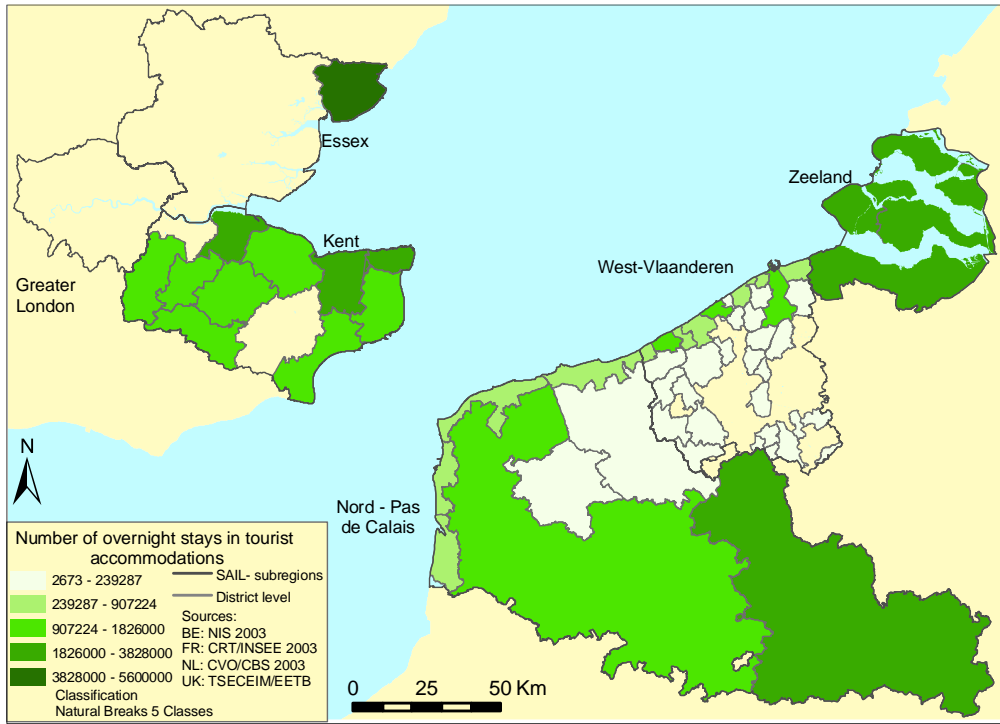
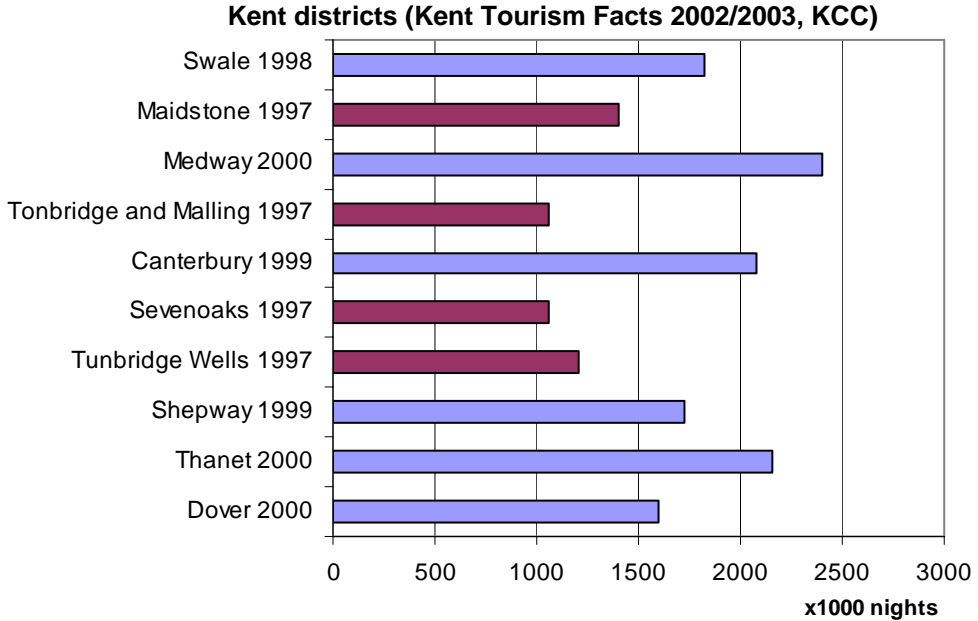


