



Hot Off The Press

LATEST STATISTICS FROM STATISTICS NEW ZEALAND

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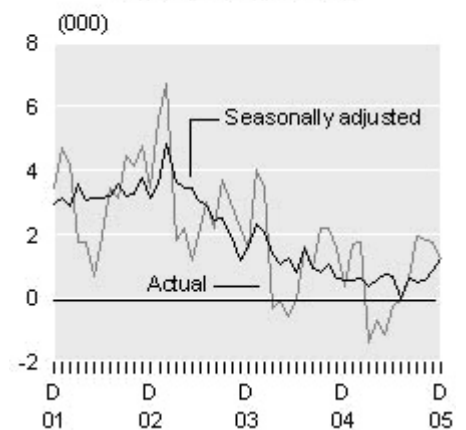
External Migration December 2005

Highlights

- **Visitor arrivals were down 2 percent** on December 2004, from 313,100 to 307,100.
- **There were more visitor arrivals from China** (up 1,400), but fewer visitors from **Australia** (down 2,100) and the **United Kingdom** (down 1,400), compared with December 2004.
- **Seasonally adjusted visitor arrivals increased 2 percent** between November and December 2005.
- **Overseas trips by New Zealand residents were up 13 percent** between November and December 2005, on a seasonally adjusted basis.
- **Permanent and long-term arrivals exceeded departures by 1,300** in December 2005, on a seasonally adjusted basis.

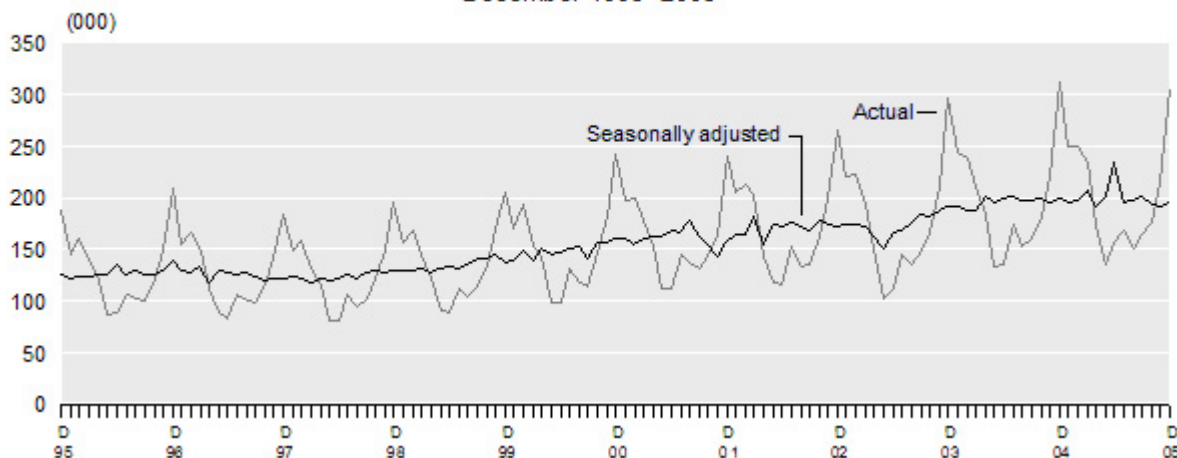
Monthly Net Permanent and Long-term Migration

December 2001–2005



Monthly Visitor Arrivals

December 1995–2005



Brian Pink
Government Statistician

3 February 2006
Cat 33.900 Set 05/06 – 119

There is a companion Media Release published – [External Migration: December 2005](#).

