

## Resident attitudes towards tourism in the light of COVID-19 (Feb 21)

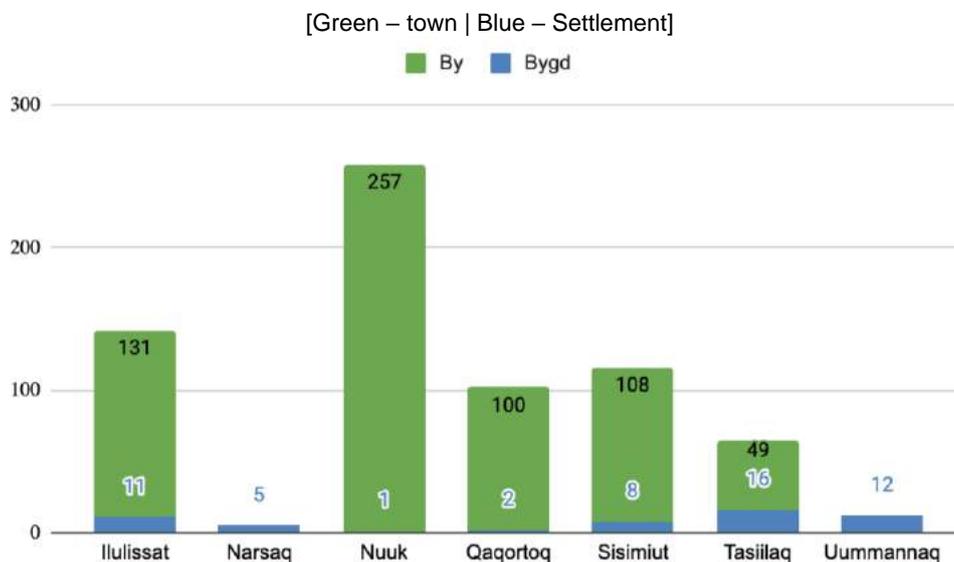
### Background

In November 2019, Visit Greenland conducted the first resident survey to find out what kind of attitudes the population has to tourism in the country. The results of the analysis can be read at [vg.gl/bef\\_holn\\_tur2019](http://vg.gl/bef_holn_tur2019) (in Danish). At that time, there were 831 respondents.

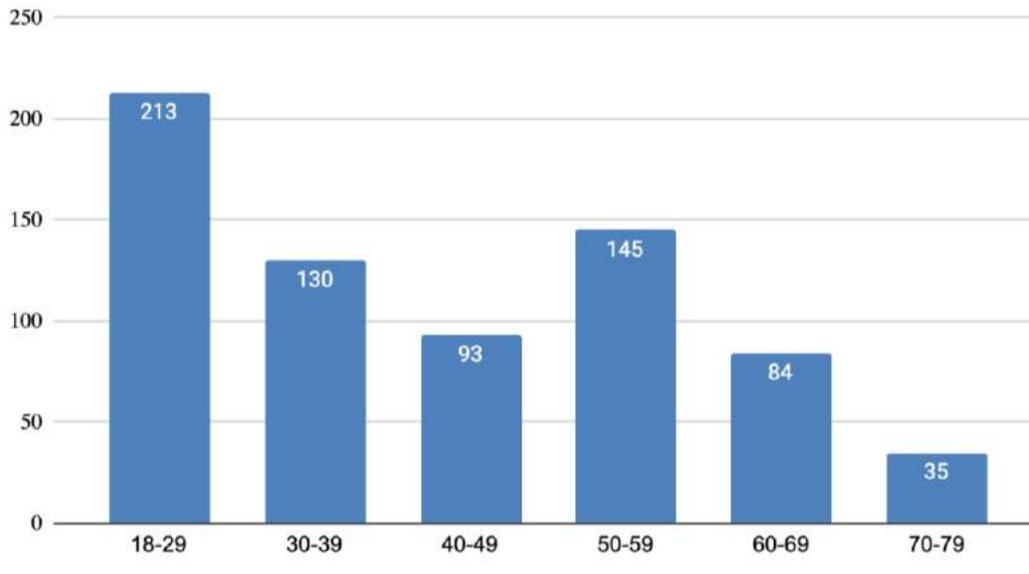
In February 2021, Visit Greenland conducted another survey to examine the extent to which COVID-19 has influenced the population's attitudes towards tourism. Most of the questions are comparable to the Nov 2019 survey. 700 residents from towns and villages that have relatively high tourism activity responded to the survey. This number of respondents provides good validity in the data on a national level. Readers should be aware that the statistical validity decreases with the number of respondents, for example when focusing on a single city or settlement.

