



Annual Report 2018

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Message of Congratulations from the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Nial Ring.

I would like to acknowledge and praise the work done by the Irish Tourist Assistance Service (ITAS) in helping visitors to our city who have suffered from crime. Their contribution to the City of Dublin for the past 25 years in helping over 17,000 tourists from 110 countries around the world is invaluable. Despite Dublin's reputation as a friendly city, unfortunately some of our visitors need assistance and ITAS is always there to help them.

Thank you for all you do.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Ring'.

Nial Ring
Mayor of Dublin

Message from Shane Ross T.D., Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport

I am pleased as Minister of Transport, Tourism and Sport to take this opportunity to express my support for the wonderful service provided by the Irish Tourist Assistance Service (ITAS) and to congratulate all involved on another impressive annual report. I want to compliment the dedicated staff and volunteers for their contribution to the continued success of Ireland's tourism industry.

2018 was another excellent year for Irish tourism and the eighth consecutive year of growth in overseas visitor numbers. Tourism is now one of Ireland's most important economic sectors and supports over 260,000 jobs right across the country. The continued growth in the sector is testament to the continued hard work of everybody involved in Irish tourism, including ITAS.

ITAS offers a very specialist support service to tourists who fall victim to crime or who may have become stranded here for some other reason. This important service, together with Ireland's excellent, good-value tourism product offering and friendly people, all contribute to our continued attractiveness as a tourist destination.

Security and safety continues to be one of the most important factors that influence destination decisions for holiday-makers and Ireland's reputation as a safe, secure holiday destination is something we must continue to protect and enhance. It is reassuring to know that the Irish Tourist Assistance Service is available year-round to offer immediate assistance and support to tourists free of charge.

As 2019 marks the 25th anniversary of the founding of ITAS, I want to congratulate all involved on the dedicated service they have provided since 1994. Thank you for the care, kindness and support that you have provided to tourists in their time of need over the last 25 years. Congratulations to you all and I wish you continued success in the future.

Message from Charlie Flanagan, TD, Minister for Justice and Equality

For the last 25 years, the Irish Tourist Assistance Service has assisted tourists who unfortunately have become victims of crime in Ireland. Many of us have been away from home and have experienced situations where things have not gone as expected. However, to have money, credit cards, identity documents and travel tickets stolen while travelling abroad, is deeply distressing. To be given the support to regroup and, time permitting, continue to enjoy your travels is a blessing. I wish ITAS continued success and congruity in the valuable service it provides.

Message from J A Harris Commissioner, An Garda Síochána

On behalf of An Garda Síochána, I want to offer sincere congratulations to the Irish Tourist Assistance Service (ITAS) for 25 years of dedicated service. The ITAS and An Garda Síochána have always worked closely to ensure tourists who are victims of crime receive support and assistance they need during what can be a difficult and stressful time. I want to thank you for your commitment and wish the ITAS well for the next 25 years.

Message from Paul Kelly, Chief Executive, Fáilte Ireland

For 25 years the Irish Tourist Assistance Service has been providing a vital service to visitors to our country. They do this quietly and professionally without seeking the limelight and in doing so they represent the essence of true hospitality and care.

Often referred to as the quiet heroes of the tourism industry ITAS volunteers work tirelessly to ensure that tourists and visitors who find themselves in difficulty are reassured, supported and assisted in their needs.

This practical and emotional support, offered free of charge to tourists in distress, ensures they are cared for as well as possible on the very rare occasion that something goes wrong while on holidays. This support serves to ensure that Ireland's reputation as a welcoming and caring destination is maintained and indeed strengthened.

ITAS is the only dedicated national service of its kind in Europe and I want to thank CEO Lisa Kennedy and her team of volunteers for the invaluable work that they do and for their part in reaffirming the warm *Céad Míle Fáilte* at the heart of the Irish tourism experience.

Message from Ann Meade, MBE, Founding Member

This year, 2019 marks 25 years of the provision of immediate support to international visitors to Ireland who were affected by crime or other traumatic incidents. Since inception, 17,000 visitors from 110 countries have availed of appropriate assistance. Many continued their holiday in Ireland.

I wish to congratulate the Chairman and Board of Directors of ITAS, Lisa Kennedy, Chief Executive Officer and Bernard Lavelle, Office Manager, on the continuous provision of the service to this date.

I wish also to pay tribute to the quality of care provided by staff and volunteers seven days a week, all year round. This service, unique in Europe, is made possible by the close relationship with its key partners, An Garda Síochána, Foreign Embassies and also the goodwill it enjoys from the Tourism & Hospitality Industry in terms of complimentary accommodation, meals and transport. ITAS offers comfort, support and hope to tourists who otherwise may leave our country and never wish to return.

On April 1st, 2019, President Michael D Higgins hosted a reception for ITAS at Áras an Uachtaráin to mark the 25th anniversary. In attendance were Guido Nasi and his mother Simonetta. Guido was just 17 when he came to Dublin in July 1999 to take part in an English language course. His life was inexplicably altered in a few short moments in an unprovoked attack in Dublin's Fairview Park. As a result, Guido was left paralysed, unable to speak and almost blind.