Commentary

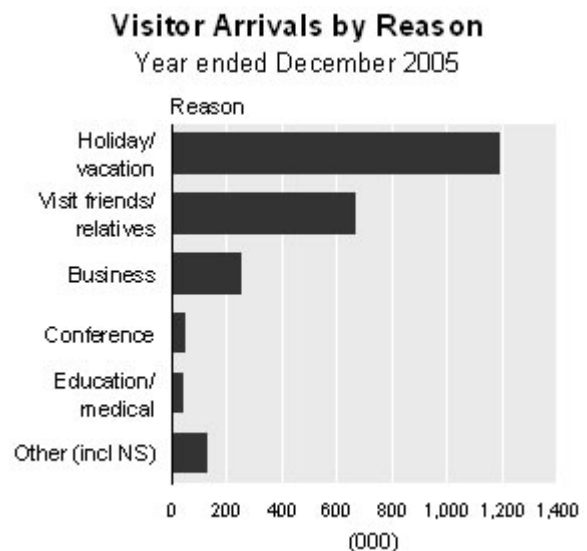
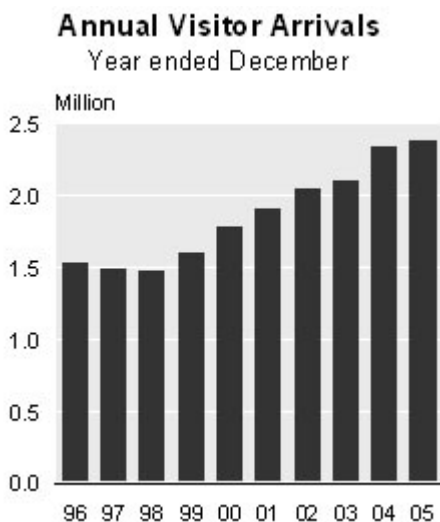
Visitor arrivals

There were 307,100 short-term overseas visitor arrivals to New Zealand in December 2005, down 6,000 (2 percent) from December 2004.

The number of stay days for all visitor arrivals in December 2005 was up 1 percent on the previous December, from 6.76 million to 6.81 million days. The average length of stay was 22 days in both December 2005 and December 2004.

Seasonally adjusted monthly visitor arrivals were up 2 percent in December 2005, following a fall of 1 percent a month earlier.

In the December 2005 quarter, visitor arrivals totalled 698,000, a decrease of 17,100 (2 percent) from the December 2004 quarter total of 715,000. This resulted from decreases in the months of October (down 5,200), November (down 5,900) and December (down 6,000), when compared with the same months in 2004.



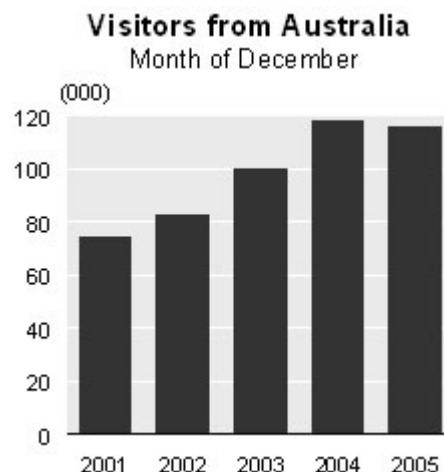
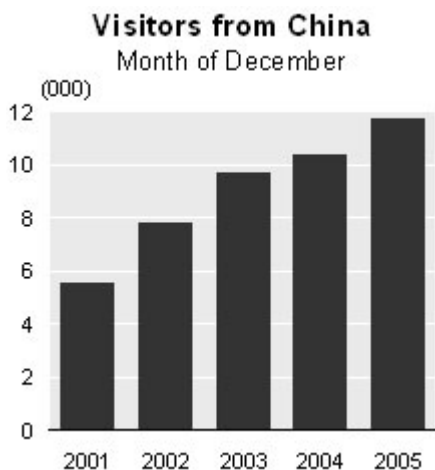
During the year ended December 2005, there were 2.383 million visitor arrivals, up 35,300 (2 percent) on the December 2004 year. Holidaymakers accounted for 50 percent (1,192,000) of the overseas visitors, 28 percent (673,600) came to visit friends and relatives (VFR), 11 percent (259,200) came on business, 3 percent (59,300) came for a conference, and a further 2 percent (48,100) came for education/medical reasons.

VFR arrivals in the December 2005 year were up 13,600 (2 percent) compared with the previous December year. There were also more business travellers (up 10,400 or 4 percent), visitors attending a conference (up 5,600 or 11 percent), and holiday arrivals (up 1,600 or less than 1 percent). Arrivals for education/medical reasons were down 1,100 (2 percent) in the year ended December 2005.

