

SOAR

(Situation & Outlook Analysis Report)

May 2025



The global economic outlook has weakened sharply, in part due to a surge in tariffs and trade policy uncertainty. According to the UN Trade and Development agency's latest [economic outlook](#) update, global economic growth in 2025 could slow to +2.3%, marking a shift towards a recessionary path. Subdued demand, trade policy shocks, financial turbulence and systemic uncertainty are intensifying pressures – especially for developing countries. Trade policy uncertainty is already affecting businesses and long-term planning decisions.



Scheduled seat capacity to the island of Ireland for the 2025 summer season sits at 104% of last summer's levels, based on OAG filings. Ireland is currently scheduled at 107%, with Northern Ireland filed at 92%. The decline in seats to Northern Ireland is predominantly due to trimmed seat capacity by easyJet.

Island wide, scheduled air seat capacity from North America (110%), Mainland Europe (105%) and Other Areas (116%) is ahead of last summer's levels. Seat capacity from GB (99%) is just below. While overall seat capacity from Mainland Europe is up, seat capacity on routes of significant inbound potential from Mainland Europe is similar to last summer.



The Central Statistics Office (CSO) reports a decline in overseas tourist numbers and spend for Ireland for the first three months of the year, with January to March typically representing up to 17% of annual revenue. Industry leaders have shared their data and experience on the ground. Tourism Ireland has worked with our stakeholders, industry and the CSO to fully share data sources and connect industry and the process is ongoing to understand the full analysis.

A softer-than-usual Q1 was expected due to the Dublin Airport cap, with macro-economic factors also playing a part. The cap is now on hold, per legal review. The cap, limiting annual passengers to 32 million, was in place from November to March. Industry challenges include increased costs and changes to spread of visitors, based on length of stay and accommodation availability.



Working closely with Tourism Northern Ireland and Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland was delighted to bring 129 top international tourism buyers to Northern Ireland for Meet the Buyer (MTB) 2025, to meet with 200 Northern Ireland industry partners. In Killarney, 250 overseas trade partners gathered for Meitheal 2025 to do business with 380 Irish industry partners. Over 15,000 commercial meetings took place, supporting future programming of the island of Ireland. Most of the buyers took part in familiarisation trips while they were here, inspiring them to win visitors to the island of Ireland.



Tourism Ireland is investing in an extensive and targeted programme of activity across 13+ overseas source markets throughout 2025. Sustainable development is at the core of our plans, so there is a continued focus on attracting tourists who have 'value adding tourism traits' – people who are likely to see more, do more, enjoy more and therefore spend more when they visit. We will also unveil a new global advertising campaign this year, which will refresh and build on the strong foundations of our 'Fill your heart with Ireland' campaign, based on consumer insights – to make the island of Ireland stand out as a 'bucket list' destination.

Economic Conditions

Great Britain

According to Oxford Economics, the UK growth outlook has been impacted in part by higher US tariffs. Around 15% of UK goods exports go to the US and most goods imported into the US will now face a 10% tariff, with cars and car parts subject to a 25% levy. Oxford Economics expects that US demand for UK products will drop because the new tariffs will make them more expensive. A prolonged period of trade policy uncertainty may weigh on capital spending. Oxford Economics forecasts UK 2025 GDP growth at +1%.

Exchange rate

Apr '24 £1 : €1.17 Apr '25 £1 : €1.19

US

The US economy has been impacted by several shocks, which are reshaping the near-term outlook for growth, inflation, unemployment, monetary policy and financial markets. The economy was in good shape ahead of these shocks, but recession risks have risen. Oxford Economics has lowered its 2025 GDP growth forecast for the US from +2% to +1.2%.

Exchange rate

Apr '24 \$1 : €0.92 Apr '25 \$1 : €0.90
Apr '24 \$1 : £0.79 Apr '25 \$1 : £0.76

France

Oxford Economics forecasts that growth will remain subdued for most of the year. The unfolding trade war with the US and political instability at home will be key headwinds. Oxford Economics has lowered its forecast for French GDP growth in 2025 from +0.6% to +0.5%, as global trade uncertainty is weighing on business investment even more than initially anticipated.

