



MUNES

26

STUDY GUIDE

UNWTO

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1. LETTER FROM THE SECRETARIAT

Dear Delegates, As Eskişehir's first and only official MUN, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to MUNES'26, a historic Model UN Conference. This conference is a special opportunity to promote cooperation, critical thinking, and diplomacy among young people in our city and beyond. In order to ensure that every aspect of this conference reflects excellence, dedication, and a commitment to providing a truly transformative experience, the Academy has brought together the most gifted students from all management teams of local MUNs. The Eskişehir Municipality and Governorship, along with the prestigious companies that have supported this event, are proud to support MUNES'26. Their contributions and trust demonstrate the importance of MUNES as a catalyst for civic engagement, youth leadership, and the advancement of global awareness in Eskişehir. We really care about setting the rules for talking working together and cooperating with other countries as the only Model United Nations that represents our city. We are the Model United Nations for our city and we want to make sure we do a good job of discussing things and working with other people from different countries. We think it is very important to have discussions, diplomacy, and international collaboration as the Model United Nations, for our city. This conference is an opportunity for you to think like world leaders. You get to discuss problems that affect the whole world and come up with new ideas to solve them. As a delegate, you are representing the country you were assigned to. You also need to show that you can work well with others respect each other and understand points of view which is what the United Nations is all about. I want each of you to take part fully in your committees. Listen to what other people have to say even if you do not agree with them.. When things get tough be brave and curious and try to find a way to make it work. The United Nations is, about people working together so let us make that happen at this conference. I want to wish every delegate the best of luck during their sessions on behalf of the organizing team. I hope your discussions are enlightening, your partnerships fruitful, and your MUNES'26 experiences motivating. Let this conference be a journey of self-improvement, deep connections, and a long-term dedication to changing the world and your communities for the better.

Best regards, MUNES Secretary General
Çağlar Baran Topaç

2. LETTER FROM THE CHAIRBOARD

Esteemed Delegates, MUNES

Welcome to _____ and to **UNWTO**. We are thrilled to welcome you to a committee that calls for empathy, critical thinking, and sharp diplomatic analysis. When you read headlines about locals shooting water guns at tourists or painting “Go Home” on historic walls, it is easy to condemn the locals for xenophobia or the tourists for ignorance. Your job as diplomats is to reject these easy assumptions and seek meaningful solutions.

My name is **Zümra Elif Dilek**, and I will be serving as your GA Committee Director, President Chair and USG. I am currently studying **Journalism at Marmara University**, and I graduated from Eti Social Sciences High School. During my years in Eskişehir, I was actively involved in many MUN conferences as well as initiatives related to the European Parliament and the European Council, so some of you may already know me from those circles. For MUNES, I came from Istanbul to Eskişehir, and I am truly excited to meet all of you and share this committee together.

Now, I would like to yield the floor to my partner and love, **Efe Şahin**.

Hello everyone,

My name is **Efe Şahin**, and I am a **third-year Tourism Guidance student at Anadolu University**. I am also actively working as an **assistant tour guide**, and since this is the field I plan to pursue professionally, this committee is especially meaningful to me. In addition to that, I have worked on projects regarding the sustainability of tourism in Eskişehir and had the opportunity to present them to our city’s municipal leaders, which made this topic even more personally relevant. Together, Zümra and I bring two connected but different perspectives-media and international affairs on one side, and tourism practice on the other-and we are genuinely excited to combine our experiences as both a team and a couple to create a truly memorable committee for you.

We are confident that with your preparation, creativity, and diplomacy, this committee will become an unforgettable experience for all of us. We cannot wait to meet you, hear your ideas, and watch your solutions take shape throughout the debate.

With warmest regards,

Zümra Elif Dilek

GA Director, President Chair & USG

Efe Şahin

Vice Chair

3. INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE



UNITED NATIONS WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION (UNWTO)

Committee: United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

Agenda Item: Addressing the Rise of Hostile Sentiments and Hate Movements Targeting Tourists and its Political Background

3.1 Mission, Principles, and the SDGs

The World Tourism Organization (UN Tourism / UNWTO) is the United Nations' specialized agency entrusted with the promotion of responsible, sustainable, and universally accessible tourism. With 160 Member States and over 500 Affiliate Members (representing the private sector, academia, and civil society), UN Tourism works to maximize tourism's socio-economic contribution while minimizing its negative environmental and cultural impacts. It is a central driver in achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), and Goal 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production).

3.2 Five Strategic Priorities

- **Innovation and Digital Transformation:** Harnessing technology for better destination management.
- **Investment and Entrepreneurship:** Fostering green investments and supporting local SMEs.
- **Education and Employment:** Creating high-value jobs to replace low-wage, seasonal exploitation.

- Resilience and Safe Travel: Crisis management and restoring confidence in global mobility.
- Cultural and Environmental Protection: Empowering local communities as the true custodians of their heritage.

3.3 The Global Code of Ethics for Tourism

A foundational document for this committee is the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism. It establishes that tourism must act as a force for mutual understanding, respect human rights, and benefit host countries economically and socially. When these ethics are violated—such as when locals are displaced or cultures commodified—the social contract of tourism breaks down.

4. OVERVIEW OF THE AGENDA ITEM

4.1 Introduction: The Paradox of Modern Travel

Across the globe, from the Mediterranean coast to Southeast Asian islands, a troubling trend is accelerating: overt hostility, hate speech, and organized movements targeting tourists. What was once the “hospitality industry” is increasingly becoming a battleground for urban space. The core issue, however, is rarely the individual tourist. The hostility is a symptom of “touristification”—a process where neighborhoods, economies, and cultures are forcibly restructured to serve transient visitors rather than permanent residents.

4.2 Tourism as a Peacebuilding Tool vs. Source of Conflict

Historically, tourism has been championed as a peacebuilding mechanism. It facilitates intercultural dialogue, breaks down geopolitical prejudices, and fosters global citizenship. However, this interaction requires mutual respect. When mass tourism overwhelms a destination, the interaction devolves from cultural exchange into transactional friction. The “guest” becomes a “consumer,” and the “host” becomes “staff.”

4.3 Conceptualizing the Problem: Anti-Tourism vs. Hate Movements



- **Legitimate Anti-Tourism / Civic Resistance:** This is a socio-political critique. It involves locals protesting unsustainable models, demanding housing rights, environmental justice, and fair wages. This is not a hate movement; it is a demand for survival.

- **Anti-Tourist Hostility and Xenophobia:** This occurs when legitimate frustration is radicalized. It manifests as physical harassment, vandalism, discriminatory

language, and xenophobic mobilization targeting specific nationalities.

- **The Committee's Mandate:** We must distinguish between legitimate civic protest and discriminatory hate-based mobilization. UN Tourism must address the root causes of the former to prevent the rise of the latter.

4.4 The Metrics Problem: Shifting from Volume to Value

For half a century, governments measured tourism success through a single metric: arrival numbers. “More tourists” equated to “more success.” This paradigm has failed. A destination cannot be judged successful if an increase in arrivals correlates with an increase in local poverty and homelessness. The new metric must be community well-being and social legitimacy.

5. TOPICS

5.1 TOPIC A: STRUCTURAL CAUSES - THE ROOTS OF RESENTMENT

5.1.1 Overtourism and Destination Carrying Capacity

Overtourism is a governance failure, not merely a visitor problem. It occurs when a destination's physical, ecological, or psychological carrying capacity is exceeded. Infrastructure meant for 50,000 residents is suddenly forced to accommodate 200,000 people daily. Public squares, local markets, and public transport become inaccessible to the taxpayers who fund them.

5.1.2 The Housing Crisis, Short-Term Rentals, and Gentrification

This is the absolute core of modern anti-tourist anger. Platform-mediated short-term rentals (e.g., Airbnb, Vrbo) have allowed landlords to make triple the profit by renting to tourists rather than locals. The results are catastrophic:

- Rent prices skyrocket beyond local wages.
- Neighborhoods are gentrified and residential housing supply evaporates.
- Locals are displaced from city centers, destroying the social cohesion of communities.

