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On Tap

Dublin pours on the charm to attract innovators and entrepreneurs.

BY SUSAN B. BARNES

WITH ITS ENVIABLE LOCATION at the head of Dublin Bay on the Irish Sea, framed by the Wicklow Mountains beyond and the River Liffey running through it, there's little wonder Dublin draws so many visitors. In fact, more than 6.3 million people visited in 2018. For a city with a population of 1.3 million and a country of just more than 4.9 million, that's quite a number of people to welcome to the Emerald Isle.

Doing business in Dublin is not new. In the 1950s Ireland made a concerted effort to pursue “industriali-

sation by invitation” by creating a welcoming business environment. A likely result, Dublin hosts some of the most influential global multinational corporations in industries such as technology, finance and pharma and biotech, with companies including Google, Microsoft, Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer, JP Morgan and Deloitte establishing headquarters here. According to IDA Ireland, the country's inward investment promotion agency, one-third of all multinational corporations in the country have operated in Ireland for more than 20 years, which speaks volumes about its appeal.

According to Andrew Vogelaar, head of the growth markets division, IDA Ireland, 1,300 overseas companies work within Ireland, and about half are based in Dublin. He added two-thirds of Ireland's exports — €140 billion in goods and €160 billion in services annually — are driven by multinational corporations.

“We're a small, open economy that's very much export-driven,” said Vogelaar.

ALONG THE RIVERSIDE:

A view across the River Liffey in Dublin

PHOTO: © IAN WHITWORTH - DREAMSTIME.COM

COMING AND GOING

U.S. citizens must have a passport valid for at least the duration of their stay, but it is recommended it be valid for six months after arrival date. A visa is not required for stays of up to 90 days.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

English and Irish (Gaeilge)



PAST & PRESENT:

Famine *memorial statues on the Custom House Quay in the Docklands opposite Dublin's Central Business District*

PHOTO: © NICOLA PULHAM - DREAMSTIME.COM

LODGING

CARTON HOUSE

About 20 minutes outside of the city center, the historic mansion built in 1739 sits on 1,100 acres of private parkland estate and features two golf courses, a spa, professional training pitches and more.

Carton Demesne, Maynooth, Co. Kildare
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THE CLARENCE HOTEL

The city's original rock 'n roll boutique hotel features just 50 rooms in a location perfect for business and pleasure ... just as you might expect from the hotel's owners, U2.

6-8 Wellington Quay, Temple Bar
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THE SHELBOURNE, AUTOGRAPH COLLECTION

The 5-star luxury hotel, a favorite of discerning guests from around the world, has been the center of Dublin's social and cultural life for nearly 200 years.

27 St. Stephen's Green
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JUST THE FACTS

Time zone: GMT

Phone code: Country code: 353
City code: 1

Currency: Euro

Key industries: The five key industries expected to have the most significant growth in Dublin over the next decade are technology, health and social care, professional services, arts and recreation, and logistics and storage.

What's more, Ireland makes it easy to do business on the island. The World Bank's "Doing Business 2020" report ranks Ireland in the top 25 in regards to ease of doing business, and Dublin ranked second in Overall: European Cities of the Future in the *fDi Magazine* rankings for 2018–2019. Regarding its economy, the IMD World Competitiveness Center ranks Ireland as the second-most competitive economy in the European Union and the seventh-most competitive in the world.

Concerning the homegrown talent in Ireland, IDA Ireland reports the country is implementing a comprehensive, forward-looking National Skills Strategy & Action Plan for Education, aiming to make Irish education and training the best in Europe by 2026. The Emerald Isle enjoys a head start in that regard: It boasts one of the most educated workforces in the world, with 56.3 percent of 30- to 34-year-olds in Ireland having a third-level qualification, compared to an EU average of 40.7 percent. According to a recent study by the European Commission, the Irish are "the most highly employable graduates in the world."

