

# Immigration Tourism Update

November 2025

## Overview

- Immigration is crucial to the Government’s economic growth agenda and Immigration New Zealand (INZ) is committed to ensuring that visa processing is not a barrier to New Zealand getting the visitors we need to grow the economy.
- INZ aims to provide a trusted and effective immigration service and is committed to processing all visa applications as quickly as possible.
- Visitor visa processing remained positive for the 2024/25 financial year, with more than 1.6 million NZeTAs approved and over 443,000 visas approved. Combined, this resulted in more than 1.6 million people visiting NZ.
- Comparatively, from 01 January to [31 October](#) 2025, nearly [1.2 million](#) NZeTAs were approved, and over [334,000](#) visitor visas were also approved. Combined, this resulted in over [1.2 million](#) people visiting New Zealand so far in 2025.
- Processing times continue to improve, with an average visitor visa processing time for the 2024/2025 financial year of 7 working days. The average processing time from 01 January to [31 October](#) 2025 was [5](#) working days.

### Total Visitor Visas applications from all nationalities (01 July 2024 – 30 June 2025)

	Submitted	Decided	Approved	Declined	Average processing time (working days)
Total	502,146	502,809	443,283	54,657	7

### Total Visitor Visas applications from all nationalities (01 January – [31 October](#) 2025)

	Submitted	Decided	Approved	Declined	Average processing time (working days)
Total	<a href="#">396,404</a>	<a href="#">393,991</a>	<a href="#">349,987</a>	<a href="#">40,309</a>	<a href="#">5</a>

### Visitor Visas applications – Top 5 nationalities approved & declined (01 July 2024 – 30 June 2025)

Nationality	Approved	Average processing time (working days)	Nationality	Declined	Average processing time (working days)
China	226,258	6	India	14,779	9

India	64,942	9	China	10,905	6
Philippines	26,334	6	Pakistan	3,899	16
Fiji	15,289	10	Fiji	2,494	10
Thailand	14,998	5	Philippines	2,379	6

**Visitor Visas applications – Top 5 nationalities approved & declined (01 January – 31 October 2025)**

Nationality	Approved	Average processing time (working days)	Nationality	Declined	Average processing time (working days)
China	170,041	5	India	11,273	5
India	52,773	5	China	5,853	5
Philippines	22,104	4	Pakistan	3,776	11
Fiji	13,363	6	Fiji	1,935	6
Thailand	13,322	4	Philippines	1,677	4

## China

- China is a very important market for New Zealand’s tourism sector and increasing the number of visitors from China is a key focus for the New Zealand government.
- INZ carefully monitors application flows and trends to ensure the right resources are in place to deliver a quick and easy immigration process for Chinese visitors.
- New Zealand visitor visa offerings for Chinese nationals are more generous than other groups of travellers, reflecting the importance of the relationship with China. Most Chinese visitors receive a five-year multiple entry visitor visa, making it easier for Chinese visitors to return to New Zealand.
- For the 2024/2025 financial year, we received over 236,000 visitor visas and approved more than 226,000.
- Processing times went from 7 working days for the 2023/24 financial year, to 6 working days in the 2024/2025 financial year. These times continue to improve - from 01 January to 31 October 2025 the average processing time was 5 working days.
- The approval rate for all China visitor visas has remained consistently high this year, with an average of 96% from 01 January to 31 October 2025.
- INZ also now has more support in place to help make it easier for Chinese tourists applying for a visa. This includes
  - additional contact points for the Chinese travel industry with staff based in China to support Approved Destination Status (ADS) agents, including a phone number they can call for direct support; and
  - web content in Simplified Chinese: [Visitor Visa application guide for citizens of China : Immigration New Zealand](#).

### Visa-free travel trial from Australia

- As of 3 November 2025, eligible travellers from China and Pacific Islands Forum countries can visit New Zealand from Australia for up to three months using an NZeTA, if they hold a valid eligible Australian visa. This is a 12-month trial.
- The full list of eligible Australian visas can be found on the INZ website:
  - [Easier travel from Australia to New Zealand for Chinese visitors: Immigration New Zealand](#)

### Transit update for Chinese nationals

- From 27 October 2025, Chinese nationals can [now](#) transit through Auckland International Airport on an NZeTA, removing the need for a Transit Visa.

### China engagements

- Visits to China by senior leaders from INZ have reinforced the importance of the Chinese market and deepened our understanding of stakeholder expectations. In May, the Head of INZ and Deputy Chief Operating Officer met with key education and tourism sector representatives, gaining valuable insights into visa processing expectations and the need for clear, accessible information.
- In June, the Associate Deputy Secretary travelled to China as part of the Prime Minister's official delegation, where engagements further highlighted the technology-driven nature of the market.
- These engagements confirmed that Chinese stakeholders respond well to strong, consistent branding and place high value on fast, reliable communication. While language barriers are increasingly mitigated by translation tools, the demand for timely and accurate content remains high. INZ remains committed to delivering responsive, user-focused services that support the needs of this important market.
- In September, the Head of INZ joined the Minister of Tourism and other key tourism representatives, on the Minister's trip to China where they met with social media agents, booking services, China-based airlines and key Approved Destination Status (ADS) travel agents.
- Feedback on immigration policy changes, and INZ's response to market insights from previous visits to China was positive, and improvements to the timeliness of visitor visa processing have been well received.

### Tourism Memorandum of Understanding

- During the September visit to China, INZ and TNZ signed an updated Memorandum of Understanding with selected Chinese travel agents, committing to a five-day turnaround for ADS and FIT visa applications. Previously, these applications were processed in 10 working days, so this change delivers a faster service for applicants.
- The agreement also includes study tours and allows ADS travellers to participate in events, meetings, or incentive trips as part of their tour itineraries, offering greater flexibility and alignment with evolving travel preferences.
- This reflects New Zealand's strong tourism partnership with China and supports faster, more responsive visa processing.

### China Visitor Visas (01 July 2024 – 30 June 2025)

Category	Submitted (applications)	Decided (applications)	Approved (applications)	Approval rate	Arrivals (person)
All Visitor Visas	236,071	237,955	226,258	95%	208,527
General Visitor Visa	141,423	143,092	132,358	92%	146,805
Business Visitor Visa	53,325	53,289	52,763	99%	7,462
Group Visitor Visas	36,885	37,040	36,919	100%	50,580

### China Visitor Visas (01 January – 31 October 2025)

Category	Submitted (applications)	Decided (applications)	Approved (applications)	Approval rate	Arrivals (person)
All Visitor Visas	173,227	176,448	166,925	96%	169,023
General Visitor Visa	95,160	98,649	92,869	94%	118,524
Business Visitor Visa	42,689	42,328	41,970	99%	5,614
Group Visitor Visas	31,955	32,134	32,086	100%	41,987

### China – All Visitor Visas (YTD 2025)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Submitted</b>	17,253	14,480	21,363	18,114	14,667	16,746	18,773	16,639	17,642	16,797		
<b>Decided</b>	21,992	13,720	20,418	18,166	16,946	15,670	20,088	15,879	17,051	15,826		
<b>Approved</b>	21,212	12,975	19,591	17,540	16,310	15,205	19,495	15,298	16,507	15,275		
<b>Approval rate</b>	96%	95%	96%	97%	96%	97%	97%	96%	97%	97%		
<b>Average Processing time (working days)</b>	6	6	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	4		
<b>Arrivals</b>	30,682	15,232	16,895	19,227	13,397	8,326	17,147	16,643	17,153	14,322		

### China – General Visitor Visa (2025 YTD)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Submitted</b>	8,354	7,963	11,849	9,482	9,193	10,372	10,232	9,836	9,228	8,430		
<b>Decided</b>	12,059	7,409	11,553	9,639	9,643	9,518	11,505	8,964	9,713	8,249		
<b>Approved</b>	11,371	6,755	10,780	9,049	9,068	9,110	10,983	8,437	9,217	7,772		
<b>Approval rate</b>	94%	91%	93%	94%	94%	96%	95%	94%	95%	94%		
<b>Average Processing time (working days)</b>	8	6	6	5	5	5	4	4	5	4		
<b>Arrivals</b>	30,682	10,879	10,078	12,237	8,908	6,143	13,436	11,906	12,416	8,753		

### China – Business Visitor Visa (2025 YTD)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Submitted</b>	4,561	3,359	4,293	4,636	3,306	4,446	5,456	4,209	4,176	4,210		
<b>Decided</b>	5,224	3,243	3,930	4,019	4,601	4,272	5,537	4,322	3,586	3,592		
<b>Approved</b>	5,169	3,205	3,900	3,984	4,566	4,236	5,498	4,295	3,569	3,555		
<b>Approval rate</b>	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	100%	99%		
<b>Average Processing time (working days)</b>	5	6	4	5	5	4	4	2	3	4		
<b>Arrivals</b>	381	408	622	582	679	529	456	672	695	588		

### China – Group Visitor Visa (2025 YTD)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Submitted</b>	4,048	2,870	4,788	4,023	1,819	1,632	2,793	2,393	3,924	3,662		
<b>Decided</b>	4,326	2,740	4,514	4,508	2,309	1,558	2,719	2,340	3,505	3,610		
<b>Approved</b>	4,326	2,726	4,508	4,507	2,308	1,557	2,713	2,337	3,499	3,605		
<b>Approval rate</b>	100%	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%		
<b>Average Processing time (working days)</b>	5	5	5	4	4	3	4	3	4	4		
<b>Arrivals</b>	6,032	3,624	5,909	6,132	3,612	1,421	2,874	3,829	3,818	4,736		

## India

- India is a very important market for New Zealand and is the second largest source of visa required visitors to New Zealand.
- From 1 December 2025, Immigration New Zealand will only accept police clearance certificates issued by a Regional Passport Office of the Indian Minister of External Affairs when required from Indian national visa applicants living in India. This will ensure that the police clearance certificates we receive are more consistent and is in line with the requirements of other countries.
- In 2024, INZ decided around 85,000 visitor visa applications from Indian nationals, which accounted for 16% of the total number of visitor visa applications submitted that year.
- For the 2024/2025 financial year, we had over 77,000 Indian visitor arrivals and decided over 80,000 visitor visa applications from Indian nationals. Comparatively, from 01 January to 31 October 2025 we had over 57,000 Indian visitor arrivals and approved nearly 53,000 visitor visa applications from Indian nationals.
- In March, the Head of INZ travelled to India and gained some valuable insights about the travel movements of Indian nationals, including that there are a growing number of people with disposable income, who in turn are favouring shorter and more frequent trips to a variety of destinations. This means Indian nationals are booking more travel at short notice and what they want from INZ is certainty about being able to travel on chosen dates.
- Following our engagement at Kiwi Link India 2024, INZ introduced several service enhancements to better support the tourism sector. These included a new approach to processing visitor visa applications from large family groups, aimed at ensuring a consistent and timely experience for all travellers. These improvements reflect our commitment to supporting Tourism New Zealand's efforts and contributing to a seamless visitor journey.
- In July 2025, INZ participated in Kiwi Link India, hosted by Tourism New Zealand in Goa and Delhi. The event provided a valuable opportunity to connect with key travel trade partners and share updates on New Zealand's immigration system. Our involvement highlights the strong collaboration between MBIE, INZ, and Tourism New Zealand, and our shared goal of enabling sustainable growth in New Zealand's tourism industry.
- Processing times for Indian nationals have reduced from an average of 10 working days in the 2023/24 financial year, to 9 working days in the 2024/2025 financial year. Processing times continue to improve - from 01 January to 31 October 2025 the average processing time was 6 working days.
- INZ has also been working hard to inform the Indian market on visa requirements which has led to a significant improvement in the quality of the applications that INZ receives. For the 2023/2024 financial year approval rates for Indian visitor visas were at 68% and have increased to 81% between 01 January to 31 October 2025.
- To reflect the importance of the Indian market and ensure we are well connected, INZ has established a dedicated position in our New Delhi office to work directly with and provide support to travel agents in the market.

### India Visitor Visas (01 July 2024 – 30 June 2025)

Category	Submitted (applications)	Decided (applications)	Approved (applications)	Approval rate	Arrivals (person)
All Visitor Visas	75,882	76,196	61,142	80%	77,517
General Visitor Visa	63,230	64,121	50,451	79%	66,976
Business Visitor Visa	3,717	3,727	3,453	93%	2,185
Group Visitor Visas	760	647	508	79%	748

### India Visitor Visas (01 January – 31 October 2025)

Category	Submitted (applications)	Decided (applications)	Approved (applications)	Approval rate	Arrivals (person)
All Visitor Visas	64,836	65,091	52,769	81%	57,362
General Visitor Visa	52,892	54,107	43,134	80%	48,723
Business Visitor Visa	3,424	3,410	3,156	93%	2,025
Group Visitor Visas	1,255	1,046	932	89%	861



### India – All Visitor Visas (2025 YTD)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Submitted</b>	6,149	5,887	6,763	5,782	5,433	5,228	6,524	6,978	7,589	8,085		
<b>Decided</b>	6,442	6,014	7,727	5,879	5,813	5,128	6,590	6,348	7,396	7,616		
<b>Approved</b>	5,190	4,996	6,218	4,721	4,679	4,010	5,246	5,134	6,221	6,432		
<b>Approval rate</b>	81%	83%	80%	80%	80%	78%	80%	81%	84%	84%		
<b>Average Processing time (working days)</b>	12	12	8	4	5	4	4	5	4	5		
<b>Arrivals</b>	4,052	6,092	7,539	6,566	7,812	5,104	3,655	4,760	5,767	6,159		

### India – General Visitor Visa (2025 YTD)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Submitted</b>	5,162	4,824	5,225	4,672	4,388	4,076	5,400	5,669	6,304	6,645		
<b>Decided</b>	5,613	5,052	6,194	4,915	4,701	3,944	5,460	5,240	6,324	6,327		
<b>Approved</b>	5,188	4,996	4,821	3,884	3,709	2,977	4,273	4,142	5,285	5,305		
<b>Approval rate</b>	81%	83%	78%	79%	79%	75%	78%	79%	84%	84%		
<b>Average Processing time (working days)</b>	12	11	7	4	4	4	4	5	4	5		
<b>Arrivals</b>	3,627	5,301	6,360	5,626	6,860	4,252	2,891	3,642	4,783	5,381		

### India – Business Visitor Visa (2025 YTD)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Submitted</b>	281	303	347	367	280	316	387	312	424	404		
<b>Decided</b>	259	309	389	359	312	308	384	305	381	388		
<b>Approved</b>	237	293	366	335	285	283	355	281	356	354		
<b>Approval rate</b>	92%	95%	94%	93%	91%	92%	92%	92%	93%	91%		
<b>Average Processing time (working days)</b>	11	10	6	4	4	3	3	5	3	5		
<b>Arrivals</b>	90	176	206	201	223	156	207	261	242	263		

### India – Group Visitor Visa (2025 YTD)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Submitted</b>	32	44	105	36	81	182	16	335	153	271		
<b>Decided</b>	35	34	93	43	91	173	32	167	102	276		
<b>Approved</b>	22	15	84	34	82	164	25	156	91	259		
<b>Approval rate</b>	63%	44%	90%	79%	90%	95%	78%	93%	89%	94%		
<b>Average Processing time (working days)</b>	8	5	4	5	6	4	4	5	4	5		
<b>Arrivals</b>	36	38	12	146	46	60	63	207	201	52		

*\*Please note the arrivals data in each table for India has also been updated for January and February in this report as the arrival data in the March update was incorrect. We apologise for any confusion this may have caused.*