

Embargoed until 10:45am – 20 March 2008

External Migration: February 2008

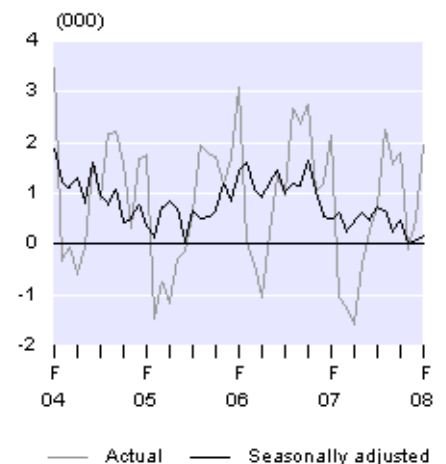
Highlights

- Visitor arrivals (280,500) were up 5 percent from February 2007 (267,600).
- There were more visitors from Australia (up 7,400) but fewer from Taiwan (down 2,000).
- New Zealand resident departures (107,900) were up 12 percent from February 2007 (96,300).
- There were more trips by New Zealand residents to Australia (up 6,700), and the Cook Islands and New Caledonia (both up 600).

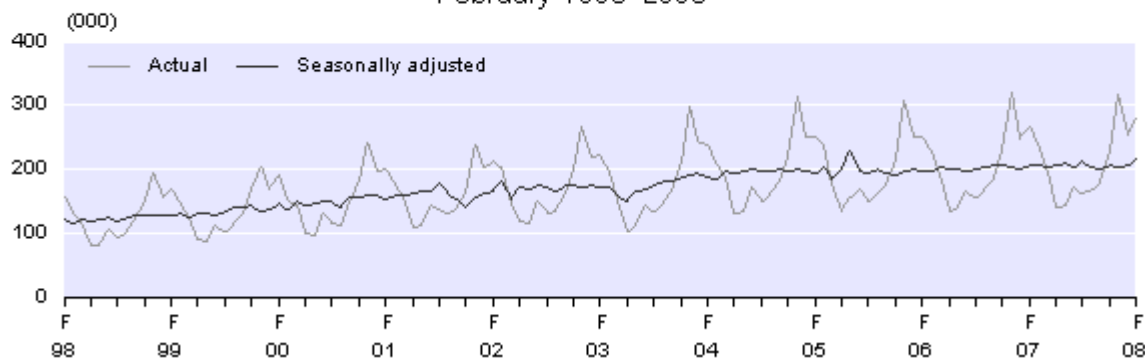
On a seasonally adjusted basis:

- Visitor arrivals were up 5 percent from January 2008.
- Overseas trips by New Zealand residents were up 6 percent.
- Permanent and long-term arrivals exceeded departures by 200.

Monthly Net Permanent and Long-term Migration
February 2004–2008



Monthly Visitor Arrivals
February 1998–2008



Geoff Bascand
Government Statistician

20 March 2008
ISSN 1178-0274

There is a companion Media Release published – [External Migration: February 2008](#).

Commentary

Visitor arrivals

Monthly visitor arrivals

Short-term overseas visitor arrivals to New Zealand numbered 280,500 in February 2008, an increase of 12,900 (5 percent) from February 2007. This followed an increase of 15,100 (6 percent) in February 2007 compared with February 2006. Because 2008 is a leap year, there was one more day in February 2008 than in February 2007. If the 9,700 visitor arrivals on this extra day were excluded, there would have been an increase of only 1 percent over February 2007.

Seasonally adjusted visitor arrivals increased 5 percent between January and February 2008. This followed an increase of 1 percent between December 2007 and January 2008.

The estimated average number of visitors who were in New Zealand during February 2008 was 203,000 per day, up less than 1 percent from an average of 202,900 in February 2007. Estimated numbers of visitors in the country are calculated from the date of arrival and intended length of stay of sampled visitor arrivals. The average intended stay of visitors who arrived in February 2008 was 23 days, and the median (half are shorter, and half are longer, than this duration) was 12 days.

