

# Leading indicator of international arrivals to Canada, August 2021

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## Highlights

August saw the number of international arrivals to Canada by land and air increase from last year, but remain well below the pre-pandemic levels of 2019.

There were almost six times as many non-resident travellers arriving from abroad in Canadian airports equipped with electronic kiosks during August 2021 than last year, yet down 84.4% from August 2019.

Meanwhile, the number of Canadian residents returning from abroad via these same airports was over five and a half times greater than in August 2020, but 60.1% below the same month in 2019.

US residents made 354,000 trips to Canada through land ports with electronic sensors in August. Although this represented over 280,000 more arrivals than in August 2020, it was down 82.7% from August 2019.

Likewise, the number of Canadians who returned from the United States (230,300) through these same land ports was almost 80,000 more than in August 2020, yet down 92.7% from the same month in 2019.

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

## Canada begins to open borders

Although existing restrictions on non-essential travel across the Canada–US border were extended on July 21, 2021 for another 30 days, more cross-border traffic is expected. As provincial governments continue to ease restrictions, the federal government has started opening Canada's borders to all fully vaccinated international travellers.

As a first step effective August 9, Canada began allowing entry to American citizens and permanent residents who currently reside in the United States and have been fully vaccinated at least 14 days prior to entering Canada for non-essential travel.

