

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

International Visitor Survey Report:
January - December 2025

Expenditure Segmented by Purpose of Visit

SOFO



Photo Credit: David Kirkland

Disclaimer

- ❖ The information presented in this report is based on data collected through the **Papua New Guinea International Visitor Survey (PNG IVS)** for the period January to December 2025. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the findings, results are based on a **sample survey** and may be subject to **sampling variability and response biases**.
- ❖ The expenditure estimates in this report are derived from self-reported data provided by visitors. These figures should be interpreted with caution, as variations may occur due to **recall errors, underreporting, or overestimation** by respondents.
- ❖ The **Pacific Tourism Organization (SPTO)** and the **Papua New Guinea Tourism Promotion Authority (PNGTPA)** do not accept liability for any loss or damages incurred as a result of the use of this information. Users are advised to exercise discretion when interpreting the data.

Methodology and Segmentation Approach

- ❖ The PNG IVS collects data on visitor demographics, travel behaviors, and expenditure patterns. Analysis was conducted using SPSS, with weighting and filtering to ensure accuracy and representativeness.
- ❖ Visitor spending was categorized into **prepaid expenditure** (e.g., international flights, accommodation, meals, tours, and activities paid before arrival) and **in-country expenditure** (e.g., accommodation, food, retail, transport, and other expenses incurred during the visit). Some items, like accommodation and meals, appear in both categories due to differing payment methods (prepaid vs. on-site). Visitors should not provide the same amount for both, as the figures represent distinct spending types.
- ❖ The total economic impact was estimated by multiplying the weighted average spend per visitor by total actual visitor arrivals. Economic impact by purpose of visit was calculated by segmenting spending by purpose (e.g., holiday, business) and applying the same methodology.
- ❖ This approach ensures accurate representation of visitor spending and its economic contribution to PNG's tourism sector.

Tourism Economic Impact by Segment, 2025

(Source-market weighted; Special Interest combined)

	Indicator	Other	Holiday	Business	MICE	VFR	Special Interest	Employment	Overall
#1	Local spend per visitor (USD)	237	794	1,323	1,075	863	874	1,237	995
#2	Prepaid spend per visitor (USD)	303	2,241	2,232	3,398	1,568	1,671	2,051	2,087
#3	Adjusted prepaid (USD) <i>(65% of #2)</i>	197	1,456	1,451	2,209	1,019	1,086	1,333	1,356
#4	Average nights	3.3	10	8.9	5.9	11.1	9.4	19.7	10
#5	Spend per visitor per trip (USD) <i>(#1 + #3)</i>	434	2,250	2,774	3,284	1,882	1,960	2,570	2,352
#6	Spend per visitor per day (USD) <i>(#5 ÷ #4)</i>	131	225	313	559	170	209	130	236
#7	Actual Visitor arrivals <i>(Air only)</i>	7,996	16,000	29,615	2,152	8,844	3,261	36,013	103,881
#8	Economic impact (USD million) <i>(#5 × #7)</i>	3.5	36	82.1	7.1	16.6	6.4	92.6	244.3

Note:

- Prepaid expenditure adjusted using a 65% local retention assumption.
- Special Interest includes Sports, Education, Church, and Volunteering (incl. Medical Missions).

Executive Summary – Overall International Visitor Performance (2025)

- ❖ In 2025, international visitors to Papua New Guinea generated an estimated USD 244.3 million in local economic impact, supported by 103,881 visitor arrivals. Average expenditure per visitor was USD 2,352 per trip, comprising USD 1,356 in locally retained prepaid expenditure and USD 995 in in-country spend, reflecting tourism's continued contribution across accommodation, transport, retail, services, and community-based activities.
- ❖ While visitor arrivals increased across several segments in 2025, overall economic impact declined relative to 2024, driven largely by lower per-visitor expenditure in high-volume segments such as Holiday and Business travel. This indicates growing cost sensitivity and more compressed travel profiles, rather than a broad weakening in visitor demand, with visitors spending less per trip despite travelling in similar or greater numbers.
- ❖ Employment-related travel remained a major contributor to total economic impact, accounting for USD 92.6 million in 2025, although both arrivals and average spend declined from the previous year. At the same time, MICE travel emerged as a high-growth segment, delivering strong gains in economic impact through higher visitor volumes and increased per-visitor spending. Overall, the 2025 results highlight a tourism sector with resilient demand but softer per-visitor value, underscoring the importance of increasing in-country spend and strengthening higher-yield segments to sustain economic returns.

Note: Total visitor numbers was 103,881 for the January – December 2025 period.

