

# Travel Trends, 2011

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Geographical Area: **Region**

Theme: **People and Places**

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## Foreword

Travel Trends is an annual publication providing trends in overseas travel and tourism, based on interviews on the International Passenger Survey (IPS).

## Travel Trends 2011: Key Trends

- 2011 saw an increase in number of overseas visits both to and from the UK for the first time since 2006.
- Overseas residents made 3.3 per cent more visits to the UK in 2011 compared with 2010 and in total stayed for 3.2 per cent more nights and spent 6.5 per cent more money on these visits.
- UK residents made 2.3 per cent more visits abroad. However, they stayed for 2.0 per cent less nights and spent 0.4 per cent less money on these visits in 2011 compared with 2010.
- Visits to the UK from each of North America, Europe and Other Countries rose in 2011.
- Similarly, visits for each of the main purposes of visit, holiday, business and to visit friends or relatives, all grew. The rise in holiday visits is a continuation of a trend dating back to 2002, whereas both business visits and those to visit friends or relatives represent some recovery following falls in recent years.
- Overseas residents made 15.3 million overnight visits to London in 2011, an increase of 584,000 (4.0 per cent) from 2010, and spent an estimated £9.4 billion on visits to the Capital.
- Overnight visits to the rest of England grew by 3.4 per cent to 13.0 million in 2011 while those to Scotland and Wales were broadly unchanged at 2.3 million and 0.9 million respectively.
- The average visit abroad by UK residents was shorter haul in 2011 than in 2010. Visits to Europe grew by 3.5 per cent while those to North America grew by 0.4 per cent and those to Other Countries fell by 2.6 per cent.
- Holiday visits abroad grew by 1.1 per cent, business visits by 3.1 per cent and those to visit friends or relatives increased by 6.9 per cent.
- The increase in visits abroad occurred primarily among residents of London, which grew by 5.0 per cent from 11.1 million in 2010 to 11.7 million. Visits abroad by residents of the rest of England and Wales showed smaller increases of less than 1 per cent while visits abroad by residents of Scotland fell by 1.1 per cent.

## Introduction

### Travel Trends explained

Travel Trends is an annual publication which presents some of the key trends in overseas travel and tourism drawn from the findings of the International Passenger Survey (IPS).<sup>\*</sup> Analysis is based on completed visits (for any purpose) of less than 12 months' duration by:

a) Overseas residents to the UK,

and

b) UK residents abroad.

<sup>\*</sup> (Please note that, although data collected on the IPS feeds into the estimates of international migration, this report does not provide any information relating to migration).

The IPS is a continuous survey carried out by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the results of which are used by a number of government departments and organisations. The results are based on face-to-face interviews with a random sample of passengers as they enter or leave the UK by the principal air, sea and tunnel routes. Approximately 95 per cent of passengers entering and leaving the UK have a chance of being sampled on the survey.

The estimates contained in this publication are based on approximately 300,000 interviews a year, which represents approximately 0.2 per cent of travellers. They are subject to sampling errors that result because not every traveller to or from the UK is interviewed on the survey.

Sampling errors and associated confidence intervals are provided in Appendix E of this report. They are provided at a variety of levels to aid the reader in interpreting the robustness of the estimates being considered.

Robustness of estimates ranges from a 95% confidence interval of +/- 1.1 per cent of the estimate for total visits abroad by UK residents and +/- 1.9 per cent for visits to the UK by overseas residents, to confidence intervals of +/- over 50 per cent for some estimates relating to visits to the UK from some countries.

### Data tables associated with this report

The report includes several data tables, based in most part on annual data although some splits by quarter are included. These data tables are presented in five sections, containing information on:

[Section 1: The long-term trends in tourism to and from the UK from 1980 to 2011 \(196.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

[Section 2: The trends in travel and tourism to the UK over the last five years \(2007 to 2011\) \(528.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

[Section 3: The trends in overseas travel and tourism by UK residents over the last five years \(2007 to 2011\) \(437.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

[Section 4: The characteristics of visits made by overseas residents to the UK in 2011 \(593.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

[Section 5: The characteristics of overseas visits made by UK residents in 2011 \(402.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

All tables which appeared last year have been retained in this edition. It is important to note that the tables relating to visits abroad by UK residents report only the main country visited on each trip abroad.

This edition of Travel Trends is available only in electronic format.

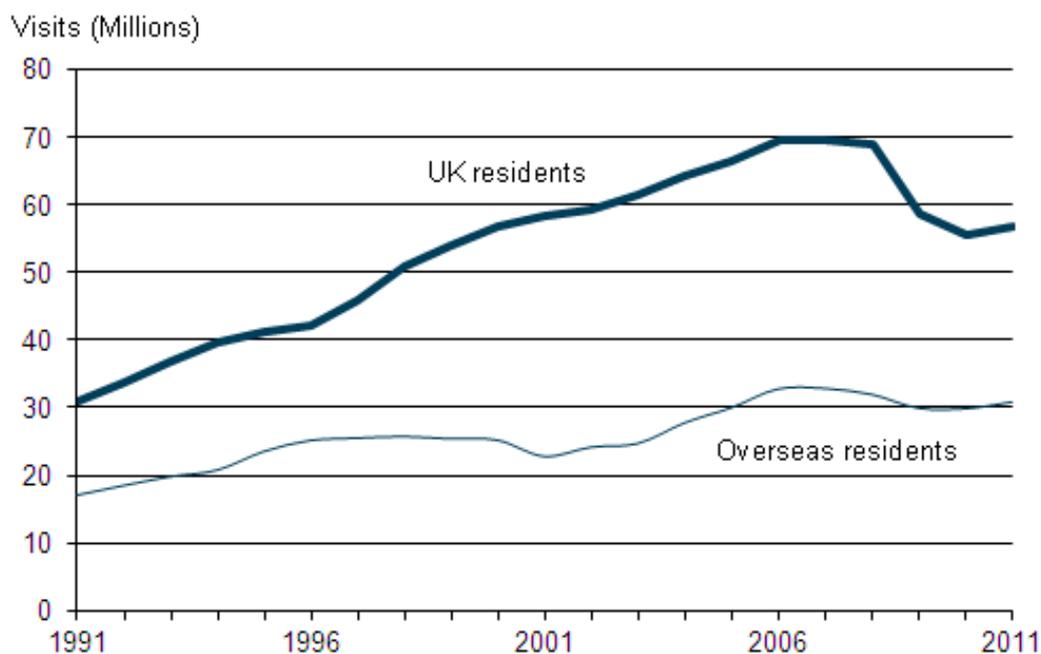
## **Commentary: Travel Trends 2011**

### **Increase in international visits in 2011**

Tables [1.01 \(196.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#), [1.02 \(196.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

The number of visits to and from the UK grew in 2011 (Figure 1). The percentage increase in visits to the UK from overseas residents was slightly higher, from 29.8 million in 2010 to 30.8 million in 2011 (an increase of 3.3 per cent). This compared with UK residents' visits abroad which rose from 55.6 million in 2010 to 56.8 million in 2011 (a 2.3 per cent rise). The increase in visits abroad by UK residents followed a spell of falling numbers since 2007.

Despite the rise in numbers, the total visits in 2011 for both UK and foreign residents were still less than those in the middle of the last decade. The 30.8 million visits to the UK in 2011 were 2.0 million less than in 2007 and the 56.8 million visits abroad nearly 13 million lower than the high of 69.5 million recorded in 2006.

**Figure 1: Visits to and from the UK, 1991 to 2011**

Source: International Passenger Survey (IPS) - Office for National Statistics

### Download chart

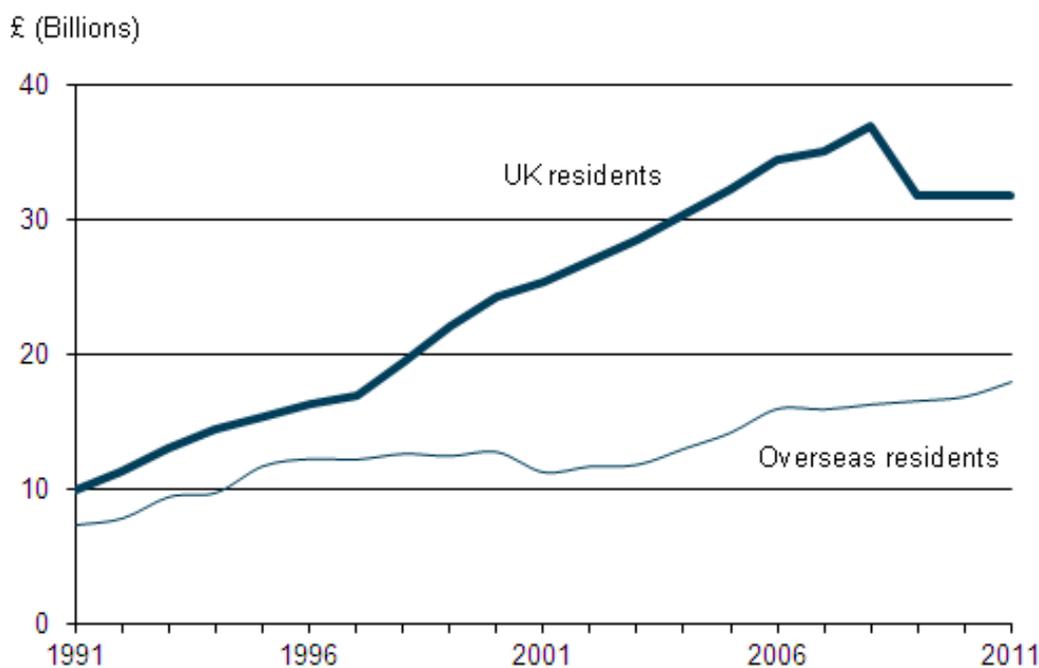
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### Spending abroad fell during 2011

Tables [1.01 \(196.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#), [1.02 \(196.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

Spending in 2011 for foreign residents' visits to the UK increased (6.5 per cent), from £16.9 billion in 2010 to £18.0 billion in 2011 (Figure 2). By contrast, UK residents' spending abroad fell from £31.8 billion in 2010 to £31.7 billion in 2011, as average spend per visit abroad fell from £572 to £557.

**Figure 2 Spending on visits to and from the UK, 1991 to 2011**

Source: International Passenger Survey (IPS) - Office for National Statistics

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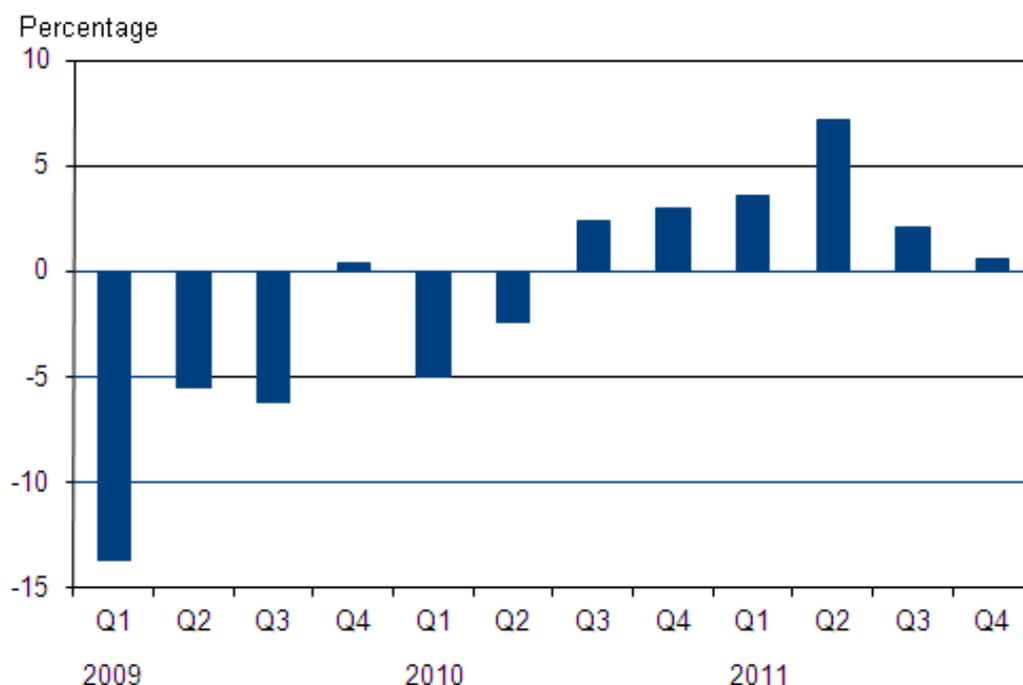
## Commentary: Overseas residents' visits to the UK

### Visits rose in every quarter of 2011

Tables [2.01 \(528.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#), [2.03 \(528.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

The number of visits to the UK by foreign residents rose in every quarter of 2011, when compared with the previous year. There were some differences in the rates of increase between quarters, with quarter 2 showing the largest percentage increase.

