

## VISITOR EARNINGS & REMITTANCES REPORT DECEMBER 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.6: 2024/25

December 2024

### Visitor Arrivals<sup>1</sup>

Total number of visitor arrivals at the end of the year recorded a significant seasonal increase of **75.7 percent (or 9,832 visitors)** over the previous month, reaching a total of **22,828 visitors**. This was also 1.4 percent (or 316 visitors) higher when compared to the same month in 2023. (See Graph 1).

Apart from the usual peak during the festive season, there were also one-off events during the month like the Seventh-day Adventist Trans-Pacific Union Youth Congress 2024. Other gatherings such as weddings, family reunions and chiefly title bestowments, contributed to the influx of the Samoan diaspora returning to visit their families.



Largely responsible for the higher visitor arrivals in December 2024 from the previous month were visitors from ‘New Zealand’ (up by 5,522 visitors), Australia (by 3,264 visitors), USA (655 visitors) and American Samoa (by 517 visitors). These were

partially offset by decreases in arrivals from Europe and ‘Other countries’. By purpose, the bulk of this expansion came from those ‘Visiting friends and families’ (up by 6,960 visitors), on ‘Holiday’ (up by 3,051 visitors) and ‘Other purpose of visit’ (4 visitors).

As a result, **total visitor receipts** expanded by **58.1 percent (or \$31.0 million)** to **\$84.4 million** compared to the previous month. Likewise, this level was 4.1 percent (or \$3.3 million) higher over the same month of the previous year.

Underpinning this expansion were higher earnings from those who came from New Zealand (by \$14.0 million), Australia (by \$9.4 million), USA (by \$2.9 million), American Samoa (by \$2.9 million) and ‘Other countries’ (by \$1.9 million). Proceeds from those who were here for ‘Visiting friends and families’, ‘Holiday’ and ‘Others’ rose by \$18.3 million, \$11.7 million and \$2.1 million respectively.

As a result, total visitor earnings for the **first six months of FY2024/25** expanded by **5.3 percent (or \$18.0 million)** to a total of **\$357.3 million**, over the same period of last year.

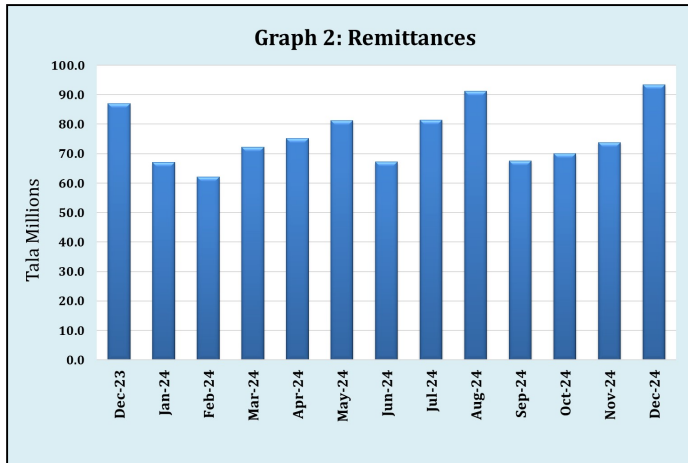
### Remittances

Total remittances also surged by a seasonal 26.9 percent (**or \$19.8 million**) to **\$93.4 million** in December 2024 and was 7.4 percent (or \$6.4 million) higher than the same month of last year. This seasonal growth reflects the influx of transfers to families and households for the Christmas and festive holidays. (See Graph 2.)

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

# VISITOR EARNINGS & REMITTANCES REPORT

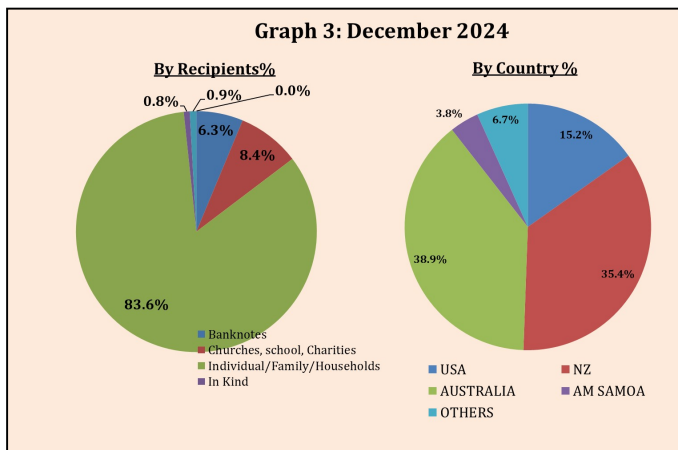
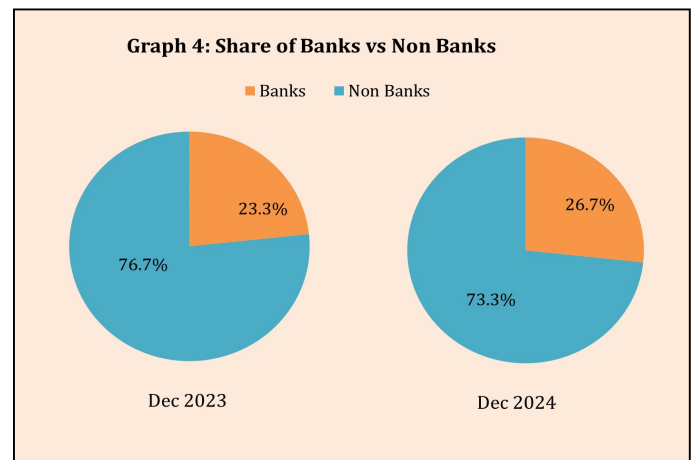
December 2024



\$7.2 million, ‘Others’ by \$4.3 million and ‘In kind transfers’ by \$0.1 million.

In terms of remittance channels, the shares of funds that was sent through Money Transfer Operators (MTOs) rose to 73.3 percent (from 71.5 percent in November 2024) but was lower than 76.7 percent in December last year. However, funds received through the commercial banks contracted to 26.7 percent from 28.5 percent a month ago but higher than 23.3 percent in the same month last year. (See Graph 4)

The hike over the previous month reflected increases in funds received from Australia (up by \$10.5 million), ‘New Zealand’ (up \$5.6 million), ‘Other countries’ (up \$2.2 million) and USA (up \$1.9 million). In terms of recipients, higher transfers were recorded for ‘Family and households’, Non-profit institutions serving households (NPISH) and ‘Pension by residents’. (See Graph 3)



According to the data obtained from *Send Money Pacific*<sup>2</sup>, the average monthly cost of remitting NZD\$200.00 to Samoa fell slightly to 7.45 percent in the month under review from 7.46 percent in December 2023. Similarly, the average cost of sending AUD\$200.00 to Samoa also contracted to 6.90 percent compared to 7.36 percent in the same month last year.

As a result, total inflow of remittances in the **first six months of FY2024/25** grew further by **5.6 percent (or \$25.4 million) to a total of \$477.3 million** over the corresponding period of last year. This was underpinned by increased funds from Australia (up by \$24.4 million), ‘Other countries’ (up by \$5.3 million) and American Samoa (up by \$0.2 million). Partially responsible for this growth was the depreciation of the Samoan Tala against the US dollar by 0.2 percent and New Zealand dollar by 0.6 percent. By recipient, funds for ‘Family and households’ went up by \$21.2 million, ‘NPISH’ by

**CENTRAL BANK OF SAMOA**  
**12<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

<sup>2</sup> <https://sendmoneypacific.org>



# VISITOR EARNINGS & REMITTANCES REPORT

December 2024

Table 2.

## INFLOW OF PRIVATE REMITTANCES

AMOUNTS IN TALA MILLION

Amount in Tala Millions	Dec-22	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24
<b>By Recipient (Tala Millions)</b>	<b>94.51</b>	<b>86.97</b>	<b>67.03</b>	<b>62.05</b>	<b>72.28</b>	<b>75.24</b>	<b>81.30</b>	<b>67.19</b>	<b>81.46</b>	<b>91.29</b>	<b>67.57</b>	<b>70.03</b>	<b>73.77</b>	<b>93.40</b>
Banknotes	6.29	7.55	5.13	3.16	4.38	4.46	7.26	4.92	4.62	5.84	4.77	3.81	5.94	5.87
Churches, school, Charities	4.35	6.78	6.26	4.60	6.72	12.86	10.88	5.12	4.92	13.00	3.24	3.24	6.29	7.85
Individual/Family/Households	82.09	70.95	53.80	48.54	59.33	52.45	60.40	51.98	65.07	70.86	57.98	61.12	58.17	78.12
In Kind	0.93	0.83	0.79	0.74	0.63	1.15	0.68	0.83	0.83	0.95	0.72	0.99	0.99	0.74
Pensions by residents	0.81	0.77	0.71	0.78	0.73	0.67	1.04	0.60	0.71	0.64	0.77	0.51	0.68	0.82
Others	0.03	0.08	0.34	4.23	0.48	3.65	1.05	3.73	5.31	0.00	0.09	0.36	1.71	0.01
<b>By Country (Tala Millions)</b>	<b>94.51</b>	<b>86.97</b>	<b>67.03</b>	<b>62.05</b>	<b>72.28</b>	<b>75.24</b>	<b>81.30</b>	<b>67.19</b>	<b>81.46</b>	<b>91.29</b>	<b>67.57</b>	<b>70.03</b>	<b>73.77</b>	<b>93.40</b>
USA	12.35	12.48	9.70	12.17	12.19	12.59	15.22	11.63	14.61	15.65	10.86	12.14	12.29	14.19
New Zealand	38.01	36.67	26.24	23.80	28.69	28.18	33.22	26.10	27.43	28.49	24.34	23.56	27.49	33.04
Australia	36.45	29.09	24.02	20.67	22.74	21.26	24.14	22.40	34.11	36.12	27.70	28.48	25.82	36.30
American Samoa	5.06	3.55	2.75	3.08	4.58	4.10	5.07	3.35	3.47	3.96	3.21	4.11	4.13	3.56
Others	2.65	5.17	4.31	2.33	4.08	9.11	3.66	3.72	1.85	7.07	1.46	1.74	4.04	6.30
<b>By Channel (%)</b>														
Banks	17.5%	23.3%	28.0%	26.5%	27.4%	31.4%	30.3%	27.5%	25.3%	29.4%	19.3%	19.8%	28.4%	26.7%
Non Banks (1)	82.5%	76.7%	72.0%	73.5%	72.6%	68.6%	69.7%	72.5%	74.7%	70.6%	80.7%	80.2%	71.6%	73.3%
<b>Total Remittances (Tala Millions)</b>	<b>94.51</b>	<b>86.97</b>	<b>67.03</b>	<b>62.05</b>	<b>72.28</b>	<b>75.24</b>	<b>81.30</b>	<b>67.19</b>	<b>81.46</b>	<b>91.29</b>	<b>67.57</b>	<b>70.03</b>	<b>73.77</b>	<b>93.40</b>
<b>First Number of Months up to</b>	<b>6 months to Dec 22</b>	<b>6 months to Dec 23</b>	<b>7 months to Jan 24</b>	<b>8 months to Feb 24</b>	<b>9 months to Mar 24</b>	<b>10 months to Apr 24</b>	<b>11 months to May 24</b>	<b>12 months to June 24</b>	<b>1st month to Aug 24</b>	<b>2 months to Sep 24</b>	<b>3 months to Oct 24</b>	<b>4 months to Nov 24</b>	<b>5 months to Dec 24</b>	<b>6 months to Dec 24</b>
<b>Total Remittances (Tala Millions)</b>	<b>456.25</b>	<b>451.88</b>	<b>518.91</b>	<b>580.96</b>	<b>653.24</b>	<b>728.47</b>	<b>809.77</b>	<b>876.96</b>	<b>81.46</b>	<b>172.75</b>	<b>240.31</b>	<b>310.34</b>	<b>384.11</b>	<b>477.51</b>
Percentage Change (over same period last year)	20.0%	-1.0%	1.5%	2.3%	3.3%	6.7%	6.8%	5.4%	9.7%	11.8%	8.3%	7.7%	5.3%	5.7%
3 year average (%)	11.5%	17.1%	15.6%	15.1%	14.7%	14.4%	13.8%	13.7%	12.9%	13.0%	12.3%	10.1%	11.4%	12.1%
5 year average (%)	12.4%	14.3%	13.4%	12.8%	12.3%	11.5%	11.2%	11.4%	15.4%	12.6%	12.7%	11.9%	12.0%	10.7%
<b>By Recipient (Tala Millions)</b>														
Hand Carried Cash	30.34	38.22	43.34	46.50	50.88	55.34	62.60	67.52	4.62	10.46	15.23	19.04	24.98	30.85
Churches, school, Charities	16.30	31.24	37.51	42.10	48.83	61.69	72.56	77.69	4.92	17.91	21.15	24.39	30.68	38.52
Individual/Family/Households	398.59	370.07	423.87	472.41	531.74	584.19	644.59	696.57	65.07	135.93	193.91	255.03	313.19	391.31
In Kind	5.15	4.91	5.70	6.44	7.07	8.22	8.90	9.73	0.83	1.78	2.50	3.49	4.48	5.22
Pensions by residents	4.40	4.26	4.97	5.76	6.49	7.15	8.19	8.79	0.71	1.35	2.12	2.63	3.32	4.13
Others	1.48	3.17	3.52	7.75	8.23	11.88	12.94	16.67	5.31	5.32	5.40	5.76	7.47	7.48
<b>By Country (Tala Millions)</b>														
USA	62.62	80.68	90.38	102.55	114.74	127.33	142.56	154.18	14.61	30.26	41.11	53.26	65.55	79.75
New Zealand	181.93	167.92	194.16	217.96	246.66	274.83	308.05	334.15	27.43	55.92	80.25	103.82	131.30	164.35
Australia	169.90	164.02	188.03	208.70	231.44	252.70	276.84	299.23	34.11	70.23	97.93	126.40	152.22	188.52
American Samoa	28.14	22.17	24.92	28.00	32.58	36.68	41.75	45.10	3.47	7.43	10.64	14.75	18.88	22.44
Others	13.65	17.10	21.41	23.74	27.82	36.93	40.58	44.30	1.85	8.91	10.38	12.11	16.15	22.45

(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.

Table 3.

## AVERAGE COST OF SENDING \$200 PER CURRENCY OF SOURCE COUNTRY TO SAMOA

Average (%)	Dec-22	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24
New Zealand	7.35	7.46	6.98	7.39	8.34	8.53	8.14	7.87	8.95	8.91	8.01	7.55	7.41	7.45
Australia	7.89	7.36	7.03	6.58	6.89	7.48	7.29	7.51	8.05	8.90	8.81	8.29	6.67	6.90

Source: Send Money Pacific Website (<https://sendmoneypacific.org>)