# Cross-Border Tourism Between Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland Triples in Past Decade, Study Finds



Cross-border tourism between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland has tripled over the past decade, according to a joint study by Ulster University and Dublin City University. The study, released in late May 2024, indicates significant growth in the number of trips from the Republic to Northern Ireland, rising from nearly 400,000 in 2013 to over 1.3 million in 2023. While international visits also increased on both sides of the border—33% in Northern Ireland and 46% in the Republic—the latter saw a more significant economic impact and higher visitor expenditure.

A major finding of the study is that tourists visiting Northern Ireland are typically there to see friends or relatives rather than for holidays or business trips, which influences spending patterns and accommodation income. Meanwhile, domestic tourism within Northern Ireland has remained relatively static at roughly two million trips per year, compared to a substantial rise in the Republic of Ireland from 6.5 million to 11 million trips annually. The report highlights the resilience of the tourism industry post-COVID-19 and suggests that closer cooperation might benefit Northern Ireland’s tourism sector more significantly, given the stronger development in the Republic.

Moreover, a strategic focus on joint marketing, streamlined visa requirements, tax policies, and regional development could help bridge the gap in economic gains from tourism between the two regions.