This partly reflects the fall in visits during the same quarter in 2010 when there were a large number of cancelled flights due to the ash cloud produced by the Icelandic volcano Eyjafallajokull. Figure 3 shows the percentage changes in these visits for the last three years (2009 to 2011).

**Figure 3 Change from a year earlier in overseas residents visits to the UK, 2009 to 2011**

Source: International Passenger Survey (IPS) - Office for National Statistics

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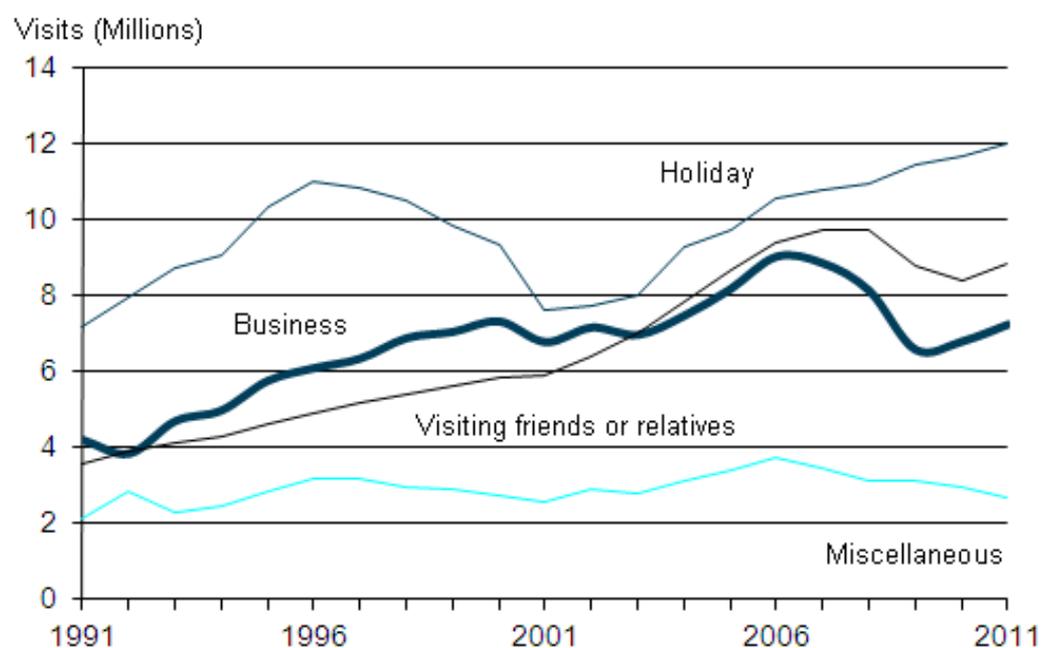
Although the number of visits by residents from North America and Europe declined in the previous few years, both showed some increase in 2011. Visits from the rest of the world ('Other Countries') have risen since 2009 and were the highest recorded in 2011 (4.8 million visits). This rise in visits from 'Other Countries' was mainly driven by the increase in holiday visits, up by 26 per cent in 2011 compared with 2007.

### Visits for holiday, business and to visit friends or relatives all grew in 2011

Table [1.03 \(196.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

Holiday visits by foreign residents have risen every year since falls during 2001, the year of an outbreak of foot and mouth disease in the UK and the events of 11 September.

In 2011 the number of holiday visits grew by 2.9 per cent to 12.0 million, the highest number on record (Figure 4). The number of visits to the UK for business and visiting friends or relatives fell between 2006 and 2010. These types of visit showed some increase in 2011, but business visits in particular were lower relative to the high recorded in 2006.

**Figure 4 Overseas residents visits by purpose, 1991 to 2011**

Source: International Passenger Survey (IPS) - Office for National Statistics

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### Most popular reason for visiting the UK in 2011 was for a holiday

Tables [2.03 \(528.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#), [2.04 \(528.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

The most common reason for visits to the UK in 2011 was for holiday (39 per cent). Of these, one in six were packages, where the accommodation and travel were paid for together.

Visiting friends or relatives was the next most common purpose of visit (29 per cent), with business visitors making up 24 per cent of all visits.

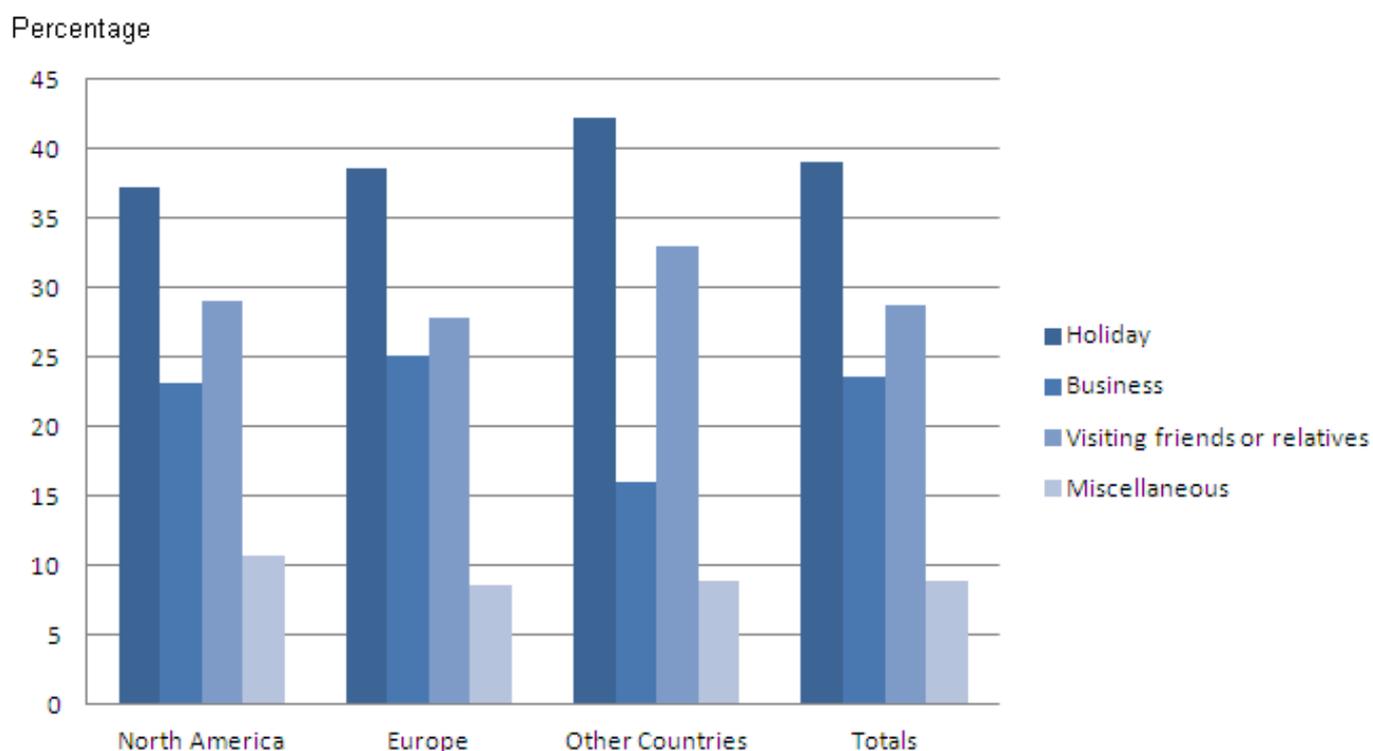
In terms of direct spending, holiday visits made by overseas residents in 2011 contributed £7.0 billion to the UK economy. Spending on business visits added £4.4 billion and visiting friends or relatives £4.0 billion.

The relative importance of the holiday sector to UK Balance of Payments has grown quite substantially in recent years. For example in 2007 holidays contributed £5.3 billion, compared with £4.5 billion from business visits and £3.6 billion from visits to friends or relatives.

The relative prominence of visit purposes across residents of different parts of the world is shown in Figure 5. This chart, based on 2011 estimates, highlights that holiday is the main reason for visiting the UK across residents of all three broad regions of the world.

It also demonstrates that business visits are relatively less prominent among visits from 'Other Countries'.

**Figure 5 Proportion of overseas residents visits to the UK by purpose and region of residence, 2011**



Source: International Passenger Survey (IPS) - Office for National Statistics

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### Business trips from all regions of the world grew in 2011

Table [2.03 \(528.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

Business visits from all regions of the world: North America, Europe and 'Other Countries', fell substantially in 2009 in the face of the global financial crisis.

However, since then the number of such visits recovered to some extent, and in 2011 they rose by 6.6 per cent. The increase occurred across all regions, with those from North America rising by 4.6 per cent, from Europe by 6.9 per cent and from other countries by 6.0 per cent.

## Average spending per day is highest for North American residents

Table [2.06 \(528.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

Average spend per day on all visits has continued to rise from 2007 and now stands at £76. This varies depending on region of residence with the highest being spent by those from North America (£94) and the least by those from Europe (£71).

Business trips generated the most income per day in 2011, an average of £141 compared with an average of only £43 for those visiting friends or relatives. Residents from North America who made a business trip spent on average £208 per day, more than twice as much as they did on holiday visits (£100 per day).

## Average length of stay remains stable

Table [2.05 \(528.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

The average length of stay has remained fairly constant at close to eight nights from 2007 to 2011. As may be expected, the number of nights stayed in the UK varies with residents from different regions of the world, with those travelling the furthest staying the longest.

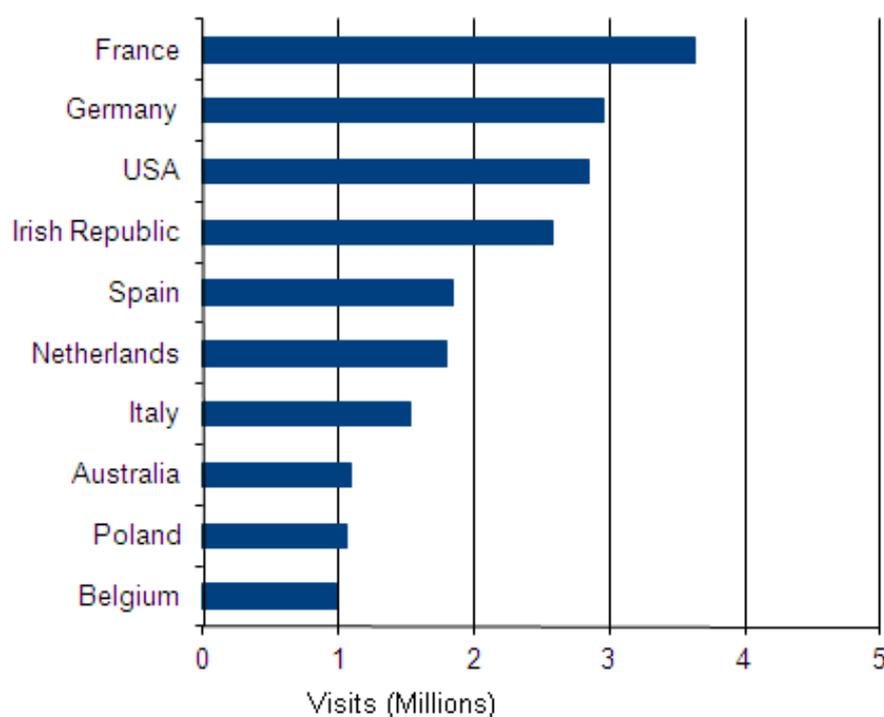
Over the last five years, the average number of nights stayed in the UK remained fairly stable for residents from all regions of the world.

Business trips tended to be of shorter length; an average of 4.3 in 2011. Holiday visits averaged 6.2 nights, with longer visits reserved for visits to friends or relatives which were, on average, over 10 nights every year since 2007.

## Visits made by residents of different countries

Tables [2.10 \(528.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#), [4.04 \(593.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

In 2007, residents from the US made the most visits to the UK. This number has declined since then, and in 2011 French residents made the most visits to the UK with a total of 3.6 million. The number of visits from those living in the US is third in the rankings. The top 10 countries are shown below (Figure 6).

**Figure 6 Visits to the UK of the top 10 visiting countries, 2011**

Source: International Passenger Survey (IPS) - Office for National Statistics

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Reasons for visits varied between these 10 countries although most were made for holidays. Residents from the Irish Republic were more likely to visit the UK to see friends or relatives, as were residents of Poland, with 40 and 41 per cent of visits respectively being for that reason.

