

Social Indicators 2021

Gold Coast



Surfers Paradise, Gold Coast

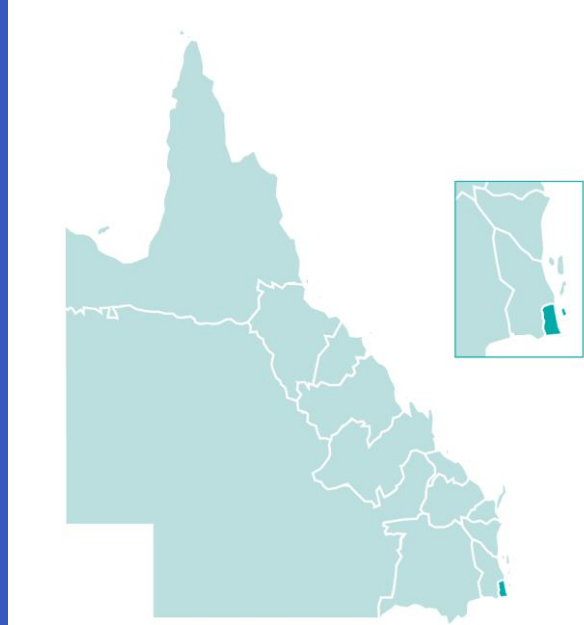
About this study:

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.

Our study monitors local community views on tourism. Queensland residents were surveyed with a focus on understanding their sentiment towards tourism and their local area.

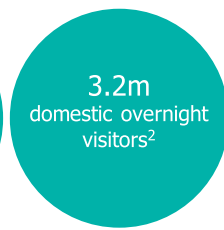
For our 2021 study, we surveyed 3,305 Queensland residents with fieldwork conducted between 10 June 2021 and 7 July 2021. In the Gold Coast tourism region, 402 residents were surveyed.

This is our fifth Social Indicators study, with previous studies run in 2010, 2013, 2017 and 2019. We have compared results for 2021 to the results from 2019.



The Gold Coast region (GC) is the most visited holiday destination in Queensland (QLD), and tourism accounts for 10.8% of the gross regional product (GRP) to the local economy. The region's 635,000 residents welcomed 3.2 million domestic overnight visitors in the year ending June 2021. 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 beaches and community were top of mind. Commonly used words were: beaches, quiet, peaceful, beautiful, friendly and community.



Notes:
1. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population, Australia, 2019-20
2. Tourism Research Australia, Domestic Visitor Surveys for the year ending June 2021
3. Tourism Research Australia, Regional Tourism Satellite Accounts 2019-20

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', which is significantly higher than the Queensland average.

	GC		QLD
	2019	2021	2021
Really like it, can't think of anywhere else I would rather live	44%	44%	38%
Enjoy living here but can think of other places I would enjoy equally	49%	48%	52%
I only live here because circumstances demand it	8%	8%	10%

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 a third (32%) of Gold Coast residents really like tourists, which is significantly less the Queensland average.

"Tourists are on the whole happy and carefree and take pains to enjoy a broad range of the entertainment we have to offer in our city. This is very good for local businesses."

Gold Coast resident, 2021

Gold Coast residents have a more neutral view on tourism than the rest of Queensland. A significantly higher proportion would prefer that tourism numbers remain the same (70%) than the Queensland average (60%).

Similarly Gold Coast residents are significantly more likely to be happy with tourism development but not want any more growth than the rest of Queensland (38% vs 31%).

Three in five residents (60%) report seeing tourists around but they don't usually talk to them; this is higher than for the rest of the state.