As can be read in the wording of the questions, questions 1, 2, 9, 10, 11 and 12 are directly related to COVID-19. The others (3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8) are about the tourism season in 2020. Firstly, the below information describes where the respondents live and their ages:

### 700 respondents – distribution between towns and settlements



## Age groups

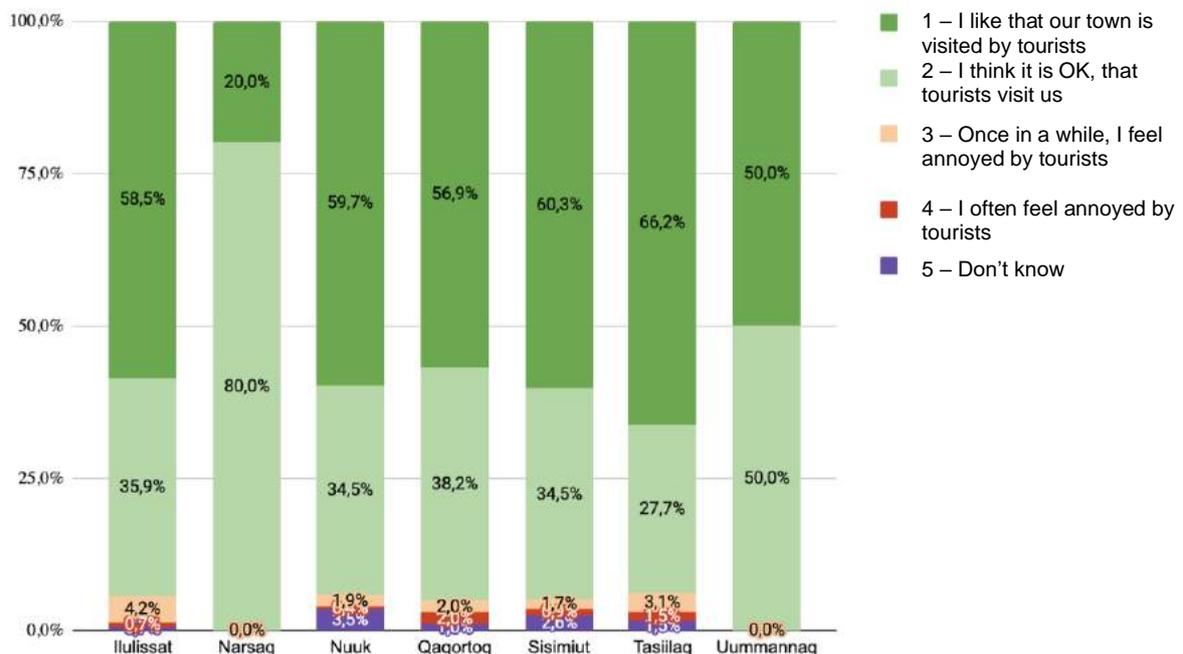


There is an underrepresentation of respondents from Tasilaq, Narsaq and Uummannaq and an overrepresentation from Nuuk. The age group of 18-29 is also slightly overrepresented. There was a balanced distribution between men and women.

In the following, the results for each question are reviewed, and compared with the results from the resident survey conducted in November 2019.

## Question 1 - How were tourists experienced before COVID-19

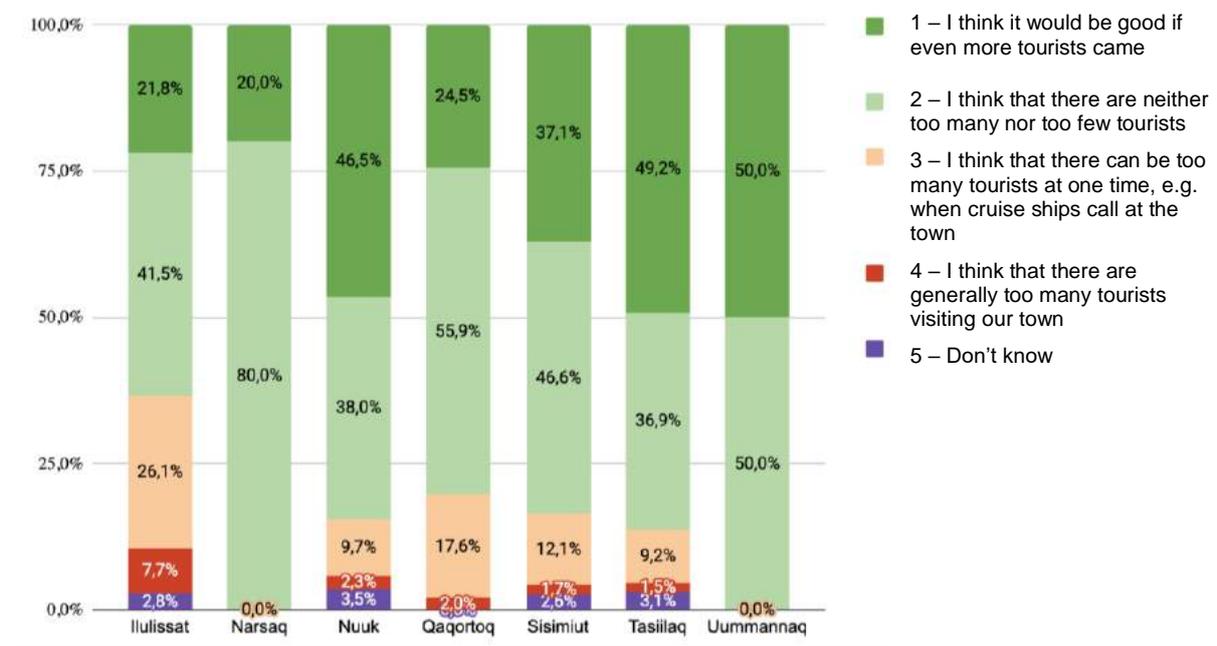
Thinking about before the COVID-19 crisis, when tourists came to your town/settlement, how did you experience it?



