

Statistical bulletin

Short-term lets through online collaborative economy platforms, UK : Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2023

Number of guest nights, nights, and stays for short-term lets offered via online collaborative economy platforms (Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia Group).

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1 . Main points

- From July to September 2023, there were nearly 2.8 million stays in short-term lets booked through the three online collaborative economy platforms in the UK (Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia Group); this totalled nearly 28.9 million guest nights with an average of 313,879 guest nights each day.
- In the UK, domestic visitors made up 63.6% of guest nights (18.4 million) compared with 36.4% by international visitors (10.5 million); Wales was the UK country with the highest proportion of domestic guest nights (85.3%).
- The local administrative units (LAUs) in the UK with the highest number of total guest nights in Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2023 were Cornwall (1,586,060), City of Edinburgh (1,157,180) and Westminster (871,900).
- The LAUs with the highest share of guest nights for each UK country were Cornwall (7.3% of England), City of Edinburgh (26.9% of Scotland), Gwynedd (19.1% of Wales), and Belfast (29.2% of Northern Ireland).
- The most popular LAUs for domestic guest nights were Cornwall (1,311,380), Gwynedd (365,750), and City of Edinburgh (345,000).
- The most popular LAUs for international guest nights were City of Edinburgh (812,190), Westminster (757,350), and Kensington and Chelsea (389,720).

In future publications we will have UK data for other time periods, but similar international data published by Eurostat suggest that the summer months are the busiest, so we would not expect to see similar levels throughout the rest of the year. For further information, see [Section 8: Measuring the data](#).

2 . Nights, guest nights and stays

The statistics in this bulletin are official statistics in development. In this release, short-term lets refers to rentals, such as apartments or rooms, booked through Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia Group, excluding other forms of accommodation, such as hotels or campsites. See our [leisure and tourism](#) releases for more related statistics .

Interest in short-term letting has increased substantially with the growth of digital platforms, making it easier for property owners and managers to advertise their rooms or properties to potential guests (domestic and international). People can generate income by renting for short periods of time and allowing tourists a wider choice of accommodation beyond traditional hotels, hostels or bed and breakfasts.

For the first time, this analysis provides aggregated data from three large online collaborative economy platforms (Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia Group) on the number of guest nights, nights, and stays spent in short-term lets offered via online platforms during Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2023.

The number of guest nights takes into account the number of nights spent during a stay multiplied by the number of visitors in the travel party. This can be influenced by guest group size and length of stay. For example, a group of four staying for two nights would be eight guest nights, but one guest staying for two nights would be two guest nights. The number of nights refers to the number of nights a property or room offered via the platforms was occupied; the number of stays refers to the number of times a facility offered via the platforms was occupied.

Table 1: Number of guest nights, nights and stays in short-term lets offered via collaborative economy platforms UK, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2023

Country Name	Number of Guest Nights	Number of Nights	Number of Stays
United Kingdom	28,876,830	9,932,820	2,782,000
England	21,598,290 (74.8%)	7,572,260 (76.2%)	2,056,320 (73.9%)
Scotland	4,301,420 (14.9%)	1,447,960 (14.6%)	445,120 (16%)
Wales	2,217,030 (7.7%)	679,090 (6.8%)	200,210 (7.2%)
Northern Ireland	760,080 (2.6%)	233,510 (2.4%)	80,350 (2.9%)

Source: Office for National Statistics analysis using data from Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia Group

Between July and September 2023, there were nearly 28.9 million guest nights spent in accommodation booked via one of the three platforms in the UK across 2.8 million stays. On average, this is 313,879 guest nights each day over the three-month summer period. The average number of guest nights each day refer to the number of guest nights divided by the number of days in Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2023. This does not tell us the total number of guests staying in short-term lets as guests can stay more than one night.

In future publications we will have UK data for other time periods, but similar [international data published by Eurostat](#) suggests that the summer months are the busiest. In the EU, guest nights in Quarter 3 2023 made up nearly half (47.3%) of annual guest nights (Quarter 4 (Oct to Dec) 2022 to Quarter 3 2023). This means we would not expect to see similar levels throughout the rest of the year. Certain events or seasonal trends may have an additional impact at a local level, for example the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in August.

