

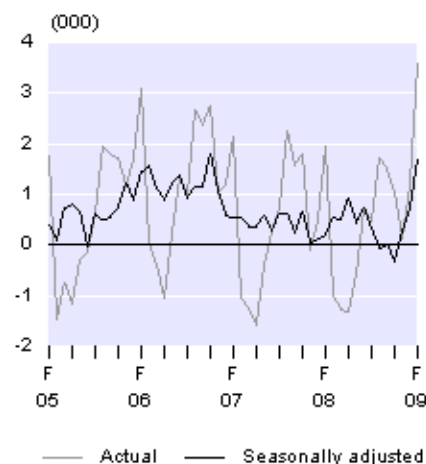
Embargoed until 10:45am – 20 March 2009

International Travel and Migration: February 2009

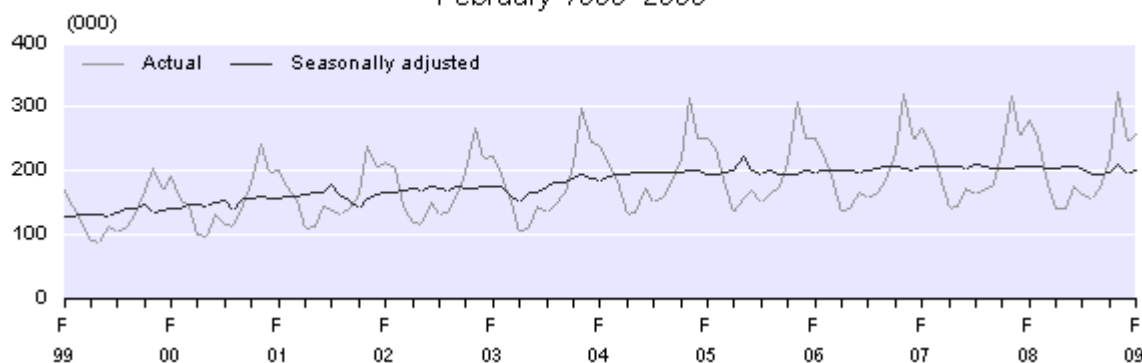
Highlights

- Visitor arrivals (256,600) were down 9 percent from February 2008 (280,500).
- There were fewer visitors from the United Kingdom (down 7,500), the United States (down 5,600), China (down 3,400) and Korea (down 2,000), but more from Australia (up 2,200).
- New Zealand-resident departures (96,700) were down 10 percent from February 2008 (107,900).
- New Zealand residents departed on fewer trips to Australia (down 5,900) and Fiji (down 1,200).
- Permanent and long-term arrivals exceeded departures by 1,700 on a seasonally adjusted basis.

Monthly Net Permanent and Long-term Migration
February 2005–09



Monthly Visitor Arrivals
February 1999–2009



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20 March 2009
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See also [International Travel and Migration: February 2009 – Media release](#).

Commentary

Visitor arrivals

Monthly visitor arrivals

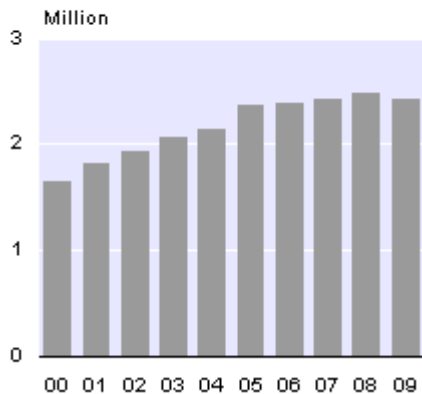
Short-term overseas visitor arrivals to New Zealand numbered 256,600 in February 2009, the lowest for a February month since 2006 (252,400). Visitor arrivals were down 24,000 (9 percent) from February 2008 (280,500), partly due to the extra day during that month. Compared with 1–28 February 2008, visitor arrivals in February 2009 were down 14,300 (5 percent).

The estimated average number of visitors in New Zealand per day in February 2009 was 194,500, down 4 percent from the average of 203,000 in February 2008. 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 2009 was 23 days, the same as in February 2008. The median (half stay shorter, and half stay longer than this duration) was 11 days, down from 12 days in February 2008.

