

Monthly Inbound Update

May 2022

International Passenger Survey by the ONS
(published 20th September 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 **20th September 2022**. This data covers May 2022 but may be revised for the quarterly release (Apr-Jun 2022) and the annual 2022 release.

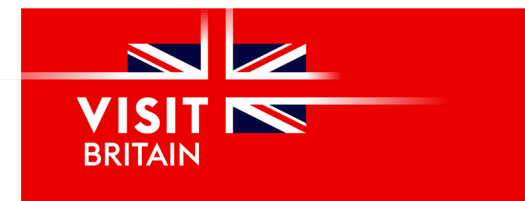
[Read the 'Inbound research & insights' section of the VisitBritain website](#) for much more detail on long term trends, data for individual markets and UK regions. Short term figures give an indication of the very latest trends, but should be used with caution. IPS is not designed to report accurately by month, and figures should be treated as indicative. Analysis of the last three months or longer is more reliable. All figures are provisional and subject to revision by the ONS.

The IPS data is based on interviews with a sample of departing visitors and the number interviewed varies but is typically around 3,000 per month.

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 ports during 2022. 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** – data published for 2021 should be interpreted with the caveats that no data was collected for those travelling to the UK by Eurotunnel and data for those travelling via Dover was only collected from Q3. Please see [our 2021 inbound data page](#) for more information.
- **January to May 2022** – the ONS were unable to restart interviewing at Eurotunnel during this period due to COVID-19 restrictions so data for this timeframe excludes travel via this port in section 2. In section 3, we have carried out some analysis to exclude Eurotunnel from the 2019 IPS data so that we can make direct comparisons between Jan-May 2022 and Jan-May 2019.

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 monthly inbound UK

May 2022

Headlines – May 2022

Please note that 2022 data excludes those travelling via Eurotunnel

Total	January 2022	February 2022	March 2022	April 2022	May 2022	Year-to-date (Jan-May 2022)
Visits	820,000	1,050,000	1,850,000	2,150,000	2,680,000	8,550,000
Spend	£620m	£740m	£1.3bn	£1.7bn	£2.1bn	£6.4bn

- **Visits:** The UK received 2.7 million visits in May 2022, more than double the visits in February 2022. Visits have continued to increase month-on-month as traveller confidence is built up again. For the first 5 months of the year, visits totalled 8.6 million.
- **Spending:** Inbound visitors spent £2.1bn in May 2022. Following the same pattern as visits, spend has continued to grow month-on-month with total inbound spend reaching £6.4bn for the first 5 months of 2022.



Journey Purpose – Visits – May 2022

Please note that 2022 data excludes those travelling via Eurotunnel

Total	January 2022	February 2022	March 2022	April 2022	May 2022	Year-to-date (Jan-May 2022)
Holiday	100,000	250,000	540,000	730,000	1,020,000	2,640,000
Business	160,000	240,000	400,000	370,000	450,000	1,620,000
VFR	510,000	440,000	690,000	800,000	900,000	3,340,000
Miscellaneous	50,000	120,000	230,000	250,000	310,000	960,000

- Across journey purposes, visits continue to grow closer to pre-pandemic levels in May 2022.
- **Holiday** visits reached the 1 million mark in May, the first time in 2022. These holiday visits accounted for 38% of all visits, overtaking VFR visits for the first time in 2022.
- There were 900,000 visits from those **visiting friends and relatives** in the UK.
- **Business** visits totalled at 450,000.
- All other visits, under '**miscellaneous**', which includes study, accounted for 310,000 visits in May 2022. This was higher than 'miscellaneous' visits in May 2019 (which totalled at 196,000 visits) likely due to the high number of study visits in May 2022.

Global Region - Visits

Please note that 2022 data excludes those travelling via Eurotunnel

Total	January 2022	February 2022	March 2022	April 2022	May 2022	Year-to-date (Jan-May 2022)
Europe	610,000	860,000	1,470,000	1,690,000	1,920,000	6,550,000
→ EU	540,000	790,000	1,350,000	1,530,000	1,760,000	5,970,000
→ EU15	390,000	620,000	1,070,000	1,240,000	1,410,000	4,730,000
→ Other EU	160,000	180,000	280,000	290,000	350,000	1,260,000
→ Rest of Europe	70,000	70,000	120,000	160,000	160,000	580,000
North America	70,000	90,000	200,000	240,000	440,000	1,040,000
Rest of World	140,000	100,000	180,000	220,000	320,000	960,000

- **Europe** made up 72% of all inbound visits to the UK in May, equating to 1.9m visits. 92% of these visits were from the **EU** (1.8m visits) vs 8% from the **Rest of Europe** (160,000 visits).
- There were 440,000 visits from **North America** in May 2022, representing 16% of inbound visits.
- The **Rest of the World** saw just 320,000 visits with some of the markets in this region still under lockdown and subject to stricter travel rules.



3. Comparison to 2019, excluding Eurotunnel

May 2022

2019 vs 2022, excluding Eurotunnel

As mentioned on slide 5, the ONS were unable to interview travellers at Eurotunnel during the first 5 months of 2022, due to COVID-19 restrictions. In order to gain a better understanding of how 2022 inbound tourism is performing compared to previous years, we have carried out analysis to exclude the Eurotunnel data from 2019 so that we can directly compare the 2022 data to that dataset. Please find this analysis available on the next slide.

Headlines – comparison to 2019 excluding Eurotunnel

Please note the data on this slide excludes those travelling via Eurotunnel

Visits (excl Eurotunnel)	2019	2022	% change
January	2,590,000	820,000	-68%
February	2,330,000	1,050,000	-55%
March	3,010,000	1,850,000	-39%
April	3,060,000	2,150,000	-30%
May	3,310,000	2,680,000	-19%
YTD (Jan –May)	14,290,000	8,550,000	-40%

Spend (excl Eurotunnel)	2019	2022	% change
January	£1.6bn	£620m	-61%
February	£1.3bn	£740m	-43%
March	£1.8bn	£1.3bn	-28%
April	£1.8bn	£1.7bn	-7%
May	£2.3bn	£2.1bn	-9%
YTD (Jan –May)	£8.8bn	£6.4bn	-27%

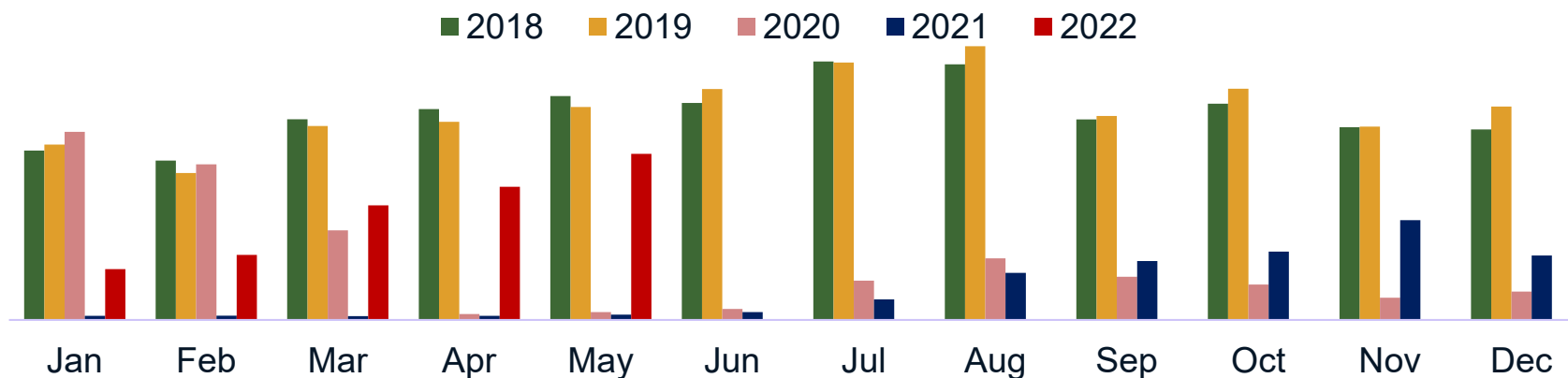
- Removing Eurotunnel data from the inbound picture, **visits** in May 2022 were down 19% on May 2022 showing vast improvements from January when visits were down 68% on 2019. Year-to-date figures show that visits were down 40% compared to the same time period in 2019.
- Inbound **spend** was just 9% below 2019 levels in May 2022 compared to January 2022 when spend was down 61% on January 2019. Inbound spend for the first 5 months of 2022 was down 27% on 2019.

4. Detailed monthly trends

Detailed monthly trends - visits

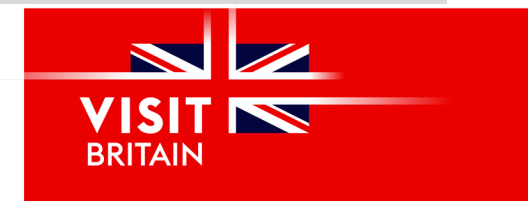
Please see notes on slide 5 when interpreting 2020, 2021 and 2022 data

Overseas Visits to the UK - Total Visits (000)
Source: Office for National Statistics, International Passenger Survey



Years	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2018	2,734	2,573	3,240	3,404	3,614	3,503	4,172	4,126	3,237	3,491	3,112	3,075
2019	2,830	2,372	3,129	3,199	3,438	3,727	4,155	4,418	3,292	3,731	3,121	3,445
2020	3,036	2,512	1,446	95	127	176	633	993	696	570	358	458
2021	65	69	61	65	86	126	331	759	949	1,103	1,610	1,039
2022	820	1,050	1,850	2,150	2,680							

