

International Travel and Migration: January 2013

Embargoed until 10:45am – 27 February 2013

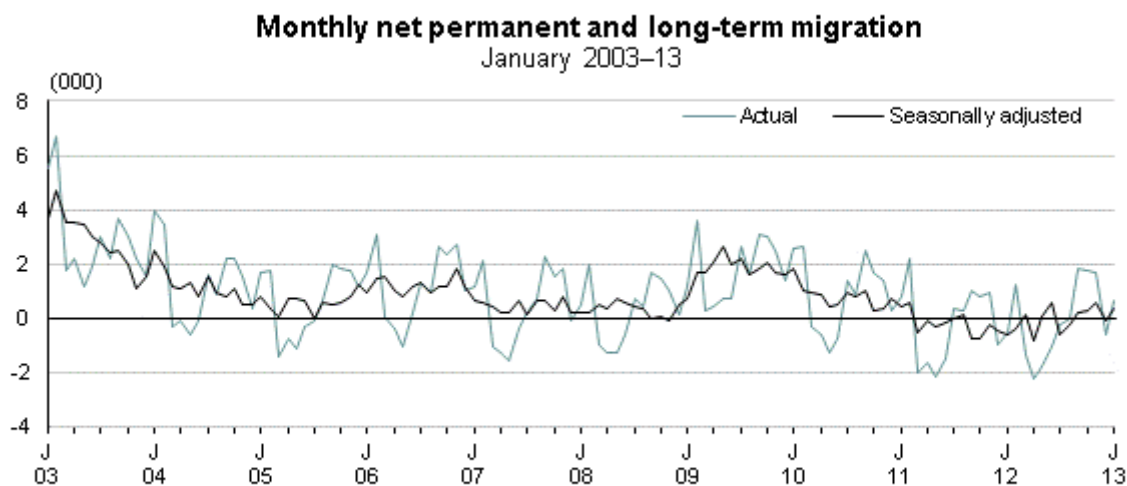
Key facts

In January 2013 compared with January 2012:

- Visitor arrivals (260,600) were down 6,200. The biggest changes were in arrivals from:
 - the United States (up 3,500)
 - Australia (up 2,200)
 - the United Kingdom (down 2,400)
 - China (down 4,600).
- Overseas trips by New Zealand residents (121,000) were down 8,100. The biggest changes were in departures to:
 - China (down 1,000)
 - Malaysia (down 1,100)
 - Australia (down 1,400).

In January 2013:

- Seasonally adjusted figures showed a net gain of 400 migrants.



Source: Statistics New Zealand

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Acting Government Statistician

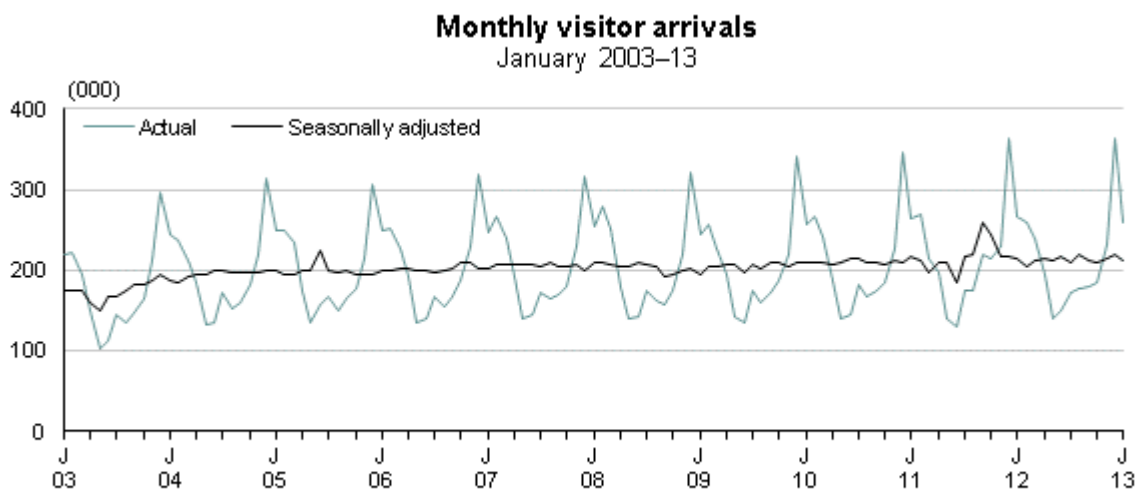
27 February 2013
ISSN 1179-0407

Commentary

- Fewer visitors from China but more from the United States in January
- More annual visitor arrivals from China, fewer from the UK
- Fewer residents depart in January
- New Zealand residents take more overseas trips in the year
- Net gain of 400 migrants in January
- Net migration zero for the year

Fewer visitors from China but more from the United States in January

Short-term overseas visitor arrivals to New Zealand numbered 260,600 in January 2013. This was down 2 percent from both January 2012 (266,800) and January 2011 (265,600).



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Visitor arrivals by country of residence

The biggest changes in visitors by country of residence between January 2012 and January 2013 were in arrivals from:

- the United States (up 3,500)
- Australia (up 2,200)
- Malaysia (down 1,100)
- Hong Kong (down 1,500)
- the United Kingdom (down 2,400)
- China (down 4,600).

Visitor arrivals from the United States numbered 24,300 in January 2013 – the highest for a January month since January 2008 (26,000), and an increase of 17 percent from the January 2012 figure (20,800). There were 85 percent more cruise passengers (up 1,700) from the United States this month than in January 2012. This increase in cruise passengers was half of the total increase (3,500) from the United States.

From within Australia, there were more visitors from Queensland (up 2,600) but fewer from New South Wales (down 1,400).

The 27,500 visitors from the United Kingdom were down 8 percent from the previous year. Arrivals from the United Kingdom have decreased in most months since April 2007, just after the start of the global economic downturn.

Visitor arrivals from China numbered 18,800 in January 2013, a decrease of 20 percent from the January 2012 figure (23,300). Visitor arrivals from both China and Hong Kong are generally boosted around Chinese New Year. This year Chinese New Year was on February 10, whereas in 2012 it was on January 23.

Visitor arrivals by travel purpose

The biggest changes in visitors by travel purpose between January 2012 and January 2013 were in arrivals for:

- holidays (down 3,300)
- visiting friends and relatives (down 5,100).

The fall in the number of holidays was a result of both decreases and increases in different countries. There were decreases from China (down 4,200) and Hong Kong (down 1,200), partly offset by increases from the United States (up 3,000) and from Australia (up 1,900).

The fall in arrivals to visit friends and relatives was also a result of decreases in different countries. There were decreases from the United Kingdom (down 1,000), China (down 900), and Australia (down 700).

More annual visitor arrivals from China, fewer from the UK

There were 2.558 million visitor arrivals to New Zealand in the January 2013 year. This was down 2 percent from the January 2012 year (2.603 million), which was boosted by visitor arrivals for the Rugby World Cup. However, the 2013 figure was up 1 percent compared with the January 2011 year.

Annual visitor arrivals from China were up 25 percent (38,100) from the January 2012 year. This was due to an overall increase in total international outbound travel from China in recent years.

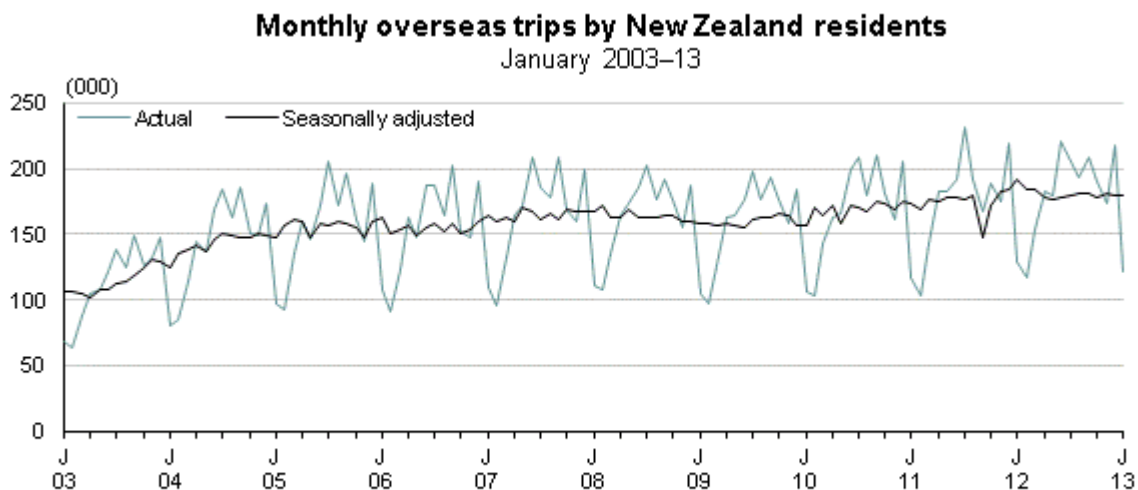
The increase from China was countered by fewer visitor arrivals from the United Kingdom (down 38,600), due to the global economic downturn. Fewer visitor arrivals from France (down 11,800) and South Africa (down 10,200) followed increases the previous year during the Rugby World Cup.

There were large changes in the purpose of visits. Holidaymakers decreased 48,900 when compared with the January 2012 year, whereas travellers visiting friends and relatives increased 10,800. New Zealanders now living in Australia made up most of the increase in arrivals visiting friends and relatives.

For more detailed data about visitor arrivals, see the Excel tables in the 'Downloads' box.

Fewer residents depart in January

New Zealand residents departed on 121,000 overseas trips in January 2013, down 6 percent from January 2012 (129,100), but 3 percent higher than January 2011 (117,700).



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Overseas trips by country of main destination

The biggest changes in overseas trips by country of main destination (where the person will spend the most time) between January 2012 and January 2013 were in trips to:

- India (up 700)
- Fiji (down 800)
- China (down 1,000)
- Malaysia (down 1,100)
- Australia (down 1,400).

New Zealand residents take more overseas trips in the year

Trips by New Zealand residents in the January 2013 year (2.161 million) rose 3 percent from the January 2012 year (2.104 million).

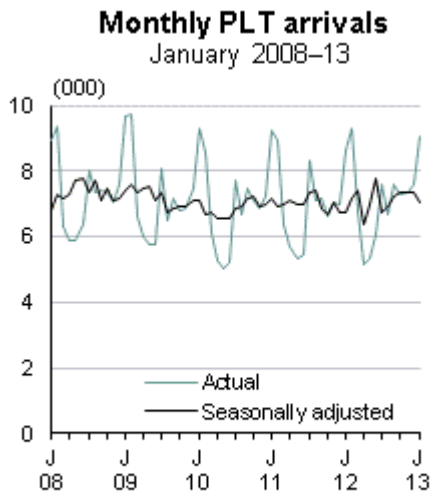
The biggest increases were in trips to the United States (up 16,300) and Australia (up 10,300). Over recent decades, changes in the number of trips to the United States have followed changes in the exchange rate.

In the January 2013 year, residents also made more trips to a number of Pacific island destinations, including the Cook Islands (up 5,800) and Samoa (up 3,700). There were also more trips to Thailand (up 5,100), Japan (up 4,100), and India (up 3,400).

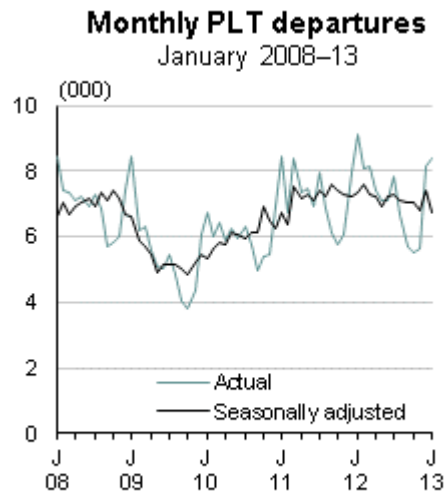
For more detailed data on overseas trips by New Zealand residents, see the Excel tables in the 'Downloads' box.

Net gain of 400 migrants in January

Seasonally adjusted permanent and long-term (PLT) migration figures showed a net gain (more arrivals than departures) of 400 migrants in January 2013. Over the past year, net migration fluctuated between positive and negative figures, averaging zero migrants.



Source: Statistics New Zealand



Source: Statistics New Zealand

The seasonally adjusted net loss of 2,600 migrants to Australia in January 2013 was the smallest net loss since February 2011 (2,500). Since the start of the series in 1996, the highest-ever net loss to Australia was 4,300 in February 2001. This was just before the eligibility of New Zealand citizens to access certain welfare benefits in Australia was changed on 26 February 2001.

Net migration zero for the year

Unadjusted figures showed there were 85,700 PLT arrivals in the January 2013 year, 2 percent more than the 83,600 migrants in the January 2012 year. PLT departures numbered 85,600, down 1 percent from the 86,700 the previous year. This resulted in net migration of zero in the January 2013 year.

There has been an annual net loss of migrants since the October 2011 year, peaking at 4,100 in the February and August 2012 years.

Auckland and Canterbury were the only regions to gain migrants, with arrivals outnumbering departures by 3,800 and 700, respectively. Following the February 2011 Christchurch earthquake, departures from Canterbury increased, and arrivals decreased. In the last few months, the number of arrivals and departures have returned to pre-quake levels, and there has been a net inflow of migrants to Canterbury. In the January 2013 year, Canterbury had a net gain of 400 technicians and trade workers, whereas in 2011 and 2012 there were net losses. This net gain is mostly construction workers (300) – a direct result of rebuilding in Christchurch.

There was a net loss of 37,900 people to Australia in the January 2013 year. This is down from the record net loss of 40,000 in the August 2012 year. The January figure resulted from 53,100 departures to Australia, offset by 15,100 arrivals from Australia. In both directions, most migrants were New Zealand citizens.

There were net gains of migrants from most other countries in the January 2013 year, led by:

- the United Kingdom (5,700)
- China (5,500)
- India (5,000)
- the Philippines (2,100)
- Germany (1,700)
- Ireland (1,200).

For more detailed data about permanent and long-term migration, see the Excel tables in the 'Downloads' box.

Definitions

About the international travel and migration statistics

International travel and migration statistics count passengers arriving into and departing from New Zealand. Passengers are split into one of three passenger types: overseas visitors, New Zealand-resident travellers, and permanent and long-term migrants.

Arrivals and departures of overseas visitors and New Zealand resident travellers are key indicators of tourism and travel. Permanent and long-term migration is a component of New Zealand's population change (along with births and deaths), measuring changes in the characteristics of the population as well as population size.

More definitions

Citizenship: determined from the country that issued the passport the person uses when arriving or departing. A person may hold passports from more than one country.

Country of main destination: the country where a New Zealand-resident traveller will spend the most time while overseas. Departure cards do not ask travellers which other countries they intend to visit on the same trip.

Country of residence: for arrivals, this is the country where the person last lived for 12 months or more. For departures, it is the country where the person will next live for 12 months or more.

New Zealand-resident travellers: people who live in New Zealand and are travelling overseas for less than 12 months.

Overseas visitors: people who live overseas and are visiting New Zealand for less than 12 months.

Passenger type: each passenger is classed as an overseas visitor, a New Zealand-resident traveller, or a permanent and long-term migrant. Passenger type is not related to legal permanent residence in a country or the visa type a person holds. It is based on the time spent in and out of New Zealand. This is primarily determined from responses on the arrival and departure cards to questions about how long the person is in or away from New Zealand, and where they last lived and will next live for 12 months or more.

Permanent and long-term arrivals: people from overseas arriving to live in New Zealand for 12 months or more (including permanently), and New Zealanders returning after an absence of 12 months or more overseas.

Permanent and long-term departures: New Zealanders departing for an absence of 12 months or more (including permanently), and people from overseas who are departing after a stay of 12 months or more in New Zealand.

Travel purpose: the main purpose for the visit to New Zealand or trip overseas. Categories are holiday, visiting friends and relatives, business, conferences and conventions, education, and other.

Related links

Upcoming releases

International Travel and Migration: February 2013 will be released on 22 March 2013.

[Subscribe to information releases](#), including this one, by completing the online subscription form.

The [release calendar](#) lists all our upcoming information releases by date of release.

Past releases

[International Travel and Migration](#) has links to past releases.

Related information

Information about international travel

[International Visitor Arrivals to New Zealand](#) contains detailed tables about the number and characteristics of visitor arrivals. It is released two working days after each International Travel and Migration information release.

[Provisional international travel statistics](#) provide the latest weekly and four-weekly figures for visitor arrivals and New Zealand-resident traveller departures, including figures for 10 major source and destination countries. These are released weekly, usually at 3pm on a Friday.

[International travel and migration articles](#) are occasional publications that provide analyses of selected topics.

Statistics NZ's [Tourism](#) web page lists tourism-related data sources, such as the Accommodation Survey and the Tourism Satellite Account.

[Tourism research and data](#) from the Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment includes results from the International Visitor Survey, Domestic Travel Survey, and tourism forecasts.

[Tourism New Zealand](#) provides guides to New Zealand's key tourism markets, which include the outlook for future months.

Information about international migration

[International travel and migration articles](#) are occasional publications that provide analyses of selected topics.

Statistics NZ's [Migration](#) web page lists migration-related data sources, such as the Longitudinal Immigration Survey.

[Labour and Immigration Research Centre](#), part of the Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment, publishes research reports and information about the immigration research programme.

Immigration New Zealand statistics include application and approval numbers for the main immigration visa types.

Data quality

Period-specific information

This section has information that has changed since the last release.

- [New Zealand arrival and departure information: Final report on consultation](#)

General information

This section has information that does not generally change between releases.

- [Data source](#)
- [Accuracy of the data](#)
- [Interpreting the data](#)
- [Timing of published data](#)
- [Confidentiality](#)
- [More information](#)

Period-specific information

New Zealand arrival and departure information: Final report on consultation

[New Zealand arrival and departure information: Final report on consultation](#) has been released on Statistics NZ's website. The report presents the results of the recent public consultation on proposed changes to the New Zealand Passenger Departure card, and related changes to arrivals and departures statistical series. It makes final recommendations for the new departure card taking into account the feedback received.

