

# Travel between Canada and other countries, October 2019

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## Highlights

More Canadian residents travelled to the United States by plane (+1.3%) in October, but fewer travelled across the border by car (-0.9%). Over the first 10 months of 2019, car travel to the United States by Canadians fell by 3.5% compared with the same period a year earlier. Over the same period, plane travel to the United States by Canadians rose by 4.0% to a record-high 8.3 million.

Similarly, US residents made 4.9 million trips—a record high—to Canada by plane over the first 10 months of the year, up 3.2% from the same period a year earlier.

During the first 10 months of 2019, 5.2 million residents of overseas countries came to Canada by air, up 1.1% year over year. This was led by more air arrivals from Mexico and France. Conversely, there were fewer air arrivals from China.

The number of Canadians travelling to overseas destinations edged down 0.4% in October, but was 2.8% higher over the first 10 months of 2019 compared with the same period in 2018.

## Canadian plane travel to the United States is up, while car travel declines

Canadian residents made 3.6 million trips to the United States in October, down 0.7% from September.

After normal seasonal variation is accounted for, plane travel to the United States increased 1.3% in October to 837,000 trips, while car travel declined 0.9% to 2.7 million trips.

In Manitoba, the number of Canadian residents returning from the United States by car fell 8.6% since a heavy snowstorm affecting the southern part of the province caused power outages and travel delays.

Over the first 10 months of 2019, Canadian residents made 37.1 million trips to the United States, 1.8% fewer than during the same period of 2018. Car travel to the United States was down 3.5% to 27.6 million trips, while the number of plane trips to the United States rose 4.0% to 8.3 million—the highest number on record for the 10-month period.

The value of the Canadian dollar, a factor known to influence cross-border travel, may have contributed to the decrease in car travel from Canada to the United States. The Canadian dollar declined from an average of US\$0.78 over the first 10 months of 2018 to an average of US\$0.75 during the same period in 2019.

## Air arrivals from the United States ease in October following a record-setting pace in 2019

US residents took 2.1 million trips to Canada, down slightly (-0.2%) in October after two consecutive monthly increases.

Plane arrivals to Canada from the United States declined 3.1% in October to 463,000 trips following two consecutive monthly increases.

Air arrivals to British Columbia recorded the largest decline among the provinces (-10.8% to 105,000 trips) in October. However, this decline came after increased travel demand from the United States during the summer months. On a year-to-date basis, US travellers took 1.2 million trips to British Columbia by air, up 5.4% from the same period in 2018. This was the highest level seen for the 10-month period since modern record-keeping began in 1972.



US travellers took 1.4 million trips to Canada by car, up 0.9% in October. Car arrivals increased in British Columbia (+1.8%), but decreased in Alberta (-4.0%) and Saskatchewan (-3.0%), which recorded the largest declines.

During the first 10 months of 2019, US residents made 21.8 million trips to Canada, up 2.4% from the same period in 2018 and the highest level for the period since 2007—the year preceding the global recession in 2008/2009. Both car (+2.4% to 14.5 million) and air (+3.2% to 4.9 million) arrivals were up compared with the same period in 2018.

### **Arrivals to Canada from overseas countries hold steady**

Residents of overseas countries (countries other than the United States) made 626,000 trips to Canada in October, unchanged from September after a 0.5% decline.

On a year-to-date basis, 5.2 million residents of overseas countries came to Canada by air in 2019, 1.1% more than during the same period a year earlier.

During the first 10 months of 2019, there were more air arrivals from Mexico (+12.0%), India (+7.8%) and France (+7.2%) compared with the same period a year earlier, while there were fewer arrivals from Brazil (-10.0%) and China (-9.8%).

The number of air arrivals from the United Kingdom—Canada's largest source market for overseas travellers—declined 1.1% to 605,000 over the first 10 months of 2019. This was the third consecutive year-to-date decline since 2017.

There were 514,000 air arrivals from China—Canada's second largest source of overseas travellers—during the first 10 months of 2019. This was 9.8% fewer than during the same period in 2018.

Meanwhile, over the first 10 months of 2019, air arrivals to Canada from Brazil declined 10.0% compared with the same period in 2018 to 136,000. The decline in 2019 came after annual growth of 31.5% in 2017 and 25.9% in 2018, which followed the partial lifting of visa requirements for residents of Brazil in May 2017.

### **Canadians travelling overseas down slightly**

Canadian residents made 1.0 million trips overseas (trips to countries other than the United States), down slightly (-0.4%) from September. On a year-to-date basis, Canadian residents made 2.8% more trips to overseas countries compared with the same period in 2018.

## Note to readers

Monthly data are seasonally adjusted. For information on seasonal adjustment, see [Seasonally adjusted data – Frequently asked questions](#). Year-to-date figures are based on unadjusted data.

Seasonally adjusted data from July to September 2019 have been revised. No revisions were made to non-seasonally adjusted data.

Data for Statistics Canada's Frontier Counts program are produced using administrative data received from the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) on all international travellers who have been cleared for entry or re-entry into Canada. This includes residents of Canada, United States residents and overseas residents entering Canada from abroad.

Starting with January 2019 data, Statistics Canada updated the method for determining trip durations for US residents travelling to Canada and for Canadian residents returning from the United States. This change affects the relative proportions of same-day and overnight travellers arriving in Canada by air and by "other" modes of transportation (train, marine private, pedestrian or other vehicles). Trip durations for travel by automobile and bus are not affected. Caution is therefore advised when comparing 2019 data with data from earlier periods for these modes of transportation. Users who are analyzing trends in the same-day or overnight travel portions for these modes of transportation are advised to also compare trends for the total as a reference.

