



## Almost 110 Million Travelers Expected During the Year-End Holiday Period, Nearing Pre-Pandemic Levels

### More People to Travel Over 2020

Travel during the 2021 year-end holiday period will rebound significantly from last year with **109.5 million travelers**, a 33.9% increase. This is within 8% of pre-pandemic levels in 2019.

### Car Travel Will Exceed 100 Million This Year

The projected 100.1 million car travelers this year is **27.6% above last year** and nearly as high as in 2018. Rising gas prices, while a headwind, are unlikely to have a significant impact on the return of auto travel.

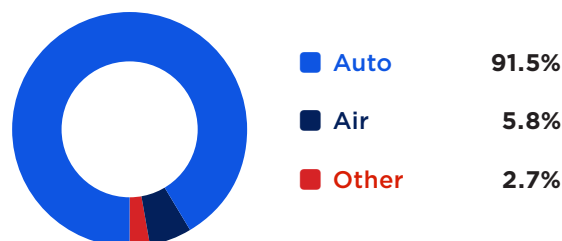
### Air Travel Will Almost Completely Rebound

**6.4 million travelers** are expected to fly during the holiday season. This will represent a **184% increase** from 2020 and bring the 2021 volume to 87% of 2019 levels.

## Key Takeaways:

- More than 109 million people are expected to travel during the year-end holidays—27.7 million **more than 2020** and just under 10 million **fewer than 2019**.
- Following the dramatic decrease in travel in 2020, this year will bring holiday travel in line with 2017 volumes.
- More than 100 million people will travel by car, an increase of 27.6% from 2020.
- After falling nearly 70% last year, air travel during the year-end holidays in 2021 will be nearly triple the 2020 total, with 6.4 million people flying.
- Travel by other modes will also nearly triple, with 2.9 million using transportation including buses, trains and cruise ships.
- The 2021 year-end holiday period is defined as Thursday, Dec. 23 to Sunday, Jan. 2. This 11-day period is one day shorter than last year.

## Share of Travelers by Mode



## Year-End Travelers

	Auto	Air	Other	Total
2021 (forecast)	100.1M	6.4M	2.93M	109.5M
2020	78.5M	2.25M	980K	81.7M
2019	108M	7.33M	3.89M	119.3M
Change (2019 to 2021)	-7.3%	-12.6%	-24.8%	-8.2%
Change (2020 to 2021)	27.6%	184%	198.7%	33.9%



## Economic factors influencing the travel forecast include the following:

- Continued concerns about the pandemic and rising COVID-19 cases in some areas are holding down consumer sentiment and creating a drag on consumer spending, slowing the return to pre-pandemic travel volume.
- GDP growth should accelerate after a weak third quarter, and the labor market remains strong with the unemployment rate falling to 6.9% in November.
- Despite falling consumer sentiment and rising prices, spending remains strong. Consumer spending increased 12.1% in the fourth quarter compared with last year.
- Gas prices remain elevated, at an average of \$3.41 for the month of November, which is \$1.29 higher than one year ago.

## Holiday Forecast Methodology: A Brief Overview

### Travel Forecast

In cooperation with AAA, IHS Markit—a world leader in critical information, analytics and expertise—developed a unique methodology to forecast actual domestic travel volumes. The economic variables used to forecast travel for the current holiday are leveraged from IHS Markit's proprietary databases. These data include macroeconomic drivers such as employment, output, household net worth, asset prices including stock indices, interest rates, housing market indicators, and variables related to travel and tourism, including prices of gasoline, airline travel and hotel stays.

Historical travel volume estimates come from DK SHIFFLET's TRAVEL PERFORMANCE/*Monitor*<sup>sm</sup>. The PERFORMANCE/*Monitor*<sup>sm</sup> is a comprehensive study measuring the travel behavior of U.S. residents. DK SHIFFLET contacts over 50,000 U.S. households each month to obtain detailed travel data, resulting in the unique ability to estimate visitor volume and spending, identify trends, and forecast U.S. travel behavior.

The travel forecast is reported in person-trips. In particular, AAA and IHS Markit forecast the total U.S. holiday travel volume and expected mode of transportation. The travel forecast presented in this report was prepared the week of Nov. 15, 2021.

## About AAA

AAA provides more than 62 million members with automotive, travel, insurance and financial services through its federation of 30 motor clubs and nearly 1,000 branch offices across North America. Since 1902, the not-for-profit, fully tax-paying AAA has been a leader and advocate for safe mobility. Drivers can request roadside assistance, identify nearby gas prices, locate discounts, book a hotel or map a route via the [AAA Mobile app](#). To join, visit [AAA.com](#).

## About IHS Markit

[www.ihsmarkit.com](http://www.ihsmarkit.com)

IHS Markit (NYSE: INFO) is a world leader in critical information, analytics and solutions for the major industries and markets that drive economies worldwide. The company delivers next-generation information, analytics and solutions to customers in business, finance and government, improving their operational efficiency and providing deep insights that lead to well-informed, confident decisions. IHS Markit has more than 50,000 business and government customers, including 80 percent of the Fortune Global 500 and the world's leading financial institutions. Headquartered in London, IHS Markit is committed to sustainable, profitable growth.

## About DK SHIFFLET

[www.dkshifflet.com](http://www.dkshifflet.com)

DK SHIFFLET boasts the industry's most complete database on U.S. resident travel both in the U.S. and worldwide. Data is collected monthly from a U.S. representative sample, adding over 60,000 traveling households annually and is used daily by leading travel organizations and their strategic planning groups. DK SHIFFLET is an MMGY Global company.