

# Gold 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 Gold Coast is Australia's premier regional tourism destination, and rates fifth in the nation's top tourism economies.

Home to a populace of <sup>ii</sup>513,000 the Gold Coast is also Queensland's largest regional centre. Similar to the rest of the state, around half (53%) its residents like living in the area but can think of other places they would equally enjoy. However, most choose to live in the region with only a small number of locals (11%) stating that circumstances demand it. Powered by <sup>iii</sup>retail, construction and health care sectors, accommodation and food industries follow close behind as the major employers. The region welcomed almost <sup>iv</sup>4.44 million overnight visitors for the year ended June 2013.

**86% of residents agree that festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness of the region**

**57% of residents are happy with the way tourism is developing in their local area and would like to see it continue to grow**

		Queensland %		Gold Coast %	
		2013	2010	2013	2010
<b>Feelings about local area and tourists</b>					
<b>Feelings about local area</b>	I like it, I can't think of anywhere else I would rather live	39	37	42	36
	I enjoy living here but can think of other places I would enjoy equally	50	50	49	53
	I only live here because circumstances demand it and would prefer to live somewhere else	12	13	10	11
<b>Feelings about the number of tourists</b>	Want more tourists	45	43	34	39
	About the same number	50	50	55	54
	Want fewer tourists	6	8	11	7↓

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

On the whole, people living on the Gold Coast remain happy with the way tourism is developing in the region and would like to see the industry continue to grow (57% equal to 2010). A similar number (54%) are also satisfied with the same number of tourists visiting the region. This translates to how residents rate the positive impacts of tourism on the community.

**48% of residents indicated that tourism has a moderate or very positive affect on their local community**

*“The more tourists the better. It actually brings so much more to the coast in jobs, activities, food, fashion and other items that wouldn’t be here without them.”*

GOLD COAST RESIDENT 2013

Forty eight per cent of locals rated the affect of tourism on the community positively +2 or +3), particularly those living in the southern end of the region, those who want more tourists visiting the area, who really like tourists or benefit from tourism. The top benefits that residents most agree with are consistent with the views they held back in 2010.

- Greater cultural diversity (93% in 2013 compared with 92% in 2010)
- Important economic benefits (92% in 2013 compared with 91% in 2010), and
- Increased regional profile (84% in 2013 compared with 77% in 2010).

Almost nine in ten (86%) residents also agree that festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness of the region. Of this number, around one in four feel the benefits on their personal lives (23% rated it +2 or +3), while half feel the positive affects on the wider community (49% rated it +2 or +3).

Agreement among locals when rating their top three negative impacts of tourism in general has softened.

- Increased prices (63% compared with 67% in 2010)
- Rise in delinquent behaviour (46% compared with 55% in 2010), and
- Increased property values (45% compared with 61% in 2010).

## Contact with Tourists, Feelings and Development

		Queensland %		Gold Coast %	
		2013	2010	2013	2010
<b>Feelings about tourists</b>	I like tourists	57↑	49	45	39
	I tolerate tourists	31↓	35	37	43
	I adjust my lifestyle to avoid tourists	10	10	13	13
	I stay away from places tourists go	3↓	5	4	5
<b>Contact with tourists</b>	I never come into contact with tourists	22↑	18	20↑	11
	I see tourists around but don't usually talk to them	51	52	58	58
	I often interact with tourists as part of my job	10↓	13	9↓	14
	I often meet tourists around town and talk to them	15	14	13	12
	I have made friends with tourists during their stay, but have not kept in contact	7	7	7↓	11
	I have made friends with tourists and kept in contact after they have left	4	5	5	4
<b>Preferred development growth</b>	Happy with continued growth	59	59	57	58
	Happy but no more growth	25	25	28	27
	Want less tourism	3↓	6	5	7
	More growth different direction	13↑	10	11	8

