

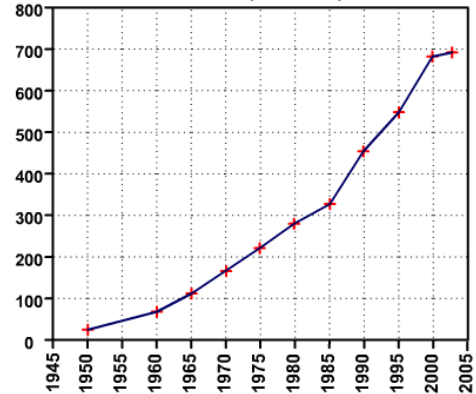
# The Growth of the Tourism Industry

With 700 million international travellers each year, tourism is the world's largest industry. It has been estimated that tourism accounts for approximately 10% of the world's economy and provides work for over 500 million people. In some LICs tourism is the main engine of growth, in some extreme cases accounting for 80% of GDP. Even in Britain tourism is big business with 24 million visitors spending £75 billion each year.

## So why has tourism exploded?

Tourism has grown due to a combination of economic, social and political reasons.

international tourist arrivals (millions)



**Economic** – The world is getting richer. As countries have become more developed the average income of their population has increased, resulting in a greater disposable income. This rise in wealth has been matched by increased access to credit. Credit cards, loans and overdrafts have meant that many people are no longer required to save for a holiday. At the same time holidays have become cheaper due to a number of travel and industry developments. The introduction of package holidays gave tour operators huge economies of scale which enabled them to bulk buy services driving prices down. More recently the growth of budget airlines and regional airports has led to lower priced travel.



**Social** – Due to improved employment conditions and new approaches to work (e.g. flexi-time) most people in HICs have experienced a significant increase in leisure time. Changing family life – later marriage, fewer children and earlier retirement - has also given families more freedom to travel. Today, holidays for most have become a 'given' and a way of measuring progress against peers. Travelling can give you a 'cachet'. Travel is viewed as broadening the mind and those that are actively engaged can appear cultured and experienced.



**Political** – A number of political changes have also stimulated the growth in tourism. Within Britain new legislation, such as statutory rights to paid holiday, have encouraged demand whilst at a European level the creation of the EU's single market boosted continental travel by allowing the free movement of people between member states, removing the need for passports and visas. Changing internal politics within a number of countries, including much of Eastern Europe and China, has led to new more welcoming attitudes towards tourists, promoting further growth.

## EXAM PRACTICE

1. **Describe** the growth in international tourism. (3)
2. **Outline** the reasons why many people now have more leisure time. (3)
3. **Give** two reasons why holidays have become more affordable. (2)
4. **Explain** how the EU has led to a growth in tourism. (6)

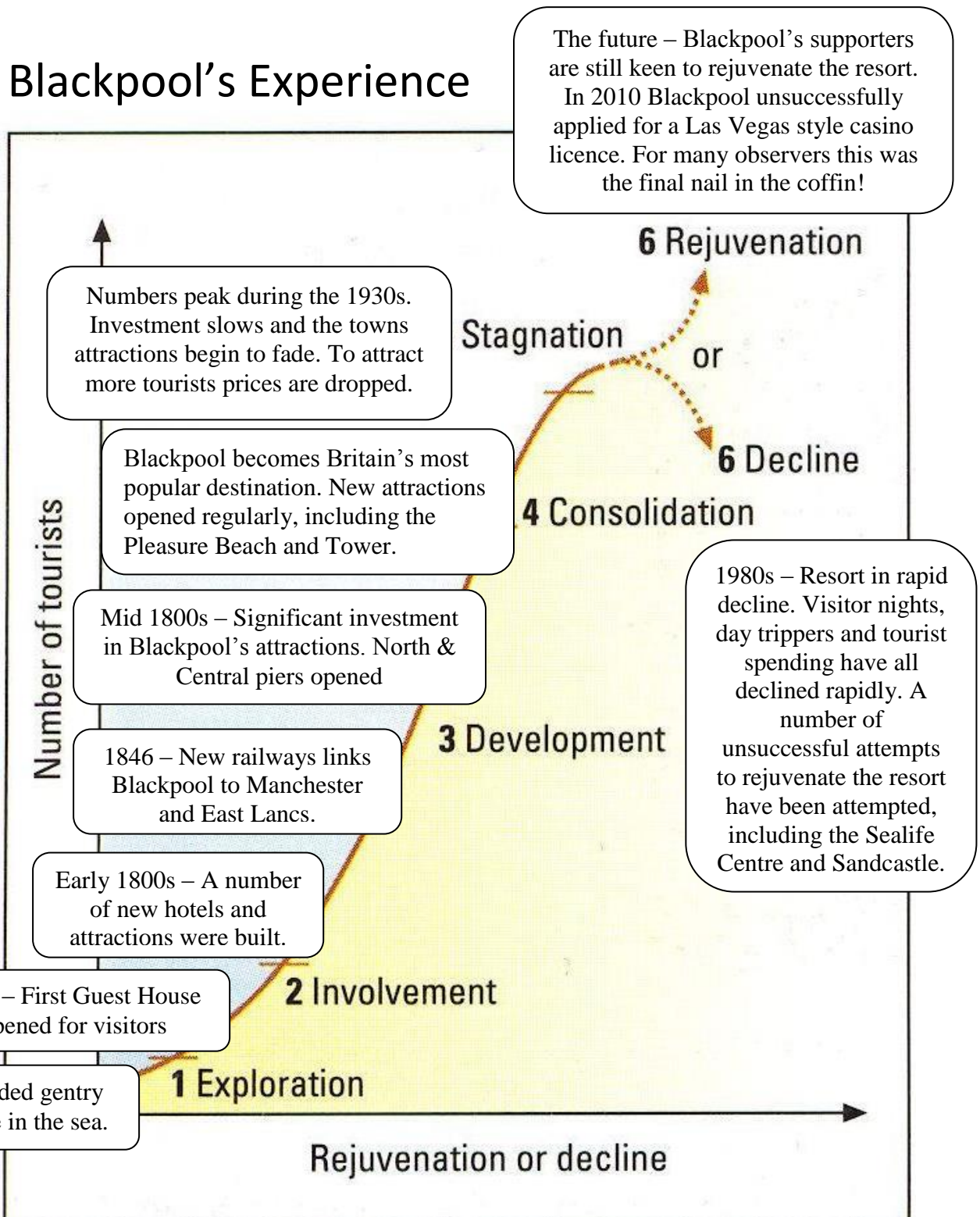
**The social, economic and environmental impact of tourism growth.**

The following impacts affect most holiday destinations:

	<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Drawback</b>
<b>Economic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Tourism creates new business opportunities, resulting in a growth in employment.</li> <li>b) Higher employment and profits generates greater tax returns, leading to higher levels of government investment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Tourism based employment tends to be low skilled, seasonal and poorly paid.</li> <li>b) The tourism industry is unpredictable. Destinations can quickly fall out of fashion causing economic collapse in overly dependent regions.</li> </ul>
<b>Environmental</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) As the environment is often an important attraction, the growth of tourism can lead to protection measures, such as national parks.</li> <li>b) Tourist resorts often experience 'beautification', i.e. the addition of flower displays and window boxes to make the resort more visually attractive.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The construction of new hotels and attractions often results in damage to the local environment.</li> <li>b) Many hotels can be viewed as 'visual' pollution, damaging natural landscapes.</li> <li>c) Tourists tend to create large amounts of 'noise' pollution.</li> <li>d) Tourism often increases the demand for water, possibly putting local resources under stress.</li> </ul>
<b>Social</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Tourists bring new ideas and cultures, making life more interesting.</li> <li>b) Meeting tourists from different locations can result in greater harmony and less racism.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The lifestyle of the tourists can 'take-over' local culture. Traditional beliefs and ways of life can be lost.</li> <li>b) Local culture can become commercialised.</li> </ul>

**SPECIFICATION TARGET: 6.2b An EU case study to show the development of a resort from its origins to present day.**

How does Blackpool's experience follow the pattern predicted in the Butler report?



## EXAM PRACTICE

1. **Describe** the stagnation stage of the Butler model. (4)
2. **Outline** the changes that usually happen during the development stage. (3)
3. **Give** two pieces of evidence that suggest that Blackpool is now in decline (3)
4. **Explain** how the local's view of tourism changes as a resort goes from exploration to stagnation. (6)
5. **Suggest** some strategies that could be used to rejuvenate a declining resort. (4)

### **A Study of an eco-tourism destination to show how tourism can protect the environment and benefit the local community.**

Eco-tourism is a term used to describe tourism that aims to be sustainable, i.e. eco-tourism meets the needs of present tourists and host communities while protecting the needs of future generations. Over the past 20 years there has been a rapid growth in demand for more 'green' forms of tourism as the destructive elements of mass of tourism have become increasingly apparent.

#### The main principals of Eco-tourism

- a) Minimise environmental damage
- b) Contribute to local conservation efforts
- c) Employ and train locals
- d) Educate visitors about the local environment and the culture of its people

Today, many destinations advertise themselves as eco-resorts. In fact, several declining resorts have been able to rejuvenate themselves through sustainable management strategies. Eco-tourism has proven particularly popular with host communities as the tourist impact on both society and the environment is reduced while the price tourists are prepared to pay for such experiences has increased.