

# Sunshine Coast 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.**

The Sunshine Coast is one of the 'Australia's fastest growing regions and <sup>ii</sup> ranks among its top 10 tourism destinations, attracting almost <sup>iii</sup> three million domestic and international overnight visitors in the year ended June 2013.

The region is home to many mid-life families and couples (60%), and a playground for retirees (28%). The vast majority of its <sup>iv</sup> 317,000 residents have moved to the area within the past 20 years (81%). They live in the region by choice and more than other Queenslanders, half the population would not live anywhere else (51% compared with 39% QLD).

The lifestyle lends itself to an outgoing and friendly attitude and people of the region are more likely to chat with tourists (21% compared with QLD 15%), even though fewer noted contact with them recently, down three percentage points to 92 per cent since 2010.

Over the three-year period, changing attitudes have seen a big rise in the number of residents who want more tourists to come to the region (47% compared with 31% in 2010) and also want tourism growth to continue (59% up from 43% in 2010). The upswing matches a prevailing statewide trend, with more residents agreeing with the positive impacts of tourism.

**51% of residents can't think of anywhere else they would rather live**  
**94% of residents, more than the State average, agree that festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness of the region**

Feelings about local area and tourists		Queensland %		Sunshine Coast %	
		2013	2010	2013	2010
Feelings about local area	I like it, I can't think of anywhere else I would rather live	39	37	51↓	60
	I enjoy living here but can think of other places I would enjoy equally	50	50	45↑	34
	I only live here because circumstances demand it and would prefer to live somewhere else	12	13	4	6
Feelings about the number of tourists	Want more tourists	45	43	47↑	31
	About the same number	50	50	50↓	61
	Want fewer tourists	6	8	4↓	8

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



Sunshine Coast residents rate the benefits of tourism on the community higher than other Queenslanders (71% of Sunshine Coast residents rating the impact of tourism +2 or +3 compared with 46% of all Queenslanders). The upward trend is driven by residents that really like tourist or think the region should try to attract more. There is also still wide consensus among residents for the top positive outcomes of tourism.

- Important economic benefits (95% in 2013 and 92% in 2010)
- Greater cultural diversity (93% in 2013 and 91% in 2010), and
- Increased regional profile (91% in 2013 and 87% in 2010).

*“It lets you meet new people, brings money to the town, gives you new ideas, keeps the town going and adds more fun things like markets and cafés.”*

SUNSHINE COAST RESIDENT 2013

Compared with other Queenslanders, people living on the Sunshine Coast are more likely to agree that festivals and events, attracts tourists and raises awareness of the region (94% vs. QLD 87%). To break it down, locals are more likely to rate the impact of festivals and events attracting tourists and raising awareness on the community as a whole +2 or +3 (57% compared with 49% QLD).

In general, residents are now less likely to agree with the top three negative outcomes of tourism than in 2010. Nevertheless, across the board they are more likely to agree with the adverse impacts than the Queensland average.

- Increased prices (66% in 2013 and 76% in 2010)
- More disruption (49% in 2013 and 64% in 2010), and
- Increased property values (57% in 2013 and 78% in 2010).

While tourism’s negative impacts have eased, increased property values appear to be a main concern. More than other Queenslanders, residents state it as affecting the community as a whole with 22% rating increased property values -2 or -3 compared with 16% of all other Queenslanders.

## Contact with Tourists, Feelings and Development

		Queensland %		Sunshine Coast %	
		2013	2010	2013	2010
<b>Feelings about tourists</b>	I like tourists	57↑	49	46↑	32
	I tolerate tourists	31↓	35	39↓	48
	I adjust my lifestyle to avoid tourists	10	10	13↓	19
	I stay away from places tourists go	3↓	5	2	1
<b>Contact with tourists</b>	I never come into contact with tourists	22↑	18	8↑	5
	I see tourists around but don't usually talk to them	51	52	54	56
	I often interact with tourists as part of my job	10↓	13	13↓	19
	I often meet tourists around town and talk to them	15	14	21	21
	I have made friends with tourists during their stay, but have not kept in contact	7	7	7	9
	I have made friends with tourists and kept in contact after they have left	4	5	4	5
<b>Preferred development growth</b>	Happy with continued growth	59	59	59↑	43
	Happy but no more growth	25	25	28↓	43
	Want less tourism	3↓	6	3↓	6
	More growth different direction	13↑	10	10	8

