

International Travel and Migration: January 2014

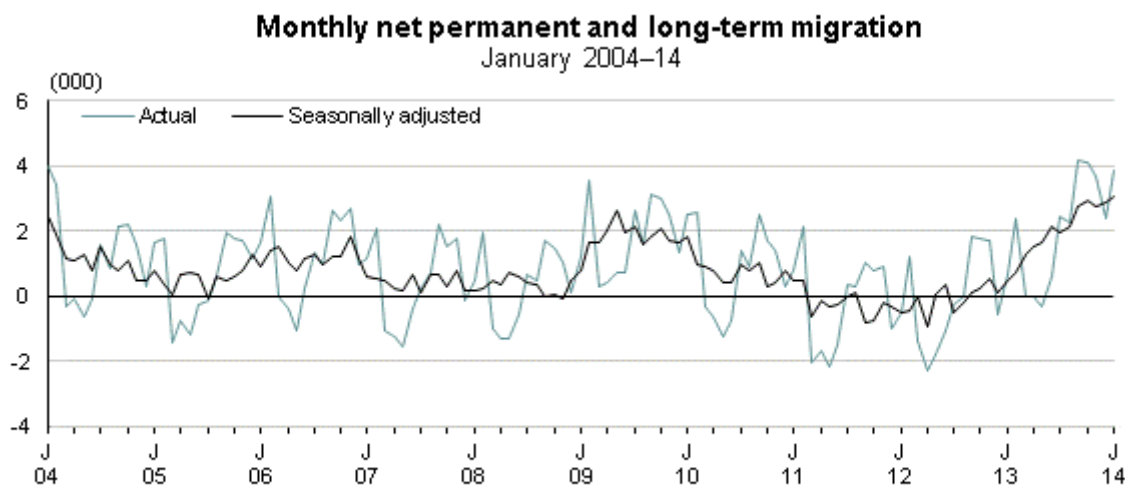
Embargoed until 10:45am – 27 February 2014

Key facts

In January 2014 compared with January 2013:

- Visitor arrivals (292,400) were up 31,800. The biggest changes were in arrivals from:
 - China (up 11,400)
 - Australia (up 8,400)
 - the United Kingdom (up 3,100).
- Overseas trips by New Zealand residents (127,800) were up 6,900.

In January 2014, seasonally adjusted figures showed a net gain of 3,100 migrants.



Source: Statistics New Zealand

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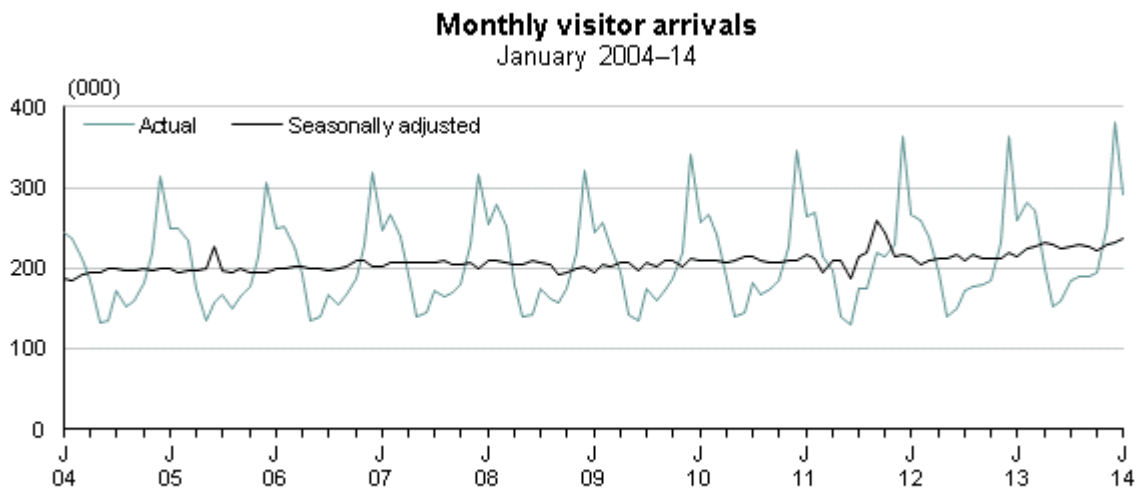
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Commentary

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- [Australia is the most visited country in the January 2014 year](#)
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Chinese New Year boosts January visitor arrivals

Short-term overseas visitor arrivals to New Zealand numbered 292,400 in January 2014, the highest ever for a January month. The latest figure was up 12 percent from January 2013 (260,600).



Visitor arrivals by country of residence

The biggest changes in visitors by country of residence between January 2013 and January 2014 were in arrivals from:

- China (up 11,400)
- Australia (up 8,400)
- the United Kingdom (up 3,100)
- Germany (up 1,900)
- Hong Kong (up 1,500).

The earlier timing of Chinese New Year (January this year, compared with February last year) boosted visitor arrivals from China and Hong Kong. However, visitor arrivals from China were still up 6,800 compared with two years ago, when Chinese New Year also fell in January.

The increase from China was the first since September 2013. A new tourism law was introduced in China on 1 October 2013, which places restrictions on low-cost shopping tours,

increasing the price of many tour packages. Many tours include only a short stay in New Zealand, in conjunction with a visit to Australia.

The new law saw some changes in the usual characteristics of Chinese visitors. The number of visitors with longer stays increased, particularly for stays between 7 and 16 days, when comparing January 2014 with January 2013. There were increases across all age groups, especially for travellers aged 35–44 years, and travellers aged under 15 years.

There were more visitors from every Australian state, including New South Wales (up 2,400), Queensland (up 1,700), Western Australia (up 1,600), Victoria (up 1,300), and South Australia (up 1,200). The 42 percent increase from South Australia and the 16 percent increase from Western Australia were helped by additional direct flights to New Zealand.

Visitor arrivals by travel purpose

The biggest changes in visitors by travel purpose between January 2013 and January 2014 were in arrivals for:

- holidays (up 20,000)
- visiting friends and relatives (up 10,900).

The biggest increases in holiday arrivals were from China (up 10,000), Australia (up 3,600), Germany (up 1,500), the United Kingdom (up 1,400), and Hong Kong (up 1,200). Holiday arrivals from the United States were down 1,600.

The biggest increases to visit friends and relatives were from Australia (up 5,400), China (up 1,700), and the United Kingdom (up 1,300).

Visitors from Australia, China, and the US drive annual increase

There were 2.75 million visitor arrivals to New Zealand in the January 2014 year. This was 7 percent higher than in the January 2013 year (2.56 million).

Compared with the January 2013 year, the biggest increases in visitors were from Australia (up 68,500), China (up 47,800), and the United States (up 19,500). There were also more visitors from Germany (up 8,300), the United Kingdom (up 7,400), and Singapore (up 7,100).

Following the global economic downturn, which started in 2007, visitor arrivals from the United States and the United Kingdom declined. The latest increases from both countries show partial recovery toward pre-downturn figures.

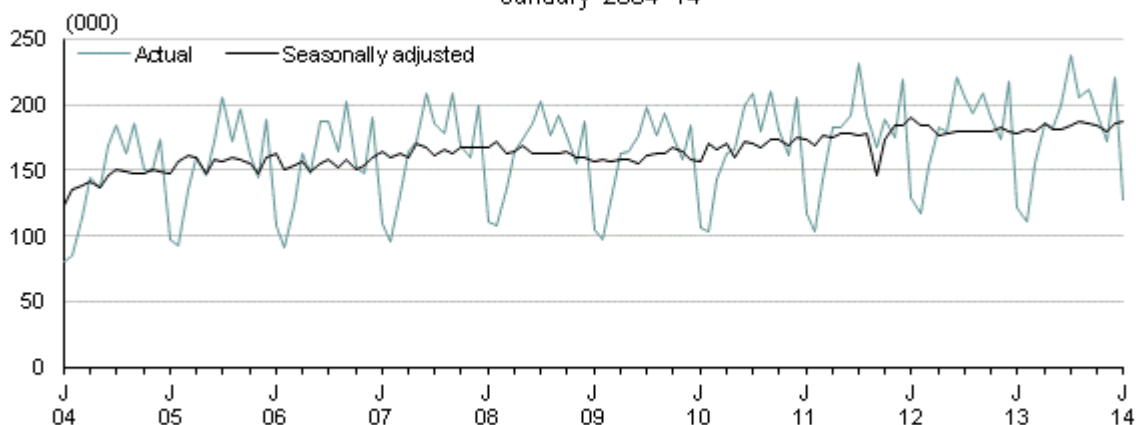
For more detailed data about visitor arrivals, see the Excel tables in the 'Downloads' box.

New Zealand residents take more trips in January

New Zealand residents departed on 127,800 overseas trips in January 2014, up 6 percent from January 2013 (121,000).

Monthly overseas trips by New Zealand residents

January 2004–14



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Overseas trips by country of main destination

A new departure card was introduced in July 2013, which improved the response rate to the 'country of main destination' question. As a result, the number of passengers in the 'not stated' category decreased by 8,700 (72 percent) in January 2014, compared with January 2013. The improved response rate contributed much of the change in the figures for individual countries.