In 2017, CBSA began introducing the electronic Primary Inspection Kiosk (PIK) system at airports in Canada. The PIK system replaces the E311 Declaration Cards that were completed by international travellers to Canada.

Data users are cautioned that the switch from E311 cards to PIKs has affected the historical comparability of some data series. Most notably, there has been an increased tendency of Canadian residents returning from overseas trips via the United States to report in PIKs that they are returning from the United States and not from overseas via the United States. In the Frontier Counts program, this has led to increases in the number of Canadian residents returning from the United States by air and to decreases in the number of Canadian residents returning from overseas countries by air via the United States (and more aggregated series to which these data contribute). Data for other series that include international travellers to Canada by air do not appear to be affected by the switch from E311 cards to PIKs. Therefore, comparisons with data for other reference months can be made.

Further information on the switch from E311 cards to PIKs is available in the document "[Impacts on Statistics Canada travel and tourism data resulting from replacement of E311 declaration cards with Primary Inspection Kiosks.](#)"

In 2018, Statistics Canada undertook a review of sources of data on overseas residents entering Canada at land ports. Overseas residents who enter Canada at land ports represent about 10% of total overseas travellers to Canada. Total counts of overseas travellers were revised to reflect new sources of data at some ports. In addition, starting with August 2018 data, Statistics Canada implemented a new method for estimating country of residence through breakdowns of these overseas travellers when they enter Canada, at most land ports. These changes have varying degrees of impact on the total counts of travellers to Canada from individual countries. Users are therefore advised to use caution when comparing changes in travel to Canada with previous months for individual overseas countries.

**Overseas countries** refer to countries other than the United States.

A **Canadian resident traveller** is a Canadian resident who has travelled outside Canada for a period of less than 12 months.

A **non-resident traveller** is a resident of a country other than Canada who is travelling to Canada for a period of less than 12 months.

An **overnight traveller or a tourist** is a traveller whose trip includes one or more nights' stay.

**Table 1**  
**Travel between Canada and other countries – Seasonally adjusted**

	October 2018 <sup>r</sup>	September 2019 <sup>r</sup>	October 2019 <sup>p</sup>	September to October 2019
	thousands			% change <sup>1</sup>
<b>Canadian trips abroad<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>4,661</b>	<b>4,669</b>	<b>4,641</b>	<b>-0.6</b>
To the United States	3,666	3,643	3,620	-0.7
To other countries	995	1,026	1,022	-0.4
Same-day car trips to the United States	1,840	1,779	1,766	-0.7
Total trips, one or more nights	2,781	2,783	2,742	-1.5
United States <sup>3</sup>	1,786	1,757	1,720	-2.1
Car	881	913	901	-1.3
Plane	828	770	756	-1.8
Other modes of transportation	77	75	64	-15.3
Other countries	995	1,026	1,022	-0.4
<b>Travel to Canada<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>2,626</b>	<b>2,733</b>	<b>2,728</b>	<b>-0.2</b>
From the United States	2,043	2,107	2,102	-0.2
From other countries	583	626	626	0.0
Same-day car trips from the United States	687	698	703	0.7
Total trips, one or more nights	1,768	1,870	1,861	-0.5
United States <sup>3</sup>	1,200	1,270	1,256	-1.1
Car	676	703	710	1.1
Plane	388	442	423	-4.2
Other modes of transportation	137	125	123	-2.0
Other countries <sup>4</sup>	568	600	605	0.8
<b>Travel to Canada: Top overseas markets,<sup>5</sup> by country of origin<sup>6, 7</sup></b>				
United Kingdom	70	81	78	-3.3
China	64	60	59	-1.8
France	53	60	59	-1.5
Mexico	41	46	46	-0.7
Germany	34	34	37	10.2
Australia	30	30	31	3.0
India	25	28	30	10.4
Japan	20	21	22	4.8
Brazil	16	16	17	11.2
South Korea	21	18	17	-7.7
Hong Kong	14	16	16	0.6
Netherlands	12	12	13	3.8

<sup>r</sup> revised

<sup>p</sup> preliminary

1. Percentage change is based on unrounded data.

2. Totals exceed the sum of "same-day car trips" and "total trips, one or more nights" because the totals include same-day trips by all modes of transportation.

3. Data for the United States include counts of cars and buses, and data for planes, trains, boats and other methods of transportation.

4. Figures for other countries exclude same-day entries by land only via the United States.

5. Overseas markets refer to countries other than the United States.

6. Includes same-day and overnight trips.

7. Starting with August 2018 data, Statistics Canada implemented a new method for estimating the country of residence breakdowns of overseas travellers entering Canada at land ports where this breakdown was not available. This change has varying degrees of impact on the total counts of travellers to Canada from individual countries. Users are therefore advised to use caution when comparing changes in travel to Canada with previous months for individual overseas countries.

Source(s): Tables [24-10-0005-01](#), [24-10-0043-01](#) and [24-10-0006-01](#).

Available tables: [24-10-0002-01](#), [24-10-0003-01](#), [24-10-0005-01](#), [24-10-0006-01](#), [24-10-0041-01](#) and [24-10-0043-01](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [5005](#).

The October 2019 issue of *International Travel, Advance Information*, Vol. 35, no. 10 ([66-001-P](#)), is now available.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; [STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca)) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; [STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca)).