Note: Provisional weekly and four-weekly visitor arrivals data is available on the Statistics New Zealand website: www.stats.govt.nz. This data is updated each week with the most recently available information on visitor arrivals from the 10 major source countries.

Visitors by source country

In December 2005, there were more visitor arrivals from China (up 1,400 or 13 percent) and Samoa (up 700 or 30 percent), compared with December 2004. In contrast, there were fewer visitors from Australia (down 2,100 or 2 percent), the United Kingdom (down 1,400 or 3 percent), Japan (down 1,100 or 7 percent) and Tonga (down 800 or 35 percent).



In the year ended December 2005, there were more visitors from Europe (up 7 percent) and Oceania (up 3 percent), compared with the December 2004 year. There were fewer visitors from Asia (down 2 percent) and visitor numbers from the Americas were unchanged. Two countries – the United Kingdom (up 23,100 or 8 percent) and Australia (up 18,800 or 2 percent) – provided the majority of the annual increase in total visitor numbers. Other countries with increased visitor arrivals included Ireland (up 3,800 or 22 percent), Fiji (up 3,700 or 22 percent) and China (up 3,500 or 4 percent). There were fewer visitors from Japan (down 10,100 or 6 percent), the United States (down 3,800 or 2 percent), Singapore (down 3,200 or 10 percent) and Korea (down 1,900 or 2 percent).

Note: Detailed visitor data is available in the December 2005 edition of the Statistics New Zealand publication *International Visitor Arrivals to New Zealand*, which can be ordered via the Statistics New Zealand website: www.stats.govt.nz.

New Zealand resident departures

New Zealand residents departed on 188,400 short-term overseas trips in December 2005, an increase of 14,800 (8 percent) on December 2004.

In December 2005, New Zealand residents went on more trips to Australia (up 2,200 or 3 percent), the United Kingdom (up 2,100 or 36 percent), Fiji (up 1,300 or 18 percent), Tonga (up 1,200 or 95 percent) and the United States (up 1,000 or 16 percent) than in the previous December. There were fewer trips to Korea (down 800 or 23 percent) and Norfolk Island (down 400 or 45 percent).

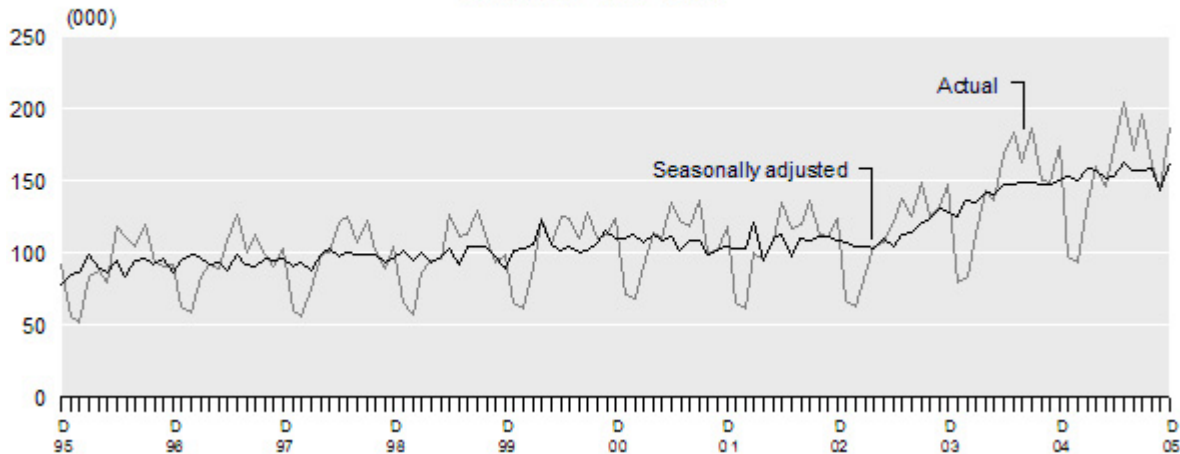
On a seasonally adjusted basis, New Zealand resident departures rose 13 percent between November and December 2005. This follows a fall of 9 percent between October and November 2005.

