

**ANALYSIS OF IRISH TOURISM POLICY'S  
CONTRIBUTION TO URBAN TOURISM:  
DUBLIN CASE STUDY**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. BACKGROUND**

The idea of doing this paper appeared when studying in Dublin as an Erasmus student. After having decided to spend the second semester also abroad, the possibility of taking advantage of the situation and doing the final essay of the studies about Dublin became very appealing. When the suggestion of doing the project in English was initially made by my advisor, I accepted the challenge since not only it would make easier the search of information and the comprehension of the overall situation of the industry but, it would also contribute to improve my language level.

Deciding the topic of the essay was at first difficult due to the preliminary little knowledge about the city and the fear of choosing a theme that could turn out to be too complicated. Finally, after several subject proposals, the paper was focused on the tourism policy and its contribution to the urban tourism. That was a relatively unknown topic until then and for this reason it became interesting.

Modules done in the Dublin Institute of Technology about tourism planning, tourism destinations and tourism impact analysis, and the respective course projects, as well as working in the Guinness Storehouse provided me an essential background on the city of Dublin and its tourism industry.

### **1.2. OBJECTIVES**

The primary aim of this paper is to analyse the Irish national, regional and local policies and plans involved with the tourism industry and to determine how these contribute to the urban tourism in Dublin.

There are secondary objectives to complement the key goal of the essay that comprise:

- To communicate the main features of Ireland and an exhaustive description of Dublin in order to facilitate the comprehension of the paper's background.
- To investigate the concept of urban tourism and the Dublin's tourism performance as an urban tourism destination.
- To analyse the positive and negative impacts derived from the city tourism and how the Irish policy deals with them.
- To examine the current tourism trends and their repercussion in the policy formulation.



### **1.3. METHODOLOGY**

To achieve the aim of this paper, several sources have been used.

Firstly, an interview with the Dublin Institute of Technology lecturer Kevin Griffin, specialised on tourism planning was organised. The main aim of the meeting was to get to know the situation of the tourism industry in Ireland and in Dublin, its structure and the main organizations responsible for tourism issues.

The information presented on the theoretical chapter has been compiled from books as well as tourism and economic journals of the Dublin Institute of Technology library and the University of Girona library.

In the library of the Irish National Tourism Authority, Fáilte Ireland, reports were found with current and reliable data about the tourism in Ireland and Dublin.

Once a considerable amount of information about the same theme was collected from different sources, it started the process of reading cautiously through all the documents, analysing the utility of the data for the purpose of the project, selecting the most adequate and to summarise it and translate it when necessary.

The policy documents were obtained from Internet, which has been a useful source since most of the official policies were easily accessible through the government and public agents' websites. Also, several tourism strategies and plans were found in the Fáilte Ireland's library. All policies were examined in order to get a general idea of the situation and then the most significant information relating Dublin was summarized and incorporated in the policy chapter.

Once, the policy chapter was completed, it started the analysis.

Firstly, the focus was on the contribution of the policy to the urban tourism in Dublin. Subsequently, the analysis was based on the comparison of the content among all policies at all levels and lastly, the analysis was focused on how the tourism impacts and the tourism trends are considered within the policy.

The last step in the analysis process was to outline the main findings and to relate them with the rest of the paper.

#### **1.4. STRUCTURE OF THE PAPER**

The core of the paper is structured in seven different chapters, in which the first one is the introduction and the last one the presentation of the conclusions.

The second chapter presents the theory needed to elaborate the essay and to accomplish the objectives previously described.

The theory starts by presenting the current situation of the tourism in Ireland and there are definitions of the most used terms in the essay as well as a justification of the importance of the involvement in tourism of both, local tourism organisations and the government. After this brief introduction, the tourism trends and the changes in the tourist demographics are outlined in order to let the reader notice the changing patterns of the demand and introduce the city tourism as a suitable tourism product in the current tourism context.

Prior to the urban tourism piece, the advantages of a good planned destination are introduced and the overall process for policy formulation is illustrated, giving special emphasis to the planning of the city tourism.

In the urban tourism section there are several issues presented including the benefits of developing city tourism, the characteristics of the urban tourists and what they seek when traveling to a city and the peculiarities of the tourism industry in an urban context. Subsequently, the positive and negative economic, environmental and socio-cultural impacts that urban tourism may cause are described.

In the third chapter, there is a concise introduction to the overall tourism situation in Ireland with the aim of situating Dublin in its context. There are some current figures that indicate the weight of the tourism in the economy followed by the description of the structure of the industry in the country dividing the organizations with tourism responsibility in public and private sectors.

The fourth chapter is the case study. It begins by introducing the city, its physical appearance, the climate in the area, some demographic and economic data, the government structure and its main tourism features and attractions. Afterwards, Dublin is studied as an urban destination and significant data is illustrated in tables and graphs followed by a brief account on the main factors that have contributed to the success of the tourism in the city. This chapter is complemented with the example of the Temple Bar district which show how urban renewal has contributed to the development of tourism in Dublin.

The fifth chapter is basically the Irish policy description. It commences by giving some details on the evolution of the tourism policy in Ireland and it presents the current policies classified on national, regional and local level. A summary table is presented at the beginning of the section to help to understand the structure of the policy and its general function also all information has been accurately structured to make easier the reading. On the grounds that the study of a foreign country's policy requires a major amount of information in order to comprehend a distinct policy framework, all policies have been exhaustively summarized with the key points to reduce the effort needed by the reader.

The sixth chapter is the analysis of the policy presented on the previous chapter and it is structured in three different stages. On the first stage, the examination is focused on the contribution of the Irish policy to the urban tourism in Dublin, highlighting what contributes the most and accomplishing the aim of this paper. After that, there is a contrast of the content of all policies in order to detect overlaps and/or inconsistencies. The last stage was to analyse how the tourism policy deals with the tourism impacts and how foresee and takes in account the main changes in the tourism trends.

The seventh chapter presents the results of the analysis jointly with a summary of the main facts discovered during the elaboration of the paper.

## **2. THEORY CHAPTER**

### **2.1. INTRODUCTION: TOURISM NOWADAYS**

Nowadays Ireland is completely different to the country it was twenty years ago. Things have considerably changed and that has been noticed in the tourism industry which has had to evolve and adapt to the current tourist needs and to the new products offered by the competing destinations.

In this new context, Dublin has turned out to be the most important tourism destination in the country. The main advantage of a strength destination such as the Irish capital is that it has become a consolidated gateway for visitors entering to Ireland. That contributes to the increase of the tourism in neighbouring regions because the small size of the country allows to see different landscapes and tourist attractions in a relatively short distance in comparison with other tourist countries such as Spain.

Dublin is already a successful urban tourism destination but the aim of this paper is to know how the policy formulated by the Irish public sector contributes to the development and consolidation of the tourism in the capital.

Before examining the theory chapter of the essay, several themes need to be clarified such as the fact that the tourism industry, in some occasions, is considered a combination of regional and national economy instead of an industry on its own right. Despite the existing disagreements, for the purpose of this paper, the tourism industry will be viewed as an industry in its own.

There are certain terms that will appear repeatedly in the text and that need to be defined in order to avoid further confusions. These include:

City: in this case, it generally means the metropolitan area, including the central city, and the suburbs.

Urban tourism: an amalgam of activities interlinked in a specific environment which allow cities to attract visitors. There is not necessarily one key factor, as for example a beach in a resort. It is considered that business tourism contributes to urban tourism.

Short Break holiday: defined as a trip of 1 to 3 nights away from home.

Tourism policy: it includes all plans and strategies that set objectives and identifies possible ways of developing tourism through an analysis of the industry's current situation.

❖ **Features of tourism destinations**

A destination is considered as “an amalgam, or mix, of attractions and support facilities, which demonstrate a number of common features” (Cooper, 1998, pp. 133). Every destination is characterised by the environmental, social and economic environment in which it finds itself, so it is essential to consider the specific features of every single location.

As a result of being a mix of different service suppliers and organisations, the issue of stakeholders and the relationship of interdependence among them have to be carefully taken into consideration. A destination where public and private sectors do not cooperate will never have the opportunity to success. In this sense, it is vital the function of local and regional tourism organisations that give general guidelines for planning and managing a destination in order to ensure that all stakeholders work together with a common aim in mind: make the destination successful and create a desire to visit it.

There are dissimilarities in the way these organisations functions in different countries. For example, in Britain local tourism organisations have responsibility for the education, the economic development of the region and the formulation of tourism policy while in Ireland the main function of local agencies is to promote the destination and under no circumstances they are allowed to manage issues involving policy. The functions of these organisations will be studied later on in the project.

The government involvement in the tourism destinations is vital since the industry could not survive without its collaboration.

Governments can provide political stability as well as facilitate an adequate legal and economic framework that makes easier the development of the industry. In some cases, the government becomes an important investor of the tourism industry due to the lack of private investment and that was what happened in the Languedoc-Rousillon area, in the south of France. In this region new resorts were built by fund provided by the government and that dramatically improved the tourism infrastructures in the area

The tourist policy formulated by the government and the local organisations is essential to ensure a competitive destination and the partnership of public and private sectors.

### 2.1.1 Tourism Trends

*“Consumers will look for new experiences such as unusual environments and cultures, personal and physical improvements emotional development...customers no longer want just a trip; they want a memorable, custom-designed travel experience”* (Tourism Policy Review Group, 2005)

Prior to start analysing the tourism, specifically the urban tourism product in Dublin, it is important to have a good grasp of how the industry and the costumers' characteristics and needs are changing.

#### ❖ *International tourism trends: a summary*

<i>Current facts</i>	<i>Forecasts</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- International trips have grown on a 5% annual average over the past 30 years</li> <li>- Great recovery of the industry after the events on 11 September 2001 in the USA.</li> <li>- New destinations are being developed and regions such as the Asia Pacific and the Eastern European countries are suffering a rapid growth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- International arrivals are expected to reach more than 1.56 billion by 2020.</li> <li>- The long-haul travel is expected to grow faster than the regional travel.</li> <li>- Trips to Northern Europe which include Scandinavia, Britain and Ireland are forecast to grow yearly an average of 3.8%.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.1. Summary of International tourism trends**

Source: WTO, 2007

The majority of the international trips are leisure trips, although international business travel (meetings, incentives and exhibitions) is rising at a very high and it is predicted to become one of the most important types of travel.

❖ ***Trends affecting Ireland and Dublin's main markets***

Great Britain: this market is expected to become the most important demand for city breaks and it is also expected to be a growing market for countryside and touring holidays.

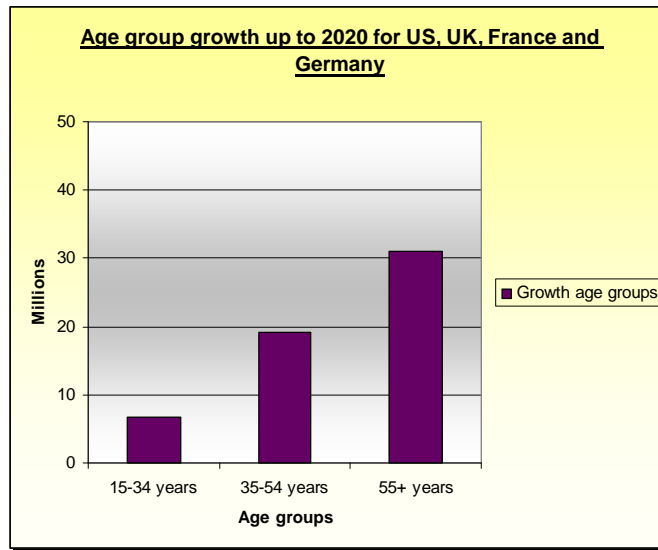
North America: it is forecast to become increasingly interested in sightseeing, culture, cruises and guided tours.

Mainland Europe: Touring holiday, city breaks and wellness are expected to be the most popular type of holidays for European tourists.

❖ ***Changes in the tourists' demographics and lifestyles:***

- Increase of the leisure time and more flexible working conditions
- The increase of trips made by the more than 55 years old segment
- The augment of the single person family unit
- More emphasis on wellbeing and evolution of the value system
- More sophisticated and demanding consumer
- More trips but of shorter length what lead to the city breaks.
- More information available about the destinations
- Destinations are chosen depending on the hobbies and interests
- Tendency of booking accommodation and transportation late
- Importance of the relationship between price and value.
- Environmental awareness
- Transportation revolution: cheaper long distance trips and growth of low-cost airlines.

Tourism destinations have to be aware of who the tourists are and what they want in order to create suitable products for them. For example, now that more old people are travelling, their needs have to be carefully considered since they have more flexibility on the time to travel and usually also on the money available to spend.

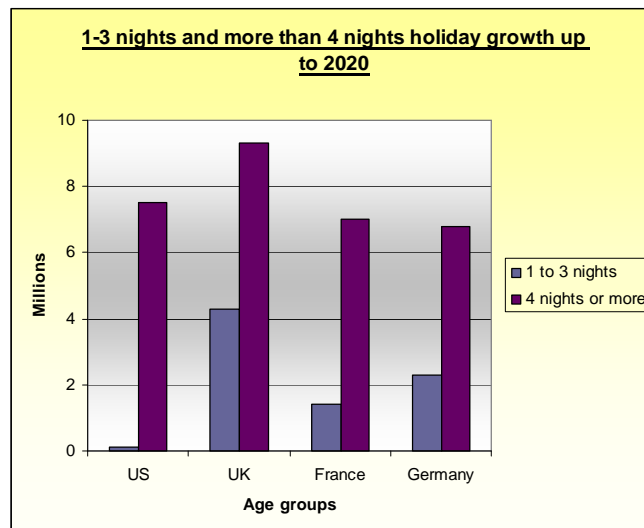


**Chart 2.1. Forecast age group growth**

Source: WTO, 2007

As it can be observed in this graph, the older people segment will growth up to 30 million by 2020. The countries examined above (UK, Germany, France and US) show a remarkable increase in the number of tourists from the aged segment.

The main reason for this is that old people have more free time and nowadays old people are in a good shape to travel.



**Chart 2.2. Increase short breaks**

Source: Fáilte Ireland, 2007



The graph shows the increase of the more than four-night trips for the US, UK, France and Germany markets that are the more important ones for Ireland and also for Dublin. The short break trips have also augmented but in a more reasonable amount. Only in the case of the United States, the short trips do not increase due to the distance. The boost of the longer trips is caused by the increase in the flexibility at work and it could indicate a change of the current tendency of short trips into fewer trips per year but of longer duration.

❖ ***Focusing on tourists' personal needs***

Consumers are more demanding and they expect the tourism industry to offer products that meet their needs, with a good quality that meets their expectations and with a price they are willing to pay. They do not just look for the quality on the tangible products, but they also want their personal needs to be considered.

For example, some needs that tourists want to have satisfied are relaxation, self-actualisation, safety, freedom and the discovery of authentic experiences.

Most of these needs are found in the Maslow's need hierarchy, so the challenge of the travel industry is to satisfy the more individual and basic needs of the clients.

In conclusion, after having examined the international trends for tourism it can be stated that the number of trips will continue growing. The industry must adopt a new strategy focusing on the customers' needs identified through permanent research.

Innovation and the development of new and tailored products will be crucial.

## **2.2. INTRODUCTION TO PLANNING AND POLICY FORMULATION**

The public sector agencies are responsible for the planning and tourism policy formulation but, how can these documents help to improve the tourism industry in a destination?

Nowadays, it is widely recognised that tourism needs to be carefully planned in order to be developed in a sustainable way. Sustainable tourism basically maximise all the advantages of tourism and it reduce the harmful impacts derived from this activity.

So, sustainable tourism is vital to ensure the future of tourism destination since if the resources are destroyed or damaged, the tourists will be no longer attracted and that would cause the death of the tourism industry. National and regional planning are essential tools to create a dynamic and profitable tourism industry and to control its development within the sustainability context.

There are several types of planning in which tourism is related like economic development, physical land use or urban planning. All the decisions made in these projects affect directly the tourism industry and its implications.

Also, there is tourism planning at international, national and regional or local level but for the purpose of this essay, the focus will be on the national and the local planning processes and their implications.

### **❖ *The advantages of planning tourism***

There has not always been such emphasis in planning but since the consequences of bad planned destinations have been studied, public and private sectors have realized that a well planned tourism destination can multiply the benefits as well as decrease the harmful impacts.

Some of the advantages of tourism planning are as following:

- ✓ Contribution to the preservation of the natural and cultural resources.
- ✓ Incorporation of tourism into the general policy context.
- ✓ Framework for decision-making.
- ✓ Increased benefits from tourism and subsequently distribution to the society
- ✓ Avoid problems derived from the industry
- ✓ More coordination between public and private sectors.

When planning, the elements that compose the tourism sector needs to be cautiously identified. The suppliers include all the attractions, accommodation establishments, the transportation network and other tourist facilities and services. The demand includes

the international and national tourists as well as the residents since they also use some of the tourist facilities. Thus, the participation and agreement of the population with the tourism policies and plans it is very important because the shared use of some facilities implies that they have contact with the visitors and discontented locals with the industry could lead to a bad image of the destination.

