


Chapter 16


Techno–Politics, Tourism, and the Transformation of the International Political Economy in the Digital Age

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ABSTRACT

The digital age has ushered in a profound transformation of global governance, tourism practices, diplomatic engagement, and trade relations. This chapter investigates how techno-political strategies, smart tourism infrastructures, digital diplomacy initiatives, and evolving patterns of global digital commerce collectively reconfigure the international political economy. Drawing on interdisciplinary

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literature—from political science, international relations, tourism studies, and economics—this chapter develops a comprehensive conceptual framework to analyze the feedback loops among data governance, mobility management, normative influence, and platform-driven market structures. The chapter offers insights into digital technologies' challenges and opportunities for sovereign states, industry stakeholders, and civil society actors through detailed case studies, policy analyses, and normative reflections.

INTRODUCTION

The 21st century has ushered in a profound convergence of digital technologies with the fundamental frameworks of politics and economics (Talukder et al., 2020). Once confined to specialized research labs, these innovations now permeate global systems—reshaping supply chains, border security, and the exchange of information between governments and citizens. Blockchain, for instance, facilitates transparent and tamper-proof ledgers for applications ranging from pharmaceutical distribution to carbon-credit trading (Kumar et al., 2025; Talukder, 2021). Similarly, artificial intelligence (AI) has evolved beyond experimental prototypes to power mission-critical functions, such as automated risk assessments at international entry points and predictive monitoring of financial markets (Milana & Ashta, 2021).

Within this era of hyper-connectivity, the tourism industry—long valued for its role in fostering human interaction—has undergone a significant digital transformation. Today's travelers move through cities guided by personalized, real-time itineraries generated through advanced data analytics (Barashok et al., 2021; Talukder, 2025; Lina et al., 2025; Kumar et al., 2025). Sensor networks track and optimize crowd flow, environmental impact, and public safety. Meanwhile, biometric identity verification, mobile health credentials, and contactless payments streamline cross-border travel, even as they introduce complex debates on privacy, equity, and the commodification of personal data. In this emerging innovative tourism paradigm, human experiences are increasingly shaped by algorithms that curate, monitor, and monetize each aspect of the journey (Чорна et al., 2024).

At the same time, diplomacy has embraced digital platforms and virtual spaces, shifting away from traditional chancery halls and formal receptions. Diplomatic engagement now unfolds across social media, immersive virtual-reality forums, and AI-moderated discussions. Governments craft digital narratives to shape global perceptions, leveraging viral content, chatbot-driven interactions, and targeted influencer campaigns (Li et al., 2024). From live-streamed bilateral summits to data-driven public-opinion analysis, digital diplomacy minimizes geographical barriers while amplifying soft-power initiatives and geopolitical rivalries (Sheikh, 2024).

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