

Valuing the Tourism Industry in Northern Ireland

A broader assessment of tourism's value to the
Northern Ireland economy

Andrew Webb



Valuing tourism

- The Tourism Industry has developed into one of the most important sectors to the Northern Ireland economy
- It plays a fundamental role in creating 'the offer' that Northern Ireland promotes around the world.
- We don't shout this loudly enough!
- Size matters, and there is more to tourism than we think.



What we are told...

- ### NISRA Expenditure (2019)
- **£1bn** total expenditure of all visitors in NI
 - **£730m** excl. NI residents

- ### Trips
- **5.3m** overnight trips, **3m** excl. NI residents
 - **16.6m** nights stayed, **11.8m** excl. NI residents

- ### Accommodation (2021)
- **1.3m** rooms sold, **62%** room occupancy rate
 - **2.6m** beds sold, **55%** Bed Occupancy Rate

Employment

- **65,425** employee jobs in the tourism industry (BRES 2021)
- **60%** of employee jobs in food and beverage services
- Total gross weekly median pay for the tourism industry was **£400** in 2021

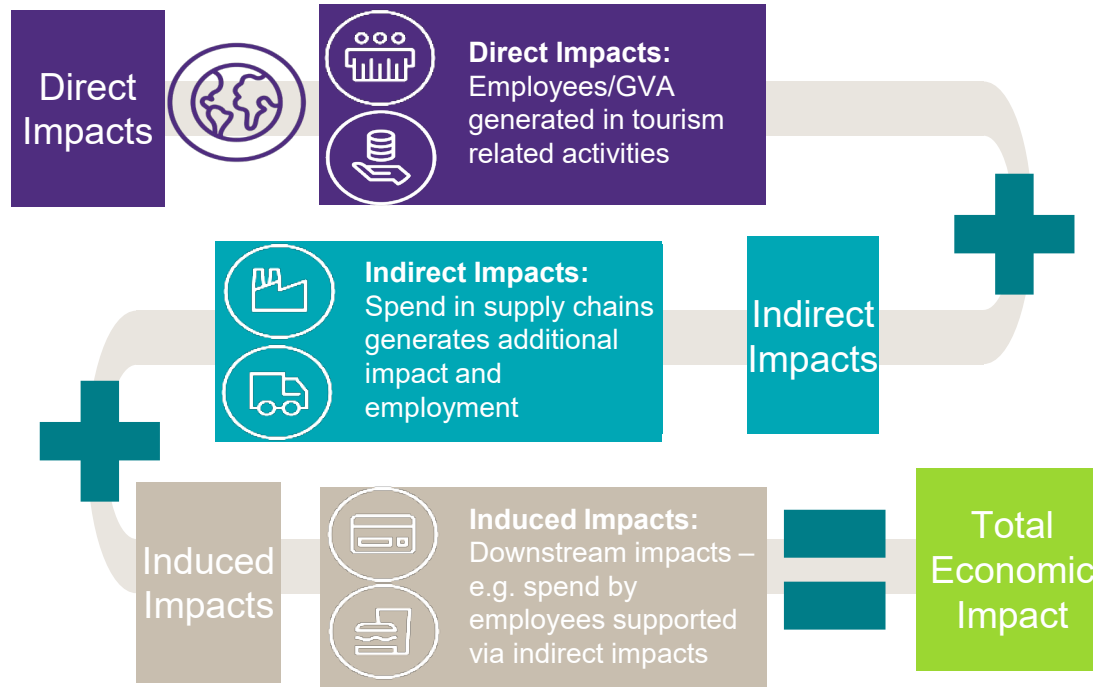
Travel

- **6.6m** Total Annual Air Passenger Flow through all NI airports (2022)
- **107%** annual increase in air passenger flow
- **326,293** Total Cruise Ship Passengers and Crew onboard ships docking in NI in 2022

Attractions

- **10.7m** visits to visitor attractions in NI (2022)
- Titanic Belfast was the **most visited paid attraction** in 2022