Looking at the data across countries and English regions (mainly [International Territorial Level 1 \(ITL1\)](#)), in Quarter 3 2023 there were:

- 21,598,290 guest nights (on average 234,764 guest nights each day) in England
- 4,301,420 guest nights (on average 46,755 guest nights each day) in Scotland
- 2,217,030 guest nights (on average 24,098 guest nights each day) in Wales
- 760,080 guest nights (on average 8,262 guest nights each day) in Northern Ireland
- 5,125,710 guest nights (on average 55,714 guest nights each day) in London
- 4,992,280 guest nights (on average 54,264 guest nights each day) in the South West (England)
- 3,236,360 guest nights (on average 35,178 guest nights each day) in the South East (England)
- 2,283,840 guest nights (on average 24,824 guest nights each day) in the North West (England)
- 1,680,000 guest nights (on average 18,261 guest nights each day) in Yorkshire and The Humber
- 1,508,190 guest nights (on average 16,393 guest nights each day) in the East (England)
- 1,080,980 guest nights (on average 11,750 guest nights each day) in the West Midlands (England)
- 990,680 guest nights (on average 10,768 guest nights each day) in the East Midlands (England)
- 700,260 guest nights (on average 7,612 guest nights each day) in the North East (England)

This bulletin focuses on the number of guest nights, unless otherwise stated, and provides analysis at the national, country and local administrative unit (LAU) level in the UK. LAUs are broadly comparable with local authority districts in the UK, however, there are some differences. While in Northern Ireland and Wales LAUs and local authorities are the same, for England and Scotland some local authorities are split up further as LAUs. Data for LAUs and [International Territorial Levels](#) (ITLs) are available in the accompanying dataset.

Figure 1: Number of guest nights, nights and stays, by Local Administrative Unit, United Kingdom Q3 2023

[Download the data](#)

3 . Guest nights by country of origin

Proportion of domestic and international guest nights

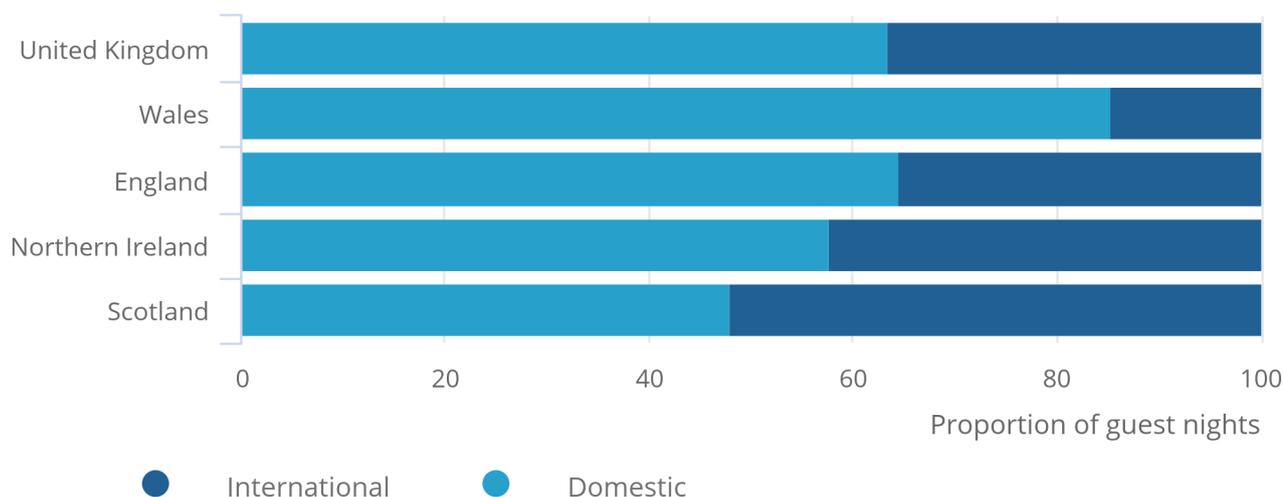
In the UK, around two-thirds (63.6%) of all guest nights were by UK domestic visitors, with 36.4% being international. Scotland was the only UK country where fewer than half of guest nights were by domestic visitors (48.0% domestic, 52.0% international). Wales had the highest proportion of domestic guest nights with 85.3% of all guest nights being domestic and 14.7% international. For England, 64.6% of its guest nights were by domestic visitors and Northern Ireland had 57.8%.

