Office for National Statistics

Reforming Travel & Tourism Statistics

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International Passenger Survey
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Presentation Outline

1. Travel and Tourism Statistics (‘as is’)

2. Travel and Tourism Transformation (‘to be’)

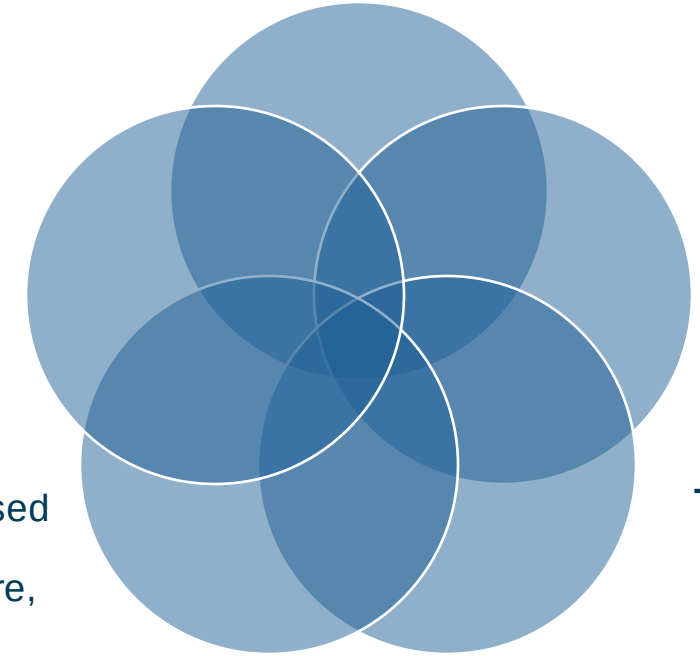
The International Passenger Survey (IPS)

- Face-to-face survey that is conducted in airports and ports for passengers arriving and departing the UK.
- Approximately 285,000 interviews take place each year in major air, sea and rail ports.
- The survey has run (almost) consistently since 1961, until it was paused March to December 2020 due to COVID-19.
- IPS operation employs around 200 field staff across the UK.
- Costs £5.8 million per year to run; this includes staff salaries, as well as paying for offices and locations within the ports.

Who uses the IPS data?

Tourism policy – DCMS, Devolved Administrations, National Tourist Boards

Tourism planning and analysis – Industry, Local Authorities, National Tourist Boards, Academia



Migration – primary source prior to the move to use administrative data. Still used in the short-term for measuring British Nationals.

National Accounts – expenditure used in Trade, Balance of Payments, Household Expenditure, CPI & Environmental Accounts

Tourism Satellite Account – produced by ONS on behalf of Department for Culture Media and Sport

Travel and Tourism Reform Project (TTRP)

The Office for Statistical Regulation (OSR) conducted a compliance check of ONS travel and tourism statistics in 2019 and in response, ONS carried out a full review of travel and tourism statistics.

The aims of the review were to:

- Understand the needs of our users in T&T statistics
- Recommend how T&T statistics should be transformed
- Agree an implementation plan to deliver the transformation

As a result of the review, the Travel and Tourism Reform Project was commenced. This project aims to deliver more efficient, accurate and coherent T&T statistics.

A final report from the review was published that outlined plans to transform the way we collect T&T data.

