



Northern Ireland Domestic Tourism 2017

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**2.2m
trips**



**5.2m
nights**



**£270m
spent**

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The key points are:

- in 2017, an estimated 2.2 million domestic overnight trips were taken within Northern Ireland by Northern Ireland residents;
- estimated expenditure associated with these domestic overnight trips in Northern Ireland during 2017 was £270 million;
- Northern Ireland residents spent an estimated 0.9 million nights in local hotels during 2017; and
- an estimated 3.7 million overnight trips were taken by Northern Ireland residents outside of Northern Ireland during 2017.

Frequency: Annual
Coverage: Northern Ireland
Theme: People and Places

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

National Statistics Status

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the *Code of Practice for Official Statistics*. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Office for Statistics Regulation. The Office for Statistics Regulation considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is NISRA's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Office for Statistics Regulation. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.



Introduction

This report provides an analysis of the tourism activity of Northern Ireland (NI) residents. A full picture of all tourism activity is provided in the [Northern Ireland Annual Tourism Statistics 2017 publication](#). The statistics in this report and accompanying tables aim to give an indication of the levels of domestic tourism along with some information on where NI residents take trips outside of Northern Ireland.

The information provided is the result of sample surveys (collected in the Continuous Household Survey (CHS)) and is used to estimate the headline statistics of overnight trips, with the associated nights and expenditure, taken by Northern Ireland residents. The results from sample surveys are always estimates and not precise figures. This means that they are subject to margins of error which can have an impact on how the estimates should be interpreted, especially regarding comparisons over the short term.

What you can say....

The sources show a fluctuating trend in estimated overnight trips in Northern Ireland by Northern Ireland residents from 2011 and a general upward trend in estimated expenditure over the same period. There has been no statistically significant change in the estimated number of overnight trips and expenditure between 2016 and 2017.

What you cannot say....

There was a definite increase in overnight trips by Northern Ireland residents within Northern Ireland from 1,984,392 in 2016 to 2,193,428 in 2017 with associated expenditure increasing by 14% from £237 million to £270 million over the same period.

Overnight Volume/Latest Trend in Northern Ireland

Figure 1: Rolling 12 months NI domestic overnight trips and associated expenditure within NI, Q4 2011-Q4 2017

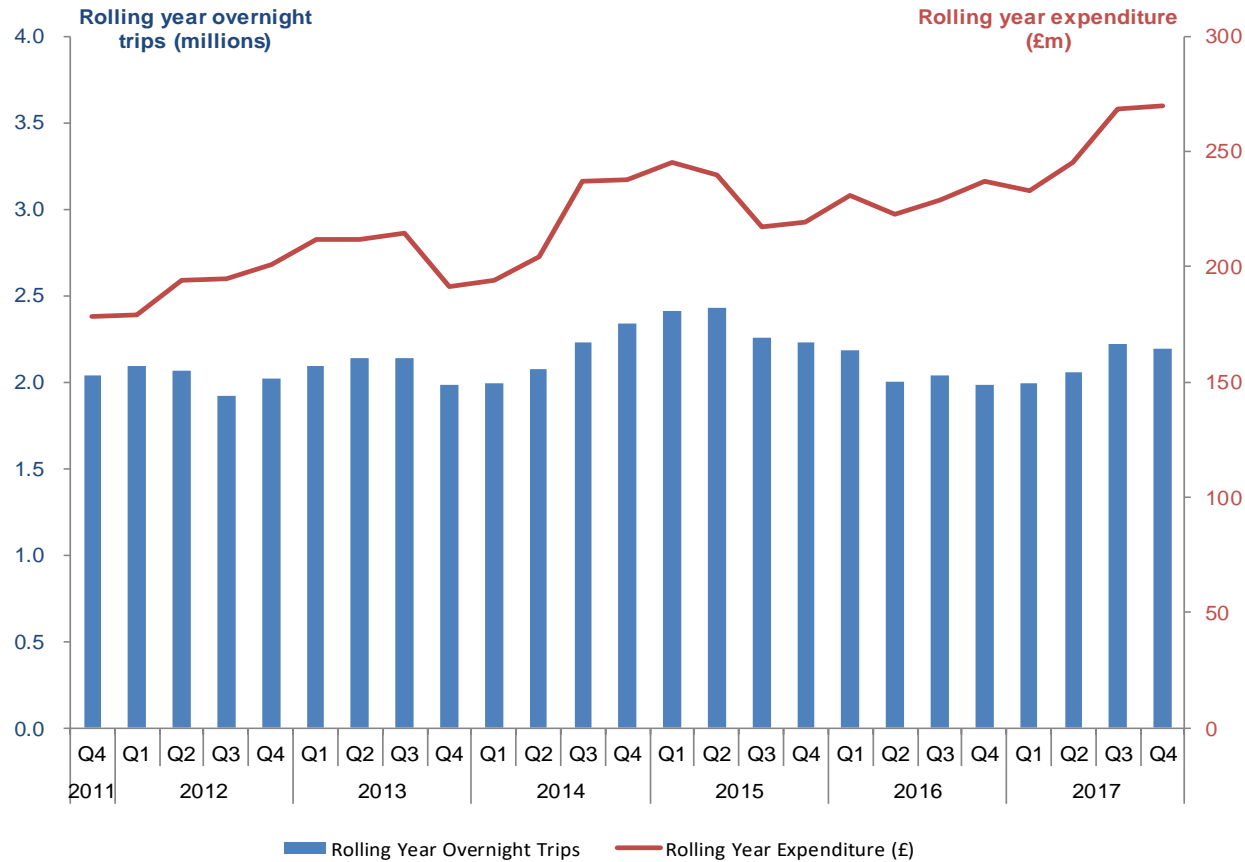


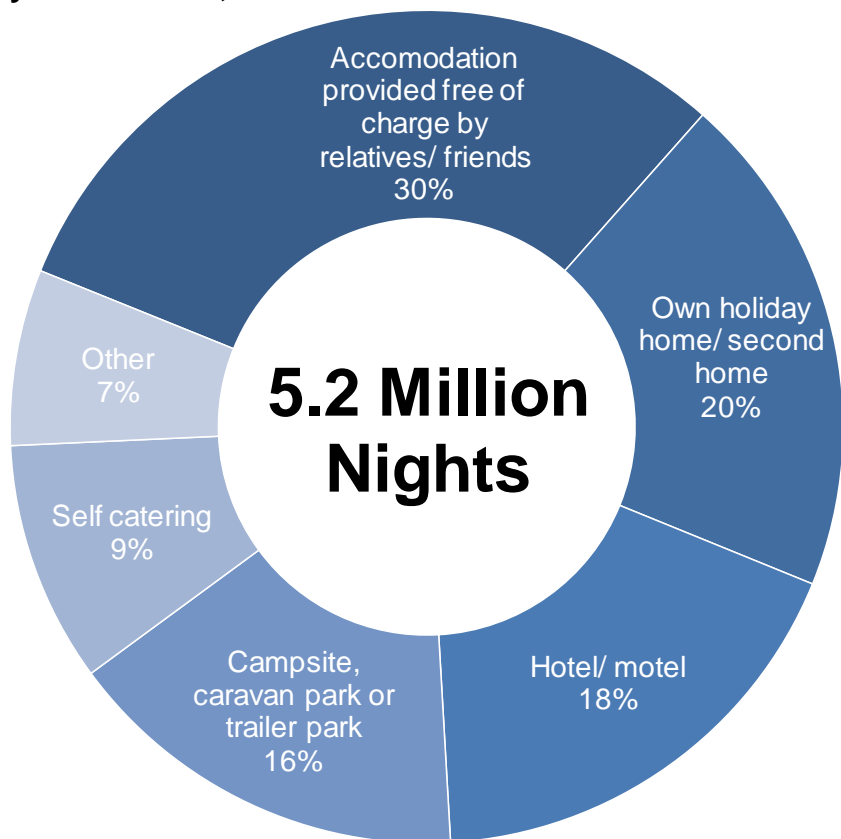
Figure 1 shows the rolling year (twelve month) domestic estimated overnight trips and associated spend from quarter four 2011-2017. It shows that the trend for the estimated number of overnight trips taken by NI residents within NI has fluctuated since 2011 when the series began and estimated expenditure shows an upward trend.

