



# Rural and Small Town Canada ANALYSIS BULLETIN



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## A visit to Canada's countryside: rural tourism

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### Highlights

- ◆ Canada's predominantly rural regions were visited by one-half of Canadian tourists, 39 percent of USA tourists and 33 percent of overseas tourists.
- ◆ Canadian tourists tended to be younger tourists and were more likely to visit a predominantly rural region.
- ◆ USA tourists tended to be older tourists and were more likely to visit a predominantly rural region.
- ◆ Tourists from the USA and from overseas spent more money per tourist-visit, in part because they stayed at their destination for a longer period of time.

### Introduction

Rural Canada offers tourists many unique experiences that often cannot be replicated elsewhere in the world. While rural regions offer a rich assortment of natural vistas, wildlife and flora, there is also a diverse cultural heritage to discover and appreciate. Many rural communities have been successfully developing their local and regional attributes to attract tourists and thus reduce their employment dependency on more traditional primary industries.

Rural regions provide opportunities for leisure, adventure or a place of solitude – whether for the foreign tourist looking for a 'Canadian' experience or for the urbanite looking to slow their hectic pace. Society, in general, and urban people in particular, can derive substantial benefits from these rural experiences, making it important to plan for rural amenity protection and development (OECD, 1994).



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In 2000, 1 percent of all domestic overnight trips in Canada were spent at a resort, most of which were located in rural regions. While this was indeed a small share of total travel, this was an 18 percent increase from 1998. As well, this represented a \$360 million market, or 2 percent of all expenditures made on domestic overnight trips (Marcoux, 2004).

In 2001, about 36 million or 25 percent of Canada's total domestic person-trips involved participation in a sport or outdoor activity trip (Weighill, 2003). Rural regions account for much of this market.

In a previous bulletin (Beshiri, 2005) we discussed the amount of tourism employment - or supply of tourism services - in rural Canada. This bulletin reviews the demand for tourism services

in rural Canada by both domestic and international tourists.

This bulletin examines the number and characteristics of travellers to rural Canada in 2002 in order to develop an initial understanding. By the end of 2002, some aspects of the world tourism market had recovered from the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 (Box A). However, as noted in Box A, we were not able to provide a comparison with earlier time periods.

It is important to note the distinction between a tourist and a tourist-visit. This bulletin focuses on "tourist-visits" as the unit of tourism activity. A tourist-visit is the visit by a tourist to a specific destination. Thus, a visit by a tourist to two destinations will constitute two tourist-visits (Box B).

## **Box A**

### **Tourism in Canada, 2002**

In 2002, tourism world wide remained strong despite the terrorism attack of September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001, economic uncertainties and the impending war in Iraq. The World Tourism Organization reported that for the first time the number of tourists worldwide (defined as an overnight traveler) reached over 700 million in 2002 (Statistics Canada, 2002).

As a destination for international travellers, Canada's popularity strengthened. A record number of close to 20 million international overnight visitors crossed Canadian borders in 2001 (Statistics Canada, 2003). After a slow first quarter in 2002, both domestic and international tourists were taking more leisure trips. But travel patterns had changed – tourists vacationed closer to home, they travelled to familiar places and got there more by car, train or bus and less by plane. For the first time since the mid-1970's, overnight car travel from the United States exceeded 10 million from a total of 16.2 million overnight travellers (Statistics Canada, 2003). Plane travel was not only hampered by fears of safety: increased airfares, airport security tax, and airport security inconveniences were all issues that limited long distance travel by plane (Canadian Tourism Commission, (2002b). The economy played a strong role as well. In the U.S.A. consumer confidence tumbled with weak economic growth and the impending war in Iraq. Yet, overnight travel from the United States rose 3.8 percent in 2002 from 2001, but this increase was entirely due to car travellers who tended to spend less money on trips (Statistics Canada, 2003).

In 2002, the number of tourists from overseas countries dropped by 5.3 percent from the previous year (Statistics Canada, 2002). Tourists from Europe were hampered by security worries and high inflation rates; thus, travellers from three of Canada's top four overseas markets (United Kingdom, France and Germany) recorded double digit decreases, down by 12 and 13 percent, compared to 2001. In contrast, the number of Japanese and South Korean travellers increased slightly by 3 percent and, with their strengthening economy, Chinese visitors increased by 17 percent (Statistics Canada, 2002).

Canada reported, in 2002, a strong economy with lower interest rates and stronger consumer confidence than in 2001 (Statistics Canada, 2002). However, probably due to the safety concerns noted above, fewer Canadians travelled overnight to overseas countries (-3.1 percent) and to the United States (-3.7 percent) than in 2001\*.

On a more positive outlook for tourism businesses, while business travel was restricted due to a cautious business environment, increased use of teleconferencing and safety concerns, leisure travel appeared poised to lead a tourism recovery (Canadian Tourism Commission, 2002c). One year after the terrorist attack, Canadian airlines posted profits, the hotel industry posted positive financial results and the tourism industry as a whole had rebounded to match 2001's pre-September 11<sup>th</sup> performance (Canadian Tourism Commission, 2002c).

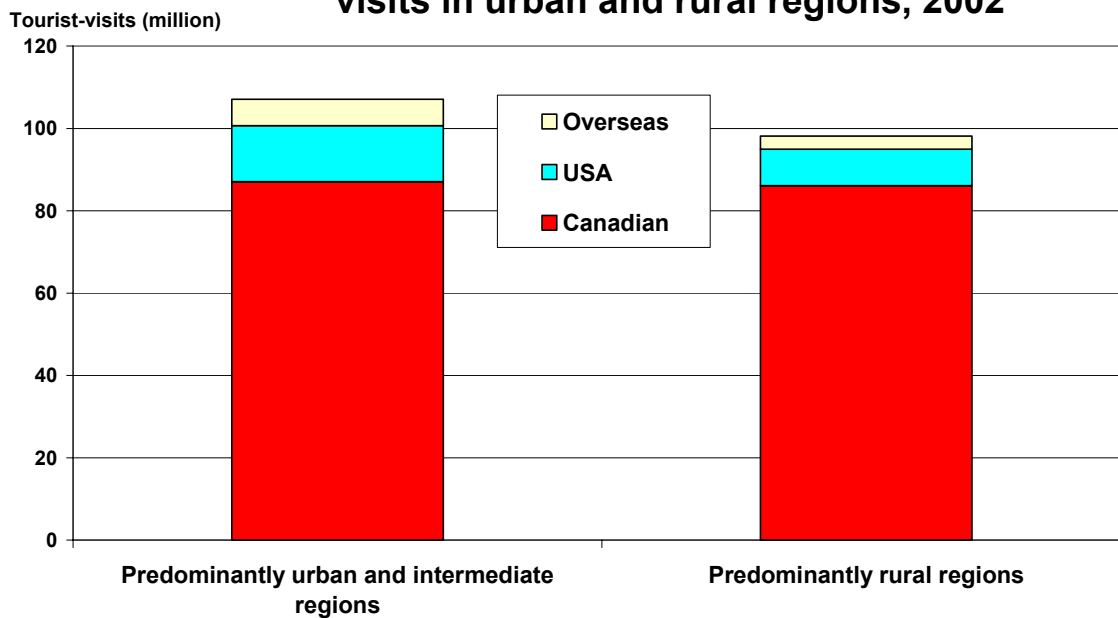
\* In 2002, a more systematic interview monitoring system was put in place for the Canadian Travel Survey, 2002. This resulted in a substantial increase in the estimates for 2002 compared to the 2001 data. The revised 2001 data was not available for this bulletin. Therefore, a comparison of Canada's domestic travel between these two is not available.

## Over 80 percent of tourist-visits are by Canadians

In 2002, there were 211 million leisure tourist-visits to Canadian destinations (Figure 1) (Box B for the definition of a leisure tourist and ‘tourist-visits’). The vast majority of these visits (83 percent or 173 million tourist-visits) were by Canadian travellers. Tourist-visits by USA

residents represented 12 percent (22.5 million tourist-visits) and overseas tourist-visits another 5 percent (9.6 million tourist-visits). The vast majority of tourist-visits in each of predominantly urban and intermediate regions and in predominantly rural regions were by Canadian tourists (See Box C for the definition of geographic regions).

**Figure 1 Canadian tourists generated the majority of tourist-visits in urban and rural regions, 2002**



**Source:** Statistics Canada. Canadian Travel Survey, 2002; International Travel Survey, 2002. The percent with a "not stated" destination was 1 percent for Canadian tourists, 12 percent for tourists from the USA and 8 percent for overseas tourists. Tourists are defined as leisure (non-business) travellers only.

## Box B

### Tourism data sources

The data used for this bulletin comes from combining data from two surveys – the Canadian Travel Survey and the International Travel Survey

#### Canadian Travel Survey (CTS)

This annual survey gathers information to measure the volume, characteristics and economic impact of domestic travel by Canadians. The CTS is a supplement of the Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey and uses its sampling frame.

A **traveller** is defined as those who have a Canadian destination of 80 kilometres or more from home. The survey also collects information for all overnight trips, regardless of distance, and for all same-day trips having a one-way distance from home of 80 kilometres (40 km. in Ontario) regardless of the destination (Canada or other countries).

#### International Travel Survey (ITS)

This survey is composed of three parts: the mail-back questionnaires, the Air Exit Survey of Overseas Visitors (AES) and the Frontier Counts Survey.

The **mail-back questionnaire** targets all Canadian residents who return to Canada and, more importantly for this bulletin, all travellers entering Canada except for crews, diplomats and their dependants, refugees, landed immigrants, military and former Canadians residents. The survey questionnaires are directed to international travellers who use popular modes of transportation to enter Canada and who enter through ports with a significant amount of traveller traffic. Accordingly, questionnaires are distributed at 150 designated ports of entry.

The **AES** is a monthly survey that targets all overseas travellers leaving Canada on their way directly to selected overseas countries. The targeted countries are those from which Canada attract the most visitors. The information is gathered directly from the respondent by interview and is voluntary. In total, for all the international travellers, the number of questionnaires that were used to produce estimates is approximately 40,000 for travellers from the USA and 47,000 for travellers from overseas countries.

The **Frontier Counts Survey** is a monthly survey that targets all international travellers entering Canada either by air, sea or land. It provides a count of travellers crossing the Canadian border. In this survey a **traveller** is simply defined as any person who completes a trip. Based on information from this survey, the weights of the combined survey components are adjusted.

For more information on the surveys used and definitions please go to:

[www.statcan.ca/english/sdds/index.htm](http://www.statcan.ca/english/sdds/index.htm) and look under Travel and Tourism.

### What is a tourist and a tourist-visit?

Using the CTS, for this bulletin, a **tourist** is defined as a traveller who travelled to a Canadian destination for leisure (i.e., visiting friends or relatives, pleasure, personal, non-business convention) but not for business purposes. In the ITS mail back questionnaire and AES questionnaire a leisure tourist is defined as those visitors who have pleasure trips (i.e., vacations, visiting friends or relatives, visiting a second residence, attending attractions) or other types of trips (i.e., personal – medical, wedding, educational, shopping, etc.). The Frontier Counts Survey has more limited choices (i.e., visiting friends and relatives and pleasure trips of shopping and entertainment). Each of these surveys allows the respondent to specify other trip types that may be included as a tourist. Leisure tourist-visits defined in this way comprise 88 percent of the total travellers in and to Canada.

This bulletin focuses on **tourist-visits** as the unit of tourism participation. The surveys count each census division that a tourist visits as one destination. Therefore, a tourist may take a plane to a city, stay a few days and then go camping in a predominantly rural region. Thus, one tourist can account for multiple tourist-visits.

## **Half of all tourist-visits were in predominantly rural regions**

Rural destinations were just as popular as urban destinations for Canadian tourist-visits. One-half of Canadian tourists visited a predominantly rural region while the other half visited predominantly urban and intermediate regions (PUI regions) — 30 percent visited predominantly urban regions while the remaining 20 percent visited intermediate regions (Figure 2). While the data does not tell us from which Canadian region these tourists came from, we expect that they were most likely urban residents visiting rural regions.

About 39 percent of the 25.6 million USA tourist-visits were in predominantly rural regions and only one-third of the 10.4 million overseas tourist-visits were in predominantly rural region in 2002<sup>1</sup>.

Once tourists made it to rural regions, their destinations were almost evenly split between rural metro-adjacent and rural non-metro-adjacent regions. A very small number of tourists headed for rural northern regions. USA tourists showed the greatest interest in this region as 4 percent of all USA tourist-visits were to a rural northern region.

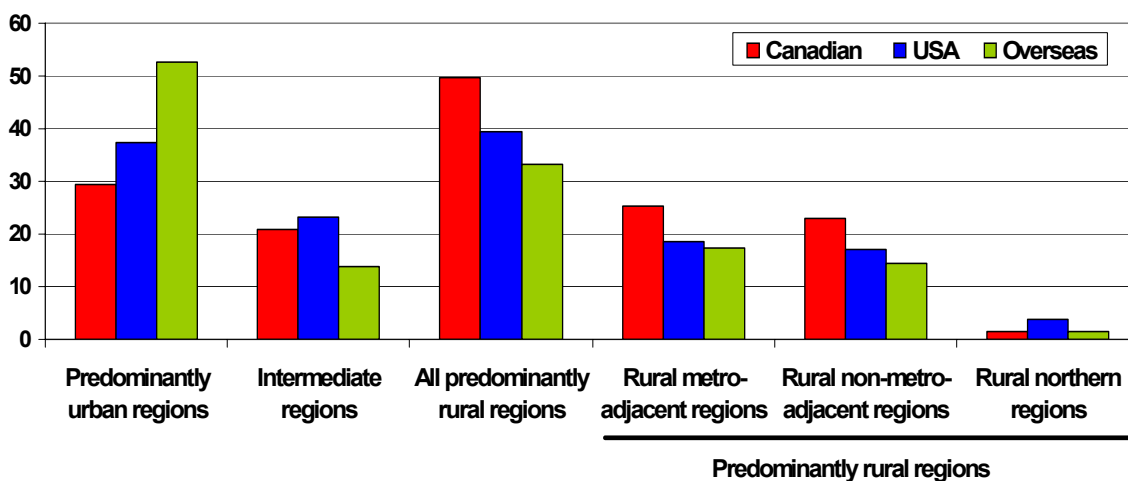
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1. Here we are reporting the distribution of tourist-visits only for tourists that stated a destination. In 2002, 12 percent of USA tourists and 8 percent of overseas tourists did not state a destination. The impact of “destination not stated” on the shares of tourist-visits by destination is shown in Appendix Table A1.

