

'Mood of the Nation'
New Zealanders' perceptions of tourism
April 2016



Background

- Tourism 2025 aims to increase the value of tourism to \$41 billion by 2025 with a focus on building value rather than volume
- Tourism 2025 identifies visitor experience as a key areas to help grow value with a key part of the customer journey being interaction with local communities to help create a unique and pleasurable visitor experience
- In recent years, New Zealand has seen strong volume growth in international tourism
- This has been accompanied by some negative sentiment and wide media coverage on foreign drivers and road accidents
- The purpose of the 'Mood of the Nation' research programme is to reveal New Zealanders' perceptions of the size and value of tourism as well as measure perceived benefits and downsides
- The overall aim of the research is to identify key issues that might negatively impact perceptions and tolerance for further growth

Overview of research approach



Method and audience

TNS conducted an online survey of residents in New Zealand aged 18 plus



Area quotas

To ensure sufficient representation from traditional tourism areas, the following regional quotas were applied with minimum targets for key cities/towns:

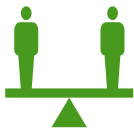
	Regional Quotas	City / Town Targets
Auckland region	100	Minimum: N = 80 from Auckland City (Achieved: W1 N = 83, W2 N = 100)
Wellington region	80	Minimum: N = 60 from Wellington City (Achieved: W1 N = 61, W2 N = 80)
Bay of Plenty	50	Minimum: N = 40 from Rotorua (Achieved: W1 N = 40, W2 N = 50)
Other North Island	100	
Canterbury	80	Minimum: N = 40 from Christchurch (Achieved: W1 N = 75, W2 N = 80)
Otago	50	Minimum: N = 30 from Queenstown (Achieved: W1 N = 17, W2 N = 51)
Other South Island	40	
TOTAL	500	



Fieldwork dates

Wave 1: 502 online interviews were conducted over the period December 2, 2015 to December 6, 2015

Wave 2: 520 online interviews were conducted over the period March 17, 2016 to April 2, 2016



Weighting and Analysis

Respondents were weighted by gender, age and region to be broadly representative of the New Zealand population based on the 2013 census

Regional analysis has been reported based on aggregated data over the first two waves to provide the benefit of larger sample sizes

Key insights (1 of 2)

1

New Zealanders continue to have mixed knowledge of the tourism industry:

- Most remain aware of its value to the economy, although not all know how highly it ranks
- Few are aware of the number of New Zealanders either directly or indirectly employed by the industry, with as many under as over estimating the figure
- Few are aware of the annual number of visitors, with most continuing to under-estimate these

2

Attitudes towards current visitor numbers are generally positive with few thinking that current numbers are too high

3

Many continue to express interest in seeing an increase in visitor numbers (30%) which is driven by strong awareness of the benefits that this would provide to the economy and employment opportunities

4

The majority think that New Zealand is well equipped to handle current international visitor numbers although 25% now believe current numbers are applying too much pressure, being up from 18% in December and particularly high in Otago (at 30%); Similar to December pressure is typically seen to be localised to areas such as Auckland, Queenstown and Rotorua

5

Although the majority think that predicted growth is at the right level or could even be increased, the 30% of those who believe predicted growth is too high are concerned about road safety, impact on the environment and a lack of infrastructure

- Concerns about road safety are greatest in the South Island, especially Otago and provincial South Island areas and in these areas positivity about the economic benefits are also less

Key insights (2 of 2)

Steps to help manage tolerance towards future growth:

1. Build awareness of the wider benefits that tourism provides in terms of regional development to help further offset the perceived negatives such as over crowding, especially in the South Island
2. While it is important that ongoing initiatives continue to improve road safety, it is also important that these initiatives are communicated, especially to those on the South Island as road safety concerns are the biggest barrier to acceptance of growth in these areas
3. Continue to address concerns around areas such as freedom camping, accommodation and potential damage to our environment

1

Detailed information

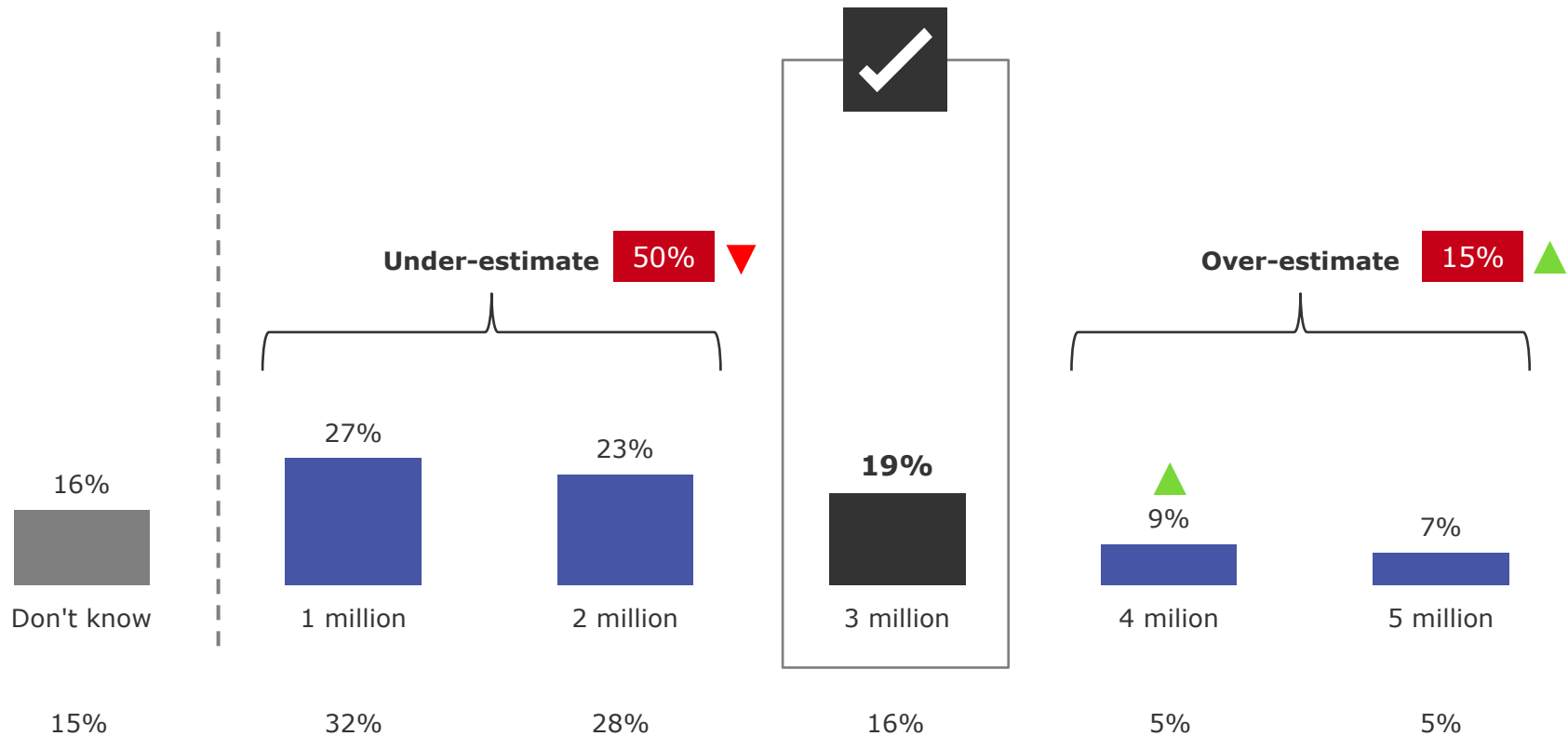


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Over half of New Zealanders continue to under-estimate the number of current international visitors each year..

