

Ireland

Market Summary

The 11 percent decrease in Irish arrivals in the first six months of 2010 can be attributed to the current state of the economy in Ireland which continues to play a major role in consumer confidence and disposable income. Unemployment levels also continue to climb. The Icelandic volcanic ash disruption saw a significant amount of flights cancelled from Ireland in late April and early May have also compounded the negative arrival figures.

The youth segment is showing a decline in arrivals which indicates that this usually resilient segment is being influenced by the economic situation and looking for a value proposition in their purchasing. Destinations such as the USA still prove to be popular with Irish backpackers due to the close historical ties, low airfares and a more favourable exchange rate. This segment continues however to make up the majority of all arrivals from this market and will continue to be the focus of Tourism Australia activity going forward.

1. Market News

- Ireland's 13.7 per cent unemployment rate is higher than the euro-zone average, while Irish households tend to be even more heavily in debt than families in Britain, Spain and Portugal. Source: *Wall Street Journal, June 29, 2010*
- The Economic and Social Research Institute of Ireland has calculated that 60,000 people will leave Ireland this year and will be followed by 40,000 in 2011. It says that unemployment is driving emigration particularly among young people. Source: www.irishcentral.com June 2, 2010
- The Northern Ireland Tourist Board has launched a £1.4m "staycation" campaign across Ireland to encourage people to holiday at home. Source: www.businessworld.ie June 24, 2010
- Consumers are detecting signs of life in the economy but are resigned to seeing no dramatic improvement in their fortunes this year. The latest KBC/ESRI consumer sentiment index shows consumers are more positive than this time last year but are still reluctant to spend. Source: www.irishexaminer.com June 2, 2010

2. Consumer Insights

- Irish consumers are holding off from booking holidays in advance in order to take advantage of last minute bargains with some Irish travel agents offering discounts of up to 33 per cent. Source: *Irish Times, May 5, 2010*
- Despite the recession, Irish holidaymakers have been found to be one of the least likely among their European counterparts to holiday at home in 2010, according to Eurobarometer. Source: *Eurobarometer, April, 2010*
- Irish consumers are cutting up their credit cards and trying to pay off their bills, new figures from the Central Bank have shown. In the year to May 2010 there were 50,000 less credit cards in circulation. Overall credit card debt now stands at just less than €3bn but is falling steadily from a high of more than €3.1bn in December last year. Source: www.breakingnews.ie June 1, 2010
- Irish shoppers spent €2.13 billion online last year, a new survey by Visa Europe reveals, with the average Irish shopper spending €1,450 online per year. Half of the people surveyed believe they can save up to 30 per cent by buying goods on the internet compared to the high street. The research found that flights and holidays are the most popular online purchase, with 83 per cent of respondents having purchased flights and holidays online. Source: www.rte.ie, June 22, 2010

For the latest in visitor arrivals, please visit 'Research & Statistics' at www.tourism.australia.com

3. Trade Update

- As at June 2010, there were 126 Aussie Specialist agents, of which 80 per cent were fully qualified.

4. Airline News

- AirAsia X is to increase its flights to Australia by flying twice daily from Kuala Lumpur to Melbourne and Kuala Lumpur to Perth this summer. Source: www.asiatraveltips.com April, 13, 2010
- Dubai based Emirates airline has launched a special fare for a limited period on its Singapore-Brisbane route. Source: www.asiatraveltips.com, April 30, 2010

5. Competitor News

- NYC & Company, New York City's official marketing, tourism and partnership organisation has launched a multi-faceted marketing campaign targeting international markets including Ireland, Italy and the UK. Source: <http://www.ftnnews.com/content/view/9731/32/> June 24, 2010
- Fees for many categories of US visa will go up, the result of a weakening euro and a decision by the US authorities to align charges more closely to the work

involved in processing applications. Some Irish applicants will find the cost of obtaining a visa increasing by as much as 200 per cent this summer. Source: *Irish Times*, <http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/travel/2010/0529/1224271353758.html> May 29, 2010

- Statistics New Zealand figures have revealed that international visitor arrivals are holding steady for the June 2010 quarter. Irish visitors were however down by 28 per cent for the same period. Source: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/> 26 July 2010

6. Key Campaigns and Activities in Market

Current Campaigns and Activities (April – June 2010)				
START DATE	END DATE	PROJECT/EVENT	TARGET AUDIENCE	PARTNERS
15 March 2010	30 April 2010	<i>Youth Facebook promotion:</i> Online campaign promoting the working holiday visa and encouraging peer advocacy for Australia. www.facebook.com/australianworkingholiday	Irish First Time Experience Seekers, aged 18-30	None
April 2010	June 2010	<i>International Media Hosting Programme visits:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel Extra travelled to ATE held in South Australia and the Northern Territory, • The Irish Mail on Sunday travelled to the Northern Territory and Western Australia for two separate features. 	Irish First Time Experience Seekers	Various airlines, STOs and industry partners
April 2010	April 2010	<i>Co-op campaign with USIT:</i> Campaign focussed on the Working Holiday Visa and inspiring travellers aged 18-30 to travel and work in Australia. The creative was seen on A2 posters on bus systems in Dublin, Cork and Limerick and also in inserts in daily newspapers in these areas.	Irish First Time Experience Seekers, aged 18-30	USIT
26 April 2010	28 April 2010	<i>Australia training with Maui:</i> Tourism Australia was on the road, travelling around the country in a Maui campervan spreading the word on the great Australian driving routes to agents in Dublin and Cork. The agents experienced an Aussie BBQ while they learned about driving around Australia and the many spectacular touring routes on offer.	Irish travel agents	Maui
2 May 2010	16 May 2010	<i>Corroboree 2010:</i> Training event for 298 Aussie Specialist travel agents from across Europe and South Africa. Workshops with Australian industry were held on 5 – 8 May in Melbourne followed by famils throughout Australia (22 itineraries in total).	Aussie Specialist travel agents throughout Europe	Qantas; Tourism Victoria; State & Territory Tourism Organisations; Australian tourism industry
June 2010	June 2010	<i>World Cup promotion on Newstalk:</i> As Ireland didn't get in to the World Cup, the listeners of Newstalk voted to support Australia during the 2010 tournament. Tourism Australia worked with the station on promotions and messaging to promote the destination as part of this coverage.	Irish First Time Experience Seekers	Newstalk

07 June 2010	30 June 2010	<i>Co-op campaign with Justsplit.com:</i> Online banner campaign on The Irish Times and MSN travel websites driving traffic to a dedicated campaign page on www.australia.com featuring packages from Justsplit.com with Justsplit.com as the call to action.	Irish First Time Experience Seekers	JustSplit.com
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Upcoming Campaigns and Activities (July – September 2010)				
START DATE	END DATE	PROJECT/EVENT	TARGET AUDIENCE	PARTNERS
		None to report at this point in time		