"...it is nice to see visitors out and about enjoying themselves"

Gold Coast resident, 2021

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

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

	GC	QLD
	2019	2021

Feelings towards tourists

I really like tourists	34%	32%	42%
I tolerate tourists as they're good for the community	46%	47%	42%
I adjust my lifestyle to avoid tourism inconveniences	17%	16%	12%
I stay away from places tourists go	4%	4%	4%

Number of tourists local area should attract

More	22%	23%	31%
About the same number	67%	70%	60%
Fewer	11%	8%	9%

Preferred tourism development growth

Happy with continued growth	48%	49%	55%
Happy but no more growth	39%	38%	31%
Want less tourism	8%	8%	6%
More growth, different direction	5%	6%	9%

Level of contact with tourists

Never come into contact with them	13%	16%	26%
See them around but don't usually talk to them	63%	60%	49%
Often interact with them as part of my job	8%	12%	8%
Often meet them around town and talk to them	12%	11%	13%
Have made friends with them, but not kept in contact	6%	4%	5%
Have made friends with them, and have kept in contact	5%	2%	2%

Attitudes towards tourism in local area (cont.)

	GC	QLD
	2019	2021

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	44%↓	44%	41%
...their personal quality of life ¹	17%	13%	14%

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 13% agree that tourism has a positive impact on their personal quality of life.

i.e. 14% 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)'.

Positive impacts of tourism

Gold Coast residents overwhelmingly agree that, because of tourism, there is: greater cultural diversity (92%), economic benefits (90%), an increased regional profile (83%), increased local pride (63%), and new infrastructure (75%). These positive benefits are seen to impact the community more than the individual.

% agree	GC		QLD
	2019	2021	2021
Greater cultural diversity	91%	92%	89%
Important economic benefits	90%	90%	89%
Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness	87%↓	89%	88%
Increased regional profile	83%	83%	83%
Increased local pride	68%	63%	71%
New infrastructure	77%	75%	67%
Benefits shared evenly	47%	45%	44%

"It brings in revenue to the cafes and restaurants in my community helping small businesses survive which helps our community here and myself"

Gold Coast resident, 2021

"(Tourism) gives me access to restaurants and attractions that wouldn't be here if it wasn't for tourists."

Gold Coast resident, 2021

Impact on...	GC 2021		QLD 2021	
	personal quality of life ¹	community as a whole ¹	personal quality of life ¹	community as a whole ¹
Greater cultural diversity	16%	33%	15%	34%
Important economic benefits	14%	46%	12%	43%
Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness	16%	40%	15%	39%
Increased regional profile	13%	39%	14%	38%
Increased local pride	21%	41%	16%	39%
New infrastructure	34%	54%	28%	47%
Benefits shared evenly	21%	44%	16%	39%

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

Gold Coast residents are more likely to agree with all of the negative statements about the impacts of tourism than the average Queensland, and perceptions of tourism's impact on prices has increased significantly from 2019.

% agree	GC		QLD
	2019	2021	2021
Increased prices	65%	66%	60%
Increased property values	57%	66%↑	53%
Rise in delinquent behaviour	52%	57%	42%
More disruption	55%	57%	43%
Negative impact on the environment	45%	40%	36%
Negative impact on local character	47%	47%	30%
Misdirected public spending	33%	33%	28%
Lack of access for locals	31%	38%	26%

"The housing prices have exploded due to accommodation being converted to Air BnB"

Gold Coast resident, 2021

"When it's busier, food prices seem to go up and parking anywhere is hell."

Gold Coast resident, 2021

Impact on...	GC 2021		QLD 2021	
	personal quality of life ¹	community as a whole ¹	personal quality of life ¹	community as a whole ¹
Increased prices	14%	14%	10%	13%
Increased property values	18%	23%	10%	18%
Rise in delinquent behaviour	10%	22%	8%	15%
More disruption	13%↓	22%	12%	15%
Negative impact on the environment	11%	20%	9%	17%
Negative impact on local character	6%	10%	8%	7%
Misdirected public spending	12%	19%	6%	14%
Lack of access for locals	19%	25%	12%	17%

In summary

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

The region's 635,000 residents share the area with more holidaymakers than any other Queensland region.

Gold Coast residents' general sentiment to tourists continue to be more neutral than the state average. Residents from the Gold Coast are more likely than the Queensland average to want tourism numbers to remain the same and want no more tourism development growth.

Gold Coast residents see the wide range of benefits that tourism brings to the community. However, Gold Coast residents were also 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 2021 Queensland report on our website: teq.queensland.com/research-and-insights/domestic-research/queensland-research

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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

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

