Business Travel Powers Economic Impact and Growth Across the World's Leading Business Cities, According to GBTA Study

Destination-level research finds $178 billion in business traveler spending in 25 cities contributed $93B in local GDP, nearly $55B in tax revenue and 1.4M jobs

ALEXANDRIA, VA, UNITED STATES, September 29, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- From New York to Tokyo to London to São Paulo and around the world, business travel is powering local economies far beyond airports, hotels and conference centers. Business travel and travelers generated an estimated $283 billion in total economic activity across 25 of the world's leading business destinations, according to a new impact study released today by the Global Business Travel Association (GBTA).

City	Business Travel Spending	GDP Contribution	Jobs Supported
1 - New York	$21.2B	$13.7B	139,067
2 - Tokyo	$20.7B	$11.8B	157,856
3 - London	$15.0B	$6.4B	98,051
4 - Shanghai	$14.2B	$3.6B	138,622
5 - Paris	$13.6B	$8.3B	90,472
6 - Los Angeles	$12.2B	$7.1B	80,068
7 - Chicago	$11.6B	$6.6B	83,154

Among 25 of the world's leading destinations for business travel and traveler economic impact, the Global Business Travel Association has identified these seven as accounting for more than 60% of the total.

Based on 2024 data, the study finds that $178 billion in business traveler spending across the 25 cities* supported 1.4 million jobs and contributed $93 billion to local GDP. It also generated nearly $54 billion in wages and $55 billion in tax revenue, demonstrating the outsized economic impact of business travel on cities around the globe. The $178 billion in spending accounted for roughly 12% of the approximately $1.47 trillion in worldwide business travel spending in 2024, as reported in GBTA's Business Travel Index.

The new global economic impact study, conducted with Rockport Analytics, measures the role and value of business travel from the destination perspective. This includes examining what domestic and international business travelers spend while in a city for the purpose of work and the resulting economic activity that their spending generates throughout local economies.

"Business travel is a powerful driver of economic growth and this study reflects its far-reaching

impact. When people travel to meet, collaborate and build relationships, the benefits extend well beyond the traveler and their organization, generating jobs, income, tax revenue and opportunity in communities around the world. More than a catalyst for commerce, business travel is an investment in economic opportunity and sustained growth for communities worldwide," said Suzanne Neufang, CEO of GBTA.

Seven Cities Account for More Than 60% of Top Spending

Business travel spending is concentrated in some of the largest destinations in the world. Seven cities each exceeded $10 billion in 2024 and together accounted for more than $108 billion, or 61% of the total across the 25 cities studied.

The top seven cities ranked by business travel spending (all figures in U.S. dollars) are New York ($21.2B), Tokyo ($20.7B), London ($15.0B), Shanghai ($14.2B), Paris ($13.6B), Los Angeles ($12.2B) and Chicago ($11.6B). [See attached chart for more details.]

Significant business travel activity extends well beyond these seven, across North America, Europe, and Asia, and into commercial centers in the Middle East, Latin America and Australia.

The next tier of cities for spending impact included Washington DC ($9.4 billion), San Francisco ($6.9 billion), Amsterdam ($5.6 billion), Singapore ($5.2 billion), Frankfurt ($4.7 billion) and Sydney ($4.7 billion). Delhi, Helsinki, Oslo, Dubai and São Paulo each recorded business travel spending of between $1.5 billion and $2.4 billion.

Every Business Travel Dollar Spent Generates $1.59 in Local Economic Activity

Business traveler spending has impact beyond the businesses that serve travelers directly. As local businesses serve travelers, they buy from local suppliers, generate wages spent again in the local economy, and create jobs. Across the 25 cities, every dollar of business travel spending generated approximately $1.59 in total sales for local businesses, 52 cents in GDP, and 31 cents in tax revenue. On average, every $1 billion of business travel spending in a destination supports approximately 7,800 jobs.

This "multiplier effect" varies by city and by the structure of the local economy. For example:

New York, with its service-based economy, generated $1.76 in local economic activity per dollar of business travel spending, the highest of the 25 cities. Los Angeles followed at $1.68.

Copenhagen converted nearly 60 cents of every business travel dollar into government revenue, the highest in the study, with Oslo and Stockholm close behind. Dubai recorded the lowest at just above one cent, reflecting the absence of broad-based income and sales taxes in the United Arab Emirates.

Paris and New York returned more than 37 cents of every dollar as labor income.

Delhi and Mexico City supported far more jobs per dollar than the study average, at 42,900 and 24,100 jobs per $1 billion respectively, reflecting local wage levels and labor intensity.

Various Business Travel Factors Influence Spending Across Cities

Individual city findings point to what drives spending in each destination. For example, London recorded the second highest daily spend per business traveler in the study and the largest contribution to overall spending from premium air tickets, reflecting its international draw. Shanghai had the highest hotel room demand from groups of the 25 cities, and Chicago the second highest, showing how much organized meetings matter to both. Stockholm and Oslo posted the strongest growth in group room demand in 2024.

About the Study

The GBTA Global Cities Business Travel Economic Impact report analyzes 2024 data, drawing on public, private, and proprietary sources. The study covers managed and unmanaged travel across a broad range of trip purposes, including meetings and conventions, sales and customer engagement, training, internal company meetings, incentives, and operations.

Spending is measured from the destination perspective, versus the origin-market view in GBTA's Business Travel Index (BTI), which measures spending by businesses and travelers based in a given market.

Visit the web page here to download the GBTA Global Cities Economic Impact study.

*25 cities in alphabetical order: Amsterdam, Chicago, Copenhagen, Delhi, Dubai, Frankfurt, Helsinki, London, Los Angeles, Madrid, Mexico City, Milan, New York City, Oslo, Paris, San Francisco, São Paulo, Shanghai, Singapore, Stockholm, Sydney, Tokyo, Toronto, Vienna, Washington DC.

About the Global Business Travel Association

GBTA is the world's premier business travel and meetings trade organization serving stakeholders across six continents. GBTA and its 9,000+ members represent and advocate for the $1.71 trillion global business travel and meetings industry. GBTA and the GBTA Foundation deliver world-class education, events, research, advocacy, and media to a growing global network of more than 28,000 travel professionals and 125,000 active contacts. For more information, visit GBTA.org and GBTAFoundation.org.

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