



Aer Lingus College Football Classic

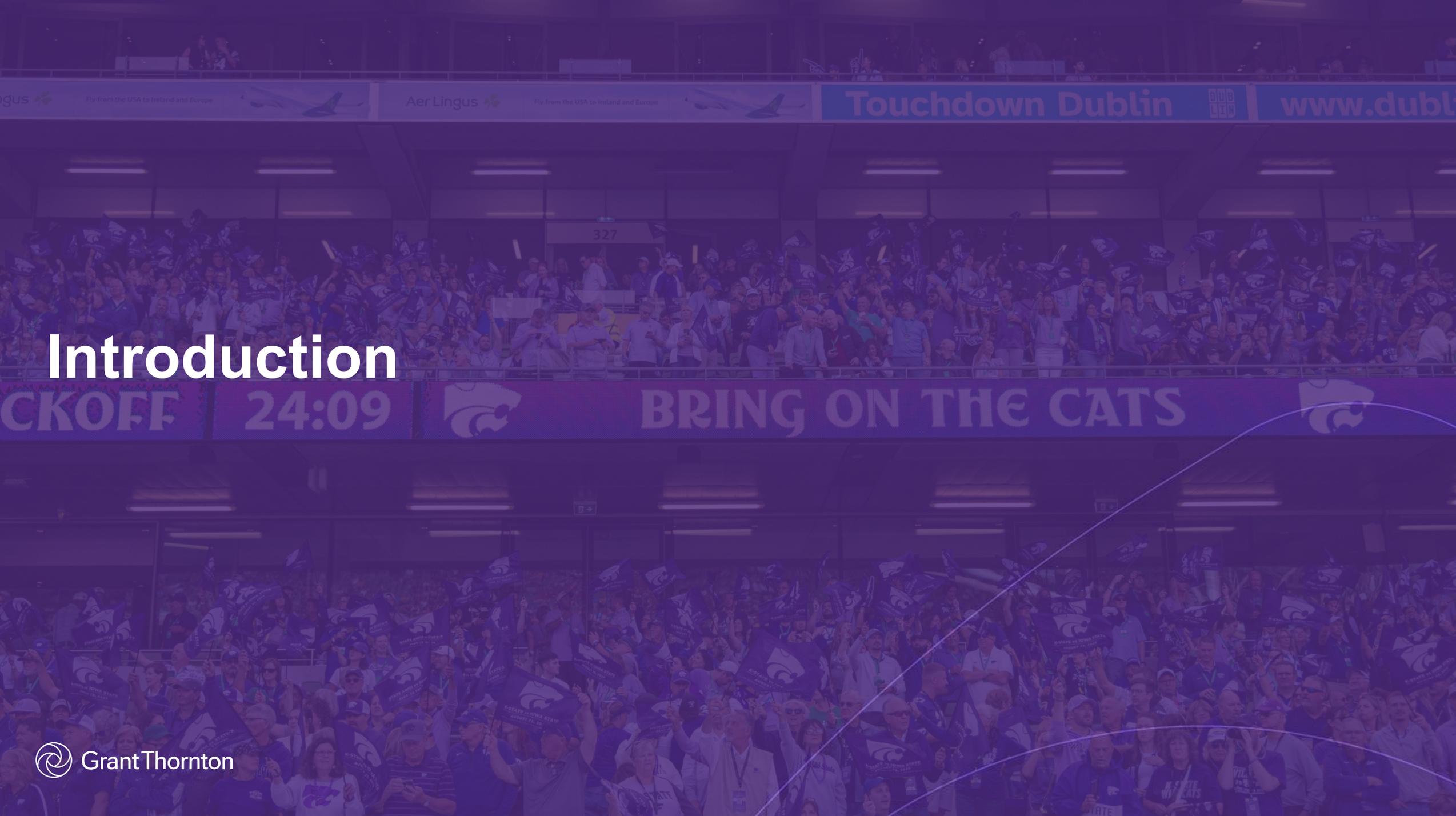
2025 Post Game Economic Impact Report



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Introduction

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24:09



BRING ON THE CATS



Introduction

The 2025 Aer Lingus Classic between Kansas States 'Wildcats' and Iowa States 'Cyclones' saw the Cyclones clinch victory over the Wildcats in a down to the wire finish with the game ending 24-21. This event proved to have another exceptionally positive impact on the Irish economy. Broadcast live on ESPN in the United States, the game attracted a peak of 4.7 million viewers.

