



**Fáilte Ireland**  
National Tourism Development Authority

# **Fáilte Ireland Covid-19 Tourism Impact Bulletin**

**Issue 1**  
**10<sup>th</sup> March, 2020**

## CONSUMER SENTIMENT

### Omnibus Data Table

New weekly research tracker with consumers living in ROI and NI

Amongst domestic audience there are signs of a slowing intent to travel.

KPI	06 March	13 March	20 March	27 March	Commentary
How likely is it that the Corona Virus will impact your domestic travel (that is travel in Ireland)?	37%				With more than a third of consumers claiming that their travel will be impacted we can expect a decrease in visitors.
What, if any, behaviour changes do you think you will make/are you making as a result of this new Corona Virus? • Postponing/cancelling travel plans in Ireland	13%				This indicator will be critical in tracking consumer behaviour and how it links to the claimed likelihood of change in travel behaviour.
How likely would you be to consider replacing your trip abroad with a holiday at home?	37%				When a health / safety risk is identified in a country to which visitors had planned to travel, the opportunity exists to convert them into booking a domestic trip.

See page 7 for more detailed results from last week's consumer research.

## CONSUMER SENTIMENT

### Domestic Online Trends –

Last 7 days versus same week last year

Online activity based on search terms and traffic to travel websites, indicates a slow-down in interest in domestic travel.

Brand Experience	Organic Traffic	Trade Referrals
Discover Ireland	↓42%	↓36%
Wild Atlantic Way	↓3%	55%
Visit Dublin	↓31%	↓21%

*Note: Ireland's Ancient East and Ireland's Hidden Heartlands base sizes too small*

## WEBSITES

- Overall decline of –32% in organic traffic across all Fáilte Ireland websites, resulting in a decline of -27% in industry referrals.
- Negative last 7-day trajectory for organic traffic to all sites except WildAtlanticWay.com. This may be related to the recent launch of ‘Keep Discovering’ campaign that drives consumers to this site.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

- Very little negative travel conversations or queries coming through on Fáilte Ireland owned social media channels
- Domestic online mentions on social platforms and media sites of travel in Ireland referencing Coronavirus: 3,000 or 12% of all travel conversations in Ireland.

# INDUSTRY INSIGHTS

**Fáilte Ireland is getting weekly updates from industry across all sectors.**

### **Industry are reporting:**

- Massive loss of corporate business Monday to Friday. Several international companies have put in a no travel policy or travel only when necessary.
- Increase in conference cancellations and deferrals, plus the loss of some incentive travel and reporting that pipeline for future business is significantly down.
- On the leisure side there has been significant cancellations of March/April business. Tour operators specializing in US market are seeing particularly large downturns in forward bookings and the European markets is also slowing down.
- Attractions are seeing a decline of anywhere between –20% to –40% in visitors last week versus the same week last year. With some seasonal attractions deciding to open later in the season and / or considering not opening. Others are looking at reduced opening hours.
- Restaurants down up to –40% at weekends.
- Accommodation sector from domestic consumers hasn't been hit as hard as overseas, however Easter holidays will be key.
- Some concerns as cancellations around rooms for weddings is increasing.

Discussions with several OTAs has highlighted significant decline in bookings into Ireland.

**Sales performance YOY for week, month and YTD**

Bookings to the island of Ireland incl NI - Friday Feb 28<sup>th</sup> to Friday March 6<sup>th</sup> versus same week last year:

1. Overall -40%
2. UK -30%
3. US -50%
4. Within Ireland -15%

Since the outbreak of Coronavirus cancellations have increased substantially:

- Cancellations for March are up 40% year-on-year
- Cancellations for April are up 30%
- Little impact yet on May, June etc...

## General Business Operations

- Cash Flow – Immediate priority across all sectors to keep business open and viable in the short term.
- Staffing and Payroll - Being actively managed by many businesses through postponing seasonal staff recruitment and / or reduced hours for casual workforce.
- Businesses have now moved from contingency planning to active crisis management.

# INTERNATIONAL IMPACT REPORTS

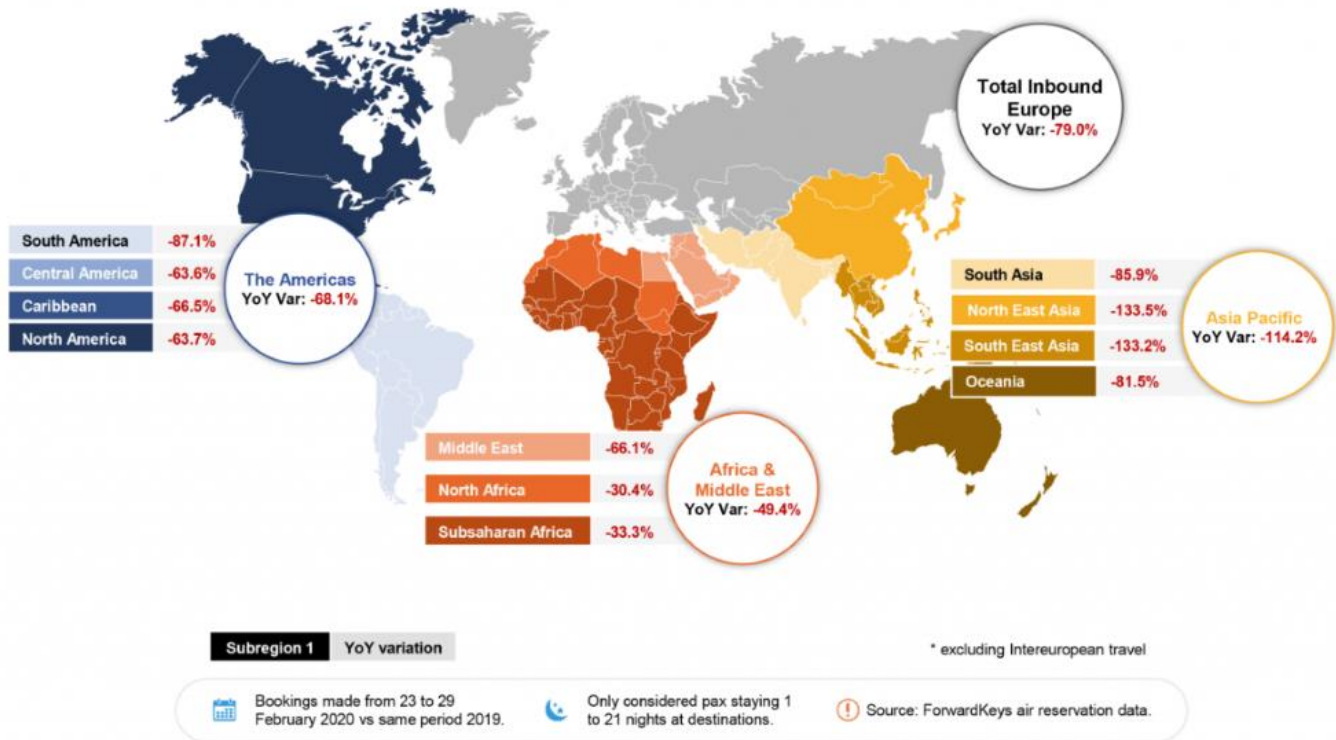
## The Aviation Sector

- Analysis by ForwardKeys, the travel analytics company, shows that there was a collapse in new bookings to Europe (-79.0%) from intercontinental source markets.



### Bookings made for arrivals to Europe from worldwide destinations by origin\*

23 to 29 February 2020; Market shares by region and Year-on-Year variations



Analysis by IATA, a trade association of the world's airlines, estimated the potential impact of Covid-19 based on two possible scenarios:

- Limited Spread: Whereby a sharp downturn is followed by a V-shaped recovery. Globally this leads to a loss of -11% in passenger revenue.
- Extensive Spread: This scenario suggests an even sharper downturn followed by a delayed recovery. This translates into a loss of -19% in worldwide passenger revenue – on a par with the global financial crisis.

