

Minister Martin welcomes the establishment of Recovery Oversight Group for the tourism sector

From [Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media](#)

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The Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Catherine Martin T.D., today (3rd December 2020) welcomed the establishment of a Recovery Oversight Group for the tourism sector. The Group, appointed by the Minister, met for the first time today and will be chaired by Nóirín Hegarty, VP Lonely Planet, and member of the Board of Tourism Ireland.

The tourism sector has been devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic. A Tourism Recovery Taskforce was appointed in May to prepare a Tourism Recovery Plan including recommendations on how best the Irish tourism sector can adapt and recover in a changed tourism environment as a result of the crisis. The taskforce presented its Tourism Recovery Plan 2020-2023 to Minister Martin on September 30th. The Plan makes a number of recommendations to help tourism businesses to survive, stabilise and recover from the COVID pandemic.

As recommended in the Recovery Plan, an independently chaired Recovery Oversight Group has now been established to oversee the implementation of the recommendations in the Taskforce report and monitor the sector's recovery from the Covid-19 crisis. The Group's membership is comprised of tourism industry practitioners, a transport policy expert, along with the CEOs of the tourism agencies and a Departmental representative. The Group will keep the Minister apprised of progress on the implementation of the Recovery Plan and the recovery of the sector.

Speaking today, Minister Martin said:

“I am very pleased to be able to appoint the Recovery Oversight Group so soon after the development of the Tourism Recovery Plan. As we are still in the survival stage, it is more important than ever that this Group begins its work in earnest overseeing the implementation of the Recovery Plan and monitoring the progress of the tourism sector's recovery. There remains much uncertainty but I am hopeful that recent progress with regard to vaccines will allow the industry to enter the recovery phase and begin to grow again in 2021. The actions I have taken to date have been primarily to help tourism businesses and jobs to survive. I look forward to this Group's advice as to the priorities as they emerge at different stages of recovery.

“I am very appreciative that this hugely experienced Group, chaired by Nóirín Hegarty, has agreed to give their considerable expertise voluntarily to help ensure the recovery and strengthening of our tourism industry. The fact that there is continuity from the TRT is a positive. The tourism sector is integral to our national economic recovery and I believe that the implementation of the recommendations in the Recovery Plan will lead to high economic returns as well as benefitting the thousands of people who work in the sector.”

Speaking of her appointment, Ms Hegarty said:

“I am delighted and honoured to be appointed chair of the Recovery Oversight Group. I am well aware of the hard work and time invested by the Tourism Recovery Taskforce and wish to congratulate them on delivering a Recovery Plan that sets out a framework for recovery for our tourism sector over the period 2020-2023. While we have made a good start, this is just the beginning of a process of recovery and I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Oversight Group to ensure that the recommendations set out in the Tourism Recovery Plan are implemented. We will also be monitoring the sector’s recovery from the Covid-19 crisis. Minister Martin has brought together a very experienced group and it is up to us now to ensure that this Plan is brought to fruition.”

Recovery Oversight Group membership

Name	Organisation
Nóirín Hegarty (Chair)	VP, Lonely Planet
Ruth Andrews	CEO, ITOA, Chair, ITIC
Paul Kelly	CEO, Fáilte Ireland
Niall Gibbons	CEO, Tourism Ireland
Paul Gallagher	GM, Buswells Hotel
Helena Healy	CEO, B&B Ireland
Aisling Reynolds- Feighan	Professor of Transport Economics and College Vice Principal for Research Innovation and Impact at the UCD College of Social Sciences & Law
Rob Rankin	MD, Vagabond Tours
Maria Melia	Principal, Tourism Policy and Marketing Division, Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media