



Northern Ireland Annual Hotel Occupancy Survey 2017

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The key points are:

- during 2017 room occupancy in Northern Ireland hotels was an estimated 73%. Bed-space occupancy was an estimated 56%;
- there were an estimated 2.11 million rooms sold in Northern Ireland hotels during 2017;
- Belfast hotels saw the highest occupancy rates with an estimated 80% room occupancy and 63% bed space occupancy; and
- the figures point towards a positive year for hotels. Estimates suggest 2017 saw the highest hotel occupancy rates of any year from 2011 onwards.

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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 statistics on Hotel occupancy rates in Northern Ireland during 2017. As occupancy statistics are survey based estimates the statistics provided are an indicator of how hotels are performing.

What you can say....

Whilst we cannot say there has been a statistically significant change in hotel occupancy rates year on year, when looking at the full picture sources point towards a general upward trend since 2011

What you cannot say....

During January to December 2017 there was a definite increase in Northern Ireland hotel room occupancy rates to 73% compared to 70% during 2016

This report should be read in conjunction with other tourism statistics reports for a full picture. When looking at the full picture, sources point toward a general upward trend in hotel occupancy rates since 2011. A full picture of all tourism activity can be found in the [Northern Ireland Annual Tourism Statistics Publication](#).

Hotel Stock

To offer tourist accommodation in Northern Ireland, you must have a certificate from Tourism Northern Ireland (TNI) - TNI refers to this as certification. It is illegal to offer tourist accommodation in NI without a certificate from TNI. The list of certified accommodation in TNI is known as the 'stock'. The table below shows all the available stock as registered with Tourism Northern Ireland.

Table 1: Northern Ireland Hotel Stock 2017

| Year | Hotels | Rooms | Bed Spaces |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| 2012 | 138 | 7,708 | 17,176 |
| 2013 | 138 | 7,893 | 17,661 |
| 2014 | 134 | 7,809 | 17,470 |
| 2015 | 135 | 7,822 | 17,545 |
| 2016 | 137 | 7,916 | 17,739 |
| 2017 | 138 | 8,121 | 18,135 |
| Change 16/17 | 1% | 3% | 2% |

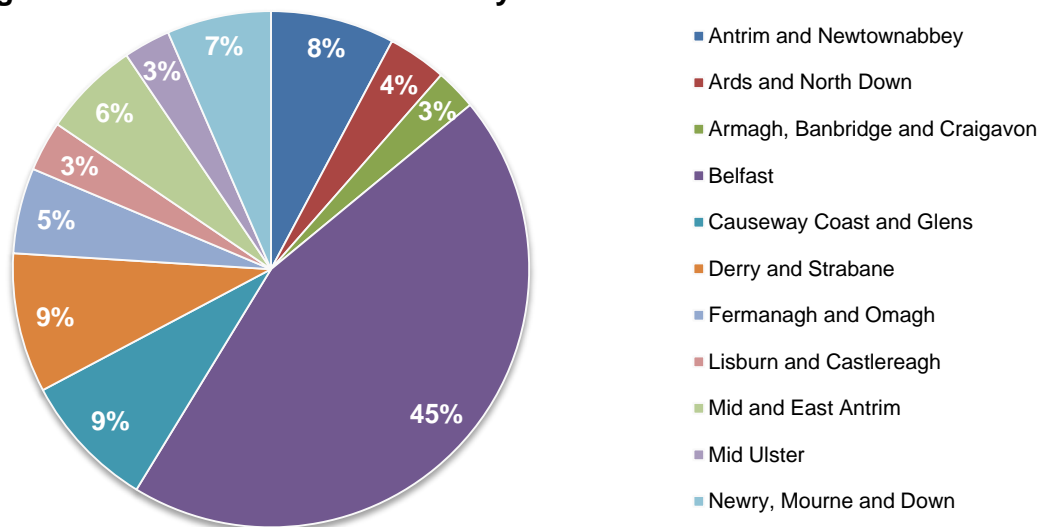
As of the end of December 2017 there were a total of 138 hotels, offering accommodation in Northern Ireland.

The number of hotels increased by 1% when compared to 2016. The number of hotel rooms and beds increased by 3% and 2% respectively over the same period.

Full information on Northern Ireland hotel stock can be found at the following link
[NI Hotel Occupancy Survey Additional Tables](#)

Stock levels and Occupancy Rate by Local Government District

Figure 1: Hotel Room Stock 2017 by Local Government District

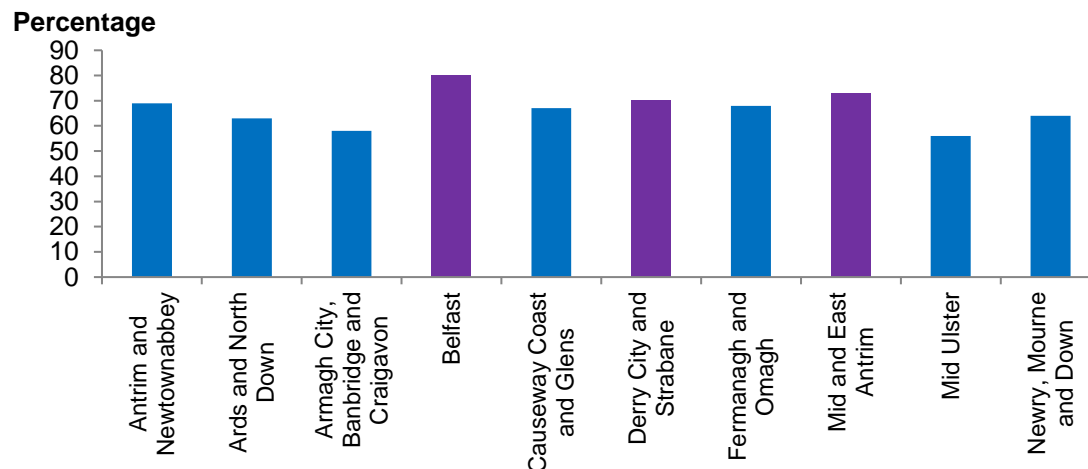


Room Stock

Belfast
Causeway Coast and Glens
Derry City and Strabane

Belfast accounted for the highest share of accommodation rooms during 2017 with 45% of the hotel room stock in Northern Ireland. Causeway Coast & Glens and Derry City & Strabane accounted for the second highest hotel room stock both with 9%.

Figure 2: Hotel Room Occupancy 2017 by Local Government District



Room Occupancy

Belfast
Mid and East Antrim
Derry City and Strabane

Belfast had the highest room occupancy during 2017 (80%). Mid & East Antrim experienced the second highest room occupancy rates during 2017 (73%) followed by Derry City & Strabane (70%).

