Tourism and Regeneration in World Heritage Urban Areas: A Systematic Literature Review and Bibliometric Analysis

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Abstract

Tourism and regeneration are two interrelated factors that have a significant impact on World Heritage urban areas (WHUAs), places of outstanding cultural and historical values. However, the literature on the relationship between tourism and regeneration and their impact on these areas is still scarce and fragmented. This paper aims to provide a comprehensive and systematic review of the existing studies on tourism and regeneration in WHUAs and to identify the main research gaps and directions for future research. In this regard, we reviewed English published articles, conference proceedings, and book chapters indexed on Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus databases until 2023. We analyzed the publication trends, the most influential journals and publishers, the main research topics and methods, and the most applied approaches. The results revealed that in recent years, the Historic Urban Landscape, and culture-led urban regeneration approaches, as well as concepts such as authenticity and sustainability, have received the attention of researchers in this field. However, the literature also shows some limitations, such as a lack of theoretical and review studies, quantitative approaches, and a shortage of multiple-case studies. In addition, the factors for failure, consequences, and procedural solutions extracted as the key themes of the related projects. Based on these findings, this review provides insights valuable to researchers, urban planners, and policymakers involved in the conservation and development of these culturally valuable areas in ways that balance tourism growth with heritage preservation.

Keywords: tourism; regeneration; World Heritage; urban areas; systematic literature review; bibliometric analysis

Introduction

World Heritage Urban Areas (WHUAs) are invaluable sites that combine cultural, historical, and architectural significance. Due to their outstanding universal value, these locations attract millions of tourists each year, who support local economies through cultural tourism (Aslani et al., 2022; Bacsi & Tóth, 2019; Pedersen, 2002). In the light of this opportunity, many countries

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around the world have adopted regeneration policies aimed at revitalizing their WHUAs and enhancing their appeal (Mbhiza & Mearns, 2014; Xuili & Maliene, 2021).

While tourism promotes economic growth and helps fund conservation efforts, it also brings challenges that threaten the very heritage assets that attract visitors (Rössler, 2023). The influx of large numbers of tourists can cause complex social and spatial changes that affect the quality of life for locals, from overcrowding to environmental degradation as well as the loss of local culture (Enseñat-Soberanis & Blanco-Gregory, 2022; Semprebon, 2022). In particular, WHUAs face unique challenges because they serve both living spaces for residents and destinations for visitors, which increases concerns about authenticity, gentrification, and socio-economic imbalance as tourism grows (Jamieson & Engelhardt, 2018). Hence, the link between tourism and urban regeneration has become an important area of research (e.g. Lak et al., 2020; Li, 2020; Uysal & Özden, 2012), especially within WHUAs, where the conservation of historical and cultural assets must be compatible with tourism development. Despite the growing popularity of tourism-led urban regeneration initiatives, there is still a lack of systematic review of how tourism and urban regeneration interact in WHUAs. By integrating the fragmented knowledge in this context, this review aims to provide insights for developing theoretical and practical approaches to managing WHUAs, address important research gaps and limitations in previous studies, and summarize current knowledge on tourism and regeneration in WHUAs.

The specific research questions are:

- What are the key themes in studying tourism and regeneration in WHUAs?
- What methodologies and approaches were utilized to research tourism and regeneration in WHUAs?
- What are the gaps and future agenda for research on tourism and urban regeneration in WHUAs?

Also, bibliometric analysis questions are:

- How is the distribution of the selected records by year?
- How is the geographical distribution of the selected records' case studies?
- How is the keywords occurrence of the selected publications?
- What scientific journals have published papers on tourism and regeneration in WHUAs?
- Which publications contributed the most to publishing papers on this topic?
- What branches of science deal with this issue (i.e., urban studies, urban geography, history, cultural studies, etc.)?

Research Design
This study employs a mixed-methods approach combining a systematic literature review (following PRISMA guidelines), bibliometric analysis, and inductive content analysis to synthesize existing research on tourism and regeneration in World Heritage Urban Areas (WHUAs). These combined methods are well suited to synthesising a fragmented literature and highlighting research gaps by providing both qualitative depth and quantitative mapping of the field.

Systematic Literature Review
In the first step, a systematic review and meta-analysis were performed to achieve the stated aim. A systematic literature review is a method for identifying, interpreting, and evaluating all available research on a particular research issue, subject domain, or idea of interest (Suikkanen,

2020). It can be used to detect gaps in existing knowledge and propose future study directions (Chigbu et al., 2023).