Polish residents were also more likely than average to come for business reasons (41 per cent) compared with holidays at only 14 per cent of their total visits. Australian residents were the least likely to come for business reasons (6 per cent) and more likely to come for a holiday (48 per cent) or to visit friends or relatives (39 per cent).

### Visits to different parts of the UK in 2011

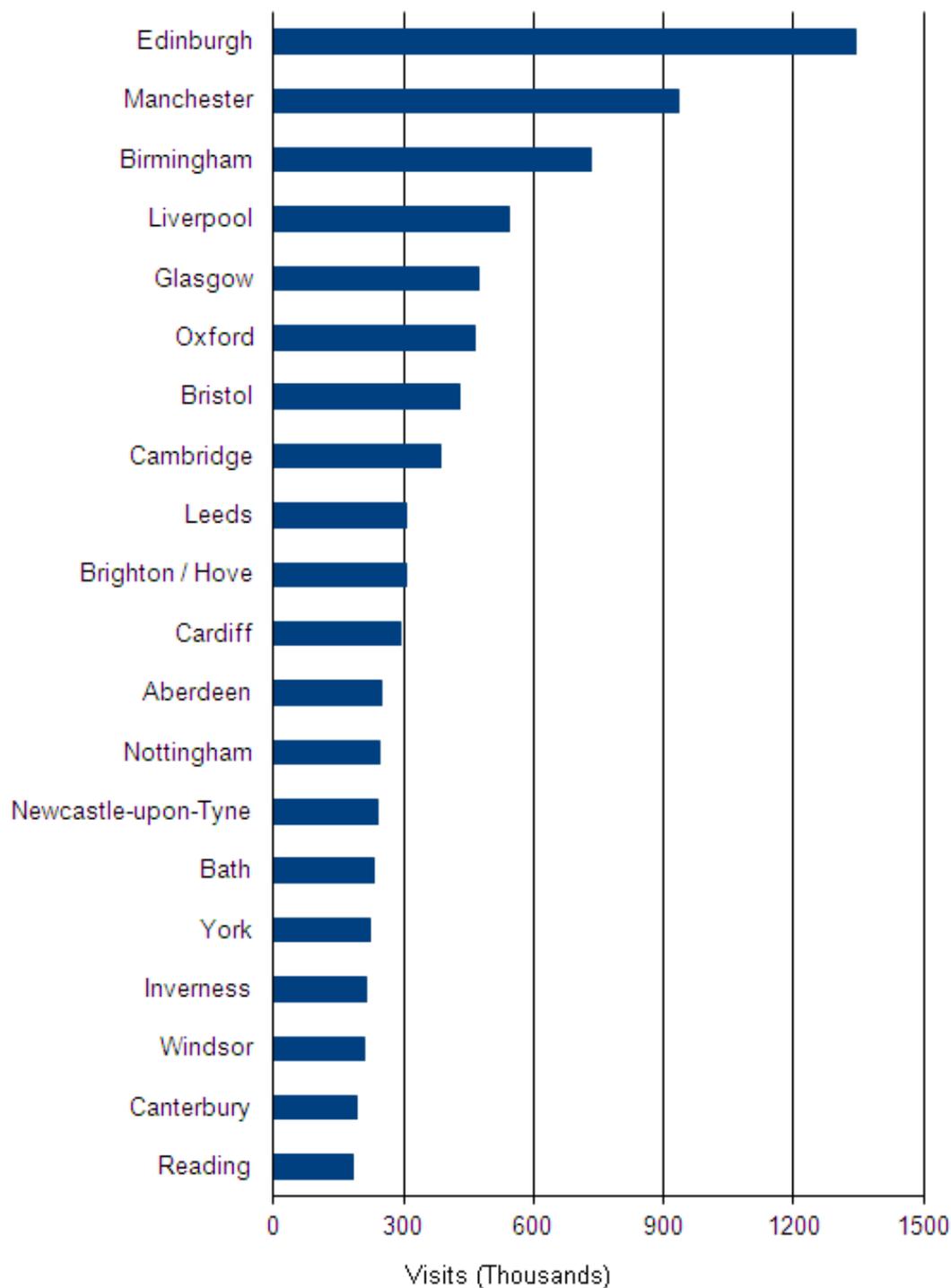
Tables [2.16 \(528.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#), [4.03 \(593.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#), [4.12 \(593.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#), [4.13 \(593.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

Nearly half of all visits included a stay in London. In total 15.3 million visits with 91.5 million nights were spent in the capital. Outside of London, another 13.0 million visits and 116.7 million nights were spent within England.

Visits to Scotland were lower than England, 2.3 million visits and 17.7 million nights, although Edinburgh was the second most visited city after London. There were 0.9 million visits to Wales in 2011 involving 6.3 million nights stayed.

Excluding London the top 20 most visited destinations are shown below (Figure 7).

**Figure 7 Top 20 towns visited for at least one night, 2011**



**Source: International Passenger Survey (IPS) - Office for National Statistics**

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## Comparison of profile of visits to towns

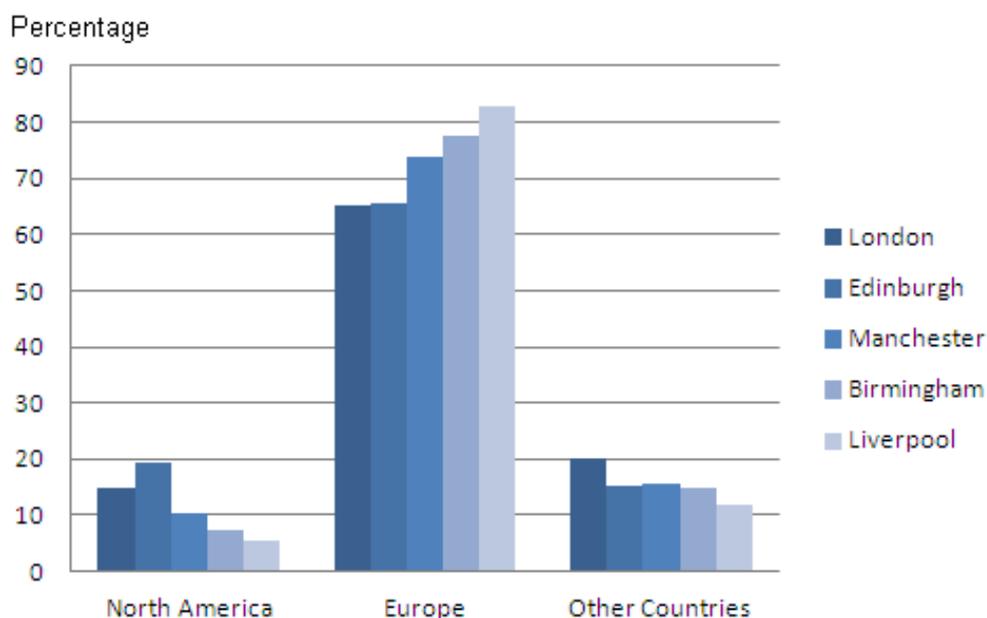
Tables [4.13 \(593.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#), [4.14 \(593.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#), [4.16 \(593.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

Residents from North America and 'Other Countries' mostly stayed in London and other large cities when they visited the UK. In 2011, 63 per cent of residents from North America and 64 per cent of those from 'Other Countries' included an overnight stay in London. In comparison, only 44 per cent of residents who visited in 2011 from Europe stayed in London.

Figure 8 provides a summary of the percentages of visits to each of the top five towns originating in each region of the world. It highlights that London, and particularly Edinburgh, received a relatively high proportion of visits from residents of North America.

London also had a high proportion of visits from 'Other Country' residents. In comparison, Manchester, Birmingham and Liverpool visits were more heavily based on European residents. For example, Liverpool received over 80 per cent of its overnight visits from these residents.

### Figure 8 Proportion of visits by region of the world for the top 5 towns visited, 2011



Source: International Passenger Survey (IPS) - Office for National Statistics

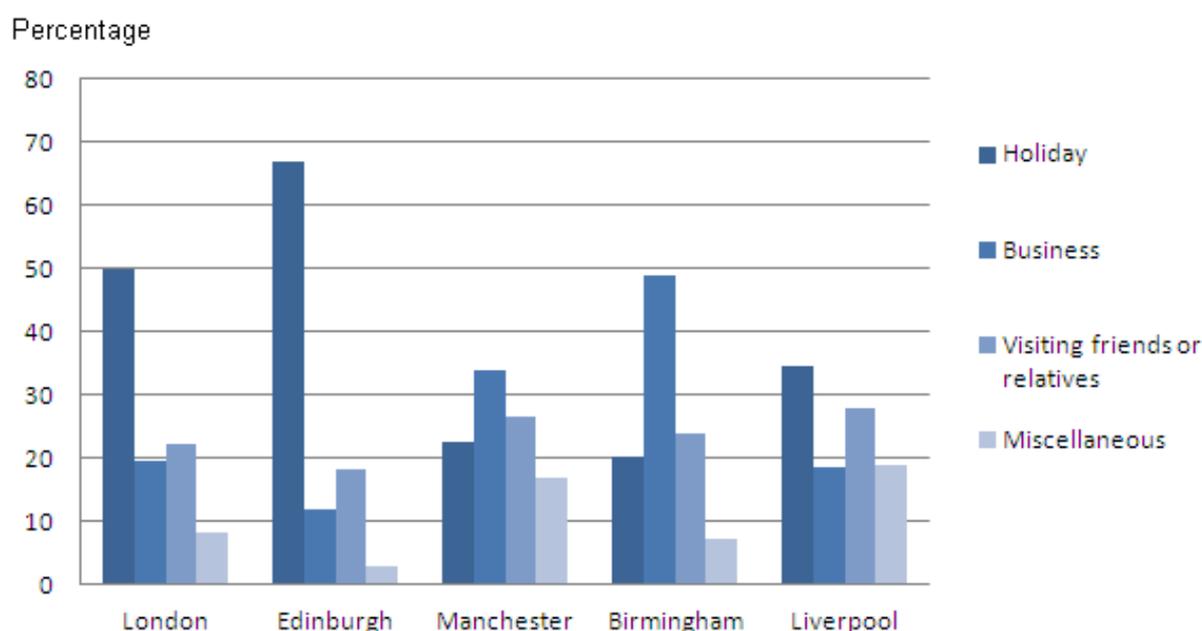
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Figure 9 shows the proportion of visits to the top five towns by main purpose. Looking in more detail at these visits shows some differences between the different towns. Half of all visits to London were for holidays, compared with Edinburgh where 67 per cent of visits were for holidays and Birmingham with only 20 per cent for this reason. Holiday visits to London totalled 7.6 million, the highest on record.

Birmingham and Manchester both received a high proportion of visits for business purposes, 49 per cent and 34 per cent respectively for this purpose compared to 20 per cent for London.

**Figure 9: Proportions of visits by purpose for the top 5 towns visited, 2011**



Source: Office for National Statistics

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As mentioned above, spending varies between purpose and country of residence. The relatively high proportion of visits from North American residents to Oxford resulted in a spend of £290 million compared with £196 million in Liverpool; this was despite Oxford receiving less visits. Cambridge also received a high level of spend compared with the number of visits. In contrast, spending in Leeds was low compared with the high number of visits there.

