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COUNTRY REPORT

IRELAND

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Preview Report – Country Statistics, Travel Guidance & Useful Websites

Country Statistics

DEMOGRAPHIC:

Population: 4.1million (2006)

Number of Households: 1.2million

MAIN EXPORTS:

Machinery & Transport Equipment

Chemicals & Pharmaceuticals

Foodstuffs & Tobacco

Scientific Instruments

Glass & Crystal

Clothing & Textiles

GEOGRAPHIC:

Land Area: 68,890sq.km

Arable Land: 16%

TRANSPORTATION:

40' Full Load from UK: c.£600.00
GBP

20' Full Load from UK: c.£400.00
GBP

CULTURAL:

Principal Languages: English, Irish

Main Religion: Christianity

MAIN IMPORTS:

Machinery & Transport Equipment

Chemicals

Foodstuffs & Tobacco

Fuels

ECONOMIC:

Currency: Euro (€)

GDP per head: \$24,740

39th Biggest World Economy

INTERNET USAGE:

Internet Users 2.06 million (2006)

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Travel Guidance

Getting there from the UK:

Ferries:

Irish Ferries: Holyhead > Dublin Port – Fast Ferry (2 Hours) Cruise Ferry (3 Hours 30 Minutes); Pembroke > Rosslare – Cruise Ferry (3 Hours 45 Minutes). All services are daily subject to weather conditions. www.irishferries.com

Stena Line: Holyhead > Dun Laoghaire – Fast Ferry (2 Hours); Holyhead > Dublin Port - Cruise Ferry (3 Hours 30 Minutes); Fishguard > Rosslare – Fast Ferry (2 Hours) Cruise Ferry (3 Hours 30 Minutes); All services are daily subject to weather conditions. There are also sailings from Fleetwood to Larne and Stranraer to Belfast in Northern Ireland, and the drive to Dublin takes 2-3 Hours depending on traffic conditions. www.stenaline ferries.org

P&O Irish Sea Ferries: Liverpool > Dublin Port – Standard Ferry (8 Hours). There are also both fast ferry and standard ferry sailings from Cairnryan & Troon to Larne in Northern Ireland. Check timetables for availability. www.poirishsea.com

Useful tips: Dublin Port is probably the more efficient arrival point for doing business in Dublin, as the drive into the city will take only 5-10 minutes. Alternatively, Dun Laoghaire which is situated to the south of the city, is useful for access to the M50 motorway which links to routes to all remaining areas of the country.

Flying In:

<http://www.dublinuncovered.net/airlines.html> provides information about the various Irish airlines operating from Dublin Airport together with directions to the Dublin Bus Air Link, guidance on taxi fares into the City, and links to car hire companies based at the airport.

Dublin Airport is about 10 miles from the city centre and when the M50 is clear, this represents a journey time of about 20 minutes. In practise, the M50 is a very busy route and Dublin itself generally has significant traffic problems throughout the working day. For time efficiency it is wise to book early flights in, and late flights out from Dublin when the traffic is lighter.

<http://www.a2btravel.com/airports> provides a full list of airports in the UK and Ireland, with hyperlinks which contain information about each of Dublin, Cork, and Shannon Airports.

Getting Around:

Driving is the most efficient way of travelling around Ireland. Trains (DART – Dublin Area Rapid Transport) and buses outside Dublin are infrequent, and taxis are an expensive option for longer trips. The road network has improved significantly in the last ten years and you can drive to any of the major cities in 3 to 4 hours, even with delays. Fuel in Ireland is cheaper than it is in the UK (and therefore in Northern Ireland) and as a result, regular visiting drivers tend to purchase their fuel both when they arrive and before they leave the country. While Dublin is the main business centre, it is advisable to stay in hotels close to the M50 when doing business on the outskirts of Dublin (or further out of the city when using Dublin as a base) in order to minimise delays caused by traffic congestion. Check <http://www.irelandhotels.com> for accommodation both in Dublin and across Ireland.

In January 2005 Ireland changed all road signs from imperial to metric measurements.

Useful Websites:

Business Sites:

http://www.msi-network.com/content/doing_business_in_ireland_page1a.asp - a really thorough site on doing business in Ireland.

Chambers of Commerce:

http://www.indexireland.com/business_and_finance/chambers_of_commerce - provides a full alphabetical listing of Ireland's regional Chambers of Commerce with website links.

Exhibitions:

<http://www.rds.ie> - RDS is the Irish International Exhibition & Convention Centre, based in Dublin. Search this site for exhibitions which may be relevant to your business. There are plenty of other exhibition venues in Ireland, but RDS holds events throughout the year and is considered to be the leading showcase. Do not be fooled by the comparatively low attendance figures – there is a genuine quality about exhibitions in Ireland.

Financial:

<http://www.bankofireland.ie/html/gws/business/index.html> - the Bank of Ireland

<http://www.worldwide-tax.com/ireland/ireinvestbanks.asp>

Government:

www.irgov.ie - the Government of Ireland website

Press & Media:

http://www.unison.ie/irish_independent - The Irish Independent; www.ireland.com - the Irish Times

Travel and Accommodation:

<http://www.ireland.ie> - a comprehensive and easy to navigate site which will save time in booking accommodation, selecting the right transport options, and general itinerary planning, either prior to or during a business trip to Ireland.

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Public Holidays:

Check the following web link for a full list of public holidays and holiday dates in Ireland.

<http://www.qppstudio.net/bankholidays2007/ireland.htm>

The weeks either side of St.Patrick's Day in Ireland are often used as holiday weeks.

Local Information:

Do not drink and drive. You may be heavily penalised or possibly imprisoned.

It is illegal to smoke in places of employment, pubs and restaurants in Ireland.

United Kingdom passport holders do not require their passport to visit Ireland for immigration purposes. However, some airlines require photo ID for travel between the UK and Ireland (and between some UK airports). It is a good idea to take your passport anyway, just in case.

If you are travelling into Ireland by ferry from the UK, be sure to check the weather reports in advance of your journey, especially in the Autumn and Winter months. The Irish Sea can be quite choppy, and there are numerous occasions when the fast ferries do not run, with passengers being transferred to the much slower ferry services. The slower vessels are cancelled only very occasionally.

New legislation on the controls of cash entering or leaving the EU will apply in all Member States from 15 June 2007. Any person entering or leaving the EU will have to declare the cash that they are carrying if this amounts to 10,000 euros or more; this includes cheques, travellers' cheques, money orders, etc. This will not apply to anyone travelling via the EU to a non-EU country, as long as the original journey started outside of the EU nor to those travelling within the EU.

Useful Contacts:

British Embassy

29 Merrion Road
Dublin 4

Tel: 00 35 31 205 3700

Fax: 00 35 31 205 3880

The information contained in this report was correct at the time of writing. Exportaid advises clients always to check specific information before travelling to the market.

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