

Household Travel Survey – Methodological Change (August 2016)

In August 2016, the Central Statistics Office (CSO) implemented an improved weighting scheme to the Household Travel Survey (HTS); which has been applied retrospectively to Quarter one 2012.

With regards to Northern Ireland (NI) Tourism Statistics, the HTS is the source for the number of overnight trips to NI by residents of the Republic of Ireland (RoI). Additional information is also provided associated with these overnight trips including number of nights, expenditure, reason for visit, and accommodation type used whilst in NI.

Methodological Change

Central Statistics Office treats overnight trips to NI by residents of RoI as outbound travel. The change in weighting to outbound travel is detailed below:

From Quarter one 2012 onwards, survey data for outbound travel are weighted to agree with population estimates broken down by sex, age group and region (NUTS 3). These population estimates are provided by CSO's Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS). These weightings are then applied to survey results. The results for outbound travel are subsequently further weighted to agree with the Tourism & Travel results.

Revisions to data

There have been revisions to outbound travel data from Quarter one 2012 onwards as a result of the change to the weighting methodology. Revised data are published in the Northern Ireland Tourism Statistics April 2015 to March 2016 tables release. The Northern Ireland Annual Tourism Statistics 2015 and the External Overnight Visitors to Northern Ireland 2015 were also revised as of the 12th August 2016 to include the revised HTS data from Quarter one 2012 onwards.

Due to the revisions in the HTS data, discontinuities in all of the series relating to NI Tourism Statistics have occurred. Therefore, results of RoI residents taking overnight trips to NI (their associated number of nights and expenditure) from Quarter one 2012 onwards are not directly comparable to results prior to Quarter one 2012. However, the impact on the overall tourism in Northern Ireland (trips, nights and spend during overnight trips) was minimal and insignificant; so NISRA will continue to plot results on the same chart including a footnote on when the change occurred.

A summary of the impact these revisions have had on the number of overnight trips, associated number of nights and expenditure of (i) residents of the RoI to NI; (ii) external trips to NI and (iii) total trips (external and domestic) in NI; can be found in Tables 1 – 3 below.

Summary effect of revisions of data due to new methodology

Table 1: Overnight trips (000's), associated number of nights (000's) and expenditure (£m) of RoI residents to NI 2012 to 2015⁽¹⁾⁽³⁾⁽⁵⁾

	2012	2013	2014	2015
Rol overnight trips to NI (pre-revised)	430,000	400,000	389,000	320,000
Rol overnight trips to NI (revised)	453,000	396,000	390,000	336,000
% Difference	+5.2%	-0.9%	+0.3%	+5.2%
Rol number of nights in NI (pre-revised)	1,181,000	1,096,000	1,071,000	812,000
Rol number of nights in NI (revised)	1,248,000	1,003,000	1,088,000	850,000
% Difference	+5.6%	-8.5%	+1.6%	+4.8%
Rol expenditure in NI (pre-revised)	70	57	68	57
Rol expenditure in NI (revised)	67	50	61	61
% Difference	-3.2%	-12.3%	-9.6%	+6.9%

Table 2: External overnight trips (000's), associated number of nights (000's) and expenditure (£m) to NI 2012 to 2015⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾⁽³⁾⁽⁵⁾

	2012	2013	2014	2015
External overnight trips to NI (pre-revised)	1,984,000	2,093,000	2,177,000	2,285,000
External overnight trips to NI (revised)	2,006,000	2,089,000	2,179,000	2,301,000
% Difference	+1.1%	-0.2%	+0.1%	+0.7%
External number of nights in NI (pre-revised)	9,885,000	9,910,000	10,016,000	10,642,000
External number of nights in NI (revised)	9,952,000	9,817,000	10,033,000	10,680,000
% Difference	+0.7%	-0.9%	+0.2%	+0.4%
External expenditure in NI (pre-revised)	488	531	514	541
External expenditure in NI (revised)	485	524	507	545
% Difference	-0.5%	-1.3%	-1.3%	+0.7%

Table 3: Total (external and domestic) overnight trips (000's), associated number of nights (000's) and expenditure (£m) to NI 2012 to 2015⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾⁽³⁾⁽⁴⁾⁽⁵⁾

	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total overnight trips to NI (pre-revised)	4,002,000	4,073,000	4,512,000	4,515,000
Total overnight trips to NI (revised)	4,025,000	4,069,000	4,513,000	4,532,000
% Difference	+0.6%	-0.1%	+0.0%	+0.4%
Total number of nights in NI (pre-revised)	13,791,000	14,487,000	15,065,000	15,432,000
Total number of nights in NI (revised)	13,858,000	14,394,000	15,082,000	15,471,000
% Difference	+0.5%	-0.6%	+0.1%	+0.2%
Total expenditure in NI (pre-revised)	689	722	751	760
Total expenditure in NI (revised)	686	715	745	764
% Difference	-0.3%	-1.0%	-0.9%	+0.5%

Notes:

(1) All surveys are based on sample surveys and therefore have an associated degree of sampling error. Information on confidence intervals where these are available and sample sizes are provided in the background notes.

(2) Figures derived from the Northern Ireland Passenger Survey (NIPS) conducted by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) and the Survey of Overseas Travellers (SOT) conducted on behalf of Fáilte Ireland.

- (3) *Figures derived from the Household Travel Survey (HTS) conducted by Central Statistics Office (CSO)*
- (4) *Figures derived from the Northern Ireland Continuous Household Survey (CHS) conducted by NISRA.*
- (5) *Data for Calendar Years - January - December*