The number of intended days away for resident departures in December 2005 increased 7 percent, to 4.48 million days, compared with the previous December. The average intended length of absence was 24 days in both December 2005 and December 2004.

In the December 2005 quarter, resident departures totalled 494,000, an increase of 21,600 (5 percent) over the December 2004 quarter total of 472,400.

Monthly New Zealand Resident Short-term Departures

December 1995–2005

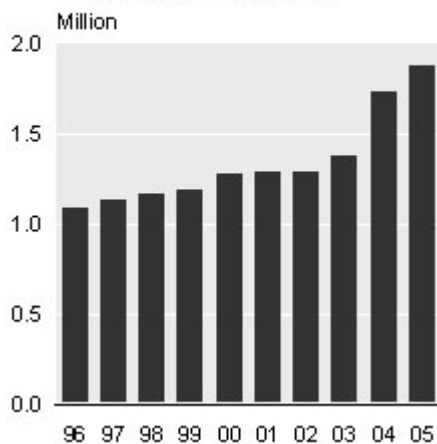


In the year ended December 2005, resident departures totalled 1.872 million, up 138,600 (8 percent) on the previous December year (1.733 million). There were more trips to Australia (up 60,900 or 7 percent), the United States (up 10,400 or 13 percent), Fiji (up 10,300 or 10 percent), the Cook Islands (up 10,000 or 31 percent), the United Kingdom (up 8,200 or 11 percent), Samoa (up 5,500 or 27 percent) and China (up 4,700 or 10 percent).

Holidaymakers accounted for 43 percent (804,600) of the departures during the December 2005 year. A further 30 percent (565,700) left to visit friends and relatives, 15 percent (276,500) went on business, 3 percent (61,000) attended a conference, and 1 percent (25,100) went for education/medical reasons.

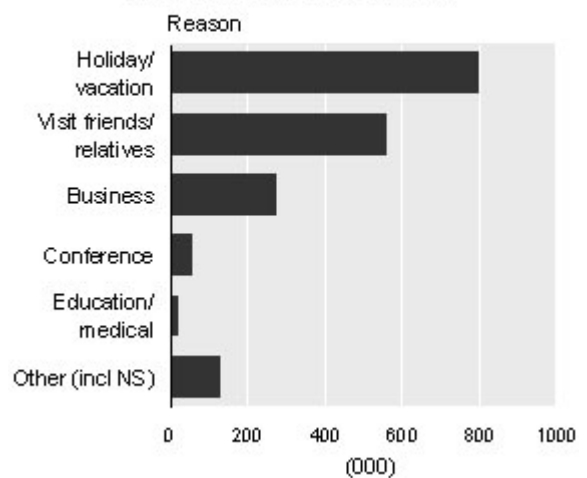
Annual Resident Departures

Year ended December



Resident Departures by Reason

Year ended December 2005



Note: Provisional weekly and four-weekly resident departures data is available on the Statistics New Zealand website: www.stats.govt.nz. This data is updated each week with the most recently available information on resident departures to the 10 major destinations.

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. Permanent and long-term departures include New Zealand residents departing for an intended period of 12 months or more (or permanently), plus overseas visitors departing from New Zealand after a stay of 12 months or more.

Analysis

PLT arrivals exceeded departures by 1,100 in December 2005, compared with an excess of 300 arrivals in December 2004. The higher net PLT inflow in December 2005 resulted from 600 fewer PLT departures, and 200 more PLT arrivals. Non-New Zealand citizen departures decreased by 500 in December 2005, and non-New Zealand citizen arrivals increased by 300.

Annual net PLT migration increased by 800 between November 2005 (6,200) and December 2005 (7,000), the second consecutive monthly increase after decreases were recorded each month from June 2003 until October 2005.

In December 2005, there was a net inflow from the United Kingdom (1,800) and a net outflow to Australia (1,500).