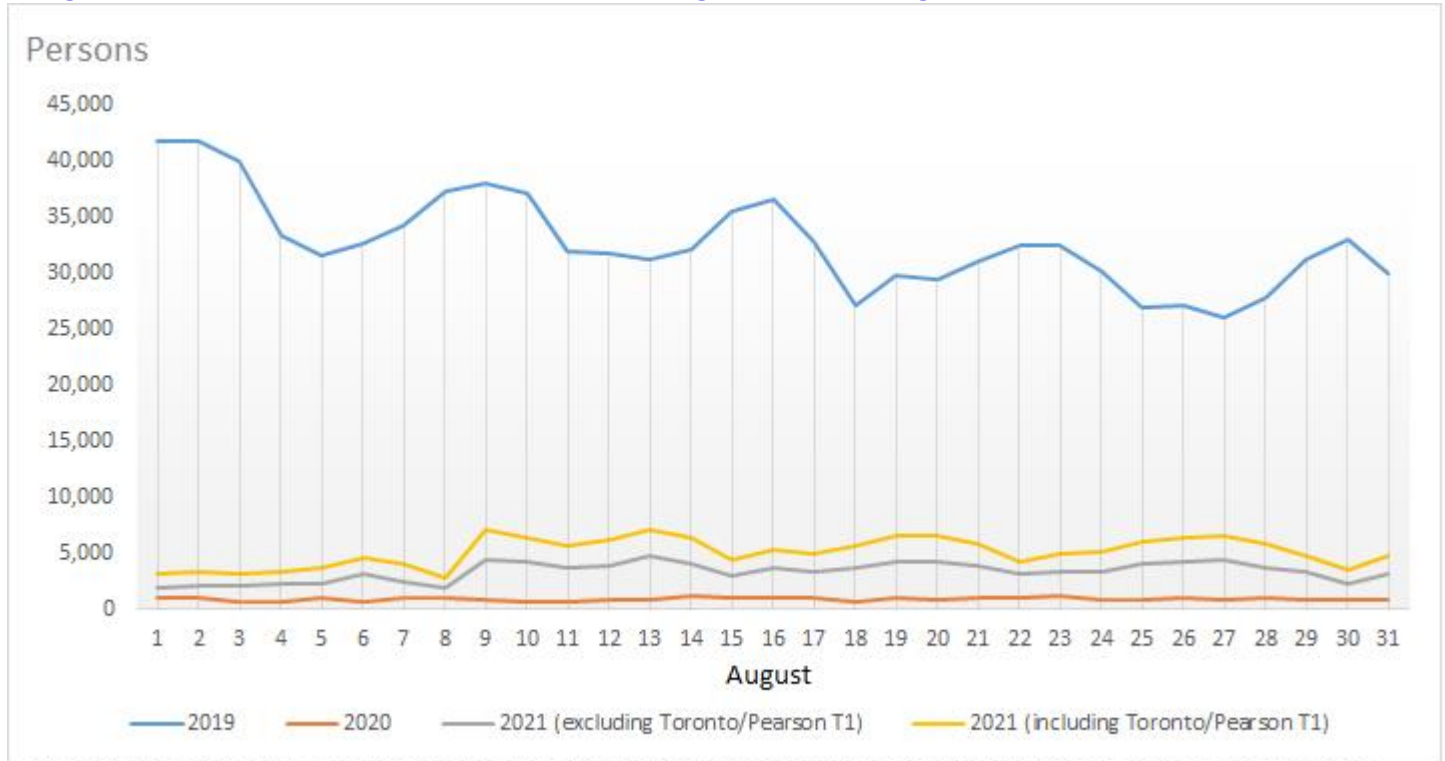
## Non-resident arrivals by air

Air arrivals of non-residents from abroad—overseas countries (78,900) and the United States (79,500)—at Canadian airports equipped with Primary Inspection Kiosks (PIKs) numbered 158,300 in August, up from 27,500 in August 2020. Despite this increase, it is down 84.4% from the 1.0 million arrivals during the same month in 2019.

The PIK system was fully implemented in Toronto/Pearson Terminal 1 on June 22, 2021, and these counts are now included in this leading indicator. Infographic 1 shows the counts for August, both including and excluding international arrivals at Toronto/Pearson Terminal 1 (see Note to readers).



**Infographic 1 – Non-resident air travellers arriving in Canada, August 2019, 2020 and 2021**



Source(s): Statistics Canada- Reports of entries and re-entries from offices of the Canada Border Services Agency, Primary Inspection Kiosks.