Knowledge of annual international visitor numbers (% , Mar-16)



Base: New Zealanders aged 18 plus Dec -15 N = 502, Mar-16 N = 520

▲ ▼ Significantly higher / lower than Dec-15 at 95% CL

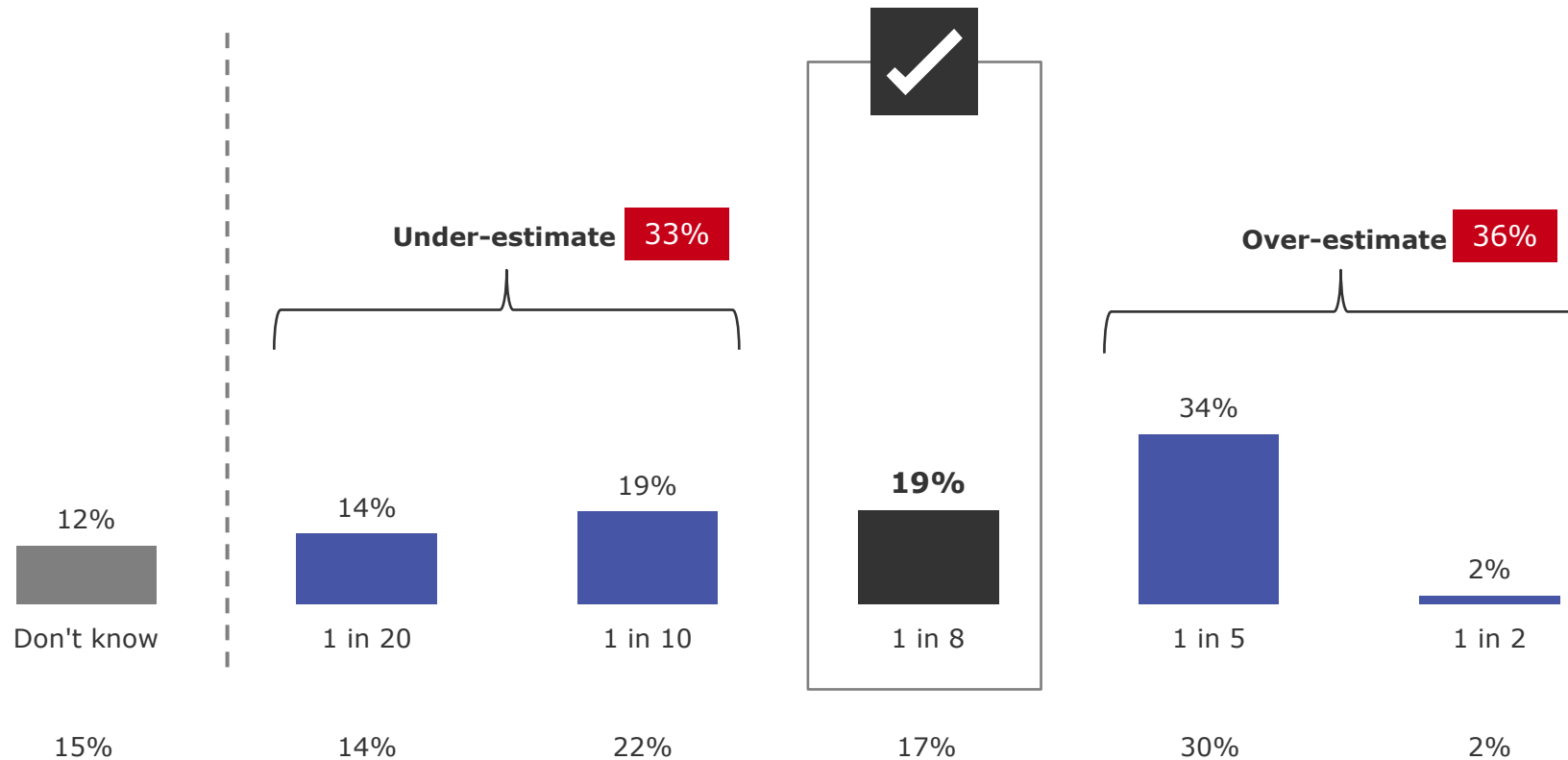


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... while as many under-estimate as over-estimate the employment impact of tourism

Knowledge of New Zealand workers employed in the tourism industry (directly or indirectly) (% , Mar-16)



Base: New Zealanders aged 18 plus Dec-16 N = 502, Mar-16 N = 520

▲ ▼ Significantly higher / lower than Dec-15 at 95% CL

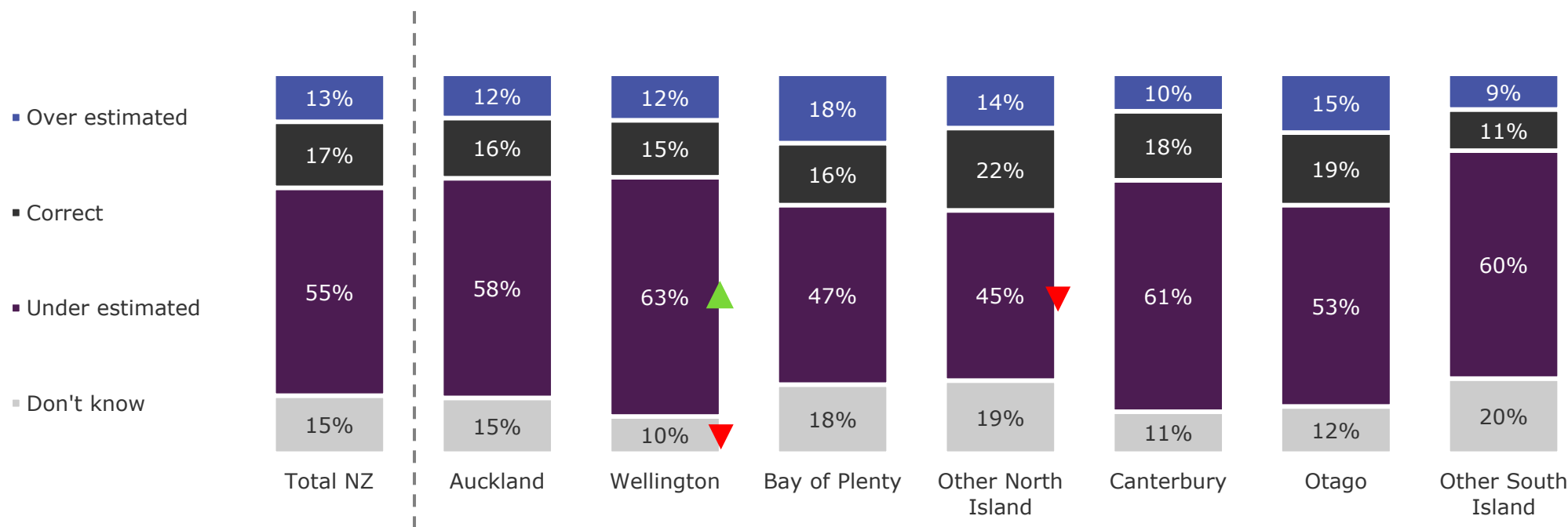


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There is little regional variation in the knowledge of visitor numbers...

