

2025

Economic Impact of Visitors to Iowa



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Introduction

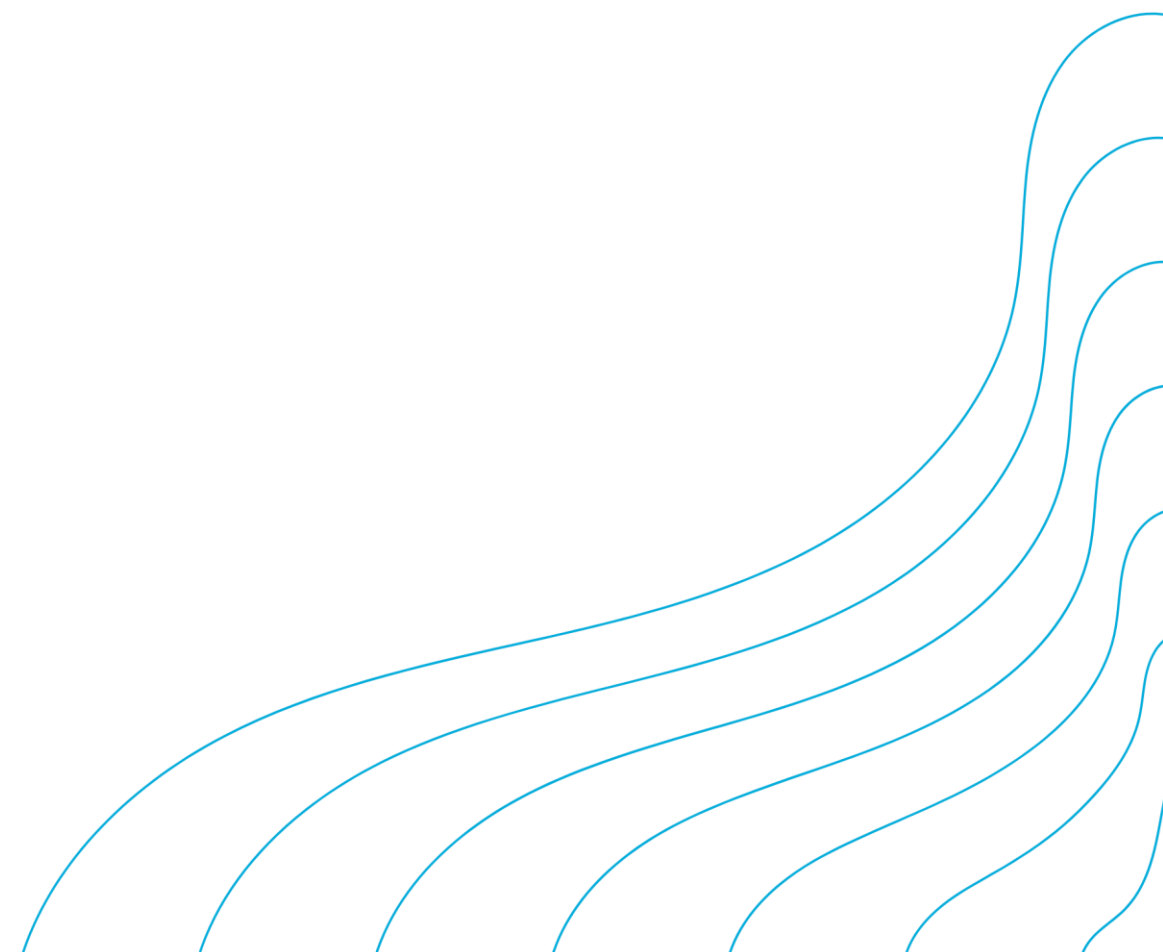
Visitors are integral to Iowa's economy, generating significant financial benefits for residents and local businesses. Visitor activity also produces substantial tax revenue that supports government services.

Credible measurements of the visitor economy are designed to inform policy decisions that foster the sector's development.

To quantify the significance of Iowa's visitor economy, Tourism Economics developed a comprehensive analysis of visitor spending and its total economic impact on businesses, employment, personal income, and taxes. At a high level, our approach includes the following stages:

- Compilation of visitor statistics
- Compilation of industry data
- Compilation of government data
- Analysis of visitor spending by category
- Economic impact modeling

KEY FINDINGS



Key Findings

Visitors Generate Significant Economic Impact

In 2025, 46.3 million visitors spent \$7.6 billion in the Iowa economy, generating a total economic impact of \$11.3 billion.



46.3M VISITORS TO IOWA



\$7.6B VISITOR SPENDING



\$11.3B TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT



\$2.6B TOTAL PERSONAL INCOME



72,196 TOTAL JOBS SUPPORTED



\$1.2B STATE AND LOCAL TAXES



Results in Context

The visitor economy is an economic pillar in Iowa. In 2025, visitor spending supported one-in-18 jobs in Iowa. In addition:



\$7.6B VISITOR SPENDING

Visitors spent \$20.8 million per day, on average, in Iowa.



\$2.6B PERSONAL INCOME

The \$2.6 billion in total income generated by the visitor economy is the equivalent of \$1,947 for every occupied household in Iowa.



72,196 JOBS

The visitor economy sustained 5.5% of all jobs in Iowa. These employees could fill Kinnick Stadium.

