London 2012 Games attract over half a million overseas visitors in July and August

There were an estimated 590,000 completed visits to the UK by overseas residents in July and August either specifically for the 2012 Olympics/Paralympics (participating, working or watching) or primarily for another reason but involving attendance at a ticketed event.

However, the total number of 3.0 million visits in August (for any purpose) was 5 per cent lower than in August 2011. Despite this, the amount of money spent in the UK was 9 per cent higher than the same period 2011, with the UK earning nearly £2.4 billion from all visits in August 2012. This figure includes any money spent on purchase of Olympics tickets.

The average amount of money spent by Olympics-visitors was £1,290 per person, almost twice as much as the average £650 spent by other visitors.

The majority of visits for the Games were made by European residents, with an equal share coming from North America and other countries around the world.

The fall in total visit numbers in August followed recent falls in June and July. Visits to the UK in that period were 7 per cent lower than in 2011 while spending on those visits was in line with 2011.

In 2012 year to date the number of visits from overseas residents is unchanged in percentage terms from 2011 and spending is 3 per cent higher.

In August 2012, UK residents made 7.3 million visits abroad. This is 1 per cent lower than in 2011, but expenditure on these visits is 6 per cent higher than in 2011, with total spend by UK residents abroad being over £4.5 billion.

The distribution of visits abroad by region of destination (North America, Europe and other countries) in 2012 year to date is similar to 2011. However, holidays have fallen by 2 per cent from 25.9 million to 25.3 million.

Read the full report.

Media contact:
Tel Martin Nicholls 0845 6041858
Emergency on-call 07867 906553
E-mail press.office@ons.gsi.gov.uk

Statistical contact:
Tel Roger Smith 01633 455277
E-mail socialsurveys@ons.gsi.gov.uk

Website:
www.ons.gov.uk
Background notes

1. The London 2012 Olympic Games took place from 27 July to 12 August. The London 2012 Paralympic Games opened 29 August and closed 9 September.

2. The estimates contained in the report are based on interviews completed on the International Passenger Survey conducted by ONS. A visit is recorded when a traveller finishes the visit. Therefore any visits commencing in August but not completed until September or later are not included in the estimates.

3. Earnings relates to overseas-sourced money spent by travellers (and earned by the UK) in relation to this visit. It includes any money spent before or after the visit and as such includes Olympics ticket sales regardless of when they were purchased.

4. As outlined in ONS’s Special Events Policy, it is not possible to make an estimate of the full effect of the Olympics and Paralympics on total visits to the UK because other factors may have influenced visit patterns.

5. It has been possible to produce estimates of number of visits to the UK that were associated with the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympics. This is because ONS expanded questionnaire coverage of the International Passenger Survey in 2012 and expanded sample coverage in the first half of August.

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

Copyright

© Crown copyright 2012

You may use or re-use this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/ or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This document is also available on our website at www.ons.gov.uk.