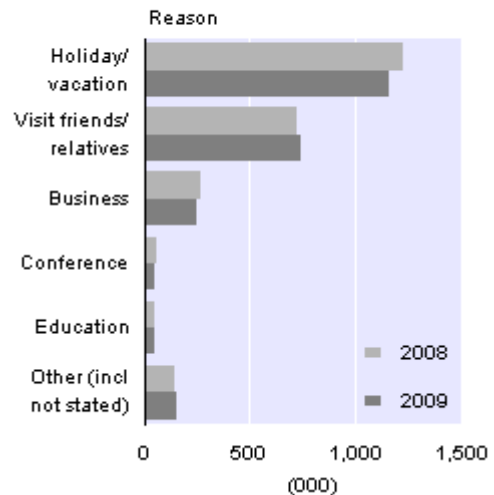
Annual visitor arrivals

During the February 2009 year, there were 2.425 million visitor arrivals, down 60,300 (2 percent) from the February 2008 year. A holiday was the main travel reason for 1.160 million visitors to New Zealand in the February 2009 year, down 62,200 (5 percent) from the previous year. Another 743,400 arrived to visit friends and relatives (up 24,800 or 3 percent), and 247,000 arrived for business (down 22,400 or 8 percent).

Annual Visitor Arrivals
Year ended February



Visitor Arrivals by Reason
Year ended February



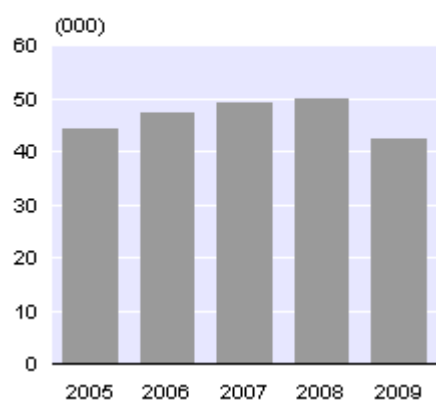
Note: [Provisional international travel statistics](#), including weekly and four-weekly visitor arrival data, are available on the Statistics NZ website. This data is updated each week with the most recently available information on visitor arrivals from 10 major source countries.

Visitors by source country

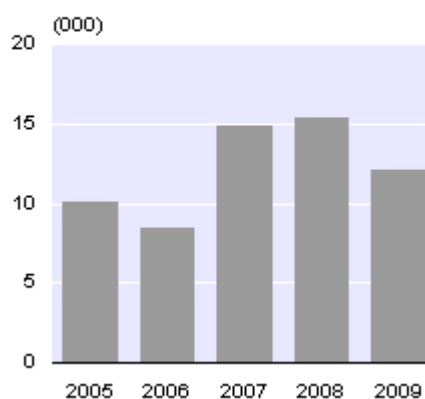
In February 2009, there were more visitor arrivals from Australia (up 2,200 or 3 percent) but fewer from the United Kingdom (down 7,500 or 15 percent), the United States (down 5,600 or 18 percent), Korea (down 2,000 or 29 percent), Japan (down 1,700 or 14 percent), Canada (down 1,600 or 17 percent) and Taiwan (down 1,100 or 46 percent).

There were also fewer visitors from China (down 3,400 or 22 percent) and Hong Kong (down 1,700 or 53 percent), influenced by the Chinese New Year period falling in January 2009 compared with February 2008. Combining January and February 2009, visitors from China were up 100 (less than 1 percent) and visitors from Hong Kong were down 700 (14 percent) compared with the same months in 2008.

Visitors from the United Kingdom
Month of February



Visitors from China
Month of February



In the year ended February 2009, compared with the year ended February 2008, more visitors arrived from Oceania (up 28,300 or 3 percent), and Africa and the Middle East (up 6,600 or 15 percent). Fewer visitors arrived from Europe (down 14,100 or 3 percent), the Americas (down 18,000 or 6 percent) and Asia (down 57,300 or 12 percent).

There were 980,200 visitor arrivals from Australia in the year ended February 2009, up 16,400 (2 percent) from the February 2008 year. More visitors were also recorded from South Africa (up 3,600 or 16 percent), Fiji (up 3,500 or 17 percent) and France (up 2,700 or 15 percent).

Fewer visitor arrivals were recorded from Korea (down 22,400 or 24 percent), the United States (down 19,600 or 9 percent), Japan (down 19,500 or 17 percent), the United Kingdom (down 17,200 or 6 percent) and China (down 10,100 or 8 percent) in the February 2009 year. After Australia, these five countries are New Zealand's largest sources of visitors. There were also fewer visitors from Taiwan (down 5,900 or 25 percent) in the February 2009 year.

