

FÁILTE IRELAND SUPPORT FOR FESTIVALS

Fáilte Ireland has identified festivals as a key driver for tourism growth, particularly during off-season times. Investment in and business development support for festivals is helping to drive growth in the regions and entice both domestic and overseas visitors to different parts of the country in the off-peak season.

Fáilte Ireland also provides funding for local festivals through its '**Regional Festivals and Participative Events Programme**', which has been managed by Local Authorities since 2018.

NEW FESTIVAL IDEAS

As well as the range of major national festivals Fáilte Ireland supports, the '**Festival Innovation Programme**' was launched in 2018 to support unique and high tourism impact festivals and events which will stand out internationally. Festivals are encouraged to apply on our website: www.failteireland.ie/festivalsandevents

FÁILTE IRELAND SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL SCHEMES

RURAL REGENERATION & DEVELOPMENT FUND

Fáilte Ireland works closely with the Department of Rural and Community Development to deliver quality visitor experiences nationwide to ensure local communities can benefit from tourism growth, both economically and socially. Fáilte Ireland has partnered with its strategic partners – Coillte and the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) – on two applications under the Department's Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF):

Coillte: International Mountain Biking Project

This flagship national project will develop international standard Mountain Biking Centres which will provide recreational, health and tourism benefits. The locations include Slieve Bloom Mountains in Laois and Offaly. The overall project, which will be delivered by 2022, was awarded a total of €10.26m including over €950,000 from Fáilte Ireland.

NPWS: "Regenerating Rural Ireland by Transforming the Visitor Experience at Ireland's National Parks and Nature Reserves"

This is a flagship national project stemming from the recently published Tourism Interpretative Masterplan for Ireland's National Parks, which will enhance and significantly upgrade the visitor experience across Ireland's portfolio of National Parks and Nature Reserves in a number of locations including Laois.

UPCOMING FÁILTE IRELAND INITIATIVES FOR LAOIS

VISITOR EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR LAOIS

Fáilte Ireland has initiated a number of Visitor Experience Development Plans across the country. These are 3-5 year commercial development plans for a region, which bring the public and private sector together to drive visitors and revenue to lesser known areas and attractions, especially in the off-peak season. The themes of the Visitor Experience Development Plans have been designed to enhance each area's strongest tourism assets and appeal to core overseas markets. Vitaly, these plans will be delivered in a way that encourages visitors to spend more time in an area, without compromising the environment or culture of the region.

TALES OF TWO WORLDS: In Laois, Fáilte Ireland has started work on the 'Tales of Two Worlds' Visitor Experience Development Plan, which brings together Ireland's historic houses and gardens, and the period in Ireland's history of famine and emigration – connected in timeline but offering contrasting experiences. A number of Laois businesses are now taking part in a bespoke 15-month Great Houses & Gardens Experience Development Programme. This programme is looking at the house and garden experiences available across the county including ways to develop guiding, events, cost and revenue management and sales distribution.

Fáilte Ireland and the Office Public Works (OPW) have a strategic partnership in place and Emo Court is a key attraction for the Tales of Two Worlds Visitor Experience Development Plan.

CASTLES AND CONQUESTS: Fáilte Ireland has also started work on the 'Castles and Conquests' Visitor Experience Development Plan in Laois, which will help to develop key attractions such as the Rock of Dunamase.

Fáilte Ireland has also provided the Local Authority with a report on how Timahoe Round Tower & Heritage Centre - another key attraction in the Castles and Conquests plan - can develop with the aim of attracting capital investment.

DESTINATION TOWNS – OPEN FOR APPLICATIONS

Through Fáilte Ireland's Destination Towns initiative, every Local Authority in the country – including Laois County Council - will be able to bid for funding of between **€250,000 and €500,000** to develop up to two towns in their area that have the potential to become a tourism hub.

The new scheme, which is now open for applications, will provide funding for the Local Authority to enhance public spaces and attract more overseas visitors. The Ireland's Ancient East team is working closely with the council on its funding submission. The closing date for applications is September 2019.

PLATFORMS FOR GROWTH INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

Platforms for Growth is Fáilte Ireland's new four-year capital investment programme worth **€150million**. The programme specifically targets product themes and types known as 'platforms', which have the greatest potential to grow tourism in Ireland. The first of the platforms to be launched is **Immersive Heritage and Cultural Attractions**, which will focus on developing world-class attractions that appeal to overseas visitors who are looking for hands-on experiences.

