

Community Satisfaction Survey

Results summary

August 2023

The survey

In March 2023, Eurobodalla Shire Council commissioned Micromex Research to conduct a random survey of residents of our shire.

Why?

- To verify what residents value most about Eurobodalla and what are the most important issues facing the community.
- To identify the community's overall level of satisfaction with Council performance and what services are most important to them.
- To identify what actions our residents take to address local issues and how confident they are that their say makes an impact.
- To identify priority areas and the level of investment for future resource and funding allocation.
- To use the insights gained to inform future decisions about service offerings, delivery and reviews.

How?

400 residents were surveyed by telephone.

This sample size provides for +/- 4.9% as the greatest margin error, which means if we did this survey again, 19 times out of 20 we would get the same results.

Who?

Micromex ensure survey respondents are residents of Eurobodalla. This is to confirm that results reflect day to day life in our area.

The survey data is then weighted to the age and gender profile of Eurobodalla residents to reflect the makeup of our community, as identified in the 2021 census.

When?

Residents were contacted between 28 March and 15 April 2023 – the survey was paused over the Easter period.

Living in Eurobodalla

We asked residents what they love about Eurobodalla, but also what they are concerned about:



92% agree that Eurobodalla is a good place to live



83% feel safe living in Eurobodalla



only 10% agree that housing in the area is affordable

When residents were asked what they value most 56% mentioned the natural environment, including cleanliness and natural scenery.



When residents were asked what they value most about Eurobodalla, the most popular themes are:

- **The natural environment, including the cleanliness and natural scenery** (56% mentioned one of these)
- **Good lifestyle and peaceful, nice area** (22% mentioned one of these)
- **The community connectedness and our friendly people** (18% mentioned one of these)

When residents were asked what is the most important issue facing the community right now the most pressing single issue is the cost and availability of housing (20% of respondents).

Concern for community infrastructure and the provision of services, (health and medical, roads, traffic, parking, availability of more services and facilities and managing development) were mentioned by 54% of respondents collectively.

“...the most pressing single issues is the cost and availability of housing (20% of respondents).”

Priorities and investment

Councils provide a mix of services to the community, well beyond the old saying of ‘roads, rates and rubbish’. This can be because of community expectations where Council is lobbied and commits to fill a gap in services, or it can be due to other levels of government shifting the responsibility for some services to councils.

To align our services to best address our community's current needs and future goals, Council sought to understand what the community perceives to be the priority areas for the shire.

We asked about 32 broad functions that Council provide and perform, and found:

Higher priorities

- Sealed roads (91%)
- Financial management (87%)
- Disability services (86%)
- Public order and safety (85%)



91% of respondents said that sealed roads are a priority

Lower Priority

- Bus shelters (48%)
- Arts and cultural development (49%)
- Library services (61%)
- Advocacy (62%)
- Unsealed roads (62%)

Even the lower priority items are still considered important by 48% or more of those surveyed.

When residents were asked whether they wanted more, the same or less investments across these areas at least 80% wanted more, or the same level of investment across all functions put to them.

Over 60% said more investment in sealed roads, and services for youth, disability and seniors is needed.

“...80% wanted more, or the same level of investment across all functions put to them.”

Council's performance

Residents were asked to consider how Council has performed across the board over the last 12 months, how well informed they feel, and how residents address local issues:

- 78% are at least somewhat satisfied with the performance of Council over the last 12 months.
- 56% are at least somewhat confident that their say was taken into consideration when addressing a local issue.
- 76% are at least somewhat satisfied with Council's efforts to keep residents informed.
- 65% are at least satisfied with Council's efforts to respond to residents.

When addressing local issues, residents have taken the following actions:

- 71% talked to a neighbour
- 51% have contacted a Council officer
- 32% have participated in a Council community engagement event
- 9% attended a Council meeting.



78% of residents are at least somewhat satisfied with the performance of Council.

The survey also asked residents to consider 56 specific service offerings and tell us how important they consider each of them, and how satisfied they have been with them over the past 12 months.

Importance

↑ Higher importance

- Support for local emergency services (91%)
- Long term planning for Eurobodalla (91%)
- Management of waterways and beaches (90%)
- Public litter bins (90%)
- Parks, playgrounds and open spaces (90%)

↓ Lower importance

- Bus shelters (50%)
- Maintenance of unsealed roads (59%)
- Arts and cultural programs and services (60%)
- Boating facilities such as boat ramps and fishing cleaning tables (63%)
- Communicating and doing business with Council online (64%)



91% of residents rate support for local emergency services and long term planning for Eurobodalla as important to very important.

Satisfaction

✓ Higher satisfaction

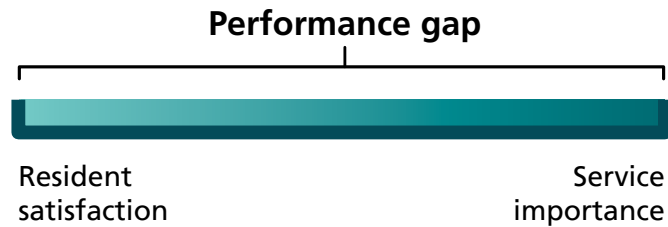
- Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens (97%)
- Library services (94%)
- Water services (92%)
- Cemeteries (91%)
- Lifesaving services (91%)
- Kerbside collection (91%)

✗ Lower satisfaction

- Maintenance of sealed roads (37%)
- Development assessment and approval services (47%)
- Maintenance of unsealed roads (49%)
- Capacity of infrastructure, including traffic management and congestion at peak times (57%)
- Planning for the development of residential land (59%)

Performance gap and regression analysis

Performance gap measures the gap between how important a service is considered and how satisfied residents are with its performance.



This survey showed seven areas where the performance gap was greater than 20%:

- Maintenance of sealed roads (51%)
- Public toilets (25%)
- Management of Council finances (25%)
- Long term planning for Eurobodalla (24%)
- Capacity of infrastructure (23%)
- Development assessment and approval services (23%)
- Engagement and consultation with the community about Council plans, projects and services (22%)

Micromex also perform regression analysis on the results. Regression analysis is a way to find trends in data, or in a survey like this, it is used to determine the most differentiating factors that drive community satisfaction with Council.

Customer services across all areas of service delivery and engaging and consulting with the community emerged as the highest influencers of satisfaction, when regression analysis was performed on the survey data.

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Next steps

- ➔ Councillors and senior council staff have the survey results and these will form an integral part of the information used for decision-making going forward.
- ➔ Council recognises that residents love living in Eurobodalla and value the environment and lifestyle our area offers, however ongoing concern for housing affordability and availability continues.
- ➔ Our road network has been heavily impacted by numerous natural disasters and significant rain events, and satisfaction for this has dropped considerably.
- ➔ To improve satisfaction for our community across Council’s services, we need to improve our customer services across all areas of service delivery and we need to further improve how effective our community consultation and engagement is.
- ➔ We must continue to foster the relationship between community and Council and how we inform, involve, and respond to important matters.
- ➔ The community show little appetite for less investment in the current service and infrastructure offerings, so we need to look for efficiencies and dynamic ways to continue delivery of current services.
- ➔ Council is currently preparing a Finance Strategy and part of that is a complete review of all services and budgets. This means that all anticipated expenses will need to be reviewed and justified.
- ➔ We will also continue to periodically check in with the community via this survey format to measure and compare Council’s performance into the future.

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