Figure 2: Wales has the highest proportion of domestic guest nights, while Scotland has the lowest

Proportion of guest nights spent in short-term lets offered via online collaborative economy platforms, by origin of the guest and country, UK, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2023

Figure 2: Wales has the highest proportion of domestic guest nights, while Scotland has the lowest

Proportion of guest nights spent in short-term lets offered via online collaborative economy platforms, by origin of the guest and country, UK, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2023



Source: Office for National Statistics analysis using data from Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia Group

The proportion of domestic guest nights varied across local administrative units (LAUs) within the UK as follows:

- in England, East Lindsey (97.4%), Great Yarmouth (96.0%) and North Norfolk (95.7%) had the largest proportions of domestic guest nights
- in Scotland, Dumfries and Galloway (87.4%), Arran and Cumbrae (86.5%) and South Ayrshire (76.9%) had the largest proportions of domestic guest nights
- in Wales, the Isle of Anglesey (92.6%), Flintshire (89.7%) and Ceredigion (88.8%) had the highest proportions of domestic guests out of all guest nights
- in Northern Ireland, Causeway Coast and Glens (69.3%), Fermanach and Omagh (68.4%) and Newry, Mourne and Down (66.2%) had the largest proportions of domestic guest nights

Figure 3: Proportion of guest nights by country of origin, by Local Administrative Unit, United Kingdom Q3 2023

Download the data

There were some LAUs in the UK with a larger proportion of guest nights from international guests than domestic guests. These were as follows:

- in England, 36 out of 314 LAUs had a higher proportion of guest nights from stays of international guests, of which 32 were located in London; the highest proportions of international guest nights were in Kensington and Chelsea (87.4%), Westminster (86.9%) and City of London (84.1%); the LAUs with a higher proportions of international guests outside of London were Oxford (68.0%), Epsom and Ewell (53.3%) and Crawley (50.7%) in the South East, and Cambridge (59.6%) in the East of England
- in Scotland, 6 out of 41 LAUs had more guest nights from international guests in comparison with domestic guests, with the highest proportions found in Skye and Lochalsh (75.3%), City of Edinburgh (70.2%) and Inverness and Nairn (66.3%)
- in Northern Ireland, 2 out of 11 LAUs had over half the guest nights from stays of international guests; these were Belfast (57.0%) and Derry City and Strabane (53.2%)
- Wales was the only UK country with no LAUs with over half the share of guest nights being from international guests; the LAUs with the highest proportions of international guest nights were Cardiff (29.7%), Vale of Glamorgan (23.5%) and Swansea (18.7%)

4 . Average number of guest nights per stay

The average number of guest nights per stay provides information on how many guest nights one booking or stay represented. This is calculated by dividing the number of guest nights by the number of stays in each area and can be influenced by both guest group sizes and length of stay.

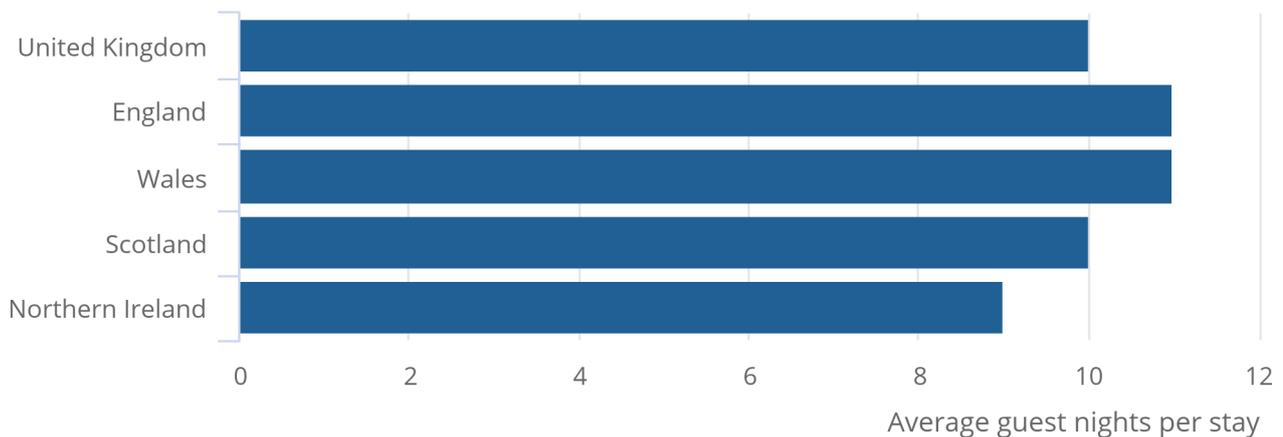
The highest number of guest nights per stay for Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2023 was observed in both Wales and England (11 guest nights per stay). On average, there were 10 guest nights per stay in Scotland and 9 guest nights per stay in Northern Ireland.

