

UK Occupancy Survey for serviced accommodation

2002 summary report



Marketing English Tourism

VISIT
BRITAIN

This report presents a summary of the main findings from the UK Occupancy Survey for Serviced Accommodation 2002, which is jointly commissioned by the four statutory tourist boards of the UK.

The report was written by Sue Tait on behalf of NFO WorldGroup.

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1. MAIN FIVE YEAR TRENDS

1.1 Introduction

This report summarises the main trends apparent from the individual surveys carried out in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland during the period 1998 – 2002 which have been aggregated to provide occupancy figures for the UK as a whole. In addition to this summary, fuller separate reports for the UK and for each National Board are available from the National Tourist Boards listed on page 16. Each board holds its own data from which this report was compiled, together with further details about occupancy according to the size and tariff of the establishments and average length of stay.

Throughout this report, when comparing the figures for 2002 with those for 2001, it must be remembered that the use of serviced accommodation during 2001 was seriously affected by two events:

- In the early part of 2001 (starting in late February and with the effects felt until well into the summer months) there was the outbreak of foot and mouth disease and the resulting decline in visits to the countryside.
- Just as domestic tourism was recovering at the end of that summer, there were the far-reaching events of 11th September 2001, with their inevitable repercussions on travel, both domestic and from overseas. These events greatly affected occupancy rates from September onwards, especially in London which felt the full force of the down turn in travel at that time. 2002 therefore should be seen as a year of recovery and consolidation for the tourist trade, during which time many occupancy levels rose, although rarely reaching the levels seen in 1998.

During the first part of 2002, the UK celebrated the Queen's Golden Jubilee, which culminated in a special two-day Bank Holiday at the beginning of June (replacing the usual one day Spring Bank Holiday at the end of May). Many celebratory events took place that weekend, focussing to a great degree upon London.

Provisional figures from both the International Passenger Survey (IPS – which monitors inbound tourism) and the United Kingdom Tourism Survey (UKTS – which monitors domestic tourism) indicate that the number of trips taken by both overseas and domestic visitors increased during 2002 (by 5% and 3% respectively when compared with 2001). The number of nights spent in the UK by overseas visitors also grew by 5% in 2002, while those by UK residents on trips away from home of at least one night grew by less 1%, with an overall growth in total nights of 2%. However, total nights in 2002 were 2% lower than in 1998. It should be noted that the IPS and UKTS figures quoted here cover trips using all types of accommodation while the occupancy figures in this report are based only on serviced accommodation.

1.2 Bedroom occupancy

The 2002 UK annual average bedroom occupancy was 1 percentage point higher than that of 2001, returning to the level of 1999 and 2000, but still 1 percentage point below that of 1998. The four constituent countries, however, show differing patterns.

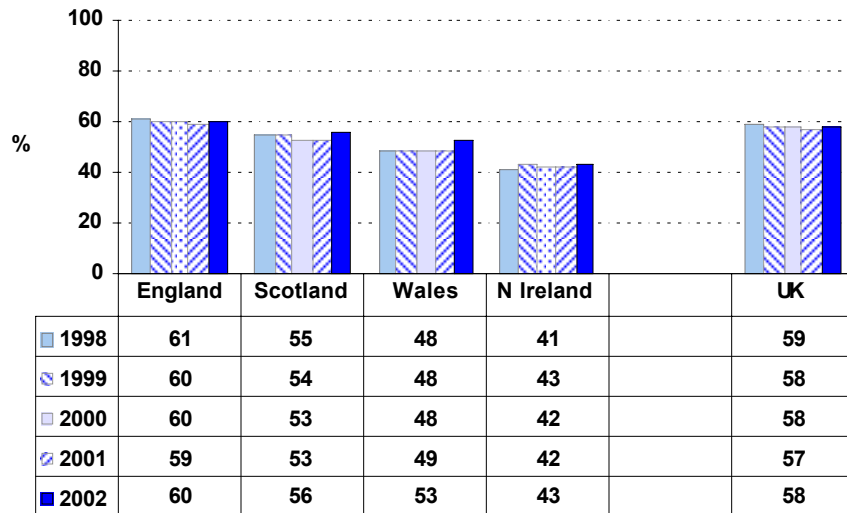
In Wales, annual average bedroom occupancy had remained more or less static over the period 1998-2001, but rose in 2002 by 4 percentage points compared with 2001.

In Northern Ireland, the annual average for 2002 was 1 percentage point higher than in 2001, with the figure fluctuating by 1 or 2 percentage points during the period 1998-2001.

The 2002 figure for Scotland was 3 percentage points higher than in 2001, reversing the decline over the previous four years.