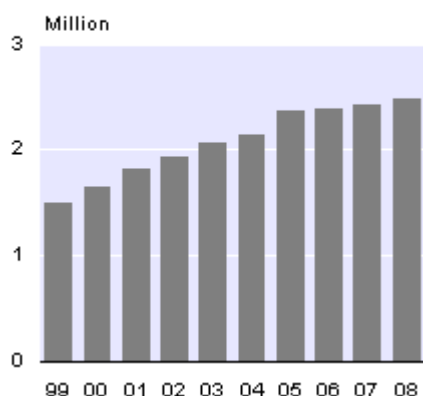
Annual visitor arrivals

During the February 2008 year, there were 2.485 million visitor arrivals, up 52,500 (2 percent) from the February 2007 year.

A holiday was the main reason for travel for 1.222 million visitor arrivals to New Zealand in the February 2008 year, up 21,200 (2 percent) from the previous year. Another 718,600 arrived to visit friends and relatives (up 21,600 or 3 percent) and 269,400 arrived for business (up 1,100 or less than 1 percent).

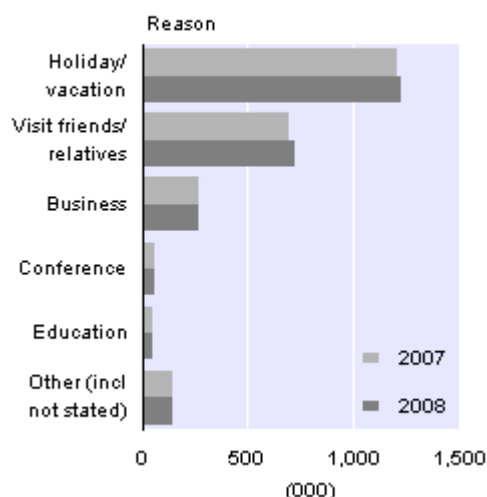
Annual Visitor Arrivals

Year ended February



Visitor Arrivals by Reason

Year ended February

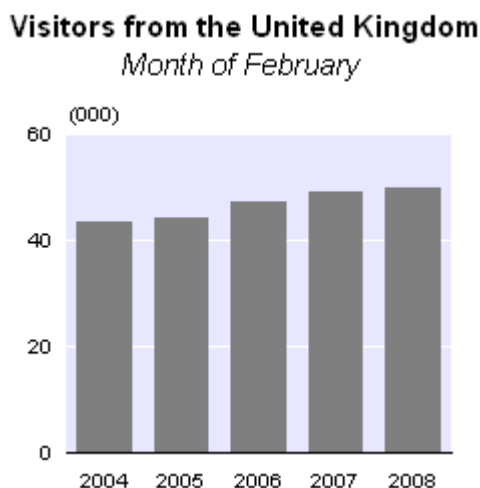
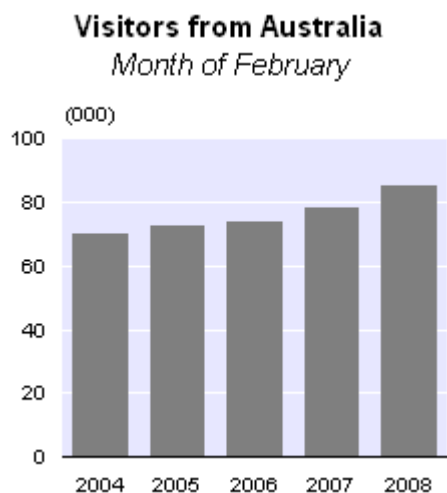


Note: Provisional international travel statistics, including weekly and four-weekly visitor arrival data, are available on the Statistics NZ website: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/tables/provisional-arrivals/default>. This data is updated each week with the most recently available information on visitor arrivals from 10 major source countries.

Visitors by source country

There were 85,400 visitor arrivals from Australia in February 2008, up 7,400 (9 percent) from February 2007. There was also an increase in visitor arrivals from the United States, up 1,900 (7 percent) to 31,100. More cruise passengers and new air services between Vancouver and Auckland contributed to 1,800 more visitors arriving from Canada compared with February 2007.

Visitor arrivals from Taiwan in February 2008 (2,300) were down 2,000 (47 percent) from February 2007 and were slightly below the February 2006 figure (2,400). Compared with February 2007, there were also fewer visitor arrivals from Japan (down 1,800 or 13 percent) and Korea (down 1,400 or 17 percent).



In the year ended February 2008, there were more visitors from Oceania (up 62,100 or 6 percent) and the Americas (up 5,600 or 2 percent) compared with the February 2007 year. Fewer visitors arrived from Asia (down 19,400 or 4 percent) and Europe (down 3,800 or 1 percent).

