

IVS Release – Key Highlights

International visitor spend and arrivals are on the rise

(International Visitor Survey – Year ending March 2026)

Release date: 2 June 2026

Overview

This release presents results from the International Visitor Survey (IVS) for:

- Year ending March 2026
- March quarter 2026.

Top-line results are available on MBIE's Tourism Evidence and Insights Centre (TEIC).

[International Visitor Survey](#) – Tourism Evidence and Insights Centre

Microdata is also published on MBIE's website.

[International Visitor Survey data](#)

Notes on interpreting results

- All spend figures and percentage changes are in nominal terms unless stated otherwise.
- Where figures are in real terms, adjustments were made using Stats NZ's consumers price index to account for inflation.
- We compared the results for:
 - the year ending March 2026 to the year ending March 2025
 - the March quarter 2026 to the March quarter 2025.
- Prices increased 29% from March 2019 to March 2026, while annual inflation was only 3% from March 2025, so inflation adjustment is not necessary for annual changes.
- Quarterly results have a higher margin of error than annual results due to smaller sample sizes.
- Market breakdown includes Total, Australia, UK, USA, Rest of Europe, Asia, Germany, Canada, Rest of World, and China.

- A correction has been applied to the weighting scheme to address an error where China was incorrectly grouped with Macau and Hong Kong. Revised figures for the year ending December 2025 are reflected in this March 2026 release.
- This adjustment has no material impact on overall visitor spend or most market breakdowns. The primary changes affect the China and Rest of Asia categories, with Rest of Asia now including Macau and Hong Kong.
- Compared with 2024, China has increased by 11 percentage points, while Rest of Asia has decreased by 8 percentage points.
- Asia excludes China, which is now reported separately due to a larger sample size.
- Asia is now composed of Japan, Korea, and Rest of Asia.

Further details on data quality (sample sizes, response rates, margins of error) are available [here](#).

Key highlights for the year ending March 2026

(Results cover 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026)

Overall performance

- Annual visitor spend increased by 12%, and visitor arrivals grew by 9%.
- Annual spend has been steadily increasing since the borders reopened to international visitors.

Visitor spend

- International visitors contributed \$13.7 billion (up 12%) to New Zealand's economy.
- International tourism remained New Zealand's second-largest export earner, behind Dairy (\$23.9 billion) and ahead of Meat and Edible Offal (\$10.7 billion).

Visitor arrivals

- 3.63 million international visitors arrived in New Zealand, up from 3.32 million in 2025 (up 9%).

Spending by market

- Australia: Highest total spend at \$4.2 billion (up 21%).
- Asia: \$2.1 billion (up 11%).
- USA: \$2.0 billion (up 8%).

Spending patterns

- Highest median spend per visitor: Germany at \$6,670 (up 1%). Australians had the lowest at \$2,216 (up 12%). Longer stays generally correlate with higher spend.

- Highest median daily spend: China at \$502 (up 36%), followed by USA (\$378, up 2%) and Asia (\$350, up 17%). Germany had the lowest at \$213, unchanged from last year.
- Overall median spend per visitor: \$3,100 (up 9%).
- Median daily spend: \$327 (up 12%).
- Visitors on holiday spent \$9.1 billion, up 19%.
- Accommodation (\$3.7 billion, up 17%) and eating out (\$2.0 billion, up 15%) remained the top industries visitors spend on.

Length of stay

- Median length of stay: 10 days, consistent with 2025.
- Germany: Longest stay at 28 days (unchanged from 2025), followed by other European visitors at 21 days (unchanged from 2025).

Accommodation spend

- Total accommodation spend: \$3.7 billion (up 17%).
- Australians spent the most on accommodation: \$1.3 billion (up 19%).
- Canadians spent the least: \$89 million (up 16%).

Recovery to Pre-Pandemic Levels

- Overall spend when adjusted for inflation and arrivals remain below 2019 levels but median spend per visitor is above 2019 levels.
- Inflation-adjusted visitor spend: \$10.6 billion (94% of 2019 levels).
- Visitor numbers: \$3.63 billion, or 94% of 2019 levels (3.87 million).
- Median spend per visitor: \$2,396 (107% of 2019 levels).
- Median daily spend per visitor: \$253 (same as 2019 levels).

Key Highlights for the March Quarter 2026

(Results cover 1 January 2026 to 31 March 2026)

Quarterly performance

- International visitors spent \$5.7 billion, up 25%.
- Australia: Largest market at \$1.5 billion, up 33%.

- International tourism ranked second-highest export, behind Dairy (\$6.6 billion) and ahead of Meat & Edible Offal (\$3.3 billion).

Visitor behaviour

- Median spend per visitor: \$3,580 (up 16%).
- Median length of stay: 11 days (similar to last year).
- Holiday spend: \$3.9 billion, up 27%.

Visitor experience

- Net Promoter Score (NPS): Unchanged at 73, indicating strong visitor satisfaction.
- Top activity: Walking, hiking, trekking, or tramping (82%, up from 72%), followed by 'going to the beach' (70%, up from 63%).