### Visits to the UK by UK nationals living abroad

Table [4.11 \(593.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

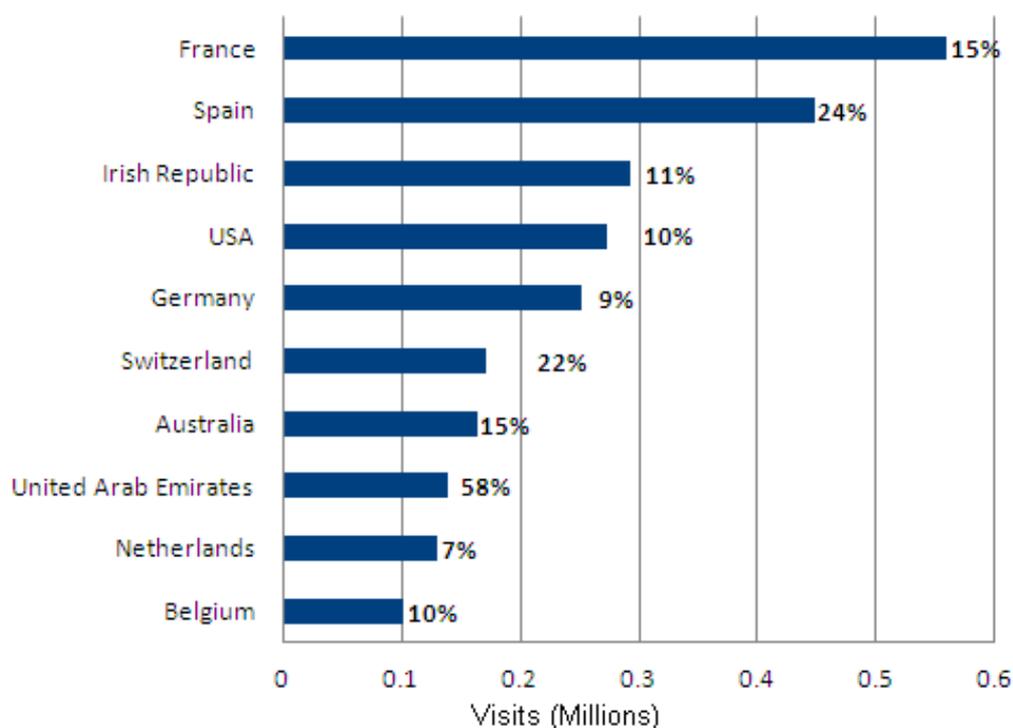
Eleven per cent of visits by overseas residents in 2011 were made by those holding a UK passport. As would be expected, the majority of these visits were to see friends or relatives; two-thirds of visits were for this reason.

The countries of residence, from which most visits to the UK by British nationals were made, are represented by the length of the shaded bars shown in Figure 10.

The percentages next to the shaded bars are the proportions of the total visits from each country that UK nationals resident there accounted for. Of note, 58 per cent of all visits from the UAE were made by UK nationals living there.

The most prominent countries were unsurprisingly those in Europe, with France and Spain being the most common. For example there were 559,000 visits from France. UK passport holders who live in these countries would find it relatively easy to visit friends or family over these short distances. Australia, the United Arab Emirates and the US also feature in this top 10.

**Figure 10: Number of visits made by UK nationals by country of residence and percentage of total visits, 2011**



Source: Office for National Statistics

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**Commentary: UK residents' visits abroad**

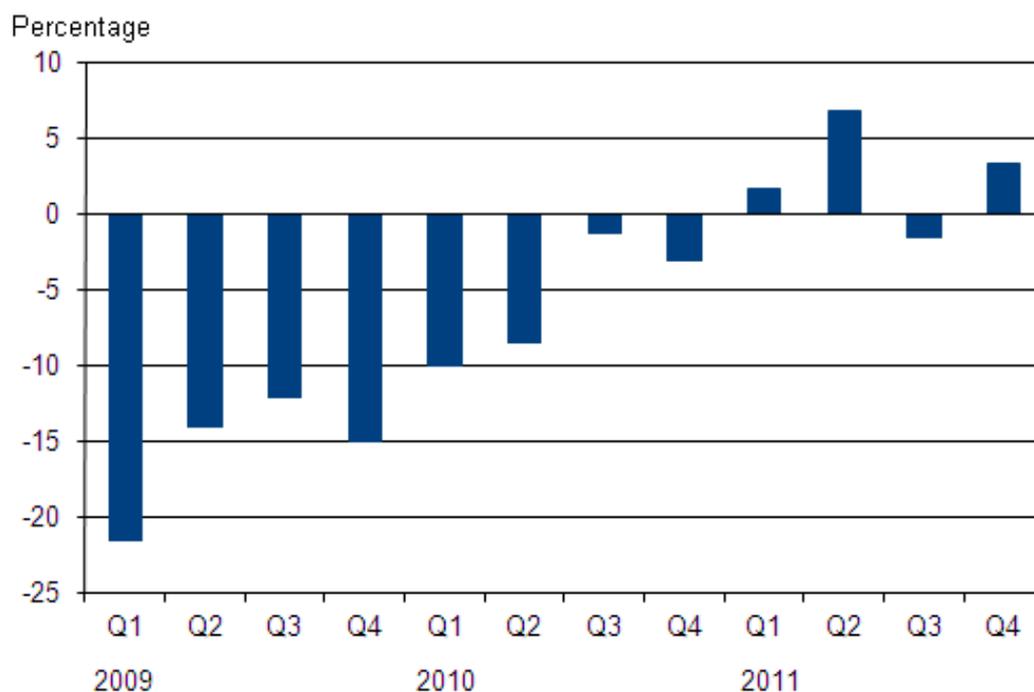
**Visits to the UK rose in most quarters of 2011**

[Table 3.01 \(437.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

The number of visits abroad by UK residents showed a downward trend over the last five years, with a sharp fall during 2009 continuing to fall through 2010.

Figure 11 shows that the Travel and Tourism market for UK residents improved during 2011 and there was an increase in the number of visits abroad in three out of the four quarters of the year.

**Figure 11: Change from year earlier in the UK residents' visits abroad**



Source: Office for National Statistics

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### Spending abroad was subdued

Table [3.02 \(437.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

Spending between 2007 and 2011 followed a similar pattern to the number of visits, falling heavily in 2009 and the first quarter of 2010. Since then, it made a small recovery in 2010 followed by a mixed pattern in 2011 – some increases in quarters 2 and 4 but a decline for the other two quarters.

### The proportion of short haul visits rose in 2011

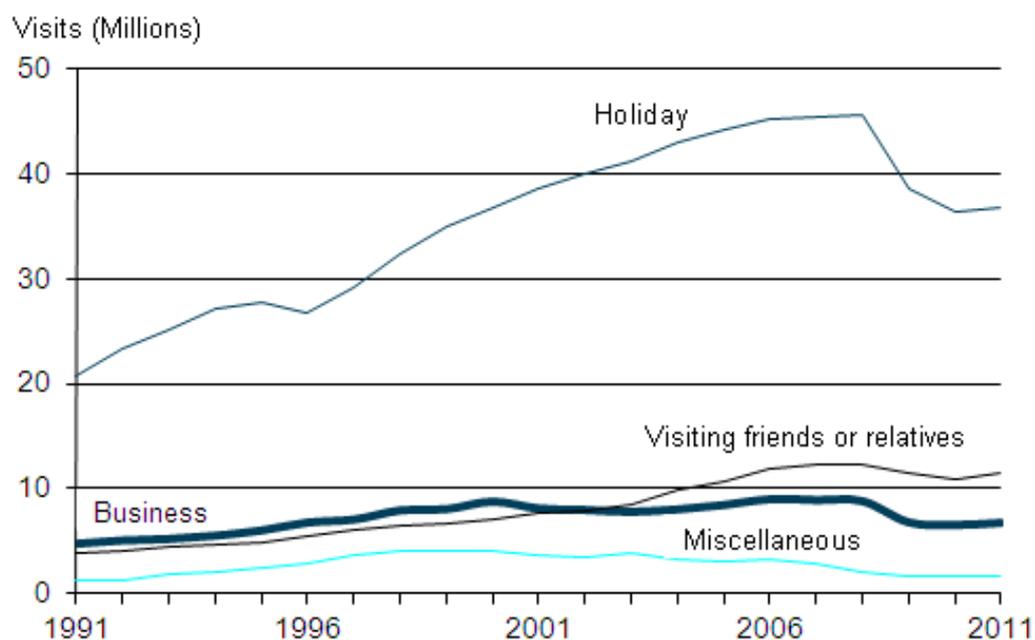
Table [3.03 \(437.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

The decline in visits since 2007 has been at a similar rate for travel to North America and Europe; an annual average fall of 5.4 and 5.5 per cent respectively. Visits further afield were not affected as much and only saw an annual average decline of 1.5 per cent over the five-year period. However,

in 2011 visits became shorter-haul as visits to Europe increased by 3.5 per cent and those to 'Other Countries' fell by 2.6 per cent.

Apart from visits for miscellaneous purposes, which fell by 4.6 per cent in 2011, UK residents made more visits abroad for all purposes during this year when compared with 2010. The largest increase was for visiting friends or relatives; a rise of 6.9 per cent representing an extra three-quarters of a million visits (Figure 12). This compared with smaller growths for holidays and business trips (1.1 and 3.1 per cent respectively).

**Figure 12: UK residents' visits abroad by purpose 1991 to 2011**



Source: Office for National Statistics

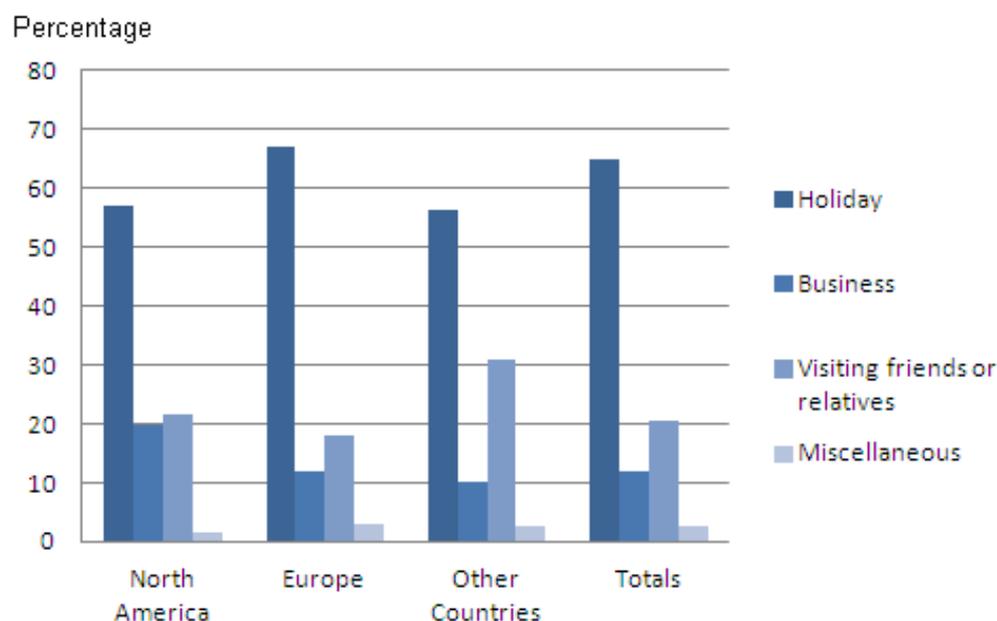
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### Varying reasons for visiting different regions of the world

Tables [3.03 \(437.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

Holiday was the main reason for travelling to all regions of the world in 2011 (Figure 13). However, there was some variation in the relative number of visits: 20 per cent of all visits to North America were for business compared with only 10 per cent further afield to 'Other Countries'. This region of the world saw 31 per cent of visits there defined as visiting friends or relatives.

**Figure 13: Proportion of UK Residents' visits by purpose and region of the world, 2011**

Source: Office for National Statistics

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#### Number of nights spent on average trips abroad is stable

Tables [3.05 \(437.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#), [5.05 \(402.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

The average number of nights spent abroad between 2007 and 2011 has stayed constant at around 10 nights. It also remained broadly unchanged for visits to different regions of the world (14 nights to North America, 8 nights to Europe and 21 nights to 'Other Countries').

As would be expected, the further people travelled abroad, the longer they stayed, so that those whose main country of visit was Australia stayed an average of 38 nights abroad compared with only 3 nights for those whose main country of visit was Belgium. Visitors to Australia and New Zealand spent the most money per visit. This would have been due to the longer length of stay as the average spend per day for these travellers was close to the average of £53.

