

## New statistics show importance of tourism to NZ recovery

The critical importance of the tourism industry to New Zealand's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic has been reinforced by the latest statistics.

**Tourism Satellite Account** (TSA) figures released today by Stats NZ show that total annual tourism spend had reached a record \$41.9 billion in the year ended 31 March 2020, an increase of 2.4% or \$1 billion on a year earlier.

International visitors' spend was up by 2.2% or \$371 million to \$17.5 billion, even though international arrivals fell 5.6% compared with the previous year.

Domestic travellers' spend was up by 2.7% or \$629 million to \$24.4 billion.

The TSA is the official annual measurement of the New Zealand tourism industry. It includes measures of tourism spend by international and domestic visitors, the number of people employed through tourism, tourism's share of export earnings and its contribution to New Zealand's GDP.

"This official measurement of the value of the visitor economy reinforces its importance to New Zealand," Tourism Industry Aotearoa Chief Executive Chris Roberts says.

"While this period covered the initial stages of the pandemic, including the border closures in mid-March, we still saw total annual tourism expenditure grow to \$41.9 billion - an average spend of \$115 million per day."

"The increase in expenditure was achieved despite the fall in international arrivals. This is pleasing as it showed value growing faster than volume, one of the industry's key long term goals," Mr Roberts says.

225,384 people were directly employed in tourism – 8.0% of the total workforce and an increase of 2.5% from the previous year. A further 158,802 were indirectly employed in tourism (5.6 % of total employment), providing products and services consumed by visitors.

Tourism was New Zealand's largest export earner, providing 20.1% of New Zealand's total export receipts.

Visitors provided the government with \$3.9b in GST revenue, with \$1.8b of that coming from international visitors.

"Since March, the tourism picture has changed dramatically. However, this official record of the contribution of tourism to Aotearoa demonstrates the critical role the revitalisation of tourism will have in the wider economic recovery," Mr Roberts says.

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To read the latest Tourism Satellite Account go to  
<https://www.stats.govt.nz/information-releases/tourism-satellite-account-year-ended-march-2020>

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## KEY FACTS

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Tourism in New Zealand was a \$115 million per day industry. Tourism delivered more than \$48 million in foreign exchange to the New Zealand economy each day of the year. Domestic tourism contributed another \$67 million in economic activity every day.
- Tourism was New Zealand's biggest export earner, contributing \$17.5 billion or 20.1% of New Zealand's foreign exchange earnings (year ended March 2020).
- 13.6% of the total number of people employed in New Zealand worked directly or indirectly in tourism. That means 384,186 people were working in the visitor economy.
- The [Tourism 2025 & Beyond](#) sustainable growth framework/Kaupapa Whakapakari Tāpoi has a vision of growing a sustainable tourism industry that benefits New Zealanders.

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