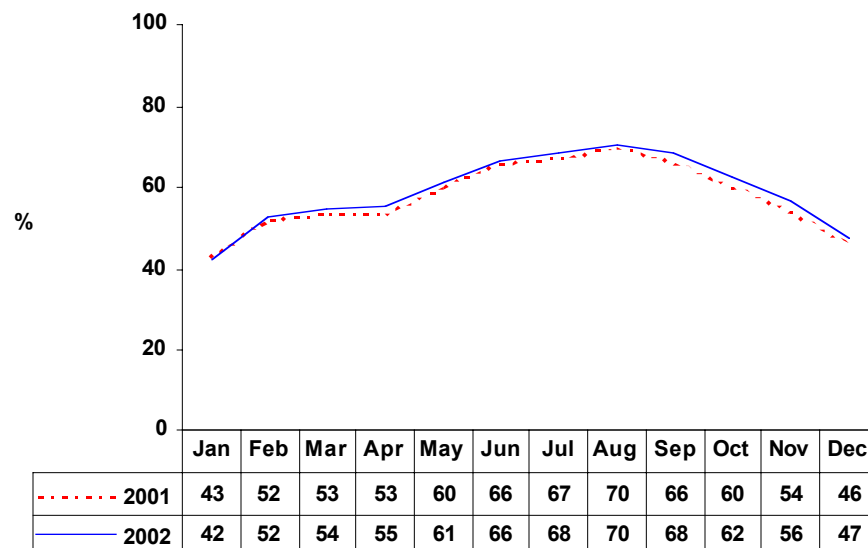
England also showed an increase of 1 percentage point when compared with 2001 but was the only country where the 2002 figure was below that of 1998 (albeit by only 1 percentage point) – possibly the result of a decrease in overseas and business visitors to London since September 11.

Fig. 1.1: UK and National: Annual Bedroom Occupancy 1998 - 2002



In terms of UK monthly figures, 2002 levels were generally slightly higher than in 2001 – it must be remembered that year-on-year comparisons for March and April are difficult to make because of the influence of the Easter holiday (the dates of which vary).

Fig. 1.2: UK: Monthly Bedroom Occupancy 2001 and 2002



When compared with the levels five years previously (in 1998), figures for April to September 2002 were lower than in 1998, while those for November and December were higher in 2002 (see Table1). Again there were differences between the four countries.

Monthly figures in England reflected UK figures, while those for Scotland and Wales were for the most part higher than in both 1998 and 2001, as to a smaller extent were those in Northern Ireland.

	Bedroom Occupancy (%)																								
	England					Scotland					Wales					Northern Ireland					UK				
	98	99	00	01	02	98	99	00	01	02	98	99	00	01	02	98	99	00	01	02	98	99	00	01	02
January	48	45	43	47	44	35	33	31	34	36	28	26	27	29	36	31	30	28	30	31	44	42	40	43	42
February	55	53	53	55	54	41	43	41	42	45	37	33	38	38	45	39	35	36	38	39	52	50	50	52	52
March	57	56	55	56	56	46	47	44	43	49	38	39	40	38	48	38	37	37	38	40	54	53	52	53	54
April	60	58	59	55	56	51	50	50	48	50	48	46	48	43	51	40	41	45	39	42	58	55	56	53	55
May	64	62	62	61	62	63	60	59	58	62	56	54	53	55	58	46	47	50	46	50	63	61	61	60	61
June	68	66	67	68	66	69	68	65	64	67	59	58	57	57	63	45	52	52	53	51	67	66	66	66	66
July	71	70	70	68	69	69	69	67	65	70	63	64	64	62	64	43	48	46	45	46	69	69	68	67	68
August	70	69	70	70	69	77	75	75	75	78	68	68	68	67	67	52	54	52	55	52	71	69	70	70	70
September	73	71	68	67	69	68	68	63	66	68	62	62	58	59	64	49	54	51	50	50	71	69	66	66	68
October	65	65	64	61	64	56	55	56	55	58	49	51	50	52	56	42	46	41	43	43	62	62	62	60	62
November	57	60	57	56	58	46	45	45	48	49	37	41	40	46	48	38	42	38	39	38	54	56	54	54	56
December	49	46	49	48	49	36	33	37	41	40	32	34	36	37	40	29	30	31	31	29	46	43	46	46	47
April–Oct Average	67	66	66	64	65	65	64	62	62	65	58	58	57	56	60	45	49	48	47	48	66	65	64	63	64
July–Sept Average	71	70	69	68	69	71	71	68	69	72	64	65	63	63	65	48	52	50	50	49	70	69	68	68	69
Annual Average	61	60	60	59	60	55	54	53	53	56	48	48	48	49	53	41	43	42	42	43	59	58	58	57	58

1.3 Bedspace occupancy

The difference between bedroom and bedspace occupancy is explained by single occupancy of double/twin rooms or, in some cases, empty beds in family rooms. A double room occupied by one person has 100% room occupancy but only 50% bedspace occupancy.

