

# Social Indicators 2019 Queensland



13  
tourism  
regions

28.1m  
overnight visitors<sup>1</sup>  
(25.3m domestic /  
2.8m international)

\$27bn  
total tourism  
contribution to gross  
state product  
(7.8% of QLD GSP)<sup>2</sup>



## About this study:

Our study monitors local community views on tourism. Queensland residents are surveyed with a focus on understanding their sentiment towards tourism, their local area, and the impacts of tourism on their local area.

This is our fourth Social Indicators study, with previous studies run in 2010, 2013 and 2017. For our 2019 study, we surveyed 3,316 Queensland residents with fieldwork conducted between 3 June 2019 and 9 July 2019.

Here we present the results for Queensland as a state. Individual summaries for each of Queensland's 13 tourism regions are available on our website. [teq.queensland.com/research-and-insights](http://teq.queensland.com/research-and-insights)

**This study examines the social impacts of tourism on the local community, as perceived by its residents. The research is intended to inform the decision making of state and local authorities, as well as tourism bodies.**

Tourism is a \$27 billion industry for Queensland, accounting for 7.8% of its gross state product (GSP). In the year ending June 2019, the state's residents welcomed 28.1 million overnight visitors. Our Social Indicators study aims to monitor these residents' views on tourism.

In the study, the first words that comes to Queenslanders' mind when thinking about their local area showed a positive attitude. They primarily see it as peaceful, beautiful, friendly, and quiet.



Notes:  
1. Tourism Research Australia, International & Domestic Visitor Surveys for the year ending June 2019  
2. Tourism Research Australia, State Tourism Satellite Accounts 2017/18

## Attitudes towards living in their local area

In the study we asked respondents to select one of three statements to describe how they feel about living in their local area. Queenslanders really like living where they do. The study revealed that over a third (40%) of residents 'really like' living in the area and 'can't think of anywhere else they would rather live'.

	2017	2019
Really like it, can't think of anywhere else I would rather live	37%	40% ↑
Enjoy living here but can think of other places I would enjoy equally	52%	51%
I only live here because circumstances demand it	11%	9% ↓

*i.e. 40% of Queensland respondents chose this statement as best describing how they feel about living in their local area*

## Attitudes towards tourism in local area

Respondents answered a series of questions about their attitudes towards tourism in their local area. For each question they picked a statement that best reflects their view.

This showed a largely positive attitude towards tourism. There was an increase in the number of residents that really like tourists and the number that are happy for continued tourism development growth was high at a similar proportion to 2017. However, there was a reduction in the proportion of residents that want more tourists, instead an increasing proportion want tourism numbers to remain about the same.

At a regional level, attitudes towards tourism were the most positive outside of the South-East Queensland regions, i.e. outside of Brisbane, Gold Coast, and Sunshine Coast. Regional residents overwhelmingly want more tourists and seek continued growth in tourism development.

Half of Queensland residents see tourists in their day-to-day lives, and usually don't talk to them. Regionally, we found that meeting and making friends with tourists was most common Gladstone, Whitsundays, and Tropical North Queensland regions.

*"It is great watching the families coming and enjoying themselves."*

QLD Resident, 2019

*"Tourism improves my quality of life, the variety of activities and entertainment offered increases during high tourist times."*

QLD Resident, 2019

*"...I enjoy seeing tourists enjoying the area that I choose to live in... I think that the benefits out way the negatives."*

QLD resident, 2019

### Feelings towards tourists

	2017	2019
I really like tourists	46%	50% ↑
I tolerate tourists as they're good for the community	40%	36% ↓
I adjust my lifestyle to avoid tourism inconveniences	11%	10%
I stay away from places tourists go	3%	4%

### Number of tourists local area should attract

	2017	2019
More	36%	32% ↓
About the same number	57%	60% ↑
Fewer	7%	8%

### Preferred tourism development growth

	2017	2019
Happy with continued growth	58%	59%
Happy but no more growth	29%	30%
Want less tourism	6%	4% ↓
More growth, different direction	7%	7%

### Level of contact with tourists

	2017	2019
Never come into contact with them	21%	21%
See them around but don't usually talk to them	54%	51% ↓
Often interact with them as part of my job	10%	9%
Often meet them around town and talk to them	13%	14%
Have made friends with them, but not kept in contact	6%	6%
Have made friends with them, and have kept in contact	3%	4% ↑

↑ Statistically significantly higher/lower than previous year at 95% confidence level  
↓

## Attitudes towards tourism in local area cont.

2017

2019

Respondents were then asked to rate the overall impact tourism has on their community, and on them personally, by using a seven-point scale ranging from 'very negatively (-3)' to 'very positively (+3)'.

