

# International Travel and Migration: September 2011

Embargoed until 10:45am – 21 October 2011

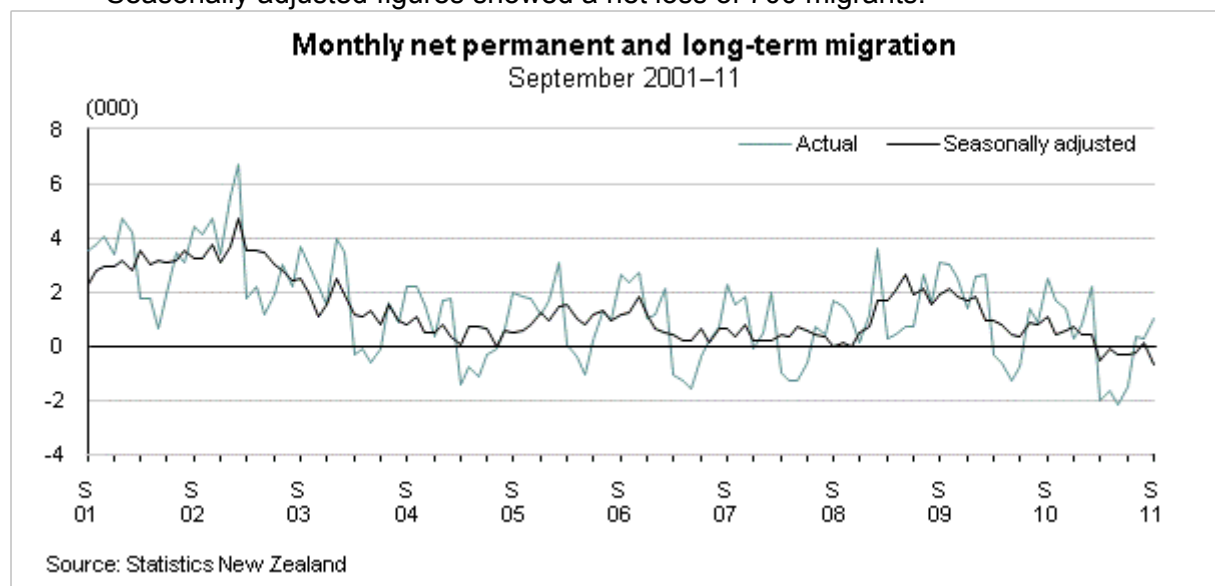
## Key facts

In September 2011 compared with September 2010:

- Visitor arrivals (219,900) were up 45,800. The biggest changes were in arrivals from:
  - the United Kingdom (up 10,900)
  - Australia (up 9,700)
  - France (up 8,200)
  - South Africa (up 3,900)
  - Ireland (up 3,600)
  - Argentina (up 3,100).
- Overseas trips by New Zealand residents (167,400) were down 42,600. The biggest changes were in departures to:
  - Australia (down 23,900)
  - the United Kingdom (down 3,200).

In September 2011:

- Seasonally adjusted figures showed a net loss of 700 migrants.



