



17 E. Taylor St., Champaign, IL 61820 | 217.351.4133  
[experiencecu.org](http://experiencecu.org)

**Media Contacts:**

Terri Reifsteck: (217) 351-4133 or [terrir@experiencecu.org](mailto:terrir@experiencecu.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 19, 2024

**Economic Impact Data Shows Increased Local Impact of  
Travel & Tourism to Champaign-Urbana Area**

**Champaign, IL** – Experience Champaign-Urbana (ECU) receives annual data on the economic impact of travel and tourism to East Central Illinois, from available jobs to local taxes generated from direct visitor spending. Recently received 2023 data (January 1–December 31, 2023) showed significant increases across spending, job growth, and taxes generated for the local economy.

ECU reports that travel and tourism supported 5,033 jobs (2.7% increase), generating \$172.7 million in payroll (7.4% increase), plus \$19.3 million in local taxes (11.5% increase) were generated through \$666.9 million in visitor spending (9.5% increase). The counties supported by ECU in 2023 include Champaign, Douglas, Ford, Moultrie, and Piatt.

“Following the pandemic, we saw significant increases in travel and are thrilled to see that continue through 2023 with an 8.3% growth in spending in Champaign County, and a 9.5% increase overall for our region,” states Jayne DeLuce, President & CEO of ECU. “Our community continues to grow and thrive thanks to the work of our team, our Board of Directors, and our many stakeholders and partners throughout the region.”

This economic impact data was provided by Tourism Economics on behalf of the Illinois Office of Tourism and includes international visitation numbers. The data also shares spending within the different segments of our community, including lodging, food and beverage, recreation, transportation, and retail. In 2023, transportation (ground and air) accounted for 45.2% of visitor spending, and food and beverage accounted for 21.9%.

“When we see growth in spending, we see increased jobs, leading to higher payrolls, and higher collected revenues that are invested back into our community,” explains DeLuce. “Our team works diligently to bring sport & special events, meetings and conferences, group travel, and leisure to the area that grows our economy, while also enhancing the quality of life of our residents.”

While the “revenge” travel following COVID has slowed, DeLuce anticipates that the positive trends will continue into 2024 and beyond. “We monitor visitor traffic and spending regularly, and we’re pleased to see that 2024 tax revenues to date continue to surpass previous years, with many big events still left in the year that significantly impact our area businesses and support our residents.”

**Economic Impact of Domestic Travel by County:**

*Champaign County*

Travel expenditures – \$583.9 million (8.3% increase)

Local tax revenue – \$16.3 million (7.2% increase)

*Douglas County*

Travel expenditures – \$49.7 million (0.4% decrease)



17 E. Taylor St., Champaign, IL 61820 | 217.351.4133  
[experiencecu.org](http://experiencecu.org)

Local tax revenue – \$1.3 (8.3% increase)

*Ford County\**

Travel expenditures – \$12.4 million (4.2% increase)

Local tax revenue – \$0.8 (14.2% increase)

*\*ECU began promoting Paxton in mid-2023.*

*Moultrie County*

Travel expenditures – \$9.9 million (6.3% increase)

Local tax revenue – \$0.5 million (25% increase)

*Piatt County*

Travel expenditures – \$11.2 million (7.9% increase)

Local tax revenue – \$0.4 million (no change)

**About Experience Champaign-Urbana**

Experience Champaign-Urbana is the certified destination management organization for the greater Champaign-Urbana area. Their mission is to promote a welcoming destination experience for visitors to strengthen economic opportunity and enhance the lives of residents. Visit [experiencecu.org](http://experiencecu.org) to learn more.

-end-