



8 June 2026

Brooke H

fyi-request-33932-1c4431b1@requests.fyi.org.nz

DOIA-REQ-0028610

Tēnā koe Brooke,

Thank you for your email of 3 March 2026 to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

This request relates to individuals whose country of citizenship is the Philippines and who were granted a Working Holiday Visa under the Philippines scheme.

No personal identifying information is requested...

...If any requested breakdown is not available in the exact form specified, please provide the closest available aggregated dataset held by Immigration New Zealand systems and briefly outline any limitations.

The specific questions raised in your request are included in our response below, along with responses to your questions.

On 31 March 2026, we notified you of an extension of the timeframe to respond to your request under section 15(1)(a) of the Act.

On 29 May 2026, we wrote to inform you we had decided to grant your request, but it would take us some time to process, and that we would send you the requested data by 8 June 2026.

Our response

Question 1. Working Holiday Visa Applications and Decisions (Per Opening Date)

For each of the following Working Holiday Visa (Philippines scheme) opening events:

5 February 2014, 5 February 2015, 5 February 2016, 8 February 2017, 8 February 2018, 7 February 2019, 11 February 2020, 31 March 2022, 1 November 2022, 16 March 2023, 12 March 2024, 12 March 2025

Please provide:

- a) The total number of applications submitted in that opening round.*
- b) Of those applications, the number:
Granted, Declined, Withdrawn*

The number of Philippines Working Holiday Visa applications submitted, along with applications approved, declined, or withdrawn from 2014 to 2025 is set out in Table 1 of the appendix attached at the end of this response.

Question 1B. Special Direction – 13 March 2022

Please provide:

a) *The number of Working Holiday Visas granted under the Special Direction batch on 13 March 2022 for applicants whose country of citizenship is the Philippines.*

The number of Philippines Working Holiday Visas that were granted related to the 2022 Special Direction¹ was 95.

Question 1C. Annual Grant Totals

For each calendar year from 2014 to 2025, please provide the total number of Working Holiday Visas granted under the Philippines scheme.

Please refer to the response to question 1 above. The number of Philippines Working Holiday Visa applications granted is set out in Table 1 of the appendix.

Question 2. Transition from Working Holiday Visa to Residence (Cohort-Based)

For each cohort of individuals granted a Working Holiday Visa under the Philippines scheme in each calendar year from 2014 to 2025 (as identified in Section 1), please provide the following:

A. Preferred Breakdown – By WHV Grant Cohort Year

For each year's WHV grantee cohort, the number of individuals who were subsequently granted a Resident Visa, including breakdown by residence category:

Skilled Migrant Category (SMC), Skilled Migrant Category (2023), Other Skilled Residence, Straight to Residence (STR), Long Term Skill Shortage List (LTSSL) Residence, Talent (Accredited Employer) Residence, Other Residence from Work, Tier 2 Green List Residence, 2021 Resident Visa, Partnership Residence, Any other residence category (please specify category name)

For each residence category above, please indicate:

*Number granted as principal applicant
Number granted as secondary applicant*

B. If Cohort-Year Breakdown Is Not Readily Available

If breakdown by WHV grant cohort year is not readily available, please provide:

The total number of Philippines Working Holiday Visa grantees (2014–2025 combined) who were subsequently granted residence; and

Breakdown by residence category and applicant status (principal vs secondary), if available.

The information requested on the number of Philippines Working Holiday Visa holders who went on to obtain a resident visa, broken down by principal versus secondary applicant and by residence categories, is provided in Table 2 of the attached appendix.

¹ [Special Direction – Grant Work Visas to a Class of Offshore Persons Whose Working Holiday Scheme Visas Have Expired, to Manage Effects and Deal With Consequences of Measures Taken to Contain or Mitigate the Outbreak of COVID-19 or its Effects - 2022-go1276 | New Zealand Gazette](#)

Question 3. Quota Administration and Allocation Mechanism

For the Working Holiday Visa (Philippines scheme):

a) Please confirm whether the annual quota (e.g., 100 places) represents:

*A cap on the number of applications that may be successfully submitted at lodgement;
A cap on the number of visas that may ultimately be granted; or
A cap on the number of approved applicants once all decisions are finalised.*

b) Please explain how the quota is operationalised in practice, including:

*Whether more than the stated quota of applications may be accepted at lodgement;
Whether additional applications may be accepted after the initial opening date if places become available due to declines or withdrawals; and
Whether Immigration New Zealand grants additional visas beyond the stated quota in order to account for declines or withdrawals.*

c) Please explain why previously published financial year data for the Philippines scheme may show grant totals exceeding the stated annual quota.

d) Please confirm whether any Working Holiday Visas under the Philippines scheme were granted as Exceptions to Instructions (ETI), and if so, whether such grants are counted within or outside the annual quota.