Geoff Bascand  
Government Statistician

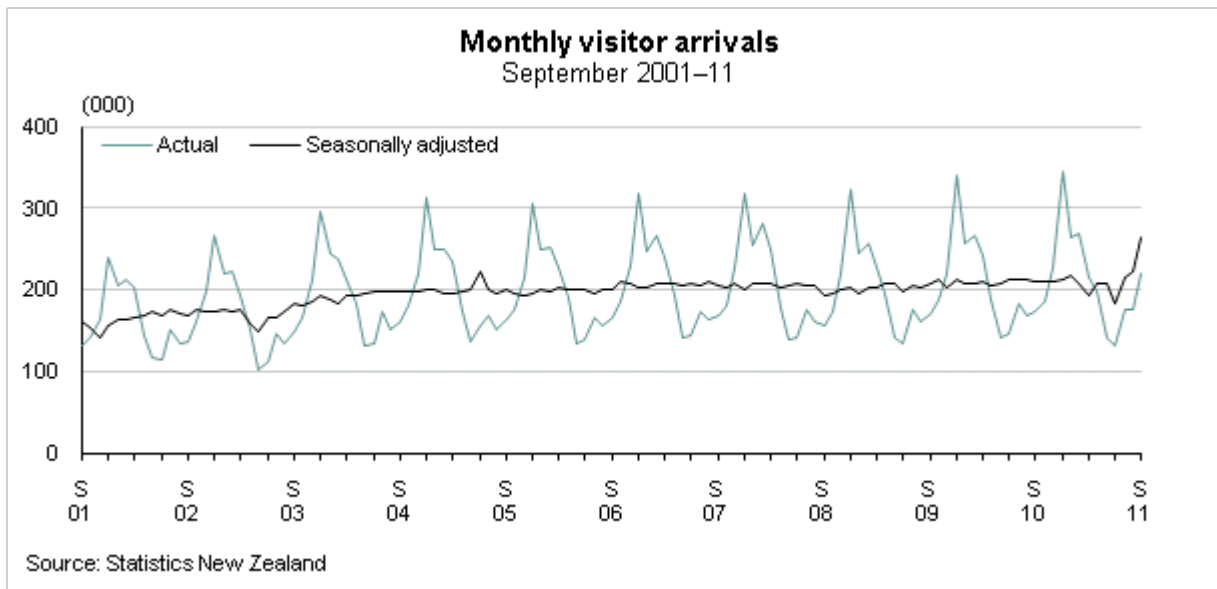
21 October 2011  
ISSN 1179-0407

## Commentary

- Monthly visitor arrivals boosted by the Rugby World Cup
- Small increase in annual visitor arrivals
- Fewer trips by New Zealand residents in September
- Annual trips by New Zealand residents up 3 percent
- Monthly net migration turns negative again
- Annual net migration hits a 10-year low

### Monthly visitor arrivals boosted by the Rugby World Cup

Short-term overseas visitor arrivals to New Zealand in September 2011 (219,900) were up 26 percent from September 2010 (174,200) due to the Rugby World Cup (RWC) being held in New Zealand.



### Visitor arrivals by country of residence

The biggest changes in visitor arrivals by country of residence between September 2010 and September 2011 were in arrivals from:

- the United Kingdom (up 10,900)
- Australia (up 9,700)
- France (up 8,200)
- South Africa (up 3,900)
- Ireland (up 3,600)
- Argentina (up 3,100)
- Canada (up 1,600)
- Korea (down 1,600).

Each of the countries that contributed a large increase in arrivals had a team participating in the RWC.

The RWC did not have a significant impact on arrivals from non-participating countries. Arrivals from the major source countries of China (up 600) and Germany (down 200) remained similar to September 2010.

Although there was a noticeable decrease in visitors from Korea, this has been occurring since the Christchurch earthquake on 22 February 2011.

### Visitor arrivals by travel purpose

The biggest changes in visitor arrivals by travel purpose between September 2010 and September 2011 were in arrivals for:

- holidays (up 29,000)
- visiting friends and relatives (up 10,400).

### Rugby World Cup visitor arrivals

There were 74,400 RWC visitor arrivals in September 2011, accounting for over one-third of all arrivals during the month. These add to 4,400 RWC arrivals in August and 1,200 in July, to give a three-month total of 80,000. The tournament is being held in New Zealand between 9 September and 23 October, and Statistics NZ is recording RWC arrivals from July until October.

RWC arrivals are identified from people ticking the 'yes' response to a question on arrival cards asking "Are you here for the Rugby World Cup?". A small proportion of arrival cards did not include the RWC question, and any people arriving for the tournament who used these cards will be missed from the RWC count.

Over one-third of the RWC arrivals were from Australia. The next most common source countries were the United Kingdom (which includes England, Scotland, and Wales) and France.

<b>Rugby World Cup visitor arrivals</b>		
<b>Country of residence</b>	<b>September 2011</b>	<b>July–September 2011</b>
Australia	27,500	28,700
the United Kingdom	11,600	12,800
France	7,900	8,300
the United States	3,500	3,700
South Africa	3,400	3,600
Ireland	3,100	3,400
Argentina	2,500	2,600
Japan	2,000	2,200
Canada	1,900	2,000
Fiji	1,000	1,100

New Zealand citizens accounted for 8,200 RWC visitor arrivals during July–September 2011, including 5,500 of those from Australia. In fact, only 62 percent (17,800) of the RWC arrivals from Australia were Australian citizens. RWC visitors from Australia also included 2,000 United Kingdom citizens, 1,700 Irish citizens, 500 South African citizens, and 400 French citizens.

Over two-thirds (69 percent) of RWC arrivals were male. The most common age groups were 25–29 years (11,900) and 30–34 years (10,200).

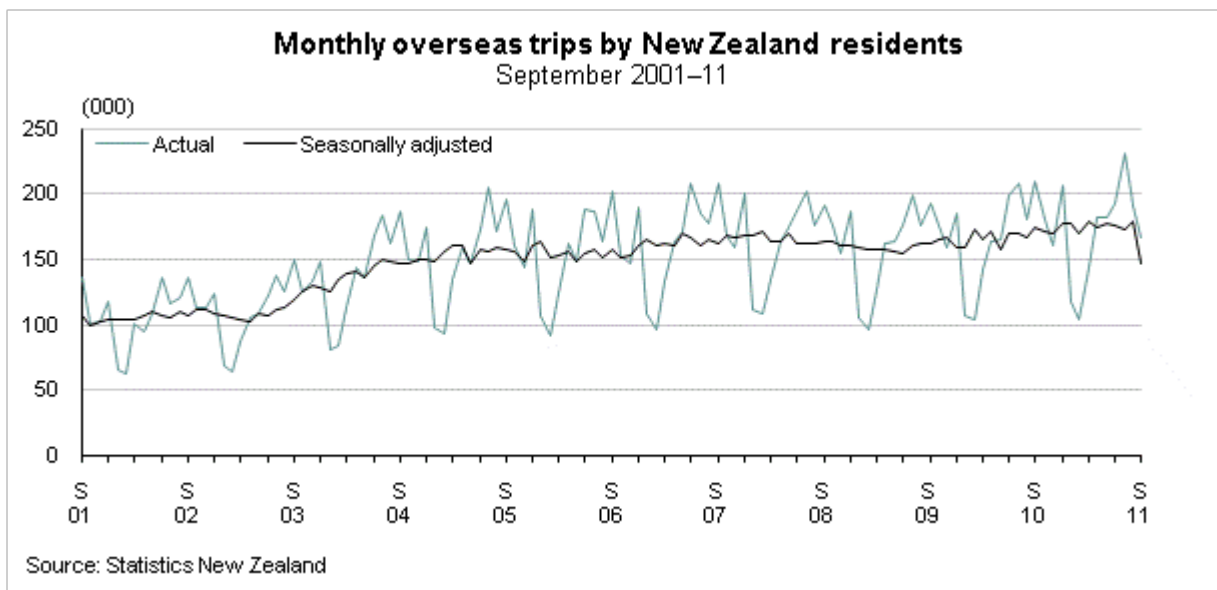
## Small increase in annual visitor arrivals

Annual visitor arrivals to New Zealand numbered 2.548 million in the September 2011 year. This was up 1 percent from the September 2010 year (2.517 million). There have been a number of major events that have affected visitor arrivals in 2011, including the Canterbury earthquakes, flight disruptions due to volcanic ash, and the Rugby World Cup.

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

## Fewer trips by New Zealand residents in September

New Zealand residents departed on 20 percent fewer overseas trips in September 2011 (167,400) than in September 2010 (210,000). The main reason for the decrease was the later timing of school holidays. School holidays usually start in September, but were moved to October in 2011 to coincide with the Rugby World Cup finals. Also, the RWC caused a significant increase in visitors to New Zealand, which would have affected the availability and price of international airfares available to New Zealand residents.



## 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 when overseas) between September 2010 and September 2011 were in trips to:

- Australia (down 23,900)
- the United Kingdom (down 3,200)
- Fiji (down 1,900)
- China (down 1,400)
- the United States (down 1,400)
- Samoa (down 1,200).

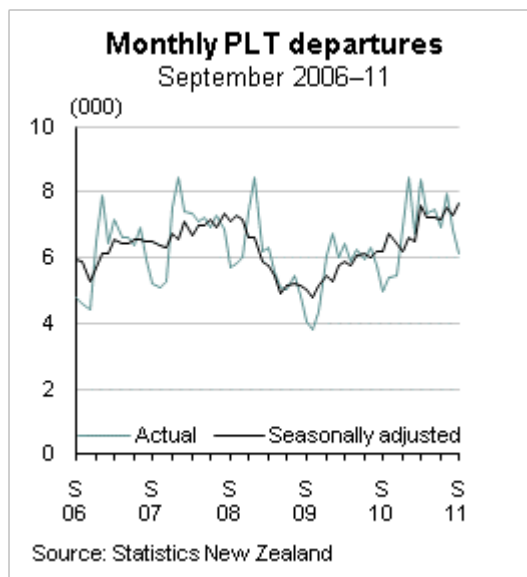
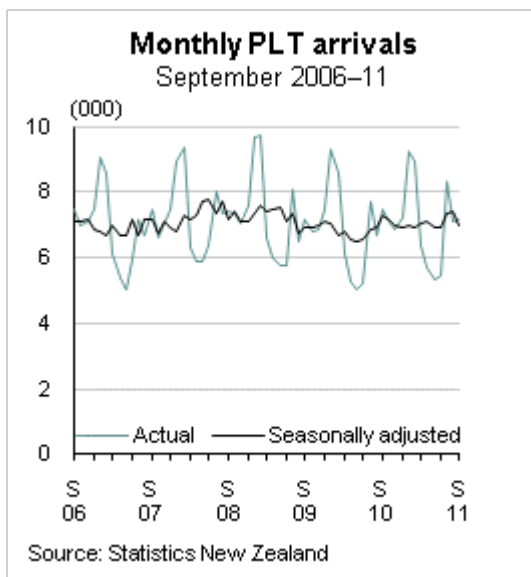
## Annual trips by New Zealand residents up 3 percent

Short-term departures of New Zealand residents in the September 2011 year (2.059 million) were up 3 percent from the September 2010 year (1.998 million). Australia was the most common destination with 966,500 trips, well ahead of the next most common destinations of the United States (100,800) and Fiji (100,700).

