

Immigration Tourism Update

May 2026

High level messages

- Immigration supports the Government's economic growth agenda, and Immigration New Zealand (INZ) works to ensure visa processing supports New Zealand's visitor economy.
- INZ aims to provide a trusted and effective immigration service and is committed to making timely and good quality visa decisions.
- China and India are important markets for our tourism sector, and INZ has been working hard to ensure the immigration process is as quick and easy as possible for these visitors, through strengthened engagement and ongoing improvements in processing performance.
- INZ is committed to working closely with the tourism sector to ensure that we are in a good position to support the sector to grow.
- Between **1 January and 30 April 2026**, a total of **601,962** New Zealand Electronic Travel Authority's (NZeTA) were approved, along with **137,014** visitor visas. As a result, **704,793** people visited New Zealand during that period.
- Working Holiday makers also make a valuable contribution to the tourism sector and between **1 January and 30 April 2026**, a total of **11,950** Working Holiday Visas (WHVs) were approved across all schemes, with an approval rate of **98%**. During that same period, **11,754** WHV holders arrived in New Zealand.

China

Snapshot

- China remains a key tourism market for New Zealand, and INZ continues to strengthen our engagement with this important market, while also ensuring the immigration process is quick and easy.
- Between 1 January and **30 April 2026**, a total of **129,928** Chinese visitors arrived in New Zealand on an NZeTA or visitor visa. During that same period, **62,487** visitor visas were approved with an approval rate **97%** and **51,650** NZeTA requests were approved with an approval rate of **99%**.
- Most Chinese visitors are issued a five-year multiple-entry visitor visa.
- Visa processing times have improved year on year. The average processing time in the first four months of this year was 4 working days, compared with 6 days in the same period last year.
- There has been a strong uptake in the NZeTA trial from Australia, and as at 30 April 2026, we have received **82,671** requests and **70,489** travellers have arrived since the trial began on 3 November 2025.

- In the month of April 2026 alone, we received **11,516** requests. Monthly stats can be found here: [Background on the NZeTA: Why it was introduced and key statistics :: Immigration New Zealand](#).

Support & engagement

- We have dedicated staff in China to ensure we are well connected to the market and provide support to our tourism customers, including Approved Destination Status (ADS) agents.
- We have simplified Chinese online guidance to support applicants, including: [Visitor Visa application guide for citizens of China : Immigration New Zealand](#).
- INZ and Tourism New Zealand have an updated Memorandum of Understanding with selected Chinese travel agents under the ADS and Free and Independent Traveller (FIT) scheme, including a 5-day turnaround commitment.

Transit update

- Since the transit changes to allow Chinese nationals to transit New Zealand on an NZeTA came into effect on 27 October 2025, as at **30 April 2026** we have received **8,756** requests for a transit NZeTA from Chinese nationals, and **8,159** of these have transited through New Zealand.

India

Snapshot

- India is a priority visitor market for New Zealand and INZ continues to strengthen our engagement with this important market.
- Between 1 January and **30 April 2026**, **23,066** visitor visas were approved with an approval rate of **84%** and **21,187** Indian visitors arrived in New Zealand.
- Visa processing times have improved year on year. The average processing time in the first four months of this year was **7** working days, compared with **9** days in the same period last year.
- INZ continues to work with the market to encourage more complete applications, which has contributed to faster processing and higher approval rates.

Support & engagement

- INZ has strengthened in-market support through a dedicated role in New Delhi to work directly with, and provide support to our tourism customers, including travel agents.

Appendix A – Data

Visitor Visas

Total Visitor Visa applications and Visitor Visa arrivals from all nationalities (01 Jan – 30 April 2026)

	Submitted	Decided	Approved	Declined	Arrivals	Average processing time (working days)
Total	147,801	154,564	137,014	16,013	153,613	6

Total Visitor Visa applications and Visitor Visa arrivals from all nationalities (01 Jan – 30 April 2025)

	Submitted	Decided	Approved	Declined	Arrivals	Average processing time (working days)
Total	152,577	159,015	140,233	17,284	150,009	7

Visitor Visas applications – Top 5 nationalities approved and declined (01 Jan – 30 April 2026)

Nationality	Approved	Average processing time (working days)	Nationality	Declined	Average processing time (working days)
China	62,487	4	India	4,073	9
India	23,066	7	Pakistan	2,088	13
Philippines	9,438	5	China	1,937	13
Thailand	6,287	5	Nigeria	923	12
Indonesia	4,780	5	Fiji	806	14

Visitor Visas applications – Top 5 nationalities approved and declined (01 Jan – 30 April 2025)

Nationality	Approved	Average processing time (working days)	Nationality	Declined	Average processing time (working days)
China	71,646	6	India	4,753	12
India	20,857	9	China	2,841	10
Philippines	8,175	4	Pakistan	1,602	20
Thailand	6,197	5	Fiji	899	35
Fiji	4,671	9	Philippines	724	13

China

China Visitor Visas (01 January – 30 April 2026)

Category	Submitted (applications)	Decided (applications)	Approved (applications)	Approval rate	Arrivals
All Visitor Visas	61,522	64,654	62,487	97%	79,365
General Visitor Visa	32,388	32,257	33,301	94%	56,583
Business Visitor Visa	12,594	12,829	12,750	99%	1,909
Group Visitor Visas	14,817	14,785	14,769	100%	19,324
NZeTA	51,756	51,685	51,650	99%	50,563
Total	113,288	116,339	114,137	99%	129,928

China Visitor Visas (01 January – 30 April 2025)

Category	Submitted (applications)	Decided (applications)	Approved (applications)	Approval rate	Arrivals
All Visitor Visas	71,805	74,683	71,646	96%	82,035
General Visitor Visa	37,806	40,749	37,975	93%	56,962
Business Visitor Visa	16,878	16,423	16,257	99%	1,993
Group Visitor Visas	15,732	16,094	16,067	100%	21,697
Total	71,805	74,683	71,646	97%	82,035

India

India Visitor Visas (01 January – 30 April 2026)

Category	Submitted (applications)	Decided (applications)	Approved (applications)	Approval rate	Arrivals
All Visitor Visas	27,235	27,504	23,066	84%	21,187
General Visitor Visa	21,167	21,877	17,988	82%	22,616
Business Visitor Visa	1,260	1,312	1,150	93%	651
Group Visitor Visas	1,626	1,649	1,596	97%	1,724
Total	27,235	27,504	23,066	84%	21,187

India Visitor Visas (01 January – 30 April 2025)

Category	Submitted (applications)	Decided (applications)	Approved (applications)	Approval rate	Arrivals
All Visitor Visas	24,693	26,010	20,857	80%	24,105
General Visitor Visa	20,202	21,935	17,268	79%	20,914
Business Visitor Visa	1,300	1,325	1,235	93%	673
Group Visitor Visas	217	205	155	76%	232
Total	24,693	26,010	20,857	80%	24,105