



22 January 2025

Ref: DOIA-REQ-0007518

## Privacy of natural persons

Thank you for your request to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) on 9 December 2024 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

1. *Current Number of Illegal Aliens: Please provide the most recent statistics on the number of illegal aliens currently residing in New Zealand.*
2. *Total Persons Deported Per Annum Since 2010: Please provide statistics on the total number of persons deported from New Zealand each year since 2010.*

### Our Response

In response to question one relating to statistics of "illegal aliens", we have interpreted your request to mean statistics of people who are unlawfully in New Zealand. MBIE is refusing this request under section 18(f) of the Act, as the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research. In accordance with section 18A of the Act we have considered whether fixing a charge or extending the timeframe to respond to your request would assist with answering your request however it is our opinion that it would not.

We can advise that the most recent estimate of people who have overstayed their visa was from December 2017. That report estimated that there were around 14,000 individuals, who were unlawfully in New Zealand at that time. To ensure the integrity of this data, Immigration New Zealand (INZ) took a sample of approximately 2,000 people from the data set and manually investigated each client record to establish which clients were in New Zealand unlawfully. This proportion was then applied to the complete data set to get an estimate of the total number of individuals unlawfully in New Zealand. Please find a copy of this report attached to this response, attached as Appendix A.

There is no updated list available. MBIE has however, developed a new methodology to calculate the number of people who are in New Zealand unlawfully. Work is currently underway to update the current estimate based on the new methodology. We expect a new estimate to be available within the next 12 months.

In response to question two, the term "deportation" covers unlawful migrants, most of whom have interacted with MBIE prior to their departure from New Zealand. This information shows Compliance cases with any of the following case closure outcomes:

- **Client Deported** – A person who is unlawfully in New Zealand who has been served a deportation order and departs New Zealand, or a temporary visa holder who was made liable

for deportation and departs New Zealand after the date when they may be served with a deportation order.

- **Client Self-Deported** – A person who is unlawfully in New Zealand who departs New Zealand of their own volition and at no cost to the Ministry after the date when the person may be served with a deportation order, but they have not been served with such an order.
- **Voluntary Departure** – A person who is unlawfully in New Zealand or is a temporary visa holder who was made liable for deportation and departs of their own volition and at no cost to the Ministry prior to the date when the person may be served with a deportation order.

Please note that MBIE is unable to provide data relating to deportations prior to 1 January 2011 as this information was recorded in a previous case management system that is no longer accessible.

Therefore, the table below shows the number of people who were deported each year from New Zealand from 1 January 2011 to 8 December 2024.

Please note that data previously released relating to deportations is different. This is because remedial work has been done on how deportations are recorded and closed in MBIE's case management system. This has resulted in changing the closed date for around 6600 cases across six financial years. Please note all departure dates from 1 July 2018 onwards show the date client has departed the country, and majority of all dates before this date show the Compliance case closed date.

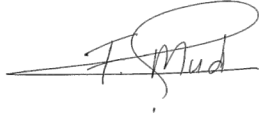
	Deportation Types			
Departure Date / Case Closed Date	Client Departed	Client Self-Deported	Voluntary Departure	Total
2011	611	2*	1052	1665
2012	764	189	1399	2352
2013	745	503	1105	2353
2014	545	579	619	1743
2015	537	904	462	1903
2016	562	619	528	1709
2017	813	1075	1121	3009
2018	471	787	1156	2414
2019	495	491	759	1745
2020	217	203	334	754
2021	213	160	211	584
2022	195	218	269	682
2023	248	243	256	747
2024 (-8/12/2024)	354	251	381	986
<b>Total</b>	<b>6770</b>	<b>6224</b>	<b>9652</b>	<b>22646</b>

\* Self-Deportation outcome data did not become available for reporting until June 2012.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request or this response, or if you require any further assistance, please contact [OIA@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:OIA@mbie.govt.nz).

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F. Mudafar', with a horizontal line underneath.

Fadia Mudafar  
**National Manager Immigration Compliance**  
Immigration Compliance and Investigations

## OVERSTAYERS

Overstayers are people who remain in New Zealand after their visas expire without applying for a further visa.

Immigration New Zealand (INZ) records all arrivals and departures from New Zealand and we are aware when someone has not departed before their visa has expired. There is an express obligation under the Immigration Act 2009 for all people unlawfully in New Zealand to leave the country. The legal obligation to leave New Zealand before a temporary visa expires is clearly communicated on visas.

People who are overstayers, regardless of nationality, must appreciate that if there are no special circumstances that call for the grant of a visa they are expected to leave New Zealand or face deportation. If a person is deported they face a ban of up to five years from applying to come to New Zealand again.

In the 2017/18 financial year (1 July 2017 – 30 June 2018) INZ deported 642 people who were unlawfully in New Zealand and liable for deportation. INZ also negotiated the voluntary departure of a further 2,304 overstayers which avoided the New Zealand taxpayer paying the deportation costs and allowed the person to apply to return to New Zealand without a travel ban.

Immigration New Zealand encourages people who are unlawfully in New Zealand to contact us to discuss their circumstances and determine what the best option is for them. They can contact us on our free phone 0508 55 88 55.

People who are in New Zealand unlawfully can end up being exploited by unscrupulous employers and many create a significant financial stress for family attempting to house and support them. If an individual has any information about the whereabouts of people unlawfully in New Zealand we encourage them to contact us.

Immigration New Zealand is grateful for the public's assistance in helping to locate anyone unlawfully.

## ESTIMATED OVERSTAYERS 2000 to 2017

\* Totals include Rest of World (generally nationalities where there were fewer than 200 cases) figures.

Note:

- › Gaps occur where the nationality was included in the Rest of World estimate. For example, the October 2006 report was the first year South Korea was split out from Rest of World.
- › The increase in overstayer numbers reported in the December 2017 estimate can, in part, be attributed to a change in methodology. The previous estimate methodology relied to some extent on personal judgement about whether an individual had left New Zealand. Under the new estimate methodology a person classified as unlawfully in the country is regarded as an overstayer unless there is clear evidence they have left New Zealand.

	Jul 2000	Nov 2001	Oct 2002	May 2003	Nov 2003	Apr 2004	Oct 2005	Apr 2006	Oct 2006	Apr 2007	Oct 2007	Apr 2008	Oct 2008	Apr 2009	Oct 2009	Apr 2010	Oct 2010	May 2011	Aug 2012	Sep 2013	Oct 2014	Jan 2016	Dec 2016	Dec 2017
Samoa	5456	3621	3822	3500	3713	3900	3149	3742	3582	4085	4198	4036	3661	4082	3981	3945	3540	3509	2983	2686	2,451	2,124	1,853	1,549
Tonga	5073	2774	2940	2736	2816	2496	2352	2497	2136	2284	2294	227	2181	2457	2786	2995	2982	3109	3044	2889	2,536	2,381	2,432	2,498
China	558	800	912	1225	1968	2050	2880	2591	2584	2261	2312	2066	2056	1965	1877	1678	1785	1632	1604	1617	1,406	1,226	1,299	1,529
Thailand	1809	1968	1617	1560	1328	1232	801	695	539	473	489	412	400	443	409	384	415	366	301	268	220	192	205	184
USA	316	1148	1056	775	999	952										402								
Great Britain	1184	1066	888	1330	1292	816	1372	1276	1034	1029	830	1060	671	729	581	611	649	535	506	486	486	495	471	589
Fiji	912	684	702	742	810	750	603	731	599	686	786	743	653	713	919	1045	1031	1055	853	771	699	473	444	434
Tuvalu		609	680	664	744	**	450	489	502	518	483	489	463	469	510	501	498	535	484	466	463	400	366	358
India	451	420	533	832	924	1066	880	807	680	630	620	558	556	534	535	510	591	581	678	785	790	763	912	1,310
Malaysia	465	450	370	410	490	574	765	698	645	63	695	686	632	683	638	629	526	525	447	392	383	364	441	790
Indonesia	342	280	295	345	264	292	296	335	278	243	206	192	173	157	165	140	136	139	144	121	114	104	105	107
Brazil					126	194	252	274	176	182	196	236	211	227	187	172	149	158	172	107	92		63	124
Philippines							168	156	141	130	141	138	145	173	182	154	165	164	120	93	87	90	111	129
Kiribati							105	106	81	90	98	82	91	99	105	130	121	110	140	121	118	108	91	96
Czech Rep						156	99	102	76	68	49	46	35	28	24	17	12	26	14	17	15			
South Korea									506**	492	573	469	456	416	502	392	438	356	354	312	269	271	285	323
South Africa																								176
Rest of World							5628	4589	3804	3614	3517	3496	3164	2596	2480	2055	2578	2230	2200	2020	2,033	1,634	1,816	3,699
Est totals*	20657	18287	18134	18405	20440	20328	19800	19091	17364	17397	17487	16979	15548	15769	15880	15760	15614	15030	14044	13151	12,162	10,848	10,894	13,895