5.1.3 Economic Leakage and the “Tourism Trap”

There is a widespread myth that mass tourism automatically enriches a region. In reality, many destinations suffer from economic leakage.

- The Tourism Trap: A region becomes entirely dependent on tourism, abandoning agriculture, manufacturing, or tech. When a crisis hits (like COVID-19), the region faces instant economic collapse.
- Leakage: Large multinational hotel chains, foreign investors, and digital booking platforms extract the majority of the profits. The local population is left to work low-paying, precarious, seasonal service jobs. The local infrastructure is exploited, but the capital flows out of the country.

5.1.4 Cultural Commodification and the Loss of Identity (The Island Paradigm)



The transformation of the Kecak dance in Bali, Indonesia, illustrates the shift from sacred ritual to commercial spectacle. Originally a rare Sanghyang trance performance used for spiritual protection, it was restructured into a narrative drama to suit foreign audiences.

What was once a communal event is now a daily, ticketed performance at sites like Uluwatu Temple. This commodification reflects how

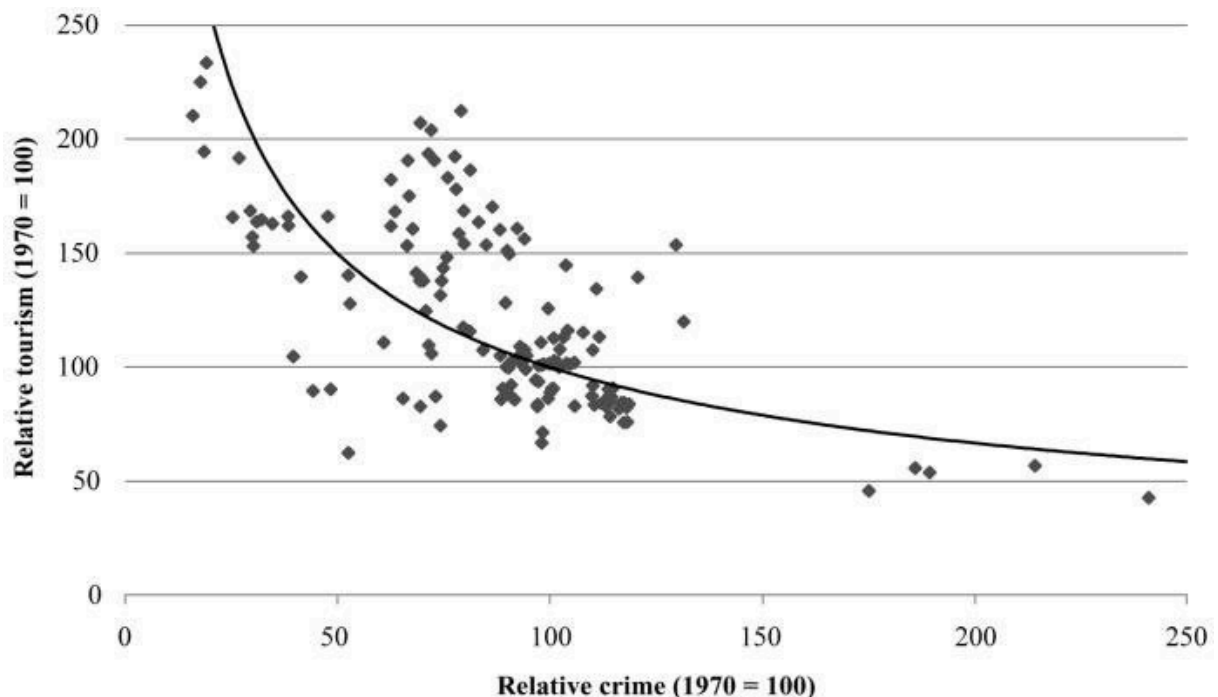
intangible cultural heritage is often altered to meet the economic demands of global tourism, stripping the tradition of its original sacred function.

5.1.5 Environmental Degradation and Infrastructure Collapse

Mass tourism places severe exogenous stress on local ecosystems. A single tourist often consumes three times more water per day than a local resident. Mega-cruise ships dump immense pollution into fragile coastal ecosystems. Historical sites suffer physical erosion, and municipal waste management systems collapse under seasonal surges.

5.1.6 Crime Rates and the “Tourist vs. Traveler” Divide

In heavily touristified zones, petty crime (pickpocketing, scams) often spikes, creating an unsafe environment for everyone. Furthermore, locals often draw a distinction between a “traveler” (who seeks integration, respects local norms, and contributes to the local economy) and a “tourist” (who views the destination merely as an amusement park, exhibiting entitlement and poor behavior).



Note: This figure plots relative crime indices against share of tourism flows with data pooled across sample nations and scaled for all countries so that 1970 = 100.

5.1.7 Dark Tourism and Ethical Controversies



Another source of hostility toward tourists can emerge from dark tourism, which refers to travel to places associated with death, tragedy, and human suffering, such as abandoned disaster zones, genocide memorials, and former concentration camps. Although such visits may serve educational or commemorative purposes, they can also become deeply unethical when tourists treat these sites as entertainment, aesthetic backdrops, or “bucket list” attractions rather than spaces of memory and mourning. This

has been especially visible in places such as Chernobyl, where visitors have often been criticized for taking stylized photographs in a site marked by long-term trauma and catastrophe, as well as at Holocaust memorials and former Nazi concentration camps, where smiling selfies, inappropriate poses, or insensitive behavior can be perceived as trivializing immense historical suffering. The same ethical tension can also appear in visits to orphanages, impoverished communities, or sites of ongoing hardship, where local people—especially children—may feel objectified, exploited, or emotionally misled, sometimes believing that visitors are observing their pain rather than helping them. As a result, dark tourism can intensify resentment toward tourists, as communities may come to see them not as respectful visitors, but as outsiders consuming trauma for curiosity, emotional gratification, or social media visibility.

5.2 TOPIC B: THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF HOSTILITY

5.2.1 Populism, Scapegoating, and Electoral Weaponization

Politicians often fail to regulate housing markets or build adequate infrastructure. To deflect blame for their governance failures, governments and opposition parties alike weaponize the public’s anger, turning the “tourist” into a visible scapegoat. Anti-tourism rhetoric becomes a powerful tool to gather votes during election cycles.

5.2.2 Nationalism and Xenophobic Spillover

What begins as economic frustration can easily be hijacked by extremist groups. “We need affordable housing” transforms into “Our city is being stolen by foreigners.” This breeds dangerous xenophobic spillover, often targeting specific nationalities based on stereotypes.

5.2.3 Local Governance Failures and the Power of the Tourism Lobby

The influence of the tourism lobby (hotel associations, cruise lines, airlines) often overpowers local municipalities. City councils fail to implement zoning laws or cap visitor numbers because they are heavily reliant on tourism taxes, prioritizing short-term economic gains over long-term livability.

5.2.4 Social Media Radicalization and the Post-Pandemic Rebound

Algorithms thrive on outrage. Viral videos of poorly behaving tourists, “tourist shaming” accounts, and digital disinformation campaigns amplify local anger exponentially, creating an echo chamber where hostility is normalized.

5.3 TOPIC C: THE HUMAN RIGHTS AND ETHICAL DIMENSIONS

5.3.1 The Right to the City vs. Freedom of Movement

Locals possess the right to the city. This includes the right to adequate and affordable housing, access to public spaces, the preservation of cultural heritage, and the right to live in a healthy environment free from excessive noise and pollution.

5.3.2 Protecting Host Communities and Visitors Equally

Tourists possess the right to freedom of movement, safety, and non-discrimination. Harassing an individual based on their nationality or status as a visitor is a violation of basic human rights.

5.4 TOPIC D: BLOC POSITIONS AND COUNTRY ALIGNMENTS

5.4.1 High-Volume European Destinations (e.g., Spain, Italy, France, Portugal)

Stance: These nations are at the epicenter of the crisis. They face immense domestic political pressure from angry citizens.

Goals: They will likely advocate for strict regulations on short-term rentals (Airbnb), the implementation of heavy tourist taxes, giving municipalities the power to ban cruise ships, and pivoting toward “high-value, low-volume” luxury tourism.

5.4.2 Tourism-Dependent Developing Nations & SIDS (e.g., Maldives, Thailand, Caribbean Nations)

Stance: For these nations, tourism is the lifeline of their GDP. While they suffer from cultural commodification and environmental stress, they cannot afford a global drop in travel.

Goals: They will resist policies that discourage global travel or make it too expensive. They will focus on fighting economic leakage, demanding that foreign investors retain more profits within the local economy. They will seek UN funding for sustainable infrastructure and capacity building.

5.4.3 Major Tourist-Sending Nations (e.g., USA, China, Germany, UK)

Stance: These countries export millions of tourists annually. They are primarily concerned with the safety, consular protection, and freedom of movement of their citizens abroad.

Goals: They will strongly condemn any language that tolerates “hate movements” or xenophobia. They will advocate for better tourist education programs and bilateral cooperation, but will push back against excessive visitor caps or discriminatory taxes that target their citizens.

5.5 TOPIC E: CASE STUDIES IN DESTINATION GOVERNANCE

5.5.1 Barcelona & The Canary Islands, Spain

Spain is ground zero for the anti-tourism movement. In Barcelona, extreme housing shortages led to mass protests where locals symbolically sprayed tourists with water guns. The local government has responded by pledging to ban all short-term tourist apartments by 2028. In the Canary Islands, locals initiated hunger strikes under the banner “The Canaries have a limit,” protesting the depletion of water resources and housing by mass tourism models, proving that island economies are particularly fragile.

5.5.2 Venice, Italy: The “Museum City”

Venice represents the fight against physical displacement and cruise pollution. The city has lost a massive portion of its permanent population, risking becoming a hollow “museum city.” In response, Venice banned large cruise ships from its historic center and became the first city in the world to implement a daily entry fee (5 Euros) for day-trippers to manage crowd sizes.

5.5.3 Lisbon, Portugal

Lisbon faces a unique modern challenge: the overlap of traditional tourism and the rise of digital nomads. Foreign remote workers with high salaries flock to Lisbon, taking up housing and driving rent prices up by over 50% in a few years. This has pushed local Portuguese workers, who earn significantly lower domestic wages, out of the capital entirely.

5.5.4 Kyoto, Japan

Kyoto highlights the issue of behavioral friction and cultural preservation. The influx of tourists led to severe overcrowding on public buses (preventing locals from commuting) and incidents of tourists harassing Geishas in the historic Gion district for photographs. The local government has had to implement strict fines, close off certain historic alleys to foreigners, and launch “manner campaigns” to manage the clash between mass tourism and traditional etiquette.

6. ADDITIONAL ANALYTICAL TOPIC EXPANSIONS

6.1 Structural Contradiction of Tourism: Economic Benefit vs Social Tension

Modern tourism has become one of the largest sectors of the global economy. According to United Nations World Tourism Organization, international tourism reached almost full recovery after the pandemic, with more than 285 million tourists traveling internationally in the first quarter of 2024 alone.

However, the expansion of tourism also exposes deep structural contradictions within the global economic system.

Tourism simultaneously produces:

- economic growth
- cultural exchange
- infrastructure development

but it can also lead to:

- overcrowding
- cultural commodification
- housing crises
- local resentment toward visitors

Research conducted by UN Tourism and IPSOS shows that nearly 47% of people believe they live in cities with a high number of tourists, while many also associate tourism with overcrowding and social stress.

These tensions create the social conditions in which hostile attitudes toward tourists can develop, especially when tourism is perceived as benefiting external investors more than local communities.

This paradox is central to understanding why tourism-an activity meant to connect cultures-can sometimes produce xenophobia, protest movements, and even violence against visitors.

6.2 Overtourism and Urban Displacement



One of the most significant drivers of hostility toward tourists is overtourism, a phenomenon where the number of visitors exceeds the social, environmental, or infrastructural capacity of a destination.

Cities like Barcelona, Venice, and Amsterdam have experienced growing anti-tourism protests due to:

- short-term rentals
- overcrowded public spaces
- environmental degradation
- loss of local cultural identity
- rising housing prices caused by

When local populations perceive tourism as displacing them from their own communities, resentment often shifts toward tourists themselves.

This dynamic is not simply cultural tension-it is fundamentally political and economic.

Many scholars argue that overtourism reflects broader patterns of neoliberal urban governance, where cities prioritize tourism revenue over residents' well-being.

In this sense, hostility toward tourists often emerges not because of the tourists themselves but because tourism becomes a symbol of broader economic injustice.

6.3 Political Instrumentalization of Anti-Tourism Sentiment

Hostile sentiments toward tourists are frequently amplified by political actors.

Populist movements in various countries have used tourism-related tensions to promote narratives about:

- national sovereignty
- cultural purity
- protection of local identity

Tourists may become scapegoats in political rhetoric portraying them as:

- outsiders exploiting local resources

- representatives of global elites
- symbols of cultural homogenization

This politicization transforms social grievances into organized hate movements targeting visitors.

Such dynamics are closely connected to broader political trends including:

- rising nationalism
- anti-globalization movements
- protectionist economic policies

6.4 Nationalism and the Construction of “Foreign Threats”



The rise of nationalism in many regions has significantly shaped the hostility directed toward tourists.

Nationalist ideologies often emphasize:

- cultural homogeneity
- territorial identity
- suspicion toward outsiders

Tourists-by definition temporary foreigners-can become easy targets for nationalist narratives that frame external presence as a threat to:

- national culture
- economic sovereignty
- social cohesion

From a sociological perspective, nationalist rhetoric constructs a divide between:

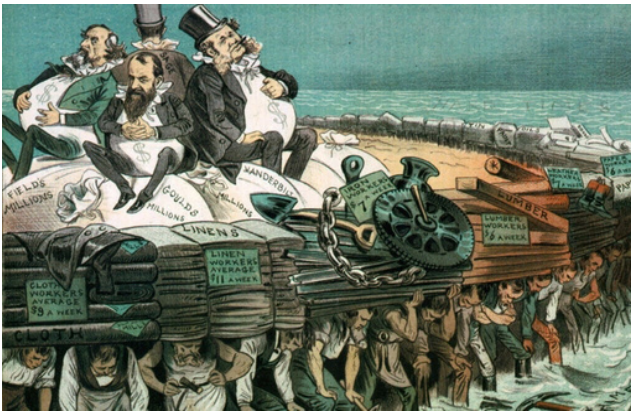
“locals” vs “outsiders.”

In this framework tourists are not merely visitors; they are sometimes framed as agents of:

- cultural dilution
- economic exploitation
- moral corruption

Ironically, tourism itself often promotes intercultural understanding. The Global Code of Ethics for Tourism emphasizes tourism's role in fostering mutual respect between peoples and societies.

When nationalism intensifies, however, tourism becomes a site of ideological conflict.



6.5 Capitalism and the Commodification of Culture

Another crucial dimension is the relationship between tourism and global capitalism.

Tourism operates largely within a market-driven economic model, where destinations compete to attract international visitors and maximize revenue.

While tourism generates economic opportunities, this model can produce several negative outcomes:

- Cultural commodification

Local traditions, rituals, and cultural practices may be transformed into products designed to satisfy tourist expectations rather than preserve authentic cultural meaning.

- Unequal distribution of profits

Large multinational corporations, hotel chains, and online platforms often capture a significant portion of tourism revenue, leaving local communities with limited benefits.

- Rising cost of living

Tourism-driven demand can increase housing prices, food costs, and infrastructure pressure.

As a result, local residents may perceive tourists as participants in a system that prioritizes profit over community well-being.

Hostility toward tourists therefore sometimes reflects deeper dissatisfaction with global economic inequalities rather than purely cultural prejudice.

6.6 Digital Media and the Spread of Anti-Tourism Narratives

In the digital age, social media platforms significantly amplify both tourism promotion and anti-tourism discourse.

Online spaces have facilitated:

- the rapid spread of anti-tourism campaigns
- viral videos of tourist misbehavior
- coordinated protests against tourism industries

Digital activism can mobilize communities but can also fuel:

- misinformation
- exaggerated narratives about tourists
- xenophobic discourse

Certain extremist groups exploit these narratives to justify harassment or hostility toward visitors.

