

# SPATIAL ASPECTS OF OVERTOURISM IN SELECTED DESTINATIONS

## Prostorové aspekty overtourismu ve vybraných destinacích

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### Annotation

One of the specifics of overtourism is its uneven distribution in space and time. Defining an area where the manifestations are visible and the people living in the area are affected is important not only for the correct interpretation of objective numerical indicators, which are used to identify a potential problem, but especially for the application of appropriate measures to alleviate overtourism. The aim of this article is to define, based on direct knowledge of selected destinations in Karlštejn and Kladruby nad Labem, the behavior of visitors in the destination and map materials, the relevant tourist area for the study of overtourism, its impacts and manifestations. In this process, a demand-oriented approach is used. The area is defined both graphically in ArcMAP ESRI and numerically with the function Dissolve. In connection with the visual and numerical delimitation of the area, selected indicators of tourism pressure for both mentioned destinations are calculated. The values compared to corresponding values in other destinations suffering from overtourism indicate the presence of overtourism in Karlštejn.

### Key words

impacts of tourism, overtourism, relevant tourist area, spatial differentiation

### Anotace

Jedním ze specifíků overtourismu je jeho nerovnoměrné rozložení v prostoru a čase. Vymezení oblasti v destinaci, kde jsou projevy viditelné a obyvatelé žijící v této oblasti jsou jím ovlivněni, je významné nejen pro správnou interpretaci objektivních číselných ukazatelů, které jsou využívány pro identifikaci potenciálního problému, ale především pro aplikaci vhodných opatření pro zmírnění projevů overtourismu. Cílem tohoto článku je na základě přímé znalosti zvolených destinací Karlštejn a Kladruby nad Labem, chování návštěvníků v destinaci a mapových podkladů, vymezit relevantní turistickou plochu pro zkoumání overtourismu, jeho dopadů a projevů. Je využit poptávkově orientovaný přístup, zvoleno bylo grafické vymezení v programu ArcMAP ESRI. V návaznosti na vizuální i číselné vymezení plochy (funkce Dissolve) jsou spočítány vybrané ukazatele tlaku cestovního ruchu pro obě zmíněné destinace. Na základě porovnání těchto hodnot s jinými destinacemi trpícími overtourismem, je možné předpokládat overtourism v destinaci Karlštejn.

### Klíčová slova

dopady cestovního ruchu, overtourism, prostorová diference, relevantní turistická area

**JEL Classification:** Z30

## 1. Introduction

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, tourism was one of the fastest growing industries in the world. Between 2018 and 2019, the number of international arrivals grew by more than 4% and exceeded 1.5 billion (UNWTO, 2020). In 2020, there was a drop of more than 74%, which means up to one billion fewer arrivals (UNWTO, 2021). Despite the extreme decline, some places remained crowded. According to Fialová (2021), excessive tourism was typical

of urban destinations. When the pandemic had occurred, visitors began to miss them, and they shifted their interests to rural areas. Not only the preferences of certain places, but also the revival of tourism, the current manifestations of which are pointed out, for example, by Butler and Dodds (2022), can cause destinations problems associated with overtourism.

One of the specifics of overtourism is the uneven distribution of visitors in time and space. Its negative effects do not manifest themselves in the same way in all parts of the municipality or destination (Peeters et al., 2018; Amore et al., 2020). The evaluation of overtourism is based on numerical characteristics and relative indicators of tourism intensity, which also include the value of the area (e.g. number of visitors per area, Tourist Density Rate, modifications of Defert function). However, the resulting indicator can be, and often is, misleading, especially in rural areas with a significant cultural monument. The primary and secondary offer of tourism is concentrated in a specific part of the municipality, but the area of the entire cadastral area is included in the calculation of the load indicator. Not only problem identification and interpretation of indicators, but above all prevention and solution of overtourism must be specified for the relevant area. The aim of the article is to define areas in model destinations that are relevant for examining the impacts of overtourism, and therefore for problem solutions that this phenomenon brings.