On the night of the attack, the Tourist Assistance Service quickly identified a fluent Italian speaker to liaise with Simonetta and hospital personnel. Bernadette Kelly di Giorgi has fulfilled her role as a volunteer with the service to an extraordinary degree. At the Aras she was a voice for Guido and Simonetta.

In the context of the Italian's enduring relationship with Ireland, President Higgins in his address said 'it was a message of how important it is that we must do all in our power to combat crime and ensure the safety of not only our own citizens but everyone who visits our country'.

Message from Derek Nally, Founding Member

When Lisa Kennedy, Chief Executive of the Irish Tourist Assistance Service, e-mailed me in early March of this year asking if I would provide a message marking the 25th anniversary of the Service's founding, I was amazed to think a quarter of a century had passed since the establishment of this unique body. That it has survived and prospered for 25 years is testament in itself of the magnificent role the Irish Tourist Assistance Service provides nationwide for tourist victims of crime.

It is somewhat regrettable and a source of concern to me as a founding member that a service such as the ITAS is still needed in the Ireland of a hundred thousand welcomes but, be that as it may, it is also a matter of great pride to me to know that the aims and objectives of the founding members is alive and well and flourishing in pursuit of the ideals and principles on which the Service was founded.

That this is so is due in no small measure to the work of Lisa Kennedy who has guided the service for many years now and who, through her professionalism, dedication and courage, has placed the Service at the very centre of providing support for visitors to this country who have suffered the trauma of being a victim of crime. For 25 years now many visitors from abroad have had every reason to gratefully acknowledge the role played by the Service's personnel in helping them recover from such a trauma and that, in itself, is proof positive of the need for a body of the calibre of the Irish Tourist Assistance Service.

The work of the Service in this respect has helped enhance Ireland's reputation as a nation fully conscious of its responsibilities towards visitors and it is my earnest wish, desire even, that the work started a quarter of a century ago by Ann Meade and myself among others will continue well into the future.

It would be remiss of me to let this important milestone in the history of the ITAS pass without making reference to the contribution made by the then Minister for Justice, Maire Geoghegan-Quinn and the then Garda Commissioner, Patrick Culligan in the successful establishment of the Service. Their collective response to the idea when first mooted provided the founding members with the impetus from which to proceed with their plans. As a result of their collective support and level of commitment the founding members had the confidence to put in place the objectives for which the organisation is known and respected today. Those objectives have stood the test of time and long may they continue to be the guiding factor by which this great organisation continues to operate.

To Lisa Kennedy, Chief Executive, her staff and the many volunteers who make up the Service, may I offer my sincere thanks and congratulations on the wonderful work done over the past 25 years. Your collective endeavours have far exceeded the expectations of the founding members and your work with tourist victims of crime will endure after the perpetrators of such crimes are long forgotten.

Message from Kevin McPartlan, Chairman, Irish Tourist Assistance Service

2019 marks the 25th year of ITAS providing essential services to international visitors who experience crime and other traumatic events while visiting Ireland. Each year the Service continues to flourish and 2018 was no exception, being the busiest year in our history. 579 incidents were referred, which involved assisting nearly 1000 tourists. This underpins the importance of the continuation of this dedicated Service.

Tourist crime by its very nature demands an immediate support response as clients can be in a vulnerable state, requiring the skill and expertise provided by ITAS staff and volunteers. I would like to acknowledge and pay tribute to everyone in ITAS who do exceptional work, 7 days a week, to ensure a positive outcome for tourists in often very difficult and emotional circumstances on both emotional and practical levels.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Gardaí for their support as they play a vital role in ensuring tourists become aware of the support available after experiencing crime. We will continue to work with the Gardaí to make sure victims receive the rights that are afforded them under the Criminal Justice (Victims of Crime) Act 2017. It is essential that tourist victims are informed of supports available on first contact with the Gardaí and that timely referrals are facilitated in an effort to ensure tourists receive comprehensive support and information in the immediate aftermath of crime.

ITAS could not carry out its work without the financial and complimentary supports it receives on an annual basis and I would like to acknowledge and thank all the organisation that continue to support the Service. Our concern for the future is the Service's reliance on Community Employment Scheme personnel for the 7-day operation, at a time when fewer candidates are available due to the economic upturn and increased employment opportunities. With 85% of our client interactions being face-to-face, it is imperative that extra resources are made available in order that the level of service currently offered to tourist crime victims is maintained.

For 25 years the Service has played an important role in the recovery of tourist crime victims and their perception of the country. I think I speak for all the Directors when I say we are very proud to be part of this unique service and look forward to further contributing to the Service's future development.

Visitor Experiences – Comments Spanning 25 years

What amazing people! I was tired, depressed and uncertain when I came in and I feel wonderful now! Thank you all.

This made my day and stay in Dublin! Thank you for the wonderful service and understanding!

I am singing the praises of the Irish Tourist Assistance Service to everyone back here in the States. You helped me through a tough time and I am forever grateful.

ITAS is an amazing system, really can help tourists. When back in Germany I always talk to my friends and family about ITAS. There are more and more tourists going to China, I really hope China can have a similar system one day and I would be a volunteer. I will go to Ireland at least one more time, to finish my trip plan, this time I will take care of my bag.

