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## **FASHION AS A TOURIST ATTRACTION IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: HISTORICAL TRENDS AND PROSPECTS FOR COUNTRIES**

### **Abstract**

The article examines the phenomenon of fashion tourism as a component of creative industries and a tool for sustainable development. **The purpose of the article** is to explore the role of fashion as a tourist attraction in the context of sustainable development. **The methodological basis** of the study was a systematic and interdisciplinary approach, which made it possible to consider fashion tourism in relation to cultural, creative, shopping tourism and concepts of sustainable development. **Scientific novelty.** Based on an analysis of international practices, the potential of fashion as a tourist attraction that combines economic benefits, cultural value and the preservation of local identity has been identified. The main threats to the sustainable development of this area were identified: cultural appropriation, the digital divide, gender inequality, environmental challenges, unequal access to the market, and a lack of political support. Cross-sectoral solutions are proposed at the level of policy, management, education and digital transformation. Particular attention is paid to the circular economy, intellectual property protection and support for local artisans. **Conclusions.** The results of the study demonstrate the role of fashion tourism as a means of cultural dialogue and social development. It was determined that a comprehensive approach – a combination of ethical design, responsible consumption and cultural sensitivity – can turn fashion tourism into an effective tool for social, economic and cultural growth. Based on an analysis of global practices, it can be argued that the potential of fashion tourism as a driver of sustainable development is significant, but its implementation is only possible if a number of challenges are overcome: the commercialisation of traditions, digital inequality, environmental pressure, gender discrimination and a lack of political will. This requires the implementation of multi-level strategies – from supporting local creators and artisans to developing digital platforms, legislating intellectual property protection, and promoting the circular economy.

**Keywords:** fashion tourism, sustainability, creative industries, globalisation, ethical fashion.

## **МОДА ЯК ТУРИСТИЧНА АТРАКЦІЯ В КОНТЕКСТІ СТАЛОГО РОЗВИТКУ: ІСТОРИЧНІ ТЕНДЕНЦІЇ ТА ПЕРСПЕКТИВИ ДЛЯ КРАЇН**

### **Анотація**

У статті досліджено феномен модного туризму як складової креативних індустрій та інструменту сталого розвитку. **Метою статті** є дослідити роль моди як туристичної атракції у контексті сталого

розвитку. **Методологічною основою дослідження** стали системний та міждисциплінарний підходи, що дали змогу розглядати модний туризм у взаємозв'язку з культурним, креативним, шопінг-туризмом та концепціями сталого розвитку. **Наукова новизна.** На основі аналізу міжнародних практик виявлено потенціал моди як туристичної атракції, що поєднує економічну вигоду, культурну цінність і збереження локальної ідентичності. Визначено основні загрози для сталого розвитку цього напрямку: культурне привласнення, цифровий розрив, гендерна нерівність, екологічні виклики, нерівний доступ до ринку та нестача політичної підтримки. Запропоновано міжсекторальні рішення на рівні політик, управління, освіти й цифрової трансформації. Особливу увагу приділено циркулярній економіці, захисту інтелектуальної власності та підтримці місцевих ремісників. **Результати дослідження** свідчать про роль модного туризму як засобу культурного діалогу й соціального розвитку. Визначено, що комплексний підхід – поєднання етичного дизайну, відповідального споживання та культурної чутливості – може перетворити модний туризм на ефективний інструмент соціального, економічного та культурного зростання. На основі аналізу світової практики можна стверджувати, що потенціал модного туризму як рушія сталого розвитку є значним, але його реалізація можлива лише за умови подолання низки викликів: комерціалізації традицій, цифрової нерівності, екологічного тиску, гендерної дискримінації та відсутності політичної волі. Це вимагає впровадження багаторівневих стратегій – від підтримки місцевих творців і ремісників до розвитку цифрових платформ, законодавчого регулювання захисту інтелектуальної власності та просування циркулярної економіки.