## 2. Time and spatial aspects of overtourism

Overtourism has become one of the most discussed topics in the field of tourism in recent years, and the word has gradually spread from the media to the wider academic sphere (Goodwin, 2017; Koens et al., 2018; Milano et al., 2019; Capocchi et al., 2019; Seraphin et al., 2019; Wall, 2020). Despite the debate over whether it is a new concept that describes the long-known topic of negative impacts or a new situation, there is a prevailing consensus on the dangers it poses to an ever-increasing number of destinations (Capocchi et al., 2019). According to UNWTO (2018) overtourism is defined as: "The impact of tourism on a destination or part of it that affects the quality of life of citizens and / or the quality of visitors' experience negatively".

Overtourism is more often associated with the urban environment (so-called narrow approach) (Žemla, 2020), many authors also find it in rural, coastal and island destinations or destinations with a cultural-historical monument (so-called wide approach) (e.g. Koens et al., 2018; Peeters et al., 2018; Capocchi et al., 2019 or Oklevik et al., 2019). In urban destinations, overtourism manifests itself differently than in rural and natural destinations; in natural ones, the impacts may be even more pronounced than in cities. According to Fontanari and Berger-Risthaus (2019), it is not possible to compare these areas since the nature of overtourism is completely different in them. According to Koens et al. (2018), the most significant effects of overtourism are overcrowding on the streets, heavy traffic, loss of local identity, loss of facilities for local residents due to monocultural tourist shops and facilities, noise, disturbance, lower availability of housing, loss of safety, increased waste production, higher water consumption and air pollution.

What are the specifics of overtourism are not only the mentioned differences according to the type of destination, but also its temporal and spatial differentiation. The time aspect includes the development of the destination, as introduced by Butler (1980), as well as seasonality and daily rhythm. From the point of view of destination development, it is not possible to classify overtourism into any of its phases. Butler (1980) argues that as the demand increases, so do the influences of tourism on local communities, but according to Rangus et al. (2018) can be found not only in cities with developed management, but also in destinations and developing countries.

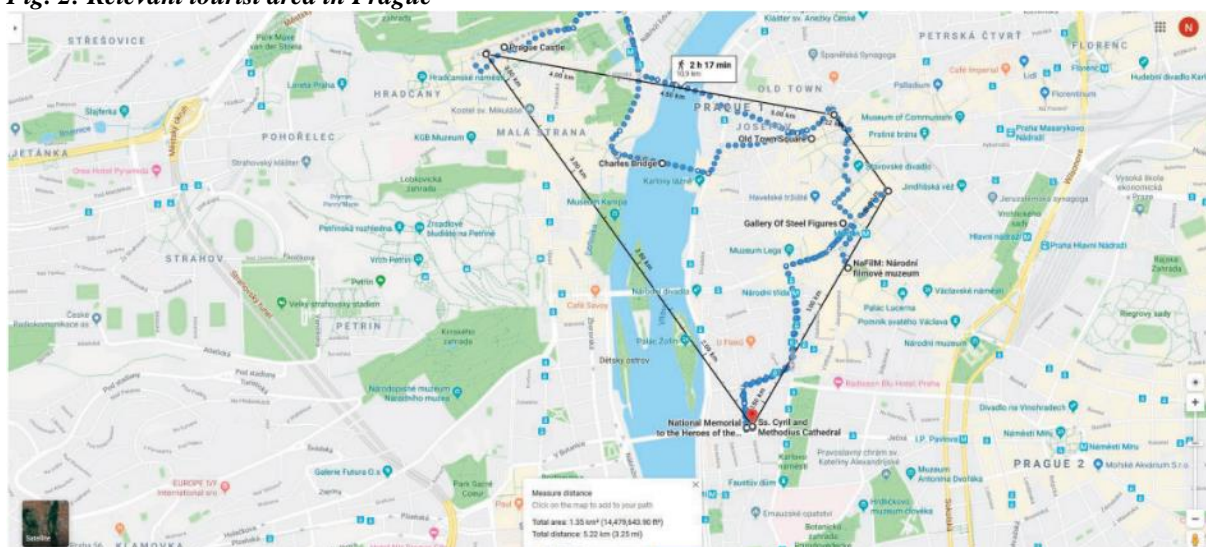
Another important aspect of time tourism is seasonality. Milano et al. (2019) even consider it as one of the defining features, when residents suffer from the consequences of temporary and seasonal peaks, which force permanent changes in their lifestyle. Seasonality as such is one of the dominant problems of tourism. It represents an imbalance in tourism demand that is concentrated in one or more periods (López-Bonilla and López-Bonilla, 2006). This imbalance is caused by natural, institutional or other factors (Petrevska, 2013). Some processes are typical of the "rest period", others of the seasonal peaks. For the latter, the specific needs of visitors may also be given priority, to the detriment of the already lagging needs of the local population. When evaluating the destination, it is necessary to take into account the view of residents and other stakeholders in the destination, as well as excursionists or tourists who use the space for a limited time and for a specific purpose (Fialová, 2009). Processes and activities that take place within 24 hours can also be discussed.

