

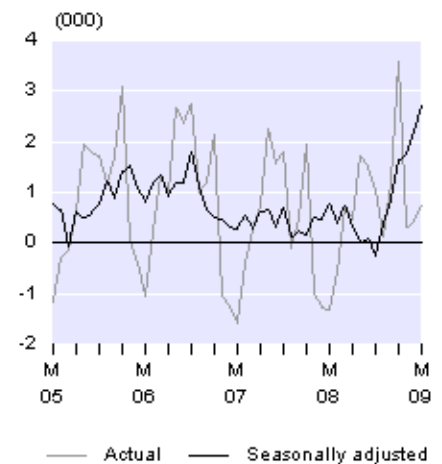
Embargoed until 10:45am – 22 June 2009

International Travel and Migration: May 2009

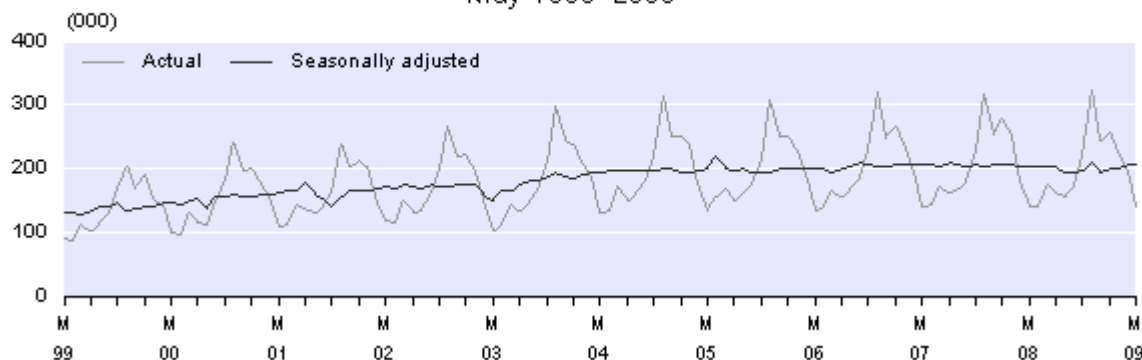
Highlights

- Visitor arrivals (141,900) were up 1 percent from May 2008 (140,500).
- There were more visitors from Australia (up 9,200), but fewer visitors from Korea (down 3,400), China (down 2,700) and Japan (down 2,500).
- New Zealand-resident departures (163,700) were down 6 percent from May 2008 (174,000).
- New Zealand residents departed on fewer trips to Australia (down 5,900), the United Kingdom (down 900) and Fiji (down 800).
- Permanent and long-term arrivals exceeded departures by 2,700 on a seasonally adjusted basis.

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



Monthly Visitor Arrivals
May 1999–2009



Geoff Bascand

Government Statistician

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

22 June 2009
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Commentary

Visitor arrivals

Monthly visitor arrivals

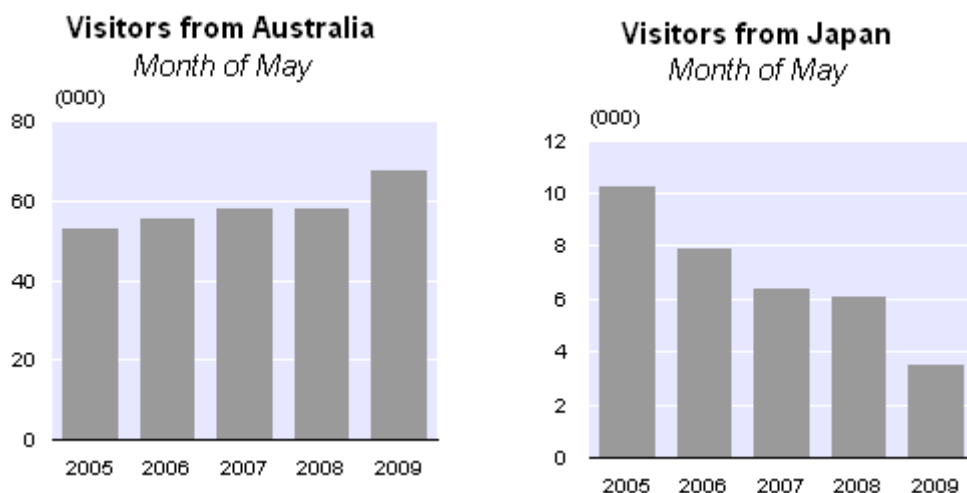
Short-term overseas visitor arrivals to New Zealand numbered 141,900 in May 2009. This figure is up 1,400 (1 percent) from May 2008 (140,500) and is the highest ever recorded for a May month.