**Ключові слова:** модний туризм, сталий розвиток, креативні індустрії, глобалізація, етичне споживання.

**Introduction.** In today's world, fashion has become not only an industry but also a powerful element of cultural tourism. The number of tourists travelling to attend fashion events, exhibitions, boutiques of famous designers and themed museums is growing. Fashion tourism includes participation in fashion weeks, shopping tours to the fashion capitals of the world (such as Paris, Milan, London, New York), excursions to fashion museums, visits to showrooms, designer boutiques and fashion clothing factories. This type of tourism attracts not only fashion industry professionals, but also ordinary tourists who want to experience aesthetics, style, and a glamorous lifestyle. Fashion tourism also contributes to the development of local brands, creative industries, and the promotion of cultural heritage through fashion. Social networks, bloggers and influencers make a significant contribution to the popularisation of fashion tourism, forming new tourist routes related to the world of fashion. As a result, fashion becomes not only a means of self-expression, but also a powerful tool for tourism, combining culture, economy and creativity. The relevance of the study is determined by the fact that fashion is becoming a unique tourist attraction that combines cultural, economic and social significance, and its integration into the tourism sector opens up new opportunities for sustainable development.

**Analysis of the latest research and publications.** The authors have not identified any comprehensive works devoted to the entire spectrum of issues related to the development of fashion tourism, including the introduction of sustainable development principles and practices into this industry. The only works that could claim this status are the dissertation “Fashion tourism and sustainability” (Kefalá, 2024) and the collection “The Handbook of Fashion Studies” (Black et al., 2013), one of whose chapters is devoted to the interconnection between fashion, tourism and global culture. Individual studies are mainly devoted to either analysing fashion tourism trends in specific countries, such as Poland (Malinowska, 2019), Iran (Montazer & Zare Bidoki, 2017), Nigeria (Bada, 2013), or issues of sustainable development in the fashion industry in general (for example, on retail trade in the fashion market, see Yang, Song & Tong, 2017, or on the phenomenon of “eco-fashion,” see Iasaiba, 2024), while leaving aside the tourism potential of the industry and the importance of sustainability principles for its development. In the context of the research topic, the work of domestic researchers on sustainable development in

tourism is of interest (Brych & Galysh, 2020, Soloviy, Adamovskyi, & Dubovich, 2023, Pavlikha, Tsymbalyuk, & Savchuk, 2022). This study is primarily based on recent works on sustainable tourism, cultural tourism, current trends in the fashion industry, innovations in tourism, as well as data from the World Tourism Organisation and relevant scientific publications. According to a publication by the UNWTO and the University of Italian Switzerland (2025), fashion is closely integrated into cultural tourism, becoming a channel for presenting intangible heritage through textiles, crafts, and accessories (World Tourism Organisation and Università della Svizzera italiana, 2025). Examples from Tanzania, Peru, Korea, Indonesia, Italy, Spain and Mexico illustrate how local communities, through a combination of tradition and innovation, can create tourist attractions around fashion.

**The main purpose of the article** is to explore the role of fashion as a tourist attraction in the context of sustainable development (after first revealing the theoretical foundations of the relationship between fashion, tourism and sustainable development), to analyse global practices in fashion tourism, to assess environmental and social responsibility in fashion tourism, and to outline the prospects for the development of fashion tourism, taking into account sustainable practices.

**Research methods and methodology.** A number of general scientific and special methods were used in the course of the work, in particular the method of analysis and synthesis (for processing scientific literature, regulatory documents and materials of international organisations (UNWTO, UNESCO, UN), which made it possible to identify key approaches to the study of fashion tourism), the case study method (to analyse specific examples demonstrating the practical aspects of integrating fashion into tourism), and the generalisation method (to draw conclusions and develop recommendations on strategic directions for the development of fashion tourism in the context of sustainability).

