

Embargoed until 10:45am – 21 June 2010

## International Travel and Migration: May 2010

### Highlights

In May 2010 compared with May 2009:

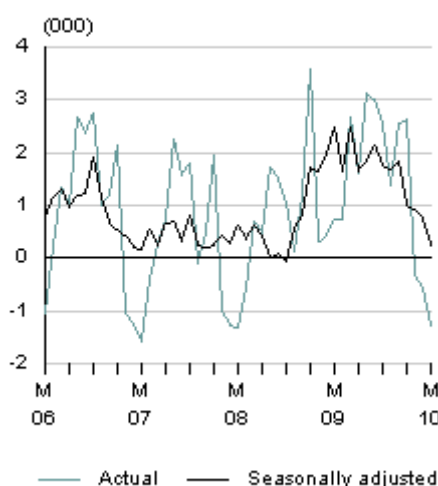
- Visitor arrivals (141,300) were just below the 141,900 arrivals in May 2009.
- There were more visitors from China (up 2,100), but fewer from Australia (down 3,100).
- New Zealand residents departed on 165,400 overseas trips, up 1 percent from May 2009 (163,700).
- New Zealand residents departed on more trips to the United Kingdom and China (both up 1,000), but fewer to Australia (down 5,000) and Thailand (down 1,200).

In May 2010:

- Permanent and long-term arrivals exceeded departures by 200 on a seasonally adjusted basis.

### Monthly net PLT migration

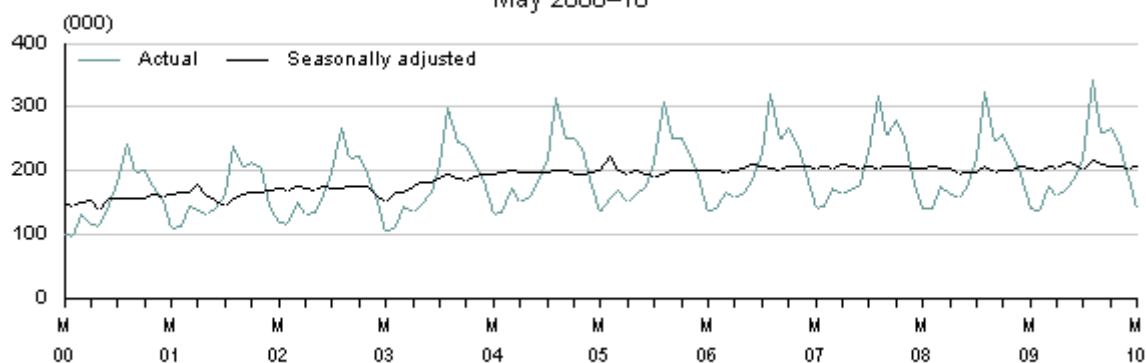
May 2006–10



Source: Statistics New Zealand

### Monthly visitor arrivals

May 2000–10



Source: Statistics New Zealand

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# Commentary

## Visitor arrivals

### Monthly visitor arrivals

Short-term overseas visitor arrivals to New Zealand numbered 141,300 in May 2010, just below the 141,900 arrivals in May 2009. Visitor arrivals in the month of May have remained around this level since 2007.

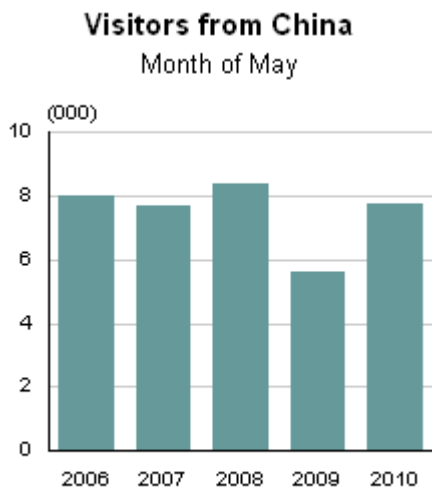
The underlying trend, derived from the seasonally adjusted series, indicates that visitor arrivals have declined 4 percent since a peak in November 2009. Prior to this, the trend had been increasing from a low in November 2008, during the global economic downturn.

The estimated average number of visitors in New Zealand per day was 104,400 in May 2010, up 1 percent from 103,500 in May 2009. Holiday travellers accounted for 35,700 of the visitors in New Zealand per day in May 2010, up 2 percent from the previous May. Travellers visiting friends and relatives averaged 31,200 per day, down 6 percent from May 2009.

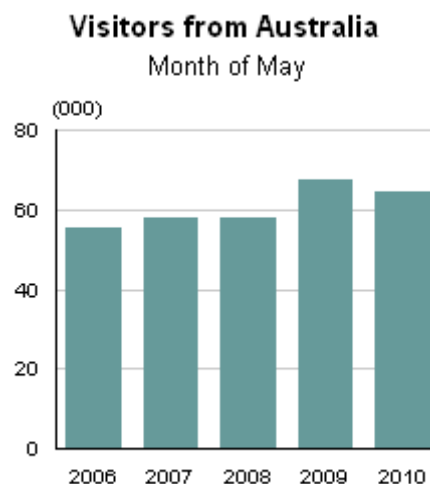
### Monthly visitors by source country

In May 2010, combined visitor arrivals from China, Japan, and Korea were up 5,400 (45 percent), due to the H1N1 pandemic affecting numbers travelling from those countries in May 2009. However, the recovery is not complete as the May 2010 arrivals are still 3,200 (16 percent) lower than the combined arrivals from those countries in May 2008.

There were fewer visitors from Australia (down 3,100 or 5 percent) and the United Kingdom (down 1,600 or 15 percent) in May 2010. The drop in visitors from Australia follows a 16 percent increase in numbers between May 2008 and May 2009. The decrease from Australia included 3,800 fewer holiday arrivals and 2,500 fewer arrivals to visit friends and relatives. However, business arrivals from Australia were up 3,100, recovering to 2008 levels. Visitor arrivals from the United Kingdom were the lowest for a May month since 2001.



Source: Statistics New Zealand



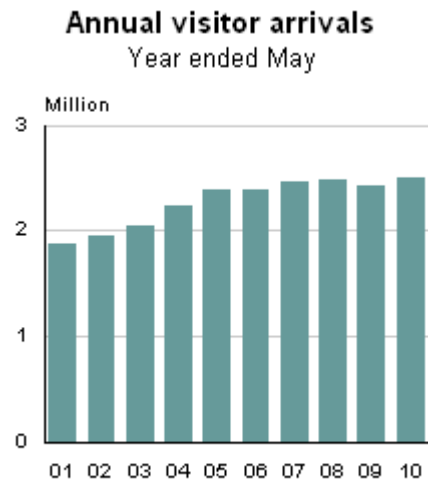
Source: Statistics New Zealand

**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 2.491 million in the May 2010 year, up 72,000 (3 percent) from the May 2009 year (2.419 million).

A holiday was the main travel reason for 1.198 million visitors to New Zealand in the year ended May 2010, up 38,800 (3 percent) from the previous year. Another 785,800 arrived to visit friends and relatives (up 32,700 or 4 percent), and 243,800 arrived for business (up 6,200 or 3 percent).



Source: Statistics New Zealand



Source: Statistics New Zealand

## Annual visitors by source country

There were 1.114 million visitor arrivals from Australia in the May 2010 year, up 112,200 (11 percent) from 2009. The next largest increases came from France (up 2,900 or 13 percent) and Hong Kong (up 2,800 or 13 percent).

Fewer visitors came from the United Kingdom (down 13,400 or 5 percent), Japan (down 12,500 or 13 percent), China (down 7,800 or 7 percent), and South Africa (down 7,000 or 29 percent) in the May 2010 year, compared with the May 2009 year.

## Departures of New Zealand residents

### Monthly resident departures

New Zealand residents departed on 165,400 short-term overseas trips in May 2010, up 1,700 (1 percent) from the 163,700 trips in May 2009, but still below the 174,000 trips in May 2008.