#### Travel patterns abroad differ between areas of residence in the UK

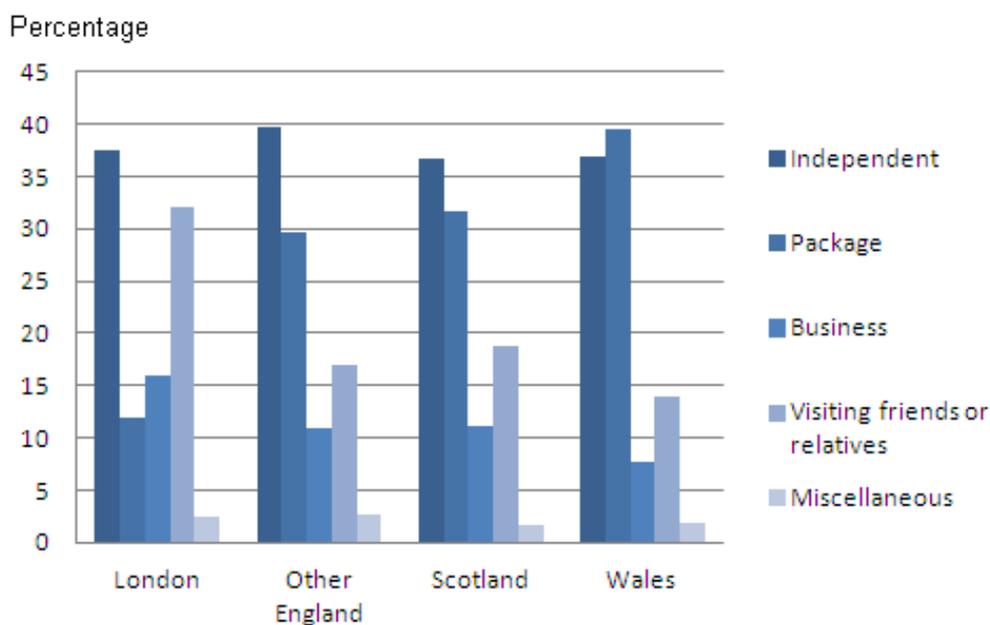
Tables [5.03 \(402.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#), [5.12 \(402.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

Londoners were more likely to travel for business reasons and visiting friends or relatives abroad than residents of other parts of the UK (Figure 14). Nearly half of all their visits were for these two reasons, compared with 28 per cent by residents of other areas of the UK. Londoners also made

different types of holiday trips; only 24 per cent of their holiday visits were packages compared with over 40 per cent for residents of the rest of England and Scotland, and 52 per cent for Welsh residents.

UK residents living in London were also more likely to travel away from Europe, with 29 per cent of their trips being spent North America and 'Other Countries'. This compared with 21 per cent of those living in Scotland and 20 per cent of Welsh residents. Higher proportions of those living outside of London also visited Spain (between 21 and 29 per cent compared with only 10 per cent of London residents).

**Figure 14: Proportion of UK Residents' visits by purpose and region of residence, 2011**



Source: Office for National Statistics

### Download chart

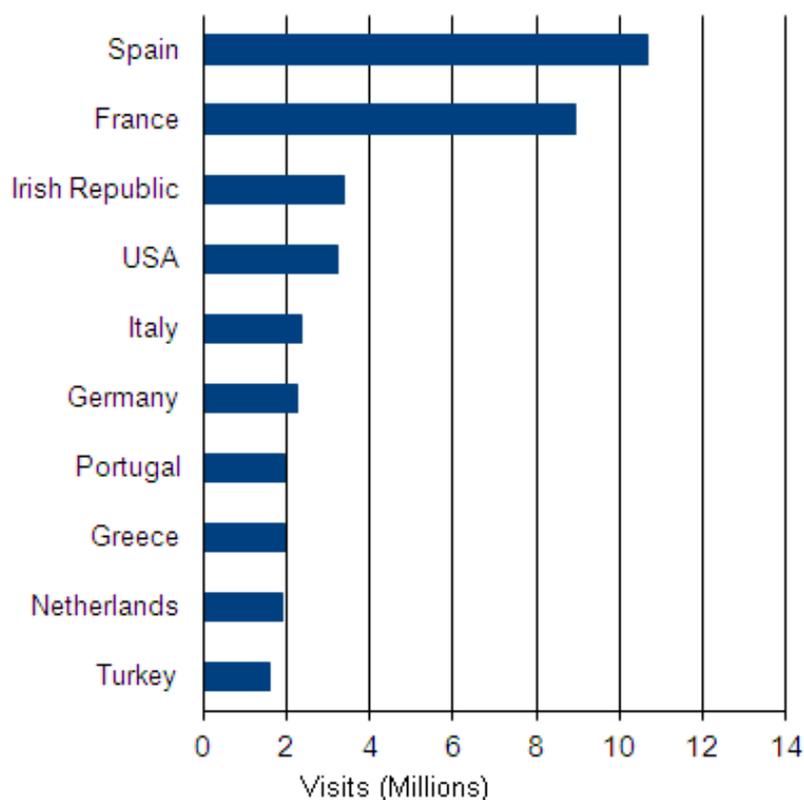
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### Spain and France still the most visited countries

Table [3.10 \(437.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

The most visited countries by UK residents in 2011 were Spain and France (Figure 15). These two countries have been the most popular for a long time. The numbers have fallen alongside total visits abroad, but they are still much higher than other countries and in 2011 accounted for 34 per cent of all visits. With the exception of the US, the top 10 countries visited are all in Europe.

**Figure 15: Top 10 overseas countries visited, 2011**

**Source: Office for National Statistics**

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**The profile of visitors to individual countries varies**

Table [5.11 \(402.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

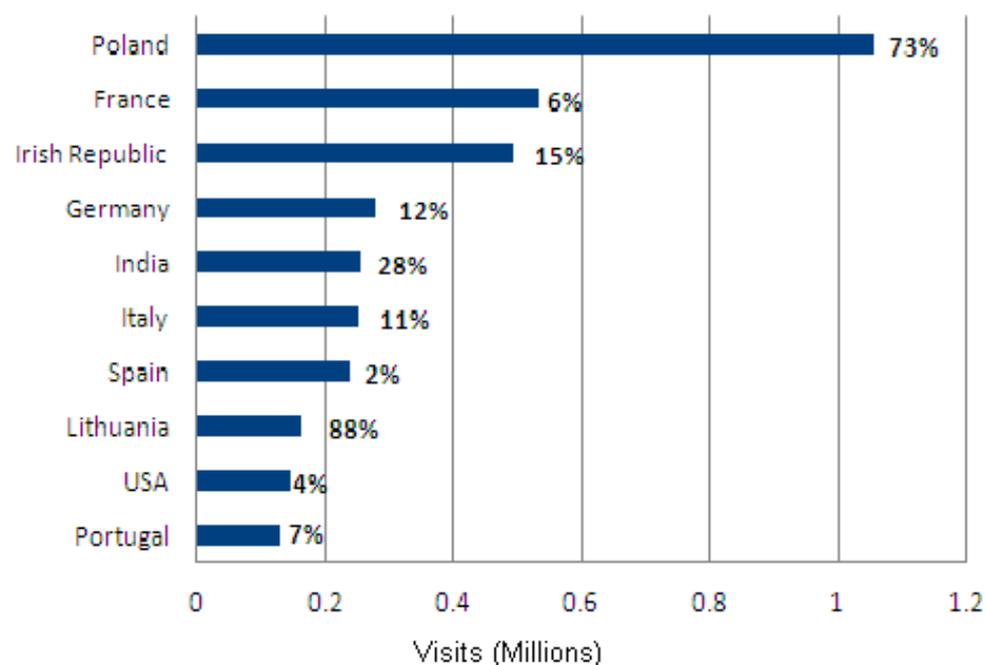
The composition of UK visitors abroad, measured in terms of nationality, varies between countries: and are represented by the shaded bars in Figure 16. In 2011 over 1 million visits were made to Poland by Polish nationals living in the UK. This represented 73 per cent of total visits to Poland by UK residents.

There were 534,000 visits to France made by French nationals living in the UK in 2011. However, as shown in Figure 16, this represented only 6 per cent of all visits to that country, highlighting the high volume of visits to France by UK nationals.

It can also be seen from Figure 16 that visits to each of the Irish Republic, Germany, Italy and Lithuania by UK residents include at least 10 per cent made by nationals of that country.

Most of these visits 'home' were to see friends or relatives. This proportion was at least two-thirds of visits for the top 10 countries with the highest value, 81 per cent, for UK residents with Indian passports.

**Figure 16: Number of visits made by foreign nationals by country of nationality and percentage of total visits, 2011**



Source: International Passenger Survey (IPS) - Office for National Statistics

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### Business visits abroad are still made predominately by men

Table [5.09 \(402.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

Men made more business trips than women. In 2011, 78 per cent of all business visits were made by men who also spent a slightly higher proportion of all money spent on these trips (79 per cent).

### Visits by age group

Table [5.10 \(402.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

In 2011 most visits were made by people aged 35 to 44, although these were only slightly higher than the 25 to 34 and 45 to 54 age groups.

People aged 65 and over were more likely to make visits to Spain; 25 per cent of all visits made by this group compared with 19 per cent of all visitors. Visits by those aged 0 to 15 were more likely to be to the most popular countries overall; 28 per cent of these visits were to France and 22 per cent to Spain.

## Background notes

1. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available by visiting [www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html](http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html) or from the Media Relations Office email: [media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk)

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This document is also available on our website at [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk).

## Appendices

### Appendix A: Definitions on which this report is based

1. The figures relate to the number of visits, not the number of visitors. Those entering or leaving the UK more than once in the same period are counted on each visit. The count of visits relates to UK residents returning to this country and to overseas residents leaving it.
2. Day trips are visits that do not involve an overnight stay. Day trips abroad made by UK residents, as well as day trips to the UK made by overseas residents, are included in the figures for visits and spending. Note 3 in sub-section Exclusions refers to overseas residents in transit through the UK.
3. An overseas visitor is a person who, being permanently resident in a country outside the UK, visits the UK for a period of less than 12 months. UK citizens resident overseas for 12 months or more coming home on leave are included in this category. Visits abroad are visits for a period of less than 12 months by people permanently resident in the UK (who may be of foreign nationality).
4. When a resident of the UK has visited more than one country, spending and stay for the entire visit are allocated to the country stayed in for the longest time.
5. Visits for miscellaneous purposes include those for study, to attend sporting events, for shopping, health, religious or other purposes, together with visits for more than one purpose when no one purpose predominates (for example visits both on business and on holiday). Overseas visitors staying overnight in the UK en route to other destinations are also included in the miscellaneous purposes category.

6. Estimates relating to tourist flows across the land border between the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland are, for convenience, included in the figures for sea. Where not shown separately, flows through the Channel Tunnel are also included under the figures for sea. Also excluded from the regional analysis tables (except the 'Total' section) are all visits that did not include an overnight stay in the UK. Visits by overseas residents to Northern Ireland, although included in the 'total' column, are not separately analysed. More than one region can be visited by an individual while in the UK so the total of the visits to all the regions will be greater than the total number of visits to the UK as a whole.
7. Adjustments are made to the reported cost of an inclusive tour so that only the amount earned by the country of visit is included (for example accommodation costs and car hire). This estimate is then added to an individual's spending to give the total spending in the country of visit (see also note 9).
8. Length of stay for UK residents covers the time spent outside the UK, including the journey. For overseas residents it refers to the time spent within the UK.
9. Spending figures cover the same categories of traveller as the number of visits figures except that the figures for overseas residents additionally include the spending of same day transit passengers. Spending also includes foreign exchange earnings and expenditure due to travel between the Channel Islands and other (non-UK) countries.
10. Spending reported in this report and other ONS Overseas Travel and Tourism publications covers money spent in association with overseas travel and tourism, but excludes fares for travel to or from the UK. For any traveller on an inclusive tour, an estimate of the return fare is deducted from the total tour price. Inclusions and exclusions are driven by Balance of Payments definitions, and key specifics are as follows:
11. Only money sourced outside the country of visit is included. Thus, any money earned and subsequently spent by an overseas resident on a visit to the UK is excluded
12. In addition to money spent during the visit, certain expenditure before or after the visit is included in spend estimates. Such expenditure includes items such as deposits, car hire, theatre tickets, short course fees, tickets for internal travel in the country of visit, travel insurance if bought prior to this particular visit.
13. Purchase for personal export of large items such as cars or boats are excluded from expenditure. However, if the car was bought abroad and not brought back to the UK, the spending would be included. Cost of any house purchase abroad is excluded. Any money spent abroad for the purpose of improving or renovating a property is included however, as is any expenditure abroad on legal fees to do with a house purchase.
14. Expenditure by UK residents on board UK-owned cruise ships is excluded, but expenditure on visits ashore during a cruise is included. Any money spent abroad (for example, on medical treatment) which will be refunded through an insurance company inside the country of visit will be excluded. Private school fees are excluded.
15. An estimate for purchases by overseas visitors at airport duty-free shops is included in the figures for spending. Such purchases on British carriers are excluded.

## Exclusions

The following groups are excluded from the tables in this publication:

1. Trippers who cross the Channel, North Sea or Irish Sea but do not alight from the boat (called stay-on-board).

2. Migrants and persons travelling to take up prearranged employment, together with military or diplomatic personnel, merchant seamen and airline personnel on duty.
3. Overseas residents passing through the UK en route to other destinations, but who do not stay overnight (often known as transit passengers). However, any spending by transit passengers while in the UK is included in the spending figures.

## Geographical areas

The geographical areas used in this report are as follows.

