

# Northern Ireland Domestic Tourism 2022

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The key points are:

- In 2022, an estimated 2.1 million domestic overnight trips were taken within Northern Ireland by Northern Ireland residents;
- estimated expenditure during these trips was £267 million;
- estimated nights on these trips were 4.8 million nights of which 3.5 million was for the purpose of ‘holiday, pleasure or leisure’;
- an estimated 3.5 million overnight trips were taken by NI residents outside of NI

[Click here for definitions of tourism statistics common terms used in this report](#)

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Theme: People and Places

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## Introduction

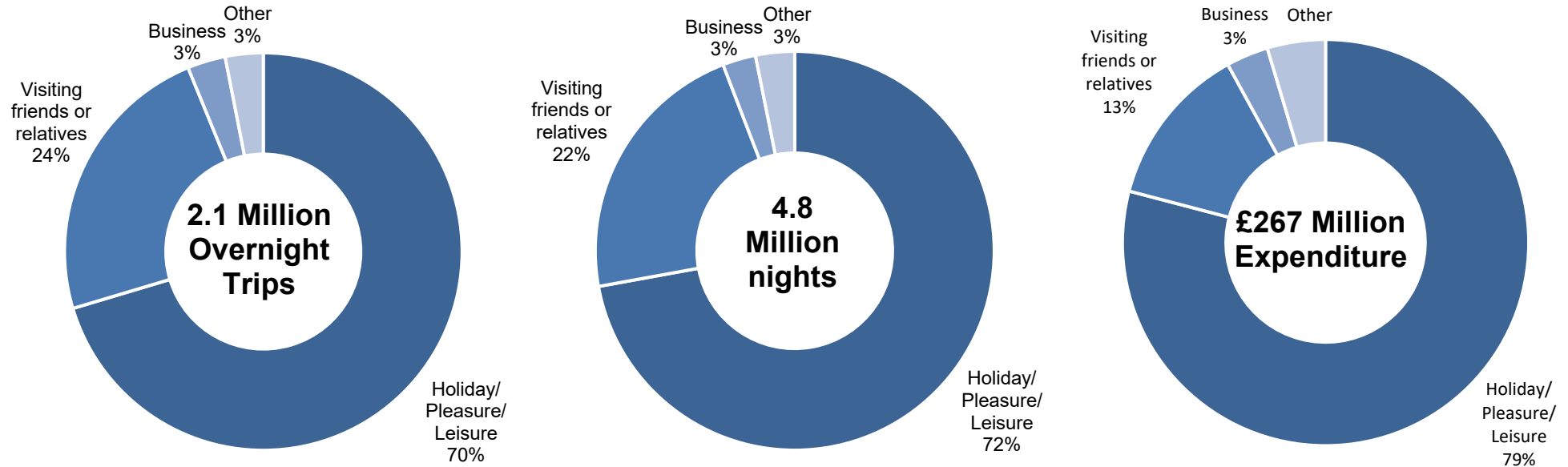
This report provides an analysis of the tourism activity of Northern Ireland (NI) residents in 2022. The statistics in this report and accompanying tables give an indication of the levels of domestic tourism in 2022 and provide information on where NI residents take trips outside of Northern Ireland.

The data in this report are derived from the Continuous Household Survey (CHS). The CHS is a continuous, representative survey of individuals aged 16 and over, which is designed and conducted by the Central Survey Unit, part of NISRA. This survey is used to estimate the value of domestic tourism, which is overnight trips and associated nights and expenditure by NI residents. The results from sample surveys are always estimates and not precise figures. This means that they are subject to sampling error which can have an impact on how the estimates should be interpreted, especially regarding comparisons over the short term.

These estimates have been calculated using different methodology to previous publications therefore cannot be directly compared with previous publications. Details of the methodological changes are noted in the “[Methodological Review of NI Domestic Tourism metrics and Outcome](#)” section below. Estimates from 2019 have been revised and supplied in [additional tables](#) by applying the same methodology to allow 2019 metrics to be comparable.