# INSIGHTS INTO CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR



## COVID-19 Consumer Sentiment and Behaviour

Fáilte Ireland has carried out the following research into consumer behaviour and will be updating this on a weekly basis

**Key lead indicators show that domestic travel will be affected by the coronavirus.**

### Research Objectives

- To track intention to take domestic short breaks
- To understand the role of perceived health risks and how they impact on short breaks
- To track consumer sentiment and behaviour as regards the coronavirus and domestic breaks
- The sample is IOI consumers

### Perceived health risks and travel in general

- Health risks in general are identified by 60% of consumers as having the potential to stop travel
- 43% of consumers will postpone a planned trip in light of a health risk, but they will not re-book or commit to a new date
- 33% claim that they will postpone or cancel travel to affected areas

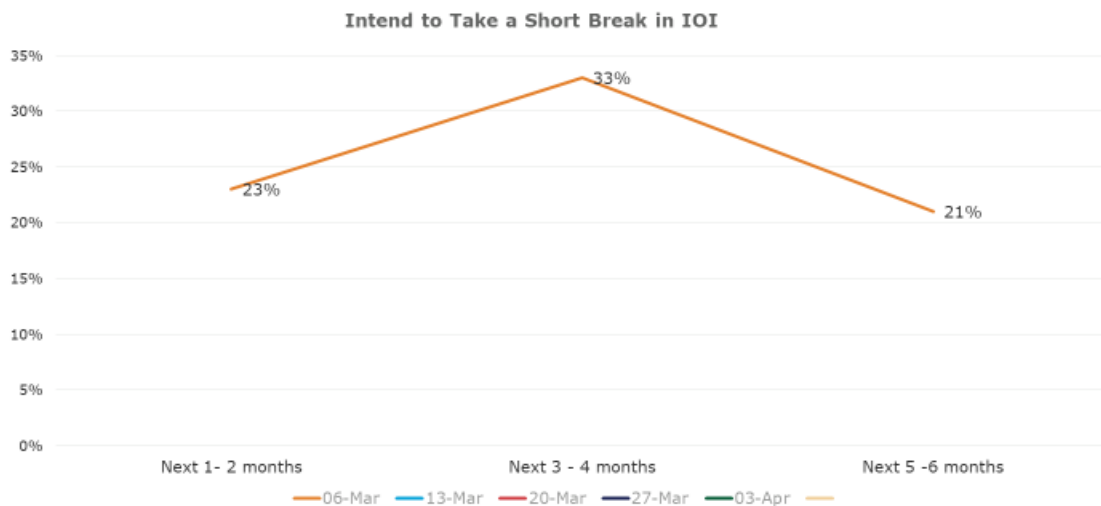
### Coronavirus and Travel in IOI

- 37% claim that their domestic leisure travel will be negatively affected by the presence of the virus
- 55% are actively avoiding large gatherings as a result of the virus
- 46% claim that their travel to public events, festivals etc. will all in likelihood be affected <sup>1</sup>