**Presentation of the main research material.** Over the past decades, there has been a rapid growth in the number of forms and types of tourism as the set of motives, aspirations and interests of travellers themselves has become more complex and differentiated. One of the consequences of this trend is the increased popularity of so-called fashion tourism – a specific form of tourism associated with visiting places, events or establishments directly related to the world of fashion.

The nature of fashion tourism should be viewed through the prism of the mutual balanced influence of three other forms of tourism: cultural, creative and shopping tourism. This perspective is important because it allows for a deeper understanding of the complex nature of fashion tourism, which combines elements of cultural awareness, personal self-realisation and consumer activity. On the one hand, as a form of cultural tourism, it promotes familiarity with fashion history, traditional crafts, local styles and artistic trends that influence the formation of the fashion environment. Visiting fashion museums, historic ateliers or architecturally significant shopping streets broadens tourists' horizons and deepens their understanding of fashion as part of cultural identity. Fashion is used as a tool for economic development and cultural positioning of territories: from artisan collections in Peru to the promotion of watchmaking in Switzerland or the art of soap making in Lebanon.

On the other hand, fashion tourism is inextricably linked to creative tourism, as it often involves the active participation of travellers in master classes, workshops on clothing design, accessory making or even personal style creation. In this context, the tourist is not just a consumer but also a participant in the creative process.

The third important element is shopping tourism, which provides the material embodiment of tourists' aesthetic and stylistic preferences. Shopping in fashion capitals or at local design fairs becomes not only a way to purchase goods, but also a form of experience

associated with special impressions, social status, and even self-expression. In fact, fashion tourism is partly related to shopping, but not always, so these two types of tourism cannot be equated. Thus, the nature of fashion tourism is formed at the intersection of cultural values, creative activity and consumer practices, which makes it a unique phenomenon in the modern tourism space.

The traditional and most popular tourist attractions of fashion tourism primarily include global centres of the world fashion industry (Table 1), i.e. cities that combine the status of fashion capitals, developed shopping infrastructure, rich cultural heritage and eventful life – such as Paris, Milan, London, New York, Tokyo, Seoul and Dubai, which attract tourists not only as venues for prestigious fashion shows, but also as centres for design schools, concept stores, authentic local brands and fashion festivals. Major industry events (the world-famous “big four” Fashion Weeks in London, Milan, Paris, New York, and other important shows) have long since evolved from highly specialised events of interest mainly to industry professionals into large-scale cultural events that actively attract a wide audience of tourists, media, influencers, students, and fashion lovers from all over the world.

Table 1

**Global fashion tourism hubs: key locations, visitor statistics and revenues**

*(Paris Tourism statistics, 2024; James, 2025; Piva, 2024;*

*Milano Fashion Week 2024, 2024; Hendriksz, 2021a; The economic impact of fashion weeks on host cities, 2025; Wikipedia contributors, 2025; Hendriksz, 2021b;*

*London Fashion Week by the numbers, 2015; Clarke, 2024;*

*Seoul City Hall, 2023; Staff, 2010; Bagde, 2024)*

City	Main locations and events	Number of visitors (latest data)	Revenue from fashion tourism/events
Paris	Fashion Week, Champs-Élysées, Haute Couture shops, Louvre, Le Marais	~50 million tourists per year (all types of tourism); Paris Fashion Week is one of the city's top 10 events	Tourism in Paris: €71 billion (2024, total revenue); Paris Fashion Week is one of the key drivers
Milan	Milan Fashion Week, Quadrilatero della Moda (Via Montenapoleone, Via della Spiga), Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II	Two Fashion Weeks per year: ~245,000 visitors (2024), 56% Italian, 44% foreign	Two Fashion Weeks in 2024: €396 million (fashion and tourism industry)
New York	New York Fashion Week, 5th Avenue, SoHo, Madison Avenue, The Met Gala	NYFW: ~232,000 visitors (twice a year); the city welcomes over 60 million tourists a year	NYFW: \$900 million per year; average revenue per week – \$598 million
London	London Fashion Week, Oxford Street, Carnaby Street, Knightsbridge	LFW: over 5,000 professionals from 70+ countries, tourist flow in the city – over 30 million per year	LFW: over £269 million per year (2017 estimate), total fashion industry revenue – £26 billion
Tokyo	Tokyo Fashion Week, Ginza, Omotesando, Shibuya	Tokyo Fashion Week: tens of thousands of visitors; city – over 14 million tourists per year	Contribution to the local economy – tens of millions of dollars (estimates)