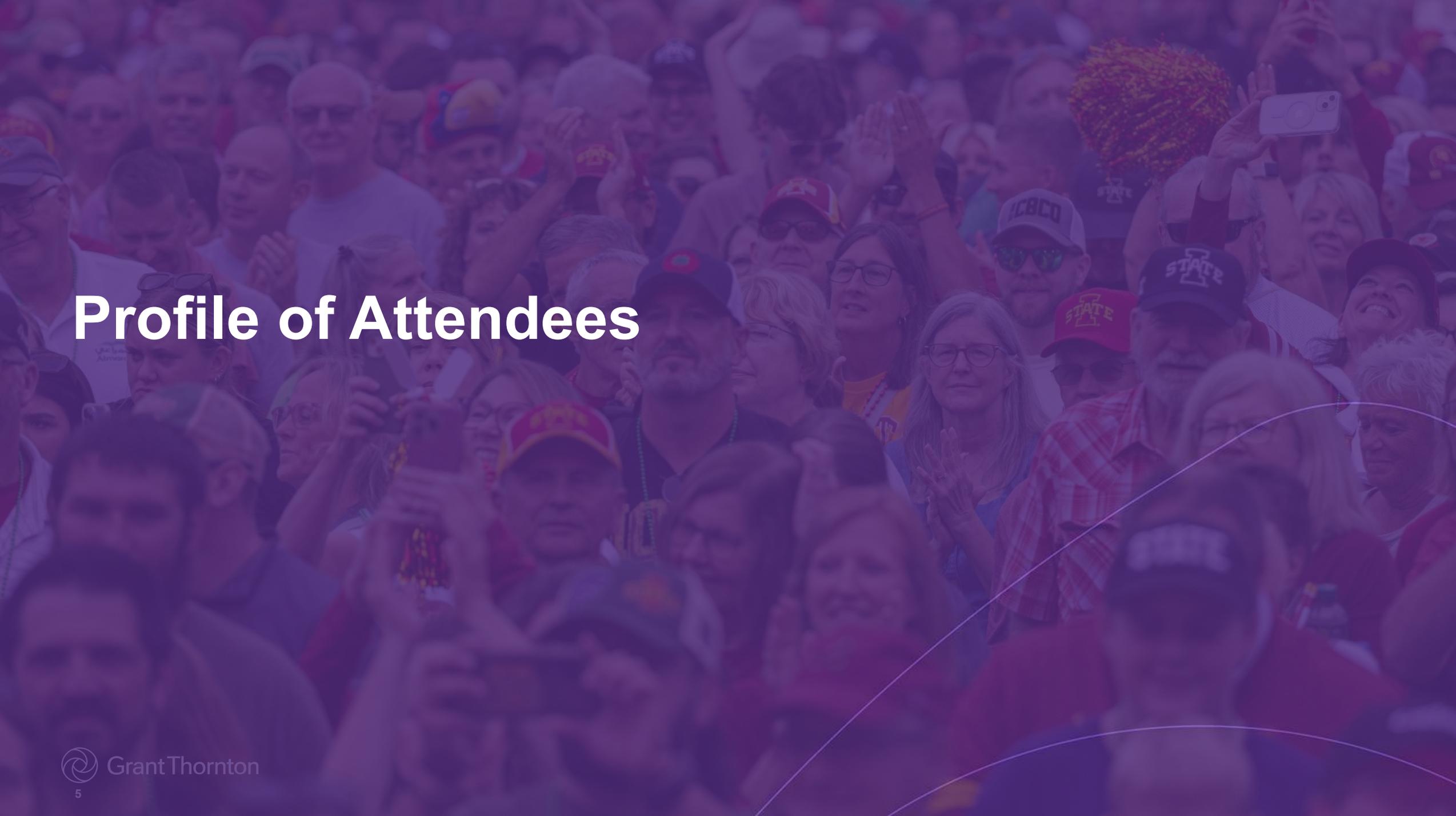
Aviva Stadium was a sell-out once again with 47,266 fans in attendance, including 25,999 international visitors. The vast majority of the international visitors, 22,910, were US visitors, many of whom came for the game and stayed on, for around 7 nights on average.

These visitors to Ireland have generated an economic boost, which this report estimates at €132m.



“We have a huge amount of common ties and shared values, that we want to harness over the coming hours and days and to celebrate a truly magnificent spectacle which will be that exceptional game of American football tomorrow”