This phenomenon highlights the importance of digital governance and responsible communication within tourism policy.

6.7 Tourism, Cultural Heritage, and Identity Conflicts



Tourism often revolves around cultural heritage sites, which hold deep historical and emotional significance for local communities.

When tourism is poorly managed, these sites may suffer from:

- environmental degradation
- commercialization
- cultural disrespect

In some cases, local resistance emerges when communities feel their cultural heritage is being appropriated for external consumption.

This dynamic can lead to tensions between:

- preservation
- economic development
- community ownership

6.8 Tourism as a Tool for Peacebuilding

Despite these challenges, tourism also has the potential to counteract hostility and promote peace.

Many scholars and policymakers argue that tourism fosters intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding by allowing individuals to directly experience different societies.

Tourism initiatives in post-conflict regions have demonstrated that responsible tourism can contribute to:

- reconciliation
- economic recovery
- cultural exchange

This perspective suggests that the challenge is not tourism itself but rather how tourism is structured and governed.

6.9 Governance Challenges in Protecting Tourists

Another critical issue is the lack of universal frameworks ensuring the protection of tourists.

During crises such as pandemics or political conflicts, many tourists have been left stranded abroad without sufficient assistance.

The International Code for the Protection of Tourists was developed to address these gaps by establishing international standards regarding tourists' rights and safety.

However, implementation varies widely between countries, leaving many visitors vulnerable to:

- discrimination
- lack of legal protection
- inadequate emergency support

This institutional weakness can further intensify tensions between tourists and host communities.

6.10 Ethical Tourism and Sustainable Solutions

Addressing hostility toward tourists requires a shift toward sustainable and ethical tourism models.

Such approaches emphasize:

- equitable distribution of tourism benefits
- protection of cultural heritage
- community participation in tourism governance

Responsible tourism policies should ensure that local communities remain active stakeholders rather than passive recipients of tourism development.

Encouraging community-led tourism initiatives can help transform tourism from a source of tension into a platform for cultural cooperation and mutual understanding.

7. GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

- **Overtourism:** When the volume of visitors negatively impacts the quality of life for locals and the environment.
 - **Touristification:** The socio-spatial process whereby neighborhoods are transformed to cater strictly to tourists.
 - **Economic Leakage:** When revenue generated by tourism is lost to outside economies (foreign hotel chains, international airlines) rather than remaining in the host community.
 - **Carrying Capacity:** The maximum number of visitors a destination can sustain without environmental, physical, or social degradation.
 - **Displacement:** The forced relocation of local residents due to gentrification and rising costs of living associated with tourism.
 - **Destination Governance:** The holistic, multi-stakeholder approach to managing a tourist location, balancing public, private, and civic interests.
 - **Platform-Mediated Housing Pressure:** The inflation of real estate and rent caused by apps like Airbnb.
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8. QUESTIONS TO PONDER

1. How can UNWTO establish a universal framework to help cities calculate and enforce their unique carrying capacities?
 2. What international guidelines can be recommended to regulate platform-mediated short-term rentals without violating free-market principles?
 3. How can developing nations restructure their tourism models to prevent economic leakage and ensure profits reach local workers?
 4. How do we establish a clear legal distinction between legitimate civic protest against tourism models and illegal xenophobic hate speech against tourists?
 5. What specific mechanisms can prevent the commodification of indigenous cultures and ensure heritage is protected rather than exploited?
 6. What new global indicators should replace arrival numbers to measure the success of a destination based on local well-being?
 7. What protocols should be put in place to diversify economies heavily reliant on tourism to prevent the tourism trap?
 8. How can governments address the socioeconomic inequalities created by tourism industries?
 9. What policies can prevent overtourism while maintaining economic benefits?
 10. How can tourism governance counter nationalist narratives that portray tourists as threats?
 11. What role should international organizations play in protecting tourists from discrimination or violence?
 12. How can digital platforms be regulated to prevent the spread of anti-tourism hate movements?
 13. What strategies can ensure tourism benefits local communities rather than external corporations?
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