Prior to the pandemic, the U.S. travel industry experienced 10 straight years of growth due to the strength of the domestic leisure travel, domestic business travel and international inbound travel segments. Travel was a significant economic driver in every region of the country, representing 1 in 10 jobs and generating a travel trade surplus.

**TODAY, TRAVEL REMAINS THE HARDEST-HIT INDUSTRY, WITH AN UNEVEN RECOVERY ACROSS ALL SECTORS**

- In 2021, domestic business travel spending remained 56% below 2019 levels and international travel spending remained 78% below 2019 levels
- The U.S. travel industry suffered unparalleled losses amid the COVID-19 pandemic
- While domestic leisure is thriving, the recovery remains uneven across other travel sectors. Domestic business travel and international inbound travel spending remain severely depressed, dragging the overall industry’s recovery
- We not only need to get back to pre-pandemic levels but also make up for years of losses. While we are years away from returning to 2019 levels, the right policies can return us to the trajectory of growth

**THE LOSS IN TRAVEL SPENDING HAD A DRASTIC EFFECT ON AMERICAN JOBS***

- One third of the 9 million direct travel jobs (3 million jobs) were lost at the onset of the pandemic in 2020 and 2.3 million travel jobs remained lost in 2021 (staying at 75% of pre-pandemic levels)
- Direct travel jobs that were generated by business travel suffered more than those generated by leisure
- Business travel jobs declined to just 26% of pre-pandemic levels in 2020 and remained at 29% in 2021; 1.4 million jobs remained lost
- Leisure travel jobs declined to 77% of pre-pandemic levels in 2020 and remained at 87% in 2021; 900,000 million jobs remained lost

**TRAVEL ALWAYS PRODUCES AN ECONOMIC FOOTPRINT THAT FAR EXCEEDS DIRECT SPENDING**

*All data here reflects direct travel jobs. This differs from the Leisure & Hospitality (L&H) data, released by the government, that we share each month. Travel jobs include industries beyond L&H such as transportation. On the other hand, L&H also includes leisure activities or dining that are not travel related. Please see [this fact sheet](#) for more info on this distinction.*

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**U.S. TRAVEL ANSWER SHEET**

**Updated March 2022**

**Total 2-year direct travel spending losses throughout the end of 2021.**

$755 billion

**Sources of Travel**

- **Food Services**
  - 2019 ($1.2T)
  - 2021 ($0.9T)
  - $261B (22%)
  - $238B

- **Lodging**
  - 2019 ($0.9T)
  - 2021 ($0.9T)
  - $237B (20%)
  - $206B

- **Public Transportation**
  - 2019 ($1.2T)
  - 2021 ($0.9T)
  - $223B (19%)
  - $125B

- **Auto Transportation**
  - 2019 ($1.2T)
  - 2021 ($0.9T)
  - $156B (13%)
  - $136B

- **Recreation**
  - 2019 ($1.2T)
  - 2021 ($0.9T)
  - $111B (10%)
  - $79B

- **Retail**
  - 2019 ($1.2T)
  - 2021 ($0.9T)
  - $129B (11%)
  - $92B

- **Travel Planning**
  - 2019 ($1.2T)
  - 2021 ($0.9T)
  - $56B (5%)
  - $34B

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**Economic Impact**

- **Traveler Spending**
  - 2019: $1.2 trillion
  - 2020: $680 billion
  - 2021: $910 billion

- **Economic Output**
  - 2019: $2.6 trillion
  - 2020: $1.5 billion
  - 2021: $2.0 billion

- **American Jobs Supported**
  - 2019: 16.7 million
  - 2020: 11.1 million
  - 2021: 12.0 million

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**Updated March 2022**

**U.S. Travel Association**

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