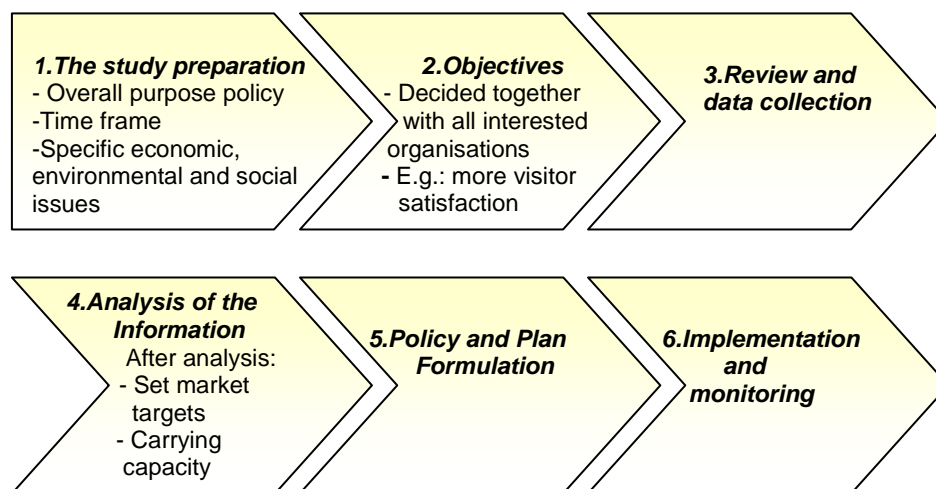
For the planning to succeed, certain basic ingredients are needed. One on hand, there are the public and private sector organisations such as tourist offices, private enterprises associations and marketing organisations. On the other hand there are a wide range of institutional elements like tourism legislation, education and training programmes for the workforce, marketing strategies as well as the reduction of the travel limitations, for example the visa.

The policy to be efficient needs to consider all changes in the tourist demand as well as the global opportunities and challenges to ensure the planning of the destination is integrated in the real economic context but always being in accordance with the destination's background.

After having observed the importance of planning tourism and all the elements to be considered before starting the process, now is time to examine the different stages in the planning process and policy formulation.

### ❖ **The planning and policy formulation process**

The overall process to elaborate planning and policy documents is outlined below:



**Figure 2.1. Planning and policy formulation process**

Source: adapted from the book National and Regional Tourism Planning

Tourism data is always recompiled when planning in order to gain a better knowledge of the situation of the industry at global and national level. The data collection step includes economic, environmental, socio-cultural, market and marketing aspects. Specific examples of data to be collected are international tourism trends, destinations with similar products, popularity of local attractions and accommodation availability among others.

Although in the project, specific Irish tourism legislation is not analysed, it is important to highlight that always policy and planning must be coherent with the existing legal context, which sets the functions of the National Tourism Authorities (NTAs) as well as establishes specific regulations such as the licensing, the inspection procedures for the tourist companies (hotels, restaurants, etc.) and the hotel category requirements.

#### ❖ ***The tourism policy and the urban tourism***

As it has been previously observed, cities offer a wide range of cultural and leisure attractions, shopping and gastronomy options. Some of these facilities were firstly created for the locals use but the tourism use can greatly help to support and enhance them.

Urban tourism is further analysed in the next section, but it is important to note that this type of tourism must be carefully planned. Some issues that are important for planning are the location of the hotels and tourist facilities, the access to the city and the transportation network which must be useful for both tourists and residents. But, tourism is a multi-related activity and regulations in other sectors also affect it and an example of that is the popular renewal of certain urban areas such as old quarters that become then a major tourist attraction. For this reason, tourism has to be considered when developing any kind of policy. Also, conventions and sport events are organised to attract more tourists to the city.

The planning of a destination should have the aim of integrating the attractions, the access to the city and the community to be successful.

The increase of urban tourism also explains the new need and focus of the local tourism planning, since this phenomenon has even become a basic element of competence among cities.

## **2.3. URBAN TOURISM**

### **❖ *An introduction:***

Cities are a gateway for tourists' entry to the country. Also, they are centres of accommodation and usually as a meeting point for tourist excursions to rural areas as well as destinations in their own right.

The study of tourism in large cities or urban tourism has not attracted much attention until the 1980s when the rise of unemployment in some industrial cities led to a search for new activities able to create new jobs and a constant amount of income. At that time, the potential contribution of the tourism industry to cities was recognised.

As a result of the changing demand trends that led to an increase of mobility, changes in household structure and higher standards of living, people started to be willing and able to travel for shopping and leisure purposes. Cities, where visitors can find a wide variety of facilities for the spare time, are becoming crucial within the tourism industry. With the current augment of the short break, cities have become popular destinations to travel to throughout all year.

### **❖ *Motivation for Urban Tourism***

Nowadays, many cities are seeing the benefits of urban tourism, mostly owing to the strong multiplier effect, characteristic of the tourism industry.

According to Tyler (1999), there are a number of motivations for developing urban tourism. These range from the planned regeneration of economies, to enhancing local and national prestige, and improving the quality of life of resident populations.

Tourist are basically attracted to cities by a variety of attractors such as sport events, art museums, etc. and then by visitor experience enhancers like shops, transport and restaurants.

So, the development of tourism in urban context offers the opportunity to increase the performance of other activities and also to provide local residents in deteriorating areas with more possibilities of finding a job.

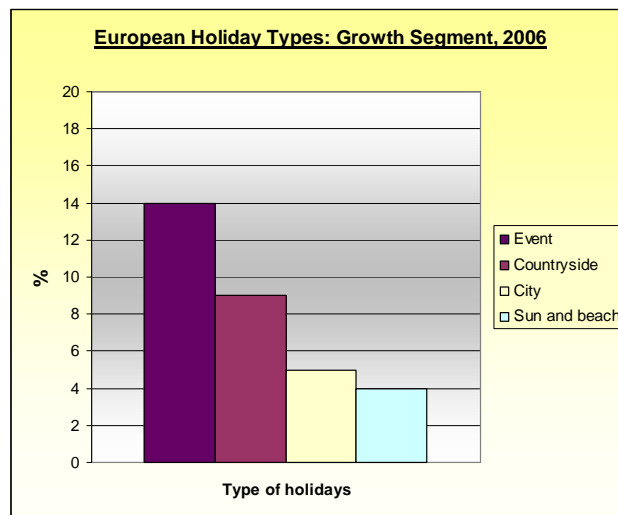
Tourism can also be an effective vehicle to improve the environment both in terms of physical conservation of the region and in relation to specific buildings and areas which, having lost their original purpose, might assume a new function. An example of that is the Guinness Storehouse in Dublin, which after building up new facilities more appropriate for the brewing, this old building has become a museum and as such, the most important visitor attraction in the Republic of Ireland.

With reference to the contribution to the local economy, tourism can augment business earnings as well as increase the local jobs at a possibly “lower” cost and at a quicker speed, than the more traditional industries.

As Higgins stated (1999, in Flanagan and Conlon 1999) an important tourism development in urban areas also benefits rural development through the following factors:

- ✓ The generation of sustainable employment in the regions.
- ✓ The attraction of tourists to rural areas through new developed activities such as agro tourism and eco tourism.
- ✓ The stimulation of investment in tourism products and marketing in rural contexts.
- ✓ The protection of the heritage, the landscape, history and culture that are a major part of the tourist attraction. They are easier to preserve in rural regions due to the less numbers of tourists consuming them.

Cities are mainly interested in the short break market which operates all over the year and is for that reason attractive.



**Chart 2.3. Growth European holiday types**

Source: IPK International. World travel Monitor, 2006

As can be observed, the “City break market” grew by a 5 % of increase in 2006. The “events” segment is the one which experienced the greatest augmentation. It is important to consider that the majority of the events, such as sporting events or arts festivals take place in cities.

The following could be stated as the three main reasons why tourism is important in cities:

- Urban tourism creates all year business since there is less seasonality.
- It considerably influences the local and regional economy mainly by the incomes from tourist's expenditure.
- It maintains the community quality of life, for example through enhancing local facilities such as theatres and shopping areas.

In the literature reviewed, urban tourism market is segmented in three different groups: Short-breaks, shopping and festival and events.

❖ ***The elements of Urban Tourism:***

The three components of urban tourism are the tourist, the city and the tourism industry.

*Analysing the demand of city tourism*

In terms of specific demographics it is difficult to define a type of urban tourist.

Usually, older segments prefer spending their holiday in more quiet places rather than in a city. According to Cockerell (1997), the 20-39 year-old age segment, generally couples without children, are the most likely to take city trips.

However, as it has been previously observed, the senior citizens segment is increasing at a high pace and that may change in the foreseeable future.

Tourists travel to urban areas for a variety of reasons. The main motivators are to visit historical and cultural attractions and to attend to important sporting or festival events. Sometimes, tourists just want to enjoy the particular atmosphere of a city.

As it has been stated previously, other activities such as entertainment, nightlife and shopping amenities complement the tourist holiday experience.

Business travel is also one of the most common reasons for city trips, from traditional business travel to participation in conferences, seminars and exhibitions. Incentive travel has recently become another important trip motivator too.

In accordance with Moreau (1999 in Flanagan and Conlon, 1999) emotional criteria come to the fore in a tourist's decision making.

In this sense, a positive image of the city is crucial on the grounds that destinations with negative images are not even considered by the potential tourists. Some

emotional aspects that the tourists consider are the friendliness of the locals, the street life and security and the authenticity of the site.

On the other hand, the rational criteria takes into consideration other issues such as the number of tourist attractions and the activities which can be done in the destination, always trying to make sure that there will be enough sites to visit during the stay.

The relation between emotional and rational criteria determines if a potential tourist will visit that city. Once all the possible options have been taken into account, other issues such as the travel distance, the price and the climate are considered.

The result of this process is mainly influenced by the image of a city so, efforts need to be made to create a positive image of an urban destination to ensure that tourists situated it in a good position on their ranking list.

Also, the hearsay of friends and family is one of the tourist's most important sources of information in deciding where to go on holiday. To deal with this fact, it is essential to invest in how to create nice memories which tourists take home. Consequently, that will influence the decision making of other potential visitors.

#### *Cities: the scene for urban tourism*

Tourists are continuously seeking new experience to get away from their daily routine. When on holiday, visitors want to experience the heritage, architecture, and culture that make the city unique and different from other sites. Within the metropolis, spaces or monuments like the Eiffel Tower or the Vatican become identified as official tourist attractions. Those places are "famous for being famous" and everybody desires to see them in some moment in their lifetime.

An urban destination should definitely try to differentiate itself with some particular element, like the previously mentioned. That would lead to an easier identification of the city which would rapidly be set on the tourist mind, creating the wish to visit it.

Consideration should be given to the threat of standardization of modern cities as all of them want to offer similar types of tourist facilities like hotels, cafes and restaurants.

So, a city would definitely achieve better outcomes by distinguishing themselves from their competitors instead of trying to follow the same steps as their neighbouring towns.

Another issue regarding urban tourism is the authenticity. It is a fact that many cities have a boundary that separates the tourist sites from other areas of the city where



crime, poverty, and urban decay keep tourists away. Basically, tourists see and visit what they are planned to.

Dublin is a clear example of this practice. When moving away from the city centre, another reality is discovered and the cleanliness and liveliness of the streets disappear.

#### *-The tourism industry in an urban context*

The industry's major components include among others airline companies, city governments, hotels, travel agencies as well as food and beverage establishments.

In the cities, the supply system is made by a complex combination of international chains and local businesses (restaurants, bars, clubs, souvenir shops, sport facilities).

The tourism industry is rapidly becoming better organized and consolidated. That is mainly due to a large number of firms that are sold, acquired and merged by other companies with the aim to create fewer and larger international tourism businesses. This happens through vertical integration (along the supply chain) and horizontal (expanding a business at the same point in the supply chain). For examples, a case of horizontal integration was the take over in 2002 of the budget airline *Go!* by *EasyJet*, another low-cost company

All things considered and according to Crockwell (1997, pp99) *“a combination of tourism development strategies, together with co-ordination and co-operation among all the parties involved, can help to ensure that urban tourism remains a source of well being for a city's inhabitants, the tourism industry and visitors alike”*

### **2.3.1 Tourism impacts analysis in the urban tourism context**

Economic, environmental and socio-cultural impacts derived from the tourism industry need to be carefully considered. Even though the majority of the control measures for addressing these harmful effects are applicable at local level, they need to be present as guidelines at national and regional policy and strategies.

#### **❖ *Economic impacts:***

The main reason why tourism is developed in most countries and regions is due to its economical benefits and often are considered as the most important.

<b>Positive economic impacts</b>	<b>Negative economic impacts</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Foreign exchange earnings and contribution to the Balance of Payments</li> <li>- The multiplier effect: when money spent by tourists goes through the economy and generate other economic activities.</li> <li>- Contribution to the government revenues</li> <li>- Business opportunities and encouragement of foreign investment</li> <li>- Employment generation (direct, indirect and induced employment)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inflation of local prices of goods and services</li> <li>- Economic leakages due to the presence of foreign companies (more usual in developing countries than in urban destinations)</li> <li>- Increase of land and building costs</li> </ul>

**Table. 2.2 Economic impacts of tourism**

Source: WTO, 2007. Made by the author

In order to take the maximum advantages of the economic benefits there are certain techniques such as reinforcing the linkage between tourism and other economic sectors for example by purchasing the food items to the local suppliers since it is a way of creating more employment. Also, it is important to support the local ownership of tourist companies in order to retain the profits made.

#### ❖ **Environmental impacts**

“The environment and the tourism are inter-dependent” (WTO, 1994, pp.32). The natural resources provide lots of tourist attractions world wide and the tourism industry can produce both positive and negative impacts to the environment.

<b>Positive environmental impacts</b>	<b>Negative environmental impacts</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Economic contribution to the conservation of natural areas and wildlife.</li> <li>- Improvement of the environment quality and reduction of all kinds of pollution.</li> <li>- Improvement of waste and water infrastructures.</li> <li>- Increase of the locals' awareness for the conservation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Water, air, noise and visual pollution</li> <li>- Littering problems</li> <li>- Damage of environmental sites such as deserts, coasts and mountains due to the improper development of tourism</li> <li>- Damage of archaeological and historical sites owing to excess of visitors.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.3. Environmental impacts of tourism**

Source: WTO, 2007. Made by the author

The environment must be a concern implied in all kind of tourism policy and planning at all levels. To reduce the consequences of a high presence of tourists is important to work on the seasonality issue since some environmental problems take place only in the high season due to the overuse of the tourist facilities.

❖ **Socio-cultural impacts**

Tourism can bring both benefits and problems to the society. These kinds of impacts are the most difficult to measure and are a direct result of the interaction between the residents and the tourists.

<i>Positive socio-cultural impacts</i>	<i>Negative socio-cultural impacts</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Generation of better living standards</li> <li>- Tourism development helps to pay for facilities and services that also use the residents such as museums and theatres.</li> <li>- Economic aid for the conservation of archaeological and historic sites which become attractions for visitors.</li> <li>- Reinforcement of the residents' sense of pride of their culture and traditions when they see that tourists appreciate it.</li> <li>- Interaction among different cultures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Misunderstandings between locals and visitors due to language barriers.</li> <li>- Resident's hostility towards tourism due to an excessive presence of the tourists in the locals' life.</li> <li>- Change or loss of cultural identity due to an excess of commercialisation of local customs such as music and dance.</li> <li>- Crime generation, drug dealing, alcoholism and prostitution might augment owing to tourism.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.4. Socio-cultural impacts of tourism**

Source: WTO, 2007. Made by the author

In some cases, tourism causes the solution of social tensions between countries and an example of that is the cooperative approach in tourism that exists nowadays between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Also, in 2000 the First Global Summit on Peace through Tourism was held and the tourism industry was identified as a global peace industry.

❖ **Impacts of large events**

In the case of urban tourism, it needs to be considered the impacts derived from a specific event such as the Olympics or any kind of large scale event.

Some of the positive impacts of hosting such events are the increase of the tourist arrivals and in general a combination of all the positive impacts listed above for

example employment creation, improvements in infrastructures used also by the residents, locals' pride and raise awareness about the environment.

A celebration of this type, if well managed, can lead to long-lasting benefits as a good image of the city and that will attract more tourists.

But also, there are very important negative impacts which comprise price inflation, crime increase, changes on land use and increase of pollution and a bad image of the destination if the facilities are not good enough or if bad practices are identified.

So, tourism can cause a wide range of positive and negative impacts. In the tourism planning and policy there is the opportunity to address the majority of the problems caused by tourism and take advantage of the benefits. Later on the project will be seen how the tourism impacts are treated in the Irish planning and policy at national, regional and local level.

### 3. IRELAND'S TOURISM INDUSTRY: ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION AND STRUCTURE

#### 3.1. ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF THE IRISH TOURISM

In Ireland over the past decade, there has been much development in the area of tourism and currently this industry is undoubtedly a major contributor to the national economy. The Irish tourism industry began to grow significantly when the Irish Government took an active role in promoting it in 1987.

<b>Main incoming markets for Ireland, 2006</b>		
<b>Market</b>	<b>Numbers (000s)</b>	<b>%</b>
Britain	3,821	47.7
Mainland Europe	2,252	28.1
<i>Germany</i>	417	5.2
<i>France</i>	360	4.5
<i>Italy</i>	248	3.1
<i>Poland</i>	230	2.9
<i>Spain</i>	198	2.5
<i>Netherlands</i>	155	1.9
<i>Other Europe</i>	592	7.4
North America	1,034	12.9
<i>USA</i>	945	11.8
<i>Canada</i>	89	1.1
Rest of World	310	3.9
<i>Australia</i>	115	1.4
<b>Total Overseas</b>	<b>7,417</b>	<b>92.7</b>
Northern Ireland	585	7.3
<b>Total Out-of-State</b>	<b>8,002</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 3.1. Main incoming markets for Ireland, 2006.**

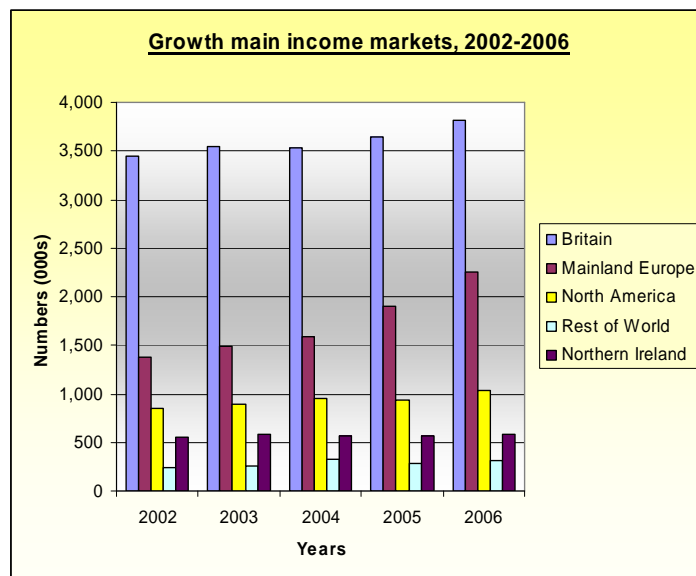
Source: Failte Ireland, 2007

Overseas tourists in Ireland increased by 10 % to 7.4 million in 2006. This was more than twice the World Tourism Organisation's preliminary estimation for the year 2006 that show an increase of 4.5 % in world arrivals, and it is significantly better than the 3.9 % growth in European arrivals.