In this study, as shown in Figure 1, the procedure follows PRISMA (Protocol for Reporting in Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) 2020 statement inscribed by Page et al. (2021). The PRISMA protocol is a collection of recommendations designed to improve the quality of systematic reviews (Kelly et al., 2016). It includes a checklist and flow diagram to guarantee that systematic reviews are reported transparently and comprehensively (Sohrabi et al., 2021).
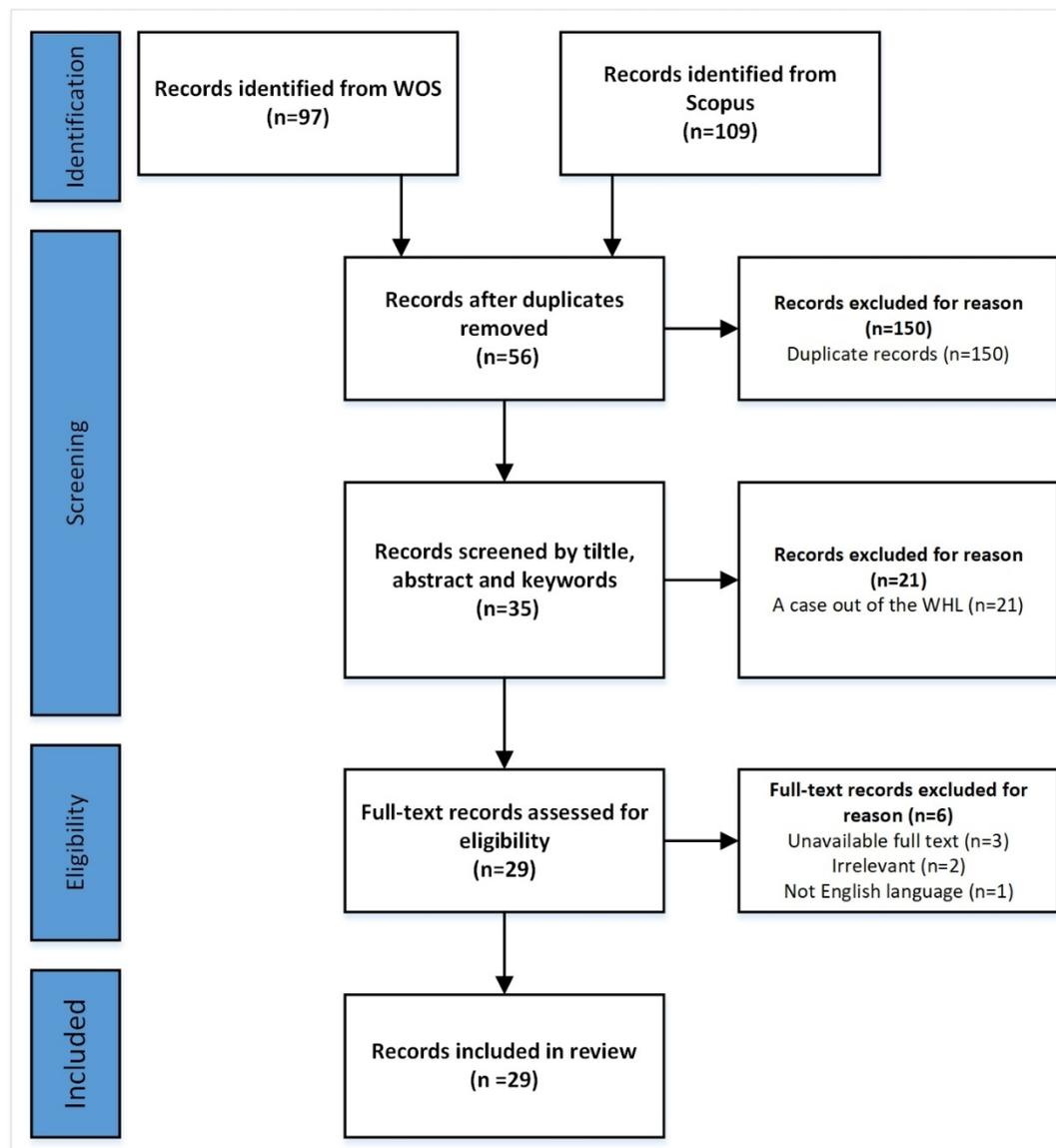

Figure 1. Flowchart PRISMA by levels

Records selection

Due to the robust query engines, excellent visualization tools, and the ability to automatically extract metadata from a wide range of academic publications, WoS and Scopus databases were selected for conducting the review (Putra et al., 2023; Valente et al., 2022).

A combination of keywords and Boolean operators—words such as AND, OR, and NOT, which are used to expand (OR) or narrow (AND, NOT) search results (Whitehead & Maude, 2013)—was used to construct the search query: (tourist OR tourism) AND (regeneration OR revitalization OR renewal) AND (urban OR city) AND (world heritage). The query is applied to the topic field, which includes the title, abstract, and keywords of the articles. The search process was conducted in March 2024, and 206 journal articles, conference proceedings, and book chapters were retrieved that match the search query. Then, the metadata of the records, such as the title, authors, journal, year, abstract, and keywords, was exported to a spreadsheet for further analysis. The researcher applied exclusion and inclusion criteria to the retrieved articles to filter out the irrelevant or duplicate ones during the selection process. The exclusion criteria are: the record is not written in English; the record is a duplicate of another one; the record whose full text was not available. The inclusion criteria are: the record addresses the concepts of tourism and regeneration in relation to WHUAs; and the record is a journal article, conference proceeding, or book chapter. The screening process results in 29 records that are included in the final sample.

Bibliometric Analysis

The second step involves conducting the bibliometric analysis of the selected literature. Bibliometric analysis summarizes scientific activity within a domain using statistical methods (Liu & Li, 2016). It comprises various factors, such as patents, types of publication, topic domain, available data-based research, annual publications, journals and publishers, etc. (Ramnath & Harikrishnan, 2021).

Year-wise distribution of studies

Distribution of records by year is shown in Figure 2. Accordingly, Topics related to tourism and regeneration in WHUAs first appeared in the literature in 2000. However, since 2018, the number of records has increased and this trend of continues until now. The majority of records (68.96% of the 29 entries) were between 2018 and 2023, indicating the topics' rising significance in the last 5 years.
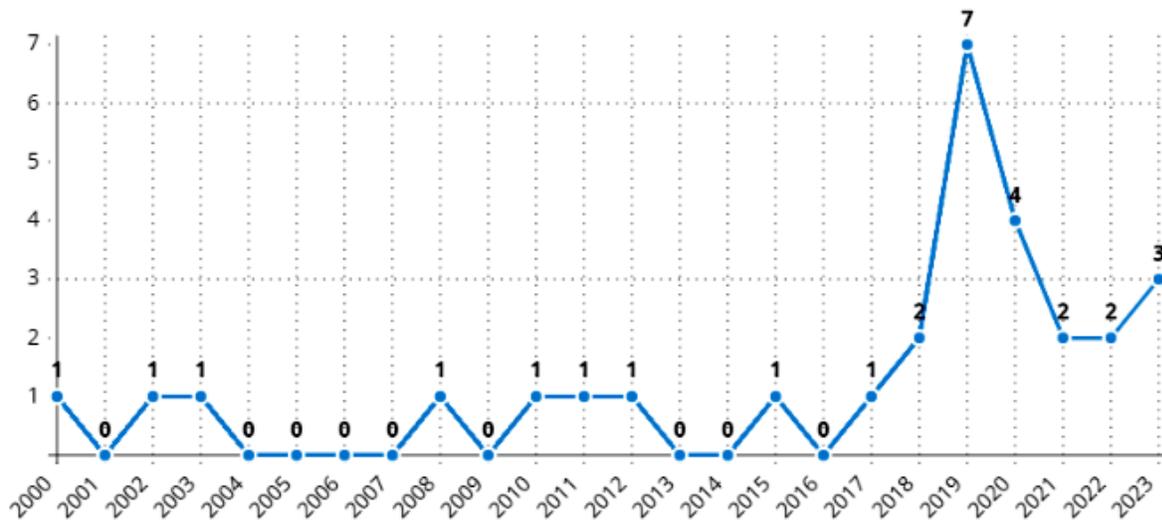
Figure 2. Distribution of records by year

Journals and disciplinary field

Out of the 32 records analyzed, 68.96% were journal articles, 17.24% were conference proceedings, and 13.80% were book chapters, respectively (Figure 3).
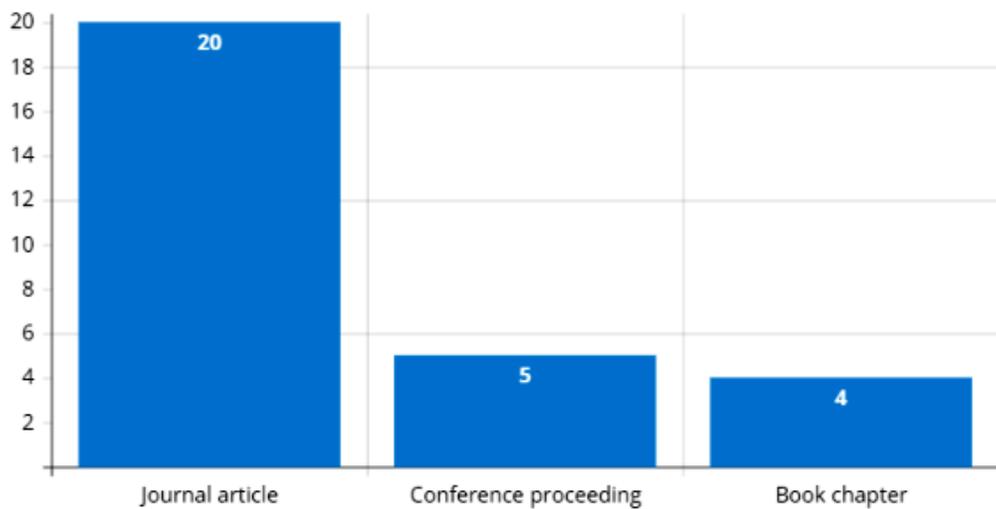

Figure 3. Final records based on the type

The articles were published in 16 different journals (Table 1), which cover a range of eight disciplinary fields and twenty-nine sub-disciplines (Table 2). Among the journals, Sustainability and International Journal of Heritage Studies have the highest volume of publications (3), with only one record found in the remaining journals. The diversity of the academic disciplines indicates the multidisciplinarity of the studied topic. It should also be noted that most journals cover multiple fields of study, which may also serve as justification for this

diversity. Although the journal Sustainability can be considered an exception because it publishes articles in different disciplines. For example, energy and computer science are mentioned in Table 3, but they are not related to the studied topic. Also notable are the contributions of publications relating to "geography, planning and development" (22.22%), followed by "urban studies" (11.11%), and "tourism, leisure, and hospitality management" (9.26%). It is noteworthy that journals related to "architecture" and "conservation" were less involved in the subject under study. As a result, architecture and conservation journals do not welcome the combination of topics related to tourism and urban regeneration. Also, the journals published by Taylor & Francis publications had the largest share in accepting the articles.