Figure 4: England and Wales have more average guest nights per stay than Scotland and Northern Ireland

Average number of guest nights per stay, by country, UK, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2023

Figure 4: England and Wales have more average guest nights per stay than Scotland and Northern Ireland

Average number of guest nights per stay, by country, UK, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2023



Source: Office for National Statistics analysis using data from Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia Group

Wales has the same average number of guest nights per stay as England (11), but fewer nights per stay (3 nights compared with 4, respectively), which suggests that Wales typically has a slightly higher number of guests per stay on average in comparison with England.

In the UK, Gosport and Dartford, both in the South East of England, were the LAUs with the highest number of guest nights per stay on average (16). This is followed by Isles of Scilly, Isle of Wight, North Devon, Cornwall and Castle Point, all with an average of 15 guest nights per stay. This suggests these areas either had longer average stays or larger groups or both. When looking at the average number of nights per stay in these seven LAUs, all had an average number of nights per stay of 4 or fewer (suggesting larger groups), except for Dartford (6) and Isles of Scilly (7) (suggesting longer stays).

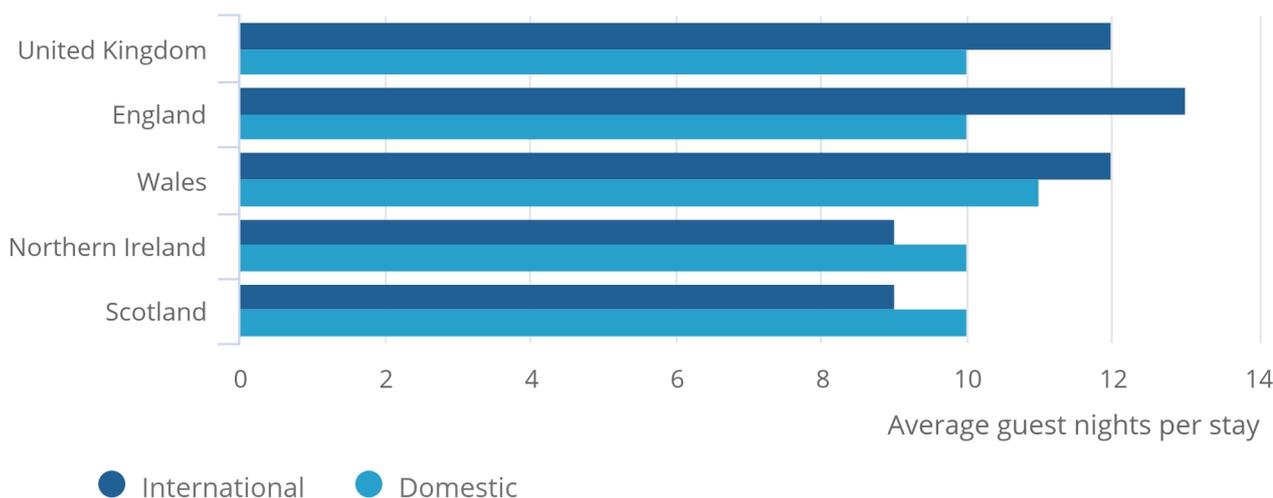
The average number of guest nights per stay was higher for international visitors (12) compared with domestic visitors (10) for the UK overall. However, Northern Ireland and Scotland had a higher number of domestic guest nights per stay (10) compared with international domestic guest nights per stay (9).