Figure 2

**Half of Canadian tourists visited a rural region, 2002**

Percent distribution of total tourist visits



Source: Statistic Canada, Canadian Travel Survey, 2002; International Travel Survey, 2002.

Those tourists that had "not stated" a destination were excluded. The percent with a "not stated" destination was 1 percent for Canadian tourists, 12 percent for American tourists and 8 percent for overseas tourists. Tourists are defined as leisure (non-business) travellers only.

### Box C

#### Defining rural regions

This bulletin uses the definition of predominantly rural regions adopted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). It is based on the settlement pattern of the *region* (specifically, the share of the population living in a rural community).

This definition defines a **rural community** as those communities with less than 150 persons per square kilometre. This includes the individuals living in the countryside, towns and small cities (inside and outside the commuting zone of larger urban centres).

Building on this definition of rural communities, **predominantly rural regions** are census divisions (CDs) where more than 50 percent of the population lives in rural communities. This includes all census divisions without a major city.

The predominantly rural regions are disaggregated into three sub-regions: **rural metro-adjacent regions**, **rural non-metro-adjacent regions**, and **rural northern regions**.

**Predominantly urban regions** are CDs where less than 15 percent of the population lives in rural communities.

**Intermediate regions** are where between 15 and 50 percent of the population lives in a rural community.

**Predominantly urban and intermediate (PUI) regions** are sometimes used for comparison with predominantly rural regions in this bulletin. PUIs are the amalgamation of predominantly urban and intermediate regions.

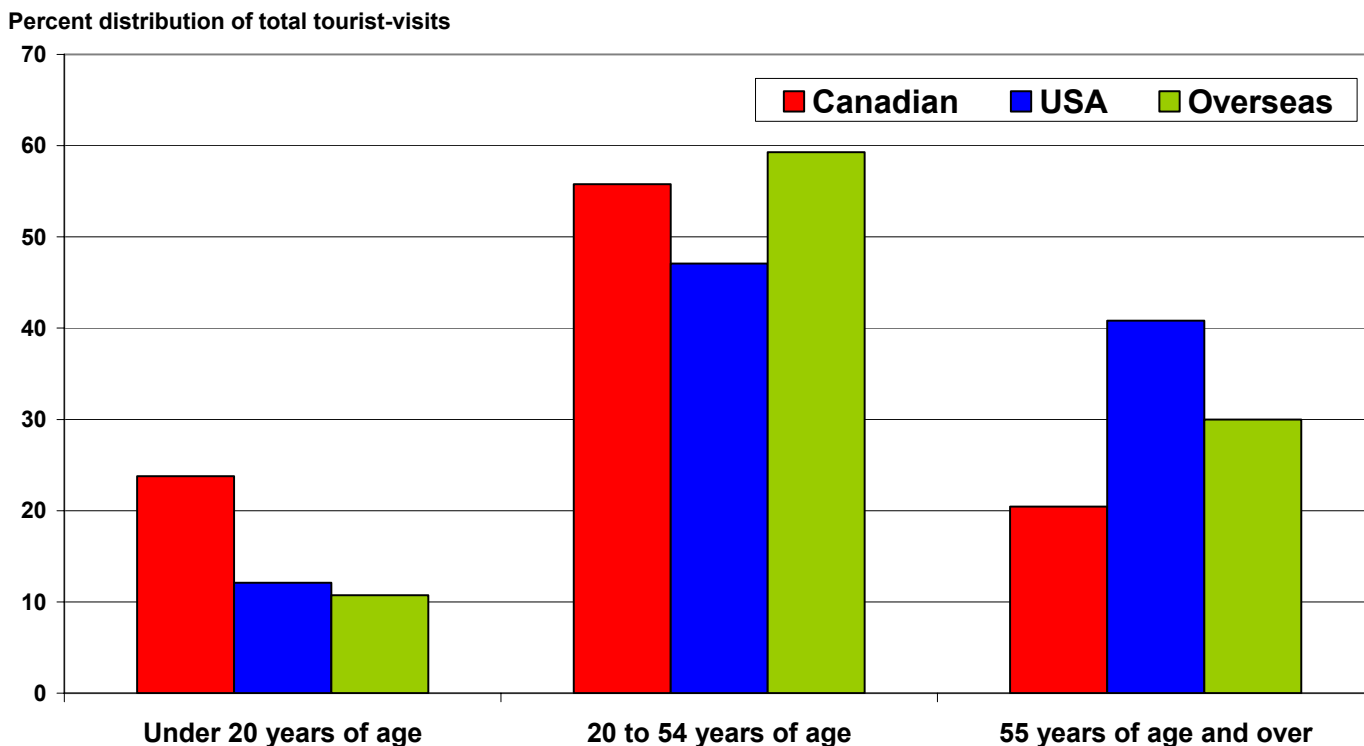


### Overall, Canadian travellers were younger

In 2002, 24 percent of Canadian tourist-visits were made by tourists under 20 years of age – many were children travelling with their parents

(Figure 3). Of the USA tourist-visits, a relatively higher share was made by visitors 55 years of age or older (41 percent). Among overseas tourist-visits, 59 percent were made by tourists 20 to 54 years of age.

**Figure 3 For tourist-visits made by each origin, a higher share were made by Canadian youths and older USA tourists, Canada, 2002**

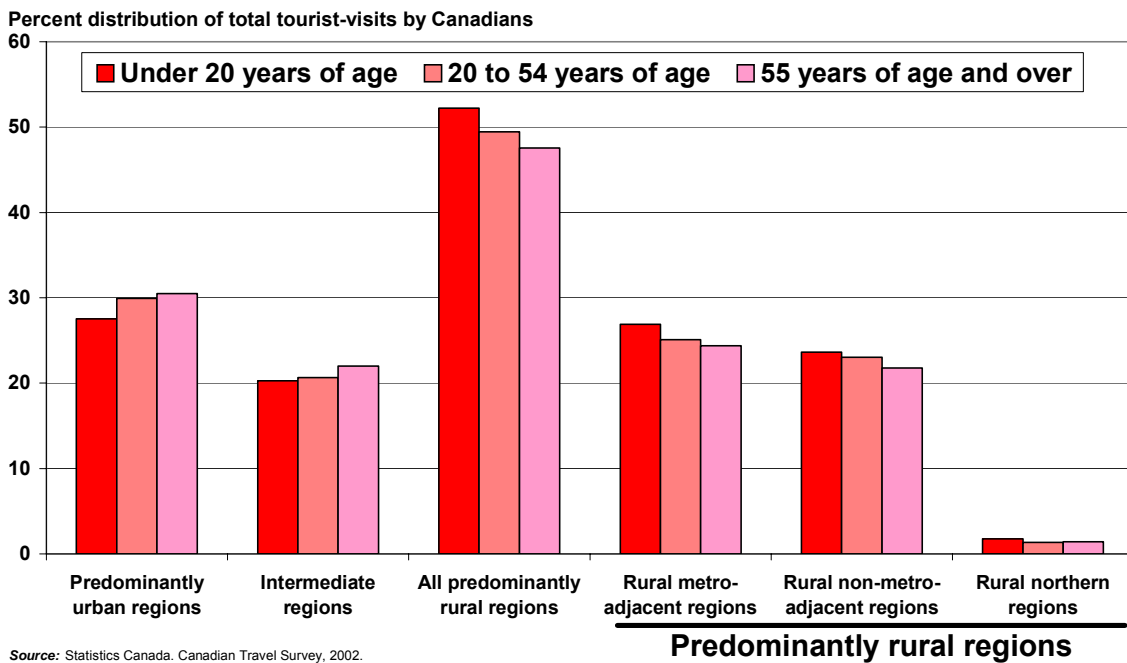


**Source:** Statistics Canada. Canadian Travel Survey, 2002; International Travel Survey, 2002. Those tourists that had "not stated" an age were excluded. The percent with an age not stated was zero for Canadian tourists, 12 percent for USA tourists and 8 percent for overseas tourists. Tourists are defined as leisure (non-business) travellers only.

The fact that total Canadian tourists tend to be younger is of importance for predominantly rural regions. That is because younger Canadian tourists were slightly more likely to visit a predominantly rural region, compared to older Canadian tourists. In 2002, 52 percent of tourists-visits made by younger Canadians were to

predominantly rural region. This was marginally higher than the 49 percent of tourist-visits made by 20 to 54 year old Canadians and the 48 percent of tourist-visits made by Canadians aged 55 years of age and over (Figure 4). This indicates that predominantly rural regions were somewhat more attractive to younger Canadian tourists.

**Figure 4 Canadian youth were slightly more likely to visit a predominantly rural region, 2002**

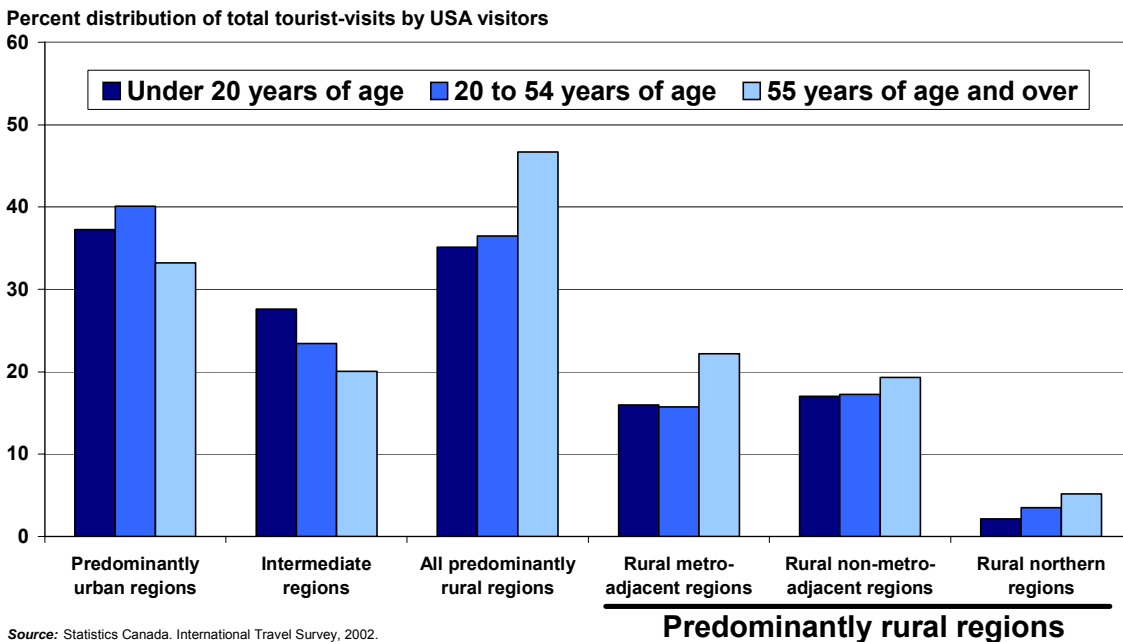


As previously observed in Figure 3, USA tourists were more likely to be older. Again, this is important for predominantly rural regions as 47 percent of tourist-visits by USA tourists 55 years of age and older were to predominantly rural regions (Figure 5). This was significantly higher than the share (about one-third) of USA tourist-visits made by tourists under 55 years of age to a predominantly rural region. Importantly for rural

northern regions, a higher proportion of older USA tourists making tourist-visits (5 percent) compared with the youngest tourists making tourist-visits (2 percent) were to rural northern regions, in 2002. There seems to be a preference amongst older USA tourists to visit predominantly rural regions and this provides a possible rural marketing focus.

Figure 5

### Older USA tourists were more likely to visit predominantly rural regions, 2002

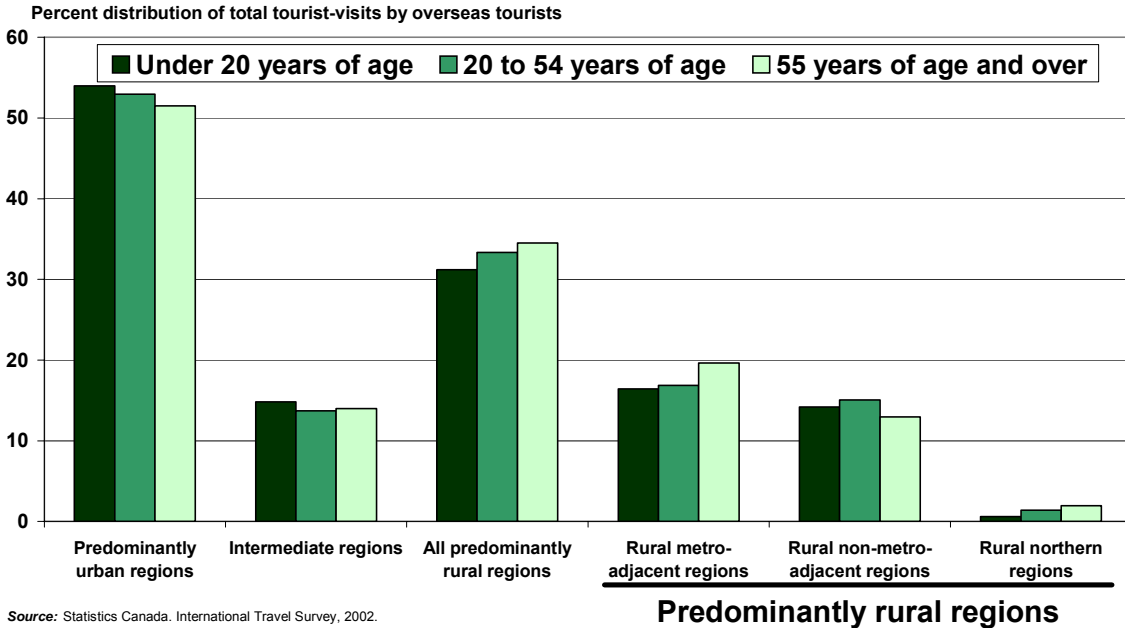


Over 50 percent of tourist-visits made by tourists from overseas in each age class were to a predominantly urban region in 2002 (Figure 6). The proportion of older overseas tourists who

visited a predominantly rural region was slightly higher than for younger overseas tourists.

Figure 6

**Older overseas tourists were slightly more likely to visit a predominantly rural region, 2002**



**USA tourist-visits represent a relatively high share of visitors to rural northern regions**

The above three charts summarize the tendency (or the proportion) of tourists to visit each type of region. However, from the point of view of residents of a particular region, what is the profile of tourist-visits in the receiving region?

