

Northern Ireland Self Catering Occupancy Statistics (2015)

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The key points are:

- self catering unit occupancy in 2015 was 36%, an increase of 3 percentage points from 2014;
- peak season (April-September) unit occupancy was 48% in 2015, an increase of 3 percentage points on the previous year;
- of the 32,800 weeks sold in self catering units, 70% (22,800) were during peak season (April-September);
- around two out of three weeks sold in self catering establishments were to visitors from outside Northern Ireland; and
- the average length of stay has decreased from 4.6 nights in 2014 to 4.3 nights in 2015.

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Contents:

Introduction	2
Self catering stock	2
Occupancy rates and weeks sold	3
Arrivals country of residence	4
Guests country of residence	5
Average length of stay	6
Background Notes	7

Introduction

This report provides statistics on occupancy in Self Catering accommodation in Northern Ireland during 2015. A full picture of all tourism activity can be found in the Northern Ireland Annual Tourism Statistics Publication.

Self catering stock (Source: Tourism NI)

You must have a certificate from Tourism NI (TNI) to offer tourist accommodation in NI – this is referred to 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’. See Table 1 below for more information on Northern Ireland’s certified self catering stock operating at the start of December 2015.

Table 1: Northern Ireland Self Catering Accommodation Stock 2015

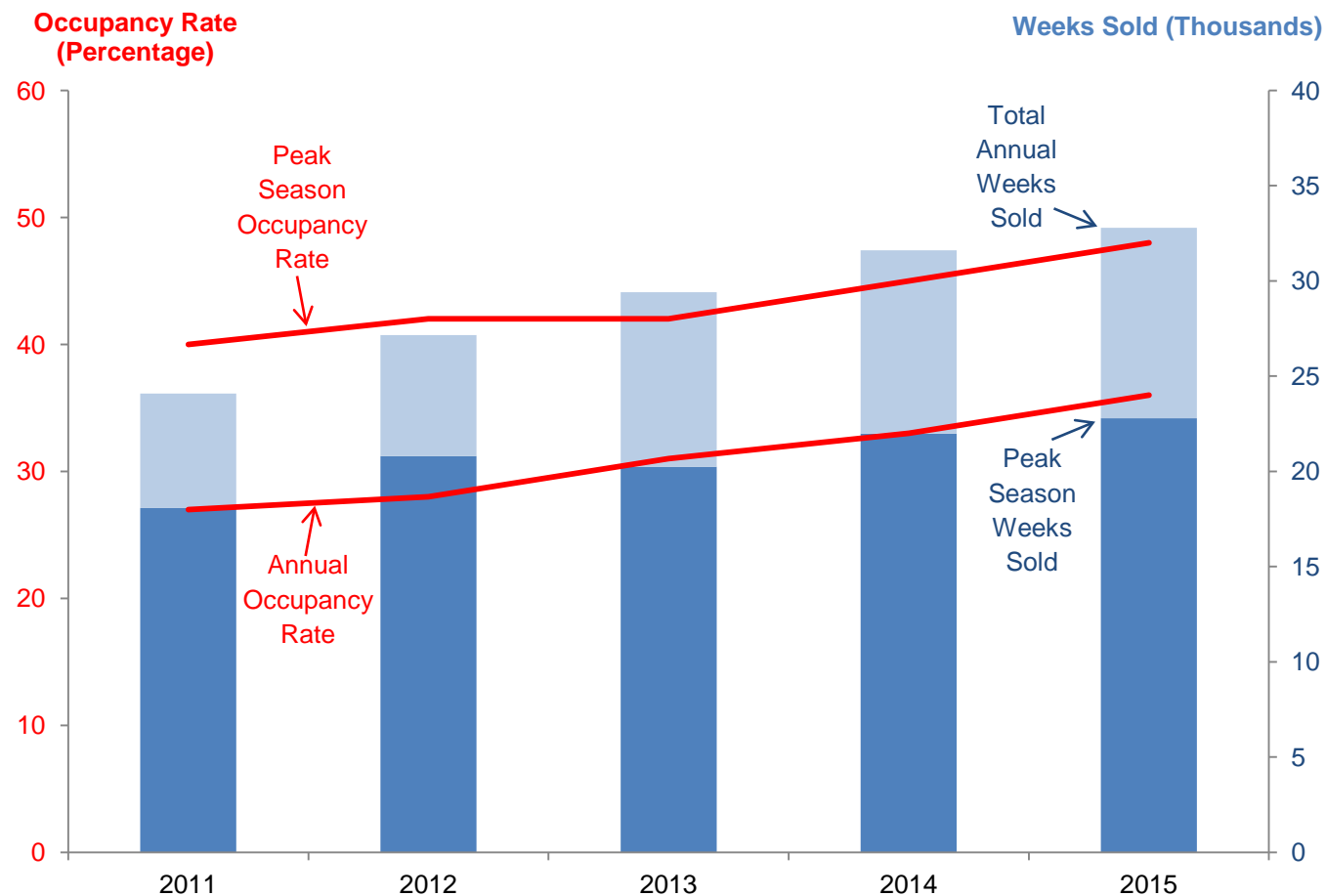
Size / Classification of Establishment	Establishments	Units
1 to 4 Units	1,361	1,620
5 to 9 Units	36	231
10 + Units	22	430
Total	1,419	2,281
Unclassified	1,048	1,653
One Star	0	0
Two Star	1	3
Three Star	120	221
Four Star	193	336
Five Star	57	68
Total	1,419	2,281

