Definitions

There are two main measures for day visits used in this report.

3 Hour+ Leisure Day Visits
Trips by adults and accompanied children that lasted for 3 or more hours including travel time to undertake 1 or more eligible leisure activities. All overnight visits are excluded as are day visits from a holiday accommodation base.

Tourism Day Visits
These are a subset of 3 hour+ leisure day visits and to qualify as a tourism day visit, they must meet the additional criteria of being undertaken less often than once a week and they must include visit to a place outside of the local authority where the visit started. The requirement to travel to a different local authority covers most activities with the exception of visits where the main activity is watching live sports events, going to visitor attractions and going to public events that qualify as tourism day visits even if they are undertaken within the same local authority.

Eligible Leisure Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visited friends or relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Went to a visitor attraction e.g. a historic house, theme park, museum, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Took part in sports or outdoor leisure activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Went sightseeing and exploring areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Took part in hobbies and interests</td>
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<tr>
<td>Took part in a health or wellbeing experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attended a special event or celebration (e.g. wedding, birthday etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attended an organised public event (e.g. exhibition, live sport etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Went to an arts, cultural or entertainment experience (e.g. museum etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and drink, a night out or speciality shopping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Took part in leisure activities not mentioned above</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Definitions

Other definitions used in this publication

• **Volume** - an estimate of what the grossed-up number of day visits undertaken by the population would be if the survey sample is representative of the whole GB population.

• **Value** - an estimate of what the total expenditure relating to the volume of day visits undertaken by the population would be if the survey sample is representative of the whole GB population.

• **Pre-nesters** – aged 16-34 with no children

• **Families** – aged 16-54 with children

• **Older Independents** – aged 25-54 with no children

• **Empty Nesters** – aged 55+

These definitions and the associated qualifying criteria have been revised as part of the new combined GBTS/GBDVS survey to align with agreed international standards. These changes impact the comparability of the published domestic overnight and domestic day tourism estimates for 2021 with 2019 and previous years.
Methodology

In 2019, the producers of the domestic tourist statistics, VisitScotland, VisitWales, and VisitEngland, undertook a review of the requirements and methods for producing the statistics to help future-proof the data collection methods, whilst maintaining the reliability and robustness of the information reported. As a result, substantial changes were introduced as part of a new combined online survey method collecting data on both domestic overnight trips as well as domestic day visits. For overnight visits, this represents a fundamental change in the way data is collected including moving to an online-panel, non-probability survey methodology from the previous face-to-face non-probability methodology.

The sample for the combined online survey is sourced from 4 ESOMAR accredited online panel providers and includes quotas for key demographic variables and region of residence to make the overall sample as representative as possible of GB population. The target annual sample size for GBDVS is 35,000 completed interviews. It was not possible to collect data for the first 3 months of 2021 because of the lockdown and travel restrictions in place due to COVID-19. Fieldwork started in England and Wales at the start of April 2021 and in Scotland on 12th April and the number of interviews achieved for the period April to December 2021 is 29,226 including 4,454 interviews with Scottish residents.

As part of the survey changes, a revised weighting scheme has been introduced to improve efficiency, whilst making the results as representative as possible of the GB population. However, the use of a non-probability online sample limits the extent to which the survey responses are truly representative of the full GB population, a limitation of all online sample surveys. The new weighting scheme uses the National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC) mapped to approximated social grade for population statistics, for the purpose of quotas and weighting to the GB population. The change to using NS-SEC as the population statistics source will impact the estimation and reporting of trips compared to the previous reporting of social grade used for GBDVS in 2019 and previous years. We are still assessing the impact of these changes, and this may result in a re-release of statistics for 2021.

There have also been changes in the methods for imputations and data edits and to the calculations to provide monthly trip and spend estimates.

Further details of the changes to survey method, sample design and estimation approaches are available in the GBDVS Background and Quality Report 2021 (link)
Comparability and coherence

Statistics for domestic day trips have been collected in a broadly similar way since 2011. However, the changes in survey methodology introduced in 2021, together with the interruption in data collection due to COVID-19, means that results published from April 2021 onwards are not directly comparable with data published for 2019 and previous years.

The estimates of volume for 2021 included trips by GB adults and accompanying children, whereas the published day trip volumes for 2019 and previous years were estimates of adult trips only.