When this question was asked in Nov 2019 (only in relation to the 2019 season - obviously not COVID-19 related), 92.4% had a positive attitude towards tourists in general, compared to 94.6% in Feb 2021, which is 2.2 percentage points higher.

## Question 2 - How did residents experience the amount of tourists before COVID-19

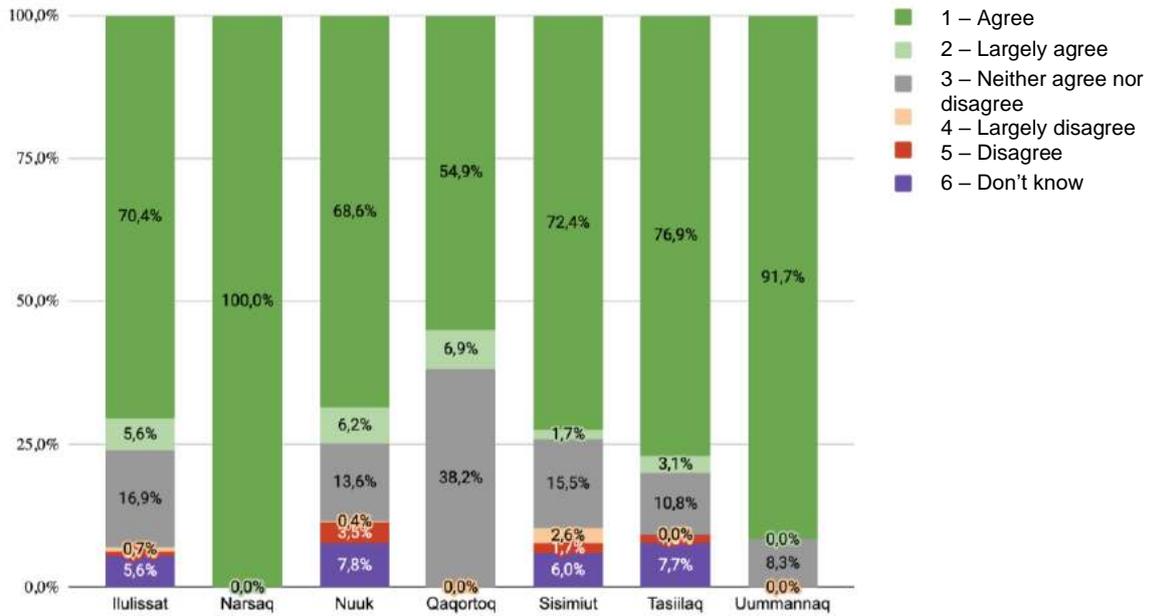
How did you experience the amount of tourists that visited your town before COVID-19?



In Nov 2019, 78.8% had no objections to the amount of tourists in their town/settlement (answer options 1 and 2) compared to 80.0% in Feb 2021, which is 1.2 percentage points higher. NB: The question relates to the 2019 season in both surveys.

### Question 3 - about the behaviour of land-based tourists in relation to the local population

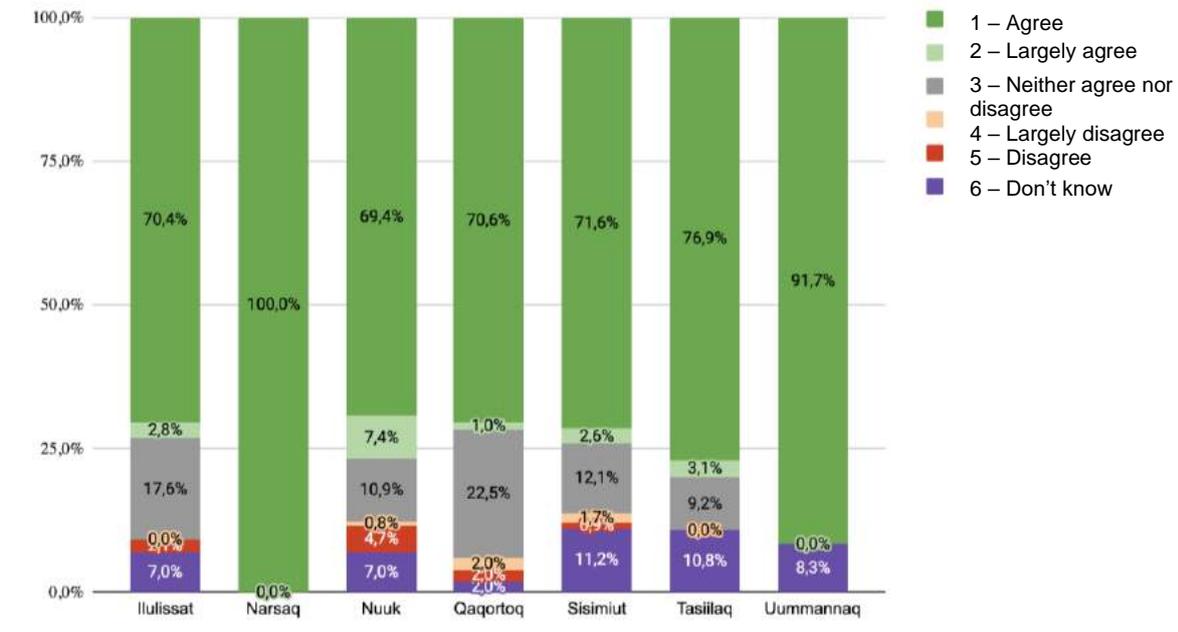
Regular tourists (those who are not cruise passengers) behave respectfully to the population and culture



In Nov 2019, 71.0% either agreed or largely agreed that 'land-based' tourists behave respectfully towards the population and culture, compared to 74.0% in Feb 2021, which is 3.0 percentage points higher.

