

Embargoed until 10:45am – 23 April 2010

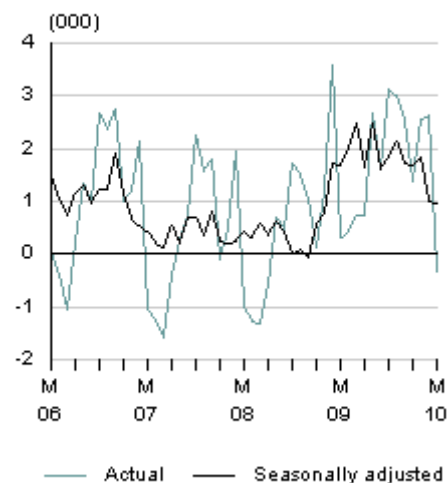
International Travel and Migration: March 2010

Highlights

- Visitor arrivals (243,300) were up 7 percent from March 2009 (226,500).
- More visitors arrived from Australia (up 17,500) and Korea (up 2,400) in March 2010.
- New Zealand residents departed on 142,700 overseas trips, up 13 percent from March 2009 (126,700).
- New Zealand residents departed on more trips to Australia (up 6,000), Fiji, the United States (each up 1,400), and the United Kingdom (up 1,300).
- Permanent and long-term arrivals exceeded departures by 1,000 on a seasonally adjusted basis.

Monthly net PLT migration

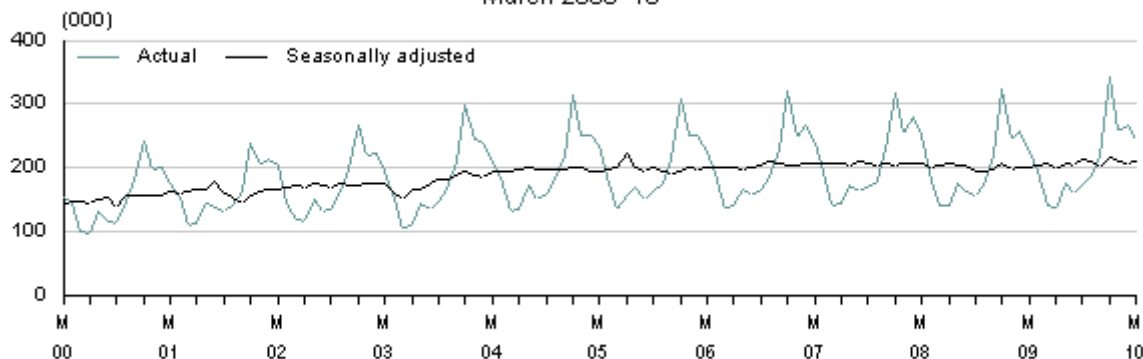
March 2006–10



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Monthly visitor arrivals

March 2000–10



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Geoff Bascand
Government Statistician

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Commentary

Visitor arrivals

Monthly visitor arrivals

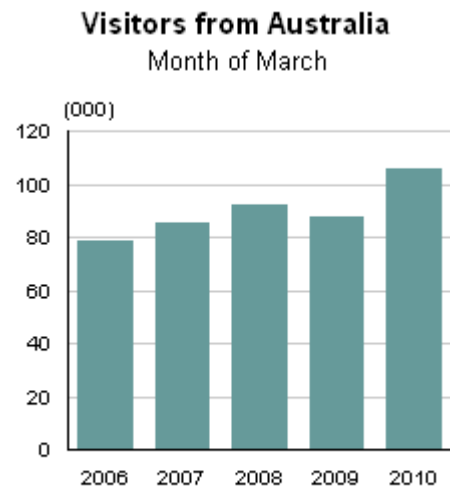
Short-term overseas visitor arrivals to New Zealand numbered 243,300 in March 2010, up 16,800 (7 percent) from March 2009. The earlier timing of Easter, and school holidays in some Australian states, influenced this increase. Although these holiday periods did not begin until 2 April, it is common to see increases in travel shortly before holiday periods begin. Of the increase in March 2010, the majority (14,300) was in the last eight days of the month. Although visitor arrivals were up from March 2009, the March 2010 figure was still below the 250,800 visitors in March 2008.

The underlying trend, derived from the seasonally adjusted series, accounts for changes in the timing of holiday periods. The trend shows that the global economic downturn contributed to a four percent decrease in visitor arrivals between March and November 2008. The trend then increased beyond pre-downturn levels to a peak in November 2009, before falling slightly in recent months.

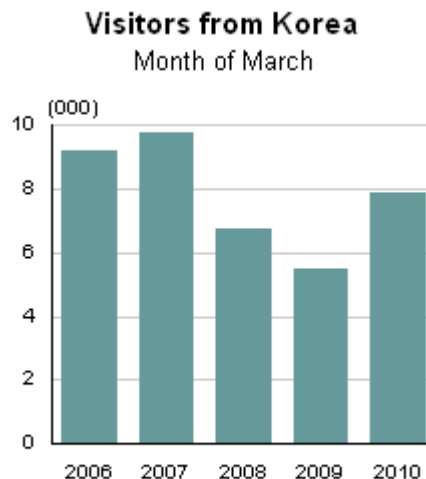
The estimated average number of visitors in New Zealand per day was 174,300 in March 2010, up 2 percent from March 2009 (170,600). Holiday travellers accounted for 77,200 of the visitors in New Zealand per day in March 2010, up 5 percent from 73,400 in March 2009. Travellers visiting friends and relatives averaged 54,600 per day in March 2010, down 4 percent from 56,800 in the previous March.

Monthly visitors by source country

Visitor arrivals increased significantly from Australia (up 17,500 or 20 percent) in March 2010 compared with March 2009. The increase included more arrivals from New South Wales (up 6,800 or 22 percent), Queensland (up 4,700 or 21 percent), Victoria (up 3,200 or 16 percent), and Western Australia (up 1,700 or 30 percent). More visitor arrivals were also recorded from Korea (up 2,400 or 43 percent) than in March 2009, although the latest figure was still well down on earlier March months.



Source: Statistics New Zealand



Source: Statistics New Zealand

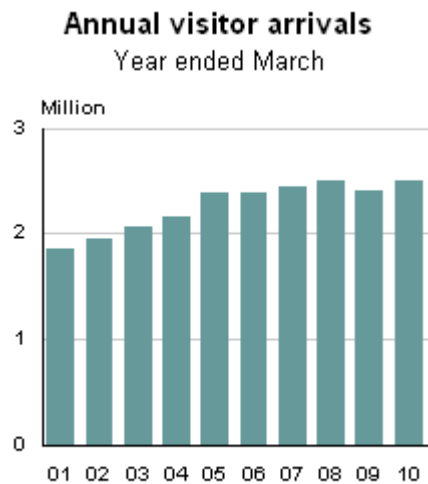
In contrast, there were fewer visitor arrivals from China (down 1,800 or 16 percent) in March 2010. A decrease in visitors from the United States (down 1,100 or 6 percent) was due to the arrival of fewer cruise passengers.

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.

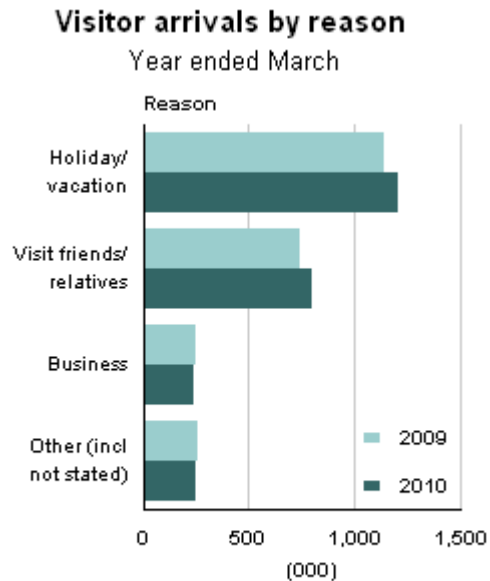
Annual visitor arrivals

Visitor arrivals numbered 2.499 million in the March 2010 year, up 98,400 (4 percent) from the March 2009 year (2.401 million).

A holiday was the main travel reason for 1.205 million visitors to New Zealand in the year ended March 2010, up 62,900 (6 percent) from the previous year. Another 796,400 arrived to visit friends and relatives (up 58,400 or 8 percent), and 236,300 arrived for business (down 11,000 or 4 percent).



Source: Statistics New Zealand



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Annual visitors by source country

Visitor arrivals from Australia numbered 1.117 million in the March 2010 year, up 141,000 (14 percent) from 2009. There were also more visitors from Hong Kong (up 4,600 or 22 percent).

There were 196,500 visitor arrivals from the United States in the year ended March 2010, similar to the 196,700 visitors in the March 2009 year. Both figures were 12 percent below the 222,800 arrivals from the United States in the March 2008 year, prior to the global economic downturn.

Fewer visitors came from China (down 12,900 or 11 percent), Japan (down 17,200 or 18 percent), Korea (down 13,800 or 19 percent), the United Kingdom (down 8,400 or 3 percent), and South Africa (down 7,100 or 29 percent) in the March 2010 year, compared with the March 2009 year.

Departures of New Zealand residents

Monthly resident departures

New Zealand residents departed on 142,700 short-term overseas trips in March 2010, up 16,000 (13 percent) from the 126,700 departures in March 2009. The increase was mainly due to the earlier timing of Easter and the school holidays as, although these started on 2 April, it is common to see increases in travel shortly before holiday periods begin. New Zealand residents departed on 11,400 more trips in the last nine days of March 2010 than in the same period in March 2009.

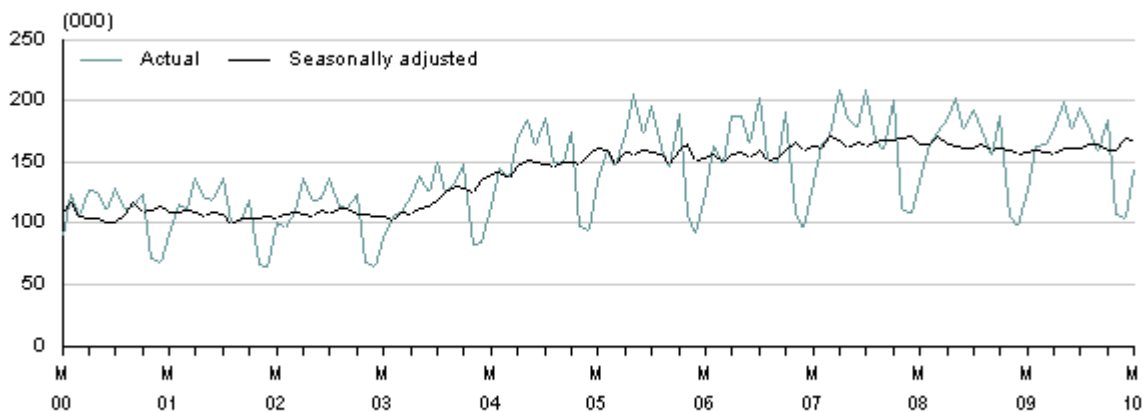
New Zealand residents took 75,000 trips to Australia in March 2010. This figure was up 6,000 (9 percent) from the 69,000 departures in March 2009. There were also more departures to Fiji, the United States (both up 1,400), and the United Kingdom (up 1,300).

The trend in New Zealand resident departures decreased 6 percent between January 2008 and April 2009. It has since been increasing but has not yet surpassed the January 2008 high.

The estimated average number of New Zealand residents who were temporarily overseas per day during March 2010 was 69,700, up 1 percent from the average of 68,800 in March 2009. This increase was much smaller than the 13 percent rise in departures, as most of the latter occurred towards the end of March. Generally, people departing late in March will spend much of their time away in April.

Monthly New Zealand-resident short-term departures

March 2000–10



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Annual resident departures

Short-term departures of New Zealand residents in the March 2010 year numbered 1.943 million, just above the 1.942 million departures in the March 2009 year.

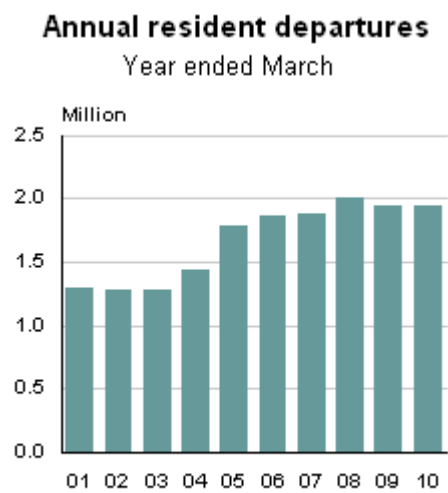
New Zealand residents departed on more trips to Australia (up 5,700 or 1 percent) in the year ended March 2010 compared with the March 2009 year. However, this is only a partial recovery following a drop of 33,400 in the March 2009 year compared with the previous year.

There were also more trips to Samoa (up 3,700 or 9 percent), India (up 2,900 or 10 percent), Thailand (up 2,300 or 8 percent), South Africa (up 2,200 or 19 percent), and Singapore (up 2,100 or 16 percent) in the March 2010 year. The increase in resident departures to India and South

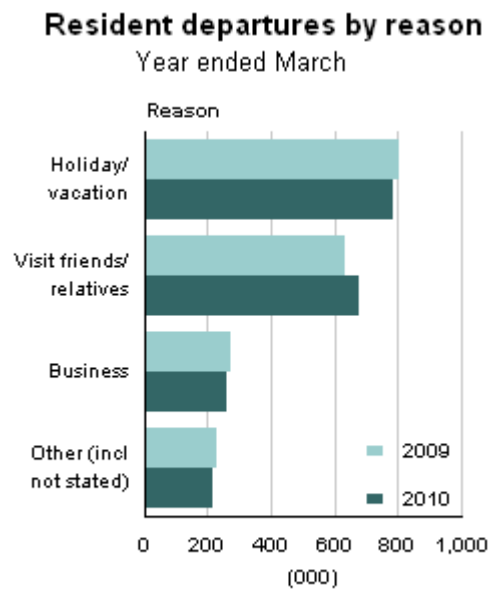
Africa was driven by New Zealand residents born in those countries, with fewer trips by New Zealand-born. This is reflected in an increase of departures to these countries to visit friends and relatives, and a decrease in trips for a holiday.

Trips to Europe were down 9,900 (6 percent) compared with 2009. This decrease included fewer trips to the United Kingdom (down 2,800 or 3 percent), Italy (down 2,300 or 21 percent), and France (down 1,600 or 11 percent). Fewer departures were also made to the United States (down 3,300 or 4 percent) and Hong Kong (down 2,300 or 12 percent).

A holiday was the main travel purpose for 781,200 New Zealand residents who departed in the March 2010 year, down 22,300 (3 percent) from the previous year. Another 677,700 departed to visit friends and relatives (up 42,500 or 7 percent). Departures for business purposes (264,200) were down 7,400 (3 percent) from the year ended March 2009.



Source: Statistics New Zealand



Source: Statistics New Zealand

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. The former group may include 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

Seasonally adjusted net PLT migration was 1,000 in March 2010, the same as February 2010, but down from 1,800 in January 2010. The monthly seasonally adjusted series had averaged 1,900 between February 2009 and January 2010.

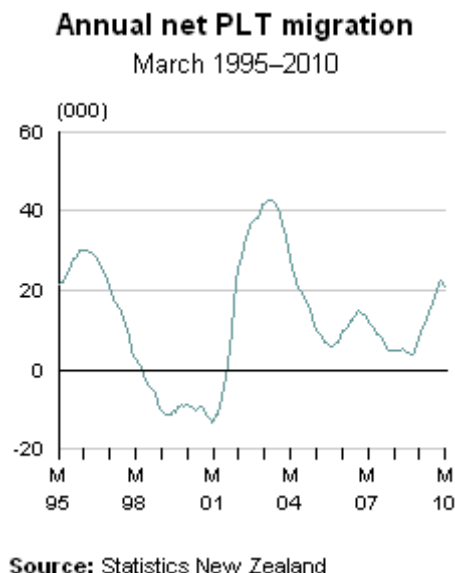
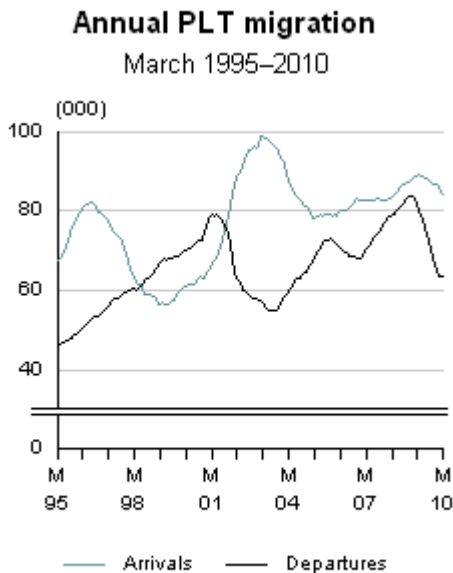
On an unadjusted basis, PLT departures exceeded arrivals by 300 in March 2010, compared with an inflow of 300 in March 2009. Net outflows of 1,000 were recorded in the months of March 2007 and 2008. The decrease in net migration compared with March 2009 was mainly due to 600 fewer arrivals of non-New Zealand citizens, including fewer arrivals on work (down 300) and student permits (down 100). Also, departures of non-New Zealand citizens were up 400, although this was offset by 200 fewer departures of New Zealand citizens. PLT departures of New Zealand citizens to Australia decreased 200 from March 2009.

In March 2010, net inflows of migrants came from India and China (each 400). The net outflow of 1,800 PLT migrants to Australia was down from 2,300 in March 2009, and was the lowest outflow for a March month since 2006 (1,700).

Annual PLT migration

Net migration was 21,000 in the March 2010 year, compared with 7,500 in the year ended March 2009. The increase was due to 18,000 fewer departures. The 63,400 PLT departures in the March 2010 year were down 22 percent from 81,400 departures in the March 2009 year. PLT arrivals were also down in the March 2010 year. There were 84,300 PLT arrivals, down 4,500 or 5 percent from the March 2009 year.

Although net migration in the March 2010 year was up from the previous March year, it was down from the net gain of 22,600 in the 12 months to January 2010. The January figure was the highest annual net gain since the May 2004 year (24,000).



Source: Statistics New Zealand

The net PLT migration gain of 21,000 in the March 2010 year was higher than the annual average of 11,900 for the December years 1990-2009. Net PLT migration varied substantially within this 20-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 experienced during most of 1998-2001, with the largest being a net loss of 13,200 people in the February 2001 year.

Annual PLT migration by country

In the year ended March 2010, the highest net PLT inflows were from the United Kingdom (8,400), India (5,600), and China (3,700). Substantial decreases in net PLT inflows were recorded for South Africa (down 2,000), Fiji (down 1,600), and the Philippines (down 1,500).

The net PLT outflow to Australia was 14,900 in the March 2010 year, less than half the outflow of 33,600 in the March 2009 year. The latest net outflow resulted from 30,500 PLT departures to Australia, partly offset by 15,600 PLT arrivals from Australia. Almost 9 in every 10 PLT departures to Australia were New Zealand citizens (26,400). Of the PLT arrivals from Australia, two-thirds were New Zealand citizens (10,600), similar to levels observed over the past decade.

