

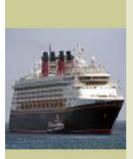


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Government_of Tonga

STATISTICAL BULLETIN ON



INTERNATIONAL ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES 2023



Statistics Department P.O. Box 149, Nuku'alofa, Kingdom of Tonga Website: www.stats.gov.to/statistics/social-statistics/migration E-mail: dept@stats.gov.to

January 2024 Price: This is the twenty fourth bulletin of an annual migration reports produced by the Statistics Department as the main reference on the volume of overseas visitors, cruise ship passengers, yacht passengers and resident's movement to and from the Kingdom of Tonga. This bulletin covers the period of January to December 2023, includes tables providing a monthly breakdown of the data. Comparative data for previous years are also included in this bulletin. Most of the information contained in this bulletin was obtained from the Immigration Department database on international arrivals and departures.

The main purpose of collecting and compiling statistics on International Arrivals and Departures, or Migration Statistics, is to make migration data available for planners and decision-makers. Tonga has a high rate of Net Migration, with more people moving out of Tonga than arriving. Production of Migration Statistics and their components enables the Statistics Department to estimate the resident population and to produce Population Projections for the whole Kingdom.

This bulletin presents information relating to the number of arrivals and departures by sex, purpose of travel, reasons for absence, country of usual residence and country visited.

A special thanks are extended to the Immigration Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Customs Departments of the Ministry of Revenue Services, Airport terminal Services and Port Authority for their assistance in providing their administrative information relating to these statistics. I am also grateful particularly to my staff in the Population and Social Statistics Division who contributed to the compilation of this report.

Any suggestions that recipients of this bulletin wish to make for its future improvement will be welcomed by the Statistics Department.



Government Statistician

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1. MAIN FEATURES

1.1 General

- a. Net overseas migration is the net gain or loss of population through immigration to Tonga and emigration from Tonga.
- b. Individuals are considered to be residents when they reside in Tonga for 12 months or more.
- c. For 2023, total international arrivals were 119,916 and total departures were 126,866, a net outflow of 6,950. This means that there are more persons departing the Kingdom than persons arriving for the year 2023.

1.2 Total International Arrivals and Departures

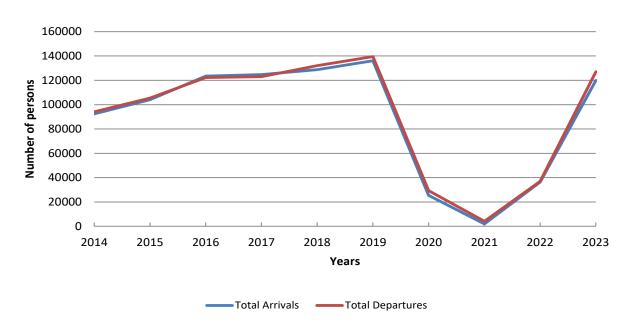


Fig. 1. Total International Arrivals & Departures 2014 - 2023

Figure 1: The above graph shows that there is an upward trend from 2014 to 2016. However, there was a negative net migration in 2017, arrivals slightly higher than departures. Year 2018 and 2019 shows that there were more people departed the Kingdom than arrivals. There was a very sharp decline from 2019 to 2020 and to 2021 and this was mainly due to the COVID – 19 Pandemic. There were travel restrictions and some countries continue to close their borders entirely. There was an increase from 2021 to 2022 and this was because the borders opened for both air and sea travelers. This continued in 2023 and also more people are departed than arrived.

Year	Total Arrivals	% Change	Total Departures	% Change
2004	66,639	-	70,206	-
2005	76,286	14.5	73,540	4.7
2006	78,652	3.1	82,268	11.9
2007	75,587	-3.9	83,416	1.4
2008	91,128	20.6	92,890	11.4
2009	99,803	9.5	99,360	7.0
2010	89,506	-10.3	90,607	-8.8
2011	94,960	6.1	95,607	5.5
2012	82,400	-13.2	83,805	-12.3
2013	85,473	3.7	85,134	1.6
2014	92,374	8.1	94,090	10.5
2015	104,070	12.7	105,379	12.0
2016	123,462	18.6	122,266	16.0
2017	124,703	1.0	122,970	0.6
2018	128,734	3.2	132,086	7.4
2019	136,059	5.7	139,527	5.6
2020	25,382	-81.3	29,306	-79.0
2021	1,903	-92.5	4,132	-85.9
2022	36,314	1808.3	36,880	792.5
2023	119,916	230.2	126,866	244.0

1.3 Total International Arrivals and Departures by Annual Percentage Change Table 1.1 Total International Arrivals and Departures 2004 - 2023

Table 1.1: shows the total arrivals or person arrived in the kingdom with the highest point in 2019 with 136,059. The largest increase in arrivals occurred from 2021 to 2022 with 1804%. This was after the Covid 19 restrictions and borders were closed and 2022 it was opened again. It was followed by 2022 to 2023 with 230.2%. Similarly, the total departures or persons leaving Tonga in 2019 (139,527). The year 2020 to 2021 shows the highest decline with 92.5 percent and as well as departures with a decline of 85.9 percent and this was the covid – 19 pandemic impacting on migration. 2022 all borders were opened and departures went up to 792.5% and to 244% in 2023.

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2. INTERNATIONAL ARRIVALS

2.1 International Arrivals by Transport Mode 2014 - 2023

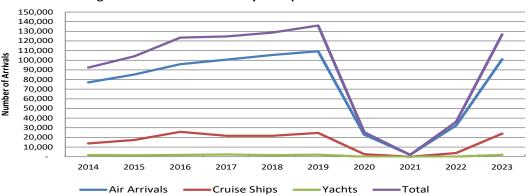
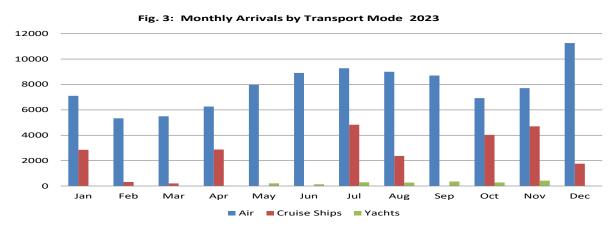


Fig 2: International Arrivals by Transport Mode 2014 - 2023

The above graph shows the total international arrivals to the Kingdom by transport mode for the year 2014 - 2023. It clearly shows that international air arrivals dominated the total international arrivals to the Kingdom followed by arrivals on cruise ships and yachts the least. The steep rise from 2015 to 2019 is mainly due to the dramatic increase in air arrivals as shown in the above graphs. Yachts arrivals increased by 27% in 2015 to 2016, however a huge decline by 34% from 2017 to 2018. There was a steep declined in both air and sea arrivals from 2019 to 2021. This was mainly due to the covid 19 restrictions. From 2021 to 2022, all mode of transport increased as the internation border restrictions had been lifted. In 2023 all mode of transport went up to its usual stage as observed before covid.



2.2 Total Arrivals by Transport Mode and Month 2023

Figure 3: The above graph illustrates the monthly arrivals by transportation mode in 2023. As shows in the graph above Air arrivals is the highest in all months. There were no Cruise ships arrivals in the month of May, June and September. Also there were no yacht arrivals for the month of January to March.



Fig. 4: Total Air Arrivals by Passenger's Type and Month 2023

Figure 4: December 2023 recorded the highest number of returning residents arrived in Tonga and also the highest number of visitors arrived by air to Tonga.

2.3 Total Air Visitors by Country of Usual Residence 2023

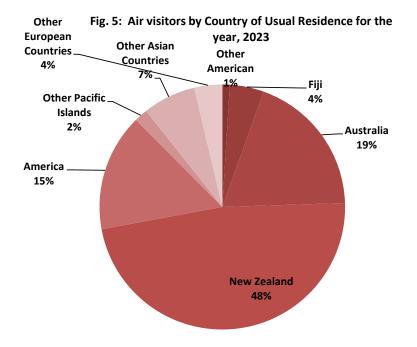
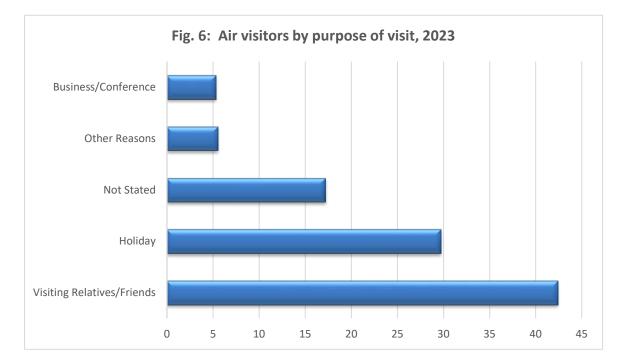


Figure 5: New Zealand remains the leading country for visitors arrivals by country of usual residence accounting for 48% (26,527). This was followed by Australia with 19% (10,592) and America with 15% (8,626)



2.5 Visitors Arrivals by Purpose of Visit 2023

Figure 6: Most visitors visited the Kingdom were here to visit relatives/friends 42% (23,633). This was followed by 30% (16,547) who came on holidays and those who did not state the purpose of their visit 17% (9,563)

2.6 International Air Arrivals by Age Group 2023

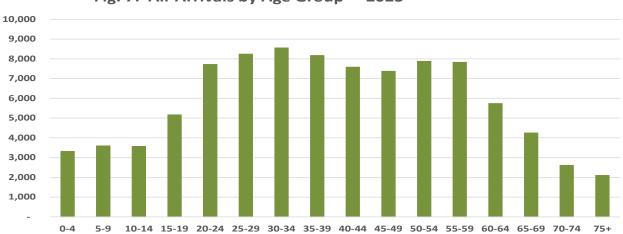


Fig. 7: Air Arrivals by Age Group - 2023

Figure 7: The majority of the air arrivals were in the age group of 30 - 34 (8,574) which was 9% of the total air arrivals followed by those in aged 25 - 29 (8,258) and age group 35 - 39 (8,189). The lowest number of air arrivals was those aged 75+ which was of 2% of total air arrivals.

3. International Departures

3.1 Air Departures by Sex and Month 2023

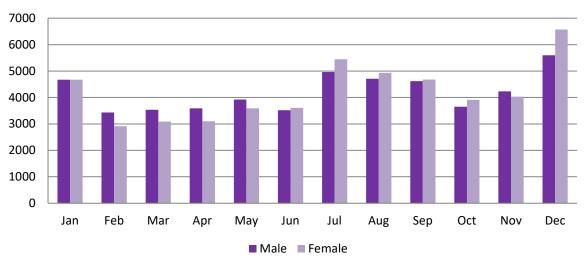


Fig. 8: Total Departures by Sex and Month 2023

Figure 8: The above figure shows that the lowest departures for male was in the month of February (3,435) followed by June (3,515). The highest number of departures was in the month of December with 6,571 for males and 5,600 for females.

3.2 Air Departures by Country of Usual Residence, 2023

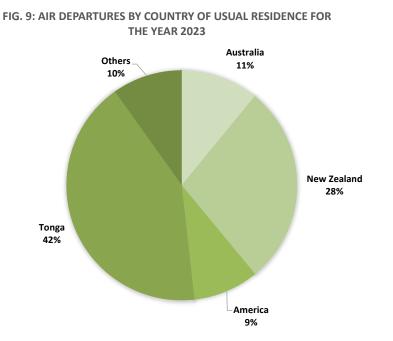


Figure 9: shows that most of the persons departing in the year 2023 were Tongan residence 42,339 (42)% followed by New Zealand 28,423 (28)% and Australia 11,024 (11)%.

4 EXPLANATORY NOTES

4.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this bulletin is to give an overview of total international arrivals and departures and their main social and economic characteristics.