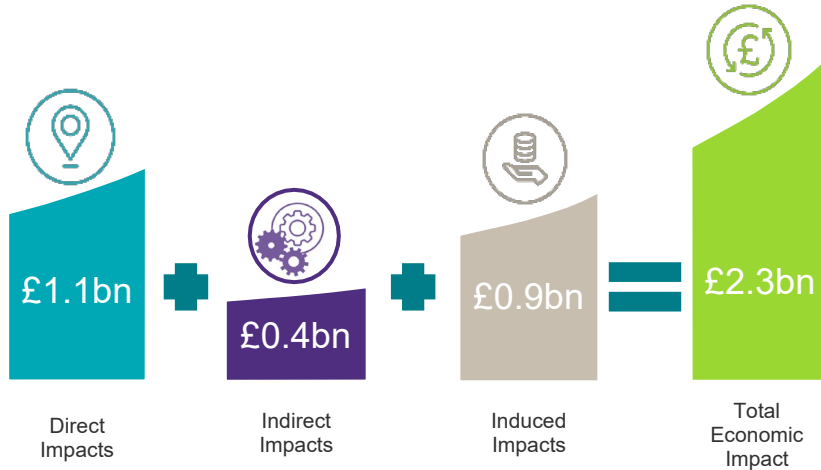
A broader measure of tourism in Northern Ireland



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2021 performance...

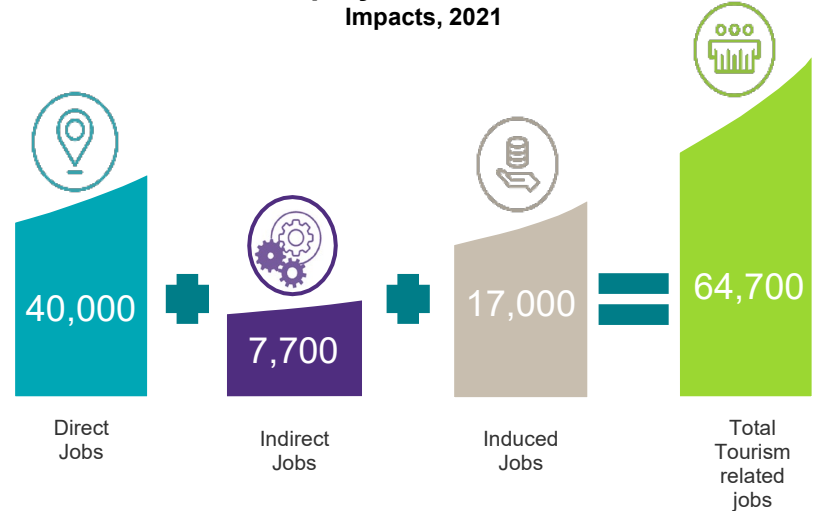
Economy-Wide **Gross Value Added** – Direct, Indirect + Induced Impacts, 2021