Exchange rate

Apr '24 €1 : £0.86 Apr '25 €1 : £0.84

Germany

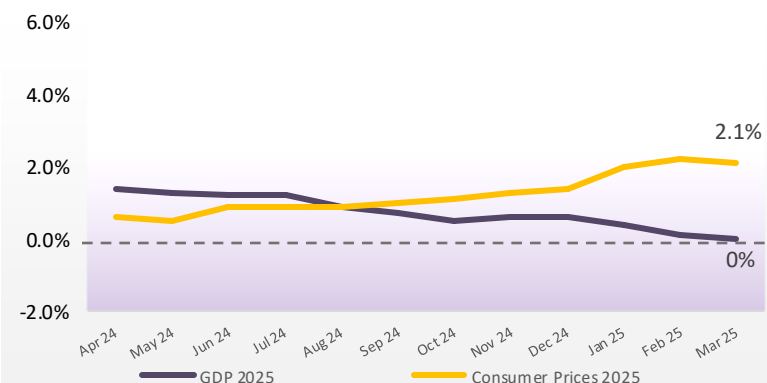
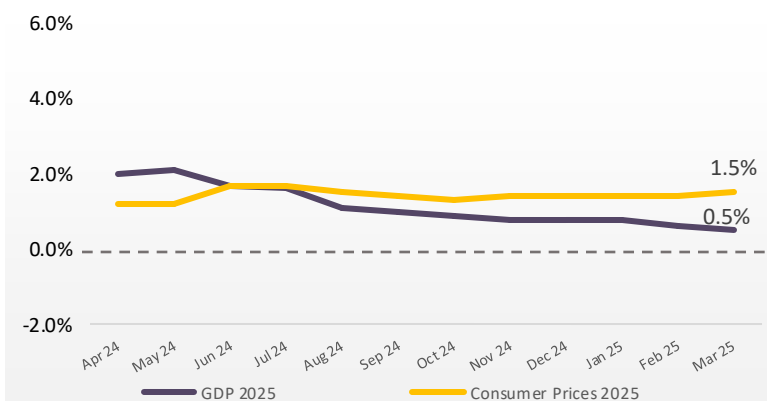
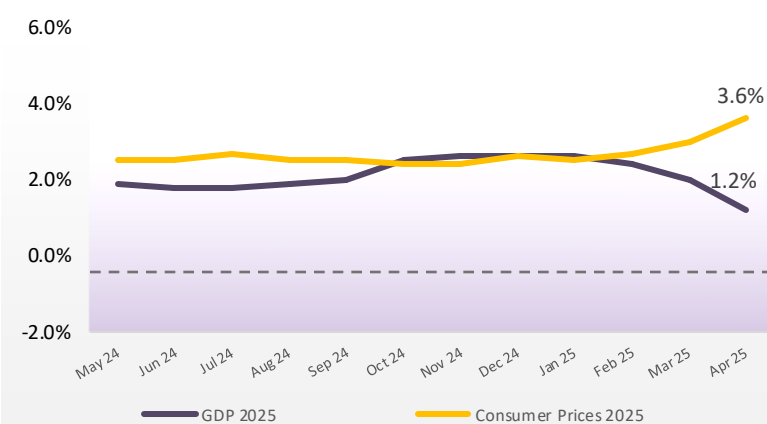
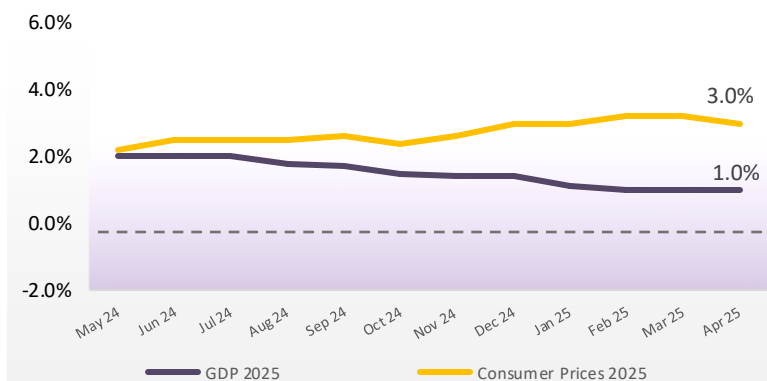
There is still no clear sign that the economy is recovering, according to Oxford Economics. Moreover, the announcement of US tariffs will likely result in a further setback. Oxford Economics continues to forecast that growth in the first half of the year will be muted, at best. Activity could pick up in the second half of the year, but it depends on the exact fiscal plans of the incoming government. GDP for 2025 is forecast to be flat.

