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.

For our 2019 study, we surveyed 3,316 Queensland residents with fieldwork conducted between 3 June 2019 and 9 July 2019. In the Gold Coast tourism region, 399 residents were surveyed.

This is our fourth Social Indicators study, with previous studies run in 2010, 2013 and 2017. We have compared results for 2019 to the results from 2017.

The Gold Coast region (GC) is the most popular holiday destination in Queensland (QLD), and tourism accounts for 13.8% of the gross regional product (GRP) to the local economy. The region’s 607,000 residents welcomed 5.2 million overnight visitors in the year ending June 2019. Around three in five of these visitors (58%) were holidaying in the region. Our Social Indicators study aims to monitor residents' views on tourism.

In the study, the first words that come to residents’ minds when thinking about the Gold Coast showed a positive attitude. The region’s great beaches and shopping were top of mind. Commonly used words were: beaches, quiet, peaceful, beautiful, friendly and community.

Notes:
2. Tourism Research Australia, International & Domestic Visitor Surveys for the year ending June 2019
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. The study revealed that 44% of Gold Coast residents ‘really like’ living in the area and ‘can’t think of anywhere else they would rather live’. This is higher than the Queensland average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Really like it, can’t think of anywhere else I would rather live</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoy living here but can think of other places I would enjoy equally</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I only live here because circumstances demand it</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 that the proportion of Gold Coast residents who ‘really like’ tourists increased from 32% in 2017 to 34% in 2019.

“I think it’s wonderful what it does for businesses and employment for the area and to see those places flourish, but it has raised the price on housing dramatically.”

Gold Coast resident, 2019

However, despite the increase in proportion that really like tourists there has been a decrease in the proportion that want more tourists and continued tourism growth. Instead the proportion that want the number of tourists to remain the same increased to 67%, compared to 63% in 2017 and the proportion which are happy with tourism development but no more growth increased from 34% to 39%.

Two thirds of residents (63%) report seeing tourists around but they don’t usually talk to them; this is higher than for the rest of the state.

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

Gold Coast resident, 2019

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 that the proportion of Gold Coast residents who ‘really like’ tourists increased from 32% in 2017 to 34% in 2019.

“I think it’s wonderful what it does for businesses and employment for the area and to see those places flourish, but it has raised the price on housing dramatically.”

Gold Coast resident, 2019

However, despite the increase in proportion that really like tourists there has been a decrease in the proportion that want more tourists and continued tourism growth. Instead the proportion that want the number of tourists to remain the same increased to 67%, compared to 63% in 2017 and the proportion which are happy with tourism development but no more growth increased from 34% to 39%.

Two thirds of residents (63%) report seeing tourists around but they don’t usually talk to them; this is higher than for the rest of the state.

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

Gold Coast resident, 2019
Attitudes towards tourism in local area (cont.)

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)'.

Gold Coast residents feel that tourism positively impacts the community more than them personally. Nearly half (44%) agree that tourism has a positive impact on the community, while 17% agree that tourism has a positive impact on their personal quality of life.

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)'.

Gold Coast residents overwhelmingly agree that, because of tourism, there is: greater cultural diversity (91%), economic benefits (90%), an increased regional profile (83%), increased local pride (68%), and new infrastructure (77%). These positive benefits are seen to impact the community more than the individual.

Positive impacts of tourism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% agree</th>
<th>GC 2017</th>
<th>GC 2019</th>
<th>QLD 2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greater cultural diversity</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important economic benefits</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased regional profile</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased local pride</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New infrastructure</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits shared evenly</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"Interesting people from different cultures, more jobs are great for the area.”
Gold Coast resident, 2019

"I like seeing people from other countries/cultures around enjoying themselves and what we have to offer.”
Gold Coast resident, 2019

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)
Potential negative impacts of tourism

Respondents were 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)'.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>GC 2019</th>
<th>QLD 2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased prices</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased property values</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rise in delinquent behaviour</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More disruption</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative impact on the environment</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative impact on local character</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misdirected public spending</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of access for locals</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In summary

Gold Coast residents really like living in the region. Residents appreciate the beautiful beaches and see their local area as peaceful and quiet with a good sense of community.

The region’s 607,000 residents share the area with more holidaymakers than any other Queensland region.

Through the study, we see that positive sentiment towards tourism has softened and shifted towards a more neutral position. More residents ‘really like’ tourists but fewer residents think their local area should attract ‘more’ tourists. There remains little negative sentiment towards tourism.

Gold Coast residents see the wide range of benefits that tourism brings to the community. However, Gold Coast residents were more likely than the rest of the state to identify the negative aspects of tourism.

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 at the end of our Social Indicators 2019 Queensland report on our website: teq.qld.gov.au/research-and-insights/domestic-research/queensland-research

Disclaimer:

By using this information you acknowledge that this information is provided by Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ) to you without any responsibility on behalf of TEQ. You agree to release and indemnify TEQ for any loss or damage that you may suffer as a result of your reliance on this information. TEQ does not represent or warrant that this information is correct, complete or suitable for the purpose for which you wish to use it. The information is provided to you on the basis that you will use your own skill and judgement and make your own enquiries to independently evaluate, assess and verify the information’s correctness, completeness and usefulness to you before you rely on the information.

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).

“Just the inability to use the beaches and parks due to no parking when in tourist season. Also harder to get anywhere with the traffic congestion.”

Gold Coast resident, 2019

“Increase in rental prices because homes are being taken away from the rental market and being run as Airbnb instead…”

Gold Coast resident, 2019

In summary

Gold Coast residents really like living in the region. Residents appreciate the beautiful beaches and see their local area as peaceful and quiet with a good sense of community.

The region’s 607,000 residents share the area with more holidaymakers than any other Queensland region.

Through the study, we see that positive sentiment towards tourism has softened and shifted towards a more neutral position. More residents ‘really like’ tourists but fewer residents think their local area should attract ‘more’ tourists. There remains little negative sentiment towards tourism.

Gold Coast residents see the wide range of benefits that tourism brings to the community. However, Gold Coast residents were more likely than the rest of the state to identify the negative aspects of tourism.

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 at the end of our Social Indicators 2019 Queensland report on our website: teq.qld.gov.au/research-and-insights/domestic-research/queensland-research

Disclaimer:

By using this information you acknowledge that this information is provided by Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ) to you without any responsibility on behalf of TEQ. You agree to release and indemnify TEQ for any loss or damage that you may suffer as a result of your reliance on this information. TEQ does not represent or warrant that this information is correct, complete or suitable for the purpose for which you wish to use it. The information is provided to you on the basis that you will use your own skill and judgement and make your own enquiries to independently evaluate, assess and verify the information’s correctness, completeness and usefulness to you before you rely on the information.

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).