



**An
Phríomh-Oifig
Staidrimh**

Central
Statistics
Office

Standard SIMS Report: Household Travel Survey 2023



Single Integrated Metadata Structure (SIMS) Report

For

Household Travel Survey

This documentation applies to the reporting period: 2023

Last edited: September 2024



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2. Introduction

The purpose of the Household Travel Survey (HTS), which commenced in the first quarter of 2000, is to measure domestic and outbound travel patterns and associated details (expenditure, purpose of trip, type of accommodation used etc.) of Irish residents. It is used to satisfy national demands for tourism statistics, and to meet some of the obligations of EU legislation.

3. Contact

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4. Metadata Update

4.1. Metadata last certified

30/09/2024

4.2. Metadata last posted

30/09/2024

4.3. Metadata last update

30/09/2024



5. Statistical Presentation

5.1. Data Description

The release focuses on domestic and outbound travel patterns and expenditure.

The principal outputs from the Household Travel Survey are the number of trips taken; number of nights spent away from home and total expenditure on domestic and outbound travel by Irish residents.

The publication contains tables, covering travel patterns and expenditure for domestic and outbound travel. The travel data (in terms of number of trips and number of nights spent) is categorised according to region of residence, region visited, gender, reason for journey, type of accommodation used, mode of transport and length of stay. Expenditure data is categorised according to region visited and reason for journey.

In relation to domestic travel, the number of trips taken, number of nights spent away from home and the average length of stay is published according to the following classifications:

- Domestic region visited (NUTS2)
- Reason for journey
- Accommodation type

Total expenditure on domestic travel is published by the following categories:

- Reason for journey.
- Region visited (NUTS2)

Outbound travel patterns are also published by the number of trips taken, number of nights spent away and the average length of stay according to the following classifications:

- Region visited (broad categories, e.g. EU, North America etc.).
- Detailed breakdown of country/region visited.
- Reason for journey
- Accommodation type

Total expenditure on outbound travel is published by the following categories:

- Reason for journey
- Region visited (broad categories)
- Detailed breakdown of country/region visited

The purpose of the Household Travel Survey (HTS) is to measure domestic and outbound travel patterns involving overnight and same-day trips and including associated details (expenditure, purpose of trip, type of accommodation used etc.) of Irish residents.

5.2. Classification System

The domestic regional classifications for the survey are based on the NUTS (Nomenclature of Territorial Units) classification used by Eurostat. The NUTS 3 regions correspond to the eight Regional Authorities established under the Local Government Act, 1991 (Regional Authorities) (Establishment) Order, 1993, which came into operation on 1 January 1994. The NUTS 2 regions, which were proposed by Government and agreed by Eurostat in 1999, are a more aggregated version of the NUTS 3 regions. Changes made under the 2014 Local Government Act prompted a revision to the Irish NUTS2 and NUTS3 Regions. These changes to the NUTS boundaries have been given legal status under Commission Regulation (EU) 2016/2066 and have come into force from Q1 2018. Data is published at NUTS2 level, NUTS3 level and county level. The classification is as follows:



NUTS2 Regions

Northern and Western

- Cavan
- Galway City & County
- Donegal
- Mayo
- Leitrim
- Roscommon
- Monaghan
- Sligo

Southern

- Clare
- Limerick City & County
- Tipperary
- Carlow
- Kilkenny
- Wexford
- Waterford City & County
- Cork City & County
- Kerry

Eastern & Midland

- Dublin City
- Kildare
- Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown
- Meath
- Fingal
- Wicklow
- South Dublin
- Louth
- Laois
- Longford
- Offaly
- Westmeath

Other Classifications used in the Household Travel Survey include age groups, gender, type of accommodation used, method of booking, region/country visited, purpose of trip, type of transport used. The regional classifications used for Domestic Travel are based on the NUTS (Nomenclature of Territorial Units) classification used by Eurostat.

5.3. Sector Coverage

All private households. Domestic and Outbound travel patterns which involve overnight stays and same-day trips, and associated variables, of all residents of the Republic of Ireland.

5.4. Statistical Concepts and definitions

Trip

A trip refers to the travel by a person from the time of departure from his/her usual residence until he/she returns it thus refers to a round trip. A trip is made up of visits to different places. Only trips which were not part of regular travel are recorded in the HTS.



Included are all overnight and same-day trips for personal or professional purposes that ended in the reference month e.g., holidays, visiting friends or relatives, business or professional trips, sporting or religious events, medical visits, shopping trips.

Excluded are all weekly or more frequent trips that are part of normal routine such as visits to parent's home each weekend, weekly visits to hospital, travel to place of work, and regular routes by commercial travellers. Same-day trips taken that were less than 30km from usual residence are also excluded.

Trip Cost

The cost of each trip includes all expenditure for each trip (e.g., air fares, taxi fares, accommodation costs, food, and drink costs) regardless of the method of payment. The cost covers both payments made by all household members in the travel party and all expenses paid for or reimbursed by others (e.g., employer). Excluded from trip costs are any expenditure on housing, land, real estate, goods for resale, donations to charities/institutions or cash presents/payments to relatives and friends who are not part of the travel party.

Example of an Overnight trip (Form A) – All-island (Domestic including Northern Ireland)

Joe is a 42-year-old Irish resident from Cork. He returned from a 7-night holiday break in Mayo where he stayed in a hotel. He took the bus to Mayo and his total expenditure on the trip was €1,876.

To calculate the total expenditure on each trip the following categories are used: accommodation costs, transport costs, package tour costs, expenditure on valuables, expenditure on durable consumer goods and other expenditure such as meals, drinks, shopping and entertainment.