City	Main locations and events	Number of visitors (latest data)	Revenue from fashion tourism/events
<b>Seoul</b>	Seoul Fashion Week, Dongdaemun Design Plaza, Myeongdong	Seoul Fashion Week: over 2 million visitors per year (including shopping tourists)	Significant impact on retail and tourism
<b>Dubai</b>	Dubai Shopping Festival, Dubai Mall, Fashion Avenue	Dubai Shopping Festival: over 3 million visitors	Contribution to the economy – over \$4 billion (2023 estimate)

Fashion museums (Table 2) play an equally important role in the structure of fashion tourism, not only presenting historical heritage, but also demonstrating the connection between fashion and cultural, social and artistic processes. Well-known institutions such as the Musée Yves Saint Laurent in Paris, the Fashion and Textile Museum in London and the Gucci Garden in Florence have become not just exhibition spaces, but places of cultural pilgrimage for style connoisseurs.

Table 2

**The world's largest fashion museums (Lobaostudio, 2025; Met attendance rebounds, 2024; Waldek, 2025; Harris & Da Silva, 2019; BBC News, 2024; The Mall Luxury Outlets – My Mall Magazine, 2020; Styles, 2024; CF Contributor, 2023; BSM's 2024 Annual Review, 2024; Iannone & Izzo, 2017).**

Museum and city	Brief description	Visitor statistics
<b>The Costume Institute at The Metropolitan Museum of Art (The Met), New York</b>	The world's largest collection of costumes and accessories (over 35,000 items), spanning five centuries and five continents. Hosts high-profile exhibitions annually, including the Met Gala	Over 5.5 million visitors in 2024 (all museum departments); themed fashion exhibitions – up to 1.65 million visitors
<b>Victoria &amp; Albert Museum (V&amp;A), London</b>	One of the largest museums of decorative and applied arts, with a fashion collection of over 14,000 items spanning five centuries. Known for its large-scale fashion exhibitions.	Dior exhibition (2019): 595,000 visitors in 7 months – a record for the museum; total museum attendance – over 3 million (2023).
<b>Musée Palais Galliera, Paris</b>	Paris' main fashion museum, collection – over 100,000 items (clothing, accessories, documents) from the 18th century to the present day. Presents the history of French fashion	Attendance depends on exhibitions; the museum is one of the world's top fashion museums
<b>Musée des Arts Décoratifs (Museum of Decorative Arts), Paris</b>	A huge collection of textiles, costumes, accessories (over 60,000 exhibits), part of the Louvre. Famous for its themed fashion exhibitions	Exhibitions by Dior, Louis Vuitton and Dries Van Noten attract hundreds of thousands of visitors
<b>Fashion Museum, Bath, United Kingdom</b>	Approximately 100,000 items (clothing and accessories from the 16th century to the present day). Famous for its "Dress of the Year" collection	In 2019, the museum's exhibits were seen by over 1 million visitors.
<b>Mode Museum (MoMu), Antwerp</b>	The largest collection of contemporary Belgian fashion, focusing on designers who graduated from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts	Tens of thousands of visitors every year, two major exhibitions per year