Statistics on Overseas Arrivals and Departures related to the number of movements of travelers rather than the number of travelers (i.e. the multiple movements of individual persons during a given reference period are all counted).

4.2 COVERAGE

This bulletin covers all international arrivals and departures from the Kingdom of Tonga, including yachts and those through Lupepau'u Airport and all outer islands, during 2023. Final totals of arrivals and departures are based on the reconciliation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration Electronic data, Customs Wharf Register and Air Terminal Services Manifest.

4.3 SOURCE OF DATA

Data is extracted from the arrival and departure cards of the Immigration Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Customs vessel and yacht log book. The Statistics Department reconciles the figures from the Air Terminal Services Manifest and Ports Authority Manifest to produce final published data.

4.4 DATA LIMITATIONS

Passengers on yachts and ships do not complete arrival and departure cards therefore we are unable to provide details on Age, Sex and Purpose of visit.

Due to the limitation and incomplete data, we are unable at this stage to determine whether arrivals and departures are of a long term or short term duration.

(Note: This problem caused by incomplete arrival and departure card)

5 GLOSSARY

- A Visitor is a person other than a Tongan citizen, permit holder and exempted person, who usually stays at least 24 hours in the kingdom, or who stays overnight in accommodation within Tonga. This refers to passengers arriving by air and yacht only.
- Cruise Ship Passengers are defined as those who arrive and depart in the same vessel which is a cruise trip, and use that vessel's accommodation during their stay in Tonga. They are also known as "Excursionist"
- A Returning Resident is a person who has the Kingdom of Tonga as their permanent address for more than six months of the year and returns to Tonga after a trip overseas. Tongan residence is self-defined as reported by travelers when completing the Passenger Arrival Card.
- Main reason for journey On arrival in Tonga, all overseas visitors and Tongan residents are asked to state their purpose of journey. Statistics are published using the following categories: Holiday, Business, Visiting friends and /or relatives, Conference and Others.
- Mode of Transport Only air, yacht and cruise ships passengers are included. Passenger/crew on cargo, navy or special vessels are excluded.

Table 1. Monthly Arrival and Dep	parture by Mode of Travel and	Net Migration, 2015 - 2023