# NI overnight trip estimates

Figure 1: NI domestic overnight trips, nights and expenditure by purpose of trip 2022



\*Total percentage may not sum to 100% due to rounding

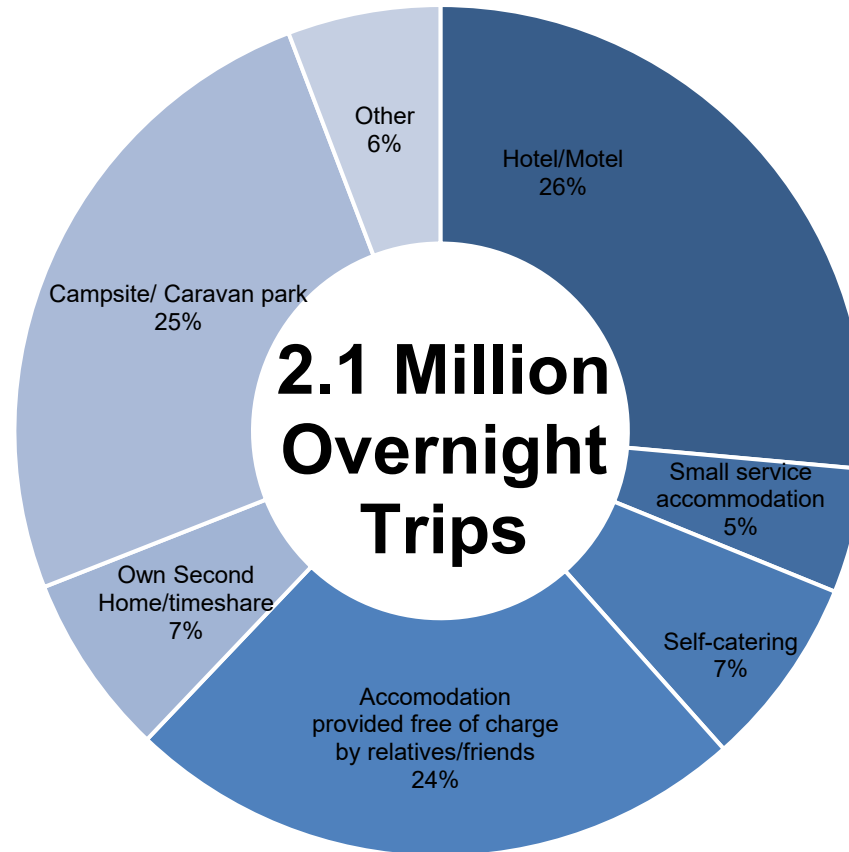
Figure 1 shows domestic overnight trips, nights and expenditure by purpose of trip for 2022

The number of overnight trips taken by NI residents within NI was 2.1 million (70% for holiday, pleasure and leisure), 4.8 million nights (72% for holiday, pleasure and leisure) with expenditure of £267 million (79% for holiday, pleasure and leisure).

## Accommodation used by Northern Ireland residents during overnight trip nights in Northern Ireland

In 2022, an estimated 2.1 million nights were spent on trips within NI. It is estimated 26% of these nights were spent in a hotel or motel and 25% of nights were spent in campsite, caravan park or trailer park. A similar proportion 24% was also spent in accommodation provided 'free of charge by relatives/friends'.