The programme will fund projects of scale (greater than €2.5million) and falls under the Government's Project Ireland 2040 strategy which supports sustainable growth in the Irish tourism sector to drive higher revenue and job creation around Ireland. Platforms for Growth is now open for applications until 17th July 2019 and a series of workshops will be held around the country. Find out more: www.failteireland.ie/platformsforgrowth

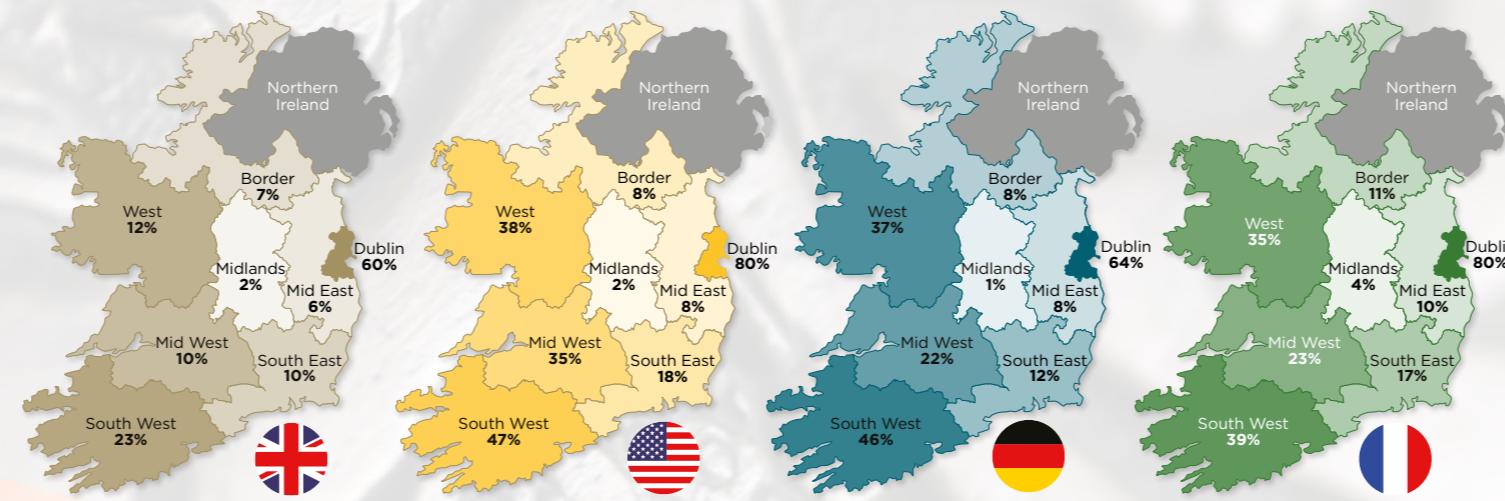
DEVELOPING TOURISM IN LAOIS



TOURISM JOBS & REVENUE



REGIONS VISITED BY KEY OVERSEAS MARKETS



*Holidaymakers can visit more than one region, therefore the sum of regions adds up to more than 100%

Counties which make up regions: DUBLIN: Longford, Westmeath, Offaly, Laois.
MID-EAST: Wicklow, Kildare, Meath, Louth. SOUTH WEST: Cork, Kerry. SOUTH EAST: Waterford, Kilkenny, Carlow, Wexford.
MID-WEST: Clare, Tipperary, Limerick. WEST: Galway, Mayo, Roscommon. BORDER: Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Cavan, Monaghan.

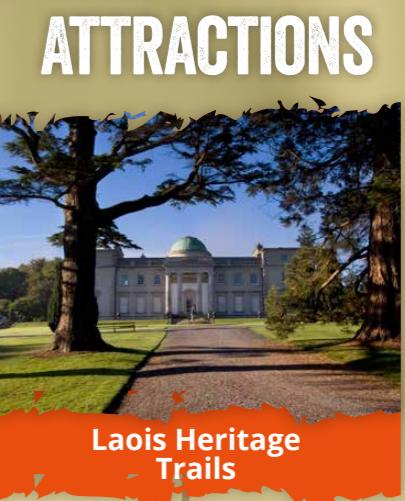
2018 ACCOMMODATION SUPPLY IN LAOIS

- 10 Hotels with 1,377 beds
- 8 Self-Catering units with 51 beds
- 1 Irish Welcome Standard with 22 beds
- 7 Bed & Breakfasts with 75 beds
- 1 Hostel with 30 beds

*Fáilte Ireland registered/approved accommodation. Source: Capita

In general, holidaymakers spend the largest portion of holiday nights staying in hotels (38%). Guesthouses/B&Bs are next most popular for overnight stays (21%). American and British holidaymakers favour hotels, while the French and Germans prefer guesthouses and B&Bs.

PROJECTS FUNDED THROUGH FÁILTE IRELAND CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN LAOIS (2015-2019)*



ATTRACTIIONS

FÁILTE IRELAND FUNDING TO DATE

€84,800

TOTAL PROJECT AMOUNT

€99,800

Total project costs may change.

*Fáilte Ireland funded projects often include match funding from key partners such as local authorities, the Office of Public Works, Coillte and the National Parks & Wildlife Service.