Figure 5: International visitors have higher average guest nights per stay in England and Wales, while Scotland and Northern Ireland have higher by domestic visitors

Average number of guest nights per stay by country of origin, by country, UK, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2023

Figure 5: International visitors have higher average guest nights per stay in England and Wales, while Scotland and Northern Ireland have higher by domestic visitors

Average number of guest nights per stay by country of origin, by country, UK, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2023



Source: Office for National Statistics analysis using data from Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia Group

5 . Number of guest nights in local administrative units

[Local administrative units \(LAUs\)](#) are maintained by Eurostat to meet the demand for statistics at a local level.

England

The local administrative units (LAUs) with the highest number of guest nights in England were Cornwall (1,586,060), Westminster (871,900), Camden (448,500) and Kensington and Chelsea (445,850). The LAUs with the fewest guest nights were all in England, with Isles of Scilly being lowest (1,220), followed by Oadby and Wigston (1,540) and Redditch (1,790).

Cornwall made up 7.3% of all guest nights in England, followed by Westminster (4.0%) and Camden (2.1%). The top 10 LAUs with the most guest nights were geographically spread, with 4 in London, 3 in the South West and 1 each in the South East, North West and Yorkshire and the Humber.

Cornwall had the most domestic guest nights (1,311,380) in England, making up a 9.4% proportion of all domestic guest nights in England. This is 3.8 times higher than the second highest LAU, Dorset (341,760, 2.4% proportion).

Westminster had the highest number of international guest nights in England with 757,350 guest nights (9.9% of all international guest nights in England), followed by Kensington and Chelsea with 389,720 guest nights (5.1%). Camden had the third highest number of international guest nights, making up 4.9% in England (375,830).

Scotland

City of Edinburgh, which had the second highest number of guest nights in the UK (1,157,180), made up 26.9% of all guest nights in Scotland. This is 3.8 times higher than the second highest LAU in Scotland, Glasgow City (7.0% of all guest nights), and four times higher than the third highest, Inverness and Nairn (6.8% of all guest nights). Figure 6 shows that 63.5% of all guest nights in Scotland were accounted for by the top eight LAUs, each having at least 3.0% of all guest nights in Scotland.

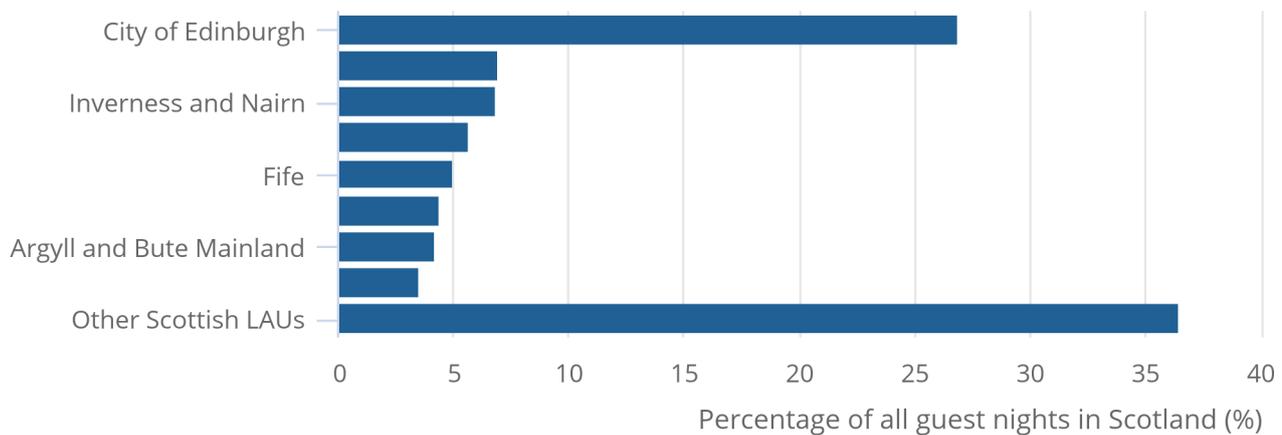
East Renfrewshire (0.1%), East Dunbartonshire (0.2%) and East Ayrshire (0.2%) made up the lowest proportion of total guest nights in Scotland.

