

# The changes in the global pattern of tourism

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The global pattern of tourism has changed drastically over the last fifty years. Changes such as the number of global tourist arrivals, distances travelled, and the cost of travel have meant that 'tourism' is today one of the world's most important industries. There are a number of reasons for this change, for example, technology and social situation. In the seventeenth century, doctors recommended benefits of water, which triggered the building of spas. People began taking relaxing trips to these spas.

When the industrial revolution struck, huge changes in transport took place, such as better rail links in the United Kingdom. These railway lines provided links to expand. Also, people began to earn more money, and with disposable income, annual holidays became increasingly popular. During World War 2, people were not allowed on beaches. Once the war had finished, people celebrated by going to the beach. This made seaside resorts become much more popular. In 1970, the jet plane carried 307 million passengers. By 2006, this had increased to a huge 2. billion!

This shows just how much tourism has increased in the past half century. In 1950, international tourist arrivals were only 20 million. In 2005, it was measured to be over 700 million! Europe in particular was responsible for a considerable amount of this increase, approximately 400 million. In 2005, there were 441, 528 thousand international tourist arrivals. The Mediterranean was responsible for 36% of this number. This shows that southern Spain is a very popular tourist destination. I think this is due to the climate in the Med.

The Mediterranean is well known for its hot, dry summers, which naturally attract visitors. Most arrivals here are on holiday for leisure purposes, rather than business. It is not just in Europe, however, that tourism has increased. In 1990, the world saw 439 million international tourist arrivals. In 2005, this has increased to 806 million. This shows an average annual increase of 3.3%. There are many reasons for this increase. Economic factors, such as rising incomes, decreasing costs of the flight itself - due to the expansion of budget airlines.

Also, many airlines have introduced reward schemes, or loyalty bonuses, which are appealing to the customer. Social factors, such as the increase of the number of days paid leave workers can take. This gives people more spare time for a holiday. Many students in recent years, after finishing school, which to take a 'gap year' to go travelling, before going to university, or getting a job. Finally, there are also political reasons for which tourism has increased. Some governments invest heavily in advertising campaigns to encourage tourism.

Also, international sporting events, such as the world cup or the Olympics, attract millions of people from all over the globe. Forecasts from the World Tourism Organisation are showing an approximate 650 million increase in global arrivals between 2007 and 2020. Another noticeable change is the distance people are travelling to go on holiday. In 1841, Thomas cook introduce the first ever package holiday, from Leicester to Loughborough, which was only 12 miles away. These travellers attended temperance meetings.

Fifty years ago, tourist arrivals in the Middle East and Africa were virtually none existent, as the travel links simply were not there. I believe one of the main reasons that tourist arrivals have gone up so considerably is due to the travel links expanding. Thanks to the invention of the train, Thomas Cook was able to expand his holidays. However, in 1970, with the invention of the jet plane, mass tourism began. There was no limit to where people could go on holiday, so the distances travelled dramatically increased here.

People travel to places such as Spain, specifically the Mediterranean, as it is only 725 miles, which is approximately a 2 hour flight. Today; people can travel literally across the world, from London to Sydney, a distance of 10,552 miles. The third main change in the pattern of tourism over the last fifty years is the cost of travel. People first began taking holidays after the industrial revolution, as they had disposable income. Although prices for travel such as trains were cheaper in the 1950's, people have a much higher income in today's society, so they are much more affordable.

In the early 1990's, the first budget airline was introduced. They offered low cost flights in exchange for passenger services, such as in-flight meals and extra leg room. This appealed to many working class people, who wished to go on holiday for less. Flights on budget airlines can be extremely cheap, especially if you fly on an unpopular time and date. You can purchase some flights from the UK to Ireland as cheap as 1p plus VAT. Return flights to Spain can be as cheap as i?? 20. Package holidays also made holidays more appealing to people who were not as well off as some.

They combine the cost of flight, accommodation and travel, and are usually with a group of several other tourists. Package holidays range from your typical relaxing fortnight on the beach in Majorca, to cockroach races in Brisbane! At the story bridge hotel in Brisbane, every January 26th, they race cockroaches! This tradition began in 1981, when two drunken men argued that the cockroaches from their part of town were fastest. Today, people literally come from all over the world just to race these cockroaches! Also, many people today choose to go on "all inclusive" holidays.

This is when the holiday resort provides all food and drink in the price. This is appealing to people as when on holiday, many people do not wish to cook or worrying about finding places to eat. All inclusive holidays start from just i?? 290 to Ibiza; this makes luxury more affordable for the working class.

Recently, ecotourism has become more popular. This is when people travel to less economically developed countries such as Kenya, or India. They volunteer once in the country, often doing conservation work. Flights to these areas are not very expensive, as they are less popular.

Fifty years ago, few people travelled far to go on holiday, as it was so expensive. Overall, these are the three key changes in the pattern of tourism. A dramatic increase in the number of global tourist arrivals, an increase in the distance travelled, and cost of travel being more affordable, have meant that tourism is very different today than it was fifty years ago. I feel that the main catalyst for increasing tourism in general, was the invention of the jet plane. Carrying 2.1 billion passengers in 2006, it is clearly responsible for a large part of transporting these tourists.

Of course, another reason for the patterns in tourism is the fact that people are earning more money. Thanks to this disposable income, more people can afford to treat themselves to a holiday. I also feel there are now more incentives to go on holiday today, such as these "package", or "all inclusive" holidays, as these save the consumer money. Fifty years ago, people used to travel 12 miles down the road to go on holiday, today they travel to the other side of the world. I feel this shows just how big these changes in the pattern of tourism are.