

**Tourism**

**Statistical Bulletin**

**Northern Ireland Tourism Statistics  
October 2012 to September 2013**

**6 February 2014**

# Contents

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 1. Key Findings<br>Pages 3-4                                      | 2. Commentary<br>Pages 5-8                     | 3. Overview of overnight<br>trips, nights and<br>expenditure<br>Pages 9-10 |
| 3.1 Analysis of overnight<br>trips and expenditure<br>Pages 10-13 | 3.2 Visitors from<br>outside NI<br>Pages 13-14 | 4. Occupancy<br>Page 15-16   |
| 5. Other sources<br>Page 17                                       | 6. Background Notes<br>Pages 18-21             | 7. Annexe 1<br>July 2012 –<br>September 2013<br>tables<br>Pages 21-26      |
| 8. Annexe 2<br>January - September 2013<br>tables<br>Pages 27-30  |  |  |

## 1. Key Findings

**This report provides the most recent annual (October 2012 - September 2013) and year to date (January – September 2013) provisional tourism statistics for Northern Ireland (NI) from a combination of NISRA official statistics and Republic of Ireland (RoI) sources. It contains information on overnight trips made to NI from Great Britain (GB), overseas, and RoI visitors as well as NI residents who made overnight trips within NI. The main results show:**

### **Annual Results (October 2012 - September 2013)**

- The estimated total number of overnight trips to NI by all visitors (NI residents and non residents) in the period October 2012 – September 2013 increased by 8% compared to the previous twelve months.
- Tourist expenditure during overnight trips increased over the same period by 10% when compared to 2011-2012.
- The estimated number of overnight visitors from outside NI (GB, Overseas and RoI) increased by 5% to just over 2.09 million in the 12 months to September 2013, compared to the same period in the previous year. The expenditure associated with these trips increased by 10% over the same period.

### **Year to Date Results (January - September 2013)**

- Estimates for the first three quarters of 2013 (January – September) indicate that the total number of overnight trips to NI increased by 8%, while expenditure during these overnight trips grew by 6% compared to the same period in the previous year.
- When NI residents are excluded, the total number of estimated visitor overnight trips from outside NI increased by 7% and the associated expenditure by such visitors rose by 5% to September of 2013 compared to the same period in 2012.
- The growth in the estimated number of overnight visitor trips from outside NI in the first three quarters of 2013 was due to an increase (+18%) in those visiting friends and relatives and an increase in visits for business purposes (+7%).
- However, there was a 2% fall in the estimated number of overnight visits by external visitors for holiday purposes in the first 9 months of 2013, compared to the same period in 2012. This is associated with a decline in such visitors from the RoI (-26%), whereas holiday visits for from GB increased by 11% and those from overseas visitors increased by 3% over the period.

- Room occupancy rates for hotels for the 9 months to September 2013 were 2 percentage points lower than for the same period the previous year whereas the room occupancy rates for the B&B, guesthouse and guest accommodation showed a 1 percentage point decrease over the same period.

### **Cruise Ship Arrivals (January - September 2013)**

- During January – September 2013, 54 cruise ships docked in Belfast, with up to 69,431 passengers and 28,245 crew onboard. There were also 5 cruise ship visits to Londonderry with up to 1,757 passengers. These figures showed an increase on the same period in 2012 in Belfast, when 45 cruise ships with up to 51,507 passengers and 22,209 crew docked. However, there were 8 cruise ship visits to Londonderry with up to 4,789 passengers during January – September 2012.

Previously reported provisional annual figures for 2012 and for the first and second quarters of 2013 can be found at <http://www.detini.gov.uk/deti-stats-index/tourism-statistics.htm>. Please note the next annual publication will include revised figures which will take account of updated population projections. The current publication includes revised figures for quarter 2 2013. These are designated as ‘experimental’ official statistics to reflect the fact they are undergoing development in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. User views are welcome to inform this process and NISRA can be contacted at [tourismstatistics@dfpni.gov.uk](mailto:tourismstatistics@dfpni.gov.uk)

## **2. Commentary**

### **Background**

Tourism results are presented in terms of both (i) annual estimates for the most recent 12 months (to September 2013) and (ii) the nine months to September 2013. The annual estimates provide greater precision due to the larger sample sizes available from the respective surveys that comprise the estimates, whereas the 9 month results provide a more recent measure of trends; though with some loss of precision (see background notes for statistical margins of error).

### **ANNUAL TOURIST ACTIVITY**

#### **Overall trips, nights and expenditure rise**

The estimated number of overnight trips to NI in the 12 months to September 2013 increased by 8% to 4.2 million when compared to the previous 12 months. Expenditure associated with these trips is estimated to have increased by 10% to £716 million. These estimated figures indicate that Programme for Government targets of 4.2 million visitors and £676 million tourist expenditure which were set for December 2014, have been met by September 2013.

#### **Domestic market influencing growth**

Much of the growth in overnight trips can be accounted for by a growth (of 221 thousand or 12%) in the number of overnight trips taken by NI residents. The increase of 5% in the number of overnight trips by non residents comprises a rise in both GB (+13%) and overseas visitors (+5%) and a fall in those visiting from RoI (-11%).

Rises in expenditure of 23% and 8% were estimated for overseas and GB visitors respectively and of 10% for NI residents, while those visiting from RoI showed a fall of 15% in expenditure.

#### **Growth in trips to visit friends and relatives**

The growth in overnight trips by all visitors of 8% is mainly driven by those visiting friends and relatives which rose by 19%. While those visiting for business and 'other' reasons also experienced rises of 16% and 10% respectively, holiday visits showed a fall of 3%.

#### **Rises in holiday/VFR/business in external visitors but fall in the small category 'other'**

When NI residents are excluded, there is growth in the number of overnight trips to NI to visit friends and relatives (+9%), and for business (+9%) and holiday purposes (+1%). Those visiting for 'other' reasons experienced a fall of 7%; but this category represents a relatively small proportion of all overnight trips to NI by external visitors (5% in the 12 months to September 2013).

### **Main reason external visitors come to NI is to visit friends and relatives**

Half of all external visitors came to NI to visit friends or relatives in the 12 months to September 2013. The overall growth of +9% in this category when compared to the previous 12 months has been driven by GB visitors (+19%). There were, however, decreases in the number of overseas (-11%) and RoI (-2%) visitors coming to NI to visit friends and relatives in the same period.

### **Occupancy rates relatively flat but in line with holiday visitors**

Hotel room occupancy showed no change and a slight fall (-1pps) in bed space occupancy between the 12 months ending September 2013 when compared with the previous 12 months. The equivalent figures for B&B, Guesthouse and Guest accommodation showed a slight rise (+1pps) in both room and bed space occupancy. This is broadly in line with the rise in external visitors holidaying in NI (+1%) and those visiting for business purposes (+9%).