Note: Detailed visitor data will be available in the February 2009 edition of *International Visitor Arrivals to New Zealand*, which can be ordered on the [International visitor arrivals subscription](#) page on the Statistics NZ website.

New Zealand-resident departures

Monthly resident departures

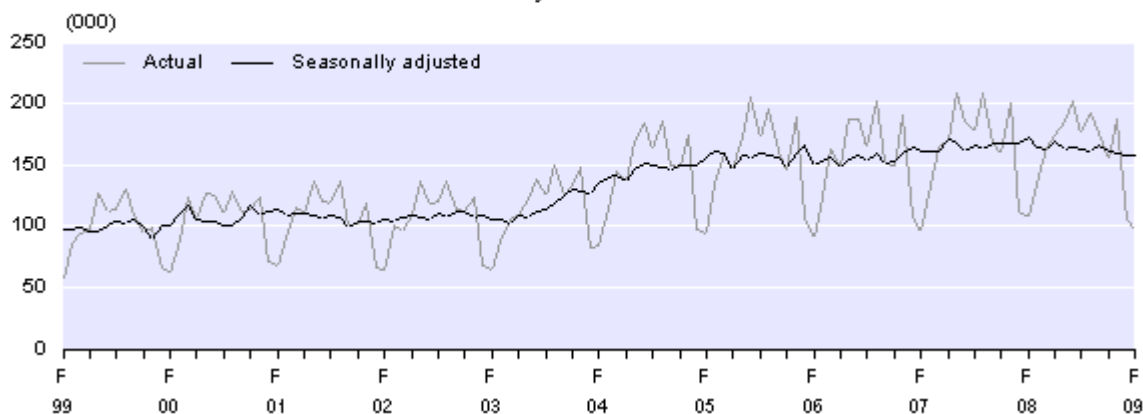
New Zealand residents departed on 96,700 short-term overseas trips in February 2009, down 11,200 (10 percent) from the 107,900 departures in February 2008. Compared with 1–28 February 2008 (to adjust for the extra day in that month), resident departures in February 2009 were down 6,900 (7 percent). Despite the decrease, it was still the second-highest resident departure total recorded for a February month.

In February 2009, there were fewer trips to Australia (down 5,900 or 10 percent), Fiji (down 1,200 or 31 percent), China (down 800 or 28 percent) and the United Kingdom (down 700 or 25 percent).

The estimated average number of New Zealand residents who were temporarily overseas during February 2009 was 72,900 per day, down 5 percent from the average of 76,400 in February 2008. 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 2009 was 19 days, the same as in February 2008. The median was 8 days, also unchanged from February 2008.

Monthly New Zealand Resident Short-term Departures

February 1999–2009



Annual resident departures

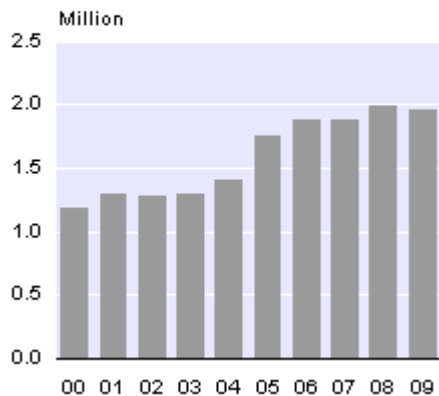
Short-term departures of New Zealand residents in the February 2009 year numbered 1.950 million, down 44,100 (2 percent) from the February 2008 year. There were fewer departures to Oceania (down 36,800 or 3 percent), Europe (down 8,500 or 5 percent) and Asia (down 300 or less than 1 percent). More resident departures were recorded to the Americas (up 3,000 or 2 percent), and Africa and the Middle East (up 1,800 or 6 percent).

By country, trips to Australia (946,900), the most popular destination, were down 32,500 (3 percent) from the previous year. There were also fewer trips to France (down 4,600 or 24 percent), the United Kingdom (down 2,800 or 3 percent), Singapore (down 2,700 or 17 percent) and New Caledonia (down 2,400 or 22 percent). There were more trips to Viet Nam and the Philippines (each up 1,600 or 20 percent), Samoa (up 1,500 or 4 percent) and India (up 1,500 or 6 percent) in the February 2009 year.