Exchange rate

Apr '24 €1 : £0.86 Apr '25 €1 : £0.84

2025 Forecast Economic Outlook trended by month

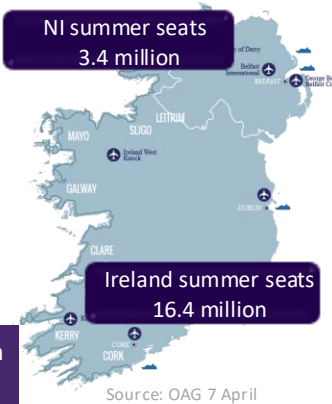
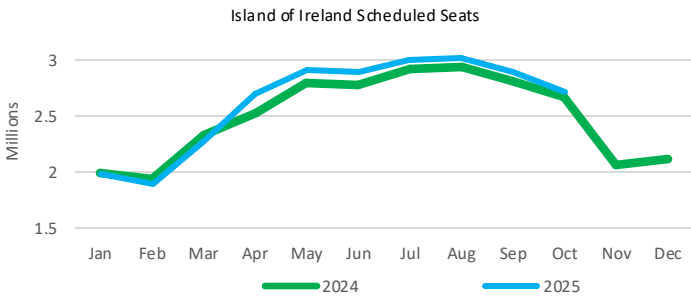
Source: Oxford Economics



Island of Ireland Access Situation



OAG Scheduled Seat Capacity Summer* 2025

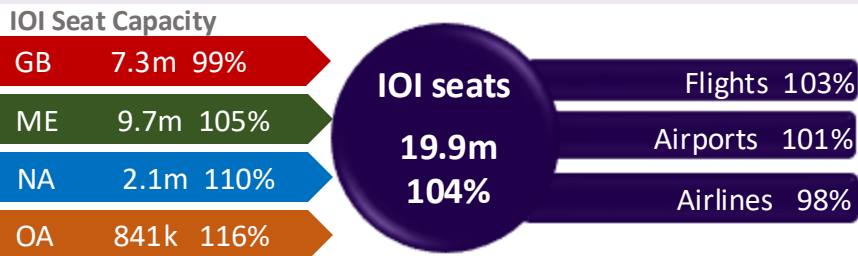


Based on OAG filings, scheduled air seat capacity to Ireland is filed at 107% of last summer's levels. Northern Ireland is scheduled at 92%, primarily due to fewer seats on offer from easyJet.

*The summer season runs from the last Sunday in March to the last Sunday in October.

Seat capacity to the island of Ireland for the 2025 summer season is scheduled at 104% of the level it was last summer.

Air Access Summer 2025 – % share of Summer 2024



OAG's scheduled air seat capacity to the island of Ireland from North America (110%), Mainland Europe (105%) and Other Areas (116%) is ahead of last summer's levels. Seat capacity from GB (99%) is just below the 2024 summer season.

GB = Great Britain ME = Mainland Europe NA = North America OA = Other Areas

Source: OAG 7 April

Airport Seat Capacity Forecast – Summer 2025

According to OAG, Dublin Airport has increased overseas seats scheduled for this summer season compared to last summer, with seats filed at 105%. Cork and Shannon Airports are both scheduled at 116% and 110% respectively of last summer's levels. Knock and Kerry are filed at 119% and 101% respectively and Donegal is scheduled at 128% for overseas seats.

Belfast International Airport and Belfast City Airport are filed at 93% and 90% respectively of 2024 summer season levels. City of Derry Airport is scheduled at 122%.