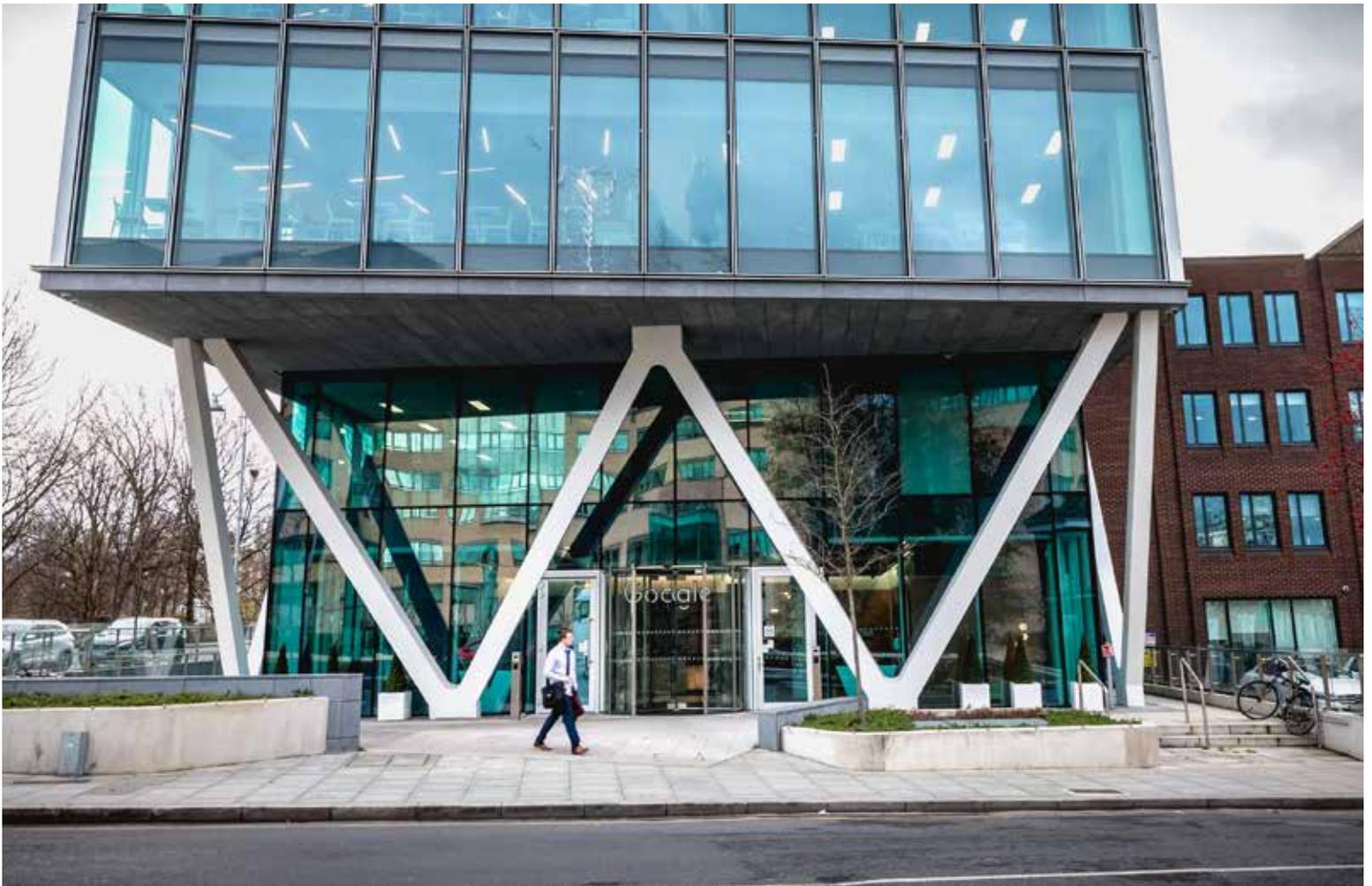
That's not to say Ireland's workforce is all local, however. According to the Dublin City Council, "Ireland is consistently ranked among the top coun-

tries in the world for labour productivity, availability of skilled labour, availability of financial skills and flexibility of its people, according to figures from the World Bank." Because of this, "Highly skilled workers are attracted to Dublin for its many career opportunities, but especially for the great lifestyle that this compact, friendly city offers."

