

# Leading indicator of international arrivals to Canada, February 2021

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## Highlights

In February, international arrivals to Canada by land and air remained low, as restrictions on non-essential travel were tightened during the month.

US travellers made 41,200 trips to Canada through land ports with electronic sensors, down 94.5% compared with February 2020, while 130,200 Canadians returned from the United States through these same ports, down 91.9% from the same month a year earlier.

The number of non-resident travellers arriving from abroad in Canadian airports equipped with electronic kiosks was down 96.6% year over year in February. Meanwhile, the number of Canadian residents returning from abroad via these same airports was down 95.6% and dwindled after additional testing requirements were imposed.

This release provides a first glimpse of international arrivals to Canada in February. Complete counts will be available with February's "[Travel between Canada and other countries](#)" release.

## New restrictions introduced in February

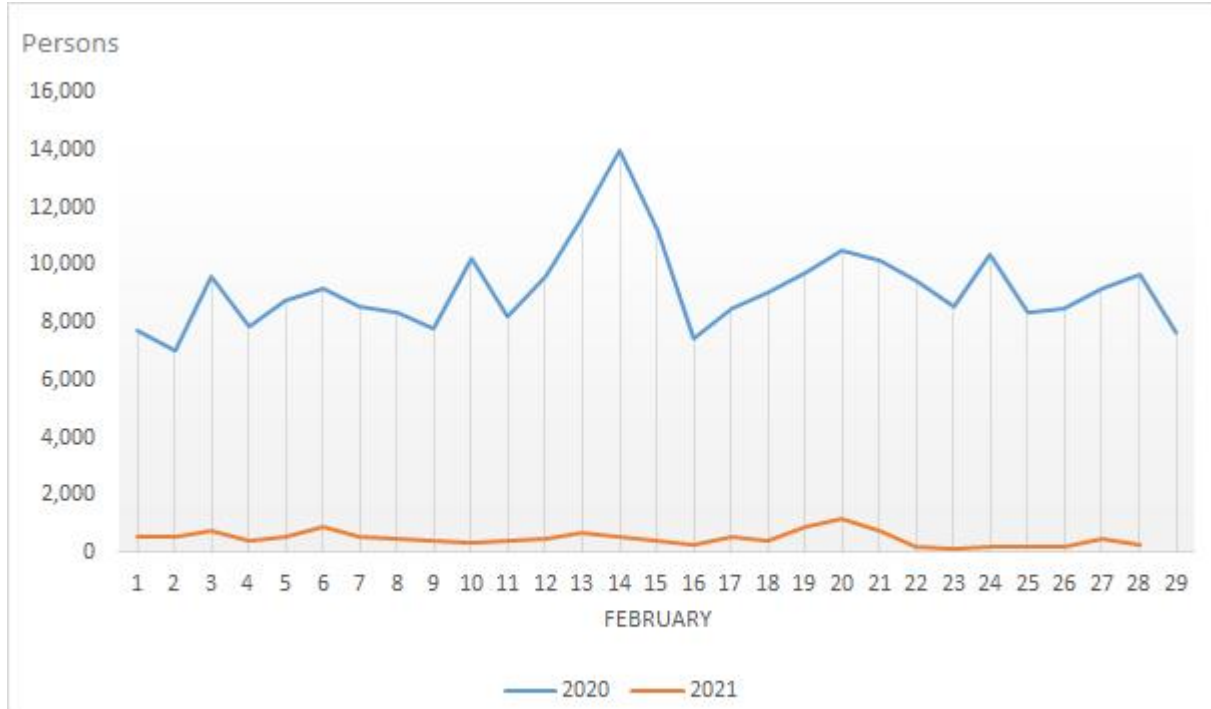
Existing restrictions on non-essential travel across the Canada–US border were extended on February 21, 2021, for another 30 days. Additional travel requirements for international air travellers were announced by the federal government at the end of January.

