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Overtourism vs. Sustainable Development of Tourism. Attempts to Handle Overtourism Following the Example of Venice

Abstract. In this day and age, overtourism has become a burning issue and a considerable challenge to tackle. It will remain on the rise as long as the tourism industry continues to grow. It appears impossible to stop or eliminate. Therefore, it only seems reasonable to adopt proper management strategies. Since no comprehensive solution has been elaborated as of yet, tourist destinations have started to take their own measures in order to handle the issue. The objective of the article is to identify the underlying characteristics of overtourism with regard to the strongly promoted concept of sustainable development of tourism, and to analyze the methods of handling overtourism, following the example of Venice. The issue of excessive tourist traffic in the center of Venice is very well-known. The problem is serious enough to serve as a case study in the context of tourist destination management.

Keywords: overtourism, sustainable development of tourism, tourism destination management, Venice

1. Introduction

Darsi dei limiti è il gesto che distingue la civiltà dalla barbarie[1]
(Sergio Latouche)

The concept of sustainable development of tourism was formulated nearly 30 years ago in response to the rapid growth of tourism. The matter soon became a major priority for the European Union policymakers. Ever since that time,

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[1] Author's own translation: "The establishment of borders is what distinguishes a civilization from barbarity".

countless debates on the topic have been held, numerous programs have been elaborated, and a large number of initiatives aimed at promoting the concept have been undertaken. Consequently, its fundamental principles have been established; the term "sustainable development" has been mentioned in nearly all development strategies adopted by cities and regions. In the long term, the immense significance of maintaining balance between the economic, sociocultural and environmental dimensions has been repeatedly confirmed. Nevertheless, a number of questions concerning the implementation of sustainable development remains unanswered. Some tourism researchers and analysts disagree on the legitimacy of the concept, seeing it as nothing else but an abstract philosophy and a marketing gimmick.

The inability to successfully implement the principles of sustainable development and manage the negative consequences of tourism has brought the issue of its dysfunction back to the table. However, it now refers to the phenomenon known as overtourism, experienced by local communities and tourists alike. The fast-growing number of tourists in particular locations, which leads to adverse consequences, carries negative connotations and presents a considerable challenge to tackle. The burning issue has become a global concern and subject of heated debates.

The objective of the article is to identify the underlying characteristics of the multifaceted phenomenon known as overtourism, especially in the context of the strongly promoted notion of sustainable development of tourism. Secondly, the goal is also to analyze the methods employed by the Venice authorities to handle the issue of overtourism. The problem of excessive tourist traffic in the center of Venice is very well-known and serious enough to serve as a case study in the context of managing tourist destinations. There are no hard-and-fast solutions to the problem of overtourism. Since its negative consequences are dire, it appears necessary to introduce the principles of sustainable development of tourism as quickly as possible.

The article is based on secondary resources: literature analysis and Internet search query analysis.

2. The origin of the concept of sustainable development of tourism

From a global perspective, the tourism industry has been expanding since the mid-20th century. The number of tourist arrivals increased from 25 million in 1950 to 684 million in 2000, which amounts to a 7% increase rate [UNWTO 2009]. The opening of Asian markets caused a major influx of tourists coming mainly from China. In 2013–2015, the number of Chinese travelers increased by

270%. Interestingly enough, a record of 1.4 billion international tourist arrivals was set in 2018, even though that number was to be reached only in 2020 according to a 2015 forecast [UNWTO 2015]. UNWTO suggests that the number of international arrivals will have reached 1.8 billion by 2030.

Initially, such a rapid growth of tourism in Europe was perceived as a positive trend. After all, tourism used to be considered a significant component of economic growth. However, already in the 1970s, concern was raised about the accepted model of extensive economic growth, which had turned tourism into a mass-market commodity. Tourism became one of the key sectors of capitalist societies [Murphy 2013], centered on growth and promotion rather than regulation and preservation. Criticism was focused on the growth of consumerism and an associated lifestyle, which presents a threat to the environment and economic stability. Jost Krippendorf questioned the conviction that the only way to achieve prosperity is through constant economic growth, resulting from artificially generated demand; he stated that the production-consumption/consumption-production carousel resulted in a dangerous dynamic [Krippendorf 1987].

