

62,000

New Zealanders cruised in 2025

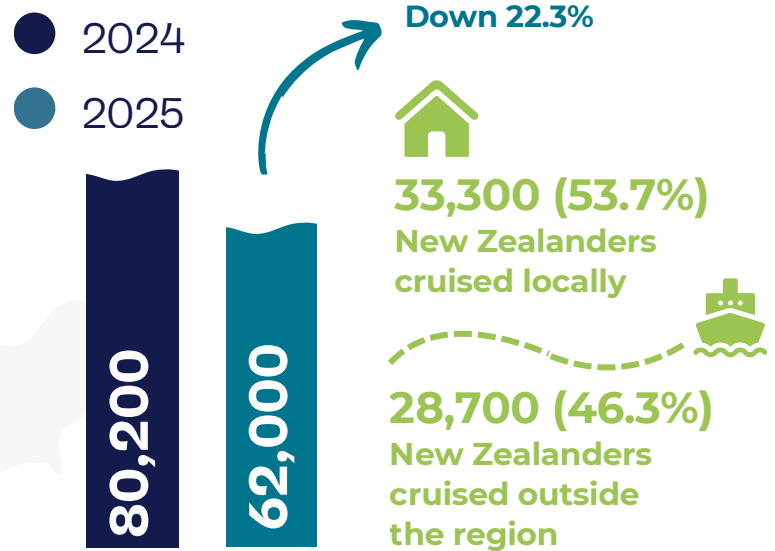
New Zealand market lags

The number of New Zealanders taking holidays at sea totalled 62,000 during 2025. This is a 22.3% decrease from 2024 when 80,200 sailed, and well below the 106,300 people who sailed in 2019.

In contrast to global cruise figures which are at record levels, New Zealand continues to be impacted by reduced local deployment due to well-publicised regulatory challenges and cost increases, resulting in fewer cruise choices at home.

While New Zealanders had limited opportunities to sail locally in 2025, the portion who chose fly-cruise holidays in long-haul destinations increased from 34.5% in 2024 to 46.3% in 2025. This trend confirms New Zealand cruise travellers will sail elsewhere if a more favourable regulatory environment for cruising is not achieved in the local region.

New Zealanders cruising



Local cruising impacted

Around half of Kiwi cruisers (53.7% or 33,300 people) sailed within Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific – traditionally the most popular region for this market. However, this was down from 2024 when around two-thirds (65.5% or 52,500 people) sailed locally.

New Zealanders cruising in long-haul destinations



Key Trends



A sharp decline in New Zealanders cruising locally



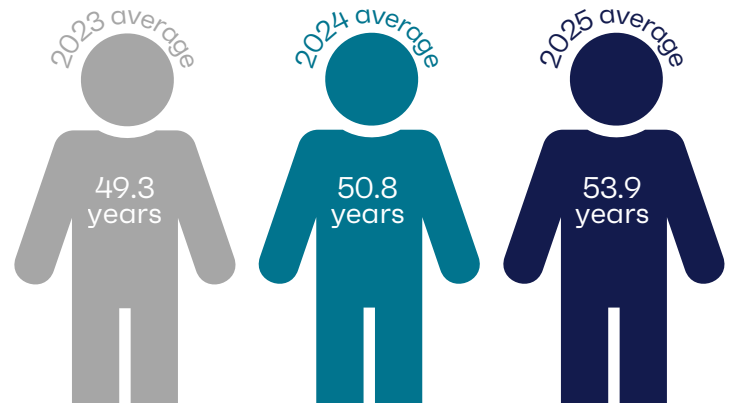
Increased fly-cruise travel to long-haul destinations



Regulatory environment impacts local deployment

New Zealand cruise passenger age groups

The average age of a New Zealand cruise passenger in 2025 was 53.9 years, an increase on previous years. This is above the global average of 46.7 and against the downward trend seen in other markets as cruise lines continue to attract younger generations. The reduction in local cruise options for New Zealanders has had a greater impact on younger travellers who traditionally favour shorter, close-to-home itineraries.