Now, more than five weeks have gone since I made first this horrible experience to be lost in a foreign country without valid papers and without a penny – and the second wonderful experience that I have not been lost, that I found very kind, warm-hearted people who tried to help me with all their possibilities – and they succeeded. I think you remember me, the woman who at the check-in discovered that her ID card and her credit card were stolen. You succeeded to calm my mind with hearty words, tea and cookies; you even booked me on a new flight. You gave me all that was necessary to get new papers, you organised a bed in a hostel, a train ticket to get to & from the Embassy and bus tickets to your office and to the airport – one of you even came with me to the bus-stop and made sure I took the correct bus. I am full of gratitude to you!!!

Your service and help were invaluable to me dealing with the upsetting situation. While I have a bad feeling for one person who stole my cash, I have excellent long term memories of all the other people we met and beautiful / historic sights during the 2 week visit to Ireland. Thank you again and Happy Holidays!”

What could have been a truly horrible experience was eased by caring and compassionate people such as yourself. Thank you. I hope to one day return so that I can see Ireland's lovely country and enjoy it's warm hospitality.

The two ladies in the ITAS office made a traumatic experience much easier to handle. They went out of their way to help in every possible way. We could not have asked for a more professional, courteous, kind, caring and sympathetic response than we received. Thank you for having such a service for tourists in need and staffing it with top-notch people.

I am writing on behalf of my wife and I to thank the wonderful staff of ITAS, who were so supportive of our needs following a burglary at our motorhome. We were given every assistance with our faxing and email requirements; we were further spoiled with a plentiful supply of T.L.C., coffee and complimentary tickets to a tourist attraction, which we enjoyed immensely. While we were thankful only our laptop was stolen, the stress and trauma of the loss was still significant. A very sincere thank you to the three ladies who were there on the day.

My husband and I would like to thank you, from the bottom of our hearts, for all your help in dealing with an unfortunate event we had on our trip to Ireland. You provided us with the right information to quickly cancel our credit cards and take action in securing new passports to get back to the United States. We left your beautiful country not disappointed from a robbery, but with great love of the people of Ireland, for their kindness and compassion during our time of need.

I'm sending this email to thank and thank again the ITAS association for the tremendous help they brought me this last week-end. This kind of association is one of those we should find in any country, and this is one of the reason why I will only keep good memories of Dublin. Knowing by advance that we can rely on such level of assistance when flying to a country is more than good for tourism, and shall be a key point for travel destination selection for holidays. This is at least big relief for me to know that, next time I will fly to Dublin (and I will for sure), ITAS will be present to support me if I have any issue. Thanks again for your perfect assistance.

*My case was that I have lost my National ID card and am a German citizen but had a flight to Paris for business early on Monday. He really tried every option and possibility coming to our mind and was very helpful coming up with alternative solutions and suggestions. Additionally, he was very patient and persistent to find a solution for my case. It was really great to see such dedication and drive to help me. Best Regards & Many Thanks
Greeting from Paris – yes I made it!*

I just want to extend my praise and thanks for your amazing service. It was a really stressful and trying weekend and I would have been lost without your assistance. Keep up the amazing work!!

Yesterday you helped us after we were robbed on O'Connell Street. Now everything had been come to a good end for us. We got a call from a family in Dublin whose son found the wallet in a bin on Moore Street. The wallet contained the bank & credit cards, the National ID card and some business cards from which they got our phone number. This family lived only 10 minutes by car from our campsite so he brought us the wallet that same evening. We were very very happy and now we think it is useful also for you to know that the thieves probably have been interested in cash. We thank you very much for your great help and your friendly and calm way to find adequate solutions for our problems. We think that your Irish Tourist Assistance Service to help tourist victims of crime is an exemplary helpful institution. We will never forget this. Thank you so much again.

I want to send my most sincere thanks to people I met in ITAS and to let them know that I have arrived home safely after enjoying the rest of my stay in Ireland and England. I so appreciated their sincere concern at a time I felt very vulnerable. The embassy replaced my passport expeditiously, but knowing how to get there and to have the picture ready was valuable information.

We are again in our home in France and we just want to thank you for your precious assistance. I have not found my papers again but we have can take the plane in Dublin to return in France with copy of my papers. We keep marvellous ideas of Irish people. Thanks again and excuse my poor English ...We shall go back in your fantastic country, that's sure!

I wanted to thank your staff who supported me yesterday. My wallet was stolen out of my backpack at approximately 4 pm. The first thing I want to do is thank your office for all the help, assistance and guidance that your office gave me in my time of need and panic. I feel horrible that I didn't get the names of the two gentlemen who assisted me. They stayed with me for over 3 hours while I called my credit cards and my sister and had money wired to me. Without them I don't know what I would have done. I just wanted to let them know how much I appreciated their assistance and that the rest of my trip was fantastic. I was able to regroup and change plans to use public transportation and had a wonderful vacation in Ireland, as I always do when I am there. Again, thank you for all your help. I have been telling everyone how helpful your office was when I was there.