Source: Tourism NI

Full information on Northern Ireland self catering accommodation can be found at the following link
[NI Self Catering Occupancy Statistics Additional Tables](#)

Occupancy rates and weeks sold

Figure 1: Unit Occupancy and Weeks Sold (Annual and Peak Season) 2011-2015



Peak season=April-September

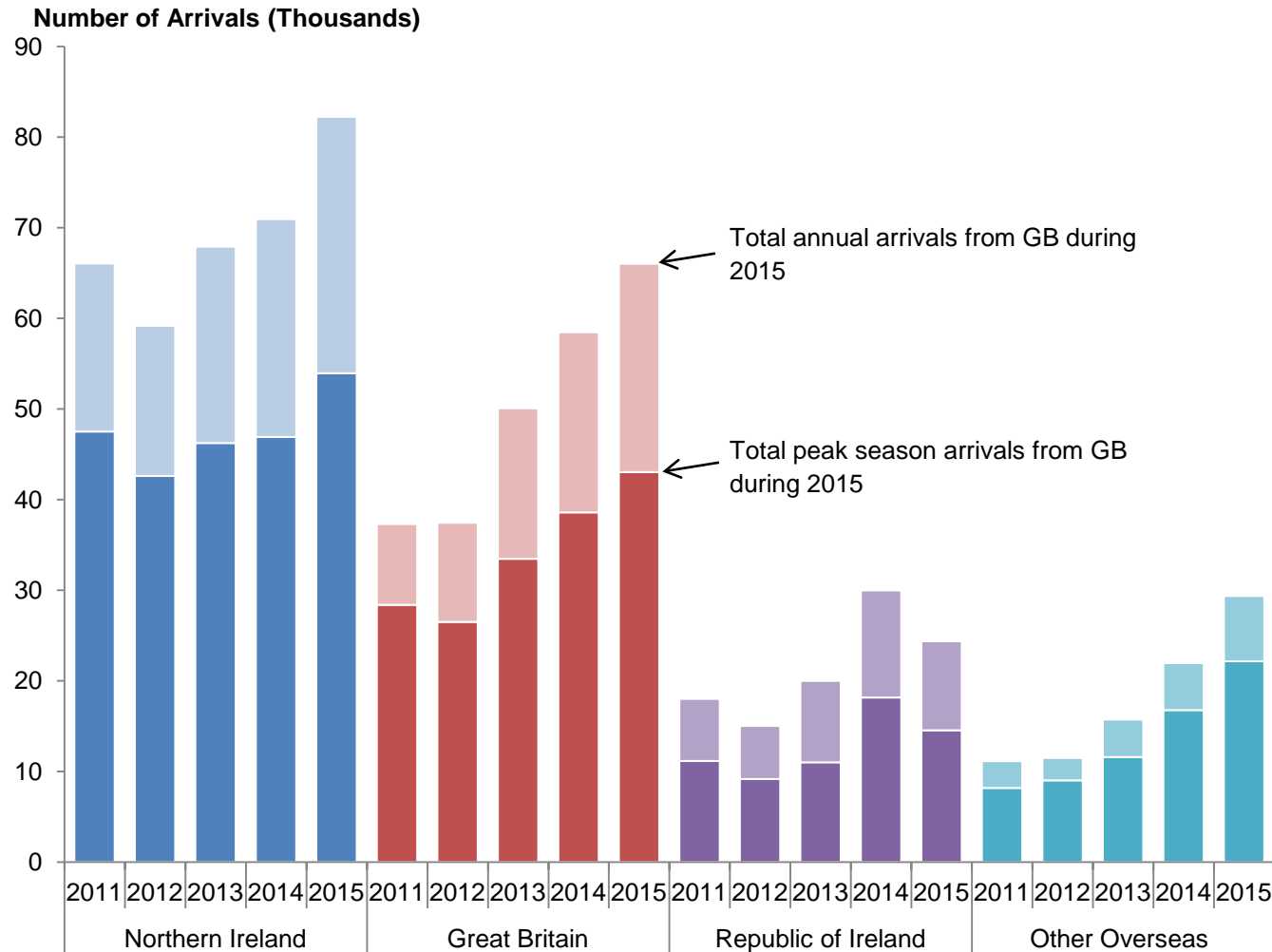
Self catering unit occupancy rate was 36% during 2015, a rise in three percentage points when compared to 2014 (33%). There has been a steady rise in the self catering unit occupancy rate over recent years. During peak season, April to September, self catering unit occupancy rate was 48%; also a rise of 3 percentage points when compared to 2014 (45%). The peak season (April to September) occupancy rate reflects the same steady rise over time as the annual rate (Figure 1).

There was a total of 32,800 weeks sold at self catering establishments during 2015, an increase of 4% from that of 2014 (31,600 weeks sold). The number of weeks sold during peak season, April to September, also increased by 4% to 22,800 weeks sold in 2015. Of the total weeks sold during 2015, 70% were during peak season (Figure 1).

Arrivals by Country of Residence

An arrival does not take into consideration the length of stay, therefore a party of 5 staying for two weeks is treated as 5 arrivals, as would a party of 5 staying for one week.

Figure 2: Total arrivals (Annual and Peak Season) by Country of Residence 2011-2015



It is estimated that there were 202,000 arrivals to self catering establishments during 2015 - an increase of 11% from 2014. There was an increase in the number of arrivals in guests from Northern Ireland (16%), Great Britain (13%) and Other Overseas (34%); however, there was a decrease in the number of arrivals from the Republic of Ireland (down 19%) between 2014 and 2015 (Figure 2).

Approximately 66% of all arrivals came during peak season (April to September). Reflecting the trends in annual arrivals; during peak season there were increases in arrivals from Northern Ireland, Great Britain and Other Overseas (15%, 12% and 32% respectively); and a decrease in the number of arrivals from the Republic of Ireland by 20% between 2014 and 2015.

Guests by Country of Residence

During 2015, of the total 32,800 weeks sold in self catering establishments; 11,200 were to guests from Great Britain, an increase of 8% from 2014. There was also an increase in the number of weeks sold to guests from other overseas (+25%) to 6,300 weeks in 2015. There was a decrease in the number of weeks sold to guests from the Republic of Ireland (down 9% to 4,200 weeks) and Northern Ireland (down 1% to 11,100 weeks), as seen in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Total weeks sold (Annual and Peak Season) by Country of Residence of guests 2011-2015