**Figure 2: Proportion of nights spent in NI by accommodation type used by NI residents, 2022**



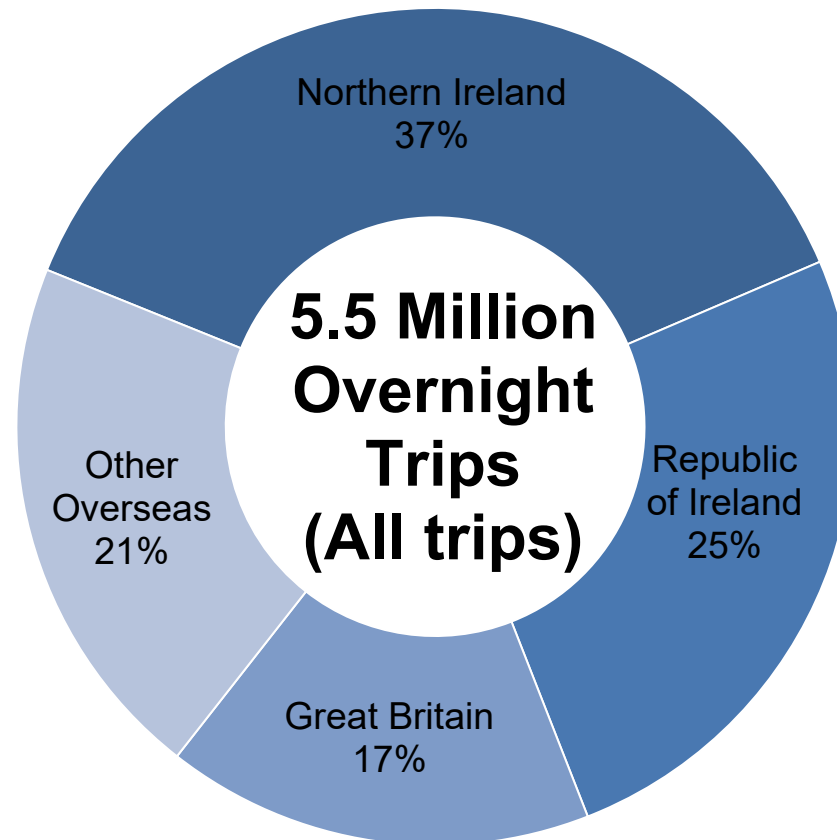
\*Total percentage may not sum to 100% due to rounding

Full information (including additional tables) on Northern Ireland Domestic tourism can be found at the following link: [Northern Ireland Domestic Tourism](#)

## All destinations of overnight trips by NI residents

The CHS also collects information on trips Northern Ireland residents take outside NI; this has shown the total number of estimated overnight trips taken by NI residents to all destinations during 2022 was 5.5 million.

