



Northern Ireland Domestic Tourism 2016

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**2.0m
trips**



**3.8m
nights**



**£237m
spent**

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The key points are:

- in 2016, an estimated 2.0 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 2016 was £237 million;
- Northern Ireland residents spent an estimated 1.1 million nights in local hotels during 2016; and
- there were an estimated 2.4 million overnight trips taken by Northern Ireland residents overseas during 2016.

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

Contents

Introduction	3
Overnight Trips in NI	4
Accommodation used during overnight trips	5
Reason for overnight trips	5
Activities on overnight trips	6
Type of transport used on overnight trips	6
Main reason for not taking an overnight trip	7
Overnight Trips – outside NI	7
Background Notes	8

[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 estimated overnight trips taken by Northern Ireland (NI) residents. A full picture of all tourism activity is provided in the [Northern Ireland Annual Tourism Statistics 2016 publication](#).

The statistics are survey based estimates and are an indicator of how Northern Ireland residents spend their overnight trips within Northern Ireland along with information on where they spend overnight trips outside of Northern Ireland. The information provided is the result of sample surveys used to estimate the headline statistics of overnight trips by Northern Ireland residents, and the associated nights and expenditure as well as other informative statistics on the whole population. 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 2015 and 2016.

What you cannot say....

There was a definite decrease in overnight trips by Northern Ireland residents within Northern Ireland from 2,230,216 in 2015 to 1,984,392 in 2016 with associated expenditure increasing by 8% from £219 million to £237 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 2016

