



Outback Social Indicators 2013

This study examines the social impacts of tourism on the local communities, as perceived by its residents. The research is intended to inform the decision making of state and local authorities, as well as tourism bodies.

97% of Outback residents state they come into contact with tourists.

76% of residents want to see more tourists in the region.

Queensland's Outback is both vast and unspoiled. Of its almost 155,000 residents 34 per cent have lived in the region for 20 years or more and most are aged 45 years or older (52%). Sixty-two per cent of the workforce is in fulltime employment compared with the Queensland average (39%). The majority (87%) of residents work in small businesses, and higher than the average number (25% compared with QLD 16%) benefit from tourism.

Overall, the people of the Outback are keener than most when it comes to tourism. Much more than other Queenslanders, locals like tourists (73% compared with QLD 57%) and three in four (78%) are happy with the way the industry is developing in the region. However, there is no room for complacency. Increasingly, residents would like to see more tourists coming to the region (76% compared with QLD 45%), up 12 percentage points since 2010, despite the fact that the vast majority (97%) already come into contact with them. Perhaps indicative of their friendly nature, locals are also twice as likely (34% compared with QLD 15%) to talk to tourists.

		Queensland %		Outback %	
		2013	2010	2013	2010
Feelings about local area and tourists	I like it, I can't think of anywhere else I would rather live	39	37	35	32
	I enjoy living here but can think of other places I would enjoy equally	50	50	51	49
	I only live here because circumstances demand it and would prefer to live somewhere else	12	13	14	19
Feelings about the number of tourists	Want more tourists	45	43	76↑	64
	About the same number	50	50	23	31
	Want fewer tourists	6	8	1	5

Shaded box highlights a significantly greater response when comparing the region and Queensland

↑ Highlights a statistically significant increase in the region from 2010

↓ Highlights a statistically significant decrease in the region from 2010

Consistent with these views are strong feelings about the impacts of tourism at the community level (77% of Outback residents rated the impact of tourism +2 or +3 compared with 46% of all Queenslanders). Those that agree with the positive impacts of tourism are more likely to be fond of tourists, interact with tourists, personally benefit from tourism or like living in their local area.

Their top positive outcomes of tourism include:

- Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness (91%, new statement in 2013),
- Important economic benefits (92% compared with 86% in 2010),
- Greater cultural diversity (90% compared with 96% in 2010), and
- Increased regional profile (89% compared with 83% in 2010).

The exception to the upward movement across all statements is in the area of cultural diversity. While more Queenslanders agree that tourism results in greater cultural diversity (92%), fewer Outback residents feel this way compared with 2010 (96%), although it is still considered a key benefit.



91% of residents agree that festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness of the region.

“Events in town (like the rodeo) that probably wouldn’t happen if people from out of town didn’t come give us something to do.”

OUTBACK QUEENSLAND RESIDENT 2013

In fact, residents are more likely than other Queenslanders to indicate that each positive impact of tourism has a positive effect on the community as a whole.

The only negative impact that found traction among residents was increased prices with just over one in four residents agreeing that tourism leads to price hikes.

Contact with Tourists, Feelings and Development

		Queensland %		Outback %	
		2013	2010	2013	2010
Feelings about tourists	I like tourists	57↑	49	73	66
	I tolerate tourists	31↓	35	22	23
	I adjust my lifestyle to avoid tourists	10	10	4	6
	I stay away from places tourists go	3↓	5	1	5
Contact with tourists	I never come into contact with tourists	22↑	18	3	8
	I see tourists around but don’t usually talk to them	51	52	44	43
	I often interact with tourists as part of my job	10↓	13	18	27
	I often meet tourists around town and talk to them	15	14	34	30
	I have made friends with tourists during their stay, but have not kept in contact	7	7	7	12
	I have made friends with tourists and kept in contact after they have left	4	5	9	13
Preferred development growth	Happy with continued growth	59	59	78	73
	Happy but no more growth	25	25	11	12
	Want less tourism	3↓	6	2	3
	More growth different direction	13↑	10	10	12

