

Canadian Tourism Activity Tracker, October 2021

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Highlights

In October, overall tourism activity in Canada was 35.8% below the level reached in October 2019, before the pandemic. This was the fifth consecutive month of improvement since May 2021, when activity dipped 68.6% below the pre-pandemic level from May 2019.

The reopening of many provincial economies over the summer, along with the easing of travel restrictions starting in July 2021, have contributed to this improvement.

Visit the [Canadian Tourism Activity Tracker](#) tool to interact with the data.

Borders opening but more restrictions looming

The federal government opened Canada's borders to all fully vaccinated international travellers on September 7, 2021. However, effective October 30, 2021, all air passengers departing from Canadian airports are required to be fully vaccinated.

In late November 2021, the World Health Organization declared a new variant of concern, Omicron, prompting Canada to implement new travel restrictions. The data in this release do not yet reflect these new travel restrictions.

Inbound activity now supporting recovery

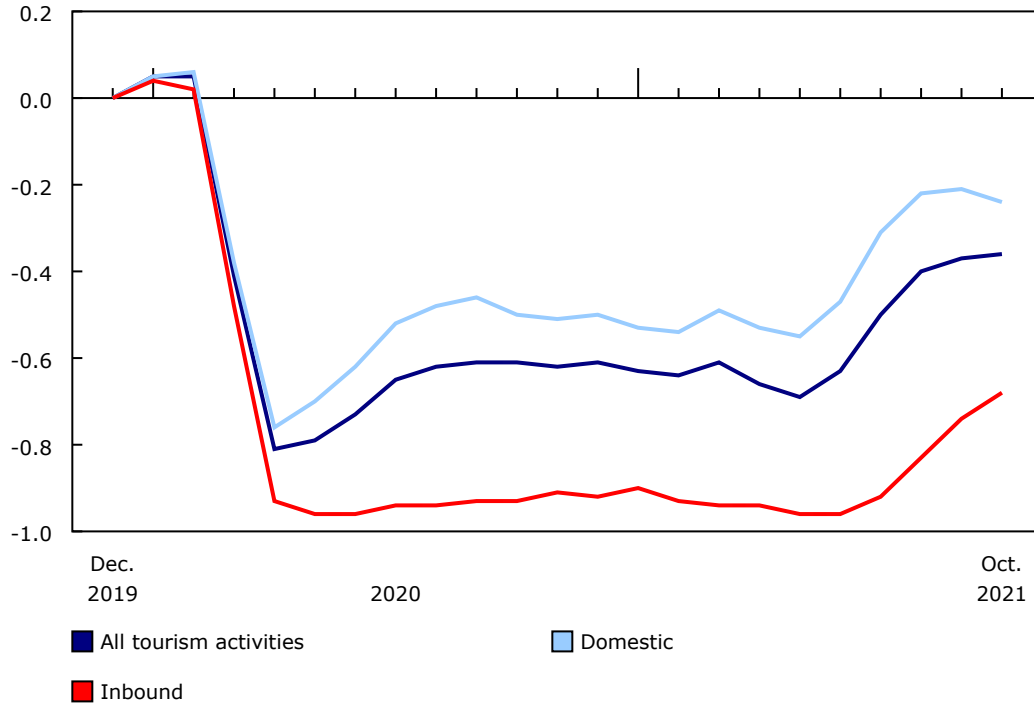
Tourism activity was subdued at the start of 2021 as travel restrictions were tightened to combat new COVID-19 variants. Temporary reopenings in March provided a reprieve before additional lockdowns were put in place in April and into May 2021. Since dipping to 68.6% below its pre-pandemic level in May 2021, overall tourism activity has increased for five consecutive months relative to the base period.

As restrictions eased and vaccination rates rose over the summer, domestic tourism (i.e., Canadians travelling within Canada) began to recover. In the fall when Canada's borders were opened to all fully vaccinated international travellers, inbound tourism (i.e., the contribution of international visitors within Canada) began to recover. Nationally, overall tourism activity in October 2021 was 35.8% below the pre-pandemic level of October 2019, with domestic activity down 24.1% and inbound activity down 67.7%.