In 2017, the average duration of an overnight trip within NI was 2.4 nights with an average spend per trip of £123 and an average spend per night of £52.

Accommodation used by Northern Ireland Residents during Overnight Trip Nights in Northern Ireland

In 2017, an estimated 5.2 million nights were spent on domestic overnight trips in NI. It is estimated that almost one third (30%) of these nights were spent in accommodation provided free of charge by relatives/friends and one fifth (20%) of nights were spent in own holiday homes/second homes. Almost one fifth (18%) of nights were spent in a hotel or motel (Figure 2).

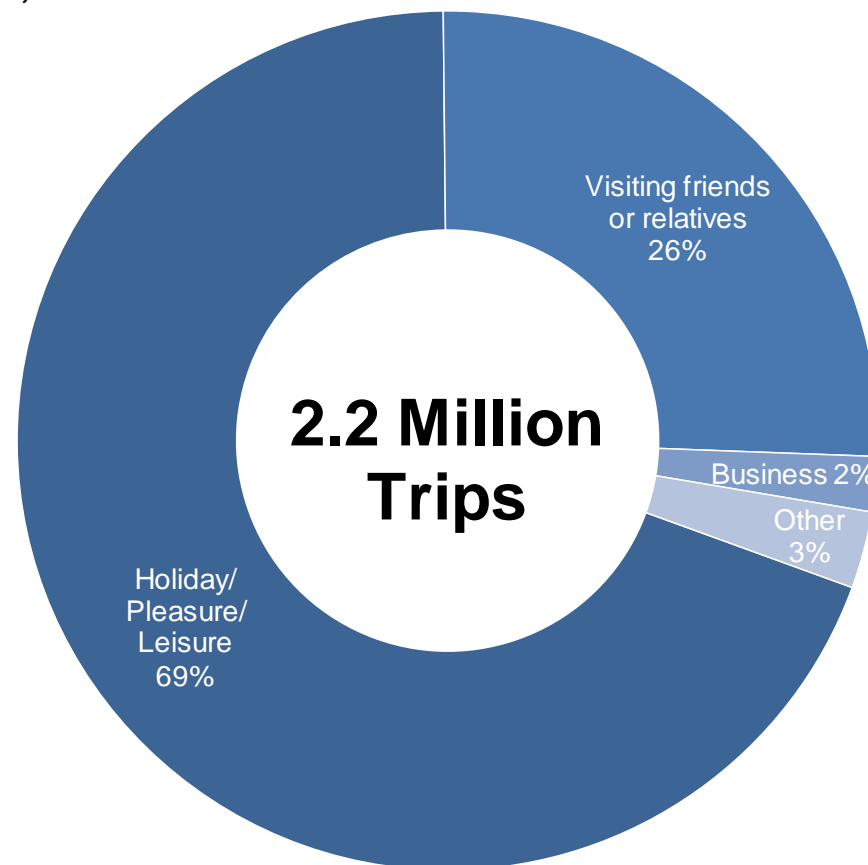
Figure 2: Proportion of nights spent in NI by accommodation type used by NI residents, 2017



Reason for Overnight Trips taken in Northern Ireland by Northern Ireland Residents

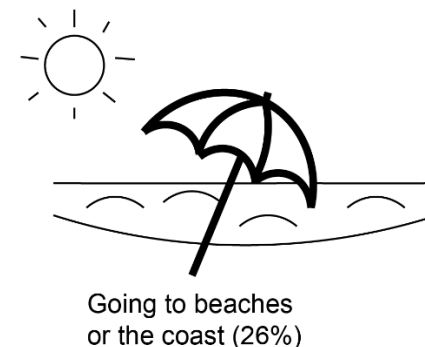
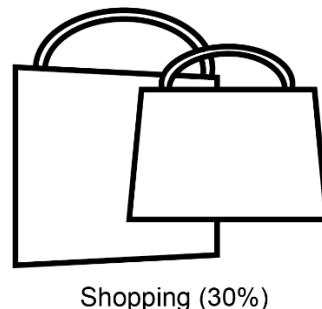
Figure 3 shows that, over two thirds (69%) of the estimated domestic overnight trips taken were for a holiday and just over one quarter (26%) were to visit friends or relatives.

