

Social Indicators 2019 Southern Queensland Country



277,000
residents¹

2.3m
overnight visitors²
(2.2m domestic /
58,000 international)

\$922m
total tourism
contribution to gross
regional product
(4.8% of SQC'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 Southern Queensland Country tourism region, 303 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 tourism industry provides residents of the Southern Queensland Country region (SQC) with 4.8% of their gross regional product (GRP). The region's 277,000 residents welcomed 2.3 million overnight visitors in the year ending June 2019. These visitors are mostly domestic, with 97% coming from within Australia. 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 SQC showed a positive attitude and an appreciation for the region's beautiful gardens. Commonly used words were: rural, country, quiet, peaceful, friendly, and gardens.



Quiet

TOURISM
& EVENTS
Queensland

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 over a third (36%) of SQC residents 'really like' living in the area and 'can't think of anywhere else they would rather live'.

	SQC		QLD
	2017	2019	2019
Really like it, can't think of anywhere else I would rather live	31%	36%	40%
Enjoy living here but can think of other places I would enjoy equally	54%	51%	51%
I only live here because circumstances demand it	15%	14%	9%

i.e. 36% of Southern Queensland Country 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.

The proportion of SQC residents who 'really like' tourists remains significantly higher than the Queensland average, after increasing to 58% in 2019.

"it broadens the people I meet and teaches me many different things about life".

SQC resident, 2019

We also saw that just under five in ten residents (48%) would like more tourists in their local area. There was a significant increase in the number that are happy in continued tourism development growth, from 61% in 2017 to 72% in 2019. In their day-to-day lives, residents have a similar level of contact with tourists as the average Queenslander.

"Tourism improves my quality of life, the variety of activities and entertainment offered increases during high tourist times."

SQC resident, 2019

	SQC		QLD
	2017	2019	2019

Feelings towards tourists

I really like tourists	55%	58%	50%
I tolerate tourists as they're good for the community	34%	30%	36%
I adjust my lifestyle to avoid tourism inconveniences	10%	8%	10%
I stay away from places tourists go	1%	5%	4%

Number of tourists local area should attract

More	51%	48%	32%
About the same number	43%	47%	60%
Fewer	5%	5%	8%

Preferred tourism development growth

Happy with continued growth	61%	72%	59%
Happy but no more growth	25%	21%	30%
Want less tourism	5%	4%	4%
More growth, different direction	9%	4%	7%

Level of contact with tourists

Never come into contact with them	18%	19%	21%
See them around but don't usually talk to them	55%	49%	51%
Often interact with them as part of my job	9%	11%	9%
Often meet them around town and talk to them	13%	17%	14%
Have made friends with them, but not kept in contact	6%	5%	6%
Have made friends with them, and have kept in contact	3%	4%	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.

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	SQC 2019	QLD 2019
...the community as a whole ¹	58%	62%	45%
...their personal quality of life ¹	15%	18%	16%

SQC residents are more likely than the average Queenslander to agree that tourism has a positive impact on the community. Almost two thirds (62%) of residents agree that tourism has a positive impact on the community, compared with 45% in Queensland. 18% 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)'.

SQC residents overwhelmingly agree that, because of tourism, there is: greater cultural diversity (90%), economic benefits (88%), an increased regional profile (87%), and new infrastructure (65%). residents are more likely than the average Queenslander to recognise the impact of these benefits to the community.

Compared to Queensland relatively few SQC residents agree that there are negative consequences to tourism. The main negatives identified were increased prices (35%) and more disruption (30%).

Positive impacts of tourism

% agree	SQC		QLD
	2017	2019	2019
Greater cultural diversity	90%	90%	91%
Important economic benefits	89%	88%	89%
Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness	94%	91%	89%
Increased regional profile	86%	87%	83%
Increased local pride	83%	79%	73%
New infrastructure	65%	65%	69%
Benefits shared evenly	50%	52%	51%

"It creates and assists jobs in the region for local businesses, such as dining, accommodation. Events and local attractions."

SQC resident, 2019

"Tourism has provided us with the opportunity to meet new people and experience other cultural activities/food and created opportunity for diverse shops to rise up."

SQC resident, 2019

Impact on...	SQC 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	18%	42%	17%	35%
Important economic benefits	17%	59%	17%	45%
Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness	21%	61%	18%	44%
Increased regional profile	19%	56%	17%	41%
Increased local pride	22%	54%	21%	41%
New infrastructure	34%	69%	31%	53%
Benefits shared evenly	27%	58%	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)

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□ 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	SQC		QLD
	2017	2019	2019
Increased prices	36%	35%	50%
Increased property values	23%	24%	42%
Rise in delinquent behaviour	25%	28%	36%
More disruption	29%	30%	36%
Negative impact on the environment	23%	28%	34%
Negative impact on local character	25%	26%	33%
Misdirected public spending	18%	21%	28%
Lack of access for locals	14%	14%	22%

"I have also found through experience that the more tourism grows the higher the cost of living gets which then makes it impossible for the low income to survive."

SQC resident, 2019

"it is harder to find a park near the shopping center".

SQC resident, 2019

Impact on...	SQC 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	4%	6%	10%	10%
Increased property values	9%	11%	13%	13%
Rise in delinquent behaviour	8%	13%	8%	16%
More disruption	11%	12%	13%	16%
Negative impact on the environment	9%	12%	11%	19%
Negative impact on local character	2%	6%	6%	7%
Misdirected public spending	7%	7%	6%	12%
Lack of access for locals	11%	17%	11%	14%

In summary

Southern Queensland Country residents like living where they live. They describe their local area using positive language with a friendly, rural theme coming through. The region's beautiful gardens are often mentioned in their descriptions.

The region's 277,000 residents welcomed 2.3million visitors in the year ending June 2019; they mainly receive domestic travelers.

Through the study, we see that broad sentiment towards tourism is more positive than the Queensland average. Just under half of residents would like their local area to attract more tourists. The proportion of residents that 'really like' tourists and want more tourism development growth has increased since 2019. There is little negative sentiment towards tourism.

SQC residents are more likely than the average Queenslanders to recognise the benefits of tourism to the community and less likely to recognize the negative effects.

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:

- 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