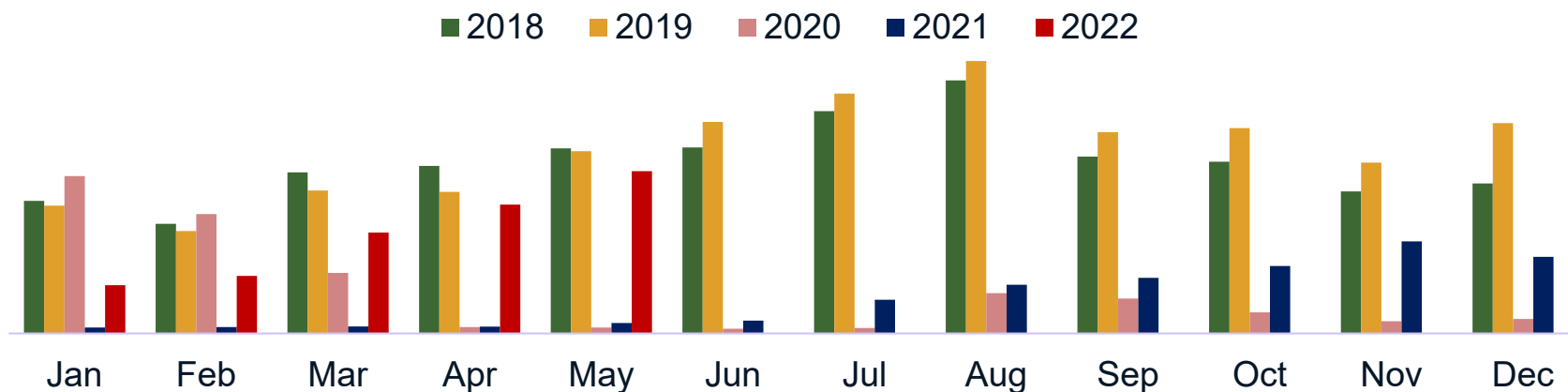
Note: Visits in thousands. Monthly data is replaced by the more accurate Quarterly data.
[Long term trends showing percentage change year-on-year by quarter and more is available here.](#)



Detailed monthly trends - spend

Please see notes on slide 5 when interpreting 2020, 2021 and 2022 data

Overseas Visits to the UK - Total Spend (£m)
Source: Office for National Statistics, International Passenger Survey



Years	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2018	1,708	1,412	2,074	2,157	2,385	2,396	2,864	3,259	2,278	2,212	1,830	1,931
2019	1,646	1,318	1,840	1,824	2,347	2,725	3,090	3,510	2,593	2,645	2,201	2,708
2020	2,026	1,538	780	82	75	61	69	519	448	270	156	185
2021	76	82	89	87	134	165	433	626	716	867	1,186	985
2022	620	740	1,300	1,660	2,090							

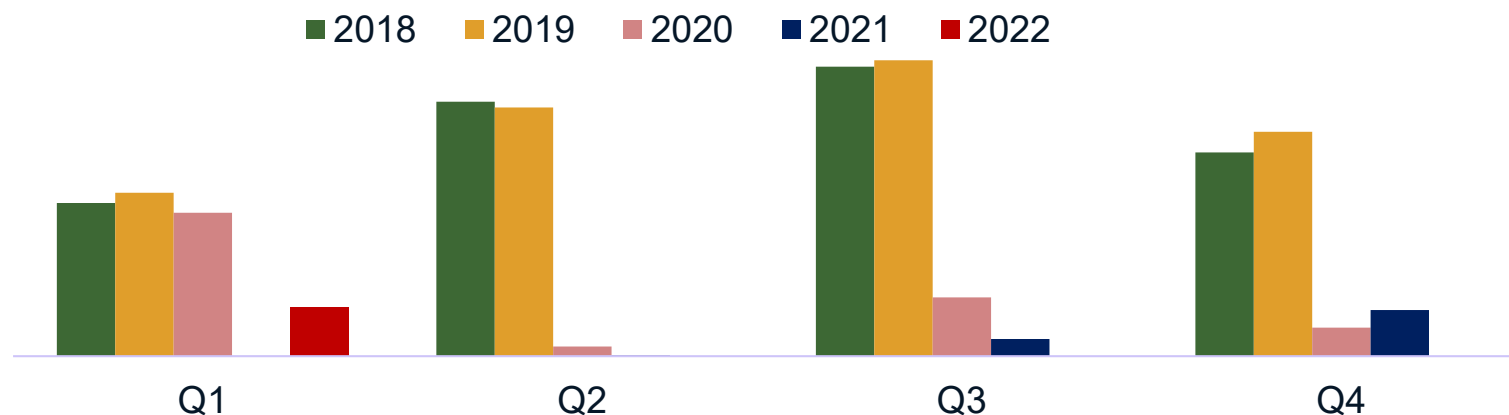
Note: Spending in million pounds. Monthly data is replaced by the more accurate Quarterly data.
[Long term trends showing percentage change year-on-year by quarter and more is available here.](#)



Detailed quarterly trend – journey purpose - holiday

Please see notes on slide 5 when interpreting 2020, 2021 and 2022 data

Overseas Visits to the UK – Holiday Visits (000)
Source: Office for National Statistics, International Passenger Survey



Years	Q1 (Jan-Mar)	Q2 (Apr-Jun)	Q3 (Jul-Sep)	Q4 (Oct-Dec)
2018	2,778	4,614	5,249	3,694
2019	2,964	4,508	5,365	4,068
2020	2,600	177	1,066	519
2021	7	13	313	837
2022	890			

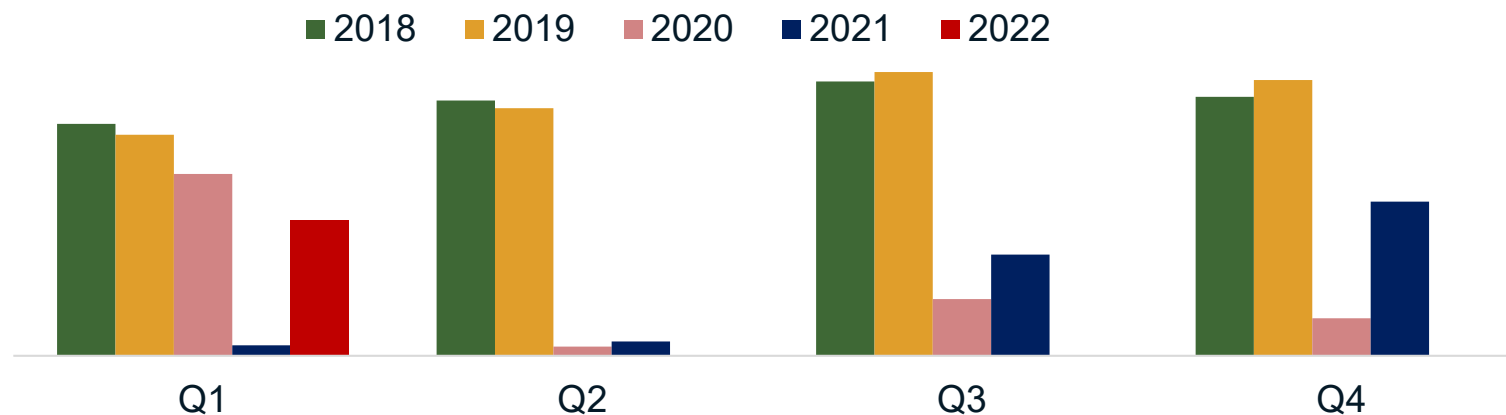
Note: Visits in thousands. [Long term trends showing percentage change year-on-year by quarter and more is available here.](#)



Detailed quarterly trend – journey purpose - VFR

Please see notes on slide 5 when interpreting 2020, 2021 and 2022 data

Overseas Visits to the UK – Visits to Friends and Relatives (000)
Source: Office for National Statistics, International Passenger Survey



Years	Q1 (Jan-Mar)	Q2 (Apr-Jun)	Q3 (Jul-Sep)	Q4 (Oct-Dec)
2018	2,803	3,086	3,315	3,130
2019	2,672	2,993	3,430	3,332
2020	2,197	112	686	454
2021	127	173	1,224	1,864
2022	1,640			

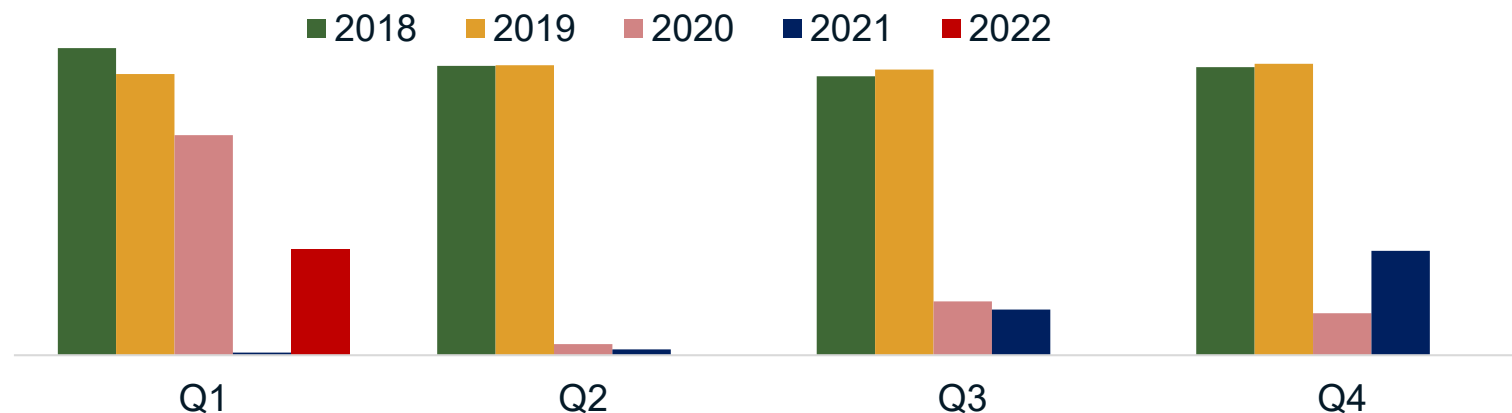
Note: Visits in thousands. [Long term trends showing percentage change year-on-year by quarter and more is available here.](#)



Detailed quarterly trend – journey purpose - business

Please see notes on slide 5 when interpreting 2020, 2021 and 2022 data

Overseas Visits to the UK – Business Visits (000)
Source: Office for National Statistics, International Passenger Survey



Years	Q1 (Jan-Mar)	Q2 (Apr-Jun)	Q3 (Jul-Sep)	Q4 (Oct-Dec)
2018	2,319	2,185	2,106	2,175
2019	2,123	2,190	2,157	2,201
2020	1,661	84	406	316
2021	20	44	344	788
2022	800			