In the example Joe spent €875 on hotel accommodation for the 7 nights. Transport by bus to and from Mayo cost €49 and he spent an additional €30 on taxi journeys during his trip. He bought an electronic tablet for €200. Additionally, while on his trip he spent €500 on food and drink, €167 on shopping and €55 for a fishing excursion.

Example of a Same-day trip (Form A) - All-island (Domestic including Northern Ireland)

Joe is a 42-year-old Irish resident from Cork. He took a same-day trip to Wexford for leisure, where he spent 5 hours in the town. He drove to Wexford and his total expenditure on the trip was €262.

In the example Joe spent a total of €55 on fuel for his car, parking charges in Wexford and toll charges on the N25. A meal during his stay cost him €79, and he spent €128 on a guided tour and souvenirs.

Example of an Overnight trip (Form B) – Outbound (excluding Northern Ireland)

Joe is a 42-year-old Irish resident from Cork. He returned from a 7-night holiday break in Spain where he stayed in a hotel. He flew to Spain and his total expenditure on the trip was €1,876.

To calculate the total expenditure on each trip the following categories are used: accommodation costs, transport costs, package tour costs, expenditure on valuables, expenditure on durable consumer goods and other expenditure such as meals, drinks, shopping and entertainment.

In the example Joe spent €725 on hotel accommodation for the 7 nights. Transport costs, including flight to Spain and taxi journeys cost €229. He bought an electronic tablet for €200. Additionally, while on his trip he spent €500 on food and drink, €167 on shopping and €55 on an excursion.

Example of a Same-day trip (Form B) - Outbound (excluding Northern Ireland)

Joe is a 42-year-old Irish resident from Cork. He took a same-day trip to England for leisure, where he spent 12 hours at his destination. He flew to England and his total expenditure on the trip was €262.

In the example Joe spent a total of €55 on return flights and taxi journeys. A lunch and dinner during his stay cost him €79, and he spent €128 on a short excursion and some souvenirs.

**Tourism**

Means the activity of visitors taking a trip to a main destination outside their usual environment, for less than a year, for any main purpose, including business, leisure, or other personal purpose, other than to be employed by a resident entity in the place visited.

Usual Environment

The usual environment of an individual is defined as the geographical area (though not necessarily a contiguous one) within which an individual conducts his/her regular life routine. Places that are frequently visited are part of a person's *usual environment* even though they may be located at a considerable distance (or in another country) from the place of residence.

For the purposes of this release, trips taken on a weekly or more frequent basis are within a respondent's usual environment and are thus excluded from estimates for tourism trips. The one exception being that of holiday homes which although may be frequently visited, are considered outside the *usual environment* according to the UNWTO 2008 International Recommendations on Tourism Statistics (IRTS).

Domestic Tourism

Domestic tourism is defined as the activities of residents of the Republic of Ireland travelling to and staying in places only within the Republic of Ireland but outside their usual environment.

The following categories are excluded from the definition of domestic travel:

- Residents travelling within the country with the intention of changing their usual residence.
- Persons who travel to work temporarily in institutions within the country.
- Persons who travel regularly or frequently between neighbouring localities to work or study.
- Nomads and persons without fixed residence.
- Armed forces on manoeuvre.

Outbound Tourism

Outbound tourism is defined as the activities of residents of the Republic of Ireland travelling to and staying in places outside the Republic of Ireland and outside their usual environment. It is important to note that trips to Northern Ireland are included under outbound tourism for results purposes.

From 2012 onwards expenditure on outbound travel includes the cost of second-hand car imports.

The following categories are excluded from outbound travel:

- Persons leaving the country as migrants, including dependants accompanying or joining them.
- Persons, known as border workers, residing near the border in the Republic of Ireland but working in the North of Ireland.
- Diplomats, consular officers and members of the armed forces when travelling outside of the Republic of Ireland on assignment. This includes dependants and household employees accompanying or joining them.
- Persons travelling as refugees or nomads.

Overnight Visitor

An overnight visitor is a visitor who stays at least one night in collective or private accommodation in the place, county or country visited.

Tourism Expenditure (to the end of 2011)

Total consumption expenditure is any expenditure made by a visitor or on behalf of a visitor during their trip and stay at their destination.

Tourism expenditure includes purchases of consumer goods and services inherent in travel and stay (e.g., travel to, from and at destination, accommodation costs, food and drink, excursions), purchases of durable goods for personal use, souvenirs and gifts for family and friends.



The following outlays or acquisitions are excluded:

- Purchases for commercial purposes, for resale, purchases made on behalf of an employer during a business trip.
- Capital type investments or transactions engaged in by visitors, such as land, housing, or real estate, works of art and other important acquisitions (such as cars, caravans, boats, second houses), even though they may be used in the future for tourism travel purposes.
- Cash given to relatives or friends during the trip, which does not represent payment of tourism goods or services, as well as donations made to institutions.

Tourism Expenditure (from 2012 onwards)

Total consumption expenditure is any expenditure made by a visitor or on behalf of a visitor during their trip and stay at their destination.

Tourism expenditure includes purchases of consumer goods and services inherent in travel and stay (e.g. travel to, from and at destination, accommodation costs, food and drink, excursions), purchases of durable goods for personal use, souvenirs and gifts for family and friends.

Expenditure on valuables such as paintings, works of art, jewellery and on durable consumer goods such as cars, boats, mobile homes and caravans are also included.

