

## Verbal evidence to Bristol Airport Expansion – 16 September 2021.



**UKINBOUND**  
THE VOICE OF INBOUND TOURISM

Thank you for the opportunity to present to the committee today.

I am Joss Croft, the CEO of UKinbound, a travel trade association that has over 300 member businesses across the UK, such as tour operators, accommodation providers and attractions.

We represent the inbound tourism industry, that's international visitors coming to the UK, which was worth £28.4 billion to the UK economy in 2019.

I have a number of points I will address today regarding the positive impact expanding Bristol airport would have on jobs, businesses and investment in the region.

To start, inbound tourism drives significant revenue into the South West, £1.31 billion in 2019.

IPS data shows that 25% of all inbound visitors to the South West, and 14% of inbound visitors to Wales, arrive through Bristol airport, demonstrating its importance of driving regional spread of international arrivals to the UK.

In contrast, Manchester accounts for a much higher proportion of visits to the North West at 53% and 42% for the whole of the north. This shows how a major airport can drive spread and levelling up.

We know that almost one in three (29%) of international arrivals only visit London as they don't know what else there is to see in the UK. Additionally, one in five (19%) of international arrivals only visit London as they believe other places are too far from the capital.

An expanded international airport with direct access to the region would help combat both of these issues.

I would also like to highlight that attracting more domestic visitors to the region would not have the same economic advantages in the longer term. This is because a domestic visitor will spend on average £239 on a trip. In contrast, an international visitor will spend £696. International visitors spend almost three times as much as a domestic tourist.

VisitBritain evidence suggests that more money will stay in a region if they have an international airport.

Increasing the capacity of the airport will mean more international visitors will arrive by air and their money will stay in the South West.

My final point.

It has been proven that there are strong links between people visiting a destination and then considering it for inward investment and trade. Business travel is also immensely important, and directly links to trade and investment. 30 percent of arrivals into England's regional gateways are business visitors, compared with 22 percent in London.

The plans for expanding Bristol airport will bring large economic benefits to the South West with regards to new jobs and investment, but it will also bring greater prosperity to the whole of the UK.

Thank you for your time today.

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