The spatial differentiation of overtourism is due to the uneven distribution of visitors in the place. As visitors look for visual experiences different from what they encounter on a daily basis, they travel to places that are unique. It can be, for instance, a major cathedral, castle or sporting event (Hamilton-Smith, 1991). Places suffering from overtourism are, according to Peeters et al. (2018) popular attractions and points, which he refers to as "hot spots".

Koens et al. (2018) examined overtourism in urban localities and suggested that this phenomenon is not identical with mass tourism because its manifestations are not visible evenly throughout the city. Overtourism is concentrated in specific areas that provide most of the tourist infrastructure. It competes with the city's normal functions and can also lead to the tourism of areas that have been used primarily as residential (Jover and Díaz-Parra, 2020).

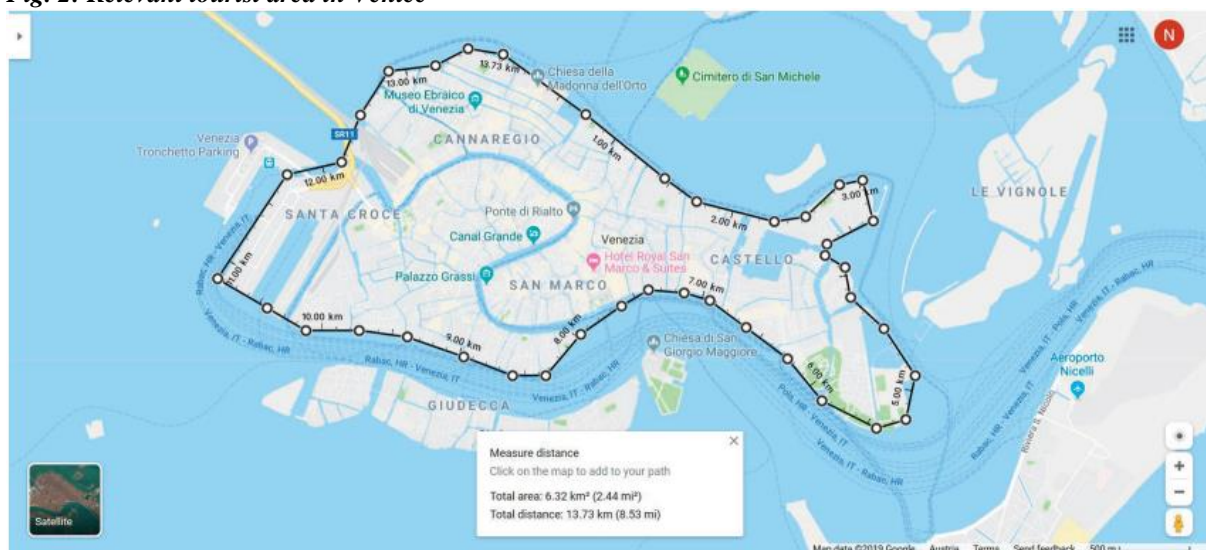
The authors agree that a one-size-fits-all approach is not effective in addressing overtourism (Weber, 2017; Peeters et al., 2018; Benner, 2019). This means that each destination is unique and requires specific measures to mitigate the negative effects or work in a preventive way. The uneven spatial distribution of tourist activity in the destination also naturally entails the need to differentiate solutions for its specific areas. The definition of the relevant tourist area (RTO) was first introduced by Amore et al. (2020) in European cities, when the RTO was identified as an area among the 10 most visited landmarks of the city according to TripAdvisor. Similarly, they have reduced (albeit inaccurately) the population that is primarily affected by the impacts of tourism. As a result, they have eliminated one of the problems of tourist indicators, which are measured against the entire area of the destination or the total population of the settlement. Figure 1 shows the definition of the relevant area in Prague, Figure 2 in Venice.