Annual PLT migration by citizenship

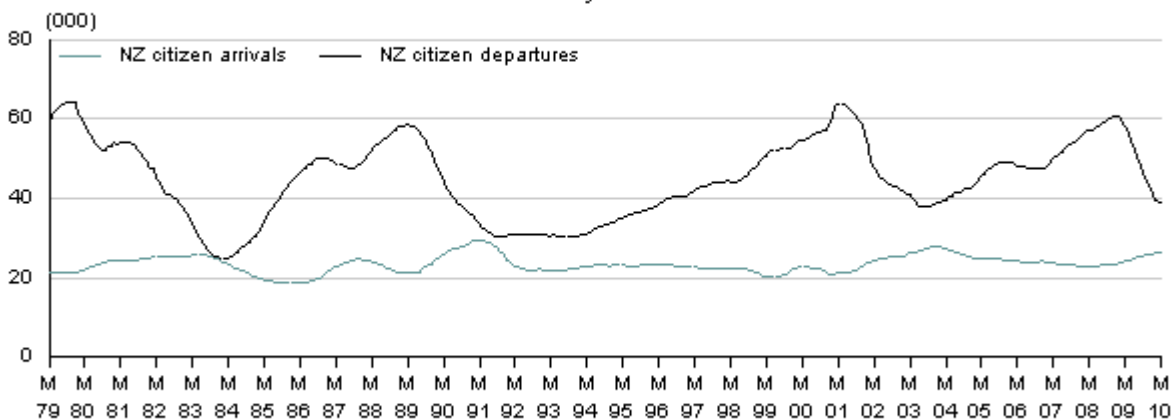
A net inflow of 33,400 non-New Zealand citizens and a net outflow of 12,400 New Zealand citizens were recorded in the March 2010 year.

PLT arrivals of New Zealand citizens numbered 26,400 in the March 2010 year, above the average of 23,500 recorded for the 1979–2009 December years, but below the peaks of the March 1991 year (29,600) and the October 2003 year (27,800). Arrivals of New Zealand citizens tend to show relatively little variation year-to-year, and the variation that does occur often follows trends in departures of New Zealand citizens a few years earlier.

PLT departures of New Zealand citizens have shown much more annual variation than arrivals of New Zealand citizens. The highest number of departures of New Zealand citizens was 64,300 in the October 1979 year, but by the January 1984 year, this had decreased to a low of 24,400. PLT departures of New Zealand citizens numbered 38,900 in the March 2010 year, well down from 58,200 the previous March year.