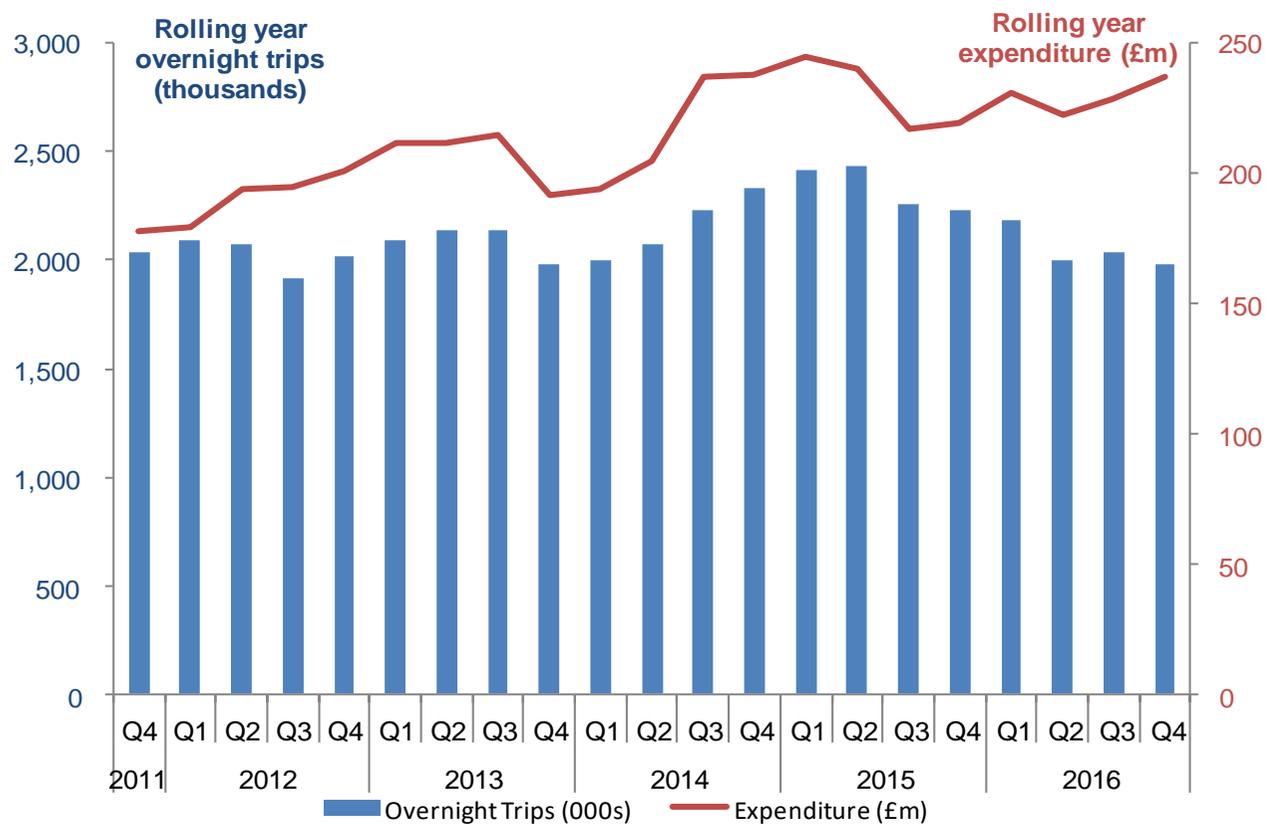


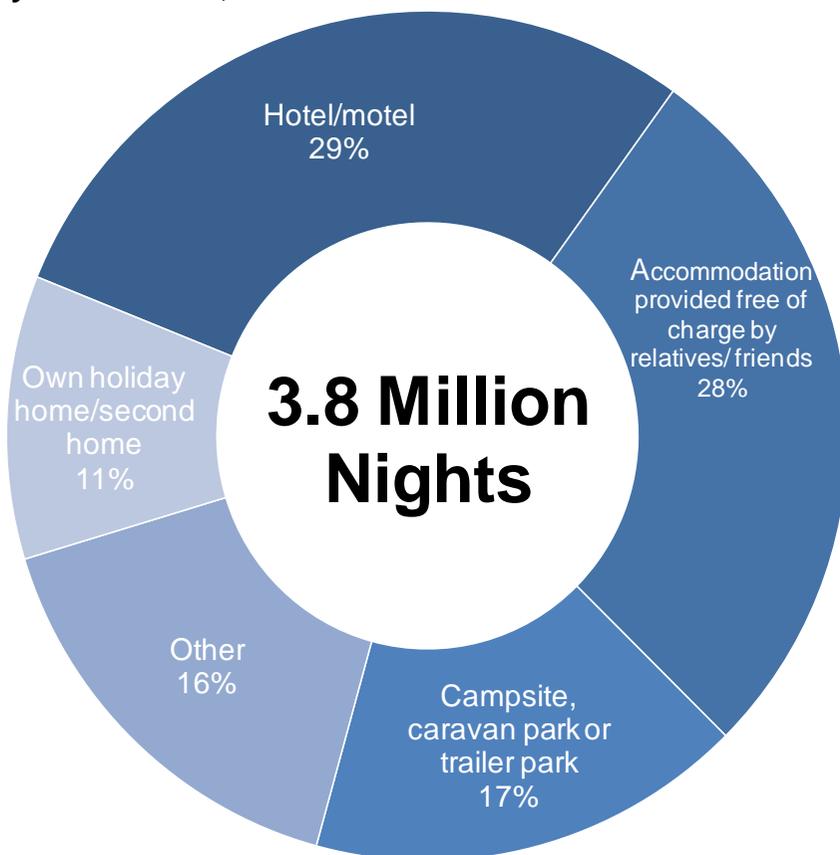
Figure 1 shows the rolling year (twelve month) domestic estimated overnight trips and associated spend from quarter four 2011-2016. It shows that the trend for the estimated number of overnight trips taken by NI residents within NI has fluctuated since 2011 when the series began and estimated expenditure shows an upward trend.

In 2016, the average duration of an overnight trip within NI was 1.9 nights with an average spend per trip of £120 and an average spend per night of £62.

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

In 2016, an estimated 3.8 million nights were spent on domestic overnight trips in NI. It is estimated that almost one third (29%) of these nights were spent in a hotel or motel and over one quarter (28%) of nights were spent in accommodation provided free of charge by relatives/friends. Just under one-fifth (17%) of nights were spent in a campsite, caravan park or trailer park (Figure 2).