A holiday was the main travel reason for 809,300 New Zealand residents who departed in the February 2009 year, down 33,000 (4 percent) from the previous year. Another 634,300 were departing to visit friends and relatives (up 10,300 or 2 percent). Departures for business purposes (274,100) were down 16,800 (6 percent) from the year ended February 2008.

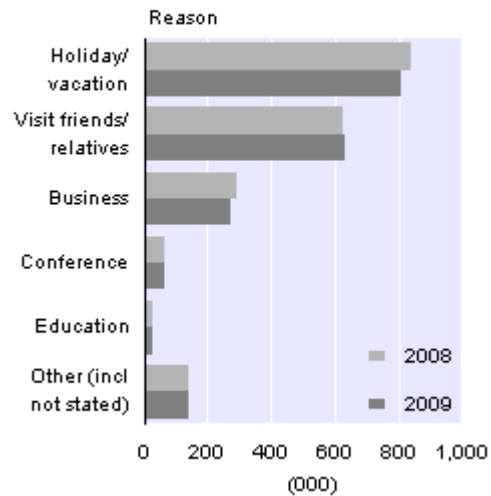
Annual Resident Departures

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. 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

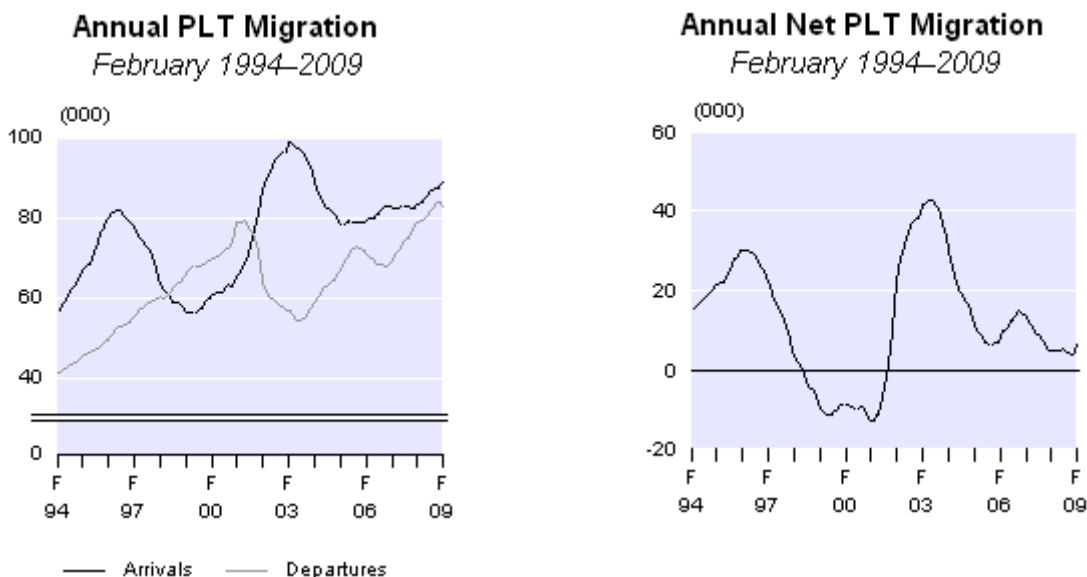
PLT arrivals exceeded departures by 3,600 in February 2009, up from the net PLT inflow of 2,000 in February 2008. The increase was mainly due to 1,200 fewer PLT departures, including 1,000 fewer departures to Australia. PLT arrivals increased by 400, consisting of 200 more New Zealand citizen arrivals and 200 more non-New Zealand citizen arrivals. The increase in non-New Zealand citizens was helped by 400 more PLT arrivals on student permits in February 2009, compared with February 2008.

On a seasonally adjusted basis, PLT arrivals exceeded PLT departures by 1,700 in February 2009, well up from 700 in January 2009 and 300 in December 2008. It was the highest seasonally adjusted figure recorded since November 2006 (1,800).

In February 2009, there were net inflows of migrants from India (1,400), China (800), the United Kingdom (700), Malaysia (400) and Fiji (300). There was a net outflow of 2,500 PLT migrants to Australia, down from the outflow of 3,500 in February 2008, and equal to the outflow in February 2007.

Annual PLT migration

In the year ended February 2009, there were 88,600 PLT arrivals, up 5,300 (6 percent) from the February 2008 year. Over the same period, there were 82,400 PLT departures, up 3,800 (5 percent). As a result, net PLT migration was 6,200 in the February 2009 year, up from 4,600 in the February 2008 year. This is the first time since the May 2007 year that net PLT migration has been higher than in the previous year.



