

Should tourist numbers be capped?

Level: Advanced

Time: 90 minutes +

Summary: This lesson is about whether an upper limit should be placed on the number of tourists that can visit certain places. In this lesson, students:

1. generate a list of must-see tourist destinations;
2. study one of two texts, either *for* or *against* capping tourist numbers;
3. share information from their text and discuss the differing opinions expressed in the two texts;
4. discuss how tourist numbers can be managed as well as the pros and cons of heavy tourism.

Materials: One copy of the worksheet per student; one copy of either Article A or Article B per student

Group size: Two or more

Note: This lesson plan is for both pre-experience and in-work business students based on an original article first published in *Business Spotlight* issue 4/2018.

Warmer

In pairs, students come up with ten must-see tourist destinations around the world. This task should be a quick brainstorming session, so set a time limit of five minutes or so. Tell students they do not have to rank the destinations. When they have their ten destinations, they should compare their suggestions with those of other students and say how many of their places the others thought of, too.

Key words

Divide the students into two groups, A and B. Give group A the 'Yes!' article and give group B the 'No!' article. Each group should read their article and find their key words in task 2. Note that the definitions are given in the order that the words appear in the articles.

Key:

Article A

1. *benign*
2. *discontent* (The phrase 'summer of discontent' is a variant of 'winter of discontent' from William Shakespeare's *Richard III*: 'Now is the winter of our discontent / Made glorious summer by this sun [or son] of York'.)
3. *gentrification*
4. *hollowed out*
5. *heritage*
6. *disturbing*
7. *exploited*
8. *controversial*
9. *resort*

Article B

1. *discrete*
2. *peak*
3. *boroughs*
4. *revenue*
5. *capacity*
6. *honeypots*
7. *assets*
8. *stocks*
9. *invest*

Expressions

Students find the expressions in their text and match them with the meanings.

Key:

Group A: 1. b; 2. c; 3. a

Group B: 1. c; 2. d; 3. a; 4. b

Understanding the article

Working with someone who read the same text, students answer questions with information from their part of the article.

Key:

Group A

1. *Locals may no longer be able to afford to live in tourist areas. Tourists may not use natural resources, such as water, responsibly.*
2. *Many tourists don't spend money in local places (especially if they are staying on a cruise ship, visiting for a day or staying in an all-inclusive resort).*

Should tourist numbers be capped?

3. Eat at restaurants belonging to local people, stay in local accommodation and spend their money on other things provided by local people (e.g. use local tour guides, buy locally made souvenirs) rather than by global corporations.

Group B

1. It would provide secure jobs (not just seasonal ones) and bring money into the local economy.
2. Even though half the visitors to the UK don't go beyond London, the £120 billion that they bring to the UK each year is spent right across the country.
3. Although this is partly due to laziness, global tour operators want to make sure that they get the maximum return on their investments and so they promote already popular places that they know tourists will want to go to – this is the best way to make sure people spend money on their company's offers.

Information sharing

Students first work with someone who read the same article as them, and together they should make a note of all the arguments the author makes. Then, they sit with someone who read the other article, either in pairs or small groups, and share the information in their texts by explaining to their partner(s) the points that the authors make. Next, they discuss where the two authors' opinions differ and where they (almost) agree with each other. Lastly, they discuss which of the two authors they think presents the most convincing argument and how the author does this.

Answering and discussing an important question

This is a two-part task. In part a, the students find answers to the question posed in article B. The answers can be found mostly in paragraph 4 of article B but students should also add any ideas of their own. Encourage students to write out their answers as this will make it easier for them to discuss them in part b.

Key:

- Limiting numbers of flights and cruise ships, as well as accommodation offers, will force tourists to go to other destinations as they will not be able to go to the popular ones once capacity has been reached.

- Pricing strategies can be put into place so that tourists are not encouraged to go to certain popular places as they will be too expensive for most people.
- Marketing could be increased for destinations that have few tourists and decreased for the most popular places.

Research and discussion

In pairs, students search the internet to find out which places are currently the world's top-ten tourist destinations. They should write out the list and specify which website they used to source the information. Did they use a reliable source?