Table 1. Number of articles per journal and publisher

Journal title	Publisher	Counts
Built Heritage	Springer Nature	1
Erdkunde	University of Bonn	1
Historic Environment: Policy and Practice	Taylor & Francis	1
Human Organization	Taylor & Francis	1
International Journal of Heritage Studies	Taylor & Francis	3
Sustainability	MDPI	3
Land	MDPI	1
URBAN DESIGN International	Taylor & Francis	1
Journal of Place Management and Development	Emerald Publishing	1
Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change	Taylor & Francis	1
On the waterfront	University of Barcelona	1
Open House International	Emerald Publishing	1
Planning Malaysia	Malaysian Institute of Planners	1
Tourism	Croatian Institute for Tourism	1
Tourism Geographies	Taylor & Francis	1
Urban Geography	Taylor & Francis	1

Table 2. Disciplinary fields and sub-disciplines covered by journals

Disciplinary field	Sub-discipline	Counts
Arts and Humanities	Archeology	1
	Arts and Humanities	1
	Conservation	3
	History	3
	Museology	1
	Visual Arts and Performing Arts	1
Business, Management and Accounting	Business and International Management	1
	Marketing	1
	Strategy and Management	1
	Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality Management	5
Computer Science	Computer Science	1
	Hardware and Architecture	1
Earth and Planetary Sciences	Earth and Planetary Sciences	1
Energy	Energy Engineering and Power Technology	1
	Renewable Energy, Sustainability and the Environment	1
Engineering	Architecture	1
Environmental Science	Ecology	2
	Environmental Science	1
	Global and Planetary Change	1

	Management, Monitoring, Policy and Law	1
	Nature and Landscape Conservation	2
Social Sciences	Anthropology	1
	Cultural Studies	2
	Geography, Planning and Development	12
	Transportation	1
	Social Sciences	1
	Urban Studies	6

Keyword analysis

A network analysis of keyword co-occurrences with their timelines is given in Figure 4. The network map was created using VOSviewer software. The node size shows the weight of the keywords, which is determined by the number of occurrences, while the lines depict the connection between the keywords. A total of 157 keywords were extracted from the 29 records. Out of these, 124 had a single occurrence, representing 79% frequency, while just 33 (21%) had two or more co-occurrences. Because of it, and to ensure a more realistic visualization of the network, all keywords with at least one occurrence were included. This lower prevalence of keywords with two or more co-occurrences might be justified to some extent by the small number of records in the analysis. "Tourism" had the majority of occurrences, with 8 occurrences and a total link strength of 78, while "urban renewal" had the highest link strength, with 7 occurrences and a total link strength of 81. Other keywords based on the occurrences are "tourism development," "heritage," "heritage tourism," "UNESCO," "World Heritage Site," "urban regeneration," and "Historic Urban Landscape" respectively. Since these keywords made up the search code, this result was fairly expected. The point worth mentioning is that, from 2018, "Historic Urban Landscape" appeared in 4 records with a link strength of 18. In addition, compared to renewal and revitalization, regeneration has grown in prominence during the last decade.
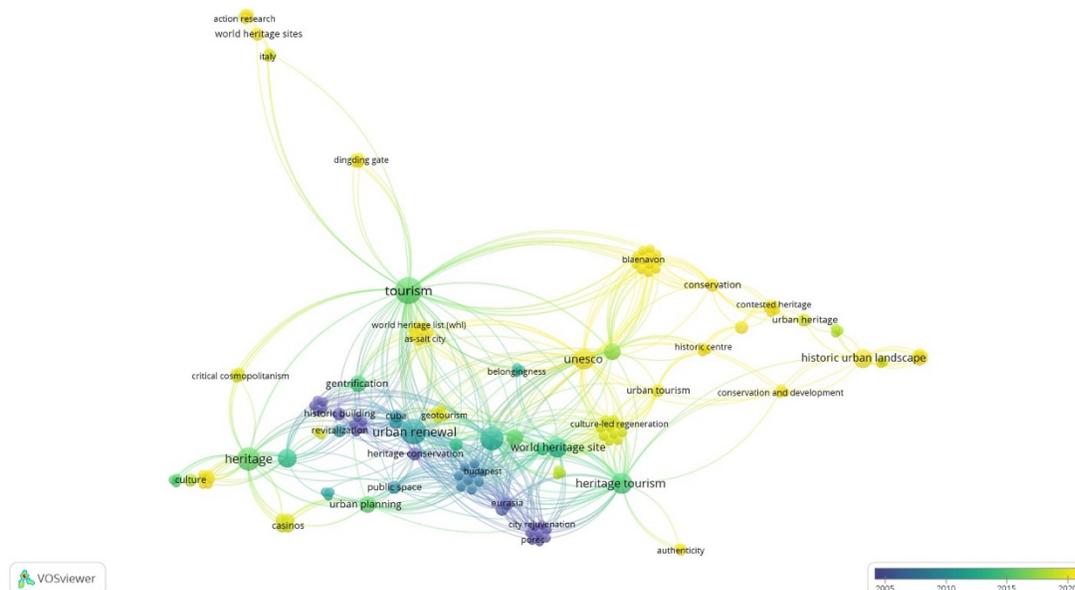

Figure 4. Keywords network by co-occurrence with the timelines

This analysis resulted in the identification of 15 clusters overall and 1039 links, with a total link strength value of 1101. The first one was formed around urban renewal, heritage conservation, revitalization, and transformation. The second cluster combined studies around heritage and culture. The third cluster emphasizes UNESCO and regeneration. The fourth cluster was related to urban heritage and conservation. The fifth cluster was more focused on urban regeneration, gentrification, public space, and historic building. Cluster 6 was centered on urban development, urban tourism, and tourist destination. Cluster 7 words were around the topic of Historic Urban Landscape. Following that, clusters 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 evolved around themes such as cultural tourism development and tourist attraction; overtourism, participatory design, world heritage sites, and tourism development; cultural change, economic development, and tourism management; social exclusion; and tourism development. Eventually, clusters 13 to 15 were based on a single article that represented a wide range of subjects, including heritage tourism and authenticity as well as urban planning and flexibility.

Geographical context
According to Figure 5, Europe had the highest geographical concentration (44.44%), followed by Asia (38.89%), South America (13.89%), and North America (2.78%), while no relevant research is carried out in Africa and Australia. In the context of Europe, practically the most research was done in Italy (5), Portugal (4), and the UK (2). Within the Asian setting, the highest number of cases belonged to Malaysia (4) and China (3). Next, Cuba (2) had the greatest number of cases in the Caribbean region.

Two studies employed a multiple-case study approach from different countries located in Asia and Europe, as well as Asia and South America, while the rest focused on a single case study.
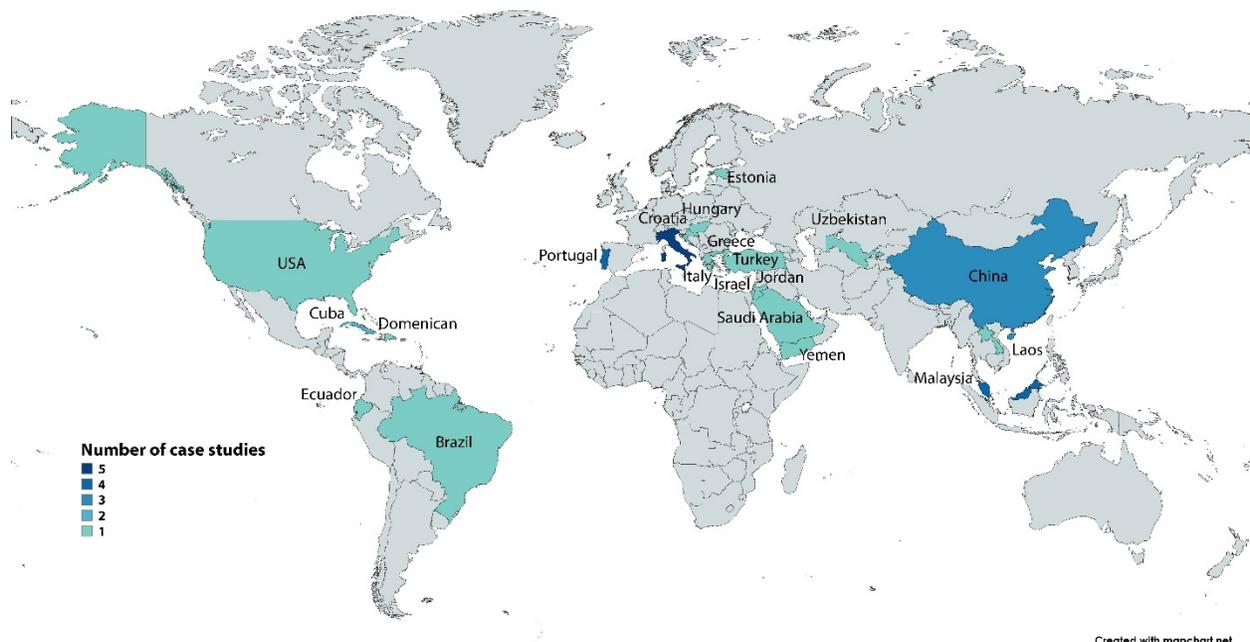

Figure 5. Geographic distribution of the records' case studies

Note: Kosovo and Metohija is an integral part of the Republic of Serbia, in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999), under temporary UN administration

Content Analysis
The records were analyzed in terms of research methodology and research context using the inductive content analysis technique. The method is employed in the analysis of textual material in order to clarify hidden themes (Ghaderi et al., 2020). This process includes three steps: open coding, creating categories, and abstraction (Elo et al., 2014). The records were coded according to research inquiries and then grouped based on semantic and conceptual linkages, and each group was finally given a name (Ghaderi et al., 2022). Regarding the research context, the aim was to identify the primary domains where tourism and regeneration in WHUAs were adopted.

Research methods
The methods employed in the records are summarized in Table 3. All of the records were empirical studies. Out of all the records reviewed, 22 (75.9%) were qualitative, 6 (20.7%) were mixed, and 1 (3.4%) were quantitative. Secondary data analysis (such as institutional documents) 17 (34.69%), observation 14 (28.57%), interviews 9 (18.36%), informal conversations 3 (6.12%), comparative studies 2 (4.08%), questionnaires 2 (4.08%), Delphi method 1 (2.05%), and nominal group technique 1 (2.05%) were among the data retrieval techniques employed by qualitative approaches. Quantitative methods were particularly popular in topics concerning tourism-led regeneration and urban transformation (Čaušević & Tomljenović, 2003; Ciambrone, 2015; Colavitti & Usai, 2019; Höftberger, 2023; Michelson et al., 2020; Paz, 2011; Ratz et al., 2008; Ricca, 2018; Salim & Mohamed, 2018; Santos, 2019; Scarpaci, 2000; Soccali & Cinà, 2020; Ye, 2021; Zandonai, 2019), tourism development consequences and urban regeneration (Alberti, 2022; Bakri et al., 2023; Katahenggam, 2020; Zandonai, 2019), stockholders' attitude towards regeneration in tourism destinations (Del Baldo & Demartini, 2021; Peira et al., 2022; Schiller, 2019; Su et al., 2020), and urban regeneration and sustainable development of tourism destinations (Lombardi & Doganer, 2019). Among mixed methods approaches, the most frequently used techniques were composition of observation 5 (23.81%), secondary data analysis (such as official statistics) 5 (23.81%), statistics analysis 3 (14.28%), field mapping 2 (9.52%), interviews 2 (9.52%), questionnaires 2 (9.52%), informal conversations 1 (4.77%), and ethnography 1 (4.77%). These methods were especially implemented in studies pertaining to cultural heritage tourism and urban regeneration (El Faouri & Sibley, 2022; Gusman et al., 2019), tourism-led regeneration and urban transformation (González-Pérez, 2017; Nobre, 2002; Völkening et al., 2019), and tours and disseminating knowledge about urban regeneration projects (Santos, 2012). In the only quantitative research (Chua & Deguchi, 2010), questionnaires were applied to identify stockholders' attitudes towards regeneration in a tourism destination.

Table 3. Research methods

Author(s) and (year)	Research design	Method(s)	Target of data collection
Gusman et al. (2019)	Mixed	Observation; secondary data analysis; statistical analysis	n.a.
Ratz et al. (2008)	Qualitative	Secondary data analysis	n.a.

Nobre (2002)	Mixed	Observation; secondary data analysis; statistical analysis	n.a.
Bakri et al. (2023)	Qualitative	Interviews; observation	Cultural and heritage activists/practitioners; workers, residents; representatives of place of worship; traditional/non-traditional business traders; community leaders; heritage advocates, WH office staff; local planning authority representatives; local government staff; representatives of the tourism industry; community-based organisation representatives; and a Federal heritage department representative
Colavitti & Usai (2019)	Qualitative	Comparative analysis; secondary data analysis	n.a.
González-Pérez (2017)	Mixed	Field mapping; observation; secondary data analysis; statistics analysis	n.a.
Del Baldo & Demartini (2021)	Qualitative	Interviews; observation; questionnaires; secondary data analysis	Citizens and university students
El Faouri & Sibley (2022)	Mixed	Interviews; observation; statistics analysis	Local community
Michelson et al. (2020)	Qualitative	Secondary data analysis	n.a.
Alberti (2022)	Qualitative	Secondary data analysis	n.a.
Höftberger (2023)	Qualitative	Observation; secondary data analysis	n.a.
Scarpaci (2000)	Qualitative	Observation; interviews; secondary data analysis	Local residents and administrators
Čaušević & Tomljenović (2003)	Qualitative	Interviews; secondary data analysis	City mayor
Su et al. (2020)	Qualitative	Observation; secondary data analysis	Local residents; tourists; heritage experts; and heritage managers
Völkening et al. (2019)	Mixed	Field mapping; interviews; observation; secondary data analysis; statistical analysis	Residents
Katahenggam (2020)	Qualitative	Interviews; observation	Tourists
Santos (2019)	Qualitative	Informal conversations; interviews; participant observation	Tour attendees
Santos (2012)	Mixed	Ethnography; informal conversations; participant observation; questioniares; secondary data analysis	Tour guides
Salim & Mohamed (2018)	Qualitative	Observation; secondary data analysis	n.a.
Soccali and Cinà (2020)	Qualitative	Comparative analysis; secondary data analysis	n.a.
Ricca (2018)	Qualitative	Observation; secondary data analysis	n.a.

Zandonai (2019)	Qualitative	Informal conversations; interviews; observation; secondary data analysis	City residents; architects, an economist; former administrators
Ciambrone (2015)	Qualitative	Observation; secondary data analysis	n.a.
Paz (2011)	Qualitative	Observation; secondary data analysis	n.a.
Lombardi & Doganer (2019)	Qualitative	Secondary data analysis	n.a.
Ye (2021)	Qualitative	Informal conversation; observation; secondary data analysis	Residents; a shop staff; tourists; and students
Peira et al. (2022)	Qualitative	Delphi; interviews; nominal group technique	Trade associations; tourist associations; a tour operator; a tourist attraction manager
Schiller (2019)	Qualitative	Interviews; observation; questionnaires	Members of two non-profit associations; local residents and shop owners; and long-term street vendors
Chua & Deguchi (2010)	Quantitative	Questionnaires	Residents and business owners

Research topics

In total, factors for failure, consequences, and procedural solutions were the key themes that were extracted from a thorough, methodical full-text analysis of each record.

The factors for failure address the reasons that hinder the success of tourism-led urban regeneration projects. The consequences included advantages, referring to the benefits that tourism-led urban regeneration projects bring to an area, and disadvantages, focusing on the challenges arising from these projects. The procedural solutions deal with ways in which the challenges of the projects can be overcome and their benefits expanded.

T1: Factors for failure

Content analysis of the reviewed records indicated that these factors encompass projects with a state-run and top-down nature (Nobre, 2002; Scarpaci, 2000; Völkening et al., 2019), preference for tourism (El Faouri & Sibley, 2022; González-Pérez, 2017; Höftberger, 2023), beautification and restoration of historical buildings without adaptive reuse (El Faouri & Sibley, 2022; Ye, 2021), ignoring the site background and the stakeholders (Colavitti & Usai, 2019; Ye, 2021), and restriction of regeneration to a local plan (Ye, 2021).

T2: Advantages

Urban regeneration, in line with tourism, can offer physical, economic, and social benefits to urban areas (Rezaei et al., 2020). For instance, it contributes to the revitalization of areas that were previously devalued economically (Čaušević & Tomljenović, 2003; Gusman et al., 2019; Ratz et al., 2008; Salim & Mohamed, 2018), the conservation of heritage properties (Nobre, 2002; Zandonai, 2019), the enhancement of local quality of life (Čaušević & Tomljenović, 2003; Ratz et al., 2008), and the improvement of urban infrastructure (Höftberger, 2023; Scarpaci, 2000).

T3: Disadvantages

On the other hand, like any other phenomenon, tourism-led urban regeneration projects can lead to negative impacts on WHUAs, such as museification and commodification of heritage

(Colavitti & Usai, 2019; El Faouri & Sibley, 2022; Katahenggam, 2020; Scarpaci, 2000; Soccali & Cinà, 2020; Ye, 2021; Zandonai, 2019), overtourism (Alberti, 2022; Čaušević & Tomljenović, 2003; Colavitti & Usai, 2019; Gusman et al., 2019; Höftberger, 2023; Zandonai, 2019), gentrification and displacement of local inhabitants (Höftberger, 2023; Michelson et al., 2020; Santos, 2019; Scarpaci, 2000), threats to authenticity (Höftberger, 2023; Katahenggam, 2020; Su et al., 2020), creating unequal economic opportunities (Santos, 2019; Völkening et al., 2019), and dependence of the local economy on tourism (Michelson et al., 2020; Santos, 2019).

T4: Procedural solutions
The scholars suggested various solutions in response to mitigate the above disadvantages, like public participation (Alberti, 2022; Čaušević & Tomljenović, 2003; Chua & Deguchi, 2010; Ciambrone, 2015; Colavitti & Usai, 2019; Del Baldo & Demartini, 2021; El Faouri & Sibley, 2022; Gusman et al., 2019; Katahenggam, 2020; Lombardi & Doganer, 2019; Michelson et al., 2020; Peira et al., 2022; Ricca, 2018; Santos, 2012; Soccali & Cinà, 2020; Su et al., 2020), incorporating culture into regeneration strategies (Čaušević & Tomljenović, 2003; Colavitti & Usai, 2019; Del Baldo & Demartini, 2021; Gusman et al., 2019; Ratz et al., 2008; Ricca, 2018), considering sustainability (Alberti, 2022; Bakri et al., 2023; Colavitti & Usai, 2019; Gusman et al., 2019; Michelson et al., 2020), connecting the area to its surroundings (Čaušević & Tomljenović, 2003; Lombardi & Doganer, 2019; Michelson et al., 2020; Peira et al., 2022; Ye, 2021), implementing heritage management (Bakri et al., 2023; Colavitti & Usai, 2019; Del Baldo & Demartini, 2021; Ratz et al., 2008), fostering creative industries (Čaušević & Tomljenović, 2003; Del Baldo & Demartini, 2021; Paz, 2011; Ratz et al., 2008), raising local heritage awareness (Čaušević & Tomljenović, 2003; Santos, 2012, 2019; Soccali & Cinà, 2020), adaptive reuse aligning with the historic identity of the area (Chua & Deguchi, 2010; Ciambrone, 2015; Ye, 2021), balancing economic development with heritage preservation (Nobre, 2002; Salim & Mohamed, 2018; Su et al., 2020), flexibility in planning (Chua & Deguchi, 2010; Del Baldo & Demartini, 2021; Zandonai, 2019), considering mixed land uses in line with resident and tourist demands (Lombardi & Doganer, 2019; Salim & Mohamed, 2018), applying a dynamic assessment and monitoring mechanism (Colavitti & Usai, 2019; Gusman et al., 2019), funding conservation efforts with tax revenues from tourism activities (Zandonai, 2019), and including public spaces in the analysis of urban transformation processes (Paz, 2011).

Discussion and Conclusion

The systematic literature review and bibliometric analysis of tourism and regeneration in WHUA provides important insights into the current state of research in this area. The results of this study show that this issue has been emerging in the literature since the beginning of the 21st century and has received increased attention in recent years. In line with Nachmany and Hananel (2023), after reviewing the global experiences, it could be said that these projects act like a double-edged sword in such a way that they bring advantages and disadvantages together. Their advantages to WHUAs are economic redevelopment, the conservation of heritage properties, the enhancement of the local quality of life, and the improvement of urban infrastructure. Nevertheless, they also have several disadvantages, including museification and commodification of heritage, overtourism, gentrification and displacement of local inhabitants, threats to authenticity, creating unequal economic opportunities, and dependence of the local economy on tourism. The disadvantages mainly arise due to the state-run and top-down nature of these projects and other

factors, such as a preference for tourism, the beautification and restoration of historical buildings without adaptive reuse, ignorance of the site background and stakeholders, and the restriction of regeneration to a local plan. The reviewed studies propose solutions that consist of public participation, incorporating culture into regeneration strategies, considering sustainability, connecting the area to its surroundings, implementing heritage management, fostering creative industries, raising local heritage awareness, adaptive reuse that aligns with the historic identity of the area, balancing economic development with heritage preservation, flexibility in planning, considering mixed land uses that align with resident and tourist demands, applying a dynamic assessment and monitoring mechanism, funding conservation efforts with tax revenues from tourism activities, and including public spaces in the analysis of urban transformation processes.

The intersection of urban regeneration and tourism studies in recent years has shown a growing trend towards the Historic Urban Landscape approach, culture-led development, authenticity, and sustainability (e.g., Aslani & Kapusta, 2025; García-Hernández et al., 2017; Light et al., 2020; Pezzi, 2017). This highlights a rising emphasis on preserving the cultural and historical values of WHUAs while promoting sustainable tourism and urban development (Prabowo et al., 2023).

As a comprehensive solution in response to the aforementioned concerns, the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach was introduced by UNESCO in 2011 to better integrate heritage management with urban development (Veldpaus, 2015). By following HUL, cities can achieve their Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets and become more sustainable, resilient, and inclusive in urban development (UNESCO, 2015). Additionally, through tourism, commercial use, and higher property values, a properly managed urban heritage can promote socio-economic development (UNESCO, 2013). The HUL approach can be achieved through the following key steps: "1. undertaking a full assessment of the city's natural, cultural and human resources; 2. using participatory planning and stakeholder consultations to decide on conservation aims and actions; 3. assessing the vulnerability of urban heritage to socio-economic pressures and impacts of climate change; 4. integrating urban heritage values and their vulnerability status into a wider framework of city development; 5. prioritizing policies and actions for conservation and development, including good stewardship; 6. establishing the appropriate (public-private) partnerships and local management frameworks; 7. developing mechanisms for the coordination of the various activities between different actors" (UNESCO, 2013, p. 16). Future research might concentrate more on evaluating the connection between tourism and regeneration in WHUAs using the HUL approach.

The study also revealed limitations in the existing literature, such as a lack of theoretical and review studies, quantitative approaches, and a predominance of single-case studies. These limitations may have an impact on the scope and depth of the literature available for analysis. As a result, future research should aim to fill these gaps through more theoretical studies, quantitative methods, and a multiple-case study approach.

Furthermore, the findings of this study have implications for future research and practice in the field of tourism and regeneration in WHUAs. Key themes extracted, such as factors for failure, consequences, and procedural solutions, provide policymakers, urban planners, and heritage conservationists with practical insights. Understanding the challenges and opportunities associated with tourism and urban regeneration in WHUAs will assist in developing more effective and sustainable strategies for preserving cultural assets and encouraging responsible

tourism. A study agenda was also proposed for future directions from a theoretical perspective in order to enhance tourism and regeneration knowledge and practice in WHUAs.

At the same time, there are several important limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results. First, the search was limited to Web of Science and Scopus and to English-language records; consequently, regional studies published in other languages or in national repositories, as well as relevant grey literature (reports, theses, local planning documents), were neglected. Second, despite following standard procedures to enhance reliability in inductive content analysis, it includes subjective interpretation during coding and abstraction, which can lead to researcher bias despite efforts to ensure reliability through repeated review. Finally, the search string focused on specific keywords and did not explicitly include related terms such as "rehabilitation" or "renovation," which could have captured additional relevant studies. Future studies should consider expanding database coverage and languages, including grey literature, using multiple coders (with inter-coder checks), and conducting sensitivity analyses with alternative search strings to test the robustness of bibliometric patterns observed here.

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