Figure 6: City of Edinburgh has the highest percentage of all guest nights in Scotland

Proportion of guest nights, by local administrative unit, Scotland, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2023

Figure 6: City of Edinburgh has the highest percentage of all guest nights in Scotland

Proportion of guest nights, by local administrative unit, Scotland, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2023



Source: Office for National Statistics analysis using data from Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia Group

Notes:

1. "Other Scottish LAUs" consists of the remaining 33 LAUs in Scotland.

The largest number of domestic guest nights in Scotland were in City of Edinburgh (345,000), Fife (123,220) and Glasgow City (122,260). City of Edinburgh also had the highest number of international guest nights (812,190), accounting for 36.3% of all international guest nights in Scotland. This comes far above the number of international guest nights in comparison with the rest of Scotland, with it being 4.2 times higher than the second highest number of international guest nights in Inverness and Nairn (194,410, 8.7% proportion of all non-domestic guest nights).

Wales

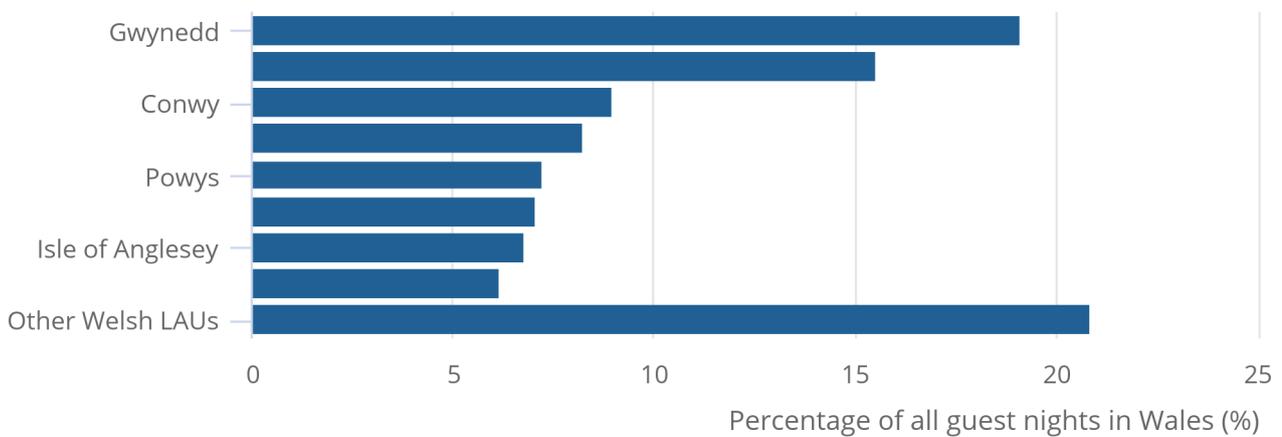
In Wales, Gwynedd had the largest amount of guest nights (423,280), accounting for 19.1% of all guest nights in Wales. This was followed by Pembrokeshire (15.5% of guest nights) and Conwy (9.0% of guest nights). The other 19 LAUs were distributed between Cardiff (8.2%) and Blaenau Gwent (0.3%). Of these LAUs, 11 made up less than 2.0% of guest nights in Wales and six LAUs made up 1.0% or less.

Figure 7: Gwynedd had the highest percentage of all guest nights in Wales

Proportion of guest nights, by local administrative unit, Wales, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2023

Figure 7: Gwynedd had the highest percentage of all guest nights in Wales

Proportion of guest nights, by local administrative unit, Wales, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2023



Source: Office for National Statistics analysis using data from Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia Group

Notes:

1. "Other Welsh LAUs" consists of the remaining 14 LAUs in Wales.

Looking at the total domestic guest nights in Wales, the largest counts were in Gwynedd (365,750), Pembrokeshire (304,040) and Conwy (169,270). For international guest nights, Gwynedd had the highest count (57,530), which made up 17.7% of all international guest nights in Wales. Cardiff (54,210, 16.6%) and Pembrokeshire (40,450, 12.4%) followed on from Gwynedd.