Tip: If students search for 'top-ten tourist destinations in the world' they will find images of the most popular tourist destinations. Tripadvisor also has a comprehensive slide show with interesting tourist information: www.tripadvisor.com/TravelersChoice-Destinations-cTop-g1.

Then students should compare this new list to the places they wrote in task 1. How many of them are the same? Finally, they should discuss how each one might specifically benefit and suffer from large numbers of tourists.

Related topics on onestopenglish

The following set of news lessons is on the anti-tourism marches referred to in paragraph 1 of article A in this lesson.

www.onestopenglish.com/skills/news-lessons/monthly-topical-news-lessons/monthly-news-lesson-anti-tourism-marches-spread-across-europe/556281.article

In this lesson, students look into the impact of tourism on Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs).

www.onestopenglish.com/clil/secondary/geography/leisure-and-tourism-in-less-economically-developed-countries-ledcs/550324.article

Should tourist numbers be capped?

1 Warmer

Write ten must-see tourist destinations around the world into the graphic.



2 Key words

Write the key words next to the definitions. Then, find them in your article to read them in context.

Group A

controversial resort disturbing exploited benign
gentrification heritage hollowed out discontent

1. harmless _____
2. the unhappy feeling that you have when you are not satisfied with something _____
3. the process by which an area of a city where poor people live becomes an area where middle-class people live, as they buy the houses and repair them _____
4. emptied out from the inside _____
5. the art, buildings, traditions and beliefs that a society considers important to its history and culture _____
6. upsetting and worrying someone a lot _____
7. treated someone unfairly in order to get some benefit for yourself _____
8. something that many people disagree with or do not approve of _____
9. a place that many people go to for a holiday, usually a large hotel that provides a range of amenities, such as entertainment and recreational activities _____

Should tourist numbers be capped?

Group B

assets boroughs capacity discrete honeypots
invest peak revenue stocks

1. separate _____
2. when something is at its highest or greatest level _____
3. districts in a city that are responsible for their own schools, libraries etc _____
4. income from business activities or taxes _____
5. the number of people that a place has room for _____
6. places that are attractive or interesting to people _____
7. major benefits; positive aspects that can be used to your advantage _____
8. the amount of something that you have available so that you can use it when you need it

9. put money into a place or venture with the aim of making a profit from it _____

Should tourist numbers be capped?

Yes!

Article A



Whether it's cruises or city breaks, tourism is booming, much to the dismay of residents of attractive destinations that are overrun by tourists. Can this problem be solved by placing a limit on the number of visitors? Julian Earwaker listened to the arguments for and against.

"Tourism is about all of us taking responsibility" – Justin Francis

- 1 Tourism has long been regarded as a benign industry in which everybody wins. That is changing. Local people have taken to the streets in protest and the world's media are reporting on their concerns about tourism in their communities; 2017 was the summer of discontent. Tourism is moving into a new era.
- 2 Overtourism has many impacts, notably gentrification and the divide between the cost of living and accommodation. Venice has essentially been hollowed out because local people can no longer afford to live in the centre. Isle of Skye residents can't get on the roads because of the number of visitors. Some areas suffer damage to cultural heritage sites and natural resources. There can be water issues, for example when tourists use much more than locals in areas of water shortage.

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It would be a misunderstanding to say that there are just too many tourists. Locals are not seeing enough benefits from them. Whether it's cruise ships, international hotels or global tour operators, tourism is disturbing people's lives and the proceeds are going to global corporations. Plans to manage tourism have been around for 30 to 40 years but have never been acted upon. And the people who have been most exploited in the search for growth have been local people.

Capping can involve limiting the number of flights or cruise ships and spreading arrivals throughout the day or week. You can limit the amount of accommodation, stop building new hotels and regulate Airbnb. You can employ pricing strategies, which is controversial because it can price some people out of the market. Botswana's done that for decades. You can stop marketing the hotspots or increase marketing for under-touristed destinations. The world can deal with far more tourists but not if they all want to go to the same places at the same time. There are many remarkable yet unfamiliar places to visit. If we only look at the top ten, that's a failure of the imagination on our part.

Overtourism is not always an extra million people in a huge resort. In a small location, 25 people might be too many. On safari, ten or 15 vehicles around a lion is too many. Try to go out of season. Think local: local restaurants, local guides, local accommodation – putting your money into local people's hands. Tourism is about all of us taking responsibility.

JUSTIN FRANCIS is co-founder and CEO of international travel experts Responsible Travel (www.responsibletravel.com).

3

4

5

Should tourist numbers be capped?

No! Article B



Whether it's cruises or city breaks, tourism is booming, much to the dismay of residents of attractive destinations that are overrun by tourists. Can this problem be solved by placing a limit on the number of visitors? Julian Earwaker listened to the arguments for and against.

"Tourism is a great wealth spreader and job creator" – Patricia Yates

working within the industry. It's about encouraging people to go out of season, to places that aren't honeypots, so as to better use the assets we have.

Some people blame the shared economy but organizations like Airbnb help to build flexible bed stocks in areas where hotels are not going to invest. They also help deal with some of the seasonality of tourism. Consumers are voting with their feet to go to shared-economy places, partly because they're cheaper but also from a desire to have an experience and to get under the skin of places. The traditional industry needs to look at those trends and tap into them.

It's not really realistic to cap visitor numbers to cities or regions. You have to capacity-manage, whether through ticketing or pricing. It's true that with some cruises and tours to historic cities, it's too easy to have a great day trip without spending any money locally. The industry needs to make it easier for visitors to increase that future spend. Some of the concerns of cities or destinations would be reduced if they could see that tourists were really financially contributing.

How do we get people to go to areas that are not naturally on their top-ten list? There's some laziness on the part of tourists and the tourism industry but international tour operators like a sure thing and those are things people have already heard of and that won't require a lot of work to encourage product development.

PATRICIA YATES is head of strategic communications for VisitBritain (www.visitbritain.com).

- 1 Overtourism is better described as managing success. There are some areas that have global recognition and that visitors love to visit but they tend to be quite small and discrete and the busy time might just be at summer peak. In the UK, half of our international visitors don't go outside London. Lots come to Westminster but other London boroughs aren't seeing any extra revenue from tourism. So it's about spreading rather than capping numbers.
- 2 Tourism is an important global industry, which adds about £120 billion to the UK economy annually. That money is spent right across the country. It's a great wealth spreader and job creator. And there is spare capacity. In 2017, around a fifth of UK rooms were empty. Many resorts and attractions close down for the winter. If tourism were less seasonal, it would be more productive and could offer secure employment to people

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Should tourist numbers be capped?

3 Expressions

Find these expressions in your article and match them with their meanings.

Group A

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. price someone out of the market | a. not during the main holiday time |
| 2. on someone's part | b. make something so expensive that most people can't afford it |
| 3. out of season | c. done by someone |

Group B

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. vote with your feet | a. use something to get a benefit from it |
| 2. get under the skin of something | b. something that cannot fail |
| 3. tap into something | c. express an opinion through your actions, for example by not going somewhere or by deciding to spend money in a certain place |
| 4. a sure thing | d. experience and gain an understanding of more than the most obvious aspects of a place |

4 Understanding the article

Answer the questions with information from your article.

Group A

1. What problems might local people encounter due to overtourism?

2. Even when tourists visit an area, why might local people not benefit?

3. What can tourists do to help local people?

Group B

1. How would encouraging tourists to visit the whole year through help local people?

2. How does the money from tourists visiting London help people in other parts of the country?

3. Why don't global tour operators encourage tourists to visit less popular places?

Should tourist numbers be capped?

5 Information sharing

- a. Write the arguments from your article into the box.
- b. Talk to someone who read the other article. Exchange information and fill the other side of your box with the information you gather.
- c. Discuss where the two authors' opinions differ and where they (almost) agree with each other.
- d. Discuss who makes the strongest case and decide what part of his or her argument you find most convincing.

text A	text B

6 Answering and discussing an important question

- a. In article B, Patricia Yates asks:

How do we get people to go to areas that are not naturally on their top-ten list?

Answer this question with ideas and suggestions from the two articles as well as suggestions of your own. Write your answers down.

- b. How easy or difficult do you think it would be to successfully implement these ideas and suggestions?

7 Research and discussion

- a. Do internet research to find out which places are currently the world's top-ten tourist destinations.
- b. How many of your answers from task 1 are on this researched list?
- c. How do you think each of the places on the researched list both benefits and suffers from large numbers of tourists?