

## TSS Release – Key Highlights

(Tourism Sentiment Survey: Summer 2025/26)

Release date: 21 May 2026

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### Overview

This release presents results from the first wave of the Tourism Sentiment Survey (TSS) conducted in February 2026.

Top-line results are available on MBIE’s Tourism Evidence and Insights Centre (TEIC) <https://teic.mbie.govt.nz/teiccategories/datareleases/tss/>

Microdata and a data dictionary are also published on MBIE’s website <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/immigration-and-tourism/tourism-research-and-data/tourism-data-releases/tourism-sentiment-survey>

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### Notes on interpreting results

#### Definitions used in the survey questionnaire

NZ summer period refers to the time from December to February.

International tourism is when people living in other countries visit New Zealand for less than 12 months.

International visitors are people living in other countries who visit New Zealand for less than 12 months.

Domestic tourism is when people living in New Zealand visit other NZ regions for less than 12 months.

**The data is weighted to produce population-representative estimates:** Survey results are weighted to reflect the national adult population profile based on key demographic variables. The sample is designed to be nationally representative, with regional coverage across all 16 regions.

**Further details** about the data are available in the TSS User Guidance on the [MBIE webpage](#).

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### Key highlights for Tourism Sentiment Survey: Summer 2025/26

**Overall**, the results of the Tourism Sentiment Survey show that while tourism retains strong public support and clear economic value, significant localised environmental and community pressures remain, with views differing markedly by region and destination.

#### Sentiment toward tourism in New Zealand overall

Tourism continues to be widely supported nationally, with most New Zealanders believing it benefits the country. Visitor numbers are largely seen as appropriate, with some appetite for growth.

- 91% say tourism benefits New Zealand
- 48% say the number of international visitors is about right
- 48% say the number of domestic visitors is about right
- 36% say there are not enough domestic visitors

- 31% say there are not enough international visitors

### **Perceived impacts of tourism in New Zealand**

Tourism is strongly associated with economic benefits, but most New Zealanders also identify environmental and community pressures as key downsides.

- 95% see tourism as economically beneficial
- 86% consider tourism to benefit community and everyday life
- 60% cite “economic growth for NZ” as a key benefit
- 59% cite job creation or income opportunities
- 83% identify environmental impacts as a key negative
- 81% identify negative impacts on community and everyday life
- Domestic tourism is viewed more positively than international tourism across most measures, especially for community (77% vs 65%), environment (48% vs 33%), and culture (71% vs 59%).

### **Sentiment toward tourism in different regions**

Most people feel tourism benefits their region, but perceptions of visitor pressure vary widely, especially in tourism intensive destinations.

- 86% agree tourism benefits their region nationally
- 90%+ agreement in Nelson, West Coast, Gisborne and Otago
- More than 25% in most regions feel there are not enough international visitors
- 25% in Tasman and 26% in Otago say there are too many international visitors

### **How New Zealanders engage with tourism**

New Zealanders commonly engage with tourism as visitors or workers, but most feel they lack opportunities to influence tourism decisions.

- 11% worked in the tourism sector in the past year
  - 53% visited beaches during summer, 36% visited public gardens, 29% visited scenic walks/lookouts
  - 80%+ say they have not had opportunities to voice views on tourism development
  - 27% would like to be more involved, especially those who work in tourism (51%) and Māori (35%)
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