Patterns of bedspace occupancy were slightly different from those for bedroom occupancy, with the UK annual average bedspace occupancy for 2002 showing a rise of 2 percentage points when compared with 2001 and an increase of 1 percentage point over the 1998 figure. This may be attributed to an increase in family use of accommodation along with a slight downturn in business use.

As with bedroom occupancy, figures for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland showed differing patterns. In all cases, the 2002 annual average for bedspace occupancy represented a rise when compared with 2001 (of 3 percentage points in Wales, 2 percentage points in Scotland and 1 percentage point in England and Northern Ireland). Annual average bedspace occupancy rose over the period 1998-2002 in both Wales and Northern Ireland, while in England and Scotland it was the same as in 1998.

Fig. 1.3: UK and National: Annual Bedspace Occupancy 1998 – 2002

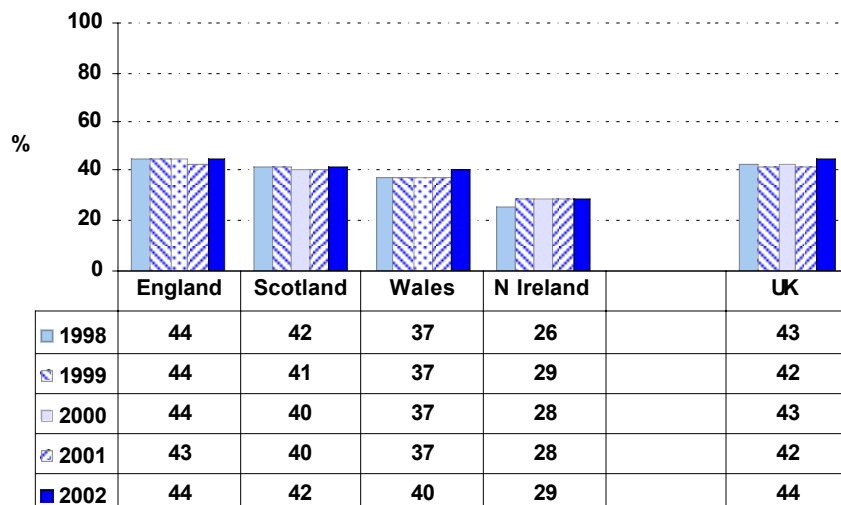


Table 2: UK and National: Bedspace Occupancy 1998 – 2002																									
	Bedspace Occupancy (%)																								
	England					Scotland					Wales					Northern Ireland					UK				
	98	99	00	01	02	98	99	00	01	02	98	99	00	01	02	98	99	00	01	02	98	99	00	01	02
January	32	29	29	29	29	23	21	21	21	24	19	18	18	19	23	18	17	17	18	18	30	27	27	27	28
February	38	36	36	36	37	29	29	28	30	31	28	24	26	28	32	24	21	23	23	24	36	34	34	35	36
March	38	37	39	37	41	31	32	30	30	35	27	28	28	26	36	22	24	23	23	26	36	36	37	35	39
April	44	41	44	40	39	38	36	40	37	37	37	35	38	34	36	26	28	32	26	28	42	40	43	39	39
May	47	45	46	44	45	49	45	44	44	48	45	41	41	42	44	29	32	33	30	33	47	45	45	44	45
June	49	49	50	48	52	54	52	51	50	54	45	45	44	44	50	29	35	34	35	35	49	49	49	48	52
July	54	54	54	52	55	57	58	56	53	57	51	51	52	50	51	31	35	33	32	34	54	54	54	51	54
August	57	56	57	56	58	66	63	62	63	66	58	58	58	58	58	38	40	38	41	39	58	57	57	57	59
September	53	52	51	50	51	54	53	50	53	53	47	47	45	45	47	32	36	33	33	34	52	52	50	49	51
October	47	47	47	45	47	42	42	41	43	42	36	38	37	39	41	27	30	26	28	28	45	46	45	44	46
November	38	41	39	39	41	32	30	30	32	34	26	29	28	34	34	23	26	22	24	24	36	38	36	37	40
December	35	33	36	36	36	27	25	27	29	28	23	25	26	28	28	19	19	20	21	19	32	31	34	34	35
April–Oct Average	50	49	50	48	50	52	50	49	48	51	46	45	45	45	47	30	34	33	32	33	50	49	49	47	49
July–Sept Average	55	54	54	53	55	59	58	56	56	59	52	52	52	51	52	34	37	35	35	36	55	54	54	52	55
Annual Average	44	44	44	43	44	42	41	40	40	42	37	37	37	37	40	26	29	28	28	29	43	42	43	42	44

1.4 Weekend and weekday occupancy

Overall average figures for the UK hide considerable differences in weekend and weekday occupancy.

