

Embargoed until 10:45am – 19 March 2010

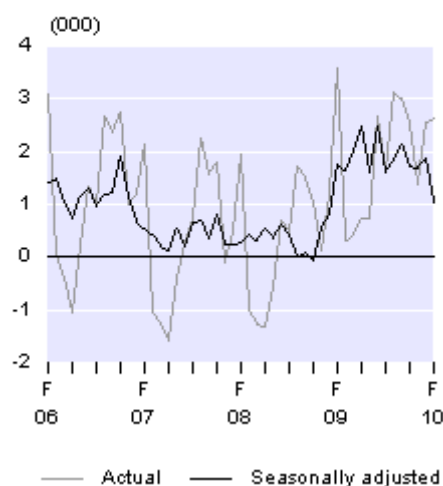
International Travel and Migration: February 2010

Highlights

- Visitor arrivals (267,900) were up 4 percent from February 2009 (256,600).
- More visitors arrived from China (up 4,900) and Australia (up 3,700).
- New Zealand residents departed on 104,000 overseas trips, up 8 percent from February 2009 (96,700).
- New Zealand residents departed on more trips to Australia (up 2,500) and China (up 1,400).
- Permanent and long-term arrivals exceeded departures by 1,000 on a seasonally adjusted basis.

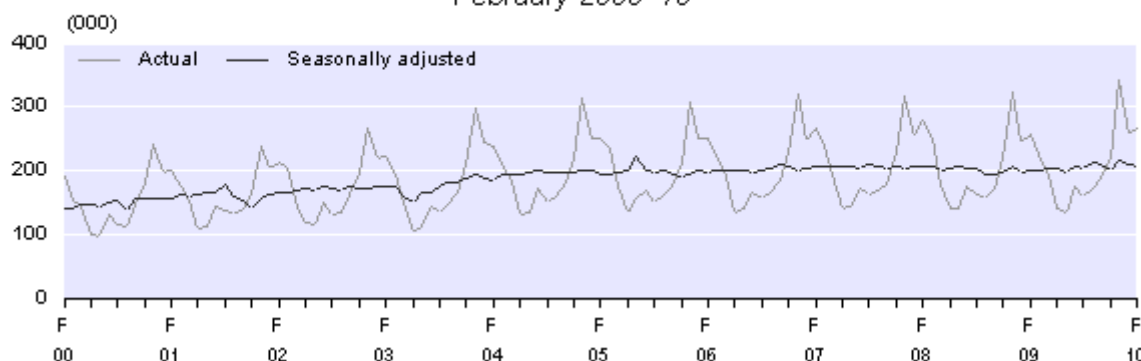
Monthly Net PLT Migration

February 2006–10



Monthly Visitor Arrivals

February 2000–10



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Commentary

Visitor arrivals

Monthly visitor arrivals

Short-term overseas visitor arrivals to New Zealand numbered 267,900 in February 2010, up 11,300 (4 percent) from February 2009. The latest figure was below the 280,500 visitor arrivals in February 2008, although that month included an extra day due to 2008 being a leap year.

The estimated average number of visitors in New Zealand per day was 203,300 in February 2010, up 5 percent from February 2009 (194,500). Holiday travellers accounted for 96,300 of the visitors in New Zealand per day in February 2010, up 8 percent from 88,900 in January 2009. Travellers visiting friends and relatives averaged 67,300 per day in February 2010, up just 1 percent from 66,700 in the previous February.

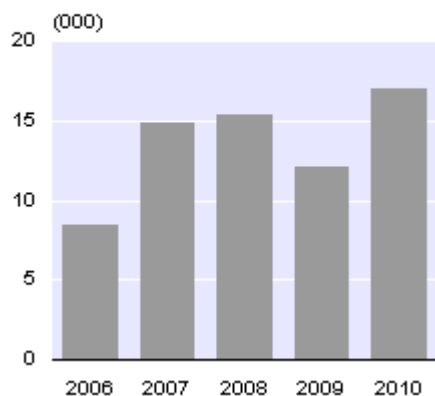
Monthly visitors by source country

Visitor arrivals increased significantly from China (up 4,900 or 41 percent), Taiwan (up 2,300 or 188 percent), and Hong Kong (up 1,700 or 111 percent) in February 2010 compared with February 2009. These increases were largely due to Chinese New Year falling in February in 2010, rather than in January as occurred in 2009. The Chinese New Year holiday period is a popular time for people from these countries to travel.