"What you're seeing now is it's a much more open, multicultural society in the demographics of Dublin, all the different cultures that you have here," said Vogelaar. "Facebook quite recently hired their 100th different nationality into the Irish operation."

Looking ahead, Ireland is investing in its future. Through the National Development Plan, implemented in 2018 and running through 2027, the country is investing €116 billion in public infrastructure and capital works, with a focus of 10 strategic priorities including "enterprise, skills and innovation capacity, housing and sustainable urban development, the national road network, environmentally sustainable public transport and climate action." Additionally, at the end of the first quarter of 2019, more than 5 million square feet of office space was under construction in Dublin, of which nearly 3.8 million square feet lies in the city center.

Doing business in Dublin is smart, too, in that



INNOVATION:
 Google office building (top), and downtown Dublin (bottom)

PHOTOS: © CLEMENT MANTION PIERRE OLIVIER - DREAMSTIME.COM, © ARTUR BOGACKI - DREAMSTIME.COM

two projects will transform it into a smart city. Four Dublin County authorities have partnered with technology providers, researchers and residents to solve challenges and improve city life. Additionally, Dublin City Council and Trinity College Dublin's CONNECT research center launched Smart Docklands in 2018 to encourage professionals to connect with the startup community and university students.

So what about Brexit? IDA Ireland notes there is strong public support for Ireland's European Union membership, and 88 percent of the public "believe that Ireland has benefited from EU membership," and 83 percent "are positive about EU membership."

"There is some uncertainty out there due to Brexit potentially impacting business and consumer confidence and potential disruption to global supply chains as well," explained Vogelaar. "Ireland is fully committed to the EU and will stay with the EU."

The future is bright in Dublin and all of Ireland, and businesses from around the world are more than welcome to be a part of it. As the Irish say, *céad míle fáilte* — a hundred thousand welcomes.



CHECKING IN WITH DR. ROISIN LYONS AND FURKAN KARAYAL

Dr. Roisin Lyons, assistant professor of entrepreneurship and innovation, Dublin City University Business School, and Furkan Karayal, founder and CEO, Diverse In, both served to organize StartupWeek Dublin to build momentum around the community's unique entrepreneurial and innovative identity.

What makes Dublin conducive to startups and attractive to entrepreneurs?

Roisin Lyons: Dublin has many attributes that attract startups and corporates alike. Firstly, it is a hub of highly trained and highly skilled individuals, supported by five nearby universities and multiple third-level institutes and training facilities. This proximity to graduates and expertise allows for numerous collaborations and community-building initiatives. Secondly, the community itself is welcoming, supportive and engaged, with mentorship and information sessions to suit all needs. This energy and goodwill, of course, is showcased during StartupWeek but all year-round is felt, too. In addition, there is a supportive corporate infrastructure for entrepreneurship, multiple co-working spaces and related community leaders who strive to support this wave of innovation through the city. Lastly, with citywide services such as Dublin City Council also helping to attract startups, the concerted effort feels like a strong web, an ecosystem for startups of all kinds.

Which industries are attracted to doing business in Dublin? What is on the horizon as far as new industries coming onto the scene?

Furkan Karayal: There is no doubt the technology industry will lead the future of the Dublin economy due to its current talent pool with tech startups and being the home to the European headquarters of most of the big American tech companies. Similarly, tech-related industries have higher potentials, too. Research shows medical technology is one of the fastest-growing industries in Ireland. From another side, the impact of Brexit uncertainty plays a big role to make Dublin the best option for multinational companies in financial services or other areas to maintain their bridges with the European Union.