The overseas tourist expenditure, including visitors from Northern Ireland, amounted to €4 billion and the domestic tourism expenditure amounted to €1.4 billion. In total, tourism industry was worth € 6 billion.

Since 1988 one in three jobs created in Ireland has been in the tourism sector. The estimated number of people who worked in the Irish tourism and hospitality industry in 2006 was 249,338. That was a 1.4 % more than in the previous year. The largest growths were in the Hotel and Restaurant sectors.

The main market for Irish tourism industry is definitely Britain (47.7 %). The North American market is also noteworthy, taking into consideration that it is situated in the second position of the highest spenders according to the WTO tourism international trends 2006.



**Chart. 3.1. Growth main income markets, 2002-2006**

Source: Fáilte Ireland, 2007

As can be observed in the graph above, there is an uninterrupted increase in the tourist numbers visiting Ireland. All main markets show an escalating trend from the year 2002 and this is assumed to continue in the future.

<b>Tourism Revenue in Ireland, 2006</b>	
<b>Market</b>	<b>Revenue (€m)</b>
Britain	1372,4
Mainland Europe	1354,5
North America	815,1
Rest of World	267,1
<b>Total Overseas</b>	<b>3809,0</b>

**Table 3.2. Tourism revenue in Ireland, 2006**

Source: Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism, 2007

Ireland receives a considerable amount of money from tourism. The markets with a higher level of expenditure are Britain and Mainland Europe. The North American market used to be the one with highest spending level but due to the depreciation of the Dollar this is changing.

It is important to find out that the Irish Government receives an additional 30, 2 cent in tax revenue for every Euro spent by foreign visitors in the country, so the contribution of the tourism to the Irish economy is a clear fact.

Also, the tourism industry forms the 4, 6 % of the GNP (Gross Net Payments), which is a significant amount for a young destination such as Ireland.



**Chart. 3.2. Total foreign exchange earnings, 2002-2006**

Source: Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism, 2007

<b>Main tourism advantages for Ireland and Dublin</b>		
<b>Advantage</b>	<b>Ireland (%)</b>	<b>Dublin (%)</b>
The Irish people	39	41
The scenery	27	26
Culture/history	15	16
English speaking	15	14
Access/easy to get	10	9
Restful/relaxing	8	7
Drinks/pubs	4	5
Unspoilt environment	6	6
Quiet roads/drive on same side	4	2
Good accommodation	4	3
Climate	4	5

**Table 3.3. Main tourism advantages for Ireland and Dublin**

Source: Failte Ireland, 2007

The personality and friendliness of Irish people is the most important attraction for tourists visiting Ireland and Dublin. Also, the scenery, culture and history of the country and the city itself as well as the advantage that is an English-speaking country also contribute to attracting tourists to the island.

The state of the roads and the levels of satisfaction with the accommodation provided are issues that need to be addressed. The climate in Ireland is still a clear disadvantaging factor.



### 3.2. STRUCTURE OF THE TOURISM IN IRELAND

Irish tourism is formed by public and private organisations. According to the aim of this paper, a more in-depth description will be made of the public sector organisations since these have direct responsibility for tourism and some of them are in charge of the tourism policy or they are directly involved in it.

The following graph's aim is to help to comprehend further the structure of each sector in the Irish tourism industry.

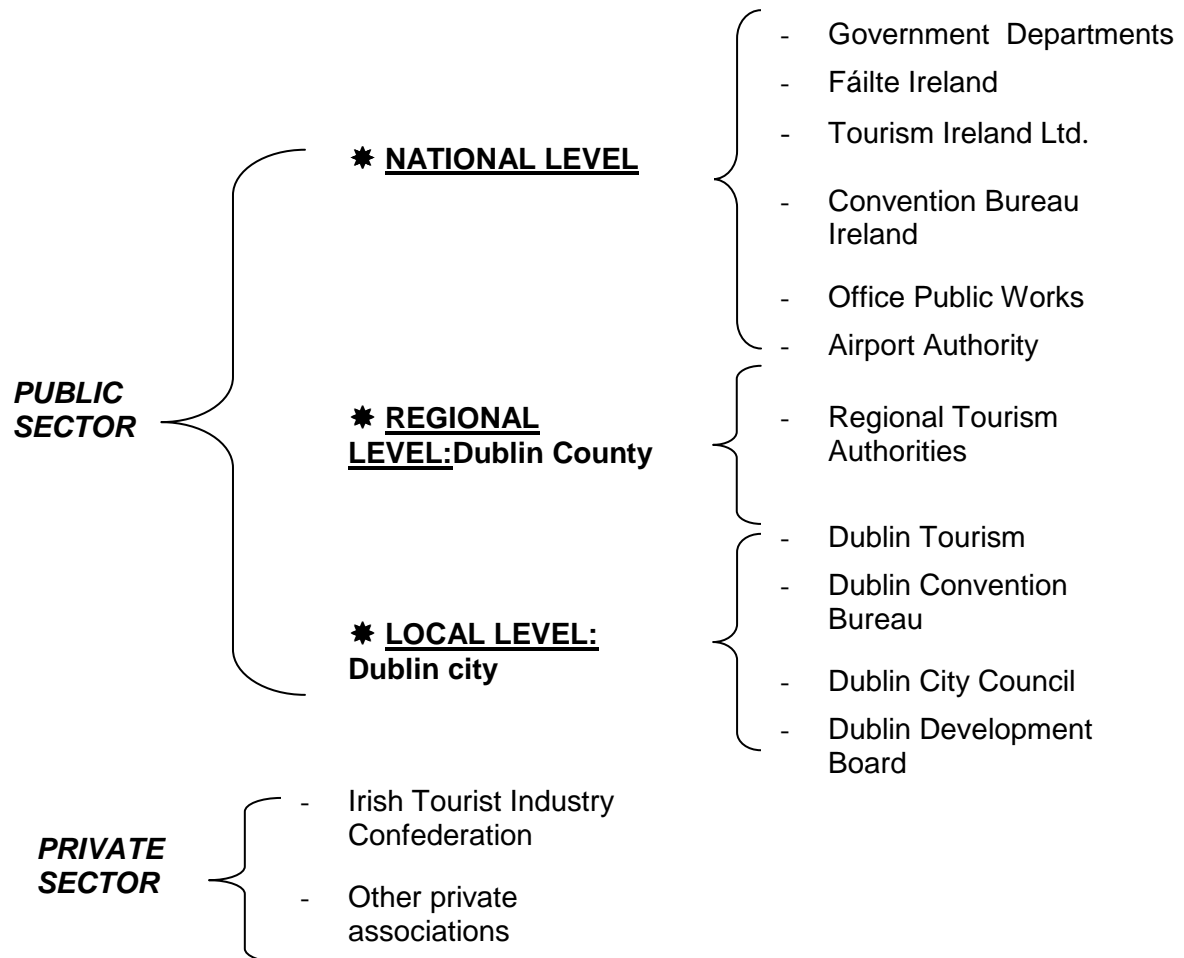


Figure. 3.1. Structure of the tourism in Ireland

Source: made by the author

#### 3.2.1 PUBLIC SECTOR: National level

##### 3.2.1.1. Government

###### Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism

The department's main function is to formulate national tourism policy and integrate it in the overall development of the country. Also, it manages funding issues and the

North-South cooperation between Ireland and Northern Ireland. The department controls the adequacy of the actions taken in the industry to the National Development Plan.

Within the department there is a tourism policy unit known as *Tourism Policy Review Group* that is part of the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism has responsibility on the following matters on policy formulation:

- Human resources, training and education.
- Tourism product development, for example International Sports Tourism Initiatives and festivals such as the annually St. Patrick's Festival
- Standards and quality of the tourism product. For example it is the responsible for creating legislation of the minimum requisites needed by a tourist accommodation establishment.
- Control that the Regional Tourism Organisations follow the same guidelines established at a national level.

It is necessary to highlight that the Department does not have direct responsibility for making decisions on the funding of tourism projects.

Department of Finance: it controls the finances of the Irish economy at all levels. So, all money invested by the Department of Tourism is determined by this department.

Other departments related with tourism are:

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources: has responsibility for marine policy and the development of the ports.

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food: is involved in tourism through agro-tourism schemes.

Department of Transport

Department of the Environment, the Heritage and Local Government

### **3.2.1.2. Fáilte Ireland**

Fáilte Ireland (FI) is also known as the National Tourism Development Authority (NTDA) and is mainly funded by the government. The members of the National Tourism Development Authority are selected by the Minister of Arts, Sports and Tourism and all of the components come from different backgrounds which include from businesspeople to university lecturers.

Fáilte Ireland is responsible for tourism development in the twenty-six counties of the Republic of Ireland at a national, local and regional level. It is allied with various organisations (public and private) involved in the Irish tourism industry

The main functions of Fáilte Ireland are as follows:

- Marketing
- Training for businesses and professionals.
- Tourism products development through grants and tax incentive plans.
- Research and Statistic.

#### **3.2.1.3 Tourism Ireland Limited**

This organisation was originated as part of the Good Friday Agreement, the treaty between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. It was decided that the whole island would be promoted overseas as a single destination in order to attract more foreign tourists and in 2002 Tourism Ireland Limited was established with this function

#### **3.2.1.4. The Convention Bureau of Ireland**

The Convention Bureau of Ireland (CBI) is a corporate promotion name used by the Conference, Incentive and Group Travel Department of Fáilte Ireland.

#### **3.2.1.5. The Office of Public Works (OPW)**

This organisation is run by a minister of state from the Department of Finance and it is responsible, in conjunction with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, for the preservation and refurbishment of:

- National monuments and historical properties
- Parks and gardens
- Ireland's National Parks and Wildlife Service

It is also in charge of managing the state art collection which includes 6,000 works of art and it promotes the country's art.

#### **3.2.1.6. Airport Authorities**

Basically these organisations manage the airports as well as the development of Irish aviation. It also includes the administration of the duty free establishments within the airport facilities.

### **3.2.2. PUBLIC SECTOR: Regional level**

#### **3.2.2.1. Regional Tourism Authorities**

There are seven tourism regions in the Republic of Ireland, which are structured according to the EU planning areas. Six of the seven regions are managed by Regional Tourism Authorities but the Shannon region is managed by an organisation called

Shannon Development which has overall responsibility for the industrial development including tourism.

The Regional Tourism Authorities main functions are the management, the promotion and development of the tourism sector in each of their respective regions. It is fundamental to point out that these authorities run the tourist information offices located in their area and that are responsible for tourism policy in their region as well.

The RTAs are funded by Fáilte Ireland, member's fees and commercial activities, such as visitor services.

### **3.2.3. PUBLIC SECTOR: Local level**

#### **3.2.3.1 Dublin Tourism**

Dublin Tourism is the state agency responsible for the development and promotion of the tourism in the Dublin region. This authority was created because of the need to promote Dublin as a single destination due to its high potential to attract visitors.

The main collaborators of Dublin Tourism include Fáilte Ireland, the Dublin Council and the main tourism organisations and companies such as hotels, restaurants and museums.

It also operates four tourist information offices and reservation centres and five visitor attractions in the region of Dublin County.

#### **3.2.3.2. Dublin Convention Bureau**

This organisation main function is to promote Dublin as an optimum destination for Business travel. It provides advice on organisations and companies that want to hold conferences and conventions in the city.

#### **3.2.3.3. Dublin City Council**

Dublin City Council is the local authority for the city of Dublin. It is responsible for the maintenance of various aspects of the city such as the roads, housing, water and waste management but it does not have a tourism department, although there is a chapter for Arts, Sport and Tourism in the Dublin City Development Plan that sets policy objectives for tourism in the city.

#### **3.2.3.4. Dublin City Development Board**

The Dublin's Development Board is basically an association of state agencies, private organisations and the Dublin City Council. It has no direct responsibility for tourism but

it promotes the culture, the art and the safety among other issues in the city and these elements are considered very important for the tourism.

### **3.2.4. PRIVATE SECTOR:**

#### **3.2.4.1. *The Irish Tourist Industry Confederation (ITIC)***

The Irish Tourist Confederation represents all major commercial tourism interests and it can be considered as a negotiation group. It encourages the development of legislation appropriate for the private sector and it deals with the Irish government in issues such as tourism policy, funding and investment

#### **3.2.4.2. *Private associations***

There are several small and large private organisations which work independently of the government and that sometimes cooperate with state agencies such as Fáilte Ireland. Some of them are:

- Irish Hotel Federation (IHF):
- Town and Country Homes Association (B&B)
- Irish Farmhouse Holidays
- Houses, Castles and Gardens of Ireland
- Restaurant Association of Ireland (RAI)
- The National Trust for Ireland: It is an independent and voluntary organisation that helps in the conservation of national heritage.

## 4. CASE STUDY: DUBLIN

### 4.1- INTRODUCTION TO DUBLIN CITY



Dublin or *Baile 'Atha Cliath*, which is its name in Gaelic and it means “the town of the ford of the hurdles”, is located on the east coast of the Republic of Ireland. With a size of 115 square kilometres is the largest city in the country and it is also its capital.

**Image 4.1. Dublin's location in Ireland**

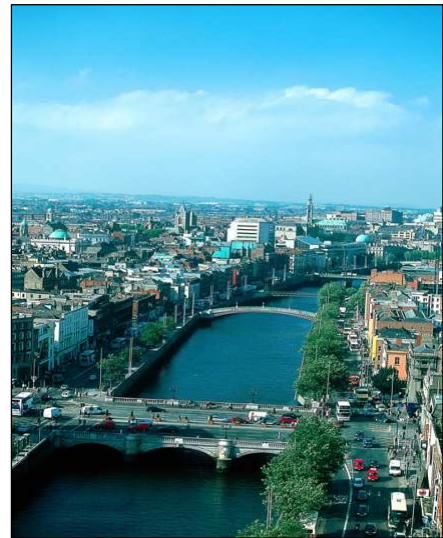
Source: Dublin City Council website

#### ❖ *Physical appearance*

The city is located at the head of a beautiful bay and the city's river is named the River Liffey which it breaks eastward into the Irish Sea. There are also two canals named the Grand Canal, on the south, and the Royal Canal, on the north part of Dublin.

In spite of its historical development, Dublin remains a physically small city. From Dublin Castle, located in the heart of the city centre, it is little more than eight kilometres to the farthest city boundary in any direction. Every year the suburbs are expanding into the countryside but in the south there is a physical boundary, the Wicklow mountains, which ring the city.

In the city there are few buildings dating before the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The tallest building, Liberty Hall, has 17 stories, but most of the buildings are no higher than 10 stories.



**Image 4.2. Overview Dublin city**

Source: Dublin Tourism

There are several parks and squares in the city. The most remarkable ones are “Phoenix Park”, whose size is nearly 80 Km<sup>2</sup>, being one of the greatest city parks in

the world, “St. Stephens Green”, which is the oldest and largest of the city’s squares and “Merrion Square”.

O’Connell Street is Dublin’s main street, in which you can find a great variety of cinemas, shops and bars. Perpendicular to this avenue, there is Henry Street, which with its numerous shopping centres and stores, is one of the two most important shopping areas for tourists and locals in the city. Grafton Street, located in the south of the quays of the Liffey, is known as the point where all the major smart shops are located.



**Image4.3. O’ Connell Street, Dublin**

Source: Living Dublin, 2008



**Image 4.4.Grafton Street, Dublin**

Source: Living Dublin, 2008

Temple Bar is a district of the city very visited by tourists since lots of traditional Irish pubs, including the famous Temple Bar, are located there. Also, this area is placed



**Image 4.5.Temple Bar main street**

Source: Dublin Tourism, 2008

between two retail cores, Grafton Street and Henry Street and that increases its significance. The business area is situated on the east site and it is currently being enhanced. Two main projects which need to be highlighted are “the Dublin Docklands” and the “Spencer Dock” as they will completely improve the amenities for the businesses as well as offer new entertainment and shopping facilities.

## ❖ **Climate**

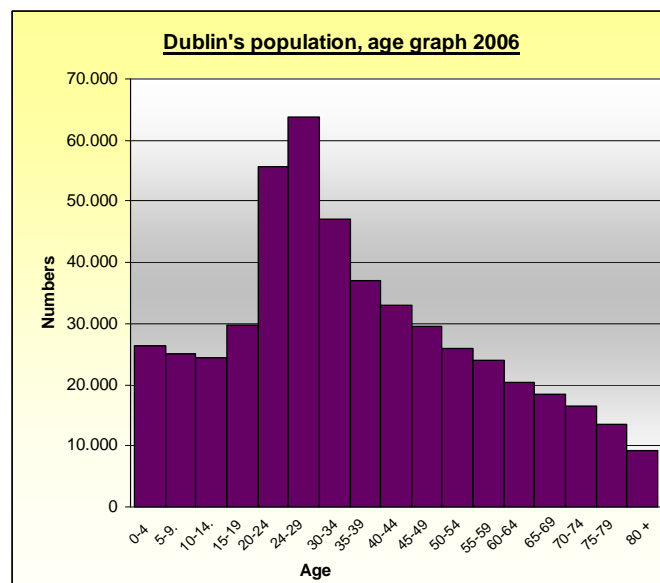
With its coastal site on the western of the Irish Sea, Dublin enjoys a mild climate. The lowest average temperature is 2, 5 °C in January- February and the highest average is 19 °C in July-August. The annual rainfall averages 800-2,800 millimetres. The period of maximum rainfall is in winter and there are less than 10 days of snow a year. The sunniest months are May and June with a sunshine duration between 5 and 6.5 daily.

❖ **Demography data**

The total amount of people living in the Republic of Ireland in 2006 was 4,239,848 and the state population is expected to reach five million by 2021 at an average of 1.26 per cent per year (The Irish Times, 2007).

Dublin County has a population of 1,187.176 inhabitants and 506,211 live in the city according to the latest census recorded by the Central Statistic Office in 2006. Of the people who live in Dublin city, 248,087 are males and 258,124 females.

More interesting demographic data is that a 61% of the inhabitants are singles, 29.22% are married and a 4.5% are separated or divorced.



**Chart 4.1. Dublin's population age graph, 2006**

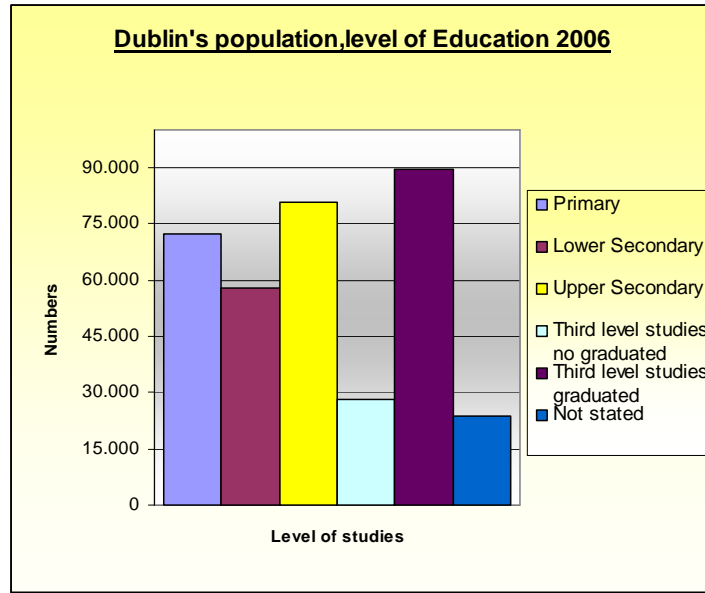
Source: Central Statistics Office, Dublin 2007

As it can be observed on the graph above, Dublin has a young population, and most of the population has from 20 to 34 years old, and that is important because it means that it has a potential workforce.



❖ **Socio-cultural data**

Dublin is the primary centre of education in Ireland with three universities (Trinity College, University College Dublin and Dublin City University) and several higher level education institutions.



**Chart 4.2. Dublin's population, level of education 2006**

Source: Central Statistics Office, Dublin 2007

In the last census in 2006, the 17, 71% older than 18 stated that are university graduated while almost the half of the participants in the census (47, 26%) has a lower level studies finished such as Secondary or university studies not finished. This is important to consider in reference to the workforce available to work in the tourism industry.

❖ **Economy**

Ireland is the fastest growing economy in the European Union and Dublin has been the engine of Ireland's economic growth, with the leading sectors of the economy: software, electronics, financial services and tourism.

Dublin's performance is supported by a number of underlying factors in the Irish economy, including a strong social partnership model and the fact that Ireland is the youngest country in Europe. Irish labour costs used to be among the lowest in Europe, and also lower than the US average and this contributed to the successful economic performance of the country.

Since 2003, business tax rates have been fixed at a standard rate of 12.5 % and that lead to a great boost for the national economy.

The major employers in the city are companies such as Google, Yahoo!, Microsoft, Amazon, eBay, IBM, Dell among others which now have European headquarters and/or operational bases in the city and its suburbs.

Banking, finance and commerce are also important in the city and most of the great banking companies, such as Citibank and Commerzbank, have headquarters in the IFSC (International Financial Services Centre) that is located in the heart of the business area.

The tourism and construction sectors and the government organisations have a crucial contribution to the Dublin's economy.

A National Conference Centre is set to be operational in 2010. This Centre will be capable of accommodating up to 2,000 delegates in plenary session. It will also have some 22 multi-purpose meeting rooms and approximately 4500 m<sup>2</sup> of flexible exhibition and banqueting space. This project will give response to the increasing demand for Dublin as a leading Business tourism destination.

#### ❖ **Transport**

As far as the road network is concerned, the M50 motorway which runs around the south, west and north of the city, is the most important.

One of the main means of transport in Dublin is the bus. Dublin Bus is the company which operates and organises the service, although there are other small companies that offer bus services such as transfer to/from the airport and private tourist tours.

The tram existing in the city known as Luas consists on two different lines and in spite of providing a limited service, it is widely recognised as the most effective way to travel within the areas it runs.

It is necessary to stress that there is an existing plan called "Transport 21" in which the details for the construction and operation of a subway system have been set out.

There is also a train service called DART that runs along the coast of Dublin county and also daily trains to other cities in the country. There are a lot of trains in Ireland because that was the mean of transport used by the British troops to travel within the Republic.

Dublin has also the busiest sea port in the whole country and Dublin Airport is not only the largest in the island, but it has had a fundamental growth in the last decade.

#### ❖ **Government**

The Republic of Ireland takes place in a framework of a parliamentary representative democratic republic. The state operates under the Constitution of Ireland which dates of 1937.

The main parties in the politics frame are *Fianna Fáil* and *Fine Gael* which had their origins in the Irish Civil War of 1921-23. The third largest group in the state is the centre-left Labour party.

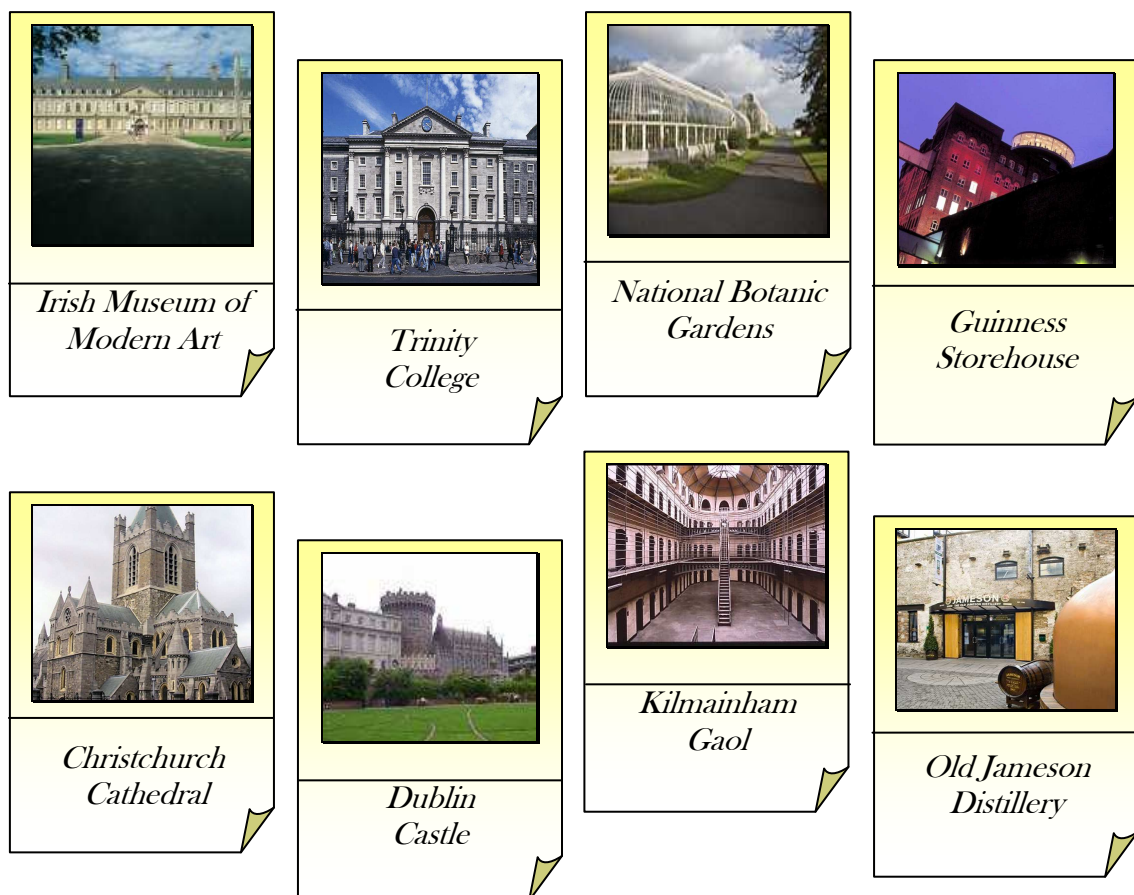
At national level there is the national parliament of Ireland which consists on the President of the Republic of Ireland and two houses, the *Dáil* (Chamber of Deputies) and Senate.

At a local level, the city is governed by Dublin City Council. The current Lord Mayor of the city is the Councillor Paddy Bourke from the Labour Party.

❖ **Tourism**

Dublin has all the facilities to provide a world-class tourist product.

The most important tourist attractions in the city are:



**Image 4.6. Dublin's main tourism attractions**

Source: Dublin Tourism website, 2008

Apart from these attractions, there are a total of 36 museums and galleries in the city which include the National Gallery of Ireland, the James Joyce centre, the Dublin Wax museum and the Vikings' museum among others. So Dublin provides tourists with a complete amalgam of amenities for all tastes and ages.

Tourists can find different types of accommodation available from the traditional guesthouses and B&B, hostels and the most modern hotels. There are also apartments and castles hired for tourist use and during summer there are rooms available in several university campuses.

In reference to the gastronomy, there are quite a good number of restaurants and cafes in the city in which you can find traditional Irish cuisine but there is a great variety of establishments that offer international food such as Italian, Spanish or Chinese.

The bustling nightlife in Dublin has all type of options. There are traditional Irish pubs in which you can find live music like "The Porterhouse" and "The Gogarty's", the more contemporary pubs such as "Café en Sien" and "Camdem Palace" and clubs.

There are continuously events and festivals in the city which appeal tourists. For example, the St. Patrick's Festival that is held annually in March is well known for the parade, the music and the fireworks and lots of people from other countries come just to attend to the celebration.



St. Patrick's  
\* festival \*



**Image 4.7. St. Patrick's Festivals**

Source: St. Patrick's Festivals official website, 2008

## **4.2. DUBLIN AS AN URBAN TOURISM DESTINATION**

### **Facts and figures:**

- Annual average growth of 6% in tourism arrivals between 2001 and 2006.
- More than €1.6 billion spent by 5.6 million visitors in Dublin region in 2006
- Overseas tourists spent €1.4 billion that is a three quarter parts of the total income derived from tourism in the state.
- Money spent from North American tourists grew a 16% from 2005 to 2006.
- Mainland Europe visitors expenditure grew by 53% from 2000 to 2006.
- 20.5 million Bed nights spent in Dublin in 2006 which represent one third part of the total number in Ireland.

Dublin definitely leads the Irish tourism industry both in terms of tourism arrivals and revenue. The capital is the main point for air and sea arrivals. Dublin is the main entry for Ireland since the 50% of the tourists also visits other regions of the country, so a good development of the tourism is crucial.

The city has all the advantages and tourist sights of a historic city but it also possess a new cosmopolitan appeal. The combination of all these factors makes possible to state that Dublin is likely to continue as an important urban destination for the foreseeable future.

In the table below, it can be observed that Dublin is currently competing with important European capitals such as Amsterdam, Vienna, Prague, Barcelona and Budapest. It is placed on the seventh position in overseas market and on the eighth position if including the domestic market.

City	Overseas tourists		Overseas and domestic tourists	
	Ranking	Nº Beds (millions)	Ranking	Nº Beds (millions)
London	1	36.4	1	47.8
Paris	2	22.5	2	33.6
Rome	3	11.3	3	16.6
Prague	4	10.4	6	11.2
Barcelona	5	7.9	7	10.9
Vienna	6	7.8	8	9.5
<b>Dublin</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8.7</b>
Amsterdam	8	7.4	10	8.4
Madrid	9	6.0	5	12.3
Budapest	10	5.7	11	6.6
Berlin	11	5.0	4	14.6
Brussels	12	4.0	19	4.5

**Table 4.1. European urban tourism ranking, 2007**

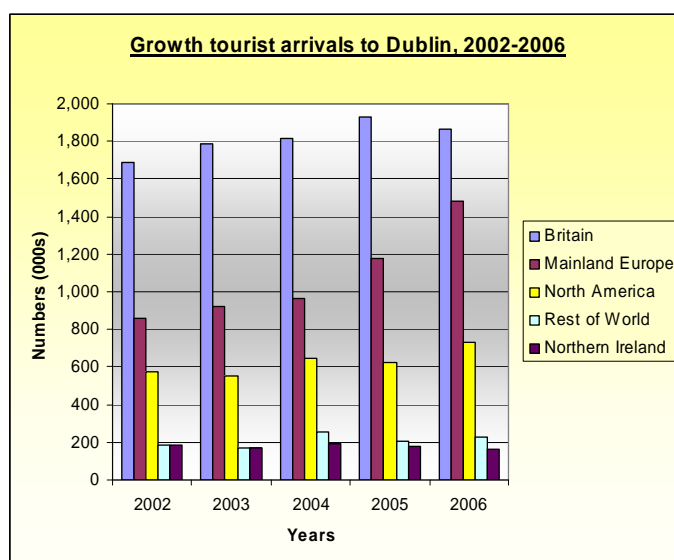
Source: Dublin Tourism, 2007

Dublin is currently on the seventh position for the European ranking in number of beds booked. It is better positioned than mature destinations such as Madrid and Amsterdam and it is no far from the top 3 European cities with more beds booked London, Paris and Rome.

<b>Number of Tourist visits to Dublin, 2006</b>		
Market	Number (000s)	%
Britain	1,864	32.8
Mainland Europe	1,483	26.1
North America	732	12.9
Rest of World	226	4
<b>Total Overseas Tourists</b>	<b>4,306</b>	<b>75.9</b>
Domestic Tourism	1,207	21.2
Northern Ireland	163	2.8
<b>Total tourists</b>	<b>5,676</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 4.2. Number of tourist visits to Dublin, 2006**

Source: Failte Ireland, 2007



**Chart 4.3. Growth tourist arrivals to Dublin, 2002-2006**

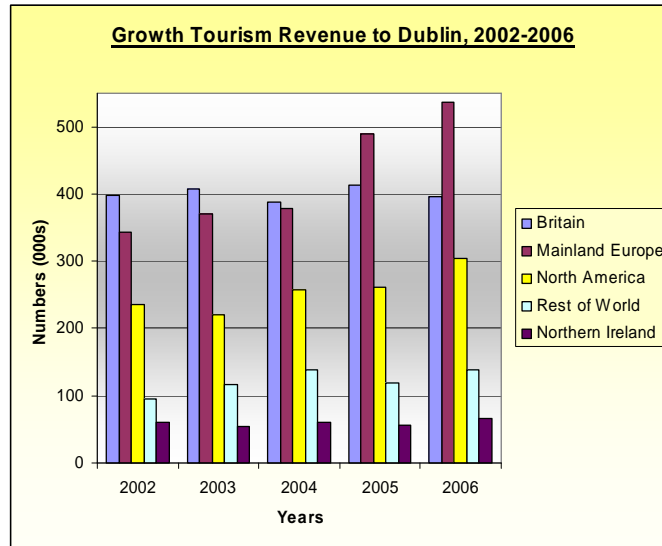
Source: Failte Ireland, 2007

In the graph above, it can be noted that the British market is suffering a soft decline in tourist arrivals to the Irish capital. This shift in the number of arrivals from the British market has to be considered, since it is the key market for Dublin and it represented 43.3 % of the total tourist arrivals in 2006. It can also be noticed that the other main market, Mainland Europe, is having a quick and significant growth. As far as the North American market is concerned, after 9/11, there has been a good recovery and it is presumed that in the next years it will continue growing.

<b>Tourism Revenue to Dublin, 2006</b>		
<b>Market</b>	<b>Number (€m)</b>	<b>%</b>
Britain	395.8	43.3
Mainland Europe	537.1	34.6
North America	303.7	17
Rest of World	137.6	5.2
<b>Total Overseas Tourists</b>	<b>1,374.1</b>	<b>75.9</b>
Domestic Tourism	230.7	21.2
Northern Ireland	65.4	2.8
<b>Total tourists</b>	<b>1,670.2</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 4.3. Tourism revenue to Dublin, 2006**

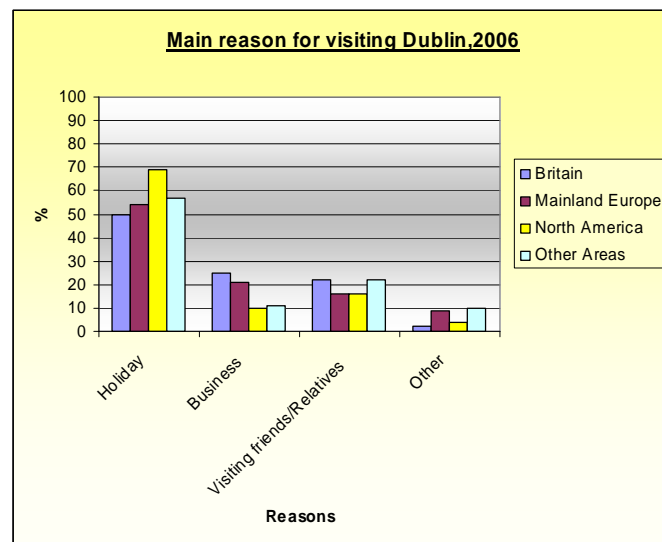
Source: Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism, 2007



**Chart 4.4. Growth tourism revenue to Dublin, 2002-2006**

Source: Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism, 2007

British tourists have the highest level of expenditure in Dublin with a total amount in 2006 of €395.8 million and this corresponds to the 43.3 % of the total tourist turnover. The chart 4.4. shows that it has significantly increased the amount of money spent in Dublin by tourists from Mainland Europe. Also, the North American market is augmenting the levels of spending in the city. The British market has diminished in level of expenditure in comparison with previous years, and this is also related to the fact that the tourist arrivals from that area have also decreased.



**Chart 4.5. Main reason for visiting Dublin 2006**

Source: Failte Ireland, 2007



As far as the motivation for visiting Dublin is concerned, the main reason is for holiday, followed by visiting friends and relatives. The importance of this kind of tourism is due to the large numbers of Irish people who emigrated to other countries during the period of 1848-1990.

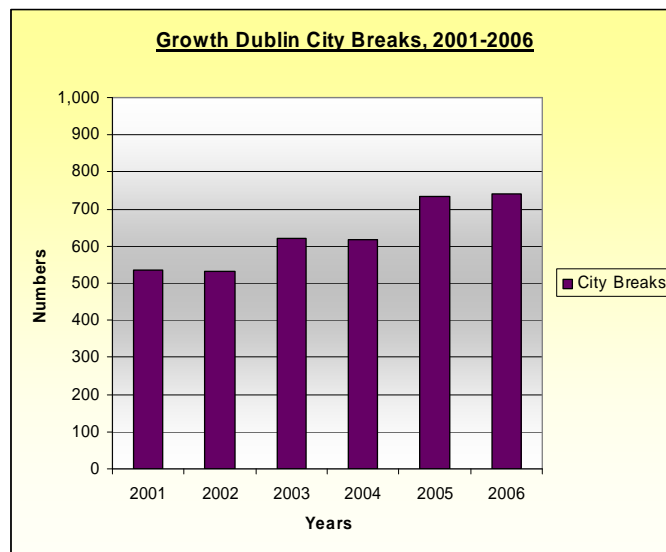
Business-related trips are also considerable and because of the high level of spending that characterises this type of tourism, it has to be promoted in the foreseeable future.

<b>Length of stay in Dublin, 2006</b>		
<b>Market</b>	<b>Average stay in Ireland</b>	<b>Average stay in Dublin</b>
Britain	4.2	2.8
Mainland Europe	7.8	6.7
North America	8	4.7
Other Areas	10.2	8.7

**Table 4.4. Length of stay in Dublin, 2006**

Source: Failte Ireland, 2007

Tourists who spend more days in Dublin are people from Mainland Europe. The British market spends an average of 2.8, perhaps mainly due to the short distance between both countries. It can also be observed that North American tourists spend an average of 8 days in Ireland but just an average of 4.7 days in Dublin. That could mean either this segment is interested in rural tourism or it does not find enough entertainment and things to do in Dublin to justify a longer stay.



**Chart 4.6. Growth Dublin City Breaks 2001-2006**

Source: Dublin Tourism, 2007

The chart 4.6. shows that the Dublin short break market has grown over the last six years by 39 % since 2001. In 2006 the city received more than 7 million of city breaks.

All things considered, it can be stated that Dublin is now one of the most popular short-break destinations, with British visitors as the main market. Major attractions such as international rugby and soccer matches and the new appeal of the music and film industries are contributing to the growing success of the capital as a quality international destination in itself.

The sport- related tourism in Dublin has always been a key source of income. The capital has hosted several internationally known sporting events in the last ten years. The year 1998 was one of the better periods for international sport events for the Irish capital. Some events held in the city were the opening stages of the Tour de France, the Cutty Sark Tall Ships race (August) and the Smurfit European Golf Open at the K Club. In 2003 the Special Olympics Games and the Ryder Cup in golf were also held in the capital.

Even though the great performance of Dublin in the tourism industry, the fact that the tax in the country are so high is a clear disadvantage because of almost all incoming tourists to Ireland, and Dublin, are European and that the products are more expensive than in their home countries it is a clear disadvantage. Also, Ireland competes with other European destination for long-haul tourists and the inflation locates it in a bad position.

#### **4.2.1. FACTORS DETERMINING DUBLIN'S SUCCESS AS AN INTERNATIONAL URBAN TOURISM DESTINATION**

A number of reasons have influenced the success of tourism in Dublin.

In 1991, Bord Fáilte supported the idea of promoting Dublin as a short-break destination. Bord Fáilte succeeded in convincing carriers in twelve different destinations to include Dublin in their city breaks brochures.

The retail sector agreed to contribute in a specific promotion that would have direct benefits for the trade, so it contributed to the marketing strategy for the capital.

Dublin Tourism established a common marketing strategy of the then significant day visitor attractions.

The liberalisation of the air routes was vital for the development of the tourism both in Ireland and in Dublin. Firstly, Ryanair lowered the cost and augmented the frequency of air transport and secondly, as a result of a change in government policy, direct flights to and from the USA were authorized.

<b>Traffic flows in Dublin airport, 2007</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Passengers ('000)</b>	<b>Turnover (€'m)</b>
2005	24,483.000	525
2006	27,846.000	591
2007	30,088.000	623

**Table 4.5. Traffic flows in Dublin airport, 2007**

Source: Aer Rianta, 2007

Dublin Airport is nowadays Ireland's busiest airport and the fourteenth busiest in Europe in passenger numbers. In 2006 the estimated number of passengers was more than 20 million with eighty airlines serving more than 150 international destinations.

The figure above, shows the evolution in number of passengers at Dublin Airport, as well as the revenue obtained from those. The year 2007 represented the sixteenth consecutive year of growth in passenger numbers at Dublin Airport. The 10 % rise in passenger to 30 million has maintained Dublin's position as one of Europe's fastest-growing airports.

The turnover has also had a very significant increase.

On sea routes, larger ships and high speed ferries were introduced and there was an increase in the number of routes offered between Ireland and Britain. That enhanced the services offered by Stena Sealink and Irish Ferries, the two main companies.

Besides, Dublin continues to experience a programme of extensive and attractive urban renewal. For instance, the creation of more streets for pedestrian use enabled the visitors to discover the city in a better way rather than on a tourist sightseeing bus. Also, the enhancement of the illumination of significant buildings in central areas like O'Connell Street has gradually improved the city's image.

In conclusion, market research has shown that visitors mainly come to Dublin for the atmosphere and the friendliness of the locals. Then, also the visitor attractions in the city must provide an authentic Dublin experience linked to what the tourists expect when come to the Irish capital.

One project to highlight is the current revitalization of the Docklands area which will spread the numbers of tourists across a bigger area and will alleviate overcrowded areas such as Grafton Street and Temple Bar. Thus, visitors will be able to enjoy a less congested environment and that will allow a more deep contact with the city, its characteristic charm and their inhabitants.

The urban renewal in the city has directly contributed to the success of the tourism and areas in decay such as Temple Bar would have not become such a popular tourist area without an extensive rejuvenation process.

#### **4.2.2. TEMPLE BAR: TOURISM IMPROVEMENT AS A RESULT OF URBANISATION RENEWAL.**

In the sense of area regeneration, it is important to have a closer look at the development of one of the most tourist districts in Dublin: Temple Bar.

What happened in Temple Bar was a combination of cultural development with urban renewal encouraged by the local organisations.

The year 1965 can be stated as the starting point of the changing process in the Temple Bar district. In that year the national Bus and Rail Company CIE (*Córas Iompair Éireann*) which run the transportation in Dublin wanted to place a central bus station in the city centre, specifically in Temple Bar. CIE started to purchase properties in the area which were rented out at low rents to artists, musicians and to cultural bodies while the planning process was taking place. This inevitably caused an alternative, bohemian atmosphere to the place and residents started to see a real value in their neighbourhood. In 1998 a committee named Temple Bar Development Council was formed with the aim of impeding CIE's plans for the bus station. The group put pressure on the Dublin City Council and on various government departments and eventually CIE sold its properties to Temple Bar Properties. Temple Bar Properties and Temple Bar Renewal were the two companies set up to deal with the development of Temple Bar.

In 1991 Temple Bar Properties initiated a competition to create an Architectural Renewal Plan which was won by a group of architects called "Group 91".

In their plan was emphasised the importance of a pedestrian main street (the Fleet Street to Essex Street axis), which was seen as a backbone for the area. Traffic

restrictions were introduced and on-street parking was banned in order to encourage a flow of people through the lively quarter. As a part of the same project, three new public squares (Temple Bar Square, Meeting House Square and Market Square) were built providing a different atmosphere to the respective nearby streets.

From the following pictures can be observed the results of the revitalizations made in the district.



**Image 4.8. Temple Bar square before rebirth**

Source: Temple Bar Cultural Trust



**Image 4.9 Temple Bar square after rebirth**

Source: Temple Bar Cultural Trust

Also, the project had the aim of mixing the uses of the buildings, with residential accommodation on the upper floors and retail units on the ground floor in order to encourage vitality and diversity on the streets. A number of cultural centres were created and the area started to be promoted as a quarter of cultural diversity and a select location for small and alternative businesses.

The aim of ensure a balance of diverse use of the land failed, as a result of inefficient management of tax incentives issues by the company Temple Bar Renewal. Many pubs were established in the quarter which turned itself into the “Temple of Bars”. By 1997, Temple Bar had already been identified as a party area for tourists.



**Image 4.10. The Temple Bar before renewal**

Source: Temple Bar Cultural Trust



**Image 4.11 The Temple Bar after renewal**

Source: Temple Bar Cultural Trust

The image of the Temple Bar after the physical renovation is one of the most used for the tourist postcards.

## 5- TOURISM POLICY AFFECTING DUBLIN CITY

### ❖ *Brief evolution on Irish Tourism Policy:*

On the following chart, it can be observed how the Irish tourism policy has evolved and which have been the main objectives:

<b>Tourism Policy</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
<b>1985.</b> White Paper on Tourism Policy	-To preserve natural and heritage resources -To create job through tourism
<b>1988-1993.</b> Programme for National Recovery	-To encourage investment in tourism industry
<b>1989-1993.</b> Operational Programme for Tourism. Phase 1 (£380m)	-To improve the marketing strategy -To prepare workforce through training
<b>1992.</b> Tourism Task Force	-To increase cooperation between the industry and the government -To reduce seasonality
<b>1994-99.</b> The National Development Plan	-To maintain the good progress of the industry and a good relationship with Northern Ireland -To abolish air regulation
<b>1994-99.</b> Operational Programme for Tourism. Phase 2 (£652m) <i>*the first marketing campaign to promote the whole island.was launched</i>	-To upgrade the tourist accommodation -To decrease seasonality -To modernise the tourist office network. - To train the employees
<b>2000-06</b> National Development Plan	- To obtain high levels of revenue through tourism - To address negative environmental impacts
<b>2000-06</b> Tourism Product Development Scheme	- To develop new tourism products in order to extend the activity in all the country and all year.

**Table 5.1. Evolution Irish tourism policy.**

Source: Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism. Made by the author

At first, the policy was based on job creation through tourism and an increase of investment and when the industry was more competitive, the focus was on new products. The environment preservation has always been vital and considered on policy. It is important to point out that the contribution of European funds to the industry, like the current European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) that will contribute to urban and rural regeneration, to transport improvement and to environment protection.

<i>Description</i>		<i>Organisation</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Description</i>
<i>Documents</i>				
<b>NATIONAL</b>	National Development Plan 2007-13	Government	General and tourism policy	It is a state strategy that considers different aspects of the economy, including tourism and it sets specific action to be taken in Dublin city.
	National Spatial Strategy 2000-20	Government	General policy	It is a state plan that deals with the land use and planning and its main aim is to reduce the congestion of urban areas.
	“New Horizons for Irish Tourism” 2003-12	Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism	Tourism policy	It is the main tourism strategy for Ireland and it analyses the current situation of the industry and it sets guidelines to improve it.
	Ireland Environmental Action Plan	Fáilte Ireland	Report/strategy	It analyses the relationship between environment and tourism and it sets action to be taken to preserve the environment.
	Ireland’s Tourism Product Development Strategy	Fáilte Ireland	Report/strategy	It examines the current tourism products in the country and analysing the demand, it proposes new products to be developed.
<b>REGIONAL</b>	Make it happen: Dublin Regional Plan	Dublin Tourism	Tourism policy	It is the tourism strategy for Dublin County. It sets actions to improve the overall quality of the tourism in Dublin city.
<b>LOCAL</b>	Dublin City Development Plan 2005-11	Dublin City Council	General and Tourism policy	It is the local policy and it deals with a wide range of issues related with the tourism industry. The main aim is to improve the city and the facilities and services for its inhabitants. There are specific actions for the tourism.
	Dublin: a city of possibilities 2002-12	Dublin Development Board	Report/strategy	It is a strategy that wants to encourage the safety in the city and to promote the culture as distinctive feature of the city.

**Table 5.2. Summary of the Irish policy**

Source: made by the author

## **5.1- NATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT**

### **5.1.1. National Development Plan 2007-2013: “Transforming Ireland”: Tourism Development Plan**

Public Authority: Irish government

Description: *General and tourism policy.* This plan carried out by the Irish Government a total of €800 million are available to be invested in the tourism industry during this period. That consists on the largest sum of money ever invested by the central administration for tourism projects.

Aim: The main aim of the Tourism Development Plan, included in the National Development Plan is to stimulate the regional tourism development and the actions that will be taken are as follows:

1. An International marketing campaign to promote the island in the key international markets in order to increase the tourism arrivals and revenue as well as addressing the seasonality issue of the industry. This campaign will include advertisement on television, radio, print ads, direct marketing as well as the production of tourism research and reports. This plan also looks for the use of e-marketing and to target new markets as China and India. The total amount of the expenditure is €335 million.
2. Enhancement of existing tourism attractions and activities and the construction of the National Conference Centre in Dublin. The full amount spent is €317 million.
3. More investment in training. After the report of Fáilte Ireland “Competing through people” in which the workforce in the Irish tourism industry was assessed, the conclusion was that the employees have to be considered as the main source of competitive advantage and due to that a considerable amount of investment is located on education and training of the people (national and non-national) working in the industry. Also, it encourages the improvement of the management skills for the companies’ directors as well as the networking in the SMEs (small and medium enterprises). The total amount of the investment is €148 million.
4. New tourism products. €328 million in funding for the Fáilte Ireland’s Tourism Product development Strategy 2007-2013 described further in the project. Also, new festivals and musical, cultural and literature programmes will be developed.
5. Environment conservation



6. Improved access for disabled visitors.
7. Abolish air regulations. Increase the number of US visitors through the Open Skies arrangement.

Apart from the large investment on Tourism, the NDP 2007-2013 has planned actions for social insertion (children and people with disabilities), education, housing, health and justice issues as well as the foster of innovation at enterprise and scientific level. Also, the plans for the transport and the energy services, for the encouragement of the culture and the sport will benefit the tourism development.

The National Development Plan actions are structured by different cities. For the aim of this project, the focus will be on the Dublin, the main Ireland's gateway and for this reason a large amount of money is invested on it.

#### ❖ ***Focus on Dublin***

There is the need to highlight the *Transport 21* programme whose main aim is to improve the public transport by creating an underground system that will connect the city centre with the airport, by enhancing the DART and the rail network and by providing a better bus service within the city centre and the county that will be also complemented by the end of the new part of the M50 motorway. It also will augment the capacity of Dublin airport with the construction of the second terminal.

Other actions planned in the capital are:

- The development of tourism, sport and cultural facilities such as the new National Theatre and the new National Concert Hall.
- A continuous investment on urban rejuvenation and improvement of the physical appearance of some areas of the city.

It is important to point out that in the NDP 2007-2013, a major co-operation approach between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland is introduced and both countries will work together ,although obviously having different economies, on issues such as the marketing of the whole island (through Tourism Ireland Limited) and the encouragement of investment for the overall tourism industry.

### 5.1.2. National Spatial Strategy 2000-2020(NSS)

Public authority: Irish Government: Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

Description: *General policy.* The National Spatial Strategy is a twenty-year plan designed to monitor the development at social, economical and environmental level of the island of Ireland. The important tourism zones in the country were identified and issues that need to be addressed were raised.

Aim: This strategy seeks a better quality of life for the population as well as strong economic growth and a preservation of the natural resources.

The actions to be implemented at global level are as following:

1. Control land utilisation and reduce cities congestion. One of the major concerns expressed by the NSS is the utilisation of the urban land and the risk of the cities' congestion and overcrowding in some regions such as Dublin while parts of the Western coast and Midlands are suffering the opposite effect.  
For example in the case of Dublin, the urban area is extending through the suburbs due to the establishment of companies on the outskirts that oblige the employees to move out the city centre. Also, the construction of shopping centres, hotels and technology parks are taking areas that used to be virgin and out of the human reach.
2. Reduce seasonality
3. More sustainability of the tourism industry.
4. Reduce congestion of tourism areas.
5. Spread the benefits derived from tourism outside the focal regions.

#### ❖ **Focus on Dublin**

It is expected that the city will grow in inhabitant numbers but it needs to be avoid the area expansion of Dublin, among some reasons, to keep an effective transport system within the city.

The bodies responsible for the land planning have to take actions to maintain the current extension of the city. Also, more aspects need to be considered in order to maintain Dublin as an important European capital for tourism. Planned actions for Dublin:

- Develop an efficient use of the housing. For example by promoting the use of apartments placed over shops and retail.
- Encourage the regeneration of the city, particularly on declining industrial and urban areas into residential areas.
- Develop a first-class public transport system within the city
- Provide effective access to the city from other countries mainly through Dublin Airport and Dublin Port and also with other metropolis in the state.
- Maintain adequate water and waste management services
- Protection of the nearest natural resources that are the Dublin Bay and the Wicklow Mountains.
- Invest on the education and research facilities in the city.

### **5.1.3. Tourism Policy Development Unit's strategic report: "New Horizons for Irish Tourism: an Agenda for action 2003-2012"**

Public authority: Government. Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism: Policy Unit.

Description: *Tourism policy.* It is the national tourism policy formulated by the responsible unit of the Government.

Aim: to improve the national tourism.

The strategy planned the following actions:

1. Develop a new vision for Irish tourism. This will be based on the meeting of visitor's expectations, good quality products, respect for the environment and wide career opportunities.
2. Identify major factors that change the tourism industry. For example, the changes on customer behaviour, development on transport and technology.
3. Set specific objectives for the industry at national level. The targets are an increase on visitor expenditure from €3 billion to €6 billion and a growth on visitor numbers from 7 million to 10 million in ten years time.
4. Adapt continuously to the changing environment in which tourism activity takes place in order to continue with a competitive tourism performance.
5. Specify a decision-making system.

The tourism policy analysed the international and national situation of the tourism industry and it identified key factors that contribute to the success of the industry and that was considered for the development of the strategy. The policy includes an extensive action plan with detailed objectives to develop and/or maintain each of these

factors but, to do not get away from the purpose of this paper the following points will take into account the actions that will be developed.

The factors driving the success of the Irish tourism industry are the following:

- An adequate business environment through maintaining inflation at low levels and setting low taxes for tourism activities.
- Maintain competitiveness of the industry and value for money of the products through training, preservation of the environment and avoiding a high rise on the price in tourism products.
- An effective transport system for national and international access.
- Encouragement of Irish operators to use up-to-date information and communication technologies which affect several activities within the industry for instance the promotion of the destination and the dealing with the costumers.
- Maintenance and enhancement of the existing products and the natural resources that are one of the main appeals of the country.
- Focus marketing efforts on key markets as well as new target markets as China and India through more use of new distribution channels and a continuous assessment of the results.
- Major product segmentation including the promotion of wellness tourism, English learning stays, incentive travel, cruising, castles and gardens among others with the aim of positioning Ireland as a destination suitable for short and long stay.
- High-quality education and training for tourism industry workforce as well as an improvement of the conditions of the jobs starting by a good wage.
- Public sector involvement through formulation of tourism policy, incentives on the regions with less income from tourism and the partnership with the private sector.
- Constant research and investigation on the tourism industry.

To control the results of the strategy implemented, a report of the performance of the strategy is handed every two years to the Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism.

On March 2006, the latest summary was done and it stated that the best performing areas were the commitment of both public and private sectors for the tourism sector, the increase of air routes from the key markets for Ireland as well as an improvement of the national transport system, the creation of new facilities such as the National

Conference Centre and the renovation of existing ones including the Abbey Theatre and the National Concert Hall in Dublin.

On the other hand, the areas with slower progress were the improvement of the competitiveness of the industry, the upgrading of the Dublin airport facilities and the high level of taxes on the Conference and Business segment that leaves the state in a disadvantage position in comparison with other European capitals. The strategy also failed on developing new tourism products, which need to be urgently addressed, and on extending the tourism activity on the countryside mainly due to a poor road signage and the bad conditions of the roads on the different routes.

## **5.2. REPORTS AND STRATEGIES OF TOURISM IMPORTANCE AT NATIONAL LEVEL**

### **5.2.1. Fáilte Ireland's Tourism Product Development Strategy 2007-2013**

Public Authority: National Tourism Authority: Fáilte Ireland

Description : it is a nine-year strategy that analyses the tourism trends at international and national level and identifies the gaps on the Irish tourism products.

Aim: To set actions that will improve the national tourism products.

Dublin is considered a destination on its own right so, it will be given just a brief description of the main contents of the strategy in order to gain a deeper knowledge in the overall tourism situation in the island.

The actions that are set in the report are:

1. Preserve physical environment through beach and historic towns' sustainable management.
2. Improve transport system in order to make easier the access to every place in the country.
3. Accelerate the development of the National Conference Centre which can provide vital benefits for the industry.
4. Create new tourism attractions such as a Science Museum, new golf courses and the all-Ireland coastal walk product.
5. Encourage training and a high quality management of tourism enterprises.

All these actions will lead to a general improvement and to an upgrade of the Irish tourism products. That will allow maintaining Ireland as one of the most important destinations in the international context.

❖ **Main findings of the analysis of the current tourism products:**

The existing tourism products are analysed and classified in different themes based on the tourism experiences that can be provided to the visitors. The themes are urban culture, gastronomy, wellness, soft adventure which includes outdoor activities such as equestrian, golf and cycling; arts and events, self-improvement that involves the English language learning and genealogy tourism. Also, the discovery of Irish heritage and the rural culture are part of the proposals.

The best performing segments are the soft adventure, the gastronomy and the arts and events segments. Also, the heritage and rural culture themes have done it properly.

Some feedback derived from visitor surveys that must be kept on mind is the opinion that the museums have a weak presentation of the exhibitions and that some heritage sites are considered as poor quality due to the inexistence of visitor facilities.

It is necessary to point out that the product of English language learning has suffered a decline as a result of several reasons such as the limited number of host families, the price competition with other destination and the complication of the visa requirements for foreign students owing to changes on Government immigration policy. This turn down has an affect on Dublin as it is one of the towns where this product is more popular.

### **5.2.2. Fáilte Ireland's Environmental Action Plan 2007-2009**

Public Authority: Fáilte Ireland's Environmental Unit

Description: this report studies the importance of the environment for the Irish tourism.

Aim: to demonstrate the importance of sustainable tourism for the environment preservation.

This Action plan takes into consideration all existing national policy on environmental issues that are the *Making Ireland's Development Sustainable* published by the Government in 2002, the EPA's *Ireland's Environment* (2004) and *Environment on Focus* (2006) reports and also the National tourism policy report previously outlined.

The paper describes the Ireland's green image as the main motivator for the tourism industry to preserve the environment. Since the natural environment is one of the key

attractors of tourists to Ireland, it cannot be permitted that the recent economic growth destroy the landscape and as a consequence Ireland's green image, which is the key of the marketing campaign of the island.

The following actions to conserve the environment were set:

1. Reduce seasonality
2. Reduce congestion of main tourism areas.
3. Reduce environmental impact related to tourism
4. Encourage sustainability in the tourism sector mainly through waste management and water and energy stewardship.
5. Insert environmental issues on tourism policy, from national to local level.
6. Preserve specific environmental-dependent and tourist sights such as historic towns, scenic landscapes among others.
7. Investigate deeper the relationship between the tourism industry and the environment.
8. Establish partnerships with environmental and/or ecological organisations, in order to work together with the same objective preserve the natural resources.

### **5.3. POLICY AT REGIONAL LEVEL: DUBLIN REGION**

#### **5.3.1. Make it happen: Dublin Regional Tourism Plan 2008-2010**

Public Authority: Regional Tourism Authority: Dublin Tourism

Description: Tourism policy that sets the main guidelines to the development of the tourism in the Dublin County but with especial emphasis to Dublin city.

Aim: to guide the development of the tourism in the period 2008-2010 under the key principles of Dublin Tourism: to protect Dublin's people, heritage and environment, to ensure quality and economic value and to work together with the public sector and all the stakeholders in order to boost a satisfactory tourism performance.

The plan sets objectives to be accomplished in Dublin city by 2010 which include:

- To spread the benefits of the tourism activity on the suburbs.
- To go over or at least meet the visitors' expectations that will lead to an effective word of mouth with relatives and friends and that will help to promote the destination.
- To continue promoting Dublin city as a high-quality destination for both business and leisure tourists.

- To enhance the attractions and the facilities available for tourists and locals by incorporating new products and events.
- To achieve an 6.5 % average increase in overseas tourists arrivals that will lead to a 5.5 million visitors to Dublin city by 2010
- To achieve an 8 % average growth of the overseas revenue that will result on € 1.8 million expenditure by the end of the period.
- To preserve the environment.

The main actions to be developed by 2010 in order to achieve the objectives listed above are the following:

1. Establish an annual forum of the tourism industry in the city to help to develop and improve products.
2. Initiate tourism awards for the tourist industry components in order to motivate them.
3. Work on multi-lingual tourist information for tourists.
4. Create opportunities for the tourist to enjoy the natural resources located close to Dublin such as the Dublin Wicklow Mountains, the Dublin Bay, the Phoenix Park and the Canal.
5. Encourage tourists to visit the cultural heritage of Dublin through promoting the numerous sites available without having to pay and with widen opening hours.
6. Face the limitations of the tourist attractions for example by providing access for the disabled people and improving the public transport service.
7. Encourage the growth of the business travellers segments through incentives, usually in reference with taxes, in choosing Dublin as a destination for a conference.

❖ ***Main points of the marketing strategy for Dublin city 2008-2010***

The main goal of the marketing campaign is to promote Dublin city brand in the key markets that are Britain, Midland Europe and the USA with the aim of increasing the revenue, the tourist arrivals and the duration of their stay. Integrating e-marketing is also a major issue.

Also, several tourist data was collected in order to identify the most strong market segments which comprised the “sightseers and “culture seekers” which is currently the principal segment, “the calm seekers” that will be more attracted when developing tourism attractions outside the city centre and the “social adventurers” that look for nightlife, pubs and music.



In addition, the segment of people interested in outdoor activities will be also enhanced by offering more opportunities of this type on the suburbs and neighbouring towns.

The main actions included in the Marketing Programme are the promotion of the destination on 40 international trades, the introduction of an aggressive e-marketing campaign that will promote a new Dublin brand, special offers, and transport and event tickets among others. Also, familiarisation visits, publicity campaigns and annual publication will continue being essential for the marketing strategy

❖ ***Tourism trends analysis: opportunities and weaknesses for Dublin***

After the analysis of the international and national tourism trends, several opportunities to increase the competitiveness of the industry have been identified.

For example in the case of the increase of last minute bookings, Dublin Tourism has incorporated a Last Minute Booking Stand in one of the Tourism Offices and in the tourist information website there is an option that allow the customers to tailor their holiday in Dublin. Also, it is important to highlight the trend of an important growth of the older people segment and that affects Dublin as it is traditionally considered as a city for young people so, this fact needs to be urgently faced.

❖ ***Current tourism industry analysis: opportunities and weaknesses for Dublin***

- Growing of the city population to 4.5 million by 2020 that can lead to a decrease of the image of Dublin as a quiet place.
- Effects of the construction of the new Metro line and the extension of the LUAS network.
- The increase on the number of foreign people working in the tourist industry can threaten the perception of the “Irish welcome character” that is one of the most important appeals for tourism. It is planned to redress that offering language courses to foreign staff as well as providing knowledge on the national culture and traditions.
- Scarcity in numbers of banqueting facilities and hotels for business tourists that can hold conferences until the new Conference Centre is open.
- New hotels such as Ritz Carlton located on the suburbs and that is a clear opportunity to start promoting tourist attractions in other areas and in this way decrease the tourism congestion on the city centre.

## **5.4. POLICY AT LOCAL LEVEL: DUBLIN CITY**

### **5.4.1. Dublin City Development Plan 2005-2011**

Public Authority: Dublin City Council

Description: General and tourism policy. It is a planning policy for the Dublin city.

Aim: to assure a sustainable development of Dublin, assuring an efficient economic development and an enhanced quality of life for its inhabitants.

The plan is structured in different sections depending on the issue. A brief description of the main chapters related with the tourism industry in Dublin is given below.

#### a) Economic development:

The main economic activities in Dublin identified by the plan are the financial services, the digital media, the Information and Communication Technologies as well as the tourism industry and the retail sector.

Several actions are set to achieve the aim of developing the capital's economy and the issues related in some extend to tourism are the following:

- Encourage the development of the companies in the city and an adequate business environment but trying to affect the minimum the environment, so promoting sustainable economic development.
- Consolidate the main industry sectors, which include tourism, and to provide specific land use and other planning policies in order to improve the development of these sectors.

#### b) Arts, Culture and Tourism

All the actions planned in this chapter have a high tourist component and they can directly help to improve the tourism in the city.

Within the period of this plan, it is planned to create a Museum of Dublin, to promote public space art such as statues exhibitions and areas of the metropolis where carnivals and circus could take place annually will be identified too. Also, the City Council will facilitate the development of the National Congress Centre as well as looking for adequate areas in the city to create new tourist facilities in order to

contribute to the regeneration of the zone but without affecting the already existing ones.

The existing tourist attractions located outside the core city centre that are the Guinness Storehouse, the Jameson Distillery, the Smithfield Square and the National Museum at Collins Barracks have already contributed to the renewal and to the individual character of these areas as well as to the expansion of the visitor routes to other sites that were previously considered as suburbs. The main aim of the Dublin City Council is to keep encouraging this phenomenon and create new connections between cultural buildings and tourist related sites through pedestrian routes or promote them as "heritage trails". For this to be feasible, new signage, tourist information and efficient public transport need to be developed.

It is also highlighted in the text, the need to preserve the unique character of the Irish pubs and restaurants since is one of the most important components of the tourism offer.

The following policy articles summarize the Dublin City Council goals for the period 2005-2011:

- To improve the tourism and cultural facilities and preserve the natural environment of the city through land use and environment actions.
- To develop new tourism infrastructures which include signage, tourist information and trails, cafes, public toilets, public transport and car and coach parking in the core tourism areas. Also, computerised information points for tourists in various locations will be created.
- To encourage a mixture of entertainment sites in the city centre such as traditional pubs, restaurants, and other facilities for live music and dance performances, theatre and films. It must be avoided the concentration of big size pubs in any specific area
- To establish a Museum of Dublin covering the heritage of the city, for education, culture and tourism uses.

### c) Heritage

Since the origins of Dublin, the city has experienced dramatic changes in its structure as it initially was a Viking settlement, then a medieval city followed by the Georgian period. That mixture of urbanism structure and traditions has formed the current Dublin

and it is central to preserve all heritages that reflect those past periods. This is undoubtedly a key component for the tourism in Dublin.

Heritage policy establishes measures to protect different areas of the existing heritage: protected structures, architectural and archaeological conservation areas; and landscape and natural heritage areas.

Also, there is a register managed by the City Council of all buildings which have risk to suffer damages.

The policy regarding heritage seeks:

- To create information plaques located on historic buildings in order to provide awareness of the city's history.
- To protect the Georgian areas and to preserve key historic streets.
- To preserve the street patterns originated in the Viking and the Medieval periods, the section of the medieval city wall and the remaining important buildings of the zone such as the Dublin Castle and St. Patrick's Cathedral. The buildings characteristic of the Industrial era are important to preserve too.
- To conserve street and paving features of value that includes fountains, statues and signage among others. Also, keeping the original facades of the pubs and some shops is crucial.
- To make sure that the names of the streets reflect the local history and for this reason the names must remain bilingual (Gaelic and English)
- To conserve the natural heritage areas including the quays of the river Liffey and the Dublin Bay.

#### *d) Urbanism*

The urbanism plans for Dublin city are based on the extension of the city centre and on the reduction of the congestion in it.

To achieve that, a linkage between the Phoenix Park and Dublin Bay will be introduced and that will round the city from the farthest point in the west to the sea located in the east of the city centre. The promotion of new urban centres on the suburbs will also contribute to the goal.

The pedestrianisation wants to be encouraged as well and to complete that new pedestrian routes will be developed and the existing ones consolidated so, more

pedestrian presence in the quays of the river Liffey will be encouraged and that will reinforce the presence of the river in the city image.

In addition, it is wanted to emphasize the use of public space by creating safe areas that encourage pedestrian use and that connect streets and squares.

For a further analysis of the urban features of the city two studies are being developed: *The Dublin Legibility Study* that analyse how locals and visitors arrive to the city and move within it in order to identify weaknesses in signage and pedestrian routes and improve it in a near future. This project cooperates with local businesses and tourism organisations. *The Outdoor Advertising Strategy* basically seeks to identify the potential locations to place advertisements.

Policy is formulated to support the residential use of Georgian and Victorian areas of the city but with the main aim of maintaining the specific personality of these areas.

As far as the land use is concerned, more tourist facilities and establishments such as hotels, bed and breakfast, restaurants and nightclubs are planned in specific areas of the city.

Lastly, a project will be developed which will create a food and leisure products market with restaurants in its surroundings that might become of tourist interest.

#### *e) Transportation*

The principle actions to be taken in the transportation context are the ones previously explained in the *Transport 21* report. Also, the creation of a rail link to the airport is considered necessary although there are no immediate plans.

Consideration should be given to the development of facilities within the pedestrian routes for walkers with disabilities and/ or mobility impairments. These facilities include:

- More car park spaces for disabled drivers.
- Street furniture such as bins symmetrically placed along the streets in order to reduce the number of obstacles for the visually impaired pedestrians.
- Introduction of more tactile road surface in crossings, rail platforms, bus stops, among others.
- More ramps located in several points of the city.

*f) Retail*

Shopping is one of the complementary activities of tourism and as such, it needs to be considered the actions to be taken in this area.

The City Council is determined to attract residents and tourists through the retail facilities and create linkages with other attractions in the city in order to promote an overall visitor area. To achieve this aim, it is essential to communicate an image of a safety environment in the shopping area.

The policy in this case is related to the retail use of ground floor spaces of the buildings in the main shopping areas, to improve the environment in the retail zones through landscape conservation and planting actions. Also, the traditional trade area will be remarked within the city centre.

*g) Recreation facilities and open space*

The main objectives of the Plan are to develop green chain areas in the city which connect new and existing parks and open spaces as well as maintaining the coastline of the city in good conditions. As far as the coast is concerned, it will be promoted its recreational use and a Blue Flag standard will be pursued. That would become a new tourist attractor in summer season.

There are no plans for the construction of any large-size recreational facility.

*h) Waste management*

The City development Plan also takes into consideration the improvement of waste and water supply services and all other social infrastructures needed in a capital city.

To solve the issue of the littering, more bins will be placed on the streets and the cleaning service will work more often in order to reduce the amount of rubbish. The recycling will be encouraged.

The Plan also considers the impacts derived from the climate change like the increase of the sea and canal levels and it states actions to be taken.

## **5.5. REPORTS AND STRATEGIES OF TOURISM IMPORTANCE AT LOCAL LEVEL**

### **5.5.1. Dublin City Development Board: Dublin a City of Possibilities 2002-2012**

Public Authority: Dublin City Development Board

Description: it is a ten years-local strategy.

Aim: to improve the quality of life and the facilities of Dublin's inhabitants.

The Dublin's Development Board is basically an association of state agencies, private organisations and the local government.

This strategy covers all issues at economic, social and cultural levels for the city of Dublin basing its goals on a sustainable development.

There are two core sub-strategies to highlight:

- The improvement of the personal safety in Dublin since it is stated that the grade of safety perception of a destination can directly diminish the quality of life and the attractiveness of the city for the visitors and, as a result, it could lead to a decrease on the investment for tourism.
- Proposal of a City Arts and Culture Office which will contribute to a more integrated development of the cultural aspects.  
Culture is vital in order to point out the different and exclusive characteristics of the city and combat the homogeneity of the urban tourism due to the globalisation and the high number of trips.

At local level it is important to point out that Dublin city has a Local Agenda 21 which helps to develop the tourism industry in a sustainable way, reducing the human impacts on the environment. It also encourages the cooperation of all the actors participating in the industry.

## **6. ANALYSIS OF HOW IRISH POLICY CONTRIBUTES TO URBAN TOURISM**

When examining the theory on tourism planning and the policy formulation, it has been seen that a well planned tourism destination can have great benefits.

In this chapter, it will be analysed how the planning and the policy in the tourism industry can help to develop tourism in a sustainable way, reducing the harmful impacts of the tourism as well as to contribute to the development of specific tourism products, as in this case the urban tourism.

To help the reader to understand better the tourism industry in Ireland and the policy, there will appear references of the current Spanish policy, previously considering that Spain is a more mature destination and for this reason some of the objectives may differ.

Tourism is a multi-related industry and for this reason policies and plans that are not specifically for the tourism industry have a vital role in the development of the sector as well. This will contribute get a deeper outlook of the overall situation in the country and it will facilitate the comprehension of the tourism policy formulation strategy.

When examining the evolution of the Irish tourism policy and planning there is a crucial aspect to highlight, the improvement of the relationship between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Without this step, the tourism industry would not have had such a success, neither in Ireland nor in Northern Ireland because tourists tend to avoid destinations with social or/and politic conflicts. The tourists in Ireland, more in the rural areas, can still note the remains of this conflict because Irish people do not avoid talking about it, since for them that was the period when they recovered their identity and they will always be proud of that.

So, nowadays the cooperation between these two countries exists on a great variety of aspects in the economy but specifically in tourism. The increase of investment and a joint overseas marketing strategy are the two main pillars of this alliance.

Since the beginning of the tourism policy in Ireland until nowadays, there has been emphasis on the increase of sustainability, on training, on development of new products and on the competitiveness. These guidelines are still in force.

In the evolution of Spanish policy, the competitiveness was one of the major issues considered but it was later on replaced by the quality matter with the implementation of the PICTE 2000-2006 (*Plan Integral para la Calidad Turística del Turismo Español*).



Because of Spain is a more mature destination and it has more experience in the tourism sector, the issue of quality was officially addressed before than in Ireland.

### **6.1. ANALYSING THE TOURISM PLANNING AT NATIONAL LEVEL: IRELAND AND THE ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN IN DUBLIN**

As far as the general public planning is concern, the Tourism Development Plan, include in the National Development Plan 2007-2013, and the National Spatial Strategy 2000-2020 have to be taken into consideration.

On the first case, the NDP 2007-2013 looks for an augment of investment, an increase on the number of tourists and a decrease of the seasonality. To achieve these goals, it has been launched an international marketing campaign focused on the key markets and on the potential ones that are China and India. Also, a large number of visitor attractions will be enhanced and renewed and lastly, more emphasis will be put on training due to the increasing presence of foreigner workforce on the tourism sector. This fact may cause a lost of the Irish identity and *savoir faire* which are the major intangible appeals of the industry as it was stated in the table 3.3 that reflected that the main advantage of Ireland (39 %) and Dublin (41%) is the character of the Irish people. The actions to be made in Dublin city include the Transport 21 project, the construction of the second terminal of the capital's airport, the creation of the new National Conference Centre and a physical image rejuvenation of the city.

All these actions will directly help to develop the tourism in Dublin city. On one hand, by providing a better transportation network and with the arrival of more international daily flights at the airport that will augment the amount of short city break possibilities. On the other hand, it will promote the business travel segment with the inauguration of the Conference Centre which also will contribute to urban tourism consolidation. The improvement of the physical appearance of Dublin will help not only to the development of an improved tourist image, but it will be beneficial for new business opportunities due to the enhanced reputation too.

Also, investment is planned for the environment conservation, a critical issue for the current tourism industry everywhere in the globe, and for the provision of easier access for the disabled visitors.

In this case, these two actions are also widely considered on the *Plan de Turismo Español Horizonte 2020* which sets the main actions to be taken in the tourism industry to transform it in a highly competitive and sustainable sector by 2020. It has to be

pointed out that the city of Dublin has already taken actions to facilitate the movement within the city for disabled tourists and residents, some examples of that would be the wider pavements for pedestrians and the traffic lights with a sound system that allow sightless people to know when they can cross the street. This is a source of competitive advantage and important potential segment to focus efforts on because nowadays people with disabilities are more integrated and are more able to travel, there are even travel agencies specialised in this segment.

The National Spatial Strategy 2000-2020 raises the issues of urban congestion, urban land use and the lack of spread of the benefits from tourism outside main areas. The main worry relating Dublin is the extension of the city limits on the grounds that could lead to an ineffective transport system and waste, water and electricity services management. To avoid that, some actions to be implemented will be the promotion of the housing above retail units and the renewal of suburb areas in bad conditions. Urban tourism will be benefited from this as it will be a more compact city with a more effective transport system which could even be used by the visitors, and in this way the tourist revenues would increase due to the utilisation of the local transport.

On both plans, there is a common focus on improving the living standards in Ireland and so that in Dublin as well. That affects directly and positively the tourism because a better quality of life implies better services and facilities which are also used by the visitors. The issue of homeless people needs to be urgently readdressed because with the increase of the housing prices, more inhabitants have problems finding a place to live and so, more people live and sleep on the streets. This problem is mainly found in tourism sites and it deteriorates the image of the city as the inhabitants' rights, like the right of having a home, should be a priority.

#### ❖ ***Analysing tourism policy***

*"New Horizons for Irish Tourism: an Agenda for action 2003-2012"* is the most important plan for Irish national tourism. This is a good example of the process for formulating tourism policy observed in the theory chapter because it includes an analysis of the current situation, it sets objectives and it also establishes a range of actions to be implemented and monitored. This report would be an equivalent of the *Plan de Turismo Español Horizonte 2020* the objectives coincide since both plans look for a more sustainable and competitive tourism industry.

The Irish plan sets specific objectives to be accomplished by 2010 that include increasing the visitor expenditure, providing good quality services and promoting career opportunities in the sector.

It also sets specific tourist expenditure and visitor growth targets to be achieved by the end of the period.

This report deals with the inflation issue and the high prices on the Irish tourism products since these are two of the main factors affecting visitor satisfaction and solutions are proposed to readdress these weaknesses such as fixing an inflation target considering the EU levels, a prudent fiscal policy and the avoidance of tax increase. Usually, the products found more expensive by the tourists are the price of eating out, drink and the food bought in shops. The prices of the alcoholic beverages and tobacco comprise the highest increases. Tourists coming from Spain, Greece and other countries where the prices are considerably lower will be affected by the higher cost of the services and products. This fact can affect the satisfaction of the visitors due to not having met their expectations and also it reduces the income received from tourism. The North American market, the third more important market for tourist arrivals and revenue in Dublin, has the same problem now that the US Dollar is depreciated and so that has less value than the Euro.

However, the tax refund service is very attractive for the non-European visitors who are very content just for having money part of the money back. It would have to be implemented in as much businesses as possible since the companies with this service get some money from it.

It also identifies the tax levels as the factor that situates Ireland in a less competitive position in the Conference and Business travel market due to the high taxes for the conferences and this type of events. This matter needs to be rapidly solved because this segment is one of the most important when considering urban tourism since it helps to reduce the seasonality and spread the activity along the week and it is the second main reason for visiting Dublin for the British market and the third for the American one.

The factors listed above and the high costs of the insurance for the workers in the tourism industry lead to a general high prices context that is one of the Irish tourism industry priorities since it directly affects its competitiveness.

There is a need of encouraging both the short and the long stay in the country and this will be done through the promotion of new products such as the wellness market for short stay in urban and rural destinations and the English learning product for longer stays and mainly in Dublin and the other big metropolis.

In the report for the Irish product development strategy 2007-2013 by Fáilte Ireland, it can be observed the evolution and the changes in the visitors' trends and how the National Authority analyse the weaknesses and strengths of the existing products. When considered at national level, urban tourism has little importance due to the general green image that wants to be promoted but heritage and cultural tourism, the gastronomy, the arts and events segments and the soft adventure have had good outcomes.

To take the most advantage of city tourism, Dublin city would have to incorporate some of the elements that visitors seek when visiting Ireland. They do not only look for visiting a city, but they seek the authenticity of the green island as well. Since this is quite difficult to achieve in a European industrialised capital such as Dublin, a strategy to follow would be the promotion of cultural activities to be done and the heritage sites to be visited. There are several festivals and events in the city all year round but specially during the weekends and in the summer period, this already helps to develop the urban tourism but it should be complemented with a more extensive traditional gastronomy offer. Last but not least, Dublin area has an opportunity in the soft adventure segment as the Wicklow mountains are located approximately one hour by car from the city centre and there, visitors have a wide range of outdoor activities available like trekking, angling and horse-riding among others in a green environment. A strategy that complements the city tourism with the green atmosphere would lead to lengthen the tourists stay and that would result in an augment of the tourist revenue in the city and in the region.

The opening of a Science Museum in Dublin would also complement the existing recreational possibilities. It would be a right decision because one of the main reasons why visitors do not stay longer in Dublin is because there is no a large number of attractions to visit in the capital in comparison with other European capitals such as Barcelona and Paris, although the size differences need to be considered too.

#### ❖ ***Common points between Spanish and Irish policy***

The points that are common in both the Irish and the Spanish policy at national level are the following:

- Competitiveness and quality on the products and services
- Effective transport network
- Emphasis on disabled visitors
- Promote use of IT (Information Technology)
- Protection of natural resources
- Training and good conditions for the employees

- Cooperation public and private sector

There are a wide range of common points on the tourism policy in both Ireland and Spain, although the extents in which some issues are considered differ, especially in the case of the training.

Ireland is a country where training has a huge importance and the tourism sector is not an exception. All companies have a structured training and welcome programme and the conditions for the employees are very good which include for example on Sundays and Bank Holiday days the employee is paid more, in some cases even the double of the money earn in an ordinary day. Also, the differences between the salary in the tourism sector when comparing it to other sectors is not that high in comparison to other countries like Spain.

## **6.2. ANALYSING THE TOURISM POLICY AT REGIONAL LEVEL: DUBLIN REGION**

At regional level, the main policy is formulated by Dublin Tourism. This organisation wants to support the cooperation and the partnership within the tourism industry and an example of that is the new annual tourism forum to develop new products.

One of the objectives set to be accomplished by 2010 is to broaden the area with benefits from tourism and to reach this outcome more tourist attractions will be promoted outside the city centre, particularly the nearest natural resources like the previously mentioned Wicklow mountains and the Dublin Bay. Also, the construction of new hotels like the Ritz Carlton outside the city centre area will contribute to that.

The other main aim is to meet the tourists' expectations and to achieve that, some weaknesses like the access for disabled visitors to all tourist sites and the lack of multi-lingual tourist material. In the majority of the visitor attractions the information is presented in English and very few times other languages are available. A clear example of this deficiency is the Guinness Storehouse museum, the most important visitor attraction in Ireland, which until very recently have not had the information of the tour in other languages apart from English and that was very frustrating for the visitors and moreover after having paid a considerable amount of money for the entry. Another issue to be considered is the availability of the multi-lingual sightseeing bus tour as of the three existing companies, there is only one that offers this service and it is not really effective since the multi-lingual buses do the tour every twenty minutes.

After having readdressed these issues and other minor ones, and if it is kept on with the constancy of analysing the weaknesses of the sector, going over the expectations

will be feasible. In addition, Dublin Tourism has also analysed the main market segments for the tourism in the Dublin area and their needs have been identified. This has also been done, but at national level, in the *Plan Operativo 2008* by Turespaña, the organisation responsible for the promotion of Spain overseas.

Like in the National Development Plan, it is also mentioned the increasing presence of foreign employees in the tourism sector and to solve it, it is proposed to incorporate language courses and knowledge on the Irish background on the training program for non-Irish staff.

All in all, this regional plan will deal with all the previously mentioned weaknesses of the tourism in Dublin city. Also the major knowledge on the main market segments will lead to an augment of competitiveness in the tourism industry at regional and local level and so, Dublin will benefit of these improvements.

### **6.3. ANALYSING TOURISM POLICY AT LOCAL LEVEL: DUBLIN CITY**

There is no specific tourism policy formulated by the local authorities, but in the City Development Plan there are a wide range of topics related with tourism.

Firstly, the city centre will be extended in order to reduce the congestion of the current city centre area and this will cause repercussion for the tourism. If the centre is bigger, it means that the visitors will need a more compact public transport system, which will be arranged by the Transport 21 programme, because the distance to travel are longer and also the areas to maintain clean and safe will augment. Another opportunity of this extension it would be the possibility of creating pedestrian routes or heritage trails to go from one tourist site to another. This would let the visitors keep on discovering the city on foot because although the city centre is bigger, it will never be like the city centre of London or Paris. These improvements on transport will help to preserve the environment on the grounds that with a more effective transport system, less people will use the car and also with better facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, there will be a reduction of the pollution.

Also, more areas will benefit from the presence of the tourism. An example of that is what happened in the area where the Guinness Storehouse is located that it was refurbished due to the tourism.

The extension of the city centre would promote a quieter environment of Dublin that would be in more harmony with the overall Irish image of green and calm destination that is sold and that would attract more visitors.

*The Dublin Legibility Study* will also allow to know how the tourists move within the city and then the pedestrian routes will link the most popular attractions with other that are not very well-known and also the signage for visitors will be strategically placed in the most adequate place. All things considered, it will lead to a first-class tourism context for the city reinforcing its character of urban destination.

With the conservation of the heritage policy, the tourism industry will continue taking advantage of the unique charm of the city as an element of differentiation from other European city destinations and that is vital as it has been observed in the beginning of the project. For this reason it is fundamental the preservation of the facades of the Irish pubs and restaurants, the streets, the paving and all the remains of the city's history as well as avoiding the concentration of contemporary entertainment locals and clubs that break the traditional image of the Irish nightlife. As an urban tourism destination, there is a clear need of preserving the authenticity of the Irish culture and the nightlife is one of these distinctive features. The urban renewal, in general, also contributes to the development of the tourism activity, particularly in some cases such as the Temple Bar explained in the project.

The foundation a museum of Dublin is also a key step to complete the attraction catalogue and to contribute to raise awareness of the heritage weight in Dublin.

As far as the shopping facilities are concerned, emphasis is put on encouraging the ground floor units and on decorating the retail areas with plants and flowers. The area where the trade was located years ago will be refurbished and promoted as a shopping area that will attract new sightseers. Shopping is a main attractor for city tourism and in the case of Dublin it is more remarkable due to the numerous artists, street vendors and musicians that play on the streets and attract, in this way, the attention of the visitors. The level of the performances of these individuals is so exceptional that visitors consider it as another tourist attraction.

Last but not least, the recreational use of the Dublin's coastline will be promoted and by 2011 it is wanted to have the Blue Flag in the majority of the beaches with the intention of attracting more visitors and in this way lengthening the duration of the stay in the city and the tourist revenue. This could be an opportunity since the climate is changing and in some periods of the year Dublin is not as cold as it used to be. Moreover, there are very few European capital destinations that have beach and this combination of culture and leisure will find a competitive place in the future of city tourism.

The Dublin City Development Board has developed two strategies to improve the overall life quality in the city. Firstly, a plan to increase the security in the city since it is stated that the grade of safety perception of a destination can directly diminish the quality of life and the attractiveness of the city for the visitors and, as a result, it could lead to a decrease on the investment for tourism. Secondly, the creation of a City Arts and Culture Office and that is important because managing and promote culture is vital in order to point out the different and exclusive characteristics of the city and combat the homogeneity of the urban tourism due to the globalisation and the high number of trips.

#### **6.4. COMPARING TOURISM POLICY CONTENT**

In order to do a more exhaustive analysis of the policy and to facilitate the comparison, the issues that appear in the several documents have been grouped in the following categories:

- Environment and natural resources conservation. Development sustainable tourism
- Cultural and historic resources conservation and promotion
- Enhancement/ creation of tourist attractions and facilities
- Urban renewal and public services improvement
- Transport
- Facilities for disabled people
- Education, training and research
- Cooperation public and private sectors
- Specific tourist objectives, not found in the other categories (to be specified in the table)



<b>Policy</b> <b>Content</b>	<b>National Development Plan</b>	<b>National Spatial Strategy</b>	<b>New Horizons for Irish Tourism</b>	<b>Fáilte Ireland's Environmental report</b>	<b>Fáilte Ireland's Product development</b>	<b>Dublin Tourism Strategy: "Make it Happen"</b>	<b>Dublin City Development Plan</b>	<b>Dublin City Development Board report</b>
Environment conservation and sustainable tourism	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Cultural and historic resources			x			x	x	x
Enhance/create tourist attractions and facilities	x		x		x	x	x	
Urban renewal and public services	x	x					x	x
Transport	x	x	x		x		x	
Facilities for disabled people	x						x	
Education, training and research	x	x	x	x	x	x		
Cooperation public and private sectors			x			x		
Specific tourist objectives (to be specified in the table)	-To increase investment and tourist arrivals -To decrease seasonality -North-South cooperation	-To avoid congestion Dublin city	-To meet expectations -Competitiveness -IT -Quality	- To know the impact of tourism industry on environment.		-Meet expectations -Quality -To spread benefits -Multi-lingual information -Incentive conference	-To promote recreational use beaches -To develop green areas	

**Table 6.1. Comparison of the Irish policy content**  
Source: made by the author

After having analysed how the existing tourism policies in Ireland at national, regional and local level contribute to the development and consolidation of the urban tourism, it is time to examine how the policy deals with the impacts caused by the tourism. The issues of policy cohesion and overlapping will also be considered.