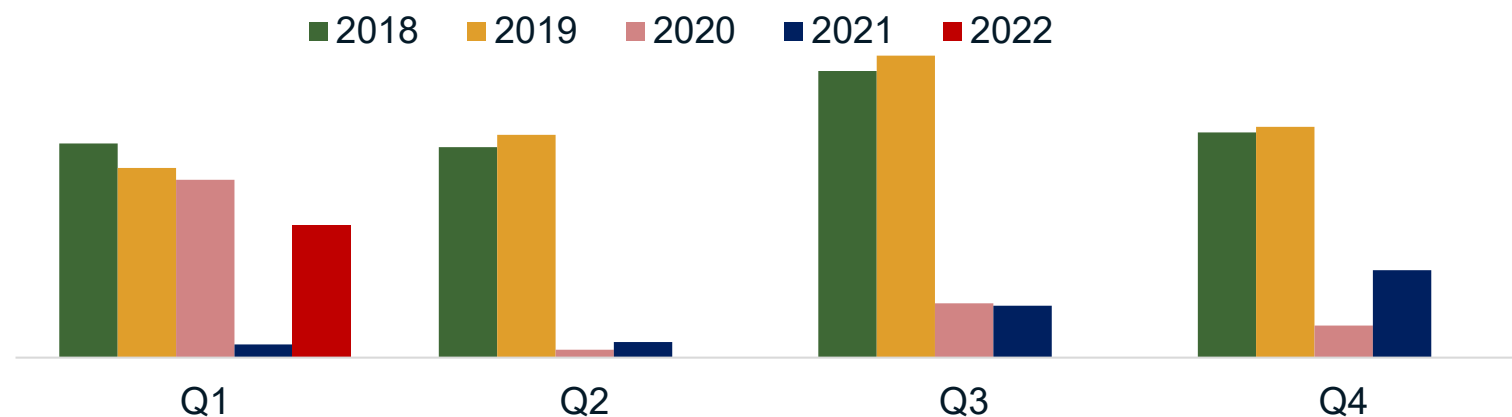
Note: Visits in thousands. [Long term trends showing percentage change year-on-year by quarter and more is available here.](#)



Detailed quarterly trend – journey purpose - misc

Please see notes on slide 5 when interpreting 2020, 2021 and 2022 data

Overseas Visits to the UK – Miscellaneous (includes short-term study, 000)
Source: Office for National Statistics, International Passenger Survey



Years	Q1 (Jan-Mar)	Q2 (Apr-Jun)	Q3 (Jul-Sep)	Q4 (Oct-Dec)
2018	647	636	866	680
2019	573	673	912	697
2020	537	24	164	97
2021	40	47	157	264
2022	400			

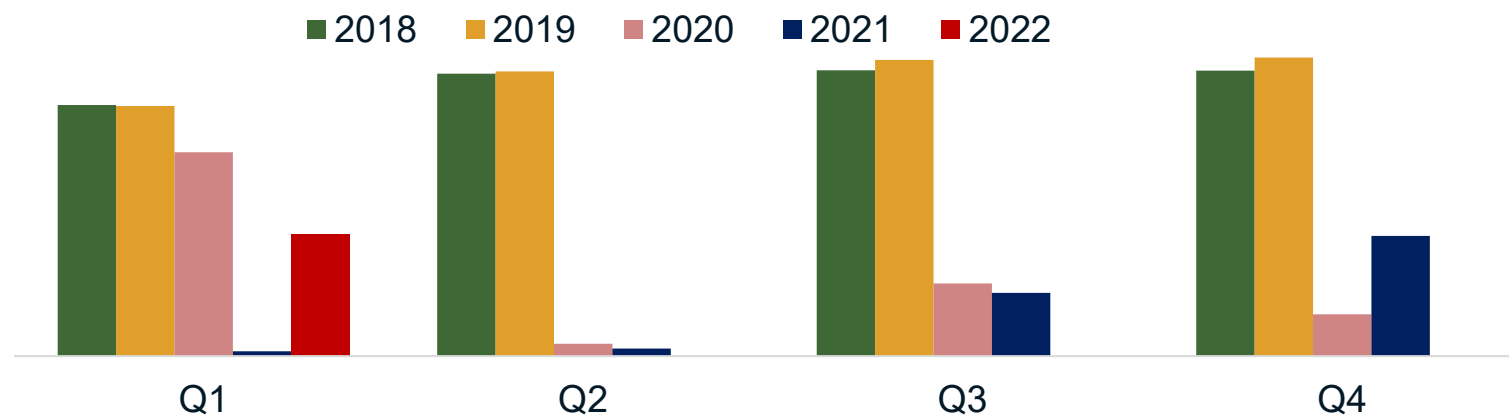
Note: Visits in thousands. [Long term trends showing percentage change year-on-year by quarter and more is available here.](#)



Detailed quarterly trend – global regions - Europe

Please see notes on slide 5 when interpreting 2020, 2021 and 2022 data

Overseas Visits to the UK from Europe (000)
Source: Office for National Statistics, International Passenger Survey



Years	Q1 (Jan-Mar)	Q2 (Apr-Jun)	Q3 (Jul-Sep)	Q4 (Oct-Dec)
2018	6,065	6,824	6,904	6,899
2019	6,044	6,879	7,156	7,215
2020	4,926	298	1,754	1,009
2021	115	183	1,528	2,904
2022	2,940			