The following outlays or acquisitions are excluded:

- Purchases for commercial purposes, for resale, purchases made on behalf of an employer during a business trip.
- Investments or transactions engaged in by visitors, such as land, housing or real estate.
- Cash given to relatives or friends during the trip, which does not represent payment of tourism goods or services, as well as donations made to institutions.

5.5. Statistical Unit

Private households.

5.6. Statistical Population

At national level the statistical population consists of all private households in the republic of Ireland. All individuals in the households are included.

To comply with European legislation the statistical population for the transmission to Eurostat is slightly different, consisting of all individual resident in the republic of Ireland aged 15 or over. The survey includes the travel patterns of all individuals in a household during the survey reference month.

5.7. Reference Area

Republic of Ireland, Region and County (Domestic) and Country/Regions visited (Outbound).

5.8. Time Coverage

2000 – 2023.

5.9. Base period

Not applicable.



6. Unit of Measure

The units of presentation are the number of trips taken (thousands), the number of nights spent away (thousands); the total amount spent on travel (€m).

7. Reference Period

2023.

8. Institutional Mandate

8.1. Legal Acts and other agreements

The survey is one of several Central Statistics Office (CSO) tourism surveys conducted to comply with the requirements of Council Directive 95/57/EC of 23 November 1995 concerning the collection of statistical information in the field of tourism for data to the end of 2011 and Regulation (EU) No 692/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 July 2011 concerning European statistics on tourism and repealing Council Directive 95/57/EC in respect of data from the beginning of 2012.

8.1.1. National legal acts

The HTS is carried out every month under Section 24 of the Statistics Act, 1993.

8.1.2. European legal acts

The Household Travel Survey is conducted in part to comply with the following EU regulations:

- Council Directive 95/57/EC- up to the end of 2011
- Regulation (EU) No 692/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council – from 2012 onwards

8.2. Data Sharing

Not applicable.

9. Confidentiality

9.1. Confidentiality – policy

All information supplied to the CSO is treated as strictly confidential. The Statistics Act, 1993 sets stringent confidentiality standards: Information collected may be used only for statistical purposes, and no details that might be related to an identifiable person or business undertaking may be divulged to any other government department or body.

These national statistical confidentiality provisions are reinforced by the following EU legislation: Council Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 on European statistics for data collected for EU statistical purposes. Further details are outlined in the CSO's Code of Practice on Statistical Confidentiality.

For more information on the CSO confidentiality policy please visit:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/aboutus/lgdp/csodatapolicies/statisticalconfidentiality/>

9.2. Confidentiality – data treatment

Every precaution is taken to ensure that there are no violations of confidentiality during the HTS survey process. The questionnaire data is securely returned directly from the households to the CSO once the respondent selects the submit button on the questionnaire. The data is held on the CSO e-Questionnaire database and can only be extracted by designated individuals. Access controls are used to ensure only



authorised Tourism & Travel staff can access the required survey data. The data is extracted from the central database using SAS programming. The extracted data contains the required raw survey data, first name only, and age. No surname or address is included on this file.

Data is published in aggregate form only, ensuring that no individual or household can be identified.

10. Release Policy

10.1. Release Calendar

The date of dissemination of all statistics released by CSO can be found in the Release Calendar published in CSO.ie. This calendar is regularly updated.

10.2. Release calendar access

The release calendar can be accessed via the CSO website, www.cso.ie, or directly from this link: <https://www.cso.ie/en/csolatestnews/releasecalendar/>

10.3. User access

In accordance with Principle 6 of the European Statistics Code of Practice all users of CSO statistics have equal access via the CSO website at the same time of 11 am. Any privileged pre-release access to any outside user is limited, controlled and publicised. If leaks occur, pre-release arrangements are revised so as to ensure impartiality.

The CSO recognises that in very limited circumstances a business need for pre-release access may be substantiated. Any form of pre-release access is a privilege and a strict CSO pre-release access policy is adhered to for these special requests. The full pre-release access policy can be accessed at <https://www.cso.ie/en/aboutus/lqdp/csodatapolicies/csopolicyonpre-releaseaccess/>

The various results are published nationally in statistical release format as well as on the CSO website (www.cso.ie). Selected extracts from the results are posted on the CSO's data dissemination database, PxStat.

11. Frequency of Dissemination

Quarterly.

12. Accessibility and clarity

12.1. News release

There is no news release associated with this publication.

12.2. Publications

The survey results are published in the form of a release and this is available at <https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/tourismandtravel/householdtravelsurvey/>

12.3. On-line database

Additional data and tables (quarterly and annual) are also published on the CSO's PxStat database: <https://data.cso.ie/product/HTSQ>
<https://data.cso.ie/product/HTSA>



12.3.1. AC 1. Data tables - consultations

In the period 01/06/2023 to 31/12/2023 the Household Travel Survey had 2,465 page views, and the number of unique web-hits (Active users) for this period was 975.

12.4. Micro-data Access

There is no microdata access to HTS data.

12.5. Other

Where possible data and detailed tables are provided to researchers and other industry users as requested.

The Statistical Yearbook of Ireland contains statistics on all domains and is available at:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/statisticalyearbookofireland/>

12.5.1. AC2. Metadata consultations

Not calculated.

12.6. Documentation on Methodology

Summary details on the HTS methodology including a copy of the questionnaire is available at

<https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/tourismandtravel/householdtravelsurvey/>

12.6.1. AC3 – Metadata completeness – rate

Not calculated.

