

VISITOR EARNINGS & REMITTANCES REPORT MARCH 2024

This report is a monthly release of the latest available indicators on the tourism sector and private remittances, with information sourced from the Central Bank, Samoa Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of Customs and Revenue.

Report No.9: 2023/24

March 2024

Visitor Arrivals¹

Total visitor arrivals recorded an increase of **16.7 percent (or 1,612 visitors) to 11,242 visitors** over February 2024 and was also higher by 11.0 percent (or 1,114 visitors) than the same month of last year.

The expansion in the number of visitors over the previous month reflected hikes in visitors from Europe (up by 34.2 percent), Australia (by 27.4 percent), USA (by 21.3 percent), New Zealand (by 13.9 percent), American Samoa (by 10.8 percent) and ‘Other countries’ (by 5.5 percent). By purpose of visit, bulk of this growth came from those who were here for ‘Visiting Families and Friends’ (by 48.3 percent). ‘Holiday’ (by 40.3 percent) and ‘Business and conference’ (by 22.6 percent).

Underpinning this growth over the previous month were mainly higher earnings from New Zealand, Australia and USA by \$3.2 million, \$2.1 million and \$1.4 million respectively with marginal increases from American Samoa, Europe and ‘Other countries’. Proceeds from visitors such as ‘Others’, ‘Holiday’ and ‘Visiting Friends and Relatives’ to name a few all went up by \$3.7 million, \$2.9 million, \$1.9 million respectively.

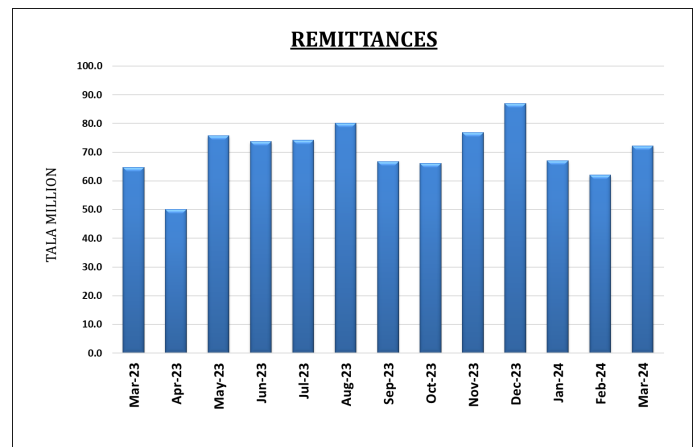
Moreover, total arrivals in the first eight months of **FY2023/24 totalled 132,763 visitors**, which was 72.0 percent (or 55,568 visitors) higher than the same period of FY2022/23. Also, total **tourism earnings amounted to \$461.1 million**, which was 82.0 percent (or \$208.0 million) higher than in the same period of 2023.



Similarly, **total visitor receipts expanded by 24.7 percent (or \$8.2 million) to \$41.4 million** over the February 2024 and was 19.8 percent (or \$6.8 million) higher than the same month of 2023.

Remittances

Total **monthly remittances for the month under review rebounded by 16.5 percent (or \$10.2 million) to \$72.3 million** when compared to the previous month and was 11.7 percent (or \$7.6 million) higher than the same level of the same month last year.

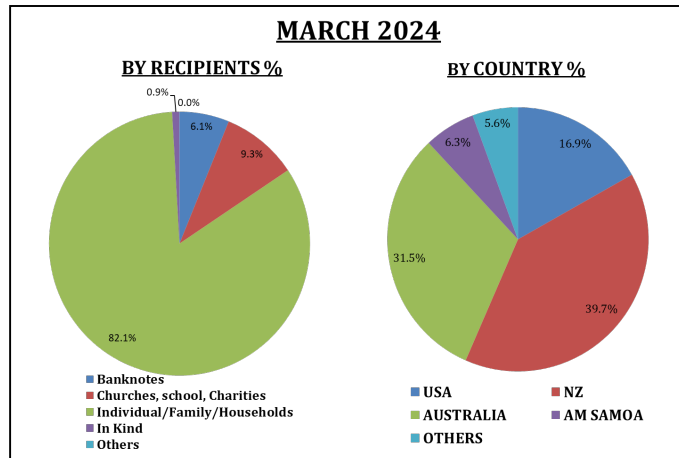


¹ Samoa re-opened its border to international travelers on 1st August 2022. Cruise ship tourists are not counted as tourist as they are only in Samoa for a day but their spending is included as part of tourist earnings.

VISITOR EARNINGS & REMITTANCES REPORT

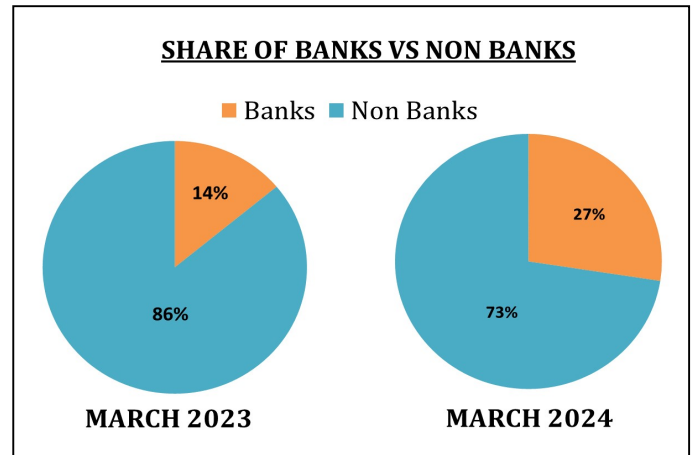
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The improvement in remittances over February 2024 was due to rise in funds received from all its main source markets such as New Zealand, Australia, 'Others', American Samoa and USA by \$4.9 million, \$2.1 million, \$1.8 million, \$1.5 million and 0.02 million respectively. In terms of recipients, gains were recorded for 'Family and Households' (up by \$10.8 million), 'Non-profit institution serving households' (NPISH)² (by \$2.1 million) and 'Hand-carried cash' (by \$1.2 million).



Likewise, the total inflow of remittances in the **first nine months of FY2023/24** hiked up further by **3.2 percent (or \$20.0 million) to \$652.6 million** over the same month of last year. Accounting for this increase were higher transfers from USA by \$25.0 million and 'Other source markets' by \$11.8 million. This was partially aided by the depreciation of the Samoan Tala against the US dollar (by 0.9 percent). Additionally, total funds for 'Non-profit institution serving households' (NPISH), and 'Others' went up by \$24.9 million and \$7.0 million respectively.

The monthly share of total remittances received through Money Transfer Operators (MTO's) contracted to 73.0 percent in March 2024 from 86.0 percent in March 2023 while funds received through commercial banks edged up to 27.4 percent from 14.0 percent in March 2023.



The average monthly cost of sending NZD\$200.00 to Samoa rose to 8.34 percent in the month under review from 6.48 percent in March 2023 whereas the average cost of sending AUD\$200.00 to Samoa fell to 6.89 percent from 7.19 percent last year.

CENTRAL BANK OF SAMOA
03 May 2024

² Includes funds for churches, non-profit organizations and charities

VISITOR EARNINGS & REMITTANCES REPORT

March 2024

Table 1. TOURISM EARNINGS, AVERAGE EXPENDITURE AND TOURISM PRICE INDEX

	Mar-22	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24
Total arrivals (persons)	0	10,128	13,720	15,719	18,021	17,270	16,471	14,879	13,383	12,856	22,512	14,520	9,630	11,242
Total arrivals incl. cruise ships (1)	0	13,292	17,330	15,719	18,021	17,270	16,471	14,879	13,383	16,366	22,512	14,520	9,630	11,242
Arrivals, by market (persons)														
American Samoa	0	826	1,008	819	1,714	1,007	1,233	777	726	720	1,316	883	649	719
Australia	0	2,439	3,879	4,495	4,893	4,229	4,455	4,472	3,597	3,471	6,993	4,232	2,198	2,801
Europe	0	217	331	310	340	371	469	382	452	460	213	297	345	463
New Zealand	0	4,296	6,062	6,902	7,561	7,827	6,973	6,679	5,873	5,644	10,848	6,561	3,920	4,463
USA	0	867	970	1,247	1,563	1,831	1,230	892	1,008	976	1,752	1,002	877	1,064
Other Countries	0	1,483	1,470	1,946	1,950	2,005	2,111	1,677	1,727	1,585	1,390	1,545	1,641	1,732
Cruise ships	0	3,164	3,610	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,510	0	0	0	0
Arrivals, by purpose (persons)														
Holiday	0	3,660	5,441	5,891	7,722	8,098	7,249	6,372	5,859	5,019	9,052	5,172	2,778	3,897
VFR	0	3,592	5,801	6,070	6,996	5,107	5,056	4,845	3,932	4,225	10,832	6,047	3,124	3,776
Business & Conference	0	650	569	1,397	1,280	1,290	732	887	870	1,218	357	567	765	938
Sport	0	37	255	383	120	154	1,070	611	205	103	13	21	277	44
Other	0	2,189	1,654	1,978	1,903	2,621	2,364	2,164	2,517	2,291	2,258	2,713	2,686	2,587
Cruise ships	0	3,164	3,610	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,510	0	0	0	0
Total earnings (tala million)	0.00	34.53	48.74	61.23	57.68	52.32	55.50	51.54	47.78	51.13	81.07	47.22	33.15	41.35
Earnings, by market (tala million)														
American Samoa	0.00	2.02	3.52	3.42	5.11	2.75	2.59	1.55	1.14	1.58	4.08	2.35	0.80	1.84
Australia	0.00	9.78	15.48	16.32	17.34	12.54	17.56	16.53	16.27	18.44	28.90	15.42	10.04	12.13
Europe	0.00	0.32	0.42	0.32	0.30	0.31	0.60	0.41	0.43	0.71	0.38	0.35	0.36	0.74
New Zealand	0.00	14.16	22.03	29.22	22.00	23.41	25.10	23.73	21.95	22.15	35.24	21.06	12.42	15.58
USA	0.00	3.84	2.11	3.87	5.24	6.12	3.27	4.05	2.63	3.01	6.35	2.86	3.61	4.98
Other Countries	0.00	4.41	5.18	8.08	7.69	7.19	6.39	5.26	5.36	5.23	6.13	5.18	5.92	6.08
Cruise ships	0.00	0.59	0.66	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.66	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Earnings, by purpose (tala million)														
Holiday	0.00	10.78	16.90	21.44	22.76	23.23	24.48	22.54	15.87	15.68	29.65	17.18	9.40	12.28
VFR	0.00	12.03	22.63	29.83	28.02	20.21	20.48	18.36	17.01	26.58	42.72	23.17	10.93	12.83
Business & Conference	0.00	2.34	2.25	4.50	4.25	3.57	2.96	3.26	2.64	5.34	1.41	2.45	3.31	3.64
Sport	0.00	0.14	0.84	1.51	0.23	0.60	2.85	2.44	0.51	0.27	0.03	0.08	0.75	0.18
Other	0.00	9.23	6.12	3.96	2.41	4.71	4.74	4.93	11.75	3.26	7.26	4.34	8.75	12.41
Cruise ships	0.00	0.59	0.66	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.66	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Average expenditure (tala,per person)	0.0	3.409	3.553	3.895	3.201	3.030	3.370	3.464	3.570	3.977	3.601	3.252	3.442	3.678
Tourism Price Index	138.7	165.0	167.4	167.0	169.8	175.2	173.8	175.3	175.9	175.7	175.7	177.3	177.8	177.7
First Number of Months up to	9 months to Mar 22	9 months to Mar 23	10 months to Apr 23	11 months to May 23	12 months to June 23	1st month	2 months to Aug 23	3 months to Sep 23	4 months to Oct 23	5 months to Nov 23	6 months to Dec 23	7 months to Jan 24	8 months to Feb 24	9 months to Mar 24
Total Visitor Arrivals (persons)	0	77,195	90,915	106,634	124,655	17,270	33,741	48,620	62,003	74,859	97,371	111,891	121,521	132,763
Over the past year (%)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	160.7%	80.1%	86.6%	50.7%	34.2%	17.8%	25.3%	11.0%
Past 3 year average	-41.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Past 5 year average	-29.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Arrivals, by market (persons)														
American Samoa	0	6,351	7,359	8,178	9,892	1,007	2,240	3,017	3,743	4,463	5,779	6,662	7,311	8,030
Australia	0	19,259	23,138	27,633	32,526	4,229	8,684	13,156	16,753	20,224	27,217	31,449	33,647	36,448
Europe	0	1,421	1,752	2,062	2,402	371	840	1,222	1,674	2,134	2,347	2,644	2,989	3,452
New Zealand	0	35,346	41,408	48,310	55,871	7,827	14,800	21,479	27,352	32,996	43,844	50,405	54,325	58,788
USA	0	6,036	7,006	8,253	9,816	1,831	3,061	3,936	4,961	5,937	7,689	8,691	9,568	10,632
Other Countries	0	8,782	10,252	12,198	14,148	2,005	4,116	5,793	7,520	9,105	10,495	12,040	13,681	15,413
Cruise ships	0	17,498	21,108	21,108	21,108	0	0	0	0	3,510	3,510	3,510	3,510	3,510
Arrivals, by purpose (persons)														
Holiday	0	24,585	30,026	35,917	43,639	8,098	15,347	21,719	27,578	32,597	41,649	46,821	49,599	53,496
VFR	0	33,057	38,858	44,928	51,924	5,107	10,163	15,008	18,940	23,165	33,997	40,044	43,168	46,944
Business & Conference	0	4,868	5,437	6,834	8,114	1,290	2,022	2,909	3,779	4,997	5,354	5,921	6,686	7,624
Sport	0	319	574	957	1,077	154	1,224	1,835	2,040	2,143	2,156	2,177	2,454	2,498
Other	0	14,366	16,020	17,998	19,901	2,621	4,985	7,149	9,666	11,957	14,215	16,928	19,614	22,201
Cruise ships	0	17,498	21,108	21,108	21,108	0	0	0	0	3,510	3,510	3,510	3,510	3,510
Total Visitor Earnings (tala million)	0.00	253.36	302.10	363.33	421.01	52.32	107.82	159.36	207.14	258.27	339.34	386.57	419.72	461.07
Over the past year (%)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	423.8%	230.0%	189.1%	152.5%	115.7%	99.1%	91.8%	82.0%
Past 3 year average	-42.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Past 5 year average	-26.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Earnings, by market (tala million)														
American Samoa	0.0	14.5	18.0	21.4	26.5	2.7	5.3	6.9	8.0	9.6	13.7	16.0	16.8	18.7
Australia	0.0	74.5	90.0	106.3	123.7	12.5	30.1	46.6	62.9	81.3	110.2	125.7	135.7	147.8
Europe	0.0	1.7	2.1	2.4	2.7	0.3	0.9	1.3	1.8	2.5	2.8	3.2	3.6	4.3
New Zealand	0.0	114.0	136.1	165.3	187.3	23.4	48.5	72.2	94.2	116.3	151.6	172.6	185.1	200.6
USA	0.0	20.8	22.9	26.8	32.0	6.1	9.4	13.4	16.1	19.1	25.4	28.3	31.9	36.9
Other Countries	0.0	27.8	33.0	41.1	48.8	7.2	13.6	18.8	24.2	29.4	35.6	40.7	46.7	52.8
Cruise ships	0.0	3.1	3.8	3.8	3.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
Earnings, by purpose (tala million)														
Holiday	0.0	70.5	87.41	108.85	131.61	23.23	47.71	70.25	86.13	101.80	131.46	148.64	158.04	170.32
VFR	0.0	126.2	148.9	178.7	206.7	20.2	40.7	59.0	76.1	102.6	145.4	168.5	179.5	192.3
Business & Conference	0.0	16.9	19.1	23.6	27.9	3.6	6.5	9.8	12.4	17.8	19.2	21.6	24.9	28.6
Sport	0.0	0.9	1.8	3.3	3.5	0.6	3.5	5.9	6.4	6.7	6.7	6.8	7.5	7.7
Other	0.0	38.8	44.9	48.9	51.3	4.7	9.4	14.4	26.1	29.4	36.6	41.0	49.7	62.1
Cruise ships	0.0	3.1	3.8	3.8	3.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7

(1) Including July 2022 which was a month inclusive of the lockdown period.

VISITOR EARNINGS & REMITTANCES REPORT

March 2024

Table 2. INFLOW OF PRIVATE REMITTANCES

AMOUNTS IN TALA MILLION														
Amount in Tala Millions	Mar-22	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24
By Recipient (Tala Millions)	55.20	64.72	50.03	75.74	73.75	74.25	80.22	66.79	66.19	76.83	86.97	67.03	62.05	72.28
Banknotes	0.28	3.90	4.01	12.15	4.83	3.20	4.38	8.48	7.24	7.36	7.55	5.13	3.16	4.38
Churches, school, Charities	1.32	2.67	0.85	6.82	2.98	4.33	7.17	0.65	4.25	7.62	6.78	6.26	4.60	6.72
Individual/Family/Households	52.51	56.81	43.30	55.17	64.50	65.40	66.73	54.09	52.69	60.05	70.95	53.80	48.54	59.33
In Kind	0.46	0.78	0.75	0.79	0.82	0.70	0.81	0.85	0.84	0.88	0.83	0.79	0.74	0.63
Others	0.63	0.57	1.11	0.81	0.63	0.62	1.12	2.73	1.18	0.92	0.86	1.06	5.02	1.21
By Country (Tala Millions)	55.20	64.72	50.03	75.74	73.75	74.25	80.22	66.79	66.19	76.83	86.97	67.03	62.05	72.28
USA	8.94	8.83	8.32	9.53	10.90	13.18	15.24	11.22	13.28	15.16	12.48	9.70	12.17	12.19
New Zealand	23.42	27.77	22.40	31.85	28.29	24.27	27.71	25.78	24.00	29.26	36.67	26.24	23.80	28.69
Australia	19.40	22.95	16.01	23.28	28.16	29.48	32.65	24.05	22.68	26.00	29.09	24.02	20.67	22.74
American Samoa	2.79	4.05	2.90	4.00	4.02	3.98	3.51	3.63	3.98	3.55	3.55	2.75	3.08	4.58
Others	0.65	1.12	0.40	7.09	2.38	3.33	1.10	2.23	2.61	2.42	5.17	4.31	2.33	4.08
By Channel (%)														
Banks	15.7%	14.0%	19.6%	21.7%	19.4%	22.1%	26.5%	26.6%	29.3%	30.7%	23.3%	28.0%	26.5%	27.4%
Non Banks (1)	84.3%	86.0%	80.4%	78.3%	80.6%	77.9%	73.5%	73.4%	70.7%	69.3%	76.7%	72.0%	73.5%	72.6%
Total Remittances (Tala Millions)	55.20	64.72	50.03	75.74	73.75	74.25	80.22	66.79	66.19	76.83	86.97	67.03	62.05	72.28
First Number of Months up to	9 months to Mar 22	9 months to Mar 23	10 months to Apr 23	11 months to May 23	12 months to June 23	1st month	2 months to Aug 23	3 months to Sep 23	4 months to Oct 23	5 months to Nov 23	6 months to Dec 23	7 months to Jan 24	8 months to Feb 24	9 months to Mar 24
Total Remittances (Tala Millions)	534.03	632.60	682.63	758.37	832.13	74.25	154.47	221.26	287.45	364.29	451.25	518.29	580.34	652.61
Percentage Change (over same period last year)	16.5%	18.5%	15.2%	14.9%	13.6%	-10.6%	-0.6%	-1.5%	0.1%	0.7%	-1.1%	1.4%	2.2%	3.2%
3 year average (%)	8.8%	9.4%	9.9%	10.1%	11.1%	18.6%	16.8%	18.2%	17.0%	16.8%	17.1%	15.6%	15.1%	14.7%
5 year average (%)	9.5%	12.2%	12.4%	12.7%	12.9%	21.5%	17.9%	17.1%	15.1%	14.7%	14.3%	13.4%	12.8%	12.3%
By Recipient (Tala Millions)														
Banknotes	3.71	44.02	48.04	60.19	65.02	3.20	7.58	16.06	23.30	30.66	38.22	43.34	46.50	50.88
Churches, school, Charities	20.73	21.65	22.51	29.32	32.30	4.33	11.50	12.16	16.41	24.03	30.80	37.07	41.66	48.39
Individual/Family/Households	489.29	551.83	595.13	650.30	714.80	65.40	132.12	186.21	238.90	298.94	369.89	423.69	472.23	531.56
In Kind	7.59	7.29	8.04	8.83	9.65	0.70	1.51	2.36	3.20	4.08	4.91	5.70	6.44	7.07
Others	12.71	7.81	8.92	9.73	10.36	0.62	1.74	4.47	5.65	6.57	7.43	8.49	13.50	14.72
By Country (Tala Millions)														
USA	76.38	89.77	98.09	107.61	118.51	13.18	28.43	39.64	52.92	68.09	80.57	90.27	102.44	114.63
New Zealand	215.62	254.13	276.53	308.38	336.67	24.27	51.98	77.76	101.76	131.03	167.70	193.95	217.75	246.44
Australia	193.78	234.32	250.33	273.61	301.77	29.48	62.13	86.18	108.86	134.86	163.95	187.97	208.64	231.37
American Samoa	34.27	38.57	41.47	45.48	49.49	3.98	7.50	11.01	14.64	18.62	22.17	24.92	28.00	32.58
Others	13.98	15.82	16.22	23.30	25.68	3.33	4.44	6.66	9.27	11.69	16.87	21.18	23.51	27.58

(1) Includes Money Transfer Operators (MTOs) and Foreign Exchange Dealers (FEDs)
 (rev) - Remittances data starting from May 2017 up to December 2018 have been revised to reflect updates and amendments to the international transactions reported by commercial banks and money transfer operators.