

International Travel and Migration: August 2013

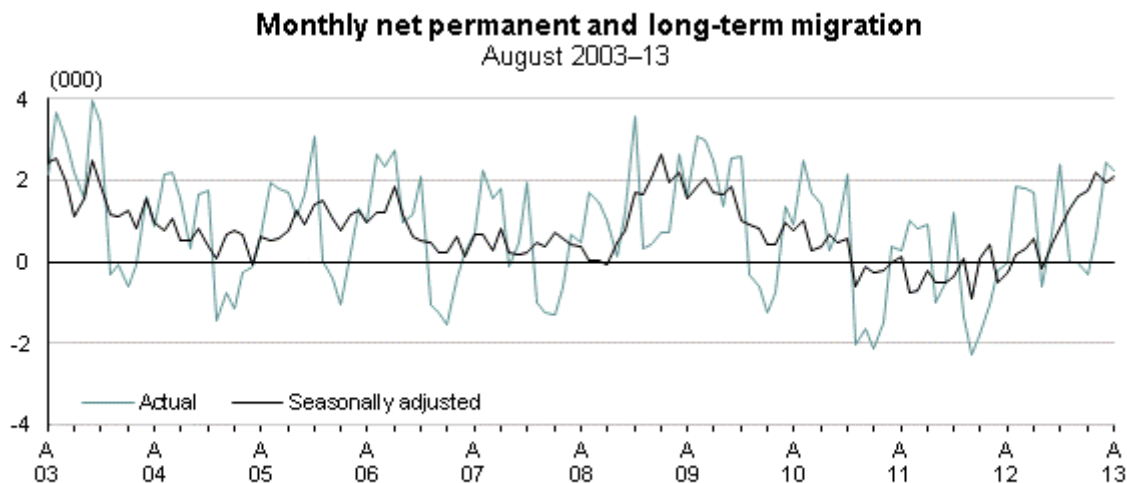
Embargoed until 10:45am – 20 September 2013

Key facts

In August 2013 compared with August 2012:

- Visitor arrivals (189,300) were up 11,000. The biggest changes were in arrivals from:
 - Australia (up 4,500)
 - China (up 3,400).
- Overseas trips by New Zealand residents (205,100) were up 11,600. The biggest changes were in departures to:
 - Australia (up 7,900)
 - the United States (up 3,100)
 - Fiji (up 2,100)
 - the United Kingdom (up 2,100).

In August 2013, seasonally adjusted figures showed a net gain of 2,100 migrants.



Source: Statistics New Zealand

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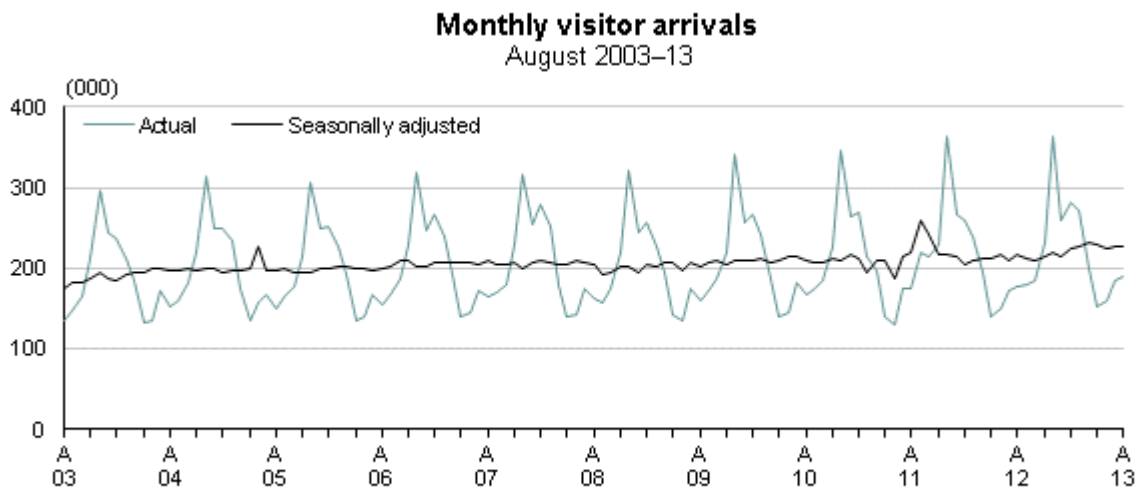
20 September 2013
ISSN 1179-0407

Commentary

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- [China leads rise in annual visitor arrivals](#)
- [Resident departures up across the board in August](#)
- [Trips to the United States up in the August year](#)
- [Migrant inflow remains strong in August](#)
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Visitor arrivals hit record high for August

Short-term overseas visitor arrivals to New Zealand numbered 189,300 in August 2013, the highest ever for an August month. The latest figure was up 6 percent from August 2012 (178,300).



Visitor arrivals by country of residence

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

- Australia (up 4,500)
- China (up 3,400)
- Indonesia (up 1,100).

Visitors from Australia topped 100,000 for the first time in an August month. The increase in arrivals from Australia was split between New South Wales (up 1,800), Queensland (up 1,400), and Victoria (up 1,200).

The number visiting from China (17,800) increased 24 percent, and has increased in most months since May 2010.

Visitors from Indonesia numbered 4,000, matching the previous high recorded in December 2001. Both months were boosted by visitors travelling during the Ramadan holiday period.

Visitor arrivals by travel purpose

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

- holidays (up 9,500)
- visiting friends and relatives (up 2,000)
- education (up 1,100)
- conferences and conventions (down 1,200).

Holidaymakers accounted for most of the increase in visitors from Australia (up 3,800), China (up 3,000), and Indonesia (up 900). The change in the number visiting friends and relatives came mostly from Australia (up 1,200).

China leads rise in annual visitor arrivals

There were 2.658 million visitor arrivals to New Zealand in the August 2013 year. This was 1 percent higher than the August 2012 year, when visitor numbers were boosted by the Rugby World Cup. The 2013 figure was up 6 percent from the August 2011 year.

Compared with the August 2012 year, more people visited from China (up 48,400), Australia (up 15,100), and the United States (up 9,200). Annual visitor arrivals from China (229,200) have doubled since August 2010 (114,300).

These increases were partly offset by fewer arrivals from the United Kingdom (down 19,200), France (down 11,200), South Africa (down 9,800), and Malaysia (down 8,500). The decreases in visitor numbers from France and South Africa follow increases the previous year for the Rugby World Cup. Malaysia's visitor numbers fell due to the ending of direct flights from Kuala Lumpur to Christchurch.

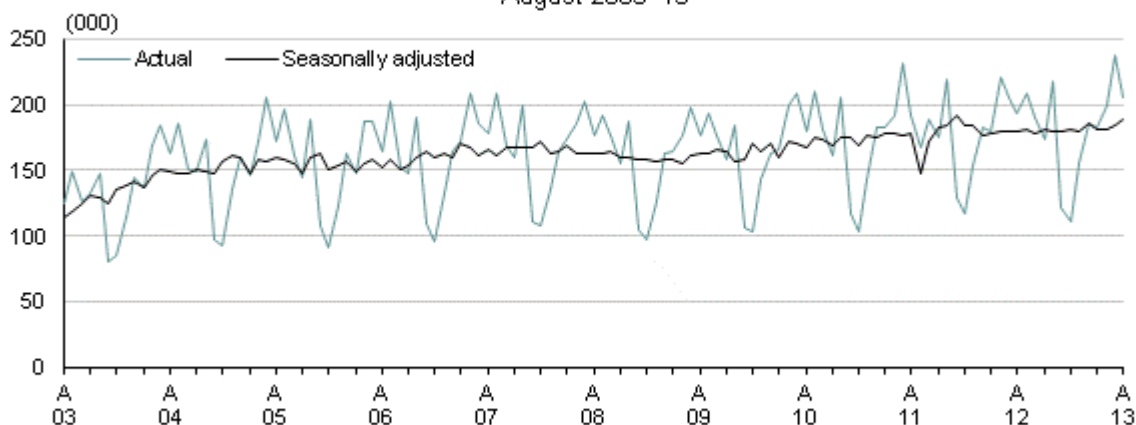
For more detailed data about visitor arrivals, see the Excel tables in the 'Downloads' box.

Resident departures up across the board in August

New Zealand residents departed on 205,100 overseas trips in August 2013. This was up 6 percent from August 2012 (193,500), and the highest ever for an August month.

Monthly overseas trips by New Zealand residents

August 2003–13



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 August 2012 and August 2013 were in trips to:

- Australia (up 7,900)
- the United States (up 3,100)
- Fiji (up 2,100)
- the United Kingdom (up 2,100)
- Indonesia (up 1,000).

A new departure card was introduced on 15 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 from 10 to 4 percent. This, together with the increase in total departures, boosted the number of passengers in many country categories.

Trips to the United States up in the August year

Trips by New Zealand residents in the August 2013 year (2.184 million) were up 3 percent from the August 2012 year (2.130 million).

