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## Access and the Spatial Interactions of Tourists

**By the end of this chapter, the reader will be able to:**

- Distinguish between the resource and commodity values of time and analyse how they affect travel patterns
- Describe distance decay and analyse how it influences both absolute demand and behaviour of tourists
- Define the Effective Tourism Exclusion Zone and analyse its impact on tourism flows
- Evaluate segment transformation and the impact of distance on behaviour
- Define market access and assess how it influences tourist behaviour
- Explain different itinerary models

### Introduction

While attractions drive tourism, access, or the ability of visitors to get to and travel within a destination, plays a key role in its success. If tourists cannot get to a destination, then they cannot experience the attractions therein. If they cannot move around the destination easily, their actions will be constrained. Moreover, if access is limited, the ability of the destination to provide viable products is also limited. This chapter examines the role that access plays in tourism.

## Time

Before we discuss access, it is important to introduce the concept of time, for tourist flows can be seen as a function of the relationship between time and space (Leiper, 1990), with time, arguably, being the most critical factor affecting movements. As Pearce (1998) notes, time availability can directly constrain or expand the number and range of potential activities available and the depth at which individual activities can be experienced. Indeed, it is about the only absolute in tourism and is also the scarcest resource (McKercher & Lew, 2004). Usually the amount of time one has is fixed either by the necessity to return to work or by flight reservations and other itinerary constraints. It is rare for people to extend their holidays, although tourists can modify plans if, for example, they encounter inclement weather (Becken & Wilson, 2013). Time is even more constrained among business travelers.

Time cannot be saved or stored for future use, but can only be transferred from one type of activity to another (Truong & Henscher, 1985). How people choose to spend their time and the decisions they make around its use shape behaviour (Lew & McKercher, 2006), and influence movement patterns, participation in activities, and satisfaction (McKean et al., 1995). Tourists, though, have a great deal of discretion in how they choose to spend their time. Some may engage in fast tourism, collecting as many sites and destinations as possible in a short period of time, while others may engage in slow tourism (Oh et al., 2016), choosing to linger at a small number of places and enjoy a deeper experience. Some still will choose a combination of both slow and fast tourism.

Interestingly, the expenditure of time was discussed in detail 30 years ago but seems to have been forgotten more recently in this era of empirically driven approach to tourism research. Authors such as Chavas, Stoll and Sellar (1989), McKean, Johnson and Walsh (1995), and Walsh, Sanders and McKean (1990) were among the first to examine it, yet, as Hall (2005) discusses, it remains an under-explored, though vital, area of tourism. As a result, time use in general and decisions about spending transit time in particular, remain understudied phenomena. GIS (Geographic Information Systems) analysis effectively identifies the 'what' of time allocation but does not explain the 'why' of such allocation decisions (Hardy, 2020; Xu et al., 2021).

### ■ Transit Time

How tourists spend or allocate transit time between the home and destination area, or between destinations, is one of the most critical issues affecting time use decisions. Essentially, travel time can be perceived in one of two ways. On the one hand, it can have a commodity or utility value, where the act of travelling has value in itself and where the journey to the destination is as or more important than being