Knowledge of annual visitor numbers – by region (% , Dec-15 and Mar-16)



Base: Total NZ N = 1,022, Auckland N = 220, Wellington N = 180, Bay of Plenty N = 108, Other North Island N = 172, Canterbury N = 161, Otago N = 121, Other South Island N = 60

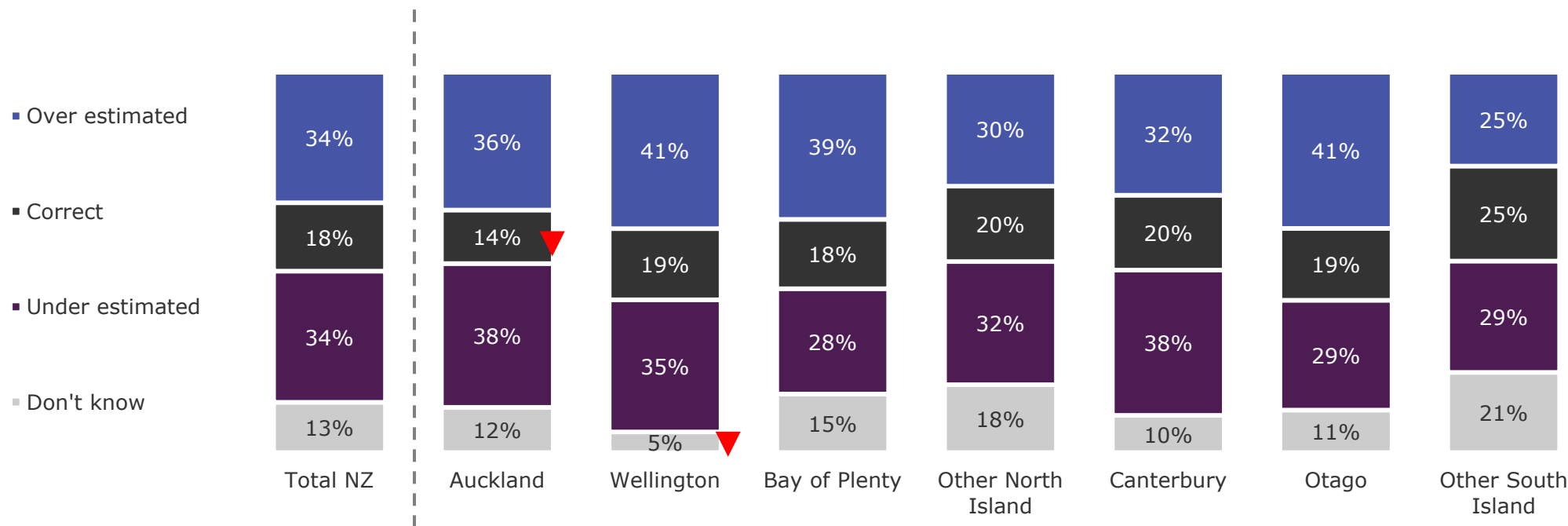
  Significantly higher / lower than other NZ at 95% CL



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... or employment in the tourism industry

Knowledge of New Zealand workers employed in the tourism industry – by region (% , Dec-15 and Mar-16)



Base: Total NZ N = 1,022, Auckland N = 220, Wellington N = 180, Bay of Plenty N = 108, Other North Island N = 172, Canterbury N = 161, Otago N = 121, Other South Island N = 60

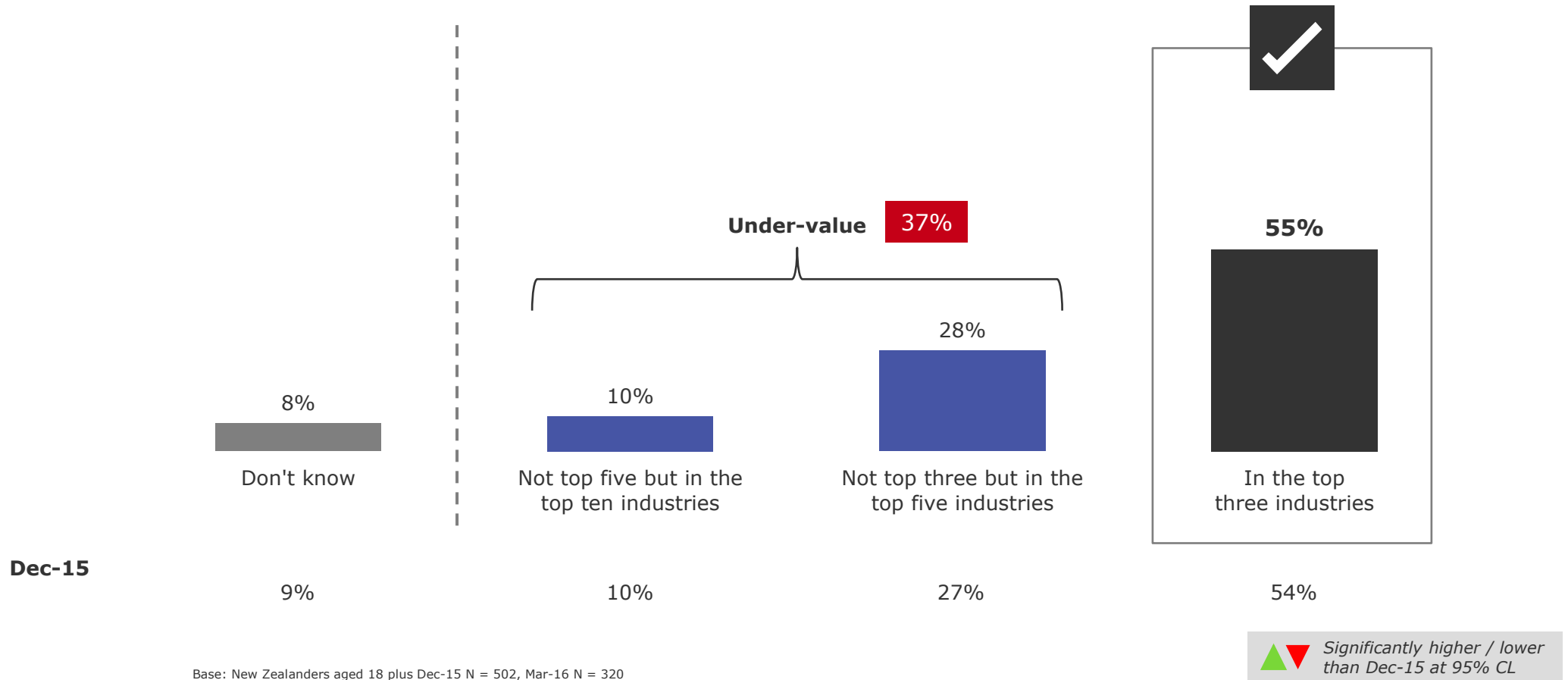
▲ ▼ Significantly higher / lower than other NZ at 95% CL