The estimated average number of visitors in New Zealand per day in May 2009 was 103,500, down 5 percent from the average of 109,100 in May 2008. This estimate is calculated from the date of arrival and intended length of stay of sampled visitor arrivals. The average intended stay of visitors who arrived in May 2009 was 18 days, down from 19 days in May 2008. The median (half stay shorter, and half stay longer than this duration) was 7 days, unchanged from May 2008.

Monthly visitors by source country

In May 2009, visitor arrivals from Australia were up 9,200 (16 percent). Arrivals from Australia have increased in 10 of the past 12 months, when compared with the same month of the previous year. In contrast, there were fewer visitor arrivals from Korea (down 3,400 or 54 percent), China (down 2,700 or 33 percent) and Japan (down 2,500 or 42 percent).

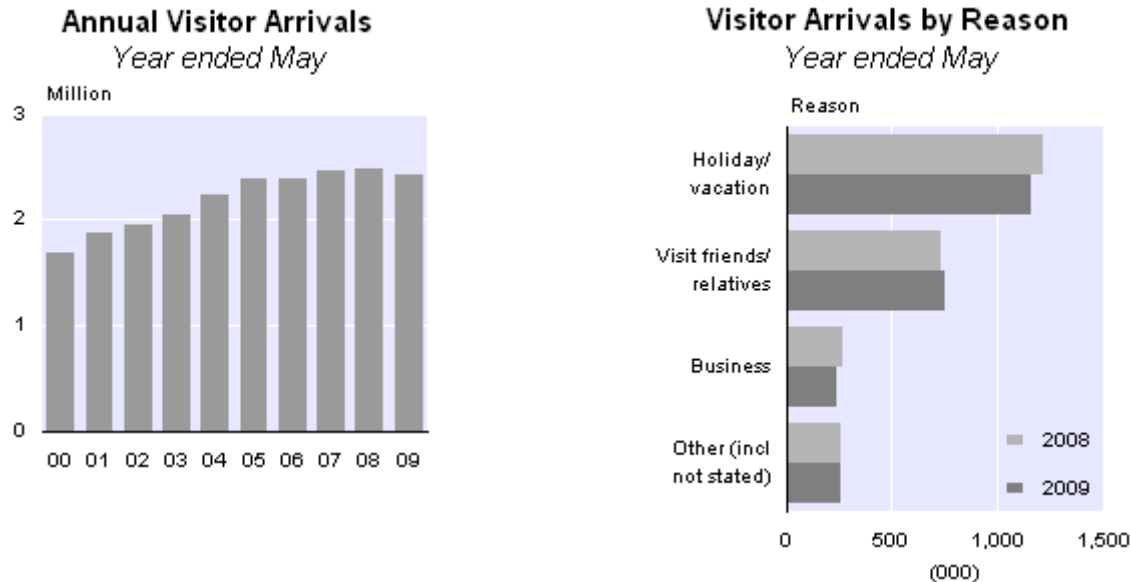
Since December 2004, visitor arrivals from Japan have dropped for all except three months when compared with the same month of the previous year. The largest monthly drops over that period were in November 2008 (down 46 percent – because there were no charter flights) and May 2009. Visitors from Korea have dropped for all except one month since May 2007 with the drop in May 2009 the largest over that period. Visitors from China have dropped in nine of the past 12 months.