In-country Spend Per Person Per Day While in PNG

	Local Spend Per Person Per Day		
	<u>% of sector</u>	<u>USD</u>	<u>PGK</u>
Accommodation	42	42	176
Food & Beverage	21	21	85
Domestic Travel	7	7	31
Retail	1	1	10
Souvenir	2	2	26
Tour	3	3	14
Local Transport	5	5	19
Other	18	18	51
Internet & Service	1	1	4
TOTAL	100	100	416

Note: Total Economic Impact-Per Trip and Per Day are per-person expenditures and can be used to estimate the total economic impact, through extrapolating to the total number of visitor arrivals during the surveyed period.

Economic Impact - Per Person and Total

Visitor Expenditure Per Person & Total		
Average Spend Prior to arrival	USD	PGK
Per Person Per Trip	2,087	8,561
<i>Flowing into local economy rate</i>	<i>estimated 65%</i>	
Per Person Per Trip	1,356	5,565
Per Person per Day	136	559
<hr/>		
Average Local Spend		
<i>Length of Stay (nights)</i>	<i>mean 10 nights</i>	
Per Person Per Trip	995	4,141
Per Person per Day	100	416
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Total Economic Impact-Per Trip	2,352	9,706
Total Economic Impact-Per Day	236	975

Note: Total Economic Impact-Per Trip and Per Day are per-person expenditures and can be used to estimate the total economic impact, through extrapolating to the total number of visitor arrivals during the surveyed period.

JAN - DEC 2024

USD 309 MILLION

FROM 100,223 VISITORS



\$2,613

Prepaid per visitor per trip

\$136

In-country spend per day

65%

Flowing into local economy rate



X 10.2 nights
Average length of stay

\$1,699

Prepaid per visitor per trip

\$1,385

In-country spend per trip



\$3,084

 per visitor per trip

\$302

 per visitor per day

JAN - DEC 2025

USD 244 MILLION ▼

FROM 103,881 VISITORS ▲



\$2,087 ▼

Prepaid per visitor per trip

\$100 ▼

In-country spend per day

65%

Flowing into local economy rate



X 10 nights
Average length of stay

\$1,356 ▼

Prepaid per visitor per trip

\$995 ▼

In-country spend per trip



\$2,352

 per visitor per trip ▼

\$236

 per visitor per day ▼

Note: US dollars. All amounts are per person. Weight adjusted.

Executive Summary – Business and MICE Travel (2024-2025 Performance)

- ❖ Business travel generated an estimated USD 82.1 million in economic impact in 2025, down from USD 94.6 million in 2024, despite an increase in visitor arrivals from 27,808 to 29,615. The decline in total economic impact was driven by a reduction in average spend per business visitor, which fell from USD 3,405 to USD 2,774 per trip. This decrease reflected lower prepaid and in-country expenditure and a modest shortening of average length of stay from 9.8 to 8.9 nights, indicating tighter travel profiles and heightened cost sensitivity among business travellers.
- ❖ By contrast, the MICE segment recorded strong growth in 2025, generating an estimated USD 7.0 million in economic impact, up sharply from USD 1.8 million in 2024. This increase was supported by a significant rise in visitor arrivals from 810 to 2,152, alongside a substantial increase in average spend per visitor, which rose from USD 2,213 to USD 3,284 per trip. Although the average length of stay declined from 7.1 to 5.9 nights, higher prepaid and in-country spending per trip more than offset the shorter stays, resulting in a marked improvement in per-visitor value.
- ❖ Together, the performance of Business and MICE travel highlights diverging trends within purpose-driven travel. While traditional business travel remains sensitive to cost pressures and compressed itineraries, the MICE segment demonstrates strong potential to deliver high-value economic returns through increased volumes and higher per-visitor spending. Strengthening Papua New Guinea’s competitiveness as a destination for meetings, conferences, and events—through improved venues, services, and accessibility—will be key to sustaining growth in this segment and offsetting softness in routine business travel.

Note: Total visitor numbers was 29,615 for Business visitors and 2,152 for MICE visitors for the January – December 2025 period.

In-country Spend Per Person Per Day While in PNG

Segmented by Business and MICE

	Business (N = 938)			MICE (N = 184)		
	<u>% of sector</u>	<u>USD</u>	<u>PGK</u>	<u>% of sector</u>	<u>USD</u>	<u>PGK</u>
Accommodation	56	83	341	64	117	477
Food & Beverage	21	31	128	19	35	142
Domestic Travel	7	10	43	1	2	7
Retail	1	1	6	0	0	0
Souvenir	1	1	6	2	4	15
Tour	0	0	0	1	2	7
Local Transport	4	6	24	2	4	15
Other	9	13	55	10	18	75
Internet & Service	1	1	6	1	2	7
TOTAL	100	149	609	100	182	746

Note: Total Economic Impact-Per Trip and Per Day are per-person expenditures and can be used to estimate the total economic impact, through extrapolating to the total number of visitor arrivals during the surveyed period.

Economic Impact - Per Person and Total

Segmented by Business and MICE

Visitor Expenditure Per Person & Total

	Business (N = 938)		MICE (N = 184)	
	USD	PGK	USD	PGK
Average Spend Prior to arrival				
Per Person Per Trip	2,232	9,138	3,398	13,911
<i>Flowing into local economy rate</i>	<i>estimated 65%</i>		<i>estimated 65%</i>	
Per Person Per Trip	1,451	5,940	2,209	9,042
Per Person per Day	164	670	374	1,533
<hr/>				
Average Local Spend				
<i>Length of Stay (nights)</i>	<i>mean 9 nights</i>		<i>mean 6 nights</i>	
Per Person Per Trip	1,323	5,416	1,075	4,401
Per Person per Day	149	611	182	746
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Total Economic Impact-Per Trip	2,774	11,356	3,284	13,443
Total Economic Impact-Per Day	313	1,282	557	2,279

Note: Total Economic Impact-Per Trip and Per Day are per-person expenditures and can be used to estimate the total economic impact, through extrapolating to the total number of visitor arrivals during the surveyed period.

SEGMENTED BY BUSINESS AND MICE

TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT (BUSINESS)

USD 82.1 MILLION ▼

FROM 29,615 VISITORS ▲

Indicator	2024	2025	
Average nights	9.8	8.9	▼
Local spend per visitor (USD)	1,718	1,323	▼
Local spend per visitor per day (USD)	176	149	▼
Prepaid spend per visitor (USD)	2,596	2,232	▼
Adjusted prepaid spend per visitor (65%) (USD)	1,687	1,451	▼
Adjusted prepaid spend per visitor (65%) per day (USD)	173	163	▼
Total spend per visitor (USD)	3,405	2,774	▼
Spend per visitor per day (USD)	349	313	▼
Visitor arrivals	27,808	29,615	▲
Economic impact (USD m)	94.6	82.1	▼

TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT (MICE)

USD 7 MILLION ▲

FROM 2,152 VISITORS ▲

Indicator	2024	2025	
Average nights	7.1	5.9	▼
Local spend per visitor (USD)	846	1,075	▲
Local spend per visitor per day (USD)	119	182	▲
Prepaid spend per visitor (USD)	2,103	3,398	▲
Adjusted prepaid spend per visitor (65%) (USD)	1,367	2,209	▲
Adjusted prepaid spend per visitor (65%) per day (USD)	193	374	▲
Total spend per visitor (USD)	2,213	3,284	▲
Spend per visitor per day (USD)	312	559	▲
Visitor arrivals	810	2,152	▲
Economic impact (USD m)	1.8	7.0	▲

Executive Summary – Holiday and VFR Travel (2024-2025 Performance)

- ❖ Holiday travel generated an estimated USD 36.0 million in economic impact in 2025, down from USD 55.7 million in 2024, despite an increase in visitor arrivals from 14,384 to 16,000. The decline in total economic impact was driven by a reduction in per-visitor expenditure, with average spend per holiday visitor falling from USD 3,877 to USD 2,250 per trip. This reflected lower prepaid and in-country spending rather than changes in trip duration, as average length of stay remained broadly stable at around 10 nights across both years.
- ❖ VFR travel generated an estimated USD 16.6 million in economic impact in 2025, compared with USD 18.3 million in 2024, with visitor arrivals remaining relatively stable at around 8,900 visitors. Average expenditure per VFR visitor declined from USD 2,051 to USD 1,882 per trip, reflecting lower in-country spending and a modest contraction in prepaid expenditure. Average length of stay remained broadly unchanged at around 11 nights, indicating that changes in total economic impact were primarily expenditure-driven rather than volume-driven.
- ❖ Together, the Holiday and VFR segments highlight continued visitor demand in 2025, but with greater cost sensitivity and reduced discretionary spending compared with 2024. Strengthening value-for-money offerings, improving service quality, and encouraging deeper in-country engagement will be key to improving per-visitor returns from both leisure-driven and family-based travel segments, and to translating stable or growing arrivals into stronger future economic outcomes.

Note: Total visitor numbers was 16,000 for Holiday visitors and 8,844 for VFR visitors for the January – December 2025 period.