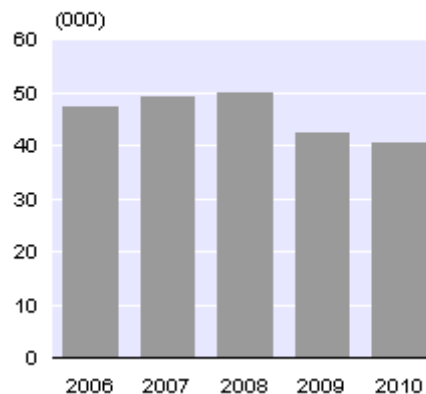
Combining the months of January and February 2010 to account for the shift in Chinese New Year, the 26,400 visitor arrivals from China were only just above the 26,300 in the same two months of 2009. Making the same comparison for Hong Kong, the 4,700 visitors in January and February 2010 compared with 4,000 in the same period of 2009. The difference was much larger for Taiwan, with the 6,500 visitor arrivals in January and February 2010 being well up from 3,800 in January and February 2009. However, visitor arrivals from Taiwan are still well below levels seen in the mid-1990s, including the high of 14,500 in January and February 1995.

More visitor arrivals were also recorded from Australia (up 3,700 or 4 percent) in February 2010. In contrast, the 40,500 visitor arrivals from the United Kingdom were down 2,000 (5 percent) from February 2009, and were well below the 50,000 visitors from the United Kingdom in February 2008.

Visitors from China
Month of February



Visitors from the United Kingdom
Month of February



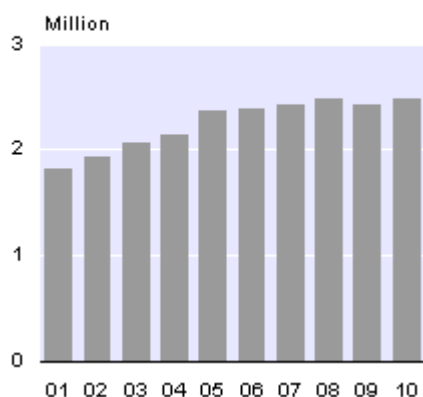
Note: Provisional international travel statistics, including weekly and four-weekly visitor arrival data, are available on the Statistics NZ website. This data is updated each week with the most recently available information on visitor arrivals from 10 major source countries.

Annual visitor arrivals

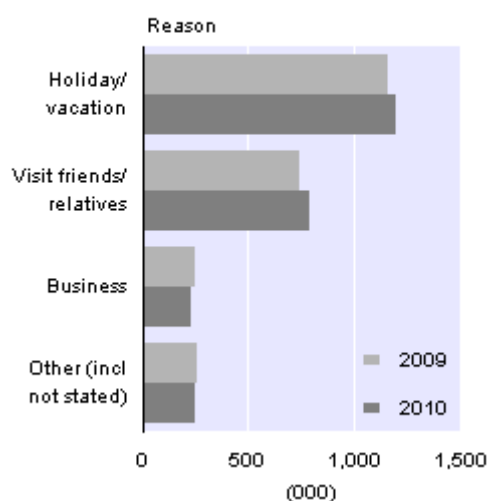
Visitor arrivals numbered 2.482 million in the February 2010 year, up 57,200 (2 percent) from the February 2009 year (2.425 million) and a similar number to the February 2008 year (2.485 million). The record annual total for visitor arrivals was 2.497 million in the March 2008 year.