In 1969, U Thant published a report titled "Problems of the Human Environment". In 1972, an international UN conference on the protection of the environment was held in Stockholm. In the same year, the Club of Rome Report focused on the so-called limits to growth, kickstarting a debate on sustainable development. As mass tourism was on the rise, more attention was given to the negative consequences of the phenomenon, particularly the social and environmental cost of overconcentrating tourism in one location.

In 1975, G.A. Doxey created the so-called iridex (irritation index) to describe the changing attitude of communities inhabiting a given destination in response to the growing number of tourists [Doxey 1975]. He distinguished four successive stages: from euphoria (when the first tourists appear) to apathy, irritation and antagonism. Several years later, Richard Butler presented the concept of Tourist Area Life Cycle (TALC), demonstrating the impact of the number of tourists on the evolution of a particular destination [Butler 1980]. Table 1 juxtaposes Doxey's index with Butler's concept. During the first stage (discovery of an attractive tourist destination), both local residents and tourists display positive feelings. When new infrastructure and facilities are set up, information is spread, and marketing campaigns are conducted, the popularity of a given destination gradually increases to reach a critical point of tourist saturation, a stage characterized by stagnation. After that point, the attractiveness of a destination diminishes considerably, potentially resulting in a lower rate of competitiveness. In the case of overdependence on tourism, the decline in popularity of a destination (and interest therein) leads to a collapse if not devastation of the local economy. However, proper destination management can ensure long-term stability, area revitalization or a shift in its function.

Table 1. Impact of increased number of tourists on destination's reaction

Change of inhabit-ants' attitude (Doxey)	Destination's reaction to increased number of tourists	Destination's potential evolution (Butler)
Euphoria	Initial stage of the development of the destination, animation, enthusiasm, involvement, informal contact with tourists	Discovery + Explo-ration
Apathy	More formal interaction with tourists perceived as a source of income and investment	Development
Irritation	Locals' growing concern resulting from an increased number of tourists and external investments, irritation expressed verbally and physically	Consolidation
Antagonism	Discontent with the excess of tourists leading to a con-flict	Stagnation (collapse/stabi-lization/ limited growth/renewal)

Source: author's own elaboration on the basis of: http://ethicaltraveler.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Doxeys.png [accessed: 3.08.2019].

The cost incurred by local communities, resulting from the negative impact tourism has on destinations, was also explored by Abraham Pizam [1978]. In 1979, John E. Rosenow and Gerreld L. Pulsipher [1979] claimed that visitors become a burden when there are too many of them and when they cause harm to the environment (e.g. noise, damage to natural resources, touristification of city centers). It was at that time that the risk of provoking conflict between local residents and tourists visiting particular destinations, caused by the rapid growth of tourist traffic, was first noticed. In 1987, Krippendorf [1987] proposed the concept of sustainable development of tourism, aware of the growing discontent inhabitants of attractive areas experienced because of the tourist "invasion", potentially leading to rebellions. He believed it was necessary to humanize tourism and achieve harmony between local residents and visitors. The harmony was to be achieved by identifying their common needs, goals and benefits, taking into account that local residents should always have the final word on how their area is to be used.

Simultaneously, in 1987, the report formulated by UN World Commission on Environment and Development, titled "Our Common Future", defined sus-

tainable development as meeting "the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" [*World Commission on Environment and Development* 1987]. The notion was popularized in 1992, during the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, when the Earth Charter was created[2] [Zaręba 2010].

The concept of sustainable development was formulated in order to prevent negative consequences of the rapid economic growth concerning the economic, social and environmental dimensions. Its primary objective was to ensure balance and harmony between these areas.

However, criticism centered on the excessively broad definition of sustainable development, as a result of which it was easy to adopt on a large scale but difficult to fully comprehend. Another problem lied in the fact that the definition referred to as many as seven different dimensions (environmental, cultural, political, economic, social, managerial and governmental) and that the interpretations made by policymakers representing different locations varied to a considerable extent [Bramwell et al. 1996].

