

Regional Quarterly Inbound Update & Full Year 2021

Q4 2021 and Full Year 2021 by region

International Passenger Survey by the ONS

(published 15th June 2022)

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1. About this data

About this data

This report is based on the latest International Passenger Survey (IPS) data released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on the morning of **15th June 2022**.

The IPS data is based on interviews with a sample of departing visitors. The number interviewed varies but is typically around 3,000 per month, but this has been severely impacted during 2021 due to COVID-19.

Please note that sample sizes at the quarterly level for some analysis and comparisons can be low and results should be treated with caution, especially for spending. For absolute clarity we have included sample sizes within this report where breakdowns have been provided.

Please also note:

- All data is sourced from the International Passenger Survey by the Office for National Statistics.
- All figures quoted are not “seasonally adjusted”.
- Numbers in some tables / charts may not sum due to rounding.
- All percentage changes in spend are nominal.

Refer to the [ONS website](#) for more on IPS methodology and UK outbound travel.

Important notice – continued impact of Covid-19 on IPS

The International Passenger Survey (IPS) was suspended on 16 March 2020 due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Interviewing initially began at UK airports at the start of 2021, though the IPS remained suspended at some sea ports and train stations during the year. To produce statistics for the periods impacted the Office for National Statistics (ONS) have applied the following processes to the data since March 2020:

- **March 2020** - With the data collected for most of March when the IPS was running the ONS had part of the data needed for the month. To produce estimates for the full month of March the ONS worked on the assumption that passenger characteristics in the second, unsampled, half of the month were represented by those sampled in the first half.
- **April – December 2020 (Q2, Q3, Q4 2020)** - The travel and tourism figures for this period are based entirely on administrative sources and modelling as no data was collected during this period. In producing these results the ONS have made assumptions that some previous trends have continued, for example, the proportions of passengers travelling for business or holidays. The data was not made available by Mode, therefore we are unable to compare current AIR data to this period in 2020 and have opted to compare AIR data to 2019 instead.
- **2021** – revised 2021 published today will contain all collected by the ONS throughout 2021 but with the following caveats that no data was collected for those travelling to the UK by Eurotunnel and data for those arriving from Dover was only collected from Q3. This report covers the regional level data for 2021. No comparisons are made in this report but you can access regional data for previous years on the [regional page on vb.org](#). The sample for this period is very low so caution should be used when interpreting results.

Please [refer to the ONS website for the official release and more information on IPS methodology and UK outbound travel](#).

Definitions

Regions:

- **Total Europe** includes **EU15** (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Finland, Germany, Greece, Irish Republic, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden); **Other EU** (Bulgaria, Cyprus (South), Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia (note that Croatia has been included in the 'Other EU' category since it joined in July 2013; before July 2013 this group was labelled as A12) and **Rest of Europe** (European countries outside the EU (including Russia, Norway and Switzerland). Before July 2013 Croatia was also included here, but from July 2013 appears in Other EU)
- **North America** - Canada (including Greenland and St Pierre et Miquelon), USA (including Puerto Rico and US Virgin Islands)
- **Rest of World** – Countries outside Europe and North America (Africa, Asia, Central America, Middle East, Oceania, South America)

Journey purpose:

- **VFR** - Visiting Friends and Relatives
- **Miscellaneous visits** - includes those for short term study, to attend sports events, for personal shopping, health or religious purposes, accompanying others and many more

Other:

- **Visit** - all departing visits from overseas residents (including those who may be UK nationals but live elsewhere, excluding other nationals who have been in the UK for 12 months or longer)
- **Spend** - the amount visitors report spending in the UK during their stay
- **YoY** - Year on Year

2. Latest inbound UK and market statistics Annual 2021 (January – December)

Regional UK data

Notes on Regional level data

- This section covers the data that the [ONS have published](#) for the Regional level.
- Please note the following when interpreting the IPS 2021 data:
 - There were no IPS interviews at Eurotunnel in 2021 so the dataset excludes all passengers travelling on this mode of transport
 - Interviews at Dover only started in Q3 2021
 - Data is not seasonally adjusted
 - Please take in account the sample sizes and guidance on [slide 11](#)

Regional summary 2021 – visits (000)

Please see notes on slide 5 when interpreting the 2021 data

Region	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2021
London	94	122	697	1,673	2,585
Rest Of England	142	192	1,073	1,724	3,131
North East	4	6	43	58	110
North West	22	38	236	412	707
Yorkshire	8	15	81	116	220
West Midlands	21	23	146	228	418
East Midlands	20	17	85	120	242
East Of England	37	30	173	277	517
South West	19	22	136	196	374
South East	37	47	276	426	786
Scotland	8	25	234	268	536
Wales	4	11	37	65	116
Total UK	245	346	1,968	3,635	6,194

- There were more inbound visits to the Rest of England than to London in 2021, reflecting the impact COVID-19 had on tourism to cities. 3.1 million visits were taken to the Rest of England vs 2.6 million visits to London.
- Behind London, the most visited England regions were the South East (786,000 visits), the North West (707,000) and the East of England (517,000).
- Scotland received 536,000 visits whilst Wales received 116,000 visits.

Notes:

- *2021 is not directly comparable to previous years due to interviews not being carried out at all ports throughout 2021. However, if you would like to see previous regional data, please visit our [regional page on vb.org](https://www.visitbritain.org/regional).*
- *Please see sample sizes on slide 11 when interpreting the data*

Regional summary 2021 – spend (£m)

Please see notes on slide 5 when interpreting the 2021 data

Region	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2021
London	£131	£192	£667	£1,608	£2,599
Rest Of England	£138	£290	£982	£1,100	£2,509
North East	£4	£9	£45	£43	£101
North West	£28	£64	£249	£273	£614
Yorkshire	£6	£21	£111	£77	£215
West Midlands	£21	£33	£192	£117	£363
East Midlands	£13	£22	£45	£71	£152
East Of England	£23	£46	£82	£147	£299
South West	£10	£31	£76	£116	£233
South East	£33	£64	£180	£255	£532
Scotland	£12	£42	£221	£246	£521
Wales	£3	£9	£23	£25	£60
Total UK	£287	£538	£1,900	£3,003	£5,788

- Inbound visitors spent a similar £2.6bn in London vs. £2.5bn in the Rest of England in 2021.
- The North West received £614m from inbound visitors, followed by the South East (£532).
- Visitors to Scotland spent £521m whilst visitors to Wales spent £60m.

Notes:

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- *Please see sample sizes on slide 11 when interpreting the data*

Regional summary 2021 – sample sizes

Please see notes on slide 5 when interpreting the 2021 data

Region	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2021
London	410	1,346	2,127	3,602	7,485
Rest Of England	619	1,664	2,638	3,550	8,471
North East	20	53	118	131	322
North West	112	317	469	752	1,650
Yorkshire	42	141	200	201	584
West Midlands	97	181	359	515	1,152
East Midlands	46	149	177	244	616
East Of England	96	240	331	410	1,077
South West	59	205	413	579	1,256
South East	160	429	801	940	2,330
Scotland	88	206	514	818	1,626
Wales	19	101	124	169	413
Total UK	1,123	3,260	5,175	7,892	17,450

- **Sample advice** - If sample is less than 30 we do not recommend use of this data. For sample sizes between 30 and 100 we recommend the data be treated as indicative. Sample sizes over 100 are more reliable.