1. North America: Canada (including Greenland and St. Pierre et Miquelon) and the USA (including Puerto Rico and US Virgin Islands).
2. Europe: All countries listed under EU25 plus other central and Eastern Europe, North Cyprus, Faroe Islands, Gibraltar, Iceland, Norway, Switzerland (including Lichtenstein), Turkey, the former USSR and the states of former Yugoslavia.
3. EU Europe: EU15: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France (including Monaco), Finland, Germany, Greece, Irish Republic, Italy (including San Marino and Vatican City), Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal (including Azores and Madeira), Spain (including Canary Islands, Spanish North Africa, Balearic Islands and Andorra) and Sweden.
4. EU Europe: EU25: The above countries, with the addition of Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Malta, Cyprus. Only the south of Cyprus is a member of the EU, but the IPS is unable to separate North and South Cyprus for the period before May 2004, and so all of Cyprus is included in the EU25 section until May 2004. From May 2004, only southern Cyprus is included in the EU25 figures. EU Europe: EU27: As for EU25 plus Bulgaria and Romania.
5. North Africa: Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia.
6. Other Middle East: Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates and the Yemen.
7. Central and South America: Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, British Antarctica, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, the Falkland Islands, French Guiana, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama (including Canal Zone), Paraguay, Peru, Surinam, Uruguay and Venezuela.
8. Caribbean: Antigua, Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Cuba, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Martinique, Montserrat, St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and the Caicos Islands.
9. Although the information in this publication is by the country groups described above, almost 200 different countries of residence or visit can be identified on the main IPS datasets.

## Appendix B: Concepts used in this report

### Key concepts and variables

#### Flow

Respondents in the IPS are mainly identified and analysed by their 'flow'. Flow is described as the direction of travel of the visitor combined with whether they are a UK resident or an overseas resident. There are, therefore, four main flows on the IPS:

- Overseas residents departing from the UK,
- UK residents departing from the UK,
- Overseas residents arriving in the UK,
  
- UK residents arriving in the UK.

Only data on overseas residents departing from the UK and UK residents arriving in the UK have been used in this publication. This is because the IPS interviews for these travellers take place at the end of their visits when factual information about visit duration and spending is available. This is felt to be more complete and reliable than the information gathered at the beginning of a trip when intentions regarding duration and spending may not prove to be accurate.

### **Number of visits**

The data in this report relate to the number of visits not the number of visitors. Those entering or leaving the UK more than once in the same period are counted on each visit.

### **Purpose of visit**

The IPS records the many different reasons people have for making a visit. These are combined into four main analysis categories:

- Holiday,
- Business,
- Visiting friends or relatives (VFR),
- Miscellaneous.

The categories describe the main purpose of the visit and, where it is not possible to determine this, the respondents' reason for the visit is categorised as 'miscellaneous'. People migrating (to or from the UK) or travelling as crew of aircraft, ships or trains are excluded from analyses in this publication.

The IPS collects information on whether tourists travel independently or on some form of package trip. As well as providing data on all holiday visits, this report also provides information on those who are on package holidays, which are referred to as 'inclusive tours'. Such visits are defined as holiday visits on which accommodation was paid for as part of an inclusive tour or where fares and accommodation cannot be separated.

The business category includes conference and trade fair visits, and those who made their visits for study, medical treatment or shopping appear in the miscellaneous category. More detailed information on the main reason for visits (such as attending conferences or trade fairs) is available from the IPS datasets (see Appendix F).

Some analyses show data for 'leisure' and 'business' visits, where the 'leisure' category includes all visits for holidays, visits to friends or relatives, and visits for miscellaneous purposes.

### **Country of residence or visit**

For overseas residents visiting the UK, this is the main country of residence of the visitor. For UK residents travelling abroad, it is the main country of visit.

Although the IPS collects information on all individual countries of the world, many countries outside of EU Europe are shown within groups rather than individually. It would not be practical to show all countries separately but also for many countries, sample sizes are too small to give accurate estimates.

On 1 May 2004, 10 new countries joined the EU and on 1 January 2007 two additional countries joined. In the tables in this report, figures are given for the original 15 member states (EU 15), the 25 EU member states (EU 25), and the 27 current EU member states (EU27). In years previous to 2004, EU Europe is defined as consisting of the countries which were EU members during the year in question. It should be noted that for the years before the reunification of Germany in 1991, data on the then East Germany are not included in the figures for Germany, and therefore are not included within the figures for EU Europe.

Appendix B shows how the countries of the world are grouped into the areas used in this report. A larger number of countries than appear in this publication can be identified in the IPS datasets.

### **UK region of stay**

The IPS records which towns overseas residents stayed in when they visited the UK. However, due to the very large number of towns in the UK it would not be meaningful to produce analyses of visits by the full range of towns. In this publication, visits information for overseas residents is therefore mainly shown at county or unitary authority, and main UK region levels although a table of the top 50 towns visited is also included.

In 2007 a more accurate approach to coding towns was employed in the survey, based on a more comprehensive coding frame of towns and boroughs. This may result in a slight discontinuity from previous years and care should therefore be exercised when comparing results with earlier years.

Care must be taken when using the regional information, as the numbers of visits to separate UK areas cannot simply be added together to form larger regions. This is because a person may stay in more than one area of the UK during a single visit. As a result, the numbers of visits to smaller areas do not sum to the figures given for larger regions in the regional tables in this publication.

For example, a person visiting London, Windsor and Aberdeen in a single visit to the UK would appear as one visit to London, one to Berkshire and one to Grampian. However, the same visitor would be recorded as a single visit in the England total and a visit in the Scotland total, and as just one visit in the UK total. Although visits cannot be summed across UK regions, the amount of spending and the number of nights stayed can.

### **UK region of residence**

For UK residents, data are presented by the region of residence, that is London, the rest of England, Scotland and Wales.

### **Mode of transport**

Until 1994 air and sea were the only two main modes of transport to and from the UK. The Channel Tunnel between the UK and France began operating towards the end of 1994. Information on passengers using the tunnel is available on the IPS from the fourth quarter of 1994. Journeys by sea and tunnel are further analysed to show whether a vehicle was taken on the trip and, if so, the type of vehicle that was used.

### **Age and sex**

Respondents' age and sex are collected in the IPS interview. Questions on exact age are not asked on the IPS and instead respondents are classified into age groups as it is felt that some people may not give accurate answers, and age groups are normally sufficient for users' needs.

All travellers, including children under 16, are eligible to be interviewed on the IPS. If the sampled person is under 16, where possible the interview is carried out with the child after having first received permission from a parent, guardian or responsible adult travelling with them (for example, a school teacher if they are on a school trip). If the child is too young to complete the interview themselves, proxy information is collected from the parent, guardian or responsible adult, wherever possible.

### **Expenditure**

Expenditure for both UK and overseas residents exclude amounts spent on fares to and from the UK.

Visits and expenditure information regarding travel to or from the Irish Republic for years up to and including 1998 are included in the figures for the EU but do not appear separately in the rows and columns of some tables. Consequently, rows and columns in the tables may not always sum to the figures shown for the whole EU.

Expenditure data relating to the Channel Islands are included within the figures for the Europe but are not shown separately. This means that spending shown for the individual countries of Europe will not always sum to the figures shown for the whole of Europe.

Expenditure data of overseas visitors transiting the UK, but not staying overnight, are included within the figure shown for 'All purpose' of travel, but are not shown separately. This means that spending shown for overseas residents' visits by individual purpose of visit will not always sum to the figure shown for 'All purposes'.

### **Travellers to and from the Irish Republic**

There is a major discontinuity in the time series shown in this publication between years up to and including 1998 and subsequent years. From the second quarter of 1999, the IPS began interviewing on air and sea routes between the UK and the Irish Republic. For the years up to and including

1998, estimates of visitor numbers, their spending and nights stayed on routes between the UK and the Irish Republic and their characteristics were based on data provided by the Central Statistical Office of the Irish Republic.

From 1999, and for subsequent years, this report uses IPS interview data. To enable 1999 data to be analysed, data for the first quarter of 1999 were constructed, based upon interviews conducted in the first quarter of 2000, but weighted to the traffic volumes of the first quarter of 1999.

Analysis of the interview data from 1999 onwards has shown that a large number of Irish visitors who would previously have been defined as tourists to the UK were transiting through the UK on their overseas visits. Also, the data for 1999 onwards showed that a number of European and Commonwealth visitors made combined visits to the UK and the Irish Republic; these visits were previously recorded as visits from residents of the Irish Republic.

These factors combined to reduce the number of overseas visitors to the UK from 1999 onwards, mainly the estimates of visitors from the Irish Republic, but they also increased the number of visitors from certain other countries, particularly Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Germany and the Netherlands.

The data from the IPS Irish interviews also affected estimates of spending and nights. These showed that the previous estimates of spending per visit of Irish visitors to the UK were overstated, while estimates of UK residents' spending per visit in the Irish Republic were previously understated.

The interview-based details of visitors from the Irish Republic have enabled more completed duration of stay and regional breakdowns to be produced from 1999 onwards. This has led to discontinuities between 1998 and 1999 in the duration of stay and regional profile from the IPS.

In summary, the major effect resulting from IPS interviewing on routes to and from the Irish Republic was to improve the quality and detail of estimates from 1999 onwards. The discontinuities from this change affected time series estimates of visitors to and from the Irish Republic, with some smaller effects for other countries.

## **Appendix C: The IPS-Methodology and coverage**

### **Background**

The International Passenger Survey (IPS) is a large multi-purpose survey that collects information from passengers as they enter or leave the UK. It is carried out by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) for a range of public and private sector organisations. In particular, the survey provides figures used for the travel account of the balance of payments, international migration statistics, and for informing decisions on tourism policy.

The data from the survey are widely used across and outside of government to provide detailed information on the numbers and types of people travelling to and from the UK. Results are published regularly by ONS on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis. More detailed analyses are possible through the Data, Advice and Relations Team (DART) in ONS, or by downloading the Travelpac database from the ONS website.

Travellers passing through passport control are randomly selected for interview and all interviews are conducted on a voluntary and anonymous basis. Interviewing is carried out throughout the year. The overall response rate (complete and partial interviews) for the 2011 survey was 79 per cent.

Since the IPS began in 1961, its coverage has been extended so that it includes all the main air, sea and tunnel ports or routes into and out of the UK. The only routes excluded from the survey are sea routes to and from the Channel Islands, the land border with the Irish Republic, and cruise ships travelling to and from the UK.

Approximately 95 per cent of passengers entering and leaving the UK are covered by the survey. The remainder are either passengers travelling at night, when interviewing is suspended, or on those routes too small in volume or too expensive to be covered.

The IPS data are weighted to produce national estimates of all international travellers to and from the UK on a quarterly basis. Although some monthly data from the IPS are also published, a single quarter is the minimum period over which most detailed analyses of the data can be made. Annual national estimates are created by combining the four quarters of the year.

The calculation of the weights on the IPS takes into account its complex sample design and information provided from other sources on, among other things, the non-sampled routes and time periods. For example, estimates of spending by travellers to and from the Channel Islands are provided by the Economic Advisor's Office in Jersey, and the Central Statistics Office in the Irish Republic provides information on travellers crossing the land border with Northern Ireland.

## **Overview of the survey design**

The IPS is based on face-to-face interviews with a sample of passengers travelling via the principal airports, sea routes and the Channel Tunnel. The number of interviews conducted in 2011 was 304,000, which represented about 0.2 per cent of all travellers. This large sample size allows reliable estimates to be produced for various groups of passengers despite the low proportion of travellers interviewed.

The IPS sample is stratified to ensure it is representative by mode of travel (air, sea or tunnel), port or route, and time of day. The frequency of sampling within each stratum is varied according to the variability of tourist expenditure and the cost of interviewing. For example, where the expenditure quoted on a particular route varies greatly across respondents, a higher sampling frequency is used to enable a more satisfactory estimate to be produced. (For further details on the sample design, see the Sampling section).

Some questions on the survey are asked of all of the passengers interviewed, while others are restricted to certain specific sub-groups. Information on the spending and length of stay of UK residents abroad and overseas residents in the UK is only collected on the return leg of a visit. This is because actual spending and length of stay are required, and these may differ from the respondents' intentions when they start their visit. In 2011, 52,000 interviews were carried out with overseas residents departing from the UK and 67,000 with UK residents arriving back from abroad.

The details collected on the survey are used by ONS, along with other sources of information, to produce overall national estimates of the number and expenditure of different types of travellers. A

complex weighting procedure is used to do this that takes into account various factors in order to improve the estimates. (For further details of the weighting procedure, see the Producing national estimates section).