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

During the May 2009 year, there were 2.419 million visitor arrivals, down 64,200 (3 percent) from the May 2008 year. A holiday was the main travel reason for 1.159 million visitors to New Zealand in the May 2009 year, down 54,100 (4 percent) from the previous year. Another 753,200 arrived to visit friends and relatives (up 23,800 or 3 percent), and 237,600 arrived for business (down 28,700 or 11 percent).



Annual visitors by source country

Annual visitor arrivals from Australia exceeded 1 million for the first time in the May 2009 year. The 1.002 million visitor arrivals were up 35,500 (4 percent) compared with the May 2008 year. Almost 40 percent of the visitors came for a holiday (397,300), while 38 percent came to visit friends or relatives (380,700). A further 15 percent came on business (146,200). Annual visitor arrivals from Australia have doubled over the past ten years, with half a million first exceeded in December 1998.

More visitors also came from Fiji (up 4,800 or 24 percent), France (up 2,600 or 13 percent), French Polynesia (up 2,300 or 14 percent), Germany (up 2,200 or 4 percent), New Caledonia (up 2,100 or 17 percent) and Singapore (up 2,000 or 7 percent), in the May 2009 year.

Fewer visitors came from the United Kingdom (down 27,300 or 9 percent), Korea (down 25,500 or 28 percent), Japan (down 22,100 or 19 percent), the United States (down 21,200 or 10 percent) and China (down 15,400 or 12 percent). After Australia, these five countries are New Zealand's largest sources of visitors. There were also fewer arrivals from Taiwan (down 5,200) and Canada (down 2,300).

Note: Detailed visitor data will be available in the May 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

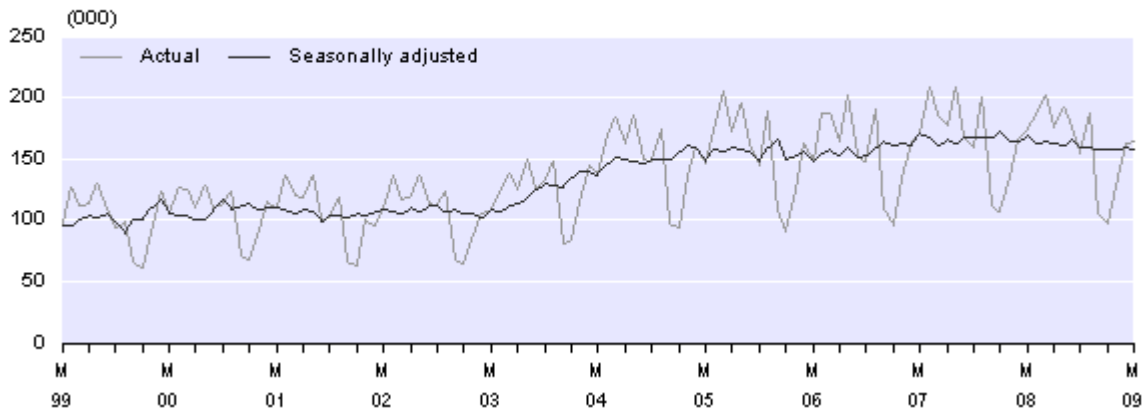
New Zealand residents departed on 163,700 short-term overseas trips in May 2009, down 10,300 (6 percent) from the 174,000 departures in May 2008. May 2009 is the seventh consecutive month in which departures of New Zealand residents were lower than for the same month of the previous year.

In May 2009, there were fewer trips to Australia (down 5,900 or 7 percent), the United Kingdom (down 900 or 7 percent) and Fiji (down 800 or 10 percent).

The estimated average number of New Zealand residents who were temporarily overseas during May 2009 was 93,100 per day, down 5 percent from the average of 97,600 in May 2008. This estimate is calculated from the date of departure and intended length of absence of sampled resident departures. The average intended absence of residents who departed in May 2009 was 21 days, down from 22 days in May 2008. The median was 10 days, the same as in May 2008.

Monthly New Zealand-resident Short-term Departures

May 1999–2009



Annual resident departures

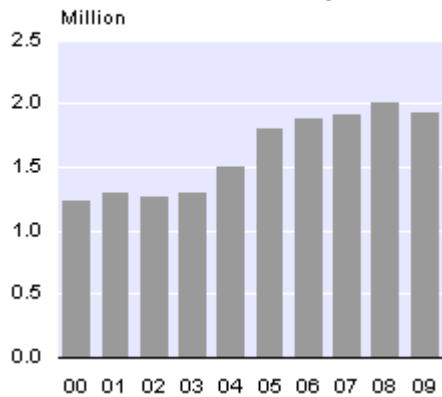
Short-term departures of New Zealand residents in the May 2009 year numbered 1.930 million, down 70,100 (4 percent) from the May 2008 year.

Trips to Australia (942,200), the most popular destination, were down 34,200 (4 percent) from the previous year. There were fewer trips to France in the May 2009 year (down 6,100 or 31 percent), compared with the May 2008 year. The larger number of trips to France in the May 2008 year was boosted by the Rugby World Cup (held in September and October 2007).

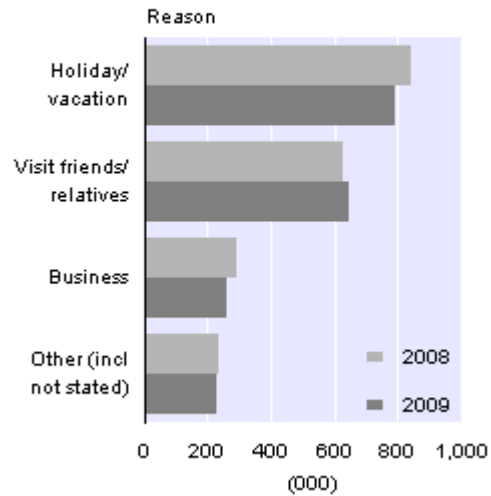
There were also fewer trips to the United Kingdom (down 5,400 or 6 percent), Fiji (down 4,200 or 4 percent), China (down 4,200 or 7 percent), New Caledonia (down 4,100 or 35 percent), Singapore (down 2,400 or 15 percent), Thailand (down 2,300 or 7 percent), Taiwan (down 2,100 or 18 percent) and Korea (down 2,100 or 13 percent). There were more trips to Samoa (up 2,300 or 6 percent).

A holiday was the main travel reason for 791,600 New Zealand residents who departed in the May 2009 year, down 49,400 (6 percent) from the previous year. Another 645,400 departed to visit friends and relatives (up 15,700 or 2 percent). Departures for business purposes (263,100) were down 27,400 (9 percent) from the year ended May 2008.

