

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. Whitsunday residents are the most likely in Queensland to say that they 'really like' living in their area and 'can't think of anywhere else they would rather live'.

	2013	WSY 2017	QLD 2017
Really like it, can't think of anywhere else I would rather live	58%	58%	37%
Enjoy living here but can think of other places I would enjoy equally	34%	37%	52%
I only live here because circumstances demand it	8%	6%	11%

i.e. 58% of Whitsunday 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 attitudes are positive towards tourism. Over two thirds of residents (67 per cent) 'really like' tourists and over three quarters (79 per cent) think their local area should attract more tourists.

These attitudes may be driven in part by the frequent, and positive, interactions that locals have with tourists. Residents interact with tourists much more than the average Queenslanders.

We also saw that over two thirds of residents (69 per cent) are happy with continued growth in tourism. A further one in five (18 per cent) would like growth, but in a different direction. These residents suggested a variety of possible directions, see examples below:

"Airlie Beach receives lots of tourism, however I think Bowen misses out on the tourists. Bowen has just as much - if not more - to offer than Airlie Beach!"

Whitsundays Resident, 2017

"An increase in Australian visitors. Greater diversity in the education of tourists in understanding the Great Barrier Reef...protection of the reef."

Whitsundays Resident, 2017

"...more informative and entertaining places in my town like Modern library with digital sound effects and open movie theatre."

Whitsundays Resident, 2017

"Free camping would be a start...Lower income people that do the camping are more community based."

Whitsundays Resident, 2017

	2013	WSY 2017	QLD 2017
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Feelings towards tourists

I really like tourists	74%	67%	46%
I tolerate tourists as they're good for the community	24%	28%	40%
I adjust my lifestyle to avoid tourism inconveniences	1%	2%	11%
I stay away from places tourists go	1%	3%	3%

Number of tourists local area should attract

More	79%	79%	36%
About the same number	20%	18%	57%
Fewer	1%	4%	7%

Preferred tourism development growth

Happy with continued growth	67%	69%	58%
Happy but no more growth	6%	12%	29%
Want less tourism	2%	0%	6%
More growth, different direction	25%	18%	7%

Level of contact with tourists

Never come into contact with them	2%	3%	21%
See them around but don't usually talk to them	42%	38%	54%
Often interact with them as part of my job	20%	26%	10%
Often meet them around town and talk to them	27%	25%	13%
Have made friends with them, but not kept in contact	15%	12%	6%
Have made friends with them, and have kept in contact	9%	8%	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

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)'.

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

	2013	WSY 2017	QLD 2017
...the community as a whole ¹	79%	72%	43%
...their personal quality of life ¹	41%	35%	18%

Whitsunday residents are more likely than the average Queenslanders to feel that tourism has a positive impact. Seventy-two per cent of residents agree that tourism has a positive impact on the community compared with 43 per cent in Queensland. Over a third (35 per cent) agree that tourism has a positive impact on their personal quality of life, compared with 18 per cent in Queensland. High visibility of tourists in the region as well as the industry's 20 per cent contribution to the local economy may raise awareness of tourism's positive impacts.

i.e. 18% 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)'.

Whitsunday residents overwhelmingly agree that, because of tourism, there is: greater cultural diversity (98 per cent), economic benefits (93 per cent), an increased regional profile (94 per cent), increased local pride (82 per cent), and new infrastructure (72 per cent). These positive benefits are seen to impact the community more than the individual.

While residents recognise the benefits of tourism, they also agree that tourism can lead to increased prices (56 per cent), increased property prices (43 per cent), a rise in delinquent behavior (42 per cent) and a negative impact on the local character (43 per cent). Agreement with statements about potential negative impacts is mostly stable compared to 2013.

Positive impacts of tourism

% agree	WSY		QLD
	2013	2017	2017
Greater cultural diversity	99%	98%	89%
Important economic benefits	95%	93%	89%
Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness	89%	96%↑	88%
Increased regional profile	89%	94%	83%
Increased local pride	75%	82%	69%
New infrastructure	68%	72%	69%
Benefits shared evenly	40%	48%	48%

"Brings variety into the area and exposes people to other things and cultures..."

Whitsundays Resident, 2017

"I feel proud to be a part of our community and the chance to show it off to others."

Whitsundays Resident, 2017

"It brings positivity and growth to the area."

Whitsundays Resident, 2017

Impact on...	WSY 2017		QLD 2017	
	personal quality of life ¹	community as a whole ¹	personal quality of life ¹	community as a whole ¹
Greater cultural diversity	32%	55%	17%	33%
Important economic benefits	39%	69%	16%	43%
Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness	37%	67%	19%	44%
Increased regional profile	32%	57%	17%	41%
Increased local pride	37%	63%	21%	40%
New infrastructure	44%	61%	32%	49%
Benefits shared evenly	36%	67%	21%	40%

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	WSY		QLD
	2013	2017	2017
Increased prices	48%	56%	50%
Increased property values	47%	43%	38%
Rise in delinquent behaviour	41%	42%	35%
More disruption	10%	21%↑	35%
Negative impact on the environment	25%	26%	29%
Negative impact on local character	42%	43%	29%
Misdirected public spending	20%	18%	25%
Lack of access for locals	5%	8%	18%

"It does increase the amount of people in town, this can be good for the local businesses. So, it may take a bit longer to be served in businesses and maybe finding a parking spot may take a few more minutes. These are the things that go hand in hand with tourism."

Whitsundays Resident, 2017

Impact on...	WSY 2017		QLD 2017	
	personal quality of life ¹	community as a whole ¹	personal quality of life ¹	community as a whole ¹
Increased prices	16%	13%	9%	11%
Increased property values	13%	23%	13%	15%
Rise in delinquent behaviour	11%	23%	8%	18%
More disruption	10%	11%	11%	14%
Negative impact on the environment	11%	31%	8%	20%
Negative impact on local character	3%	3%	5%	6%
Misdirected public spending	10%	22%	7%	14%
Lack of access for locals	*	*	16%	16%

In summary

* Small sample size - results not shown for these cells as they are not statistically robust

Whitsunday residents love where they live. They are the most likely in Queensland to say they 'can't think of anywhere else I would rather live'. When asked, they describe their local area using the words beautiful, beaches, paradise, and friendly.

Tourism contributes 20 per cent of the region's gross regional product, with 760,000 overnight visitors to the region in the year ending June 2017. These visitors are hosted by the region's small population of 34,000 people.

Through the study, we see that sentiment towards tourism is more positive than the Queensland average. Just over two thirds of residents 'really like' tourists and even more (79 per cent) would like their local area to attract more tourists. There is a strong desire for continued tourism development, with some suggesting a different direction for growth.

Since 2013, agreement with the positive and potential negative impacts of tourism is stable. Residents are more likely than the average Queenslanders to recognise the benefits of tourism and acknowledge their impact on the community.

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 2017 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