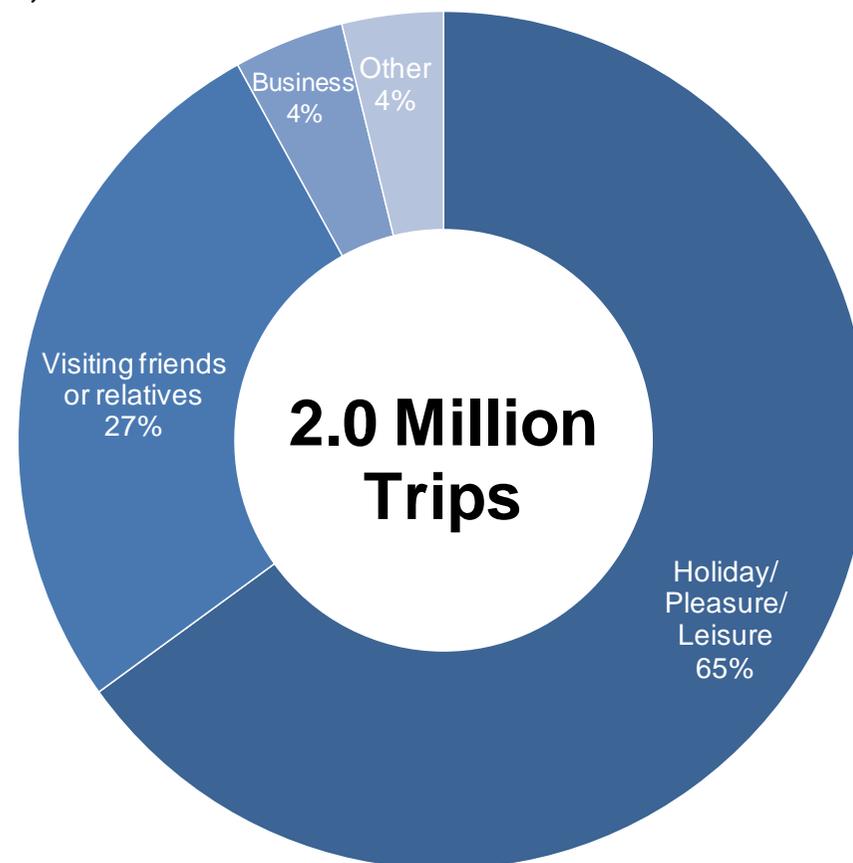
Figure 2: Proportion of nights spent in NI by accommodation type used by NI residents, 2016



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

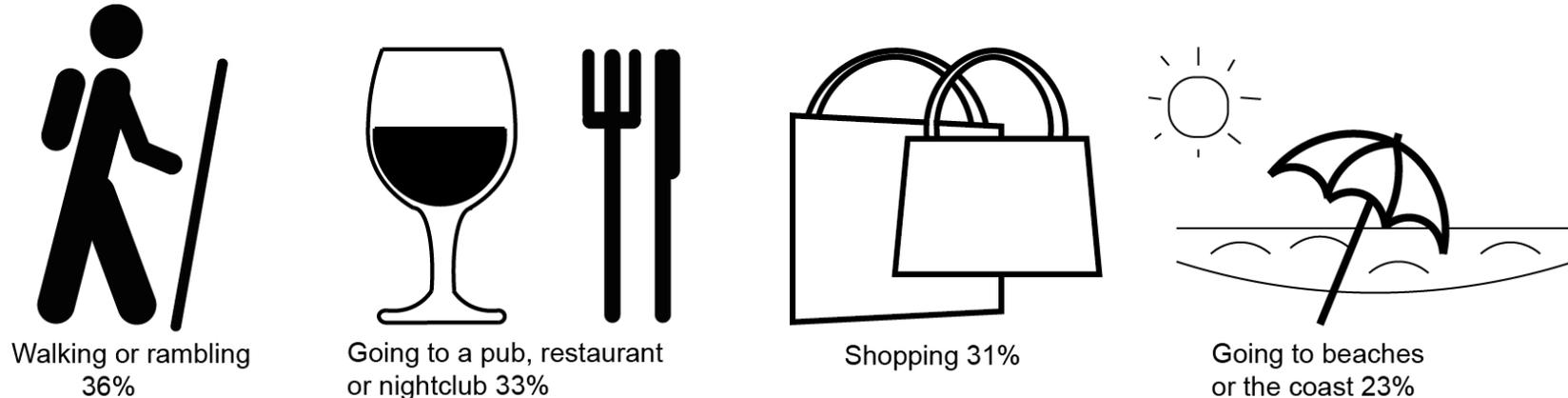
Figure 3 shows that, almost two thirds (65%) of the estimated domestic overnight trips taken were for holiday related purposes and over one quarter (27%) were to visit friends or relatives.