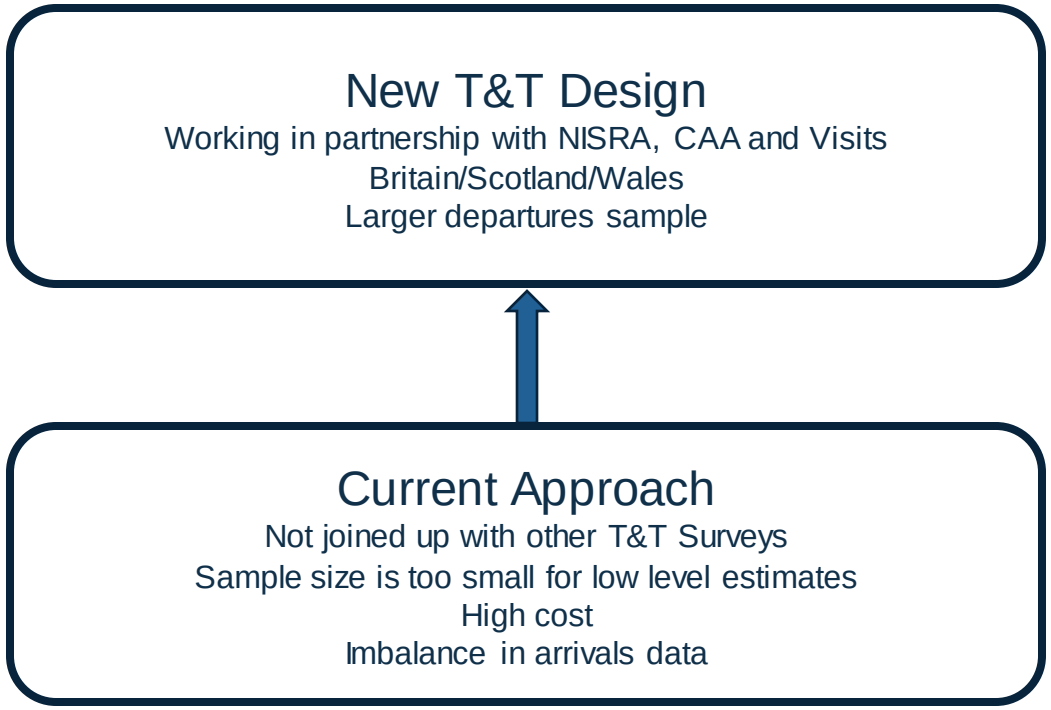
TTRP New Design

From 1 July 2024:

- Harmonising the new IPS departures survey with Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA).
- Stopping IPS arrivals and using the Great Britain Tourism Survey (GBTS) for UK resident data.

Longer-term ambition:

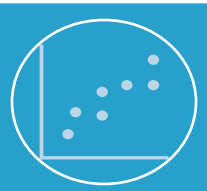
- To use administrative data (e.g. Advanced Passenger Information). This is currently in the explorative phase.



New departures design: harmonising with the CAA

- The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) currently runs their own departures passenger survey in UK airports. Due to a large overlap, the IPS and CAA surveys will be harmonised from July 2024.

- IPS data will be collected at departure gates for selected flights (whereas the current methodology is a random sample of all passengers who are interviewed before or after security) which is similar to how CAA operates.



More precise estimates (increased consistency)

Less biased on residence estimates ((increased sample size)

Field staff enjoyed working in this new design (from pilots)

More efficient builds (reproducible analytical pipelines)

New arrivals design

UK Residents tourism data is changing on the IPS

→ There will now be two sources of UK Residents expenditure, since face-to-face Arrivals will be stopping

1 IPS Departures Survey collects pre-departure spend (At the gate)

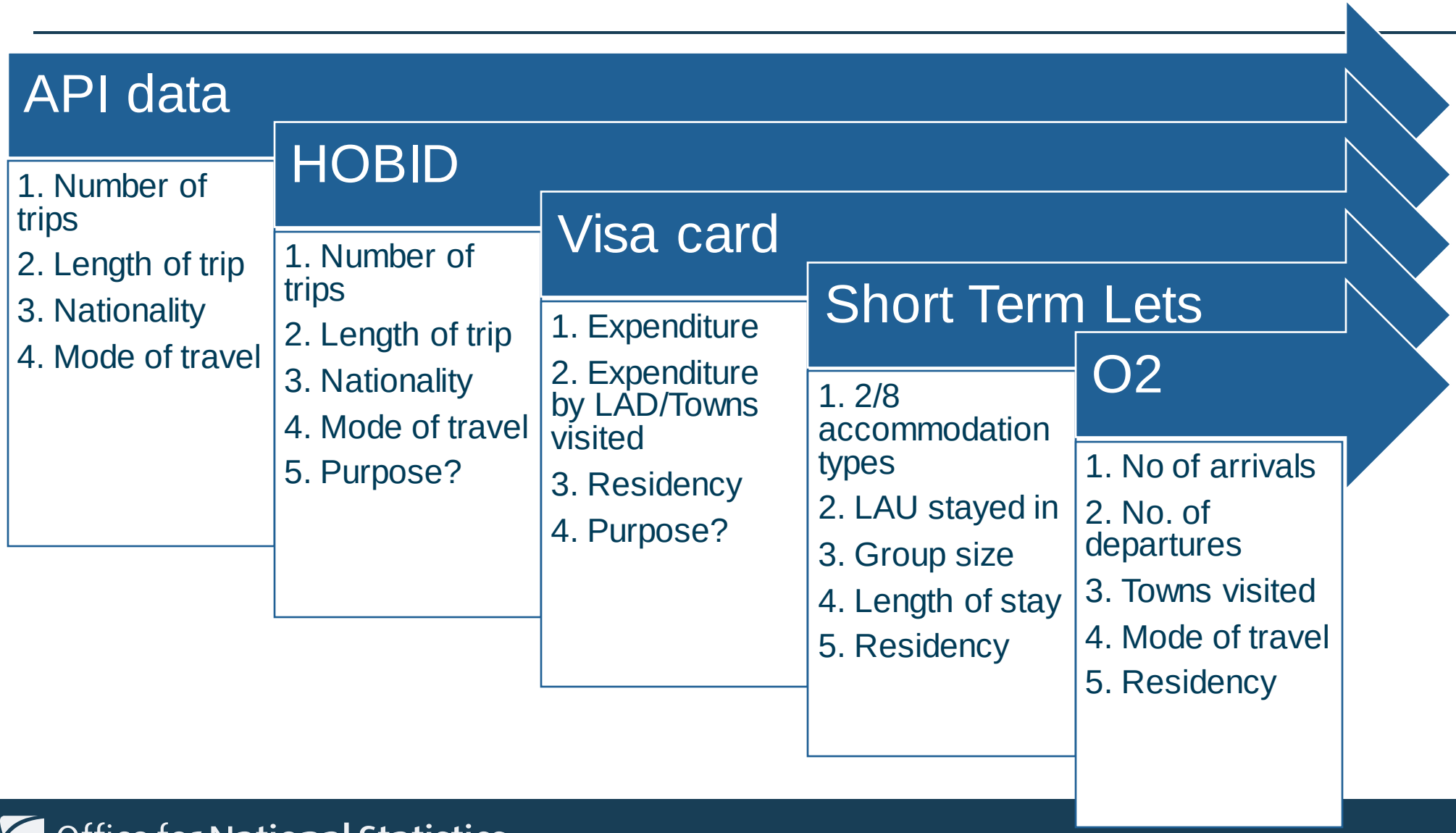
2 Great British Tourism Survey & Great British Day Visits Survey collect post-departure spend (Online HH survey)

- Regression models will be derived from the online HH survey data
- The models will predict an average post-departure spend for people who have returned from an overseas trip in a particular month, with similar characteristics (nights, destination, purpose).
- These characteristics (including month of departure) will also be collected on the larger IPS Departures survey - interviewing UK residents about spend so far before they depart.

UK Departure case X	UK 'Arrivals' data	Total spend for IPS case X
• Spain • 7 nights • Holiday • July • Pre-departure spend = £1000	= =	• Spain • 7 nights • Holiday • July • Modelled avg post-departure spend = £250

»» £1000 + £250 = £1250

Administrative Data: Longer-Term Ambition



1. Number of trips to the UK
2. Purpose of visit
3. Length of trip
4. Expenditure on trip and spend by UK LAD
5. Origin of overseas residents
6. Nationality
7. Mode of travel
8. Towns visited
9. Traveller numbers

Thank you.

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