

# International Travel and Migration: April 2016

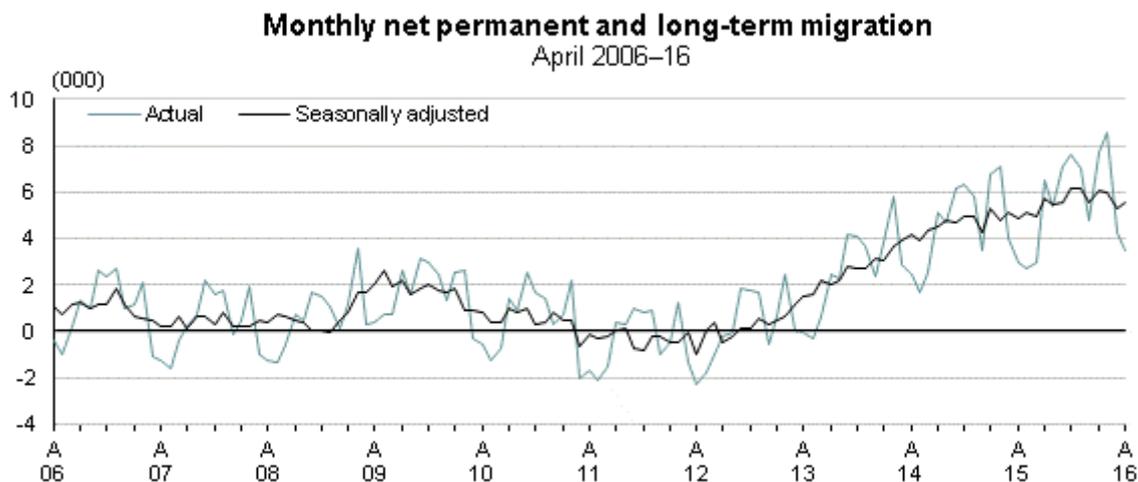
Embargoed until 10:45am – 20 May 2016

## Key facts

In April 2016 compared with April 2015:

- Visitor arrivals (256,700) were up 18,700. The biggest changes were in arrivals from:
  - China (up 12,400)
  - Korea (up 1,500)
  - Malaysia (up 1,200)
  - Japan (up 1,200)
  - Australia (down 4,200).
- Overseas trips by New Zealand residents (217,800) were up 15,500. The biggest changes were in departures to:
  - China (up 2,000)
  - Cook Islands (up 1,700)
  - Fiji (up 1,700)
  - Australia (up 1,200).

In April 2016, seasonally adjusted figures showed a net gain of 5,500 migrants.



Source: Statistics New Zealand

See the [commentary](#) and [tables](#) for more information, including annual results.

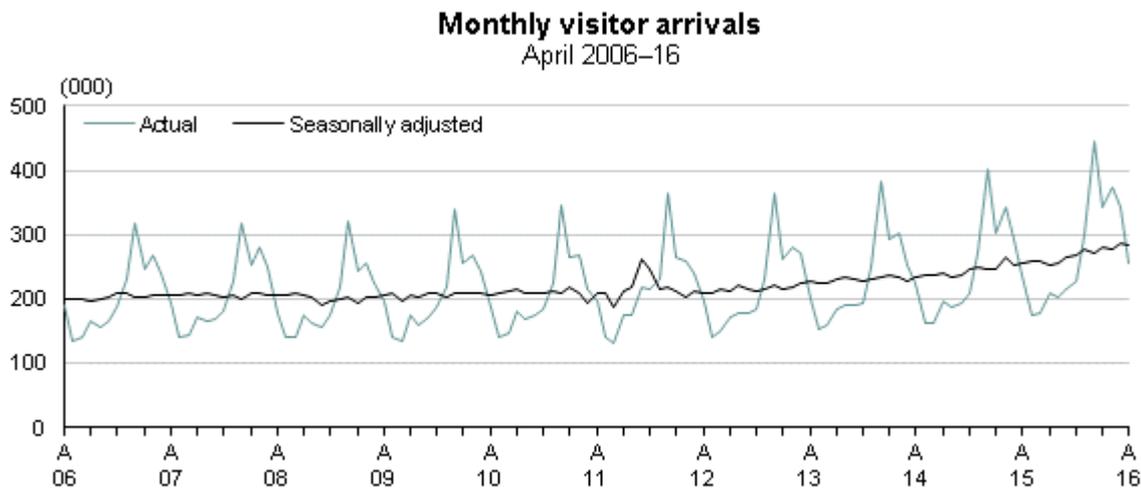
Liz MacPherson, Government Statistician  
ISSN 1179-0407  
20 May 2016