**Figure 3: All destinations of overnight trips by NI residents, 2022**

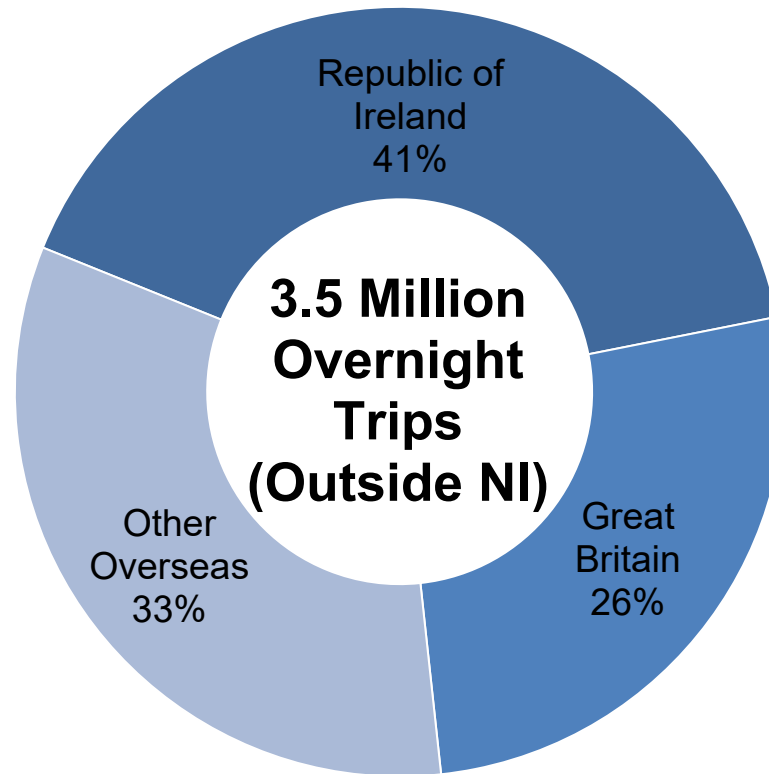


\*Total percentage may not sum to 100% due to rounding

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Nearly two thirds of these overnight trips (63% or 3.5 million) were taken outside of Northern Ireland. Of these external trips, 26% were to Great Britain, 41% were to the Republic of Ireland and 33% were outside the UK and Republic of Ireland.

**Figure 4: Overnight trips outside NI by NI residents, 2022**



\*Total percentage may not sum to 100% due to rounding

Full information (including additional tables) on Northern Ireland Domestic tourism can be found at the following link: [Northern Ireland Domestic Tourism](#)

## **Methodological Review of NI Domestic Tourism metrics and Outcome**

Tourism Branch within NISRA completed an in depth review into methodology and data available in advance of the 2022 publication. The aim of the review was to consider the inclusion of data regarding children (under 16 year old), to review the long term effects of methodology changes in 2015, and, in light of the coronavirus pandemic, to assess the quality of data available for 2020 and 2021.

### **Data relating to Children (under 16s)**

In 2015 the survey design shifted, and tourism questions were moved from the individual section of the CHS (Continuous Household Survey) to the household section. The impact of this was that rather than individual adults responding on behalf of themselves, one household member responded on behalf of the household. This resulted in the collection of data for children who previously could not complete the individual section. After reviewing the data and consulting with key stakeholders a decision was made to include data related to children in publications going forward from 2022. This would give a clearer picture of the domestic overnight tourism sector.

As one would expect, the effect of adding children has increased the number of trips and nights. Although this provides a clearer picture of the domestic overnight tourism sector going forward, this change in methodology has created a break in series and therefore results prior to their inclusion should not be directly compared. In terms of expenditure, prior to the revision, costs for the whole trip were split only among the Adults (16 and over) on the trip while now they are split among all individuals on the trips. Given that expenditure is reported in overall terms, the result is that only trips where a child took a trip without an adult from the same household will result in an increase of the overall expenditure. Data related to 2019 has been revised in line with this methodology change in order to allow comparability across years.

### **Impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on 2020 and 2021 metrics**

The coronavirus pandemic impacted data collection of Tourism metrics resulting in a change in data collection mode and reduced sample size for 2020 and 2021. In March 2020, NISRA suspended all face-to-face interviews, or CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing), they were replaced by telephone interviewing, or CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing), with all interviews from April 2020 onwards

conducted by telephone. Responses from the 2020/21 reporting year showed that switching to CATI and relying on sampled households to contact CSU negatively influenced response rates to the survey. The change in data collection mode also necessitated streamlining of the questionnaire and changes to how some questions were asked or presented as well as the response categories associated with them. Additionally, from April 2020 to June 2021 significant periods of lockdown lasting several months directly impacted the ability of NI residents to take an overnight trip. Considering the low response rates and high margin of error around these data the accuracy and quality of the statistics were compromised and deemed not of sufficient robustness to make a reliable estimate of domestic overnight trips within Northern Ireland.

### **Other methodological changes**

The review also considered the production processes more broadly in order to streamline and remove some assumptions that were previously made and with recent changes were no longer applicable. Namely; the removal of an adjustment used to compensate for survey design effect and outliers. ([See Background notes for more details](#))

### **Break in series**

Due to the methodological changes outlined above, NISRA has made the decision to create a break in series. **A break in series means that figures from this publication should not be directly compared with previously produced figures as they use significantly different methodologies.**

### **Revision of 2019 data**

NISRA are in the process of producing further publications which will incorporate 2019 domestic overnight data. As data were available to revise the estimated (and published) trips, nights and expenditure for 2019 it was decided that it would be best to do this in this publication of 2022 data. This enables comparability between 2019 data and subsequent publications.



Users however should note that the 2019 survey was carried out by face-to-face interviewers while 2022 was carried out using a telephone interview. It is however not possible to quantify what (if any) effect this has on the estimated results.

### **Publication of 2022 data**

The results of the 'Northern Ireland Domestic Tourism 2022' report are derived from the Continuous Household survey using a CATI (computer assisted telephone interviewing) mode. As a result of the introduction of efforts by NISRA'S Central Survey Unit to increase overall response rate (e.g., "knock to nudge" methods being introduced) response to tourism modules has increased to sufficient levels for data to be deemed reliable and of high quality. In 2022 data were recorded of trips taken by 7,936 individuals over the 4 week period prior to the interview resulting in a total sample of 2,233 trips of which 840 were within Northern Ireland.

Additionally, since April 2022 the variety of questions asked of respondents and content included in the survey has returned to pre-covid levels, allowing for all validation checks and quality assurance processes to be reinstated following Covid 19.

## Background Notes

### Definitions/Data sources of Domestic Tourism Statistics in Northern Ireland (NI)

An **overnight trip** includes any trip away from home for at least one night by a Northern Ireland resident.

A **domestic overnight trip** includes any trip away from home for at least one night in Northern Ireland by a Northern Ireland resident.

### Trip expenditure

Trip expenditure is the total spent on package travel, business travel, accommodation, travel costs, food & drink, and other items spend.

### Confidence Intervals

The estimates in this bulletin are derived from sample surveys and are therefore subject to sampling errors. Sampling errors are determined both by the sample design and by the sample size. Generally speaking, the larger the sample supporting a particular estimate, the smaller the associated sampling error. The confidence intervals for the estimates reported in this bulletin are detailed below.

Year	Trips confidence +/-	Nights Confidence +/-	Expenditure confidence +/-
2019	1.8%	5.2%	8.4%
2022	2.6%	6.5%	7.3%

Further information on confidence intervals in Northern Ireland tourism statistics can be accessed at this [link](#)

### Methodology

A link to details on the methodology, sample size, rounding and grossing, precision of estimates, etc can be found at this [link](#) . A quality report on the domestic tourism series can be found at this [link](#).

**Further details on the Methodological Review and Outcome:** Following the decision in 2015 to move the domestic tourism overnights module from the individual to household section of the CHS an adjustment was applied to account for the change in survey design. This was applied rather than to break series. Secondly, several outliers that were removed due to their effect on the overall expenditure figures, and the adjustment which was applied to the analysis also accounted for the loss of these trips from the overall results. Since 2015, work has been carried out to bring the survey in line with other similar surveys NISRA conduct and the natural break in series resulting from the Covid pandemic provided the opportunity to revise and update the method.

### Further Information

Tables containing data used in this publication can be found at this [link](#).

For more information relating to this publication or if an alternative format is required, please contact us at [tourismstatistics@nisra.gov.uk](mailto:tourismstatistics@nisra.gov.uk)

### Source

Full information (including additional tables) on Northern Ireland Domestic tourism can be found at the following link: [Northern Ireland Domestic Tourism](#)

The information presented in this publication was collected through the Continuous Household Survey. Further information on the survey methodology is available from <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/continuous-household-survey>

### **Accredited Official Statistics Status**

Accredited Official Statistics status means that our statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value, and it is our responsibility to maintain compliance with these standards.

These statistics were designated as Accredited Official Statistics in May 2017 following a full assessment against the Code of Practice. Since the assessment by the UK Statistics Authority, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have also made improvements such as the following:

- The CHS was made more accessible by improving the wording of questions and updating survey software to improve the presentation. This reduces the burden on respondents to improve response rates.
- Increased accessibility by publishing data in open-source format for all statistics.

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**Please note staff are currently working from home, so it would be quicker to contact via email rather than post.**

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