In-country Spend Per Person Per Day While in PNG

Segmented by Holiday and VFR

	Holiday (N = 552)			VFR (N = 464)		
	<u>% of sector</u>	<u>USD</u>	<u>PGK</u>	<u>% of sector</u>	<u>USD</u>	<u>PGK</u>
Accommodation	28	22	91	25	19	79
Food & Beverage	19	15	62	22	17	69
Domestic Travel	11	9	36	9	7	29
Retail	1	1	3	1	1	2
Souvenir	2	2	7	6	4	18
Tour	13	10	42	1	1	3
Local Transport	3	2	10	9	7	28
Other	22	17	72	27	21	85
Internet & Service	1	1	3	1	1	5
TOTAL	100	79	325	100	78	318

Note: Total Economic Impact-Per Trip and Per Day are per-person expenditures and can be used to estimate the total economic impact, through extrapolating to the total number of visitor arrivals during the surveyed period.

Economic Impact - Per Person and Total

Segmented by Holiday and VFR

Visitor Expenditure Per Person & Total

	Holiday (N = 552)		VFR (N = 464)	
	USD	PGK	USD	PGK
Average Spend Prior to arrival				
Per Person Per Trip	2,241	9,175	1,568	6,419
<i>Flowing into local economy rate</i>	<i>estimated 65%</i>		<i>estimated 65%</i>	
Per Person Per Trip	1,457	5,964	1,019	4,173
Per Person per Day	146	596	92	376
<hr/>				
Average Local Spend				
<i>Length of Stay (nights)</i>	<i>mean 10 nights</i>		<i>mean 11 nights</i>	
Per Person Per Trip	794	3,251	863	3,533
Per Person per Day	79	325	78	318
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Total Economic Impact-Per Trip	2,251	9,214	1,882	7,706
Total Economic Impact-Per Day	225	921	170	694

Note: Total Economic Impact-Per Trip and Per Day are per-person expenditures and can be used to estimate the total economic impact, through extrapolating to the total number of visitor arrivals during the surveyed period.

SEGMENTED BY HOLIDAY AND VFR

TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT (HOLIDAY)

USD 36 MILLION ▼

FROM 16,000 VISITORS ▲

Indicator	2024	2025	
Average nights	9.9	10.0	▲
Local spend per visitor (USD)	1,583	794	▼
Local spend per visitor per day (USD)	160	79	▼
Prepaid spend per visitor (USD)	3,529	2,241	▼
Adjusted prepaid spend per visitor (65%) (USD)	2,294	1,457	▼
Adjusted prepaid spend per visitor (65%) per day (USD)	232	146	▼
Total spend per visitor (USD)	3,877	2,251	▼
Spend per visitor per day (USD)	393	225	▼
Visitor arrivals	14,384	16,000	▲
Economic impact (USD m)	55.7	36.0	▼

TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT (VFR)

USD 16.6 MILLION ▼

FROM 8,844 VISITORS ▼

Indicator	2024	2025	
Average nights	11.7	11.1	▼
Local spend per visitor (USD)	1,042	863	▼
Local spend per visitor per day (USD)	89	78	▼
Prepaid spend per visitor (USD)	1,552	1,568	▲
Adjusted prepaid spend per visitor (65%) (USD)	1,009	1,019	▲
Adjusted prepaid spend per visitor (65%) per day (USD)	86	92	▲
Total spend per visitor (USD)	2,051	1,882	▼
Spend per visitor per day (USD)	176	170	▼
Visitor arrivals	8,927	8,844	▼
Economic impact (USD m)	18.3	16.6	▼

Executive Summary – Special Interest Travel and Employment - (2024-2025 Performance)

- ❖ Special Interest Travel, comprising education, medical, sport, and church-related travel, generated an estimated USD 6.4 million in local economic impact in 2025, up from USD 6.0 million in 2024, supported by an increase in visitor arrivals from 2,987 to 3,261. Average expenditure per visitor in 2025 was USD 1,960 per trip, marginally lower than USD 2,021 in 2024, reflecting differences in trip duration rather than a decline in overall economic contribution. Visitor expenditure in 2025 included USD 1,086 in locally retained prepaid expenditure and USD 874 in in-country spend, continuing to generate value across accommodation, transport, education, health, faith-based, and community services.
- ❖ The average recognised length of stay declined from 33.6 nights in 2024 to 9.4 nights in 2025, reflecting a revised treatment of long-stay education and volunteering visits rather than a behavioural shift. Despite this change, total per-trip expenditure and overall economic impact remained broadly stable across the two years, indicating the resilience of purpose-driven travel demand and its sustained contribution to the domestic economy.
- ❖ Special Interest Travel continues to demonstrate strong linkages with Papua New Guinea's economy, underpinned by education, volunteering, sporting, and faith-based networks. Strengthening partnerships with education providers, medical institutions, sporting organisations, and community groups, alongside improvements in service quality and value for money, will be key to sustaining demand and supporting stable economic returns from this segment.