Among younger tourists (under 20 years of age) visiting predominantly rural regions, in 2002, tourist-visits were found to have been 95 percent Canadian, 4 percent USA and 1 percent overseas

(Table 1). However, among older tourists (55 years of age and over), tourist-visits to predominantly rural regions were 78 percent Canadians, 18 percent were by USA tourists and 4 percent were by overseas tourists. Within predominantly rural northern regions older Canadian tourists (55 years of age and over) accounted for 51 percent of the tourist-visits, 44 percent were made by tourists from the USA and 5 percent were done by overseas tourists. Thus, although only 4 percent of all USA tourist-visits were to a rural northern region (Figure 2), they represented 24 percent of all tourist-visits to the north.

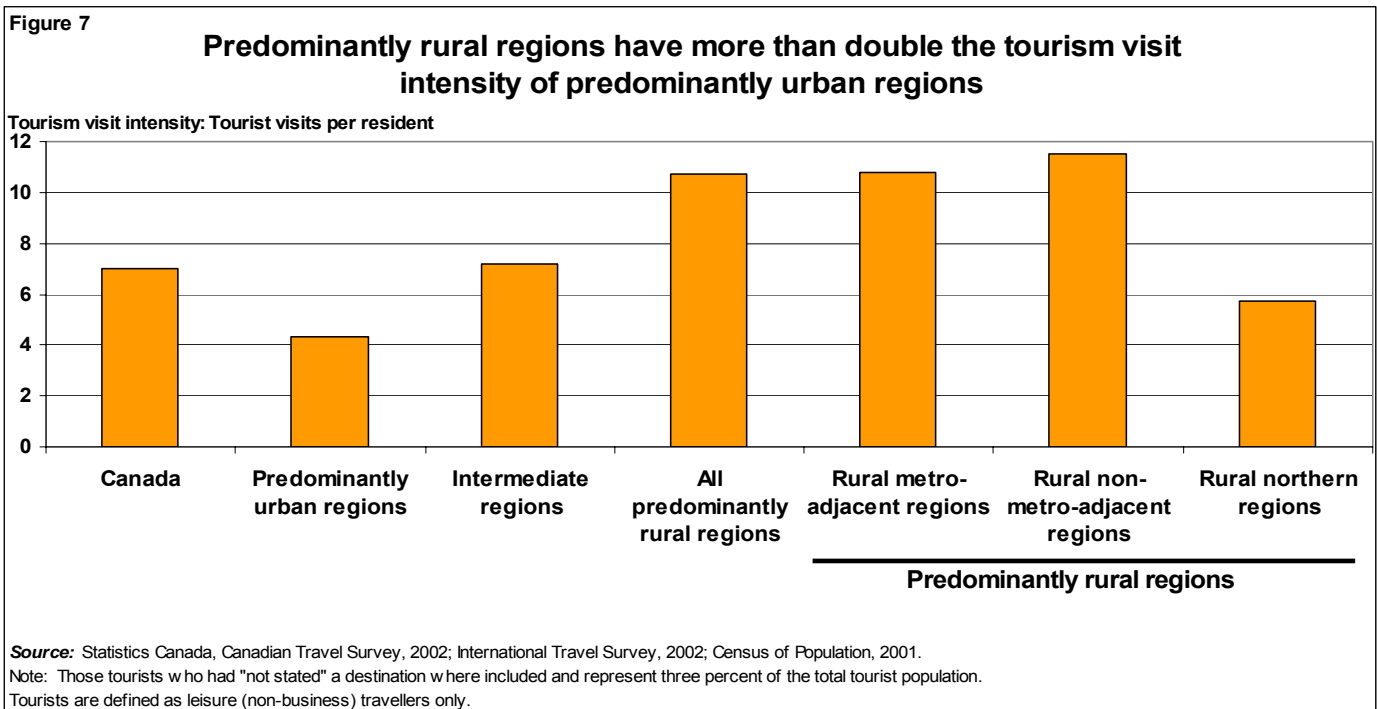
<b>Table 1. Within each type of region and within each age group, what share of tourist-visits are by Canadian, USA or overseas tourists?</b>				
	<b>Under 20 years of age</b>	<b>20 to 54 years of age</b>	<b>55 years of age and over</b>	<b>Total, with a stated age</b>
<b>Canadian tourist-visits as percent of total tourist-visits</b>				
Predominantly urban regions	89	81	72	81
Intermediate regions	91	87	79	86
<b>Predominantly rural regions</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>88</b>
Rural metro-adjacent regions	95	91	79	89
Rural non-metro-adjacent regions	95	90	80	89
Rural northern regions	92	76	51	73
<b>Total, with a stated destination</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>USA tourist-visits as percent of total tourist-visits</b>				
Predominantly urban regions	7	11	18	12
Intermediate regions	7	10	17	11
<b>Predominantly rural regions</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>8</b>
Rural metro-adjacent regions	3	6	17	8
Rural non-metro-adjacent regions	4	7	17	8
Rural northern regions	7	19	44	24
<b>Total, with a stated destination</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Overseas tourist-visits as percent of total tourist-visits</b>				
Predominantly urban regions	4	8	9	7
Intermediate regions	2	3	4	3
<b>Predominantly rural regions</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
Rural metro-adjacent regions	1	3	5	3
Rural non-metro-adjacent regions	1	3	4	3
Rural northern regions	1	4	5	4
<b>Total, with a stated destination</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Total tourist-visits, from all countries of origins, as a percent of total tourist-visits</b>				
Predominantly urban regions	100	100	100	100
Intermediate regions	100	100	100	100
<b>Predominantly rural regions</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Rural metro-adjacent regions	100	100	100	100
Rural non-metro-adjacent regions	100	100	100	100
Rural northern regions	100	100	100	100
<b>Total, with a stated destination</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Statistics Canada. Canadian Travel Survey, 2002; International Travel Survey, 2002

**For every resident of predominantly rural regions, there were 11 tourist-visits**

Another way to understand the significance of tourism in each region is to compare the number of tourist-visits to the number of residents.

For every resident of a predominantly rural region, there were about 11 tourist-visits in 2002 (Figure 7). The intensity was slightly higher for rural non-metro-adjacent regions but was less than 6 tourist-visits for every resident in rural northern regions. Predominantly urban regions have the lowest intensity with about 4 tourist-visits for each urban resident.



