

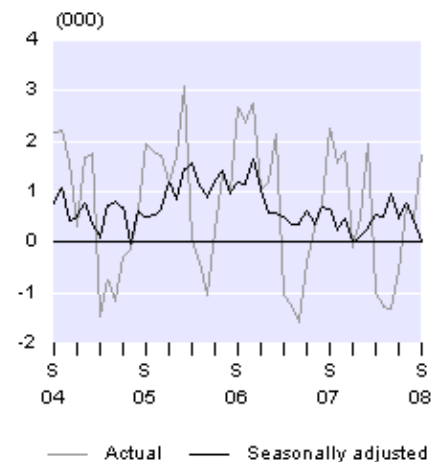
Embargoed until 10:45am – 22 October 2008

International Travel and Migration: September 2008

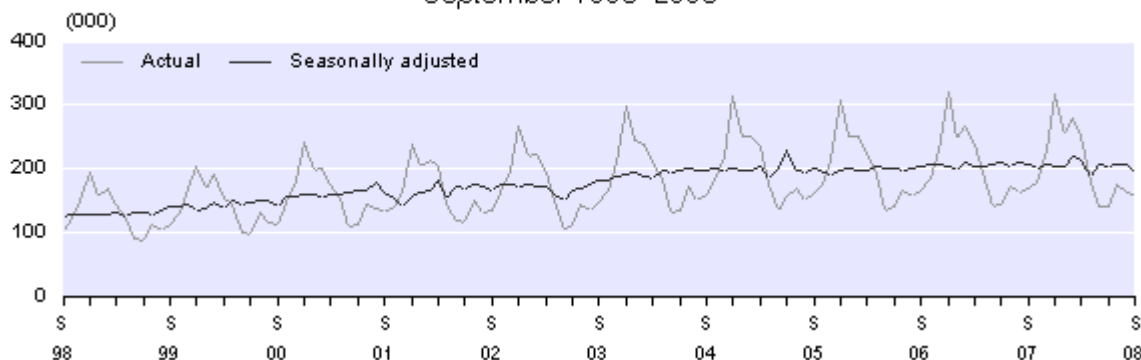
Highlights

- Visitor arrivals (157,700) were down 7 percent from September 2007 (168,800).
- There were fewer visitors from China (down 2,700), Australia (down 2,200), Korea (down 2,000) and Japan (down 1,800).
- New Zealand resident departures (192,000) were down 8 percent from September 2007 (208,500).
- There were fewer trips by New Zealand residents to Australia (down 9,900) and France (down 3,100).
- Permanent and long-term arrivals matched departures on a seasonally adjusted basis.

Monthly Net Permanent and Long-term Migration
September 2004–08



Monthly Visitor Arrivals
September 1998–2008



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See also [International Travel and Migration: September 2008 – Media release](#).

Commentary

Visitor arrivals

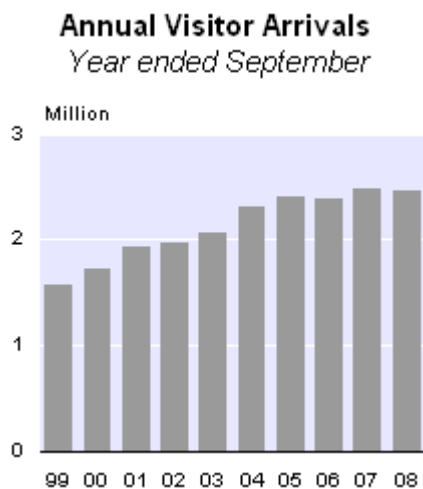
Monthly visitor arrivals

Short-term overseas visitor arrivals to New Zealand numbered 157,700 in September 2008, a decrease of 11,100 (7 percent) from September 2007 (168,800). This is the lowest September total since 2003 (148,400).

The estimated average number of visitors in New Zealand per day in September 2008 was 100,500, up 4 percent from the average of 96,300 in September 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 September 2008 was 20 days, up from 19 days in September 2007, and the median (half stay shorter, and half stay longer than this duration) was 9 days.

Annual visitor arrivals

During the September 2008 year, there were 2.469 million visitor arrivals, down 6,200 (less than 1 percent) from the September 2007 year. This is the first time in 24 months that annual visitor arrivals have been lower than for the previous year. A holiday was the main travel reason for 1.196 million visitor arrivals to New Zealand in the September 2008 year, down 26,500 (2 percent) from the previous year. Another 735,700 arrived to visit friends and relatives (up 28,700 or 4 percent), and 263,400 arrived for business (down 9,300 or 3 percent).