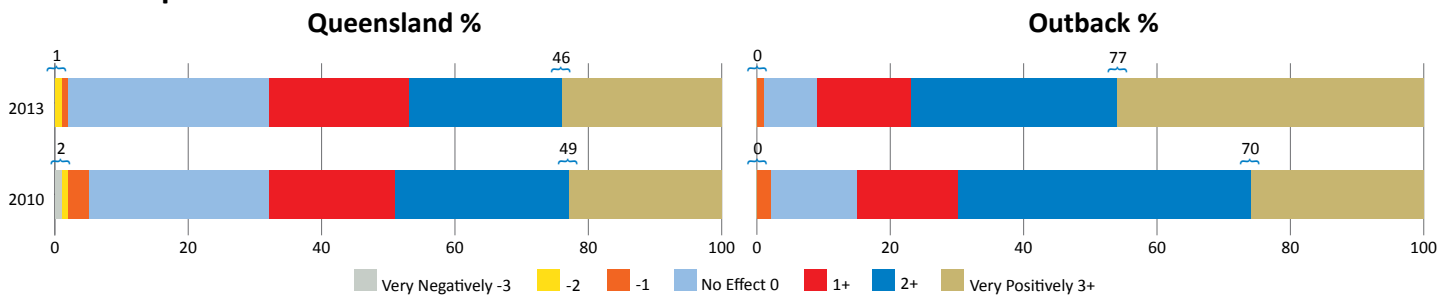
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Respondents were asked to rate the overall impact tourism has on their community as a whole, using a seven point scale ranging from very negatively (-3) to very positively (+3). In 2013, 77% of Outback residents rated the impact of tourism on their community as positive, scoring a +2 or +3, similar to the ratings from the 2010 survey.

Overall Impacts of Tourism



Respondents were then asked to nominate if they agree or disagree with the following impacts of tourism. Below is the proportion of respondents that agree with each impact.

Positive Impacts of Tourism

	Queensland % Agree		Outback % Agree	
	2013	2010	2013	2010
More interesting things to do	62↑	54	67	61
Important economic benefits	91↑	87	92	86
Improved facility maintenance	69↑	60	68	69
Increased local pride	72↑	65	82↑	70
Increased regional profile	86↑	76	89	83
New infrastructure	68↑	60	53	49
Greater cultural diversity	92↑	89	90↓	96
* Benefits of tourism shared evenly	38	-	47	-
** Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness	87	-	91	-

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* Question wording changed from 2010

** New statement included in 2013

- Data not available

Those that agree with the positive statement were then asked to rate the affect it has on their community as a whole using a seven point scale ranging from very negatively (-3) to very positively (+3). Below are the scores of those respondents who gave a rating of +2 or +3.

	Queensland % Positive affect on the community as a whole. Those that rated the affect +2 or +3.		Outback % Positive affect on the community as a whole. Those that rated the affect +2 or +3.	
	2013	2010	2013	2010
	More interesting things to do	53↓	65	75
Important economic benefits	45↓	58	65	74
Improved facility maintenance	43↓	53	61	66
Increased local pride	39↓	50	58	66
Increased regional profile	40↓	52	62	65
New infrastructure	49↓	65	78	73
Greater cultural diversity	29↓	32	52	45
* Benefits of tourism shared evenly	41	-	58	-
** Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness	49	-	69	-

% positive affect is based on the proportion of respondents who cited the top two ratings on a seven point scale ranging from very negative (-3) to very positive (+3).

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- Data not available

Base: Those that agree with each statement

Negative Impacts of Tourism

Respondents were asked to nominate if they agree or disagree with the following impacts of tourism. Below is the proportion of respondents that agree with each impact.

	Queensland % Agree		Outback % Agree	
	2013	2010	2013	2010
Increased opportunity costs	27	25	18	18
More disruption	32	31	20	19
Rise in delinquent behaviour	35	36	15	13
Negative impact on the environment	29	29	15	14
Increased prices	56↑	53	26	31
Lack of access for locals	17	16	8	11
Negative impact on local character	29	29	22	17
Increased property values	41↓	45	16	22

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Those that agree with the negative statement were then asked to rate the affect it has on their community as a whole using a seven point scale ranging from very negatively (-3) to very positively (+3). Below are the scores of those respondents who gave a rating or -2 or -3.