	Visitors Ar	rivals			Returning	Residents	Total Arriva	le			Total Depa	artures			Net
Period		Ship	Yacht	Total	Ň	Ship Yacht Total		Ship	Yacht	Total	Air	Ship	Yacht	Total	Migration
2015	53,752	17,375	1,426	72,553	31,517	31,517	85,269	17,375	1,426	104,070	86,574	17,383	1,422	105,379	(1,309)
2016	59,130	25,714	1,818	86,662	36,800	36,800	95,930	25,714	1,818	123,462	95,043	25,703	1,520	122,266	1,196
2017	62,506	21,719	2,354	86.579	38,124	38,124	100,630	21,719	2,354	124,703	99,280	21,698	1,992	122,970	1,733
2018	54,046	21,708	1,552	77,306	51,428	51,428	105,474	21,708	1,552	128,734	108,770	21,714	1,602	132,086	(3,352)
2019	67,284	24,667	2,021	93,972	42,087	42,087	109,371	24,667	2,021	136,059	112,714	24,749	2,064	139,527	(3,468)
2020	9,010	2,530	6	11,546	13,836	13,836	22,846	2,530	-,6	25,382	26,769	2,529	8	29,306	(3,924)
2021	202	_,		202	1,701	1,701	1,903	_,		1,903	4,132	_,	-	4,132	(2,229)
2022	18,427	3,799	92	22,318	13,996	13,996	32,423	3,799	92	36,314	33,018	3,797	65	36,880	(566)
2023	55,749	23,943	2,002	81,694	38,222	38,222	93,971	23,943	2.002	119,916	100,980	23,937	1,949	126.866	(6,950)
			_,			2020	,	,	_,				_,	,	(1,111)
Jan	4,665	852		5,517	7,087	7,087	11,752	852		12,604	14,576	851	-	15,427	(2,823)
Feb	3,008	1,678	6	4,692	3,328	3,328	6,336	1,678	6	8.020	6.680	1,678	8	8,366	(346)
Mar	1,259	-	-	1,259	2,219	2,219	3,478	-	-	3,478	3,778	-	-	3,778	(300)
Apr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-, -	579	-	-	579	(579)
May	-	-	-	-		-	-	-		-	93	-	-	93	(93)
Jun	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	62	-	-	62	(62)
Jul	1	-	-	1	56	56	57	-		57	96	-	-	96	(39)
Aug	5	-	-	5	145	145	150	-		150	130	-	-	130	20
Sep	16	-	-	16	84	84	100	-	-	100	100	-	-	100	-
Oct	13	-	-	13	379	379	392	-		392	218	-	-	218	174
Nov	20	_		20	275	275	295	_		295	196	_	-	196	99
		-	-					-	-			-			
Dec	23	-	-	23	263	263	286	-	-	286	261	-	-	261	25
	1				1	2021					1				
Jan	18	-	-	18	219	219	237	-	-	237	207			207	30
Feb	41		-	41	180	180	221		-	221	407		-	407	(186)
Mar	23			23	252	252	275			275	406			406	(131)
Apr	2	-	-	2	25	25	27	-	-	27	441	-	-	441	(414)
May	18			18	229	229	247			247	368			368	(121)
Jun	52	-	-	52	453	453	505	-	-	505	339			339	166
Jul	22	-	-	22	130	130	152		-	152	220			220	(68)
Aug	14	-	-	14	-	-	14	-	-	14	63			63	(49)
Sep	4			4	6	6	10			10	380			380	(370)
Oct	8			8	207	207	215			215	479			479	(264)
Nov	-			-	-	-	-			-	429			429	(429)
Dec	-			-	-	-	-			-	393			393	(393)
						2022									
Jan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	123	-	-	123	(123)
Feb	34	-	-	34	149	149	183	-	-	183	259	-	-	259	(76)
Mar	112			112	508	508	620			620	1,079			1,079	(459)
Apr	40	-	-	40	218	218	258	-	-	258	598	-	-	598	(340)
May	130			130	335	335	465			465	525			525	(60)
Jun	282	-	-	282	1,095	1,095		-	-	1,377	1,131			1,131	246
Jul	415	-	-	415	792	792	1,207	-	-	1,207	1,385			1,385	(178)
Aug	1,809	-	-	1,809	1,556	1,556	3,365	-	-	3,365	2,706			2,706	659
Sep	2,474			2,474	1,909	1,909	4,383			4,383	4,252			4,252	131
Oct	2,491	2,204	76	4,771	2,104	2,104		2,204	76	6,875	4,846	2,202	43	7,091	(216)
Nov	3,289	1,595	16	4,900	2,061	2,061		1,595	16	6,961	6,163	1,595	22	7,780	(819)
Dec	7,351	-	-	7,351	3,269	3,269	10,620			10,620	9,951			9,951	669
L	1				1	2023	1								1
Jan	3,330	2,856	-	6,186	3,780	3,780		2,856	-	9,966	9,346	2,856		12,202	(2,236)
Feb	2,671	319	-	2,990	2,666	2,666		319	-	5,656	6,346	319	-	6,665	(1,009)
Mar	3,085	207		3,292	2,407	2,407	5,492	207		5,699	6,621	207		6,828	(1,129)
Apr	3,540	2,872	6	6,418	2,724	2,724	6,264	2,872	6	9,142	6,689	2,872	20	9,581	(439)
May	4,349	-	213	4,562	3,626	3,626	7,975	-	213		7,515	-	36	7,551	637
Jun	5,861	-	137	5,998	3,050	3,050	8,911	-	137	9,048	7,122	-	192	7,314	1,734
Jul	6,435	4,832	294	11,561	2,847	2,847	9,282	4,832	294	14,408	10,411	4,832	397	15,640	(1,232)
Aug	6,058	2,369	273	8,700	2,940	2,940		2,369	273	11,640	9,638	2,369	257	12,264	(624)
Sep	5,141	•	357	5,498	3,564	3,564	8,705	-	357	9,062	9,299	-	399	9,698	(636)
Oct	3,760	4,027	285	8,072	3,167	3,167	6,927	4,027	285	11,239	7,562	4,025	342	11,929	(690)
Nov	4,196	4,702	425	9,323	3,511	3,511		4,702	425	12,834	8,260	4,700	282	13,242	(408)
Dec	7,323	1,759	12	9,094	3,940	3,940	11,263	1,759	12	13,034	12,171	1,757	24	13,952	(918)