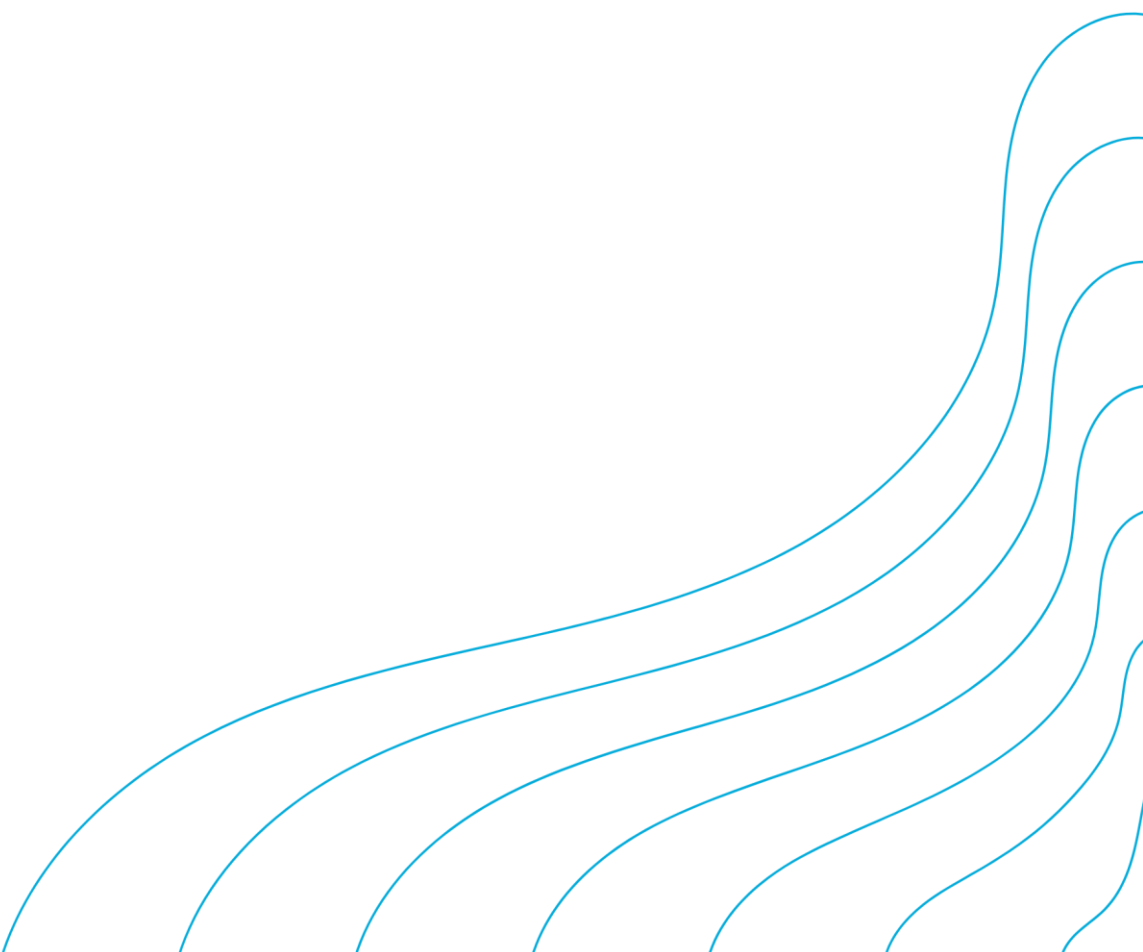


\$1.2B TOTAL STATE & LOCAL TAXES

Each household in Iowa would need to be taxed an additional \$885 to replace the visitor-generated taxes received by state and local governments in 2025.



VISITOR VOLUME & SPENDING



Iowa welcomed **46.3 million** visitors who spent **\$7.6 billion** in 2025.



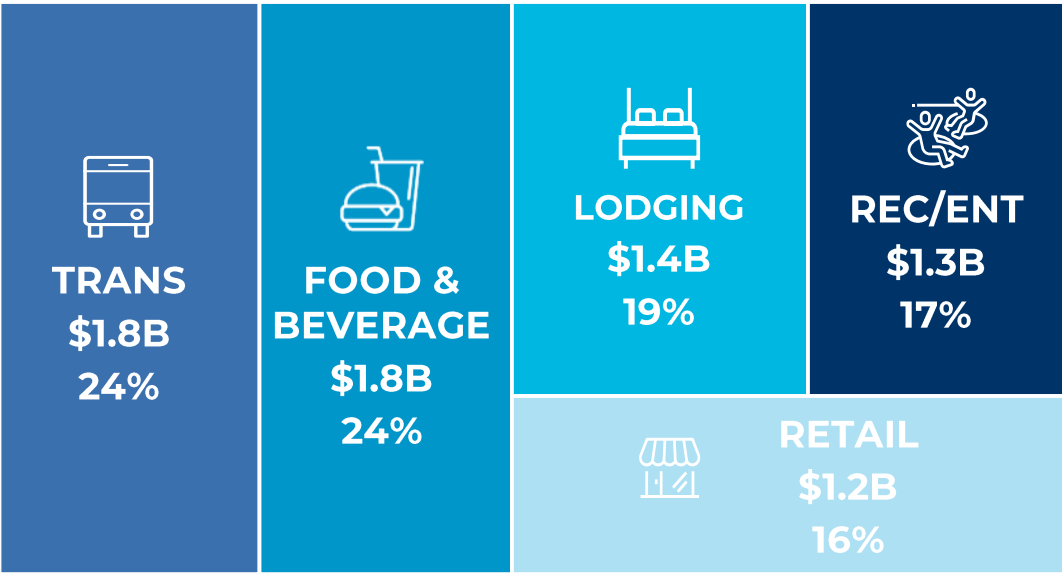
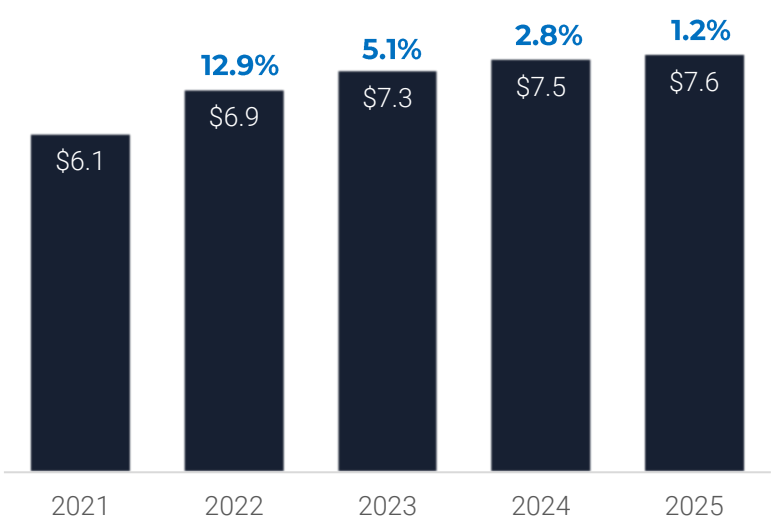
Visitor Spending

Visitor spending increased 1.2% in 2025, reaching \$7.6 billion. Of the \$7.6 billion spent, transportation spending accounted for \$1.8 billion—24% of all visitor spending.

Food and beverage purchases also represented 24% of total visitor spending, \$1.8 billion.

Iowa Visitor Spending

\$ billions



Source: Tourism Economics

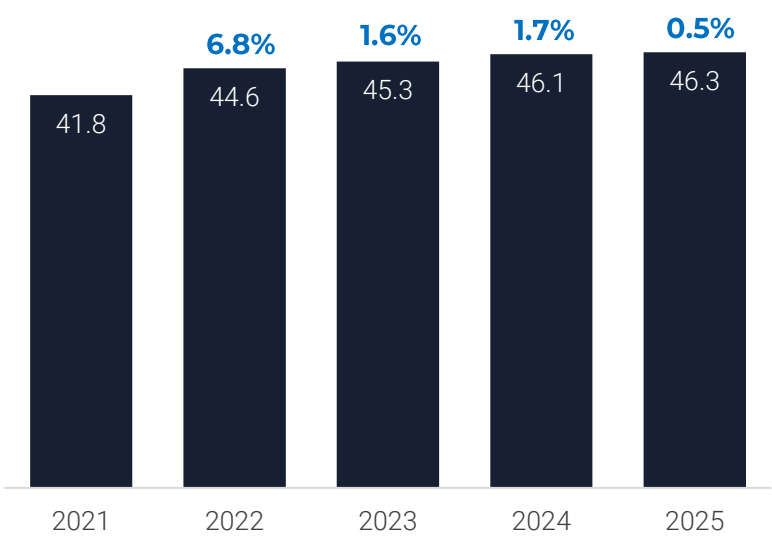
Note: Lodging includes all accommodation types, and transportation includes both ground and air transportation.

Visitor Volume

In 2025, 46.3 million visitors traveled to Iowa, an increase of 0.5% compared to the previous year.

Iowa Visitor Volume

millions



Source: Tourism Economics

Visitor Volume & Spending Trends

Visitor spending in Iowa increased 1.2% to \$7.6 billion in 2025, with gains across most spending categories. As visitor volume remained essentially flat, spending growth was primarily price-driven.

Spending on food and beverage led growth, rising 3.4% in 2025. Retail and recreation spending grew 2.5% and 2.1%, respectively, while lodging grew more modestly at 1.3%. Despite an increase in air transportation spending, lower gas prices drove a 2.4% decline in spending on transportation.

Iowa Visitor Spending

\$ millions

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2025 Growth
Total visitor spending	\$6,148	\$6,939	\$7,289	\$7,492	\$7,579	1.2%
Transportation	\$1,615	\$1,834	\$1,888	\$1,889	\$1,843	-2.4%
Food and beverage	\$1,369	\$1,530	\$1,676	\$1,745	\$1,805	3.4%
Lodging	\$1,137	\$1,337	\$1,397	\$1,432	\$1,450	1.3%
Entertainment and recreation	\$959	\$1,114	\$1,176	\$1,237	\$1,263	2.1%
Retail	\$1,067	\$1,124	\$1,152	\$1,189	\$1,219	2.5%

Source: Tourism Economics

Note: Lodging includes all accommodation types, and transportation includes both ground and air transportation.

In 2025, overall visitor volume expanded 0.5% over the previous year to reach 46.3 million visitors. Overnight visits led growth with a 0.6% increase, bringing the total to 22.3 million visitors. Day-trip growth was slightly weaker at 0.4%, climbed to 24.1 million visitors—holding a dominant 51.9% share of total volume.

Iowa Visitor Volume, by Segment

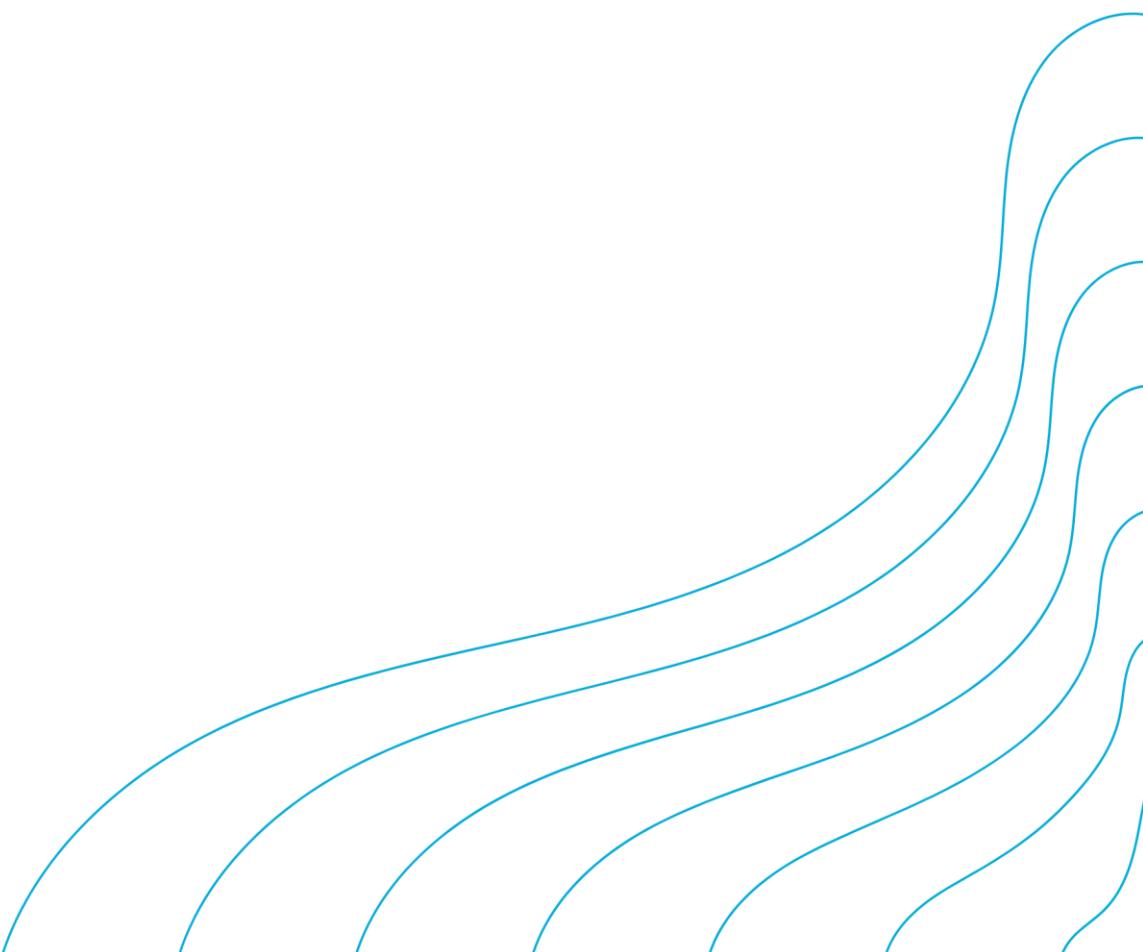
millions

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2025 Growth
Total visitor volume	41.8	44.6	45.3	46.1	46.3	0.5%
Day	20.9	22.3	22.9	24.0	24.1	0.4%
Overnight	20.8	22.3	22.4	22.1	22.3	0.6%

Source: Tourism Economics



ECONOMIC IMPACT METHODOLOGY



Economic Impact Methodology

The development of visitor economy impact modeling begins with a comprehensive demand-side analysis. Visitor survey data provides estimates on the volume of visitors by type and their spending in specific industries (e.g., lodging, restaurants, retail, recreation and entertainment, transportation). These estimates are strengthened through an analysis of industry-specific data sets on the lodging industry, aviation, and sectoral-level business sales. Government data, including taxes by type, as well as employment and personal income by industry, are used to supplement and confirm demand-side visitor spending calculations.