Annual Resident Departures
Year ended May



Resident Departures by Reason
Year ended May



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

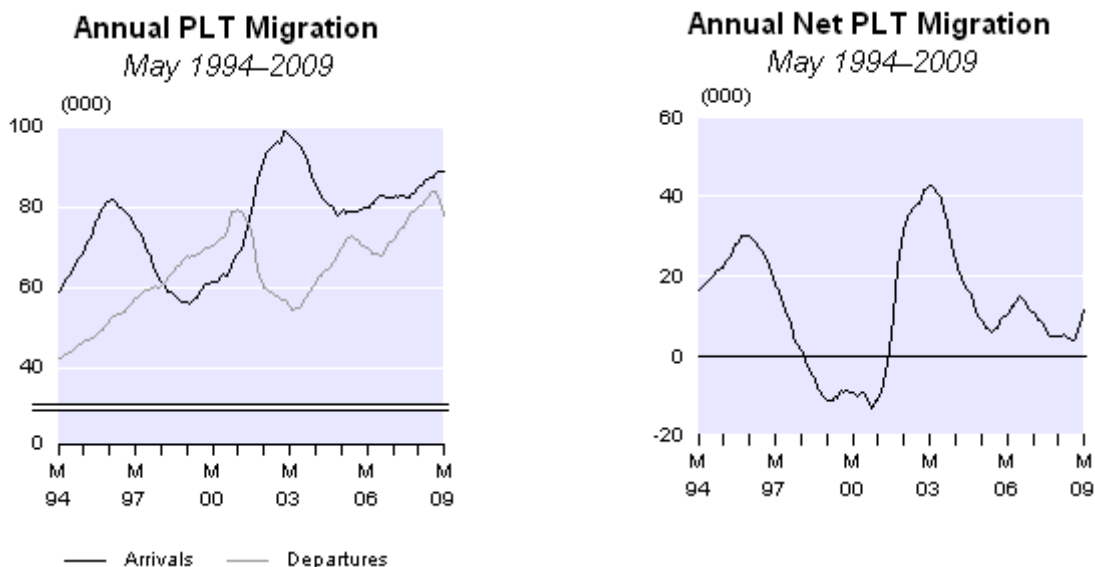
PLT arrivals exceeded departures by 700 in May 2009, compared with a net PLT outflow of 1,300 in May 2008. The increase was mainly due to 2,100 fewer PLT departures, including 1,500 fewer departures to Australia and 500 fewer to the United Kingdom. There were also 200 more PLT arrivals of New Zealand citizens, while arrivals of non-New Zealand citizens decreased by 300.

On a seasonally adjusted basis, PLT arrivals exceeded PLT departures by 2,700 in May 2009, up from 2,200 in April 2009 and 1,700 in March 2009. The May 2009 seasonally adjusted figure for net PLT migration is the highest since July 2003 (2,800).

In May 2009, there were net inflows of migrants from India (400) and the Philippines (300). There was a net outflow of 1,200 PLT migrants to Australia, down from the outflows of 2,800 in May 2008 and 2,200 in May 2007.

Annual PLT migration

In the year ended May 2009, there were 88,900 PLT arrivals, up 4,000 (5 percent) from the May 2008 year. Over the same period, there were 77,700 PLT departures, down 2,300 (3 percent). As a result, net PLT migration was 11,200 in the May 2009 year, up from 4,900 in the April 2008 year.



The net PLT migration gain of 11,200 in the year ended May 2009 was similar to the annual average of 11,400 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 May 2009, there were net PLT inflows from the United Kingdom (8,900), India (6,000), the Philippines (3,500), China (3,300), Fiji (3,100), and South Africa (2,500).

The net PLT outflow to Australia was 30,500 in the May 2009 year, down 700 from the net outflow of 31,200 in the May 2008 year. Following the record highs of 35,400 in both the December 2008 and January 2009 years, annual net outflows to Australia have dropped in each of the next four months. The latest net outflow resulted from 43,800 PLT departures to Australia, partly offset by 13,400 PLT arrivals from Australia. About 89 percent of the PLT departures to Australia were New Zealand citizens (39,100). Of the PLT arrivals from Australia, almost two-thirds were New Zealand citizens (8,700), similar to levels observed over the past decade.