12.7. Quality Documentation

For more information and documentation on the quality associated to this release please refer to the CSO's methods page <https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/tourismandtravel/householdtravelsurvey/>

13. Quality Management

13.1. Quality Assurance

Quality Management Framework

The CSO avails of an office wide Quality Management Framework (QMF). This framework allows all CSO processes and outputs to meet the required standard as set out in the European Statistics Code of Practice (ESCoP). The QMF foundations are based on establishing the UNECE's Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) as the operating statistical production model to achieve a standardised approach to Quality Management. All and any changes implemented to CSO processes and outputs require adherence to the QMF.

13.2. Quality Assessment

The CSO requires that all produced outputs complete an annual self-assessment exercise to review the quality of the processes used to generate disseminated products and the quality of the product itself.



13.2.1. Main strengths

The recall period for Household Travel Survey (HTS) has been one month since 2010 (prior to this there was a three-month recall period). Respondents are asked to outline trips completed within the reference month only. They are now less likely to forget any trips due to a shorter recall period.

The methodology to weight outbound and domestic travel was improved and changed for data from Quarter 1 2012 onwards. In 2020 a new non-response adjustment procedure was added to further improve quality.

13.2.2. Main weaknesses

The sample size is 4,600 households each month (a new sample is issued each month). Due to financial constraints, it is not possible to increase the size of the sample even though it may improve the quality of the data.

The data collection method is electronic via an on-line e-Questionnaire - because of this, the forms may not be fully submitted. In addition, they may be returned/partially complete/contradicting data etc. It is difficult to clarify issues with respondents once the form is returned.

Another challenge in household surveys is the reliability of self-reported data, which can be comprised by recall bias and memory issues. To minimise recall bias, we ensure that our questionnaires are distributed as early as possible after the reference period, allowing respondents to provide more accurate information with fewer memory-related inaccuracies.

13.2.3. Quality improvements compared with previous reference year

Recall period - from Quarter 1 2000 (when HTS survey was set up) to Quarter 4 2009, respondents were asked to detail all trips taken in the previous three months. Since January 2010, respondents are asked to outline trips completed within the previous month only. They are now less likely to forget any trips taken due to a shorter recall period.

Change in methodology to weight domestic and outbound travel:

- The methodology adopted to weight outbound travel has been changed from Q1 2012 onwards. A two-stage weighting process is used for outbound travel. Firstly, data for persons covered in the survey are weighted to agree with population estimates broken down by sex, age group and region (NUTS3). These population estimates are provided by the CSO's Demography Unit. These weightings are then applied to survey results. The results for outbound travel are subsequently further weighted to agree with Tourism and Travel results. During 2020, 2021 and 2022 Air and Sea Statistics Travel data was used in the absence of Tourism and Travel results.
- The methodology adopted to weight domestic travel has been changed from Q1 2012 onwards. Domestic travel survey results are weighted to agree with population estimates broken down by sex, age group and region (NUTS3). These population estimates are provided by the CSO's Demography Unit. These weightings are then applied to survey results. An addition step of non-response adjustment was added in Q3 2020.

14. Relevance

14.1. User Needs

The HTS is one of several CSO Tourism surveys carried out to meet the requirements of Regulation (EU) No 692/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 July 2011. It is an important indicator of domestic and outbound travel by Irish residents and the data is extensively used by Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland and the macroeconomic divisions of the CSO.



14.1.1. Main National Users

The data is used extensively by:

- Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports & Media.
- Fáilte Ireland.
- Tourism Ireland.
- Research centres and universities.
- The general public.
- National Accounts and Balance of Payments Divisions in the CSO.

Regular meetings are held with users at national level to discuss their requirements.

14.1.2. Principal External Users

Eurostat, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), Tourism Northern Ireland, other international tourism organisations.

14.2. User Satisfaction

Staff in Tourism and Travel Section of the CSO continually monitor user satisfaction of main data users as they have regular meetings with them.

14.3. Data Completeness

The HTS survey form was changed in 2010 to comply with the 2012 new Eurostat Regulation 692/2011. For this reason, all data required by Eurostat is collected on the Household Travel Survey form.

14.3.1. Data Completeness rate

100%.

15. Accuracy and reliability

15.1. Overall accuracy

The HTS data published for 2019 is to be considered interim and may be subject to future revision. The CSO undertook a comprehensive investigation of the current statistical processes in the HTS, reviewing the sampling, collection, processing, and estimation methodology and the survey data. Following the outcome of this review the CSO decided to apply a statistical adjustment to the 2019 HTS data.

15.2. Sampling Error

Sample size is 4,600 households each month (a new sample is issued each month). Due to financial constraints, it is not possible to increase the size of the sample even though it may improve the quality of the data.

An estimate of sampling error is not currently available.

15.2.1. A1. Sampling error indicator

Not calculated.



15.3. Non-sampling Error

15.3.1. Coverage error

15.3.1.1. Over coverage

The sampling frame for Quarter 1 2020 onwards is based on CSO Household Register. Prior to this the sample was taken from the 2018 electoral Register. The electoral register would appear to have over-represented the older age groups while the opposite was true for the younger age groups.

15.3.1.2. Under coverage

The old sampling frame would appear to under-represent non-nationals (as they may not have been registered to vote) so their travel patterns and expenditure may be understated. Under coverage has not been estimated for the new frame.

15.3.1.3. A2. Over coverage rate

Not calculated.

15.3.1.4. A3. Common units – proportion

Not applicable.

15.3.2. Measurement error

Measurement error is not formally measured for this survey; however, the following should be noted:

1. Questionnaire

- Information about the survey and how the respondent was selected is provided in both the letter and the survey information links that are sent to the selected Households.
- It is ensured, insofar as possible, that the questionnaire is clear with definitions provided as appropriate.
- Each question is clearly laid out and exact requirements are detailed.
- A telephone number and email address are provided on the letter if a respondent needs help or advice on completing the form.