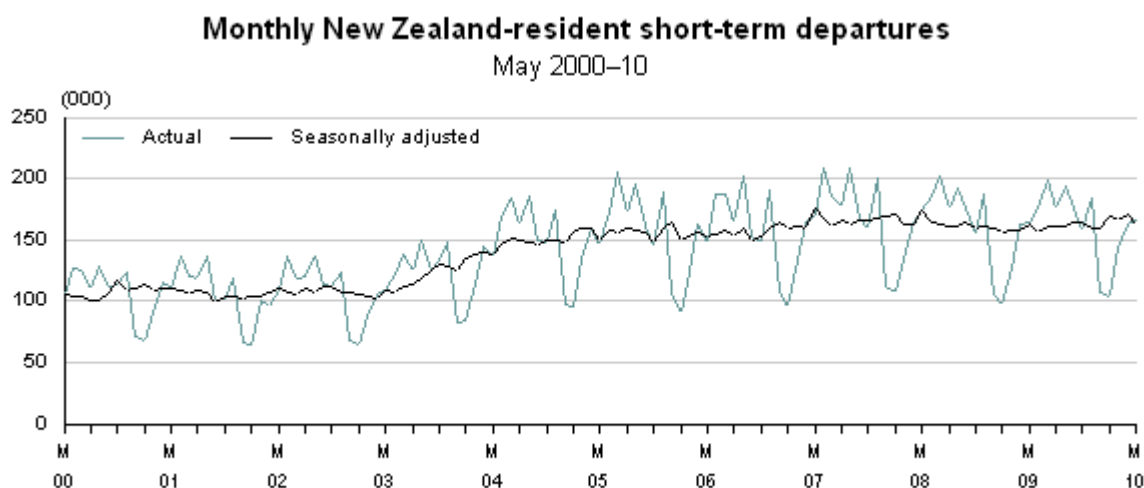
New Zealand residents took 1,000 more trips to China and the United Kingdom in May 2010, compared with the previous May. The disruption to air travel in Europe caused by the volcanic

eruption in Iceland in April 2010 may have led to more trips to the United Kingdom, due to people delaying their travel until May.

The 73,500 trips to Australia in May 2010 were down 5,000 (6 percent) from May 2009 (78,500), and well below the 84,400 trips to Australia in May 2008. There were also fewer trips to Thailand (down 1,200 or 46 percent), coinciding with civil unrest in that country.

The trend in New Zealand resident departures, derived from the seasonally adjusted series, has been increasing since a low in March 2009, and is now just below the previous peak reached in January 2008.

The estimated average number of New Zealand residents who were temporarily overseas per day during May 2010 was 94,500, up 1,400 or 2 percent from the average in May 2009.



Source: Statistics New Zealand

### Annual resident departures

Short-term departures of New Zealand residents in the May 2010 year numbered 1.946 million, up 16,100 or 1 percent from the May 2009 year.

New Zealand residents departed on 97,000 trips to Fiji in the May 2010 year, up 4,900 (5 percent) compared with 2009. However, this was still well below the May year high of 110,000 in 2006.

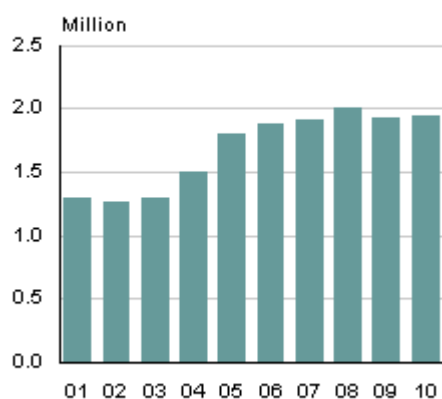
There were also more trips to China and India (both up 2,200), and South Africa and Indonesia (both up 2,100) in the May 2010 year, compared with the May 2009 year.

Trips to Europe were down 5,700 (3 percent) compared with 2009, including 2,900 (3 percent) fewer trips to the United Kingdom.

A holiday was the main travel purpose for 786,100 New Zealand residents who departed in the May 2010 year, down 5,500 (1 percent) from the previous year. Another 667,500 departed to visit friends and relatives (up 22,100 or 3 percent). Departures for business purposes (272,500) were up 9,400 (4 percent) from the May 2009 year.

## Annual resident departures

Year ended May



Source: Statistics New Zealand

## Resident departures by reason

Year ended May



Source: Statistics New Zealand

**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

Seasonally adjusted net PLT migration was 200 in May 2010, the lowest since the series briefly fell below zero in November 2008. The monthly seasonally adjusted series has steadily decreased from 1,800 in January 2010. The decrease in the net series in recent months has been due to a decrease in arrivals and an increase in departures.

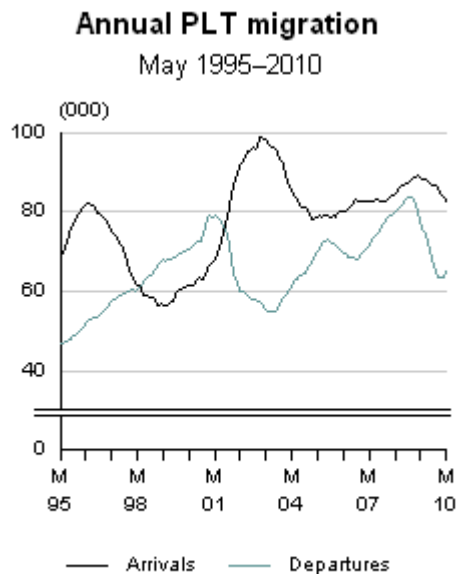
On an unadjusted basis, PLT departures exceeded arrivals by 1,300 in May 2010. Although this was down from an inflow of 700 in May 2009, it equalled the average outflow for May months between 2005 and 2008. The decrease in net migration in May 2010, compared with May 2009, was due to 800 fewer arrivals and 1,200 more departures. The increase in departures included 500 more non-New Zealand citizen departures, 400 more New Zealand citizen departures to Australia, and 200 more New Zealand citizen departures to the United Kingdom.

In May 2010, there was a net inflow of 400 migrants from India. The net outflow of 1,700 PLT migrants to Australia was up from 1,200 in May 2009, but still well down from the net outflow of 2,800 in May 2008. There was also a net outflow of 400 migrants to the United Kingdom in May 2010, compared with a net inflow of 100 in May 2009.

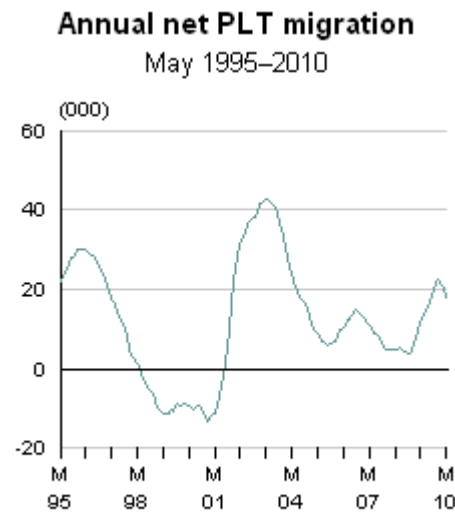
## Annual PLT migration

Net migration was 18,000 in the May 2010 year, compared with 11,200 in the May 2009 year. Annual net migration has decreased from a high of 22,600 in the January 2010 year.

The 64,900 PLT departures in the May 2010 year were down 16 percent from the May 2009 year. The 82,800 PLT arrivals were also down, by 7 percent.



Source: Statistics New Zealand



Source: Statistics New Zealand

The net PLT migration gain of 18,000 in the May 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 May 2010, the highest net PLT inflows were from the United Kingdom (7,600), India (5,500), and China (3,600). Substantial decreases in net PLT inflows were recorded for Fiji (down 2,000), and South Africa and the Philippines (both down 1,900).

The net PLT outflow to Australia was 15,200 in the May 2010 year, well down from 30,500 in the May 2009 year. The latest net outflow resulted from 31,000 PLT departures to Australia, partly offset by 15,700 PLT arrivals from Australia. Almost nine in every 10 PLT departures to Australia were New Zealand citizens (26,800). Of the PLT arrivals from Australia, two-thirds were New Zealand citizens (10,700), similar to levels observed over the past decade.

## Annual PLT migration by citizenship

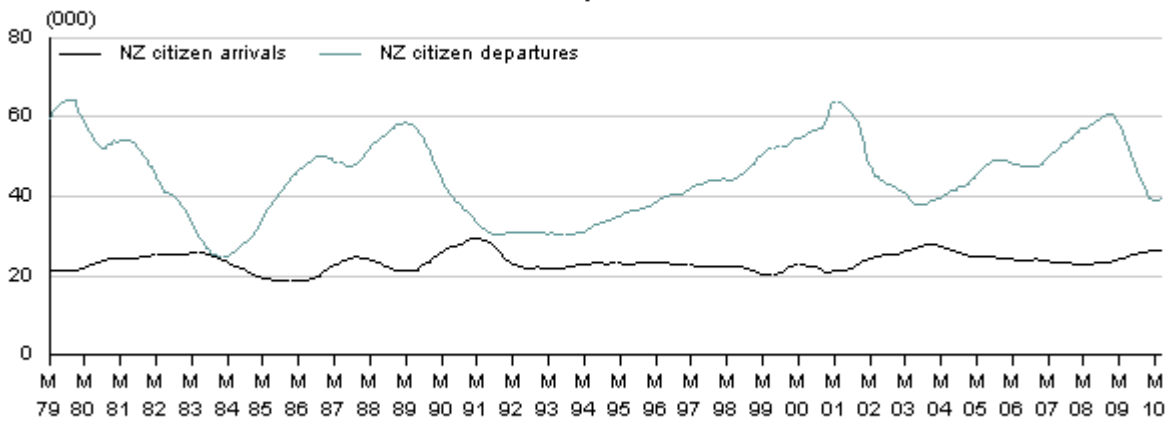
There was a net outflow of 13,300 New Zealand citizens in the May 2010 year, the lowest for a May year since 2003 (12,400). The net inflow of 31,300 non-New Zealand citizens was the lowest May year figure since 2005 (30,800).