Australia (up 56,700 or 6 percent) provided the largest increase in visitor arrivals in the February 2008 year. There were also increases in visitor arrivals from Canada (up 4,500 or 10 percent), South Africa (up 3,400 or 18 percent), Thailand (up 2,400 or 14 percent) and India (up 2,200 or 11 percent).

China (up 9,600 or 8 percent) provided the second largest increase of overseas visitor arrivals in the February 2008 year. There is an article about *Short-term Overseas Visitors from the People's Republic of China* on the [International travel and migration articles](#) page of the Statistics NZ website.

Decreases in visitor arrivals were recorded for Korea (down 16,300 or 15 percent), Japan (down 14,000 or 11 percent), the United Kingdom (down 9,700 or 3 percent), Taiwan (down 4,000 or 14 percent) and the United States (down 2,800 or 1 percent) in the February 2008 year.

Note: Detailed visitor data will be available in the February 2008 edition of *International Visitor Arrivals to New Zealand*, which can be ordered via the Statistics NZ website: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/products-and-services/subscriptions/iva-sub>.

New Zealand resident departures

Monthly resident departures

New Zealand residents departed on 107,900 short-term overseas trips in February 2008, up 11,500 (12 percent) from the 96,300 departures in February 2007. Because 2008 is a leap year, there was one more day in February 2008 than in February 2007. If the 4,300 resident departures on this extra day were excluded, there would have been an increase of 8 percent from February 2007.

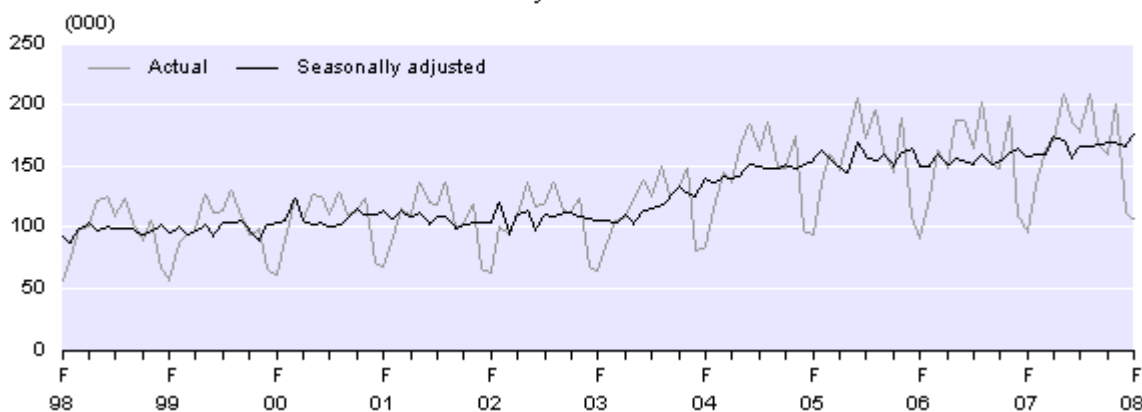
There were 60,200 short-term trips by New Zealand residents to Australia in February 2008, up 6,700 (12 percent) from February 2007. Trips to New Caledonia (up 600) quadrupled, mainly because of an increase in cruise passengers, and there were also more trips to the Cook Islands (up 600 or 33 percent).

On a seasonally adjusted basis, New Zealand resident departures increased 6 percent between January and February 2008. This followed a 2 percent decrease in this series between December 2007 and January 2008.

The estimated average number of New Zealand residents who were temporarily overseas during February 2008 was 76,400 per day, up 5 percent from the average of 72,700 in February 2007. Estimates of the number of residents overseas are calculated from the date of departure and intended length of absence of sampled resident departures. The average intended absence of residents who departed in February 2008 was 19 days, and the median was 8 days.

Monthly New Zealand Resident Short-term Departures

February 1998–2008



Annual resident departures

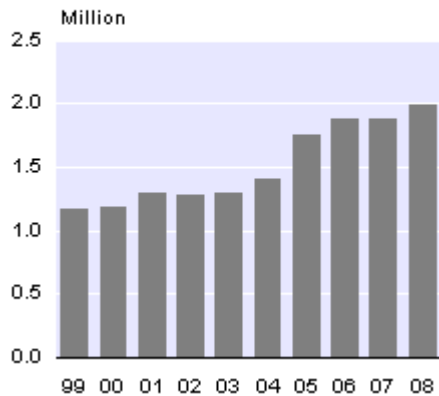
In the February 2008 year, there were 1.994 million resident departures, up 123,500 (7 percent) from the February 2007 year. There were more resident departures to Oceania (up 60,500 or 5 percent), Asia (up 16,700 or 7 percent), Europe (up 15,900 or 10 percent) and the Americas (up 8,900 or 8 percent), compared with the February 2007 year.