2. Data collection method

- The collection method is electronic on-line by e-Questionnaire (eQ). This method is by itself unlikely to be a source of measurement error.

3. Interviewer

- This is an on-line survey and therefore this section does not apply. However, staff in Tourism and Travel Section are available to answer queries and to help people complete the on-line survey form.

4. Respondent

- As it is a monthly survey, the recall period is thus one month, and this should not present problems for respondents remembering every overnight trip that they took during that period.
- Each question has a heading which facilitates understanding by the respondent.
- Questions asked are specific and in most cases are in tick box style/radio button.
- An 'Other' category is provided in the list of possible answers to questions where appropriate.
- The questionnaire does not include any questions of a personal nature, for example, income questions.
- Confidentiality is clearly emphasised on the initial correspondence.



15.3.3. Non-Response Error

The HTS survey is not statutory. The Tourism & Travel section, CSO appears to receive a high proportion of phone calls from older age profile people to assist them with questions or on-line completion of the HTS form each month.

The most common reasons for non-response are:

- The household does not wish to participate in the survey.
- Household member(s) are deceased/ gone away.
- Respondent does not have access to the on-line form or is not familiar with the technology.

Approximately 4,000 forms relating to the 2023 monthly surveys (around 7.2% of the sample) were returned to the office not completed (i.e. were blank).

A reminder letter is issued to all non-respondent households two weeks after the initial HTS letter was issued. Also, to try to minimise unit non-response a telephone number and e-mail address is provided on the HTS letter and links if a respondent needs help or advice on completing the form. See also Sections 1 and 4.5 and the CSO Methodological Note on Review of Household Travel Survey 2018.

While the extent of item non-response has not been quantified, the questions on age and gender can be sensitive and respondents may not be prepared to reveal this information. Respondents are also less likely to complete the expenditure questions information (especially the breakdown of expenditure into categories). Incomplete data (item non-response) is either imputed (age and expenditure) or estimated (other variables).

15.3.3.1. Unit non-response rate

The overall response rate for the most recently published results (year 2023) was 24%. This compares with a 31% response rate in 2022.

15.3.3.2. Item non-response rate

Not calculated.

15.3.4. Processing error

Processing errors are not formally measured for the Household Travel Survey, however the following need to be noted:

Data capture errors

All valid/submitted survey forms are returned electronically to the office. Any erroneous information identified by electronic edit programs, are checked, and changed as necessary by staff in Tourism and Travel Section.

Data editing

The series of edit programs that are run on the data test for inconsistencies and missing values within the data, examples include:

- Respondent indicated that a trip was taken but detail inconsistencies on trip entered.
- Missing gender and/ or age details.
- Range checks, e.g., for domestic trips, destination, county, acceptable values, month respondent returned from trip falls outside survey month.

Most missing data is imputed (e.g., total expenditure on trip, missing age data) or estimated.

Coding error

There is a very limited level of coding done in the HTS.



15.3.5. Model assumption error

It is assumed for the purposes of imputing missing expenditure/age data that non-respondents have the same patterns as respondents.

16. Timeliness and punctuality

16.1. Timeliness

There are no provisional results published for the HTS.

Results are published on a quarterly basis. The most recent Quarter 4 2023 period was published in t+4 months.

16.1.1. TP1. Time lag – First results

There are no provisional results published for the HTS.

16.1.2. TP2. Time lag – Final results

Participation in tourism	Data is not published
Tourism trips	170 days

16.2. Punctuality

The release is published in accordance with the dates pre-determined in the advanced release calendar.

16.2.1. TP3. Punctuality – Punctuality - delivery and publication

0 days.

17. Comparability

17.1. Comparability – Geographical

There are no problems of comparability between geographical regions. Information is collected via on-line survey of private households, monthly by the Central Statistics Office. The HTS is a random stratified sample - stratified by county and household tenure.

17.1.1. CC1. Asymmetry for mirror flow statistics

Not applicable.

17.2. Comparability over time

The HTS has been carried out since Q1 2000. Due to a change in weighting methodology, there is a discontinuity in all series relating to outbound and domestic travel from 2012 onwards, and therefore, these results are not directly comparable with the results prior to 2012.

A statistical adjustment has been applied to the results for each quarter of 2018 and 2019, as described in the CSO Methodology Note on Review of Household Travel Survey 2018.

<https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/in/hts/methodologynoteonreviewofhouseholdtravelsurvey2018/>

Participation in tourism	The length of comparable time series is 11 years (2012-2023).
Tourism trips	<p>The HTS has been carried out since 1st quarter of 2000. Due to a change in survey methodology there is a discontinuity in all of the series relating to outbound and domestic travel from 2012 onwards and therefore these results are not directly comparable with the results prior to 2012.</p> <p>The compilation of the HTS has undergone several methodological changes from Q1 2012 onwards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The methodology adopted to weight domestic travel from the HTS has been changed from Quarter 1 2012 onwards. The survey data for domestic travel is weighted to agree with population estimates broken down by sex, age group and region (NUTS3). These population estimates are provided by CSO's Demography Unit. These weightings are then applied to survey results. • The methodology adopted to weight outbound travel has been changed from Q1 2012 onwards. A two-stage weighting process is used for outbound travel. Firstly, data for persons covered in the survey are weighted to agree with population estimates broken down by sex, age group and region (NUTS3). These population estimates are provided by CSO's Demography Unit. These weightings are then applied to survey results. The results for outbound travel are subsequently further weighted to agree with Tourism and Travel results. <p>Arising from these changes in methodology, a discontinuity in all the series relating to domestic and outbound travel has occurred from 2012 onwards and these results are not directly comparable with the results prior to 2012.</p> <p>From Q3 2022 outbound travel by Irish residents has been calibrated to the new CSO Inbound Tourism statistical series. Methodological advancements in that survey mean that current results are not directly comparable to the former CSO Overseas Travel series, on which outbound travel was calibrated up to Q2 2022. Therefore, there has been a technical break in the outbound travel time series and caution should be taken when comparing data from Q3 2022 and earlier periods.</p> <p>HTS data is compared across domains where possible.</p>
Same-day visits (outbound)	The length of comparable time series is 9 years (2014-2023).