## Commentary

- Visitor arrivals set record for April month despite early Easter
- Annual visitor arrivals rise to 3.27 million
- New April record for New Zealand-resident departures
- Annual trips by New Zealand residents up to 2.44 million
- Net gain of migrants steady in April
- Annual net gain of migrants continues to break record

### Visitor arrivals set record for April month despite early Easter

Visitor arrivals numbered 256,700 in April 2016, a new April record. Visitor arrivals were up 18,700 (8 percent) from April 2015, driven by holiday arrivals. This was despite Easter, a period of high visitor arrivals for holidays and visiting friends and family, shifting from April in 2015 to March in 2016.



Source: Statistics New Zealand

### Visitor arrivals by country of residence

The biggest changes in visitors by country of residence between April 2015 and 2016 were in arrivals from:

- China (up 12,400 to 43,400)
- Korea (up 1,500 to 6,000)
- Malaysia (up 1,200 to 3,900)
- Japan (up 1,200 to 6,400)
- Australia (down 4,200 to 103,800).

An increase in visitor arrivals from Guangdong, Shanghai, Beijing, and Zhejiang contributed to the rise in visitor arrivals from China. Together these regions accounted for over half of the increase of Chinese arrivals.

Australian visitor arrivals fell by 4 percent. This was driven by school holidays in Queensland and Victoria, scheduled to coincide with Easter, starting in March this year. Both Easter and the start of school holidays are periods of high visitor arrivals.

### **Visitor arrivals by travel purpose**

The biggest changes in visitors by travel purpose between April 2015 and 2016 were in arrivals for:

- holidays (up 14,900 to 132,000)
- conference/conventions (up 2,900 to 6,500)
- business (up 2,300 to 24,100).
- visiting friends and relatives (down 1,600 to 71,300).

An increase of 46 percent in holiday-makers from China (up 11,400) drove the holiday visitor arrivals to an April high. This more than offset a fall in holiday visitors from Australia (down 4,400). Visitors from Japan, Korea, and Malaysia also helped boost holiday arrivals.

Visitors from Australia drove the increases in arrivals for conference/conventions and business, and the fall in visiting friends and relatives, again likely due to Easter timings in 2016.

### **Annual visitor arrivals rise to 3.27 million**

Visitor arrivals to New Zealand rose by 312,500 from the April 2015 year to a record 3.27 million in the April 2016 year. This was an 11 percent increase.

The biggest changes in visitors by country of residence between the years ended April 2015 and 2016 were in arrivals from:

- China (up 88,100 to 390,200)
- Australia (up 87,100 to 1.36 million)
- the United States (up 24,400 to 254,200).

Holiday-makers made up just over half the visitors who arrived in the April 2016 year (1.67 million arrivals). This was up 16 percent (up 224,200) from the April 2015 year. Almost one-third of all holiday arrivals were from Australia.

Visits to friends and relatives (979,200) were up 7 percent (61,200), and accounted for 30 percent of all visitor arrivals.