I wanted to say thank you for your kindness and support, when I was robbed on our final day in Dublin. Without your help on a Friday afternoon, no less, I doubt I would have been able to return home the next day. I would like to especially THANK the ITAS staff who were on duty that day. Your helpfulness was so greatly appreciated at a very stressful moment!

We want to say thanks for the fantastic help we received when my wife's bag was stolen in Dublin. Now we are home, and we are very grateful for your kindness. It feels really good to know that there is someone who can, and will, help if you need it. A really bad day, turned out fine in the end. Thank you so much, I get tears in my eyes just thinking about it. Next time we are going to Dublin, we will feel much more safe, knowing you are there to help when we need it. p.s. the embassy was Fantastic!!! THANK YOU.

I do not know, how I could have handled the case without you. In the middle of all the trouble and excitement there were you with your helping hand and calming me. I was so grateful that you told me what to do and helped me to realise it. The most moving was that you gave me money of your own though you did not know me!!!! I only can say: the right person at the right place. Nevertheless I enjoyed the time in Ireland and will have good memories.

My husband and I would like to take the opportunity to thank the two ITAS agents who came to our aid during a most difficult situation when we were visiting in Dublin recently. We are older people who were visiting in your country to celebrate our upcoming 50th Anniversary. A wonderful time was almost sabotaged when my husband had his wallet lifted from his hip pocket shortly after changing currency in Dublin's City Centre. It was an extremely unnerving situation...and he was feeling extremely demoralized and foolish. Upon entering Pearse Street station, we saw ITAS on the door and so hoped someone could help us. The two gentlemen behind the desk immediately sensed our distress and came to our aid. They assured my husband that he should not beat himself up and that we would be ok! We knew we would probably not see the wallet or money again but were worried about the credit cards, driver's license, etc. They helped us contact credit card companies and advised us on how to deal with other situations. I cannot relate how appreciative we were/are for their sensitivity and professionalism. Their immediate intervention and control plus the reassurance that all would be well certainly went a long way in helping us to remain grounded in a potentially devastating situation. We truly felt their concern for our welfare. They were also dealing with a Chinese family who had lost their money, cards, and passports. I watched their interactions with this family as well. Thank you again. Words are not adequate.

2018 Overview

In 2018, the Irish Tourist Assistance Service, ITAS, continued to provide vital support and practical assistance to international visitors to the country who experienced crime and other traumatic incidents. We also continued to highlight the specific needs and challenges faced by tourist victims in an effort to improve support information and referral mechanisms to enable increasing numbers of tourists to access support.

The number of tourists supported by the service has increased over the past number of years, and 2018 was no exception. In fact, 2018 saw nearly 1000 tourists seeking support from ITAS, the highest ever since 1994. The service offers an array of essential supports to tourists requiring assistance, however our key strengths lie in our direct access to relevant personnel in airlines and embassies and our comprehensive complimentary supports which can include accommodation, meals and transport.

Awareness Raising

One of our key priorities each year is to raise awareness of the service to Gardaí, front line staff in the tourism industry and embassy personnel making them aware of the assistance available so they can inform tourists who experience crime about the Service, thereby ensuring that increasing numbers of tourists can receive support, if it is their wish.

To this end our new website went live on St. Patrick's weekend, traditionally the start of the tourist season. The design is contemporary and visually engaging and the site is easy to navigate and responsive across all devices, all important factors for a new website. It also features a short promotional video which gives a brief outline of the service and how ITAS supports tourist crime victims.

ITAS also sought the help of a team from the MBA Capstone Programme with Smurfit Business School, to recommend a strategy, on how best to communicate value and increase referrals to the service from An Garda Síochána. While the Gardaí are the main source of referrals to ITAS, only about 13% of tourist crime victims seek support from the service. We would like to ensure that all tourist victims are informed of ITAS and relevant support services at first contact with An Garda Síochána. The MBA team having interviewed both senior and front-line Garda personnel, made a series of recommendations which ITAS hope to work with the Gardaí to implement in 2019 and beyond.

Once again our very successful crime prevention guides 'Safety Tips for Tourists', were printed and distributed to Garda stations, embassies, tourist offices, key tourist attractions, language schools, car rental outlets, airports and ferry ports. We work with the above agencies to try to prevent crime in the first instance through education and gentle reminders on how to stay safe. The guide which is non alarmist in nature, contains practical tips on care of belongings, personal safety and car security while holidaying in Ireland as well as contact details for ITAS. For many years Fáilte Ireland have been printing the guides for the service. Our utmost thanks for their continued support.

ITAS engaged in many promotional activities in 2018 which included giving presentations to Gardaí and representatives in the tourism industry. ITAS also works with many organisations to promote the service through their website, e-zines and social media platforms. I would like to thank the many organisations that assisted ITAS with raising its profile in 2018. This support is greatly appreciated.

ITAS also raised awareness of the issues faced by international visitors who experience crime in Ireland with submissions to the Commission on the Future of Policing and the Garda Policing Plan 2019.