Airports	Summer 2024 seats	Summer 2025 seats	2025 % share of 2024
Belfast Intl.	2,737,071	2,532,645	93%
Belfast City	924,319	833,256	90%
City of Derry	69,657	84,638	122%
Dublin	13,014,536	13,684,487	105%
Cork	1,168,406	1,361,035	116%
Shannon	807,065	889,627	110%
Knock	324,159	386,935	119%
Kerry	133,301	134,688	101%
Donegal	3,144	4,032	128%
Total	19,181,658	19,911,343	104%

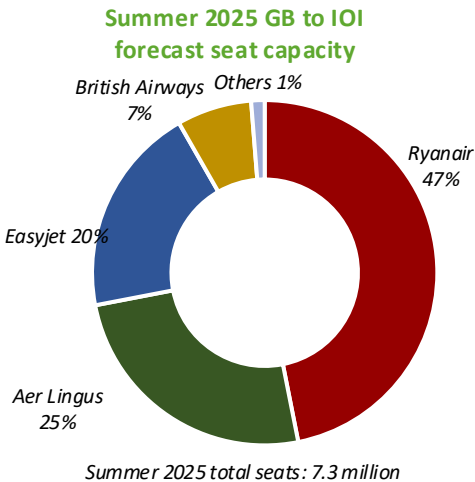
Ferry Performance – January - March 2025

Ferry passenger numbers on GB routes to and from the island of Ireland for the first three months of 2025 were at 91% of 2024 levels. The closure of and disruption at Holyhead Port in the early part of 2025 impacted on ferry traffic between GB and the island of Ireland. Note: performance data from France and Spain is not currently available.

Ferry (both ways)	January-March 2024	January-March 2025	2025 % share of 2024
GB – island of Ireland			
Sailings	4,031	3,911	97%
Passengers	681,739	623,704	91%
Cars	193,301	175,772	91%

Ferry Passenger Traffic	2025 % share of 2024
Northern Ireland	99%
Ireland	83%
Island of Ireland	91%

Access update



News

- The current scheduled seat capacity from Great Britain to the island of Ireland for summer season 2025 is at 99% of summer 2024 levels.
- While seats to the island of Ireland from Great Britain are almost on a par with last summer, GB to Ireland is filed at 106% and GB to Northern Ireland is scheduled at 88%, primarily due to a decrease in seats on offer from easyJet.
- easyJet will commence a new service from Birmingham to City of Derry Airport, beginning on 1st September 2025. The service will begin flying twice a week, on a Monday and Friday, year round.

Market activity update

Inspiring Visitors

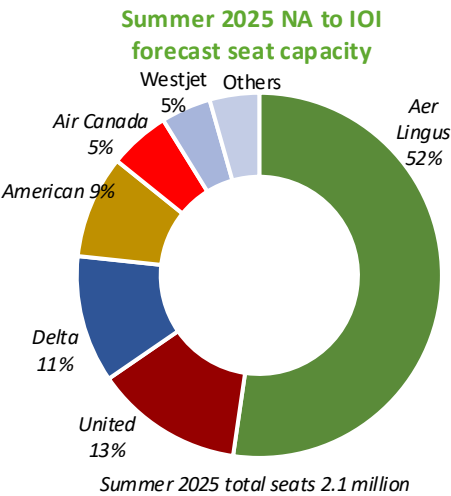
- **Fill your heart with Ireland H1 campaign:** our campaign ran from February until the end of April across TV, BVOD (broadcast video on demand), SVOD (subscription video on demand), social and digital, generating 125 million quality ‘opportunities to see’ (OTS).
- **Broadcast: Tour de Fred: Northern Ireland:** this five-part series, co-produced by Tourism Ireland, began airing in March on ITV1 and ITVX and followed TV presenter Fred Sirieix travelling around Northern Ireland by bike. Over 2.5 million viewers in GB have tuned in.
- **Broadcast: The Emerald Isles:** (co-produced by Tourism Ireland) aired on BBC2. This three-part series follows Ardal O’Hanlon as he explores the islands off the coastline of the island of Ireland.
- **St Patrick’s Day:** highlights included TV personality David Potts travelling to Dublin and Waterford for live broadcasts for *This Morning* and *Loose Women* (around 3.6 million opportunities to see); radio interviews with Dr Tim Campbell, of The Saint Patrick Centre in Downpatrick, to highlight the history of St Patrick’s Day, as well as year-round experiences across the island. Interviews aired on 15 top radio stations to over 1.8 million people across Great Britain.
- **Major landmark "Greenings":** The Royal Liver Building (Liverpool) and The Kelpies (Scotland) were illuminated in green, generating media coverage including in the *Liverpool Echo* and *The Herald* in Scotland.