**Tourists made predominantly rural regions the destination of choice outside central Canada**

About 60 percent of all tourist-visits in Canada were to central Canada – 37 percent to Ontario and 23 percent to Quebec (data not shown). Some of this high attraction rate to central Canada was due to the demographic weight and territorial

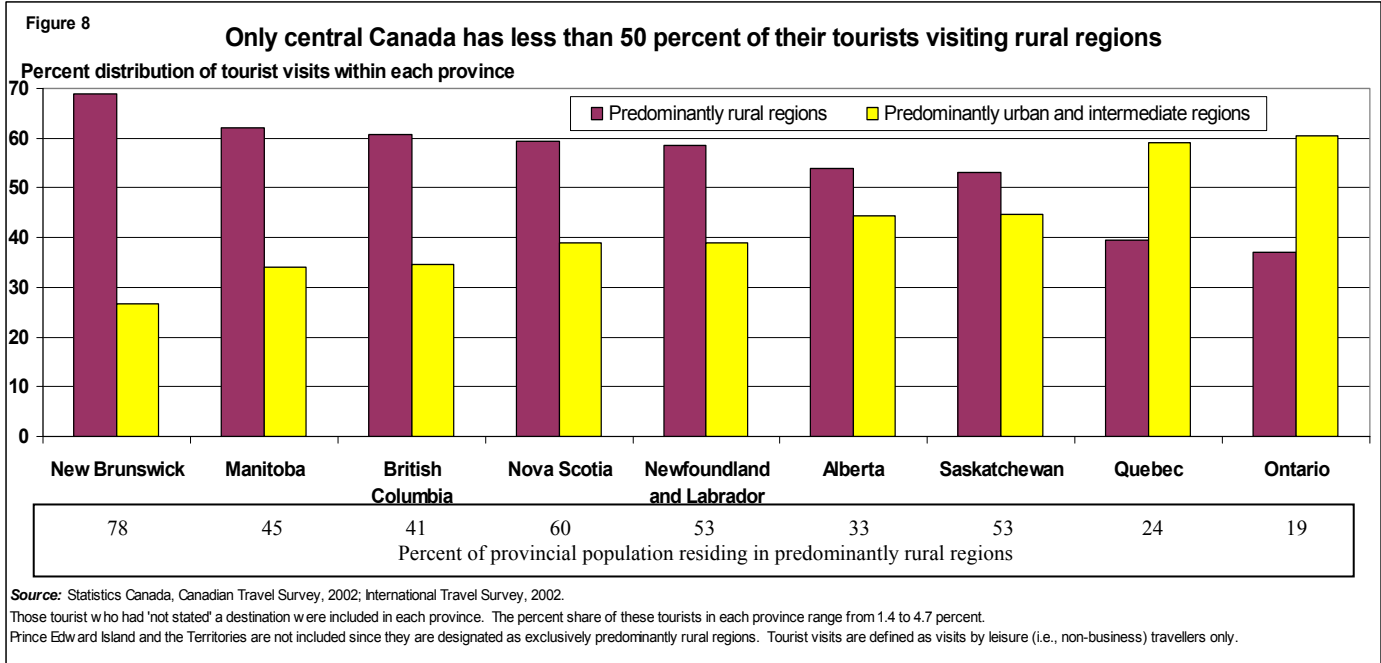
extent of these provinces<sup>2</sup>. British Columbia drew about 13 percent and Alberta drew 9 percent, while all the other provinces and territories attracted less than 5 percent each of all tourist-visits.

Most of the tourists who travelled to central Canada spent their time in predominantly urban and intermediate (PUI) regions (about 60 percent of tourist-visits) but, in all the other provinces,

<sup>2</sup> Almost two-thirds of Canada’s population lives in these two provinces: 38 percent in Ontario and 24 percent in Quebec.

over half the tourist-visits were made to rural regions (Figure 8). It should be pointed out that some of these findings merely replicate the population distribution of each province, i.e., central Canada is the most urbanized part of Canada and the Atlantic Provinces have a relatively higher share of their population living in predominantly rural regions. Thus, tourists will

inevitably find themselves visiting the region type that prevails in the province. However, Manitoba and British Columbia did not follow this pattern. Despite a relatively low share of total population in predominantly rural regions in Manitoba and British Columbia, their tourist-visit share to this type of region was high. Alberta, to a lesser degree, followed this same pattern.



Throughout the provinces, generally, the USA and the overseas tourist-visits followed the same pattern as the Canadian tourist-visits – visiting PUI regions in central Canada and visiting predominantly rural regions in the rest of Canada. However, the pattern differed in British Columbia

and Manitoba – while most of the Canadian tourist-visits were to predominantly rural regions in these provinces, most of the USA and overseas tourist-visits were made in predominantly urban regions (data not shown).

## How much do tourists spend on their visits?

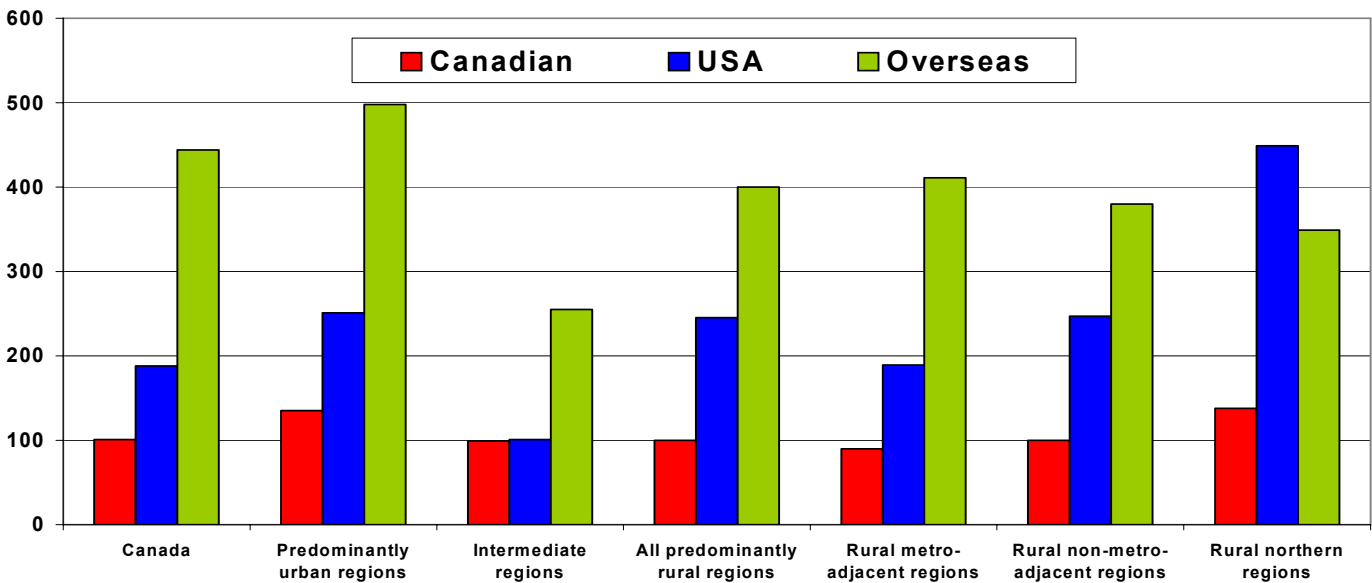
In 2002, all tourists spent about 30 billion dollars at their Canadian destinations. While Canadian tourist-visits represented 83 percent of all tourist-visits, their total spending represented only 61 percent, or 18.5 billion dollars of total tourist spending in Canada. USA tourists spent about 25 percent or 7.5 billion dollars and overseas tourists spent 14 percent or 4 billion dollars.

The share of the expenditures in each type of region mirrored the share of tourist-visits in each type of region. In each type of region visited in 2002, Canadian tourists spent the least per visit (Figure 9). In most regions, USA tourists spent about twice as much per visit as Canadian tourists and overseas tourists spent three to four times as much per visit compared to Canadian tourists. Only in rural northern regions did USA tourists spend more per visit than other tourists.

Figure 9

### Overseas tourists spent the most per visit in nearly every type of region, 2002

Average dollars spent by tourists in each census division visited



**Predominantly rural regions**

Source: Statistics Canada. Canadian Travel Survey, 2002; International Travel Survey, 2002.

Note: A tourist-visit is based on a visit in a census division. Therefore, tourist expenditures are defined as money spent in each census division visited.



## **More overnight visits in predominantly rural regions**

Visits of a longer duration were most popular in predominantly rural regions. Length of stay is an indicator of a destination's attractiveness and variety of activities. When Canadian tourists visited a predominantly rural region, 59 percent stayed one or more nights (Table 2). Many of these overnight visits were weekend visits<sup>3</sup>. When USA or overseas tourists visited a predominantly rural region, over 80 percent stayed one or more nights<sup>4</sup>. A larger share of Canadian and overseas tourists stayed for one or more nights in predominantly rural regions than in PUI regions.

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3. Almost as many Canadian tourist-visits were for two nights as for three to nine nights (30,400 and 33,700 respectively in 2002). It is assumed that the two night visits would be mainly weekend trips. Similar data for USA and overseas tourists is not available.

4. The visit duration for international tourists is more difficult to ascertain. Same-day automobile travellers from the USA to Canada would be expected to be high, but these tourist-visits are not included in these data. In this study, the same-day tourist visits reported by USA and overseas travellers are tourists who travelled from their primary tourist base to a different census division for a one-day visit.

**Table 2. Overseas and USA tourists were more likely than Canadian tourists to spend one or more nights when they visited a region in Canada, 2002**

	All tourist-visits			Canadian tourist-visits			USA tourist-visits			Overseas tourist-visits		
	One day	One or more nights	All tourist-visits	One day	One or more nights	All tourist-visits	One day	One or more nights	All tourist-visits	One day	One or more nights	All tourist-visits
	Percent distribution of tourist-visits by duration of visit											
Predominantly urban and intermediate (PUI) regions	44	56	100	50	50	100	17	83	100	19	81	100
Predominantly rural regions	38	62	100	41	59	100	19	81	100	14	86	100
<b>Canada</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Statistics Canada. Canadian Travel Survey, 2002; International Travel Survey, 2002.

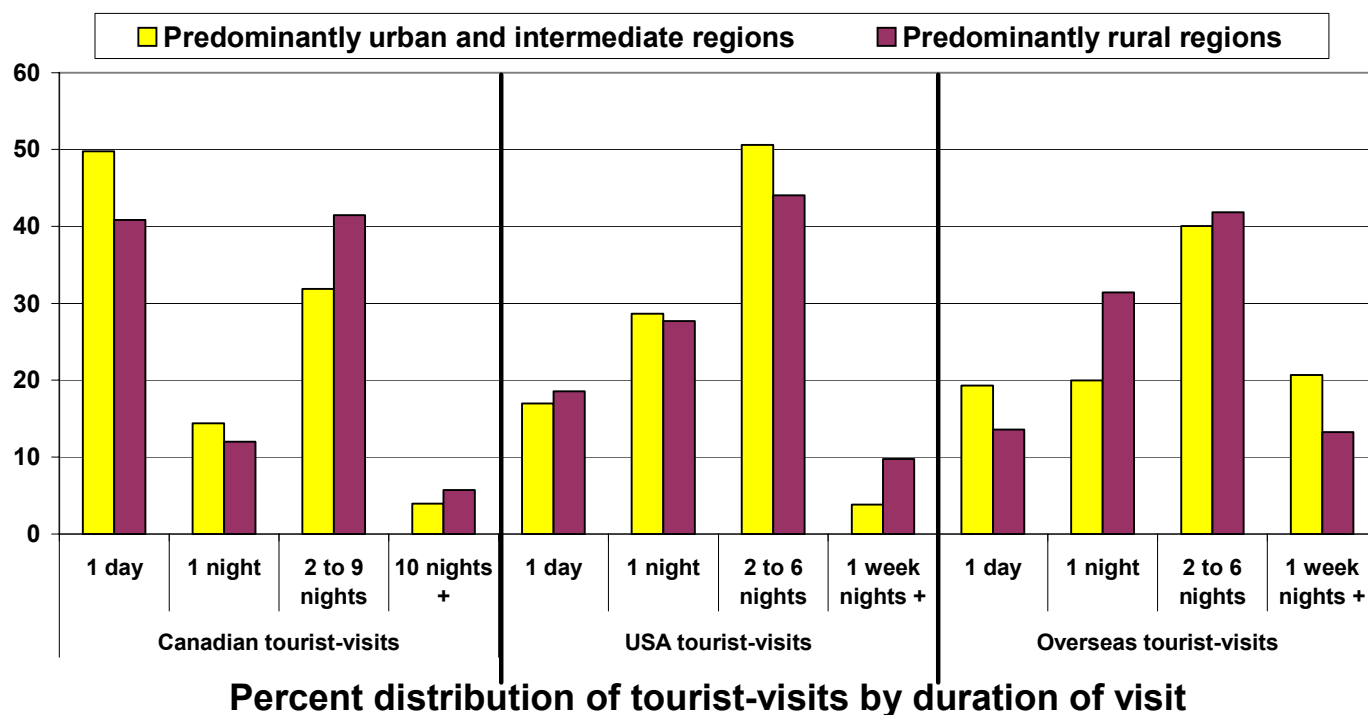
Tourists who had "not stated" a destination were excluded. This excludes 27 percent of one-day USA tourists without a stated destination; 8 percent of "1 or more nights" USA tourists without a stated destination; 20 percent of overseas tourist

A more detailed review of the duration of tourist-visits, that breaks out the overnight visits, shows that for Canadian tourists, about 4 out of 10 stayed only for one day and another 4 out of 10 stayed for two to nine nights (of which about half may be weekend visits) (Figure 10).

Overseas visitors were less likely to have reported a same day visit to a predominantly rural region,

but were more likely to have reported a one night visit in a predominantly rural region, compared to visiting a PUI region for the same length of stay. These were mainly tourists leaving their base census division and visiting another nearby census division and staying the night. Overseas tourists were also more likely to have reported visits of more than a week to both urban and rural regions, compared to the other tourists.

**Figure 10 The largest share of tourist-visits made by foreign tourists to predominantly rural regions was for 2 to 6 nights, 2002**



**Source:** Statistics Canada. Canadian Travel Survey, 2002; International Travel Survey, 2002.  
 For USA and overseas tourists, the category labelled "2 to 6" is two to six nights and it is two to nine nights for Canadian tourists.  
 For USA and overseas tourists, the category labelled "1 wk. +" is seven nights or more and it is 10 nights or more for Canadian tourists.  
 Tourists that had 'not stated' a destination region were excluded.