Note: Special Interest Travel combines education, medical, sport, and church-related travel due to low individual bases and their non-typical tourism characteristics. The same segments are aggregated for 2024 to ensure comparability.

In-country Spend Per Person Per Day While in PNG

Segmented by Special Interest Travel and Employment

	Special Interest (N = 191)			Employment (N = 69)		
	<u>% of sector</u>	<u>USD</u>	<u>PGK</u>	<u>% of sector</u>	<u>USD</u>	<u>PGK</u>
Accommodation	27	26	105	25	15	63
Food & Beverage	28	26	105	13	8	32
Domestic Travel	4	4	17	8	5	21
Retail	0	0	0	0.3	0	1
Souvenir	2	2	9	1	1	3
Tour	6	6	23	0	0	0
Local Transport	4	4	14	1	0	2
Other	27	25	104	51	32	131
Internet & Service	1	1	3	1	1	4
TOTAL	100	93	381	100	63	257

Note: Total Economic Impact-Per Trip and Per Day are per-person expenditures and can be used to estimate the total economic impact, through extrapolating to the total number of visitor arrivals during the surveyed period.

Economic Impact - Per Person and Total

Segmented by Special Interest Travel and Employment

Visitor Expenditure Per Person & Total

	Special Interest (N = 191)		Employment (N = 69)	
	USD	PGK	USD	PGK
Average Spend Prior to arrival				
Per Person Per Trip	1,671	6,841	2,051	8,397
<i>Flowing into local economy rate</i>	<i>estimated 65%</i>		<i>estimated 65%</i>	
Per Person Per Trip	1,086	4,447	1,333	5,458
Per Person per Day	116	473	68	277
Average Local Spend				
<i>Length of Stay (nights)</i>	<i>mean 9.4 nights</i>		<i>mean 19.7 nights</i>	
Per Person Per Trip	874	3,578	1,237	5,064
Per Person per Day	93	381	63	257
Total Economic Impact-Per Trip	1,960	8,025	2,570	10,522
Total Economic Impact-Per Day	209	854	130	534

Note: Total Economic Impact-Per Trip and Per Day are per-person expenditures and can be used to estimate the total economic impact, through extrapolating to the total number of visitor arrivals during the surveyed period.

SEGMENTED BY SPECIAL INTEREST TRAVEL AND EMPLOYMENT

TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT (SPECIAL INTEREST)

USD 6.4 MILLION ▲

FROM 3,261 VISITORS ▲

Indicator	2024	2025	
Average nights	33.6	9.4	
Local spend per visitor (USD)	777	874	▲
Local spend per visitor per day (USD)	23	93	
Prepaid spend per visitor (USD)	1,914	1,671	▼
Adjusted prepaid spend per visitor (65%) (USD)	1,244	1,086	▼
Adjusted prepaid spend per visitor (65%) per day (USD)	37	116	
Total spend per visitor (USD)	2,021	1,960	▼
Spend per visitor per day (USD)	60	209	
Visitor arrivals	2,987	3,261	▲
Economic impact (USD m)	6	6.4	▲

TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT (EMPLOYMENT)

USD 92.6 MILLION ▼

FROM 36,013 VISITORS ▼

Indicator	2024	2025	
Average nights	23	19.7	▼
Local spend per visitor (USD)	1,866	1,237	▼
Local spend per visitor per day (USD)	81	63	▼
Prepaid spend per visitor (USD)	1,647	2,051	▲
Adjusted prepaid spend per visitor (65%) (USD)	1,071	1,333	▲
Adjusted prepaid spend per visitor (65%) per day (USD)	47	68	▲
Total spend per visitor (USD)	2,937	2,570	▼
Spend per visitor per day (USD)	128	130	▲
Visitor arrivals	37,716	36,013	▼
Economic impact (USD m)	110.7	92.6	▼

Note: Per-day spend differs due to methodology. In 2024, education and volunteering stays were uncapped, inflating ALOS and lowering daily averages; in 2025, ALOS was capped at 29 nights. Special Interest includes sports, education, and volunteering (including church and medical missions), and 2024 results are combined accordingly for comparison.



NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE
Manatū Aorere



This report was prepared at SPTO by the Pacific Tourism Data Initiative team, in collaboration with the Papua New Guinea Tourism Promotion Authority and the New Zealand Government.

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