The idea of sustainable development was introduced into the field of tourism due to its interdisciplinary nature and major significance for the global economy. In 1993, the World Tourism Organization stated that sustainable development of tourism was meant to satisfy the needs of tourists and regions with future generations in mind [WTO 1993]. Since the mid-1990s, sustainable development of tourism has been a priority for the European Union and a subject of countless debates [Butler 1999].

In 1996, World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), World Tourism Organization (WTO) and Earth Council (EC) worked together to create Agenda 21 *for the Travel and Tourism Industry*. It established the fundamental objectives to introduce the principles of sustainable development into the field of tourism. In subsequent years, numerous programs and initiatives have been launched to promote the concept [Kiryluk 2012]. Most of them were elaborated by the European Union, owing to the fact that it was in Europe that tourist traffic had been most concentrated.

From a comprehensive long-term perspective on sustainable development, the immense significance of maintaining balance between the economic, socio-cultural and environmental dimensions has been repeatedly confirmed. The harmony should be based on an optimal distribution of benefits achieved by tourists (experience, joy), businesses (profit) and local residents (socio-economic growth), as well as particular limits set to restrict the impact tourism has on the

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[2] The declaration containing 27 priorities of sustainable development was signed by representatives of 172 countries who undertook to implement the principles of the new socio-economic development.

Table 2. Criteria for sustainable development of tourism

Criteria	Objectives
Economic	profit and support for the development of local economies
Social	local communities understand and accept the development of tourism, benefits for local communities, tourists are satisfied with their visits
Cultural	protecting and enriching material and non-material cultural environment
Environmental	preserving the environment (protecting and sustaining natural resources, reducing waste and contamination, maintaining and promoting biodiversity)
Institutional	planning with participation of all concerned tourist economy subjects (including local communities), tourism staff education, appropriate tourism marketing, education and promotion of sustainable development among local residents
Integrational	taking into account the relationship between tourism and other spheres of human activity which have impact on the society and natural environment

Source: individual elaboration on the basis of: Dobrzański 2010: 161-162.

environment (proper tourism management, proper types and scale of tourist activity) [Pender, Shalper (eds.) 2008].

Harold Goodwin underlines the fact [2011] that due to its interdisciplinary nature tourism is not a separate, isolated notion; rather, it overlaps with all the other spheres of human activity and continues to evolve in respect of people's ever changing needs. Therefore, it is necessary to counterbalance it with other sectors of human activity. Institutional support is of paramount importance as well.

The essential assumptions concerning sustainable development of tourism are presented in Table 2.

The Agenda for sustainable and competitive European tourism created by the European Commission in 2007 established a number of fundamental principles, some of which addressed the issue of growing tourist traffic. The goal was:
– to involve all concerned subjects in the process of decision-making and practical implementation,
– to achieve a rate and direction of growth that would take account of the characteristics, resources and needs of local communities and tourist centers,
– to undertake preventive measures in order to avoid harm to the environment and society,
– to set and follow particular limits in case of overdeveloped tourism and excessive influx of tourists [following: Kiryluk 2012: 254].

The aforementioned principles were not applicable to most tourist destinations; contrary to the proposed concept of sustainable development, an opposite trend started to emerge.

3. What is overtourism?

The notion of overtourism was first used in August 2012 on Twitter as a reference to the rapid growth of the number of tourists [Goodwin 2016]. In 2013, during the seventh International Conference on Responsible Tourism in Destinations held in Barcelona, concern was raised about the negative impact tourism had had on Catalonia (its capital in particular). The conference declaration stated that "more emphasis must be placed on managing tourism rather than increasing the number of tourists" [Goodwin 2016]. Soon, antitourism slogans, indicative of a growing conflict between local residents and visitors, started to appear in the public space.

In 2016, the general director and founder of the online tourism platform Skift, Rafat Ali, popularized the notion of overtourism, stating that the rapid growth of tourism posed a potential threat to popular destinations across the world, especially those that are poorly managed . He suggested that the phenomenon reflected the democratization of global travel and phrased a number the essential questions: Are particular countries (with their infrastructure) ready for a rapid increase in the number of travelers, expected to reach two billion globally in the upcoming years? Are people ready for an excessive influx of tourists into their regions; are they able to save their culture? [Ali 2018].