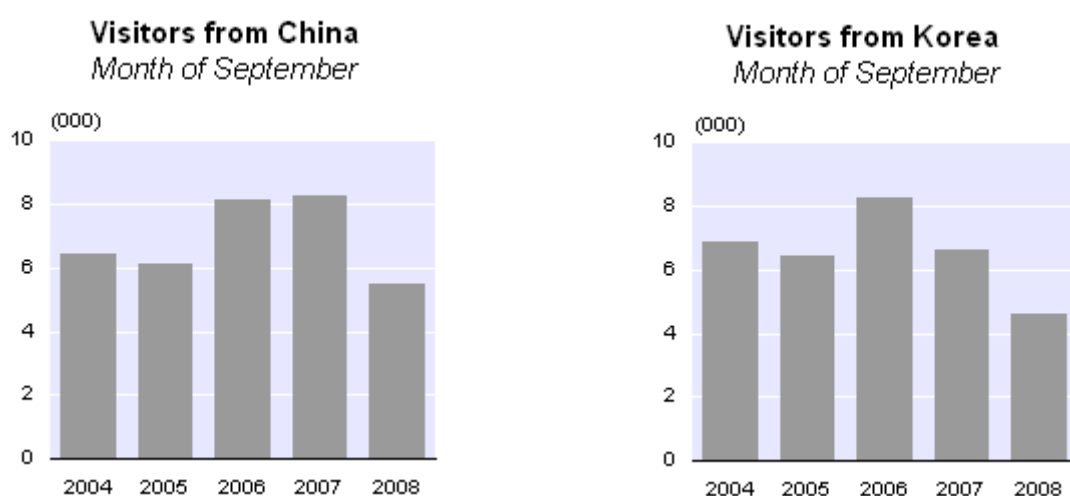


Note: Provisional international travel statistics, including weekly and four-weekly visitor arrival data, are available on the Statistics NZ website. This data is updated each week with the most recently available information on visitor arrivals from 10 major source countries.

Visitors by source country

In September 2008, there were fewer visitors from China (down 2,700 or 33 percent) when compared with September 2007. There were 1,400 fewer holidaymakers and 1,000 fewer business travellers. This is the fourth consecutive month where arrivals from China have decreased compared with the same month in 2007. Visitors from China dropped 25 percent, from 31,600 to 23,800, when compared with the four months from June to September 2007. Over this four-month period, holidaymakers dropped by 3,900 (21 percent) and business travellers by 3,500 (66 percent).

For the month of September, there were also fewer visitors from Australia (down 2,200 or 3 percent), Korea (down 2,000 or 31 percent) and Japan (down 1,800 or 22 percent) when compared with September 2007.



In the year ended September 2008, there were more visitors from Oceania (up 34,500 or 3 percent) and the Americas (up 7,300 or 3 percent) compared with the September 2007 year. Fewer visitors arrived from Asia (down 42,500 or 8 percent) and Europe (down 8,200 or 2 percent).

Australia (up 27,400 or 3 percent) provided the largest increase in visitor arrivals in the September 2008 year. There were also increases in visitor arrivals from Canada (up 5,900 or 13 percent), South Africa (up 4,200 or 21 percent) and India (up 2,700 or 13 percent).

Decreases in visitor arrivals were recorded for Korea (down 21,200 or 20 percent), Japan (down 13,800 or 11 percent), the United Kingdom (down 12,300 or 4 percent), and Taiwan (down 6,900 or 25 percent) in the September 2008 year.

Visitor arrivals from China in the September 2008 year (117,600) were down 800 (1 percent) compared with the September 2007 year. This is the first September year drop, when compared with the previous year, since 2003. Between the 2004 and 2008 September years, visitor arrivals from Asia dropped by 59,200 (11 percent), from a peak of 531,100 to 471,900. Over this period, visitors from China increased by 37,300, offsetting the drops from Korea (28,800) and Taiwan (7,100).

Note: Detailed visitor data will be available in the September 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 192,000 short-term overseas trips in September 2008, down 16,400 (8 percent) from the 208,500 departures in September 2007. This is the lowest September total since 2004 (186,300).