17.2.1. Length of Comparable Time series

The length of comparable time series is 11 years (2012-2023).

17.3. Coherence – cross domain

From Q3 2022 outbound travel by Irish residents has been calibrated to the new CSO Inbound Tourism statistical series. Methodological advancements in that survey mean that current results are not directly comparable to the former CSO Overseas Travel series, on which outbound travel was calibrated up to Q2 2022. Therefore, there has been a technical break in the outbound travel time series from this point and caution should be taken when comparing data from Q3 2022 and earlier periods. This change has had no impact on domestic travel results.

Coherence of the HTS with several other statistical sources is examined at an outline level in the CSO Methodology Note on Review of Household Travel Survey 2018.



Comparison with accommodation statistics

The data collected by the CSO's Tourism surveys for domestic and inbound travel is combined and the percentage change in nights sold is compared (on a quarterly basis) with changes in accommodation indices (NACE 55) from the CSO's Monthly Services Value Index (MSI). The MSI monitors the trends in outputs at current prices of enterprises in the non-financial traded services sector.

There is also a comparison of hotel bed nights sold (data from Failte Ireland) with CSO data from both HTS (domestic travel) and Passenger Card Inquiry (visitors to Ireland) for 2018.

Hotel bed nights sold for 2018 (Failte Ireland Hotel) 27.494 million nights.

HTS (domestic travel) hotel bed nights 7.837 million plus PCI (visitors to Ireland) hotel bed nights 20.060 million = total of 27.897 million hotel bed nights.

Difference between Failte Ireland data for hotel bed nights sold (27.494 million) and CSO data for bed nights (27.897 million) = 0.403 million bed nights (1.5%).

17.3.1. Coherence – Sub annual and annual statistics

Not applicable.

17.3.2. Coherence with National Accounts

Not applicable.

17.4. Coherence – internal

Individual figures have been rounded independently and the sum of the component items therefore may not necessarily add to the totals shown.

18. Cost and Burden

Estimates of Cost and Burden can be obtained from the Response Burden Barometer
<https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/enterprisestatistics/responseburdenbarometer/>

Survey specific information is available via CSO's dissemination database PxStat.
<https://data.cso.ie/product/RBB>

19. Data Revision

19.1. Data Revision Policy

Published statistics are subject to correction and revision for a variety of reasons. The most common reasons include the receipt of additional information (for example, late survey responses) and updated seasonal factors. Occasional revisions also occur because of changes to definitions, methodology, classifications and general updating of statistical series.

It is recognised internationally that the existence of a sound revisions policy maintains credibility in official statistics. The CSO General Revisions Policy, which details how revisions should be managed and communicated to users, outlines the three main types of revisions:

- Planned Routine Revisions
- Planned Major Revisions
- Unplanned Revisions



One reason for unplanned revisions occurring can be when errors are detected after publication. The 'CSO Error Correction Policy – How to deal with Publication Errors' outlines the steps taken when these errors are detected. As required under Principle 6.3 of the European Statistics Code of Practice, errors detected in published statistics are corrected as soon as possible and users are informed. An important step in the process is the documentation and analysis of errors that have occurred and their causes. This allows the CSO to take measures preventing similar errors from occurring in the future and uniformity in dealing with them when they do.

The data revision policy that CSO statistics adheres to can be found via the following link:
<https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/quality/treatmentofrevisions/>

19.2. Data Revision Practice

Revisions may be made to the data as required. These are highlighted on the release.

There are no provisional results published for the HTS. Revisions are made to the data when required - revisions are usually made due to a review and change in methodology for the HTS. These are highlighted on the HTS release.

Revisions to data: There have been revisions to domestic and outbound travel data from Quarter 1 2012 onwards as a result of the change to the weighting methodology. Revised data are published in Quarter 1 2016 release. A summary of the effect of these revisions is shown in the enclosed table.

Domestic Travel: From Quarter 1 2012 onwards, survey data for domestic travel is weighted to agree with population estimates broken down by sex, age group and region (NUTS 3). These population estimates are provided by the CSO's Demography Unit. These weightings are then applied to survey results.

Outbound Travel: From Quarter 1 2012 onwards, survey data for outbound travel are weighted to agree with population estimates broken down by sex, age group and region (NUTS 3). These population estimates are provided by the CSO's Demography Unit. These weightings are then applied to survey results. The results for outbound travel are subsequently further weighted to agree with the Tourism & Travel results.