Embassies

In emergency situations, embassies can be the first point of call for their citizens and can offer valuable information and support in times of crisis. In 2018 ITAS referred 241 tourists to their respective embassies for further assistance, which typically consisted of issuing emergency travel documents (ETD), passports or visas. Embassies can also refer their citizens to ITAS should further support be required. We continuously strive to ensure we have the correct information and procedures for tourists regarding their respective embassy and we work with embassies throughout the year to maintain this. We were delighted to welcome representatives from 5 different embassies to the office in 2018 who wanted to learn more about the service. Our thanks to the staff in all the embassies we work with, for their dedication and commitment, staying after hours and coming in on weekends to issue documents, in order to ensure their citizens could return home as planned.

Funding & Support

ITAS operates on a very modest budget and depends on funding from both statutory and non-statutory bodies to carry out its work. We are extremely grateful to all agencies and organisations who fund the service as without this vital funding, we could not maintain or develop the service. We will continue to work with our funders in 2019 and aim to extend the number of organisations supporting the service.

As always we are most thankful to our core funders; the Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime, Fáilte Ireland and Dublin City Council for continuing to support and value the work that we do. We are also extremely grateful to our other funders who continue to contribute to the operation of the service and ensure the best outcomes for tourists.

Complimentary Support

The complimentary supports offered by our benefit in kind sponsors is one of the key strengths of the service. It can be the difference between a positive or negative outcome to the situation. ITAS works with numerous organisations for the benefit of vulnerable tourists in order to ensure that they are not left without a bed for the night, a hot meal or transport to the airport or their embassy.

We remain sincerely grateful to all the organisations who sponsor this valuable support. We truly appreciate your generosity and goodwill. The following list is some of these supports: ***Hotel & Hostel accommodation; Rescheduling & complimentary ferry tickets; Rescheduling of airline flights and authorising travel with Garda report and photo ID; Restaurant, Retail and Sightseeing vouchers; Transport by taxi, bus, dart, and train, GP visits and advice.***

2018 Analysis of Client Contacts and Support

As previously stated, 2018 proved to be the busiest year on record with demand for the service at its highest level. 579 incidents of crime and other traumatic events were referred to the service, with ITAS supporting 987 tourists in total. This represents an increase of 9% in referrals. 826 (84%) tourists visited the office for support, a 15% increase compared with 2017.

Operating from the city centre location of Pearse Street Garda Station facilitates swift referral of tourists, not only from Pearse Street station, but from other nearby Garda stations. This affords distressed and vulnerable tourists the opportunity to meet with our staff face to face, which is particularly helpful where English may not be their first language. It also affords us the opportunity to clarify and prioritise information and assistance, taking into account their particular needs and personal circumstances.

The office expedites contact with family members, banks, credit cards and insurance companies and staff mediate with airlines, embassies, car hire companies and many other organisations on behalf of tourists. Generally, a tourist's immediate needs will be addressed in a number of hours however this can extend to a number of days depending on the circumstances. In 2018, the number of days involved in casework totalled 716, an increase of 8% on 2017 figure. 46% of assistance to tourists was provided during weekends and public holidays.

Sources of Referral

As many tourists will not be aware of supports available to them in Ireland if they experience crime, ITAS depend on third parties, Gardaí, in particular, to inform them of the Service. For tourists to benefit from ITAS support, it is crucial that they are informed of the service and referred in the immediate hours after a crime or traumatic incident has occurred.

Gardaí

As one of the first points of contact for victims in the criminal justice system, Gardaí are in a unique position to ensure the rights of the victim are upheld from the first moment of contact. As the main source of referral for ITAS, Gardaí are a critical element in ensuring tourists are informed of the service. ITAS work continuously to inform Gardaí, through correspondence, meetings and presentations of the supports and resources available to tourists.

Referrals to ITAS by Gardaí increased by 6%. With Dublin attracting over 6 million visitors in 2018, tourist crime continued to be concentrated in the capital with 453 incidents referred by Dublin Garda stations. Pearse Street Garda Station handled the majority of tourist crime incidents in the country, which meant that once again, the majority of tourist incidents were referred by Pearse Street – 363 incidents, an increase of 15% on the 2017 figure. Store Street

referred 38 incidents, a decrease of 14%. 34 incidents were referred by other city centre stations and 18 incidents from Dublin suburbs. Gardaí outside of Dublin referred 30 incidents, down 36% on last year's figure.

Other

Referrals from embassies remained the same at 20 incidents. The tourist industry referred 11 cases (2%) and in 57 cases the tourist contacted ITAS directly requesting assistance, an increase of 46%.

Gender and Age

60% of tourists assisted by ITAS were female. The younger age groups of 17-25 years (27%) and 26-35 (21%) continued to be the main age categories referred to ITAS. These younger visitors tend to have less travel experience and limited resources which makes them most in need of our help. Other age categories: 36-45 year olds (10%), 46-55 (12%), 56-65 (8%), over 65 (6%), 10-16 (2%) and under 10 years (1%). 13% of the age category is unknown.