### **Increase in trips and nights contributes to rise in Domestic expenditure**

Expenditure by NI residents accounts for just under one third of total expenditure (30%). The rise (of 10%) in domestic expenditure reflects an increase in the number of overnight trips taken by NI residents (+12%) and an increase in the average length of stay from 2.01 to 2.16 nights.

## **YEAR TO DATE TOURIST ACTIVITY**

### **Increase in trips, nights and spend for all visitors in first 9 months of 2013**

In the first 9 months of 2013, the number of overnight trips made by NI residents and non residents increased by 8% compared to the same period in 2012. A similar level of growth was experienced in the overall number of nights (+8%) while expenditure associated with such trips showed an increase of 6% over the same period in the previous year.

### **Overnight trips are mainly for holidaying and visiting friends**

Most overnight trips taken in NI were for the purposes of holidaying or visiting friends and relatives. The combination of these 2 categories accounts for over 80% of all overnight trips in the first 3 quarters of 2013. The number of trips taken to visit friends and relatives (+17%), business (+19%) and other (+13%) reasons all experienced increases while those visiting for holiday purposes showed a slight decline (-1%) when compared with the first 9 months of 2012.

### **Increase in number of external visitors**

When Northern Ireland residents are excluded, there was a 7% increase in the number of external visitors, and a 2% increase in the number of nights spent in Northern Ireland. Similarly, there was an increase in expenditure of 5% (or £17m) in this period, compared to the same period in 2012.

### **GB and overseas visitor number rise, but number of RoI visitors fall**

The number of GB visitors rose by 14% in the first 9 months of 2013 when compared with the same period in 2012. Overseas visitor numbers also rose (by 5%) over the same period but the number of visitors from RoI fell by a similar proportion (-5%).

### **Increase in visits to see friends/relatives by external visitors....**

The growth in external overnight visitors coming to NI to see friends and family (+18%) was influenced by increased numbers of both GB (+21%) and RoI (+25%) visitors while there was no change in the number visiting from overseas for this purpose.

### **..but a decrease in holiday visits**

The decrease (-2%) in the number of holiday visits by external visitors in the first 9 months of 2013 versus 2012 was due to a marked decrease in the number of overnight visitors from RoI (-26%) who visited for holiday purposes. Despite this, there were increased numbers of GB and overseas visitors for holiday purposes (+11% and +3% respectively).

### **Hotel occupancy rates fall despite rise in visitor numbers**

While the overall (resident and non-resident) number of overnight trips in NI increased (+8%) in the first 9 months of 2013 when compared to the same period in 2012, hotel room occupancy rates fell by -2 percentage points (to 66%) in the same period.

This likely reflects that the number of overnight trips has been mainly driven by increased visits to friends and relatives (+17%) and these visitors might be less likely to stay in hotels. The occupancy figures might also be influenced by the decrease (-2%) in holiday visits by external visitors in the first 9 months of 2013 when compared to the same period in 2012.

### **Conclusion**

Estimates for both the 12 months and 9 months to September 2013 show there have been an increased number of overnight trips taken by residents and non residents combined.

While the overall rate of growth in both time periods is similar, much of the growth has been influenced by a rise in the number of NI residents taking overnight trips in NI. However, evidence suggests that the growth in external visitor numbers (+7%) in the latest 9 months is higher than for the last 12 months as a whole (+5%).

Most of the growth in the most recent 9 months by external visitors was due to increases in the number of visits to see friends and relatives in Northern Ireland. Conversely, there has been a slight decrease in the numbers of such visitors visiting for holiday purposes (-2%), though this has been due to a drop in holiday visitors from RoI (-26%). In contrast there has been an increase in holiday visits from the GB and overseas markets in the most recent 9 months (+11% and +3% respectively).

The overall increase in the number of overnight trips in NI may have been influenced by a number of events that have taken place in NI such as the UK City of Culture year in Derry-Londonderry, the World Police and Fire Games, 'Backin' Belfast' and

the all-Ireland Fleadh. The good weather in the summer of 2013 might also have contributed to the growth in overnight trips.



### 3. Estimated number of overnight trips, nights and expenditure for the 12 month period ending September 2013 and January to September 2013

This bulletin brings together data from a range of sources to help provide an overall assessment of the number of overnight trips to NI, the associated number of nights and expenditure. It provides detailed information for 12 months to September 2013 and headline figures for the first 9 months of 2013. Prior to 2013, the information contained in the bulletin was published in a range of monthly reports. Following responses to a recent consultation, the decision has been made to wait until complete information is available from the various monthly sources and to publish on a quarterly basis. A summary of the consultation and NISRA response can be found at [http://www.detini.gov.uk/deti-stats-index/tourism-statistics/user\\_engagement.htm](http://www.detini.gov.uk/deti-stats-index/tourism-statistics/user_engagement.htm). An indicative timetable for future publications can be found at <http://www.detini.gov.uk/deti-stats-index/tourism-statistics.htm>.

The information provided in this bulletin helps inform a range of users including those in government charged with the development of tourism policy, Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), tourism implementation bodies (such as the NI Tourist Board and Tourism Ireland) and the tourism industry. The measures reported in this publication are the primary means of monitoring progress towards Programme for Government (PfG) targets related to tourism. These aim to increase visitor numbers to 4.2 million and tourist revenue to £676 million by December 2014. The results are also used to measure the Tourism Ireland's targets of increasing visitors by 16% over 2013 (to reach the target of over 2 million visitors a year by 2016). This will include 663,000 holidaymakers, delivering an increase of 36% growth in holiday revenue for the economy of Northern Ireland.

The following section examines the estimated number of overnight trips, nights and expenditure in Northern Ireland.

**Table 1 Estimated<sup>(1,2)</sup> number of overnight trips, nights and expenditure in NI (all visitors) for the 9 months and 12 months to September 2012, 2013**

	Oct 2012- Sept 2013	% Change	Jan- Sept 2013	% Change
Overall Trips (000s)	4,215	+8	3,204	+8
Overall Nights (000s)	14,643	+6	11,675	+8
Overall Expenditure (£m)	716	+10	539	+6

Notes:

- 1) All estimates 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 Northern Ireland Passenger Survey (NIPS) conducted by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), the Survey of Overseas Travellers (SOT) conducted on behalf of Fáilte Ireland, the Household Travel Survey (HTS) conducted by Central Statistics Office (CSO) and the Northern Ireland Continuous Household Survey (CHS) conducted by NISRA

### Overnight trips and expenditure

When compared to the same period the previous year, the estimated number of overnight trips taken in NI in the 12 months to September 2013 increased by 8% to 4.22 million, similarly the figure for the first 9 months of 2013 shows a rise of 8% to 3.20 million.

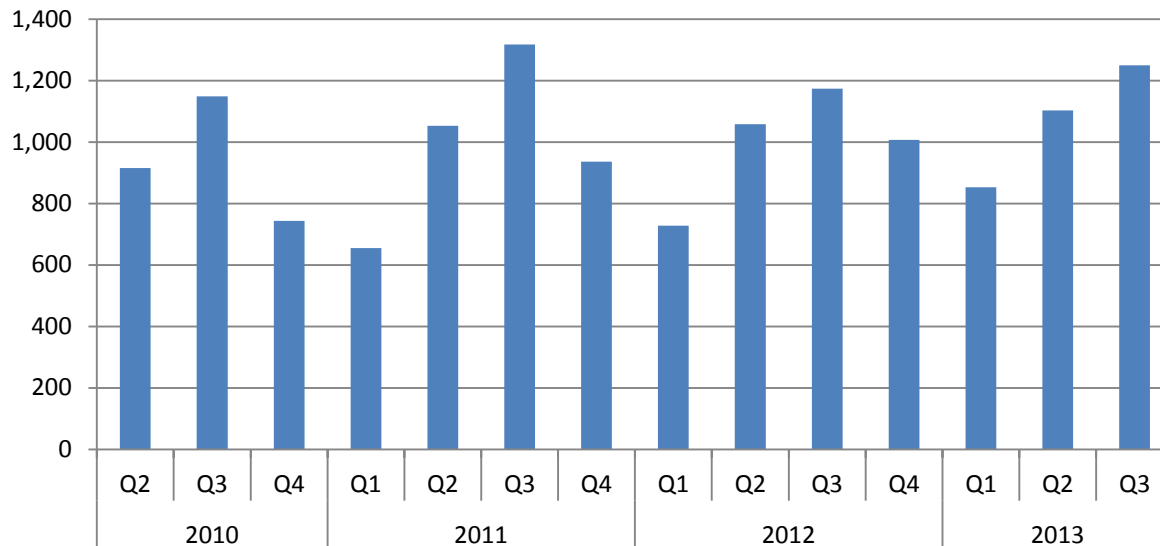
Expenditure associated with these trips shows a rise of 10% to £716million in the 12 month period ending September 2013 and of 6% to £539 million in the first three quarters of 2013.

### Number of nights spent in NI

The estimated number of nights associated with overnight trips taken in NI increased by 6% to 14.64 million in the 12 months to September 2013. Likewise, the estimated number of nights spent in NI for the first three quarters of 2013 shows a rise of 8% to 11.68 million.

The average length of stay for the 12 months to September 2013 was 3.5 nights, slightly lower than the figure for the same period the previous year (3.6 nights). The equivalent figure for the first three quarters of 2013 was 3.6 nights, showing no change than that for the same period in 2012 (3.6 nights) (Tables A1.1 and A2.1).

**Figure 1 Estimated number of overnight (thousands) trips in NI, Q2 2010 to Q3 2013**



### 3.1 Analysis of overnight trips and expenditure

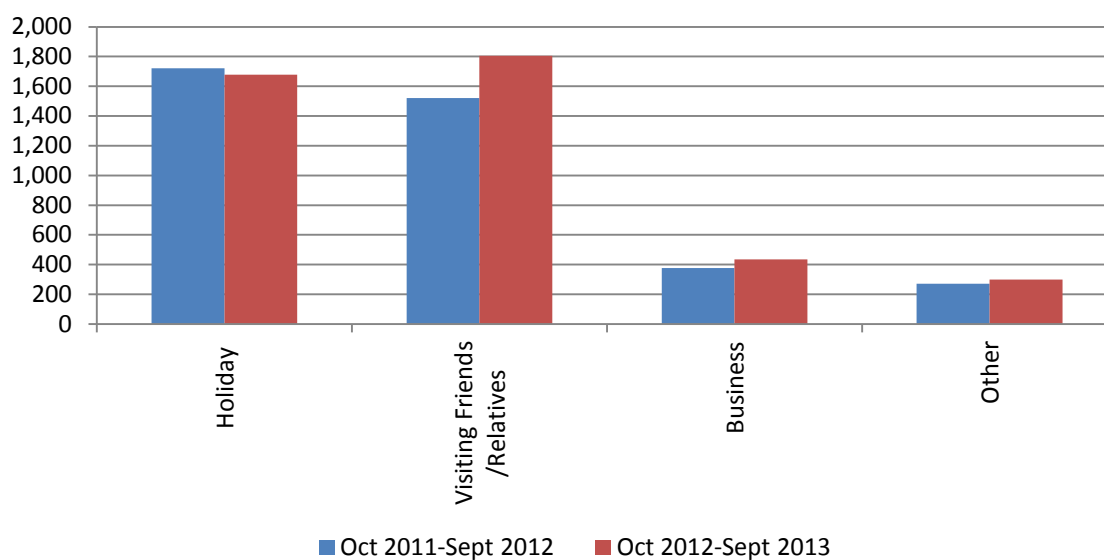
#### Estimated number of trips each quarter

Figure 1 depicts the estimated number of overnight trips taken in NI in each quarter from quarter 2 (April to June) 2010 to quarter 3 (July to September) 2013. It shows that the greatest number of trips taken in each year falls in quarter 3 with quarter 2 providing the next highest estimated number of overnight trips. Most overnight trips taken in NI are taken in quarters 2 and 3 (April – September) each year.

### Overnight trips - reason for visit

The number of trips taken in the 12 month period to September 2013 to visit friends and relatives increased by 19% (284,000) to 1.80 million. This rise, together with a rise in those visiting for business purposes (+16%), contrasts with the decrease (-3%) in those visiting for holiday purposes (Figure 2 and Table A1.2).

**Figure 2: Estimated overnight trips (thousands) by reason for visit October 2011 – September 2012, October 2012 – September 2013**



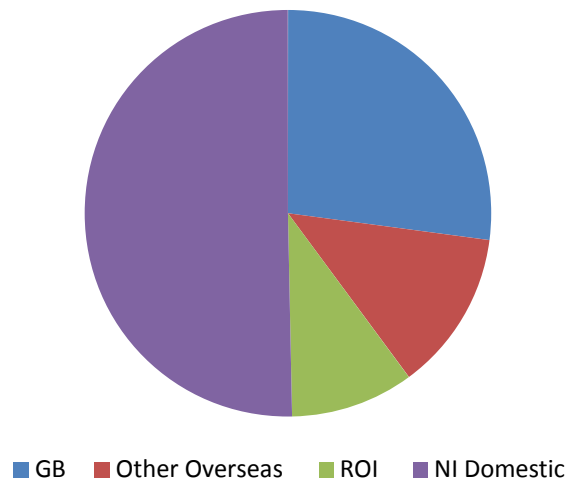
In the first 9 months of 2013 the number of trips to visit friends and relatives increased by 17% to 1.30 million and accounts for 41% of all overnight trips in NI. The largest increase in reason for visit was seen in those travelling for 'business' purposes (+19%) but those on business overnight trips represents a relatively small proportion (10%) of all overnight trips in NI. Trips taken in the first 9 months of 2013 in NI for holiday purposes decreased by 1% to 1.37 million (Table A2.2).

### Visitors country of residence

In the 12 months to September 2013, there was an increase of 12% (to 2.12 million) in the number of overnight trips taken in NI by residents accounting for just under half of all overnight trips taken in NI. The estimated number of trips taken by GB and overseas visitors increased by 13% and 5% respectively, with a fall (-11%) in those visiting from RoI (Figure 3 and Table A1.3).

The number of overnights trips taken in NI by residents in the first 9 months of 2013 increased by 10% to 1.57 million. The estimated number of GB and overseas visitors increased by 14% and 5% respectively, while the number from RoI decreased by 5% (Table A2.3).

**Figure 3: Estimated proportion of overnight trips by country of residence October 2012 to September 2013**

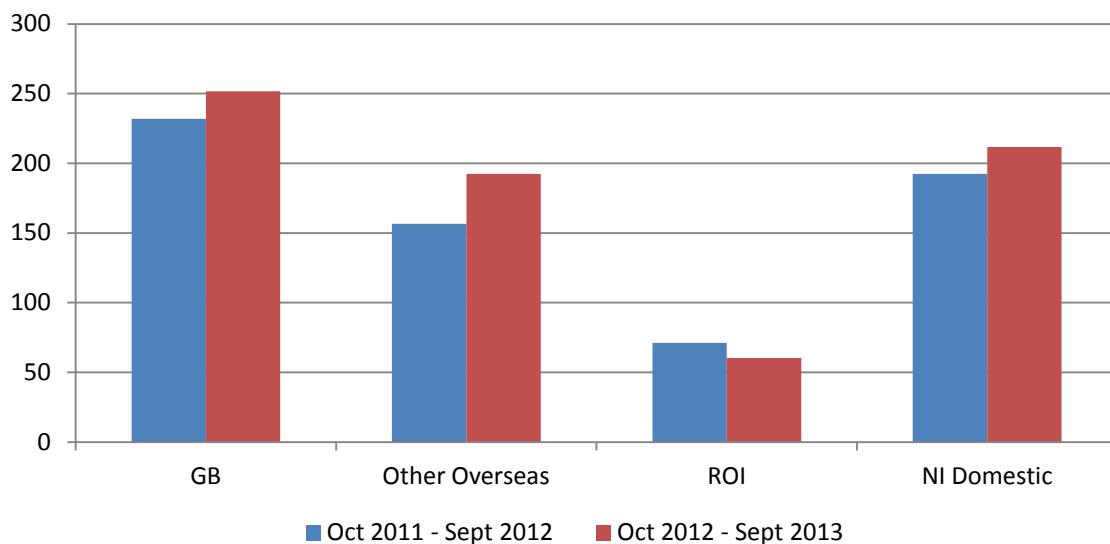


**Estimated expenditure by country of residence October 2012-September 2013**

The estimated expenditure associated with overnight trips in NI is presented by country of residence in Figure 4. Increases in expenditure were experienced by GB and overseas visitors (+14%) and NI residents (+10%).

Conversely, expenditure by visitors from ROI fell by 15% over the same period.

**Figure 4: Estimated visitor expenditure (£ million) by country of residence October 2011 – September 2012, October 2012 – September 2013**

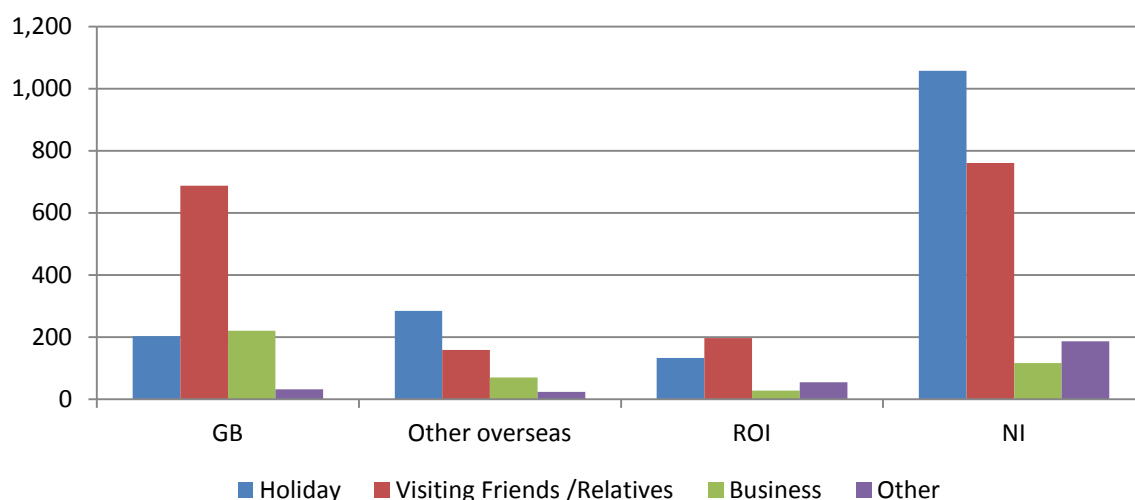


### Country of residence by reason for visit

Figure 5 shows the country of residence for visitors taking trips in NI in the most recent 12 months by reason for visit. It shows that almost two-thirds of those holidaying in NI are NI residents.

Visitors from GB, who account for the largest proportion of non-residents trips (55%), are more likely to travel to NI for the purpose of visiting friends or relatives (60%) than for all other reasons combined. In contrast, overseas visitors are more likely to report that their visit to NI was for holiday purposes (Table A1.5).

**Figure 5 Estimated overnight trips (thousands) by country of residence and reason for visit, October 2012 - September 2013**



### 3.2 Visitors from outside NI

When NI residents are excluded, the number of overnight trips to NI in the 12 months to June 2013 increased by 5% to 2.09 million. Increases in the estimated number of trips made by GB (+13%) and overseas visitors (+5%) were countered by a fall in those visiting from ROI of -11%. Visitors from GB accounted for 55% of all overnight trips to NI made by non-residents.

The number of non resident overnight trips to NI in the first 9 months of 2013 increased by 7% to 1.63 million. This was influenced by a rise in the estimated number of GB (+14%) and overseas (+5%) visitors and a decrease of 5% in ROI visitors.

#### Visitors from outside NI - reason for visit

In the 12 months to September 2013, there were increases by external visitors in all the main reasons for coming to NI, with 9% increases in those visiting friends/relatives and visits for business purposes. There was a slight increase in those visiting NI for holiday purposes (+1%).

Visiting friends and relatives, which accounts for 50% of all trips by non-residents, saw an increase (+19%) in those visiting from GB but a fall in those visiting from ROI (-2%) and those visiting from overseas (-11%) (Table A1.5).

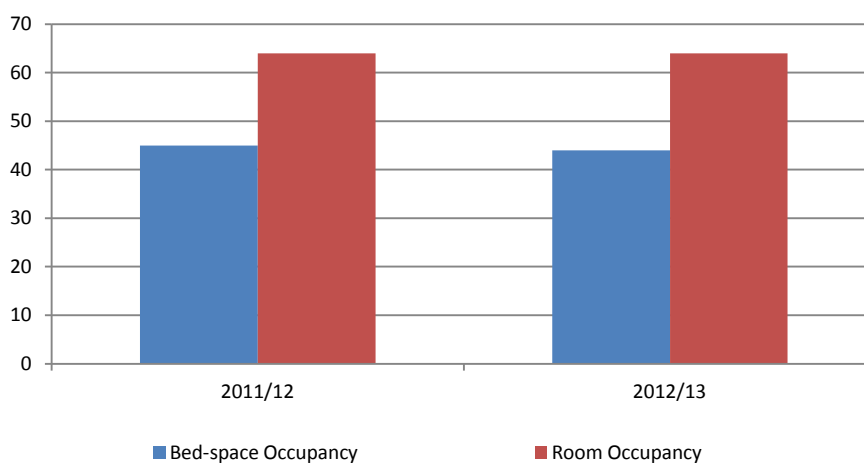
The rise in external visitors coming to NI in the first three quarters of 2013 was mainly driven by those visiting friends and relatives (+18%) and, to a lesser extent, those visiting for business purposes (+7%). The rise in those visiting friends and relatives was influenced by a rise in GB and RoI visitors visiting friends and relatives (+21% and +25% respectively). Although fewer visitors stated they were visiting NI for holiday purposes (-2%) in January-September 2013, both GB and overseas visitors increased (11% and 3% respectively). GB visitors showed increases in all main 'reason for visit' categories while overseas visitors showed increases in all but the visiting friends and relatives category, which showed no change (Table A2.5).

## 4. Accommodation

### Hotel occupancy

The room occupancy rate for hotels in NI for the 12 month period October 2012-September 2013 showed no change on the same period in the previous year (64%) whereas the bed-space occupancy showed a 1 percentage point decrease (44%). The room occupancy and bed-space occupancy rate for hotels in NI both showed a decrease of 2 percentage points between January-September 2012 and January-September 2013 (to 66% and 45% respectively). (Figure 6, Tables A1.8 and A2.6).

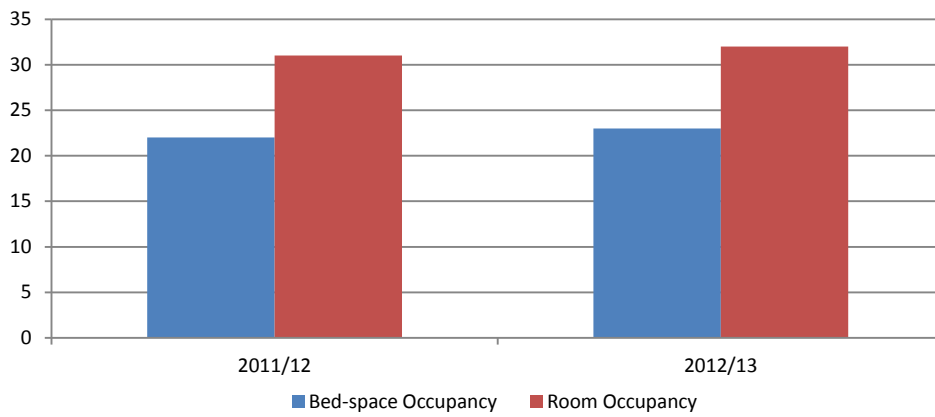
**Figure 6 Hotel occupancy rate (percentage) October 2011 – September 2012, October 2012 – September 2013**



### B&B/Guesthouse/Guest Accommodation occupancy

The 12 month period to September 2013 saw increases in both the room (to 32%) and bed space occupancy (to 23%) for the B&B, guesthouse and guest accommodation sector of 1 percentage point. There was a 1 percentage point decrease in the room occupancy rate (to 33%) for the B&B/guesthouse/guest accommodation sector between January-September 2012 and January-September 2013, bed space occupancy (at 24%) showed no change over the same period. (Figure 7, Tables A1.9 and A2.7).

**Figure 7 B&B/Guesthouse/Guest Accommodation occupancy rate (percentage) October 2011 – September 2012, October 2012 – September 2013**



The most recent occupancy statistics can be found at <http://www.detini.gov.uk/deti-stats-index/tourism-statistics/stats-accomm-6.htm>



## **5. Other sources**

### **Tourism and Leisure employee jobs (NISRA)**

At September 2013, the Quarterly Employment Survey (QES) estimated that tourism and leisure industries accounted for 54,740 employee jobs in NI, 8% of all employee jobs. This proportion was unchanged from that reported in September 2012, when tourism and leisure accounted for 54,530 employee jobs in NI.

### **Cruise Ships (DVCB+BVCB)**

During January – September 2013, 54 cruise ships docked in Belfast, with up to 69,431 passengers and 28,245 crew onboard. There were also 5 cruise ship visits to Londonderry with up to 1,757 passengers.

These figures showed an increase on the same period in 2012 in Belfast, when 45 cruise ships with up to 51,507 passengers and 22,209 crew docked. However, there were 8 cruise ship visits to Londonderry with up to 4,789 passengers during January – September 2012.

## 6. Background Notes

Trends in tourism can be tracked in a variety of ways. Demand can be assessed through visitor numbers, overnight trips and levels of expenditure.

This bulletin presents a summary of available information for Northern Ireland (NI) for the period of October 2012 to September 2013. The data is derived from a number of sources, not all of which are the direct responsibility of NISRA. For example, some GB and overseas visitors to NI leave through RoI airports and ports (an estimated 26% during October 2012 to September 2013), and NISRA receives information on such visitors from Fáilte Ireland. Similarly, the Central Statistics Office (CSO, (RoI)) provides summary statistics to NISRA on the number of RoI residents who visit NI. It is important that users appreciate that the robustness of estimates from some of the sources are limited by survey sample sizes. Confidence intervals relating to key estimates are provided for NISRA surveys, further information on the survey methodology can be found at:

[http://www.detini.gov.uk/northern\\_ireland\\_official\\_tourism\\_statistics\\_methodology\\_and\\_proposed\\_development\\_appendix\\_-\\_detailed\\_methodology.pdf](http://www.detini.gov.uk/northern_ireland_official_tourism_statistics_methodology_and_proposed_development_appendix_-_detailed_methodology.pdf)

The PfG targets relate to all overnight tourists who visit NI including visitors from (i) Great Britain (GB) and overseas markets (ii) the Republic of Ireland (RoI) as well as (iii) NI residents taking overnight trips within NI. While this publication provides information on tourists from each of these areas, NISRA does not have direct responsibility for the collection of all such information, some of which is provided from organisations in the RoI. The methodology is also subject to ongoing development and these estimates are therefore deemed to be experimental statistics in line with the Code of Practice (see below). Some of the estimates are based on relatively small sample sizes and will have an associated degree of sampling error. These are reported where available along with information on sample sizes to inform users of the relative quality of the estimates (see section on data quality).

Tourism Ireland aims to welcome more than 2 million visitors a year to Northern Ireland by 2016. The targets will see revenue from holiday visitors increase by 36% over the three-year period, 2014-2016.

<http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/index/media-centre/news-departments/news-deti/news-deti-041213-foster-outlines-plans-to.htm>

### Code of Practice

The production of those tourism statistics for which NISRA is responsible is conducted in line with the principles contained in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/code-of-practice-for-official-statistics.pdf>. These principles require that NISRA produces official statistics to meet the requirements of informed decision making by government, public services, business, researchers and the public. They include an obligation to produce statistics impartially and objectively, using sound methods and assured quality to meet user needs. The Code states that at all stages in the production and dissemination of official statistics, the public interest should prevail over organisational, political or personal interests.

The Code requires producers of official statistics to seek the views of users of their statistics. To address this, NISRA recently consulted on some proposed changes to the reporting of tourism statistics [http://www.detini.gov.uk/deti-stats-index/tourism-statistics/user\\_engagement.htm](http://www.detini.gov.uk/deti-stats-index/tourism-statistics/user_engagement.htm). A summary of responses to this consultation and proposed action by NISRA is also available on this page. User views are welcome at any time in line with the Code of Practice and any comments on the methodology or reporting format used in this report can be forwarded to [Tourismstatistics@detini.gov.uk](mailto:Tourismstatistics@detini.gov.uk)

## Sources

*Information on tourism demand is collated as follows:*

1. Data on overseas visitors leaving through a NI airport or sea terminal is collected through the NI Passenger Survey (NIPS), conducted by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). Departing visitors are asked a number of questions including their country of residence, number of nights stayed in Northern Ireland, type of accommodation used and reason for visit, as well as expenditure throughout the trip.
2. Information on overseas visitors exiting through the Republic of Ireland (RoI), an important gateway to NI, is collected through the Survey of Overseas Travellers, conducted by Fáilte Ireland. Passengers are interviewed at RoI ports and terminals and those who have stayed for one or more nights in NI are asked for similar, though slightly less detailed, to that collected through NIPS.
3. Information on RoI visitors to NI is gathered via the Household Travel Survey, a postal survey issued monthly by the Central Statistics Office, RoI.
4. Domestic Tourism, the final element in the estimation of visitor numbers, is collected by NISRA through the Continuous Household Survey. This face to face survey of NI households includes detailed questions on overnight and daytrips taken within NI during the previous month.

*Information on Tourism supply in NI is measured through:*

5. A monthly census of hotel occupancy levels and monthly survey of occupancy levels in guesthouses, bed & breakfasts and other guest accommodation, both carried out by NISRA.

## Data Quality

The estimates produced 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. It is important to note therefore that some trends observed in this bulletin may be attributable to sampling error particularly where the numbers in the cells are small.

Confidence intervals are not provided for estimates from the Survey of Overseas Travellers (SOT) or for CSO's Household Travel Survey (HTS). NISRA has estimated confidence intervals around these two surveys by assuming the SOT follows the same trend as the NIPS and the HTS as the CHS. The confidence intervals for all these estimates have been combined as per table 2. Confidence limits relating to a selection of estimates contained in this bulletin at the 95% confidence interval are shown below:

**Table 2 Confidence intervals around the visitor estimates in the 9 months and 12 months to September 2013.**

95% Confidence Interval				
	Overnight Trips	% change compared to previous year	Expenditure	% change compared to previous year
January – September	+/-7%	+/- 16%	+/- 14%	+/- 23%
October - September	+/-6%	+/- 11%	+/- 12%	+/- 16%

### Rounding

Figures in the tables have been rounded to the nearest thousand and may not add to the figure shown as the total. Year on year percentage change is based on the unrounded figures.

### Occupancy Survey

The hotel occupancy survey is a census of all hotels in NI. The Bed&Breakfasts, Guest Houses and Guest Accommodation element is a disproportionate stratified sample. This data has been weighted for non-response assuming no non-response bias and also weighted by local authority and size. More information can be found at <http://www.detini.gov.uk/deti-stats-index/tourism-statistics/stats-accomm-6.htm>

### Data revisions

Tourism estimates are produced to provide timely data to the tourism industry and government policy makers. The estimates may be subject to revision due to improvements to the survey / analysis methodology or the inclusion of data returned

after the publication date. The figures in this document are the most up-to-date available at the time of publication.

Previously reported provisional annual figures for 2012 and for the first and second quarters of 2013 can be found at <http://www.detini.gov.uk/deti-stats-index/tourism-statistics.htm>. Please note the next annual publication will include revised figures which will take account of updated population projections. The current publication includes revised figures for quarter 2 2013 and the second quarter publication will be updated accordingly. These are designated as 'experimental' official statistics to reflect the fact they are undergoing development in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. User views are welcome to inform this process and NISRA can be contacted at [tourismstatistics@dfpni.gov.uk](mailto:tourismstatistics@dfpni.gov.uk)

## Definitions

The definitions of tourist activity used in this report are based on the International Recommendations on Tourism Statistics (IRTS, 2008) from the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO). This defines tourism by the activities of persons identified as visitors. A visitor is someone who is making a visit to a main destination outside his/her usual environment for less than a year for any main purpose [including] holidays, leisure and recreation, business, health, education or other purposes, including visiting friends and relatives. This scope is much wider than the traditional perception of tourists, which includes only those travelling for leisure. If a resident is travelling within their own country (NI) they are referred to as domestic visitors in the report, whereas visits to NI by people who live outside of that country are referred to as external visitors. Thus GB, overseas and RoI visitors are termed as external visitors.

## For further information, please contact:

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## ANNEX 1 TABLES FOR OCTOBER 2012 TO SEPTEMBER 2013

**Table A1.1 Estimated<sup>(1,2)</sup> number of overnight trips, nights and expenditure in NI (all visitors) for the 12 months to September 2012, 2013**

	Oct 2011- Sept 2012	Oct 2012- Sept 2013	% Change
Overall Trips (000s)	3,890	4,215	+8
Overall Nights (000s)	13,865	14,643	+6
Overall Expenditure (£m)	652	716	+10

Notes:

- 1) All estimates 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 Northern Ireland Passenger Survey (NIPS) conducted by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), the Survey of Overseas Travellers (SOT) conducted on behalf of Fáilte Ireland, the Household Travel Survey (HTS) conducted by Central Statistics Office (CSO) and the Northern Ireland Continuous Household Survey (CHS) conducted by NISRA

**Table A1.2 Estimated<sup>(1)</sup> number of overnight trips (thousands) in NI (all visitors) by reason for visit for the 12 months to September 2012, 2013**

	Oct 2011- Sept 2012	Oct 2012- Sept 2013	% Change
Holiday	1,721	1,678	-3
Visiting Friends/Relatives	1,520	1,804	+19
Business	376	435	+16
Other	272	298	+10
<b>Total<sup>(2,3)</sup></b>	<b>3,890</b>	<b>4,215</b>	<b>+8</b>

Notes:

- 1) All estimates 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 may not add to totals due to rounding
- 3) Figures derived from 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, the Household Travel Survey (HTS) conducted by Central Statistics Office (CSO) and the Northern Ireland Continuous Household Survey (CHS) conducted by NISRA

**Table A1.3 Estimated<sup>(1)</sup> number of overnight trips (thousands) in NI for GB, overseas, Rol and NI Domestic markets for the 12 months to September 2012, 2013**

	Oct 2011- Sept 2012	Oct 2012- Sept 2013	% Change
GB visitors <sup>(2)(3)</sup>	1,013	1,143	+13
Overseas visitors <sup>(2)(3)</sup>	514	538	+5
<b>Total Overseas<sup>(3)</sup></b>	<b>1,527</b>	<b>1,681</b>	<b>+10</b>
Rol visitors <sup>(4)</sup>	463	414	-11
<b>Total visitors from outside NI<sup>(3)</sup></b>	<b>1,990</b>	<b>2,095</b>	<b>+5</b>
Domestic overnight trips <sup>(5)</sup>	1,900	2,121	+12
<b>Total<sup>(2,3,4,5)</sup></b>	<b>3,890</b>	<b>4,215</b>	<b>+8</b>

Notes:

- 1) All estimates 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 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 may not add to totals due to rounding
- 4) Figures derived from the Household Travel Survey (HTS) conducted by Central Statistics Office (CSO)
- 5) Figures derived from the Northern Ireland Continuous Household Survey (CHS) conducted by NISRA

**Table A1.4 Estimated<sup>(1, 2, 3)</sup> number of overnight trips, nights and expenditure in NI (excluding NI residents) for the 12 months to September 2013**

	Oct 2011- Sept 2012	Oct 2012- Sept 2013	% Change
Overall Trips (000s)	1,990	2,095	+5
Overall Nights (000s)	10,032	10,054	0
Overall Expenditure (£m)	460	504	+10



Notes:

- 1) All estimates 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 Northern Ireland Passenger Survey (NIPS) conducted by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), the Survey of Overseas Travellers (SOT) conducted on behalf of Fáilte Ireland, the Household Travel Survey (HTS) conducted by Central Statistics Office (CSO) and the Northern Ireland Continuous Household Survey (CHS) conducted by NISRA
- 3) Figures may not add to totals due to rounding

**Table A1.5 Estimated<sup>(1, 2, 3)</sup> visitor overnight trips (thousands) to NI (excluding NI residents) by reason for visit for the 12 months to September 2012, 2013**

	Oct 2011- Sept 2012	Oct 2012- Sept 2013	% Change
Holiday	183	203	+11
Visiting friends / relatives	579	687	+19
Business	217	220	+2
Other	34	32	-5
<b>GB visitors<sup>(2)(3)</sup></b>	<b>1,013</b>	<b>1,143</b>	<b>+13</b>
Holiday	264	284	+8
Visiting friends / relatives	179	159	-11
Business	56	71	+26
Other	15	24	+58
<b>Overseas visitors<sup>(2)(3)</sup></b>	<b>514</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>+5</b>
Holiday	170	133	-22
Visiting friends / relatives	203	198	-2
Business	20	28	+42
Other	71	55	-22
<b>Rof<sup>(2)(3)</sup></b>	<b>463</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>-11</b>
Holiday	617	621	+1
Visiting friends / relatives	961	1,044	+9
Business	292	319	+9
Other	119	111	-7
<b>Total<sup>(2)(3)</sup></b>	<b>1,990</b>	<b>2,095</b>	<b>+5</b>

Notes:

- 1) All estimates 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 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 may not add to totals due to rounding
- 4) Estimates based on a sample size of 30 or less appear shaded as  Estimated based on a sample size of 51-100 appear shaded as 

Estimated based on a sample size of 51-100 appear shaded as



**Table A1.6 Estimated<sup>(1)</sup> visitor nights (thousands) spent in NI (all visitors) for the 12 months to September 2012, 2013**

	Oct 2011- Sept 2012	Oct 2012- Sept 2013	% Change
GB visitors <sup>(2)(3)</sup>	4,577	5,067	+11
Overseas visitors <sup>(2)(3)</sup>	4,117	3,823	-7
<b>Total Overseas<sup>(3)</sup></b>	<b>8,694</b>	<b>8,889</b>	<b>+2</b>
Rol visitors <sup>(4)</sup>	1,339	1,165	-13
<b>Total visitors from outside NI<sup>(3)</sup></b>	<b>10,032</b>	<b>10,054</b>	<b>0</b>
Domestic overnight trips <sup>(5)</sup>	3,833	4,589	+20
<b>Total<sup>(3)</sup></b>	<b>13,865</b>	<b>14,643</b>	<b>+6</b>

Notes:

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- 2) Figures derived from 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 may not add to totals due to rounding
- 4) Figures derived from the Household Travel Survey (HTS) conducted by Central Statistics Office (CSO)
- 5) Figures derived from the Northern Ireland Continuous Household Survey (CHS) conducted by NISRA

**Table A1.7 Estimated<sup>(1)</sup> visitor expenditure (£ million) spent in NI (all visitors) for the 12 months to September 2012, 2013**

	Oct 2011- Sept 2012	Oct 2012- Sept 2013	% Change
GB visitors <sup>(2)(3)</sup>	232	252	+8
Overseas visitors <sup>(2)(3)</sup>	157	192	+23
<b>Total Overseas<sup>(3)</sup></b>	<b>389</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>+14</b>
Rol visitors <sup>(4)</sup>	71	60	-15
<b>Total visitors from outside NI<sup>(3)</sup></b>	<b>460</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>+10</b>
Domestic overnight trips <sup>(5)</sup>	192	212	+10
<b>Total<sup>(3)</sup></b>	<b>652</b>	<b>716</b>	<b>+10</b>

Notes: All estimates 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

- 1) Figures derived from 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
- 2) Figures may not add to totals due to rounding
- 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

**Table A1.8 Hotel Occupancy for the 12 months to September 2012, 2013**

	Room Occupancy	Bed-space Occupancy	Rooms Sold	Bed-spaces sold
2011/12	64%	45%	1,778,100	2,776,700
2012/13	64%	44%	1,794,200	2,731,400
Change				
2011/12 – 2012/13 (+/-)	0pps	-1pps	+1%	-2%