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Although most New Zealanders are aware that international tourism is a key contributor to the economy, there remains a considerable minority who underestimate its contribution

Knowledge of the value of the tourism industry (% , Mar-16)

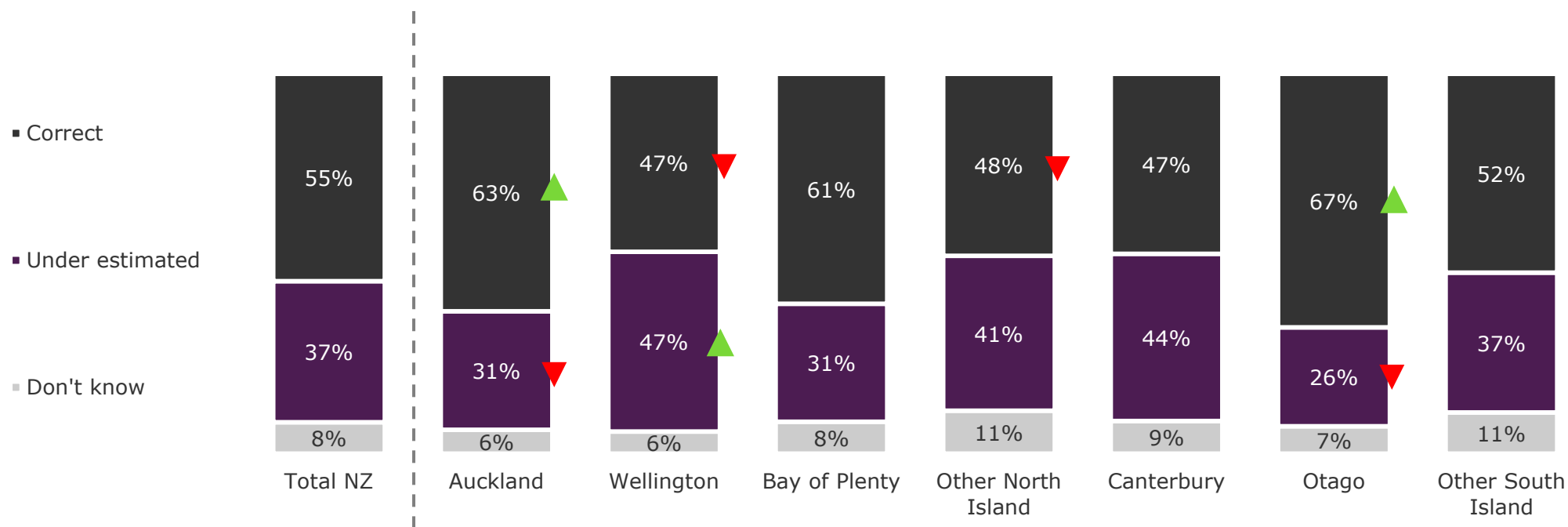


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New Zealanders living in Auckland and Otago have highest knowledge of the value of the tourism industry

Knowledge of the value of the tourism industry – by region (%, Dec-15 and Mar-16)



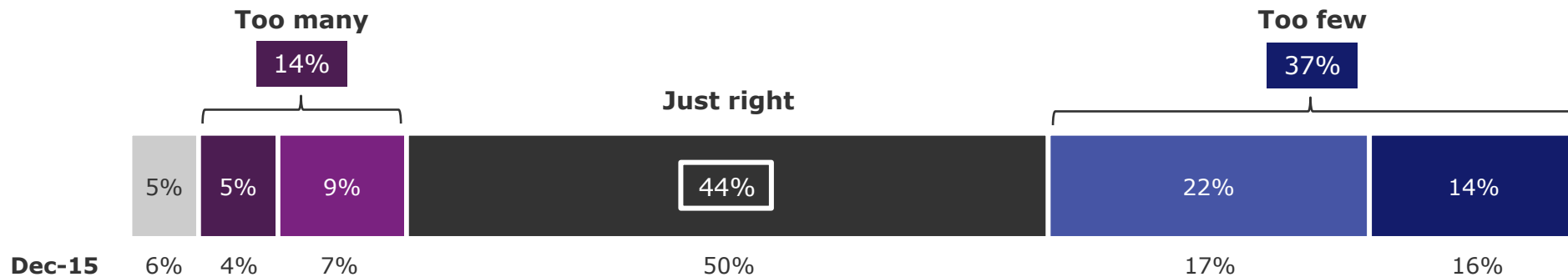
Base: Total NZ N = 1,022, Auckland N = 220, Wellington N = 180, Bay of Plenty N = 108, Other North Island N = 172, Canterbury N = 161, Otago N = 121, Other South Island N = 60

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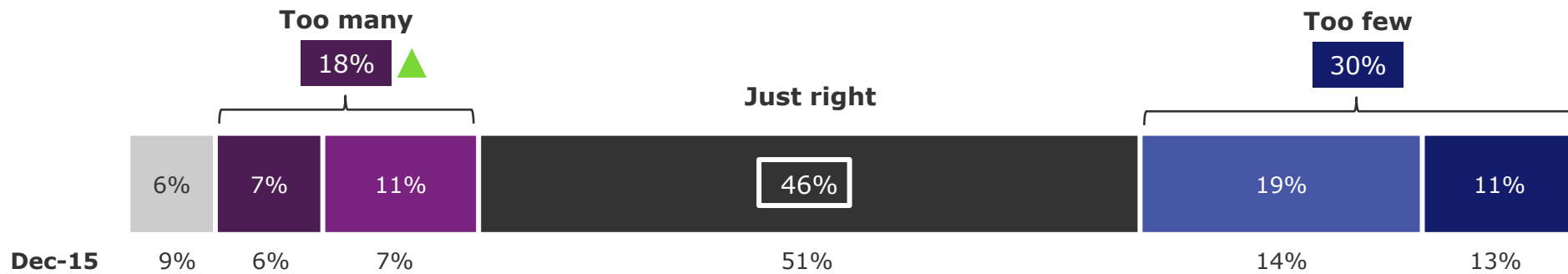
Few think that New Zealand attracts too many international visitors currently while many think that we should be attracting more

Perceptions of whether New Zealand attracts too few or too many international visitors

Based on **perceived** number of current visitors:



Based on **actual** number of current visitors (after being told):



■ Don't know ■ 1 = too many ■ 2 ■ 3 = just right ■ 4 ■ 5 = too few

Base: New Zealanders aged 18 plus Dec-15 N = 502, Mar-16 N = 320

▲ ▼ Significantly higher / lower than Dec-15 at 95% CL



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Concerns of New Zealanders relate to the need to maximise economic benefit, while mitigating impact on the environment, the experience and road safety

Selection of verbatim reasons for there being....

