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Spatial manifestations of overtourism: global experience and Ukrainian realities

The purpose of the article is to examine overtourism as a contemporary phenomenon by defining its criteria and indicators, analyzing global cases of its manifestation, and identifying the specific features of overtourism development in Ukraine in order to justify approaches to balanced management of tourist flows.

The main material. Overtourism is a situation in which the number of tourists exceeds the ecological, cultural, social, or economic carrying capacity of a destination, causing negative impacts on local residents, infrastructure, the natural environment, and the overall quality of the tourist experience. The concept of overtourism is linked to the idea of carrying capacity of destinations, which includes physical, ecological, social, and psychological limits. According to international standards, overtourism indicators are divided into four main categories: economic, sociocultural, environmental, and governance (institutional) indicators. Each category includes both quantitative and qualitative indicators that capture different aspects of tourism's impact on a destination.

The phenomenon of overtourism now affects almost all major tourist regions of the world. In international practice, the problem of overtourism has long acquired a pronounced character, as evidenced by the examples of Venice, Barcelona, Amsterdam, Dubrovnik, the Mediterranean islands, and other popular tourist centers. In these destinations, the excessive number of tourists has led to increased social tensions, the commercialization of the urban environment, environmental degradation, and the need to implement specific tools for regulating tourist flows.

For Ukraine, the problem of overtourism has not yet reached the same scale as in leading European tourist countries. However, its local manifestations are already observable in certain destinations. The developed map "Tax Revenues from Tourism in Ukraine in 2024" illustrates the spatial features of the tourism sector's development and the dynamics of its economic contribution. The spatial analysis of Ukraine's tourist destinations indicates a high concentration of recreational flows in the western region, along the Black Sea coast, and in major cultural centers.

Conclusions. Addressing the problem of overtourism requires comprehensive management of tourist flows, which includes the spatial redistribution of visitors, regulation of short-term rentals, the use of digital monitoring, the development of alternative routes, and the involvement of local communities in decision-making processes.

Keywords: *overtourism, overtourism indicators, tourist pressure, tourist destinations, tourist flows, carrying capacity of destinations, Ukraine.*

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Introduction. In the 21st century, tourism has become one of the most dynamic sectors of the global economy and an important driver of the socio-economic development of territories. Its impact extends far beyond its purely recreational function, encompassing the transformation of urban space, changes in employment structures, the use of natural resources, infrastructure development, and the formation of local identity. At the same time, the growth of tourist mobility, the expansion of low-cost air travel, the proliferation of digital booking platforms, and the popularization of travel on social media have contributed not only to the expansion of tourist flows but also to the intensification of problems associated with the excessive concentration of visitors within specific destinations.

One of the most debated manifestations of contemporary tourism development is overtourism. This phenomenon is associated with exceeding the acceptable tourism carrying capacity of a territory, when the intensity of visits begins to negatively affect the natural environment, infrastructure, cultural landscape, and the everyday life of local residents. In international practice, the problem of overtourism has already acquired a clearly pronounced character.

For Ukraine, the problem of overtourism has not yet reached the same scale as in leading European tourist countries. However, its local manifestations are already observable in certain destinations. This primarily concerns the Carpathian region, Lviv, Kyiv, Odesa, Uman, and other tourist centers, where there is a concentration of recreational flows, increasing anthropogenic pressure on the natural environment, overloading of transport and service infrastructure, and the gradual commercialization of tourist space. This issue has become particularly relevant in the context of the full-scale war, when domestic tourism has been largely reoriented toward relatively safer western and central regions, thereby intensifying the spatial unevenness of tourism activity.

Initial conditions. Overtourism is a situation in which the number of tourists exceeds the ecological, cultural, social, or economic carrying capacity of a destination, causing negative impacts on local residents, infrastructure, the natural environment, and the overall quality of the tourist experience [11, 14]. This concept goes beyond simply having a "large number of tourists" and indicates a structural imbalance between the interests of visitors and the needs of local communities.

The term gained particular prominence following the rise of protest movements in cities that have become symbols of tourism saturation: Venice, Barcelona, Amsterdam, and Dubrovnik. In response, a new sociocultural phenomenon emerged – tourismphobia – which highlights the social discontent of local populations with the growing pressure from tourists [6, 12].

The concept of overtourism is linked to the idea of carrying capacity of destinations, which includes physical (maximum number of visitors),

ecological (resilience of the natural environment), social (community tolerance toward tourists), and psychological (level of comfort) limits [2]. This approach makes it possible to quantitatively assess the boundaries of acceptable tourist pressure and identify potential points of saturation.

Overtourism is a result of uncontrolled mass tourism, where the principles of sustainable development are not followed, and tourist flows exceed the ecological, social, and infrastructural limits of a destination. Without proper management, it can lead to negative socio-economic and environmental consequences.

The purpose of the article is to examine overtourism as a contemporary phenomenon by defining its criteria and indicators, analyzing global cases of its manifestation, and identifying the specific features of overtourism development in Ukraine in order to justify approaches to balanced management of tourist flows.

Criteria and indicators of overtourism. To assess the scale and impact of overtourism at global and local levels, quantitative indicators are used, including the number of tourists per resident, tourist overnight stays per unit of area, the share of short-term rentals in the housing stock, and the load on infrastructure. The European Parliament identifies these indicators as key for detecting areas of excessive tourist activity that threaten the sustainability of local systems [10].

According to international standards, overtourism indicators are divided into four main categories:

- *Economic indicators* – reflect the contribution of tourism to GDP, employment, income, investment, expenditure structure, and multiplier effects, as well as negative consequences such as rising prices, displacement of local businesses, dependence on tourism, and income seasonality.
- *Sociocultural indicators* – reflect the impact of tourism on residents' quality of life, social cohesion, access to housing, price changes, preservation of cultural heritage, crime rates, safety, community attitudes toward tourism, and participation in decision-making.
- *Environmental indicators* – reflect the impact of tourism on the environment, including greenhouse gas emissions, water and energy consumption, waste generation, air pollution, landscape degradation, biodiversity loss, and pressure on natural areas.
- *Governance (institutional) indicators* – reflect the effectiveness of policies, planning, budgeting, stakeholder participation, the presence of sustainable development strategies, and tools for monitoring and crisis response [7, 10].

Each category includes both quantitative and qualitative indicators that capture different aspects of tourism's impact on a destination (Table 1).

Global examples of overtourism manifestations. The phenomenon of overtourism now affects almost all major tourist regions of the world. According to Eurostat,

Table 1

Categories of overtourism indicators and methods for their measurement

Category	Quantitative indicators	Qualitative indicators	Measurement methods
Economic indicators	Arrivals, overnight stays, revenues, employment, taxes, prices, density, intensity, share of Airbnb	Economic diversification, income stability, impact on local businesses, housing affordability	Statistics, Tourism Satellite Account (TSA), surveys, market analysis
Sociocultural indicators	Resident satisfaction, housing prices, crime, complaints, service accessibility, share of rentals	Community attitudes, identity, participation in planning, heritage preservation	Surveys, focus groups, social media analysis
Environmental indicators	CO ₂ emissions, water consumption, waste, air quality, pressure on nature, biodiversity	Ecosystem condition, recovery, environmental awareness, perceived threat	Environmental monitoring, GIS, sensors, surveys
Governance (institutional) indicators	Management plan, budget, number of policies, licenses, monitoring frequency	Transparency, community participation, flexibility, early warning systems	Policy analysis, interviews, audits, dashboards

the number of international tourist arrivals in Europe has been steadily increasing, leading to an uneven distribution of flows and excessive concentration of travelers in the most well-known cities and coastal regions [4].

In many European cities, tourist flows have reached such levels that they exceed the capacity of infrastructure. For example, in Venice, the number of tourists during the season significantly exceeds the number of residents: over 80,000 tourists daily compared to fewer than 50,000 permanent inhabitants. At the same time, up to 30% of housing units have been converted into tourist rentals. In Dubrovnik, more than 1.5 million tourists visit annually compared to a population of 41,000, which has forced authorities to limit the number of tourist groups in the Old Town [10]. In Barcelona, 26 million visitors were recorded in 2024, a significant share of whom were cruise passengers creating sudden pressure on key urban infrastructure nodes [15].

The situation is particularly critical on Mediterranean islands. For instance, the island of Zakynthos in Greece has become the most overcrowded tourist resort in Europe, with 150 tourists per resident. This leads to resource shortages, rising living costs, and protests by local residents [5]. A similar situation is observed in the Canary Islands, where more than 16 million tourists were recorded in 2023. Excessive pressure on ecosystems, particularly water supply, has triggered waves of public protests against mass tourism.

Similar processes are also observed outside Europe. In tourism regions of Southeast Asia – particularly Thailand, Indonesia, and Vietnam – tourist flows often exceed the environmental carrying capacity of natural sites such as national parks, coral reefs, and beach ecosystems [3, 8]. As a result, some areas have been temporarily closed to allow environmental recovery, demonstrating a direct ecological dimension of the overtourism problem. Spatial linkages between tourist hotspots form “overload networks” that require systematic management at the interregional level.

The manifestations of overtourism vary in intensity depending on the type of territory and its socio-economic context. Coastal and cultural-historical centers are

characterized by the exceeding of the physical carrying capacity of areas, while in large metropolitan cities the dominant issues include social tension, transport congestion, and increasing urban pressure. Predictive assessments by researchers indicate that, in the absence of integrated planning, further intensification of uneven tourist flows within Europe is expected, especially in the Mediterranean region, which remains the most vulnerable to the consequences of overtourism.

Thus, global examples show that overtourism is not only a consequence of the economic success of tourist destinations but also a complex socio-economic and spatial phenomenon that generates new challenges for sustainable development, environmental security, and the cultural identity of cities. It has become a global issue requiring in-depth interdisciplinary understanding and integrated approaches to managing tourist flows at the local, national, and international levels.

Spatial features of overtourism in Ukraine. In Ukraine, overtourism currently has a localized character, but the examples of Bukovel and Lviv demonstrate its potential danger. During the winter season of 2024, Bukovel hosted more than 2.5 million tourists while only a few thousand residents were permanently present. This led to resource shortages, significant price increases, and chaotic development [16]. Lviv, as one of the country’s main cultural cities, attracts up to 3 million tourists annually. The main pressure falls on the historic city center, leading to the displacement of local residents due to the popularity of Airbnb and other platforms.

Odesa is a typical example of seasonal overtourism in Ukraine. During the summer period, the city faces transport congestion, water shortages, and rising costs of temporary accommodation. Similar phenomena are observed in Carpathian towns such as Yaremche, Slavske, and Mykulychyn, where tourist pressure exceeds the limits of natural regeneration [13].

According to the State Agency for Tourism Development of Ukraine, in 2024 the tourism sector generated nearly UAH 3 billion in tax revenues for the budget. The highest figures are recorded in Kyiv, as well as in Lviv, Odesa, Ivano-Frankivsk, and Dnipropetrovsk regions [13]. The developed map “Tax Revenues from

Tourism in Ukraine in 2024” (Fig. 1) illustrates the spatial features of the tourism sector’s development and the dynamics of its economic contribution. The cartographic data indicate significant territorial differences in the levels of tax revenues from tourism activities. The highest values are concentrated in the city of Kyiv and in Lviv, Odesa, and Ivano-Frankivsk regions, which is explained by a high concentration of tourist flows and strong business activity.

Elevated tax revenues are also characteristic of Zakarpattia, Chernivtsi, Kyiv, and partly Dnipropetrovsk regions, where tourism combines recreational, cultural, and transit functions. In contrast, the central and northeastern regions of Ukraine demonstrate relatively low indicators, reflecting limited demand for local recreational services.