Main Types of Crime

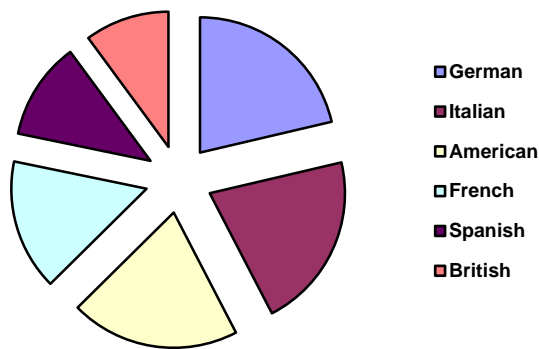
ITAS deal with all categories of crime, however tourists in general are targeted for opportunistic crimes such as theft. Tourists at ease on holiday, unfamiliar with their surroundings and easily identifiable increase the likelihood of being subject to these types of crime and this is reflected in the figures recorded by ITAS. 96% of tourist crime victims seeking assistance from the Service were victims of theft, which included incidents of 'Theft from Person' (258) and 'Theft from Car' (35). ITAS assisted tourists in 21 cases of accommodation fraud, up from 11 cases in 2017, where visitors paid for accommodation online, only to discover on arrival in Ireland that the accommodation either didn't exist or was a private dwelling. There were 10 incidents of violent crime referred to ITAS, compared with 13 cases in 2017. These cases can be extremely traumatic and distressing for victims and their families. These incidents included aggravated theft, assaults, sexual assaults and robbery with violence and with a threat of violence.

Other Traumatic Incidents

Due to ITAS' level of experience and contacts within the industry, it is often called up to assist in traumatic but non-crime incidents. ITAS is willing and able to assist tourists in these situations. Referrals of these types of incidents continue to rise each year with the cases of 'Lost Property' being most prevalent. Tourists can be very distressed when belongings go missing as they are without money or documentation and are very much in need of assistance.

There is little doubt that some of these incidents are thefts but with no CCTV or witnesses the incidents are categorised as ‘Lost Property’. In 2018 ITAS assisted in 218 cases of ‘Lost Property’. Other incidents included tourists running out of money, accidents/illnesses and expired identity documents.

Client Nationality



ITAS assisted 987 international visitors from 47 countries around the world. For the fourth year running, German citizens were the main nationality that availed of support from the service. This was closely followed by Italian citizens. The nationalities listed below have always made up the top 6 nationalities utilising the service, however their order may change in any given year. In 2018 they made up 71% of tourists availing of support from ITAS. A full breakdown of nationality is available on page 23.

German	150 people (15%)	French	110 people (11%)
Italian	148 people (15%)	Spanish	82 people (8%)
American	142 people (14%)	British	71 people (7%)

ITAS referred 241 tourists to their embassies for further assistance. The main embassies ITAS worked with were the Italian Embassy (52), American Embassy (40 cases), German Embassy (31 cases), French Embassy (26 cases) and Spanish Embassy (20 cases).

Assistance

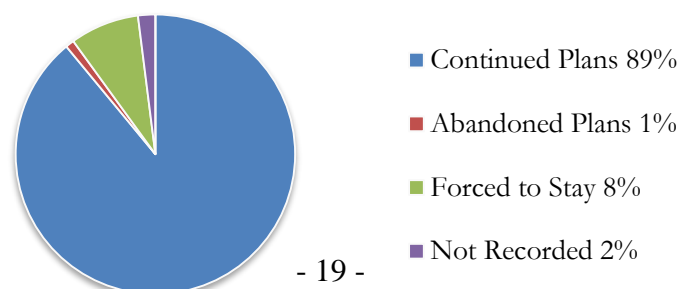
Many international visitors who experience crime do not have support structures in the country they are visiting and therefore require immediate support and assistance in order to reduce the impact of the crime and to reinstate holiday plans where possible. ITAS allows for this possibility, where tourists can immediately make the necessary contacts to family and friends for further support. ITAS' key strength lies in our direct contacts within the industry and knowledgeable staff who have time and skills to limit the impact of crime.

In 2018, ITAS worked with airlines and where security was not an issue, 113 tourists were cleared to fly with the ITAS1 Garda report and another form of photo ID, when passports/National ID's had been stolen. We are extremely grateful to the airlines for facilitating these requests as it meant that tourists did not have to delay their departure, which is a significant relief for them and has a positive impact on a tourist's wellbeing. Where airlines were not in a position to allow tourists to travel as planned, they offered complimentary re-scheduling of their flight on 41 occasions, allowing tourists time to visit their embassy for emergency travel documents.

Complimentary hotel/hostel accommodation was provided on 25 occasions during 2018. Meal vouchers and retail vouchers were also given to tourists to assist them while they awaited emergency funds from home. As a goodwill gesture, tourists also benefitted from complimentary sightseeing vouchers to allow them to enjoy the attractions of the city. With many tourists requiring transport to get to their embassy, to the airport or to some location in Ireland, we were delighted to be able to offer complimentary transport - by bus, rail, DART and taxi in 139 instances.

Trip Status

89% of tourists were in a position to continue their holiday plans after receiving assistance from the service. 8% of tourists were forced to stay – the most common reason being tourists visiting their embassy for emergency travel documents/visas or due to hospitalisation. 1% had to abandon their plans due to the consequences of the crime and the trip status of 2% of tourists was not accounted for.



