Office for National Statistics

Statistical bulletin

Overseas travel and tourism, provisional: January to March and April to June 2025

Quarterly estimates for overseas travel and tourism, including visits, spending, number of nights, and purpose of visit. These are official statistics in development.

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1 . Overview

These estimates are published as official statistics in development as we continue to develop and refine our new data collection design and methods implemented in July 2024. This is likely to have led to differences in the estimates compared with those produced using the previous design, the causes of which we are continuing to investigate.

- Overseas residents made an estimated 7.2 million visits to Great Britain and spent an estimated £4.7 billion in Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) 2025.
- Overseas residents made an estimated 9.3 million visits to Great Britain and spent an estimated £7.9 billion in Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2025.
- Residents of Great Britain made an estimated 18.7 million visits outside of the UK and spent an estimated £16.5 billion in Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) 2025.
- Residents of Great Britain made an estimated 26.0 million visits outside of the UK and spent an estimated £22.1 billion in Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2025.

We are publishing these estimates to update users on our progress, and to invite feedback and consult users on these developing methods and the useability of the estimates.

Estimates can provide general insights into overseas travel and tourism in Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) and Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2025, however users should be aware that these latest estimates appear to differ from previous travel patterns seen under our old design, which could reflect methods changes, real-world changes in international travel patterns, or sampling variability in sample surveys.

Users should refer to specific advice provided in the data sources and quality section before using these estimates and should not directly compare these estimates with those produced under the previous International Passenger Survey (IPS) design.

These statistics are labelled as official statistics in development, while we continue to develop and quality assure the new methods. Users should refer to advice provided in Section 3: Data sources and quality before using these estimates. Estimates are subject to future change as we introduce further improvements to these methods.

2 . Data on overseas travel and tourism

Estimates of overseas residents' visits and spending
Dataset | Released 29 October 2025
Quarterly estimates of visits, spending, and nights in GB by overseas residents, with additional breakdowns provided.

Estimates of visits and spending abroad
Dataset | Released 29 October 2025
Quarterly estimates of visits, spending, and nights by GB residents abroad, with additional breakdowns provided.

3 . Data sources and quality

Developing our travel and tourism statistics

These estimates are labelled as "official statistics in development" to reflect the ongoing development of our travel and tourism statistics. Until September 2023, these were called "experimental statistics". Read more about the change in the guide to official statistics in development.

These statistics are based on information from the International Passenger Survey (IPS) and the Great Britain Tourism Survey (GBTS). We are developing how we collect and produce the data to improve the quality of these statistics. Read more in our improving our travel and tourism statistics article series.

Once the developments are complete, we will review the statistics with the Statistics Head of Profession. We will decide whether the statistics are of sufficient quality and value to be published as official statistics, or whether further development is needed. Production may be stopped if they are not of sufficient quality or value. Users will be informed of the outcome and any changes.

We are publishing these estimates to update users on our progress, and to invite feedback from users on these developing methods and the useability of the estimates.

We value your feedback on these statistics. Contact us at pop.info@ons.gov.uk.

Our improving our travel and tourism statistics: August 2025 update outlines the latest methodological and quality assurance work completed. It also sets out our planned next steps to develop and refine our travel and tourism statistics. We also plan to seek user feedback on our new design and methods, and the useability of the new estimates produced.

From July 2024, our methodology to collect travel and tourism information on the International Passenger Survey (IPS) changed extensively, affecting aspects such as data collection, sampling, data processing, weighting, and estimation. We now produce travel and tourism statistics in a different way, which means we will likely see differences emerging in our estimates as a result of this new approach.

As we did not conduct a parallel run of our old and new data collection methods, it is challenging to fully evaluate the effects of these methods changes. We have been exploring the use of time series analysis to investigate the comparability of our new estimates over time, as outlined in our improving our travel and tourism statistics: August 2025 update. Changes in estimates (in trends or in levels) could be caused by these methods changes, real-world changes in international travel patterns, or sampling variability in sample surveys. Therefore, users should not directly compare estimates from periods under the old design with those from the new design.

Data considerations for January to March and April to June 2025 estimates

Users should be aware that under our new design and methods, these Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) and Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2025 estimates appear to differ from previous travel patterns, which could reflect our methods changes from July 2024, real-world changes in international travel patterns, or sampling variability in sample surveys. We are investigating these differences as part of the ongoing development and refinement of our new design and methods, and invite user feedback on this and the useability of these developing estimates.