Compared with 2001, annual average figures for both weekday bedroom and bedspace occupancy saw an improvement (of 2 percentage points and 1 percentage point respectively), as did weekend bedspace occupancy (where the rise was also 2 percentage points). However, average annual weekend bedroom occupancy remained the same as in 2001.

While weekend occupancy rates have held up well over the five years (annual average bedroom occupancy remaining at the 1998 level and bedspace rising by 1 percentage point),

the average annual weekday occupancy rates have both fallen since 1998 (by 2 percentage points for bedroom occupancy and by 1 percentage point for bedspace).

Fig. 1.4: UK and National: Annual Weekend Bedroom Occupancy 1998 – 2002

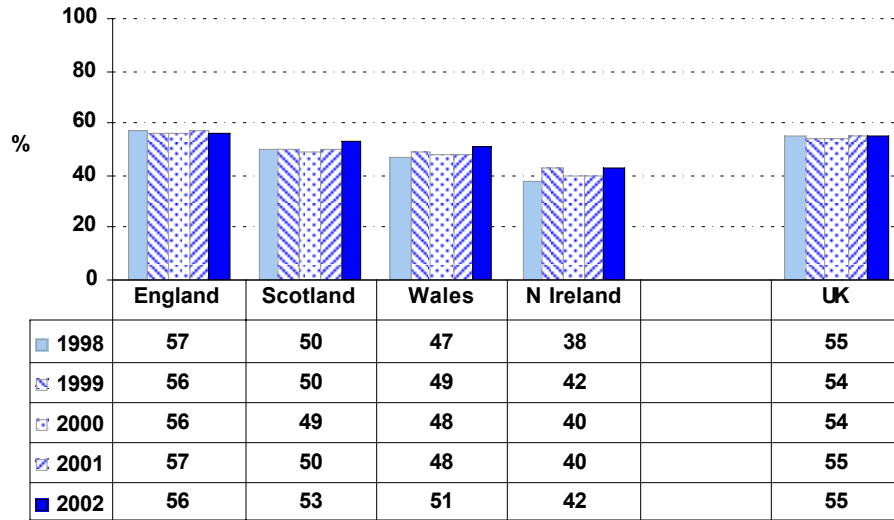
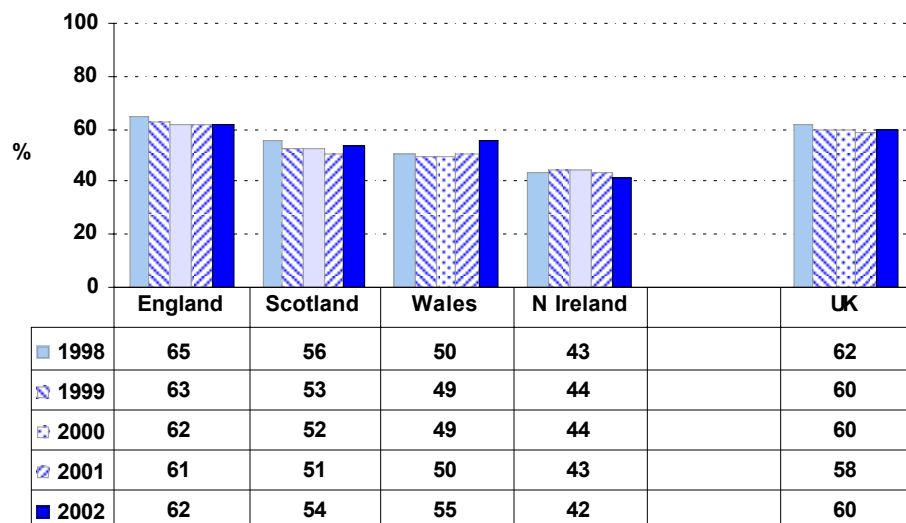


Fig. 1.5: UK and National: Annual Weekday Bedroom Occupancy 1998 – 2002

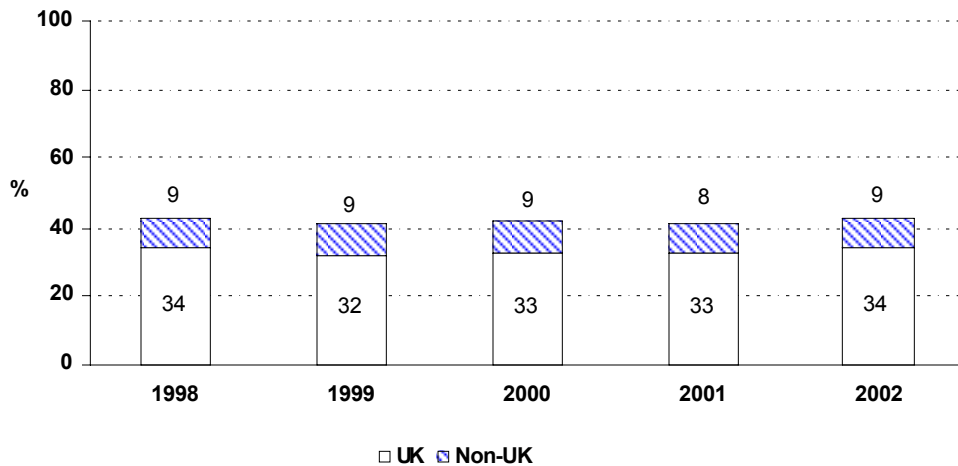


1.5 Origin of Visitors

The average annual UK bedspace occupancy in 2002 was 44%. On average visitors from outside the UK occupied 9% of the available bedspaces while UK visitors occupied 34%. (These figures do not sum precisely to the UK average because they are based only on those establishments which were able to differentiate between UK and non-UK visitors, which is less than the total sample.)

The 2002 annual average bedspace occupancy by both UK and non-UK visitors was one percentage point higher than in 2001, returning in each case to the 1998 levels.

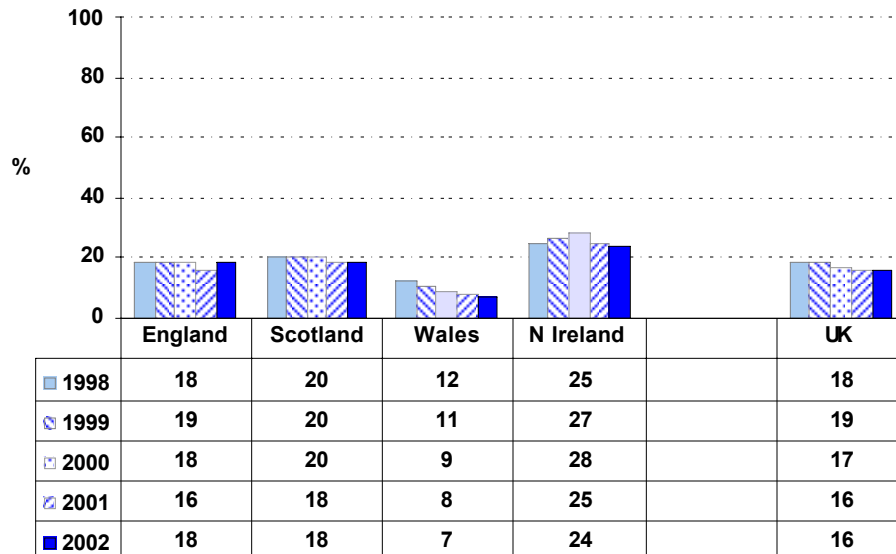
Fig. 1.6: UK: Annual Bedspace Occupancy 1998 - 2002 by Origin of Visitors



As in 2001, almost one in six (16%) of arrivals at serviced accommodation in 2002 were from outside the UK. This is 3 percentage points lower than their five year peak in 1999 (19%) (see figure 1.7).

Wales has been most affected by the decrease in non-UK arrivals, showing a fall of 5 percentage points over the period 1998-2002.

Fig. 1.7: UK and National: Annual Non-UK Arrivals as a Percentage of All Arrivals at Serviced Accommodation 1998 – 2002



Provisional 2002 figures from the IPS indicate that overseas visits to the UK as a whole increased in 2002 (by almost 5%) for the first time since 1998 – although they were still almost 7% lower than in 1998.

1.6 Occupancy by type of establishment

Nearly all UK occupancy levels showed a rise in 2002 when compared with 2001 – the exception being bedroom occupancy in hotels (the annual average remained as in 2001).

In hotels and guesthouses, most UK average annual occupancy levels have declined over the period 1998-2002 (except for bedspace occupancy in hotels, which returned to its 1998 level in 2002).

Bed and breakfast establishments on the other hand have experienced a rise in occupancy over this period.