2018 Statistics

Number of cases assisted	579
Cases assisted in the office	487
Cases assisted by phone	92
Number of casework days*	716

Number of people involved	987
People assisted in the office	826
People assisted by phone/email	161

*many cases take several days to resolve

Cases Assisted 579

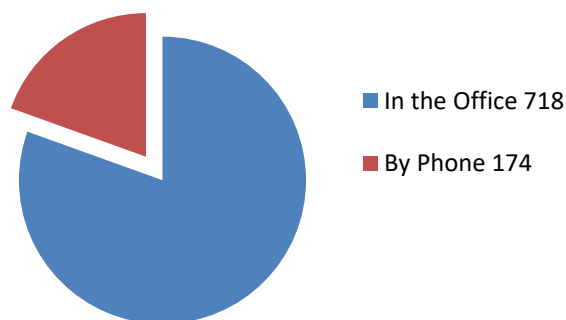
Contacts to ITAS via:

Gardaí	483
Embassy	20
Tourist Industry	11
Self	57
Other	8

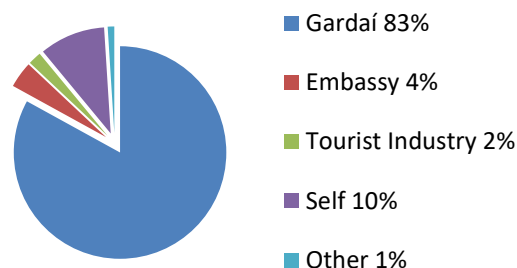
Garda Contacts by County

Dublin	453
Clare	2
Cork	3
Kerry	3
Meath	2
Offaly	1
Sligo	2
Tipperary	1
Waterford	3
Wicklow	13
Total	483

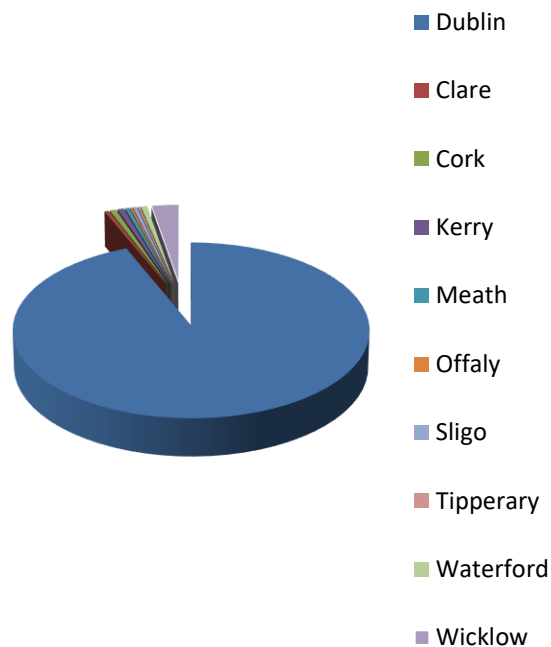
Tourists Assisted



Total Sources of Contacts

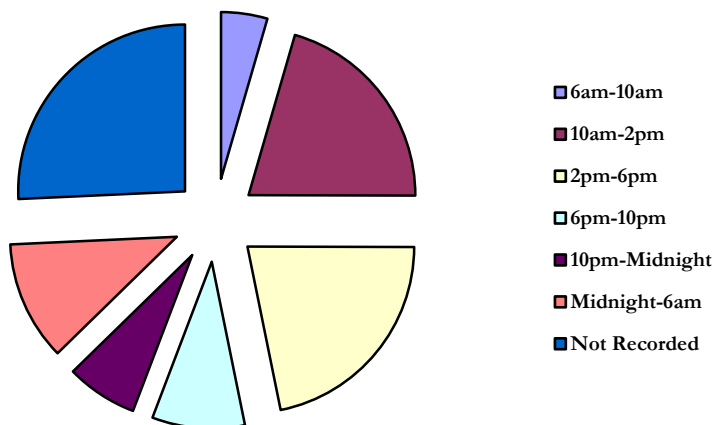


Garda Contacts by County



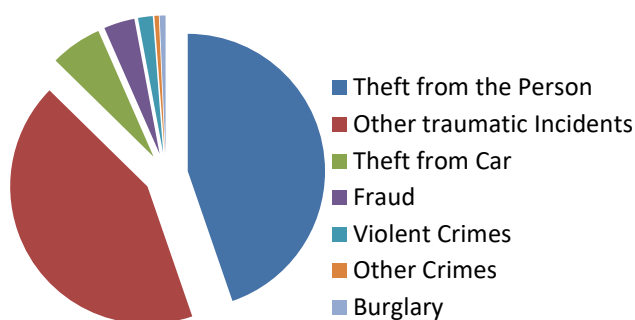
Time of Occurrence

6am-10am	26
10am-2pm	119
2pm-6pm	126
6pm-10pm	52
10pm-midnight	40
Midnight-6am	67
Not Recorded	149