### **The collection of the IPS data**

The key to producing reliable results from the IPS lies initially in the way the data are collected. Great emphasis is therefore placed upon the IPS interviewers to ensure they are able to capture data efficiently and accurately.

Nationally, IPS data are collected by a team of over 200 interviewers who are recruited and trained specifically to work on the IPS. All IPS interviewing staff undergo an intensive initial training course and, once qualified, are regularly briefed and monitored by a support team of team leaders and site managers. Some interviewing teams will cover a single large port, for example Heathrow, while others may cover several smaller ports which are generally in the same part of the UK. Interviews are carried out on all days of the year, apart from Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

Typically, an IPS shift will consist of a group of between eight and ten interviewers led by a team leader. One of the team will act as a counter to ensure that people are correctly selected for interview according to the sampling intervals appropriate for that port. The team leader is responsible for the organisation and running of the shift and is available to offer advice to team members when required. Site managers ensure that data quality is to the acceptable standard.

Due to the layout and facilities at some seaports it is not always possible to interview passengers as they arrive. In such cases, IPS staff travel to seaports in France and Ireland to select their subject and then conduct interviews which take place either at the overseas ports of departure, or on board the vessels returning to the UK.

Almost all IPS interviews take place on a face-to-face basis with the responses being initially recorded on paper forms. Shortly after the interview has taken place, the data are transferred to a computer system in which electronic checks are made of the data being input. In recent years some 'self completion' questionnaires have been used at times where an interviewer has been unable to conduct an interview because of language difficulties.

The self-completion questionnaires are produced in 13 languages but they do not cover the complete range of questions asked in a full IPS interview. The forms are designed to be as simple and user friendly as possible and aim to capture the essential data items which will be needed to produce reliable estimates of tourism.

Once the interview information has been captured electronically, it is transmitted to ONS headquarters where a series of further quality and accuracy checks are made on the data before they will be ready for processing and the publication of analysis.

In recent years, collection of data has been made more difficult owing to the changes in both the way airports and seaports operate and through the differing behaviour patterns of travellers. Many airports now operate several gateways for clients and all these have to be covered by an interviewing team. Many passengers arriving want to use their mobile phones once they land. It is

IPS policy not to intrude or interrupt when we want to interview such people and so these people although selected for inclusion in the IPS may not be interviewed.

## Sampling

The IPS uses a multi-stage sample design. The sampling for air, sea and tunnel travel is carried out separately, although the underlying principle for each mode of travel is broadly similar. In the absence of a sampling frame of travellers, time periods/shifts or sea crossings are selected at the first stage (primary sampling unit), and travellers are then systematically chosen at fixed intervals from a random start within these shifts or crossings at the second stage. The details of the sampling scheme for each individual mode of travel are described below.

### Air routes

For air routes, time periods are sampled. Shifts are selected for the first stage at the 12 largest air sites (that is the five terminals at Heathrow Airport, the two terminals at Gatwick Airport, three terminals at Manchester International Airport and Stansted and Luton Airports). These are done in such a way that the numbers of shifts are balanced between mornings and afternoons, and days of the week within any quarter. At the second stage, passengers are counted as they cross a predetermined line and every  $n$ th one is interviewed.

The sampling interval,  $n$ , differs between sites and involves a first stage sampling rate used to screen respondents for migration purposes and a second stage sampling rate used for overseas travel and tourism interviews. Departing passengers are sampled at a higher rate than arriving ones because the expenditure information for overseas residents visiting the UK is more variable than that for UK residents returning from visits abroad.

A small number of shifts every quarter are also conducted at other smaller international airports in the UK. However, the sample size is insufficient to provide accurate estimates for most of these airports individually. Those airports with less than about 250,000 passenger movements per quarter are usually excluded from the survey altogether on the grounds of cost effectiveness, but traffic at these sites is taken into account when producing national estimates.

### Sea routes

Sea routes carrying 50,000 passengers a year or more are generally included in the IPS sample. At some seaports, passengers are sampled and interviewed on the quayside as they embark or disembark, while at others IPS interviewers travel on the boat itself with interviewing being carried out on board. The choice between interviewing on the quayside or on crossings is made on practical grounds such as cost, safety and permission.

Where interviewing is conducted on the quayside, the sample is designed to select shifts that are balanced across different days of the week and times of day within a quarter, with each individual shift covering several sailings. Where interviews are conducted on crossings, a predetermined number of return crossings are selected for each route, spread across time of day and day of week each quarter. As for air sampling, sea passengers are selected at fixed sampling intervals from a random start within each shift or crossing.

The IPS also samples long haul ships capable of carrying more than 200 passengers at the port in Southampton.

### **Tunnel routes**

The method used for the tunnel routes is different for Eurostar passenger trains and for Eurotunnel vehicle shuttles.

The method for passenger trains is similar to that for air travel; time shifts are selected and then passengers are selected at fixed intervals within the time shift. Passengers are interviewed after crossing a predetermined line at Ebbsfleet, St. Pancras, and Ashford International stations on arrival or departure.

In contrast, for vehicle shuttles, crossings are randomly selected and interviewing takes place on board the shuttles themselves. Because of time constraints, only a certain number of interviews can be carried out on any individual shuttle and the sampling interval used is therefore dependent on traffic volumes.

### **Producing national estimates**

Once the information has been collected from respondents, the survey data are weighted to produce national estimates, which are then published on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis.

The basis of the weighting of IPS survey data is that the total set of respondents interviewed at a port or route is weighted up/calibrated to passenger traffic known to have passed through that port or route in the period in question. The known passenger traffic information is provided to the IPS team by CAA, Department for Transport, Eurostar, Eurotunnel, BAA and a number of airports themselves.

The weighting approach incorporates a number of stages which take account of all passengers selected for interview. Weighting is conducted for each port/route and direction of travel combination, employing the same principles at each one. The stages, listed in order of application, are as follows.

#### **Stage 1**

A **Design weight** is employed, to account for the probability of sampling this passenger using the first-stage sampling rate.

The calculation compares the number of shifts or crossings sampled (at each port/route and direction of travel combination) with the number of shifts or crossings that could have been sampled for that combination in the period. In addition it takes into account the first-stage sampling rate. For example, in a case where a contact was sampled at a port with the following details:

- 10 shifts were run in the period,
- 100 shifts could have been run in the period,
- The contact was the sample employing a first stage sampling rate of 20 (that is, every 20th passenger was selected).

The Design weight for this contact would be 200, calculated as  $(100/10) \times 20$ . As well as port/route and direction, this weight incorporates weekday or weekend, and am, pm or night as weighting strata.

## Stage 2

A **Non-response weight** factor is employed to take account of contacts selected for interview but who were subsequently not interviewed, either because it was not possible to contact them or they refused to participate.

The weight is applied at each port/route and direction of travel combination and also incorporates weekday versus weekend as weighting strata. It involves uplifting 'complete' and 'minimums' cases by a factor calculated as:

- The sum of weights applied to all 'completes', 'minimums' and 'non-response' records,
- Divided by the sum of 'completes' and 'minimums' at that port/route and direction of travel combination.

## Stage 3

A **second Design weight** is applied to account for the second-phase of the sample design and relates to the sub-sampling of non-migrants. The weight for this factor is simply equal to:

- The ratio second-stage sample interval: first-stage sample interval for non-migrants, and
- 1 for migrants.

## Stage 4

A weight factor is applied for discarding minimum respondents. **Minimum** interviews are discarded in this step of the weighting, with other cases weighted up to compensate. The purpose of applying this weight is that it is possible that the profile of minimums might be skewed to certain nationalities or residents of certain countries (for example driven by language difficulties meaning that only minimal information is provided to the interviewer).

This weighting step works to the same principle as the non-response weight. It utilises port/route and direction of travel as weighting strata.

## Stage 5

Weighting to the **sampling frame**. Here the population (that is, passenger traffic) or the ports and routes covered by the sampling frame are used to weight the data. The population excludes interlining passengers (those neither entering nor leaving the UK from this port, that is, simply changing international flights) and out-of-hours traffic (that is, arriving or departing outside the hours covered by the IPS interviewing at that port). The weight is applied at each port/route and direction of travel combination.

## Stage 6

Weighting for frame **under coverage**. This extends the above population weighting to compensate for not covering certain ports and times of day (out-of-hours traffic) in the survey sample. The weight utilises port/route and direction of travel as weighting strata and also incorporates region of the world that traffic has come from/gone to. The weight reflects the fact that flights to and from some parts of the world are more likely than others to arrive, or take off at night, when no interviewing is conducted at airports.

## Stage 7

Weighting for observed **imbalance**. This step is used to correct an observed imbalance between the number of non-migrants entering and leaving the UK. These are applied as a series of fixed factors, relating to direction of travel, port/route and country/residence.

It has been noted since spring 2009 that there has been an increase in the proportion of respondents in the IPS overseas travel and tourism sample who are starting their visit compared to the proportion ending their visit. This proportion of the two types of traveller in the sample defines the estimates of travel and tourism.

There is no clear reason for this trend and ONS has taken steps to calibrate its overseas travel and tourism estimates with external data, notably estimates from surveying conducted at departure gates at main airports in the UK by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and e-borders data. This work has shown general consistency between the datasets with the result that the factors used in the imbalance weight have been retained. However, this is an area of ongoing research.

## Stage 8

A **final weight** is applied, which combines each of the weighting stages listed above.

## Imputation

Where the responses for key items of interest are missing from the survey data for an individual record the values are imputed. Imputation is applied to the following items:

- Length of stay,
- Cost of fare (expressed in terms of cost of the single fare for the respondent),
- Spend,
- Town of stay.

For each of length of stay, cost of fare and spend, a value is calculated for the survey record which had the information missing. The IPS employs a mean-value within class imputation procedure where the missing value is replaced with the average value for records with similar characteristics. The matching variables used for each of these items are:

- **Length of stay: Country of visiting from; Purpose of visit.**
- **Cost of fare: Port in UK travelling to/from; Overseas port travelled to/from; Month of travel; Operator.**
- **Spend: Country of visit/visiting from; Duration; Purpose of visit.**

Where the respondent has travelled on a package holiday, the cost of the fare is imputed and then deducted from the total cost of the package, and the residual cost (after removal of a percentage to cover travel agent fees) is assigned to expenditure.

Overseas residents staying in the UK are asked about their total expenditure in the UK. This information is then imputed across the towns stayed in, proportionate to the length of stay in each one. It is recognised that people tend to spend more when they stay in London than in other towns in the UK and therefore an uplift index is calculated and applied to the spend allocated to London in cases where the respondent stayed in both London and other towns in the UK.

In cases where an overseas resident hasn't given details of all the towns in the UK they stayed in, an uplift is applied to towns stayed in by similar records, using the same principles as outlined above for the imputation of stay, fares and spend.

### **Seasonal adjustment**

The number of travellers and their spending both have a clear seasonal pattern, with more visits and spending in the summer than in the winter. Statistical techniques are used by ONS with the package X-12-ARIMA to produce seasonally adjusted figures. These figures show visits and spending with an estimate for the seasonal component removed. They allow more meaningful comparisons to be made between months and quarters of the year and help to identify underlying trends.

More details on seasonal adjustment procedures can be obtained from the IPS Branch of ONS.

### **Constant prices**

Usually, spending by overseas residents in the UK and UK residents abroad grows each year as the price of goods and services rise. Constant price figures are calculated by ONS to show real spending across years with the effects of price inflation removed.

For overseas residents' expenditure in the UK, an index is created by splitting spending into its component parts (accommodation, meals and so on) using past IPS data and uprating these components by their related retail price indices. The resulting index is then used to rebase the overseas figures back to 1995 prices.

For UK residents abroad, spending is split by country of visit. Consumer price indices for particular countries are used with currency conversion rates to produce an index of price rises. The index is then used to rebase UK residents' spending to 1995 prices.

### **Additional sources of data**

The method above explains how the national estimates are produced based on the routes sampled on the IPS. Unfortunately, as the IPS does not cover all passenger routes, additional figures have to be obtained from other sources or estimates and added to the totals derived from the IPS. These additions are:

- UK residents on cruises departing from or arriving at UK shores,

- Channel Islands expenditure and receipts from tourism, from the Economic Advisor's office in Jersey,
- Rail fares purchased by overseas visitors to the UK and UK visitors abroad before the start of their visit, and
- Estimates of travel across the land border between Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic, from the Irish Central Statistical Office. For years before 1999, information was also provided regarding travel on air and sea routes between the UK and the Irish Republic. However, since 1999, the air and sea routes have been covered by the IPS sample.

