



VISITOR EARNINGS & REMITTANCES REPORT FEBRUARY 2023

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.8: 2022/23

February 2023

Visitor Arrivals¹

Total number of **visitor arrivals** for February 2023 recorded a further drop of 37.6 percent (or 4,634 visitors) to a total of **7,687 visitors** when compared to the previous month.

Accounting mainly for the lower arrivals over the previous month were reductions in visitors from New Zealand (down by 3,402 visitors), Australia (down by 1,014 visitors), USA (down by 117 visitors), American Samoa (down by 77 visitors) and ‘Other Countries’ (down by 54 visitors). For arrivals by purpose, Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR), Holidays and ‘Other’ all recorded reductions of 2,347 visitors, 1,569 visitors and 853 visitors in that order.

In the event, **total visitor receipts contracted by 33.1 percent (or \$12.2 million) to \$24.7 million** over the previous month. The current drop was driven mainly by decreases in spending by visitors from New Zealand (down by \$10.3 million), Australia (down by \$1.8 million) and American Samoa (\$0.9 million). By purpose of visit, reductions were recorded for those ‘Visiting Friends and Relatives’ (down by \$2.3 million) and ‘Holiday’ (by \$1.6 million), offsetting increases from ‘Other’, ‘Business and Conference’ and ‘Sports’.

Nevertheless, total tourism earnings in the **first eight months of FY2022/23²** amounted to **\$218.8 million**. This was made up of receipts shares from New Zealand (at 45.6 percent), Australia (at 29.6

percent), ‘Other Countries’ (at 10.7 percent), USA (at 7.7 percent), American Samoa (at 5.7 percent) and Europe (at 0.6 percent). In terms of purpose of visit, ‘VFR’, ‘Holiday’, ‘Other’, ‘Business and Conference’ and ‘Sports’ recorded shares of 55.0 percent, 29.5 percent, 14.8 percent, 7.1 percent, 1.1 percent and 0.4 percent in that order.

Remittances

Total **inflow of remittances increased by 1.7 percent (or \$0.9 million)** to \$56.0 million when compared to the previous month and was also 2.5 percent (or \$1.4 million) higher than the same month last year.

Primarily contributing to the overall increase in remittances over the previous month were gains in funds from USA (up by \$2.5 million) and American Samoa (up by \$0.1 million). By recipients, funds for ‘Hand-carried cash’ and ‘Non-profit institution serving households’ (NPISH)³ rose by \$1.6 million and \$1.5 million respectively, offsetting reductions in all other recipients.

As a result, total remittances for the **first eight months of FY2022/23** jumped by 18.4 percent (**or \$88.3 million**) to \$567.3 million when compared to the same period last year. Largely responsible for the overall increase were higher transfers from Australia (up by \$36.8 million), New Zealand (up by \$34.0 million), USA (up by \$13.4 million), American Samoa (up by \$3.0 million) and ‘Others’ (up by \$1.2 million). This was partially assisted by the depreciation of the Samoan Tala against the US dollar (by 5.2 percent). By recipients, total funds for ‘Family and households’ and ‘Hand-carried cash’

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.

² Including July 2022 where Samoa was still in lockdown.

³ Includes funds for churches, non-profit organizations and charities

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expanded by \$56.9 million and \$36.7 million respectively.

The monthly share of total remittances received through Money Transfer Operators (MTOs) increased from 79.7 percent in February 2022 to 86.4 percent in February 2023 while those received directly through commercial banks fell to 13.6 percent from 20.3 percent in the same month last year.

The average monthly cost of sending NZD\$200.00 to Samoa fell to 7.35 percent of total funds from 8.60 percent in February 2022 while the average cost of sending AUD\$200.00 to Samoa went up to 6.78 percent from 6.60 percent over the year.

CENTRAL BANK OF SAMOA
31st March 2023

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

	Feb-21	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23
Total arrivals (persons)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,318	8,261	7,171	8,530	16,779	12,321	7,687
Total arrivals incl. cruise ships (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,318	8,261	10,284	10,512	18,234	14,972	12,820
Arrivals, by market (persons)														
American Samoa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	719	723	635	726	1,323	738	661
Australia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,658	1,835	1,559	1,810	5,372	2,800	1,786
Europe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	126	110	154	138	176	235	265
New Zealand	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,644	3,961	3,330	4,090	7,435	6,496	3,094
USA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	386	724	612	607	1,309	824	707
Other Countries	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	785	908	881	1,159	1,164	1,228	1,174
Cruise ships	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,113	1,982	1,455	2,651	5,133
Arrivals, by purpose (persons)														
Holiday	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,745	2,399	2,349	2,346	5,869	3,893	2,324
VFR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,745	3,617	2,860	3,696	8,176	5,359	3,012
Business & Conference	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	677	900	591	754	388	422	486
Sport	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	95	12	39	15	17	88
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,135	1,250	1,359	1,695	2,331	2,630	1,777
Cruise ships	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,113	1,982	1,455	2,651	5,133
Total earnings (tala million)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	20.58	27.70	23.37	30.62	55.04	36.85	24.65
Earnings, by market (tala million)														
American Samoa	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.70	1.64	1.05	1.54	3.85	1.81	0.88
Australia	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.20	6.39	6.50	8.79	19.98	9.38	7.53
Europe	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.15	0.11	0.14	0.18	0.28	0.25	0.24
New Zealand	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	9.17	13.45	11.67	14.81	22.06	19.49	9.23
USA	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	3.30	1.51	1.76	4.32	2.20	2.86
Other Countries	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.37	2.81	2.51	3.53	4.56	3.72	3.91
Cruise ships	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.55	0.34	0.24	0.26	0.94
Earnings, by purpose (tala million)														
Holiday	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.27	7.84	5.11	5.70	16.97	11.71	11.84
VFR	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10.31	13.37	11.09	20.29	29.71	19.42	16.10
Business & Conference	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.45	3.04	1.46	2.67	1.35	1.65	2.89
Sport	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.04	0.35	0.02	0.08	0.04	0.06	0.40
Other	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.52	3.09	5.68	1.89	6.98	4.02	8.27
Cruise ships	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.55	0.34	0.24	0.26	0.94
Average expenditure (tala, per person)	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	3,258	3,353	3,258	3,590	3,280	2,991	3,206
Tourism Price Index	127.8	137.6	138.7	139.4	139.6	143.4	147.7	164.5	165.0	162.7	158.8	158.6	163.1	164.6
First Number of Months up to	8 months to Feb 21	8 months to Feb 22	9 months to Mar 22	10 months to Apr 22	11 months to May 22	12 months to June 22	1st month	2 months to Aug 22	3 months to Sep 22	4 months to Oct 22	5 months to Nov 22	6 months to Dec 22	7 months to Jan 23	8 months to Feb 23
Total Visitor Arrivals (persons)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,318	14,579	21,750	30,280	47,059	59,380	67,067
Over the past year (%)	-100.0%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Past 3 year average	-1.5%	-25.0%	-41.8%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Past 5 year average	0.1%	-22.0%	-29.8%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Arrivals, by market (persons)														
American Samoa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	719	1,442	2,077	2,803	4,126	4,864	5,525
Australia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,658	3,493	5,052	6,862	12,234	15,034	16,820
Europe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	126	236	390	528	704	939	1,204
New Zealand	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,644	6,605	9,935	14,025	21,460	27,956	31,050
USA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	386	1,110	1,722	2,329	3,638	4,462	5,169
Other Countries	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	785	1,693	2,574	3,733	4,897	6,125	7,299
Cruise ships	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,113	5,095	6,550	9,201	14,334
Arrivals, by purpose (persons)														
Holiday	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,745	4,144	6,493	8,839	14,708	18,601	20,925
VFR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,745	6,362	9,222	12,918	21,094	26,453	29,465
Business & Conference	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	677	1,577	2,168	2,922	3,310	3,732	4,218
Sport	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	111	123	162	177	194	282
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,135	2,385	3,744	5,439	7,770	10,400	12,177
Cruise ships	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,113	5,095	6,550	9,201	14,334
Total Visitor Earnings (tala million)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	20.58	48.28	71.65	102.27	157.31	194.17	218.82
Over the past year (%)	-100.0%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Past 3 year average	0.9%	-26.3%	-42.0%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Past 5 year average	3.5%	-19.5%	-26.1%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Earnings, by market (tala million)														
American Samoa	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.7	3.3	4.4	5.9	9.8	11.6	12.5
Australia	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.2	12.6	19.1	27.9	47.9	57.2	64.8
Europe	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.9	1.1	1.4
New Zealand	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.2	22.6	34.3	49.1	71.2	90.7	99.9
USA	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	4.3	5.8	7.6	11.9	14.1	17.0
Other Countries	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.4	5.2	7.7	11.2	15.8	19.5	23.4
Cruise ships	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.9	1.1	1.4	2.3
Earnings, by purpose (tala million)														
Holiday	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.3	13.1	18.2	23.9	40.9	52.6	64.4
VFR	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.3	23.7	34.8	55.1	84.8	104.2	120.3
Business & Conference	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.5	5.5	7.0	9.6	11.0	12.6	15.5
Sport	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.6	1.0
Other	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.5	5.6	11.3	13.2	20.2	24.2	32.4
Cruise ships	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.9	1.1	1.4	2.3

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

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Table 2.

INFLOW OF PRIVATE REMITTANCES

AMOUNTS IN TALA MILLION

Amount in Tala Millions	Feb-21	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23
By Recipient (Tala Millions)	42.02	54.64	55.20	58.35	67.63	72.20	83.06	72.26	69.24	62.59	74.58	94.51	55.08	56.00
Banknotes	0.20	0.16	0.28	0.25	2.24	3.54	3.26	3.86	4.80	5.13	6.99	6.29	4.15	5.64
Churches, school, Charities	3.17	3.93	1.32	1.90	3.83	5.61	1.85	2.82	0.28	1.27	5.72	4.35	0.56	2.12
Individual/Family/Households	37.39	49.36	52.51	55.35	60.16	61.38	76.50	62.94	61.99	54.66	60.40	82.09	48.88	47.56
In Kind	0.45	0.73	0.46	0.68	0.70	0.62	0.68	0.94	0.86	0.89	0.86	0.93	0.82	0.55
Others	0.81	0.45	0.63	0.17	0.69	1.05	0.76	1.70	1.31	0.64	0.62	0.84	0.68	0.13
By Country (Tala Millions)	42.02	54.64	55.20	58.35	67.63	72.20	83.06	72.26	69.24	62.59	74.58	94.51	55.08	56.00
USA	5.63	10.22	8.94	7.04	7.89	8.79	10.79	8.18	9.92	10.77	10.62	12.35	7.87	10.34
New Zealand	17.11	19.96	23.42	25.27	29.19	32.40	33.03	28.17	28.88	24.15	29.69	38.01	22.90	21.32
Australia	11.80	19.50	19.40	19.85	22.02	23.14	30.19	28.88	25.36	22.69	26.33	36.45	20.65	20.61
American Samoa	4.37	2.93	2.79	3.91	4.40	3.81	6.67	4.23	4.09	4.32	3.77	5.06	3.12	3.23
Others	3.11	2.02	0.65	2.27	4.13	4.06	2.38	2.81	0.99	0.65	4.18	2.65	0.54	0.50
By Channel (%)														
Banks	10.9%	20.3%	15.7%	15.5%	16.4%	20.7%	12.6%	20.1%	17.6%	16.0%	20.7%	17.5%	8.7%	13.6%
Non Banks (1)	89.1%	79.7%	84.3%	84.5%	83.6%	79.3%	87.4%	79.9%	82.4%	84.0%	79.3%	82.5%	91.3%	86.4%
Total Remittances (Tala Millions)	42.02	54.64	55.20	58.35	67.63	72.20	83.06	72.26	69.24	62.59	74.58	94.51	55.08	56.00
First Number of Months up to	8 months	8 months	9 months	10 months	11 months	12 months	1st	2 months	3 months	4 months	5 months	6 months	7 months	8 months
	to Feb 21	to Feb 22	to Mar 22	to Apr 22	to May 22	to June 22	month	to Aug 22	to Sep 22	to Oct 22	to Nov 22	to Dec 22	to Jan 23	to Feb 23
Total Remittances (Tala Millions)	406.51	479.05	534.25	592.60	660.23	732.43	83.06	155.32	224.56	287.15	361.73	456.25	511.33	567.33
Percentage Change (over same period last year)	8.9%	17.8%	16.5%	18.1%	18.9%	20.7%	55.5%	40.0%	36.6%	23.1%	20.1%	20.0%	20.5%	18.4%
3 year average (%)	11.5%	9.2%	8.8%	8.1%	7.4%	7.5%	10.7%	7.9%	9.4%	12.0%	13.0%	11.6%	10.5%	10.7%
5 year average (%)	6.1%	9.2%	9.5%	9.3%	9.3%	9.3%	10.4%	10.0%	10.0%	11.7%	12.3%	12.4%	11.8%	12.2%
By Recipient (Tala Millions)														
Banknotes	4.66	3.44	3.71	3.97	6.21	9.75	3.26	7.13	11.92	17.06	24.05	30.34	34.49	40.13
Churches, school, Charities	26.80	19.41	20.73	22.62	26.46	32.06	1.85	4.67	4.96	6.23	11.95	16.30	16.86	18.98
Individual/Family/Households	362.79	438.06	490.57	545.92	606.08	667.46	76.50	139.44	201.43	256.09	316.49	398.59	447.46	495.02
In Kind	4.26	7.13	7.59	8.27	8.96	9.58	0.68	1.62	2.47	3.36	4.22	5.15	5.97	6.51
Others	8.01	11.02	11.65	11.82	12.51	13.57	0.76	2.47	3.78	4.42	5.03	5.88	6.56	6.69
By Country (Tala Millions)														
USA	52.30	67.44	76.38	83.42	91.31	100.10	10.79	18.97	28.89	39.66	50.27	62.62	70.50	80.84
New Zealand	168.68	192.20	215.62	240.89	270.08	302.48	33.03	61.20	90.07	114.23	143.92	181.93	204.83	226.15
Australia	137.02	174.38	193.78	213.63	235.66	258.79	30.19	59.07	84.43	107.12	133.45	169.90	190.55	211.17
American Samoa	28.86	31.48	34.27	38.18	42.58	46.38	6.67	10.91	15.00	19.32	23.09	28.14	31.26	34.49
Others	19.65	13.55	14.20	16.47	20.60	24.66	2.38	5.18	6.18	6.83	11.01	13.65	14.20	14.70

(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.