**Fig. 2: Relevant tourist area in Prague**



Source: Amore et al. (2020)

**Fig. 2: Relevant tourist area in Venice**



Source: Amore et al. (2020)

Amore et al. (2020) applied a demand-oriented view of overtourism and overcrowding in focal areas. They defined it as a distinctive geographical area within a larger urban area, characterized by high attendance and land use for

tourist activities. This approach can also be applied to rural areas, as in the city, only a small number of visitors come to residential and surrounding areas that are not in close proximity to the main attractions (Pearce, 1998).

### 3. Methodology

Karlštejn and Kladruby nad Labem were chosen as model destinations. ArcMAP (part of ArcGIS Desktop) from ESRI was used to define the RTO. Plots were chosen as the basic units for defining the area of interest, as the smallest part of the surface with a clearly defined boundary (drawn in the cadastral map) identification (parcel number), owners and other data – for example type and method of land use, type of real estate protection, etc. Clearly defined spatial units reduce the degree of subjectivity in defining the area of interest in different conditions and give better preconditions for comparing the results in selected localities and possibly when repeating the research, or its extension to other localities.

In both localities, the vector layer of the Cadastral Map of the Czech Republic in the SHP format distributed throughout the cadastral areas (KM-KU-SHP) was used. These are the cadastres of Budňany (cadastral code 663719) and Poučnick (cadastral code 663743) in the municipalities of Karlštejn and Kladruby nad Labem (cadastral code 665410). The affected plots were selected in the ArcMAP program based on the selected criteria and their aggregation was performed using the Dissolve function and their total area was calculated.

The criteria for selecting plots are based on direct knowledge of the destination and observation of visitor behavior. These are spatial units that fit into at least one of the following criteria:

1. The space is intended for visitors to the destination (e.g. parking lot, monument, information center, ...).
2. The spatial unit is located in close proximity to places where visitors occur (e.g. houses) and adjacent plots (e.g. gardens).
3. These are access roads, limited by the boundaries of the municipality.
4. An area where there is a high degree of personal contact between the visitor and the inhabitants of the village (e.g. railway station).

### 4. Selected destinations

#### 4.1 Karlštejn

The town of Karlštejn is located in the Beroun district, in the central part of the protected area Český kras. In 2019, the village had 848 inhabitants (CZSO, 2021). The town is known mainly for the Gothic castle of the same name Karlštejn, founded by Charles IV, which served as a fortress for storing the imperial coronation jewel, later Czech coronation jewels. The castle has been a cultural monument since 1958, and became a national cultural monument in 1962. Every year, the castle attracts more than 210,000 paying visitors, which makes the castle one of the most visited buildings in the Czech Republic (NPÚ, 2022). However, according to the castle's warden, up to 150,000 non-paying visitors come to the open courtyard every year.