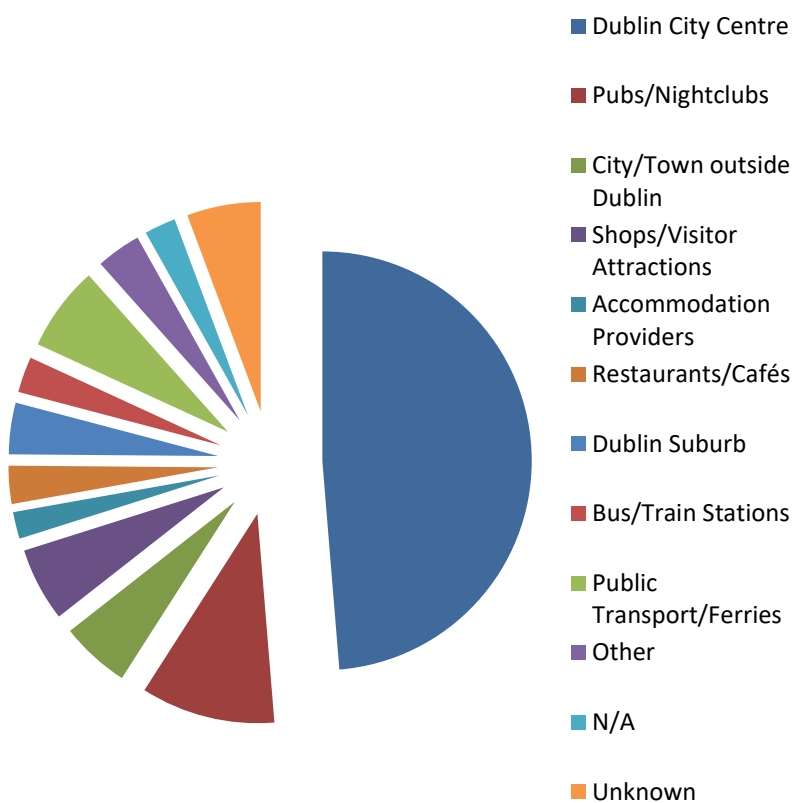
Main Incident Types

Theft from the person	258
Other Traumatic Incidents	248
Theft from Car	35
Fraud	21
Violent Crimes	10
Other Crimes	3
Burglary	4



Location of Incidents

Dublin City Centre	282
Pubs/Nightclubs	60
City/Town outside Dublin	31
Shops/Visitor Attractions	33
Accommodation Providers	12
Restaurants & Cafés	17
Dublin Suburb	23
Bus/Train Stations	16
Public Transport/Ferries	38
Other	20
N/A	14
Unknown	33



Age Groups 2018	Total	Female	Male
Under 10yrs	12	7	5
10-16years	23	16	7
17-25yrs	270	177	93
26-35yrs	206	127	79
36-45yrs	98	51	47
46-55yrs	116	68	48
56-65yrs	79	46	33
over 66yrs	57	33	24
Unknown	126	69	57
	987	594	393

Items Stolen	2018
Cash (approximate stolen €87,043)	267
Passports	254
National Identity Cards	274
Credit Cards/Bank Cards	443
Driving Licences	144
Mobile Phones	65
Laptops	22
Cameras/Camcorders	7
Luggage	9
Medication	6
Jewellery	7

Complimentary Assistance	2018
Telephone Calls	354
Referrals to Embassies	241
Complimentary Re-schedule of Flights	41
Airline Travel with ITAS1 Form + other form of ID	113
Garda Liaison	75
Accommodation	25
Money Transfers	9
Interpreting	24
Meal Vouchers	27
Complimentary Transport	139
Sightseeing Vouchers	49
Retail Vouchers	11
Complimentary GP Appointment	3

Client Nationalities

American	142
Argentinian	3
Australian	15
Austrian	4
Belgian	14
Bolivian	4
Brazilian	21
British	74
Bulgarian	5
Canadian	25
Chilean	2
Chinese	18
Czech	2
Danish	2
Dutch	19
Finnish	3
French	110
German	150
Greek	2
Hungarian	9
Indian	15
Irish	20
Israeli	2
Italian	148
Japanese	5
Lithuanian	4
Malaysian	6
Mexican	5
New Zealander	3
Norwegian	3
Pakistani	1
Polish	4
Portuguese	9
Romanian	5
Russian	3
Singaporean	4
Slovakian	3
South African	3
South Korean	2
Spanish	82
Swazi	1
Swedish	5
Swiss	24
Taiwanese	1
Turkish	2
Venezuelan	2

Total 987

Nationalities Referred to their Embassies

American	40
Argentinean	1
Australian	3
Austrian	1
Belgian	6
Brazilian	3
British	1
Canadian	6
Chinese	4
Dutch	4
French	26
German	31
Greek	1
Hungarian	3
Indian	4
Israeli	1
Italian	52
Japanese	1
Lithuanian	2
Malaysian	3
Mexican	2
Norwegian	2
Polish	1
Portuguese	4
Romanian	1
Russian	1
South African	2
Spanish	20
Swiss	4

Total 241

Irish Tourist Assistance Service (ITAS)

Monday – Sunday

Pearse Street Garda Station, Dublin 2

Tel: +353 (0) 1 666 9354

1890 365 700

Monday – Friday

6-7 Hanover Street East, Dublin 2

Tel: +353 (0) 1 661 0562

1890 365 700

Opening Hours

Monday – Saturday 10:00 to 18:00

Sundays and Public Holidays 12:00 to 18:00

Email: info@itas.ie

Web: www.itas.ie