A holiday was the main travel reason for 1.198 million visitors to New Zealand in the year ended February 2010, up 38,500 (3 percent) from the previous year. Another 792,200 arrived to visit friends and relatives (up 48,700 or 7 percent), and 234,800 arrived for business (down 12,300 or 5 percent).

Annual Visitor Arrivals
Year ended February



Visitor Arrivals by Reason
Year ended February



Annual visitors by source country

Visitor arrivals from Australia numbered 1.099 million in the February 2010 year, up 119,300 (12 percent) from 2009. According to the latest figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australians departed on 10 percent more overseas trips in the January 2010 year, compared with the previous January year.

Fewer visitors came from Japan (down 18,600 or 19 percent), Korea (down 17,500 or 24 percent), the United Kingdom (down 16,900 or 6 percent), and China (down 10,100 or 9 percent) in the February 2010 year, compared with the February 2009 year.

Visitor arrivals from Australia in the February 2010 year were more than double that of ten years earlier (534,700 in the February 2000 year). In contrast, the number of visitor arrivals from Japan (79,700) in the February 2010 year was less than half the annual high (174,800) recorded in the January 2003 year. Similarly, the number of visitor arrivals from Korea (55,000) was less than half the annual high (130,700) recorded in the April 1997 year.

Departures of New Zealand residents

Monthly resident departures

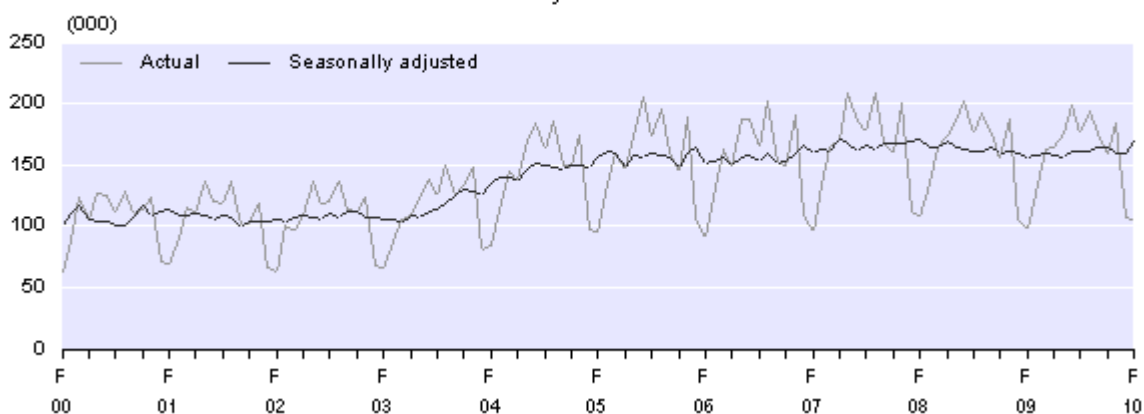
New Zealand residents departed on 104,000 short-term overseas trips in February 2010, up 7,300 (8 percent) from the 96,700 departures in February 2009. The latest total is below the 107,900 departures by New Zealand residents in February 2008, although that month included an extra day.

New Zealand residents took 56,800 trips to Australia in February 2010. This figure was up from 54,300 in February 2009, but below the 60,200 trips in February 2008. Departures to China numbered 3,500, surpassing both the 2,100 departures in February 2009 and the 2,900 departures in February 2008.

The estimated average number of New Zealand residents who were temporarily overseas per day during February 2010 was 75,000, up 3 percent from the average of 72,900 in February 2009. February and March are the months when the numbers of residents temporarily overseas are at their lowest, as many people have returned to school or work following the Christmas/New Year holidays. The number of residents overseas is highest around Christmas and New Year, and during the mid-winter school holidays in July.