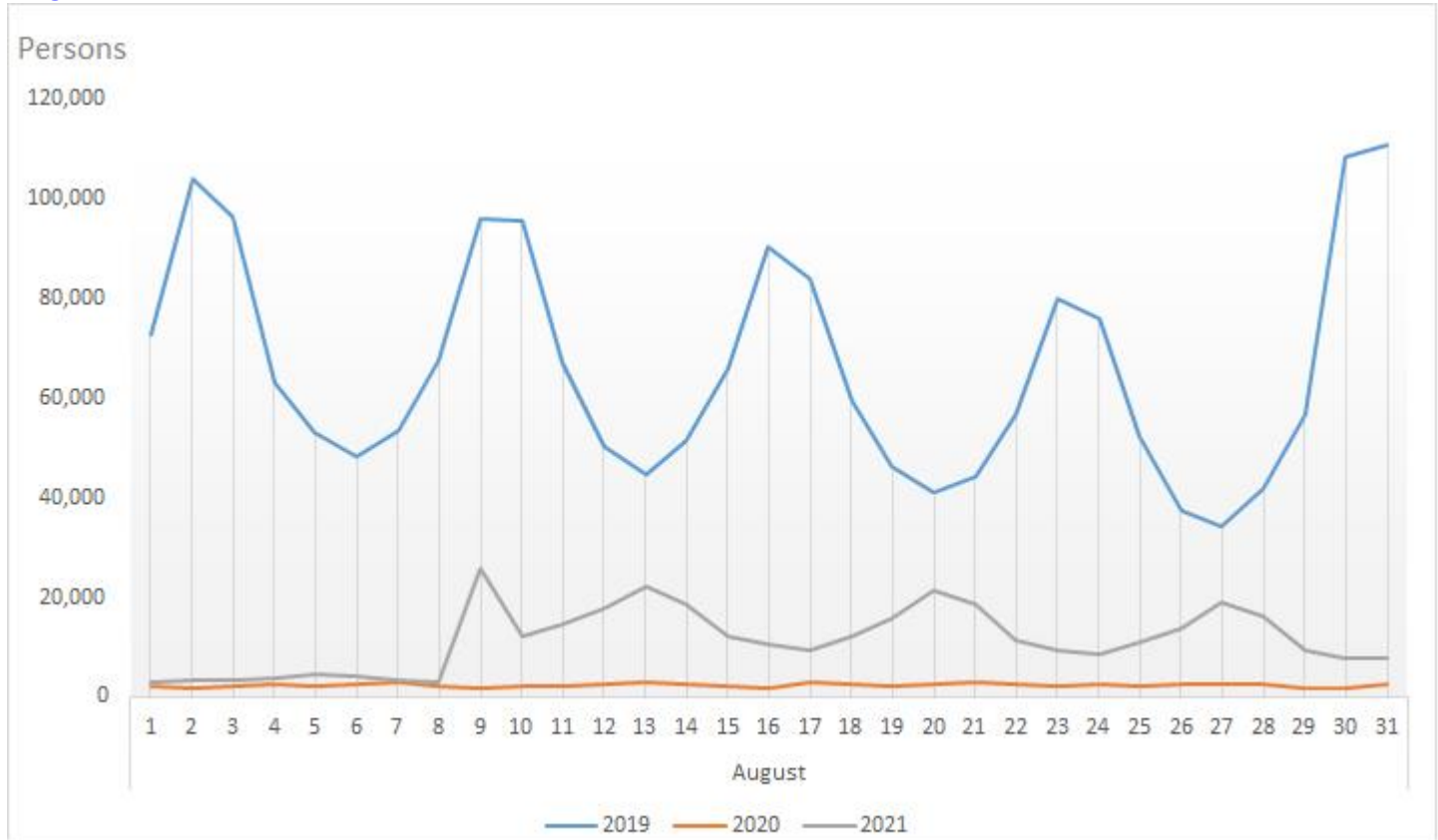
**Non-resident arrivals by car**

In August, US residents took 354,000 trips to Canada in US-licensed automobiles through 111 land ports equipped with the automated Integrated Primary Inspection Line (IPIL) application.

In the first eight days of August when the border remained closed to non-essential travel, US residents averaged 3,500 trips per day. After the border was opened to fully vaccinated US residents, this average increased to 14,200 trips per day throughout the rest of August.

While this was much higher than the 72,800 trips taken in August 2020, it remains 82.7% below the 2.0 million US car arrivals in August 2019.

**Infographic 2 – United States residents entering Canada in US-licensed automobiles, August 2019, 2020 and 2021**



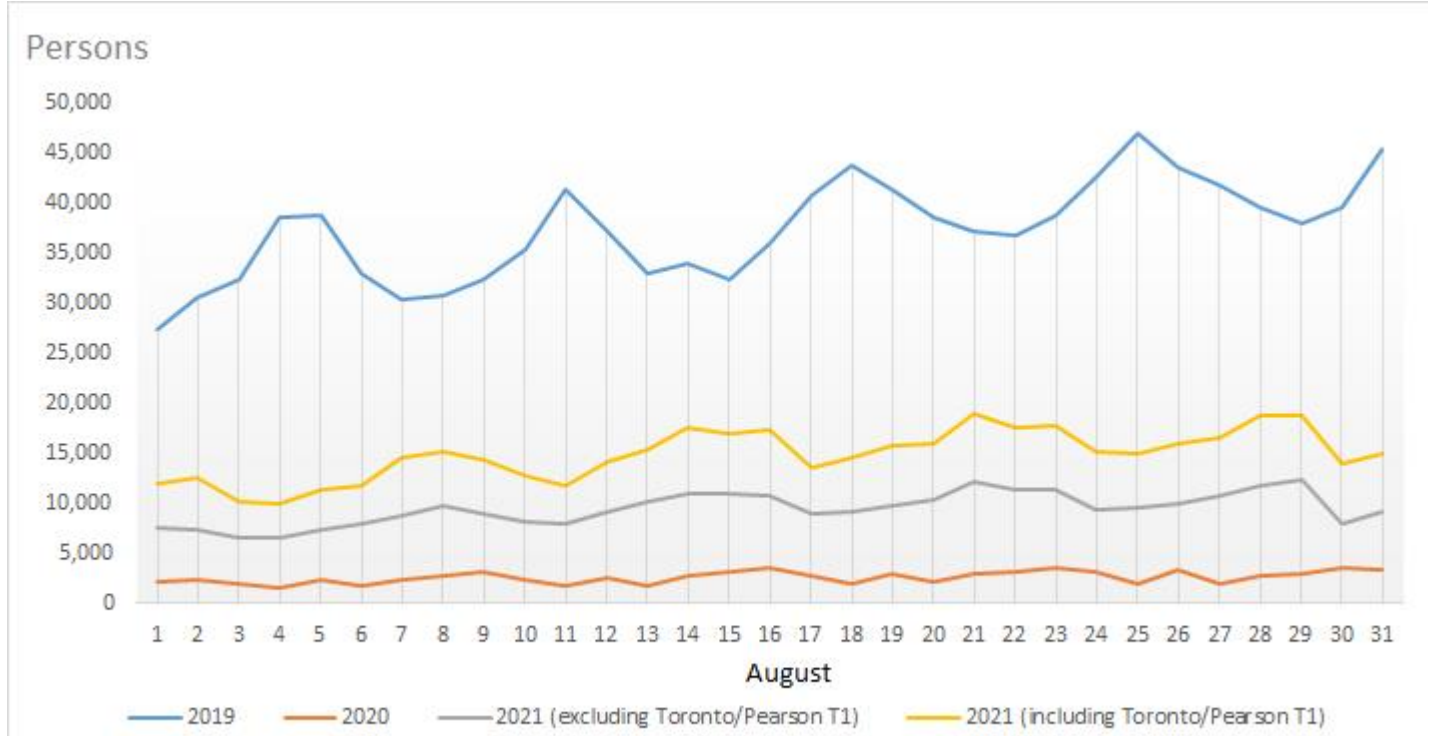
Source(s): Statistics Canada- Reports of entries and re-entries from offices of the Canada Border Services Agency, Integrated Primary Inspection Line only.

**Canadians returning by air**

While still down by over half (60.1%) from the same month in 2019, the number of Canadian residents flying back from abroad in August via airports equipped with PIKs was up 462,500 from 82,000 in August 2020.

Again, some of this August increase from 2020 to 2021 reflects the inclusion of international arrivals at Toronto/Pearson Terminal 1 (see Note to readers). Counts for August 2021 are shown in Infographic 3, both with and without arrivals at Toronto/Pearson Terminal 1. In either case, a steady rise in the number of returning Canadians flying home during August is apparent.