Overall, the analysis of the map shows that the territorial distribution of tourism activity has a clearly defined regional character, with the dominance of western and coastal regions. The most popular tourist cities – Kyiv, Lviv, Odesa, Ivano-Frankivsk, Uzhhorod, Mukachevo, Uman, Polyanytsia (Bukovel), and Kamianets-Podilskyi –serve as key centers of tourism development, confirming their strategic importance for the industry in Ukraine. At the same time, the concentration of tourist flows in these regions leads to a number of spatial and socio-environmental imbalances, including infrastructure overload, degradation of natural areas, and manifestations of overtourism, which

is becoming a noticeable challenge for the sustainable development of tourism in Ukraine.

A large number of tourists in leading tourist centers of Ukraine has both positive and negative consequences. On the one hand, it ensures the growth of local budgets, the development of small businesses, increased employment, and the stimulation of related sectors such as transport, services, trade, and creative industries. Thus, revenues from the tourist tax in 2024 exceeded UAH 270 million, which indicates a stable economic benefit for local communities [13]. On the other hand, excessive concentration of tourists in Kyiv, Lviv, Odesa, Ivano-Frankivsk, and Bukovel leads to the overloading of urban infrastructure, rising housing costs, and transport and environmental problems.

The absence of a unified system for managing tourist flows at the national level deepens existing imbalances: popular destinations are overcrowded, while other regions (for example, Polissia, Podillia, Slobozhanshchyna) remain relatively unknown. This indicates an asymmetry in tourism development, which generates economic benefits for certain regions but simultaneously threatens the depletion of their natural and recreational potential.

Based on cartographic and statistical materials, it can be stated that Ukraine is currently undergoing a transitional phase – from a stage of intensive growth in domestic tourism to a phase of local overconcentration in specific destinations. The popularity of domestic travel,

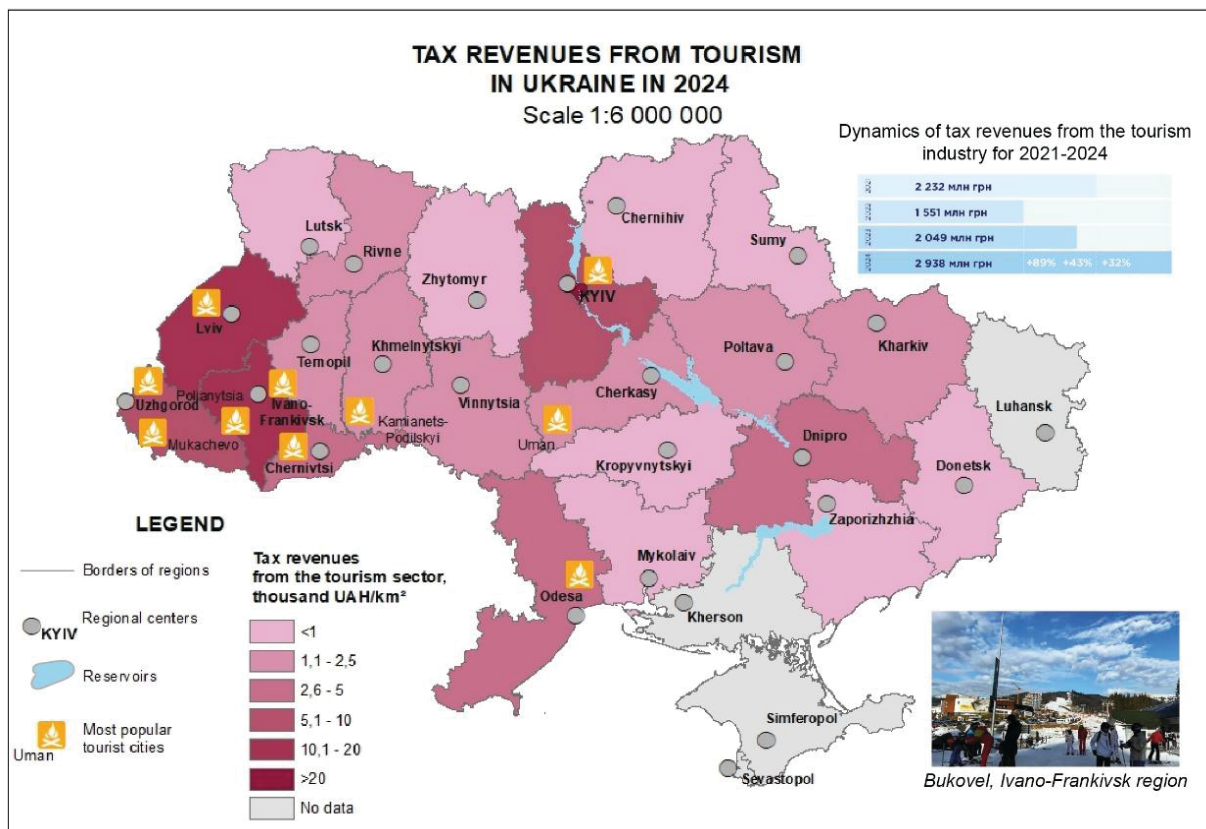


Fig. 1. Tax Revenues from Tourism in Ukraine in 2024

according to research data, is driven by a combination of wartime restrictions and the population's need for safe and affordable recreation. At the same time, the lack of a clear state policy for managing tourist flows creates risks of environmental degradation and excessive pressure on infrastructure.

Ways to address the problem of overtourism in Ukraine. The problem of overtourism in Ukraine requires a comprehensive and spatially balanced approach to the management of tourist flows. In the context of post-war recovery, the state and local communities have a unique opportunity to lay the foundations for sustainable tourism that will not reproduce the crisis-related overloading phenomena characteristic of the pre-war period. Contemporary tourism development policy is oriented toward combining economic benefits with environmental responsibility, the decentralization of tourist flows, and digital monitoring of territories [1, 9].

One of the primary directions for addressing overtourism is the spatial redistribution of tourist flows. The Carpathian region, which concentrates the majority of domestic tourists, should be relieved through the promotion of alternative destinations such as Polissia, Podillia, Slobozhanshchyna, the Dniester River basin, and lesser-known cultural routes of central Ukraine. The creation of local tourism clusters within communities enables tourism to function as a factor of regional balance rather than overload. An important prerequisite is the updating of regional tourism strategies with regard to the recreational carrying capacity of territories, which makes it possible to plan visitor numbers in accordance with natural and social resources.

Among the practical steps for addressing overtourism, the establishment of a national system of sustainable tourism indicators should be highlighted. Such a system would include indicators of recreational pressure, tourist satisfaction levels, the socio-economic impact on local communities, and an environmental stability index. These indicators would make it possible to identify critical visitation thresholds, conduct real-time monitoring, and forecast the consequences of overloading [1, 9]. To achieve this, inter-agency coordination is required between the State Agency for Tourism Development of Ukraine, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources, the State Service of Ukraine for Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre, and local self-government bodies.

In the post-war period, addressing the problem of overtourism acquires not only environmental but also socio-economic significance. Tourism acts as one of the mechanisms for community regeneration; therefore, maintaining a balance between development and environmental preservation is a strategic task of the

state. The implementation of sustainable management principles, the use of digital tools, public engagement, and environmental education create the prerequisites for forming a new tourism model in Ukraine – one without excessive pressure, chaotic development, or spatial degradation, but instead based on the harmonious coexistence of people, nature, and cultural heritage.

Conclusions. Overtourism is a complex contemporary phenomenon that arises from the excessive concentration of tourist flows within a particular destination and is accompanied by the exceeding of its ecological, social, infrastructural, or cultural capacity. Unlike mass tourism, which implies large volumes of tourist movements but does not always lead to critical consequences, overtourism is associated with a level of pressure that begins to negatively affect the natural environment, local population, infrastructure, and the overall quality of the tourist space. Its assessment relies on both quantitative and qualitative criteria and indicators that cover economic, socio-cultural, environmental, and governance dimensions.

Addressing the problem of overtourism requires comprehensive management of tourist flows, which includes the spatial redistribution of visitors, regulation of short-term rentals, the use of digital monitoring, the development of alternative routes, and the involvement of local communities in decision-making processes.