Cruise itinerary duration

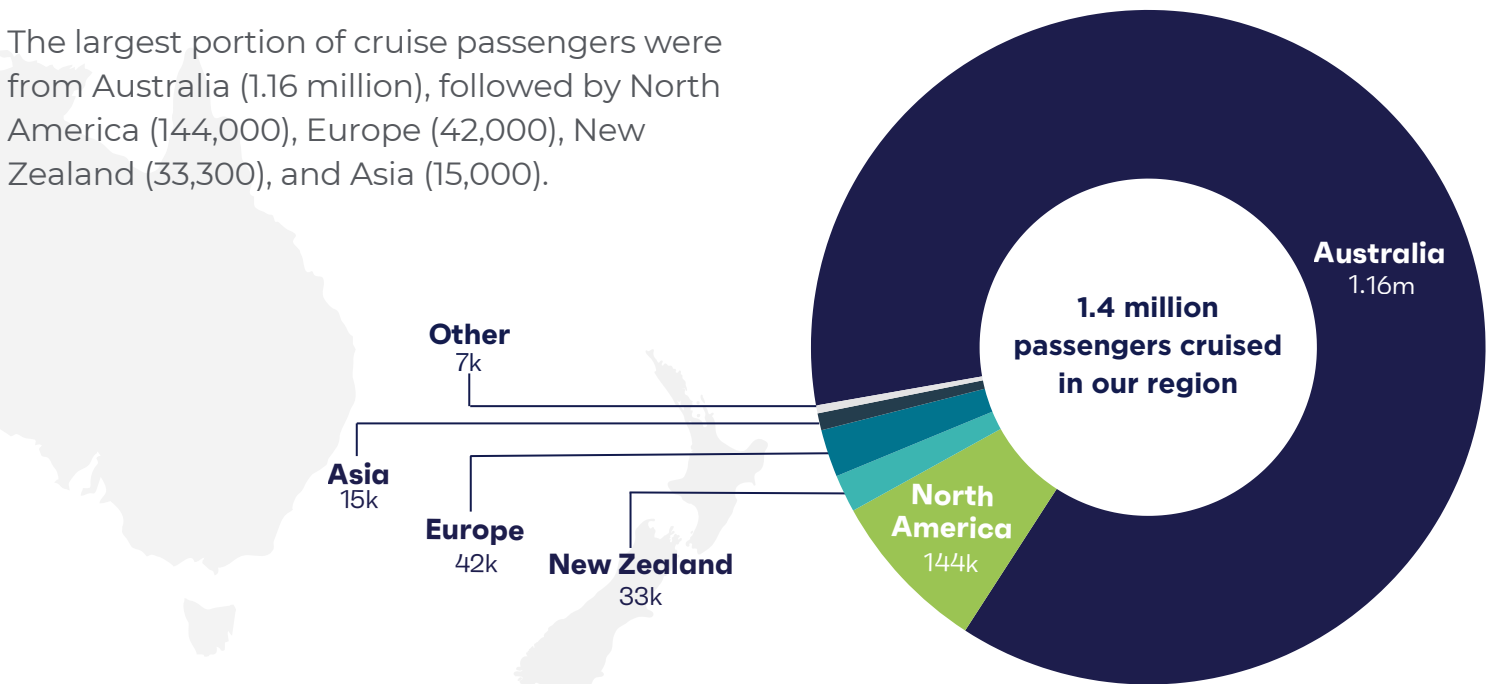
The average duration of an ocean cruise taken by New Zealanders was 9.9 days in 2025, up from 9.7 days in 2024. This reflects the increase in cruising in long-haul destinations where longer itineraries are favoured. The length of itinerary continues to influence the average age of New Zealand cruisers – older travellers are more likely to choose longer itineraries in fly-cruise destinations such as Europe, Asia and Alaska.



Who cruised in our region?

Overseas visitors made up a significant portion of passengers cruising in Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific during 2025. In all, 1.4 million people sailed in the region, a 6% increase over the previous year.

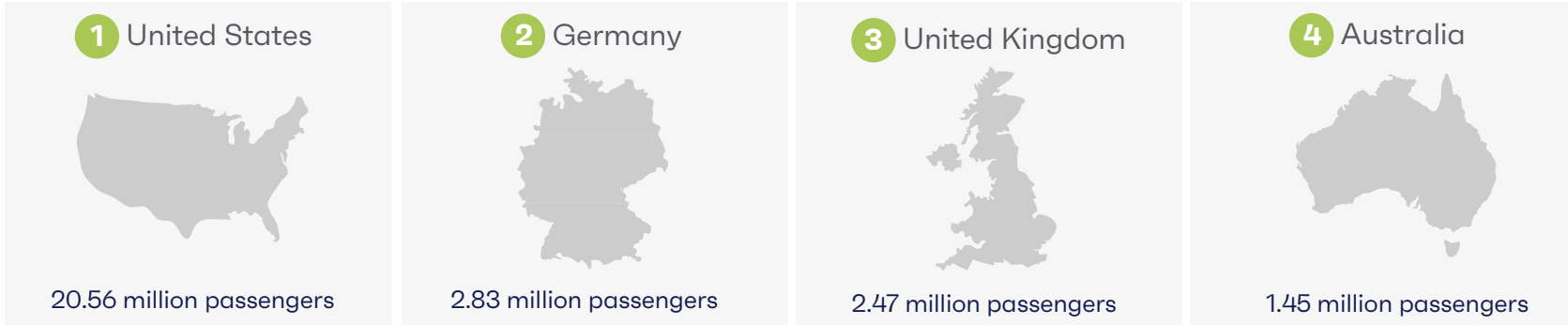
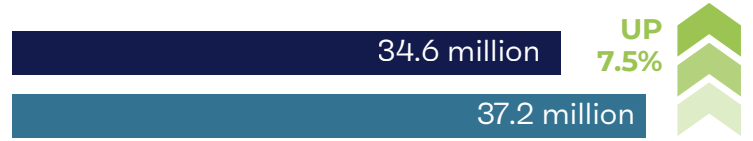
The largest portion of cruise passengers were from Australia (1.16 million), followed by North America (144,000), Europe (42,000), New Zealand (33,300), and Asia (15,000).



The world perspective

Global cruise tourism achieved another record in 2025, reaching a total of 37.2 million passengers, a 7.5% increase on the previous record of 2024.

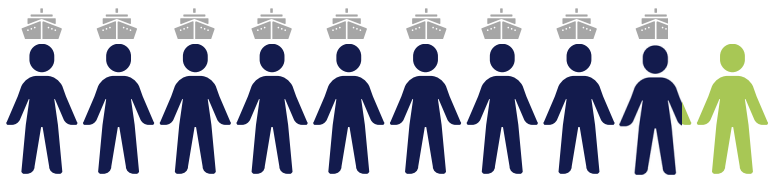
Global passengers ● 2024 ● 2025



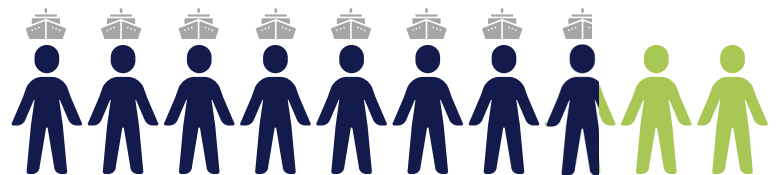
The United States continued to be the world’s largest cruise source market in 2025, followed by Germany, the United Kingdom and Australia. China had been the fourth-largest market in the previous decade but recorded 1.08 million passengers in 2025 as it continued its cruise revival, placing it behind Canada (1.27 million) and Italy (1.12 million).

CLIA forecasts show a continuing increase in global passenger numbers over coming years, including 38.3 million in 2026, rising to 42.1 million in 2029.

The outlook is supported by rising strength in consumer sentiment worldwide.



Of those who have cruised before, 89.7% say they are likely to cruise again.



Of those who have never cruised before, 75.6% say they would consider a cruise in the future.

Future potential

CLIA forecasts show strong passenger growth at the international level, with record numbers expected in 2026 and through to the end of the decade. This is in line with positive consumer sentiment and increasing capacity worldwide. In New Zealand, a significant decline in local deployment has highlighted the industry’s warnings that regulatory uncertainties and high costs are impacting the country’s competitiveness. CLIA and cruise lines are closely engaged with industry stakeholders and government, working to achieve more positive settings. Meanwhile, New Zealand’s largest overseas markets are experiencing strong growth, indicating good future potential for inbound cruise tourism if a more favourable environment for cruising can be achieved locally. Australian cruise passenger numbers increased 9.5% in 2025, while North America increased 7.5%.