The net PLT migration gain of 6,200 in the year ended February 2009 is below the annual average of 11,400 recorded for the December years from 1990–2008. Net PLT migration varied substantially within this 19-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 in the February 2001 year.

Annual PLT migration by country

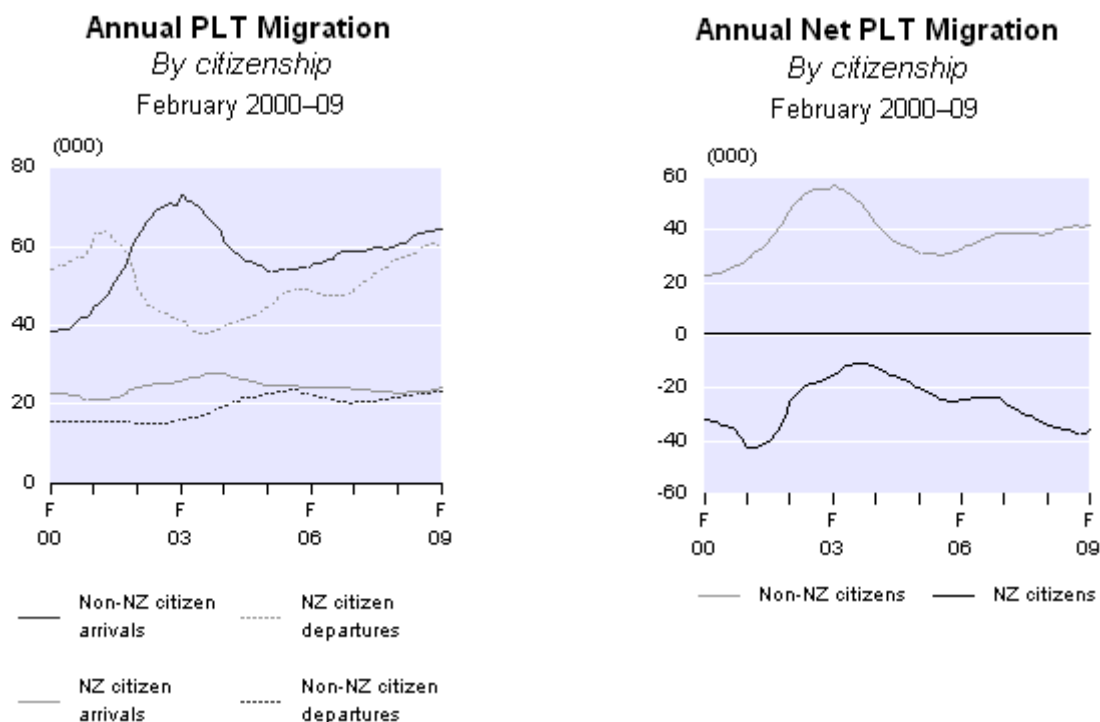
In the year ended February 2009, there was a net inflow of 8,100 migrants from the United Kingdom, up from 6,900 in the February 2008 year. The net inflow from India was 5,600, up from 4,200 in the February 2008 year and 2,400 in the February 2007 year. There were also net PLT inflows from the Philippines (3,600), Fiji (3,000), China (3,000), and South Africa (2,700).

The net PLT outflow to Australia was 34,400 in the February 2009 year. While this was above the net outflow of 29,600 in the February 2008 year, it was down from the record net outflows of 35,400 recorded in both the December 2008 and January 2009 years. The latest net outflow resulted from 47,500 PLT departures to Australia, partly offset by 13,100 PLT arrivals from Australia. Almost two-thirds of the PLT arrivals from Australia were New Zealand citizens (8,300).

Annual PLT migration by citizenship

A net inflow of 41,400 non-New Zealand citizens and a net outflow of 35,200 New Zealand citizens were recorded in the year ended February 2009. The majority of the net outflow of New Zealand citizens was to Australia (34,300), followed by the United Arab Emirates (600) and Canada (400).

Compared with the February 2008 year, PLT arrivals of non-New Zealand citizens were up 4,100 and PLT arrivals of New Zealand citizens were up 1,200. There were 2,300 more PLT departures of New Zealand citizens and 1,500 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.