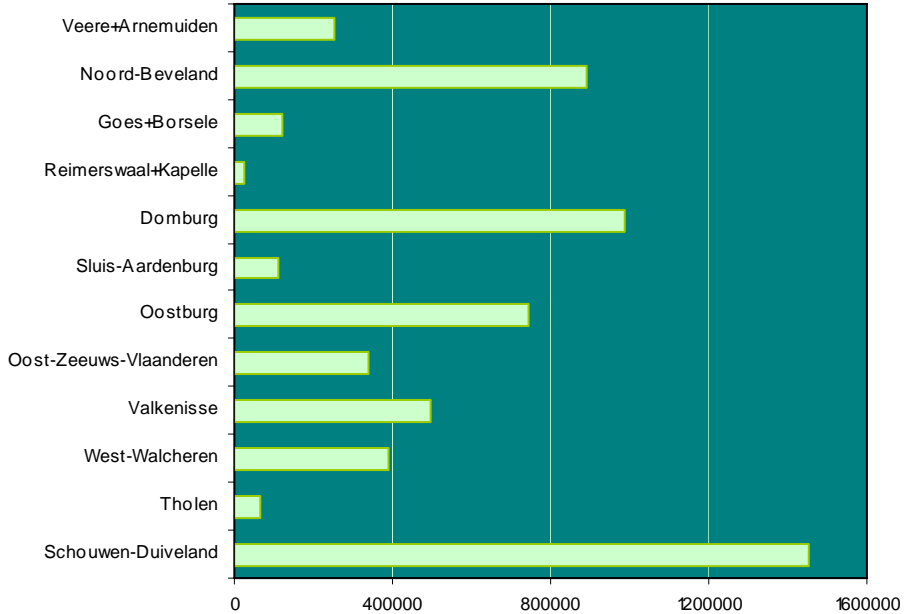
# Indicator 11 Significance of tourism



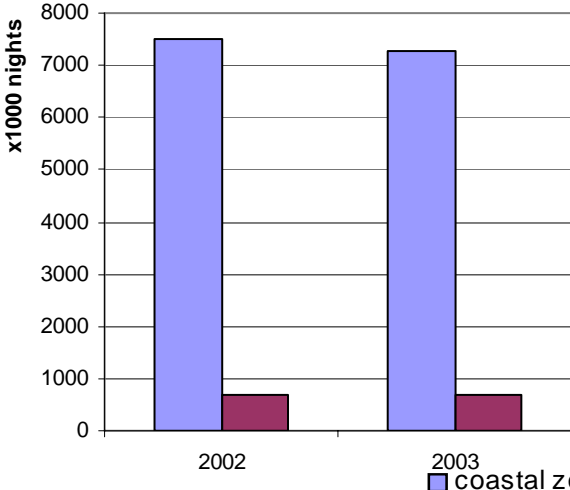
## Number of overnight stays in tourist accommodation



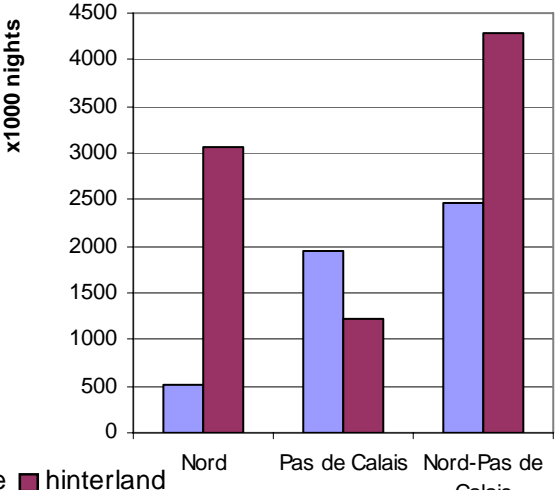
## Number of overnight stays, Zeeland (CBS 1995)



## West-Vlaanderen (NIS)



## Nord-Pas de Calais 2003 (Insee/CRT)



- *Number of overnight stays in tourist accommodations*
- *Occupancy of bed places in tourist accommodations*

## Key Message

- In spite of the importance of tourism to the economy of coastal areas, the data to monitor volume, intensity and spread of tourism over the year is fragmented and of insufficient quality.
- Where reliable data is available, it shows that the number of overnight stays in tourist accommodation at the coast largely exceeds that of the inland areas.
- An important seasonality is observed in bed place occupancy.