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Age Group													
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
0-4	279	129	192	239	273	324	282	275	239	250	302	556	3,340
5-9	428	201	181	234	256	327	375	257	251	199	236	666	3,611
10-14	463	248	124	210	218	301	402	251	286	164	176	748	3,591
15-19	575	414	232	294	297	496	648	309	453	286	316	864	5,184
20-24	546	401	400	486	664	769	658	666	757	534	795	1,060	7,736
25-29	571	395	451	555	718	696	751	869	830	645	732	1,045	8,258
30-34	582	419	490	594	765	732	788	950	931	702	721	900	8,574
35-39	614	431	500	527	679	692	831	927	829	649	622	888	8,189
40-44	524	445	425	548	671	674	749	791	774	584	603	809	7,597
45-49	504	413	459	526	689	668	776	741	712	565	567	768	7,388
50-54	545	481	514	612	690	739	813	753	706	623	629	791	7,896
55-59	519	446	540	531	739	756	794	747	653	609	713	793	7,840
60-64	355	364	380	356	499	626	550	588	494	454	508	583	5,757
65-69	266	261	285	247	395	517	422	446	380	307	350	390	4,266
70-74	193	152	170	155	224	343	250	259	229	199	231	223	2,628
75+	146	137	149	150	198	251	193	169	181	157	206	179	2,116
Total	7,110	5,337	5,492	6,264	7,975	8,911	9,282	8,998	8,705	6,927	7,707	11,263	93,971
% Distribution	7.6	5.7	5.8	6.7	8.5	9.5	9.9	9.6	9.3	7.4	8.2	12.0	100.0
SEX													
Male	3,338	2,639	2,752	3,184	4,096	4,360	4,484	4,401	4,626	3,704	3,824	5,770	47,178
Female	3,772	2,698	2,740	3,080	3,879	4,551	4,798	4,597	4,079	3,223	3,883	5,493	46,793
Total	7,110	5,337	5,492	6,264	7,975	8,911	9,282	8,998	8,705	6,927	7,707	11,263	93,971
PASSENGERS TYPE													
Returning Residents	3,780	2,666	2,407	2,724	3,626	3,050	2,847	2,940	3,564	3,167	3,511	3,940	38,222
Visitors	3,330	2,671	3,085	3,540	4,349	5,861	6 <i>,</i> 435	6,058	5,141	3,760	4,196	7,323	55,749
Total	7,110	5,337	5,492	6,264	7,975	8,911	9,282	8,998	8,705	6,927	7,707	11,263	93,971

Table 2. Total Air Arrivals by Age Group and Month 2023

Table 3: Air Visitors by Country of Residence and Purpose of Visit, 2023

Country of	Purpose of Visit											
Usual Residence	Total	%	Holiday/	Business/	Visiting Relative/	Other	Not					
		Distribution	Vacation	Conference	Friends	Reasons	Stated					
Australia	10,592	19.0	3,033	607	4,616	672	1,664					
New Zealand	26,527	47.6	6,392	738	13,528	822	5,047					
Fiji	2,481	4.5	480	551	598	498	354					
American Samoa	86	0.2	22	5	51	1	7					
Western Samoa	268	0.5	56	51	95	35	31					
Other Pacific Islands	616	1.1	97	205	113	108	93					
Japan	545	1.0	212	79	125	57	72					
China	1,992	3.6	1,116	101	311	133	331					
India	97	0.2	24	14	11	28	20					
Korea	171	0.3	60	39	27	7	38					
Other Asian Countries	1,093	2.0	607	91	70	120	205					
UK	519	0.9	283	47	45	51	93					
Germany	314	0.6	222	11	25	5	51					
France	239	0.4	100	23	39	29	48					
Italy	97	0.2	62	9	5	4	17					
Other European Countries	883	1.6	639	52	47	25	120					
All African Countries	56	0.1	23	15	4	13	1					
United States of America	8,626	15.5	2,830	236	3,889	406	1,265					
Canada	306	0.5	178	19	24	21	64					
Other American Countries	241	0.4	111	57	10	21	42					
Total	55,749	100.0	16,547	2,950	23,633	3,056	9,563					
Percent Distribution	100.0		29.7	5.3	42.4	5.5	17.2					

