously optimistic in Italy, with early demand indications reflecting the short booking cycle in the market.

**BeNe:** In both Belgium and the Netherlands, the outlook is somewhat restrained with concerns related to Britain's withdrawal from the EU continuing to cause unease. Bookings remain on par with last year.

**The Nordics:** Consumer and trade sentiment is generally positive for travel to the island of Ireland from the Nordic countries this year. Tourism Ireland's strong digital presence in the first five months of the year has helped to promote the stable year-round air connectivity, with new carriers and routes. Partners are seeing some good results from this co-operation, with reports of generally steady bookings for the island of Ireland. The 148<sup>th</sup> Open has provided Tourism Ireland with a powerful platform to showcase the availability of great golf opportunities and a very long season on the island.

### Emerging Markets

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**China:** Travel trade feedback is positive from China, with good interest and bookings for the island of Ireland this summer. There is good demand for both UK + Ireland and island of Ireland only packages, with good growth particularly in the family-tour segment. *Game of Thrones* continues to pique interest and GoT-themed tours to Northern Ireland are growing in popularity.

**The UAE:** The outlook remains positive in the UAE and the market is showing good interest and bookings to the island this year, with new programmes and promotions having a positive effect.

**India:** Market operators are seeing good growth to the island from India this year, especially in the incentive group sector. However, airfares to Europe have increased substantially due to the temporary shutdown of Jet Airways operations in the market and this may impact on future bookings.

## 5. Conclusion

Although sentiment from trade and industry partners is mixed overall, indications remain positive for modest overall growth in overseas tourism to the island of Ireland in 2019. Despite geo-political uncertainty causing unease in overseas markets, results to date are positive. We are conscious that the continuing uncertainty around the UK's exit from the EU may be impacting booking patterns in some Mainland European markets and giving rise to some concern. We are monitoring this very closely, in consultation with industry partners at home and overseas.

Tourism Ireland marketing campaigns continue across markets, helping to stimulate bookings for the rest of the year. Our new global marketing campaign *Fill your Heart with Ireland* continues to help keep the island of Ireland in the spotlight. Campaigns with carriers and OTAs also continue, highlighting ease of access and good value offers from the industry, to build on last year's record and maximise overseas tourism revenue this year.

We also continue to work closely with our colleagues in Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland.