

DVS Release – Key Highlights

(Domestic Visitor Survey: April 2026 wave)

Release date: 30 September 2026

Overview

This release presents results from the second wave of the Domestic Visitor Survey (DVS) conducted in April 2026. Both overnight trips and day trips are covered.

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

Microdata and a data dictionary are also published on MBIE's website [Domestic Visitor Survey \(DVS\) | Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment](#)

Notes on interpreting results

Trip definitions used in the survey questionnaire

Overnight trip: An overnight trip is where a person stays away for at least one night.

Same day trip: Same day trips are to an area outside of where a person usually works or lives. A same day trip must involve travel of at least 40 kilometres one way from home, or travel by aeroplane or ferry service.

Net Promoter Score: Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a widely used metric for gauging customer loyalty and satisfaction. It assesses the likelihood that visitors would recommend their destination to family or friends following an overnight trip. Respondents are asked to rate this likelihood on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 indicates 'not at all likely' and 10 indicates 'extremely likely'. Based on their responses, travellers are categorised as Promoters (9–10), Passives (7–8), or Detractors (0–6). The NPS is calculated by subtracting the percentage of Detractors from the percentage of Promoters, resulting in a score that can range from –100 to +100. A higher score indicates stronger advocacy and satisfaction with the destination.

Multiple responses: Many of the questions in the survey allow for multiple responses ie, the respondent can choose as many options as applicable from a list of options. This means totals per question may not add up to 100 per cent.

Treatment of multiple overnight trips:

Planned domestic travel (next six months): For respondents with multiple planned overnight trips, the survey records the total number of planned trips and the destinations and number of nights for the first two trips. Additional detail—such as timing, motivations, accommodation, and expected barriers—is then collected for the first planned trip only.

Domestic travel in the past six months: Where respondents have taken multiple overnight trips in the last six months, the survey first captures the total number of overnight trips. Respondents may then list the names of up to five trips. From these, two trips are randomly selected, and for each of those trips the destination and number of nights in each place are collected. More detailed follow-up questions, including spend, are asked about one of the randomly selected trips.

The data is weighted to produce population-representative estimates: Survey data were weighted on age by gender, region, and ethnicity to match 2023 Census population characteristics.

Wave comparisons: The October 2025 and April 2026 waves cover different domestic travel periods, with the April 2026 wave capturing travel during the spring and summer months and the October 2025 wave capturing travel during autumn and winter. As a result, some differences between waves may reflect seasonal travel patterns.

Wave description	Travel experiences over last 6 months	Travel intentions over next 6 months
April 2026 wave (Wave 2)	October 2025-April 2026	April 2026-October 2026
October 2025 wave (Wave 1)	April 2025-October 2025	October 2025 – April 2026

Further details on data quality are available in the DVS User Guidance on the MBIE webpage. Note that results from the Verian report and MBIE calculations shown here may vary due to rounding variations.

Results

Overall Comparison: Compared with the October 2025 wave, the April 2026 wave shows:

- Higher overnight travel participation.
- Improved visitor satisfaction and NPS for both overnight and day trips.
- Greater participation in nature-based activities.
- Lower future travel intentions.
- A strong increase in cost-related barriers to travel.
- Continued importance of visiting friends and family as the primary driver of domestic travel.

Travel experiences over last 6 months (October 2025 wave to April 2026 wave)

Number of Trips

- Overnight travel participation increased, with 64% of New Zealanders taking an overnight trip, up from 60% in the October 2025 wave.
- Day trip participation declined slightly, with 45% taking a day trip, down from 47% previously.

Key Motivations: Travel motivations remained broadly consistent across both waves, with visiting friends and family continuing to be the primary reason for travel.

Overnight trips

- Visiting friends and family increased from 36% to 38%.
- Relaxing and unwinding rose slightly from 22% to 23%.
- Bonding with travel companions increased from 20% to 22%.

Day trips

- Visiting friends and family remained stable (28% to 27%).
- Relaxing and unwinding increased slightly (21% to 22%).
- Bonding with travel companions increased (17% to 20%).

Activities and Experiences (Overnight Trips only): April 2026 travellers reported slightly higher participation in nature-based and outdoor activities than October 2025 travellers.

- Participation in walking and hiking remained high (51% to 52%).
- Visits to beaches increased from 32% to 38%.
- Visits to other natural attractions increased from 19% to 20%.
- The proportion undertaking no outdoor activity decreased from around one-third to 29%.
- Visits to museums and galleries declined from 36% to 28%.
- Visits to Māori cultural sites declined slightly from 13% to 11%.

Satisfaction and Net Promoter Score (NPS): Overnight trips:

- Overall satisfaction improved, with 50% very satisfied and 40% satisfied, compared with 49% and 39% respectively in October 2025.
- The proportion whose experience met or exceeded expectations increased from 95% to 96%.
- Net NPS increased from +26 to +30.

Satisfaction and Net Promoter Score (NPS): Day trips:

- The proportion very satisfied increased from 44% to 49%, while the proportion satisfied declined slightly from 45% to 42%.
- Expectations continued to be met or exceeded by 97% of travellers.
- Net NPS increased from +18 to +25.

Travel intentions over next 6 months (April 2026 wave to October 2026 wave)

Number of trips: While domestic travel intentions remained high, expected travel participation was lower than reported in the October 2025 wave.

- 72% expect to take an overnight trip, down from 78%.
- 54% expect to take a day trip, down from 59%.

Key motivations: Future travel intentions were similar across both overnight and day trips.

Overnight trips

- Visiting friends and family increased from 39% to 41%.
- Relaxing and unwinding decreased from 35% to 32%.
- Bonding with travel companions decreased from 27% to 23%.

Day trips

- Visiting friends and family increased slightly from 30% to 31%.
- Relaxing and unwinding declined from 30% to 28%.
- Enjoying natural attractions declined from 24% to 20%.

Barriers to Planned Travel: Cost emerged as a substantially stronger barrier to future travel in the April 2026 wave.

Overnight trips

- "Too expensive" increased from 32% to 44%.
- Weather remained stable at 25%.
- Illness or poor health decreased from 24% to 19%.

Day trips

- Weather decreased from 33% to 29%.
- "Too expensive" increased sharply from 24% to 41%.
- Illness or poor health decreased from 21% to 17%.
- Other commitments decreased from 16% to 14%.

Decision-Making for Future Travel

Information sources used to plan travel were generally less prominent in April 2026 than October 2025, although they remained important influences on travel decisions.

- Use of destination websites declined from 38% to 32%.
- Reliance on friends and family with experience of a destination declined slightly from 37% to 35%.
- Use of general internet searches and other websites decreased from 33% to 28%.
- Weather forecast services emerged as a key information source in April 2026 (30%).