The new notion had gained so much popularity that the summer of 2017 was named the summer of overtourism. What is more, The Telegraph chose "overtourism" as the word of the year in the late 2017. Greg Dickinson of The Telegraph suggested adding the notion of overtourism (defined as excessive tourist traffic in popular destinations violating the principles of sustainable development) to the Collins English dictionary [Dickinson 2018]. It was observed that the excess becomes burdensome once travelers and locals must share limited physical space [McKercher, Wang, Park 2015]. The World Tourist Organization [UNWTO 2018] defined overtourism as a negative impact of tourism on the lives of local residents inhabiting tourist destinations (or parts thereof) and the quality of travelers' experiences.

The expansion of tourism led to a widespread tourist-phobia, first described by professor of anthropology at University of Barcelona Manuel Delgado 9 years earlier, seen as a change of locals' attitude towards tourists, based upon rejection, distrust and contempt [Delgado 2018]. Such negative attitudes emerged as a result of excessive tourist traffic when no sustainable planning or development strategies were in place. The uncontrolled growth of tourist traffic led to exceeding the optimal tourist carrying capacity in given locations, which in turn led to exceeding the limits of socio-psychological capacity (the ability to accept the occurring changes) [Mika 2007], in line with the aforementioned Doxey's index.

Although a backlash against mass tourism was observed in Spain, France, Italy and Malta in the mid-1990s [Boissevain (ed.) 1996], it was only in the summer of 2017 that protests of unprecedented scale took place.

Mass demonstrations were held in Barcelona, [Martes 2017][3] Venice [Coldwell 2017], Dubrovnik, Mallorca, Ibiza, Rome, San Sebastian, and Hawaii. The slogans printed on banners were: "Tourist go home", "Tourism kills the city", "This isn't tourism. It's an invasion", "Stop cruises", "Airbnb Danger! Very harmful for our neighbourhood", "Locals first. Enough tourists already". These slogans are indicative of the issues local communities are facing. The protesters demand more respect for the local residents who seem to play no role whatsoever in the global development of tourism.

4. Managing overtourism in Venice

The most severe consequences of excessive tourist traffic are experienced in Venice, known as the capital of overtourism. Venice (and its lagoon), which was placed on the UNESCO list in 1987, is a truly unique place on earth. It owes its exceptional appeal to the historical, archaeological, urban, architectural, artistic and cultural legacy, which is very well integrated into the landscape and natural environment. The Venetian Lagoon is one of the most remarkable examples of the complex interaction between humans (and their anthropological activity) and nature. The natural phenomenon occurring between October and April, known as high waters (Italian: *aqua alta*) is major threat to the survival of the magnificent city.

However, Venice must tackle yet another challenge: a rapidly growing tourism industry. It is estimated that the historical center of Venice is visited by approximately 70,000–80,000 people per day (with 55,000 local residents). On the occasion of major events, the number grows manifold. For instance, during the Carnival season, it amounts to approximately 120,000 people per day; during the Regatta Storica it is 100,000 people per day and during the International Film Festival – 300,000. Between April and October, the city is accessed by approximately 140,000 people and 6-8 great cruise ships (each with 3,000-3,500 passengers) [Tattara 2017]. It is estimated that the number of visitors coming to Venice will have grown from over 20 to 38 million by 2025.

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[3] Moreover, acts of vandalism were committed in Barcelona. The radical wing of the Popular Unity Candidacy (CUP) called Arran became involved in the antitourism initiative and conducted a series of provocation campaigns: tourist bicycle tires were punctured, a bus with tourists at Camp Nou was assaulted (where passengers and children believed to have fallen victims to a terrorist attack), paint balls were thrown at hotels buildings.