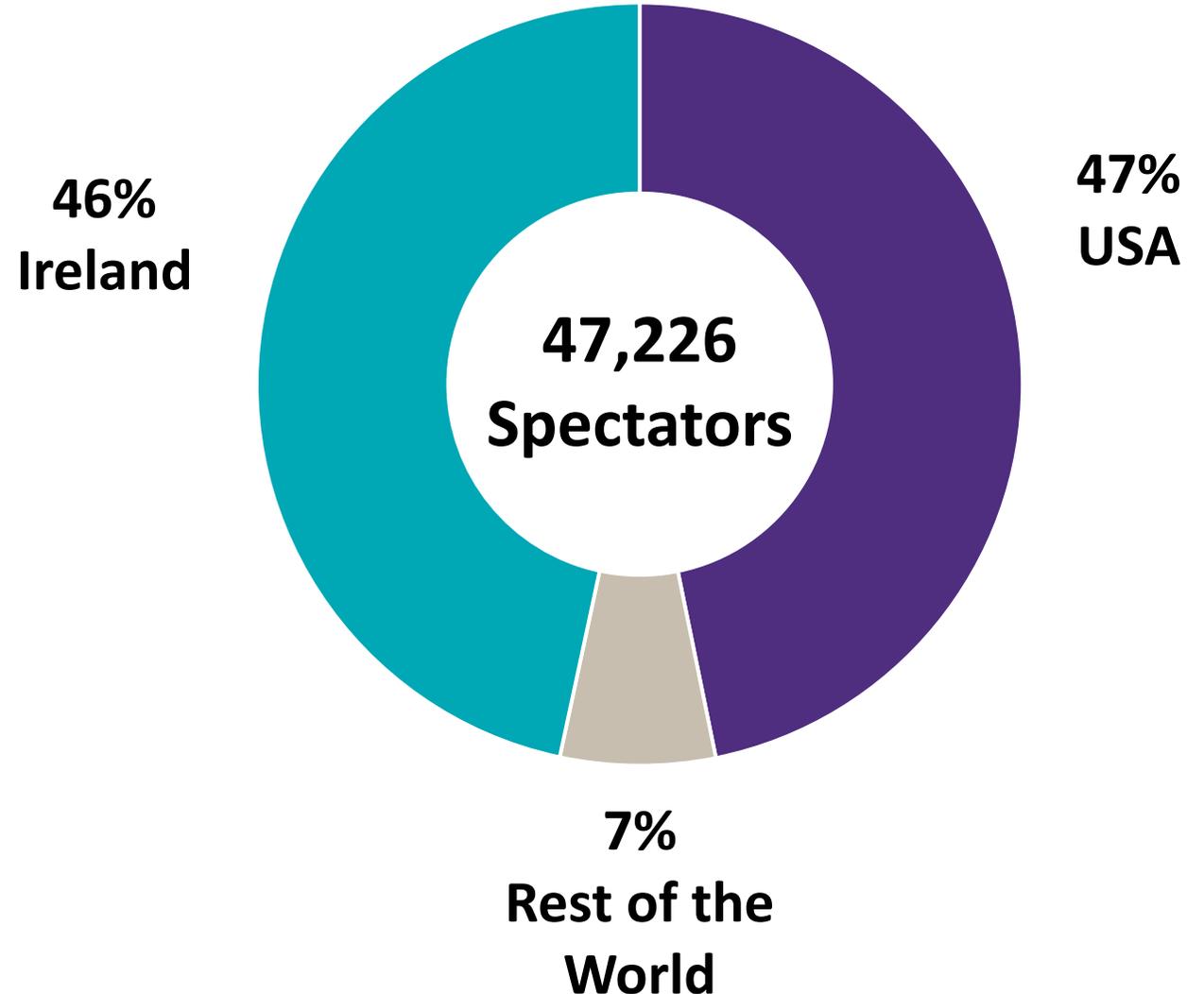
Minister Peter Burke, Minister for Enterprise Tourism and Employment



Profile of Attendees

Profile of Attendees

- In total, 47,226 spectators attended the game. The geographical breakdown of spectators is as follows:
 - 25,999 International travellers came for the game, of which 22,910 were US tickets.
 - US spectators made up almost half of total spectators.
 - 21,227 domestic and 3,089 spectators from the rest of the world made up the balance of the crowd capacity.



A background image of a college football game, featuring players from Iowa State (white jerseys with red and yellow accents) and another team (dark jerseys). The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent purple filter. The text "Economic Impact of the Game" is centered in white. The Grant Thornton logo is in the bottom left corner.

Economic Impact of the Game

Economic Impact of the Game

Key inputs to the economic impact calculation are:

- The value of travel packages and excursions purchased by US travelling fans was provided by the organiser’s travel partner.
- For travellers (US and non-US) who did not purchase a travel package, their accommodation expenditure has been estimated based on average accommodation expenditure per card holder from Mastercard* data.
- Incidental/daily spending is based on average Mastercard transactions for non-Irish residents. CSO provide an estimate of Irish residents’ expenditure on domestic day-trips.
- US visitors are assumed to have stayed for an average of 7.1 nights whereas other non-resident visitors for 2 nights.
- Working the economic impact calculation through for a total attendance of 47,226 (inclusive of 22,910 US visitors and 3,089 rest of world visitors) generates an economic impact of **€132m**.