	Queensland % Negative affect on the community as a whole. Those that rated the affect -3 or -2.		Outback % Negative affect on the community as a whole. Those that rated the affect -3 or -2.	
	2013	2010	2013	2010
Increased opportunity costs	15↓	24	14	-
More disruption	14↓	24	15	-
Rise in delinquent behaviour	22↓	31	17	-
Negative impact on the environment	18↓	31	27	-
Increased prices	13↓	18	26	-
Lack of access for locals	18↓	28	-	-
Negative impact on local character	8	11	1	-
Increased property values	16↓	25	24	-

% negative affect is based on the proportion of respondents who cited the top two ratings on a seven point scale ranging from very negative (-3) to very positive (+3).

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Base: Those that agree with each statement



Demographics

		Queensland % 2013	Outback % 2013
Life stage	Under 45 years, no children	26	19
	Under 45 years, with children	23	29
	45 years or more, no children	40	36
	45 years or more, with children	11	16
Years of residence	Less than 2 years	18	10
	2-5 years	20	19
	6-10 years	21	15
	11-20 years	23	21
	More than 20 years	17	34
Place of birth	Within 50km of where you currently live	21	22
	Elsewhere in Queensland	22	47
	Elsewhere in Australia	32	20
	In another country	24	11
Employment status	Working full-time	39	62
	Working part-time	16	9
	Unemployed, looking for work	5	0
	Unemployed, not looking for work	1	0
	Retired	19	12
	Student	4	0
	Student/part-time work	1	1
	Home duties	9	8
	Other	5	7
Directly benefit from tourism (e.g. work in or own a business that profits from tourists or rent a property to tourists)	Personal benefit	10	13
	Family benefit	10	15
	No benefit	84	75
Income	Less than \$60,000	39	19
	\$60,000 - \$99,000	24	24
	\$100,000 or more	21	47
	Prefer not to say	17	10

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Base 2013 Queensland n=3855, Outback n=255
Base 2010 Queensland n=3834, Outback n=99

ⁱ Source – Queensland Regional Profile for - Outback Queensland region (including Barcaldine Regional, Barcoo Shire, Blackall, Tambo Regional, Boulia Shire, Bulloo Shire, Burke Shire, Carpentaria Shire, Cloncurry Shire, Diamantina Shire, Doomadgee Shire, Flinders Shire, Longreach Regional, McKinlay Shire, Mount Isa City, Murweh Shire, Paroo Shire, Quilpie Shire, Richmond Shire and Winton Shire), Government Statistician, Queensland Treasury and Trade

ⁱⁱ Source – Queensland - Outback Statistical Area Level 4 (SA4) Profile, Government Statistician, Queensland Treasury and Trade

Positive impact	Description
More interesting things to do	Because of tourism, there are more interesting things to do in my local area (e.g. attractions to visit, events to attend)
Important economic benefits	Tourism is good for the economy because the money that visitors spend when they come to the region helps to stimulate the economy, stimulates employment opportunities, and is good for local business
Improved facility maintenance	Tourism promotes the development and better maintenance of public facilities such as roads, parks, sporting facilities and/or public transport
Increased local pride	Tourism increases local residents pride in their town and makes them feel good about themselves and their community
Increased regional profile	Tourism showcases my region in a positive light. This helps to promote a better opinion of my region and encourages future tourism and /or business investment
New infrastructure	Because of tourism there are better shopping, dining and/or recreational opportunities in the region
Greater cultural diversity	Tourism brings people from different backgrounds and cultures into the community
Benefits of tourism shared evenly	The benefits of tourism are shared evenly across the local community
Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness	Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness of the region

Negative impact	Description
Increased opportunity costs	Too much public money is spent on developing facilities for tourists that would be better spent on other public facilities/activities
More disruption	Tourism disrupts the lives of local residents and creates inconvenience. Problems like traffic congestion, parking difficulties and excessive noise are worse when there are lots of tourists around
Rise in delinquent behaviour	Tourism is associated with some people behaving inappropriately, perhaps in a rowdy and delinquent way, or engaging in excessive drinking or drug use or other criminal behaviour
Negative impact on the environment	Tourism has a negative impact on the environment through excessive litter and/or pollution and/or damage to natural areas
Increased prices	Tourism leads to increases in the prices of some things such as some goods and services and/or property values and/or rental costs
Lack of access for locals	Tourists deny local residents access to public facilities, that is, roads, parks, sporting facilities, public transport and/ or other facilities are less available to local residents because of overcrowding
Negative impact on local character	Because of tourism the character of the region has changed for the worse
Increased property values	The increase in property values associated with tourism, makes it more difficult for some people to live in the area