As of midnight on February 21, international travellers arriving in Canada by air are required to take a COVID-19 molecular test on arrival and to stay in a government-authorized hotel while awaiting the results. After this stopover, travellers are still required to complete the remainder of their 14-day quarantine.



## Non-resident arrivals by air

### Infographic 1 – Non-resident air travellers arriving in Canada, February 2020 and 2021



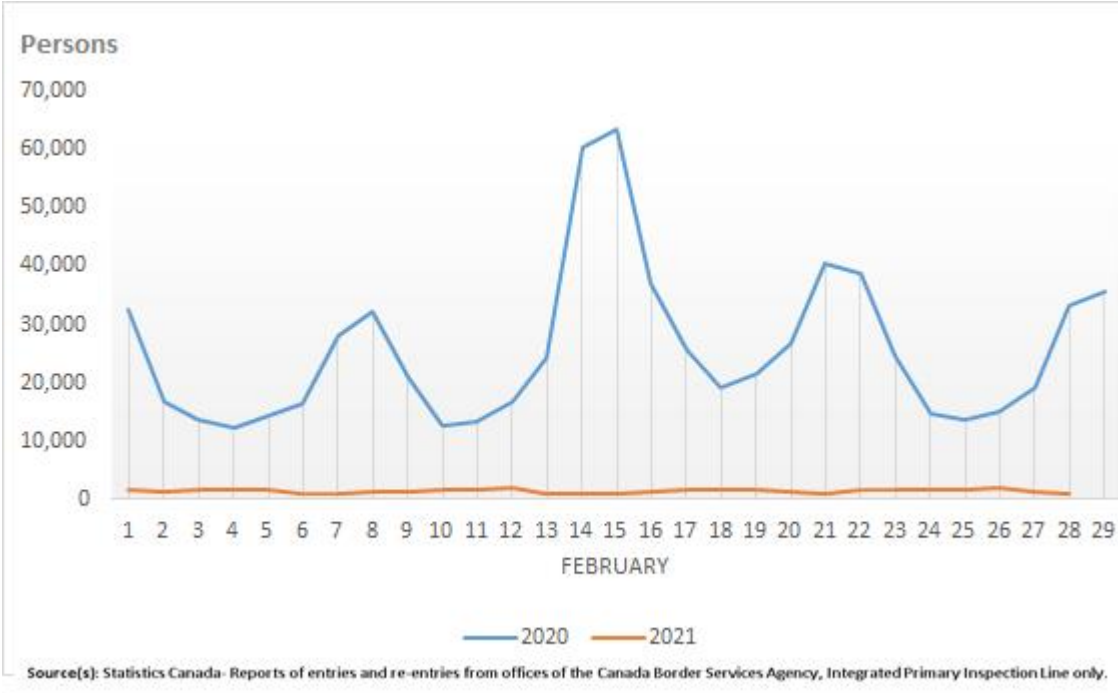
Source(s): Statistics Canada- Reports of entries and re-entries from offices of the Canada Border Services Agency, primary inspection kiosks

Air arrivals of non-residents from abroad—overseas countries (10,400) and the United States (3,400)—at Canadian airports equipped with primary inspection kiosks (PIKs) numbered 13,800 in February, down from 402,000 in February 2020.

Before the mandatory hotel quarantine required as of February 22, 2021, an average daily volume of 573 non-residents arrived by air. However, in the remaining seven days of February, non-residents from abroad dwindled to 256 arrivals a day.