Fig. 1.8: UK: Annual Bedroom Occupancy 1998 - 2002 by Type of Establishment

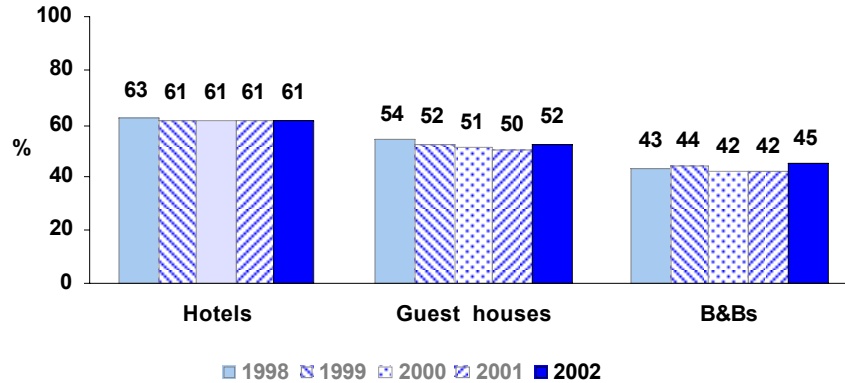
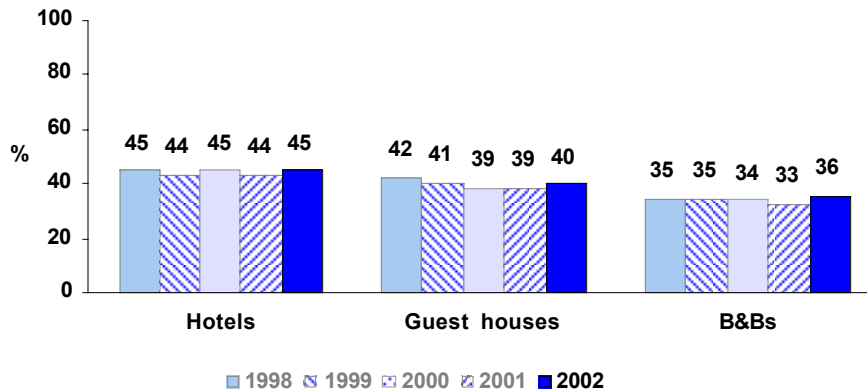


Fig. 1.9: UK: Annual Bedspace Occupancy 1998 - 2002 by Type of Establishment



On a national basis over the five years from 1998 to 2002, most average occupancy levels in hotels decreased or remained the same in England and Scotland, and increased in Wales and Northern Ireland.

Annual occupancy levels (both bedroom and bedspace) in guest houses increased in Wales (by 8 percentage points in each case) over this time but decreased in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Fig. 1.10: National: Annual Bedroom Occupancy 2001 and 2002 by Type of Establishment

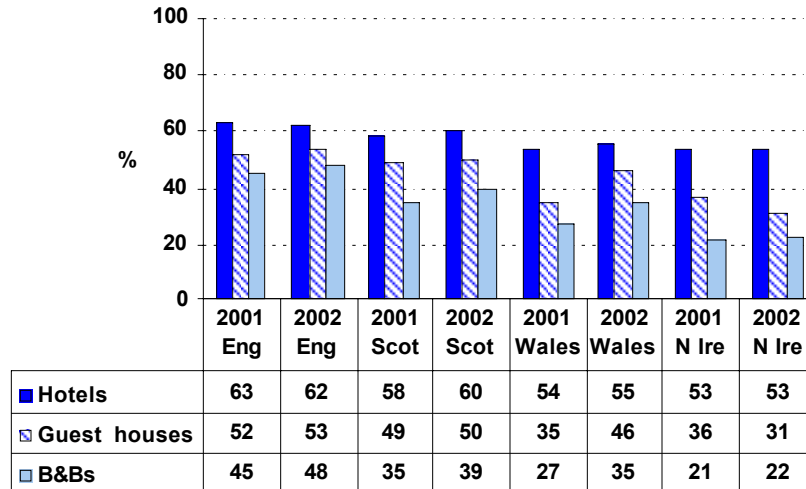
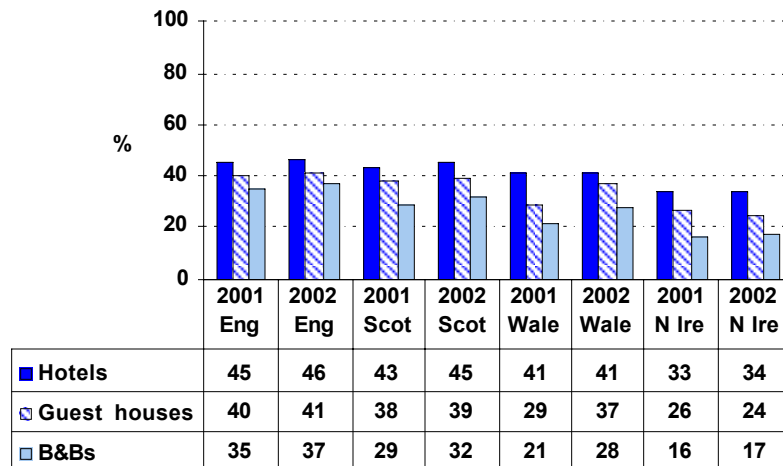


Fig. 1.11: National: Annual Bedspace Occupancy 2000 and 2001 by Type of Establishment



1.7 Occupancy by location of establishment

When compared with 2001, UK occupancy levels in most types of locations increased or remained at the same level.

Over the period 1998 – 2002, UK annual average occupancy levels (both bedroom and bedspace) have increased in seaside and country/village locations.

