



This summer edition of our newsletter, will focus on **the increased demand for experiences that demonstrate action on reducing the impacts of tourism** and how tourism partners can play their part, as well as **understanding the renewed importance of Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE) for the local tourism economy.**

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Regenerative and Responsible Travel is Here to Stay

The growing concerns on the effects of climate change and mass tourism during the last decades are starting to influence travel behaviours of travellers across the globe, mainly leading travel consumers to choose specific destinations and travel brands that best align with values aiming to minimize the negative impact of tourism. Travel purposes are changing, also fueled by the COVID-19 pandemic causing a surge of self-reflection on life choices.

In 2022, myriad sources, scenarios, and forecasts show evidence that regenerative travel will support tourism as a key pillar for sustainable economic development for destinations. Consumers are demanding their travel experience to be sustainable and are willing to pay a premium to reduce their impact – Up to 83% of global travellers will make sustainable travel a priority in the future, while 66% want their travel spending to directly benefit local communities.

EMERGING TRENDS AND THE REDEFINED TRAVELER

How Can Tourism Partners Support?

Research from Twenty31 Consulting shows that destinations betting on nature-based products and activities will take market share from urban destinations that fail to pivot, while giving tourism leadership to the local community will be a

differentiator in the global market. Moreover, ecotourism is no longer a niche, but is now mainstream. Operators will need to strive for transparency and offer clearly defined sustainable products and experiences.

In this sense, the whole tourism value chain, from airlines, to cruises, hotels, and experiences, as well as DMOs, are making commitments to preserve destinations from an environmental and social perspective, as ultimately consumers are demanding their travel experience to be sustainable and are willing to pay a premium to reduce their impact.

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How Are Destinations Attracting MICE Travel Post-COVID?

Meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions (MICE) travel is slowly returning to a growth path, after being the most devastated tourism vertical by the pandemic. Despite business travel will not return to previous volume in the short-term, face-to-face meetings remain of key value, with 72% of business travellers being eager to travel and reconnect. Furthermore, there is a significant opportunity for local tourism economies to capitalize on the growing trend to combine business travel with stay extensions for holiday purposes, giving destinations a wider range of touchpoints to engage with this traveller segment.

However, a clear strategy must be designed by destinations wanting to diversify their tourism economy and attract main meetings and events to overcome these most common challenges:

- Difficulty analyzing markets to forecast and predict industry trends and demand
- Challenges in cross-promoting in-person and virtual events during hybrid programs
- Difficulty attracting consumers from key market segments to MICE events
- Falling behind in competing with other MICE destinations for foot traffic
- Have a confusing or unclear online footprint for MICE program
- Predicting return on investment for MICE events

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Canada's National Meetings Strategy is Driving

Regional Economic Growth

A [joint report](#) developed by Business Events Canada and Skift, profiles 10 Canadian DMOs, spanning many different sizes, budgets and governance models, and how they're adapting their business event sourcing strategy with that of Business Events Canada's strategy. It also explores how those organizations are collaborating more intentionally and strategically with the national organization to elevate their city on the world stage. Critical to this inquiry, Skift approached each DMO with questions about how meetings and events in high-growth sectors are helping drive long-term economic development in their local clusters. While this is challenging to quantify, because of the length of time that those legacy impacts take to gestate, every city stated that bringing conferences in their clusters to engage local leaders is clearly a pipeline for accelerating job growth, attracting outside talent and investment, and developing increasing levels of local expertise.

RTO9 News

Celebrate, Rejuvenate, Thrive!

We're happy to announce that the RTO 9 Tourism Summit and AGM will be back and in-person this year!

Date: Friday, September 9th 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM

Hear about the exciting strategic changes under way at RTO 9. We're going to weigh in on the tourism scene over the past year as we focus on rebuilding tourism to be even bigger and better than before! So, to get a head start, save your seat below.

[SAVE YOUR SEAT](#)



Navigating 2SLGBTQ+ Diversity & Inclusion in the Tourism Industry

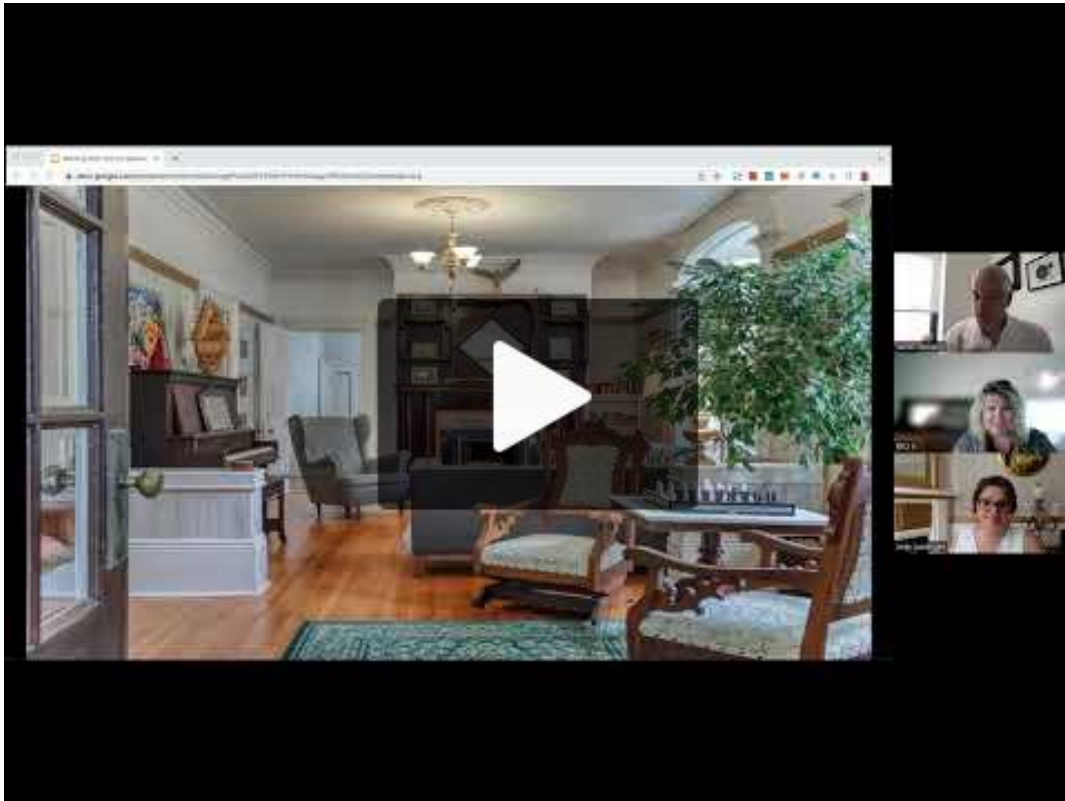
RTO 9 - Kingston
June 1st, 2022



Navigating 2SLGBTQ+ Diversity & Inclusion in the Tourism Industry

Learn how your business can become more inclusive to one of the world's largest travel markets by addressing the needs of both your internal team who identify as LGBT+ as well as potential LGBT+ customers.

[VIEW THE PRESENTATION](#)



Working With Tourism Operators to Build Multi-Day Experiences

Curious about what working with a packaged tour operator looks like? Watch this Webinar featuring Jason Sarracini, founder & CEO Landsby, to learn why packaged travel is more popular than ever!

We also monitor and share key market trends to help you respond strategically on our [COVID-19 resource page on our website.](#)

Market Insights

Top Inbound Tourism Markets Snapshot

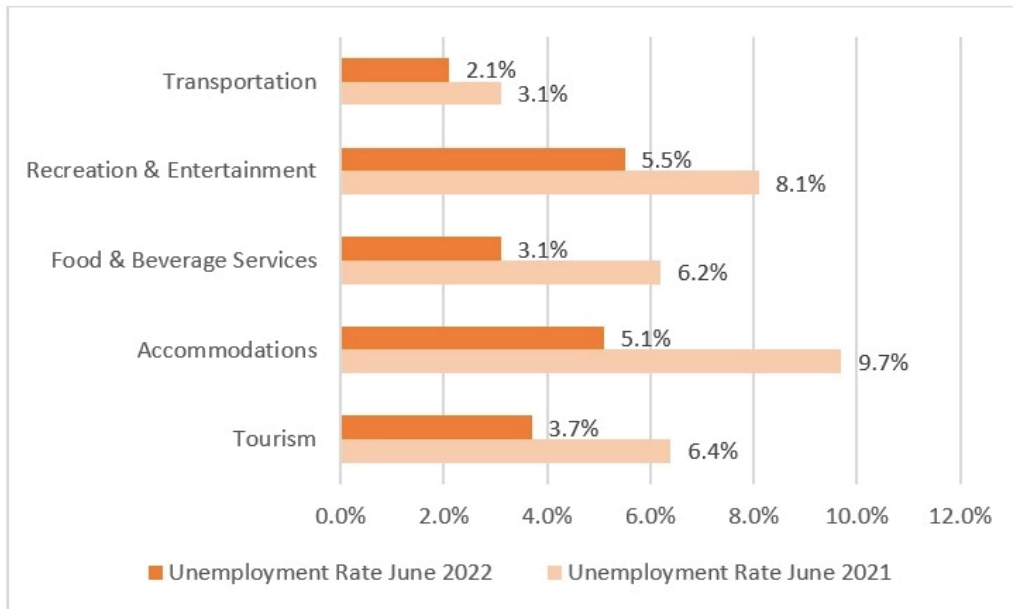
[Destination Canada's Global Tourism Watch](#) provides consumer-based intelligence on top markets around the world, and in Canada. Here are last

update's highlights from end-2021, including top source markets:

- US: with a potential market size of 60.5M travellers willing to visit Canada in the next 2 years (12.2M of these from border states), the US represents the top inbound market for Canada, as the country ranks first as top-of-mind international destination for US travellers (together with Mexico). In fact, 30% of US travel consumers are considering Canada as their holiday destination in the next 2 years, with Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia as top choices.
- UK: 6.2M British travel consumers are considering visiting Canada in the next 2 years, being Canada the 2nd top-of-mind long-haul destination – only after the US. More than a third (39%) of British travellers would consider visiting the country in the next 2 years, mainly Ontario and British Columbia.
- France: The French market also accounts for 6.2M potential visitors in the next 2 years, with Canada being the most popular long-haul destination to visit (together with the US). Almost half (44%) of French travellers would consider Canada for a vacation within the next years, with special interest in Quebec.
- Germany: the potential market size of the German travel market for Canada is 5.7M consumers. German travellers would consider Canada as their next long-haul destination in the 2nd place together with Thailand (and after the US), with 36% of travel consumers seriously considering taking a vacation in the country in the near future. Similar to the British, Ontario and British Columbia are the most popular provinces.

Overall, travellers from all markets above are ready to travel again, placing it as their top spending priority during this year. While previously the highest barrier to visit Canada was health risks, currently cost ranks as number one. Summer remains the most popular season to visit Canada for all markets, except for French travellers preferring late spring. Finally, outdoor activities remain the key tourism appeal for Canada across markets.

Tourism Unemployment Rates by Industry, June 2022 vs. June 2021 (seasonally unadjusted)



Tourism HR Canada Monthly Tourism Snapshot

Tourism HR Canada provides a monthly [Jobs and Employment Report](#). For the latest release covering June 2022, here are the key highlights:

- The tourism sector is faced with persistent labour market volatility at a time when stakeholders are entering the summer tourism season with hopes of rebounding from unprecedented labour shortages exacerbated by the COVID-19 global pandemic.
- However, tourism's unemployment rate for June 2022 (seasonally unadjusted) continues to improve from that of the year prior (from 6.4% to 3.7%).
- Compared to pre-pandemic data from June 2019, the tourism labour force has shed nearly 250,000 participants and 211,000 fewer workers are employed in the sector - not only are there fewer tourism employees than in June 2019, but are working fewer hours.
- Ontario's tourism labour force unemployment rate is lower than the total labour force (4.3% vs. 5.2%), which is attributed to a rise in full-time employment, as part-time employment saw a significant decline.

Workforce Development



Smart Serve Recertification

On July 1, 2022, the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO) approved Smart Serve Recertification every 5 years. With an ever-changing landscape this will ensure that your employees and you are kept current.

Join Caitlyn Drexler, TIAO's Policy & Research Officer, and Richard Anderson, Executive Director, Smart Serve, in conversation on **August 9, 2022 at 2pm (ET)**.

Due to the recent changes to the liquor framework in Ontario, all existing Smart Serve certificate holders will be impacted as of July 1, 2022. As such, TIAO is hosting a free webinar to outline some of the new regulations, highlight the new Liquor License and Control Act (LLCA), and how you will be impacted by these changes. The session will also include a Q&A component where you will have an opportunity to ask any questions that you may have.

[LEARN MORE & REGISTER](#)

Propel Student Work Placement Program

Aimed squarely at the tourism and hospitality sector, the Propel Student Work Placement Program is helping the industry recover from the devastating impacts of the pandemic.