Monthly New Zealand-resident Short-term Departures

February 2000–10



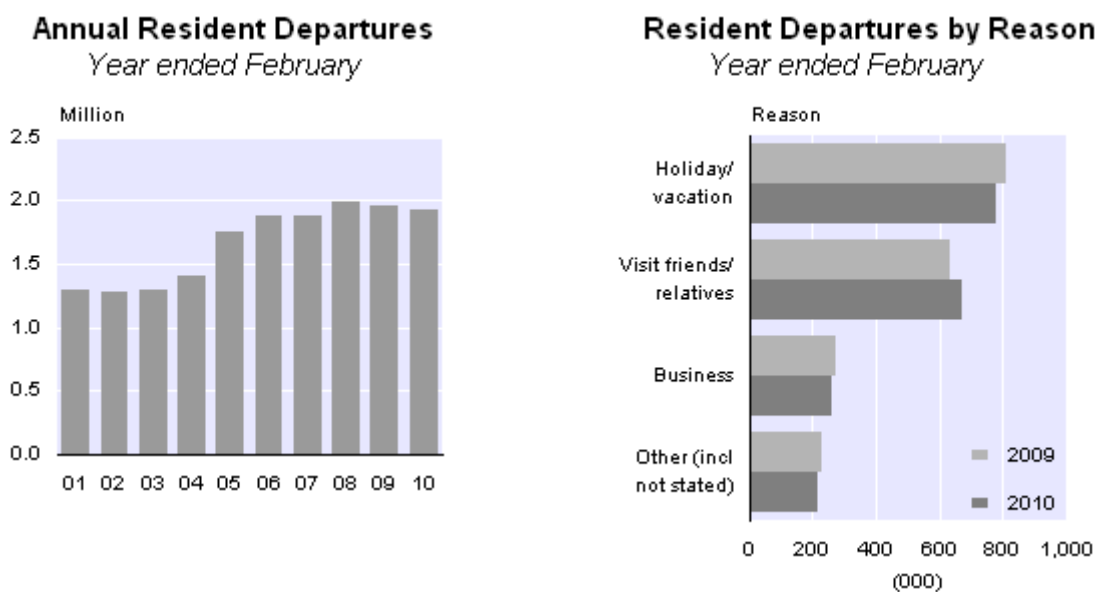
Annual resident departures

Short-term departures of New Zealand residents in the February 2010 year numbered 1.927 million, down 22,500 (1 percent) from 2009. The record annual total for resident departures was just under two million in the May 2008 year.

New Zealand residents departed on more trips to Samoa (up 3,700 or 10 percent), the Cook Islands (up 2,400 or 4 percent), and India (up 2,300 or 8 percent) in the February 2010 year. The increase in departures to Samoa was mainly due to 2,800 more trips to visit friends and relatives. This included 1,600 more trips to visit friends and relatives in the month of October 2009, following the tsunami in that country. Departures to Samoa for the purpose of a holiday were down 600 for the year, with decreases in the months before and after the tsunami.

Trips to Europe were down 13,200 (8 percent) compared with 2009. This decrease included fewer trips to the United Kingdom (down 5,100 or 5 percent), France (down 2,300 or 16 percent), and Italy (down 2,200 or 20 percent). Fewer departures were also made to the United States (down 5,000 or 5 percent), Hong Kong (down 2,600 or 13 percent), and Australia (down 2,100 or less than 1 percent).

A holiday was the main travel purpose for 776,400 New Zealand residents who departed in the February 2010 year, down 32,900 (4 percent) from the previous year. Another 669,400 departed to visit friends and relatives (up 35,200 or 6 percent). Departures for business purposes (262,200) were down 12,000 (4 percent) from the year ended February 2009.



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. The former group may include 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 2,600 in February 2010, compared with 3,600 in February 2009. This decrease in net migration was mainly due to 1,200 fewer arrivals of non-New Zealand citizens, including fewer arrivals on work and student permits (each down 400). Also, departures of non-New Zealand citizens were up 400, although this was offset by 600 fewer departures of New Zealand citizens. PLT departures of New Zealand citizens to Australia decreased 400 from February 2009.