Annual PLT migration by citizenship

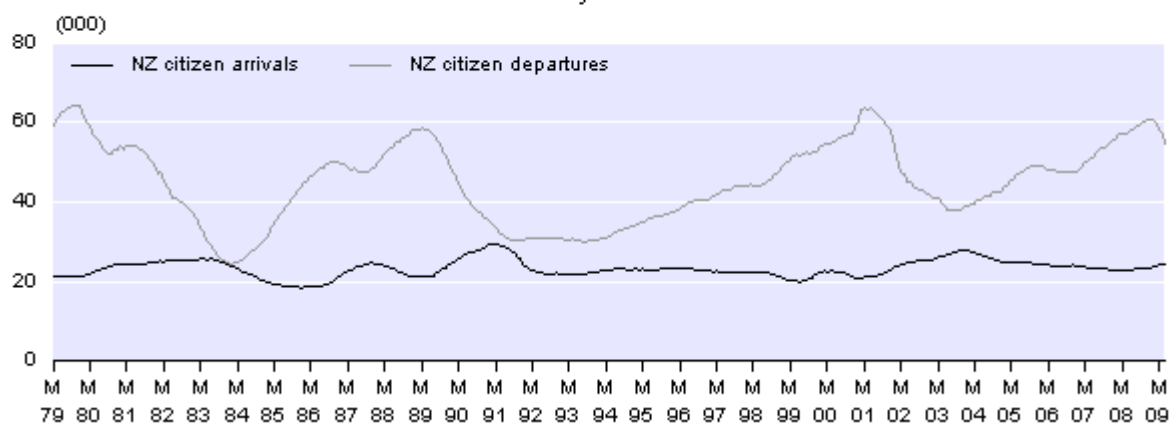
A net inflow of 41,100 non-New Zealand citizens and a net outflow of 29,900 New Zealand citizens were recorded in the year ended May 2009. There was a net outflow of New Zealand citizens to Australia (30,400), followed by the United Arab Emirates (500) and Canada (400).

PLT arrivals of New Zealand citizens numbered 24,600 in the May 2009 year, just above the average of 23,400 recorded for the 1979–2008 December years. Arrivals of New Zealand citizens tend to show little variation year-to-year, and the variation that does occur often follows trends in departures of New Zealand citizens a few years earlier. Arrivals of New Zealand citizens were at their highest in the March 1991 year (29,600), following a peak in departures of New Zealand citizens in 1989. More recently, arrivals of New Zealand citizens peaked at 27,800 in the October 2003 year, following a peak in departures of New Zealand citizens in 2001.

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. There were 54,600 PLT departures of New Zealand citizens in the May 2009 year, down 3,200 from the previous year.

Annual PLT Migration of New Zealand Citizens

March 1979 year onwards

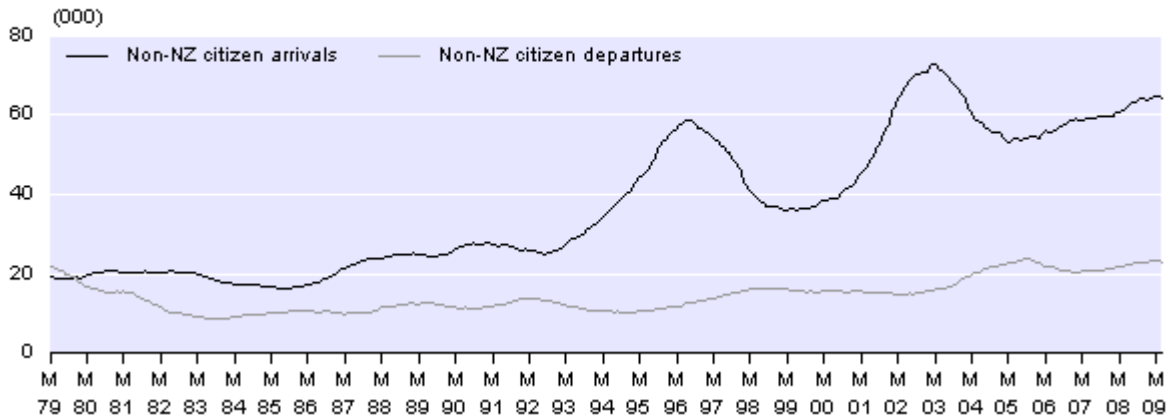


PLT arrivals of non-New Zealand citizens were less than 30,000 a year between 1979 and 1992, then doubled to reach a peak of 58,800 in the July 1996 year. Another peak, of 72,800, was reached in the February 2003 year. The changes in arrivals of non-New Zealand citizens reflect changes in arrivals of temporary workers (including working holidaymakers) and overseas students staying for 12 months or more, as well as arrivals for residence. Arrivals of non-New Zealand citizens have generally been increasing since 2005, with 64,200 in the May 2009 year (up 2,400 from the May 2008 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. There were 23,100 PLT departures of non-New Zealand citizens in the May 2009 year, up 1,000 from the May 2008 year.