## Question 4 - whether land-based tourists contribute positively to the local community

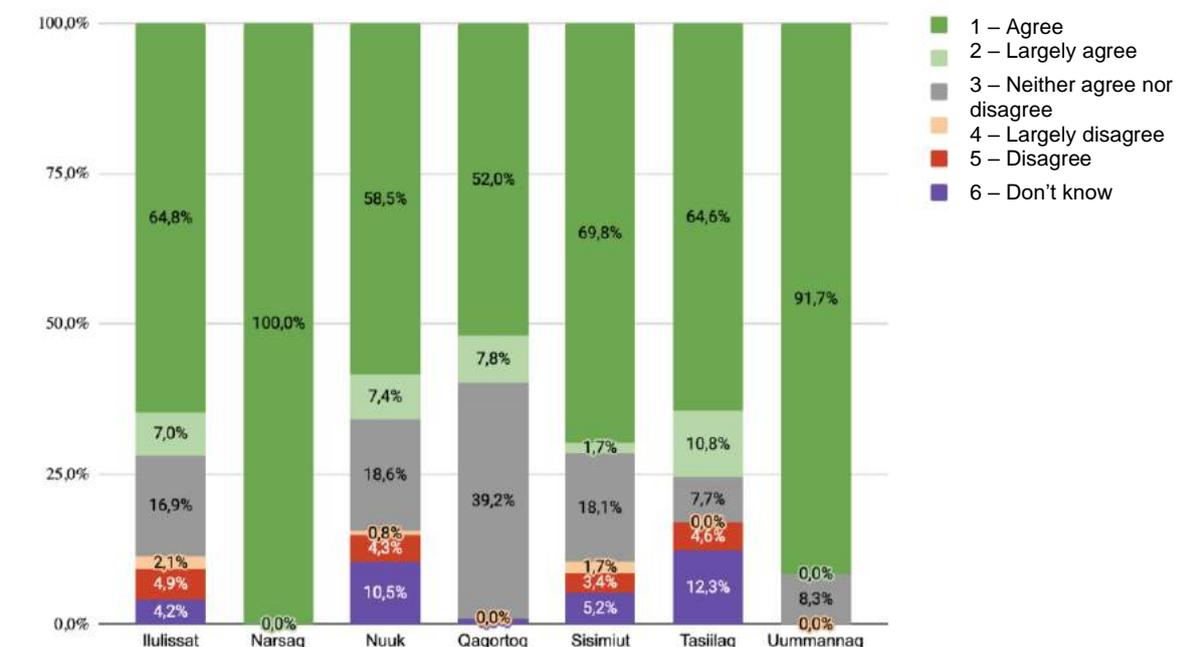
Regular tourists contribute positively to my community – by, for example, spending money in the shops, being nice to talk to or giving live to the town



In Nov 2019, 67.9% either agreed or partially agreed that land-based tourists contribute positively to their local communities, compared to 75.6% in Feb 2021, which is 7.7 percentage points higher.

## Question 5 - on the behaviour of cruise tourists in relation to the local population

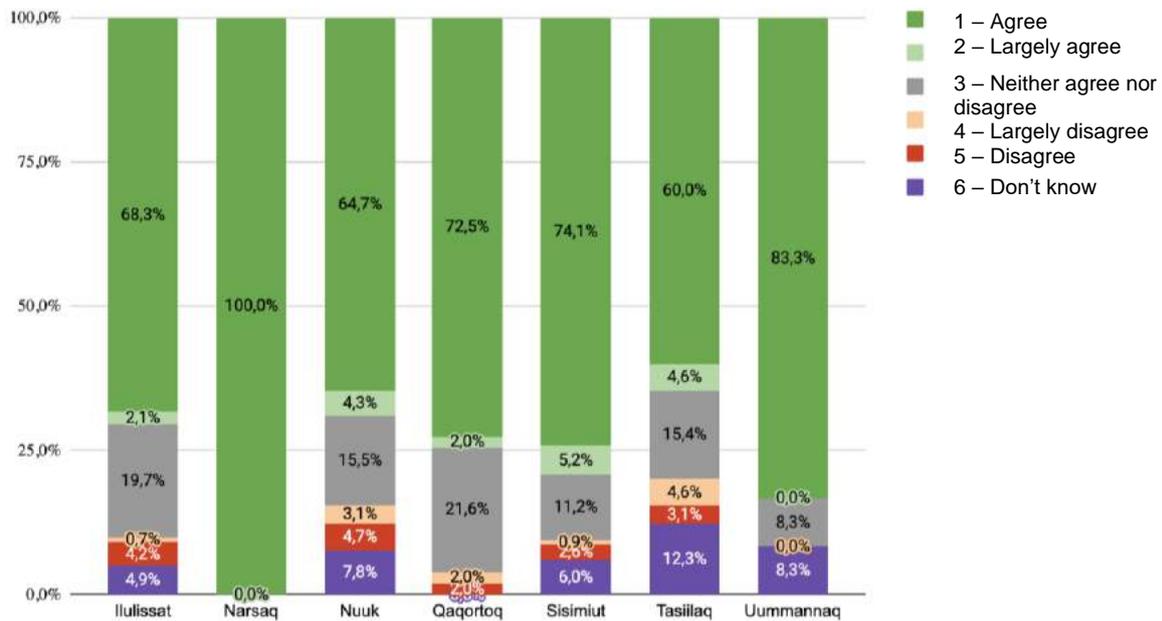
Cruise ship guests behave respectfully to the population and culture



