

Travel between Canada and other countries, September 2020

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Highlights

Restrictions on non-essential travel into Canada remained throughout September as well as the mandatory 14-day quarantine period for Canadians returning from abroad. With these measures in place across all ports of entry, travel to Canada from both the United States and from overseas countries was down 95.3% compared with September 2019.

Similarly, the number of Canadian residents returning from abroad declined 92.8% from September 2019.

Overseas travel to Canada remains low

The number of travellers from overseas (countries other than the United States) to Canada remained low in September at 34,800, down 95.9% from September 2019.

Travellers from Europe (-97.5%) and Asia (-93.4%), Canada's largest markets, were down significantly compared with the same month a year earlier.

Arrivals from the United Kingdom declined year over year from 120,500 to 2,000 in September, while travellers from France fell from 81,900 to 2,400. Arrivals from China declined from 90,000 to 2,500 over the same period.

At the provincial level, Ontario (-324,800), British Columbia (-256,000) and Quebec (-146,200) recorded the largest absolute year-over-year declines in overseas arrivals during September.

Air arrivals from the United States stall

US residents took 113,000 trips to Canada in September, down 95.1% from the same month a year earlier.

The number of US travellers arriving by plane was down 97.7% year over year to 12,300 in September. On a monthly basis, following four consecutive increases, fewer US travellers arrived to Canada by plane (-12.2%) in September compared with August.

Car travel, which accounted for approximately 88% of all US arrivals in September, declined 93.0% year over year to 99,000. Almost three-quarters (72,800) of these car trips involved a same-day return, while overnight car arrivals (26,200) were down 96.1% from last September.

Every province recorded fewer arrivals from the United States in September with Ontario (-1.1 million) reporting the largest absolute decline.

Fewer Canadians returning from the United States

Canadian residents made 250,400 return trips from the United States in September, down 93.1% from September 2019 and the first monthly decrease since March.

Car arrivals, which accounted for approximately 86% of all Canadian travel from the United States in September, fell 92.2% year over year to 216,000. Of these, 190,400 were same-day trips, down 89.5%.

Although land crossings remained closed to discretionary travel to the United States, Canadians have been able to fly there since August, and during September, 32,300 did so. This was down slightly from August (36,500), but over one-third higher (+37.6%) from the low of 9,600 trips taken in May.



Provincial measures including health screenings and quarantine remained in effect and the number of Canadian residents returning from the United States by plane was down 95.4% year over year.

Nova Scotia (-99.7%), Yukon (-98.8%) and British Columbia (-97.4%) reported the largest relative year-over-year declines in return trips by Canadians from the United States.

Fewer Canadians returning from overseas

In September, 74,400 Canadian residents returned home from travel overseas, down 17.9% from August 2020 and 91.5% lower compared with September 2019.

Note to readers

Statistics Canada's Frontier Counts program uses administrative data from the Canada Border Services Agency on all international travellers who have been cleared for entry or re-entry into Canada. This includes residents of Canada, the United States and overseas countries.

Since April 2020, releases have been based on unadjusted data (not seasonally adjusted) to emphasize the change in actual volumes. However, seasonally adjusted data are available in some tables. With the unusually small travel volumes reported since April, future revisions to seasonally adjusted data for 2020 are expected to be larger than usual and may impact monthly movements in the series.

Seasonally adjusted data for June to August 2020 have been revised.

For information on seasonal adjustment, see [Seasonally adjusted data – Frequently asked questions](#).

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

	September 2019 ^r	August 2020 ^r	September 2020 ^p	August to September 2020
	thousands			% change ¹
Canadian trips abroad²	4,672	282	343	21.7
To the United States	3,639	200	254	27.4
To other countries	1,033	82	89	8.0
Same-day car trips to the United States	1,773	141	186	31.5
Total trips, one or more nights	2,766	129	145	12.1
United States ³	1,733	47	56	19.2
Car	898	17	24	42.7
Plane	767	30	32	6.4
Other modes of transportation	68	0	0	-24.4
Other countries	1,033	82	89	8.0
Travel to Canada²	2,731	96	125	30.1
From the United States	2,105	73	98	33.7
From other countries	627	22	26	18.3
Same-day car trips from the United States	704	45	64	42.5
Total trips, one or more nights	1,881	48	57	18.9
United States ³	1,281	26	31	20.4
Car	710	17	22	29.4
Plane	443	9	9	3.3
Other modes of transportation	129	0	0	-16.2
Other countries ⁴	600	22	26	17.2
Travel to Canada: Top overseas markets,⁵ by country of origin^{6, 7}				
India	27	3	5	80.8
France	59	2	3	33.6
United Kingdom	79	2	2	-6.9
Mexico	45	1	2	47.8
China	59	1	1	-10.5
Netherlands	12	1	1	17.3
Australia	31	1	1	-6.9
Hong Kong	15	1	0	-55.8
Japan	21	0	0	...
Germany	35	0	0	...
South Korea	24	0	0	...
Brazil	15	0	0	161.1

^r revised

^p preliminary

... not applicable

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 September 2020 issue of *International Travel, Advance Information*, Vol. 36, no. 9 ([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) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca).