

# INTERNATIONAL TOURISM: ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

International tourism has become the biggest industry in the world. Some people think the advantages of international tourism outweigh its disadvantages. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

International tourism has taken mammoth dimensions. It is a highly debated issue as to whether the growth of this industry is a blessing or a curse. Personally, I feel that the advantages of international tourism outweigh the disadvantages.

It is irrefutable that there are some problems associated with this industry. Firstly, there is the increasing crime rate. Some locals see tourists as easy prey because, not only are they in unfamiliar territory and therefore less able to take care of themselves, but also they carry visible items of wealth, such as cameras and jewellery which can be disposed of quickly for a profit. Another major problem is health. With greater mobility comes greater danger of spreading contagious diseases around the world. Also to be considered is the natural environment, which can be seriously threatened by too many visitors. Australia's Great Barrier Reef, for example, is in danger of being destroyed by tourists and there are plans to restrict visitors to some of the more delicate coral reefs.

Nonetheless, international tourism can have many benefits for individuals. The most important benefit is that tourism provides regular employment for many local people who might otherwise be unemployed. They can find work in restaurants or hotels, or with tourist agencies as guides or drivers, for example, and earn regular wages. This, in turn, means that they may be able to save money and improve their standard of living. The second reason is that tourists spend money in the country and this allows local businesses such as restaurants, bars and taxi companies to flourish. In turn, other businesses, food suppliers or petrol stations, for instance, may be established in order to provide services to support the companies which cater for tourists. In other words, the whole economy of the region develops.

A third reason is that in order for tourists to be able to visit remote areas, roads, airports and hotels have to be built and local people also benefit by being able to use these new facilities. Furthermore, when communications improve, it becomes possible for other industries to move into the area, bringing with them more employment opportunities and increased prosperity. A final reason why I am in favour of tourism is that visitors from outside bring fresh ideas and different ways of doing things to the local community. Consequently, local people may learn from tourists. Likewise, visitors learn about the local people and culture, and return home with a deeper understanding of the host country.

To put it in a nutshell, I pen down saying that international tourism may create some adverse effects. However, the pros it produces far outweigh its cons. On balance, I am convinced that while promoting international tourism, we should encourage more culturally-sensitive, sustainable tourism.