Total Economic Impact
£2.3 billion
5% of the NI Economy

Source: Grant Thornton

Economy-Wide **Employment** – Direct, Indirect + Induced Impacts, 2021



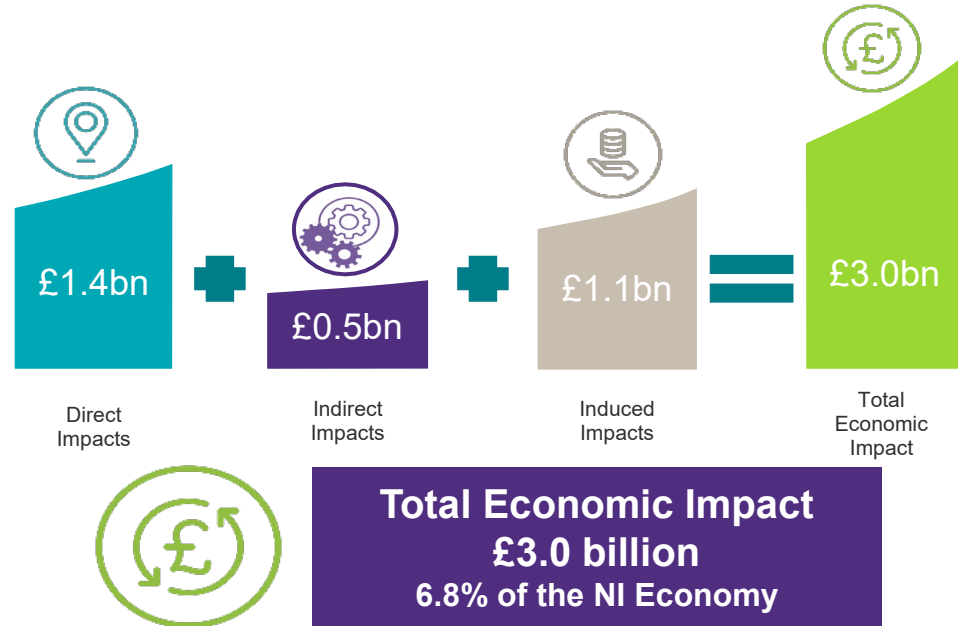
Total Jobs related to Tourism
64,700
7% of NI's total jobs

Source: Grant Thornton

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Checking 2019 against this new approach

Economy-Wide **Gross Value Added** – Direct, Indirect + Induced Impacts, 2019



Source: Grant Thornton



Views from the sector



Views from the sector

Staff matters



68% have the
required staff
levels

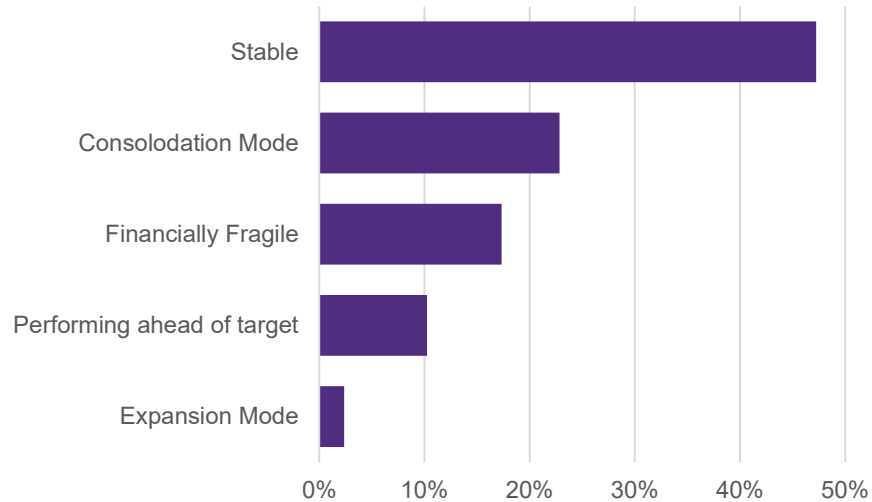
Top five barriers to staffing, recruitment and retention in the tourism industry?

- 1 Lack of available staff who want to work in the industry **(39%)**
- 2 Perception of a tourism industry i.e. long hours, poor pay, hard work, etc. **(27%)**
- 3 Other sectors are seen as more attractive **(21%)**
- 4 Current migration policy/Brexit **(18%)**
- 5 Applicants lack skills or required experience **(18%)**