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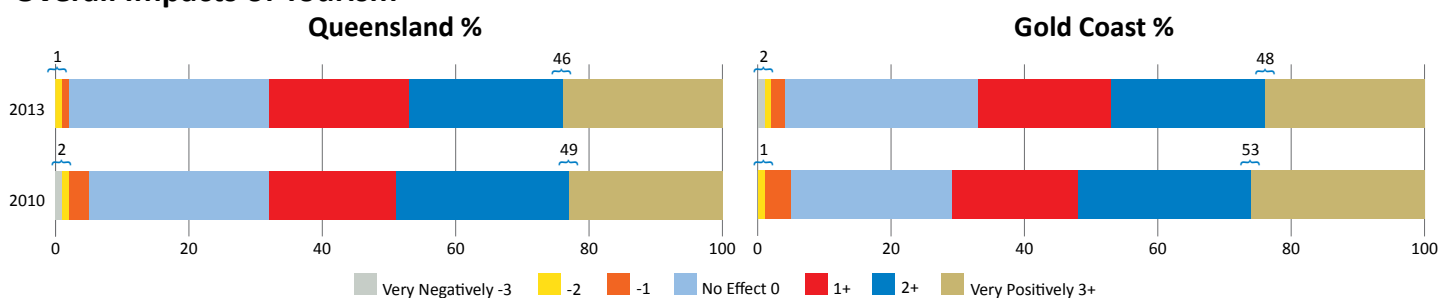
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Respondents were asked to rate the overall impact tourism has on their community as a whole, using a seven point scale ranging from very negatively (-3) to very positively (+3). In 2013, 48% of Gold Coast residents rated the impact of tourism on their community as positive, scoring a +2 or +3, similar to the ratings from the 2010 survey. Two per cent of residents rated the impact of tourism on their community negatively, with a -3 or -2 in 2013.

## 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		Gold Coast % Agree	
	2013	2010	2013	2010
More interesting things to do	62↑	54	68	72
Important economic benefits	91↑	87	92	91
Improved facility maintenance	69↑	60	70↑	62
Increased local pride	72↑	65	69↑	59
Increased regional profile	86↑	76	84↑	77
New infrastructure	68↑	60	70↓	77
Greater cultural diversity	92↑	89	93	92
* Benefits of tourism shared evenly	38	-	40	-
** Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness	87	-	86	-

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- ↑ Highlights a statistically significant increase in the region from 2010
- ↓ 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.		Gold 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	58↓
Important economic benefits	45↓	58	50↓	62
Improved facility maintenance	43↓	53	44↓	58
Increased local pride	39↓	50	42↓	55
Increased regional profile	40↓	52	43↓	58
New infrastructure	49↓	65	55↓	63
Greater cultural diversity	29↓	32	29	30
* Benefits of tourism shared evenly	41	-	39	-
** Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness	49	-	49	-

% 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		Gold Coast % Agree	
	2013	2010	2013	2010
Increased opportunity costs	27	25	33	28
More disruption	32	31	41	46
Rise in delinquent behaviour	35	36	46↓	55
Negative impact on the environment	29	29	34	36
Increased prices	56↑	53	63	67
Lack of access for locals	17	16	23	23
Negative impact on local character	29	29	40	45
Increased property values	41↓	45	45↓	61

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↓ Highlights a statistically significant decrease in the region from 2010

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.		Gold Coast % Negative affect on the community as a whole. Those that rated the affect -3 or -2.	
	2010	2013	2010	2013
Increased opportunity costs	15↓	24	19	23
More disruption	14↓	24	25	26
Rise in delinquent behaviour	22↓	31	31	33
Negative impact on the environment	18↓	31	24	28
Increased prices	13↓	18	15	19
Lack of access for locals	18↓	28	27	29
Negative impact on local character	8	11	12	16
Increased property values	16↓	25	22	24

% 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).

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- Data not available

Base: Those that agree with each statement



## Demographics

		Queensland % 2013	Gold Coast % 2013
<b>Life stage</b>	Under 45 years, no children	26	24
	Under 45 years, with children	23	25
	45 years or more, no children	40	40
	45 years or more, with children	11	11
<b>Years of residence</b>	Less than 2 years	18	14
	2-5 years	20	21
	6-10 years	21	24
	11-20 years	23	26
	More than 20 years	17	15
<b>Place of birth</b>	Within 50km of where you currently live	21	14
	Elsewhere in Queensland	22	16
	Elsewhere in Australia	32	43
	In another country	24	28
<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	14
	No benefit	84	78
<b>Income</b>	Less than \$60,000	39	42
	\$60,000 - \$99,000	24	25
	\$100,000 or more	21	18
	Prefer not to say	17	15

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Base 2013 Queensland n=3855, Gold Coast 390

Base 2010 Queensland n=3834, Gold Coast 422

<sup>i</sup> Source – Tourism Research Australia. *Tourism Facts and Figures at a Glance*, September 2012, page 21.

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

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

<sup>iv</sup> Source – Tourism Research Australia's National and International Visitor Survey 2013.





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