The spatial analysis of Ukraine's tourist destinations indicates a high concentration of recreational flows in the western region, along the Black Sea coast, and in major cultural centers. This situation points to an uneven distribution of tourism development, where the main pressure is concentrated on a limited number of the most attractive destinations, while other regions remain less involved in tourism activity. The full-scale war has significantly transformed the spatial organization of tourism in Ukraine: international tourist flows have declined, domestic tourism has been reoriented toward the safer western and central regions of the country, and the functional roles of many tourist destinations have changed.

The problem of overtourism in Ukraine requires a comprehensive and spatially balanced approach to managing tourist flows. In the context of post-war recovery, the state and local communities have a unique opportunity to lay the foundations for sustainable tourism that will not reproduce the crisis phenomena of overcrowding characteristic of the pre-war period. Modern tourism development policy is focused on combining economic benefits with environmental responsibility, decentralization of tourist flows, and digital monitoring of territories.

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ПРОСТОРОВІ ПРОЯВИ ПЕРЕТУРИЗМУ: ГЛОБАЛЬНИЙ ДОСВІД ТА УКРАЇНСЬКІ РЕАЛІЇ

Метою цієї статті є дослідити перетуризм як сучасне явище шляхом визначення його критеріїв та індикаторів, аналізу глобальних прикладів його прояву, а також виявлення особливостей прояву перетуризму в Україні для обґрунтування підходів до збалансованого управління туристичними потоками.

Основний матеріал. Перетуризм – це ситуація, за якої кількість туристів перевищує екологічну, культурну, соціальну або економічну місткість дестинації, що спричиняє негативні наслідки для місцевих жителів, інфраструктури, природного середовища та загальної якості туристичного досвіду. Концепція перетуризму пов'язана з поняттям туристичної місткості дестинацій, яка охоплює фізичні, екологічні, соціальні та психологічні межі. Відповідно до міжнародних підходів, індикатори перетуризму поділяються на чотири основні категорії: економічні, соціокультурні,

екологічні та управлінські (інституційні) індикатори. Кожна з цих категорій включає як кількісні, так і якісні показники, що відображають різні аспекти впливу туризму на дестинацію.

Явище перетуризму нині впливає майже на всі основні туристичні регіони світу. У міжнародній практиці проблема перетуризму вже тривалий час має чітко виражений характер, що підтверджується прикладами таких туристичних центрів, як Венеція, Барселона, Амстердам, Дубровник, острови Середземномор'я та інші популярні дестинації. У цих місцях надмірна концентрація туристів призвела до посилення соціальної напруги, комерціалізації міського простору, погіршення стану довкілля та зумовила необхідність запровадження спеціальних механізмів регулювання туристичних потоків.

Для України проблема перетуризму ще не досягла такого масштабу, як у провідних туристичних країнах Європи. Однак її локальні прояви вже спостерігаються в окремих дестинаціях. Розроблена карта «Податкові надходження від туризму в Україні у 2024 році» ілюструє просторові особливості розвитку туристичної сфери та динаміку її економічного внеску. Просторовий аналіз туристичних дестинацій України свідчить про високу концентрацію рекреаційних потоків у західному регіоні, вздовж узбережжя Чорного моря та у великих культурних центрах.

Висновки. Подолання проблеми перетуризму потребує комплексного управління туристичними потоками, яке включає географічний перерозподіл відвідувачів, регулювання короткострокової оренди, використання цифрового моніторингу, розвиток альтернативних маршрутів і залучення місцевих жителів до прийняття рішень.

Ключові слова: перетуризм, індикатори перетуризму, туристичне навантаження, туристичні дестинації, туристичні потоки, туристична місткість дестинацій, Україна.

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Конфлікт інтересів: автори засвідчують, що, незважаючи на те, що один з авторів статті є заступником головного редактора цього журналу, процес рецензування, прийняття рішення щодо публікації та редагування проводилися незалежно, без його участі чи впливу. Будь-які потенційні конфлікти інтересів були повністю усунені шляхом зовнішнього контролю процесу.

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