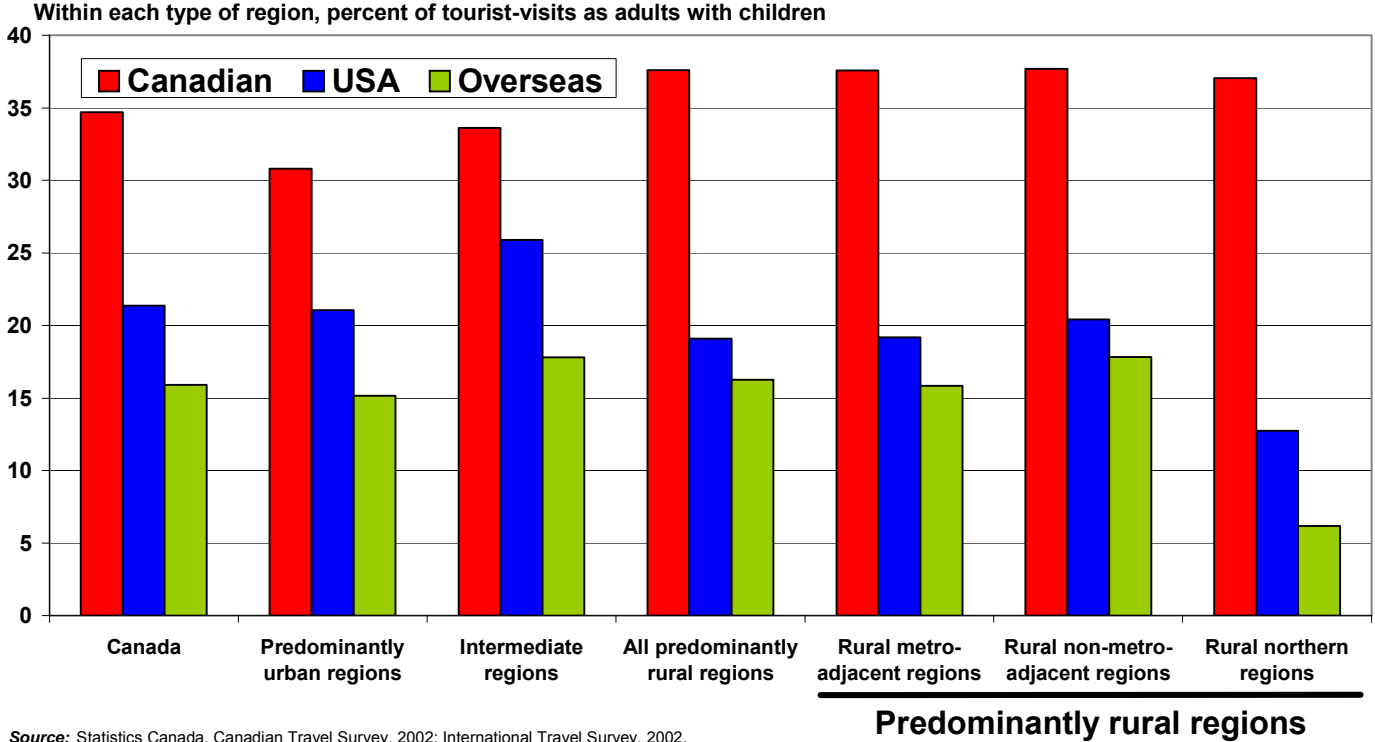
**While the majority of tourist-visits were by adults only, Canadians had the highest share of tourist-visits as adults with children**

Most tourist-visits were by tourists who travelled to the each type of region as adults only. For Canadians, 31 to 38 percent of tourist-visits were as adults with children, with predominantly rural regions seeing the greatest share (Figure 11). Overall, only about 20 percent of USA tourist-

visits were made by adults with children, and this share was only 13 percent in rural northern regions. About 16 percent of overseas tourist-visits were as adults with children – and this share was only 6 percent for overseas tourist-visits in rural northern regions. The higher share of Canadian tourist-visits with children would seem reasonable since it would seem easier for Canadian tourists to travel with children within their own country.

Figure 11

## In each region, 31 to 38 percent of Canadian tourist-visits were done as adults with children, 2002



### Conclusion

Most tourist-visits in Canada are by Canadians. Canadians accounted for 83 percent of all tourist-visits in 2002, followed by 12 percent by USA visitors and 5 percent by overseas visitors.

Predominantly rural regions attracted one-half of the tourist-visits by Canadians but a smaller share of USA tourist-visits (39 percent) and overseas tourist-visits (33 percent).

Canadian tourist-visits were made by somewhat younger tourists and USA tourist-visits were made by tourists that were somewhat older.

Importantly, tourist-visits divided into tourist age groups exhibited different patterns in terms of

their choice of tourism destination. Younger Canadians were marginally more likely to visit a predominantly rural region than older Canadians. However, older visitors from the USA were more likely to visit a predominantly rural region than a younger visitor from the USA. When these different patterns were sorted out two highlights were:

- among tourist-visits by younger tourists in predominantly rural regions, 95 percent were Canadians; however,
- among tourist-visits by older tourists in rural northern regions, 44 percent were from the USA.

Thus, somewhat small differences in the choice of tourism destination can cause a relatively large difference in the mix of tourist-visits seen in the receiving region.

Predominantly rural regions appear to receive, relatively, more tourism-visits compared to predominantly urban or intermediate regions. In predominantly rural regions, tourism-visits per resident were higher than for PUI regions.

Manitoba and British Columbia were unique in the sense that the share of tourist-visits to their predominantly rural regions was relatively high, compared to the relatively low share of the total population residing in predominantly rural regions. Both Manitoba and British Columbia differed in another way: International tourists generally followed the Canadian tourists' pattern of visiting PUI regions in central Canada and visiting predominantly rural regions in the rest of the provinces. However, in Manitoba and British Columbia international tourists did not follow this Canadian pattern of rural visits. International tourists mainly visited the predominantly urban and intermediate regions of these two provinces

Canadian tourist-visits were more likely to have been for a duration of only one day. Consequently, the expenditure per tourist-visit for Canadians was less than for USA or overseas tourist-visits, who tended to make longer tourist-visits.

Across both urban and rural regions, about 3 out of 10 Canadian tourist-visits were made by tourists travelling as adults with children. For USA and overseas travellers, only about 2 out of 10 tourist-visits were as adults with children.

Predominantly rural regions of Canada offer a large variety of experiences for Canadian as well as international tourists. When rural communities develop their economic strategies, tourism should be considered an important component. With almost half of total tourist-visits going to predominantly rural regions it is important for rural communities to understand tourists' expectations. This bulletin has documented some of the characteristics of this market. The average Canadian tourist-visit to a predominantly rural region was more likely to be done by an adult without children, willing to spend about \$100 per day on a day visit or a visit of two to nine nights. Tourist-visits made by USA tourists were more likely to be made by older adults, who visited for a longer duration and spent about twice as much money as Canadians. Tourist-visits made by overseas tourists were of longer duration and money spending was three to four times more per visit, compared to Canadian tourists. Given these tourist patterns there is still a need to investigate niche markets for other promising groups: seniors, international youth and adults with children.

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<b>Appendix Table A1. Distribution of tourist-visits by destination, showing impact of tourist-visits without a stated destination, Canada, 2002</b>					
	<b>Predominantly urban and intermediate regions</b>	<b>Predominantly rural regions</b>	<b>Subtotal, tourist-visits with a stated destination</b>	<b>Tourist-visits without a stated destination</b>	<b>All tourist-visits</b>
<b>Percent of tourist-visits, for tourist-visits with a stated destination</b>					
Canada	50	50	100	...	...
USA	61	39	100	...	...
Overseas	67	33	100	...	...
Total	52	48	100	...	...
<b>Percent of tourist-visits, for tourist-visits without a stated destination</b>					
Canada	50	49	99	1	100
USA	53	35	88	12	100
Overseas	61	31	92	8	100
Total	51	47	98	2	100

Source: Statistics Canada. Canadian Travel Survey, 2002; International Travel Survey, 2002.

... Not applicable

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