In Nov 2019, 72.0% either agreed or largely agreed that cruise tourists behave respectfully towards the population and culture, compared to 68.7% in Feb 2021, which is 3.3 percentage points lower.

### Question 6 - on the contribution of cruise tourists to the local community

Cruise ship guests contribute positively to my community – by, for example, spending money in the shops, being nice to talk to or giving live to the town

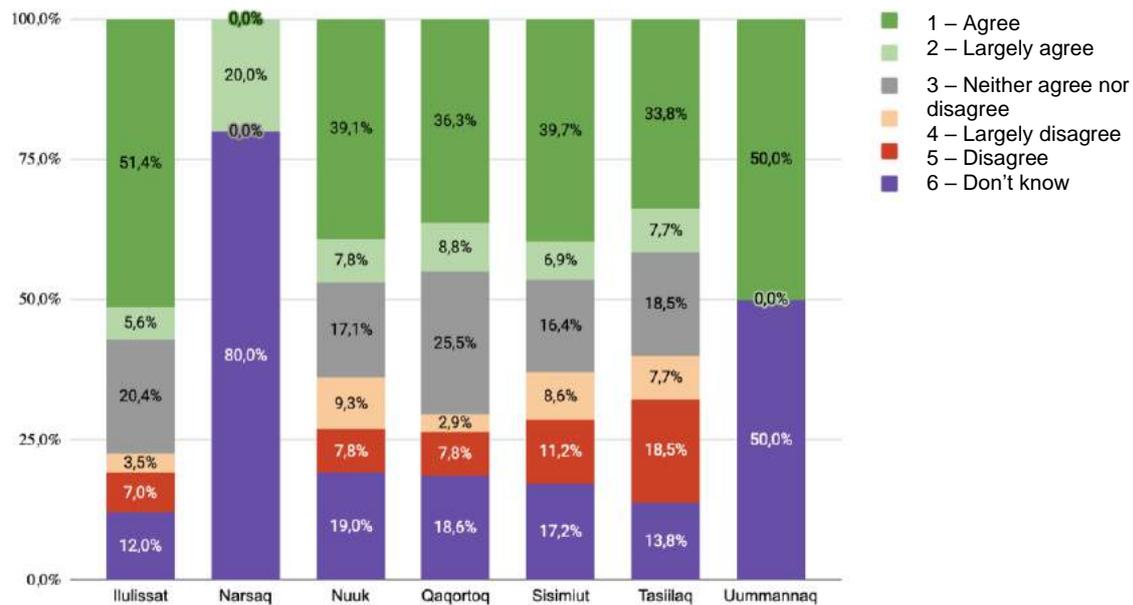


In Nov 2019, 60.8% agreed or largely agreed that cruise tourists contribute positively to the local community, compared to 71.9% in Feb 2021, which is 11.5 percentage points higher.

It is unknown whether the change by 11.5 percentage points is a result of different residents being asked in Feb 2021, or if it is related to the fact that in Feb 2021 it had been a long time since residents had experienced cruise tourists – or both.

## Question 7 - about the municipality's work to promote tourism

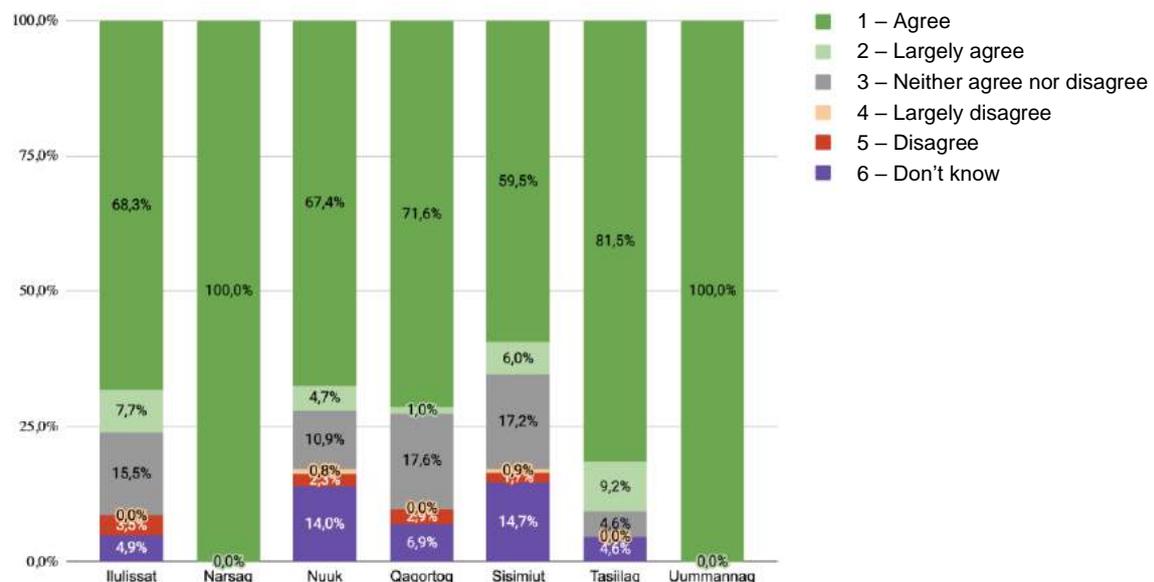
My municipality and local DMO do a lot of good work to promote tourism in a good way