As part of the survey, respondents are asked about any day trips they have taken in the 7 days prior to their date of interview (reference period). Trip and expenditure estimates are reported for individual calendar months as well as for quarterly and annual periods. As the interview reference periods do not exactly correspond with calendar months an adjustment is made using a ‘seasonal smoothing factor’ to improve monthly comparisons within and between years. The monthly estimates are subject to limitations on sample size and seasonal fluctuations in trip taking across the year. The monthly pattern of visits in 2021 will have also been influenced by any COVID-19 restrictions in place limiting travel at different times of the year, as well as by public confidence undertaking different leisure activities. Users are advised to be aware of these limitations when making month-on-month comparisons.
The statistics produced from the Great Britain Day Visits Survey in 2019 and previous years have been designated as official statistics, which provides reassurance to users that the statistics are produced to the very highest professional standards of trustworthiness, quality and value, set out in the Code of Practice for Statistics (Office for National Statistics). Due to the changes in methodology and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the survey results for 2021 have been labelled as ‘experimental statistics’ (Office for National Statistics). The new survey and statistics have undergone a comprehensive programme of quality assurance including piloting of the survey, analysis of changes to the trip definitions, testing the impact of the new weighting scheme and a review of caps and imputation rules. Changes to the survey methodology and estimation have taken account of a review and advice provided by the Methodology Advisory Service of the Office for National Statistics.

As the statistics are produced using a non-probability online survey method, they are subject to the limitations and potential sources of bias and error associated with such surveys. These include:

- coverage error: due to part of the GB population not having online access
- sampling error: using a sample to measure the behaviour of the full GB population
- sample bias: including differences between people with online access and who are online panel members compared to those who are not
- measurement error: due to respondents entering incorrect values
- non-response error: including survey refusals and drop-outs and the availability of ‘don’t know’ and ‘prefer not to say’ options
The GBDVS data is weighted to correct any imperfections in the achieved sample that might lead to bias and to rectify any differences between the sample and the target GB population. The survey uses a mix of accredited online panels to mitigate for possible panel specific biases, and the mix of panels is kept consistent over time. Demographic quotas are used to align the sample with the GB population. The survey script and data processing include bespoke checks to verify the accuracy of responses. Imputation is used to cover missing data and caps are used to minimise the impact of extreme values that are entered. It is not possible to measure standard sample errors due to the non-probability sample being used, but base sizes are reported for eligible trip takers and users are advised to consider and be cautious of small base sizes, particularly for monthly data and lower-level geographies, when drawing inferences from the statistics.

Further details of quality assurance and trip base sizes are provided in the GBDVS Background Quality Report 2021.
Relevance

These statistics are used both within and outside VisitScotland to monitor domestic tourism demand and measure the contribution and impact of domestic tourism on the visitor economy. A key purpose of these statistics is to uncover insights into market trends over time. The estimates released for 2021 will provide insights on the impact of COVID-19 on visitor levels and provide a baseline to measure performance across subsequent years. The full dataset provides additional information on visitor profiles and trip characteristics for visits to Scotland and for the wider GB domestic market that is relevant for tourism planning, policy making and marketing.

As far as possible, the new combined GBTS and GBDVS survey provides consistency with previous information collected, but new questions capture enhanced information on activities undertaken and responder profiles including protected characteristics. It is envisaged that this additional information will be of value for the various users of the survey. The current questionnaire is included in the GBDVS 2021 Background Quality Report.

Some of the key potential users are:

Tourism businesses and industry representative bodies
VisitScotland and the Scottish Government
Ministers
Local authorities
Professional tourism consultants and organisations
Students, academics and universities
Individual citizens and private companies
National and local media
Eurostat and international statistical authorities
Disruption to the new combined GBTS and GBDVS survey due to COVID-19 and comprehensive testing and quality assuring of the new statistics have resulted in the reporting of 2021 statistics to be later than normal. It is anticipated that future results for Scotland will be published on a quarterly basis with a time lag of circa 9-10 weeks reflecting the 4-weekly reference period used to allocate day trips taken. This will ensure estimates are supported by robust trip base sizes as well as allowing for quality assurance checks and reporting timescales.

The statistics will be published on the [www.visitscotland.org](http://www.visitscotland.org) website at 9.30am on the day of publication.