Australia is the most visited country in the January 2014 year

Trips by New Zealand residents in the January 2014 year (2.20 million) were up 2 percent from the January 2013 year (2.16 million).

Around half of all trips by New Zealand residents were to Australia (1.02 million). The next most visited destinations were the United States (144,200), Fiji (113,300), the United Kingdom (96,000), China (74,800), and the Cook Islands (73,100).

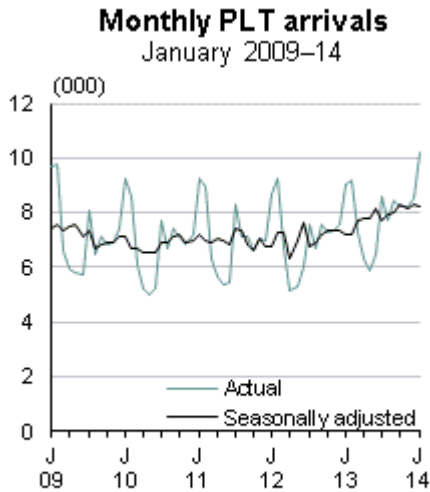
For more detailed data on overseas trips by New Zealand residents, see the Excel tables in the 'Downloads' box.

Highest net gain of migrants in over 10 years

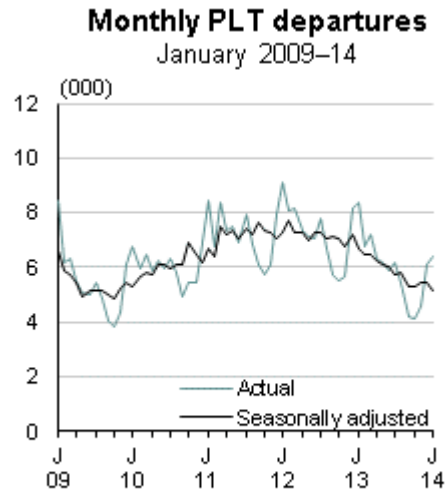
Seasonally adjusted permanent and long-term (PLT) migration figures showed a net gain (more arrivals than departures) of 3,100 migrants in January 2014. This was the highest gain in over 10 years (since 3,400 in May 2003).

Net migration has been positive and mostly increasing since September 2012. The increase since then was mainly due to fewer departures of New Zealand citizens to Australia, as well as more non-New Zealand citizens arriving.

The seasonally adjusted net loss of 900 migrants to Australia in January 2014 was just below the average net loss of 1,000 over the last six months. This average was well down from a high of 3,600 recorded in September 2011.



Source: Statistics New Zealand



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Annual migrant arrivals up, departures down

Unadjusted figures showed that 95,200 migrants arrived in the January 2014 year, up 11 percent from the January 2013 year (85,700). Migrant departures numbered 69,500, down 19 percent from the previous year (85,600). This resulted in a net gain of 25,700 migrants in the January 2014 year, compared with net migration of zero in the January 2013 year. The latest net gain was the highest since the April 2004 year (also 25,700).

Net migration can vary significantly from year to year. The highest net inflow ever recorded was 42,500 in the May 2003 year. The highest net outflow was 43,600 in the July 1979 year. Over the last 20 years (December 1994–2013 years), New Zealand's annual net inflow of migrants has averaged 11,700.

The net loss of 17,100 people to Australia in the January 2014 year was well down from the loss of 37,900 in the January 2013 year. The latest year's loss resulted from 37,200 departures to Australia (down from 53,100 in the January 2013 year), partly offset by 20,100 arrivals (up from 15,100). In both directions, most migrants were New Zealand citizens.

There were net gains of migrants from most other countries in the January 2014 year, led by:

- the United Kingdom (6,000)
- China (5,700)
- India (5,600)
- the Philippines (2,400)
- Germany (2,300).

Nine of New Zealand's 16 regions had net gains of migrants, led by Auckland (12,300), Canterbury (4,800), Otago (600), and Wellington (300). By occupation, Auckland and Wellington's biggest net gains were in professionals, Canterbury's biggest net gain was in technicians and trades workers, and Otago's biggest net gain was in community and personal service workers.

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: this is the country where the person last lived or 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 are living 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 2014 will be released on 21 March 2014.

[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

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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 New Zealand 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.

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

[International travel and migration](#) in DataInfo+ has more information. [DataInfo+](#) is the main source of information about our statistical activities and data.

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

Infoshare allows you to organise data in the way that best meets your needs. You can view the resulting tables onscreen or download them.

Use Infoshare

For this release, select the following categories from the Infoshare homepage:

Subject category: **Tourism**

Group: **International Travel and Migration**