Strengthening Partnerships

- **St Patrick’s Week:** highlights included sponsorship promotions in London, Edinburgh and Glasgow; a St Patrick’s Day CHAMP reception at the Palace of Westminster; the London St Patrick’s Festival; and a St Patrick’s Day MICE workshop, which was attended by 13 industry partners from Ireland who connected with over 50 GB corporate event planners.
- **Meitheal and Meet The Buyer:** over 20 GB operators attended these flagship B2B workshops to meet and do business with industry partners, as well as to experience product familiarisation trips.
- **Co-operative (co-op) campaigns and partnerships:** activity is live with Irish Ferries, Ryanair, Emerald Airlines, Kayak and Skyscanner.
- **Trade co-op:** campaigns are live with Golf Breaks, Your Golf Travel, Just Go! Holidays, National Holidays, Glenton Holidays, Barrhead Travel and Caledonian Travel.
- **The British Travel & Tourism Show at NEC Birmingham:** Tourism Ireland were joined by island of Ireland industry partners including Holiday Ireland, Irish Ferries, Whites Tours, JMK Hotels and Hotel Properties at the show in Birmingham.
- **Business Events:** Tourism Ireland attended The Meetings Space and C&IT International Forum B2B workshops, which were attended by over 25 leading GB corporate event agencies and meeting planners.



Access update



News United States

- Three new routes will launch in May. Aer Lingus will operate new flights from Nashville and Indianapolis to Dublin. Delta will commence a Detroit to Dublin service.

Market activity update – United States

Inspiring Visitors

- Fill your heart with Ireland campaign:** our campaign delivered 100 million quality opportunities to see in Q1 across linear and streaming TV, social media, online video and Amazon. The campaign is live until the end of May and is expected to deliver 155 million opportunities to see.
- St Patrick's Day publicity highlights:** included a high impact satellite media tour with US TV presenter and Travelzoo Editor Gabe Saglie, which included 35 TV interviews across the US on NBC, FOX and ABC, reaching 215 million.
- Broadcast:** two livestream broadcasts of the St Patrick's Day parade in Dublin aired on Create TV with Emmy award-winning PBS TV host Mickela Mallozzi and chef Donal Skehan; and on Fox Live Now with US TV personality Alex Lee and chef Kevin Dundon, reaching 115 million.
- Major landmark "Greenings":** included the Empire State Building and Grand Ole Opry in Nashville.
- Diaspora:** a programme launched in March, with Tourism Ireland working with 15 US-based Irish publishers and organisations to promote the island of Ireland as a travel destination. With 32 million Irish Diaspora in the US, this programme reaches an engaged audience, primed for our key regional, seasonal and sustainability messaging.

Strengthening Partnerships

- Northern Ireland tourism industry leaders' roundtable:** Tourism Ireland welcomed Northern Ireland Economy Minister Dr Caoimhe Archibald MLA, who met with 20 key US tour operators programming Northern Ireland, as well as airlines and leading travel broadcast hosts.
- Connections Luxury Americas:** five industry partners joined Tourism Ireland at this B2B event, connecting with over 60 influential luxury travel advisors via over 500 meetings.
- Meitheal/Meet the Buyer:** 36 US operators attended Meet the Buyer and 60 US operators attended Meitheal, to meet and do business with industry partners on the island of Ireland, as well as to experience product familiarisation trips.
- Trade co-op campaigns:** activity is live with AAA Northeast, CIE Tours, DH Enterprises, Globus, Collette and North & West Coast Links Golf Ireland.
- Business events:** Tourism Ireland hosted a golf-themed 'Meet in Ireland' event in New York for 10 industry partners to meet with 40+ meeting and incentive travel buyers, following their attendance at the Meetings University event, which resulted in 400+ meetings.
- Ryder Cup Business Forum:** in collaboration with Ryder Cup Europe, Tourism Ireland hosted 100+ influential representatives from the business community in New York, to promote the 2027 Ryder Cup event at Adare Manor. Speakers included CEO Ryder Cup Europe, there was a Q&A session with former Ryder Cup captain Paul McGinley and closing remarks were made by Tánaiste Simon Harris, TD.



Market activity update

Canada

Inspiring Visitors:

- **Fill your heart with Ireland campaign:** our campaign is live and has generated over 14.5 million quality opportunities to see on Netflix, Prime, Meta and YouTube.
- **Brand partnership:** Tourism Ireland partnered with the Toronto Maple Leafs for St Patrick's Day, with out-of-home advertising and in-game activities reaching 25 million hockey fans across Canada.
- **Major landmark "Greenings":** included Niagara Falls and the CN Tower in Toronto.

Strengthening Partnerships

- **Riverdance – The New Generation:** the 30th anniversary performance of Riverdance came to Toronto in March and Tourism Ireland hosted 65 trade and media contacts, which generated seven travel trade media articles and strong social media coverage.
- **WestJet airline co-op campaign:** a campaign is running from March to May to support access from Calgary, Toronto and Halifax, as well as a new service from St John's to Dublin.
- **Tour operator St Patricks Day promotion:** Tourism Ireland promoted Ireland and St Patrick's Day to 40+ Canadian travel advisors, in collaboration with Royal Irish Tours, via a webinar highlighting fun facts, heritage connections and spring travel.

Australia

Inspiring Visitors:

- **Fill your heart with Ireland campaign:** the campaign is live and has generated 1.5 million+ quality opportunities to see to date.
- **St Patrick's Day:** our new St Patrick's Day video was promoted in Australia and generated 230,000 quality opportunities to see over the week. Organic posts on social media during the first two weeks of March also drove engagement. Two St Patrick's themed emails were issued, generating 11,000 clicks to Ireland.com.
- **Publicity (print):** a print article featuring Mayo, Clare and Galway (resulting from a previous media trip) featured in *Escape*, reaching an audience of over 800,000.
- **Publicity (Broadcast):** an episode about Ireland was re-run the eve of St Patrick's Day on *Postcards*, a travel and lifestyle show on Channel 9, reaching an audience of over 108,000; it featured Donegal and Northern Ireland.
- **Sponsorship:** Tourism Ireland had a presence at Misneach, a new global music festival in Sydney featuring Irish and Australian artists headlined by Dermot Kennedy. Staged around St Patrick's Day, the festival attracted an attendance of 15,000. Our activity included amplification on social media.

Strengthening Partnerships

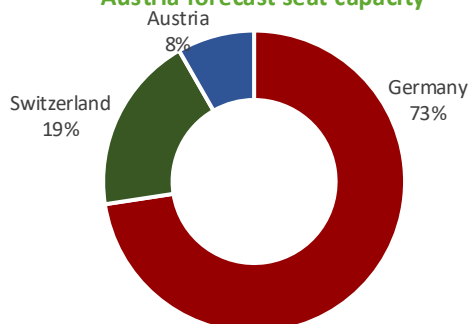
- **Flight Centre co-op campaign:** a UK and Europe campaign with Flight Centre, with a dedicated island of Ireland slot to drive visitation in Q1, ran in February. Channels included paid social media and ads on TripAdvisor.
- **Globus & Cosmos co-op campaign:** a six-week campaign to drive tour sales to the island of Ireland ran from mid-March until the end of April. Channels include paid social, GDN (global display network) banners, YouTube and EDM (electronic direct mail), as well as a package with *International Traveller* magazine, which included print advertising, paid social and a competition.
- **Emirates Roadshow:** Emirates hosted a UK and Ireland roadshow in March with events in Auckland, Christchurch, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide and Melbourne. Tourism Ireland presented the island of Ireland to 100+ agents in each city.



Central Europe - Germany, Austria and Switzerland

Access update

Summer 2025 Germany, Switzerland, Austria forecast seat capacity



Summer 2025 total seats: 1.1 million

News

Germany:

- Eurowings has begun a new service from Stuttgart to Dublin, operating four times a week.
- Lufthansa will increase capacity from Munich to Dublin for the summer months.

Austria and Switzerland:

- Edelweiss's seasonal service from Zurich to Cork commenced at the beginning of April.

Market activity update

Germany.

Inspiring Visitors:

- **Fill your heart with Ireland campaign:** in the first quarter of 2025, our campaign generated over 120 million quality opportunities to see and 17,000 engaged sessions.
- **St Patrick's Week:** a full week of events which included a partnership with the St Patrick's Day Parade in Munich which had 15,000 attendees; and press toolkits were issued with the potential to generate over 400 articles in various magazines and newspapers. Our digital campaign delivered 5.8 million quality opportunities to see.
- **Magazine event:** Tourism Ireland attended a women's high quality magazine event in Munich, where solo travel, slow travel, luxury and culinary travel on the island of Ireland were promoted to 20 top editors.
- **Media trips:** two group trips took place recently, themed around 'music and pubs' and 'spooky Ireland', with media from Germany and Austria participating.
- **Co-op campaign:** recent activity included a campaign with *lastminute.de* which generated almost 900 bookings in March.
- **Whiskey Fair:** Tourism Ireland attended a whiskey fair in Nürnberg, where the island of Ireland was a partner destination this year, to promote the island of Ireland to the 17,000 fair attendees.
- **Podcasts:** several podcasts were produced with partners, including Lufthansa City Center and DERTOUR, about travel to the island of Ireland.

Strengthening Partnerships:

- **ITB Berlin:** 28 industry partners from the island of Ireland connected with German travel trade, engaging in around 1,260 meetings at the travel trade fair.
- **Business Events familiarisation trip:** Lufthansa City Center travel agents visited Dublin, Wicklow and Kilkenny; also, over 80 meetings took place with island of Ireland industry.
- **Familiarisation trip:** a visit by the main German travel trade magazine *Touristik Aktuell* took place at the end of March, which involved 40 meetings with island of Ireland industry partners. 10 travel agents from all over Germany travelled to Cork on a separate familiarisation trip.

Austria and Switzerland

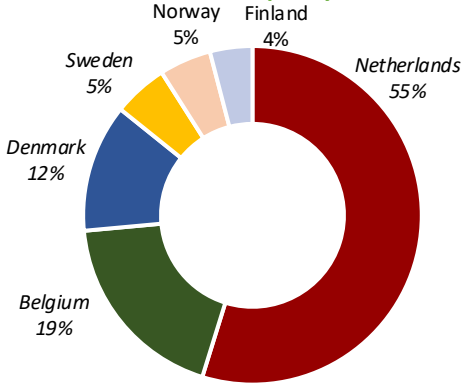
- **St Patrick's Day:** Tourism Ireland raised media and consumer awareness of Ireland's national day through sponsorship and event management and by providing an Ireland.com landing page to publicise over 30 'Team Ireland' events in market.
- **Austrian TV:** the state channel ORF dedicated a prime-time Sunday slot to Ireland's Ancient East, Ireland's Hidden Heartlands and the Wild Atlantic Way; they also sent a crew to cover the participation of an Austrian band in the Dublin St Patrick's Day parade.
- **Publicity:** in Switzerland, a dozen literary, music and sporting events generated over 20 articles, while an all-day photographic exhibition with traditional Irish dance and music performances took place at Zurich's main transport station.



Northern Europe – the Netherlands, Belgium and the Nordics

Access update

Summer 2025 Northern Europe to IOI forecast seat capacity



Summer 2025 total seats: 1.1 million

News

Netherlands and Belgium:

- Emerald Airlines will launch a new weekly service from Groningen in the Netherlands to Ireland West Airport, running every Saturday for 13 weeks from June to August 2025. The route will be operated by the Dutch tour operator BBI Travel.

