

Tourism spending outperforms national average compared to 2019

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Tourism spending in Wisconsin has outperformed the national average for the past two years in comparison to 2019 numbers, state officials announced.

A release from Gov. Tony Evers spotlighted figures from the Travel Recovery Insights report released by the U.S. Travel Association and Tourism Economics. It shows travel spending in the state in February was 1 percent lower than in 2019, while the national average was 6 percent lower.

The release also notes Wisconsin in February “fared better than tourism powerhouses” such as Texas, Michigan, North Carolina, Hawaii, California, Minnesota, Illinois and New York, each of which were down between 4 and 18 percent compared to the same month in 2019.

A graph included in the release shows tourism spending in the state has largely followed the national trend, with a sharp dip in early 2020 coinciding with the start of the pandemic. Travel spending in the state has remained below 2019 numbers for much of 2020 and 2021, and exceeded 2019 for the first time in September of last year.

Over the six-month period ending in February, travel spending in the state exceeded 2019 levels four times, the release shows. It was up 1 percent in September, down 4 percent in October, up 1 percent in November, up 4 percent in December, up 1 percent in January and down 1 percent in February.

Overall economic impact data for 2021 won't be available until June, the release shows, but the state's tourism industry in 2020 saw \$17.3 billion in business sales and supported more than 157,000 jobs. In 2019, those numbers were \$22.2 billion and 202,000 jobs, according to figures provided by Travel Wisconsin.

See the
release: <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/WIGOV/bulletins/3160be4>