Over the same period, average annual bedroom occupancy in urban areas (both cities/large towns and small towns) fell by 2 percentage points, while bedspace occupancy remained the same – possibly a result of a slight downturn in the volume of business usage.

Fig. 1.12: UK: Annual Bedroom Occupancy 1998 - 2002 by Location of Establishment

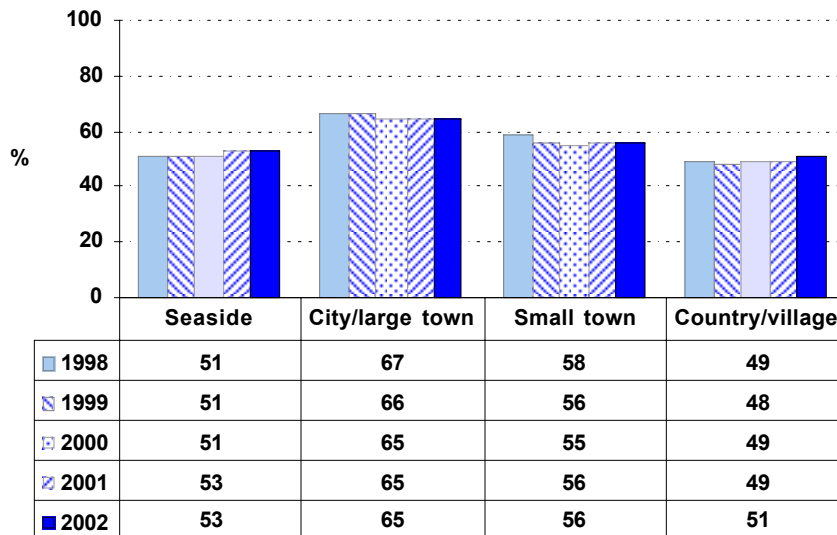
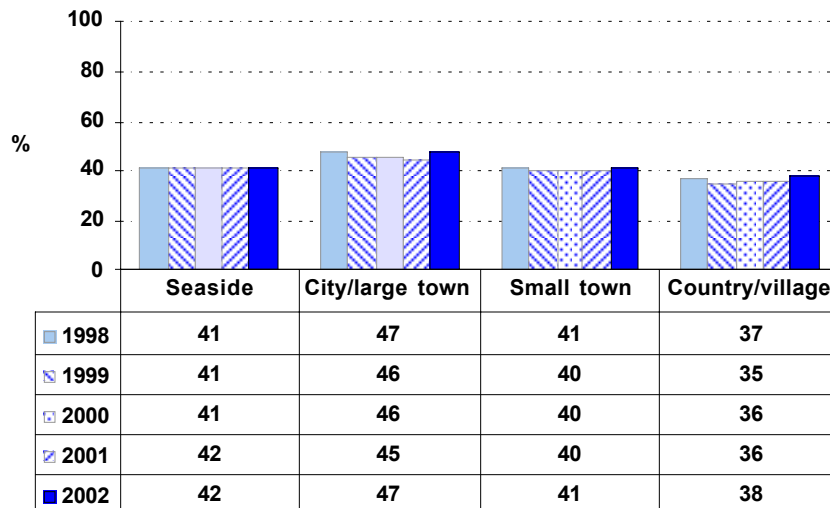


Fig. 1.13: UK: Annual Bedspace Occupancy 1998 - 2002 by Location of Establishment



2. ABOUT THE UK OCCUPANCY SURVEY

2.1 Survey sponsors

As part of the EU Directive on Tourism Statistics adopted in November 1995, the UK is required to submit monthly occupancy rates for hotels and similar establishments (ie serviced accommodation) to Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Community. Since January 1997 each of the four national tourist boards has been responsible for the implementation of an occupancy survey of serviced accommodation in its area, carried out according to a common specification and standard, thus ensuring the production of comparable occupancy data for the whole of the UK. In England this task is carried out by the regional tourist boards (co-ordinated by Visit Heart of England) under contract to VisitBritain.

NFO WorldGroup was appointed as the UK Survey Co-ordinator for 2002-2005 and collates the results from each of the national and regional surveys, combining them to produce occupancy rates for the UK as a whole.

2.2 Coverage of survey

The types of accommodation in the survey are those defined (in the EU Directive) as tourist accommodation that is arranged in rooms and where bed-making and cleaning services are provided. It therefore includes hotels (including motels, lodges and inns), guesthouses and private houses offering bed and breakfast to tourists (including farmhouses). It should be noted that only in Northern Ireland, where there is compulsory registration of tourist accommodation, is there a definition of the various types of accommodation. In England, Scotland and Wales the type was defined by each accommodation establishment itself in answering a questionnaire. Because the criteria are not objectively defined, the distinction between types is not always clear and may vary slightly.

In 2002 there were about 45,800 establishments of this type in the UK which were known to the tourist boards, with a total of almost 1.2 million bedspaces.