19.2.1. Data Revision – Average size

Table : Household Travel Survey - summary effect of revisions of data due to changed methodology				
	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total Domestic - Trips '000 (data pre revision)	7,031	7,111	7,354	7,529
Total Domestic - Trips '000 (data revised)	8,291	8,413	8,991	9,125
% Difference	17.9%	18.3%	22.3%	21.2%
Total Domestic - Nights '000 (data pre revision)	20,120	20,649	21,204	20,931
Total Domestic - Nights '000 (data revised)	23,703	24,195	26,086	25,267
% Difference	17.8%	17.2%	23.0%	20.7%
Domestic - Expenditure €m (data pre revision)	1,345.4	1,373.2	1,464.0	1,529.9
Domestic - Expenditure €m (data revised)	1,514.2	1,533.0	1,713.5	1,725.3
% Difference	12.5%	11.6%	17.0%	12.8%
Total Outbound - Trips '000 (data pre revision)	6,600	6,579	6,676	7,077
Total Outbound - Trips '000 (data revised)	6,623	6,575	6,677	7,094
% Difference	0.3%	-0.1%	0.0%	0.2%
Total Outbound - Nights '000 (data pre revision)	53,046	52,078	53,635	53,477
Total Outbound - Nights '000 (data revised)	53,112	51,985	53,652	53,515
% Difference	0.1%	-0.2%	0.0%	0.1%



Outbound - Expenditure €m (data pre revision)	5,345.2	5,392.5	5,598.2	6,016.8
Outbound - Expenditure €m (data revised)	5,342.5	5,384.2	5,590.2	6,022.1
% Difference	-0.1%	-0.2%	-0.1%	0.1%

Break in series: Arising from these changes, discontinuities in all of the series relating to outbound and domestic travel have occurred. Therefore, these results are not directly comparable with the results prior to Quarter 1 2012.

Data revision - average size: There are no provisional results published for the HTS. Final results only are published. Revisions may be made to the data as required. Revisions are usually made due to a review and change in methodology for the HTS.

20. Statistical processing

20.1. Source Data

All survey data is collected electronically via on-line eQ survey of selected private households monthly by the Central Statistics Office.

The only external source of data (apart from the survey register) is the population estimates from the CSO's Demography Unit – these are used for grossing of the results.

20.1.1. Population and sampling frame

The reference population for the national Household Travel Survey is all private households in Ireland. All individuals in the household are included. The sample is chosen using the CSO Household Register as the sampling frame since the beginning of 2020. Prior to this the sample was taken from the 2018 Electoral Register.

The survey population is individuals living in private households. The units of collection are trips taken by members of the household, the number of nights away from home, the amount spent on these trips and several other variables.

With regards the Participation in Tourism, Tourism trips and Same-day visits the population reflects that required by European legislation as follows:

- Participation in tourism: All residents aged 15 or over.
- Tourism trips: All tourism trips of at least one overnight stay made outside the usual environment by the residents aged 15 or over.
- Same-day visits: All outbound and domestic SDV made outside the usual environment by the residents aged 15 or over [reference year 2018 is the first year for collection of data on domestic SDV.

20.1.2. Sampling design

The HTS is a random stratified sample. Each month, over 4,600 households (or approximately 0.3% of all private households) are randomly selected from the CSO Household Register where the selection is stratified by NUTS 3 region and housing tenure type.

20.1.3. Survey size

The overall survey size is 4,600 per month.

In January 2021, the HTS survey form was split into two separate forms using two separate and even samples. The first form (Domestic) asks questions of selected households about overnight trips and day trips (same-day trips) taken in the Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland. The second form (International



,or Outbound) asks questions about overnight trips and day trips (same-day trips) taken outside the island of Ireland.

20.1.4. Survey technique

The default survey mode is by means of electronic data capture using an e-Questionnaire. A reminder letter is issued to non-responding households two weeks after the initial form was issued.

20.2. Frequency of data collection

The survey is conducted each calendar month with each sample of households changing from month to month.

20.3. Data Collection

Data is collected from households by means of electronic data capture using e-Questionnaires. Selected households receive a letter inviting the household to take part in the survey, together with detailed instructions on how to log onto and access the on-line e-Questionnaire.

In Q2 2023 the Household Travel Survey moved away from the previously conducted paper-based survey to the electronic data capture method. This followed a six-month period of pilot testing. Analysis found no significant effects on the survey results due to this survey mode change, but further scrutiny will continue as additional data periods are compiled using the new electronic questionnaires.

20.3.1. Type of Survey/Process

Sample survey using electronic data capture e-Questionnaires.

20.3.2. Questionnaire (including explanations)

The HTS questionnaire contains some demographic questions on the household, for example, age and gender of each member.

In 2023 the survey form asked the following questions about all overnight trips taken in the survey month:

- Destination
- Date returned from trip
- Total nights spent away
- Number of persons on each trip
- Main purpose of journey
- Main type of accommodation used
- Main type of transport used
- Total expenditure on each trip
- Breakdown of expenditure (i.e. expenditure on accommodation, transport, package tour, valuables, durable consumer goods and all other expenditure).

Starting in 2018 information on same-day trips was collected, and in 2023 the survey form also asks the following questions about same-day trips taken in the survey month:

- Destination
- Date of trip
- Number of hours at the destination
- Number of persons on each trip
- Purpose



- Total expenditure on each trip
- Breakdown of expenditure (i.e. expenditure on transport, food/drink and all other costs)

The most recent version of this questionnaire can be found at the following link:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/surveyforms/householdtravelsurvey/>

20.3.3. Survey Participation

The HTS is a voluntary postal survey of private households, which is carried out each month. The questionnaire needs to be completed for every member of each household surveyed.

20.3.4. Data Capture

The questionnaire data is returned directly from the households to the CSO once the respondent selects the submit button on the questionnaire. The data is held on the CSO e-Questionnaire database. A reminder letter is issued to non-responding households two weeks after the initial form was issued.

