

New Survey Shows U.S. Visa Process is Deterring Millions from Visiting

Due to long visa wait times, the U.S. is losing millions of travelers and billions of tourist dollars to other countries

A new Morning Consult survey of likely international travelers from Brazil, India and Mexico found that there is **strong interest** in visiting the United States. However, lengthy wait times of more than one year to obtain a U.S. visa undercut America’s ability to compete for global travelers – sending millions of potential visitors and billions in traveler spending to other nations instead. The majority of respondents report they would likely **choose a different travel destination** if they were required to wait one year or longer for a visa, and a significant share of those NOT interested in visiting the U.S. cite long visa wait times.

Data presented below references national surveys of likely international travelers from Brazil, India and Mexico who do **NOT believe they have a valid U.S. travel visa.**

Interest In Visiting The United States Is Strong

- Likely international travelers who have not ruled out visiting the U.S.:

88% OF BRAZILIANS | 90% OF INDIANS | 86% OF MEXICANS

- Likely international travelers who said that the U.S. is one of their top choices to visit:

36% OF BRAZILIANS | 44% OF INDIANS | 33% OF MEXICANS

- For those who did not choose the U.S. as a top destination, the **amount of time required to obtain a visa** to travel to the U.S. is a **contributing factor** for:

32% OF BRAZILIANS | 48% OF INDIANS | 52% OF MEXICANS

Percentage of likely international travelers WITHOUT valid U.S. visas:

- 69% OF BRAZILIANS
- 34% OF INDIANS
- 52% OF MEXICANS

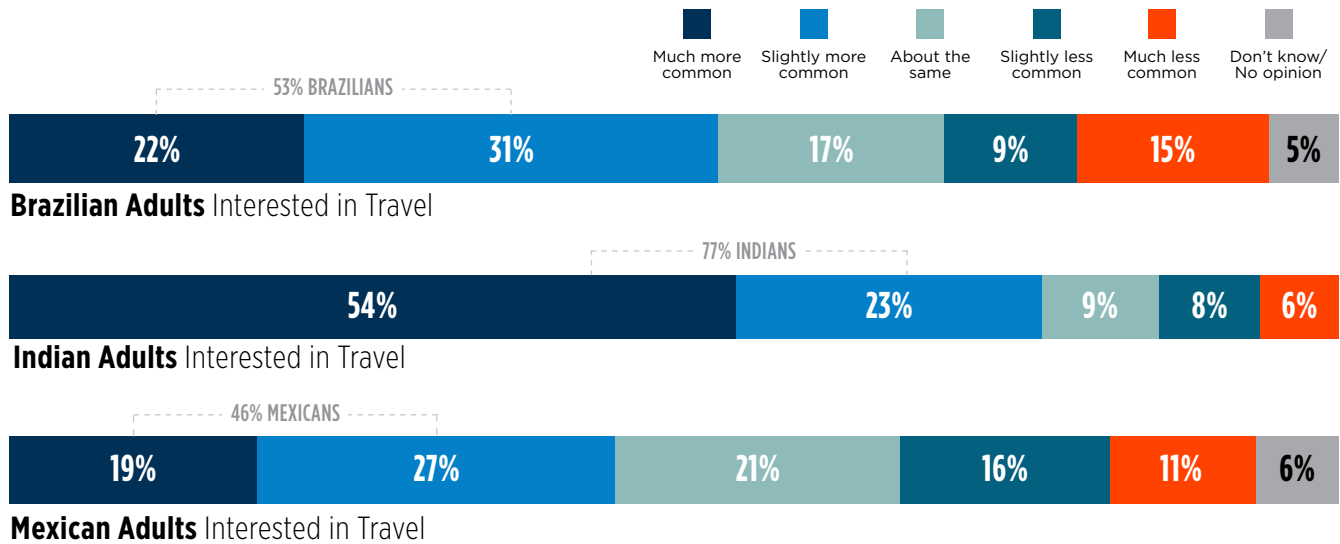
Lengthy and Cumbersome Visa Process Deters Millions of International Travelers

Of the likely international travelers who have at least some interest in visiting the U.S., but do not have a valid U.S. visa, the majority would likely choose another country to visit if wait-times exceeded a year:

61% OF BRAZILIANS | 66% OF INDIANS | 71% OF MEXICANS

U.S. Visa Process Viewed as More Inconvenient Than Other Countries*

A majority of likely international travelers from Brazil, India, and Mexico say that inconveniences in the U.S. visa process are far more common compared to other countries. Specifically, of likely international travelers who have applied for visitor visas in other countries, **53% of Brazilians, 77% of Indian and 46% of Mexicans say that hassles in the U.S. visa process are more common.**



*Includes all survey respondents

Source: Morning Consult.

Methodology: These polls were conducted September 12 to September 16, 2022 among samples of adults interested in traveling internationally in the next two years from Brazil (n=991), India (n=1,000), and Mexico (n=495). Interviews were conducted online in English, Hindi, Portuguese, and Spanish. Results from the full survey in India and Brazil have a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percentage points, while full results from Mexico have a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percentage points.

Economic Impact:

- According to an analysis by economists at the U.S. Travel Association, in 2023, the U.S. is projected to lose 6.6 million potential visitors and \$11.6 billion in projected loss spending as a result of likely international travelers being unable to obtain a visitor visa to travel to the U.S. in a timely manner.
- In the top three largest markets, projected spending losses total: **Brazil: \$1.6 billion; India: \$1.2 billion and Mexico: \$2.4 billion.**
- The \$11.6 billion in projected lost spending in 2023 is roughly equal to 10% of total pre-pandemic travel exports from non-VWP countries.

U.S. Sending Millions of Visitors and Billions of Spending to Other Countries.

- According to an analysis of the survey results by economists at the U.S. Travel Association, the U.S. is losing the opportunity to compete for millions of international visitors and billions in spending from likely travelers who say they won't tolerate long visa wait times and will choose another country to visit instead. In Brazil, India, and Mexico alone, the U.S. is losing the ability to compete for:
 - Brazil: 3.6 million visitors / \$15.6 billion**
 - India: 3.5 million visitors / \$13.3 billion**
 - Mexico: 7.1 million visitors / \$4.1 billion**

U.S. Travel Recommendations

The Biden administration must move with speed to quickly lower visitor visa wait times by:

- Enacting the following provisions (whether through a standalone bill or FY2024 appropriations):
 1. **Authorize remote interviews over videoconferencing** for low-risk non-immigrant visa applicants.
 2. **Establish a visa interview wait time standard of 21 days** and give the State Department the flexibility to transfer funds to consular posts with average wait times above 45 days for the purpose of increase staffing or implementing other measures to reduce visa wait times.
 3. **Permanently extend interview waiver authority** for low-risk visitor, worker, and student visas.
 4. **Create expedited and in-country processing options for B category visa applicants**, while retaining the authority to require travelers to leave the country and complete an in-person interview.