In Nov 2019, 46.5% agreed or largely agreed that their municipality (including the local DMO) does good work for tourism, compared to 48.0% in Feb 2021, which is 1.5 percentage points higher.

## Question 8 - about tourists' behaviour in nature

Tourists take good care of our nature when they move around in it

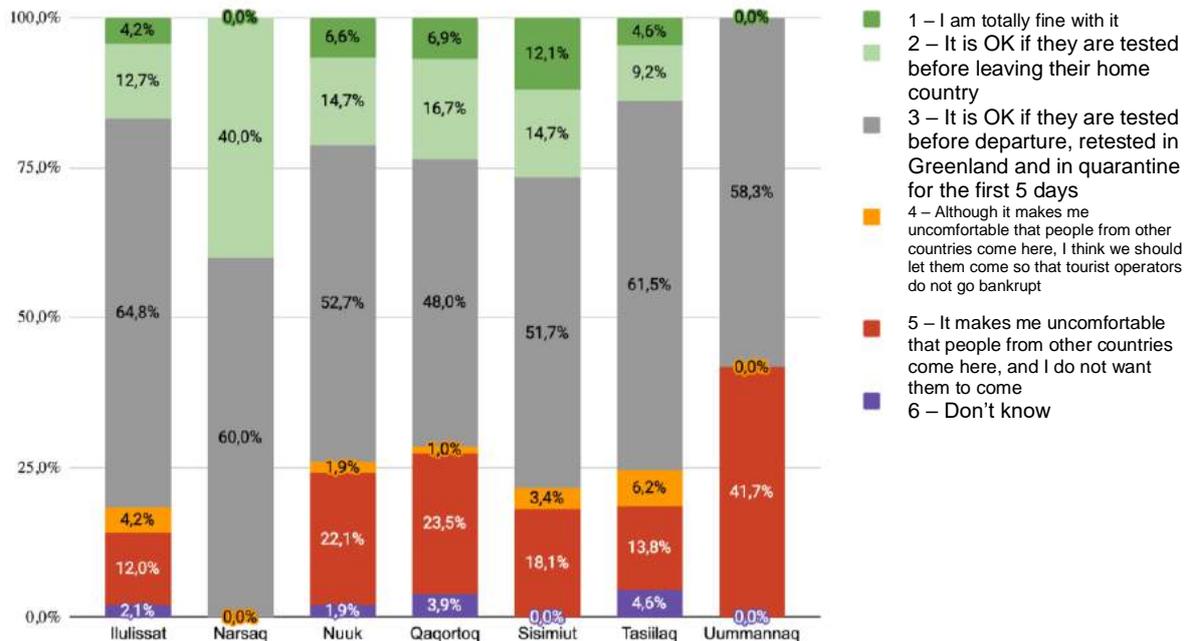


In Nov 2019, 56.3% agreed or largely agreed that tourists take good care of nature when they move around in it, compared to 74.3% in Feb 2021, which is 18.0 percentage points higher.

As in Question 6, where there was also a large percentage point difference between Nov 2019 and Feb 2021, this may be due to the fact that there were completely different respondents in the second survey, or that it has been a long time since residents have experienced tourists in large numbers.

### Question 9 - on what residents think about tourists' visits in the light of COVID-19

In the light of COVID-19, what do you think about tourists visiting your town/settlement?