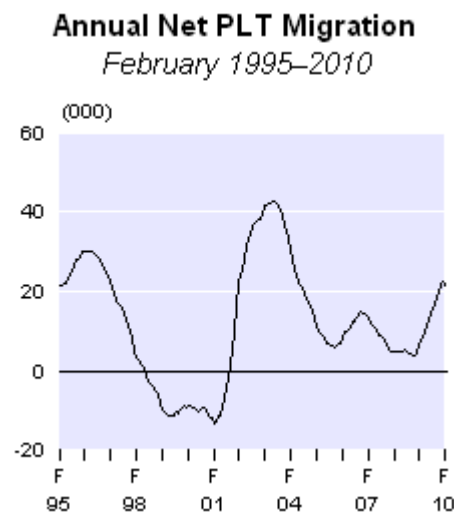
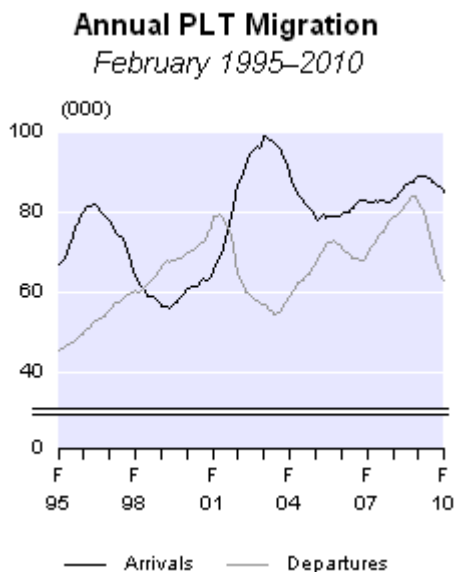
On a seasonally adjusted basis, PLT arrivals exceeded departures by 1,000 in February 2010, down from 1,900 in January 2010 and the lowest figure since January 2009 (800). The monthly seasonally adjusted series had averaged 1,900 between February 2009 and January 2010. The lower net figure for February 2010 was due to both a decrease in the seasonally adjusted arrival series and an increase in the departure series.

In February 2010, net inflows of migrants came from India (1,200), China and Malaysia (each 500), and the United Kingdom (400). The net outflow of 1,900 PLT migrants to Australia was down from 2,600 in February 2009, and was the lowest outflow for a February month since 2004 (1,400).

Annual PLT migration

Net migration was 21,600 in the February 2010 year, compared with 6,200 in the year ended February 2009. The increase was due to fewer departures. The 63,200 PLT departures in the February 2010 year were down 19,200 (23 percent) from the February 2009 year. Over the same period, there were 84,800 PLT arrivals, down 3,800 (4 percent).

Although net migration in the February 2010 year was up from the previous February year, it was down from the net gain of 22,600 in the 12 months to January 2010. The January figure was the highest annual net gain since the May 2004 year (24,000).



The net PLT migration gain of 21,600 in the February 2010 year was higher than the annual average of 11,900 for the December years 1990–2009. Net PLT migration varied substantially within this 20-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 experienced during most of 1998–2001, with the largest being a net loss of 13,200 people in the February 2001 year.

Annual PLT migration by country

In the year ended February 2010, net PLT inflows from the United Kingdom (8,600), India (5,700), and China (3,600) were all up from the February 2009 year. However, net migration from the Philippines, Fiji, and South Africa decreased.

The net PLT outflow to Australia was 15,400 in the February 2010 year, less than half the outflow of 34,400 in the February 2009 year. The latest net outflow resulted from 30,700 PLT departures to Australia, partly offset by 15,300 PLT arrivals from Australia. Almost 9 in every 10 PLT departures to Australia were New Zealand citizens (26,600). Of the PLT arrivals from Australia, two-thirds were New Zealand citizens (10,500), similar to levels observed over the past decade.