The largest increase was in resident departures to Australia (up 46,500 or 5 percent), which was the destination for about half of New Zealand residents departing on short-term trips in the February 2008 year. There were also more trips to France (up 7,300 or 62 percent), China (up 7,000 or 14 percent), the Cook Islands (up 6,400 or 14 percent), the United States (up 6,300 or 7 percent) and Samoa (up 5,200 or 16 percent).

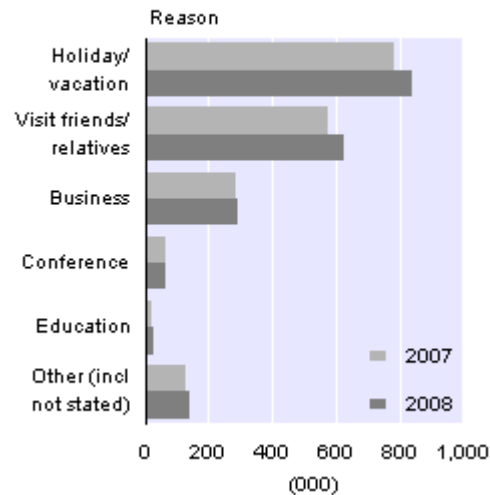
Trips to Fiji numbered 97,800 in the year ended February 2008, down 7,600 (7 percent) from the previous year, influenced by the political situation in that country.

A holiday was the main reason for travel of 842,300 New Zealand residents who departed in the February 2008 year, up 55,500 (7 percent) from the previous year. Another 624,000 were departing to visit friends and relatives (up 45,700 or 8 percent) and 290,900 were departing for business purposes (up 7,600 or 3 percent).

Annual Resident Departures
Year ended February



Resident Departures by Reason
Year ended February



Note: Provisional international travel statistics, including weekly and four-weekly resident departure data, are available on the Statistics NZ website: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/tables/provisional-arrivals/default>. This data is updated each week with the most recently available information on resident departures to 10 major destination countries.

Permanent and long-term migration

Definition

Permanent and long-term (PLT) arrivals include people who arrive in New Zealand intending to stay for a period of 12 months or more (or permanently), plus New Zealand residents returning after an absence of 12 months or more. Included in the former group are people with New Zealand residency, as well as students and holders of work permits. PLT departures include New Zealand residents departing for an intended period of 12 months or more (or permanently), plus overseas visitors departing New Zealand after a stay of 12 months or more.

Monthly PLT migration

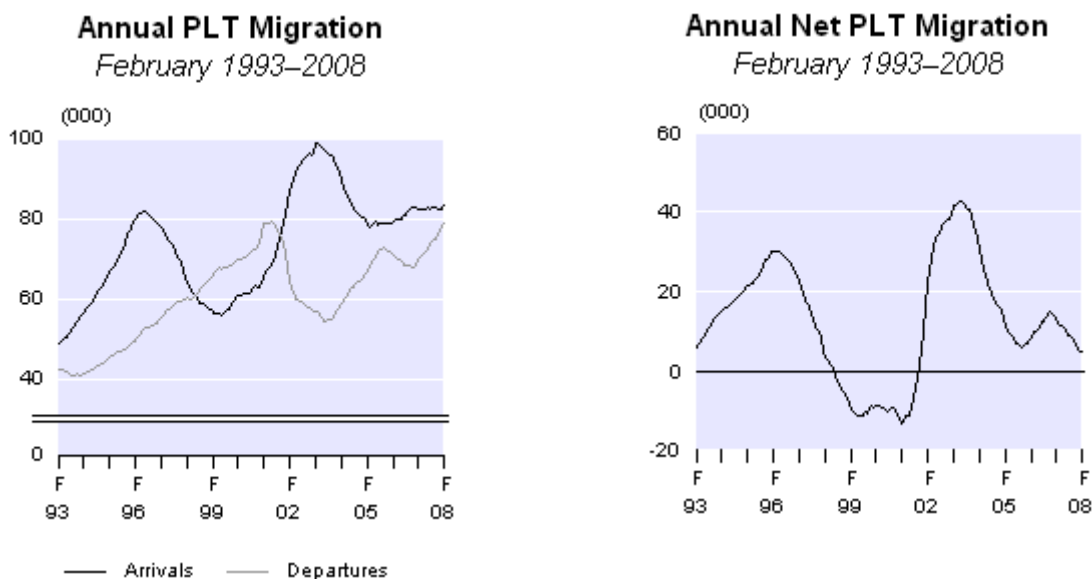
PLT arrivals exceeded departures by 2,000 in February 2008, compared with an excess of 2,100 arrivals over departures in February 2007.