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

## Monthly net migration turns negative again

Seasonally adjusted permanent and long-term (PLT) migration figures showed a net outflow (an excess of departures over arrivals) of 700 migrants in September 2011. Monthly net migration had been negative between March and July 2011 following the 22 February earthquake in Christchurch, but was positive in August.



Unadjusted figures showed a net inflow of 1,000 migrants in September 2011, compared with 2,500 in September 2010. The main changes were:

- 1,200 more departures of New Zealand citizens to Australia
- 200 fewer arrivals of non-New Zealand citizens, including 300 fewer on student visas but 400 more on work visas.

In September 2011, there were net gains of migrants from the United Kingdom (1,000), China (400), India, Germany, and Ireland (each 300). The net gain from India was half that recorded in September 2010 (600), mainly due to fewer student arrivals.

There was a net loss of just over 2,900 migrants to Australia, up from 1,500 in September 2010. The latest figure is the highest net loss recorded for a September month, narrowly surpassing the net loss of just under 2,900 in September 1988.

Six hundred Christchurch residents moved overseas in September 2011, up from 400 in September 2010. Since the devastating earthquake on 22 February, there have been 5,500

departures from Christchurch, compared with 3,300 during the same period in 2010.

Five hundred migrants arrived from overseas to settle in Christchurch in September 2011, down from 600 in September 2010. Arrivals to Christchurch have totalled 2,800 since the February earthquake, compared with 3,700 during the same period in 2010.

### **Annual net migration hits a 10-year low**

There were 84,800 PLT arrivals in the September 2011 year, up 3 percent from the September 2010 year. There were 84,000 PLT departures, up 23 percent. The resulting net gain of migrants was 800, down from 13,900 in the September 2010 year. The latest net migration figure is the lowest in ten years, since the net loss of 1,700 migrants in the September 2001 year.

The net gain of migrants in the September 2011 year was below the annual average gain for the years ended December 1991–2010 (12,000). Net PLT migration varied substantially within this 20-year period. The highest net gain of migrants was 42,500 in the May 2003 year, and the highest net loss was 13,200 in the February 2001 year.

In the September 2011 year, there were net gains of migrants from the United Kingdom (5,700), India (5,400), and China (4,600). The net gains from the United Kingdom and India were down on the previous year while the net gain from China was up.

The net loss of migrants to Australia was 34,200 in the September 2011 year, the highest since the February 2009 year (34,400). The latest figure resulted from 48,800 departures to Australia offset by 14,700 arrivals from Australia. In both directions, most migrants were New Zealand citizens.

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 in 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 which 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 a New Zealand-resident traveller will spend the most time in while overseas. Other countries they may visit on the same trip are not collected.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Related links

### Upcoming releases

*International Travel and Migration: October 2011* will be released on 22 November 2011.

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

### Past releases

See [International Travel and Migration – information releases](#) for 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 analysis of selected topics.

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

[The Tourism Strategy Group research website](#) (part of the Ministry of Economic Development) provides tourism data such as the International Visitor 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 analysis 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](#), on the Department of Labour's website, includes information about the immigration research programme and published research reports.

[Immigration New Zealand statistics](#) by the Department of Labour include application and approval numbers for the main immigration visa types.



## **Data quality**

### **Data source**

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

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

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

A copy of the [arrival card](#) (PDF, 84kb) is available on the New Zealand Customs Service website, and a copy of the [departure card](#) on the Statistics NZ website. 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 require manual completion 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.

Tables showing the sample errors for selected cell sizes are included in the [Information about international travel and migration](#) page on the Statistics NZ website.

## 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 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 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

More [information about international travel and migration](#) is available on our website.

### 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

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.

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## Tables

The following tables are included with this release. They are available in Excel format from the 'Downloads' box of International Travel and Migration: September 2011 on the Statistics NZ website.

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 citizenship

## Access more data on Infoshare

Use [Infoshare](#), a free, online database to access time-series data specific to your needs. To access the release time series on Infoshare, select the following categories from the homepage:

Subject category: **Tourism**

Group: **International Travel and Migration**