## Why monitor the significance of tourism?

The number of overnight stays in tourist accommodation is an indication of the economic impact of tourism in coastal towns and municipalities. Residential tourism requires planning for additional infrastructure and services. Together with day tourism, it can represent an important driver in the coastal economy. However, it can also explain some less desirable social and economic side effects for the local population.

Occupancy of bed places provides an indication of the degree to which existing infrastructure and tourist accommodation respond to actual demand. If information on seasonal occupancy is obtained, it can tell us more about how tourism is spread throughout the year. The greater the spread, the more likely employment in the industry will be permanent and services and infrastructure will be used more efficiently.

## Where do the data come from?

Basic data on tourism are collected by the National Statistics Services (INSEE, ONS, CBS and NIS). Specific studies and surveys are carried out in association with external expertise. The Comité Régional de Tourisme and INSEE publish data on employment, occupancy of bed places, overnight stays, expenditure and others. Continu Vakantie Onderzoek (CVO) and Bureau voor Toerisme Zeeland

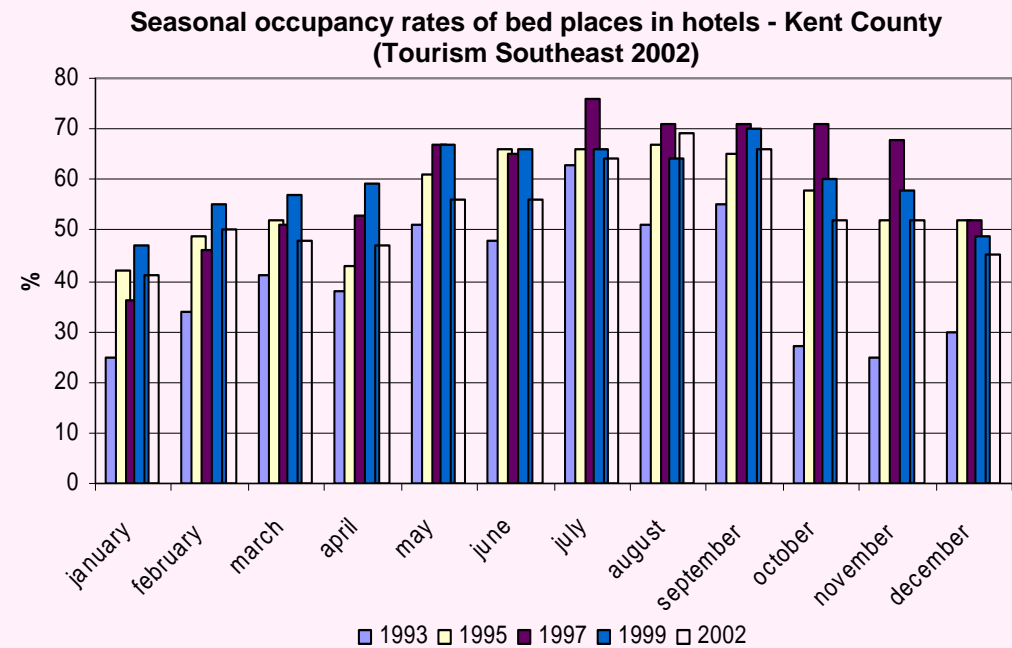
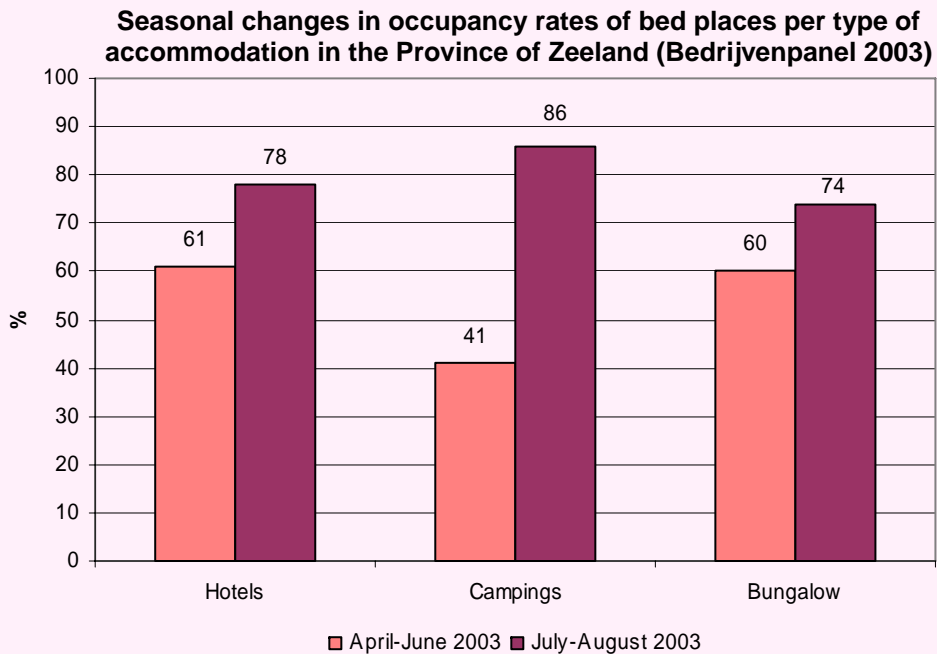
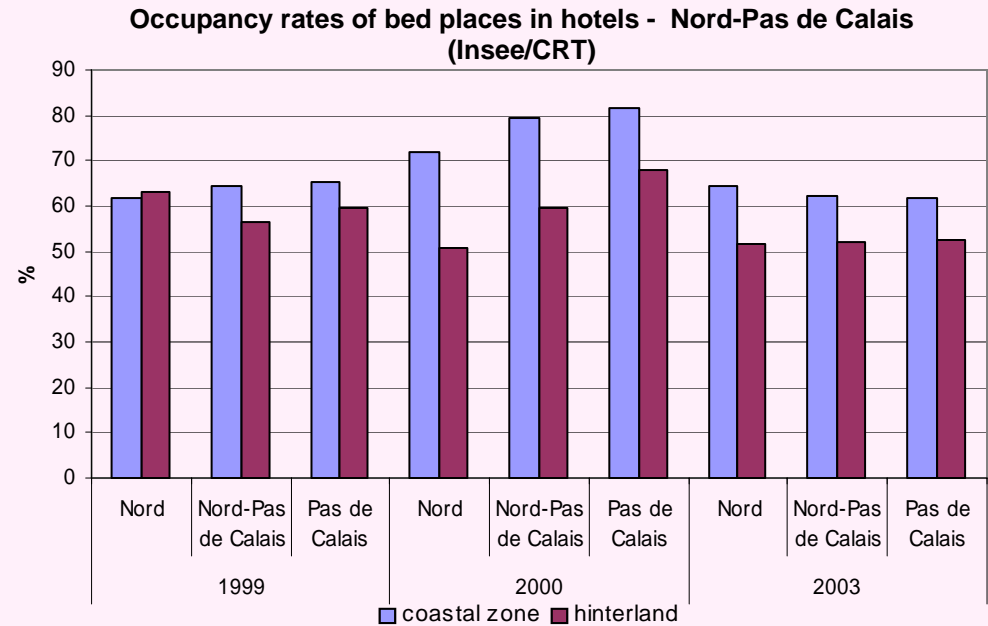
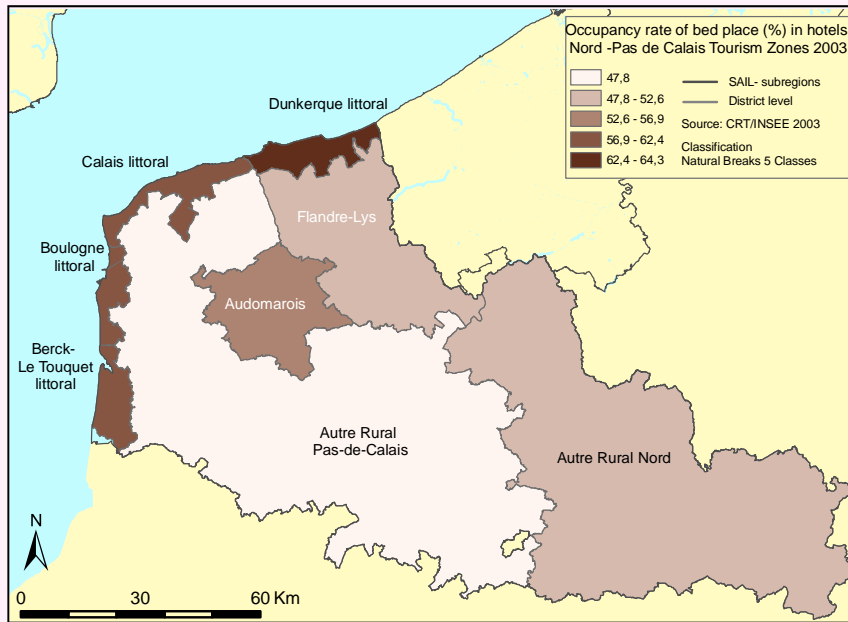
provide valuable tourism research for Zeeland. In England, data are available at district level from different sources. In West-Vlaanderen, Westtoer and WES follow up on important policy issues in tourism at the coast and other tourist regions in the province. No data are collected yet on occupancy of bed places in Flanders.