On a seasonally adjusted basis, there was a net PLT inflow of 200 in February 2008. This follows a seasonally adjusted inflow of 100 in January 2008 and a match between arrivals and departures in December 2007. The net PLT series averaged about 500 per month between January and November 2007, and was above 1,000 for most months in 2006.

In February 2008, there was a net outflow of 3,500 PLT migrants to Australia, up from the outflow of 2,500 in February 2007. There was a net inflow of 1,000 from India and 500 each from the United Kingdom and China.

Annual PLT migration

In the year ended February 2008, there were 83,300 PLT arrivals, up 800 (1 percent) from the February 2007 year. Over the same period, there were 78,700 PLT departures, up 9,300 (13 percent). As a result, net PLT migration was 4,600 in the February 2008 year, down from 13,200 in the February 2007 year.

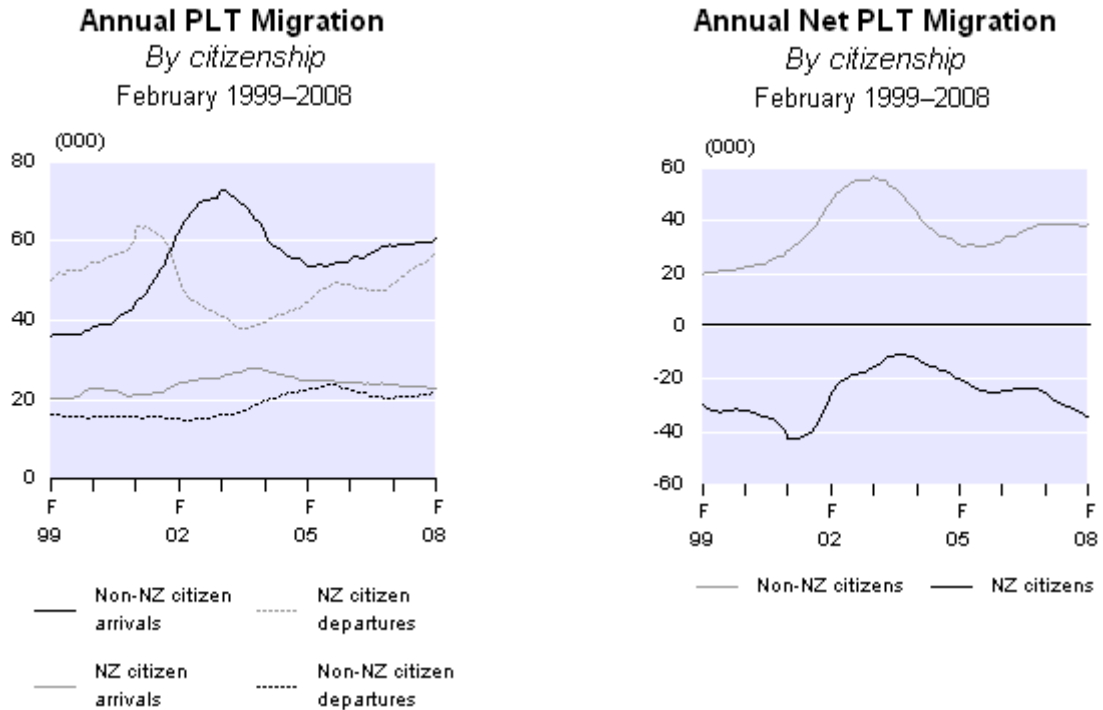


The net PLT migration gain of 4,600 in the year ended February 2008 is below the annual average of 11,800 recorded for the December years from 1990–2007. Net PLT migration varied substantially within this 18-year period. The net gain peaked at 30,200 in the April 1996 year and again at 42,500 in the May 2003 year. Net outflows were generally experienced during 1998–2001, with the highest being a net loss of 13,200 people recorded in the February 2001 year.