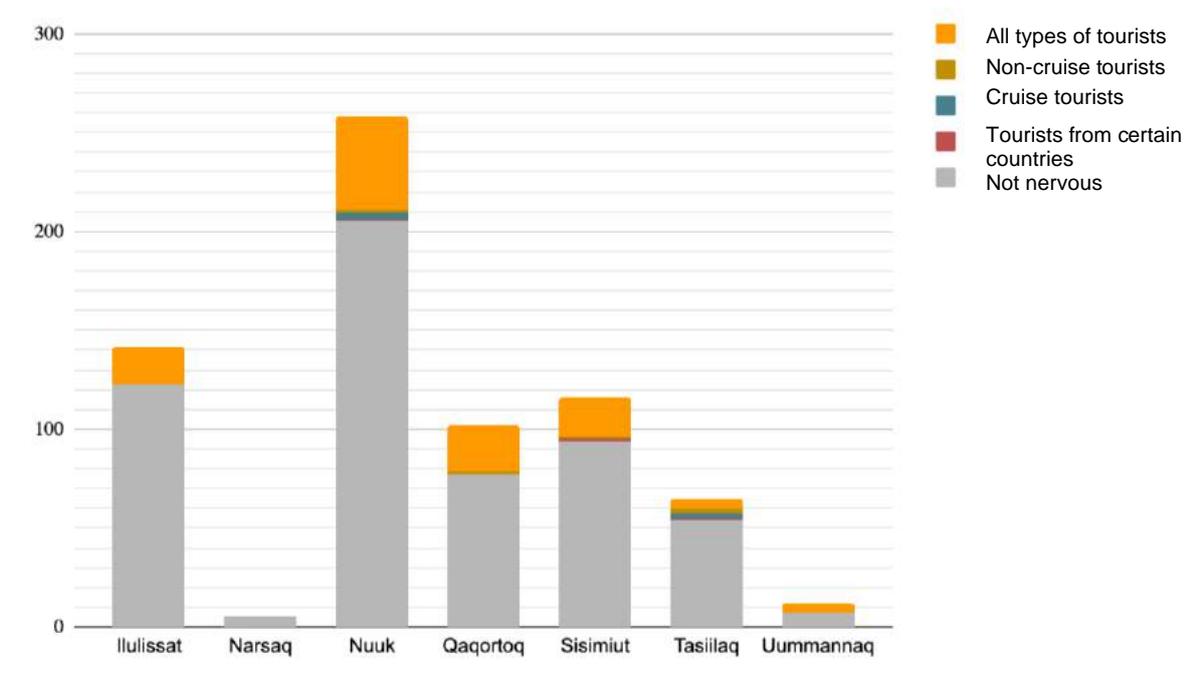


Across all towns/settlements, 6.7% answered "I am totally fine with it". 14.0% answered "It is OK if they are tested before leaving their home country". 55.3% answered "It is OK if they are tested before departure, retested in Greenland and in quarantine for the first 5 days". 2.9% answered "Although it makes me uncomfortable that people from other countries come here, I think we should let them come so that tourist operators do not go bankrupt" and 19.0% answered "It makes me uncomfortable that people from other countries come here, and I do not want them to come". 2.1% answered "Don't know".

The answers should be seen in the context of the fact that residents answered at a time when there was no one infected with COVID-19 in Greenland, but when the infection rate in many other countries looked very worrying, especially in the US and Brazil - and there were at least three mutations, which give rise to additional concern. Of course, it is not possible to know what the attitudes of the population would be like at a time when the pattern of infection looks completely different, and, for example, when many of the world's citizens have been vaccinated.

## Question 10 - about which types of tourists make some residents nervous

Are there some tourists that make you nervous?

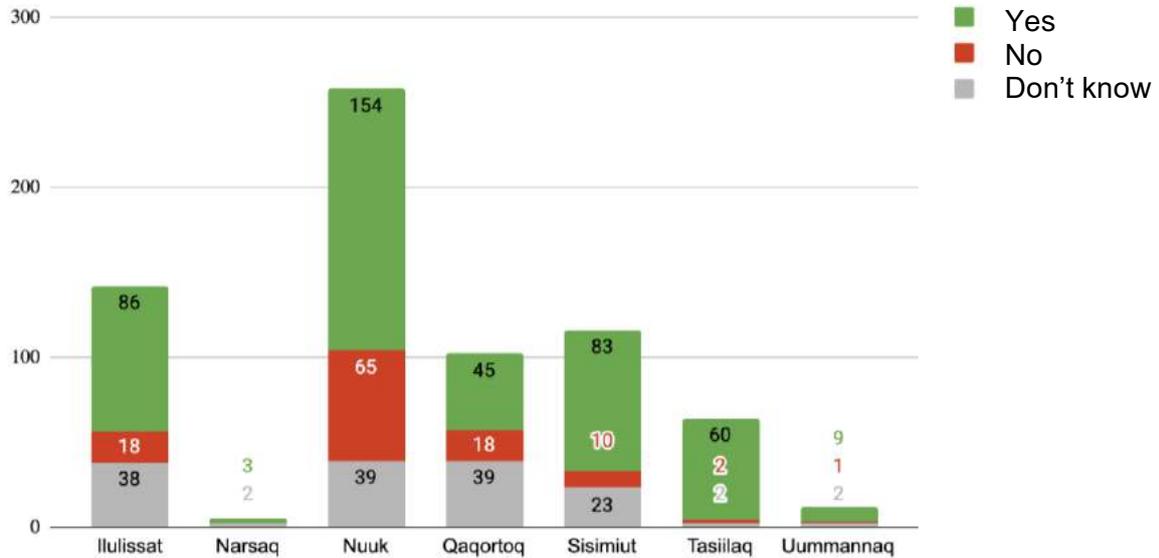


Residents who, in Question 9, answered "It makes me uncomfortable that people from other countries come here, and I do not want them to come" were asked Question 10.

Of these, 17.0% answered that all types of tourists make them nervous. 1.1% answered that land-based tourists make them nervous. 0.7% answered that cruise tourists make them nervous. 0.4% answered that tourists from certain countries make them nervous.

