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Media Release

Clear support among public for tourism

The public is right behind the tourism industry with almost all New Zealanders agreeing that international tourism is good for the country, as shown by the latest research from Tourism New Zealand and Tourism Industry Aotearoa.

In a new question asked in the twice-yearly Mood of the Nation survey, 96% of New Zealanders agreed or strongly agreed that international tourism is good for the country.

However, most New Zealanders still underestimate the size of the tourism industry, and only 10% know it is our biggest export earner.

The research, which was initiated in 2015, measures New Zealanders' perceptions of tourism. The latest survey was conducted by Kantar TNS in March this year, the previous one in November 2016.

The survey showed that half of New Zealanders feel the country attracts about the right number of international visitors, a quarter feel New Zealand should be attracting more, and 21% think New Zealand attracts too many.

Tourism New Zealand Chief Executive Stephen England-Hall says the Mood of the Nation research is designed to keep in touch with New Zealanders' perception of the value of tourism, its benefits and challenges.

"The Mood of the Nation allows the tourism industry to keep abreast of what New Zealanders are thinking. It is pleasing that despite having a record-breaking peak season there has not been a significant increase in concerns from the public and there's almost unanimous support for the industry.

"In the previous survey there was a rise in public concerns about tourism impacts but those concerns have plateaued this survey round."

For example, 35% of Kiwis think international visitors put too much pressure on New Zealand, a rise of just 1% from November.

When told of forecast growth in annual visitor numbers, 37% felt there was too much growth, while 54% said it was just right and 9% not enough.

TOURISM INDUSTRY AOTEAROA

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“Tourism New Zealand, Tourism Industry Aotearoa and other agencies are working hard to address issues that are of concern to New Zealanders. Our focus on attracting visitors during the shoulder season and new attempts to get them to visit more regions, as well as our work on educating visiting drivers address core concerns,” said Mr England-Hall.

The main benefits of international tourism are considered to be business opportunities and employment opportunities, while the biggest concern is infrastructure, with 44% agreeing that tourism is putting pressure on it.

The latest survey saw a significant drop in perception that visitors cause or increase the risk of road accidents or result in damage to the natural environment.

TIA Chief Executive Chris Roberts says the survey gives the industry insights into communities’ perspectives of tourism.

“Support from host communities is vital for the tourism industry to grow its economic contribution to New Zealand. It’s important that we know how our communities are feeling and where there may be issues for the industry to address.

“For instance, we are championing the provision of tourism infrastructure to support the growth of tourism’s value to the economy, including researching future infrastructure needs and funding options.

“The tourism industry is committed to managing tourism growth in a way that is sustainable and acceptable to our communities.”

The next Mood of the Nation survey will occur in November.

To read the Mood of the Nation, visit:

www.tia.org.nz/resources-and-tools/insight/mood-of-the-nation

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KEY FACTS

- Tourism in New Zealand is a \$95 million per day industry. Tourism delivers around \$40 million in foreign exchange to the New Zealand economy each day of the year. Domestic tourism contributes another \$55 million in economic activity every day.
- Tourism is New Zealand's biggest export earner, contributing \$14.5 billion or 20.7% of New Zealand's foreign exchange earnings (year ended March 2016).
- 13.2% of the total number of people employed in New Zealand work directly or indirectly in tourism. That means 332,322 people are working in the visitor economy.
- The [Tourism 2025](#) growth framework has a goal of growing total tourism revenue to \$41 billion a year by 2025.

Visit www.tia.org.nz for more information

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