



**MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,  
INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT**  
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

**BUSINESS AND  
ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT**



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# Regional Tourism Indicators

Questions and answers

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## **1. Why can't I get the actual spend?**

The RTI data represents varying proportions of visitor spend. In its raw state it would be misleading to quote expenditure totals captured by the RTIs until the totals have been adjusted to reflect the proportions that they represent.

## **2. How does the index work?**

An index compares the current month (or year) with a standard period. In the case of the RTI the reference period is the average month in 2008. An index allows the reader to compare the changes over time. Each index series has its own base period calculated.

## **3. Why is the index based on average month in 2008?**

The index is based on the average month in 2008 for two reasons. It is the start of the available data, and it is a year with little in the way of exceptional events (compared to later years with events such as earthquakes, volcanic ash clouds and the Rugby World Cup).

## **4. How do these figures differ from the International Visitor Survey (IVS) and Domestic Travel Survey (DTS)?**

The RTI data only captures the electronic card transactions of visitors, compared to the IVS and the DTS which capture the total spend of those surveyed. The IVS and the DTS should be used as the estimate of the total international and domestic spend, and the RTI used to determine where in New Zealand the expenditure occurs.

## **5. Is it possible to compare spend between two or more countries?**

It is possible to use the index to compare spending patterns across countries. A sense of the difference in level of spend can be provided from the transaction counts. However when comparing countries it is important to remember that there is a large difference in electronic card transaction usage rates – for example, higher index levels for the USA compared to Japan are only meaningful if the difference is greater than the difference in usage rates (about 70% of USA spend in New Zealand is via electronic card transactions compared to about 30% for Japan).

## **6. Is it possible compare domestic spend between two or more RTO areas?**

It is possible to use the index to compare spending patterns across RTO areas. A sense of the difference in level of spend can be provided from the transaction counts.

## **7. Is it possible to monitor spending categories between different tourism sectors?**

The RTI data set captures this information, however at this stage we are not able to release the data because we need to do more work to understand and present it in an accurate manner.

## **8. Can I compare domestic and international RTI data on the same chart for my RTO?**

At the moment the relative size of international and domestic spend can't be compared using the RTI. The data contains different proportions of total expenditure; at this stage these proportions have not been calculated.

However, it is possible to compare the trends in international and domestic tourism in a single RTO (for example, in a plot with one line showing change over time in international, and a different colour line showing the same for domestic). The RTI pivot tables will not do this for you automatically; you will need to take information from both the domestic and the international workbooks and combine them.

## **9. Are there any privacy concerns?**

No. Data has already been aggregated before it is purchased by MBIE, and there is no way MBIE or anyone else can use the RTIs to identify the spending behaviour of individuals.

## **10. What will happen to the RTIs if their coverage rates change over time, or people start using face-to-face electronic transactions more or less than now?**

MBIE is monitoring for any such changes over time, which will become more important in comparing long term changes as more data is available. If problems emerge, ways will be found to counter them, or additional cautions will be added for users of the RTIs.

## **11. Can I have some custom analysis done, or a custom query from the database?**

Maybe. MBIE has to assess any such requests on a case by case basis, taking into account any wider benefits from the analysis, how it will be used, and how much staff time would be taken in conducting the analysis. The published data, particularly in the pivot tables, should already answer many questions with much greater reliability than has been possible before and MBIE encourages stakeholders to use this new information to its fullest.

## **12. Why are the detailed spreadsheets in xlsx rather than xls?**

Wherever possible we have tried to make the information available in xls as it is compatible with most software. However the detailed data spread sheets contain too much data for xls to handle.

## **13. Who can I contact for further assistance?**

If you have further questions please send them to [tr\\_sharedmailbox@med.govt.nz](mailto:tr_sharedmailbox@med.govt.nz).

## **14. Are international debit cards included in the RTI?**

Yes, international debit cards are included in the RTI international indexes.

## **15. Are purchases made using China Union Pay cards included in the RTIs?**

Yes, so long as the payment is processed through Paymark.