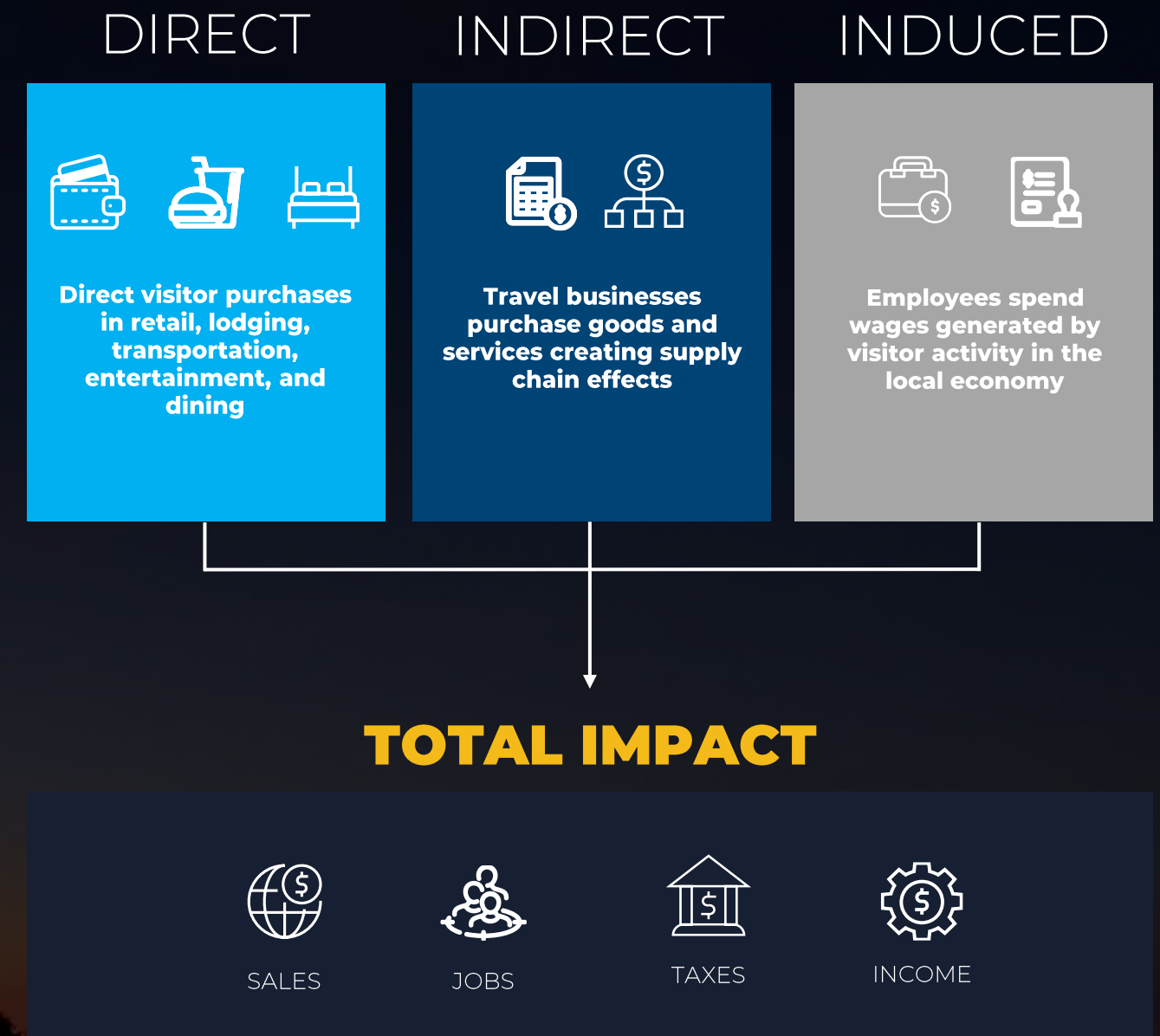
This provides a detailed profile of visitor spending by industry, which is then connected to a local input-output (I-O) economic impact model constructed within the IMPLAN platform. This uses government (Bureau of Economic Analysis and Census) data to trace the flow of visitor spending through the local economy and its effects on businesses, households, and government. The model quantifies three levels of impact:

- 1. Direct impacts:** Visitor spending creates direct economic value within a defined set of sectors. This supports a proportion of spending, jobs, wages, and taxes within each sector.
- 2. Indirect impacts:** Businesses providing direct services to visitors purchase goods and services, generating additional impacts called indirect impacts or supply-chain effects.
- 3. Induced impacts:** Additional business activity is generated as employees spend incomes locally that are earned due to visitor activity. This is called the induced impact or income effect.

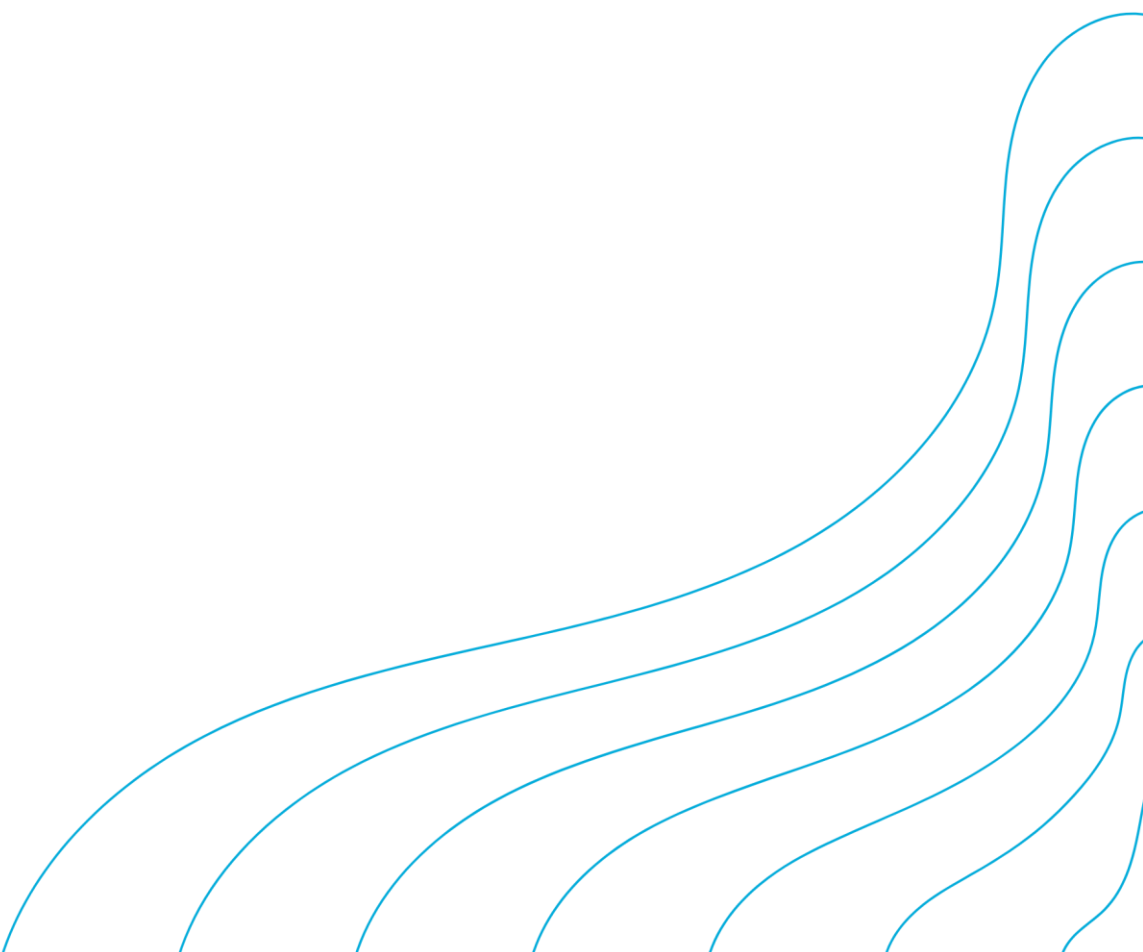
The model calculates these three levels of impact—direct, indirect, and induced—for the following metrics:

- Spending
- Wages
- Employment
- Federal Taxes
- State Taxes
- Local Taxes

Economic Impact Model



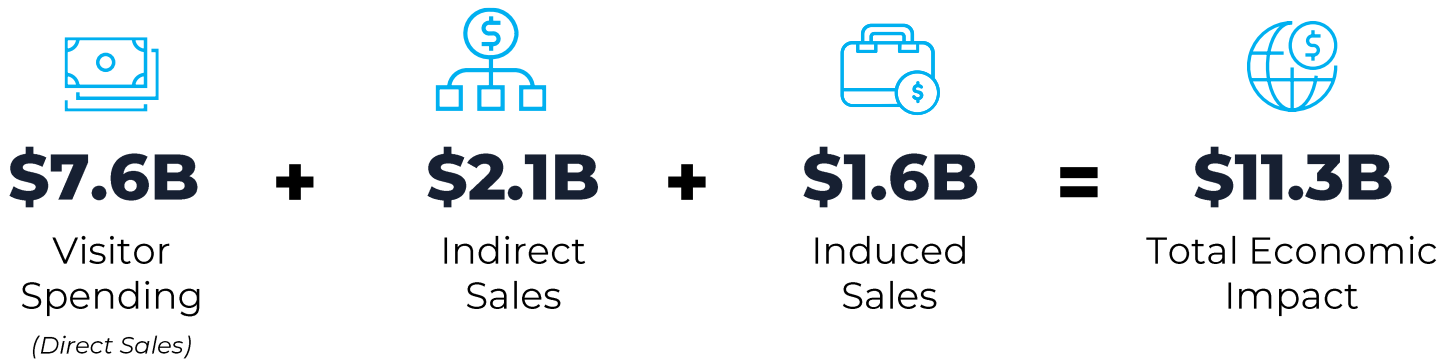
ECONOMIC IMPACT



Business Sales Impacts

Direct business sales totaled \$7.6 billion in Iowa in 2025. These direct impacts generated an additional \$3.7 billion through supply chain (indirect) and income (induced) effects.

As a result, the total economic impact of visitors reached \$11.3 billion.



Business Sales by Industry (2025)

\$ millions

	Direct Business Sales	Indirect Business Sales	Induced Business Sales	Total Business Sales
Total, all industries	\$7,579	\$2,150	\$1,589	\$11,318
Food and beverage	\$1,805	\$118	\$117	\$2,040
Lodging	\$1,383	\$0	\$0	\$1,383
Retail trade	\$1,219	\$31	\$132	\$1,382
Finance, insurance, and real estate	\$67	\$488	\$504	\$1,058
Recreation and entertainment	\$923	\$76	\$30	\$1,029
Gasoline stations	\$960	\$3	\$10	\$973
Other transport	\$659	\$192	\$41	\$892
Business services	\$237	\$512	\$117	\$867
Education and health care		\$14	\$279	\$293
Personal services	\$103	\$73	\$101	\$277
Communications		\$192	\$71	\$263
Construction and utilities		\$209	\$53	\$262
Air transport	\$224	\$3	\$3	\$230
Wholesale trade		\$88	\$66	\$154
Manufacturing		\$82	\$38	\$120
Government		\$53	\$17	\$70
Agriculture, fishing, and mining		\$14	\$9	\$23

Source: Tourism Economics

Visitor spending generated a total economic impact of **\$11.3 billion** across Iowa.

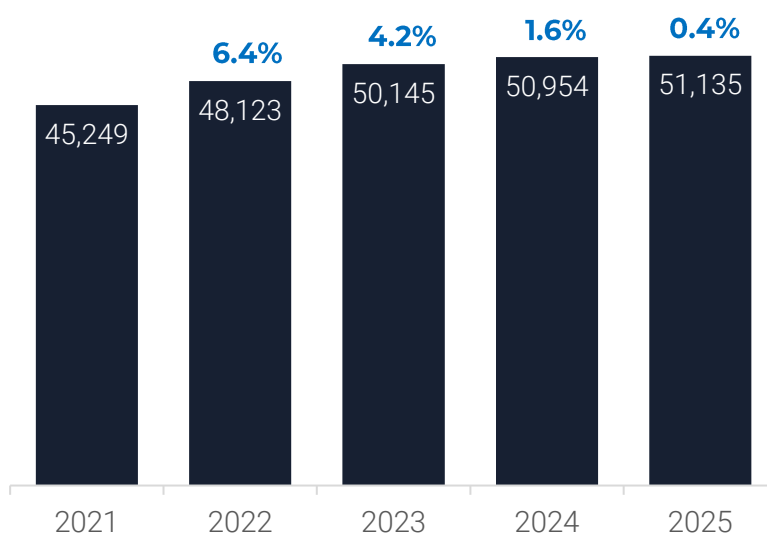


Direct Employment

Employment directly supported by visitor activity reached 51,135 jobs in Iowa in 2025, up 0.4% over the previous year.

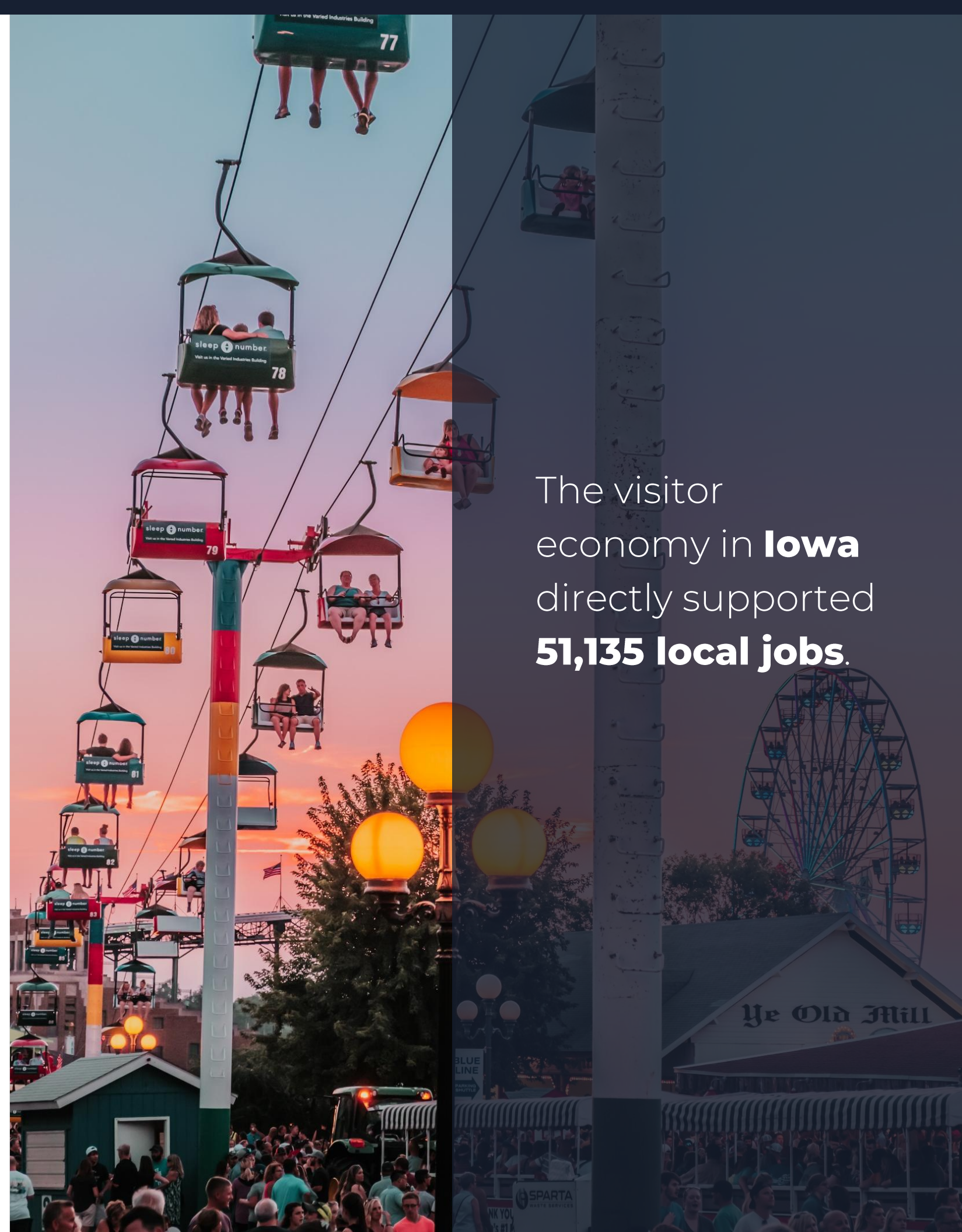
Overall, direct tourism jobs accounted for 3.9% of all jobs in Iowa in 2025.

Visitor-Supported Employment in Iowa
jobs



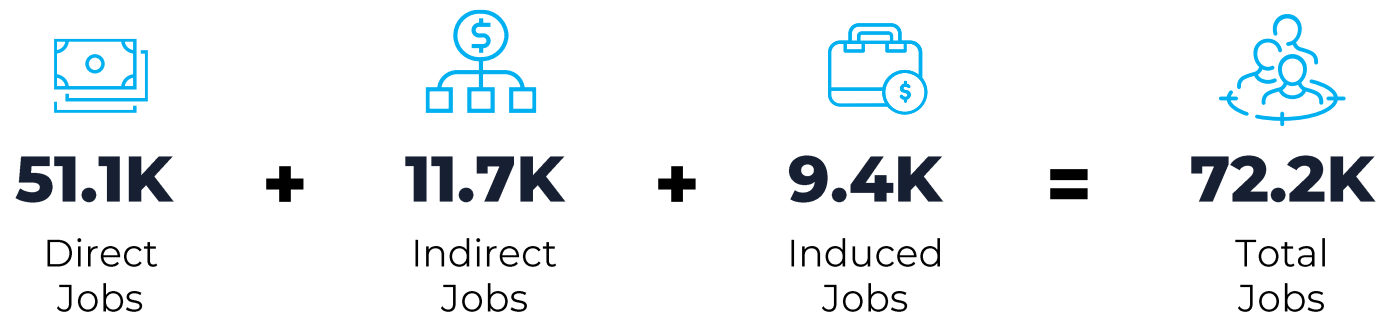
Source: Tourism Economics

The visitor economy in **Iowa** directly supported **51,135 local jobs.**



Employment Impacts

Visitor activity sustained 51,135 direct jobs in 2025, with an additional 21,061 jobs supported by the indirect and induced impacts of visitor activity. Total employment impacts tallied 72,196 in 2025, translating to one-in-18 jobs in Iowa.



Employment by Industry (2025)

jobs

	Direct Jobs	Indirect Jobs	Induced Jobs	Total Jobs
Total, all industries	51,135	11,698	9,363	72,196
Food and beverage	18,193	1,652	1,535	21,380
Lodging	14,044	2	3	14,049
Recreation and entertainment	6,178	931	354	7,464
Retail trade	5,026	295	1,387	6,709
Business services	1,145	3,227	772	5,143
Personal services	2,265	717	1,019	4,001
Other transport	1,622	1,462	307	3,392
Finance, insurance, and real estate	618	1,755	966	3,340
Education and health care		143	2,336	2,478
Gasoline stations	1,700	25	94	1,819
Communications		408	135	544
Wholesale trade		251	176	427
Construction and utilities		291	96	387
Air transport	343	8	8	358
Government		286	70	356
Manufacturing		198	77	275
Agriculture, fishing, and mining		45	29	75

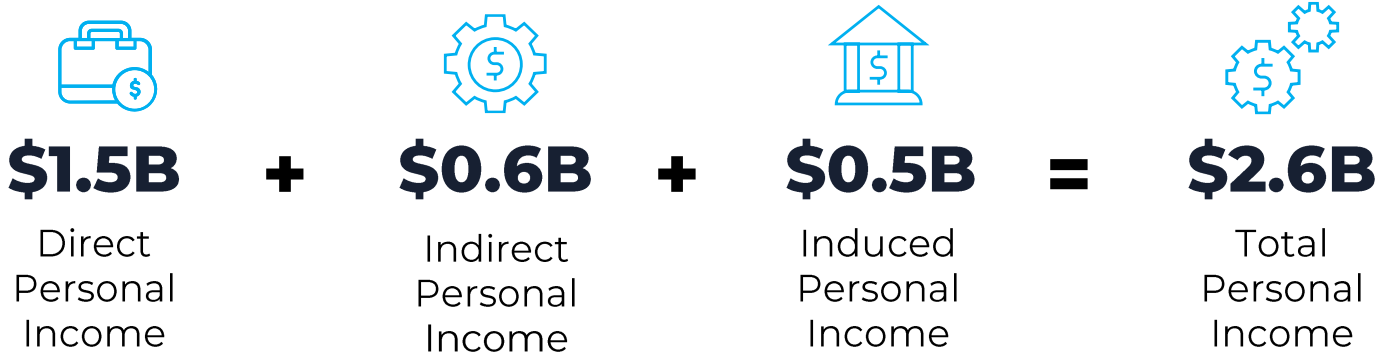
Source: Tourism Economics

Visitor spending supported **one-in-18 jobs** in Iowa, including nearly 21,400 in the food and beverage industry.



Personal Income Impacts

Visitor activity generated \$1.5 billion in direct personal income in 2025. Including \$1.1 billion in indirect and induced impacts, employees received \$2.6 billion in personal income.



Personal Income by Industry (2025)

\$ millions

	Direct Personal Income	Indirect Personal Income	Induced Personal Income	Total Personal Income
Total, all industries	\$1,513	\$625	\$456	\$2,594
Food and beverage	\$404	\$34	\$32	\$470
Lodging	\$416	\$0	\$0	\$416
Business services	\$92	\$219	\$49	\$361
Finance, insurance, and real estate	\$57	\$135	\$70	\$262
Retail trade	\$177	\$10	\$45	\$232
Recreation and entertainment	\$150	\$18	\$7	\$175
Personal services	\$84	\$27	\$44	\$156
Education and health care		\$7	\$144	\$150
Other transport	\$60	\$52	\$11	\$123
Gasoline stations	\$50	\$1	\$3	\$53
Communications		\$33	\$12	\$45
Wholesale trade		\$24	\$17	\$41
Government		\$25	\$6	\$31
Construction and utilities		\$22	\$8	\$30
Air transport	\$23	\$1	\$1	\$24
Manufacturing		\$14	\$6	\$20
Agriculture, fishing, and mining		\$2	\$1	\$3

Source: Tourism Economics



Tax Impacts

Visitor activity generated \$2.1 billion in government revenue in 2025, with state and local taxes alone reaching \$1.2 billion. Each household in Iowa would need to be taxed an additional \$885 to replace the total visitor-generated taxes received by state and local governments in 2025.