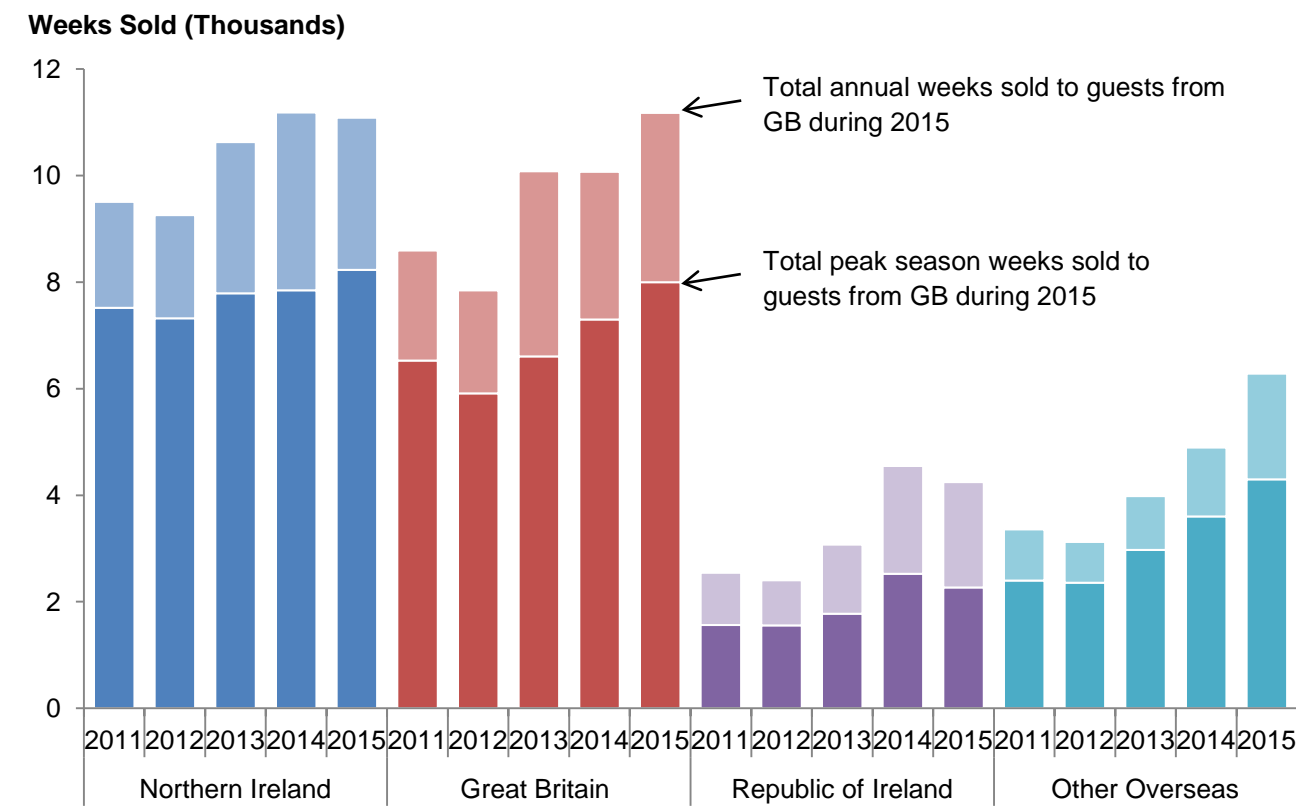
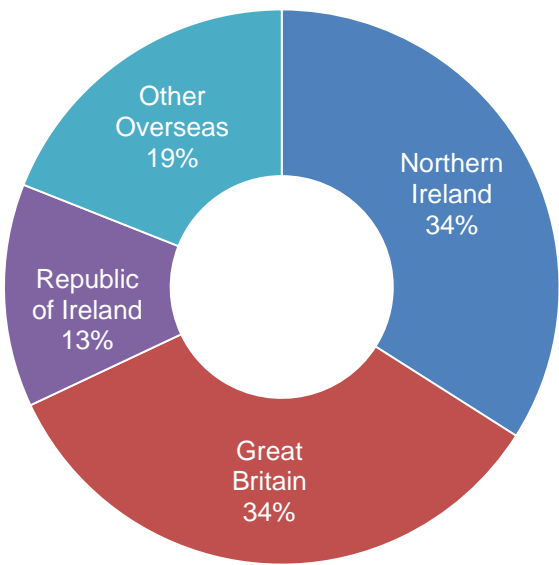