Too many international visitors (14%)

- "I worry about the negative impact on **the environment**. The **freedom campers** using the side of the roads as a toilet etc"
- "I live in a town that is one of the highest tourist destinations in the world and the rental cars driving on the wrong side of the road are causing **far too many fatalities**"
- "It is sometimes difficult to holiday in NZ at **peak visitor times** unless one books well in advance....**not easy to get accommodation** for a short notice break."
- "Some of the attractions are **very crowded** and could be easier to visit if there were less tourists. The **roads would be safer** too."
- "Popular tourist areas are getting **over crowded** and **freedom camping needs more monitoring**"
- "Currently the NZ **accommodation and camping infrastructure** is not coping with the influx."
- "Too many **accidents/problems on the roads**"

Just the right amount (44%)

- "Tourist locations, flights, ferries etc are **still accessible to NZ'ers**"
- "Just enough that they are a **boost to the economy without damaging our environment.**"
- "We want to **increase quality rather than quantity.**"
- "The **infrastructure is not in place** to support additional visitors."
- We **don't have the infrastructure** for many more especially in South Island eg **freedom camping sites**"
- "Any more than 3-4 million visitors **might ruin what we have to offer** in the first place."
- "It is important to ensure the **experience the visitors have is special** and not effected by too many other tourists... Better to go with **lower volume and higher spend** per visit."
- "I wouldn't like to have so many that my **hometown lifestyle changes**"
- "There are plenty of visitors in the area **without being overcrowded**"

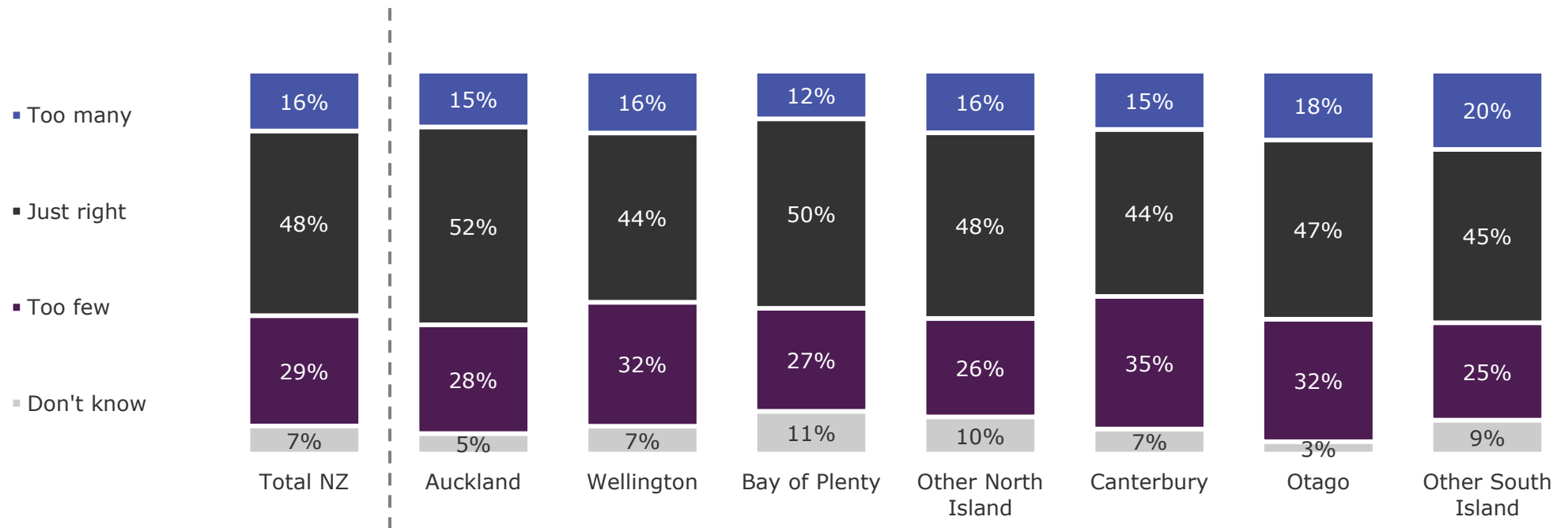
Too few international visitors (37%)

- "With the downturn in dairy prices we need **more money coming into the country.**"
- "They are **great for our economy and for employment** and the country has the capacity to cope with more, especially in the **colder "off" seasons**"
- "We could always do with more visitors to **stimulate the economy.**"
- "New Zealand is too reliant on primary industry, so we need to **capitalise more on tourism.**"
- "Tourists are great for the economy - they **spend money on goods and services and also help employ thousands of New Zealanders**. I also think it is good to have a **multi cultural country.**"
- "They are bringing in tourist dollars which **helps the economy** and our infrastructure can deal with more coming."
- "More tourists equals more **economic benefits & employment opportunities**"



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There is little difference by region in terms of perceptions of the current number of international visitors

Perception of current number of international visitors (based on actual number) – by region (% , Dec-15 and Mar-16)



Base: Total NZ N = 1,022, Auckland N = 220, Wellington N = 180, Bay of Plenty N = 108, Other North Island N = 172, Canterbury N = 161, Otago N = 121, Other South Island N = 60