Museum and city	Brief description	Visitor statistics
<b>Kyoto Costume Institute, Kyoto</b>	A leading fashion museum in Asia, with over 12,000 costumes and accessories from the 18th century to the present day. Renowned for its research activities.	Exact figures are not disclosed, but the museum is internationally recognised.
<b>Bata Shoe Museum, Toronto</b>	A unique shoe museum with over 13,000 exhibits from around the world, from ancient times to the present day.	Approximately 80,000 visitors in 2024.
<b>Museo Salvatore Ferragamo, Florence</b>	Dedicated to the legacy of the Italian designer, the exhibition features shoes, accessories and Ferragamo archives	Tens of thousands of visitors every year

Another important element of fashion tourism is visiting clothing factories, especially those that are open for tours or offer interactive demonstrations of the production process. Such facilities allow tourists to see the “inner workings” of fashion, learn about the stages of clothing creation – from sketch to finished product – and assess the level of quality, craftsmanship and innovation. Turkish factories, particularly in Istanbul (Zeytinburnu and Merter districts), are among the largest clothing manufacturers open to professional tours, master classes and demonstrations of production processes. They are actively involved in international events such as Istanbul Fashion Connection. In Italy and Japan, traditional factories and workshops also offer interactive tours that allow you to see the process of creating clothing and fabrics, especially in the luxury fashion and cultural crafts segments. Visitor numbers to factories and workshops are often not officially published, but their popularity among tourists and fashion industry professionals is growing, especially during major events and festivals. Brand stores, concept stores and designer boutiques, which are often located in iconic shopping districts and are themselves examples of sophisticated spatial design, constitute a separate category of attractions (Walks Inside Italy, 2025). Such locations serve not only as shopping destinations but also as cultural venues where tourists can immerse themselves in the atmosphere of contemporary trends, interact with designers, or attend exclusive previews of new collections. In our opinion, the key features that determine the value of fashion tourism attractions for travellers, regardless of their format, geographical location or scale, are:

- the uniqueness of the experience – the opportunity to see exclusive collections, attend fashion shows, and be part of world-class fashion events;
- aesthetic pleasure – enjoying the beauty of clothing, accessories, boutique architecture and event design;
- social status – participation in prestigious fashion events often emphasises the high social status of the tourist;
- cultural enrichment – getting to know the cultural heritage, traditions, and style of a certain region through fashion.
- shopping opportunities – purchasing branded items that are unavailable in one’s home country, or limited edition exclusives;
- professional interest – for people working in the fashion industry, this type of tourism is a source of inspiration, trends and contacts;
- Instagrammability – fashionable locations are often attractive for creating content on social media.

Undoubtedly, these features make fashion tourism attractive to both ordinary tourists and industry professionals. However, in recent years, there has been interest in the implementation of sustainable practices both in the fashion industry in general and in the

process of its development for tourism in particular. In general, fashion and tourism as global phenomena have many common features and trends. Both phenomena actively respond to the processes of globalisation, transnational exchange of identities, increased mobility and the development of digital technologies (for both sectors, websites and social networks are the main platforms for demonstrating recommendations and reviewing various offers). They shape new lifestyles, set trends, influence the economies of cities and regions, and are important instruments of soft power in international relations.

Within the framework of these global processes, attention to the principles and goals of sustainable development (United Nations General Assembly, 2015) is naturally growing, becoming increasingly relevant for both the tourism and fashion industries. This growth is driven by several key factors: firstly, awareness of the large-scale environmental crisis and the need to reduce negative impacts on the environment; secondly, growing demand for social responsibility, in particular compliance with ethical standards in production and travel organisation; thirdly, consumers' desire for authentic, meaningful experiences that go beyond superficial consumption; and finally, the development of digital technologies that have made companies' practices transparent and accountable to society. Ultimately, this should contribute to the formation of a new model of behaviour among travellers, producers and brands alike, based on responsibility, awareness and long-term sustainability.

The expectations placed on fashion tourism based on the principles of sustainability are to foster a responsible attitude towards consumption, support local producers, and preserve cultural heritage and the environment. This approach involves the development of ethical design, the use of environmentally friendly materials, transparency in production processes, and encouraging tourists to buy locally made products. It is worth agreeing with the opinion of the Secretary-General of the UN World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) Zurab Pololikashvili: "Despite the growth of globalisation and e-commerce, there are still many cultural products, such as textiles, clothing and accessories, that are best purchased where they are made. These products embody the cultural heritage of the places and communities where they are made. They can serve as a gateway to visiting specialised museums and exhibitions, cultural creators from indigenous communities, folklore and the performing arts. In addition, various fashion trends can fuel the imagination of potential tourists planning to visit a particular place (World Tourism Organization and Università della Svizzera italiana, 2025).

However, the realisation of these expectations faces a number of challenges, caused by both global economic processes and internal contradictions within the industry. Key issues include the need to develop a conscious approach to consumption, ethical management of value chains, respect for workers' rights and environmental standards, and ensuring transparency and multi-stakeholder participation. A particular threat is posed by the phenomenon of so-called "fast" or "ultra-fast" fashion, which encourages excessive consumption and reduces the real price of products by ignoring social responsibility and the sustainable use of natural resources. All this undermines the long-term viability of the industry, reducing its ability to support local communities and preserve the cultural heritage on which it relies.

As a result of growing awareness of the profound impact of fast fashion and unsustainable tourism practices on the environment and society, a new concept of ethical fashion tourism has emerged, which is a conscious attempt to rethink the fashion travel experience. The ethical fashion movement gained momentum in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, especially after the Rana Plaza tragedy in 2013 (Amnesty International, 2021), which highlighted labour issues in the garment industry. At the same time, sustainable tourism developed, promoting travel with minimal impact on the environment and respect for local

cultures. The fusion of these movements gave rise to ethical fashion tourism as a separate field. The term “ethical fashion tourism” combines the principles of ethical fashion (responsible production, fair pay, environmental friendliness) and tourism that is carried out in compliance with ethical standards. It is not just travelling for fashion, but a conscious choice in favour of sustainable development and support for local communities.

Thus, ethical fashion tourism not only rethinks the format of consumption and travel, but also integrates them into the broader discourse of sustainable development. In this paradigm, fashion and tourism are seen not as separate commercial sectors, but as complementary factors of sustainable transformation capable of influencing the economy, the environment, social practices and cultural identity. Both sectors do not simply reflect global trends – they are active instruments for implementing sustainability values. However, realising this potential requires an understanding of the complex structure of challenges and opportunities that exist in each of the dimensions of sustainable development. In the context of ethical fashion tourism, these dimensions take on specific meaning, as presented in Table 3.

Table 3

**Dimensions of ethical fashion tourism (author's development)**

Dimension	Key aspects	Forms of implementation
Social	Social equality, fair pay, preservation of culture, community development, cultural exchange	Supporting employees with fair pay; participating in local cultural festivals; organising master classes with local artisans for tourists.
Environmental	Pollution reduction, sustainable materials, circular economy, biodiversity conservation, responsible tourism	Use of environmentally friendly fabrics and sustainable materials in production; excursions with minimal impact on nature; recycling of textile waste; educational programmes on environmental protection.
Economic	Fair pricing, support for local brands, job creation, sustainable community development	Purchasing products from local designers and manufacturers; organising joint projects between tourists and local entrepreneurs; developing crafts that provide income for communities.
Cultural	Supporting the preservation of traditional crafts, encouraging local artisans to pass on their professional knowledge to younger generations and to showcase cultural heritage to a global audience.	Conducting tours demonstrating traditional clothing and manufacturing techniques; creating platforms for online sales of local artisans' products; organising exhibitions and cultural shows.