Annual PLT migration by citizenship

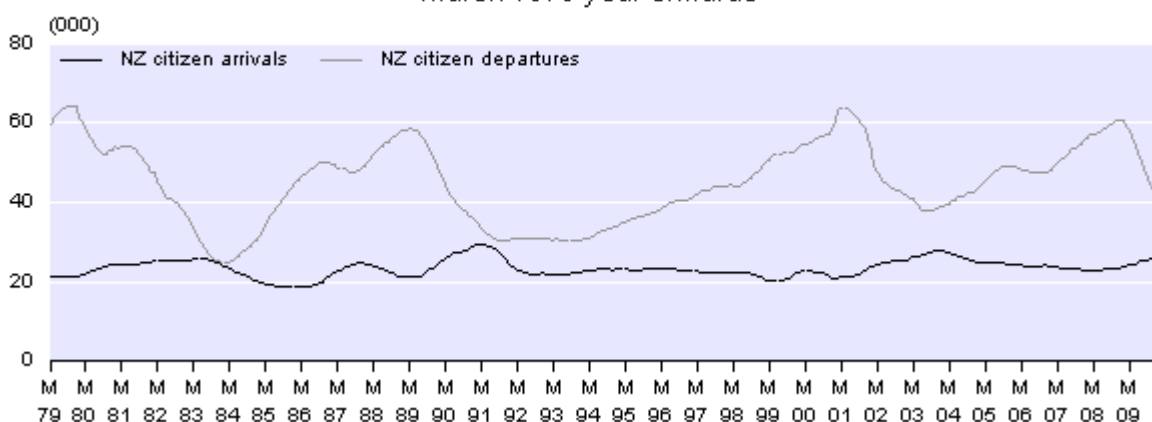
A net inflow of 34,400 non-New Zealand citizens and a net outflow of 12,800 New Zealand citizens were recorded in the February 2010 year.

PLT arrivals of New Zealand citizens numbered 26,400 in the February 2010 year, above the average of 23,500 recorded for the 1979–2009 December years, but below the peaks of the March 1991 year (29,600) and the October 2003 year (27,800). Arrivals of New Zealand citizens tend to show relatively little variation year-to-year, and the variation that does occur often follows trends in departures of New Zealand citizens a few years earlier.

PLT departures of New Zealand citizens have shown much more annual variation than arrivals of New Zealand citizens. The highest number of departures of New Zealand citizens was 64,300 in the October 1979 year, but by the January 1984 year, this had decreased to a low of 24,400. PLT departures of New Zealand citizens numbered 39,100 in the February 2010 year, well down from 59,300 the previous February year.

Annual PLT Migration of New Zealand Citizens

March 1979 year onwards



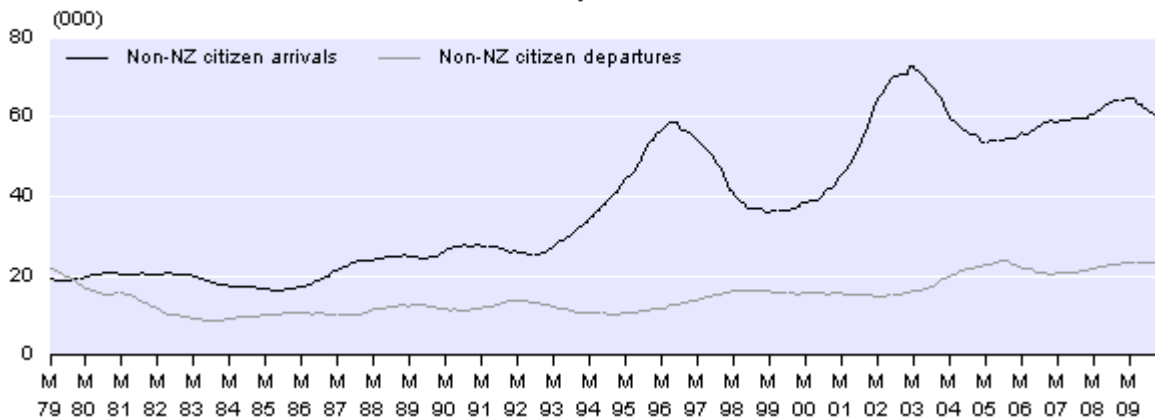
PLT arrivals of non-New Zealand citizens were less than 30,000 a year between 1979 and 1992, then doubled to reach a peak of 58,800 in the July 1996 year. Another peak of 72,800 was reached in the February 2003 year. The changes in arrivals of non-New Zealand citizens reflect changes in arrivals of temporary workers (including working holidaymakers) and overseas students staying for 12 months or more, as well as arrivals for residence. The 58,500 non-New