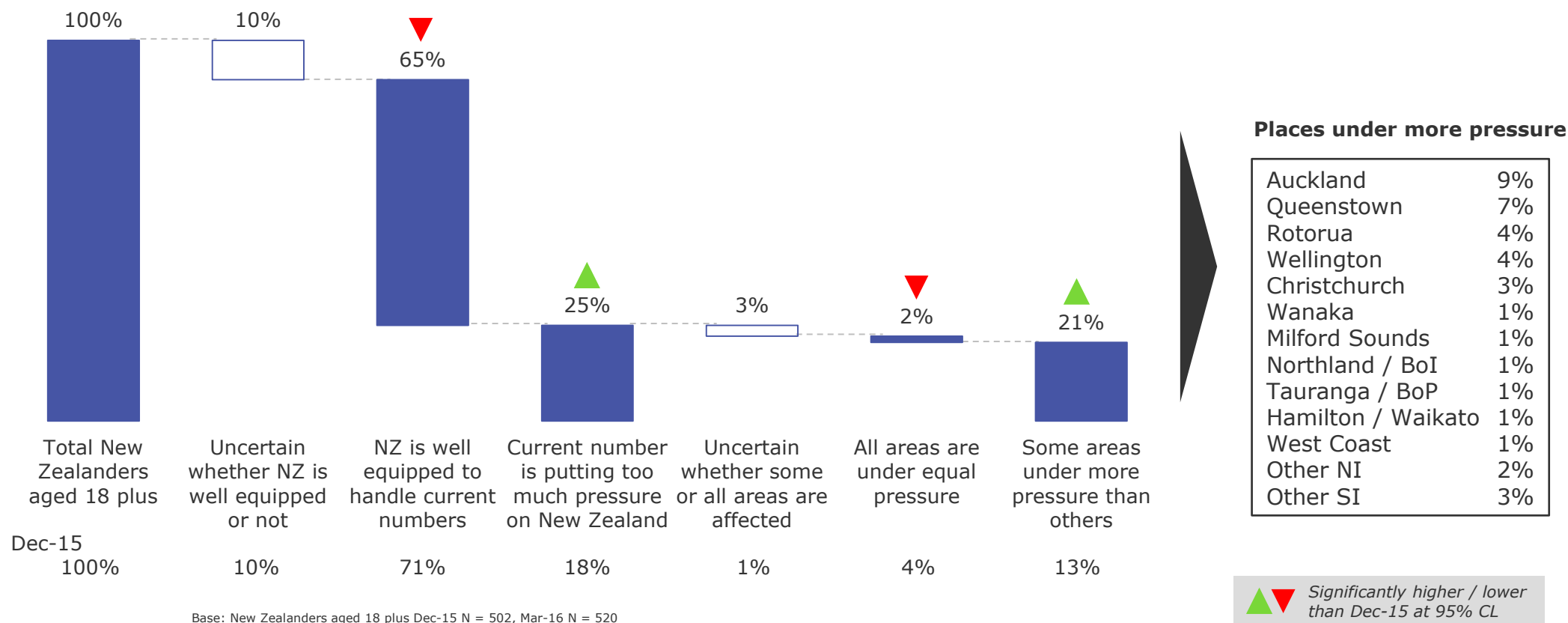
  Significantly higher / lower than Dec-15 at 95% CL



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There has been an increase in those thinking that the current number of tourists is putting too much pressure on New Zealand, although most recognise the impact is only on some areas

Perceptions of pressure of current tourists on New Zealand society, infrastructure and/or environment (% , Mar-16)



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Specific ways in which current visitor numbers are perceived to be applying too much pressure continue in terms of our roads, accommodation, prices for locals, freedom campers and polluting our environment

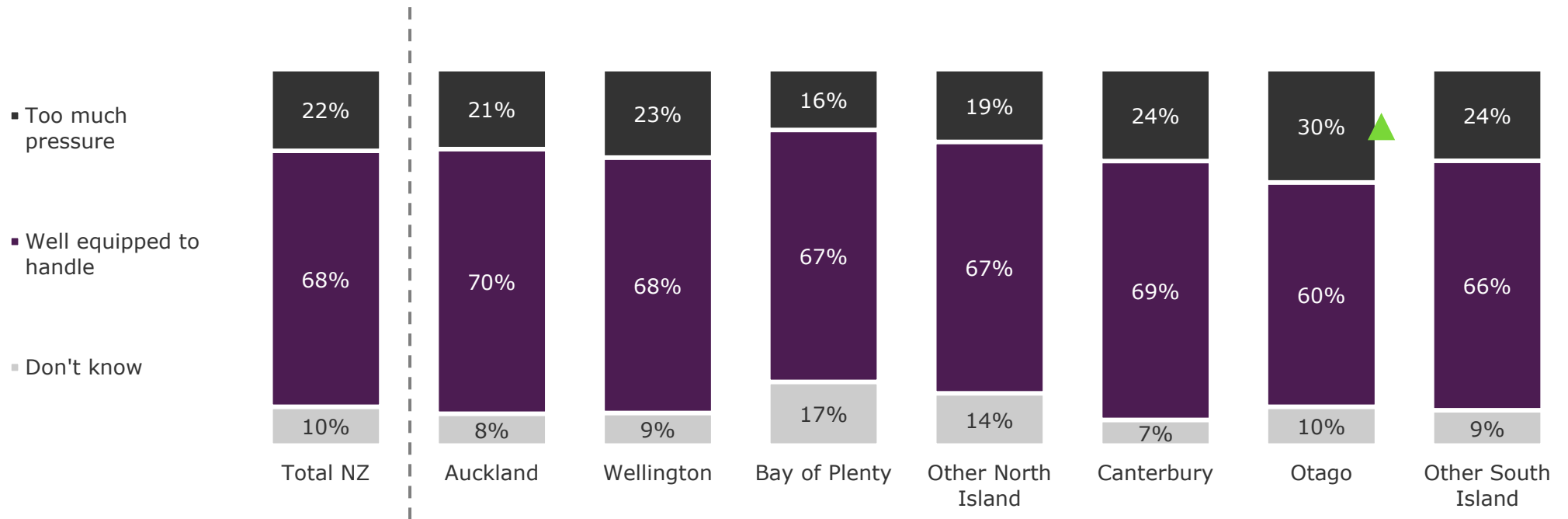
Selection of verbatim ways in which current international visitors are applying too much pressure (25%)

- “Causing **road accidents** and putting **pressure on hotels and tourist attractions.**”
- “Care of the environment is a worry for many of us and I think the increased visitor numbers is putting greater **strain on both the environment and infrastructure** in many places that tourists like to visit.”
- “**Not able to drive to our conditions** - I have personally witnessed near and very serious car accidents through mounting frustration of local (NZ drivers) and bad driving of tourists in general.”
- “Some Tourist spots such as the **walking tracks are overcrowded.**”
- “**Congestion** on holiday routes, **inexperienced drivers**, being **swamped at attractions** by overseas tourism parties, **freedom campers** with a bad attitude to dumping rubbish (not all, just some), **use of precious resources** such as water, unfamiliarity with NZ cultural values (sometimes), some hotels catering for **international visitors ahead of local visitors.**”
- “Leisure **accommodation is already too expensive.**”
- “Too many **road accidents**. Shop keepers and hotel industry putting the **needs of foreigners before the needs of ordinary New Zealanders.**”
- “**Polluting the environment, safety** on the roads and at beaches, **price hikes** in popular tourist destinations, **health system** – hospitals.”
- “**Environmental damage, increased road usage**”
- “**Accommodation** - not enough beds available during peak holiday time (December to February)”
- “Our **water ways, on hotel vacancies, the national park walks are fully booked.**”
- “**Freedom camping is messing up places - roads are overcrowded** with drivers that have no idea how to drive our roads”
- “**Freedom campers ruining** some of our iconic tourist spots.”
- “For example.....the Milford area is struggling with the **numbers travelling up that road. Insufficient toilets** along the road and a **bottleneck** at Milford Sound.”
- **Road usage, increased accidents** on roads, **human waste** left in nature, more **pressure on our parks, DoC sights, wildlife.**”
- “**Damaging the environment, eg freedom campers** and also a lot of international visitors aren't fully aware of the road rules in New Zealand, which can create extra **pressure on fire/police/ambulance services .**”



