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Preface

This is a monthly bulletin of migration reports produced by the Statistics Department as the main reference on a 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 December 2024, 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, Customs Departments of the Ministry of Revenue and Customs, Airport terminal Services and Ports 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.



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Felix Fe'iloaki

Acting Government Statistician

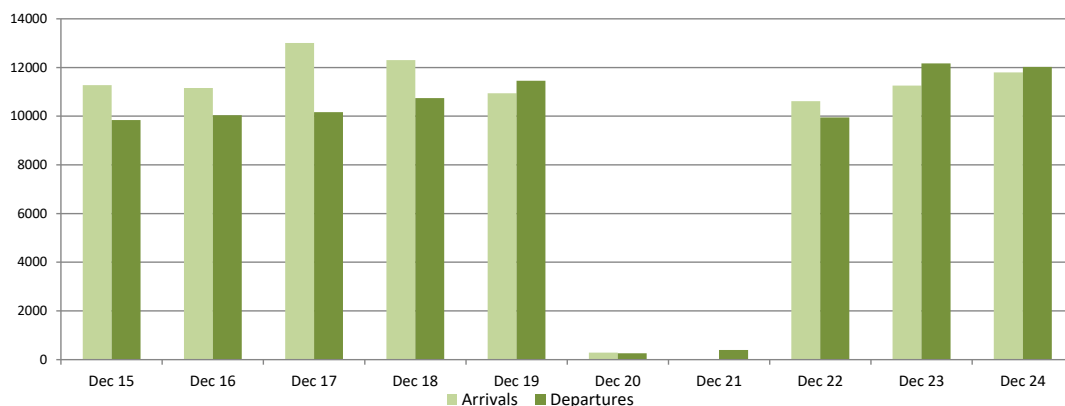
Summary of Arrivals

Table 1: Total Arrivals by month and changes from previous month and year

Month of		Number		Change from	Change from
December 2024	Dec 2024	Nov 2024	Dec 2023	previous month (%)	previous year (%)
All Arrivals	12,212	9,383	13,034	30.2	(6.3)
Air Visitors	7,371	4,255	7,323	73.2	0.7
Air Returning Residents	4,431	4,239	3,940	4.5	12.5
Cruise Ships	408	750	1,759	(45.6)	(76.8)
Yachts	2	139	12	(98.6)	(83.3)

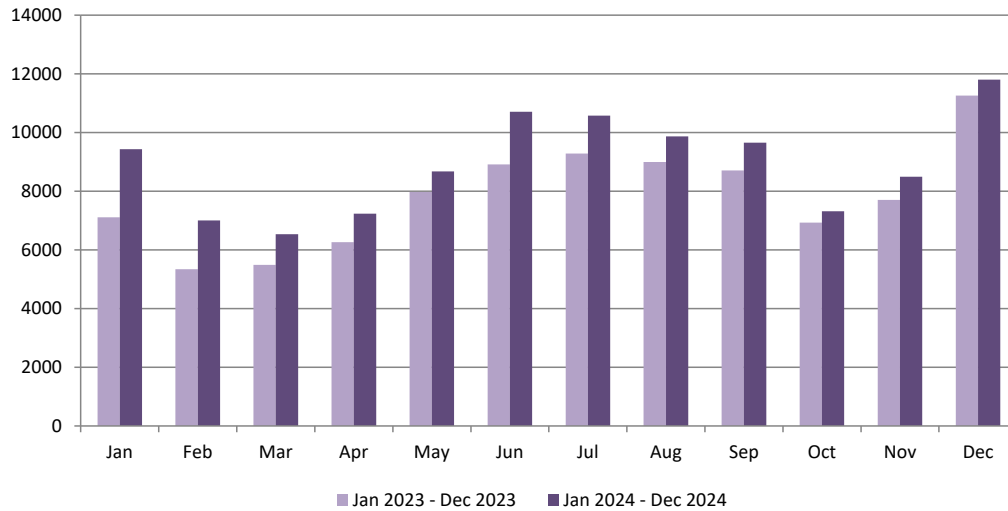
- The total of all arrivals in December 2024 was 12,212, this is an increase of 30.2% compared to the total arrivals in November 2024, 9,383.
- An increase of 73.2% of all air visitors (7,371) compared to the previous month (4,255).
- An increase of 4.5% of air returning residents (4,431) compared to the previous month (4,239)
- A decline of 45.6% of arrivals by Cruise ship in December 2024 (408) compared to previous month (750) and again a decline of 98.6% of yachts arrivals (2) compared to previous month (139).

Fig. 1. December Air Arrivals and Departures 2015 – 2024



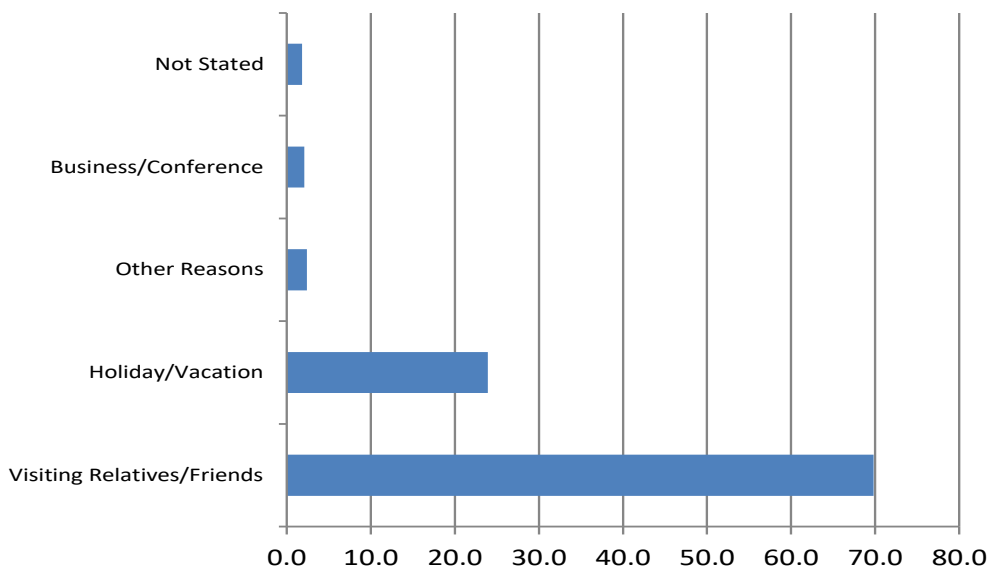
- Total air arrivals in December 2024 were 11,802 an increase of 4.8% compared to the previous year, there were 11,263 air arrivals for the month of December 2023
- Total air departures of 12,030 in December 2024, a decline of 1.2% compared to December 2023 (12,171).

Fig. 2. Monthly Air Arrivals vs the corresponding month of the previous year



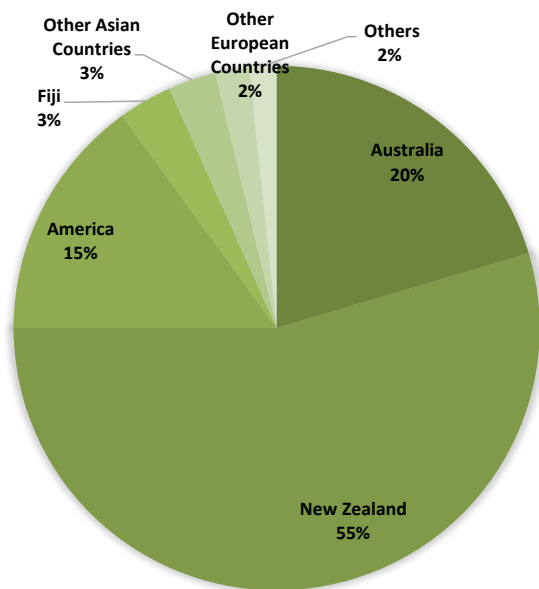
- Total air visitor arrivals in December 2024 were 7,371 comparing to December 2022 (7,323) a decline of 0.7%.

Fig. 3. Air Visitors by Purpose of Visit December, 2024



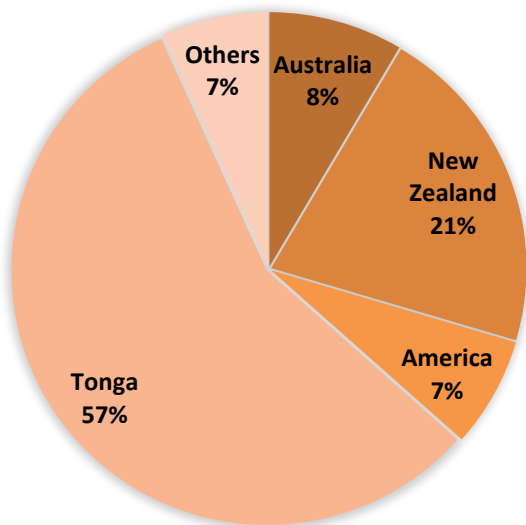
- 69.8% (5,144) of the total air visitors were here to visit relative/friends.
- Those who were here on Holiday/Vacation made up 23.9% (1,760).
- Visitors who were here on other reason such as funerals, weddings, family reunions etc made up 2.4 % (177) and those who didn't state the purpose of their visit made up 1.8% (133).