Northern Ireland

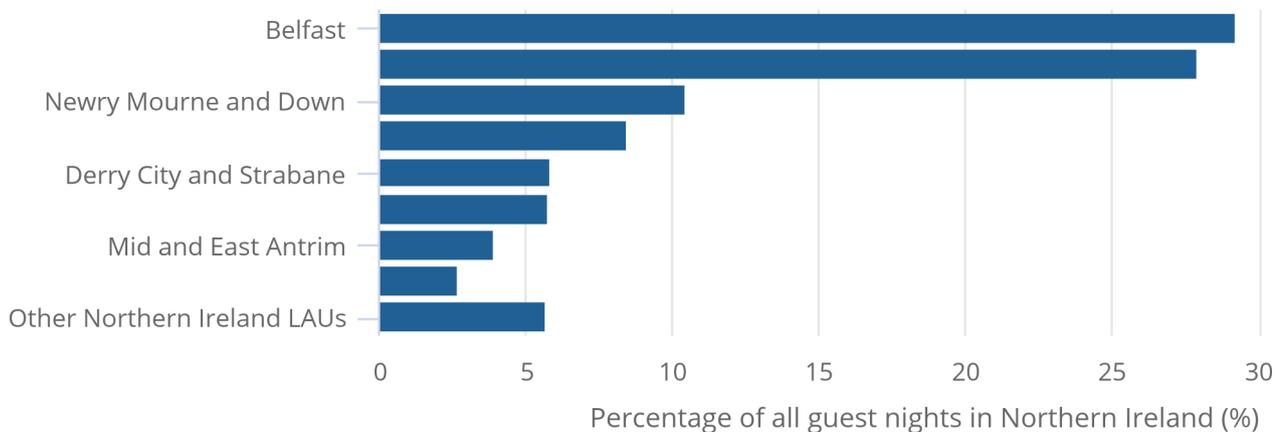
Belfast accounted for 29.2% of all guest nights, followed closely by Causeway Coast and Glens (27.9%) and Newry, Mourne and Down (10.5%). The other eight LAUs are distributed between 8.5% (Fermanagh and Omagh) and 1.7% (Antrim and Newtownabbey) of all guest nights.

Figure 8: Belfast has the highest percentage of all guest nights in Northern Ireland

Proportion of guest nights, by local administrative unit, Northern Ireland, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2023

Figure 8: Belfast has the highest percentage of all guest nights in Northern Ireland

Proportion of guest nights, by local administrative unit, Northern Ireland, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2023



Source: Office for National Statistics analysis using data from Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia Group

Notes:

1. "Other Northern Ireland LAUs" consists of the remaining 3 LAUs in Northern Ireland.

Causeway Coast and Glens had the largest number of domestic guest nights in Northern Ireland (147,190) making up 33.5% of all domestic guest nights. This was followed by Belfast (95,390) and Newry, Mourne and Down (52,670).

Belfast had the highest number of international visitor guest nights (126,580), making up a 39.4% proportion of all international guest nights in Northern Ireland. This is nearly twice as high as Causeway Coast and Glens (20.3%), which has the second highest number of international guest nights. Together they make up 59.7% of international guest nights in Northern Ireland, more than the other nine Northern Irish LAUs combined.

6 . Short-term lets through online collaborative economy platforms, UK data

[Short-term lets through online collaborative economy platforms, UK](#)

Dataset | Released 4 March 2024

Number of short-term lets offered via online collaborative economy platforms by visitor guest nights, nights, and stays

7 . Glossary

Short-term lets

Short-term lets refer to rentals, such as apartments or rooms, booked through these three platforms (Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia Group), excluding other forms of accommodation, such as hotels or campsites.

Number of stays

The number of times a short-term let offered via the platforms was occupied.

Number of nights

The number of nights a short-term let offered via the platforms was occupied.

Number of guest nights

The number of nights spent during a stay, with a night counted per individual member of the visiting group. This can be influenced by guest group size and length of stay. For example, a group of four staying for two nights would be eight guest nights, but two nights and one stay.

Average number of guest nights each day

The number of guest nights divided by the number of days in Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2023, which was 92.

Number of guest nights per stay

The average number of guest nights per stay provides information on how many guest nights one booking or stay represented. This is calculated by dividing the number of guest nights by the number of stays. This will be higher if average stays are longer or group size is larger.

Number of nights per stay

The average number of nights per stay provides information on the average duration of the stay (and so does not account for the number of guests). This is calculated by dividing the number of nights by the number of stays.

Domestic guest nights

Guest nights spent by tourists who are residents in the United Kingdom.

International guest nights

Guest nights spent by tourists who are non-residents to the United Kingdom.

Local administrative unit (LAU)

LAUs are maintained by [Eurostat](#) to meet the demand for statistics at a local level. LAU1 areas act as a building block to [International Territorial Levels \(ITLs\)](#), which are an internationally comparable regional geography for the UK.

LAUs are broadly comparable with local authority districts in the UK, however, there are some differences. While in Northern Ireland and Wales LAUs and Local Authorities are the same, for England and Scotland some local authorities are split up further as LAUs. For example, the single local authority of Cumberland equates to three separate LAUs.

8 . Measuring the data

Data sources

Data from three online collaborative economy platforms (Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia Group) provide data on short-term lets to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Data from Vrbo, Expedia, Hotels.com, Orbitz, Ebookers, CheapTickets, Trivago and others under the Expedia Group umbrella are included as part of Expedia Group. The ONS then aggregates the data for these statistics.

The data include information on the number of guest nights, nights, and stays, as well as information on the country of origin of visitors in the UK. Data are provided at the local administrative unit (LAU) level in the UK, which is also aggregated to form International Territorial Levels (ITLs), countries and the UK as a whole. Data in this release cover Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2023, which includes the months of July, August and September 2023.

The data are likely to have a strong seasonal trend. In future publications we will have UK data for other time periods, but similar [international data published by Eurostat](#) suggest that the summer months are the busiest. In the EU, guest nights in Quarter 3 2023 made up nearly half (47.3%) of annual guest nights (Quarter 4 (Oct to Dec) 2022 to Quarter 3 2023). This means we would not expect to see similar levels to Quarter 3 2023 throughout the rest of the year.

9 . Strengths and limitations

The article is based on data provided to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) by three international platforms (Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia Group). The data cover short-stay accommodation in the UK, offered by service providers via one of these three online collaborative economy platforms.

Only accommodation offered through the three platforms is included in this article and dataset. It should not be added to other tourism statistics on holiday rentals or other types of accommodation, such as hotels, because of potential overlaps. Only the merged data for the three platforms are available; individual data on each platform will not be disclosed.

While we believe these statistics cover a large proportion of short-term lets activity in the UK, they do not cover all activity, as data from other providers and platforms are not included.

The data we receive cannot be de-duplicated across the three platforms, this means that we cannot calculate the number of unique hosts or visitors.

The Scottish Government introduced licensing for short-term lets in October 2022, with existing short-term let operators having until October 2023 to apply for a license from their local authority. Data on the number of licenses applied for and issued by local authorities are [published by the Scottish government](#), with the latest data available as at 30 June 2023. Data in our release refer to visitors who have stayed in short-term let accommodation listed by one of the three online collaborative economy platforms in Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2023, therefore data are not directly comparable.

In Northern Ireland, it is a legal requirement that all tourist accommodation providers must receive [certification from Tourism Northern Ireland](#) before they are allowed to begin operating.

The Welsh Government [announced plans to introduce a statutory registration and licensing scheme for visitor accommodation](#) in Wales.

[The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities \(DLUHC\) have announced](#) that the UK Government proposes to introduce a mandatory, national register of short-term lets in England.

10 . Related links

[Office for National Statistics to have access to independently published data on short-term lets](#)

Web page

Statement from the Short Term Accommodation Association on the data sharing agreement between the three platforms (Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia Group) and the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

[Overseas travel and tourism, provisional: July to September 2023](#)

Bulletin | Released 24 January 2024

Visits to the UK by overseas residents, visits abroad by UK residents and spending by travellers, using provisional passenger traffic data.

[Travel trends estimates: overseas residents in the UK](#)

Dataset | Released 26 May 2023

Annual estimates on visits and spending in the UK by overseas residents, by purpose and town of visit.

[Visit Britain: UK short-term rentals](#)

Report | Released February 2024

This report provides monthly insights on the overall supply of short-term rental properties across the UK, as well as a selection of performance metrics.

11 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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