General information

Data source

International travel and migration statistics are based on electronic arrival and departure records for each international passenger, supplied to Statistics NZ by the New Zealand Customs Service. These electronic records include flight and passport details, such as date of travel, date of birth, sex, and country of citizenship.

The New Zealand Customs Service also supplies Statistics NZ with arrival and departure cards completed by passengers. Additional detail such as country of residence and travel purpose is captured from these cards and added to the information from electronic records.

Arrival and departure cards are owned by Immigration New Zealand, and are used to administer numerous New Zealand laws in addition to the production of statistics. Statistics NZ captures information from the cards only for statistical purposes, and passes the cards to Immigration NZ after data capture is complete.

See the [arrival card](#) (PDF, 84kb). See the [departure card](#). These are for reference only.

Accuracy of the data

Data collection

Statistics NZ scans every arrival and departure card, and uses image recognition technology to automatically recognise and code responses. Processing staff then manually capture any required information not captured automatically – as not every response can be clearly recognised by automated software.

The imaging system automatically determines all of the information required for around 9 in every 10 cards, meaning about 1 million records are completed manually each year.

Some response fields are required from every card. These include passport number and birth date, which are used to match each card with the corresponding electronic record containing flight and passport details. Some fields are only required for certain passenger types, or for a sample of passengers.

Changes in recorded passenger intentions

All arrivals and departures are processed so they can be allocated to one of three passenger types: overseas visitors, New Zealand-resident travellers, and permanent and long-term migrants.

A person may change their intentions after their arrival or departure, which may mean the recorded passenger type becomes incorrect. Statistics NZ does not revise published statistics to adjust for such changes.

Sampling

Some fields are only collected for a sample of passengers. Data from the sample is used to estimate the characteristics of the full population. This still provides a good picture of the characteristics of travellers, while greatly decreasing the time and cost of capturing the data.

All figures for permanent and long-term migrants are actual counts (not derived from a sample). Arrival and departure totals for overseas visitors and New Zealand-resident travellers are also actual counts. More detailed data for overseas visitors and New Zealand-resident travellers, such as figures by country or travel purpose, are derived from a sample.

The sample ratios currently used are:

- Overseas visitor arrivals: 1 in 16
- Overseas visitor departures: 1 in 26
- New Zealand-resident traveller arrivals: 1 in 26
- New Zealand-resident traveller departures: 1 in 20.

Figures derived from a sample may contain sample error (a difference from the actual figure). Small numbers are more likely to contain a large sample error as a percentage of the actual figure, and should be used with caution.

Information about international travel and migration has tables showing the sample errors for selected cell sizes.

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 that 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 can occur 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 is 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 traveller series.

Interpreting the data

Passenger counts

The statistics in this release relate to the number of passenger movements to and from New Zealand, rather than to the number of people – that is, the multiple movements of individual people during a given reference period are each counted separately. For example, a New Zealand resident making five business trips overseas within a year would be counted as five arrivals and five departures.

Timing of published data

Final international travel and migration statistics: released approximately three weeks after the end of the reference month. This delay is longer for December and January data due to the peak travel period coinciding with the Christmas and New Year holidays.

New Zealand and overseas port data: becomes available two working days after the international travel and migration release.

Provisional international travel statistics: normally released at 3pm every Friday on the [Provisional international travel statistics](#) web page. These show the latest weekly and four-weekly figures for visitor arrivals and New Zealand-resident traveller departures, including figures for 10 major source and destination countries. No further data is available until the monthly release of final statistics.

Confidentiality

Statistics NZ releases statistics derived from arriving and departing passenger records. It does not release the records of individual passengers.

More information

See more [Information about international travel and migration](#).

Liability

While all care and diligence has been used in processing, analysing, and extracting data and information in this publication, Statistics NZ gives no warranty it is error-free and will not be liable for any loss or damage suffered by the use directly, or indirectly, of the information in this publication.

Timing

Our information releases are delivered electronically by third parties. Delivery may be delayed by circumstances outside our control. Statistics NZ does not accept responsibility for any such delay.

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Tables

The following tables are available in Excel format from the 'Downloads' box. If you have problems viewing the files, see [Opening files and PDFs](#).

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 citizenship, actual counts
10. Permanent and long-term migration, by citizenship, seasonally adjusted series

Access more data on Infoshare

Use [Infoshare](#) to access time-series data specific to your needs. For this release, select the following categories from the Infoshare home page:

Subject category: **Tourism**

Group: **International Travel and Migration**