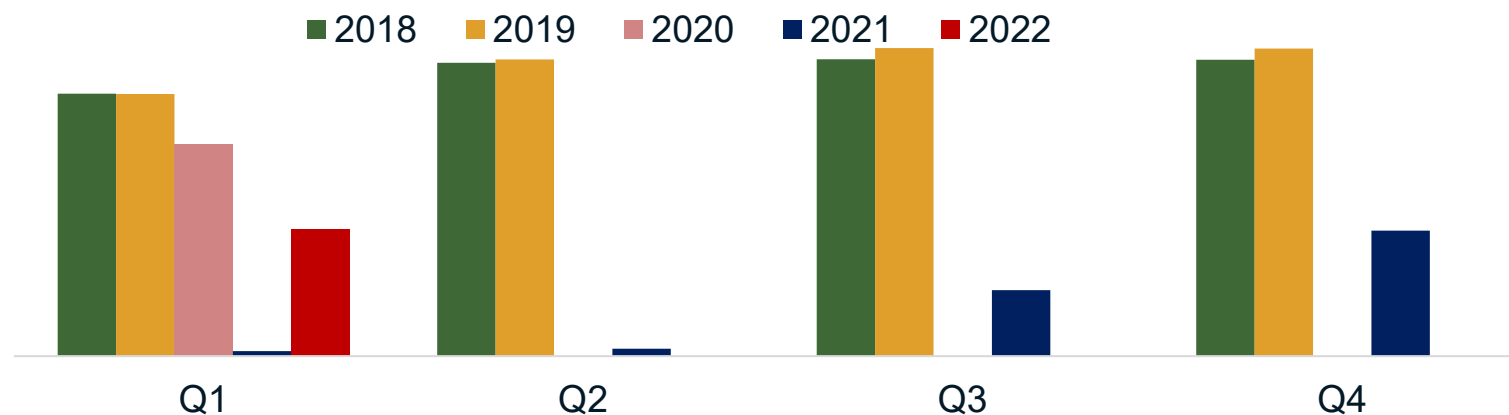
Note: Visits in thousands. [Long term trends showing percentage change year-on-year by quarter and more is available here.](#)



Detailed quarterly trend – global regions - EU

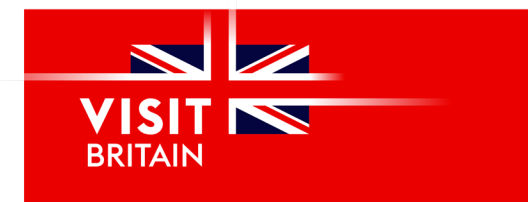
Please see notes on slide 5 when interpreting 2020, 2021 and 2022 data

Overseas Visits to the UK from EU (000)
Source: Office for National Statistics, International Passenger Survey



Years	Q1 (Jan-Mar)	Q2 (Apr-Jun)	Q3 (Jul-Sep)	Q4 (Oct-Dec)
2018	5,549	6,202	6,277	6,266
2019	5,543	6,272	6,512	6,502
2020	4,472			
2021	104	157	1,395	2,653
2022	2,680			

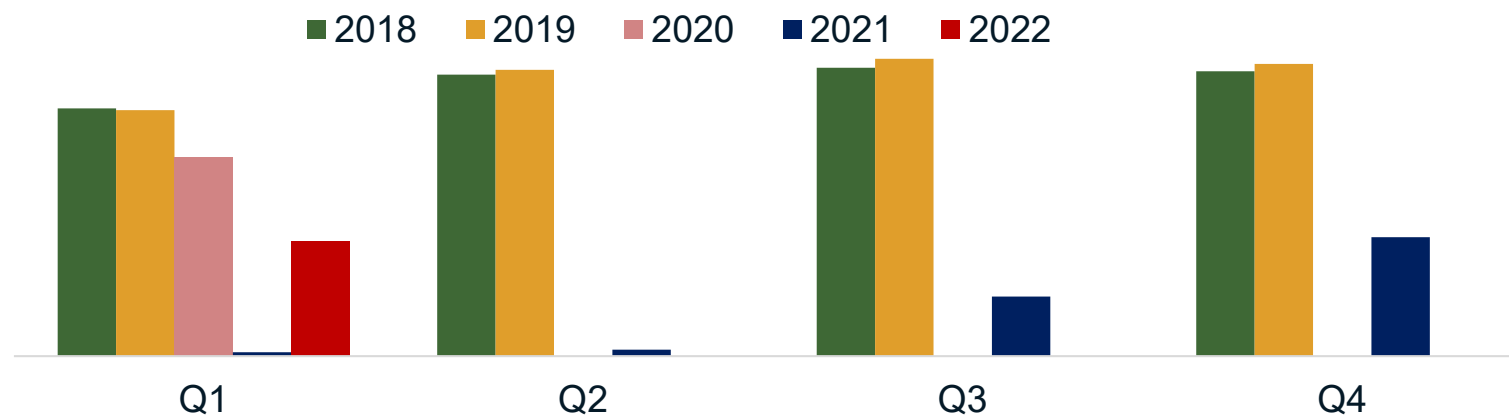
Note: Visits in thousands. [Long term trends showing percentage change year-on-year by quarter and more is available here.](#)



Detailed quarterly trend – global regions - EU15

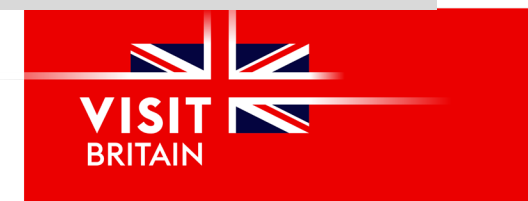
Please see notes on slide 5 when interpreting 2020, 2021 and 2022 data

Overseas Visits to the UK from EU15 (000)
Source: Office for National Statistics, International Passenger Survey



Years	Q1 (Jan-Mar)	Q2 (Apr-Jun)	Q3 (Jul-Sep)	Q4 (Oct-Dec)
2018	4,489	5,102	5,227	5,162
2019	4,456	5,187	5,389	5,295
2020	3,603			
2021	69	115	1,078	2,154
2022	2,080			

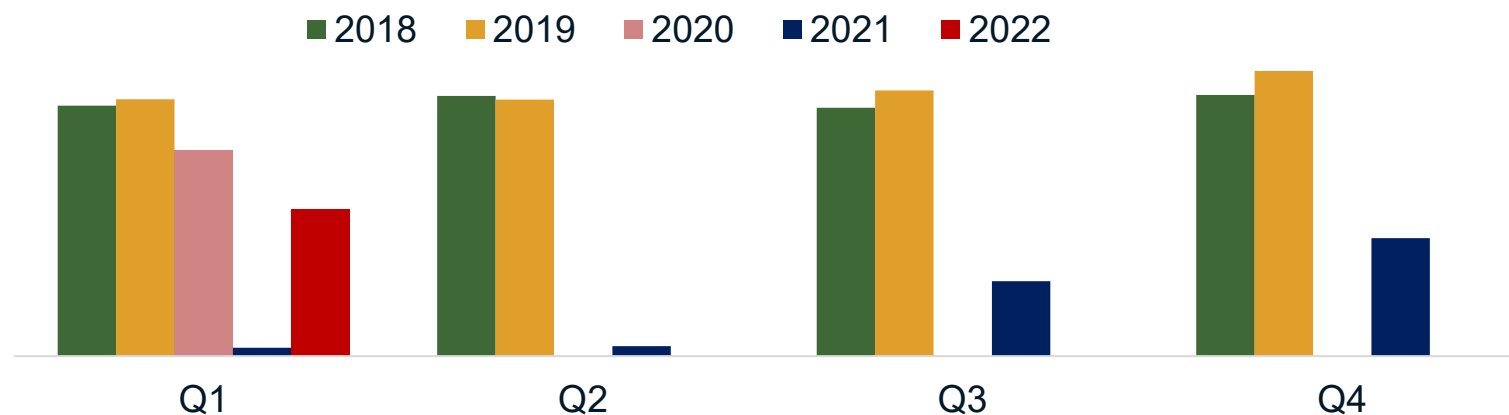
Note: Visits in thousands. [Long term trends showing percentage change year-on-year by quarter and more is available here.](#)



Detailed quarterly trend – global regions - EU Other

Please see notes on slide 5 when interpreting 2020, 2021 and 2022 data

Overseas Visits to the UK from EU Other (000)
Source: Office for National Statistics, International Passenger Survey



Years	Q1 (Jan-Mar)	Q2 (Apr-Jun)	Q3 (Jul-Sep)	Q4 (Oct-Dec)
2018	1,059	1,100	1,050	1,104
2019	1,086	1,085	1,123	1,206
2020	869			
2021	35	42	317	499
2022	620			

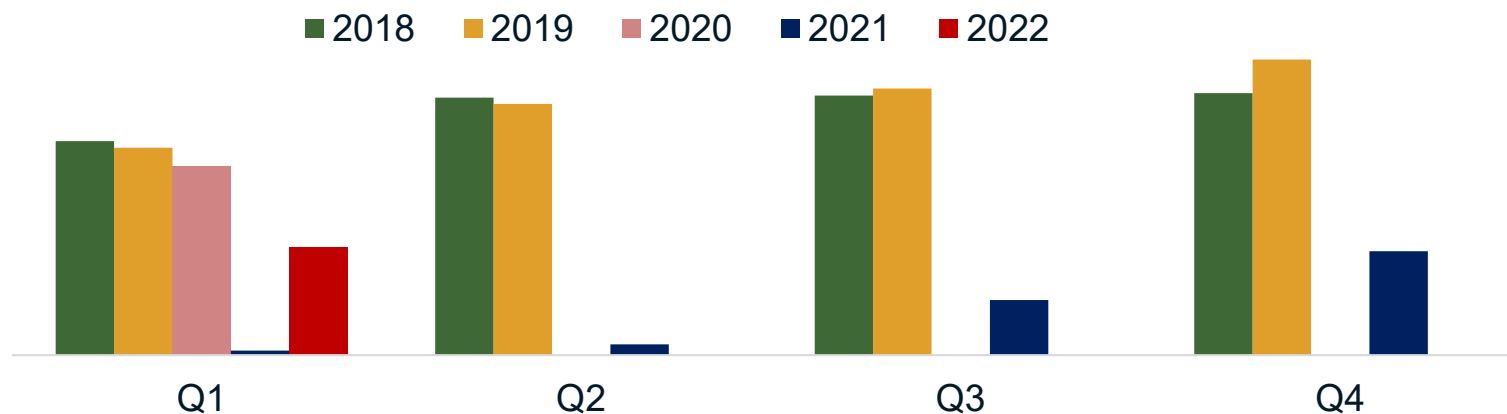
Note: Visits in thousands. [Long term trends showing percentage change year-on-year by quarter and more is available here.](#)



Detailed quarterly trend – global regions – Rest of Europe

Please see notes on slide 5 when interpreting 2020, 2021 and 2022 data

Overseas Visits to the UK from Rest of Europe (000)
Source: Office for National Statistics, International Passenger Survey



Years	Q1 (Jan-Mar)	Q2 (Apr-Jun)	Q3 (Jul-Sep)	Q4 (Oct-Dec)
2018	517	622	627	633
2019	501	607	644	714
2020	455			
2021	11	26	133	251
2022	260			