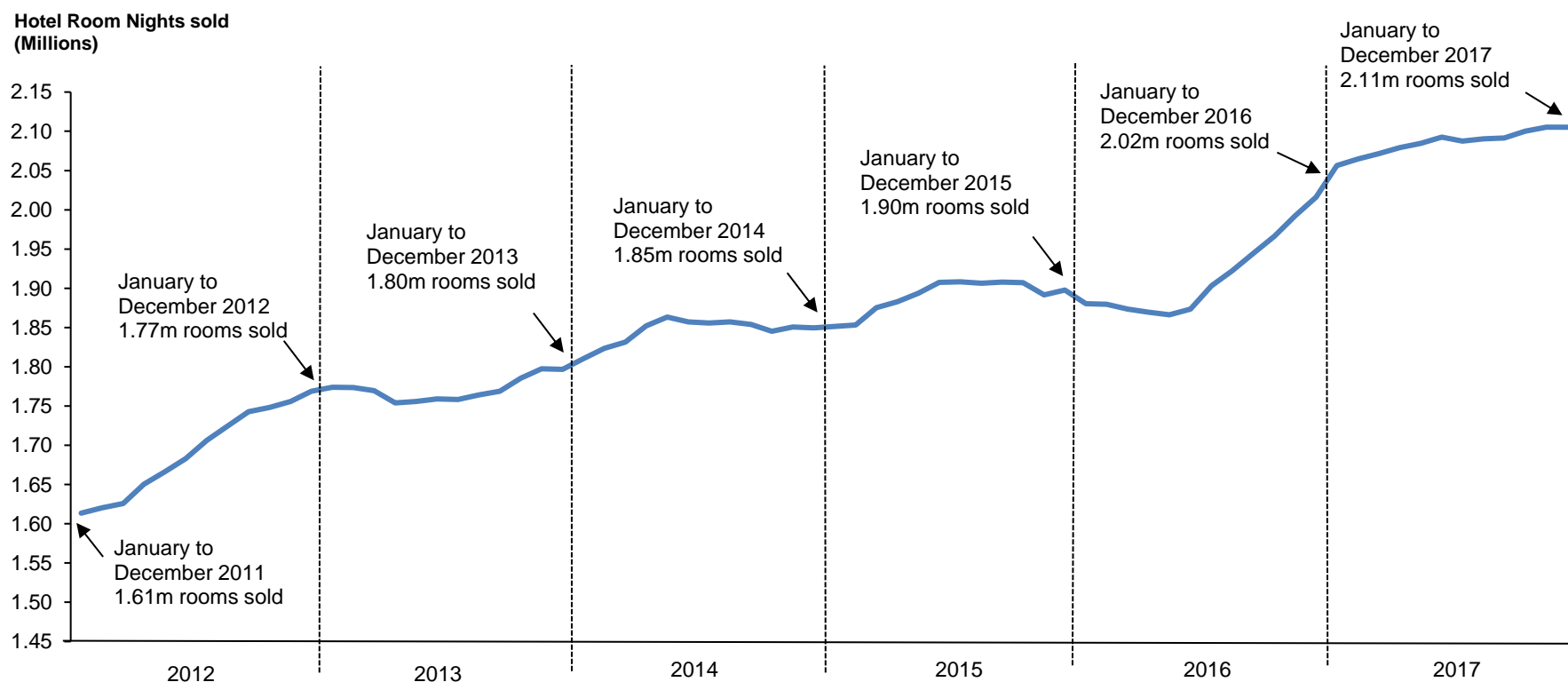
Full information on Northern Ireland hotel stock can be found at the following link
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Hotel Room Nights Sold

Figures for 2017 show the estimated number of hotel room nights sold was 2.11 million and an estimated 3.60 million bed spaces sold. According to the estimates there were an additional 89 thousand hotel room nights sold in 2017 compared to 2016.

See Figure 3 for the rolling twelve month trend in hotel room nights sold from December 2011. The trend suggests an increase over the period in the estimated number of rooms sold in Northern Ireland hotels.

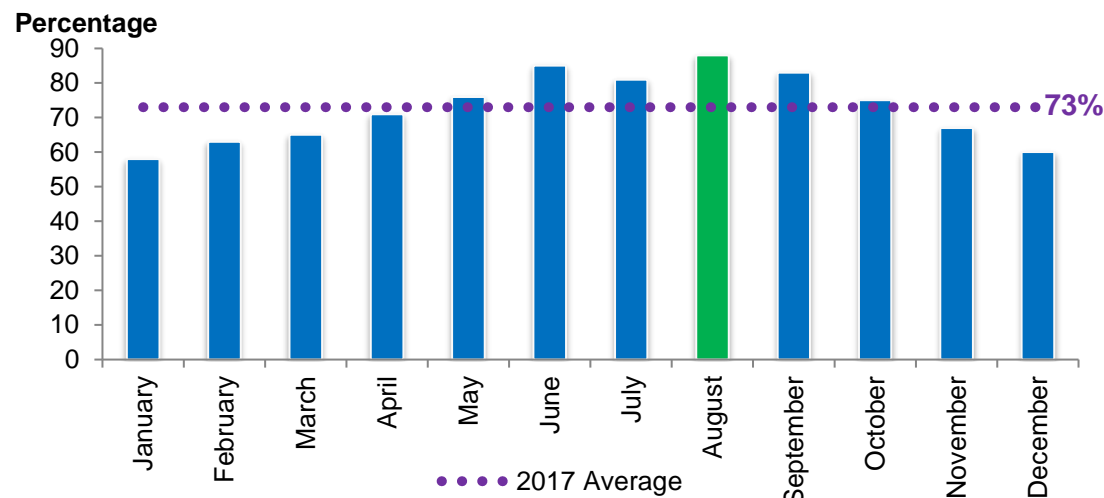
Figure 3: Estimated rolling twelve month hotel room nights sold December 2011- December 2017 (non zero axis)