Several data quality issues or areas to investigate have arisen while we have been establishing this new approach as reported in our previous travel and tourism releases. The following affect the estimates shared in this bulletin:

- assigning an incorrect airport code to a small proportion of IPS cases
- incorrectly reporting some GB residents' overseas pre-departure accommodation spend as post-departure accommodation spend
- missing "Fly, Cruise stay on board" spend information for GB residents
- differences in the proportion of visits via sea transport being attributed to overseas residents
- differences in how the new IPS design treats passengers who have arrived into a GB airport for the purpose of changing flights

Incorrect airport codes were assigned for a small proportion of the Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) 2025 data, meaning some country-level estimates published in this bulletin may be underestimated or overestimated for GB and overseas residents. We have implemented improvements at the data collection stage, which means this issue is resolved for Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2025 estimates onwards.

In our new design, the Great Britain Tourism Survey (GBTS) is used to collect post-departure spend of GB residents abroad. We have identified that some respondents may be including their pre-departure accommodation spend in their reported post-departure accommodation spend. We have removed all post-departure accommodation spend from our data while we investigate this issue. Therefore, it is likely that GB residents' overseas spend estimates are underestimated in Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 2025. Since our August 2025 update, we have completed cognitive interviewing to investigate this issue and produced several recommendations, which we plan to investigate, develop, and implement, to increase the accuracy of post-departure spend for GB residents.

As part of our investigation into confidence intervals for GB residents estimates for the "Fly, Cruise stay on board" category, we have identified that GBTS respondents are not asked about their transport method to join a cruise. As such, the spend estimate for this category will be underestimated, as it will not include post-departure spend. We will therefore not be publishing "Fly, Cruise stay on board" spend estimates or confidence intervals for GB residents in this release. We recommend the provisional estimates published in overseas travel and tourism, provisional: July to September and October to December 2024 are not used, as they will also be underestimated. We will investigate the feasibility of capturing this information as part of our ongoing development work.

Our new approach is attributing a lower proportion of total visits via sea transport to overseas residents, and consequently attributing a higher proportion to GB residents compared with our previous approach. As such, Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 2025 estimates of overseas resident visits via sea transport are likely smaller than they would have been under the previous approach. We will continue to investigate the survey design and administrative data used for calibrating the survey responses to the population totals to better understand this difference across our survey.

In our new IPS design, passengers who have flown into a GB airport for the purpose of changing flights are now included and processed in a different way, compared with our old design. Previously, passengers were interviewed immediately after airport security checks. Now, passengers are interviewed at airport departure gates or lounges at smaller airports. We are investigating how these passengers now appear in our sample data and calibration totals and are working to understand the effect these differences might have on our new estimates. This will involve exploring how best to include and process these passengers, in line with user needs.

We are planning to consult and seek feedback from users on these developments and will update on our progress in our Improving our travel and tourism statistics article series.

We are confident the developing estimates published in this bulletin provide useful insights into travel and tourism, however, they should not be directly compared with estimates produced from our old design, as some of these new estimates differ from previously seen travel patterns. When interpreting these estimates, users should be aware of the potential effects of these data issues on the estimates. These include:

- the underestimation or overestimation of some country-level estimates for visits, spend, and nights for GB and overseas residents
- the underestimation of GB residents overseas spend estimates
- smaller visit estimates for overseas residents travelling via sea transport compared with our previous approach

Uncertainty measures of travel and tourism estimates

We provide 95% confidence intervals for the headline travel and tourism estimates included in this bulletin. These intervals mean that if we drew 100 random samples and calculated a 95% confidence interval for each sample, we would expect 95 of them to contain the true population value produced using that methodology. A wider interval indicates more uncertainty in the estimate. The confidence intervals for data used in this bulletin can be found in the accompanying datasets (Section 2: Data on overseas travel and tourism).

More information on how we measure uncertainty is available on our uncertainty and how we measure it for our surveys page.

We require a new method to calculate the confidence intervals accompanying our GB residents' spend overseas estimates because of the data collection changes in our new IPS design. More information on the reasons for taking this new approach is available in Section 3: Methodological development of overseas travel and tourism estimates of our August 2025 update article. As a result of this new and developing method, some country-level confidence intervals for GB residents' spend overseas are wider for these latest Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) and Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2025 estimates. We are continuing to investigate and develop these new methods and will update on progress in our improving our travel and tourism statistics article series.

Users should take caution when interpreting estimates where confidence intervals are not currently provided.

4 . Glossary

Overseas residents

An overseas resident is a person who permanently resides outside the UK.

Visits

The figures for visits relate to the number of completed visits, not the number of visitors. Anyone entering or leaving more than once in the same period would be counted on each visit.

Weighting

A method used to make the responding sample of passengers representative of all passenger trips. The final weight includes components that represent the sample design, non-response, and calibration to known passenger totals to improve consistency.

5 . Related links

Improving our travel and tourism statistics: August 2025 update
Article | Released 26 August 2025
An article outlining our progress towards planned improvements to our travel and tourism statistics, including official statistics in development.

Travel trends: 2024
Article | Released 26 August 2025
Annual estimates for overseas travel and tourism, including visits, spending, number of nights, and purpose of visit. These are official statistics in development.

6 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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