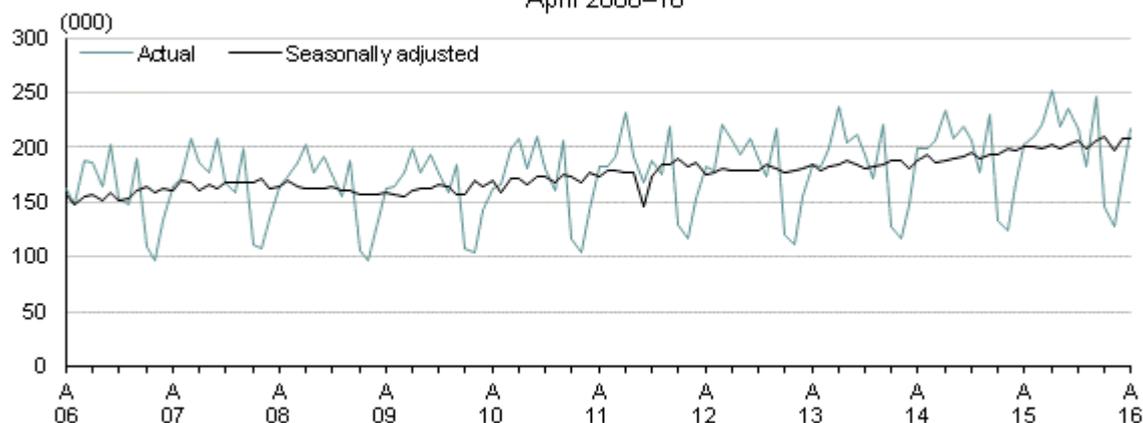
For more detailed data about visitor arrivals, see the Excel tables in the 'Downloads' box.

### **New April record for New Zealand-resident departures**

New Zealand-resident travellers departed on 217,800 overseas trips in April 2016, up 8 percent from April 2015. This was a new April record.

## Monthly overseas trips by New Zealand residents

April 2006–16



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 most time) between April 2015 and 2016 were in trips to:

- China (up 2,000 to 9,400)
- Cook Islands (up 1,700 to 7,600)
- Fiji (up 1,700 to 11,700)
- Australia (up 1,200 to 100,300).

The increase in trips to China was helped by the additional flights between New Zealand and China.

The trips to Cook Islands and Fiji were mostly for holidays. Additional flights to the Cook Islands and Fiji helped increase departures to these countries.

### Annual trips by New Zealand residents up to 2.44 million

New Zealand residents departed on 2.44 million overseas trips in the April 2016 year. This was up 134,300 (6 percent) from the April 2015 year.

The biggest changes in New Zealand-resident departures by country of main destination between the years ended April 2015 and 2016 were in departures for:

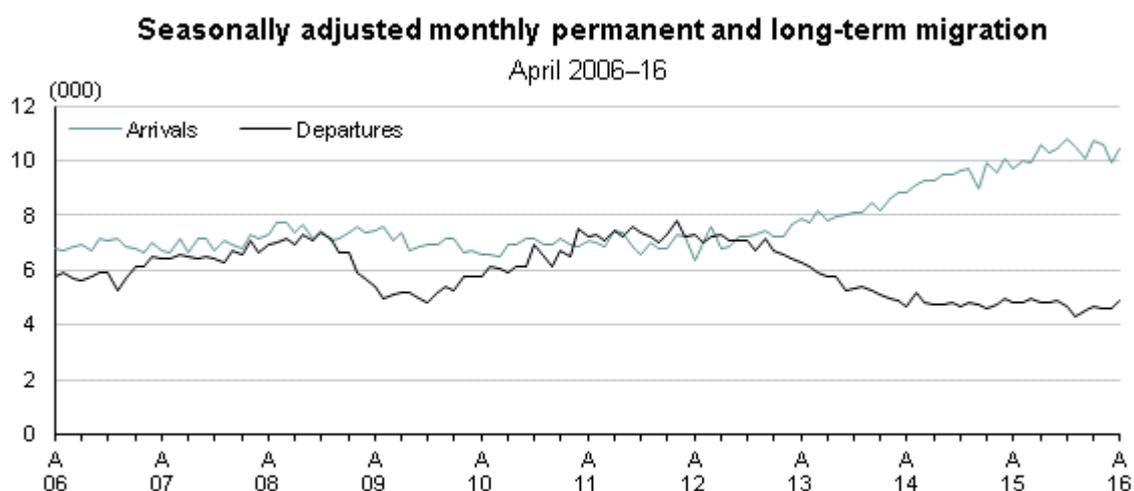
- Australia (up 37,100 to 1.14 million)
- Fiji (up 20,000 to 153,100)
- the United Kingdom (up 12,600 to 113,400).