Full information on Northern Ireland Hotel Occupancy Statistics can be found at the following link
[NI Hotel Occupancy Survey Additional Tables](#)

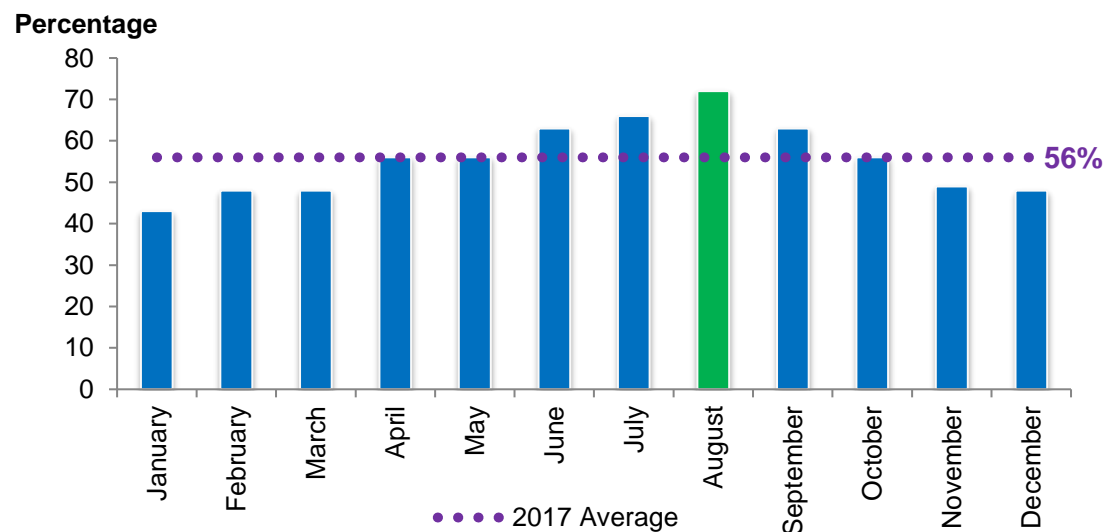
Hotel Occupancy

Figure 4: Northern Ireland Hotel Room Occupancy by Month 2017



During January – December 2017 average room occupancy rates in Northern Ireland hotels were 73%. Average bed space occupancy rates were 56%.

Figure 5: Northern Ireland Hotel Bed Space Occupancy by Month 2017

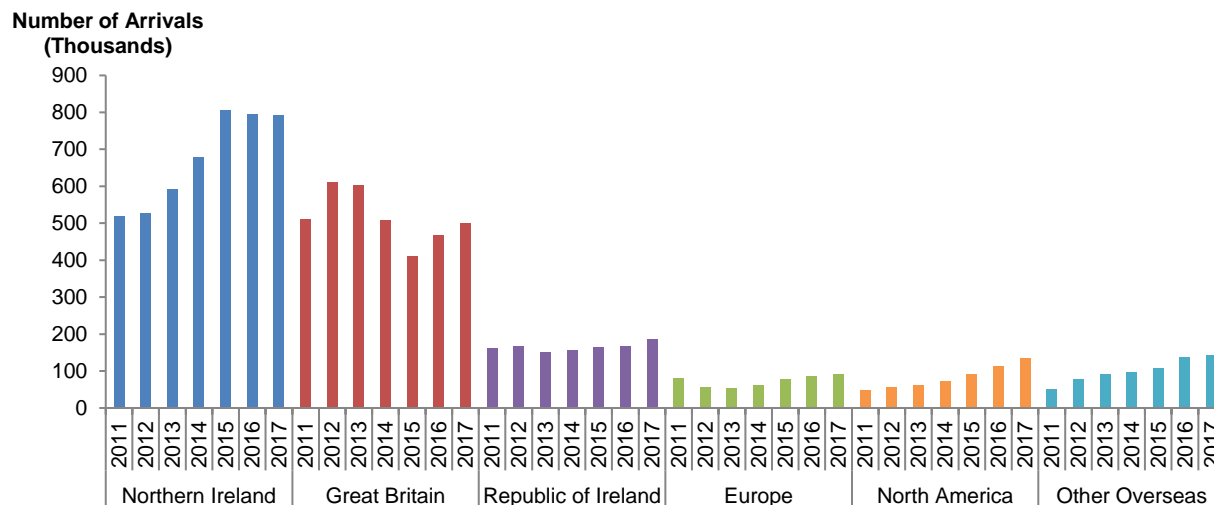


Room and bed-space occupancy rates vary from month to month. Hotel monthly room and bed space occupancy during 2017 was highest in the month of August (88% and 72% respectively). January saw the lowest monthly occupancy rates of 58% room occupancy and 43% bed space occupancy.

Estimated occupancy rates during 2017 were highest in larger hotels (78% room occupancy) and those in the higher price band of £60 plus (74% room occupancy).

Arrivals and Guests

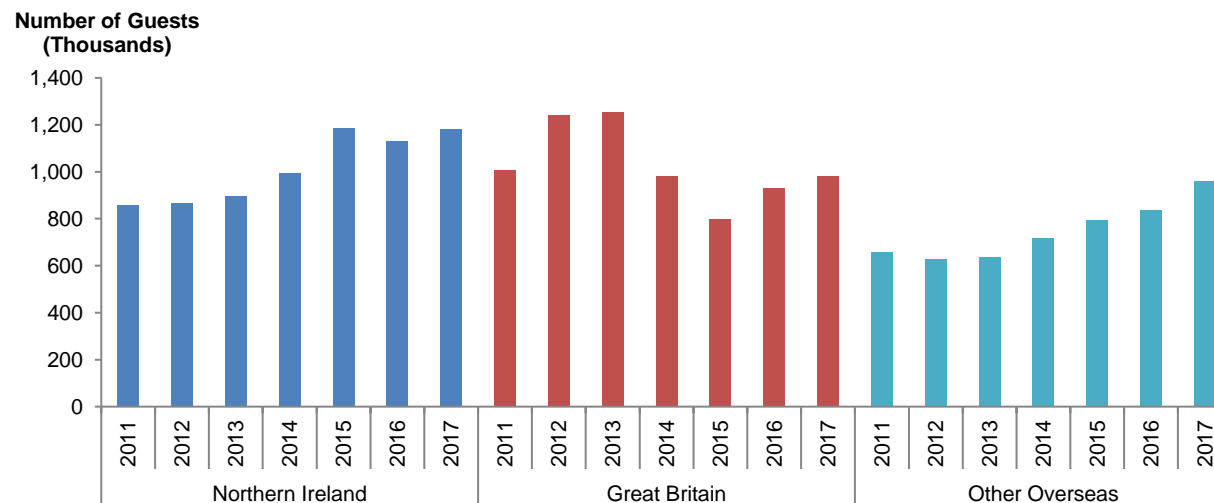
Figure 6: Arrivals to Northern Ireland Hotels 2011 - 2017



It is estimated that there were 1.84 million arrivals to Northern Ireland hotels during 2017. There were an estimated 792,100 arrivals from Northern Ireland residents, accounting for almost half (43%), of the total arrivals for the year. Arrivals from Great Britain made up just over a quarter (27%) of all arrivals with around 499,500 arrivals during 2017 (Figure 6).

When looking at the estimated number of arrivals to Northern Ireland hotels from 2011 onward the figures suggest an upward trend rising from an estimated 1.37m in 2011 to 1.84m in 2017.

Figure 7: Guests to Northern Ireland Hotels 2011 - 2017



During 2017 there were an estimated 3.13 million guests staying in Northern Ireland hotels. Around 62% of hotel guests were from outside Northern Ireland (1.94 million).

