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# The Growth of De-Temporalisation in Tourism

*Alisha Ali and Philip Murray*

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## Learning outcomes

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The purposes of this chapter are:

1. To examine if there is a place for the de-temporalisation of tourism
  2. To discuss the mega trends de-temporalising tourism
  3. To examine the role of technology in this de-temporalisation and the future implications
  4. To consider future developments which will continue to drive de-temporalisation of tourism
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## Introduction

Tourism is more than physical travel to another place. For many, tourism offers educational, cultural, spiritual and life affirming benefits going beyond the generic (business or leisure) motivations for travel. Individual values also influence and motivate the type of tourism experience desired. Over time tourists' motivations, knowledge, desire and sophistication will change but the notion of seasonality will retain a strong influence on when, how and where people travel. Many tourist economies use this seasonal influence to efficiently manage capacity and maximise revenue, however this is only one

aspect of tourism's temporal relationship. Dynamic megatrends and tourism's digital revolution are challenging this traditional notion of seasonality by creating temporal shifts.

Seasonality is often considered as a temporal imbalance problem (Cannas, 2012) with destinations seeking ways to balance the peaks and troughs of tourist demand to improve efficiency and profitability. This chapter focuses on de-temporalisation as it applies to seasonality. De-temporalisation of seasonality is, in effect, the resolution of the temporal imbalance problem by the smoothing of tourism demand across an entire period and / or the creation of multiple seasons in a given period. This chapter examines these key megatrends including the role of technology in de-temporalising the tourism industry.

## **De-temporalisation megatrends**

Megatrends are large, slow forming global shifts in our political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal settings which re-shape the way we live and work. These megatrends, also known as macroeconomic and geostrategic forces (PWC, 2016) can irreversibly shape and reshape our tourism operating environment with a direct influence on tourism demand. Structural, fruition and climate and unforeseen factors have been identified as important megatrends to investigate for the tourism industry (Senbeto & Hon, 2019). These three trends are discussed below, which encompasses demographic change, an emerging middle class, resource depletion and climate change, all of which have been identified as having a significant impact on the tourism industry (Horwath HTL, 2015; OECD, 2018; United Nations, 2020).

### **Structural factors**

Structural influences on tourism movement relate to economic, social and policy characteristics which affect an individual's ability and propensity to engage with tourism and travel. The first influential megatrend is demographic, signifying social changes which are forecast to take place over the next 30 years and are likely to have a significant influence on when, how often and where people holiday. In effect, this will promote de-temporalisation by changing the meaning of seasonality for destinations. The world's population is expected to grow to almost 10 billion people by 2050 with the largest