

Social Indicators 2019

Gold Coast



607,000
residents¹

5.2m
overnight visitors²
(4.2m domestic /
1.1m international)

\$4.7bn
total tourism
contribution to gross
regional product
(13.8% of GC's GRP)³

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.

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.

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:

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics, 3218 – Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2017-18
2. Tourism Research Australia, International & Domestic Visitor Surveys for the year ending June 2019
3. Deloitte Access Economics, Regional Tourism Satellite Accounts 2016/17



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.

	GC		QLD
	2017	2019	2019
Really like it, can't think of anywhere else I would rather live	44%	44%	40%
Enjoy living here but can think of other places I would enjoy equally	49%	49%	51%
I only live here because circumstances demand it	7%	8%	9%

i.e. 44% of Gold Coast 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 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

	GC	QLD
	2017	2019

Feelings towards tourists

I really like tourists	32%	34%	50%
I tolerate tourists as they're good for the community	48%	46%	36%
I adjust my lifestyle to avoid tourism inconveniences	16%	17%	10%
I stay away from places tourists go	4%	4%	4%

Number of tourists local area should attract

More	28%	22%↓	32%
About the same number	63%	67%	60%
Fewer	9%	11%	8%

Preferred tourism development growth

Happy with continued growth	54%	48%	59%
Happy but no more growth	34%	39%	30%
Want less tourism	9%	8%	4%
More growth, different direction	4%	5%	7%

Level of contact with tourists

Never come into contact with them	12%	13%	21%
See them around but don't usually talk to them	66%	63%	51%
Often interact with them as part of my job	10%	8%	9%
Often meet them around town and talk to them	11%	12%	14%
Have made friends with them, but not kept in contact	7%	6%	6%
Have made friends with them, and have kept in contact	3%	5%	4%

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

■ Significantly higher when comparing the region to Queensland at the 95% confidence level

Attitudes towards tourism in local area (cont.)

	GC	QLD
	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 community as a whole ¹	51%	44%↓	45%
...their personal quality of life ¹	22%	17%	16%

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.

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)'.

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

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

"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

Impact on...	GC 2019		QLD 2019	
	personal quality of life ¹	community as a whole ¹	personal quality of life ¹	community as a whole ¹
Greater cultural diversity	17%	32%	17%	35%
Important economic benefits	17%	43%	17%	45%
Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness	18%	40%	18%	44%
Increased regional profile	18%	38%	17%	41%
Increased local pride	21%	41%	21%	41%
New infrastructure	34%	56%	31%	53%
Benefits shared evenly	18%	39%	20%	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

■ Significantly higher when comparing the region to Queensland at the 95% confidence level

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)'.

% agree	GC		QLD
	2017	2019	2019
Increased prices	64%	65%	50%
Increased property values	59%	57%	42%
Rise in delinquent behaviour	50%	52%	36%
More disruption	57%	55%	36%
Negative impact on the environment	39%	45%	34%
Negative impact on local character	47%	47%	33%
Misdirected public spending	33%	33%	28%
Lack of access for locals	33%	31%	22%

"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

Impact on...	GC 2019		QLD 2019	
	personal quality of life ¹	community as a whole ¹	personal quality of life ¹	community as a whole ¹
Increased prices	13%	14%	10%	10%
Increased property values	15%	18%	13%	13%
Rise in delinquent behaviour	11%	23%	8%	16%
More disruption	20%	23%	13%	16%
Negative impact on the environment	12%	21%	11%	19%
Negative impact on local character	8%	9%	6%	7%
Misdirected public spending	8%	16%	6%	12%
Lack of access for locals	15%	22%	11%	14%

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.queensland.com/research-and-insights/domestic-research/queensland-research

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Notes:

- 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

■ Significantly higher when comparing the region to Queensland at the 95% confidence level