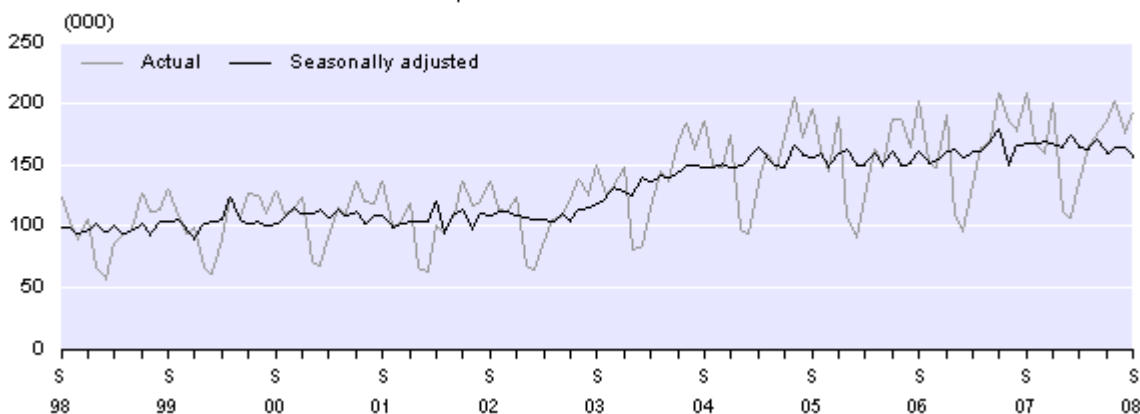
In September 2008, there were fewer trips to Australia (down 9,900 or 10 percent) and China (down 1,200 or 19 percent). There were also fewer trips to France (down 3,100 or 55 percent) and the United Kingdom (down 1,800 or 15 percent). In September 2007, there were more trips by New Zealand residents to France (up 4,000 or 238 percent) and the United Kingdom (up 2,500 or 26 percent), compared with September 2006, coinciding with the Rugby World Cup hosted by France.

There were more trips by New Zealand residents to Canada (up 900 or 65 percent) in September 2008.

The estimated average number of New Zealand residents who were temporarily overseas during September 2008 was 118,800 per day, down 7 percent from the average of 127,900 in September 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 September 2008 was 17 days, and the median was 10 days.

Monthly New Zealand Resident Short-term Departures

September 1998–2008



Annual resident departures

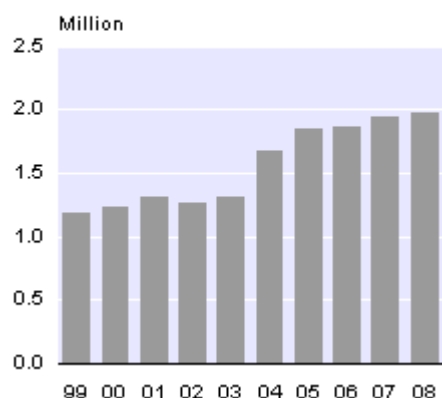
There were 1.976 million resident departures in the September 2008 year, up 32,600 (2 percent) from the September 2007 year. There were more resident departures to Asia (up 12,800 or 5 percent), the Americas (up 10,900 or 9 percent) and Europe (up 200 or less than 1 percent), but fewer departures to Oceania (down 2,900 or less than 1 percent).

By country, there were more trips to the United States (up 5,200 or 6 percent), Canada (up 4,800 or 29 percent), the Cook Islands (up 3,200 or 6 percent), New Caledonia (up 3,100 or 38 percent), Tonga (up 2,800 or 18 percent), China (up 2,700 or 5 percent) and Vanuatu (up 2,500 or 23 percent) in the September 2008 year. Trips to Australia (950,200), the most popular destination, were down 17,000 (2 percent) from the previous year.

A holiday was the main travel reason for 825,100 New Zealand residents who departed in the September 2008 year, up 9,700 (1 percent) from the previous year. Another 628,100 were departing to visit friends and relatives (up 19,200 or 3 percent). Departures for business purposes (286,900) were down 2,300 (less than 1 percent) from the year ended September 2007.