Annual PLT Migration of Non-New Zealand Citizens

March 1979 year onwards



Annual PLT migration by permit type

In the May 2009 year, 28,600 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, 23,800 arrived on work permits, 16,300 arrived on student permits, 14,400 arrived on residence permits, and 5,300 arrived on visitor permits. Compared with the May 2008 year, there were more PLT arrivals on student permits (up 2,700) and work permits (up 1,300), but fewer arrivals on residence permits (down 1,000). 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 are:

May 2009	<i>Visitors from the Republic of Korea, 1989–2008</i> examines the large fluctuations in the number of visitors from Korea, and the characteristics of these visitors.
April 2009	<i>Visitors from the Americas</i> examines changes in the number of visitors from the United States, Canada, Brazil, Argentina, and Chile between 1979 and 2008.
March 2009	<i>Christmas travel 2008</i> examines travel to and from New Zealand around the peak Christmas period.

Availability of data on Infoshare and INFOS

Statistics NZ has completed a review of international travel and migration outputs available on Infoshare (www.stats.govt.nz/infoshare), a free-of-charge online tool that provides access to a range of time-series data, and INFOS. The review was to ensure information remains relevant and easily accessible. A new international travel and migration group (ITM) is now available and can be found under Tourism on the Browse page of the Infoshare database. This will replace the external migration (EMI) group. To allow users time to familiarise themselves with the ITM group, EMI will remain available until 30 September 2009. To help users move from EMI to ITM outputs, a webpage called [International travel and migration data on Infoshare](#) has been established to provide a concordance between EMI and ITM outputs, as well as information on the data available in ITM.

Tourism and migration tables

As previously advised, Statistics NZ will no longer publish the annual tourism and migration tables produced since 2000. The detailed international travel and migration data is now freely available through the Infoshare database.

In addition to data from the international travel and migration dataset, the following data were included in the tables, with alternative sources noted:

- forecasts of visitor arrivals, available on the [Ministry of Tourism's research website](#)
- residence approvals, work permits and student permits, available on the [Immigration New Zealand statistics webpage](#)
- citizenship approvals, available in the New Zealand Official Yearbook which is published every second year by Statistics NZ
- the birthplace of New Zealand residents, and internal migration within New Zealand, both sourced from Statistics NZ's [2006 Census of Population and Dwellings](#)
- the projected population of New Zealand, from Statistics NZ's [national population projections](#).

For technical information contact:

Nick Thomson or Ian Richards

Christchurch 03 964 8700

Email: demography@stats.govt.nz

Next release ...

International Travel and Migration: June 2009 will be released on 21 July 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.

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-of-charge 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

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.

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 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). The additional adjustments for the monthly series are:

- PLT arrivals: no additional adjustments
- PLT 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 PLT migration) are a combination of the series above.

Quarterly seasonally adjusted series were introduced in April 2009. 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. The additional adjustments made to the quarterly series are:

- PLT arrivals: no additional adjustments
- PLT departures: no additional adjustments
- visitor arrivals: Easter, June/July school holidays
- visitor departures: Easter, September/October school holidays
- New Zealand-resident traveller arrivals: September/October school holidays
- New Zealand-resident traveller departures: Easter, April/May school holidays, June/July school holidays
- all composite series (total arrivals, total departures, total passenger movements, net PLT migration) are a combination of the series above.

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 prior to 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.

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 or for departures of any passenger type.

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