The seasonally adjusted series recorded a net PLT inflow of 1,300 in December 2005, compared with a net inflow of 900 a month earlier.

Permanent and Long-term Migration By country of citizenship

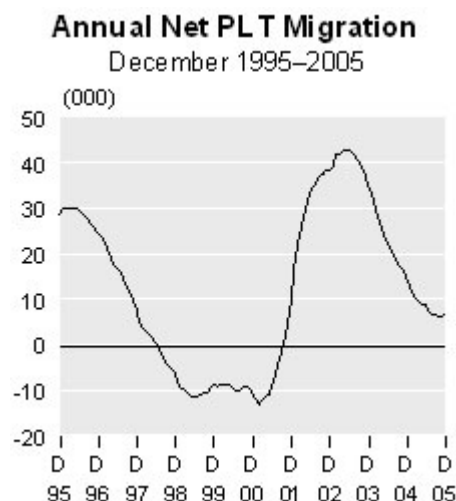
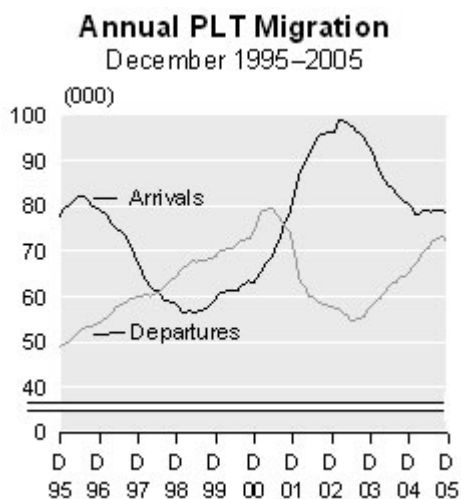
Country of citizenship	Month of December			Year ended December			Change from 2004 (%)	
	2003	2004	2005	2003	2004	2005	Month	Year
New Zealand								
Arrivals	4,200	3,800	3,800	27,700	25,100	24,200	-1	-4
Departures	3,400	3,900	3,800	38,900	43,200	49,200	-3	14
Net	700	-100	0	-11,200	-18,100	-25,000	-63	38
Non-New Zealand								
Arrivals	3,700	3,600	3,900	65,000	55,400	54,800	7	-1
Departures	2,800	3,200	2,700	18,900	22,200	22,800	-15	3
Net	800	400	1,200	46,100	33,200	32,000	185	-4
Total								
Arrivals	7,800	7,400	7,700	92,700	80,500	79,000	3	-2
Departures	6,300	7,100	6,500	57,800	65,400	72,000	-8	10
Net	1,600	300	1,100	34,900	15,100	7,000	250	-54

Note: All figures in this table are independently rounded.

In the year ended December 2005, there were 79,000 PLT arrivals, down 1,500 (2 percent) on the December 2004 year. Over the same period, PLT departures increased by 6,600 (10 percent) to reach 72,000. The overall result was a net migration gain of 7,000 in the December 2005 year, which is 54 percent lower than the net inflow of 15,100 people in the previous December year. Compared with the December 2004 year, non-New Zealand citizen arrivals were down 600 and non-New Zealand citizen departures were up 600. There were 900 fewer New Zealand citizen arrivals and 6,000 more New Zealand citizen departures.

In the year ended December 2005, there was a net PLT inflow of 9,600 from the United Kingdom, up 6 percent on the December 2004 year figure (9,000). There were also increased net inflows from Fiji (2,400), Germany (1,400), Samoa (1,200) and South Africa (1,200). In contrast, there were reduced net inflows from India (1,900), Japan (1,600) and China (1,100), down from net inflows of 2,400, 2,000 and 2,800, respectively, in the previous year. Overall, net PLT inflow from Asia has reduced, from 23,800 in the December 2003 year, to 6,800 in the December 2005 year.

There was a net outflow to Australia of 21,400 in the December 2005 year, an increase of 6,700 (45 percent) compared with the previous December year, and a net outflow of 700 to Korea.