Chart 1
Canadian Tourism Activity Tracker, December 2019 to October 2021

index (December 2019 = 0)



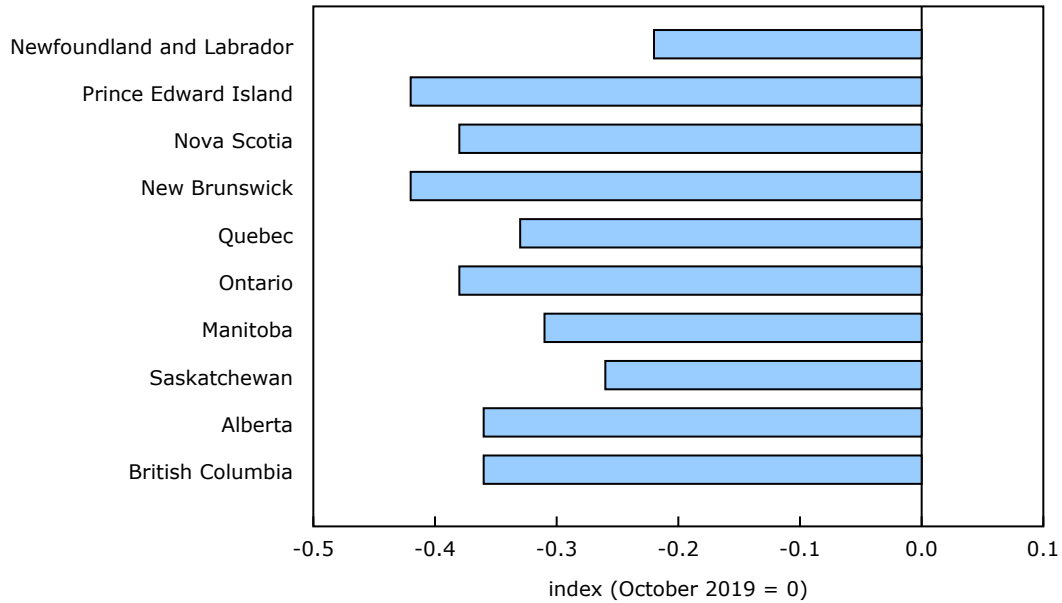
Source(s): Table 24-10-0049-01, Canadian Tourism Activity Tracker and Grouped Data Sources.

Provincial recoveries diverge

Typically, tourism in October is moderate, with children in school and the cooler autumn season. However, with testing and quarantine no longer required for fully vaccinated international travellers, [over 160,000 overseas residents arrived in Canada](#) during October 2021. This was an unseasonable jump of 4.8% from September, and the highest number of overseas visitors since the pandemic began in March 2020.

This increase of inbound activity during October appeared to help bolster tourism more in some provinces that rely on international tourists, such as British Columbia and Nova Scotia. Meanwhile, tourism activity decreased from September 2021 in provinces like Saskatchewan that rely more on domestic tourists, given the further implementation of travel restrictions.

Chart 2
Provincial tourism activity, October 2021



Source(s): Table 24-10-0049-01, Canadian Tourism Activity Tracker and Grouped Data Sources.

Note to readers

The Canadian Tourism Activity Tracker is part of a shift at Statistics Canada from measuring the economic impacts of the pandemic to assessing the recovery. The tracker combines data from multiple sources including counts of international travellers, domestic and international commercial aircraft and surface movements as well as hotel occupancy rates and restaurant sales.

When combining these data sources, each series is first normalized using a ratio method that removes seasonality and allows comparison with the same month from the 2019 base. Then weights are used to combine these normalized values into a single estimate for a given month and geography. The weights are determined based on the data series correlation with overall tourism; the higher the correlation, the larger the weight.

The domestic tourism value is calculated using domestic-related data, while the inbound value uses international-related sources. The two values are combined proportionately based on pre-pandemic National Travel Survey and Visitor Travel Survey data with the level set to zero for each month in the 2019 base year. For a given month in subsequent years, a tracker value above zero indicates that tourism activity is greater than the 2019 base, while a value below zero indicates the opposite.

As an experimental product, caution is warranted when interpreting these estimates. As such, tracker estimates should be viewed as preliminary and are subject to revision. With more data sources being considered along with new methods, this may entail the need for further revisions.

Available tables: table [24-10-0049-01](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [5357](#).

The product "[Canadian Tourism Activity Tracker](#)," part of the *Data Visualization Products* series ([71-607-X](#)), 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; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or Media Relations (statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca).