

# Social Indicators 2019 Outback



70,000  
residents<sup>1</sup>

1.1m  
overnight visitors<sup>2</sup>  
(1.1m domestic /  
25,000 international)

\$355m  
total tourism  
contribution to gross  
regional product  
(4.0% of Outback's  
GRP)<sup>3</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.

For our 2019 study, we surveyed 3,316 Queensland residents with fieldwork conducted between 3 June 2019 and 9 July 2019. In the Outback tourism region, 204 residents were surveyed.

This is our third 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 Outback region covers a vast area and has a relatively small population. The region's 70,000 residents welcomed 1.1m overnight visitors in the year ending June 2019, with tourism contributing 4.0% of the region's gross regional product (GRP). Our Social Indicators study aims to monitor these residents' views on tourism.

In the study, the first words that come to residents' minds when thinking about the region often related to it being rural and remote, and many think of the friendly community. The mining industry was also top of mind for many residents.



Notes:  
1. Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016 Census, Place of Usual Residence by SA2 aligned to tourism region  
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 the majority of Outback residents 'enjoy living here' and almost a third (28%) 'really like' living in the area. A minority only live in their area 'because circumstances demand it', but this proportion is higher than the Queensland average.

	Outback		QLD
	2017	2019	2019
Really like it, can't think of anywhere else I would rather live	29%	28%	40%
Enjoy living here but can think of other places I would enjoy equally	54%	55%	51%
I only live here because circumstances demand it	17%	16%	9%

*i.e. 28% of Outback 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 two-thirds of Outback residents 'really like' tourists; 71% of residents want more tourists and 76% want continued tourism development growth. The proportion of residents that agree with these statements is significantly higher than the Queensland average.

*"Proud of region, Keen to share our way of life, makes me want to be positive and relate the negative issues in a positive way e.g. drought."*

*Outback resident, 2019*

This may reflect the relatively high level of residents that interact with tourists. A third of Outback residents meet tourists around town and talk to them, and 19% interact with them as part of their job.

*"Gives us the opportunity to see our landscape and lifestyle through fresh eyes - lovely to alleviate your own surroundings."*

*Outback resident, 2019*

	2017	Outback 2019	QLD 2019
--	------	--------------	----------

### Feelings towards tourists

I really like tourists	64%	66%	50%
I tolerate tourists as they're good for the community	32%	29%	36%
I adjust my lifestyle to avoid tourism inconveniences	3%	2%	10%
I stay away from places tourists go	2%	3%	4%

### Number of tourists local area should attract

More	71%	71%	32%
About the same number	28%	25%	60%
Fewer	1%	4%	8%

### Preferred tourism development growth

Happy with continued growth	77%	76%	59%
Happy but no more growth	13%	10%	30%
Want less tourism	0%	1%	4%
More growth, different direction	10%	13%	7%

### Level of contact with tourists

Never come into contact with them	3%	5%	21%
See them around but don't usually talk to them	40%	43%	51%
Often interact with them as part of my job	26%	19%	9%
Often meet them around town and talk to them	30%	33%	14%
Have made friends with them, but not kept in contact	9%	5%	6%
Have made friends with them, and have kept in contact	4%	8%	4%

## 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...

	2017	Outback 2019	QLD 2019
...the <b>community</b> as a whole <sup>1</sup>	76%	79%	45%
...their <b>personal</b> quality of life <sup>1</sup>	24%	29%	16%

Outback residents have a very positive attitude towards tourism. They are significantly more likely than the average Queenslanders to agree that tourism has a positive impact. Almost four-fifths (79%) agree that tourism has a positive impact on the community, compared with 45% in Queensland. Close to a third (29%) agree that tourism has a positive impact on their personal quality of life, compared with 16% in Queensland.

*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)'.

Outback residents overwhelmingly agree that, because of tourism, there is: greater cultural diversity (92%), economic benefits (92%), festivals events attract tourists and raise awareness (94%) and increase regional profile (90%). Agreement is higher than the Queensland average for six of the statements.

Agreement with statements about potential negative impacts is significantly lower than in the rest of Queensland.

## Positive impacts of tourism

% agree	Outback		QLD
	2017	2019	2019
Greater cultural diversity	89%	92%	91%
Important economic benefits	95%	92%	89%
Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness	95%	94%	89%
Increased regional profile	92%	90%	83%
Increased local pride	83%	77%	73%
New infrastructure	47%	50%	69%
Benefits shared evenly	48%	54%	51%

*"Main contribution of tourism in this area is making businesses, etc. more feasible, thus providing a great service for the locals."*

*Outback resident, 2019*

*"It raises awareness of the attractions in the outback. It brings a diverse range of people."*

*Outback resident, 2019*

Impact on...	Outback 2019		QLD 2019	
	personal quality of life <sup>1</sup>	community as a whole <sup>1</sup>	personal quality of life <sup>1</sup>	community as a whole <sup>1</sup>
Greater cultural diversity	21%	55%	17%	35%
Important economic benefits	25%	67%	17%	45%
Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness	25%	69%	18%	44%
Increased regional profile	20%	66%	17%	41%
Increased local pride	27%	62%	21%	41%
New infrastructure	39%	66%	31%	53%
Benefits shared evenly	30%	75%	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	Outback		QLD
	2017	2019	2019
Increased prices	21%	18%	50%
Increased property values	11%	11%	42%
Rise in delinquent behaviour	14%	12%	36%
More disruption	22%	25%	36%
Negative impact on the environment	23%	17%	34%
Negative impact on local character	18%	22%	33%
Misdirected public spending	12%	14%	28%
Lack of access for locals	10%	11%	22%

"Tourism just brings a lot more people to the town, which the town really doesn't seem to have the room to accommodate."

Outback resident, 2019

"Parking congestion is the main problem in my local area."

Outback resident, 2019

Impact on...	Outback 2019		QLD 2019	
	personal quality of life <sup>1</sup>	community as a whole <sup>1</sup>	personal quality of life <sup>1</sup>	community as a whole <sup>1</sup>
Increased prices	2%	4%	10%	10%
Increased property values	13%	23%	13%	13%
Rise in delinquent behaviour	7%	10%	8%	16%
More disruption	15%	18%	13%	16%
Negative impact on the environment	5%	11%	11%	19%
Negative impact on local character	7%	9%	6%	7%
Misdirected public spending	11%	13%	6%	12%
Lack of access for locals	26%	29%	11%	14%

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

## In summary

The Outback region covers a vast, sparsely populated area. The region's 70,000 residents describe it as rural and remote with a friendly community. The majority of residents enjoy living where they do.

Through the study, we see a very positive attitude towards tourists. Residents are more likely than the average Queenslander to: 'really like' tourists, talk to tourists around town, and to want to attract more tourists.

Additionally, residents are more likely than the average Queenslander to agree that tourism has a positive impact. They see the impact as primarily on the community as a whole and recognise a range of specific benefits. Residents are less likely to agree with statements about potential negative impacts than other Queenslanders.

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](http://teq.queensland.com/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:

- 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