PLT arrivals of New Zealand citizens numbered 26,300 in the May 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 39,600 in the May 2010 year, well down from 54,600 in the May 2009 year, and 57,800 in the year ended May 2008.

### Annual PLT migration of New Zealand citizens

March 1979 year onwards



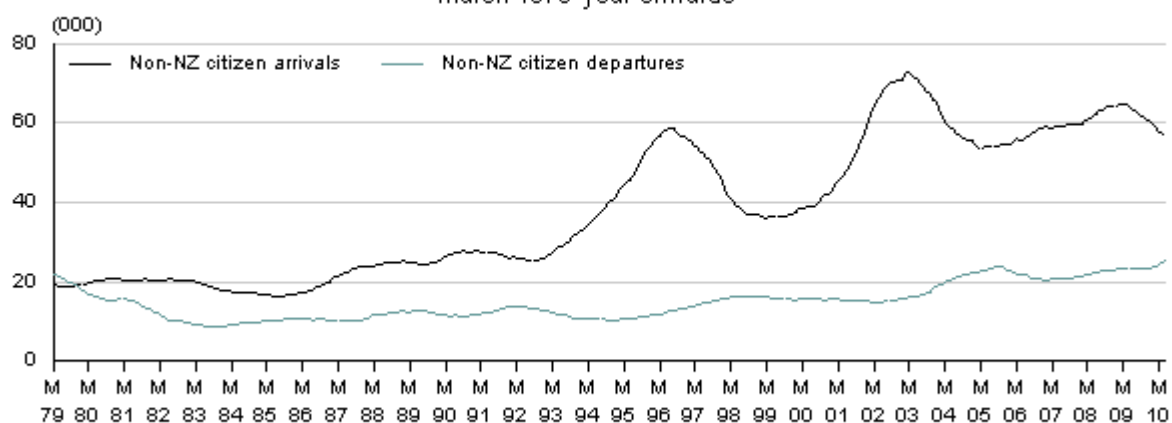
Source: Statistics New Zealand

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 56,600 non-New Zealand citizen arrivals in the May 2010 year were down from 64,200 the previous May 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 May 2010 year, there were 25,300 PLT departures of non-New Zealand citizens, up from 23,100 in the May 2009 year.

## Annual PLT migration of non-New Zealand citizens

March 1979 year onwards



Source: Statistics New Zealand

### Annual PLT migration by permit type

In the May 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 52,600 PLT arrivals who did require a permit, 19,900 arrived on work permits, 15,000 arrived on student permits, 13,300 arrived on residence permits, and 3,900 arrived on visitor permits. Compared with the May 2009 year, there were fewer arrivals on each of these permit types, the biggest decrease being 3,800 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:

May 2010	<a href="#">International travel from New Zealand regions, 2009</a> analyses the number of departures, rate of travel, and characteristics of travellers from each of New Zealand's regions.
April 2010	<a href="#">New Zealand's International Migration Statistics, 1860–1921</a> provides some background to historical data recently released in Infoshare.
December 2009	<a href="#">Business Travel to and from New Zealand: 1989–2009</a> examines changes in the number and characteristics of people travelling to and from New Zealand for business over the past two decades.

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### Next release ...

*International Travel and Migration: June 2010* will be released on 21 July 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](http://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 overseas visitor arrivals, by travel purpose and country of last permanent residence
5. Short-term New Zealand-resident traveller departures, by country of main destination
6. Permanent and long-term arrivals, by country of last permanent residence
7. Permanent and long-term departures, by country of next permanent residence
8. Net permanent and long-term migration, by country of last/next permanent residence
9. Permanent and long-term migration, by country of citizenship