## Non-resident arrivals by car

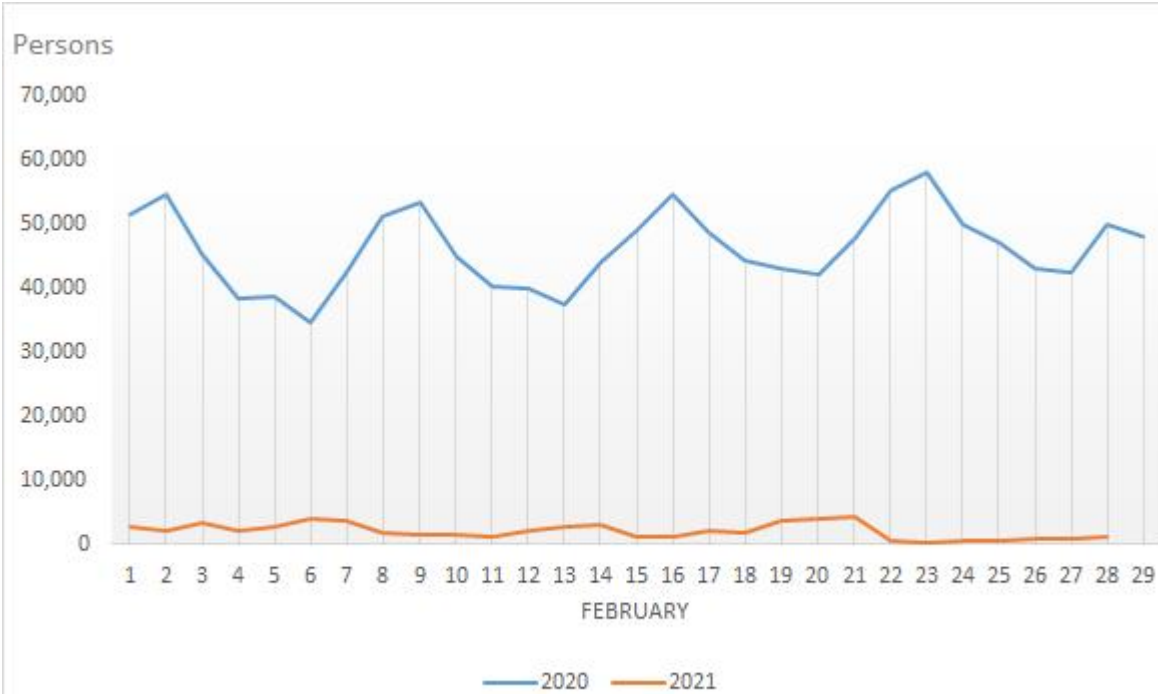
### Infographic 2 – US residents entering Canada in US-licensed automobiles, February 2020 and 2021



In February, US residents took 41,200 trips to Canada in US-licensed automobiles through 111 land ports equipped with the automated Integrated Primary Inspection Line (IPIL) system, down 94.5% from the 744,800 trips taken in February 2020.

## Canadians returning by air

### Infographic 3 – Canadian residents returning by air from abroad, February 2020 and 2021



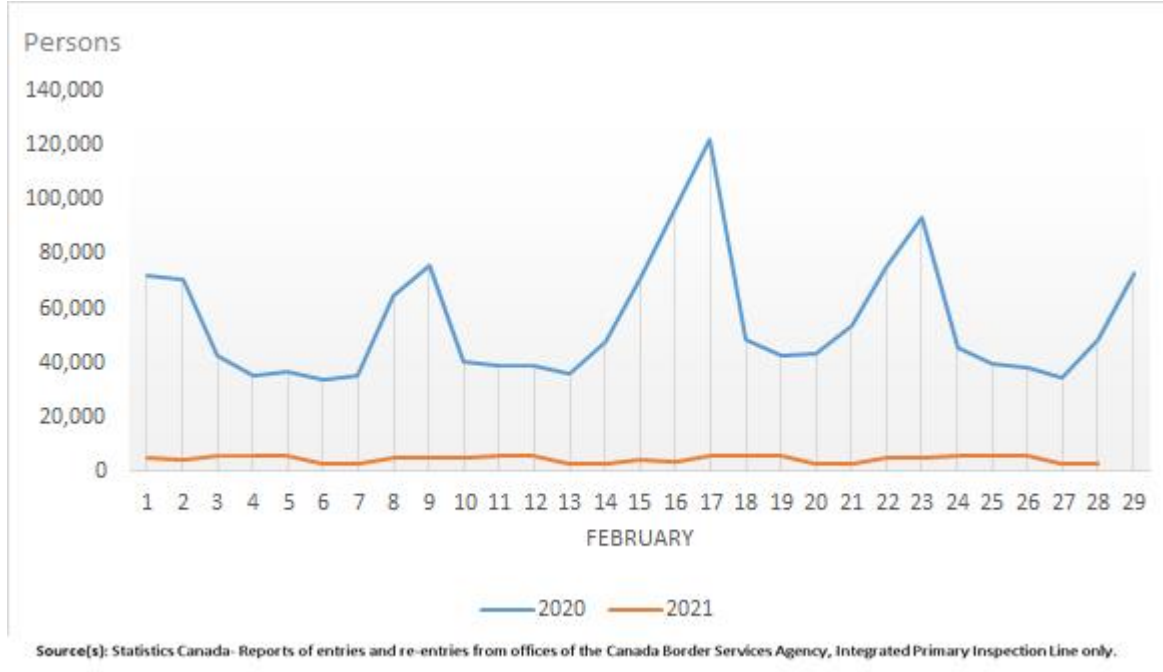
Source(s): Statistics Canada- Reports of entries and re-entries from offices of the Canada Border Services Agency, primary inspection kiosks.