### Question 11 - on the confidence that tourists comply with COVID-19 restrictions

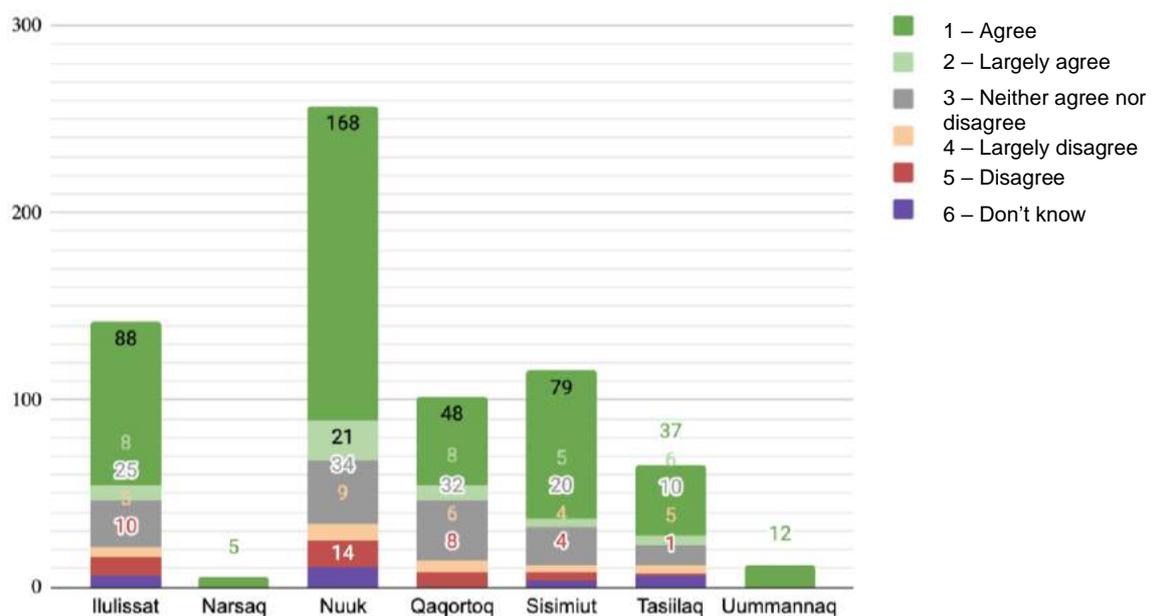
Do you have confidence in that tourists comply with the restrictions about testing, retesting and quarantine?



Overall, 62.9% of the population trusts that tourists comply with the applicable restrictions. 16.3% do not trust it. 20.7% answered "Don't know".

### Question 12 - whether residents believe that the Government has handled the crisis reasonably

The Government has handled the COVID-19 crisis in a reasonable way?



69.4% agree or largely agree that the Government has handled the crisis in a reasonable way. 17.3% neither agree nor disagree. 9.4% predominantly disagree or disagree. 3.9% answered "*Don't know*".

### **Main conclusions**

When comparing across the 8 questions that recurred in both surveys, **91.5%** of residents in Nov 2019 were positive towards tourists, when deducting "*don't know*" and "*neither agree nor disagree*" answers. In Feb 2021, the proportion had risen to **93.4%**.

With one exception (in Question 5 on "cruise tourists behave respectfully towards the population and culture"), respondents are more positive towards tourism in Feb 2021 than in Nov 2019 - in relation to the questions asked in both surveys. In questions 6 and 8, the population is even more positive, by 11.5 and 18.0 percentage points, respectively.

In relation to the COVID-19-specific questions (9, 10 and 11) it seems that 19.0% are directly opposed to receiving tourists from abroad. The vast majority are comfortable with the current COVID-19 restrictions and trust that tourists will comply with them.

69.4% of the population believe that the Government has handled the COVID-19 crisis in a reasonable way. Excluding "*Don't know*" and "*Neither agree nor disagree*" answers, the proportion is 88.0%.

### **General considerations**

It is risky to draw too many indirect conclusions, which is why we have not done this in the conclusion section. One can, however, make some considerations about the difference in attitudes towards tourists in Feb 2021 vs. Nov 2019.

It is a general pattern that residents in Feb 2021 are more positive towards tourists. During 2020, there were approx. 70% fewer land-based tourists than in 2019 - and no cruise tourists - which may be one of the reasons for the more positive attitudes. It is highly probable that only very few residents during 2020 – as well as during the first 2 months of 2021 - had negative experiences with tourists.

For Visit Greenland and the DMOs, the surveys also show that, although a large proportion of the population is positive about tourists, there is still work to be done to make the interaction between tourists and residents smoother. In addition, they also show that DMOs could potentially gain greater support and engagement in tourism from locals if they provide more local information about their work.

### **Context and reservations**

With attitude surveys, one should always take into account the circumstances of society at the relevant time. The context for the Feb 2021 survey is that Greenland had been closed to tourists since 31/12/20. During this period, there had been no flights to/from Greenland other than 'authority flights' and there had been no cruise calls for over a year. In February 2021, there were also no cases of infection in Greenland, and the roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines was just about to start.