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Media release

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## Big regional differences in how Kiwis view tourism

New Zealanders' attitudes towards tourism depend enormously on where they live, according to the latest Mood of the Nation research.

The **Mood of the Nation research** is undertaken by Kantar TNS on behalf of Tourism Industry Aotearoa and Tourism New Zealand twice a year (November and March) to measure New Zealanders' perceptions of international tourism.

"At the end of a busy summer tourism season, the latest research has highlighted big regional differences in attitudes to tourism. Auckland and Wellington residents are the most positive towards tourism while the highest levels of concern are in Queenstown and the West Coast," TIA Chief Executive Chris Roberts says.

"However, since the survey was carried out, the West Coast tourism industry suffered a significant setback when the Waiho Bridge at Franz Josef was washed out, closing the through route along State Highway 6 for almost three weeks. Businesses along the whole length of the West Coast suffered, highlighting the importance of tourism to the region's economy."

The survey highlights a big difference in attitudes between Queenstown residents and those living elsewhere in Otago. Queenstown residents are more likely to think there is too much pressure from international visitors (76%) compared to the rest of Otago (47%). Queenstown residents also have more concerns around traffic congestion, accommodation prices, road accidents and staff shortages.

Mr Roberts says this is no surprise. "Queenstown is a hugely popular destination for Kiwis and international visitors, who pour billions of dollars into the Queenstown economy. While locals do generally acknowledge the benefits of tourism, they also experience the pressures of growth.

"For our most popular destinations, the tourism industry must work closely with central and local government to improve visitor management. For less visited regions, more can be done to encourage regional dispersal."

More than 1000 New Zealand tourism operators are now signed up to the **New Zealand Tourism Sustainability Commitment** – demonstrating their support for delivering a world-class tourism industry that is financially, environmentally and socially sustainable.

"While our industry has economic goals, we also want to share the benefits with our host communities, to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural environment, and to continue to be a high-class destination of choice for international and domestic travellers," Mr Roberts says.

Both TIA and Tourism New Zealand were part of the group of organisations that joined forces to develop **Tiaki – Care for New Zealand**, an initiative that actively encourages international and domestic travellers to act as guardians of Aotearoa. Launched in November 2018, Tiaki encourages Kiwis and visitors alike to experience New Zealand in a

### TOURISM INDUSTRY AOTEAROA

Inspire House, 125 Featherston St, Wellington 6011, New Zealand  
P +64 4 499 0104 [www.tia.org.nz](http://www.tia.org.nz) E [info@tia.org.nz](mailto:info@tia.org.nz)



way that keeps everyone safe, protects our environment, respects our culture and protects the country for future generations.

"A strong tourism industry is good news for all New Zealanders and Aotearoa. It means more jobs, income, and community benefits like more shops, cafes and restaurants; more events in your community; more international and domestic flights, and competitive airfares. But we hear what the community is telling us about tourism and we are working hard to address their concerns," Mr Roberts says.

To see details of the latest Mood of the Nation research and a handy infographic, go to <https://tia.org.nz/resources-and-tools/insight/mood-of-the-nation/>

For more information, please contact:

Nic Still

Communications Advisor

027 215 6124

[nic.still@tia.org.nz](mailto:nic.still@tia.org.nz)

#### KEY FACTS

- Tourism in New Zealand is a \$107 million per day industry. Tourism delivers around \$44 million in foreign exchange to the New Zealand economy each day of the year. Domestic tourism contributes another \$63 million in economic activity every day.
- Tourism is New Zealand's biggest export earner, contributing \$16.2 billion or 20.6% of New Zealand's foreign exchange earnings (year ended March 2018).
- 13.5% of the total number of people employed in New Zealand work directly or indirectly in tourism. That means 365,316 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](http://www.tia.org.nz) for more information

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