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

## Net gain of migrants steady in April

Seasonally adjusted permanent and long-term (PLT) migration figures showed a net gain (more arrivals than departures) of 5,500 migrants in April 2016. Since exceeding 6,000 in October 2015, the seasonally adjusted net gain in migrants has averaged 5,800 a month. Migrants include 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.

There was a small seasonally adjusted net loss (less than 100) of migrants from Australia in April 2016. This was the first month to show a net loss after 12 months of seasonally adjusted net gains from Australia.



Source: Statistics New Zealand

The trend series of net migration, which adjusts for both seasonal and irregular effects, shows that the monthly net gain in migrants is slowing.

## Annual net gain of migrants continues to break record

Unadjusted figures showed a record net gain of 68,100 migrants in the April 2016 year. This is the 21st month in a row that the annual net gain in migrants has set a new record. Before this period, the record was a net gain of 42,500 migrants in the year ended May 2003.

The record annual gain in migrants was driven by more arrivals. Migrant arrivals were 124,700 in the April 2016 year, up 10,200 (9 percent) from the April 2015 year. New Zealand citizens returning to live in New Zealand accounted for one-quarter (30,800) of all migrant arrivals. In comparison, migrant departures (56,600) were down 1,100 (2 percent).

## PLT migration by country of residence

The increase in migrant arrivals between the two April years was led by:

- Australia (up 2,000 to 25,800)
- China (up 1,600 to 11,700)
- the Philippines (up 1,200 to 5,500)
- South Africa (up 1,100 to 3,000).

Migrant departures to Australia fell (down 1,600) as fewer New Zealand citizens chose to migrate. This led to a net gain of 1,700 migrants from Australia in the April 2016 year. It was the seventh consecutive month to show an annual net gain.

Migrant arrivals of non-New Zealand citizens in the April 2016 year were led by:

- India (13,100 making up 11 percent of all arrivals)
- China (11,000 making up 9 percent of all arrivals)
- the United Kingdom (9,100 making up 7 percent of all arrivals)
- Australia (9,000 making up 7 percent of all arrivals).

India provided the largest net gain in migrants (12,200) in the April 2016 year. This was primarily due to more student arrivals from India than New Zealand residents moving to India.

While students often only stay in New Zealand for one to five years of study, we consider them migrants, because we define a migrant as a person arriving in New Zealand and intending to make it their country of residence for 12 months or more (ie permanently or long-term).

### **PLT migrant arrivals by visa type**

The biggest changes in migrant arrivals by visa type between the April years were:

- work visas (up 4,000 to 38,800)
- New Zealand and Australian citizens (up 2,000 to 36,500)
- student visas (up 2,000 to 27,600).

People arriving on work visas mostly came from the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Australia. The most common occupations of migrants arriving on work visas in the latest year (for those who specified their occupation on the arrival card) were hospitality workers, food trade workers, and engineering professionals. People arriving on work visas include working holidaymakers.

### **PLT migration by New Zealand region**

All regions had a net gain of international migrants in the April 2016 year, led by Auckland (31,600) and Canterbury (7,100). The next-biggest net gains were in Wellington, Waikato, and Bay of Plenty.

The Auckland region had 52,900 migrant arrivals in the April 2016 year, up 10 percent from the previous year. Of the migrants arriving in Auckland in the April 2016 year:

- 16,600 arrived on work visas – the biggest source country was the United Kingdom
- 12,800 arrived on student visas – just over one-third were from India
- 11,700 were New Zealand or Australian citizens – half were from Australia
- 8,900 arrived on resident visas – the biggest source country was China.

Over half of all arrivals who stated an address on their arrival card indicated they would reside in Auckland. Of those who stated an address on their departure card, 42 percent were migrating from the Auckland region. In comparison, the Auckland region is home to 34 percent of New Zealand's population (at 30 June 2015).

For more detailed data about PLT migration, see the Excel tables in the 'Downloads' box.

## **Definitions**

See [International Travel and Migration concepts – DataInfo+](#) for definitions of terms used in this release.

## Related links

- [Next release](#)
- [Past releases](#)
- [Data quality](#)
- [Related information](#)

## Next release

*International Travel and Migration: May 2016* will be released on 22 June 2016.

[Subscribe to information releases](#), including this one, by completing the online subscription form. You can also subscribe to receive International Visitor Arrivals to New Zealand, and our weekly provisional international travel statistics.

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

## Past releases

[International Travel and Migration](#) has links to past releases.

## Data quality

### General information

[International Travel and Migration – DataInfo+](#)

General methodology used to produce international travel and migration statistics.

[International Travel and Migration concepts – DataInfo+](#)

Definitions of terms used in this release.

[Principles and protocols for producers of Tier 1 statistics](#)

Statistics in this release are produced in accordance with the Official Statistics System principles and protocols for producers of Tier 1 statistics for quality. They conform to the Statistics NZ Methodological Standard for Reporting of Data Quality.

## Related information

[International travel and migration articles](#) are occasional publications that provide analyses of selected topics.

### 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 2pm on a Friday.

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.

[Cruise New Zealand data](#) has figures on cruise ship visits and cruise passengers. This includes passengers considered to be 'in transit' by the Immigration Act 2009, who are not included in international travel and migration statistics.

### **Information about international migration**

Statistics NZ's [Migration](#) web page lists migration-related data sources, such as the Longitudinal Immigration Survey (2005–09).

[Migration trends](#) provides information from the Labour and Immigration Research Centre, part of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, which 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.

#### **Copyright and terms of use**

Includes our copyright, attribution, and liability statements.

## **Data quality**

See [International Travel and Migration – DataInfo+](#) for the general methodology used to produce international travel and migration statistics.

## Contacts

**For media enquiries contact:**

Melissa McKenzie

Christchurch 03 964 8700

**Email:** [info@stats.govt.nz](mailto:info@stats.govt.nz)

**For technical information contact:**

Pubudu Senanayake

Christchurch 03 964 8700

**Email:** [info@stats.govt.nz](mailto:info@stats.govt.nz)

**For general enquiries contact our Information Centre:**

Phone: 0508 525 525 (toll-free in New Zealand)

+64 4 931 4600 (outside New Zealand)

**Email:** [info@stats.govt.nz](mailto:info@stats.govt.nz)

**Subscription service:**

Subscribe to information releases, including this one, by completing the online subscription form.

**Correction notifications:**

Subscribe to receive an email if a correction notice is published for International Travel and Migration.

Unsubscribe to correction notifications for International Travel and Migration.

Subscribe to all to receive an email if a correction notice is published for any of our information releases.

Unsubscribe to all if you change your mind.

## Tables

See the following Excel tables in the 'Downloads' box on this page. 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. Overseas visitor arrivals, by country of last permanent residence
4. Overseas visitor arrivals, by travel purpose and country of last permanent residence
5. 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
11. Permanent and long-term migration, by New Zealand region
12. Permanent and long-term arrivals, by visa type and country of last permanent residence

## 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**

## Next release

*International Travel and Migration: May 2016* will be released on 22 June 2016.