

Great Britain Tourism Survey (GBTS)

Methodological Note:

Q4 2025 Data Comparability Adjustments

Comparability Adjustment to GBTS Overnight Trip Estimates

Introduction

A change in survey functionality during 2025 affected the GBTS overnight trips time series. This document outlines the nature of the change, its impact on the estimates, and the approach taken to ensure that the published data remain consistent and suitable for trend analysis.

Nature of the Change

Prior to October 2025, a technical issue within the survey, linked to JavaScript at an early stage of the questionnaire (OT1¹), prevented some respondents from completing the survey after indicating that they had taken an overnight trip.

Following the resolution of the technical issue, there was a shift in the reporting patterns for overnight trip volume, bednights and expenditure. To maintain the long-term integrity of the time series, a methodological adjustment was applied to harmonize the period before and after this update, while preserving the overall robustness and representativeness of the survey outputs.

Methodology

Correction factors were developed to estimate what the survey outcomes would have been had the update been in place throughout the full time period.

- **Derivation:** Correction factors are derived by comparing the observed proportion of respondents reporting an overnight trip, and an estimated proportion representing the level in the absence of the technical issue. The estimation process uses established survey data patterns, including completion and dropout behaviour², to infer the underlying distribution of trip taking. This approach allows the data to be adjusted without requiring

¹ OT1 is a question in the universe of trips section of the survey - 'Have you returned from any trips that have involved an overnight stay in the UK away from home in the past 4 weeks (e.g. between [INSERT DATE 2] and [INSERT DATE 1])?'

² Survey dropouts refer to participants who begin a questionnaire but abandon it before completion

observed responses from the missing respondents. The method is based on a structured statistical framework that reconstructs population behaviour from observed survey outcomes.

- **Application:** These factors are applied at the respondent level prior to standard survey weighting, which ensures that estimates remain representative of the population and that internal consistency is maintained across all sub-national breakdowns.
- **Precision:** To improve accuracy, factors were calculated on a regional and quarterly basis, allowing the data to account for variations in seasonality and geography.
- **Alignment:** In their final form, these factors are used as comparability adjustments to scale recent data and align it with the historical time series.

Next steps

Q4 2025 data, along with all GBTS data 2022 to present, is classified as [official statistics in development](#).

Next steps are: to review the impact of the technical issue on historic estimates from the GBTS survey, and, to adjust data going forward as required.

This document was produced by BMG in collaboration with VisitEngland, VisitScotland and Visit Wales. For further information, please [get in touch](#).