	Departing	Percent		Percent		Percent
Age Group	Residents	Distribution	Visitors	Distribution	Total	Distribution
0 - 4	1,425	3.4	2,242	3.8	3,667	3.6
5 - 9	1,832	4.3	2,391	4.1	4,223	4.2
10 - 14	1,860	4.4	2,446	4.2	4,306	4.3
15 - 19	3,071	7.3	3,049	5.2	6,120	6.1
20 - 24	5,199	12.3	3,500	6.0	8,699	8.6
25 - 29	4,613	10.9	4,190	7.1	8,803	8.7
30 - 34	4,084	9.6	5,130	8.7	9,214	9.1
35 - 39	3,615	8.5	5,083	8.7	8,698	8.6
40 - 44	3,264	7.7	4,759	8.1	8,023	7.9
45 - 49	2,842	6.7	4,797	8.2	7,639	7.6
50 - 54	3,013	7.1	5,143	8.8	8,156	8.1
55 - 59	2,683	6.3	5,428	9.3	8,111	8.0
60 - 64	1,888	4.5	4,111	7.0	5,999	5.9
65 - 69	1,342	3.2	3,091	5.3	4,433	4.4
70 - 74	837	2.0	1,873	3.2	2,710	2.7
75+	771	1.8	1,408	2.4	2,179	2.2
All Ages	42,339	100.0	58,641	100.0	100,980	100.0
YACHT	-	-	1,949	0	1,949	0
CRUISE SHIP	-	-	23,937	0	23,937	0
Total	42,339	100.0	84,527	100.0	126,866	100.0

Table 4: Air Departures by Age Group and Passenger's Type for the year 2023

Table 5: Total Air Departures by Country of Residence and Sex for the year 2023

Country of Usual	Male	Percent	Female	Percent	Total	Percent
Residence	No.	Distribution	No.	Distribution	No.	Distribution
Australia	5,298	10.5	5,726	11.3	11,024	10.9
New Zealand	13,329	26.4	15,094	29.9	28,423	28.1
Fiji	1,437	2.8	1,031	2.0	2,468	2.4
American Samoa	32	0.1	45	0.1	77	0.1
Western Samoa	109	0.2	137	0.3	246	0.2
Tonga	21,922	43.5	20,417	40.4	42,339	41.9
Other Pacific Islands	367	0.7	306	0.6	673	0.7
Japan	358	0.7	210	0.4	568	0.6
China	902	1.8	976	1.9	1,878	1.9
India	55	0.1	24	0.0	79	0.1
Korea	100	0.2	69	0.1	169	0.2
Other Asian Countries	593	1.2	482	1.0	1,075	1.1
UK	292	0.6	248	0.5	540	0.5
Germany	172	0.3	161	0.3	333	0.3
France	153	0.3	82	0.2	235	0.2
Italy	59	0.1	43	0.1	102	0.1
Other European Countries	514	1.0	407	0.8	921	0.9
All African Countries	46	0.1	25	0.0	71	0.1
United States of America	4,406	8.7	4,850	9.6	9,256	9.2
Canada	178	0.4	116	0.2	294	0.3
Other American Countries	120	0.2	89	0.2	209	0.2
Total	50,442	100.0	50,538	100.0	100,980	100.0