Full information on Northern Ireland Hotel Occupancy Statistics can be found at the following link
[NI Hotel Occupancy Survey Additional Tables](#)

Background Notes

To offer tourist accommodation in NI, you must have a certificate from Tourism Northern Ireland (TNI) - TNI refers to this as certification. It is illegal to offer tourist accommodation in NI without a certificate from TNI. The list of certified accommodation from TNI is known as the 'stock'.

The survey uses a census of all hotels in Northern Ireland. Each month, all Hotels are invited to participate in the occupancy survey by completing a questionnaire. The survey is issued both by post and electronically by email. Responses are also accepted by telephone in an effort to boost response rates.

The information is presented in terms of room and bed-space occupancy, and rooms and bed-spaces sold. The room and bed-space occupancy can be influenced by an establishment adding new rooms or bed-spaces which have not been certified or closing rooms for refurbishment throughout the year and can change monthly. Occupancy rates can also be influenced by seasonality.

Questionnaire

Establishments are asked to record the following in the questionnaire:

- The total number of rooms let out each night
- The total number of guests staying in the establishment each night
- The total number of guests checking in as new arrivals each day
- The daily number of new arrivals by area of residency (Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Great Britain, Europe, North America and other countries)
- The daily number of guests by area of residency (Northern Ireland, Great Britain and other countries)

Weighting

The data has been weighted for non-response assuming no non-response bias and also weighted by local authority and size. Due to different response rates to different parts of the questionnaire, there are different weights for arrivals, guests and weekend/weekday splits (some accommodation providers do not provide information on the country of residence of their arrivals/guests and others provide monthly data rather than daily data).

Terminology

The main measures are bed-space occupancy and room occupancy. Definitions of tourism statistics common terms can be found at the following [link](#).

Bed-space occupancy rates

Refer to the proportion of all bed-spaces available at any given time that are occupied by paying guests. In calculating these figures, the total number of bed-spaces available is allowed to vary from month to month to take account of any changes in the number of beds offered by individual establishments through the use of extra beds or withdrawal of some rooms from use.

The bed-space occupancy rate calculation = $(\text{Total number of bed-spaces occupied} / \text{total number of bed-spaces available}) * 100$.

Bed-space occupancy rates exclude those who have not provided the appropriate breakdown of information i.e. those who have not provided information on the number of guests.

Room occupancy rates

Refer to the proportion of rooms available at any given time that are occupied by at least one paying guest. These rates differ from bed-space occupancy rates in that the room may be occupied whilst all the bed-spaces in the room are not.

The room occupancy rate calculation = $(\text{Total number of rooms occupied} / \text{Total number of rooms available}) * 100$.

Rooms and Bed-spaces sold

Rooms Sold

Applies the calculated room occupancy rate to the number of rooms available from the Northern Ireland Tourist Board stock. This does not take into account any known differences between the stock file and the actual number of rooms available as there may be a delay in updating the stock file to enable the process of re-certification.

Bed-spaces Sold

Applies the calculated bed-space occupancy rate to the number of beds available from the Northern Ireland Tourist Board stock. This does not take into account any known differences between the stock file and the actual number of bed-spaces available as there may be a delay in updating the stock file to enable the process of re-certification. Bed-spaces sold exclude those who have not provided the appropriate breakdown of information i.e. those who have not provided information on the number of guests.

Stock

Stock is provided by Tourism Northern Ireland. Stock levels used are as of month's end of the previous month.

Geographic Referencing

Information is presented for Northern Ireland and local government districts as follows:

Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council
Belfast City Council
Causeway Coast & Glens District Council
Derry City & Strabane District Council
Fermanagh & Omagh District Council
Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Mid Ulster District Council
Newry, Mourne & Down District Council
Ards & North Down Borough Council

Further information on the survey methodology can be found at this [link](#).

A full picture of all tourism activity can be found in the [Northern Ireland Annual Tourism Statistics Publication](#).

Further Information

Tables containing data used in this publication can be found at: [NI Hotel Occupancy Survey Additional Tables](#).

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

More information on the data quality of tourism statistics can be found at [Data Quality Report](#).

Information on the data quality of administrative sources can be found at this [link](#).

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