Figure 3: Purpose of overnight trips taken by NI residents within NI, 2016



Activities reported on overnight trips in Northern Ireland

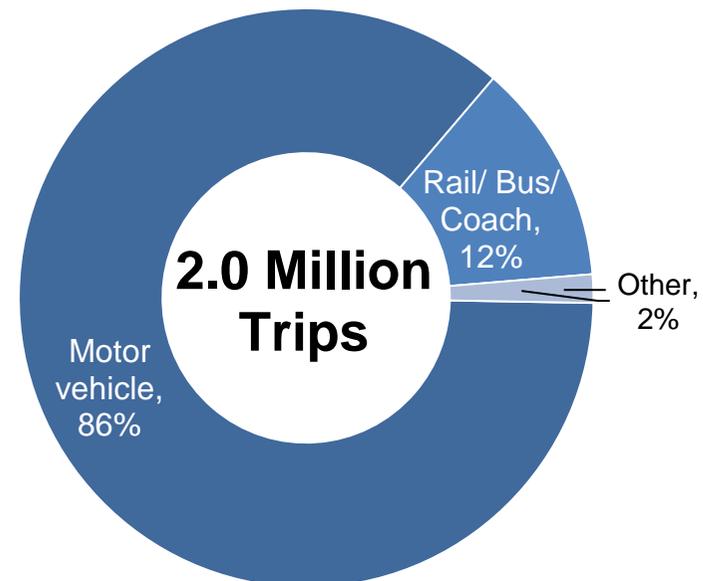
In 2016, it is estimated that the most popular activities partaken by NI residents on domestic overnight trips were walking or rambling (36%), going to a pub, restaurant or nightclub (33%), shopping (31%) and going to beaches or the coast (23%).



Type of transport used on overnight trips in Northern Ireland

During 2016, it is estimated that 86% 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 12% of estimated overnight trips.

Figure 4: Type of transport used on overnight trips by NI residents within NI, 2016.



Main reason for not taking an overnight trip in Northern Ireland

From the estimates, the main reasons given for not taking a domestic overnight trip in Northern Ireland in 2016 were “Lack of free time due to family commitments” and “Prefer to stay at home, no motivation to travel”, each of these were the main reasons given by 24% of those who did not take an overnight trip in NI. This was followed by “Lack of free time due to work or study commitments” (17%) and “Financial reasons” (16%).

Table 1: Main reason for not taking an overnight trip in NI, 2011-2016

	<i>Percentage</i>					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Lack of free time due to family commitments	10%	12%	12%	14%	19%	24%
Prefer to stay at home, no motivation to travel	5%	7%	8%	9%	18%	24%
Lack of free time due to work or study commitments	25%	22%	24%	25%	20%	17%
Financial reasons	16%	17%	17%	14%	16%	16%
Health reasons or reduced mobility	11%	10%	9%	10%	11%	12%
Other/Safety	33%	32%	30%	29%	16%	6%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Overnight trips outside of Northern Ireland

The CHS also measures trips Northern Ireland residents take outside NI; this has shown the total number of overnight trips taken by NI residents during 2016 was 5.8 million overnight trips. Nearly two thirds of overnight trips (65% or 3.8 million) taken by NI residents were taken outside of Northern Ireland, and over two fifths of overnight trips (42% or 2.4 million) were overseas. This may suggest NI residents took advantage of favourable exchange rates and/or the increased number of flights to other locations with the additional benefits of a better climate. The trends show that estimated overnight trips by NI residents have declined since 2014, while in this same period the trend for estimated overnight trips overseas has increased.

Other sources such as the [Northern Ireland Air Passenger Statistics](#), also point to a growth in the estimated number of NI residents passing through NI airports and Ryanair introduced a number of routes in 2016. The NI Air Passenger Statistics also show that the estimated number of NI residents passing through Republic of Ireland airports, particularly Dublin Airport, has also experienced growth.

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 spend.

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. The confidence interval around the estimates of 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 www.csu.nisra.gov.uk

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