The main issue the city is currently facing is the large cruise ships entering the lagoon and releasing several thousand passengers at once. There are days when the city is visited by 44,000 passengers [Simmons 2018]. The number of visitors to Venice grows at an alarming rate: in the year 2000, cruise ships brought 330,000 visitors; in the year 2016, the number increased to 1.6 million [Sheivachman 2017]. Since they typically larger than the Venetian buildings, cruise ships present a considerable threat to the local architecture, natural environment, people's health and safety, as well as the tradition of using water canal transportation. Moreover, they pose an ecological threat to the city and its lagoon (risk of fires, fuel leaks, loss of course)[4]. Following a number of protests against the cruise ships organized by the local community, a special committee named "No Grandi Navi" was formed in 2012. The inhabitants of Venice are fighting for the restoration of the highly sensitive morphological environment whose damage may create an adverse impact on the survival of the lagoon. Because of protecting the ecosystem and health and safety, demanding an immediate ban on ships of over 40,000-ton capacity in the Lagoon [Comitato No Grandi Navi 2017a].

Alternative solutions have been proposed to the government by the local authorities but failed to resolve the problem, which is why they enjoy no popularity among the local community.[5] It was clearly evidenced in the results of the referendum of 18 June 2017, in which 98.7% of votes were against allowing huge cruise ships into the Lagoon [Comitato No Grandi Navi 2017b]. A seemingly reasonable solution involves granting cruise ships access to the open sea port (meant for tank and container ships), a project which has been launched recently. As of now, the problem remains unresolved.

In order to tackle the unresolved issue of overtourism, the city launched an official campaign titled "#EnjoyRespectVenezia, promoted by UNWTO in 2017. The UN General Assembly named the year 2017 the International Year of Sustainable Development of Tourism under the slogan #Travel. Enjoy. Respect [*2017 International Year…*], hoping to unlock the enormous potential of

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[4] The threat has been proven in recent events: in June 2019, a cruise ship lost control and crashed into a tourist boat, injuring several people and causing panic at the shore: https://live.comune.venezia.it/it/2019/06/comunicato-stampa-congiunto-del-sindacoe-del-prefetto-di-venezia-sullincidente-nautico-1 [accessed: 5.08.2019].

[5] The responsibility for the management of cruise ship traffic within the area of the Venetian Lagoon rests with the Port of Venice, which is owned by the state. In 2017, the minister of transport and infrastructure G. Delrio approved the proposal to redirect ships to Marghera mainland port. However, the solution met with criticism from "No Grandi Navi", since the way to Marghera goes through the Lagoon. The current minister D. Toninelli has withdrawn from the declarations made by the previous administration. The Mayor of Venice, L. Brugnaro has requested a positive decision from the Italian government but to no effect, https://live.comune.venezia.it/it/2019/07/mayor-brugnaro-enough-ships-st-mark-s-minister-toninelli-must-stopblocking-alternative [accessed: 5.08.2019].

the tourism industry that could promote sustainable development based on the economic, social and environmental pillars. The objective of the #EnjoyRespect-Venezia campaign is to promote conscious and responsible travel, with respect for the environment and local communities. Translated into 10 languages, the campaign is conducted through social media, city council's website and within the public space. A twelve-point list of good practices was made for sightseers visiting Venice [Città di Venezia 2019]:

1. Discover the hidden treasures of Venice and appreciate its exceptional beauty.

2. Explore Mainland Venice and the islands in the lagoon. Participate in special events across the entire Venetian metropolis.

3. Try the local products and traditional Venetian foods.

4. Visit the artisan's stores that have been around since the ancient times. Buy only original products and stay away from illegal vendors.

5. See the local sights with a local tour guide.

6. Walk on the right, do not stand at any time on bridges, do not ride bikes or similar vehicles.

7. Monuments, stairs, churches, bridges, wells and river banks are not picnic areas. In order to rest, use the public gardens.

8. Do not consume food or drinks in St. Mark's Square beside designated areas.

9. In Venice, which is a city of art, it is forbidden to camp, walk about in swimwear, walk barechested, dive and swim. If you want to use the beach, visit Lido or Pellestrina.

10. Respect the environment and works of art; do not litter, do not vandalize monuments and buildings with graffiti, do not leave padlocks, do not give food to pigeons.

11. If you are staying in an apartment, remember to sort your waste.

12. Plan your trip to Venice when it is less crowded. Failing to abide by the prohibitions will result in a EUR 25-500 fine imposed by the police.[6] Compliance with the aforementioned rules is ensured by special officers wearing white vests with the byword: Enjoy, Respect Venezia. Their task is to suggest alternative routes to your destination in case of excessive crowd and traffic.

It is worth noting that the widespread issue of antisocial behavior is tackled by many other Italian cities as well. For instance, the authorities of Rome introduced

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[6] On 19 July 2019, two Berlin tourists were given a fine in the amount of EUR 950 for making coffee on a gas stove in front of the entrance to Ponte Rialto. The two sightseers were asked to leave the city immediately. The Mayor of Venice Luigi Brugnaro explained that such their does not comply with the city standards; Corrieredella Sera, https://www.corriere.it/cronache/19_luglio_19/accendono-fornelletto-gas-ponte-rialtopreparasi-caffe-multa-daspo-due-turisti-tedeschi-c9951f2c-aa56-11e9-a88c-fde1fa123548.shtml?refresh_ce-cp [accessed: 8.08.2019].

a ban on wading in fountains and consuming food in their vicinity. In addition, it is now prohibited to drink alcohol in the public space at night. Similar regulations have entered into force in Milan, where it is now prohibited to use selfie sticks.

Coming back to Venice: since 2017, the official website of the local city council contains a link to a special page #EnjoyRespectVenieza with a calendar illustrating the predicted intensity of tourist traffic.[7] Each day is marked with a specific color (yellow, red or black), so that tourists planning their trips are able to avoid crowds. This kind of traffic management helps to distribute the broad mass of tourists beyond the typically hot seasons.

The local authorities have tried to resolve the issue of poor tourist carrying capacity, especially in narrow medieval streets and on bridges, by setting up special gates to regulate traffic in sensitive areas. Local residents and workers were given a separate privileged passage [Tgcom24 2018]. However, the locals claimed that the "ugly and inconvenient gates" did not harmonize with the aesthetic standards of the city[8]. A number of protests led to an official decision to take them down in August 2019.

The locals have suggested alternative solutions to limit the number of tourists. One of them is to establish a maximum tourist carrying capacity in the St. Mark's Square and within the borders of the historic center. Special coupons would be granted to people willing to visit the city. They would be available through an online reservation platform, to be purchased online and downloaded to smartphones and tablets. Moreover, the system would connect all businesses offering tourism services in Venice. A solution like that would be advantageous from the perspective of city safety [Scurati 2015].

The Bologna Laboratory of Physics became involved in establishing an effective system to manage excessive tourist traffic in Venice. In collaboration with other academic and business entities, a special map of pedestrian and public service (water trams) mobility was created. One of the most common tools to monitor mobility is mobile phones, always located where their owners are. Basing on the elaborated algorithm and collaboration with an innovative technologies company TIM, a special system Per.Ven.Ire was set up. It serves to continuously monitor the flow of people and predict its intensity (and its consequences) 30 minutes in advance.[9] The applied technology makes it possible to distinguish specific user

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[7] https://www.comune.venezia.it/it/enjoy-respect-venezia-calendario [accessed: 8.08.2019].

[8] The opponents of the gate project attempted to tear them down on their own and displayed slogans such as: "Venice is not a reserve, we are not on the brink of extinction", "Barricading the city leads to its death".

[9] The greatest difficulty in developing the algorithm lied in the unpredictable dynamic of the city traffic, even though a considerable amount of information on the current and upcoming number of people had been collected. After all, people have a tendency to behave unexpectedly and choose different paths to reach their destinations. It is impossible to precisely determine the traffic [Giorgini 2018c].

Figure 1. Monitoring traffic in Venice

Source: Giorgini 2018a.

types (locals, foreigners, workers, tourists, etc.). Fig. 1 presents the network of land and water ways in Venice; traffic intensity is marked with a range of colors from yellow (hardly ever attended) to red (heavily attended). The system helps to determine a detailed image of particular city areas. It is a remarkably efficient tool to handle mobility, especially during major events (e.g. the Carnival, Biennale, Regatta Storica).

The Venice authorities have introduced smart infrastructure, commonly known as artificial intelligence, effectively moving the city into a new information-communication era, also in terms of the cultural dimension [Giorgini 2018c]. In fact, Venice is the pioneer in the field of e-managing tourist capacity basing on the principles of sustainable development.

