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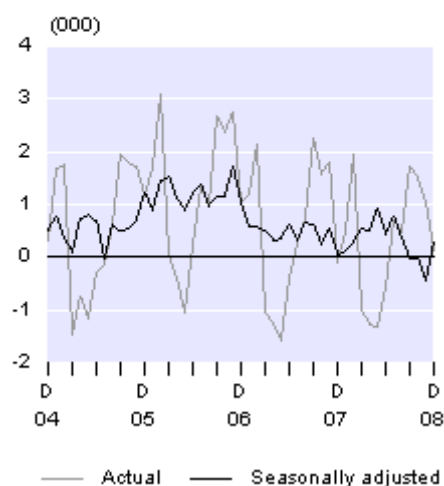
International Travel and Migration: December 2008

Highlights

- Visitor arrivals (322,200) were up 2 percent from December 2007 (317,300).
- There were more visitors from Australia (up 7,100) but fewer from Korea (down 2,700), the United Kingdom (down 1,900) and Japan (down 1,600).
- New Zealand resident departures (187,300) were down 6 percent from December 2007 (199,700).
- New Zealand residents departed on fewer trips to Fiji (down 1,400), China (down 1,300) and the United States (down 1,100).
- Permanent and long-term arrivals exceeded departures by 300 on a seasonally adjusted basis.

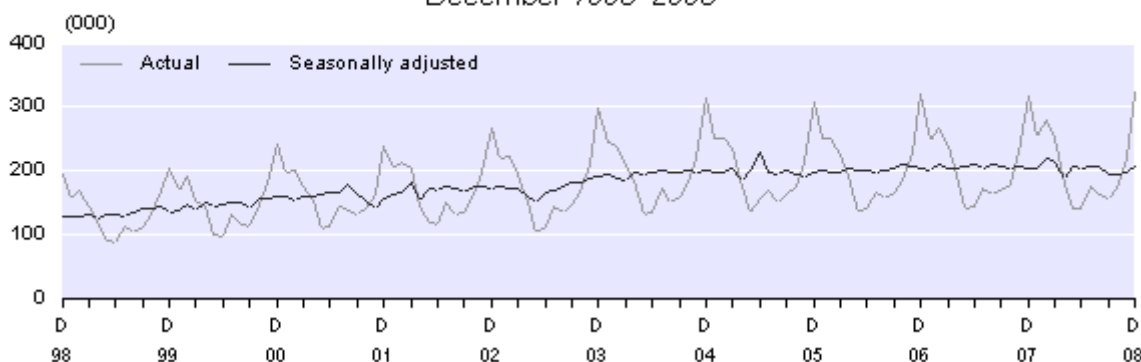
Monthly Net Permanent and Long-term Migration

December 2004–08



Monthly Visitor Arrivals

December 1998–2008



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Commentary

Visitor arrivals

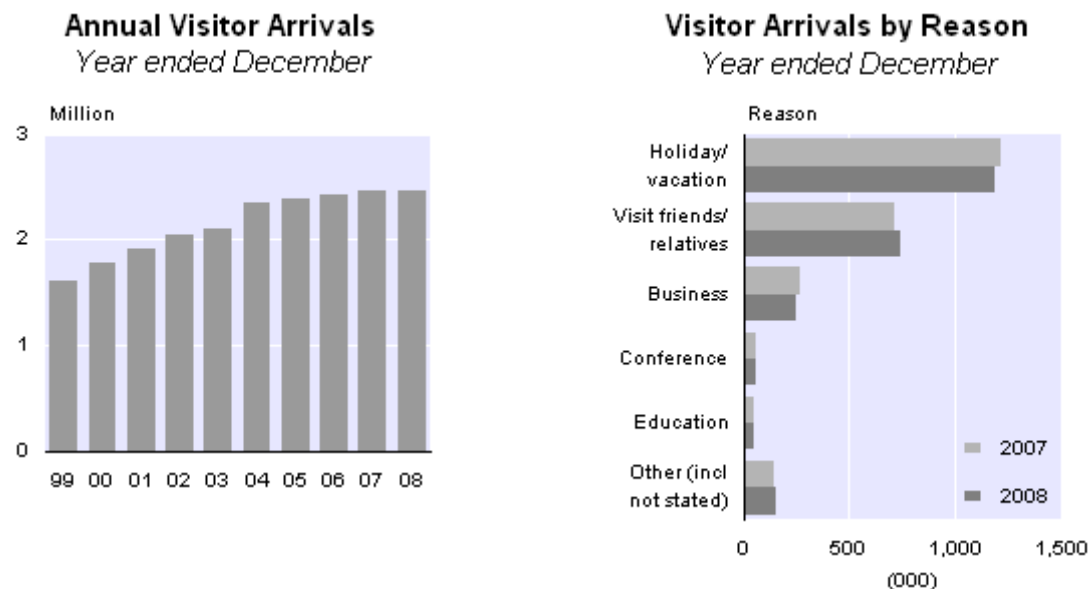
Monthly visitor arrivals

Short-term overseas visitor arrivals to New Zealand numbered 322,200 in December 2008, an increase of 4,900 (2 percent) from December 2007 (317,300). This was the highest recorded number of visitor arrivals in any month and the first increase, when compared with the same month of the previous year, since July 2008. New Zealand-born overseas visitor arrivals in December 2008 were up 5,000 from December 2007. This increase included 3,400 more visiting friends and relatives, and 1,700 more holiday makers. There was also an increase in the number of visitors not born in New Zealand who came for a holiday (up 2,900), but a decrease in the number coming on business (down 3,200).

The estimated average number of visitors in New Zealand per day in December 2008 was 182,800, up 3 percent from the average of 178,100 in December 2007. Estimated numbers of visitors in the country are calculated from the date of arrival and intended length of stay of sampled visitor arrivals. The average intended stay of visitors who arrived in December 2008 was 22 days, down from 23 days in December 2007. The median (half stay shorter, and half stay longer than this duration) was 14 days, the same as in December 2007.

Annual visitor arrivals

During the December 2008 year, there were 2.459 million visitor arrivals, down 7,200 (less than 1 percent) from the December 2007 year. A holiday was the main travel reason for 1.184 million visitor arrivals to New Zealand in the December 2008 year, down 26,800 (2 percent) from the previous year. Another 743,000 arrived to visit friends and relatives (up 30,000 or 4 percent), and 254,400 arrived for business (down 13,500 or 5 percent).

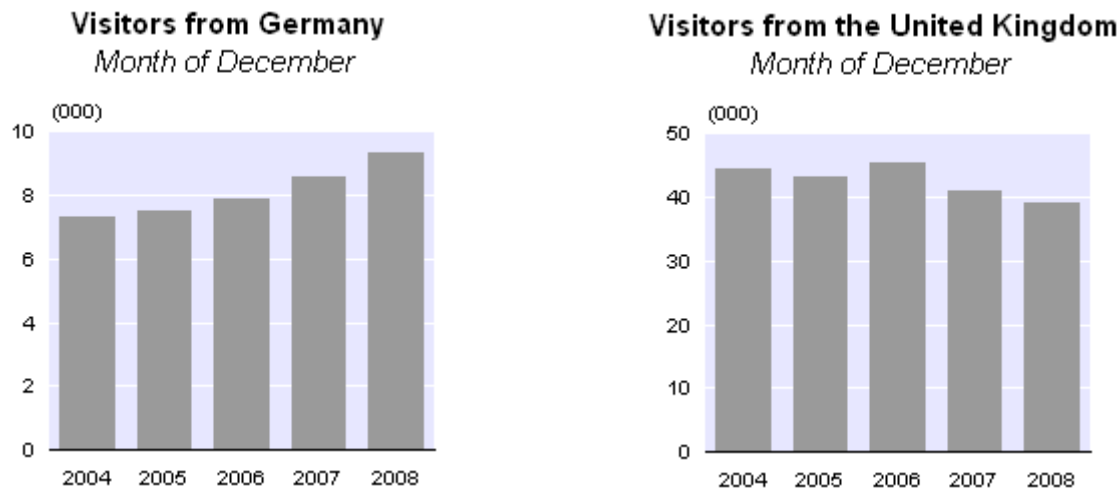


Note: *Provisional international travel statistics*, including weekly and four-weekly visitor arrival data, are available on the Statistics NZ website. This data is updated each week with the most recently available information on visitor arrivals from 10 major source countries.

Visitors by source country

There were 132,900 visitor arrivals from Australia in December 2008, up 7,100 (6 percent) from December 2007. This was the highest ever monthly total for visitor arrivals from Australia. There were also more visitors from Fiji (up 800 or 22 percent) and from Germany (up 800 or 9 percent).

For the month of December, there were fewer visitors from Korea (down 2,700 or 34 percent), the United Kingdom (down 1,900 or 5 percent) and Japan (down 1,600 or 14 percent).



In the year ended December 2008 compared with the year ended December 2007, more visitors arrived from Oceania (up 36,400 or 3 percent), Africa and the Middle East (up 6,100 or 14 percent), the Americas (up 5,500 or 2 percent) and Europe (up 1,300 or less than 1 percent). Fewer visitors arrived from Asia (down 52,400 or 10 percent).

There were 976,200 visitor arrivals from Australia in the year ended December 2008, up 26,000 (3 percent) from the December 2007 year. More visitor arrivals were also recorded from Canada (up 5,500 or 11 percent) and South Africa (up 3,700 or 17 percent).

Fewer visitor arrivals were recorded from Korea (down 20,400 or 21 percent), Japan (down 19,200 or 16 percent), China (down 8,400 or 7 percent), the United Kingdom (down 7,600 or 3 percent), Taiwan (down 6,400 or 25 percent), and the United States (down 3,600 or 2 percent) in the December 2008 year.

Note: Detailed visitor data will be available in the December 2008 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 187,300 short-term overseas trips in December 2008, down 12,400 (6 percent) from the 199,700 departures in December 2007.

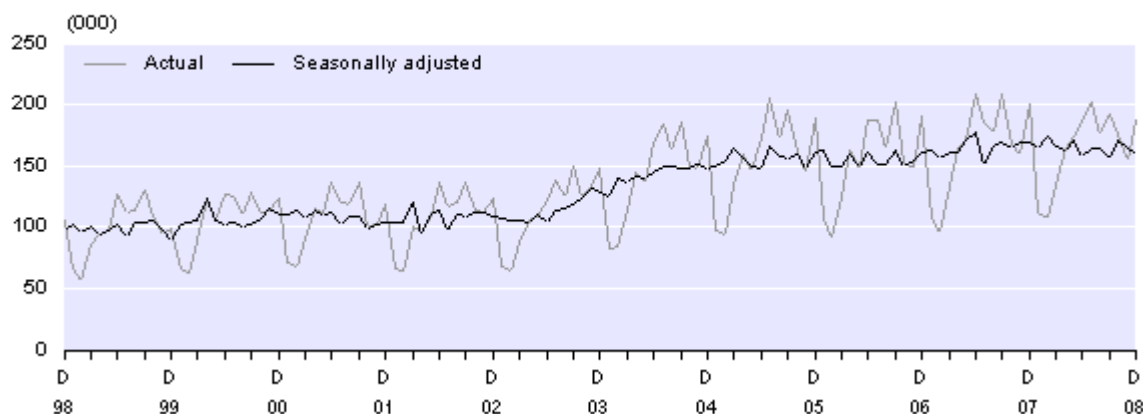
In December 2008, there were fewer trips to all of the top 10 destinations for New Zealand residents including Fiji (down 1,400 or 18 percent), China (down 1,300 or 13 percent), the United

States (down 1,100 or 13 percent) and the United Kingdom (down 700 or 8 percent). There were also fewer visits to Taiwan (down 800 or 37 percent), India (down 700 or 11 percent), New Caledonia (down 700 or 56 percent) and South Africa (down 600 or 20 percent).

The estimated average number of New Zealand residents who were temporarily overseas during December 2008 was 123,700 per day, up less than 1 percent from the average of 123,500 in December 2007. Estimates of the number of residents overseas are calculated from the date of departure and intended length of absence of sampled resident departures. The average intended absence of residents who departed in December 2008 was 24 days, down from 25 days in December 2007. The median was 16 days, down from the 17 days in December 2007.

Monthly New Zealand Resident Short-term Departures

December 1998–2008



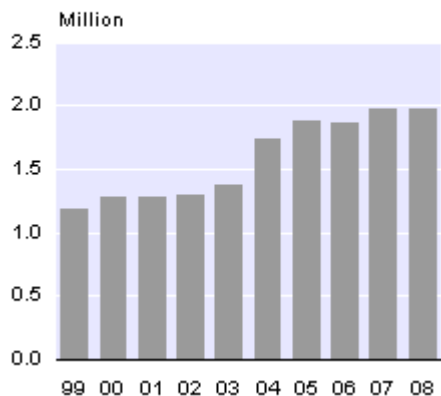
Annual resident departures

Short-term departures of New Zealand residents in the December 2008 year numbered 1.967 million, down 13,100 (1 percent) from the December 2007 year. There were fewer departures to Oceania (down 24,200 or 2 percent) and Europe (down 8,200 or 5 percent). More resident departures were recorded to Asia (up 6,000 or 2 percent), the Americas (up 5,400 or 4 percent), and Africa and the Middle East (up 2,100 or 7 percent).

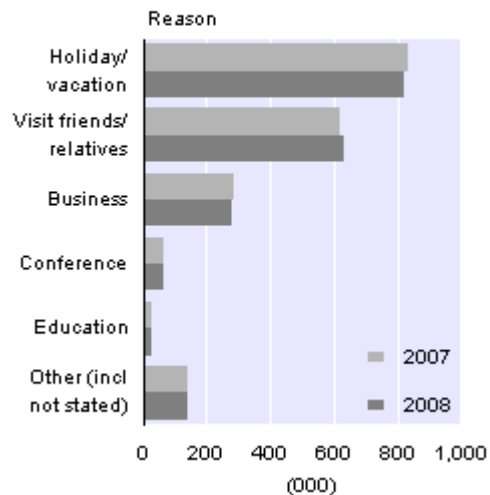
By country, trips to Australia (949,600), the most popular destination, were down 28,200 (3 percent) from the previous year. There were also fewer trips to France (down 4,400 or 23 percent) and the United Kingdom (down 2,900 or 3 percent). There were more trips to Canada (up 2,200 or 12 percent), the Philippines (up 2,100 or 28 percent), Fiji (up 1,900 or 2 percent), Viet Nam (up 1,900 or 23 percent), and the Cook Islands (up 1,800 or 4 percent) in the December 2008 year.

A holiday was the main travel reason for 820,100 New Zealand residents who departed in the December 2008 year, down 16,600 (2 percent) from the previous year. Another 630,800 were departing to visit friends and relatives (up 9,700 or 2 percent). Departures for business purposes (281,200) were down 8,000 (3 percent) from the year ended December 2007.

Annual Resident Departures
Year ended December



Resident Departures by Reason
Year ended December



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 100 in December 2008, up on the net PLT outflow of 100 in December 2007. The number of PLT arrivals was up 100, and 100 fewer PLT departures were recorded in December 2008 compared with the previous December.

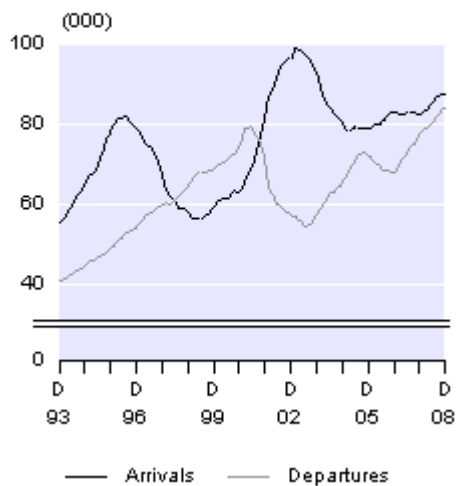
On a seasonally adjusted basis, PLT arrivals exceeded PLT departures by 300 in December 2008.

In December 2008, there were net inflows of migrants from the United Kingdom (1,500) and Fiji (400). There was a net outflow of 2,600 PLT migrants to Australia, up from the outflow of 2,500 in December 2007.

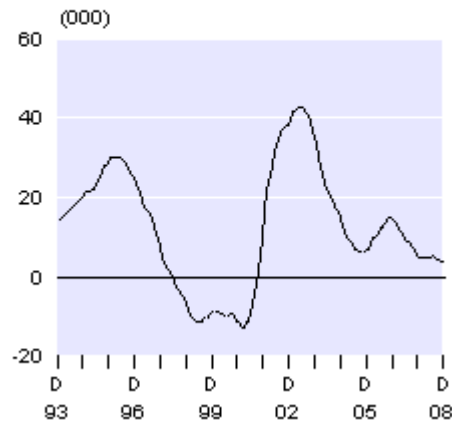
Annual PLT migration

In the year ended December 2008, there were 87,500 PLT arrivals, up 4,900 (6 percent) from the December 2007 year. Over the same period, there were 83,600 PLT departures, up 6,600 (9 percent). As a result, net PLT migration was 3,800 in the December 2008 year, down from 5,500 in the December 2007 year.

Annual PLT Migration December 1993–2008



Annual Net PLT Migration December 1993–2008



The net PLT migration gain of 3,800 in the year ended December 2008 is below the annual average of 11,400 recorded for the December years from 1990–2008. Net PLT migration varied substantially within this 19-year period. The net gain peaked at 30,200 in the April 1996 year and again at 42,500 in the May 2003 year. Net outflows were generally experienced during 1998–2001, with the highest being a net loss of 13,200 people in the February 2001 year.

Annual PLT migration by citizenship

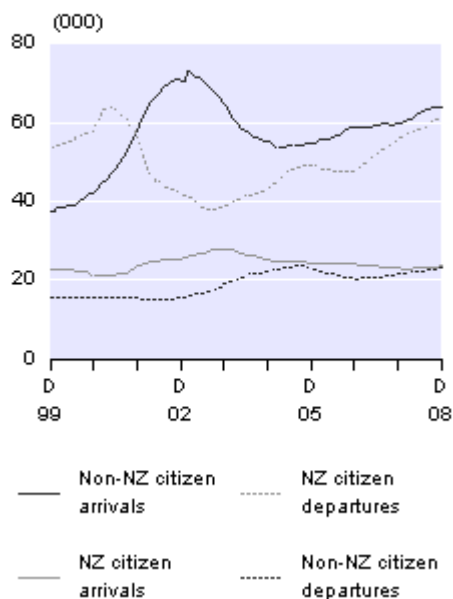
A net inflow of 40,900 non-New Zealand citizens and a net outflow of 37,000 New Zealand citizens were recorded in the year ended December 2008. The majority of the net outflow of New Zealand citizens was to Australia (35,300), followed by the United Arab Emirates (600) and Canada (500).

Compared with the December 2007 year, PLT arrivals of non-New Zealand citizens were up 4,300 and PLT arrivals of New Zealand citizens were up 600. There were 5,000 more PLT departures of New Zealand citizens and 1,600 more PLT departures of non-New Zealand citizens. Changes in non-New Zealand citizen departures are often related to changes in non-New Zealand citizen arrivals a few years earlier. Similarly, changes in New Zealand citizen arrivals are often related to changes in New Zealand citizen departures a few years earlier.

Annual PLT Migration

By citizenship

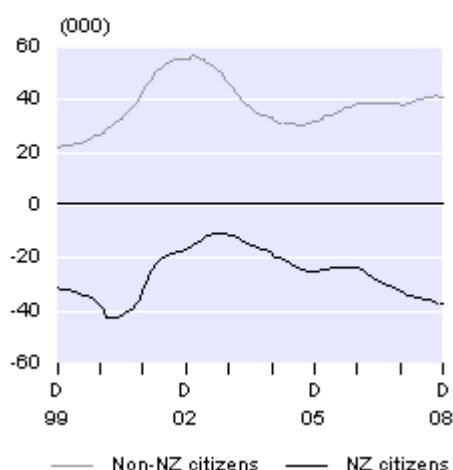
December 1999–2008



Annual Net PLT Migration

By citizenship

December 1999–2008



Annual PLT migration by country

In the year ended December 2008, there was a net inflow of 7,800 migrants from the United Kingdom, up from 7,100 in the December 2007 year. The net inflow from India was 5,200, up from 3,600 in the December 2007 year and 2,100 in the December 2006 year. There were also net PLT inflows from the Philippines (3,700), South Africa and Fiji (each 2,800), and China (2,600).

The net PLT outflow to Australia was 35,400 in the December 2008 year, up from 28,000 in the December 2007 year. The December 2008 year net outflow was the highest recorded, and exceeds previous peaks in the January 1989 year (33,700) and the December 1979 year (33,400). The latest net outflow resulted from 48,500 PLT departures to Australia, partly offset by 13,100 PLT arrivals from Australia. Almost two-thirds of the PLT arrivals from Australia were New Zealand citizens (8,200).

The net outflow to Australia was spread across both age and occupation groups. Migrants aged 15–29 years accounted for 40 percent (14,200) of the net outflow to Australia in the December 2008 year, while the 0–14-year age group and the 30–44-year age group (each 8,100) both contributed 23 percent of the outflow. The 45–59-year age group (4,400) contributed a further 13 percent, and the remaining 1 percent (500) were aged 60 years and over.

Net outflows to Australia were recorded in each broad occupation group, led by trades workers and professionals (each 2,400), and service and sales workers (2,300). There was also a net outflow to Australia of 14,600 people without an occupation, of which most were children or students.

PLT migration by permit type

Statistics NZ is now releasing the permit type for people arriving into New Zealand as part of its International Travel and Migration dataset. Permit type is available from July 2003 for short-term

overseas visitor arrivals and PLT migrants. Permit type will not be available for arrivals of short-term New Zealand-resident travellers.

Background information about permit types, and analysis of June year data from 2004 to 2008 is available in an article entitled Arrivals by permit type, available on the [*International travel and migration articles*](#) page of the Statistics NZ website.

In the December 2008 year, 27,800 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, 23,900 arrived on work permits, 15,300 arrived on student permits, 14,500 arrived on residence permits, and 5,400 arrived on visitor's permits. Compared with the December 2007 year, there were more PLT arrivals on student permits and work permits (both up 2,900), but fewer arrivals on residence permits (down 1,200). 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 three articles on international travel and migration topics. These can be accessed on the International travel and migration articles page of the Statistics NZ website.

- *Non-response for international travel and migration variables* examines non-response rates for variables captured from arrival and departure cards.
- *Short-term New Zealand traveller departures to Pacific island countries* examines departures over the last decade to Fiji, the Cook Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, Norfolk Island and French Polynesia.
- *Arrivals by permit type* introduces the newly available permit type data. It includes background notes about permit types, as well as data analysis

Infoshare and INFOS databases

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

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

The international travel and migration subject is under development, with more detailed cross-tabulations being progressively added. This will eventually replace the external migration subject, but both will remain available until development of the international travel and migration subject is complete. Both subjects remain available in the INFOS database (for subscribers only). Detailed visitor arrival, resident departure, and permanent and long-term migration families have now been released.

For technical information contact:

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Christchurch 03 964 8700

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Next release ...

International Travel and Migration: January 2009 will be released on 27 February 2009.

Technical notes

Nature of data

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

Changes in passenger type

In the preparation of international travel and migration statistics, the passenger type (overseas visitor, New Zealand resident traveller or permanent and long-term 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 (permanent and long-term migrant), but in fact may return overseas after a few months (overseas visitor). Data users should recognise the limitations inherent in the information supplied by travellers.

Sampling accuracy

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

Infoshare and INFOS databases

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

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

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

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

New Zealand resident short-term departures

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

Seasonally adjusted 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. The X-12-ARIMA computer program is used to produce the seasonally adjusted estimates of key international travel and migration series. 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.

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
2. Seasonally adjusted international travel and migration, by direction and passenger type
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