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Specifically it is those living in Otago who are most likely to agree that current tourist numbers are placing too much pressure on our society, infrastructure or environment

Perceptions of pressure on current tourists on society, infrastructure and/or environment – by region (% , Dec-15 and Mar-16)



Base: Total NZ N = 1,022, Auckland N = 220, Wellington N = 180, Bay of Plenty N = 108, Other North Island N = 172, Canterbury N = 161, Otago N = 121, Other South Island N = 60

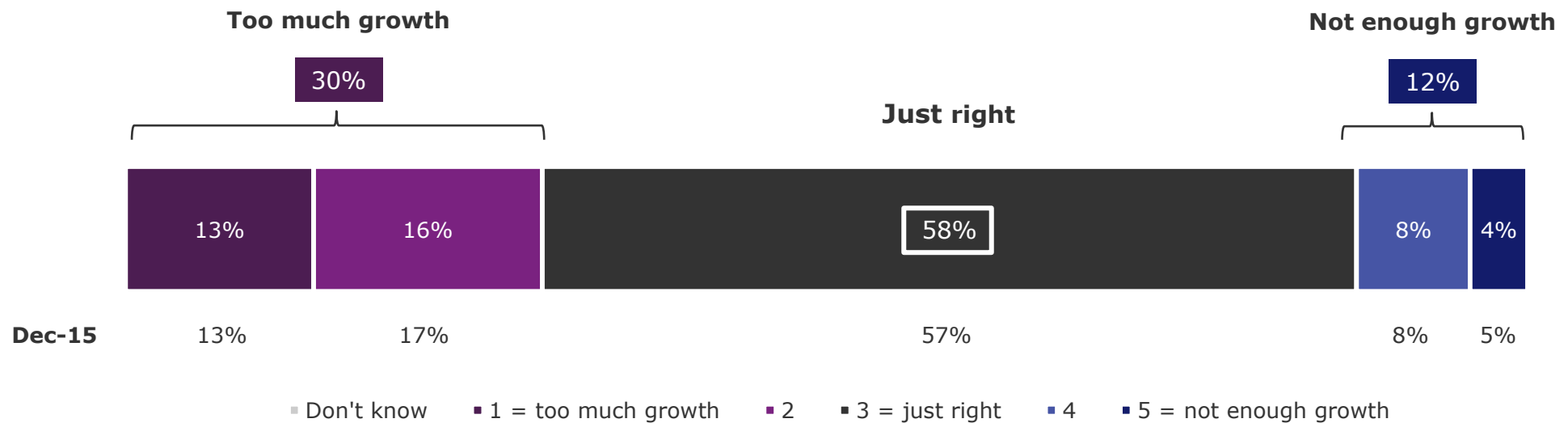
  Significantly higher / lower than other NZ at 95% CL



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The number who think tourist numbers will be too high doesn't increase much beyond the proportion that think current numbers are putting too much pressure on New Zealand

Attitudes towards predicted future growth of annual international visitors



Base: New Zealanders aged 18 plus Dec-15 N = 502, Mar-16 N = 520



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Again, attitudes to projected growth centre on the positive impact to the economy compared to perceived risk to the environment and a concern around infrastructure

Selection of verbatim reasons for there being....

Too much predicted growth (30%)

- "We must be careful that those visitors who use our walking tracks and other such areas do not overload our ability to **keep our flora and fauna protected.**"
- "**Littering, crime and accidents** will increase when too many people are in the city/town."
- There will be **more road accidents** and it will be **harder to find hotel vacancies.**"
- "We should be seeking **high end spenders not volume.**"
- "Our attractions and visitor activities are **already under pressure from the volume**, to add more will tip the balance and **compromise the experience**, especially if the visitors are low yield and mass tour groups."
- "It would be nice to keep NZ the way it is and **not too congested**. Room for a little more but not too much."
- "The countries **infrastructure will not cope** with too many more people."

Just the right amount (58%)

- "Steady increase over time will allow the current infrastructure to be **gradually upgraded to cope** with the increased demand"
- "Slow growth will **enable infrastructure to grow** with the increase."
- "Extra visitors to NZ will provide **more employment.**"
- "That extra million will be **spread throughout the country** and throughout **the seasons** - NZ can easily handle that."
- "4 to 5 years planning and building should be **enough time to upgrade and build** more accommodation and infrastructure to take the extra 1 million visitors."
- "An amount we can handle **without placing a heavy strain on the environment.**"
- "Increase is needed but it has to be at a rate where the **infrastructure can keep up** with to be able to accommodate visitors along with **still providing a good product.**"

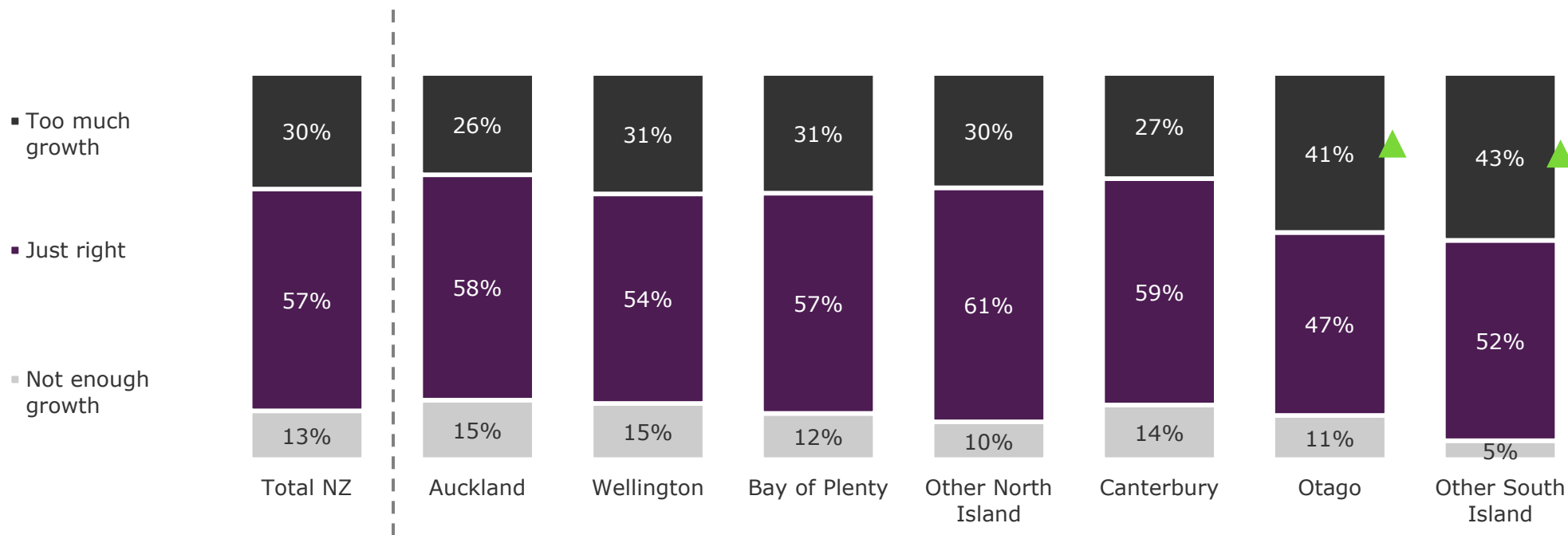
Not enough predicted growth (12%)