Over the past decade, annual PLT arrivals reached an initial peak in July 1996 (82,000) and then dropped over the next three years, reaching a low of 56,300 in June 1999. Arrivals then increased to an all-time high of 98,700 in the year ended February 2003. Annual PLT arrivals then dropped steadily to a low of 78,100 in March 2005, before increasing to 79,100 in June 2005. After a fall in July 2005, annual PLT arrivals increased to 79,000 in October, fell again to 78,700 in November, before recovering to 79,000 in December 2005. Over the same period, annual PLT departures rose steadily to a peak of 79,300 in May 2001, before falling to 54,700 in July 2003. Annual PLT departures subsequently increased to 73,000 in October 2005, before decreasing to 72,000 in December 2005.

As a result of the changes in annual PLT arrivals and departures, annual net PLT migration has fluctuated significantly. After reaching 30,200 in April 1996, there were reducing net inflows and then net outflows between 1998 and 2001. Following the net loss of 13,200 in the February 2001 year, there was a change in the direction of the net flow during 2001. This was followed by a rapid increase to a peak of 42,500 in the May 2003 year. The annual net PLT migration then dropped to a low of 6,000 in October 2005, before increasing to 7,000 in December 2005.

Split PLT data

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

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

Of the 7,700 PLT arrivals in December 2005, there were 3,000 permanent migrants, and 1,900 long-term visitors. A further 2,700 arrivals were classed as returning long-term New Zealand residents. For more information on the separate identification of permanent and long-term migrants, including data quality issues, see the [*External Migration: September 2003*](#) Hot Off The Press.

For technical information contact:
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Technical notes

Nature of data

The statistics in this release are based on final external migration counts for the month of December 2005. They relate to the number of movements of travellers, rather than to the number of travellers – that is, the multiple movements of individual people during a given reference period are each counted separately.

Data for country groupings

As of December 2000, the country groupings used in this release are consistent with the New Zealand Standard Classification of Countries 1999 (NZSCC 1999). Prior to this date, country groupings were based on the NZSCC 1995. The following changes have resulted:

1. The Americas region (which includes Northern America, Central America, the Caribbean and South America) replaces Northern America. As a result, countries in Central and South America and the Caribbean are no longer included in the 'Other' category in Tables 6–10.
2. Minor revisions to some other regions.

New Zealand resident short-term departures

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

Changes in migrant category

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

Sampling accuracy

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

INFOS database

All series in Tables 1–5 are available through the INFOS database, using the series identifiers shown. The series in Tables 1, 2 and 3 are available back to January 1960 and the seasonally adjusted series in Tables 4 and 5 are available back to January 1982. The seasonally adjusted migration series were all revised when new seasonal adjustment procedures were introduced in August 1998. Likewise, the seasonally adjusted figures, from January 1996 onwards, are now updated monthly.

Seasonally adjusted series

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

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

New migration processing system

To capture survey information more efficiently, Statistics New Zealand is developing new processing systems which incorporate scanning and image recognition technology. A new migration processing system using this technology was first used to process the arrival and departure cards for June 2004. A key difference between the new and previous systems is that there is now no need to manually enter the passport number for each traveller. In addition, classing (as overseas visitors, New Zealand residents, or permanent and long-term (PLT) migrants) and capture of the information required for the migration sample are done automatically for the majority of the cards. Those cards that cannot be classed (or are classed as PLT) and those with fields that cannot be recognised are manually processed using the card image. It is expected that operator intervention should only be required for approximately one-quarter of the cards. The new system, designed to capture the same information as previously captured, is used only for the production of statistics.

It is expected that data captured using the new system will be largely consistent with previous data. Users need to 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 New Zealand 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 New Zealand. Statistics New Zealand accepts no responsibility for any such delays.

Next release ...

External Migration: December 2005 year will be released on 21 February 2006.

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Tables

The following tables can be downloaded from the Statistics New Zealand website in Excel 97 format. If you do not have access to Excel 97 or higher, you may use the Excel file viewer to view, print and export the contents of the file.

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2. Departures by class, December 1995–2005
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6. Overseas visitor arrivals, by country of last permanent residence
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