In the national policy the objectives related to tourism are more general and they are focused on the increase of the tourist arrivals and the revenue and to reduce the congestion of Dublin and other large towns.

The two main tourism policy documents, the “New Horizons for Irish Tourism” at national level and “Make it happen” at regional level have a very similar structure. In particular, the national tourism policy has all the advantages derived from a good planning. It contributes to the conservation of the natural and cultural resources; it has the aim of incorporating the tourism in the general policy, it is a framework for decision-making, avoid problems caused by tourism and it encourages more collaboration between public and private sectors. The regional policy also has the majority of these advantages. Both policy documents coincide on the need of meeting the customers’ expectations and on increasing the quality and the competitiveness.

At local level, the tourist policy basically seeks the improvement and creation of new attractions and facilities.

The content of the policy at all levels is coherent and there are not overlaps in the objectives and actions. Nevertheless, the issue of the extension of the city centre has to be considered since it could lead to serious controversy.

In the National Spatial Strategy, it wants to be avoided the congestion and overcrowding in Dublin. It also says that due to the establishment of companies and shopping centres on the outskirts transport system could stop being effective. Already in this document there is some confusion because it is very difficult to reduce the congestion of a city without enlarging its extension.

Then, in the “Making it Happen” policy plan it is proposed the creation of new tourist attractions on the suburbs in order to reduce the congestion in the city centre. In the Dublin Development Plan, it is recommended the extension of the city centre area.

So, as it can be observed above, there is a disagreement among these policies. In theory, the policy on the top of the hierarchy is the National Spatial Strategy, but within it there is already some contradiction. This is the only point in all the policy examined that causes some confusion, because the regional and local policy propose to extend the tourist area and look for attractions on the suburbs, but the NSS wants to avoid that.

It also has to be pointed out that the National Tourism Authority, Fáilte Ireland has made excellent reports in tourism matters and they are very useful for the development of the tourism at national and local level.

❖ ***Significant issues on Irish policy***

The issue of enhancement or/and creation of new tourist attractions appears in all levels, even though it do not appear in all the policy documents and reports. This is highly important for two reasons. Firstly, because urban tourism is based on attracting tourists and they spend their holidays in a destination where they know that there are enough entertainments and attractions to visit, as it has been seen in the criteria used by the tourists to select a tourist destination. Secondly, it means that in all levels of policy formulation it is considered essential the development of new products and attractions and the innovation and this approach is key because is what the industry needs to gain competitiveness and to be always a step before its competitors.

The access for the disabled tourists is considered at national and local level, in the National Development Plan and in the Dublin's Development plan, that are the two main policy documents of each category. The actions planned for Dublin city such as introducing more tactile road surfaces and more ramps as well as adapting the street furniture to the disabled visitors and inhabitants' needs is crucial for attracting this segment of the market that is becoming highly important.

The transport and the urban renewal issues are also considered at national and local level because the government creates the plan, the Transport 21 programme for example, and then it is developed in the city.

The cooperation of the private and the public sector is emphasised on the policy. As it has been observed in the chapter on structure of the tourism, it is widely recognised the need of working together, both sectors, for the benefit of the industry and this approach is reflected in the policy.

As far as the training and the research are concerned, this part of the tourism industry is as important, or even more, than any other. To anticipate to the changes in the demand and to know the trends of the sector it is crucial to adopt a proactive approach, anticipating the needs of the customers and developing products that satisfy them and to achieve that research and training are crucial.

❖ ***How does Irish policy deal with the tourism impacts?***

To start, it is important to point out that all the organisations with responsibility on tourism are completely aware of the importance of preserving the environment as this issue appears in all the policy documents and reports from national to local level. This is explained by the fact that Ireland is widely recognised as a green destination and according to the survey made by the Central Statistics Office; in 2006 the 75 % of overseas visitors agreed that “Ireland is a clean and environmentally friendly destination” and since it is every time more important to meet the visitors expectations and of course, deal with the climate change.

There is even a report by Fáilte Ireland (Environmental Action Plan 2007-2009) that analyse the impacts of the tourism industry and propose actions to minimise the harmful effects which have been examined in the section 2.3.2 In this report there are some sustainable management recommendations such as the control of the number of tourists visiting a historic site and environmental certification for the accommodation establishments.

Dublin also has a Local Agenda 21 which is one of the more effective planning processes for sustainable tourism and to address the negatives impacts.

At local level, the positive environmental impacts found in Dublin are a general improvement of the environment quality, for example by solving the littering issue and by an improvement of all the water, waste and energy facilities and services. The littering issue has a lot to do with tourism because, once you move on from the city centre that is the area where almost all the tourists are, you find again rubbish on the streets. In Ireland people are far more concerned about the conservation of the environment than in Spain, so tourism may have contributed to it but the background and the culture have done the rest. Thanks to tourism, natural resources such as the river, the Dublin Bay and the Phoenix Park are being cautiously conserved.

The negative environmental effects in Dublin mainly include an augment of the water, visual and noise pollution due to the increase of the hotel capacity during the weekends and holiday periods but also due to the economic growth that it has been experienced in the city. The Wicklow mountains are already suffering negative consequences of the visitors increase as using applications like Google Earth, the trails used by tourists can be perfectly noted due to the overuse and this is needs to be rapidly taken into consideration.

The city does not have problems with excess of visitors to historic attractions as there is an exhaustive control.

The conservation of cultural and historical resources can be linked to the socio-cultural impacts of the tourism and it is present at national, regional and local policy.

In Dublin, some positive impacts can be noted. For example there is economic contribution for the conservation of historical sites and to place plaques on the buildings with historical importance. Also, the Temple Bar district is very well conserved and is always clean and with policy vigilance due to the continuous presence of tourists.

Other general advantages of the tourism in Dublin city is that the inhabitants are proud of their city, their traditions and their country and also they can benefit of new and improved facilities that they also can use, for example in Dublin the National Concert Hall was renewed and a museum of the city will be founded in the foreseeable future.

However, tourism negative aspects have also left a fingerprint in Dublin. The Irish culture and traditions are becoming tourist products, and although this contributes to their conservation for other generations, it also affects its authenticity. In Dublin, in all the pubs in Temple Bar there are Irish music and dance shows the majority of them performed by locals. What is important to point out is that once you move away from the tourist district, not only the prices of beverage and food is reduced by half, but these performances are no longer found. This excessive commercialisation of the Irish culture could lead to a loss of the Irish identity in Dublin, one of the most important attractors.

Crime, drug dealing and alcoholism are problems that existed before the tourism boom as Ireland has always been a country where people have the tradition of spending a lot of time in the pubs, partly due to the weather, and so locals drink a lot. Prostitution is not a major issue.

Irish people are very talkative, friendly and used to deal with foreigners since a lot of people have moved there for long periods for professional or academic reasons and usually there are no hostility problems. The language can be a problem for tourist with a low knowledge of English because few locals know a second language.

All the positive tourism economic impacts are found in Dublin that comprise more income derived from tourism, tax revenue for the government, job creation and all the benefits of the multiplier effect characteristic of the industry. Until now, the city has had not economic problems because of tourism and the inflation and the increase on the land use prices are not an exclusive consequence of tourism and actions are being taken to alleviate these issues. Direct, indirect and induced employment has been created thanks to the tourism industry.

Negative impacts are not included in policy though it is important to keep on planning the tourism activity to avoid further economic problems, and special consideration should be given to the impacts caused by large events such as rugby matches which are frequently held in the capital and a lot of people attend to them, originating all type of impacts.

❖ ***How does Irish policy deal with the international tourism trends?***

As far as the tourism trends are concerned, the policy examined adapts to the major international changes and needs.

Tourism policy considers the fact that the old segment is travelling more and for this reason is trying to develop new products such as wellness treatments that appeal to older people. Related with the fact that customers are more demanding, one of the main aims of the tourism policy at regional level is to meet the clients' expectations and to satisfy their personal needs mainly by providing authentic experiences and a sense of safety. Also, to satisfy the customers, it is planned to reduce the overall inflation context.

Currently, people do short trips but more frequently, but according to the World Tourism Organisation data represented in the chart 2.2 it is predicted that in the subsequent years, the amount of short city breaks will be reduced and longer trips will be made. To take the maximum advantage of that, Dublin is trying to offer more tourist attractions and to promote the natural resources nearby the city in order to lengthen the tourist stay and develop a new form of urban tourism based on a longer stay and so that on a high income.

Also, it has been created a last-booking desk in the main local tourism office to help the visitors without reservation and the abolition of the air regulations for long-haul trips will contribute to the tendency of more long distance flights while Ryanair will continue offering an extensive range of low-cost flights for the people with less income.

All in all, it is clear that Irish policy is based on the continuous research to innovate and develop new products and maintain in this way its competitiveness.

## **7. CONCLUSIONS**

The aim of this paper was to analyse how the overall Irish policy, especially the economic, tourism and environmental policy, contributes to the development of the urban tourism in the city of Dublin.

It has already been examined the implication of the policy in the urban tourism and significant results have been obtained, but the objective of this chapter is to seek a further relationship between the current situation of the tourism in Dublin, relating it to the international trends and the impacts studied on the first chapter, and the existing policy involved with tourism.

Tourism is forecasted to continue growing in the foreseeable future and the main incoming markets for Dublin that are Britain, Mainland Europe and North America have been predicted to maintain being highly important for the city breaks and the cultural tourism. Dublin has a wide range of diverse cultural sights due to its remarkable history as well as all the facilities and services that tourists look for during their holiday, in this way the Irish capital has become positioned among the seven more important city destinations in Europe competing with other capitals such as Amsterdam and Vienna, a great success considering that Dublin is a relatively young destination.

Urban tourism has become recognised as one of the most important sources for income and employment creation and that is revealed on the high involvement of the government in the industry and the formulation of specific tourism policies to help the industry to perform accurately. City tourism has direct benefits for the locals since it contributes to the increase of the living standard because of the overall renewal of the city, the facilities created for the tourists that the residents also use and the improvements on the transport.

But, the government is not the only agent that wants to encourage the development of the tourism in Dublin. As it has been observed when describing the structure of the tourism industry in Ireland, several public organisations like Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland Limited and Dublin Tourism have created reports and strategies to improve the tourism in Dublin and in the case of the Regional Authority, Dublin Tourism, has also formulated specific policy with detailed objectives for the capital. The private sector, less important for the planning but a fundamental element for the success of the tourism industry at local level, maintain an effective partnership with the public authorities and

that makes Dublin a successful and consolidated urban tourism destination

The figures have shown that Ireland and Dublin have a significant economic income derived from tourism. Both, Ireland and its capital, are mainly visited due to the personality and the friendliness of the inhabitants and for this reason the Irish customs and the culture are the core intangible elements carefully considered in the tourism policy at national, regional and local level since the tourism professionals are very aware of the main strength of the destination.

After the summary of the main facts and figures of the tourism in Dublin, it is time to outline the key findings of the examination of the Irish policy and its relationship with the city tourism in Dublin.

The formulation of tourism policy has evolved jointly with the development of the industry in the country. Firstly, the policy sought to create employment and establish a partnership between the public and private sectors and lately it has been more focused on the reduction of the seasonality and the development of new products and the improvement of the tourism accommodation. The environment conservation has been present in the tourism policy since its origins due to the extreme weight of the natural resources of Ireland which is promoted as the “green island”. Meeting the customer’s expectations and their personal needs is the basis of the tourism policy.

At national level, there is general policy that deals with basic and vital issues for the development of the tourism such as the transport, the environment conservation and the urban renewal. At this level, it is important to highlight the Transport 21 programme which will improve the transport in Dublin by creating a metro network and by extending the Luas lines as well as building up the second terminal for Dublin airport. Better public transport connexions to move within the city and to access to the city are an essential element for the urban tourism and this plan has been implemented thanks to the importance of the tourism in the city. The second terminal of the airport will lead to a higher number of daily flights and that to a more tourists visiting the country and specially the capital. Also, the construction of the National Conference Centre and the tax reduction of the conferences and conventions will attract more business travellers that usually have a high level of expenditure and the city would deeply benefit of that.

The inflation and the high prices are the main weakness for Dublin as an city destination. The government has noticed it and is trying to redress it on the grounds that higher prices lead to less tourism income and to a loss of competitiveness.

Another aspect considered in the policy and that contributes to the overall tourism, so also to urban tourism is the improvement of the access for disabled visitors.



The Regional Authority, Dublin Tourism, formulated the existing policy with the primary goal of improving the tourism in Dublin city and to achieve that an extensive analysis of the industry has been made and several actions have been set. Among these actions there are the introduction of multilingual tourism information and the creation of attractions outside the city centre in order to avoid the congestion.

The training has become a crucial element for the industry due to the elevated number of foreign employees who do not know the Irish culture and most of them have problems with the English language. To avoid the loss of one of the key attractive of the destination, the Irish identity, language courses as well as knowledge on the local traditions and culture will be provided.

The regional policy improves the tourism in Dublin, so it contributes to the urban tourism.

The local policy consists principally on the City Development Plan which presents the planned actions to be developed in Dublin in the subsequent years. The overall plan helps to develop the city and improve its services and facilities, but there are some aspects of it that are directly linked to tourism. A museum of the city will be founded and heritage trails that connect the main tourist attractions will be created. This will lead to a major consistency of the existing mix of cultural sights and attractions and it will complement it with a local museum, offering more cultural and leisure possibilities to the visitors.

To maintain the traditional Irish image of the capital, the facades of the pubs and restaurants will be conserved as well as all the historical elements that form the Dublin image. Refurbishments in some declining areas of the city are planned but always respecting the traditional street patterns and the street decoration.

There are no new shopping areas planned, but the new ones will be more promoted. Also, the plan has the aim of creating new green areas and parks in order to contribute to the green image of the island.

The other local policy formulated by the Dublin Development Board seek to increase the security in the streets of the city reducing the level of crimes as well as promoting the culture as an element of differentiation, which is essential nowadays for an urban tourism destination.

All policy is coherent with a common objective, the consolidation of a competitive and innovative tourism industry in Dublin. Nevertheless, while comparing the content of the different policies, it has been observed that there are some inconsistencies with the issue of extending the city centre because while the national tourism policy indicates

that it is not recommendable because then the public transport system would be inefficient, but the regional and local policies suggest to look for new tourist attractions on the outskirts and to extend the city centre transportation network to facilitate the access for the visitors to the suburbs. In theory, all regional and local policies should be in accordance with the national one although in this case it seems more reasonable the proposal of the Regional Tourism Authority because that would reduce the congestion and more areas would be able to benefit from tourism.

There are some common issues considered in both Irish and Spanish policy which comprise the protection of the environment, the partnership between public and private sector and an industry based on the competitiveness, the quality and the training of the employees.

It is curious that such a young destination like Ireland has the same objectives in tourism policy as Spain that has a tourism industry that was originated more than forty years ago.

Irish tourism policy takes into account a wide range of positive and negative impacts caused by the tourism and that is essential for an effective planning based on the sustainability. On one hand, the main positive impacts affecting the urban tourism in Dublin and that are considered in the policy include the preservation of the environment, the cleanness of the city centre, the conservation of the culture and the historical sights and the pride of the locals for their city. Obviously, all the economic advantages of the tourism are considered in the policy.

On the other hand, the negative impacts that the tourism policy tries to reduce comprise the general pollution in the city centre, the commercialisation of the local culture and traditions and the decrease of the crime, drug dealing and alcoholism. The negative economic impacts are not directly considered since they result from a lack of tourism planning and that is not the case of Dublin. Trying to maximise the economic positive aspects of the industry already prevent the emergence of the negative ones.

As far as the international trends are considered, tourism policies plan several actions to adapt to the changes on tourists' taste and lifestyle and maintain Dublin in one of the most popular European destinations. The reduction of the price of tourist products and services due to more demanding customers, the introduction of a last-minute booking stand in the local tourism office, the creation of new tourist attractions due to the tendency of lengthening the stay and offer in this way more leisure possibilities are the main points to highlight.

All things considered, it has been observed that the formulation of tourism policy is vital for the effective development of an urban destination and it contributes to the tourism in different aspects as it has been observed below. At national level, the basic issues such as the transport, the conservation of the environment and the refurbishment of the urban areas are planned while at regional and local level there are more specific and tailored actions to develop the urban tourism in Dublin such as the training needs and the preservation of the cultural assets.

So, it has been checked that tourism policy considers other issues apart from the planning of the new hotels and tourism attractions location, it considers a wide range of specific aspects to improve the tourism in Dublin as well as it takes into consideration issues which range from the adaptation to the international trends and the reduction of the tourism impacts to the development of new tourism products.

In the case of urban tourism, general policy like the Dublin Development Plan is also essential since it contributes to the improvement of the city and the services offered in it such as the transport, the shopping facilities and the cultural amenities among others and all these ingredients are vital components of an urban destination.

Dublin is an urban destination with an extensive but effective planning with the main aim of developing the tourism industry, attracting more visitors and meeting the expectations of the customers offering a first-class tourism services complemented by the popular friendliness of the locals.

Thus, Dublin has a consolidated image of a quiet capital city surrounded by unexploited natural resources but with the capacity of offering entertainment and attractions to all type of visitors, and this successful performance is assured to continue in the future.

No significant difficulties have been raised during the elaboration of this project. Mainly, finding information about the policies and the time needed to read all the documents through and summarize them in a foreign language has been the major hurdle. Moreover, the fact that Dublin Council has not a specific department for tourism has contributed to the complexity of finding information. However, the result has been satisfactory.

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