

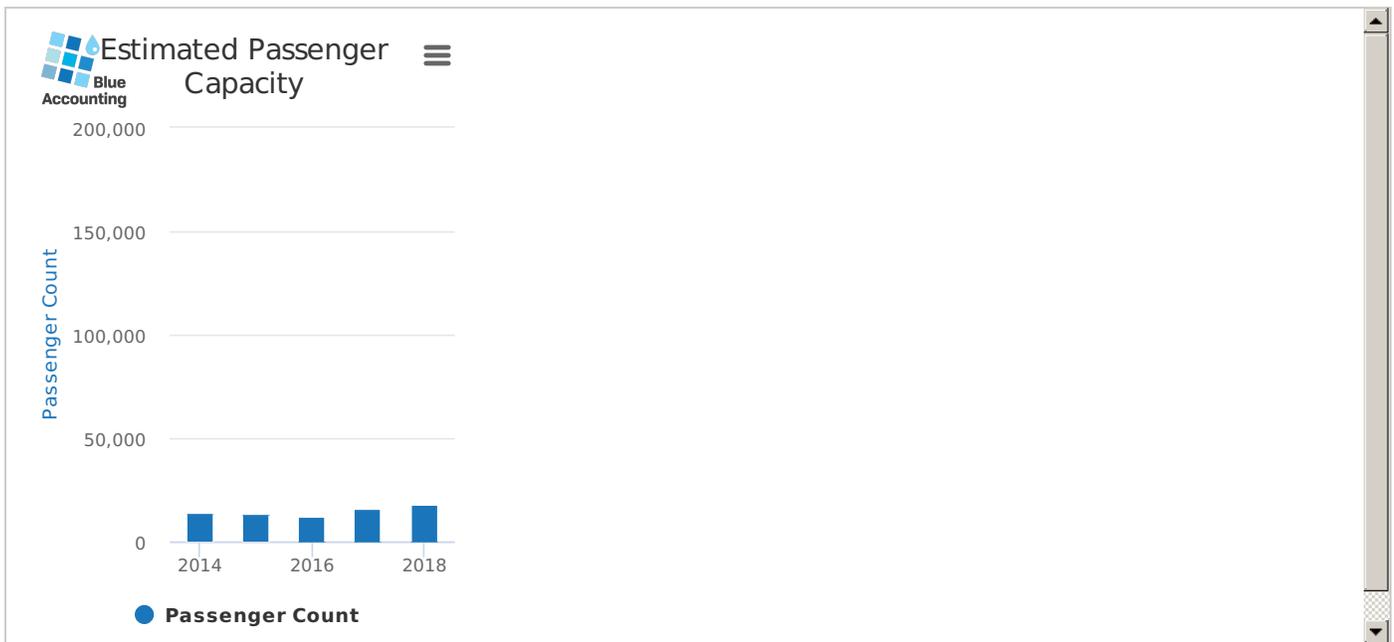
CRUISE TRAFFIC

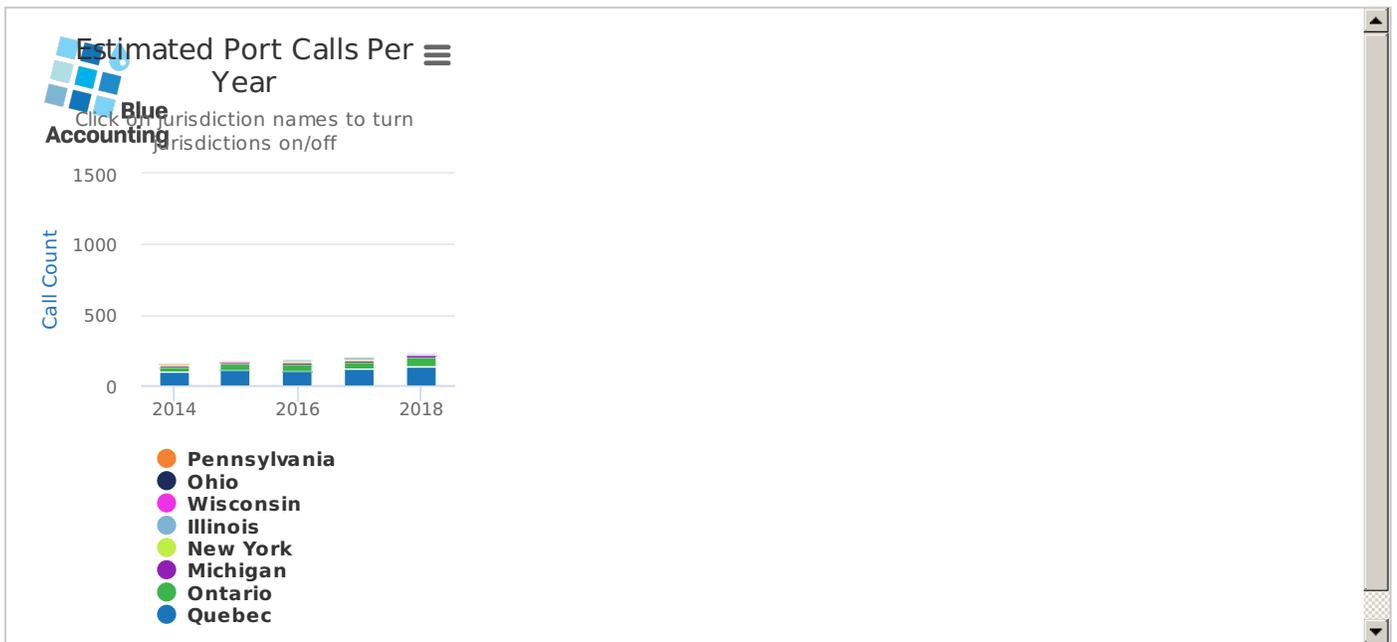
In 2018, an estimated 193 different cruise itineraries and carried 177,000 cruise passenger across the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River.

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River region's globally unique freshwater system features vibrant coastal communities, culture, and history. These assets are helping make the Maritime Transportation System increasingly attractive for cruise tourism, which can generate substantial economic benefits through cruise package spending, port calls, associated excursions and the purchase of support services.

In 2018, 28 different cruise lines, and 39 different cruise vessels called at a total of 45 ports across the MTS. Together, these cruise lines scheduled an estimated 193 different cruise itineraries and carried 177,000 people.

The metrics below illustrate how MTS cruise activity has been growing.





Over the last five years, the level of cruise activity on the MTS has increased, but the character of cruises remains different between the St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes. St. Lawrence Ports like Quebec and Montreal have deep water berths that are capable of handling large cruise vessels, and thus have the greatest number of port calls.

By comparison, Great Lakes ports have limited cruise infrastructure, and the St. Lawrence Seaway limits the size of cruise vessels that can access the lakes. These physical limitations, and a complex regulatory environment and customs protocols have meant that Great Lakes cruise activity is smaller in scale relative to the St. Lawrence River downstream from Montreal. Despite these challenges, cruise tourism in the Great Lakes is expected to grow significantly in the coming years. In 2020 and 2021, three new cruise companies, and two new cruise vessels are expected to call at ports on the Great Lakes.

This metric illustrates the cruise services *supplied* to the Maritime Transportation System each year and is not a true count of port calls or passengers. Due to limited data availability for cruise activity, these estimates of port calls and passengers are based primarily on advertised cruise packages (rather than actual records of port calls), and therefore, these estimates may be higher than the true number of port calls and passengers for the system, as itineraries are occasionally adjusted to accommodate weather or other external factors. This metric was created using historical records of cruise packages offered by cruise companies. Data was provided by [Cruise the St. Lawrence](#), [The Great Lakes Cruising Coalition](#), [Blount Small Ship Adventures](#), and [Pearl Seas Cruises](#).

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