Funded by the [Government of Canada's Student Work Placement Program](#), Propel offers post-secondary students opportunities to develop the work-ready skills required to secure meaningful employment upon graduation. Qualifying employers are provided with a wage subsidy for each qualifying student hired through the program.

Learn more by [registering here](#) for the next info session on **August 18, 2022 at 1pm (ET)** or [watch a recording](#) of a previous info session, which includes an overview of the eligibility criteria and application process.

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Featured Operators/ Destinations



Inaugural Regional Tourism Destination Strategy for the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville

A new regional tourism strategy for the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville has been developed with direct input from industry stakeholders. Implementation is moving forward immediately with branding, product, and experience development.

“The tourism and hospitality sector is a significant part of our regional economy,” said Ann Weir, economic development manager for the counties. “It has been hit very hard by the pandemic and this new plan will help this sector recover while identifying future opportunities for growth,” said Weir.

This new strategy incorporates several plans: destination management; destination development; destination marketing; communication and actions. The research also identified the brand value of the Thousand Islands and Rideau Canal in the tourism marketplace. Going forward, all tourism marketing and promotional materials will utilize the brand Thousand Islands and Rideau Canal Waterways. The report also identified the importance of incorporating tourism products from all municipalities in the development of experiential routes throughout the region.

Download the full [tourism strategy report here.](#)

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Media Spotlight

Appointment of Five Members of the Board of Directors of Destination Canada

On June 28, 2022, the Honourable Randy Boissonnault, Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance announced the appointment of four new members of Destination Canada's Board of Directors as well as the reappointment of a current member on the Board of Directors:

- The appointments of Brenda Holder, Benjamin Ryan, Martin Soucy, Natalie Thiesen and Julie D Canning provide further industry knowledge, insight and diverse experience to the existing board.
- Patti Balsillie and Patricia Macdonald, whose terms have expired, are exiting the board.

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Canada's Tourism Renaissance: New National Strategy for Recovery

Destination Canada has published its corporate strategy entitled Canada's Tourism Renaissance. This summary highlights Destination Canada's work to support the 225,000 small and medium-sized tourism businesses across Canada and their communities.

Destination Canada's focus is on driving sector recovery from the pandemic, while having the responsibility to plan and take action for an even better future. This strategy lays out a 3-year plan for recovery from 2022-2025.

The long-term strategy for driving future sector growth and resilience over the next decade in support of the new Federal Tourism Growth Strategy is expected

to be released later this year by the Honourable Randy Boissonnault, Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance.

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Pope Francis Apologizes for Forced Assimilation of Indigenous Children at Residential Schools

In an event in a First Nation community in central Alberta, Pope Francis apologized for members of the Catholic Church who co-operated with Canada's "devastating" policy of Indigenous residential schools.

He said the forced assimilation of Indigenous peoples into Christian society destroyed their cultures, severed their families and marginalized generations in ways still being felt today. "I humbly beg forgiveness for the evil committed by so many Christians against the Indigenous peoples" Francis told thousands of Indigenous people, including many survivors, who converged on Maskwacis, Alberta, about 100 kilometres south of Edmonton.

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Ontario Cities and Towns Offering Financial Incentives to Visitors

As more COVID-19 restrictions ease, tourism in Ontario is showing a positive performance, and now some cities and towns are offering benefits and rebates to tourists to encourage them to stay overnight this summer.

The discounts are in addition to the 2022 provincial Staycation Tax Credit, which will allow Ontario travellers to get a 20 per cent personal income tax credit on eligible accommodation between January 1 and December 31, up to a maximum of \$1,000 for an individual and \$2,000 for a family, for a maximum credit of \$200 or \$400 respectively. Among these, various hotels in Kingston are offering \$100 VISA gift cards, as well as other perks like prepaid gas cards to cover fuel expenses.

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Opportunities

Jobs for Ukraine

We would like to share the attached PDF outlining the tools available to Canadians looking to support the settlement of displaced Ukrainians. In particular, we'd like to highlight the [Jobs for Ukraine portal](#).

[LEARN MORE](#)



'Safe Travels' Stamp Application

The specially designed stamp will allow travellers and other Travel & Tourism stakeholders to recognise destination authorities and companies around the world that have implemented health and hygiene protocols that are aligned with WTTC's Global Safe Travels Protocols.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Every month, we'll be sending you the latest insights, research and thoughtful perspectives on the issues that matter most to tourism businesses and operators in RTO 9.

If there are any topics you want to read about in a future newsletter, please email imedeiros@region9tourism.com with your ideas.

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