Annual PLT migration by citizenship

A net inflow of 38,700 non-New Zealand citizens and a net outflow of 34,100 New Zealand citizens were recorded in the year ended February 2008. The majority of the net outflow of New Zealand citizens was to Australia (30,100), followed by the United Kingdom (1,500), and Canada and the United Arab Emirates (both 400).

Compared with the February 2007 year, PLT arrivals of non-New Zealand citizens were up 1,800 and PLT arrivals of New Zealand citizens were down 900. There were 8,100 more PLT departures of New Zealand citizens and 1,300 more PLT departures of non-New Zealand citizens. Changes in non-New Zealand citizen departures are often related to changes in non-New Zealand citizen arrivals a few years earlier. Similarly, changes in New Zealand citizen arrivals are often related to changes in New Zealand citizen departures a few years earlier.



Annual PLT migration by country

In the year ended February 2008, there was a net inflow of 6,900 migrants from the United Kingdom, down from 10,500 the previous year. There were also net PLT inflows of 4,200 from India, 3,200 from the Philippines, 2,600 from Fiji, 2,100 from South Africa, 1,900 from China, and 1,600 from Germany. China was the leading net source of PLT migrants for the years ended March 1996 to January 2004. Since then, the United Kingdom has been the biggest contributor to net migration.

The net PLT outflow to Australia was 29,600 in the February 2008 year, compared with 22,200 in the February 2007 year. This is the highest annual net outflow to Australia since the July 2001 year (30,000). The net outflow to Australia peaked at 31,800 in the May 2001 year, with earlier peaks in the January 1989 year (33,700) and the December 1979 year (33,400).

The net outflow to Australia was spread across both age and occupation groups. Migrants aged 15–29 years accounted for 39 percent (11,700) of the net outflow to Australia in the February 2008 year, while another 23 percent (6,900) were aged 0–14 years, 23 percent (6,900) were aged 30–44 years, 12 percent (3,600) were aged 45–59 years, and just 1 percent (400) were aged 60 years and over.

Net outflows to Australia were recorded in each broad occupation group, led by professionals (2,100), service and sales workers (1,800), trades workers (1,700) and technicians (1,400). There was also a net outflow to Australia of 12,300 people without an occupation, of which most were children or students.

Split PLT data

Statistics NZ began separately identifying permanent arrivals from long-term arrivals in July 2003 (departing migrants are also separately identified). Within the long-term group, a further distinction is made between overseas visitors coming to stay in New Zealand for 12 months or more (long-term overseas visitors) and New Zealand residents returning after an overseas stay of 12 months or more (long-term New Zealand residents).

The classification of a person as a permanent or long-term migrant depends on that person's responses to the questions on the arrival and departure cards. Both cards require completion of one of two sections, depending on whether or not the person feels that they live or have lived in New Zealand. The choice of which section to complete is up to the individual, and the answer may result in a person being misclassified – usually as a permanent migrant instead of a long-term migrant.

Of the 9,400 PLT arrivals in February 2008, there were 2,400 permanent migrants and 5,700 long-term visitors. A further 1,300 arrivals were returning long-term New Zealand residents.

For more information on the separate identification of PLT migrants, including data quality issues, see the *External Migration: September 2003* Hot Off The Press.

For technical information contact:

Ian Richards or Nick Thomson

Christchurch 03 964 8700

Email: demography@stats.govt.nz

Technical notes

Nature of data

The statistics in this release are based on final external migration counts. They relate to the number of movements of travellers, rather than to the number of travellers – that is, the multiple movements of individual people during a given reference period are each counted separately.

Data for country groupings

As of December 2000, the country groupings used in this release are consistent with the New Zealand Standard Classification of Countries 1999 (NZSCC 1999). Prior to this date, country groupings were based on earlier versions of the NZSCC.

New Zealand resident short-term departures

The commentaries relating to New Zealand resident short-term departures are based on the data for the country of main destination – that is, the country where each departing person intended to spend most of his or her time while away from New Zealand.