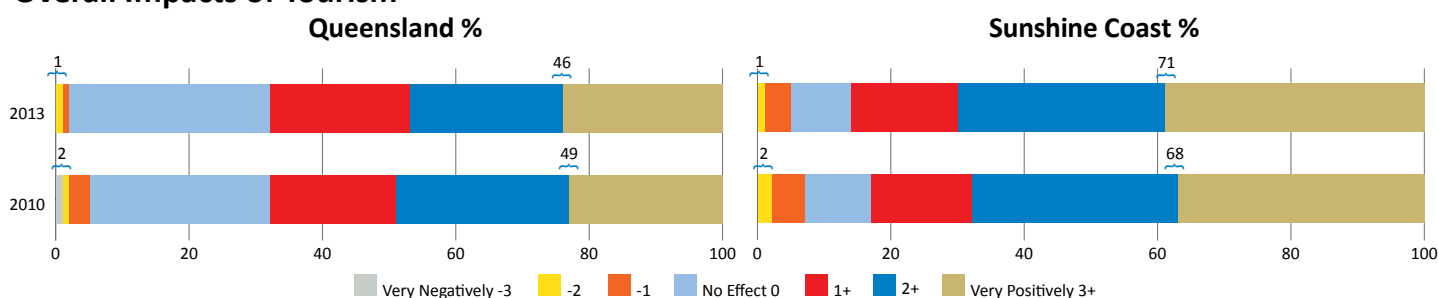
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Respondents were asked to rate the overall impact tourism has on their community as a whole, using a seven point scale ranging from very negatively (-3) to very positively (+3). In 2013, 71% of Sunshine Coast residents rated the impact of tourism on their community as positive, scoring a +2 or +3, similar to the ratings from the 2010 survey. One per cent of residents rated the impact of tourism on their community negatively, with a -3 or -2 in 2013, down from 2% in 2010.

## 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		Sunshine Coast % Agree	
	2013	2010	2013	2010
More interesting things to do	62↑	54	67↑	60
Important economic benefits	91↑	87	95↑	92
Improved facility maintenance	69↑	60	67↑	58
Increased local pride	72↑	65	74↑	62
Increased regional profile	86↑	76	91↑	87
New infrastructure	68↑	60	75	76
Greater cultural diversity	92↑	89	93	91
* Benefits of tourism shared evenly	38	-	43	-
** Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness	87	-	94	-

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- ↓ Highlights a statistically significant decrease in the region from 2010
- \* 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.		Sunshine Coast % 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	59↓
Important economic benefits	45↓	58	59↓	71
Improved facility maintenance	43↓	53	57	58
Increased local pride	39↓	50	53↓	62
Increased regional profile	40↓	52	51↓	60
New infrastructure	49↓	65	60↓	69
Greater cultural diversity	29↓	32	34	34
* Benefits of tourism shared evenly	41	-	50	-
** Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness	49	-	57	-

% 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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- \*\* New statement included in 2013
- 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		Sunshine Coast % Agree	
	2013	2010	2013	2010
Increased opportunity costs	27	25	24↓	30
More disruption	32	31	49↓	64
Rise in delinquent behaviour	35	36	42	46
Negative impact on the environment	29	29	29↓	44
Increased prices	56↑	53	66↓	76
Lack of access for locals	17	16	26↓	36
Negative impact on local character	29	29	35↓	52
Increased property values	41↓	45	57↓	78

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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 of -2 or -3.

	Queensland % Negative affect on the community as a whole. Those that rated the affect -3 or -2.		Sunshine Coast % 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	15↓	28
More disruption	14↓	24	16↓	31
Rise in delinquent behaviour	22↓	31	16↓	35
Negative impact on the environment	18↓	31	19↓	37
Increased prices	13↓	18	16↓	23
Lack of access for locals	18↓	28	18↓	34
Negative impact on local character	8	11	11	13
Increased property values	16↓	25	22↓	31

% negative affect is based on the proportion of respondents who cited the bottom two ratings on a seven point scale ranging from very negative (-3) to very positive (+3). Shaded box highlights a significantly greater response when comparing the region and Queensland

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- Data not available

Base: Those that agree with each statement



## Demographics

		Queensland % 2013	Sunshine Coast % 2013
<b>Life stage</b>	Under 45 years, no children	26	23
	Under 45 years, with children	23	16
	45 years or more, no children	40	49
	45 years or more, with children	11	11
<b>Years of residence</b>	Less than 2 years	18	15
	2-5 years	20	15
	6-10 years	21	24
	11-20 years	23	27
	More than 20 years	17	19
<b>Place of birth</b>	Within 50km of where you currently live	21	8
	Elsewhere in Queensland	22	25
	Elsewhere in Australia	32	43
	In another country	24	23
<b>Directly benefit from tourism</b> (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	13
	No benefit	84	77
<b>Income</b>	Less than \$60,000	39	45
	\$60,000 - \$99,000	24	24
	\$100,000 or more	21	17
	Prefer not to say	17	14

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Base 2013 Queensland n=3855, Sunshine Coast n=536

Base 2010 Queensland n=3834, Sunshine Coast n=754

<sup>i</sup> Source – Regional Development Australia Sunshine Coast Inc., *Sunshine Coast State of the Region 2012 – 2013*, page 2.

<sup>ii</sup> Source – Tourism Research Australia, *Tourism Industry Facts & Figures at a Glance*, September 2012, page 21

<sup>iii</sup> Source – Tourism Research Australia's *International and Domestic Visitor Surveys 2013*.

<sup>iv</sup> Source – Queensland Treasury and Trade, Government Statistician, *Queensland Regional Profile for Sunshine Coast Regional Local Government Area*.



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

