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Call for papers
Overtourism and promotion
of local public life

Since the late 2000s, the concept of overtourism has emerged in the media and political spheres. This phenomenon is primarily perceived through the environmental consequences it causes (Nguyen et al. 2008) and then through the transformations it brings about in local public life (Goodwin 2017; Peeters et al. 2019). The commodification of the travel experience, the rise of citizen mobilisation, and changes in land use in tourist areas (linked to the overheating of the short-term rental market on platforms such as *Airbnb*, *Booking*, and *Abritel*, as well as the increase in rental yields for furnished tourist accommodation) and the territorial regulation strategies that local elected officials are attempting to implement illustrate the complexity of these contemporary changes.

Knafou (2023) interprets overtourism as a collective frenzy, fuelled by excessive visitor numbers, hyper-mediatisation and the attention economy. From this perspective, the approach consists of analysing overtourism as the perception of a relational imbalance between tourists and residents (Duhamel, 2023), which is reflected in tensions over the use of urban space, visible in media discourse conveyed by journalists, and felt differently by local actors.

This relational imbalance can translate into a negative perception among residents, whose quality of life is degraded by nuisances of all kinds (noise, overcrowding in cafés, bars and restaurants, degradation of urban spaces and natural areas). But it is also among tourists themselves that a feeling of frustration is growing. At Mont-Saint-Michel, for example, although the site is subject to mass tourism, this feeling is less noticeable to residents, as the local population is small. It is therefore the tourist experience itself that is both impoverished and saturated by the presence of other visitors. Tourists play the roles of spectators and unwanted presences in turn, sometimes forced to put up with being photographed by other tourists, condemned to encounter only their own kind. In addition, this relational imbalance is permeated by economic, ecological, cultural and historical logics,

which shape the way these residents and tourists represent, imagine and perceive each other in return.

Counterpoints to the criticism of overtourism are also emerging. The pioneering work of Louis Turner and John Ash (1975) foreshadowed a critique of international mass tourism and its effects on host societies. The authors analyse the rapid expansion of international tourism, mainly from rich countries to poor regions, and propose the metaphor of "golden hordes" to describe the massive influx of tourists. They compare this invasion to historical invasions, highlighting the profoundly transformative and often destructive effects that tourism can have on local societies and their environments. Their contribution is recognised for introducing a global political-economic reading of tourism, emphasising the inequalities it can reinforce between the 'centre of pleasure' and its periphery. The subject is approached through the prism of the 'colonisation of places', which privileges the wildest desires of some at the expense of the most basic needs of others (Vidal 2024). Furthermore, this notion can also be understood as an expression of class contempt¹, stigmatising travellers from working-class backgrounds who often have no choice but to visit overcrowded sites.

At the crossroads of the humanities and social sciences, the concept of overtourism today crystallises a series of intertwined, multi-scale issues, both local and global: infrastructure saturation, conflicts of use, commodification of heritage, rising rents, alteration of ecosystems and citizen mobilisation. These tensions highlight the need for a contextualised approach, combining local roots and international mobility, to understand how overtourism is represented, discussed and regulated. This phenomenon brings into play social, economic and symbolic tensions that are redefining the relationships between residents, visitors, public actors and digital platforms.

This thematic issue of *Global* invites us to examine existing forms of resistance and obstacles to overtourism, as well as the modes of collective action, social innovation and mediation that are emerging in response to this unprecedented pressure from tourism.

Areas for reflection

1. The role of local authorities, public policy and governance
2. Overview of regulations at European level;
3. Limits and effects of sustainable tourism, ecotourism and *slow tourism* strategies;
4. Platformisation and transformation of local markets (Airbnb, TripAdvisor, etc.);
5. Conflicts over the use of urban space, residents' practices and local resistance;
6. Overtourism and the reproduction of social inequalities;

¹ "The concept of overtourism is a matter of class contempt," *Le Monde*. Published on 3 September 2024.

https://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2024/09/03/jean-pinard-consultant-la-notion-de-surtourisme-releve-du-mepris-de-classe_6302627_3232.html

7. Crises, wars and environmental crisis;
8. Media coverage and discursive framing;
9. Image of tourists and discourse on 'tourismophobia';
10. The role of social media in the creation of iconic places;
11. Citizen initiatives, participatory mechanisms and anti-tourism movements

Submission guidelines

Articles (25,000 to 30,000 characters) should be sent before 15 February 2026 to:

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Contributions may be written in French, Portuguese or English, in accordance with the editorial guidelines of Global magazine.

Suggested reading

Aïdi, N. (2022). *La fabrique de la smart destination par une approche conceptuelle et urbaine. Études caribéennes*, 51, Article 51.

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