### % agree that tourism has a positive impact on...

...the <b>community</b> as a whole <sup>1</sup>	43%	45%
...their <b>personal</b> quality of life <sup>1</sup>	18%	↓16%

Queenslanders continue to recognise that tourism delivers benefits to the community and this proportion was in line with the proportion in 2017. The benefits of tourism are seen to be more to the community than the individual.

*i.e. 16% of Queensland respondents rated tourism as affecting their personal quality of life 'positively (2)' or 'very positively (3)'.*

## Positive and negative impacts of tourism

Respondents were then asked if they agree or disagree with seven positive and eight negative statements about the possible impacts of tourism. Those that agree with a statement were asked to rate its impact on their community, and on them personally, by using a seven-point scale ranging from 'very negatively (-3)' to 'very positively (+3)'.

Queensland residents overwhelmingly agree that, because of tourism, there is: greater cultural diversity (91%), economic benefits (89%), an increased regional profile (83%), increased local pride (73%), and new infrastructure (69%). These positive benefits are seen to impact the community more than the individual.

### Positive impacts of tourism

	% agree	2017	2019
Greater cultural diversity		89%	91% ↑
Important economic benefits		89%	89%
Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness		88%	89%
Increased regional profile		83%	83%
Increased local pride		69%	73% ↑
New infrastructure		69%	69%
Benefits shared evenly		48%	51% ↑

*"Overall I think if tourism promotes a clean, happy productive community it benefits all who live in it."*

*QLD resident, 2019*

*"Tourism brings job and business opportunities and injects cash into the local economy."*

*QLD Resident, 2019*

*"I just like mixing with people from other cultures."*

*QLD resident, 2019*

Impact on...	...personal quality of life <sup>1</sup>		...community as a whole <sup>1</sup>	
	2017	2019	2017	2019
Greater cultural diversity	17%	17%	33%	35%
Important economic benefits	16%	17%	43%	45%
Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness	19%	18%	44%	44%
Increased regional profile	17%	17%	41%	41%
Increased local pride	21%	21%	40%	41%
New infrastructure	32%	31%	49%	53% ↑
Benefits shared evenly	21%	20%	40%	43% ↑

#### Notes:

1. positive impact is based on % who cited the top two ratings on a 7-point scale from very negatively (-3) to very positively (+3)

↑ Statistically significantly higher/lower than previous year at 95% confidence level  
↓

## Potential negative impacts of tourism

The main potential negative impact that residents associate with tourism is increased prices. Between 2017 and 2019 there was a significant increase in residents that associate tourism with increased property prices, negative impact on the environment, negative impact on local character and misdirected public spending.

	% agree	2017	2019
Increased prices		50%	50%
Increased property values		38%	42% ↑
Rise in delinquent behaviour		35%	36%
More disruption		35%	36%
Negative impact on the environment		30%	34% ↑
Negative impact on local character		29%	33% ↑
Misdirected public spending		25%	28% ↑
Lack of access for locals		18%	22% ↑

*"makes it harder for renters to find properties at a lower rent."*

*QLD resident, 2019*

*"Some areas in our region are not equipped for the number of tourists that come.... These need to be built before the area is spoilt"*

*QLD resident, 2019*

Impact on...	...personal quality of life <sup>1</sup>		...community as a whole <sup>1</sup>	
	2017	2019	2017	2019
Increased prices	9%	10%	11%	10%
Increased property values	13%	13%	15%	13% ↓
Rise in delinquent behaviour	8%	8%	18%	16% ↓
More disruption	11%	13% ↑	14%	16% ↑
Negative impact on the environment	8%	11% ↑	20%	19%
Negative impact on local character	5%	6%	6%	7%
Misdirected public spending	7%	6%	14%	12% ↓
Lack of access for locals	16%	11% ↓	16%	14%

## In summary

Queenslanders really like living where they do, primarily because it is peaceful, beautiful, friendly, and quiet.

The state's residents welcomed 28.1 million overnight visitors in the year ending June 2019. Tourism is a \$27 billion industry for the state, contributing 7.8% of the gross state product.

Through the study, we saw that residents have a positive attitude towards tourism. This was particularly evident in the regions outside of South East Queensland, i.e. outside of Brisbane, Gold Coast, and Sunshine Coast. Regional residents overwhelmingly want more tourists, say they 'really like' tourists, and seek continued tourism development.

There was an increase in the number of residents that really like tourists and the number that are happy for continued tourism development growth was high at a similar proportion to 2017. However, there was a reduction in the proportion of residents that want more tourists, instead an increasing proportion want tourism numbers to remain about the same.

We also saw that residents continue to recognise that tourism delivers many benefits. These benefits are seen to impact the community more than the individual. In terms of the potential negative impacts of tourism, the perceived impact in several areas has declined over the past four years.

### Disclaimer:

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### Notes:

1. negative impact is based on % who cited the bottom two ratings on a 7-point scale ranging from very negatively (-3) to very positively (+3).

↑ Statistically significantly higher/lower than previous year at 95% confidence level

## Key

A number of statements used in the questionnaire have been abbreviated for ease of reporting. The full statements, as asked in the questionnaire, are listed below.

Abbreviated wording	Questionnaire wording
<b>Residents' feeling about their local area</b>	
Really like it, can't think of anywhere else I would rather live	I really like it, I can't think of anywhere else I would rather live
Enjoy living here but can think of other places I would enjoy equally	I enjoy living here but can think of other places I would enjoy equally
I only live here because circumstances demand it	I only live here because circumstances demand it and would prefer to live somewhere else
<b>Feelings towards tourists</b>	
I really like tourists	I really like tourists, they are great for the community
I tolerate tourists as they're good for the community	I tolerate tourists and the minor inconveniences they cause because they are good for the community
I adjust my lifestyle to avoid tourism inconveniences	I adjust my lifestyle to avoid the inconveniences associated with tourism
I stay away from places tourists go	I stay away from places where tourists go because I don't want anything to do with them
<b>Preferred tourism development growth</b>	
Happy with continued growth	I am happy with the way tourism is developing in my local area and would like to see it continue to grow
Happy but no more growth	I am happy with the way tourism has developed in my local area but would not like to see it grow any more
Want less tourism	I would like to see less tourism in my local area
More growth, different direction	I would like to see more tourism growth in my local area but in a different direction
<b>Level of contact with tourists</b>	
Never come into contact with them	I never come into contact with tourists as far as I am aware
See them around but don't usually talk to them	I see tourists around but don't usually speak to them unless they ask for direction etc.
Often interact with them as part of my job	I often interact with tourists as part of my job
Often meet them around town and talk to them	I often meet tourists around town and talk to them
Have made friends with them, but have not kept in contact	I have made friends with tourists during their stay in my local area, but have not kept in contact
Have made friends with them, and have kept in contact	I have made friends with tourists and kept in contact after they have left
<b>Positive statements</b>	
Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness	Festivals and Events attract tourists and raise awareness of the region
Important economic benefits	Tourism is good for the economy because the money that visitors spend when they come to the region helps to stimulate the economy, stimulates employment opportunities, and is good for local business
Increased local pride	Tourism makes local residents feel more proud of their town and makes them feel good about themselves and their community
Increased regional profile	Tourism showcases our region in a positive light. This helps to promote a better opinion of our region and encourages future tourism and/or business investment
Benefits shared evenly	The benefits of tourism are shared evenly across the local community
New infrastructure	Because of tourism there are better shopping, dining and/or recreational opportunities in the region
Greater cultural diversity	Tourism brings people from different backgrounds and cultures into the community
<b>Negative statements</b>	
Misdirected public spending	Too much public money is spent on developing facilities for tourists that would be better spent on other public facilities/ activities
More disruption	Tourism disrupts the lives of local residents and creates inconvenience. Problems like traffic congestion, parking difficulties and excessive noise are worse when there are lots of tourists around
Rise in delinquent behaviour	Tourism is associated with some people behaving inappropriately, perhaps in a rowdy and delinquent way, or engaging in excessive drinking or drug use or other criminal behaviour
Negative impact on the environment	Tourism has a negative impact on the environment through excessive litter and/or pollution and/or damage to natural areas
Increased prices	Tourism leads to increases in the prices of some things such as some goods and services and/or property values and/or rental costs
Lack of access for locals	Tourists deny local residents access to public facilities, that is, roads, parks, sporting facilities, public transport and/ or other facilities are less available to local residents because of overcrowding
Negative impact on local character	Because of tourism the character of the region has changed
Increased property values	The increase in property values associated with tourism, makes it more difficult for some people to live in the area