## What does the indicator show?

The number of overnight stays in tourist accommodation is only available at the municipality level for West-Vlaanderen and for tourist zones in Nord-Pas de Calais. According to official statistics, the Belgian coast receives 7.5million overnight stays (2003). An additional survey suggests that these figures are far too low and that there is a discrepancy of a magnitude of 2.5. This survey also reveals a decrease in the number of overnight stays of nearly 20% over the last decade: from 21million in 1992 to 17million in 2002.

In terms of number of nights spent, the littoral of Pas-de-Calais is more important than its hinterland and than the littoral of the département Nord (2003).





Overnight stays in coastal districts in Kent in the late 1990s accounted for around 64% of the total number of stays in the county. The annual numbers of overnight stays in each of the districts of Thanet, Canterbury and Medway exceed 2million.

In Essex, an estimated 884,000 nights were spent in 2002 in the premier coastal resort of Southend-on-Sea, of which 74% are spent at friends and relatives' homes. For the Tendring district, the estimate is 5.6million nights (2000), representing 48% of the total 11.6million nights spent in 2000 in Essex.

In Zeeland, collection of time series on overnight stays at municipality level was interrupted in 1995. In that year, Schouwen-Duiveland catered for nearly 1.5million overnight stays (CBS, 1995). In 2003, visitors spent 3.8million nights in Schouwen-Duiveland. Data are now collected at the Zeeuws sub-region level, however these are too coarse to allow calculating numbers for the coast. Today, tourists spend an estimated 2million nights in the coastal commune of Veere alone. The number of overnight stays in Zeeland varied from 7.1million for both national and international visitors (CBS, 2003) to 11.2million for Dutch overnight stays only. Of these 11.2million, 34% were spent in Walcheren, followed by Schouwen-Duiveland (27%).

For all nights spent by tourists in Europe, 58% are registered in hotels. Camping and caravanning sites rank next with 18% (EEA). In the UK, estimates for the proportion of nights spent at relatives and friends' homes are significant. In the town of Dover, 18% of the estimated overnight trips are spent on a boat. This shows local differences in the importance of type of accommodation, some of which are not reflected in official statistics.

In Kent, 20% of daytrips (6.18million in 1998) were undertaken to the coast. In Tendring, visits to the seaside account for only 10% of all day trips.

Information on occupancy of bed places is not readily available at the local level, except for the tourist zones in Nord-Pas de Calais (hotels, 1999-2003). These data show that occupancy of bed places at the coast is on average 10% higher than in the hinterland. In Zeeland and Kent, occupancy levels per accommodation type are available at the Province/County level only. The occupancy levels in tourist accommodation are still very seasonal, resulting in a high number of empty bed places throughout the year.

## **What are the implications for planning and managing the coast?**

The number of overnight stays by tourists gives an indication of the economic importance of tourism. It also provides a measure of pressure from tourism and tourist accommodation on the environment. The consumption of energy and water, and the problems of wastewater and waste disposal during peak seasons, require additional planning and infrastructure in coastal towns. The maintenance of hotels and tourist accommodation requires energy, regardless of the efficiency in occupation of bed places. Peak-season concentrations of visitors in coastal towns can have a heavy impact on the environment, if not properly managed. Knowledge of the volume of tourism and its impact on local environment and economy is an essential requirement in developing policies and managing tourism in local areas. Nevertheless, such information is not readily available. More detailed local information is needed, including on the seasonal spread in the occupancy of bed places and number of overnight stays.

### **How reliable is the indicator?**

Different categories of accommodation type are taken into account in statistics on total number of overnight stays amongst the SAIL countries and even between local surveys and studies. Furthermore, mostly aggregated data are published, making it difficult to calculate numbers for the coastal zone, let alone making comparisons between SAIL sub-regions. Data are obtained from varying types of sources and methodologies. Given the importance of tourism for many coastal economies, the data are surprisingly scarce and scattered.