Fig. 4. Air Visitors by Country of Usual Residence December 2024



- New Zealand was the leading country in visitors arrivals by country of usual residence, accounting for 54.6% (4,028) of total air visitors.
- This was followed by Australia with 20.4 % (1,501), and America with 15.0% (1,105).

Fig. 5. Air Departures by Country of Usual Residence December, 2024



- Most of the persons departing in the month of December were Tongan residents (6,815) followed by New Zealand (2,541) and Australia (1,018).

Definitions

- ▶ **A Visitor** is a person other than a Tongan citizen, permit holder and exempted person, who usually stay 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 on 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.
- ▶ **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 Departure by Mode of Travel and Net Migration, 2012 - 2023

Period	Visitors Arrivals				Returning Residents				Total Arrivals				Total Departures				Net Migration
	Air	Ship	Yacht	Total	Air	Ship	Yacht	Total	Air	Ship	Yacht	Total	Air	Ship	Yacht	Total	
2012	47,457	7,957	1,816	57,230	25,170			25,107	72,627	7,957	1,816	82,400	74,098	7,987	1,720	83,805	(1,405)
2013	48,188	9,432	2,045	59,665	25,808			25,808	73,996	9,432	2,045	85,473	73,938	9,427	1,769	85,134	339
2014	50,436	13,733	1,632	65,801	26,573			26,573	77,009	13,733	1,632	92,374	78,604	13,724	1,762	94,090	(1,716)
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)
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	-	-	1,377	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	4,595	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	5,350	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
2023																	
Jan	3,330	2,856	-	6,186	3,780			3,780	7,110	2,856	-	9,966	9,346	2,856	-	12,202	(2,236)
Feb	2,671	319	-	2,990	2,666			2,666	5,337	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	0	213	4,562	3,626			3,626	7,975	0	213	8,188	7,515	0	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	8,998	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	7,707	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)
2024																	
Jan	3,762	-	11	3,773	5,672			5,672	9,434	674	11	10,119	11,330	674	-	12,004	(1,885)
Feb	3,240	2,340	-	5,580	3,766			3,766	7,006	2,340	-	9,346	7,385	2,339	-	9,724	(378)
Mar	3,520	1,378	-	4,898	3,013			3,013	6,533	1,378	-	7,911	7,075	1,377	-	8,452	(541)
Apr	3,882	611	29	4,522	3,355			3,355	7,237	611	29	7,877	6,947	611	2	7,560	317
May	5,039	-	363	5,402	3,632			3,632	8,671	-	363	9,034	8,330	-	103	8,433	601
Jun	7,277	-	309	7,586	3,434			3,434	10,711	-	309	11,020	6,982	-	414	7,396	3,624
Jul	7,453	2,768	359	10,580	3,123			3,123	10,576	2,768	359	13,703	12,157	2,768	360	15,285	(1,582)
Aug	6,679	2,287	296	9,262	3,192			3,192	9,871	2,287	296	12,454	10,125	2,290	230	12,645	(191)
Sep	5,930	-	412	6,342	3,724			3,724	9,654	-	412	10,066	9,341	-	289	9,630	436
Oct	4,460	4,908	234	9,602	2,857			2,857	7,317	4,908	234	12,459	7,084	4,907	181	12,172	287
Nov	4,255	750	139	5,144	4,239			4,239	8,494	750	139	9,383	9,250	748	47	10,045	(662)
Dec	7,371	408	2	7,781	4,431			4,431	11,802	408	2	12,212	12,030	408	-	12,438	(226)

Table 2. Total Arrivals by Age, Type of Passengers and Sex December, 2024

Age Group	Type of Passengers								
	Total			Visitors			Returning Residents		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
0-4	469	232	237	378	187	191	91	45	46
5-9	622	306	316	486	245	241	136	61	75
10-14	710	337	373	574	275	299	136	62	74
15-19	804	380	424	602	278	324	202	102	100
20-24	991	523	468	536	243	293	455	280	175
25-29	1,106	569	537	561	252	309	545	317	228
30-34	1,043	530	513	536	239	297	507	291	216
35-39	931	513	418	529	260	269	402	253	149
40-44	859	454	405	494	252	242	365	202	163
45-49	786	406	380	489	226	263	297	180	117
50-54	801	375	426	513	218	295	288	157	131
55-59	959	483	476	595	294	301	364	189	175
60-64	703	340	363	459	231	228	244	109	135
65-69	488	238	250	314	147	167	174	91	83
70-74	288	138	150	163	80	83	125	58	67
75+	242	100	142	142	63	79	100	37	63
Total	11,802	5,924	5,878	7,371	3,490	3,881	4,431	2,434	1,997
% Distribution	100.0	50.2	49.8	62.5	29.6	32.9	37.5	20.6	16.9

Table 3. Total Visitors by Usual Residence and Purpose of Visit December, 2024

Country of Usual Residence	Country of							Not Stated
	Total	% Distribution	Holiday/Vacation	Business/Conference	Visiting Relative/Friends	Other Reasons		
Australia	1,501	20.4	318	38	1088	30	27	
New Zealand	4,028	54.6	881	56	2987	52	52	
Fiji	244	3.3	65	30	110	31	8	
American Samoa	-	-	0	0	0	0	0	
Western Samoa	34	0.5	4	0	28	0	2	
Other Pacific Islands	42	0.6	4	2	33	2	1	
Japan	27	0.4	10	4	7	4	2	
China	138	1.9	53	10	55	14	6	
India	11	0.1	6	3	1	1	0	
Korea	3	0.0	3	0	0	0	0	
Other Asian Countries	37	0.5	18	3	4	9	3	
UK	43	0.6	30	2	8	1	2	
Germany	32	0.4	29	0	3	0	0	
France	17	0.2	3	0	3	11	0	
Italy	3	0.0	1	0	2	0	0	
Other European Countries	58	0.8	47	1	8	1	1	
All African Countries	3	0.0	2	0	1	0	0	
United States of America	1,105	15.0	267	7	785	18	28	
Canada	26	0.4	13	1	9	3	0	
Other American Countries	19	0.3	6	0	12	0	1	
Total	7,371	100.0	1,760	157	5,144	177	133	
% Distribution	100.0		23.9	2.1	69.8	2.4	1.8	

Table 4: AIR DEPARTURES by Age Group, Passenger's Type for December, 2024

Age Group	Returning Residence	Percentage Distribution	Visitors	Percentage Distribution	Total	Percentage Distribution
0 - 4	281	4.1	202	3.9	483	4.0
5 - 9	506	7.4	244	4.7	750	6.2
10 - 14	647	9.5	274	5.3	921	7.7
15 - 19	742	10.9	341	6.5	1083	9.0
20 - 24	650	9.5	349	6.7	999	8.3
25 - 29	589	8.6	416	8.0	1,005	8.4
30 - 34	538	7.9	385	7.4	923	7.7
35 - 39	448	6.6	388	7.4	836	6.9
40 - 44	473	6.9	401	7.7	874	7.3
45 - 49	366	5.4	379	7.3	745	6.2
50 - 54	347	5.1	418	8.0	765	6.4
55 - 59	411	6.0	481	9.2	892	7.4
60 - 64	294	4.3	344	6.6	638	5.3
65 - 69	197	2.9	267	5.1	464	3.9
70 - 74	155	2.3	162	3.1	317	2.6
75+	171	2.5	164	3.1	335	2.8
All Ages	6,815	100.0	5,215	100.0	12,030	100.0
YACHT	-	-	-	-	-	0
CRUISE SHIP	-	-	408	-	408	0
Total	6,815	100.0	5,623	100	12,438	100.0

Table 5. Total Departures by Country of Residence and Sex December, 2024

Country of Usual Residence	Male	Percent	Female	Percent	Total	Percent
	No.	Distribution	No.	Distribution	No.	Distribution
Australia	478	8.7	540	8.3	1,018	8.5
New Zealand	1,196	21.8	1,345	20.6	2,541	21.1
Fiji	156	2.8	118	1.8	274	2.3
American Samoa	-	-	-	-	-	-
Western Samoa	5	0.1	10	0.2	15	0.1
Tonga	2,887	52.6	3,928	60.1	6,815	56.7
Other Pacific Islands	17	0.3	11	0.2	28	0.2
Japan	21	0.4	8	0.1	29	0.2
China	159	2.9	37	0.6	196	1.6
India	8	0.1	6	0.1	14	0.1
Korea	2	0.0	4	0.1	6	0.0
Other Asian Countries	39	0.7	11	0.2	50	0.4
UK	26	0.5	21	0.3	47	0.4
Germany	23	0.4	9	0.1	32	0.3
France	13	0.2	5	0.1	18	0.1
Italy	2	0.0	2	0.0	4	0.0
Other European Countries	32	0.6	20	0.3	52	0.4
All African Countries	10	0.2	3	0.0	13	0.1
United States of America	397	7.2	444	6.8	841	7.0
Canada	14	0.3	12	0.2	26	0.2
Other American Countries	6	0.1	5	0.1	11	0.1
Total	5,491	100.0	6,539	100.0	12,030	100.0

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