The number of Canadian residents flying back from abroad in February via airports equipped with PIKs reached 59,300, with the average daily volume of 2,117 representing a decrease of more than half from 4,502 per day in January.

Before testing on arrival and a hotel stopover were required as of February 22, the average daily volume of Canadians returning by air was 2,583 per day, reaching 4,065 per day from February 19 to 21. During the remaining seven days of the month, 718 Canadians per day were reported.

## Canadians returning by car

### Infographic 4 – Canadian residents returning from the United States in Canadian-licensed automobiles, February 2020 and 2021



In February, 91.9% fewer Canadian residents returned from the United States in Canadian-licensed automobiles via the 111 IPIL ports, compared with February 2020. The number of returning Canadians fell from 1.6 million in February 2020 to 130,200 in February 2021.

### Note to readers

Starting in January 2021, the monthly [leading indicator of cross-border traveller volume](#) and the quarterly [leading indicator of international arrivals to Canada by air](#) are integrated in a single monthly release: [Leading indicator of international arrivals to Canada](#). This indicator uses administrative data from the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) on international travellers entering the country by automobile and by air.

Counts of cross-border travel by automobile through 111 land ports equipped with the automated Integrated Primary Inspection Line (IPIL) system are available by the traveller's state or province of residence, based on the licence plate of the automobile, and by province of entry into Canada.

The IPIL data are a subset of Canadian and US residents entering Canada by automobile. In 2020, the 111 IPIL ports captured approximately 80% of cross-border automobile traffic between Canada and the United States.

IPIL counts exclude automobile travellers who cross the border using a NEXUS card and at ports not equipped with the system. These counts also exclude US travellers in automobiles with Canadian licence plates and Canadian travellers in automobiles with US licence plates.

The data source on travellers entering the country by air is the primary inspection kiosk (PIK) system, which, at most major Canadian airports, has replaced the paper E311 Declaration Card completed by travellers and submitted to CBSA officers upon arrival. Data are available by the traveller's country of residence and by airport equipped with PIK kiosks.

The PIK data exclude travellers who cross the Canadian border using a NEXUS card, travellers arriving by private aircraft and entries at ports that are not equipped with the PIK system. As such, the PIK leading indicator represents a subset of travellers entering Canada by air.

Deployment of the PIK system was phased in at Canadian airports starting March 2017 and, by 2020, the PIK system captured approximately 59% of international travellers arriving in Canada.

Note that the data used in this analysis exclude Toronto/Pearson Terminal 1, where PIK has not been fully deployed. Data users are cautioned that the phased PIK deployment has affected the historical comparability of some series, and caution is advised when comparing data historically.

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

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)).