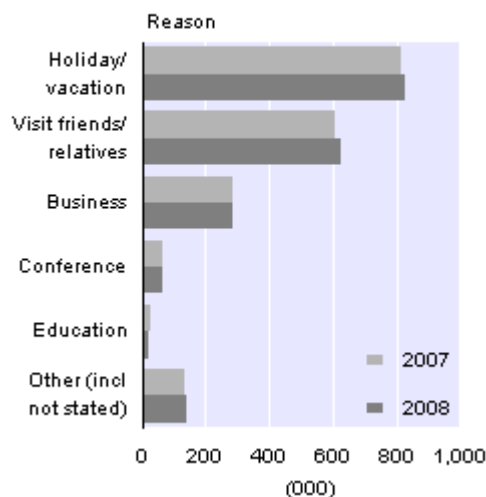
Annual Resident Departures

Year ended September



Resident Departures by Reason

Year ended September



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

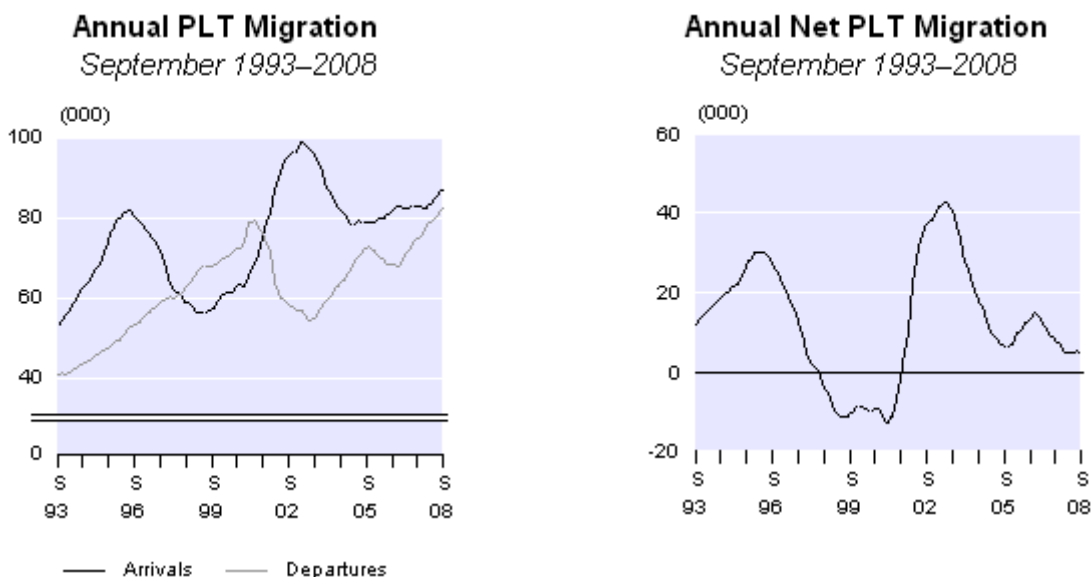
PLT arrivals exceeded departures by 1,700 in September 2008, compared with a net PLT inflow of 2,200 in September 2007. There were 500 more PLT departures in September 2008 compared with September 2007.

On a seasonally adjusted basis, PLT arrivals matched PLT departures in September 2008. The net PLT series averaged 500 between January 2007 and August 2008.

In September 2008, there were net inflows of migrants from the United Kingdom (1,200), India (500), the Philippines and Germany (each 300). There was a net outflow of 2,400 PLT migrants to Australia in September 2008, up from the outflow of 1,800 in September 2007.

Annual PLT migration

In the year ended September 2008, there were 86,700 PLT arrivals, up 3,700 (4 percent) from the September 2007 year. Over the same period, there were 82,300 PLT departures, up 7,600 (10 percent). As a result, net PLT migration was 4,400 in the September 2008 year, down from 8,300 in the September 2007 year. The latest figure is the lowest since the October 2001 year (1,700).



The net PLT migration gain of 4,400 in the year ended September 2008 is below the annual average of 11,800 recorded for the December years from 1990–2007. Net PLT migration varied substantially within this 18-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

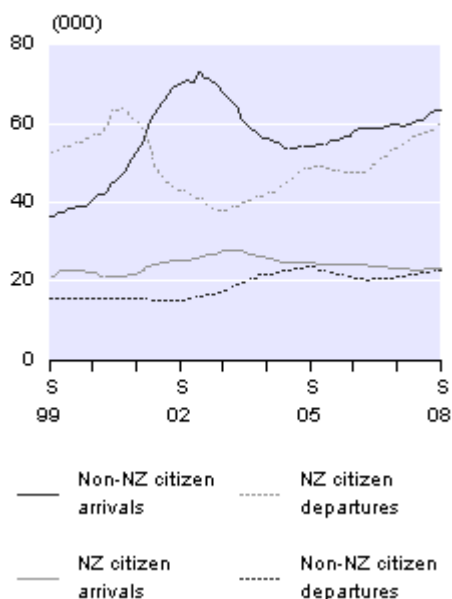
A net inflow of 40,800 non-New Zealand citizens and a net outflow of 36,400 New Zealand citizens were recorded in the year ended September 2008. The majority of the net outflow of New Zealand citizens was to Australia (34,000), followed by the United Arab Emirates (500), Canada (400) and the United Kingdom (200).