- "We **need the jobs** that would be created."
- "It's important to the **N.Z economy** that we grow this sector."
- "This generates **jobs for people** in NZ and we need **the economy** to keep growing"
- "We need more tourists **to boost our economy**. Tourism dollars are far **less polluting** than dairying which is ruining our ecosystems."
- "They **bring money.**"
- "NZ suffers from low wages generally, and if more demand for tourist jobs drives up wage rates somewhat, that should further boost the economy as there will be **more money being spent by locals** and **better job security** for workers."
- "More visitors means **more spending** which means a **more healthier economy.**"
- "The more that come the **happier the economy**"

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Concern about too much predicted growth is highest among those living in Otago and other areas of the South Island excluding Canterbury

Attitudes towards predicted future growth of annual international visitors – by region (% , Dec-15 and Mar-16)



Base: Total NZ N = 1,022, Auckland N = 220, Wellington N = 180, Bay of Plenty N = 108, Other North Island N = 172, Canterbury N = 161, Otago N = 121, Other South Island N = 60

  Significantly higher / lower than other NZ at 95% CL



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Overall the perceived positives of international tourism remain more prominent than the negatives but the safety and congestion of our roads is the primary negative concern

Pros and cons of international tourism (% , Mar-16)⁽¹⁾



Base: New Zealanders aged 18 plus Dec-15 N = 502, Mar-16 N = 520
 Notes: Agreement on a 7 point scale where 1 is 'strongly disagree' and 7 is 'strongly agree'; Top two box is shown



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Although tourist driving continues to make news headlines, there have been a wide range of media stories about freedom camping in New Zealand, although perceptions around increased littering remain unchanged

App for free camping spots but is it ruining NZ's unspoiled beauty?

EMMA DANGERFIELD AND ELENA MCPHEE
Last updated 11:34, March 13 2016



Cohesive national response to freedom camping is needed now

Tuesday, 22 March 2016, 4:05 pm
Press Release: Tasman District Council

Illegal freedom campers owe more than \$1.5 million in fines

AMANDA CROPP
Last updated 18:25, April 1 2016



Tekapo freedom camping hotspot closed because poo threatens public's 'safety'

CHRIS HYDE
Last updated 21:32, March 15 2016



Camp site like 'refugee camp'

Home » News » Queenstown Lakes

By Tracey Roxburgh and David Williams on Sat, 19 Mar 2016

News: Queenstown Lakes



Toilet paper strewn in bushes.

60,000 international tourists give freedom camping a go

AMANDA CROPP
Last updated 13:46, March 17 2016



Freedom camping numbers 'out of control' at Christchurch park

TINA LAW
Last updated 19:21, February 28 2016



Although equally aware of the benefits tourism brings, it is those living in Otago and other South Island areas that are most concerned about road safety

Pros and cons of international tourism – by region (% , Dec-15 and Mar-16)⁽¹⁾

	Auckland	Wellington	Bay of Plenty	Other North Island	Canterbury	Otago	Other South Island
Pros:							
Creates economic growth for the regions	61%	57%	60%	58%	59%	66%	55%
Creates growth opportunities for businesses	55%	55%	62%	52%	55%	63%	42%
Creates employment opportunities for residents	56%	49%	55%	50%	55%	64%	47%
Adds to the vitality of regions and local communities	45%	41%	35%	38%	44%	42%	45%
Drives improvements to recreational facilities in local communities	38%	33%	34%	43%	36%	32%	35%
Drives infrastructure development in the regions	40%	32%	36%	35%	40%	43%	32%
Connects local communities to other cultures	36%	37%	34%	33%	41%	42%	25%
Cons:							
Increases the risk of serious road accidents	35%	36%	43%	48%	45%	53%	56%
Results in a higher number of road accidents	35%	33%	34%	45%	47%	55%	55%
Results in increased traffic congestion on holiday routes	37%	30%	46%	45%	41%	59%	37%
Makes accommodation too expensive for NZ residents	28%	24%	34%	32%	36%	35%	49%
Results in increased littering	25%	29%	31%	28%	32%	37%	22%
Results in damage to NZs natural environment	20%	23%	15%	20%	32%	26%	22%
Makes it hard for NZ residents to find accommodation vacancies	18%	17%	18%	22%	24%	33%	38%
Means attractions are too busy for NZ residents to enjoy	15%	16%	18%	18%	23%	25%	26%
Increases congestion in the walking areas of urban centres	16%	13%	18%	22%	21%	23%	19%
Makes it hard to find enough staff to work in the tourism industry	13%	10%	12%	10%	12%	25%	13%

Base: Total NZ N = 1,022, Auckland N = 220, Wellington N = 180, Bay of Plenty N = 108, Other North Island N = 172, Canterbury N = 161, Otago N = 121, Other South Island N = 60

Notes: Agreement on a 7 point scale where 1 is 'strongly disagree' and 7 is 'strongly agree'; Top two box is shown

Relative agreement
Weaker  Stronger




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Addressing these concerns and environmental concerns is key to making those who are negative more comfortable about projected growth

Pros and cons of international tourism - by attitudes towards predicted future growth⁽¹⁾ (%, Dec-15 and Mar-16)

	Too much growth	Right amount	Not enough growth
PROS:			
Creates economic growth for the regions	43%	63%	78%
Creates employment opportunities for residents	37%	58%	72%
Creates growth opportunities for businesses	36%	59%	74%
Adds to the vitality of regions and local communities	32%	43%	63%
Drives infrastructure development in the regions	32%	37%	50%
Connects local communities to other cultures	26%	36%	57%
Drives improvements to recreational facilities in local communities	27%	38%	58%
CONS:			
Increases the risk of serious road accidents	59%	37%	27%
Results in a higher number of road accidents	57%	37%	26%
Results in increased traffic congestion on holiday routes	58%	34%	26%
Makes accommodation too expensive for NZ residents	51%	25%	18%
Results in increased littering	47%	20%	20%
Makes it hard for NZ residents to find accommodation vacancies	38%	15%	14%
Results in damage to NZs natural environment	42%	14%	11%
Increases congestion in the walking areas of urban centres	32%	14%	7%
Means attractions are too busy for NZ residents to enjoy	35%	12%	10%
Makes it hard to find enough staff to work in the tourism industry	16%	10%	11%

Base: Dec-15 and Mar-16: Too much growth N = 301, Right amount N = 530, Not enough growth N = 141
Notes: Agreement on a 7 point scale where 1 is 'strongly disagree' and 7 is 'strongly agree'; Top two box is shown

Relative agreement
Weaker  Stronger



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