In order to better monitor the number of tourists and increase the income generated by the tourist industry, the Italian government passed a law in 2018 allowing the local authorities to tax visitors on entering the city in the amount of EUR 2.50-10. The magistrate of Venice decided to make the fee dependent on the season and to cover all one-day visitors starting from January 2020. The groups to be exempted from taxation are: workers from various sectors, students, people with families residing in Venice and tourists spending at least one night in the city (obliged to pay a tourist tax) [Giuffrida 2018]. What is more, an ob-

ligatory payment for coaches entering Venice has been in force since 2002. The cost of entering the city depends on the EURO engine standard and season. The coach fee during hot seasons is EUR 300-520 [Tariffe ZTL Bus].

Another interesting project undertaken as part of the aforementioned campaign #EnjoyRespectVenieza is called #Detourism. Its goal is to promote responsible and sustainable tourism characterized by slow-life approach and respect for local residents. The online magazine Detourism promotes off-the-beaten-track destinations in Venice, where the real hustle and bustle can be experienced.[10] The newsletter sent by Detourism is rich in information about the currently held art exhibitions and many other interesting events.

However, Venice is facing yet another serious problem related to the concept of sharing economy. The number houses and apartments purchased by private investors to be rented through Airbnb (to avoid registration and taxation) is on the rise. At the moment, the issue remains out of control.

In the wake of the decisions made by the local authorities on the management of tourist traffic, a series of heated debates has been held to discuss the future of Venice. A number of important questions has been phrased so far: Should Venice serve as an outdoor museum, accessible only by acquiring admission tickets? If so, the locals may likely leave the city or become human exhibits of the local traditions. Should it perhaps remain a functional city where normal life can thrive?[11] The following quote has gained great prominence: "Unless the gates to the city remain open, the now free and open city of Venice will turn into a ghetto" [Giorgini 2018b].

5. Summary

Overtourism is not a new phenomenon that has suddenly captured special attention. The notion was coined and popularized in 2017. Today, the issue of excessive tourist traffic concerns numerous tourist destinations. Beside Venice, they are: Barcelona, Berlin, Paris, Dubrovnik, Reykjavik, Prague, Budapest, Rome, Florence, Amsterdam, London, Lisbon, San Sebastian, Salzburg, Mallorca and Ibiza, Hvar, Santorini.

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[10] https://issuu.com/cittdivenezia [accessed: 10.08.2019]; similar initiatives aimed at redirecting tourist traffic at less crowded areas have been undertaken by many other destinations; for instance, the authorities of London and New York are marketing external areas as part of their long-term tourism management projects.

[11] Forecasts suggest that the oldest boroughs of Venice will have been abandoned by local residents and attended only by tourists by 2028 [SSeR 2019].

Arguably, the phenomenon of overtourism is a byproduct of economic growth, causing excessive tourism consumption and poor management on the part of certain destinations. Investigating the issue of managing tourism in Venice from the perspective of sustainable development, considerable concern is raised about the lack of harmony between the economic, social and environmental dimensions. Although economic stability is generally ensured (Venice's GDP on tourism is EUR 2 billion) [Hardy 2019], there is no sustainability whatsoever when it comes to the social and environmental dimensions. Although the local authorities have been trying to promote the region and increase tourists traffic for many years, they have failed to take into account the consequences of excessive growth and have implemented no preventive measures.

As a result, unrestricted access to attractive tourist locations is ruining the social and natural environment. The vast number of tourists consuming the city is creating a negative impact on the local community. What is more, overtourism results in dissatisfaction among tourists, who experience discomfort while sightseeing, pay exorbitant prices for goods and services, and meet with hostility from the local community. Ironically, it may lower the attractiveness of the location according to the principle which suggests that "too much tourism kills tourism" [Budeanu 2002].

Will these new methods of managing tourism in Venice produce the desired effects? The distribution of tourist traffic over less attended destinations and time periods poses a major challenge. It may prove successful only on condition that low season offers are properly updated, while prices and taxes become regulated. It seems necessary to continue long-term information and education campaigns aimed at limiting and distributing tourist traffic in time, changing tourists' practices, and promoting respect for the local community. The undertaken initiatives may prove successful in the long term. Unfortunately, as the Italian government shows no interest in solving the issue of huge cruise ships entering the city, the consequences suffered by the sensitive ecosystem of the lagoon and the local community (as regards their health and life comfort) are catastrophic.

