

Foreign home buyer stats released - 3pc to overseas

1:10 PM Monday Aug 1, 2016



Photo / Greg Bowker

Overseas residents bought 1749 out of the 57,678 homes sold in New Zealand between April and June, newly-released data shows.

That amounts to 3 per cent of total sales over the three-month period - a similar level to the previous quarter.

In Auckland, 900 homes, or 5 per cent of total sales, went to non-residents. That is a 1 point increase on the January to March quarter.

Chinese tax residents bought 495 of those homes, much more than any other group.

Overall, 60 per cent of house transfers involved buyers who had only New Zealand tax residency. Another 37 per cent involved buyers who did not need to provide tax information - mainly New Zealanders who were buying their main home.

The newest data also showed that non-residents were also responsible for 3 per cent of the houses sold in New Zealand between April and June.

That figure is one point higher than the previous period.

Land Information New Zealand deputy chief executive Russell Turner said that the data did not provide a register of foreign ownership, "but it can add to the picture of what's happening with property in New Zealand".

He said that while property transfers rose by more than 12,000 in the most recent quarter, there was a similar split between foreign and New Zealand residents to the previous quarter.

"This includes trusts businesses and well as individuals," he said.

The data has been collected since October, and Mr Turner said a clear picture would develop once a year's data had been collected.

Land Information Minister Louise Upston also stressed that the data was not an authoritative guide to foreign ownership.

"This data is not a register of foreign ownership - it is collected as a result of government property tax measures in Budget 2015."

OVERSEAS HOUSE BUYERS

April-June

57,578 →

property transfers
in New Zealand



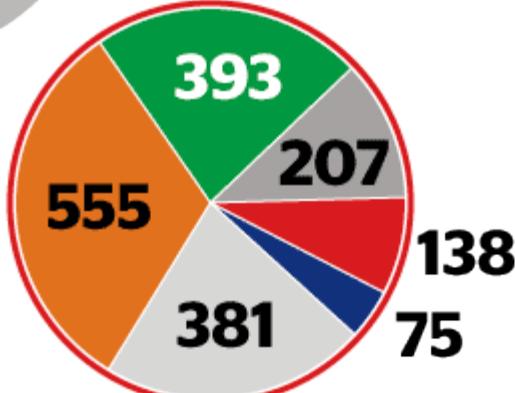
1749

houses bought
by non-residents



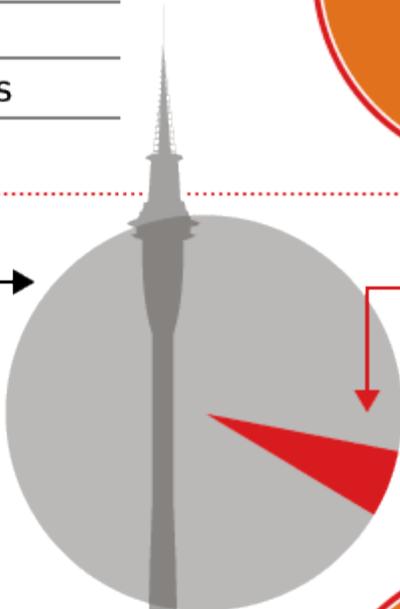
Bought by:

- Chinese tax residents
- Australian tax residents
- People with mixed tax residency, including NZ
- UK tax residents
- USA tax residents
- Other



16,494 →

property transfers
in Auckland

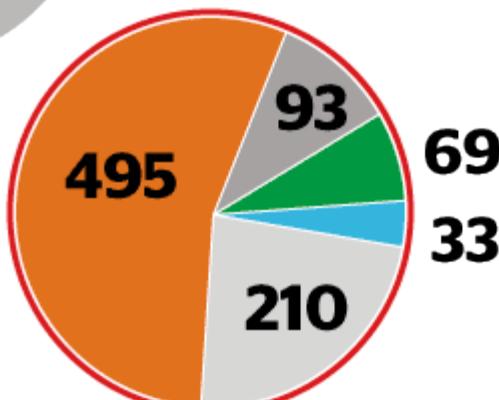


900

houses bought
by non-residents

Bought by:

- Chinese tax residents
- People with mixed tax residency, including NZ
- Australian tax residents
- Singapore tax residents
- Other



"However, over time it will give us some useful information on the property market."

National has previously said that data shows that foreign buyers are not making a significant impact on the housing market.

But Labour leader Andrew Little said the statistics were misleading because they automatically counted corporations and trusts as New Zealand tax residents.

They also counted student and temporary workers as New Zealand residents, even if they did not intend to live in the property or stay in the country.

Little said the number of non-resident buyers was closer to 8,000, or 13 per cent of total sales. That figure is based on the number of houses and bare properties sold to non-residents - 2300 - plus the 5700 buyers with temporary visas who did not intend to occupy their property.

Labour will ban non-resident purchases if in Government.

- NZ Herald