Tax Impacts

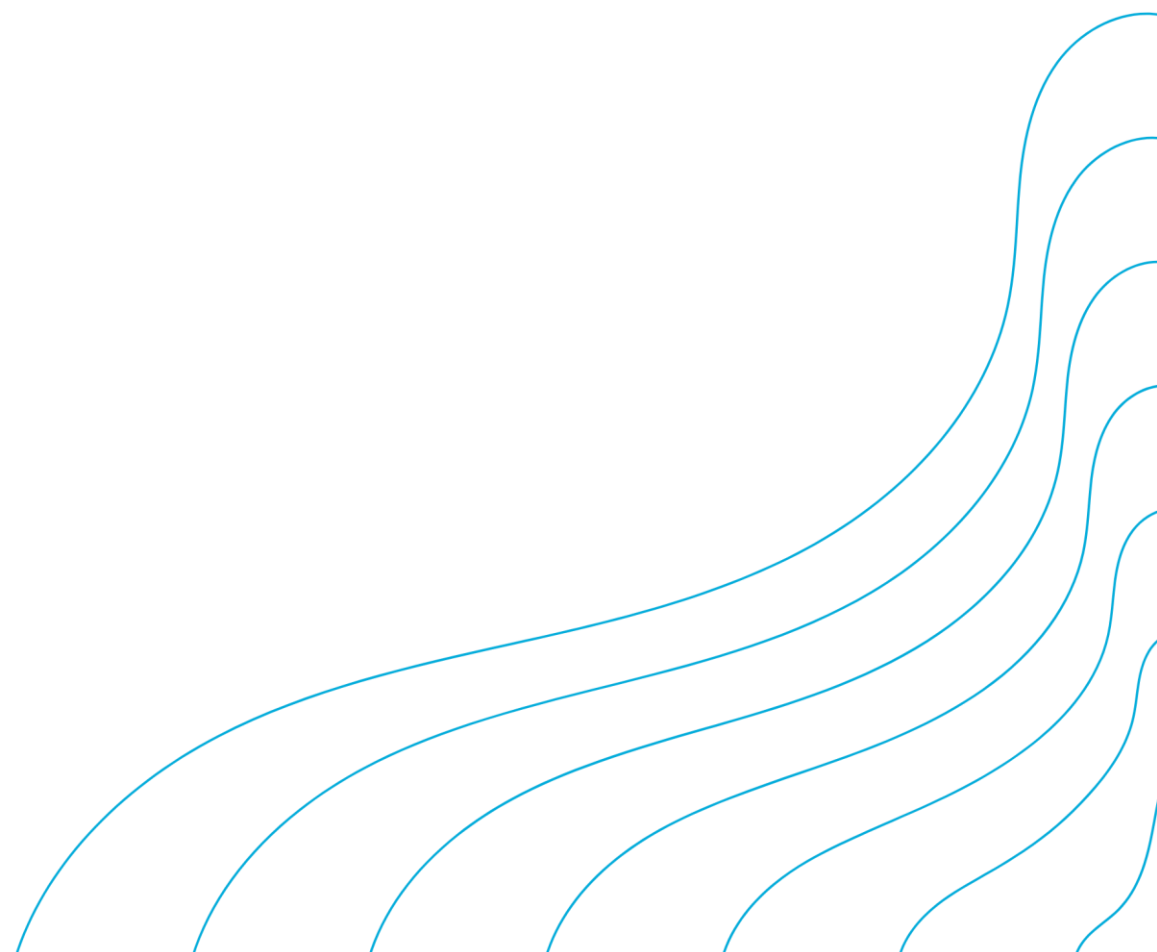
\$ millions

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2025 Growth
Total Tax Revenues	\$1,755.8	\$1,875.1	\$1,945.8	\$2,020.1	\$2,052.1	1.6%
Federal Taxes	\$754.4	\$808.8	\$839.6	\$862.1	\$885.5	2.7%
Social Insurance	\$416.8	\$439.0	\$455.0	\$467.1	\$478.9	2.5%
Personal Income	\$233.6	\$257.3	\$266.6	\$273.8	\$280.7	2.5%
Corporate	\$56.5	\$62.5	\$65.7	\$67.6	\$68.5	1.4%
Indirect Business	\$47.5	\$49.9	\$52.2	\$53.7	\$57.5	7.0%
State Taxes	\$532.3	\$572.2	\$598.8	\$615.3	\$616.6	0.2%
Sales	\$337.9	\$353.4	\$371.3	\$381.8	\$387.1	1.4%
Personal Income	\$81.8	\$89.9	\$93.2	\$95.7	\$89.3	-6.7%
Excise and Fees	\$45.7	\$49.4	\$51.2	\$52.5	\$53.9	2.5%
Lodging	\$52.0	\$63.1	\$66.0	\$67.6	\$68.5	1.3%
Corporate	\$14.9	\$16.3	\$17.2	\$17.7	\$17.9	1.4%
Local Taxes	\$469.1	\$494.1	\$507.5	\$542.6	\$550.0	1.4%
Property	\$357.3	\$364.4	\$371.7	\$403.3	\$408.8	1.4%
Lodging	\$59.6	\$75.3	\$78.8	\$80.8	\$81.8	1.3%
Sales	\$41.9	\$43.2	\$45.4	\$46.7	\$47.3	1.4%
Excise and Fees	\$8.1	\$8.8	\$9.1	\$9.4	\$9.5	1.4%
Personal Income	\$2.2	\$2.4	\$2.5	\$2.5	\$2.6	2.5%

Source: Tourism Economics

The visitor economy generated **\$2.1 billion in government revenue in 2025.**

APPENDIX



Appendix

Methodology Overview

Measuring the visitor economy begins with a comprehensive demand side analysis. A visitor is defined as someone who stayed overnight or traveled more than 50 miles to the destination.

The study area is defined as the state of Iowa.

Visitor survey data provide estimates on the volume of visitors by type and their spending in specific categories (e.g. lodging, restaurants, retail, recreation and entertainment, transportation). These estimates are strengthened through an analysis of industry-specific data sets on the lodging industry, aviation, and sectoral-level business sales. Government data, including taxes by type as well as employment and personal income by industry are used to supplement and confirm demand-side visitor spending calculations.

The primary source of the employment and wage data is the Regional Economic Information System (REIS), maintained by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). This is more comprehensive than Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS QCEW) data because sole-proprietors do not require unemployment insurance and are not counted in the QCEW data.

The complete set of data inputs is provided below.

Data Sources

- **Longwoods International:** Visitor survey data, including volumes estimates by segment
- **STR & AirDNA:** Lodging performance data, including room demand and revenue for hotels and short-term rentals
- **Arrivalist:** Mobile device geolocation data
- **Iowa Tax Collections:** Lodging and sales tax receipts, by industry
- **BEA/BLS:** Employment, wage, and CPI data, by industry
- **US Census:** Business sales and employment by industry, seasonal second homes inventory, population, households, and median real estate taxes paid
- **US Bureau of Transportation:** Air passenger data for airports in Iowa
- **Tourism Economics:** International arrivals data for visitors to Iowa

Glossary

SPENDING DEFINITIONS	LODGING	All accommodation businesses, including hotels, B&Bs, campgrounds, and short-term rentals. This includes food, entertainment, and other services provided by these establishments.
	FOOD & BEVERAGE	Includes all visitor spending on food & beverages, including at restaurants, bars, grocery stores, and other food providers.
	RECREATION	Includes visitor spending within the arts, entertainment, and recreation sector.
	RETAIL	Includes visitor spending in all retail sub-sectors within the local economy, excluding grocery stores.
	LOCAL TRANSPORT	Ride share, taxis, limos, trains, rental cars, buses, and gasoline purchases.
	AIR TRANSPORT	Where applicable, the local share of air transportation spending.
ECONOMIC IMPACT DEFINITIONS	SECOND HOMES	Where applicable, spending associated with seasonal second homes for recreational use as defined by the Census Bureau.
	DIRECT IMPACT	Impacts (business sales, jobs, income, and taxes) related to businesses where visitors spend dollars (e.g. recreation, transportation, lodging).
	INDIRECT IMPACT	Impacts created from the purchase of goods and services as inputs (e.g. food wholesalers, utilities, business services) into production by the directly affected sectors (i.e. business-to-business purchases).
	INDUCED IMPACT	Impacts created from spending in the local economy by employees whose wages are generated either directly or indirectly by visitor activity.
	EMPLOYMENT	Employment is measured by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) definition, and captures full-time and part-time jobs, which includes salary and wage employees and proprietors.
	PERSONAL INCOME	Income (wages, salaries, proprietor income, and benefits) supported by visitor spending.
	LOCAL TAXES	Local taxes generated by visitor spending. Includes any local sales, income, bed, usage fees, property, and other revenue streams to local governmental authorities.
	STATE TAXES	State tax revenues generated by visitor spending. Includes sales, income, corporate, usage fees, and other assessments of state governments.

About the Research Team

This study was conducted by the Tourism Economics group within Oxford Economics. Tourism Economics combines an understanding of traveler dynamics with rigorous economics to answer the most important questions facing destinations, investors, and strategic planners. By combining quantitative methods with industry knowledge, Tourism Economics designs custom market strategies, destination recovery plans, forecasting models, policy analysis, and economic impact studies.

Oxford Economics was founded in 1981 as a commercial venture with Oxford University's business college to provide economic forecasting and modeling to UK companies and financial institutions expanding abroad. Since then, we have become one of the world's foremost independent global advisory firms, providing reports, forecasts, and analytical tools on 200 countries, 100 industrial sectors, and over 3,000 cities. Our best-of-class global economic and industry models and analytical tools give us an unparalleled ability to forecast external market trends and assess their economic, social, and business impact.

Oxford Economics is an adviser to corporate, financial, and government decision-makers and thought leaders. Our worldwide client base comprises over 2,000 international organizations, including leading multinational companies and financial institutions; key government bodies and trade associations; and top universities, consultancies, and think tanks.

Oxford Economics employs more than 700 full-time staff, including 400 professional economists and analysts. Headquartered in Oxford, England, with regional centers in London, New York, and Singapore, Oxford Economics has offices across the globe in Belfast, Chicago, Dubai, Miami, Milan, Paris, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Washington DC.



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For more information: admin@tourismeconomics.com.