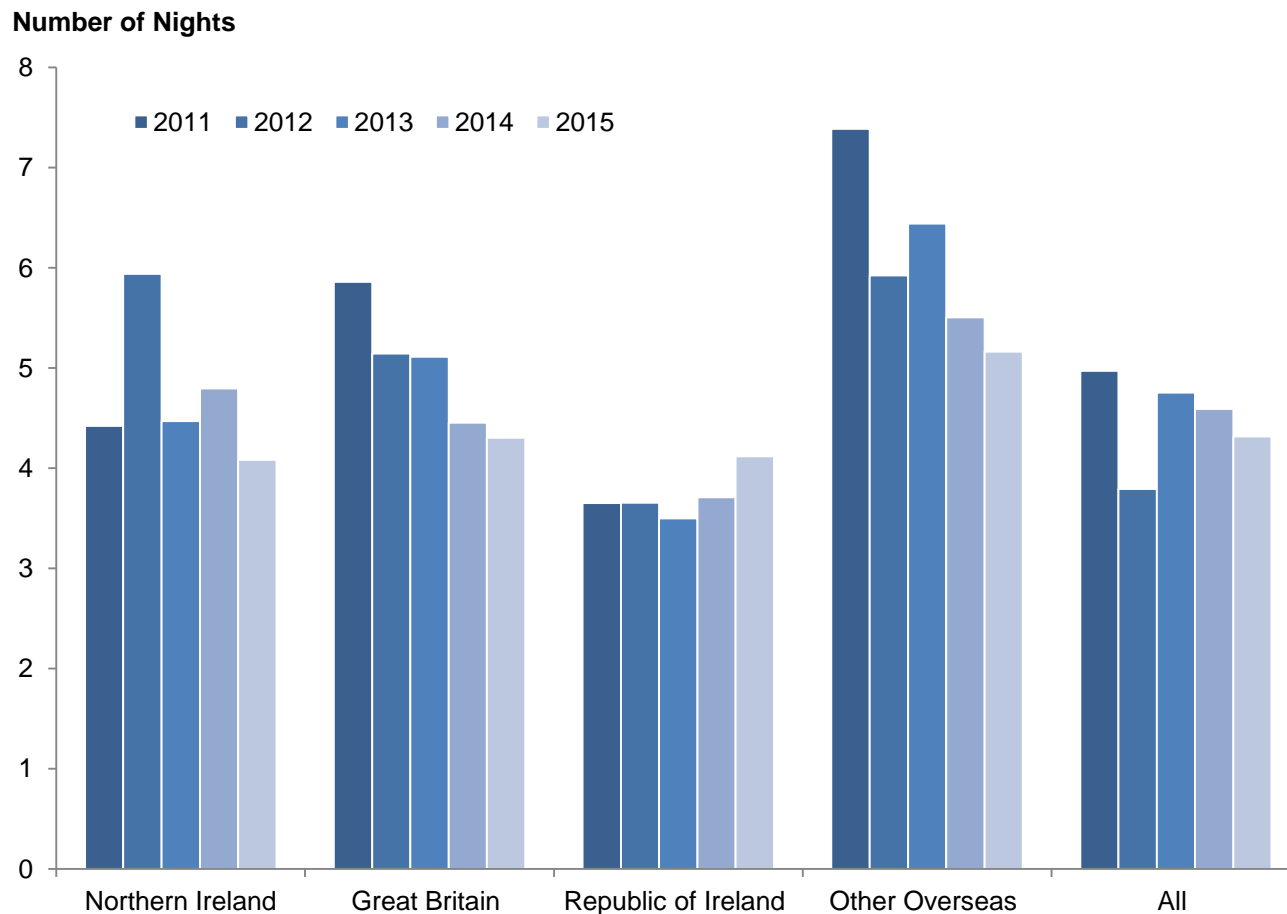
Figure 4: Proportion of total annual weeks sold by Country of Residence of guests 2015



Guests from both Great Britain and Northern Ireland each made up 34% of all guests at self catering establishments during 2015. A further 19% of guests were from Other Overseas and 13% from the Republic of Ireland, see Figure 4.

Average Length of Stay

Figure 5: Average Length of Stay by Country of Residence 2011 – 2015



During 2015 the average length of stay in self catering accommodation was 4.3 nights. This was a decrease of 6% when compared to 4.6 nights in 2014.

Figure 5 depicts that over the last few years, the average number of nights spent in self catering accommodation in Northern Ireland has been declining for those guests from Northern Ireland, Great Britain and Other Overseas. This may be explained by a greater rate of increase in the total number of guests from this market to the total number of nights spent in self catering accommodation.

During 2015, the average number of nights spent in self catering accommodation ranged from 4.1 nights for guests from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland to 5.2 nights for guests from Other Overseas.

Full information on Northern Ireland self catering accommodation can be found at the following link
[NI Self Catering Occupancy Statistics Additional Tables](#)

Background Notes

Occupancy Survey - Methodology

Sample

To offer tourist accommodation in NI, you must have a certificate from Tourism NI (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'. Table 1 in the report showed the stock when the self catering survey was issued.

The 2015 self catering survey was conducted by means of a postal questionnaire covering the period January-December of that year. The questionnaire was issued in December; it was also emailed to any establishments that had an email address and an option for returning it through the same method. All owners (a full census) were asked to provide the length of stay, number of arrivals and country of residence for each arrival for each booking throughout the year. Owners were also asked to provide an estimated income for the year; however response to this was relatively low and due to different interpretations of the question unreliable.

In 2015, there were a total of 1,419 establishments in the self catering stock (Table 1). Of these, 321 returned completed forms. Additionally, 56 were closed (temporary closure) or shut (cessation of trading) and a further 104 either refused or could not complete the form. The resultant response rate is 27%. Data was analysed by season and visitor's country of origin.

Weighting

All the analysis was carried out on weighted data. The data was weighted for non-response assuming no non-response bias and also weighted by local authority and number of units.

Terminology

The following definitions are employed throughout the report

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|-------------------------|---|
| “establishment”: | refers to the total property of self catering chalets/houses/flats |
| “units”: | refer to the actual number of chalets/houses/flats within an establishment |
| “seasonal”: | refers to the period “April-September” which in tourism is deemed to be peak season |

A quality report on Tourism Statistics can be found at this [link](#).