Annual PLT migration of New Zealand citizens

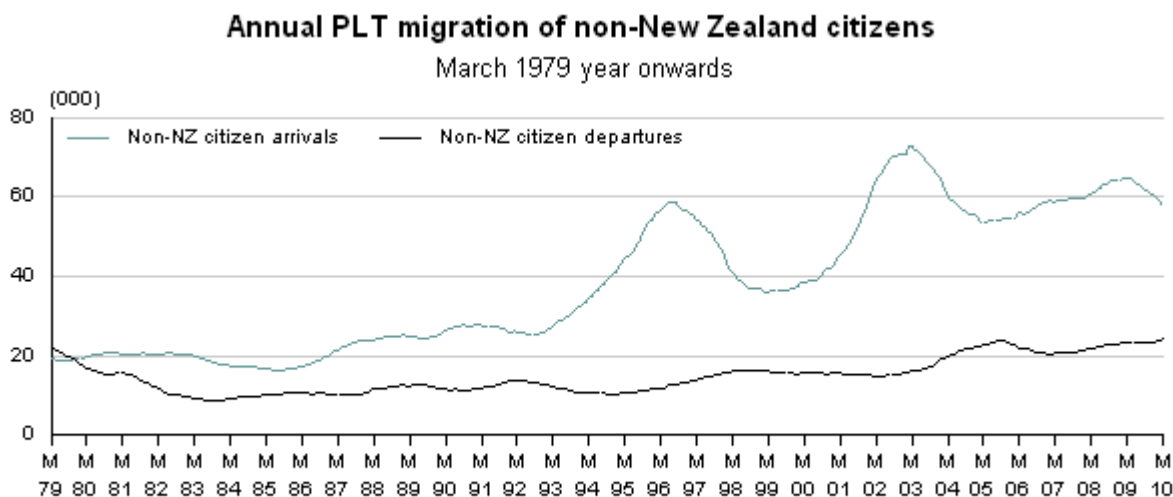
March 1979 year onwards



Source: Statistics New Zealand

PLT arrivals of non-New Zealand citizens were less than 30,000 a year between 1979 and 1992, then doubled to reach a peak of 58,800 in the July 1996 year. Another peak of 72,800 was reached in the February 2003 year. The changes in arrivals of non-New Zealand citizens reflect changes in arrivals of temporary workers (including working holidaymakers) and overseas students staying for 12 months or more, as well as arrivals for residence. The 57,900 non-New Zealand citizen arrivals in the March 2010 year were down from 64,700 the previous March year.

PLT departures of non-New Zealand citizens have generally been increasing since 1984, corresponding with the general increase in arrivals of non-New Zealand citizens. In the March 2010 year, there were 24,500 PLT departures of non-New Zealand citizens, up from 23,200 in the March 2009 year.



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Annual PLT migration by permit type

In the March 2010 year, 30,400 PLT arrivals were Australian or New Zealand citizens who did not require a permit to remain in New Zealand. Of the 53,900 PLT arrivals who did require a permit, 20,700 arrived on work permits, 15,300 arrived on student permits, 13,400 arrived on residence permits, and 4,100 arrived on visitor permits. Compared with the March 2009 year, there were fewer arrivals on each of these permit types, the biggest decrease being 3,400 fewer arrivals on work permits.

Recent international travel and migration articles

Statistics NZ has recently released a number of [International travel and migration articles](#) that can be accessed on the Statistics NZ website. The most recent articles are:

April 2010	New Zealand's International Migration Statistics, 1860–1921 provides some background to historical data recently released in Infoshare.
December 2009	Business Travel to and from New Zealand: 1989–2009 examines changes in the number and characteristics of people travelling to and from New Zealand for business over the past two decades.
October 2 009	Rates of Travel to New Zealand by Country of Residence: 2009 examines the rates of travel to New Zealand when adjusted for the population of each source country.

New table

A new table has been added to the Excel tables accompanying this release. This new table is table 4, while the old tables 4–8 are now tables 5–9. The new table contains numbers of short-term overseas visitor arrivals by travel purpose, and includes some detail by country of residence.

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Next release ...

International Travel and Migration: April 2010 will be released on 21 May 2010.

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.

Free online database

A large number of international travel and migration tables are available through Statistics NZ's Infoshare database (www.stats.govt.nz/infoshare), a free online tool that provides access to a range of time-series data. The international travel and migration subject can be found under **Tourism** on the **Browse** page of the database.

Changes in passenger type

Passenger type (overseas visitor, New Zealand-resident traveller, or permanent and long-term (PLT) migrant) is based on the time spent in and out of New Zealand, determined from past arrivals and departures of a person, and responses to questions on the arrival or departure card. Responses to the questions, and therefore the passenger type allocated, may be based on intentions. If a person's intentions change 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 (PLT 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.

Permit type

The determination of passenger type by Statistics NZ is independent of the permit type a person holds.

With the exception of New Zealand citizens, Australian citizens, and a small number of other people exempt under the Immigration Act 1987, everyone entering New Zealand is required to obtain a permit to remain in New Zealand. People already in New Zealand can apply for a permit renewal or a new permit of a different type. However, Statistics NZ only holds data on the permit type that an individual was given on arrival.

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.

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 their time while away from New Zealand.

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 which 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 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 are 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 arrivals and departures series.

Processing system

The international travel and migration processing system incorporates scanning and image recognition technology. All arrival and departure cards are processed, but for around 9 in 10 cards the required information is captured automatically and no operator intervention is needed.

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, 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 country of citizenship