As Table 3 shows, the concept of ethical fashion tourism is embodied in four key dimensions of sustainable development. However, what makes this theory truly compelling are the real-world initiatives that are already transforming the fashion and tourism sectors in different parts of the world. From the African savannahs to the Andean highlands, local communities, entrepreneurs and governments are finding innovative ways to combine cultural authenticity with economic efficiency and environmental responsibility. The following table presents striking examples of such initiatives, which not only illustrate the theoretical dimensions from Table 3, but also demonstrate their synergistic effect:

Table 4

**Real-life cases of ethical fashion tourism in a global context**  
**(Wambua, 2023; UNESCO, 2009a; UNESCO, 2009b; Original movement;**  
**Saudi 100 brands, 2024)**

Country	Project/Initiative	Social dimension	Environmental dimension	Economic dimension	Cultural dimension
Tanzania	Masai cooperatives producing traditional clothing	Training female artisans, preserving traditional techniques	Use of natural wool and organic dyes	Direct sales to tourists, creation of stable sources of income	Fashion shows during festivals as a way to promote Maasai culture
Peru	Weaving workshops in Quechua communities	Economic empowerment of women, support for family workshops	Use of plant-based dyes, rejection of chemicals	Integration into tourist routes, online sales	Revival of Inca weaving techniques, transfer of knowledge between generations
Indonesia	Programmes to preserve the art of batik	Involvement of young people in traditional crafts, creation of social enterprises	Use of natural materials, reduction of production waste	Cooperation with hotels and tour operators	Inclusion of batik in the UNESCO list, holding international exhibitions
Switzerland	Watchmaking tourist routes in Jura	Support for family-run manufacturers, preservation of unique professions	Use of local materials, energy-efficient production	Development of premium tourism, exclusive excursions	Demonstration of centuries-old watchmaking traditions as part of national identity
Mexico	The "Original" movement to support artisans	Protection of indigenous peoples' intellectual property rights	Use of recycled materials in traditional products	Tourist fairs, international partnerships	Revival of ancient crafts through modern design collaborations
Saudi Arabia	"Saudi 100 Brands"	Involving women in the creative economy, creating training programmes for young designers	Use of organic fabrics, reduction of textile waste through recycling	Developing luxury tourism, creating fashion hubs in cities	Revival of traditional Arabic tailoring and embroidery, integration into modern collections

Based on an analysis of global case studies and a series of specialised studies, the following key threats to sustainable fashion tourism can be identified:

- 1) Cultural appropriation and commercialisation of traditions – inauthentic use of symbols (e.g. mass copying of Maasai patterns or batik by international brands without the permission of communities); loss of control over intellectual property (indigenous peoples do not receive compensation for the use of their traditional knowledge);
- 2) economic inequality – exploitation of artisans (low prices for their products due to intermediaries, especially in Tanzania and Peru); competition with mass production (cheap imitations of traditional products undermine demand for authentic products);

3) Environmental risks – pollution due to tourist traffic (increased waste in regions where eco-textiles are produced, such as Indonesia); overexploitation of natural resources (e.g., depletion of natural dye sources in Peru due to increased demand);

4) social and demographic changes – loss of traditional knowledge (young people are unwilling to engage in crafts due to low incomes, as in Quechua communities); gender inequality (in some regions, women artisans have fewer opportunities for business development);

5) political and regulatory challenges – insufficient government support (lack of funding programmes for local artisans, as in Mexico); corruption in the tourism industry (unequal distribution of tourism revenues between communities and large operators).

6) Technological and market threats – the digital divide (remote communities do not have access to online sales, which limits their market); climate change (deteriorating conditions for growing natural materials such as cotton or silk).

These threats require comprehensive solutions, because without overcoming them, fashion tourism risks becoming yet another tool of exploitation rather than sustainable development. To overcome these threats and ensure the true sustainability of fashion tourism, international organisations, government administrations and local communities must implement comprehensive strategies focused on long-term positive impact (Table 5).

