

**The impact of heritage tourism for the UK economy**

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Heritage tourism is a vital part of the UK economy. In 2015, domestic and international tourists made 192 million trips to visit the UK's cultural, historic and natural assets. They spent £17.5 billion while doing so.

For the purposes of this report, heritage tourism encompasses heritage attractions, such as castles, galleries and museums as well as attractions in the natural environment such as urban parks, beaches, country parks, and nature reserves. Including direct, indirect, and induced impacts, the activities of heritage attractions and the businesses that serve heritage tourists (hotels, restaurants, transport providers, and retailers) supported an estimated £20.2 billion contribution to UK GDP in 2015 and 386,000 jobs. Heritage tourism, therefore, supported over 1.1 percent of UK GDP and more than one in every hundred jobs in the UK economy.

Heritage tourism is high-value. Relative to all tourists on holiday and visiting friends and relatives, those visiting heritage attractions are more likely to be overseas visitors, who spend on average £560 per trip, or domestic overnight visitors, who spend on average £210 per trip, rather than domestic day visitors who spend about £35 per trip. In total, overseas visitors spent £7.4 billion (42 percent of the £17.5 billion total) and domestic overnight visitors to heritage attractions spent an estimated £4.7 billion in the UK (27 percent), while day visitors spent the remaining £5.4 billion (31 percent).

The heritage tourism sector itself generated an £8.8 billion gross value added contribution to UK GDP and 191,000 jobs. That makes the heritage tourism sector larger than other major cultural sectors. For example, its contribution easily exceeds that of the combined music, performing, and visual arts sector (£5.4 billion

gross value added contribution to UK GDP in 2015), and is more than twice the contribution made by architecture to GDP (£4.3 billion).

In terms of share, natural and non-natural heritage attractions made similar contributions to the UK economy, although average spend is slightly higher for non-natural attractions. In 2015, built heritage, museums and galleries accounted for just under half (49 percent) of all heritage visits and just over half (54 percent) of the sector's direct gross value added. Natural heritage attractions accounted for the remainder.

The heritage tourism sector also supports jobs throughout its supply chain by purchasing inputs of goods and services. In 2015, the sector spent an estimated £6.5 billion with UK suppliers, and this supported a £5.2 billion gross value added contribution to UK GDP and 92,300 jobs.

Wage payments made by the heritage tourism sector and its suppliers supported additional economic activity and jobs. The sector paid an estimated £5.6 billion in employee compensation in 2015, and supported the payment of £1.8 billion in wages in its immediate supply chain. Together, this expenditure supported a £6.2 billion gross value added contribution to UK GDP and 103,000 jobs.

Additionally, the sector supported substantial tax contributions to the Exchequer. In 2015, the heritage tourism sector supported £5.3 billion in tax receipts, which is equivalent to 0.8 percent of all tax collected by the central government that year.

Heritage tourism is important to local economies the length and breadth of the UK. For the first time in this series of reports, we sets out the scale of economic activity that heritage tourism creates in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales separately and in each of the nine English regions. The largest contribution is made, unsurprisingly, by London, where the heritage tourism sector is estimated to have supported a £5.7 billion contribution to UK GDP in 2015. The heritage

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tourism sector in the South East supported £2.2 billion, and Scotland supported £2.1 billion. The South West, North West, Yorkshire and The Humber, East of England, and the West Midlands supported gross value added contributions to UK GDP of between £1 billion and £2 billion. And Wales, East Midlands, North East, Northern Ireland each supported gross value added contributions to GDP of between £470,000 and £1 billion.

The relative importance of heritage tourism is greatest in the North East, Wales, and Scotland.

Including direct, indirect and induced impacts, the sector supported nearly two percent of gross value added in those nations and regions. That is substantially higher than in the equivalent figure for UK overall, at 1.1 percent.