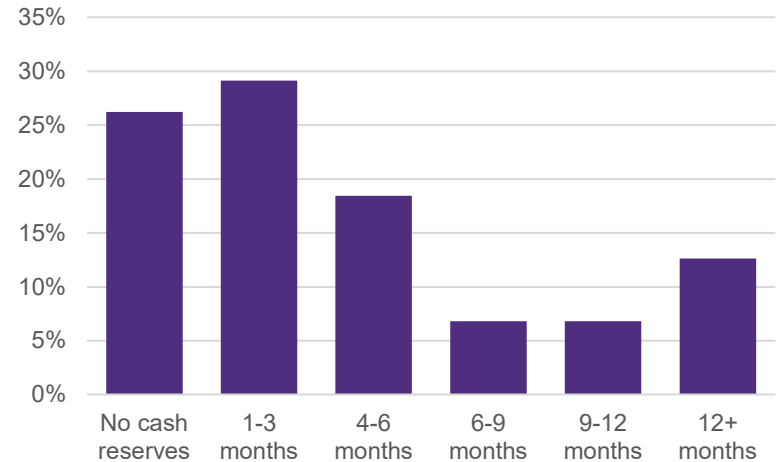
Views from the sector

Financial situation

% of Respondents Current Financial Situation by Sub-Sector



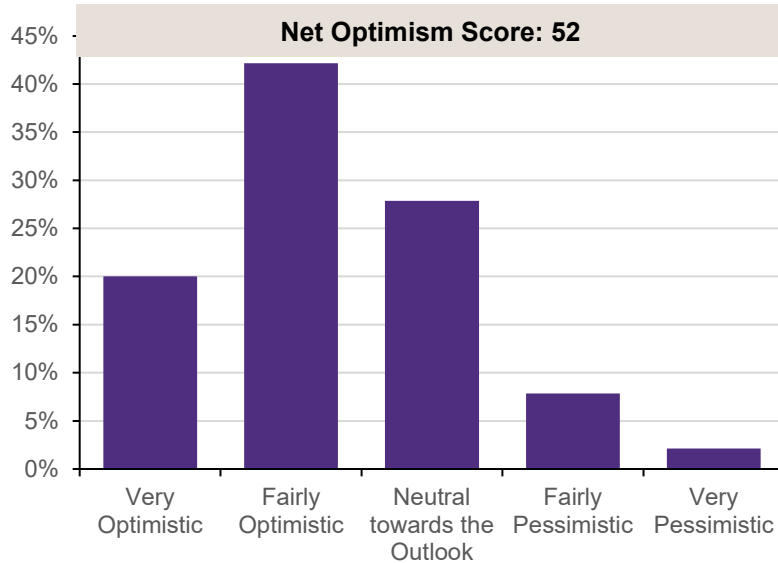
% of Respondents Cash Reserves by Sub-Sector