Compared with the September 2007 year, PLT arrivals of non-New Zealand citizens were up 3,700 but PLT arrivals of New Zealand citizens were unchanged. There were 5,900 more PLT departures of New Zealand citizens and 1,700 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

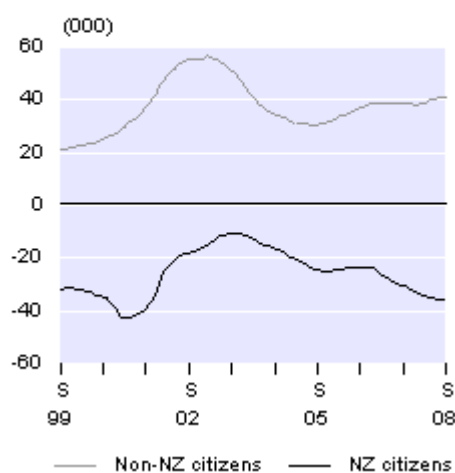
September 1999–2008



Annual Net PLT Migration

By citizenship

September 1999–2008



Annual PLT migration by country

In the year ended September 2008, there was a net inflow of 7,600 migrants from the United Kingdom, down from 8,200 in the September 2007 year. In contrast, the net inflow of 5,000 from India was up from 3,300 in the September 2007 year and 2,200 in the September 2006 year. There were also net PLT inflows from the Philippines (3,700), Fiji and South Africa (each 2,700), and China (2,600) in the September 2008 year.

The net PLT outflow to Australia was 33,900 in the September 2008 year, compared with 26,200 in the September 2007 year. This is higher than previous peaks in the January 1989 year (33,700) and the December 1979 year (33,400).

The net outflow to Australia was spread across both age and occupation groups. Migrants aged 15–29 years accounted for 40 percent (13,600) of the net outflow to Australia in the September 2008 year, while the 0–14-year age group (7,700) and 30–44-year age group (7,800) both contributed 23 percent of the outflow. A further 13 percent (4,300) were aged 45–59 years, and the remaining 1 percent (400) were aged 60 years and over.

Net outflows to Australia were recorded in each broad occupation group, led by service and sales workers (2,300), and professionals and trades workers (each 2,200). There was also a net outflow to Australia of 13,800 people without an occupation, of which most were children or students.

Split PLT data

Statistics NZ began separately identifying permanent arrivals from long-term arrivals in July 2003 (departing migrants are also separately identified). Within the long-term group, a further distinction is made between overseas visitors coming to stay in New Zealand for 12 months or more (long-term overseas visitors), and New Zealand residents returning after an overseas stay of 12 months or more (long-term New Zealand residents).

Classification as a permanent or long-term migrant depends on a person's responses to the questions on the arrival and departure cards. Both cards require completion of one of two sections, depending on whether or not the person feels that they live or have lived in New Zealand. The choice of which section to complete is up to the individual, and the answer may result in a person being misclassified – usually as a permanent migrant instead of a long-term migrant.

Of the 7,400 PLT arrivals in September 2008, there were 2,400 permanent migrants and 3,500 long-term visitors. A further 1,500 arrivals were returning long-term New Zealand residents.

For more information on the separate identification of PLT migrants, including data quality issues, see the *External Migration: September 2003* Hot Off The Press.

PLT arrivals by permit type

From the October data release on 21 November 2008, the International Travel and Migration release will include a section on PLT arrivals by permit type (eg residence, student, work, visitor). This will replace the split PLT data section. From this date, permit type will also become available on a customised basis for visitor and PLT arrivals.

Upcoming table changes

The format of the tables accompanying the International Travel and Migration release is to change from the October data release on 21 November 2008. Tables 1, 2 and 3 will be combined into one table (table 1). Tables 4 and 5 will also be combined into one table (table 2), allowing the inclusion of a seasonally adjusted net PLT migration series.

Tables 6–10 will become tables 3–7, and the other/not stated country category in these tables will be separated into Africa and the Middle East, and not stated. Table 11 will become table 8, but otherwise will not change.

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 a substantial number of international travel and migration data series. These 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 remain available in the INFOS database (for subscribers only).

For technical information contact:

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Next release ...

International Travel and Migration: October 2008 will be released on 21 November 2008.

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)
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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. Arrivals by class, September 1998–2008
2. Departures by class, September 1998–2008
3. Net migration, September 1998–2008
4. Arrivals, seasonally adjusted, September 2007–2008
5. Departures, seasonally adjusted, September 2007–2008
6. Overseas visitor arrivals, by country of last permanent residence
7. New Zealand resident short-term departures, by country of main destination
8. Permanent and long-term arrivals, by country of last permanent residence
9. Permanent and long-term departures, by country of next permanent residence
10. Net permanent and long-term migration, by country of last/next permanent residence
11. Permanent and long-term migration, by country of citizenship