Another aspect worth bearing in mind is the current travel lifestyle and ethics. Ironically, although tourists want an authentic experience, they have no actual interest in the real local culture. In order to satisfy their hedonist needs, they essentially transform the local culture rather than discover it. In fact, it is them who determine how the locals will live.

In light of the foregoing, the local authorities should establish a number of cardinal rules and oblige tourists to follow them. Needless to say, it is necessary to cooperate with the local community and tourist businesses (travel agencies, airline operators, etc.), tourist organizations and the administration. An inspiring example to follow is the Mayor of Dubrovnik, who collaborated with leading naval tourism businesses in order to limit the number of cruise ships entering the city to

only two per day by 2019. What is more, he set up a CCTV system to monitor the number of people visiting the Old Town covered by the patronage of UNESCO, establishing the acceptable number of visitors at the level of 4,000 per day [Dubrovnik Local Guides 2019]. As Mayor Mato Franković said: "Although we will lose a lot of money (about EUR 1 million), we will gain much more for the future" [Mečiarová 2017]. His words are a shining example of painstaking care and respect for a tourist destination. This type of management based on limiting the number of tourists has been long used by the Galapagos Islands (100,000 people per year) and Machu Picchu (5,000 people per year) [*Managing Overtourism...* 2017]. The authorities of Chile have limited the number of flights into the Easter Island. The Philippine island Borocay, where illegally erected beach hotels have been demolished, is closed for tourists for at least six months a year [Morris 2018]. Therefore, it is necessary to establish and follow tourist traffic limits keeping in mind to what extent tourists are expected to interfere with the natural and cultural environment.

Can tourism grow at a sustainable rate from an economic, social and environmental perspective? If so, it is necessary to manage it consistently, taking into account the needs of the local community rather than focusing on the economic outcomes achieved by large tourism corporations. It is exactly what J. Kripperdorf appealed for 30 years ago. Without the locals, tourist destinations will lose their appeal and soul, eventually turning into amusement parks. It is bound to happen unless the principles of sustainable tourism are put into practice. The current problems of excessive growth of tourist traffic require a more conscious look into the far-reaching consequences of economic growth. Nowadays, it seems wrong to associate economic (and technological) growth with social development. Therefore, a question arises: is economic growth a necessary component of growth per se? The current situation requires an alternative paradigm of development: emphasis must be placed on regulation, preservation, awareness and the significance of civil society rather than growth and promotion.

Overtourism is a major challenge that requires a highly functional and intelligent model of management. It is a cause of concern to destinations that have not yet suffered from its adverse consequences. In order to avoid them, great effort must be made so as to effectively implement the principles sustainable development of tourism.

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Overtourism vs. zrównoważony rozwój turystyki. Próby zarządzania overtourismem na przykładzie Wenecji

Abstrakt. Overtourism jest dziś poważnym problemem i stanowi ogromne wyzwanie, zwłaszcza że będzie się ono nasilać wraz z prognozowanym wzrostem ruchu turystycznego. Wydaje się być niemożliwe jego wyeliminowanie bądź zatrzymanie. Jedyną słuszną drogą jest właściwe nim zarządzanie. Ponieważ nie zostały jeszcze wypracowane w tej kwestii rozwiązania systemowe, poszczególne destynacje podejmują działania w celu radzenia sobie z tym zjawiskiem. Celem artykułu jest identyfikacja istoty overtourismu, zwłaszcza w zderzeniu z promowaną koncepcją zrównoważonego rozwoju turystyki, a także analiza metod zarządzania overtourismem na przykładzie Wenecji. Problem obciążenia turystycznego w centrum Wenecji jest problemem znanym i wystarczająco poważnym, aby uczynić go studium przypadku w obszarze zarządzania destynacjami.

Słowa kluczowe: overtourism, zrównoważony rozwój turystyki, zarządzanie destynacją