Views from the sector

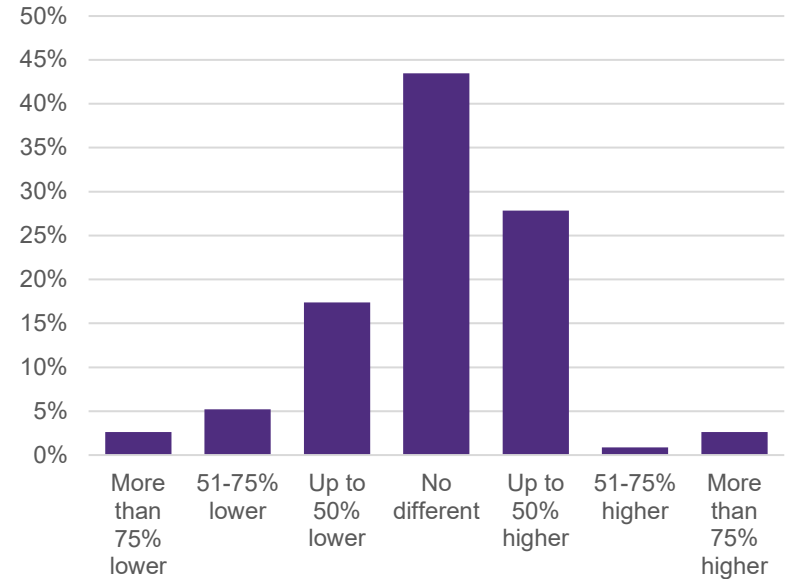
The outlook

Feelings regarding the outlook for your business over the next 12 months



Source: Grant Thornton & NITA Survey

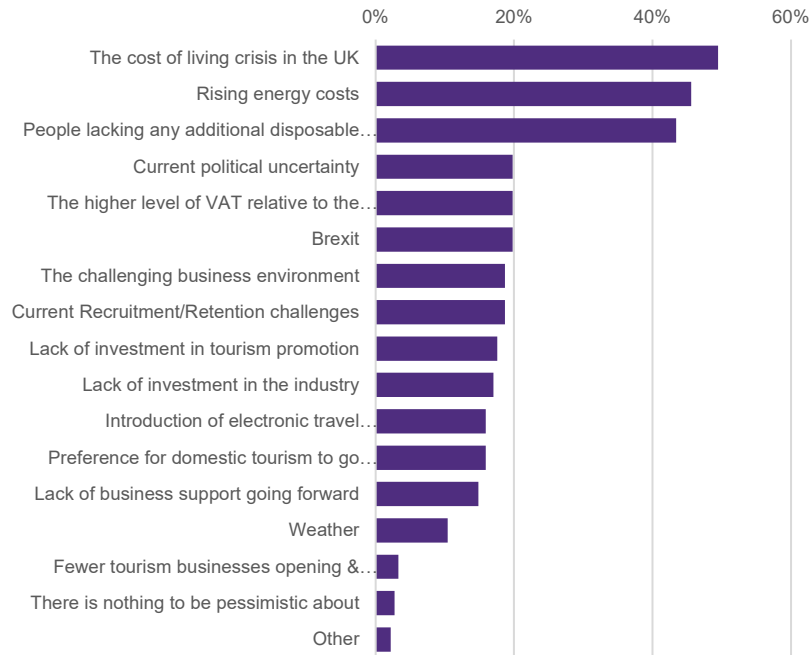
% of Bookings compared to 12 months ago



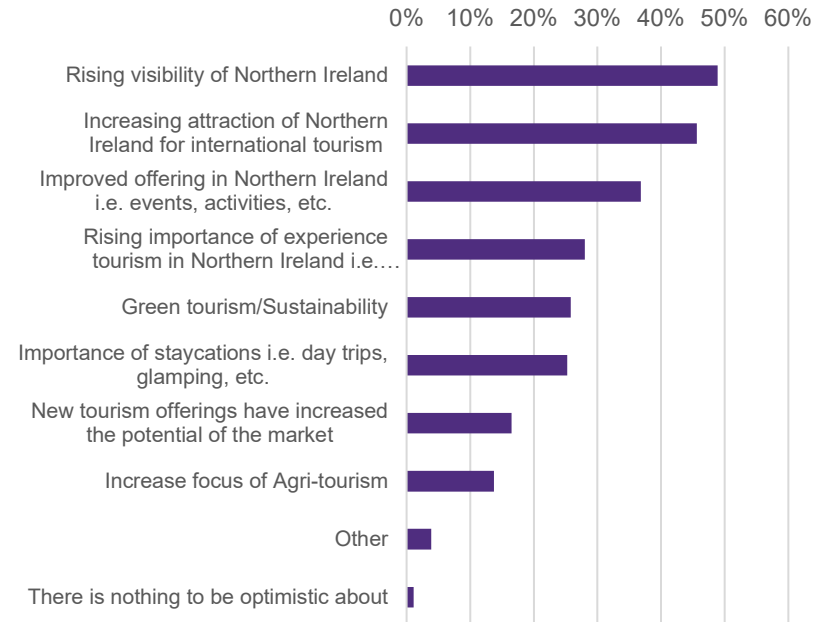
Views from the sector

Challenges and Opportunities

Industry Challenges



Industry Opportunities



Source: Grant Thornton & NITA Survey

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Summary and ambition

- Tourism's importance is greater than has been counted up to now – the billion pound industry? Triple it.
- Beneath these numbers, there are significant challenges - rising operating costs, skills and labour availability, a near neighbour with a more competitive VAT rate, etc.
- This work is part of an evolving process – the ambition is to gather even more data and more insights...

Thank you



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