

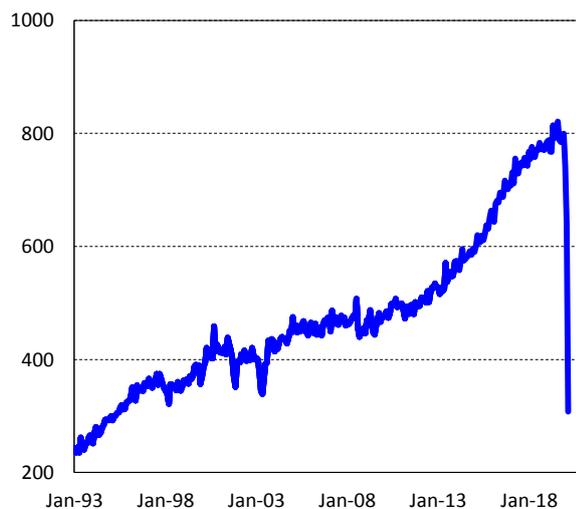


Tuesday, 12 May 2020

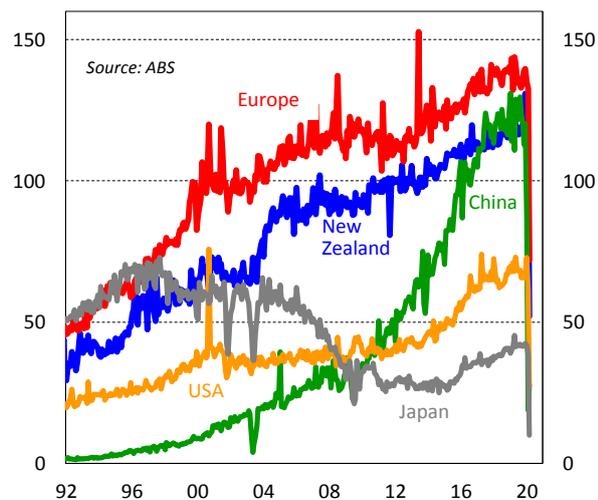
Overseas Arrivals & Departures Visiting Hours Are Over

- Short-term visitor arrivals fell 51.9% between February and March, the biggest monthly fall on record. On an annual basis, visitor arrivals were down 59.9% in March following an 18.8% fall in February.
- Short-term departures from Australia fell 64.9% compared with the same month a year earlier.
- The large fall in arrivals and departures is consistent with the halting of international travel amid the coronavirus pandemic.
- The number of visitors from mainland China ticked up slightly to 27,800 in March from 18,800 in February, however, arrivals remain significantly lower than the 120,300 visitors recorded in January.
- Mainland Chinese arrivals had their sharpest fall in February, when the Australian government banned travellers from China and as the country went into a strict lockdown.
- The number of arrivals in Australia travelling on a student visa decreased by an annual rate of 16% to 40,700 in March.
- The data confirms that the important services exports industries of education and tourism are suffering in the current environment. Migration inflows are likely to materially weaken over the coming months.

Australian Short-term Arrivals
(in thousands)



Australian Arrivals by Country
(seasonally adjusted, in thousands)



The number of overseas arrivals and departures plunged in March, consistent with the halting of international travel amid the coronavirus pandemic. Short-term visitor arrivals (less than one year) fell 51.9% between February and March, the biggest monthly fall on record.

On an annual basis, short-term arrivals were 59.9% lower in March following an 18.8% fall in February.

The number of short-term departures (non-seasonally adjusted) from Australia was 64.9% lower than the same month last year, at 287,600 in March.

Short-term arrivals have drastically reduced from all countries since coronavirus began to spread around the world. The number of visitors from mainland China ticked up slightly to 27,800 in February from 18,800 in March, however, arrivals were significantly lower compared to pre-crisis levels. On an annual basis, the number of visitors from China fell 76.7% in March. Mainland Chinese arrivals had their sharpest fall in February, when the Australian government banned travellers from China and as the country went into a strict lockdown.

By source country, most visitors to Australia continue to be from New Zealand. There were 52,000 short-term arrivals from New Zealand in March, less than half of February's number of 116,400.

Data on reason for travel indicate that the travel bans have had a significant impact on international students. The number of arrivals in Australia travelling on a student visa decreased by an annual rate of 16% to 40,700 in March. The peak in student arrivals is usually in the months of February and July. There was a decrease in international student visa arrivals of 48,800 students (or 40.2%) in February this year compared with the same month last year.

All States and territories saw a decline in the number of visitors in March. The Northern Territory saw the biggest percentage fall, with 66% fewer visitors compared with a year ago. Large declines in Queensland (-63%) and Victoria (-58%) suggest that the tourism arrivals have declined sharply, in line with international guidelines not to travel for non-essential reasons.

The data confirms that the important services exports industries of education and tourism are suffering in the current environment. Migration flows are likely to materially weaken over the coming months.

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The Detail

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