The annual quota is the number of visas that may be granted each year under the Philippines Working Holiday Visa scheme (the Philippines WHV). Ordinarily, once 100 applications have been received, the cap on applications has been reached and the Philippines WHV is closed to new applications.

In some instances, the number of visas granted has exceeded the published cap by a small number. This can occur due to limitations within the online application and payment processing system. Applications for the Philippines WHV are submitted through Immigration New Zealand's Online Services platform, and occasionally, if multiple payment attempts are made the system may mistakenly determine there is a place available when there is not.

As a result, additional applications may be accepted for processing beyond the intended cap. Applications accepted in this way are processed in the same manner as all other applications. In many cases, this is partially offset during processing, as some applications are declined for not meeting immigration instructions. The Philippines WHV scheme is not usually reopened to further applications if there are withdrawals or declined applications that make spaces available.

Immigration New Zealand monitors uptake of capped schemes and seeks to close applications once caps are reached. However, due to the limitations described above, it may not always be apparent that the cap has been exceeded at the time applications are accepted. These limitations are not specific to a single working holiday visa scheme and may affect capped schemes more generally.

Work is underway to improve system controls. All Working Holiday Visa schemes are planned to transition to the Enhanced Immigration Online System, which is expected to provide improved system functionality and a better customer experience. This transition is currently expected to be delivered by the end of 2027 under the Our Future Services Programme.

Between 2014 and 2025, three applications were recorded as being approved as an exception to instructions, these are included in Table 1. Of these decisions, only one application decision occurred during a year in which applications were granted above the cap; however, the decision to grant an exception to instructions was not related to the cap.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of the Ministry's response to your request, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request or this response, please contact inzoias@mbie.govt.nz.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Adamson', written in a cursive style.

Chris Adamson
Acting Director Visa
Immigration New Zealand
Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment

Appendix 1: Response tables, data as at 21 April 2026.

Table 1: The number of Philippines Working Holiday Visa applications lodged, along with applications approved, declined, or withdrawn for each calendar year from 2014 to 2025. Applications approved as an Exception to Instructions (ETI) are also included, as a subset of applications listed in the approved column.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2022	2023	2024	2025
Submitted	119	104	108	100	102	100	105	205	100	99	104
Approved	100	100	100	90	99	94	95	203	100	95	104
Declined	8	2	4	7	3	5	3	2	0	3	0
Withdrawn	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0
Approved as ETI	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0

Note 1: Only the specific requested application outcomes have been included in the above table; the number of submitted applications being higher than the number of decided applications listed here reflects that there are other application outcomes, such as administrative cancellations, replacement with subsequent applications, or other administrative outcomes.

Note 2: the numbers shown for 2022 reflects that the cap was doubled as a one-off increase in that year.

Table 2: The number of individuals who were approved a Philippines Working Holiday Visa and subsequently granted a resident visa broken down by year, residence category and principal applicant versus secondary applicant.

Residence category	Applicant Type	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2022	2023	2024	2025
2021 Resident Visa	Principal Applicant	11	14	24	22	30	39	2	0	0	0	0
	Secondary Applicant	4	2	4	3	8	7	0	3	0	0	0
Care Workforce Sector	Principal Applicant	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	9	0	0	0
	Secondary Applicant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0
Green List	Principal Applicant	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
	Secondary Applicant	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Partnership Category	Principal Applicant	5	4	7	6	9	13	7	9	3	4	0
Residence from Work	Principal Applicant	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Secondary Applicant	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Residence from Work (Accredited Employer)	Principal Applicant	1	2	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Secondary Applicant	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Skilled Migrant - Resident	Principal Applicant	37	36	25	22	8	7	10	11	0	0	0
	Secondary Applicant	5	9	5	3	4	1	3	2	0	0	0
Skilled Partnership Deferral	Principal Applicant	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SMC Skilled Residence	Principal Applicant	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	0	0	0
	Secondary Applicant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Straight to Residence	Principal Applicant	0	0	2	0	0	1	7	13	7	7	4
	Secondary Applicant	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	7	1	0	0

Note 1: The above sets out where Philippines Working Holiday Visa holders have later gone on to obtain a residence class visa. The grant of the residence class visa did not necessarily occur immediately following the Philippines Working Holiday Visa, as applicants may have held other visas in between.

Note 2: Individuals may be granted multiple resident visas, and as a result may be counted multiple times in the above dataset. The following visa categories have been excluded from the above dataset as such applications require a residence class visa to already be held, any results are expected to be duplicates of the data provided above, therefore we have interpreted them out of scope of your request:

- Variation of conditions of a resident visa application
- Transfer/replacement of a resident visa application
- Removal of conditions of a resident visa