	Number of Visitors	Total Incidental Spend	Trip Accommodation spending	Total Impact
USA Packages	3,800	€10.2m	€6.4m	€16.6m
USA (non packages)	19,110	€49.8m	€52.8m	€102.6m
UK, Europe & ROW (inc NI)	3,089	€3.5m	€2.4m	€5.9m
Ireland	21,227	€2.0m	€0.8m	€2.8m
Other Impacts (e.g. official event expenditure)			€4.4m	€4.4m
Total**	47,226	€65.5m	€66.8m	€132.3m

*2024 Mastercard ‘Game week Data’ has been uplifted by the annual percentage change in Mastercard Spending Pulse Data between 2024 and 2025. The inference or assumption, whether a cardholder is a visitor or traveler, is based on Mastercard aggregated and anonymized transaction data based on the location of the card issuer. This report is intended solely as a research tool for informational purposes and not as investment advice or recommendations for any particular action or investment and should not be relied upon, in whole or in part, as the basis for decision-making or investment purposes. This report is not guaranteed as to accuracy and is provided on an "as is" basis.

** economic impact includes c.800 team members and staff who travelled for the game.

Wider Impacts – Worldwide Viewership

Beyond the economic impact that has been generated from the game, there have been a range of other benefits and activities around the game that merit mention. These include:

- The game was broadcast live on ESPN in the United States and attracted a peak viewing 4.7 million making it the most watched game of ‘week zero’.
- With an average of 4.01 million viewers, the Cyclones win in Ireland was the second-most watched sports telecast of the entire weekend behind the main portion of Sunday’s TOUR Championship final round on NBC. This included large numbers from the States of Kansas and Iowa, providing a new audience to the island of Ireland.
- The festivities around the game extended far beyond the pitch, with 35+ business, academic, political, community, social and sporting events taking place throughout the week as part of the ‘Much More Than A Game’ initiative. These activities have fostered strong international ties and generated a substantial economic impact.



Wider Impacts – ‘Much More Than A Game’

The goal of the Steering Committee of the ALCFC has always been to strengthen existing ties and create new relationships between Ireland and the US. For the 2025 game, in excess of 35 public and private events took place throughout the week creating a “summit” like feel. Highlights include;

- Enterprise Ireland and UCD hosted the first One Health x AgTech summit where a MOU was signed with the visiting Universities. This was an extensive programme of events for 19 Irish agtech and animal health companies to present and share knowledge with visiting academics and potential industry partners from Iowa and Kansas. The delegates were addressed by Enterprise Minister Peter Burke as well as the Governors of Kansas and Iowa, Laura Kelly and Kim Reynolds.
- Investicon 2025 was launched as an exclusive investment conference hosted by MyWallSt at the historic trading floor of the Irish Stock Exchange in Dublin’s city centre. Speakers included; Lois Cox (Former Chief Investment Officer, Kansas State University Foundation) and Tim Kohn (Vice President & Senior Wealth Consultant, Charles Schwab & Co., and former Iowa State player)
- Wilson Hartnell , as the official Communications and PR partner of the ALCFC hosted over 16 communications and sports marketing students from Kansas State University (Miller School of Media & Communication) and Iowa State University (Greenlee School of Journalism and Mass Communication).
- For the 2025 game, the Agricultural/Food theme continued at the Ireland US CEO Club where the panel focused on the future of food and included:
 - Chuck Warta – Operating Partner, Lews & Clarke Agrifood and K State alumni
 - Paul Maass – CEO, The Scoular Company
 - Fiona Dawson – Group Board Member, Kerry



Wider Impacts – ‘Much More Than A Game’

Other notable events held during Game week include:

- Global Ireland Football Tournament (G.I.F.T.) Football Clinic and High School Football Games
- Enterprise Ireland Sports Tech Summit
- Official Game Week welcome event hosted by the Dublin Lord Mayor at City Hall
- Guinness Storehouse hosted an official event for fans and alumni of both universities
- Pep Rallies for both teams in Merrion Square
- Enterprise Ireland hosted an inward US buyer event together with Government Representatives
- Kilmacud Crokes GAA club hosted Iowa State University and Ballyboden St Endas GAA club hosted Kansas State University
- Various on-site staff engagement events with leading Game Partners
- Dublin City Fleadh held over two days in Smithfield Square
- Leaders of Tomorrow collaboration held in conjunction with students from the travelling Universities and game Partners Eversheds Sutherland and Grant Thornton
- Official Tailgate Parties at numerous pubs around Dublin, Irish Style!
- Official fan Tailgate at the RDS
- American Irish State Legislators dinner





Conclusion

Conclusion





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