PLT migration by permit type

In the February 2009 year, 28,200 PLT arrivals were Australian or New Zealand citizens who did not require a permit to remain in New Zealand. Of PLT arrivals who did require a permit, 24,000 arrived on work permits, 16,000 arrived on student permits, 14,500 arrived on residence permits, and 5,400 arrived on visitor permits. Compared with the February 2008 year, there were more PLT arrivals on student permits (up 3,000) and work permits (up 2,400), but fewer arrivals on residence permits (down 800). The majority of residence approvals in recent years have been granted onshore, to people who arrived on other permit types.

Recent international travel and migration articles

Statistics NZ has recently released a number of articles on international travel and migration topics. These can be accessed on the [International travel and migration articles](#) page of the Statistics NZ website. The most recent releases have been:

March 2009	<i>Christmas travel 2008</i> examines travel to and from New Zealand around the peak Christmas period.
November 2008	<i>Arrivals by permit type</i> introduces the newly available permit type data. It includes background notes about permit types, as well as data analysis.
November 2008	<i>Short-term New Zealand traveller departures to Pacific island countries</i> examines departures over the last decade to Fiji, the Cook Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, Norfolk Island and French Polynesia.

Infoshare and INFOS databases

Statistics NZ provides a free-of-charge online database, Infoshare (www.stats.govt.nz/infoshare) that gives access to a range of time-series data. Infoshare contains many international travel and migration data series, currently available through:

- International travel and migration (under Tourism on the Browse page)
- External migration (under Population on the Browse page).

The international travel and migration subject is under development, with more detailed cross-tabulations being progressively added. Detailed visitor arrival, resident departure, and PLT migration families are now available.

The external migration subject will eventually be replaced by the international travel and migration subject, but both will remain available until development of the latter is complete. Both subjects remain available in the INFOS database (for subscribers only).

Improved seasonal adjustment process

Statistics NZ has introduced an improved seasonal adjustment process for international travel and migration data. Adjustments have been included for the effect of the number and type of trading days in the month (as more people generally arrive and depart on Friday, Saturday and Sunday), and for holiday periods which have important effects on travel but in different months each year (eg Easter can be in March or April). The addition of these adjustments results in less volatile seasonally adjusted series. The improvements have also allowed associated trend series to be published for the first time.

Seasonally adjusted data from the improved process are available in table 2 of this release, as well as through the existing seasonal adjustment series within the Infoshare and INFOS databases. Trend series have been added to the same sources (INFOS series identifiers are shown in table 2).

The new process continues to use Statistics NZ's standard seasonal adjustment package, X-12-ARIMA, but incorporates enhancements which allow the specification and adjustment of additional calendar effects. These additional effects are:

- permanent and long-term arrivals: no additional adjustments
- permanent and long-term departures: no additional adjustments
- visitor arrivals: Chinese New Year, Easter, April/May school holidays, June/July school holidays, daily trading day
- visitor departures: Chinese New Year, Easter, September/October school holidays
- New Zealand-resident traveller arrivals: Easter, April/May school holidays, September/October school holidays, weekday/weekend trading day
- New Zealand-resident traveller departures: Chinese New Year, Easter, April/May school holidays, June/July school holidays, September/October school holidays, weekday/weekend trading day
- all composite series (total arrivals, total departures, total passenger movements, net permanent and long-term migration) are a combination of the series above.

Furthermore, the seasonal adjustment process is now only based on data from January 1996 onwards. Seasonally adjusted data before this point will remain available, but will not be revised and will be independent of the seasonal adjustment from 1996 onwards.

In addition to the monthly seasonally adjusted series, Statistics NZ also plans to introduce quarterly seasonally adjusted series from the release of March 2009 data.

Further information about the changes to International Travel and Migration series can be obtained from the contacts below. More information about the seasonal adjustment process in general, including trend series, is available on the Statistics NZ website:
<http://www.stats.govt.nz/statistical-methods/data-analysis/seasonal-adjustment/welcome.htm>.

For technical information contact:
Nick Thomson or Ian Richards
Christchurch 03 964 8700
Email: demography@stats.govt.nz

Next release ...

International Travel and Migration: March 2009 will be released on 21 April 2009.

Technical notes

Nature of data

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

Changes in passenger type

In the preparation of international travel and migration statistics, the passenger type (overseas visitor, New Zealand resident-traveller, or permanent and long-term (PLT) migrant) is primarily determined by the passenger's response, on the arrival or departure card, to the questions on where they live and their length of stay or absence. If the person's intention changes later during the trip, this passenger type may no longer be correct. For example, a person may come to New Zealand with the declared intention of settling permanently (PLT migrant), but in fact may return overseas after a few months (overseas visitor). Data users should recognise the limitations inherent in the information supplied by travellers.

