

Southern Queensland Country

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.

57% of residents feel that their local area should be trying to attract more tourists

94% of residents agree that festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness of the region

Known for its idyllic rural lifestyle, Southern Queensland Country population centres include Toowoomba, and the smaller cities of Warwick and Stanthorpe in the Southern Downs.

Of its ⁱ189,500 residents about half are over aged 45 years (56%), and have lived in the region for more than 11 years (43%). They like where they live too. In the Southern Downs this is particularly the case with more than half of its people stating they could not think of a better place to live, while across the region, 54 per cent of residents like living in the area but could think of other places they would equally enjoy. Despite this apparent contentment, there is a prevailing vibrancy and enthusiasm from respondents when it comes to opinions on tourism and development.

The region welcomed over ⁱⁱ1.9 million domestic and international overnight visitors for the year ended June 2013. The vast majority of residents (82%) come into contact with tourists when they are out and about on the street and while they may not talk to them, they like what they see.

Locals also feel more positive about the idea of tourists than the Queensland average, and Warwick residents even more so. As a collective, they are also more likely to agree that they really like tourists (68% compared with QLD 57%). Three in five residents want more tourists to visit the region (57% compared with QLD 45%), and seven in 10 support development growth - again, much higher than the average (70% compared with QLD 59%).

Feelings about local area and tourists		Queensland %		Southern Qld Country %	
		2013	2010	2013	2010
Feelings about local area	I like it, I can't think of anywhere else I would rather live	39	37	34	32
	I enjoy living here but can think of other places I would enjoy equally	50	50	54	55
	I only live here because circumstances demand it and would prefer to live somewhere else	12	13	13	13
Feelings about the number of tourists	Want more tourists	45	43	57	56
	About the same number	50	50	40	40
	Want fewer tourists	6	8	3	4

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

Contact with Tourists, Feelings and Development

		Queensland %		Southern Qld Country %	
		2013	2010	2013	2010
Feelings about tourists	I like tourists	57↑	49	68↑	56
	I tolerate tourists	31↓	35	26↓	33
	I adjust my lifestyle to avoid tourists	10	10	4↓	9
	I stay away from places tourists go	3↓	5	3	3
Contact with tourists	I never come into contact with tourists	22↑	18	18	18
	I see tourists around but don't usually talk to them	51	52	51	55
	I often interact with tourists as part of my job	10↓	13	14	10
	I often meet tourists around town and talk to them	15	14	19	16
	I have made friends with tourists during their stay, but have not kept in contact	7	7	7	6
	I have made friends with tourists and kept in contact after they have left	4	5	4	4
Preferred development growth	Happy with continued growth	59	59	70	71
	Happy but no more growth	25	25	16	17
	Want less tourism	3↓	6	2	2
	More growth different direction	13↑	10	12	11

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↑ Highlights a statistically significant increase in the region from 2010

↓ Highlights a statistically significant decrease in the region from 2010

By and large, locals think tourism positively affects the community, higher than the Queensland average (59% rated the effect on the community +2 or +3 compared with 46% of all Queenslanders). Those who believe the region should try to attract more tourists or who benefit from tourism tend to give a higher rating to its positive impacts on the community. Only one per cent of respondents thought tourism impacted negatively (rated the impact -2 or -3) on the community – the same as other Queenslanders.

Typically though, a higher than average number of Southern Queensland Country and particularly Southern Downs residents, agree with the positive impacts of tourism. These include:

- Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness (94% compared with QLD 87%)
- Increased regional profile (91% compared with QLD 86%), and
- Increased local pride (81% compared with QLD 72%).

As a whole, residents of the region feel more strongly about tourism's positive impacts on their community, consistently rating the benefits +2 or +3 more frequently than the rest of Queensland. These benefits include:

- Important economic benefits (59% compared with QLD 45%);
- Increased local pride (50% compared with QLD 39%);
- Improved facility maintenance (51% compared with QLD 43%);
- Increased regional profile (51% compared with QLD 40%);
- Greater cultural diversity (39% compared with QLD 29%);
- Benefits of tourism shared evenly (53% compared with QLD 41%); and
- Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness (60% compared with QLD 49%).

"It brings money to the area to help improve services. It brings a lot of jobs to the area, especially jobs for people who are not able for whatever reason to do the 'traditional' farm and labouring jobs."

SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND COUNTRY RESIDENT 2013



The same inescapably positive view of tourism holds strong even when it comes to its negative impacts. Fewer Southern Queensland Country residents agree on the negative impacts of tourism than the Queensland average. In particular:

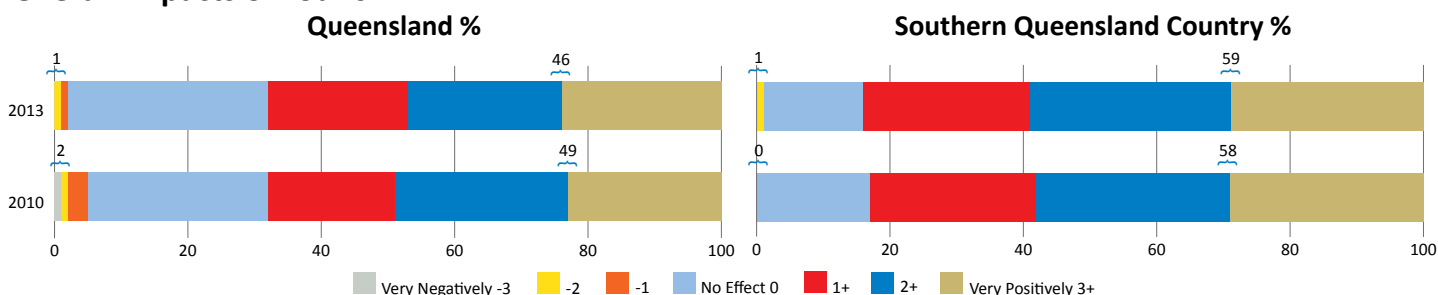
- Increased prices (47% compared with QLD 56%);
- More disruption (27% compared with QLD 32%); and
- Increase property values (26% compared with QLD 41%).

In regard to increased property values, residents are more sensitive to this impact than their Queensland counterparts, with 26% rating its negative affect on the community as a whole -2 or -3 compared with 16% of Queenslanders who rated its affect as -2 or -3.



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, 59% of Southern Queensland Country 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.

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		Southern Queensland Country % Agree	
	2013	2010	2013	2010
More interesting things to do	62↑	54	60	56
Important economic benefits	91↑	87	89	88
Improved facility maintenance	69↑	60	77↑	61
Increased local pride	72↑	65	81↑	71
Increased regional profile	86↑	76	91↑	84
New infrastructure	68↑	60	58↑	49
Greater cultural diversity	92↑	89	87	89
* Benefits of tourism shared evenly	38	-	41	-
** Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness	87	-	94	-

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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.		Southern Queensland Country % 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	57↓	72
Important economic benefits	45↓	58	59	60
Improved facility maintenance	43↓	53	59	60
Increased local pride	39↓	50	50↓	59
Increased regional profile	40↓	52	51↓	60
New infrastructure	49↓	65	54↓	78
Greater cultural diversity	29↓	32	39↓	33
* Benefits of tourism shared evenly	41	-	53	-
** Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness	49	-	60	-

% 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: This 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		Southern Queensland Country % Agree	
	2013	2010	2013	2010
Increased opportunity costs	27	25	21	20
More disruption	32	31	27	24
Rise in delinquent behaviour	35	36	32	26
Negative impact on the environment	29	29	23	25
Increased prices	56↑	53	47	41
Lack of access for locals	17	16	13	13
Negative impact on local character	29	29	20	16
Increased property values	41↓	45	26	26

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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.		Southern Queensland Country % 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	11	22
More disruption	14↓	24	7	10
Rise in delinquent behaviour	22↓	31	16	19
Negative impact on the environment	18↓	31	18	25
Increased prices	13↓	18	20↑	10
Lack of access for locals	18↓	28	17	10
Negative impact on local character	8	11	5	1
Increased property values	16↓	25	26	17

% 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	Southern Qld Country % 2013
Life stage	Under 45 years, no children	26	21
	Under 45 years, with children	23	22
	45 years or more, no children	40	46
	45 years or more, with children	11	10
Years of residence	Less than 2 years	18	18
	2-5 years	20	20
	6-10 years	21	20
	11-20 years	23	22
	More than 20 years	17	21
Place of birth	Within 50km of where you currently live	21	18
	Elsewhere in Queensland	22	35
	Elsewhere in Australia	32	30
	In another country	24	18
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	8
	Family benefit	10	8
	No benefit	84	87
Income	Less than \$60,000	39	49
	\$60,000 - \$99,000	24	24
	\$100,000 or more	21	15
	Prefer not to say	17	12

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Base 2013 Queensland n=3855, Southern Queensland Country n=446

Base 2010 Queensland n=3834, Southern Queensland Country n= 376

ⁱ Sources – *Queensland Regional Profile for Toowoomba Regional Local Government Area*, Government Statistician, Queensland Treasury and Trade.
Queensland Regional Profile for Southern Downs Regional Local Government Area, Government Statistician, Queensland Treasury and Trade.

ⁱⁱ 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