**Infographic 3 – Canadian residents returning by air from abroad, August 2019, 2020 and 2021**

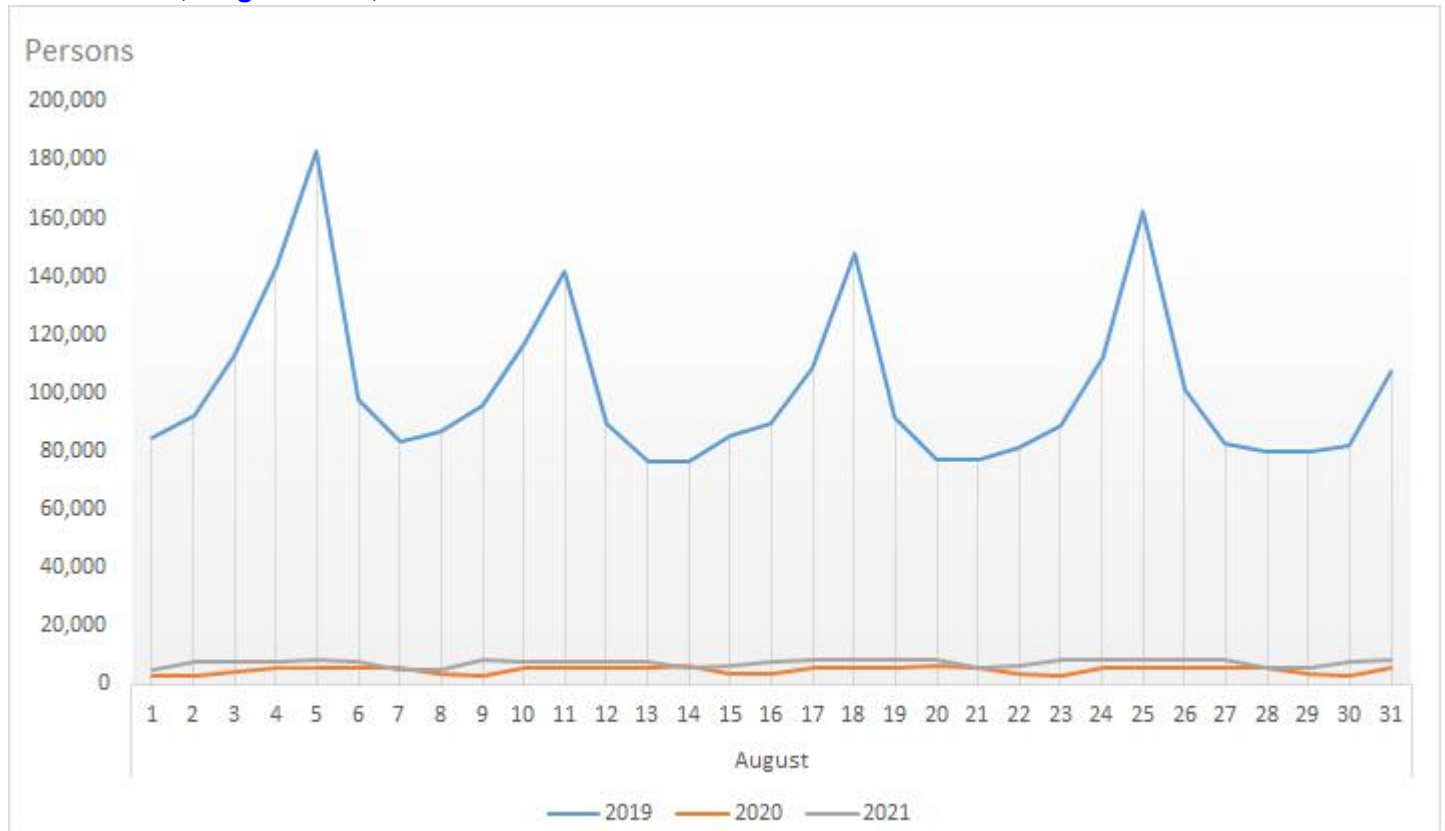


Source(s): Statistics Canada- Reports of entries and re-entries from offices of the Canada Border Services Agency, Primary Inspection Kiosks.

**Canadians returning by car**

In August, 230,300 Canadian residents returned from the United States in Canadian-licensed automobiles via the 111 IPIL-equipped ports. While this is much more than the 152,000 travellers recorded in August 2020, it is a fraction (7.3%) of the 3.1 million who drove back across the border by car during the same month in 2019.

**Infographic 4 – Canadian residents returning from the United States in Canadian-licensed automobiles, August 2019, 2020 and 2021**



Source(s): Statistics Canada- Reports of entries and re-entries from offices of the Canada Border Services Agency, Integrated Primary Inspection Line only.

### Note to readers

*This indicator uses administrative data from the Canada Border Services Agency on international travellers entering the country by automobile and by air.*

*Counts of travellers entering the country by air are from the Primary Inspection Kiosk (PIK) system and represent a subset of arrivals by air. Pre-pandemic PIK systems captured approximately 58% of international arrivals, as it excluded arrivals at Toronto/Pearson Terminal 1 where PIKs were not yet deployed.*

*PIKs were fully deployed at Toronto/Pearson Terminal 1 by June 22, 2021. Starting in July, these arrivals are included in the total counts of this leading indicator and will raise coverage accordingly. The coverage statement will be amended when a complete year of international traffic is observed for all airports receiving international flights.*

*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 the province of entry into Canada.*

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

### 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)).