20.3.5. Proxy interviews

Proxy interviews	Allowed
If "Allowed" or "Only in exceptional cases", please indicate for which variables in particular proxy interviews were used (it not all questions); If 4. "Not applicable", please explain why.	Generally, one person in each household completes the HTS form. This means that this person answers on behalf of other people living in this household.

20.3.6. Average interview time (The average interview time is X minutes.)

Average interview time	8.5 minutes
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20.4. Data Validation

Data validation	<p>Edit programs are run to test for inconsistencies and missing values within the data (e.g. number of nights, destination, expenditure, age, gender etc.). Most missing data is either imputed (e.g. cost of journey data and missing age) or estimated. Grossed up results are checked against results for previous periods. It is assumed that non-responding households (for the expenditure and age variables) have the same patterns as those households that respond.</p> <p>The Eurostat validation rules are also included in the editing process.</p>
Second survey or source (In case a second survey or source is used for collecting data on participation, trips or same-day visits, please briefly describe here in relation to those surveys/sources)	<p>Data collection for outbound same-day visits. The CSO passenger survey is a sample survey of passengers at airports and seaports. Data from this survey is used in conjunction with passenger movement figures supplied by air and sea transport companies to provide estimates for outbound same-day visits and the monthly Inbound Tourism release.</p> <p>Edit programs are run to check for inconsistencies. The results are combined with the overall residency estimates from the</p>



	Inbound Tourism data to provide data for outbound same-day visits.
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20.5. Data Compilation

There is limited coding for this survey. All travel destinations listed by respondents on the completed HTS forms are coded at data collection stage.

Edit programs are then run to test for inconsistencies and missing values within the data (for example, number of nights, destination, and cost of journey). Some missing data is imputed (e.g. cost of journey and age data). Survey results are then weighted to agree with population estimates broken down by *gender, age group and region (NUTS3)*. Results for outbound travel are subsequently further weighted to agree with the results of the Tourism and Travel survey.

20.5.1. Imputation (for Non-Response or Incomplete Data Sets)

Most missing data is either imputed or estimated. The principal variables imputed are expenditure incurred on the trip and also age. It is assumed that non-responding households have the same patterns as those households that respond. These procedures are carried out using Altair.

20.5.1.1. A7. Imputation rate

Not calculated.

20.5.2. Grossing and Weighting

A two-way weighting process is used for outbound travel. From Quarter 1 2012 onwards, survey data for outbound travel is weighted to agree with population estimates broken down by *sex, age group and region (NUTS3)*. The population estimates are provided by the CSO's Demography Unit. The results for outbound travel are further weighted to agree with the Inbound Tourism results. Arising from these changes in methodology, a discontinuity in all the series relating to domestic and outbound travel has occurred from 2012 onwards and these results are not directly comparable with the results prior to 2012.

20.6. Adjustment

20.6.1. Seasonal Adjustment

Not calculated.

21. Comment

Review of 2018 data

The Quarter 2 2018 Household Travel Survey publication was suspended in October 2018 due to concerns the CSO had about the quality of the data collected in the survey. The Quarter 3 and 4 2018 publications were subsequently also deferred while the CSO conducted an in-depth examination of the statistical issues affecting the results.

The statistical quality issues of concern were a falling response rate to the survey and, in tandem with this, a substantial increase in the percentage incidence of trips taken in the respondent sample. The CSO considered the values observed across the survey's key indicators (i.e. domestic and outbound trips, nights and expenditure) to be implausible when compared to those of previous years; and considered that there was a strong possibility of statistical bias in the survey data.



In response the CSO undertook a comprehensive investigation of the current statistical processes in the HTS, reviewing the sampling, collection, processing, and estimation methodology and the survey data. The purpose of the review was to identify anything that could be having a biasing impact on the survey results and consider what options were available to address the issues in the data.

Following the outcome of this review (outlined in more detail below) the CSO has decided to apply a statistical adjustment to the 2018 and 2019 HTS data to address a response bias in the proportion of people responding to the survey who had taken an overnight trip.

The HTS data published for 2018 and 2019 is to be considered interim and may be subject to future revision. Further information is included in the Methodology Note on Review of Household Travel Survey 2018, published by the CSO at:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/in/hts/methodologynoteonreviewofhouseholdtravelsurvey2018/>

Revisions to data (2012-2015)

There have been revisions to domestic and outbound travel data from Quarter 1 2012 onwards as a result of the change to the weighting methodology. Revised data are published in Quarter 1 2016 release. A summary of the effect of these revisions is shown in the enclosed table.

Household Travel Survey - summary effect of revisions of data due to changed methodology				
	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total Domestic - Trips '000 (data pre revision)	7,031	7,111	7,354	7,529
Total Domestic - Trips '000 (data revised)	8,291	8,413	8,991	9,125
% Difference	17.9%	18.3%	22.3%	21.2%
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Total Outbound - Trips '000 (data pre revision)	6,600	6,579	6,676	7,077



Household Travel Survey - summary effect of revisions of data due to changed methodology				
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% Difference	0.1%	-0.2%	0.0%	0.1%
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Outbound - Expenditure €m (data revised)	5,342.5	5,384.2	5,590.2	6,022.1
% Difference	-0.1%	-0.2%	-0.1%	0.1%

Break in series

Arising from these changes, discontinuities in all of the series relating to outbound and domestic travel have occurred. Therefore, these results are not directly comparable with the results prior to Quarter 1 2012.