Applying these recommendations will not only minimise risks, but also transform fashion tourism into a powerful tool for sustainable development that promotes cultural heritage preservation, community economic growth and environmental responsibility.

Table 5

**Recommended strategic directions for the development  
of sustainable fashion tourism**  
(World Tourism Organization and Università della Svizzera italiana, 2025)

No	Category	Key actions and recommendations
1	<b>Policy, governance and communications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Joint creation of experiences between fashion and tourism</li> <li>- Establishing communication between cities and villages, the state and business</li> <li>- Strengthening alliances between stakeholders</li> <li>- Overcoming administrative barriers</li> </ul>
2	<b>Sustainable development and circular economy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promoting sustainable production</li> <li>- Combating counterfeiting</li> <li>- Protecting intellectual property</li> <li>- Recognition of the symbolic value of textile crafts</li> </ul>
3	<b>Information exchange and sector integration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Joint planning of creative industry policies</li> <li>- Continuous exchange of data between tourism and fashion</li> <li>- Building comprehensive cultural narratives</li> </ul>
4	<b>Taxation and regulation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Incentives (VAT) for purchasing local clothing</li> <li>- Introduction of systems to protect the knowledge of indigenous peoples</li> </ul>
5	<b>Marketing and branding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Professional certification</li> <li>- Formation of the "fashion tourism destination" brand</li> <li>- Analysis of the effect of fashion commercialisation</li> </ul>
6	<b>Sales and digital skills support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Access to physical and virtual markets</li> <li>- Business skills training</li> <li>- Special programmes for SMEs and cooperatives</li> </ul>

7	<b>Innovation and fashion heritage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Combining tradition and modern design</li><li>- Development of storytelling and narratives</li><li>- Involvement of family businesses and local communities</li></ul>
8	<b>Communication and cultural sensitivity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Explaining norms of behaviour and dress</li><li>- Promotion of positive cultural dialogue</li><li>- Avoiding misunderstandings</li></ul>
9	<b>Partnerships and joint products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Involvement of local producers</li><li>- Organisation of events, exhibitions, competitions</li><li>- Involvement of influencers and communities</li></ul>
10	<b>Digital media and technologies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Use of AR, AI, metaverse</li><li>- Digital marketing and personalised experiences</li><li>- Developing digital narratives</li></ul>
11	<b>Education and training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Integration of fashion into tourism in educational programmes</li><li>- Professional development programmes</li><li>- Internships, academic projects</li></ul>
12	<b>Responsible tourism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Taking cultural context into account</li><li>- Incentives for culturally sensitive behaviour</li><li>- Explaining the significance of clothing in local cultures</li></ul>

**Conclusions and prospects for further research.** Fashion tourism in the 21st century has become a multidimensional phenomenon that combines cultural experience, aesthetics, economics and social dynamics. It not only satisfies the need for knowledge and consumption, but also serves as an important tool for positioning territories, supporting local brands and preserving intangible cultural heritage. Its ability to integrate into sustainable development strategies is particularly valuable, forming a new model of responsible tourism – ethical fashion tourism.

Based on an analysis of global practices, it can be argued that the potential of fashion tourism as a driver of sustainable development is significant, but its implementation is only possible if a number of challenges are overcome: the commercialisation of traditions, digital inequality, environmental pressure, gender discrimination and a lack of political will. This requires the implementation of multi-level strategies – from supporting local creators and artisans to developing digital platforms, legislating intellectual property protection, and promoting the circular economy.

An integrated approach – combining ethical design, responsible consumption, and cultural sensitivity – can transform fashion tourism into an effective tool for social, economic, and cultural growth. This opens up new opportunities for communities, which can simultaneously preserve their unique identity and actively participate in global processes. Going forward, it is important to focus on developing educational, legal and marketing solutions that will support the sustainable transformation of the fashion tourism ecosystem.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

### **Use of Artificial Intelligence**

No artificial intelligence tools or materials were used in the manuscript.

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