*Note (1) Percentage/Percentage point change calculated using unrounded figures*

**Table A1.9 Bed & Breakfast, Guesthouse and Guest Accommodation occupancy, for the 12 months to September 2012, 2013**

	Room Occupancy	Bed-space Occupancy	Rooms Sold	Bed-spaces sold
2011/12	31%	22%	349,800	566,400
2012/13	32%	23%	365,700	612,100
Change				
2011/2-2012/13 (+/-)*	+1pps	+1pps	+5%	+8%

*Note (1) Percentage/Percentage point change calculated using unrounded figures*

## ANNEX 2 TABLES FOR JANUARY TO SEPTEMBER 2013

**Table A2.1 Estimated<sup>(1,2,3)</sup> number of overnight trips, nights and expenditure in NI (all visitors) for Jan-Sept 2012, 2013**

	Jan-Sept 2012	Jan-Sept 2013	% Change
Overall Trips (000s)	2,954	3,204	+8
Overall Nights (000s)	10,774	11,675	+8
Overall Expenditure (£m)	506	539	+6

Notes:

- 1) All estimates 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 Northern Ireland Passenger Survey (NIPS) conducted by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), the Survey of Overseas Travellers (SOT) conducted on behalf of Fáilte Ireland, the Household Travel Survey (HTS) conducted by Central Statistics Office (CSO) and the Northern Ireland Continuous Household Survey (CHS) conducted by NISRA
- 3) Figures may not add to totals due to rounding

**Table A2.2 Estimated<sup>(1)</sup> visitor overnight trips (thousands) spent in NI (all visitors) by reason for visit for Jan-Sept 2012, 2013**

	Jan-Sept 2012	Jan-Sept 2013	% Change
Holiday	1,382	1,367	-1
Visiting Friends/Relatives	1,109	1,299	+17
Business	274	326	+19
Other	188	212	+13
<b>Total<sup>(2,3)</sup></b>	<b>2,954</b>	<b>3,204</b>	<b>+8</b>

Notes:

- 1) All estimates 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 may not add to totals due to rounding
- 3) Figures derived from 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, the Household Travel Survey (HTS) conducted by Central Statistics Office (CSO) and the Northern Ireland Continuous Household Survey (CHS) conducted by NISRA

**Table A2.3 Estimated <sup>(1)</sup> visitor overnight trips (thousands) to NI for GB, overseas, RoI and NI Domestic markets for Jan-Sept 2012, 2013**

	Jan-Sept 2012	Jan-Sept 2013	% Change
GB visitors <sup>(2)(3)</sup>	792	900	+14
Overseas visitors <sup>(2)(3)</sup>	401	420	+5
<b>Total Overseas<sup>(3)</sup></b>	<b>1,193</b>	<b>1,320</b>	<b>+11</b>
RoI visitors <sup>(4)</sup>	327	311	-5
<b>Total visitors from outside NI<sup>(3)</sup></b>	<b>1,520</b>	<b>1,631</b>	<b>+7</b>
Domestic overnight trips <sup>(5)</sup>	1,433	1,573	+10
<b>Total<sup>(3)</sup></b>	<b>2,954</b>	<b>3,204</b>	<b>+8</b>

Notes:

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- 2) Figures derived from 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 may not add to totals due to rounding
- 4) Figures derived from the Household Travel Survey (HTS) conducted by Central Statistics Office (CSO)
- 5) Figures derived from the Northern Ireland Continuous Household Survey (CHS) conducted by NISRA

**Table A2.4 Estimated <sup>(1, 2, 3)</sup> number of overnight trips, nights and expenditure in NI (excluding NI residents) for Jan-Sept 2012, 2013**

	Jan-Sept 2012	Jan-Sept 2013	% Change
Overall Trips (000s)	1,520	1,631	+7
Overall Nights (000s)	7,757	7,927	+2
Overall Expenditure (£m)	362	378	+5

Notes:

- 4) All estimates 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
- 5) Figures derived from Northern Ireland Passenger Survey (NIPS) conducted by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), the Survey of Overseas Travellers (SOT) conducted on behalf of Fáilte Ireland, the Household Travel Survey (HTS) conducted by Central Statistics Office (CSO) and the Northern Ireland Continuous Household Survey (CHS) conducted by NISRA
- 6) Figures may not add to totals due to rounding

**Table A2.5 Estimated <sup>(1, 2, 3)</sup> number of overnight trips (thousands) to NI (excluding NI residents) by reason for visit for Jan-Sept 2012, 2013**

	Jan-Sept 2012	Jan-Sept 2013	% Change
Holiday	149	165	+11
Visiting friends / relatives	445	540	+21
Business	172	173	+1
Other	26	22	-16
<b>GB visitors<sup>(2)(3)</sup></b>	<b>792</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>+14</b>
Holiday	224	232	+3
Visiting friends / relatives	125	125	0
Business	40	49	+23
Other	12	14	+12
<b>Overseas visitors<sup>(2)(3)</sup></b>	<b>401</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>+5</b>
Holiday	139	102	-26
Visiting friends / relatives	126	157	+25
Business	15	21	+35
Other	47	30	-35
<b>Rol Visitors<sup>(4)</sup></b>	<b>327</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>-5</b>
Holiday	512	499	-2
Visiting friends / relatives	696	822	+18
Business	228	243	+7
Other	85	66	-22
<b>Total<sup>(3)</sup></b>	<b>1,520</b>	<b>1,631</b>	<b>+7</b>

Notes:

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- 2) Figures derived from 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 may not add to totals due to rounding
- 4) Estimate based on a sample size of <30 appear shaded as   
 Estimate based on a sample size of 31-50 appear shaded as   
 Estimate based on a sample size of 51-100 appear shaded as

**Table A2.6 Hotel Occupancy for January to September 2012, 2013**

	Room Occupancy	Bed-space Occupancy	Rooms Sold	Bed-spaces sold
2012	68%	47%	1,401,000	2,181,300
2013	66%	45%	1,390,200	2,114,900
Change 2012-2013 (+/-)	-2pps	-2pps	-1%	-3%

*Note (1) Percentage/Percentage point change calculated using unrounded figures*

**Table A2.7 Bed & Breakfasts, Guesthouses and Guest Accommodation for January to September 2012, 2013**

	Room Occupancy	Bed-space Occupancy	Rooms Sold	Bed-spaces sold
2012	34%	25%	286,900	468,100
2013	33%	24%	287,200	477,700
Change 2012-2013 (+/-)*	-1pps	0pps	0%	+2%

*Note (1) Percentage/Percentage point change calculated using unrounded figures*

**Table A2.8 Number of Guests (thousands) by Country of Residence in NI Hotels January to September 2012, 2013**

	NI	GB	Other	Total
2012	588	893	485	1,966
2013	578	930	474	1,981
Change 2012-2013 (+/-)*	-2%	+4%	-2%	+1%

\*Change based on unrounded numbers