



## Permanent and long-term migration to and from the United Kingdom

Part of the series International Travel and Migration Articles

This article was prepared by the Population Statistics Unit of Statistics New Zealand.

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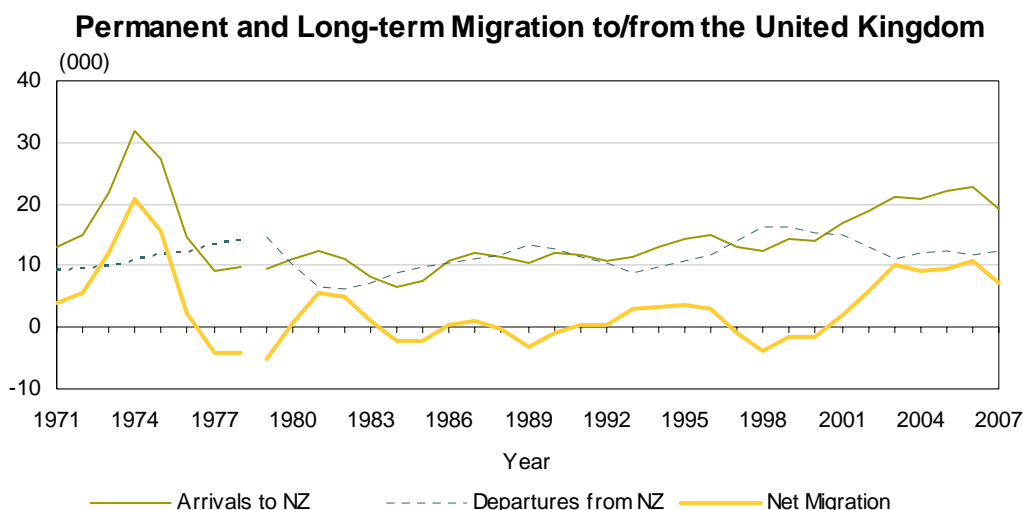
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## Permanent and long-term migration to and from the United Kingdom

The United Kingdom has traditionally been one of the main source and destination countries of New Zealand's permanent and long-term (PLT) migrants. Latest census figures from the United Kingdom showed 58,300 people born in New Zealand living there in 2001. Results from New Zealand's 2006 Census showed that 244,800 people or 6 percent of the population were born in the United Kingdom. This was well ahead of the next largest overseas-born groups – 78,100 people were born in China and 62,600 were born in Australia. Of those born in the United Kingdom, 61 percent had been living in New Zealand for 20 years or more.

Migration from the United Kingdom to New Zealand changed substantially in the mid-1970s, due to two significant changes in immigration policy. Until 1974, United Kingdom citizens had unrestricted access to New Zealand. In addition, an assisted passage scheme for migrants from the United Kingdom ended in 1975 after operating since 1947 (although other assisted immigration schemes had operated in the past). PLT arrivals from the United Kingdom subsequently declined, from 31,800 in the March 1974 year to 9,200 in the March 1977 year<sup>1</sup>. Annual PLT arrivals from the United Kingdom then remained below 15,000 until 2001.



Note: The break in the series in 1979 denotes a change from March year data to December year data

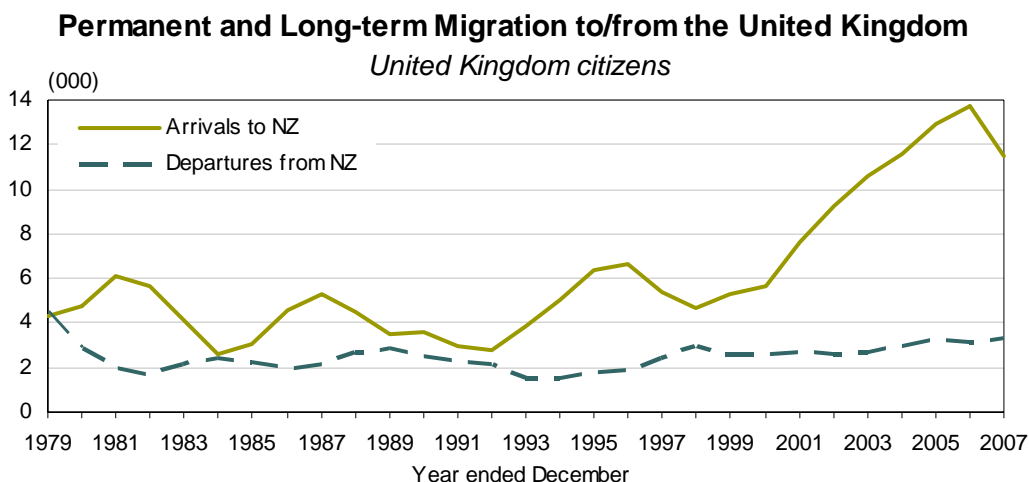
Because of the lower level of arrivals, New Zealand recorded a small net migration outflow (less than 10,000) to the United Kingdom over the 1975–2000 period.

Between 2000 and 2006, annual PLT arrivals from the United Kingdom increased from 13,900 to 22,700. This coincided with a decrease in PLT departures to the United Kingdom, from over 16,000 a year in 1998 and 1999 to less than 13,000 a year between 2002 and 2007. As a result, annual net inflows from the United Kingdom were recorded from 2001 to 2007, peaking at 10,900 in 2006 (the highest since 1975).

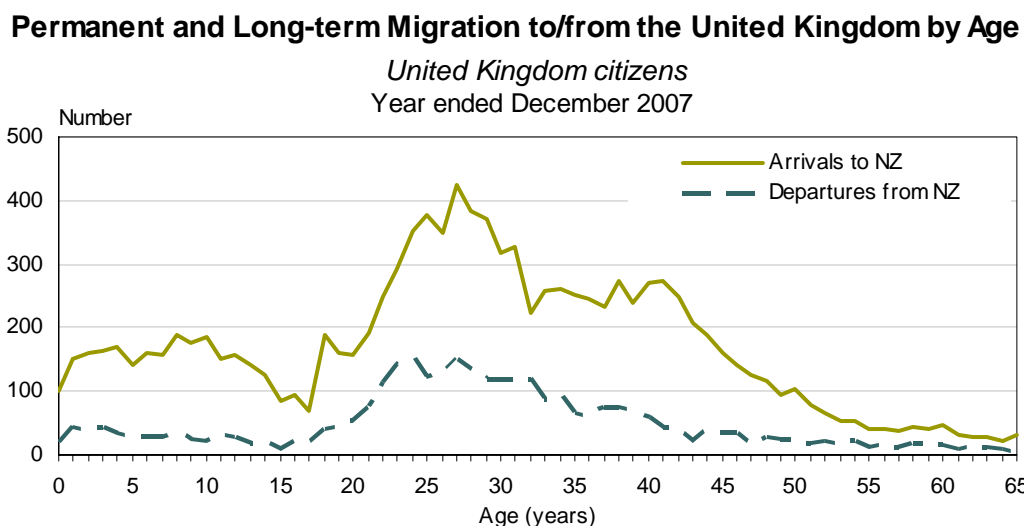
(1) This article uses December year data from 1979. Before 1979, only March year data is available.

## Permanent and long-term migration to and from the United Kingdom

Citizens of the United Kingdom contributed most of the recent increase in PLT arrivals from the United Kingdom, up from 4,700 in 1998 to 13,700 in 2006. This corresponds with an increase in residence approvals given to United Kingdom nationals, which increased from 4,300 in 1998 to 17,100 in 2005, before declining to 13,000 in 2006 and 11,300 in 2007. Much of the increase occurred between 2004 and 2005, after the number of points needed to be considered for residence was decreased (in mid-2004) in response to total residence approvals falling below the annual target. PLT arrivals can include people arriving on work, student or other permits, in addition to residence permits, as long as they intend to stay in New Zealand for 12 months or more.

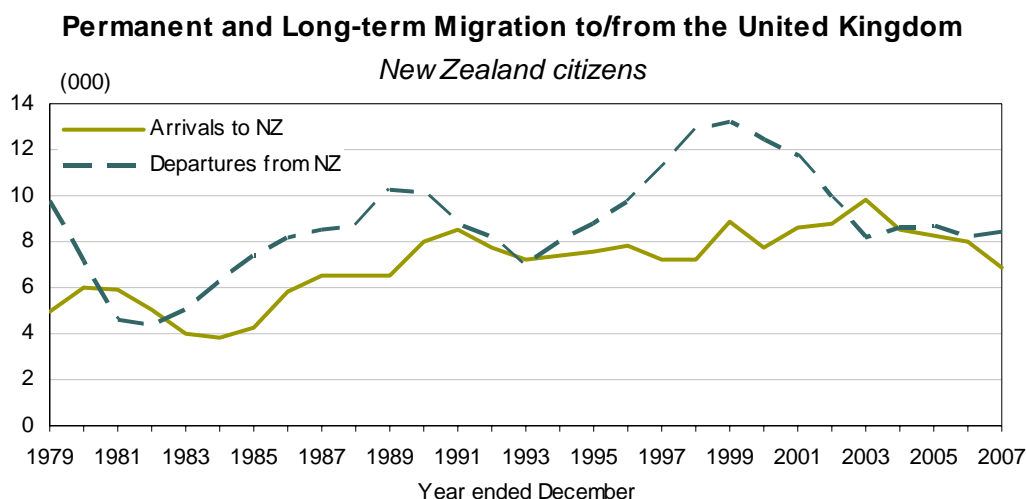


Since the late 1970s, United Kingdom citizens arriving as PLT migrants have most commonly been aged in their mid to late 20s. Many in these ages arrived as working holidaymakers. Migrants in their 30s and early 40s and their children also featured, and were more likely to arrive for permanent residence.



New Zealand citizens have accounted for significant proportions of both PLT arrivals from and PLT departures to the United Kingdom, with most travelling under the working holiday scheme (which allows a stay of up to two years) or on ancestry visas (which allow a stay of up to five years). In fact, New Zealand citizens accounted for over half of PLT arrivals from the United Kingdom between 1984 and 2001. In 2007, New Zealand citizens accounted for 36 percent of PLT arrivals from and 69 percent of PLT departures to the United Kingdom.

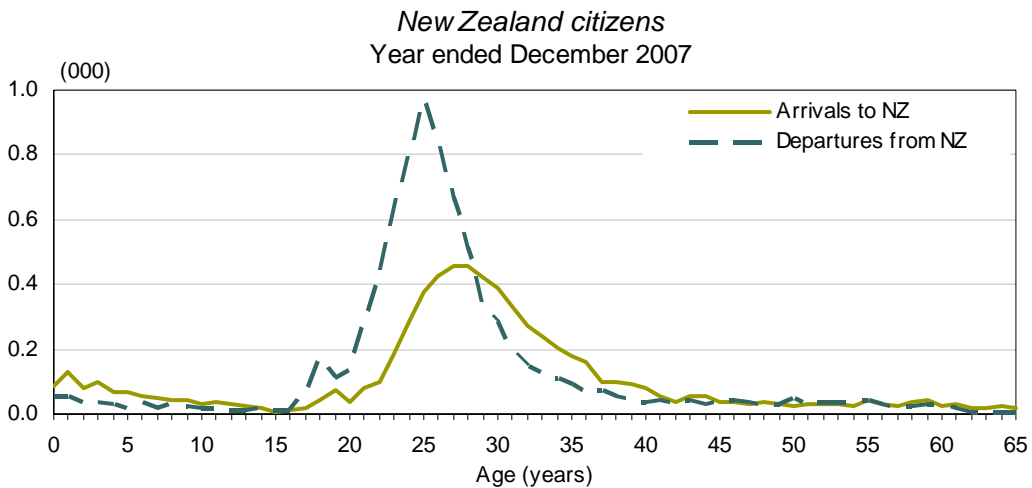
PLT departures of New Zealand citizens to the United Kingdom increased from 7,000 in 1993 to 13,200 in 1999, before dropping back to 8,100 in 2003. Despite favourable changes in the United Kingdom working holiday scheme in August 2003, the level of departures changed little between 2003 and 2007. The changes included an increase in the age limit from 27 years to 30 years and the lifting of restrictions on the jobs that working holidaymakers could take while in the United Kingdom. This policy was subsequently tightened in February 2005, with work allowed for up to one year of the two-year stay in the United Kingdom.



PLT arrivals of New Zealand citizens from the United Kingdom have generally followed the pattern of PLT departures of New Zealand citizens to the United Kingdom a few years earlier. This has been influenced by the limits on the time allowed in the United Kingdom while on certain types of visa, particularly the two-year working holiday visa. Over the 1979–2007 period, arrivals of New Zealand citizens were about 80 percent of departures, indicating a high rate of return.

The importance of working holidays is evident in the age patterns of New Zealand citizens migrating to and from the United Kingdom. In 2007, departures were mostly between 20 and 30 years of age, with a median age of 26 years. Arrivals had a median age of 29 years. The median ages have gradually increased over time, with the median ages two decades earlier being 24 years for departures and 26 years for arrivals.

## Permanent and Long-term Migration to/from the United Kingdom by Age



### Information sources

#### Assisted passage scheme

1964 and 1976 editions of the *New Zealand Official Yearbook*

#### Permanent and long-term migration data

Statistics New Zealand's External Migration dataset

#### New Zealand population by birthplace

Statistics New Zealand's 2006 Census of Population and Dwellings

#### New Zealand residence approval data

Department of Labour: <http://www.immigration.govt.nz>

#### United Kingdom census data

Office for National Statistics: <http://www.statistics.gov.uk>

#### United Kingdom immigration policies

United Kingdom Border Agency: <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk>