

# Address Overtourism by Bringing the Tourists to Japan's Regions

2024年のインバウンド消費額は前年から5割以上増え、統計開始以来初めて8兆円を超えたそう。訪日客数も過去最多といわれています。日本経済を活性化するための重要な鍵となりますが、オーバーツーリズムの問題も浮上しているといえます。国は経済的利益と地域住民の暮らしをどのように両立していけばよいのでしょうか。



## 1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

It is becoming increasingly clear that inbound tourism is supporting the Japanese economy. According to the Japan Tourism Agency, spending by tourists to Japan in 2024 increased by more than 50% from 2023, exceeding ¥8 trillion JPY (\$51.5 billion USD) for the first time since statistics began to be compiled. The Japan National Tourism Organization estimates the number of visitors to Japan in 2024 at 36.87 million. That is the highest annual figure ever.

For statistical purposes, spending by tourists visiting Japan is counted as "exports." It has already surpassed electronic parts and steel, expanding to become the nation's second-largest "export industry" after motor vehicles.

The government has set a goal of attracting 60 million visitors to Japan in 2030. It furthermore projects they will spend ¥15 trillion (\$96.5 billion). Absent other notable growth industries, Japan should aim for further expansion of tourism to revitalize the nation's economy.

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# 1. Article

However, to do so, we must deal with one major issue. Overtourism — also referred to as "tourist pollution" — is a problem. It is caused by excessive crowding from tourists concentrated at certain sites and the violation of basic etiquette. Such acute [congestion](#) regularly takes place in Tokyo, Kyoto, Mount Fuji, and other popular destinations. Even foreign media frequently report on the problem.

Also, if the level of satisfaction among visitors to Japan [plummets](#), we will likely not be able to reach our tourism targets. Granted that there is no definitive solution to the problem of overtourism. However, it is still necessary to implement whatever measures are possible at each popular tourist destination.

Over 70% of accommodations catering to foreign visitors to Japan are concentrated in three major metropolitan areas. Changing this to attract visitors to regional areas should [alleviate](#) the effects of overtourism. Foreign visitors' spending would thereby increase, leading to economic growth.

Many regional cities in Japan have their own unique tourist attractions, including such features as food culture, and historical heritage. Adventure tourism, which involves experiencing nature and culture, is also increasingly popular and is expected to result in longer-term stays. We encourage the government to make further efforts to promote regional attractions more effectively.

Nor can we neglect the infrastructure needed for local areas to receive foreign tourists in large numbers. In addition to promoting flights from overseas to regional airports, there is a need to expand accommodation facilities.

As the labor shortage becomes more acute, it will be necessary to utilize IT technology and robots to install the systems needed for handling tourists from abroad. The central government as well as local governments should also consider expanding support measures for the introduction of such systems.

In some areas, overtourism is [disrupting](#) the daily lives of local residents. However, it is unthinkable for Japan to become a nation built on tourism at the expense of its residents' livelihoods. Hopefully, those involved will keep this in mind and make wise decisions to ensure the sustainable development of the tourism industry.

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## 2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. **statistical** 統計の、統計上の；統計学上の

The report includes a detailed **statistical** analysis of population growth.

2. **congestion** 密集、混雑；渋滞

The new train system was introduced to reduce **congestion** during rush hours.

3. **plummet** (人気・物価などが) 急落する、急激に落ちる；(物が) まっすぐに落ちる；(円すい形の鉛の) おもり；(人気・物価などの) 急落

Stock prices **plummeted** after the company's financial scandal.

4. **alleviate** (痛み・苦勞などを) 軽減する、緩和する、和らげる

She took some medicine to **alleviate** her headache.

5. **disrupt** 混乱させる、妨害する；中断させる、邪魔する

Technological advancements often **disrupt** traditional industries.

## 3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. How has inbound tourism impacted the Japanese economy in recent years?
2. What measures are suggested to alleviate the effects of overtourism in Japan?
3. Why is promoting tourism in regional areas important for Japan's economy?
4. What do you think are some good ways to reduce overtourism in popular destinations?
5. How do you think Japan can balance economic benefits from tourism with the well-being of local residents?

# 4.

## 日本語関連記事： 訪日客が最多 観光公害防ぐ対策を急げ

インバウンド（訪日外国人客）が日本経済を支える構図が鮮明になっている。

観光庁によると、令和6年のインバウンドによる消費額は前年から5割以上増え、統計開始以来初めて8兆円を超えた。政府観光局によると、去年の訪日客数も推計約3687万人と年間で過去最多となった。

訪日客の消費は統計上、輸出にカウントされる。すでに電子部品や鉄鋼を上回り、自動車に次ぐ第2の「輸出産業」にまで規模を拡大した。

政府は12年に訪日客6000万人、消費額15兆円を目指す目標を掲げている。目立った成長産業が見当たらない中で、日本経済を活性化するためにも一層の拡大を目指したい。

そのためには解決すべき大きな課題がある。観光客の集中による過度な混雑や、マナー違反といったオーバーツーリズム（観光公害）である。

すでに東京や京都、富士山などの混雑ぶりは海外でも報じられるようになっている。訪日客の満足度が下がれば、目標の達成は見込めまい。オーバーツーリズム対策に決め手はないとされるが、それぞれの観光地で可能なことから実施に移していく必要がある。

訪日客の宿泊先は7割超が三大都市圏に集中している。オーバーツーリズムを軽減しながら、訪日客消費を経済成長につなげる施策として期待されているのが地方への誘客だ。

日本には食文化や歴史遺産など、その土地ならではの観光資源を持つ地方都市が数多く存在する。自然や文化を体験するアドベンチャーツーリズムの人気も高まっており、長期滞在が期待できる。地方の魅力を効果的に発信するプロモーション活動をさらに進めてほしい。

地方の受け入れ体制の整備も欠かせない。海外から地方空港への就航促進に加え、宿泊施設の拡充が求められる。人手不足が深刻化する中で、受け入れ体制を整備するにはIT技術やロボットの活用も必要になろう。政府や自治体による導入支援策の拡充も検討すべきだ。

オーバーツーリズムで地元住民の日常生活に支障が出ている地域もある。住民生活を犠牲にした観光立国はあり得ない。関係者はそのことも念頭に、観光産業の持続的な発展に向け知恵を絞ってもらいたい。

出典：訪日客が最多 観光公害防ぐ対策を急げ  
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