

United Kingdom

Reporting Form 6.10: Accessibility for recreation

Pan-European indicator 6.10: Area of forest and other wooded land where public has a right of access for recreational purposes and indication of intensity of use.

Related SoEF definitions: Forest, Other wooded land, Access for recreation, Main management goal, Visit.

Table 6.10: Accessibility for recreation and intensity of use

Category	Year	Area with access available to the public for recreational purposes		Area with recreational use as one main management goal		Intensity of use
		Total (1000 ha)	% of total	Total (1000 ha)	% of total	Annual number of visits (million)
Total forest and other wooded land	2005	2083	73	105	3.7	350
	2000	1533	55	90	3.2	350
	1990	1433	55	60	2.3	350

Country comments:

Category	Comments related to data, definitions, etc.	Comments on trend(s)
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<p>Area with access available to the public for recreational purposes</p>	<p>The original Woods for People report in 2004 showed area with access as 1,533,000 ha, equivalent to 54.9% of area in 2000. As in FRA 2005 (total area with function), apply the same % to area for 1990 (this will understate growth, because access has been increased through grants etc). Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, most state woodland in England and Wales has been dedicated, but access to private woodland is permissive, not a legal right. In Scotland, the Land Reform Act 2003 gives a statutory right of responsible access, which in principle applies to almost all woodland. These acts extend the area with legal right of access, all of which is included in area accessible to the public for 2005, even if there are considerable access difficulties in practice. The estimate for 2005 includes almost all woodland in Scotland, and most state woodland in England and Wales.</p>	<p>These figures differ from those in more recent reports on Woods for People - Forestry Statistics 2009 Table 6.13. After re-analysis in 2007, the baseline was decreased to exclude non-woodland areas, but the time series does not reflect the changes described in these comments.</p>
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Area with recreational use as one main management goal	Area is taken as equivalent to FRA 2010 area with primary function. In many forests, visitors may not go beyond the car parks, picnic areas, waymarked walks etc, so the area with function recreation could be limited to the immediate surroundings of these facilities, unlikely to average more than 10 ha per site. Assuming 40 hectares per site on average for each of around 500 FC sites and 20 hectares per site on average for around 2500 others identified in "Forests' Role in Tourism" (2003), this adds up to around 70,000 ha for 2000. The number of recreation sites is increasing, but there are no statistics for this, so estimate 60,000 ha for 1990 and 75,000 ha for 2005. To this can be added new planting in community forests and similar initiatives – around 20,000 ha in the 1990s, perhaps a further 10,000 ha to 2005, to give the totals shown below. Other possible areas (e.g. all Local Authority-owned woods) have not been included.	
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Intensity of use	<p>Most household surveys since 1990 have indicated annual totals of over 300 million day visits to woodland from home by adults. This excludes visits made while staying away from home, visits by overseas tourists, visits by children (under 16) and visits not considered to be leisure (e.g. some routine dog walking). These household surveys also indicate that around 40% of UK adults have made at least one such visit in the previous year. An alternative source (Public Opinion of Forestry survey) indicates that about two-thirds of UK adults have visited woodland in the last few years, which corroborates the view that the household surveys exclude some routine visits.</p>	<p>Changing methodologies of household surveys make it difficult to obtain reliable time trends. Where the Public Opinion of Forestry surveys used the same omnibus surveys over a long period they did not show much variation over time in the level of visiting, so no change is reported. Most forest recreation is at sites with good recreation infrastructure, so the increase in total area with access arising from the 2000 and 2003 Acts would not be expected to have a major impact on the total number of visits. The increased number of recreation sites and community woodlands would have been expected to make a positive impact, but there will have been some displacement (visiting the new sites instead of existing sites) and continuing enhancement is needed to counter other the growing range of non-forest attractions and home-based recreation.</p>
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Complementary information:

Item	Related information
Criteria used to include areas in “ <i>Access available to the public for recreational purposes</i> ”	
Criteria used to include areas in “ <i>Area with recreation as one main management goal</i> ”	

Reporting notes:

<p>1. The area in category “<i>Access available to the public for recreational purposes</i>” comprises area with a legal right of access as well as areas with no formal legal right, but with customary rights or other de-facto forms of access available to the public.</p>
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2. For “Area with recreational use as one of main management goal”, if information is not available for the scope described in the definition, please provide information for whatever area can be identified that best matches this scope, and describe the basis in country comments.

3. For intensity of use, if information on national numbers of visits is only available for a wider scope (e.g. all countryside) or a narrower scope (e.g. forest parks or state forests), please provide numbers for whatever scope best matches the definition and describe the scope under “Country comments”. If a different definition of visits is used in national data, please also describe this. Where information is not available on national numbers of forest visits, please provide other information on participation in forest recreation under “Country comments”.

4. If the information is available only for forest please report this in the Table 6.10 and explain this in “Country comments”.

Data sources:

References to sources of information	Quality (H/M/L)	Table 6.10 Category	Year(s)	Additional comments
Woods for People	H	Area with access available to the public for recreational purposes	2000	From original report - differs from FS 2009 Table 6.13.
Household recreation surveys	M	Intensity of use	All	UK/GB Day Visits Surveys from 1994 to 2002/03, separate country surveys in later years, summarised in Forestry Statistics 2009 Table 6.1
Public Opinion of Forestry surveys	M	Intensity of use	All	
Forests' Role in Tourism (2003)	M	Area with recreational use as one main management goal	2000	