Describe the women entrepreneur scene in Dublin. What types of companies are they starting, and what type of support do they have?

Furkan Karayal: The majority of female entrepreneurs in Dublin are in social enterprises, professional services, communication and creative fields. Female entrepreneurs find support through state grants or accelerator programs and mentorship opportunities through social initiatives. Even though there is still more room to improve, Irish society is ready to embrace more female entrepreneurs, as we see new role models every day in the media.

TAKING THE INITIATIVE:

Dr. Roisin Lyons (left), and Furkan Karayal (right)

PHOTOS: © DR. ROISIN LYONS, © FURKAN KARAYAL

DINING

FIRE RESTAURANT AND LOUNGE

If a restaurant is going to host the World Steak Challenge, its own steaks should be stellar. Fire delivers with a menu featuring modern Irish fare created from award-winning meats and fresh seasonal produce.

The Mansion House, Dawson Street
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THE GREENHOUSE

Michelin 2-starred chef Mickael Viljanen leads the kitchen team in creating inspired meals using the finest ingredients for a memorable dining experience at this Michelin 2-starred restaurant.

Joshua House, 21 Dawson St.
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SOLE SEAFOOD & GRILL

SOLE serves the freshest of Ireland's seafood in a chic setting where service is paramount. Sure to impress at lunch or dinner: the decadent seafood tower.

18-19 S. William St.
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DIVERSIONS

When it comes to taking some time to enjoy the city, you will find plenty of ways to keep yourself entertained in Dublin.

Get a feel for the city on a walking tour, with plenty from which to choose. Dublin Free Walking Tours traverse the north and south sides of the city, hitting the highlights along the way. Or opt for a themed tour, from history to literary to *Ulysses*; tasting and Irish music pub crawls are on tap, too.

Once you get your bearings, make your way back to the campus of Trinity College to see one of the world's most famous books, exquisitely preserved: *The Book of Kells*, dating back to the ninth century. Afterward, continue upstairs to be awed by the Trinity College Library's Long Room, filled with 200,000 of the library's oldest books and considered one of the most impressive libraries in the world. Speaking of libraries, Marsh's Library, next to St. Patrick's Cathedral, was Ireland's first public library when it opened its doors in 1707. Today it houses more than 25,000 books from the 16th to 18th centuries.

The architecture of St. Patrick's and Christ Church cathedrals is something to behold, both structures remarkably withstanding the test of time: St. Patrick's Cathedral has stood for 800 years, while Christ Church Cathedral is nearly 1,000 years old. However, you'll find the oldest church in Dublin, St. Michan's Church, on the north side, founded in 1095. Bram Stoker, who penned *Dracula*, worshiped here.

Head to The Guinness Storehouse for a beer. The experience takes enthusiasts through the history of the famous beverage at St. James' Gate, where it has been brewed since 1759. At the end, sip a frosty pint at the Gravity Bar, boasting 360-degree views across Dublin and the surrounding landscape. Of course, the city's pubs pour terrific pints, too.

This represents but a small sampling of all Dublin and its surrounding communities offer. Take some time to enjoy the city's history, perhaps take a daytrip, and start planning your inevitable return.



HISTORIC FARE:

Guinness Storehouse (above), and The Book of Kells (left)

PHOTOS: © STEVEN CUKROV - DREAMSTIME.COM,
© CHON KIT LEONG - DREAMSTIME.COM

INFO TO GO

Direct flights from the United States to Dublin are available on Aer Lingus, American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Norwegian and United Airlines. Upon arrival at Dublin Airport, about six miles from the city center, easily travel into Dublin via metered taxis and personal cars as well as by bus. Once in the city limits, get around via taxi or DART, Dublin's electric train system, or simply walk. Returning from Dublin is made easier with a U.S. Preclearance facility where passengers go through U.S. immigration, customs and agriculture inspections prior to departure.