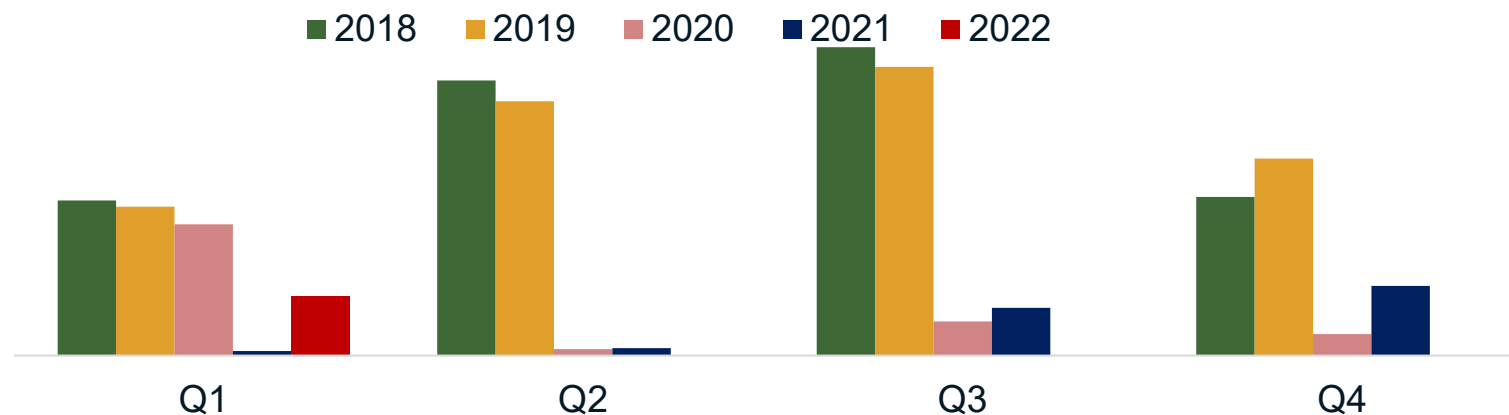
Note: Visits in thousands. [Long term trends showing percentage change year-on-year by quarter and more is available here.](#)



Detailed quarterly trend – global regions - North America

Please see notes on slide 5 when interpreting 2020, 2021 and 2022 data

Overseas Visits to the UK from North America (000)
Source: Office for National Statistics, International Passenger Survey



Years	Q1 (Jan-Mar)	Q2 (Apr-Jun)	Q3 (Jul-Sep)	Q4 (Oct-Dec)
2018	938	1,663	1,864	959
2019	900	1,537	1,745	1,191
2020	794	40	207	130
2021	28	45	289	421
2022	360			

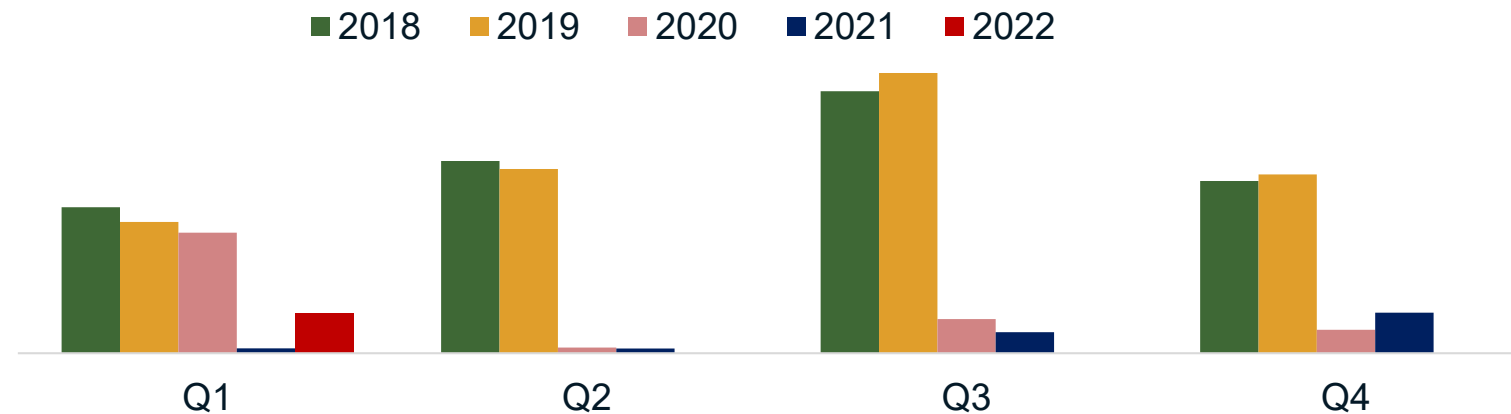
Note: Visits in thousands. [Long term trends showing percentage change year-on-year by quarter and more is available here.](#)



Detailed quarterly trend – global regions - Rest of the World

Please see notes on slide 5 when interpreting 2020, 2021 and 2022 data

Overseas Visits to the UK from Rest of the World (000)
Source: Office for National Statistics, International Passenger Survey



Years	Q1 (Jan-Mar)	Q2 (Apr-Jun)	Q3 (Jul-Sep)	Q4 (Oct-Dec)
2018	1,544	2,033	2,769	1,821
2019	1,388	1,948	2,963	1,891
2020	1,274	60	361	247
2021	51	49	222	428
2022	420			

Note: Visits in thousands. [Long term trends showing percentage change year-on-year by quarter and more is available here.](#)