### Covid-19 Consumer Behaviour and Sentiment Tracking

03 March 2020

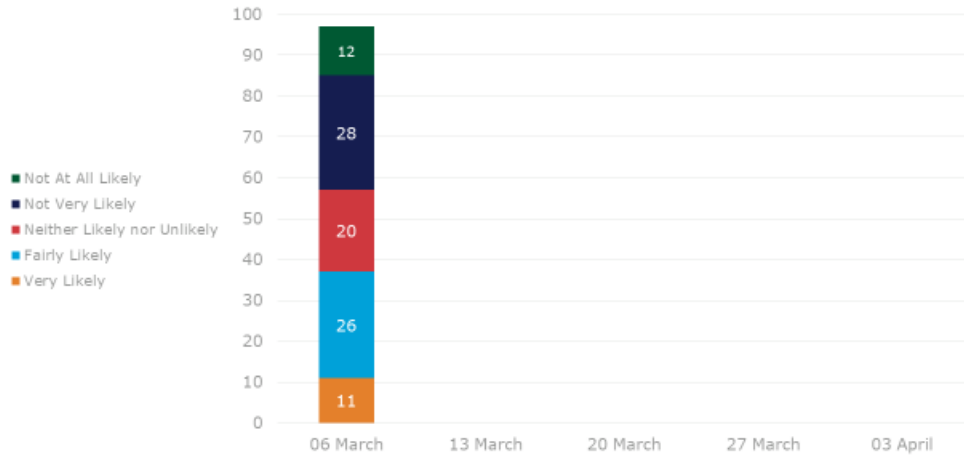


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2

**% Likelihood of Replacing a Trip Abroad with a Domestic Trip**



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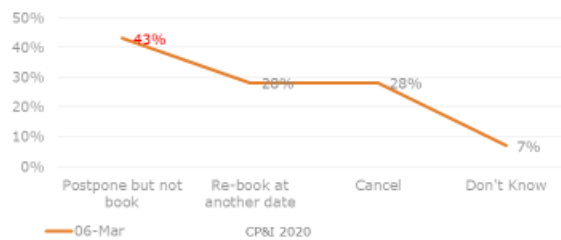
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3

**What Would Stop Me From Taking a Short Break**

	Definitely Stop me	Probably stop me	Not sure	Probably will not stop me	Definitely would not stop me
Cost	15%	24%	20%	29%	11%
Health Risks	30%	30%	18%	15%	7%
Personal safety	28%	26%	17%	20%	9%
Environmental impacts of travel	4%	11%	26%	34%	24%
Travel time to get to destinations	4%	9%	15%	42%	29%

**If Health Given as a Reason Not to Take a Short Break The Action Is....**

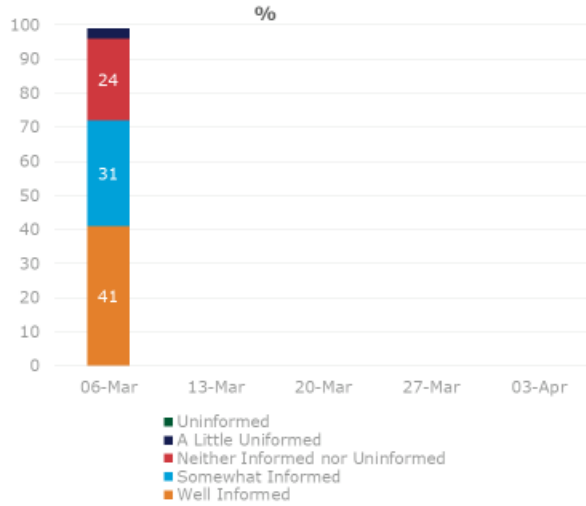


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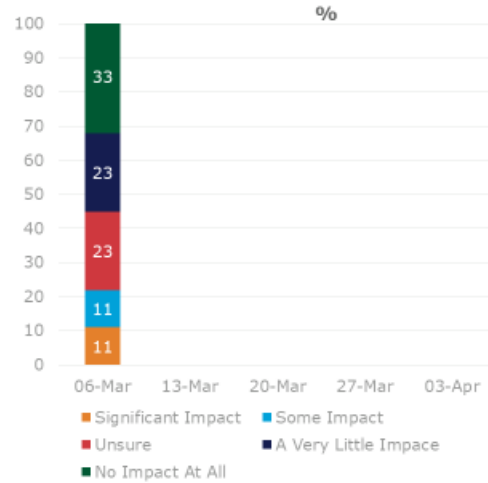
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**How Informed Do You Consider Yourself About The Coronavirus**



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**What Level of Impact is it Having on You**



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5

**Change in Behaviour Driven by Coronavirus**

Postponing/cancelling travel plans to affected areas	33%
Postponing/cancelling travel plans abroad in general	24%
Postponing/cancelling travel plans in Ireland	13%
Trying to avoid public transport	32%
Trying to avoid crowded places/large gatherings	52%
Using hand sanitiser/Washing my hands more often/more thoroughly	74%
Keeping my distance from anyone coughing or sneezing	56%
Wearing a mask when I'm out	-
None/no changes so far	12%

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**How Will Coronavirus Impact Your Domestic Travel in the Next Three Months**

	Very likely	Fairly Likely	Neither likely nor unlikely	Not very likely	Not at all likely
Visits to friends and relatives	10%	14%	25%	28%	21%
Public events (e.g. sports event, concert, play, festival etc.)	22%	24%	22%	20%	11%
Private event/celebrations (e.g. wedding, anniversary, birthday etc.)	10%	15%	23%	31%	21%
General leisure, holiday, recreation	14%	23%	24%	23%	15%

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6