Figure 3: Purpose of overnight trips taken by NI residents within NI, 2017



Activities reported on overnight trips in Northern Ireland

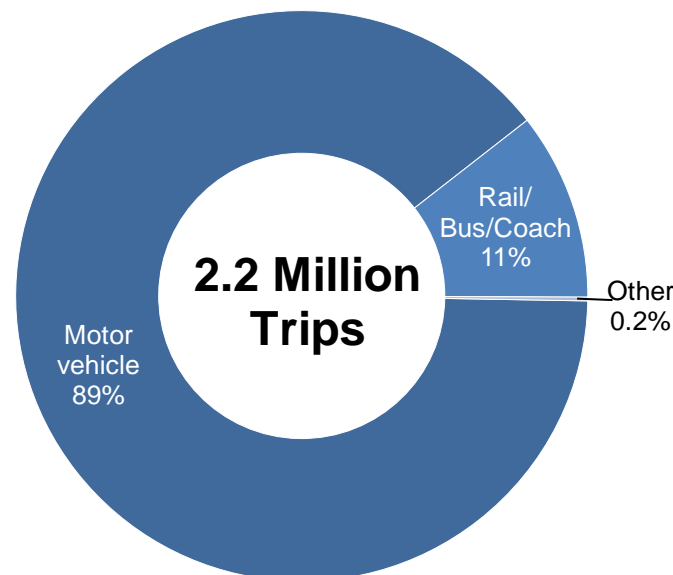
In 2017, it is estimated that the most popular activities partaken by NI residents on domestic overnight trips were hiking, cross country walking or short walks (52%), going to a restaurant, café, pub or nightclub (47%), shopping (30%) and going to beaches or the coast (26%).



Type of transport used on overnight trips in Northern Ireland

During 2017, it is estimated that 89% of domestic overnight trips in Northern Ireland by NI residents used a motor vehicle for the journey. Rail, bus, or coach was the method of transport used for 11% of estimated overnight trips.

Figure 4: Type of transport used on overnight trips by NI residents within NI, 2017.



Main reason for not taking an overnight trip in Northern Ireland

Those surveyed who did not take a domestic overnight trip in Northern Ireland in 2017 (within the 4 weeks prior to interview) were asked to provide their main reason. The most common response was “Prefer to stay at home, no motivation to travel” (21%) and “Lack of free time due to family commitments” (20%). This was followed by “Lack of free time due to work or study commitments” (17%) and “Financial reasons” (15%).

Table 1: Main reason for not taking an overnight trip in NI, 2011-2017

	Percentage	
	2016	2017
Prefer to stay at home, no motivation to travel	24%	21%
Lack of free time due to family commitments	24%	20%
Lack of free time due to work or study commitments	17%	17%
Financial reasons	16%	15%
Health reasons or reduced mobility	12%	12%
Recently returned from an overnight trip*		11%
Other	6%	4%
Total	100%	100%

**Note: The “Recently returned from an overnight trip” category was introduced in 2017*

Overnight trips outside of Northern Ireland

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 2017 was 5.9 million. Nearly two thirds of these overnight trips (63% or 3.7 million) were taken outside of Northern Ireland. Of these external trips, just over a quarter (26%) were to Great Britain, over a third (35%) were to the Republic of Ireland and nearly two fifths were outside the UK and Republic of Ireland.

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 spent.

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. For 2017, the confidence interval around the estimates of all overnight trips by Northern Ireland residents in NI stands at +/-9% while the confidence interval around the estimates for expenditure on all overnight trips by Northern Ireland residents in NI stands at +/-10%. 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 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

Source

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>

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