The biggest increase in resident departures was to the United States (up 16,100). This was helped by additional flights from Auckland to Honolulu. Also, over recent decades, changes in the number of trips to the United States have followed changes in the exchange rate.

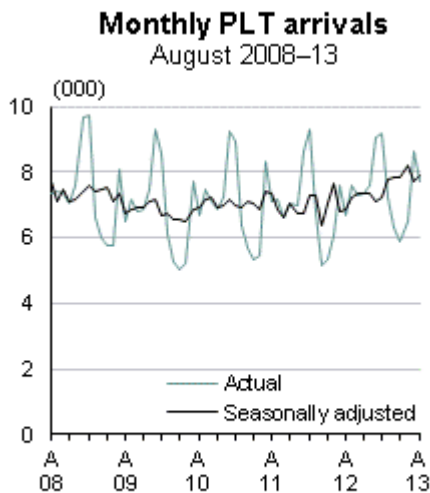
Total trips to Oceania increased by 16,700. This was mainly due to the popularity of many island destinations, including Fiji (up 5,400), Vanuatu (up 3,700), and the Cook Islands (up 2,300).

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

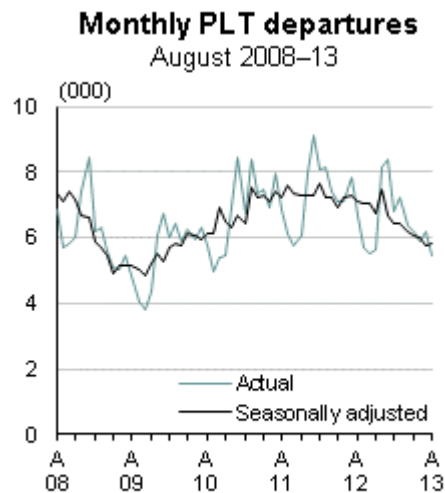
Migrant inflow remains strong in August

Seasonally adjusted permanent and long-term (PLT) migration figures showed a net gain (more arrivals than departures) of 2,100 migrants in August 2013, closely matching the 2,000 in July and 2,200 in June. Before June, the last time net migration was this high was in October 2009 (2,100). The increase in recent months was due to both an increase in arrivals and a decrease in departures.

The seasonally adjusted net loss of 1,100 migrants to Australia in August 2013 was the smallest net loss since November 2009 (also 1,100). The net loss to Australia has fallen every month since December 2012 (3,300), due to fewer New Zealand citizens moving to Australia.



Source: Statistics New Zealand



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Annual net migration rebounds as departures to Australia fall

Unadjusted figures showed there were 90,300 PLT arrivals in the August 2013 year, up 9 percent from the August 2012 year (83,200). PLT departures numbered 77,500, down 11 percent from the previous year (87,300). This resulted in a net migration gain of 12,800 in the August 2013 year, compared with a net loss of 4,100 in the August 2012 year.

Net PLT migration in the August 2013 year was the highest since the September 2010 year (13,900). This year had the highest number of PLT arrivals since the January 2004 year (91,500).

Auckland, Canterbury, and Otago were the only regions that had net gains of international migrants. Canterbury gained 3,600 migrants, reversing losses in the earthquake-affected August 2011 and 2012 years (2,300 and 1,300, respectively).

The net loss of 27,300 people to Australia in the August 2013 year was well down from the record loss of 40,000 in the August 2012 year. The latest year's loss resulted from 44,900 departures to Australia (down 9,000), offset by 17,700 arrivals (up 3,700). In both directions, most migrants were New Zealand citizens.

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

- the United Kingdom (6,200)
- China (5,400)

- India (5,200)
- the Philippines (2,200)
- Germany (1,900).

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: September 2013 will be released on 21 October 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.

- [Changes to arrival and departure information](#)

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

Changes to arrival and departure information

Statistics NZ, the New Zealand Customs Service, and Immigration New Zealand have changed what information is collected from international passengers. Details of these changes are contained in [New Zealand arrival and departure information: Final report on consultation](#).

Resulting changes to the statistics include:

- country of birth is no longer available for overseas visitors and New Zealand-resident travellers from July 2013, but remains available for permanent and long-term migrants
- overseas port of embarkation/disembarkation has been discontinued, replaced by statistics on the closest overseas port of the passenger's flight
- the country of **next** permanent residence of overseas visitor departures has been replaced with the country of **last** permanent residence, copied from the passenger's arrival record.

Changes to Infoshare series containing the affected data are noted on the Infoshare [changes by date](#) web page.

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 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**