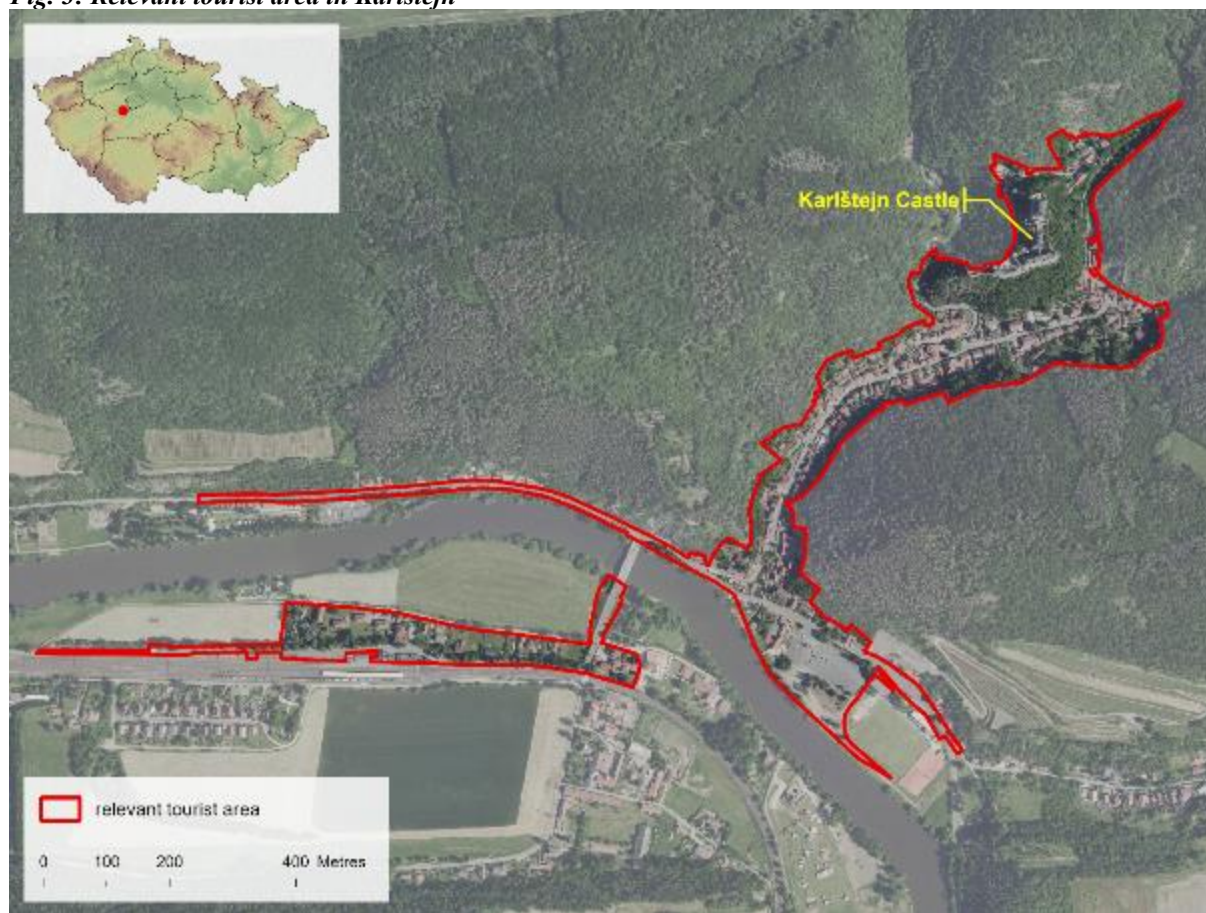
The village of Karlštejn is located in two cadastral areas, Poučnick and Budňany, with a total area of 1,209 ha (mestys-karlstejn.cz, 2022). Most of the area consists of surrounding forests or agricultural land. Tourist pressure is manifested mainly in the part of Budňany, which includes the castle, its access road and most of the secondary offer of tourism. This is where the daily crowds of visitors and locals meet. It is also possible to consider the railway station in the cadastral area of Poučnick as an area affected by tourism.

The definition of the relevant tourist area with an area of 22.964 ha is shown in Figure 3. Table 1 shows the calculated indicators of tourism in the village. The number of visitors per area reaches more than 50 times the values for the relevant tourist area.

**Tab. 1: Selected indicators of tourism in Karlštejn**

	Number of visitors to the castle	Tourist intensity rate (100 inhabitants)	Tourist penetration rate (100 inhabitants)	Number of visitors per area (1 ha)	Number of visitors per area (1 ha; relevant area)
2019	212,413	24,688.41	67.58	175.81	9,248.85
2020	120,108	13,885.32	38.04	99.42	5,230.16

Source: author's own processing, data CZSO (2021), NPÚ (2022), ČÚZK (2022a) a ČÚZK (2022b)

**Fig. 3: Relevant tourist area in Karlštejn**

Source: authors' own processing, data ČÚZK (2022a), ČÚZK (2022b)

#### 4.2 Kladruby nad Labem

Kladruby nad Labem is located in the Pardubice region, about 6 km from the authorized village Přelouč. The area of the village is 23.81 km<sup>2</sup>. The village consists of 4 parts: Kladruby nad Labem, Bílé Vchynice (approx. 8 km from Kladruby), Kolesa (approx. 3 km from Kladruby) and Komárov (approx. 4 km from Kladruby nad Labem). A total of 640 inhabitants live in the village (year 2018, CZSO, 2021), half of the entire village lives in the Kladruby nad Labem area.

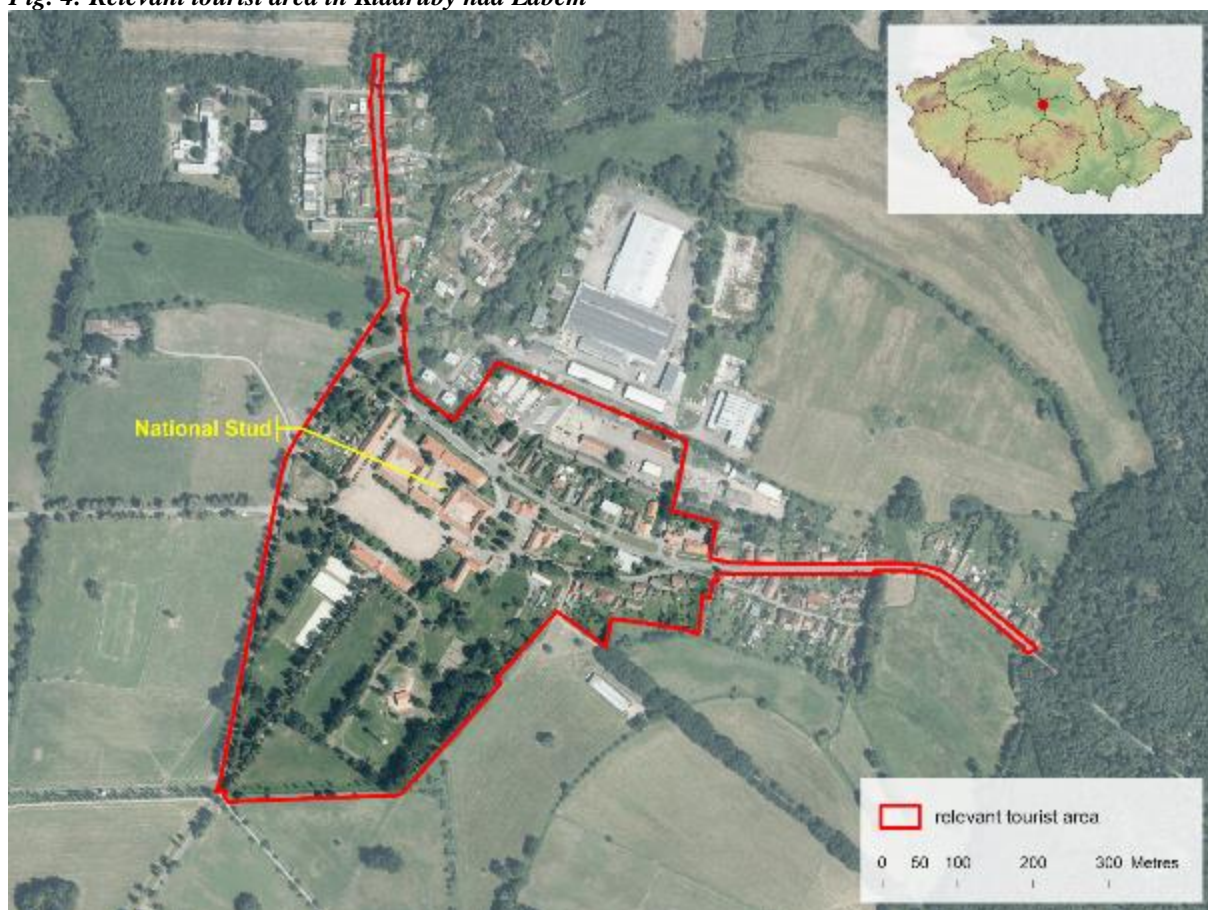
Kladruby nad Labem is associated with horse breeding, which began there in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The stud is one of the oldest in Europe and is home to probably the only breed in the world that has been bred specifically for ceremonial purposes. It is the only material "horse" monument inscribed on the UNESCO list. It has been a member since 2019, not only the stud is registered, but also the surrounding landscape for breeding and training horses with a total area of 1,310 ha (Machek, 2019; Gotthardová, 2020). The National Stud (NS) has a branch in Slatiňany, which was visited by 12,518 people in 2019. The importance of this branch is declining at the expense of Kladruby nad Labem, which had 71,694 paying visitors in 2019.

The village practically lacks a secondary offer of tourism. Tourism is concentrated in a part of the village of Kladruby nad Labem, in the immediate vicinity of the stud buildings, which is therefore affected mainly by the increased frequency of traffic. The definition of spatial aspects of overtourism in the village is shown in Figure 4. The defined area is more than 50 times smaller than the area of the whole village: 25.583 ha. Table 2 shows selected indicators of tourism, where there is the obvious difference in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> columns comparing the number of visitors per area and relevant area.

**Tab. 2: Selected indicators of tourism in Kladruby nad Labem**

	Number of visitors NS	Tourist intensity rate (100 inhabitants)	Tourist penetration rate (100 inhabitants)	Number of visitors per area (1 ha)	Number of visitors per area (1 ha; relevant area)
2019	71,694	11,237.30	61.38	30.79	2,802.35
2020	29,223	4,690.69	35.02	12.27	1,142.26

Source: authors' own processing, data NIPOS (2019), CZSO (2021), ČÚZK (2022a) a ČÚZK (2022b)

**Fig. 4: Relevant tourist area in Kladruby nad Labem**

Source: authors' own processing, data ČÚZK (2022a), ČÚZK (2022b)

## 5. Discussion and conclusion

Overtourism represents one of the major problems of tourism. Its manifestations are uniform neither in time nor in space. Defining an area in a city or municipality where manifestations are visible and residents living in the area is important not only for the correct interpretation of objective numerical indicators, which are used to identify a potential problem, but especially for the application of appropriate measures to alleviate overtourism. Each destination is specific and it is impossible to use the one-size-fits-all approach, so even spatial aspects of overtourism are not possible to specify without detailed knowledge of the environment. The paper presents two localities of the Czech cultural heritage, their example showed one of the possibilities of defining the relevant area using a demand-oriented approach, which was used in urban destinations by Amore et al. (2020). Even with the chosen method of delimiting the area, inaccuracies may arise, mainly due to the subjective point of view, as well as the indivisibility of plots or areas. Despite this, the calculated indicators, into which the area indicator enters, are many times higher and tell more about the reality of tourism. For instance in Karlštejn, the value of intensity of use exceeds the value in Venice: 7460 (Amore et al., 2020), which are considered a model destination suffering from overtourism. It should be noted that numerical values are only one element in measuring overtourism and subjective evaluations of local residents as well as destination visitors are equally or more significant (Namberger et al. 2019; Kuščer and Mihalič, 2019).

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**The paper was written within the framework of the grant MUNI /A/1506/2021 Svitava Industrial Zone in Brno as a persistent barrier and potential development area – perception of social and economic challenges and the grant MUNI/A/1406/2021 Specific factors of competitive development at the regional and local level.**