Sampling accuracy

The statistics for short-term passenger movements by country (that is, overseas visitor arrivals by country of last permanent residence and New Zealand-resident 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 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.

Infoshare and INFOS databases

All data in the Hot Off The Press tables are available through the Infoshare database (www.stats.govt.nz/infoshare), a free-of-charge online tool that gives you access to a range of time-series data. International travel and migration data are currently available through two subjects within Infoshare:

- International travel and migration (under Tourism on the Browse page)
- External migration (under Population on the Browse page).

The international travel and migration subject is under development, with more detailed cross-tabulations being progressively added. This will eventually replace the external migration subject, but both will remain available until development of the international travel and migration subject is complete.

Both subjects are also available in the INFOS database (for subscribers only). Where feasible, INFOS series identifiers are shown in the Hot Off The Press tables.

New Zealand-resident short-term departures

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

Permit type

With the exception of New Zealand citizens, Australian citizens and a small number of other people exempt under the Immigration Act 1987, everyone entering New Zealand is required to obtain a permit to remain in New Zealand. People already in New Zealand can apply for a permit renewal or a new permit of a different type. However, Statistics NZ only holds data on the permit type that an individual was given on arrival.

The determination of passenger type (as an overseas visitor, New Zealand-resident traveller or PLT migrant) by Statistics NZ is independent of the permit type a person holds. Passenger type is based on the time spent in and out of New Zealand, determined from past arrivals and departures of a person and responses to questions on the arrival or departure card.

Permit type data is available from July 2003 for arrivals of short-term overseas visitors and PLT migrants. It is not available for arrivals of short-term New Zealand-resident travellers, nor for departures of any passenger type.

Seasonally adjusted and trend series

The purpose of seasonally adjusting a time series is to measure and remove the varying seasonal components in the series (for example, there are more visitor arrivals during the New Zealand summer, due to the warmer weather and longer daylight hours). This makes the data for adjacent months more comparable.

An improved seasonal adjustment process was adopted in March 2009. The new process continues to use Statistics NZ's standard seasonal adjustment package, X-12-ARIMA, but incorporates enhancements which allow the specification and adjustment of additional calendar effects. These include the number and type of trading days in the month (as more people generally arrive and depart on Friday, Saturday and Sunday), and holiday periods which have important effects on travel but in different months each year (eg Easter can be in March or April). By series, the additional adjustments are:

- permanent and long-term arrivals: no additional adjustments
- permanent and long-term departures: no additional adjustments
- visitor arrivals: Chinese New Year, Easter, April/May school holidays, June/July school holidays, daily trading day
- visitor departures: Chinese New Year, Easter, September/October school holidays
- New Zealand-resident traveller arrivals: Easter, April/May school holidays, September/October school holidays, weekday/weekend trading day
- New Zealand-resident traveller departures: Chinese New Year, Easter, April/May school holidays, June/July school holidays, September/October school holidays, weekday/weekend trading day
- all composite series (total arrivals, total departures, total passenger movements, net permanent and long-term migration) are a combination of the series above.

Seasonally adjusted and trend data back to January 1996 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. Data before January 1996 is not revised. This cut-off is used because of the change to a four-term school year in 1996, which resulted in changes to the seasonal patterns of the New Zealand-resident arrivals and departures series.

Processing system

The current international travel and migration processing system, which incorporates scanning and image recognition technology, was first used to process the June 2004 arrival and departure cards. The determination of passenger type (overseas visitor, New Zealand-resident traveller or PLT migrant) and capture of the information required for the 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.

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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.

Tables

The following tables are printed with this Hot Off The Press and can also 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.

1. International travel and migration, by direction and passenger type, actual counts
2. International travel and migration, by direction and passenger type, seasonally adjusted and trend series
3. Short-term overseas visitor arrivals, by country of last permanent residence
4. Short-term New Zealand-resident traveller departures, by country of main destination
5. Permanent and long-term arrivals, by country of last permanent residence
6. Permanent and long-term departures, by country of next permanent residence
7. Net permanent and long-term migration, by country of last/next permanent residence
8. Permanent and long-term migration, by country of citizenship