Market activity update

Netherlands and Belgium

Inspiring Visitors:

- **Fill your heart with Ireland H1 campaign:** our campaign launched in February and ran until mid-April on display, paid social and Pinterest, delivering over 19 million opportunities to see across Belgium and the Netherlands.
- **Green Bike Parade:** celebrating St Patrick's Day, the parade cycled through The Hague on 14th March, with 70 Dutch and Irish participants.
- **Ierland Film Festival:** the second edition of the Ierland Film Festival in The Hague drew over 1,000 moviegoers – a +13% year-on-year increase in ticket sales. The strong turnout highlights growing interest in this cultural addition to The Hague's calendar, already home to one of the largest St Patrick's festivals in Mainland Europe.

Strengthening Partnerships:

- This year, the Ierland Film Festival in The Hague expanded to become a four-day event, kicking off with a 'Meet the Maker' B2B evening on 13th March. 15 Dutch trade partners and eight media guests enjoyed storytelling by five island of Ireland industry partners from our twinning region, Galway and Clare. The night featured presentations, food, live music, networking and an Irish film screening.

Nordics

Inspiring Visitors:

- **Fill your heart with Ireland campaign:** our campaign ran on Meta until 17th March, delivering 6.7 million quality opportunities to see in Sweden and Denmark.
- **Publicity:** the world's most northerly Global Greening in 2025 – a polar bear sculpture in Longyearbyen in Norway – generated 18,700 opportunities to see through publicity and a reach of 190,000 on social media.
- **Eurovision:** a collaboration with Norwegian influencer Emmy, who will represent Ireland in this year's Eurovision, went live in April. This will deliver an estimated 1.2 million quality opportunities to see in Sweden, Denmark and Norway in the run-up to Eurovision, through a content series following the singer as she 'Fills her heart with Ireland'.
- **Slow travel:** a 14-page feature on slow travel along the Wild Atlantic Way ran in a popular Swedish travel magazine called *Vagabond*, with a reach of 121,000 in March.

Strengthening Partnerships:

- **Co-op marketing:** recent activity included promoting the 11 island of Ireland tours offered by tour operator Rolf's Buss for 2025; and co-op marketing on golf platforms in April, including with HereWeGoGolf in Sweden, NordicGolfers.com in Denmark and Golf Gamebook across the Nordic region, promoting island of Ireland golf experiences.



Ireland Unrushed

In June 2025, Tourism Ireland will launch a new slow tourism campaign titled **Ireland Unrushed**. The campaign will highlight the breadth of sustainable transport and tourism experiences across the island of Ireland, inviting visitors to experience Ireland at a gentler pace.

Ireland Unrushed isn't about doing less; it's about feeling more. Through immersive storytelling across Tourism Ireland's channels, the campaign will celebrate the deeper connections that come from lingering longer – whether that's spending more time in local communities, engaging with culture or soaking in the beauty of Ireland's natural landscapes, aiming to land a new vision of what visiting the island of Ireland can be.



During the month, slow tourism messages will be prioritised on Tourism Ireland's channels, with a key focus on inspirational journeys that encourage greater dwell time in communities and nature. Tourism Ireland will execute a paid media campaign on Meta, YouTube and Pinterest in key markets and will have a busy calendar of activity including media and influencer visits to experience **Ireland Unrushed** first-hand, digital and social content live throughout the month, in-market activations and lots more.

Please join our industry webinar on 8th May to hear more about the campaign and how you can get involved. Register [here](#) to attend.

Definitions:

1 – Opportunities to see: refers to the number of times an advertisement has the chance to be seen by our audience (for example, if an ad is displayed on a website, on a social feed or pre-roll video content, each time someone encounters that ad counts as an opportunity to see).

2 – Reach: measures the total number of unique individuals exposed to an ad and is a percentage of the total target audience (for example, if a TV ad airs during a show, the reach is the number of different viewers that saw the ad at least once).

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