Zealand citizen arrivals in the February 2010 year were down from 64,600 the previous February year.

PLT departures of non-New Zealand citizens have generally been increasing since 1984, corresponding with the general increase in arrivals of non-New Zealand citizens. In the February 2010 year, there were 24,100 PLT departures of non-New Zealand citizens, up from 23,200 in the February 2009 year.

Annual PLT Migration of Non-New Zealand Citizens

March 1979 year onwards



Annual PLT migration by permit type

In the February 2010 year, 30,200 PLT arrivals were Australian or New Zealand citizens who did not require a permit to remain in New Zealand. Of the 54,600 PLT arrivals who did require a permit, 21,000 arrived on work permits, 15,400 arrived on student permits, 13,400 arrived on residence permits, and 4,200 arrived on visitor permits. Compared with the February 2009 year, there were fewer arrivals on each of these permit types, the biggest decrease being 3,000 fewer arrivals on work permits.

Recent international travel and migration articles

Statistics NZ has recently released a number of [International travel and migration articles](#) that can be accessed on the Statistics NZ website. The most recent articles are:

December 2009	Business Travel to and from New Zealand: 1989–2009 examines changes in the number and characteristics of people travelling to and from New Zealand for business over the past two decades.
October 2009	Rates of Travel to New Zealand by Country of Residence: 2009 examines the rates of travel to New Zealand when adjusted for the population of each source country.
May 2009	Visitors from the Republic of Korea, 1989–2008 examines the large fluctuations in the number of visitors from Korea, and the characteristics of these visitors.

New table

From the next international travel and migration release (on 23 April 2010), a new table will be added to the Excel tables accompanying this release. This new table will become table 4, with

the current tables 4–8 becoming tables 5–9. The new table will contain numbers of short-term overseas visitor arrivals by travel purpose, and will include some detail by country of residence.

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Next release ...

International Travel and Migration: March 2010 will be released on 23 April 2010.

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.

Free online database

A large number of international travel and migration tables are available through Statistics NZ's Infoshare database (www.stats.govt.nz/infoshare), a free online tool that provides access to a range of time-series data. The international travel and migration subject can be found under **Tourism** on the **Browse** page of the database.

Changes in passenger type

Passenger type (overseas visitor, New Zealand-resident traveller, or permanent and long-term (PLT) migrant) 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. Responses to the questions, and therefore the passenger type allocated, may be based on intentions. If a person's intentions change 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.

Permit type

The determination of passenger type by Statistics NZ is independent of the permit type a person holds.

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.

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.

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.

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 periods more comparable.

The seasonal adjustment process for international travel and migration statistics uses Statistics NZ's standard seasonal adjustment package, X-12-ARIMA, with 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).

Both monthly and quarterly seasonally adjusted series are available. The quarterly series are adjusted independently of the adjustments made to the monthly series. Hence, quarterly figures may not equal the sum of monthly seasonally adjusted figures.

Seasonally adjusted and trend data back to January 1996 are subject to revision each period. The size of these revisions is expected to be minimal, with the largest revisions occurring in the periods immediately before the current month or quarter. 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 international travel and migration processing system incorporates scanning and image recognition technology. All arrival and departure cards are processed, but for around 9 in 10 cards the required information is captured automatically and no operator intervention is needed.

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