Figure 2.1: Distribution of total known accommodation stock: Number of establishments

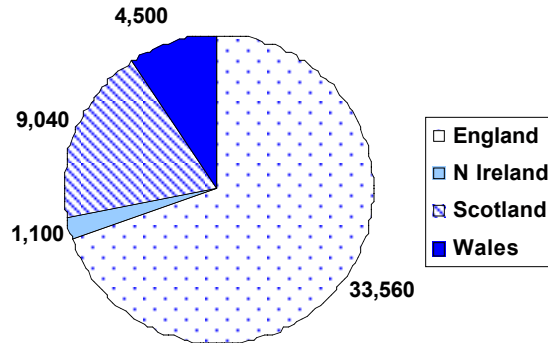
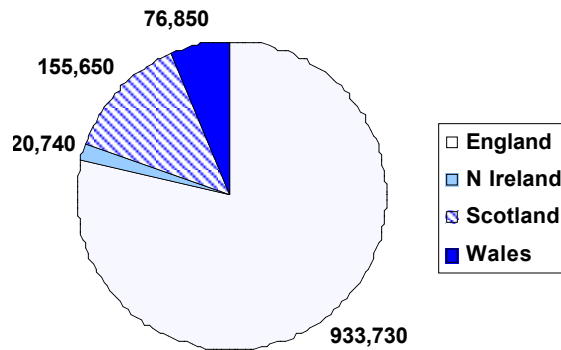


Figure 2.2: Distribution of total known accommodation stock: Number of bedspaces



2.3 Survey method

Tourist Boards invited establishments to provide data for the survey on a monthly basis and almost 5,200 establishments agreed to do so at the beginning of 2002. Each month between 3,032 and 3,920 returned data and the occupancy rates in the report are calculated from these monthly samples. Both the recruited samples (those establishments agreeing to provide data) and the analytical samples (those establishments returning monthly data) have

been closely monitored during the year to ensure that the samples are as representative as possible of the known total stock.

The occupancy figures are calculated on the accommodation available each month - ie only open accommodation is included. In calculating figures for England and for the UK, the data has been weighted by the number of available bedspaces in each contributing area.

2.4 Full reports

The individual Tourist Boards produce a wide range of other, more local, information from their own surveys which is available directly from them. It should be noted that this locally-produced information may be based on slightly different samples from the UK Survey, depending upon the timing of the analysis. The following full reports are available from the national tourist boards. Orders should be sent including remittances.

UK Occupancy Survey for Serviced Accommodation 2002 *Price: £35 incl. p&p*

Survey of Hotel Occupancy Annual Report 2002: *Free*

England Occupancy Survey for Serviced Accommodation 2002 *Price: £35 incl. p&p (available September)*

Survey of Guesthouse and Bed and Breakfast Accommodation 2002: *Free (available August)*

Both available from:
VisitBritain
Fulfilment Centre
Thames Tower
Black's Road
London W6 9EL

Both available from:
Northern Ireland Tourist Board
St Anne's Court
59 North Street
Belfast BT1 1NB

Wales Occupancy Survey for Serviced Accommodation 2001-2002 *Price: £15.00*

Scottish Accommodation Occupancy Survey 2002: Final Report *Price: £20.00*

Available from:
Wales Tourist Board
Brunel House
Cardiff CF24 OUY

Available from:
VisitScotland
23 Ravelston Terrace
Edinburgh EH4 3TP

APPENDIX. UK TOURISM TRENDS 1998 - 2002

Table 3: UK Tourism trends 1998-2002		
UK Residents¹	Total trips (m)	Total nights (m)
UK destinations		
1998	148.8	515.9
1999	173.1	568.6
2000	175.4	576.4
2001	163.1	529.6
2002 ^P	167.3	531.9
% change 2001-2002 ^P	2.6%	0.4%
% change 1998-2002 ^P	12.4%	3.1%
Overseas Residents²	Total trips (m)	Total nights (m)
UK destinations		
1998	25.7	230.8
1999	25.4	211.7
2000	25.2	203.8
2001	22.8	189.5
2002 ^P	23.9	198.7
% change 2001-2002 ^P	4.8%	4.9%
% change 1998-2002 ^P	-7.0%	-13.9%
Total	Total trips (m)	Total nights (m)
UK destinations		
1998	174.5	746.7
1999	198.5	780.3
2000	200.6	780.2
2001	185.9	719.1
2002 ^P	191.2	730.6
% change 2001-2002 ^P	2.9%	1.6%
% change 1998-2002 ^P	9.6%	-2.2%
<p>Note: These figures include stays in all types of accommodation, including non-serviced accommodation</p> <p>¹ Source: United Kingdom Tourism Survey (UKTS)</p> <p>² Source: International Passenger Survey (IPS)</p> <p>^P provisional</p>		