Changes in migrant category

In the preparation of migration statistics, the classification of each passenger is primarily determined by the passenger's response, on the arrival or departure card, to the question on intended or actual length of stay/absence. If the person's intention changes during the trip, then they may also change their migrant category. For example, if a person comes to New Zealand with the declared intention of settling permanently, but in fact returns overseas after a few months, then that person is classified as a permanent and long-term (PLT) migrant on arrival, but is later classified as a short-term visitor on departure. This is known as migration category jumping. Data users should recognise the limitations inherent in the information supplied by travellers.

Sampling accuracy

The statistics for short-term passenger movements by country (ie arrivals by country of last permanent residence and departures by country of main destination) are derived from a systematic random sample taken each month from arrival and departure cards, and are therefore subject to sampling errors. However, total counts for short-term arrivals and departures of overseas visitors and New Zealand residents are actual counts, which are not subject to sampling errors. Figures for PLT arrivals and departures are also actual counts and have no sampling errors.

INFOS database

All data in the Hot Off The Press tables are available through the INFOS database. Where feasible, the series identifiers are shown (see tables 1–5 and the footnotes for table 11). The series in tables 1, 2 and 3 are available back to January 1950, and the seasonally adjusted series in tables 4 and 5 are available back to January 1982. The seasonally adjusted migration series were all revised when new seasonal adjustment procedures were introduced in August 1998. Likewise, the seasonally adjusted figures from January 1996 onwards are now updated monthly.

Seasonally adjusted series

The purpose of seasonally adjusting a time series is to measure and remove the varying seasonal components (caused by regular events such as holidays) in the series. This makes the data for adjacent months more comparable. The X-12-ARIMA computer program is used to produce the seasonally adjusted estimates of migration. In addition, the seasonally adjusted figures are subject to revision each month. The size of these revisions is expected to be minimal, with the largest revisions occurring in the months immediately prior to the current month.

The change to a four-term school year in 1996 resulted in changes to the seasonal patterns of the New Zealand resident arrivals and departures series. As a result, the seasonal adjustment for the two series was unsatisfactory. To overcome this, a two-stage procedure was introduced in August 1998. The series prior to 1996 were seasonally adjusted separately and the values fixed, while the series from January 1996 onwards are now seasonally adjusted each month and revised if appropriate. Further information on the seasonally adjusted migration series, including information on the revision procedures, can be obtained from the Statistical Methods Business Unit, Statistics New Zealand, Christchurch, phone 03 964 8700, fax 03 964 8791.

Migration processing system

The current migration processing system, which incorporates scanning and image recognition technology, was first used to process the June 2004 arrival and departure cards. Classing (as overseas visitors, New Zealand residents or PLT migrants) and capture of the information required for the migration sample are done automatically for the majority of the cards. Operator intervention is only required for approximately one-tenth of the cards. The system is used only for the production of statistics.

Users should be aware of the changes to the processing system when comparing data for June 2004 onwards with data for earlier periods.

More information

For more information, follow the [link](#) from the technical notes of this release on the Statistics NZ website.

Copyright

Information obtained from Statistics NZ may be freely used, reproduced, or quoted unless otherwise specified. In all cases Statistics NZ must be acknowledged as the source.

Liability

While care has been used in processing, analysing and extracting information, Statistics NZ gives no warranty that the information supplied is free from error. Statistics NZ shall not be liable for any loss suffered through the use, directly or indirectly, of any information, product or service.

Timing

Timed statistical releases are delivered using postal and electronic services provided by third parties. Delivery of these releases may be delayed by circumstances outside the control of Statistics NZ. Statistics NZ accepts no responsibility for any such delays.

Next release ...

External Migration: March 2008 will be released on 21 April 2008.

Statistics New Zealand: The first source of independent information for your key decisions.

Tables

The following tables can be downloaded from the Statistics New Zealand website in Excel format. If you do not have access to Excel, you may use the [Excel file viewer](#) to view, print and export the contents of the file.

List of tables

1. Arrivals by class, February 1998–2008
2. Departures by class, February 1998–2008
3. Net migration, February 1998–2008
4. Arrivals, seasonally adjusted, February 2007–2008
5. Departures, seasonally adjusted, February 2007–2008
6. Overseas visitor arrivals, by country of last permanent residence
7. New Zealand resident short-term departures, by country of main destination
8. Permanent and long-term arrivals, by country of last permanent residence
9. Permanent and long-term departures, by country of next permanent residence
10. Net permanent and long-term migration, by country of last/next permanent residence
11. Permanent and long-term migration, by country of citizenship