### **Changes in methodology introduced in 2005**

Due to a rapid growth in traffic, in 2005 two new residual airports, Liverpool and Prestwick were introduced into the IPS sample for the first time. The introduction of these two airports has some implications for the results of the IPS. The inclusion of these two ports means that there is more likelihood of picking up contacts that reside in, or have visited areas close to, these airports.

The introduction of the new airports caused the IPS research team to review the way that traffic from airports not sampled by the IPS is accounted for in the IPS processing systems. As a result, the systems were modified slightly in order to prevent overestimates or underestimates of traffic occurring at a regional level.

The introduction of the new airports and the subsequent changes made to the processing systems causes a discontinuity in the IPS results. Any comparisons of IPS results for 2005 onwards with earlier years (and especially those of a UK regional nature) therefore should be made with care.

### **Changes in methodology, 2007**

#### **Imputing expenditure**

The methods of computing expenditure (imputation) for cases where no expenditure information is given by the contact changed in 2007. The new method takes account of the duration of stay of the contact which had not been the case previously and means there may be a discontinuity in the expenditure series from 2006 to 2007. The new methodology compensates for possible overestimates of spending which may have arisen in the past due to the average daily spending being generally lower on longer trips than on shorter ones.

#### **Imputing fares**

The costs of a package trip normally include fares to and from the country of visit. For expenditure estimates the fares are deducted from the cost of a package in order to obtain the amount of spending on the visit. The manual method of looking up fares from brochures and from the web was replaced in 2007 by an automated system which uses fares data provided by the respondent.

#### **Coding of UK towns**

In 2007 a more comprehensive approach to coding UK towns was introduced. Interviewers were provided with a more detailed list of towns and boroughs than in the past, meaning that their recording of responses given by respondents was more accurate.

## Changes in methodology, 2009

Aberdeen Airport was introduced to the sample, and as a result, the estimated number of visits to cities and regions in Scotland will have been impacted positively. Belfast International Airport was also introduced but visits to cities and regions in Northern Ireland are not reported in the IPS Overseas Travel and Tourism estimates due to inability to record details of visits made by crossing the Irish land border.

Prior to 2009, known passenger traffic passing through Belfast was allocated to airports in Great Britain. The allocation of this traffic to interviews conducted in Belfast in 2009 will have had some downward impact on estimates of visits to towns and regions in Great Britain. (Airports at Doncaster, Southampton and Bournemouth were added in 2008)

More broadly, the overall methodology of the IPS was changed in 2009, in terms of both sampling and data processing.

Sampling was revised to incorporate an increase in the number of shifts run at many ports outside of Heathrow and a decrease in the number of shifts run at Heathrow. This change was introduced following a Port Survey Review in response to the recommendations put forward by the Inter-Departmental Task Force on Migration Statistics.

Further, the way that shifts are run was changed via the introduction of a system employing a primary sampling interval for screening migrants and a sub-sample interval for travel and tourism contacts. This approach didn't affect the profile of travel and tourism contacts but it did require a change in the way the data is processed.

The data processing involves weighting of all records and imputation of records with information missing at certain questions. The basic principles behind the processing were retained in 2009 but improvements were made in some aspects. This resulted in some discontinuity with a downward impact of approx 2 per cent in visits to the UK and 3 per cent in visits overseas and a further value of less than 1 per cent in earnings and expenditure. [Details \(35.2 Kb Pdf\)](#) are found on the ONS website.

There were no changes in data collection methodology in 2010. However, the methodology used to estimate the number of UK residents departing from or arriving at UK ports on cruises was revised. The new methodology utilises new sources of data, including that published by DfT, IRN Research and the European Cruise Council. This represents an improvement in methodology and has the effect of increasing the estimated number of visits to 'rest of the world' by UK residents by approximately 175,000 compared with 2009.

## Notes to tables and figures

The following conventions have been used in the tables:

0 denotes a figure of less than 0.5

. indicates that data are not available

The sum of spending across sub-categories of visit may not add to total spending. Spend per visit and spend per day by overseas visitors broken down by some categories of visit cannot be calculated by dividing spending by the number of visits. See Appendix B for details. In some cases, percentages in tables in this report from years prior to 2004 may differ by 1.0 per cent from those published in previous years. This is because of changes in the method of rounding figures. The figures in this report are the most accurate.

## Acknowledgements

The IPS is a large continuous survey and ONS would not be able to carry out the survey without the efforts of many different groups of people from a variety of organisations. In particular, ONS wishes to acknowledge the parts played by the following:

1. The interviewers for their role in collecting the information on which the results of the IPS are based.
2. The respondents for the information they have provided.
3. The operators and managers of seaports, airports and rail terminals who give IPS interviewers access to their facilities in order to interview passengers.
4. The companies and organisations that provide additional information and data which enable the IPS results to be produced.

## Appendix D: IPS response rates

Sample surveys such as the IPS depend on achieving high levels of response from the public. Non-respondents often have different characteristics of travel and expenditure compared with those who do respond and this can lead to biases being introduced into the results.

The response rates for the main airports, residual airports, sea routes and the Channel Tunnel are shown in **Table D.1** below. A minimum response is one where the contact's nationality and country of residence were known but where the reason for visit, date the visit began or the country visited were not obtained. The overall response rate in 2011 was 79 per cent of the sample. The overall response rates for sea and tunnel routes remained consistently higher than those at most of the airports.

**Table D.1, IPS response rates 2010 and 2011: by type of response and UK port**

Per cent

	Complete or partials		Minimum response		Total response	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
Heathrow terminal 1	64	64	5	5	69	69
Heathrow terminal 3	74	74	4	5	79	79
Heathrow terminal 4	73	71	6	4	79	75
Heathrow terminal 5	72	72	5	4	75	76
Heathrow transits	77	71	5	5	82	76
Gatwick North	89	82	1	2	90	84
Gatwick South	88	83	1	1	90	84
Manchester terminal 1	84	84	1	1	85	85
Manchester terminal 2	91	91	1	2	93	93
Manchester terminal 3	86	85	1	2	88	87
Stansted	92	86	1	3	93	89
Other airports	96	82	2	1	87	83
Sea	87	88	1	1	88	89
Channel Tunnel	87	81	1	1	88	83
Total	81	79	3	3	83	82

**Table source:** Office for National Statistics

## Download table

**XLS** [XLS format](#)

(20 Kb)

### Appendix E: Accuracy of Overseas Travel and Tourism estimates

The estimates contained in this publication are subject to sampling errors that result because not every traveller to or from the UK is interviewed on the survey. 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 proportionately smaller is its sampling error.

Table A shows the sampling errors for the main 2011 estimates of the total number of visits, nights and expenditure, for both overseas residents visiting the UK and UK residents going abroad. ‘Complex’ sampling errors, which fully account for the clustered sample design of the survey, are shown in the table.

The method used to estimate sampling errors on the IPS takes into account the main features of the sample design described in the sections on Sampling and Producing national estimates in Appendix C. The approach accounts for the two-stage sampling (individuals within shifts), the stratification used when drawing the sample of shifts, differential sampling and initial non-response weights and post stratification to traffic totals.

Both standard errors and the 95 per cent confidence intervals are quoted, the latter representing the interval into which there are 19 chances out of 20 that the true figure (had all travellers been surveyed) would fall. The 95 per cent confidence intervals are given both in absolute and relative (percentage) terms – the estimate plus or minus the value, or percentage, gives the appropriate interval for each estimate.

Further details on the confidence intervals of data from the IPS and their interpretation can be obtained from the IPS Branch of ONS.

**Table A, IPS Sampling errors for 2011 estimates**

	Standard error	Absolute 95% confidence interval	Relative 95% confidence interval
<b>Overseas visitors to the UK</b>			
Number of visits (1000s)	295	578	1.9%
Number of visitor-nights (1000s)	3,246	6,362	2.7%
Total earnings (£ million)	248	486	2.7%
<b>UK residents going abroad</b>			
Number of visits (1000s)	322	631	1.1%
Number of visitor-nights (1000s)	4,892	9,588	1.6%
Total expenditure (£ million)	252	493	1.6%

**Table source:** Office for National Statistics

### Download table

[XLS](#) [XLS format](#)

(25.5 Kb)

The tables below show the sampling errors and confidence intervals for 2011 estimates relating to various purposes for visit and region of the world, together with regions of the UK visited. Relative confidence intervals are also shown for estimates relating to individual country of visit to and from the UK.

## Sampling errors and confidence intervals

	Standard error	Absolute 95% confidence interval	Relative 95% confidence interval
<b>Overseas visitors to the UK</b>			
<b>Number of visits by purpose</b>			
Holiday	181	355	3.0%
Business	145	284	3.9%
Visit friends or relatives	155	304	3.5%
Miscellaneous	67	131	4.9%
<b>Expenditure by purpose of visit</b>			
Holiday	168	330	4.8%
Business	116	227	5.2%
Visit friends or relatives	90	176	4.5%
Miscellaneous	118	232	9.1%
<b>UK residents going abroad</b>			
<b>Number of visits by purpose</b>			
Holiday	301	591	1.6%
Business	151	297	4.4%
Visit friends or relatives	173	340	3.0%
Miscellaneous	54	105	7.5%
<b>Expenditure by purpose of visit</b>			
Holiday	212	415	2.0%
Business	139	272	6.1%
Visit friends or relatives	85	167	3.7%
Miscellaneous	76	149	14.5%

	Standard error	Absolute 95% confidence interval	Relative 95% confidence interval
<b>Overseas visitors to the UK</b>			
<b>Overseas visitors to the UK</b>			
<b>Number of visits by region of residence</b>			
North America	71	139	3.9%
Europe	284	558	2.5%
Other Countries	72	141	3.0%
<b>Expenditure by region of residence</b>			
North America	86	168	5.8%
Europe	191	374	3.9%
Other Countries	135	265	5.0%
<b>UK residents going abroad</b>			
<b>Number of visits by region</b>			
North America	81	159	4.3%
Europe	338	662	1.5%
Other Countries	131	258	2.9%
<b>Expenditure by region</b>			
North America	105	207	5.4%
Europe	197	386	2.0%
Other Countries	164	322	3.9%
<b>Overseas visitors to the UK</b>			
<b>Number of visits by region of visit</b>			
London	197	386	2.5%

	Standard error	Absolute 95% confidence interval	Relative 95% confidence interval
<b>Overseas visitors to the UK</b>			
Rest of England	173	340	2.6%
Scotland	101	197	8.4%
Wales	40	78	8.9%
<b>Expenditure by region of visit</b>			
London	163	320	3.4%
Rest of England	128	251	4.0%
Scotland	141	277	18.5%
Wales	21	42	12.7%

Table source: Office for National Statistics

### Download table

[XLS](#) [XLS format](#)  
(27 Kb)

### Confidence intervals: 2011 visits, spending and nights by country of residence or visit

[Table 2 Appendix E: Visits to UK by Overseas Residents, 2011 \(25 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

[Table 3 Appendix E: Visits abroad by UK Residents, 2011 \(25.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

### Notes

- Any differences in the 'Estimates' figures contained in the tables in Appendix E and those in the tables in the main body of this document are due to the tables in Appendix E being calculated purely from IPS sample, rather than processed data which includes estimates such as visits made across the Irish land border. The tables in Appendix E should be referenced only for the purpose of identifying sampling errors.

### Appendix F: Access to IPS data and analysis

#### IPS results published by ONS

In addition to Travel Trends, ONS also publishes monthly and quarterly results from the IPS that are available free of charge from the Office for National Statistics website. These, data tables from the IPS and other statistics relating to travel and tourism are available at the [Tourism theme page](#) on the Office for National Statistics website.

The website also provides more information about the International Passenger Survey including the current [IPS questionnaire and interviewer instructions](#).

It should be noted that all IPS results published by ONS are subject to Crown Copyright. Reproduction of material is permitted under the terms of the Open Government Licence. Details of this are at the front of this report.

## **Travelpac**

To enable easier examination of the IPS data, a simplified version of the IPS database called Travelpac, comprising 14 of the most widely used variables, is available at the [Tourism theme page](#) on the Office for National Statistics website.

Data are available online for each year from 1993 onwards.

IPS databases are available through the Data Archive at Essex University. Contact details are as follows:

Telephone: +44 (0) 1206 872143

Web: [Data Archive Homepage](#)

## **Other analyses**

General enquiries about the IPS should be directed to:

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Data Advice Relations Team,

Room 2201,

Government Buildings,

Cardiff Road,

Newport.

NP10 8XG

Telephone: +44 (0)1633 455678

E-mail: [socialsurveys@ons.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:socialsurveys@ons.gsi.gov.uk)