

## Urban tourism in Arab cities: opportunities, problems and challenges. A case study of Sétif (Algeria) and Irbid (Jordan)

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### Abstract:

Cities offer multiple opportunities for various types of tourism due to their diverse recreational and leisure facilities. These opportunities vary from one city to another depending on their unique origins and urban planning strategies to attract tourists and develop tourism-related investments.

This paper aims to shed light on the cities of Sétif in Algeria and Irbid in Jordan to elucidate the different opportunities provided by these tourist destinations. Both cities share many geographical characteristics, thanks to their urban growth and the investment opportunities they offer, including the selection of Irbid as the Arab Capital of Culture in 2022. Additionally, both cities have undertaken various projects. Furthermore, the study identifies various challenges that could form obstacles that necessitate a comprehensive strategy for tourism development.

**Keywords:** Tourist destinations, urban tourism, opportunities, challenges, Setif and Irbid cities.

### ملخص:

توفر المدن فرصًا متعددة لممارسة أنواع مختلفة من الأنشطة السياحية نظرًا لمرافقها الموجهة للترفيه والاستجمام، وتتباين هذه الفرص من مدينة إلى أخرى حسب ظروف نشأتها واستراتيجيات التخطيط الحضري لجذب السياح وتطوير الاستثمارات السياحية. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تسليط الضوء على مدينتي "سطيف" في الجزائر و"إربد" في الأردن لتوضيح الفرص المختلفة التي توفرها هذه الوجهات السياحية، حيث تشترك المدينتان في العديد من الخصائص الجغرافية، وذلك بفضل تطورهما الحضري والفرص الاستثمارية التي توفرها، بما في ذلك اختيار إربد عاصمة للثقافة العربية لعام 2022 وما تبعها من تنفيذ لمشاريع مختلفة، إلى جانب ذلك، تحديد المعوقات المختلفة التي يمكن أن تشكل تحديات يمكن من خلالها وضع استراتيجية شاملة للتنمية السياحية.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الوجهات السياحية، السياحة الحضرية، الفرص، التحديات، مدينتي سطيف وإربد.

### Introduction:

Economic and social transformations in cities in recent years have led to a restructuring of their urban fabric in response to the aspirations of their residents, who seek more mobility, entertainment, and cultural activities (Blažević, Krstinić, Nižić, 2015; Page, Duignan, 2023). These changes have introduced new land uses in urban areas through urban planning processes (Hayllar et al., 2008), allowing for the integration of various forms of entertainment, leisure, and leisure activities within cities. This has been achieved by either repurposing existing heritage buildings or creating modern spaces that align with the advancements in information and communication technology. Consequently, traditional

tourism, primarily focused on traveling to distinct places with diverse cultures and customs, has evolved into a new concept known as "urban tourism" (Nogués-Pedregal, 2019).

Governments around the world have embraced this trend to promote their cities as unique hubs for new urban tourism projects with innovative urban designs and architecture that reflect new investments in city tourism (Yildiz, Akbulut, 2013). Major cities, in particular, have become essential tourist destinations, catering to both local and international tourists. Urban tourism involves short trips to cities, lasting from one day to three days, both within and to densely populated areas (Nogués-Pedregal, 2019). According to statistics from the World Tourism Organization, the importance of urban tourism is on the rise, with a 21% increase in city tourism over the past five years (Bock, 2015).

Recognizing the significance of urban tourism, most governments have incorporated its development into their developmental strategies. They aim to harness every opportunity to promote this type of tourism, eliminate obstacles, and strengthen supportive factors for its success within the context of international challenges (Tokarchuk et al., 2022).

Furthermore, various urban destinations in Arab cities, despite their diverse geographical locations (coastal, mountainous, desert), have gained significant importance in the realm of urban tourism (Al-Saad, Ababneh, 2017). These cities offer numerous tourist attractions, representing effective opportunities that require development and enhancement to become desirable destinations for tourists. This necessitates the formulation of effective plans, carrying within them the accomplishment of various urban planning operations. These operations aim to facilitate accessibility to these destinations and equip them with necessary services to meet the needs of visitors (Benghadbane, Khries, 2020). Additionally, they are complemented by the implementation of numerous urban projects such as hotels, roadways, tram lines, and commercial centers, which have the potential to boost urban tourism.

This research will focus on elucidating the tourist destinations in the cities of Sétif, Algeria, and Irbid, Jordan. Both are Arab cities that share similar opportunities for enhancing urban tourism, albeit with differences in certain obstacles that challenge some of the tourism investment projects. These challenges relate to the rehabilitation of heritage buildings, the creation of new entertainment spaces, leisure opportunities, the provision of upscale tourism services in collaboration with the local community, and improving the quality of life (Benghadbane, Djaadjou, 2021). Such efforts result in direct job opportunities, the promotion of industries and traditional crafts, and the growth of the tourist inflow to the city. These developments occur in the face of international challenges within a comprehensive national strategy, especially considering Irbid's designation as the Arab Capital of Culture for the year 2022.

#### **Research Objectives:**

The research aims to:

- Identify the urban tourism destinations available in the cities of Sétif (Algeria) and Irbid (Jordan).
- Explain the various planning policies aimed at promoting urban tourism in both cities.
- Highlight the challenges faced by urban tourism in these cities and propose alternative strategies for its enhancement within the context of international challenges.

#### **Significance of the Research:**

The importance of the research lies in:

- The historical and geographical significance of Sétif and Irbid, deeply rooted in history, as distinctive urban tourism destinations with a multitude of opportunities.
- The importance of community participation in achieving tourism development in these cities.

- The existence of similarities in planning policies to promote urban tourism in both cities, alongside variations in some of the challenges they face.

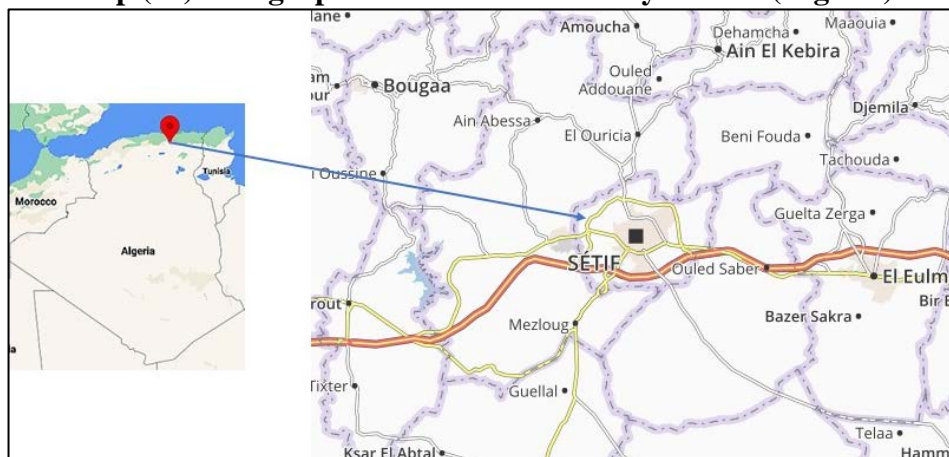
### Research Methodology:

In this research, we relied on a collection of theoretical references, including books, journals, academic studies, and articles, which allowed us to identify tourist destinations and the importance of preserving them as opportunities to enhance urban tourism in both cities. We employed a descriptive approach to elucidate these opportunities scattered throughout the two cities and their surroundings. This approach aimed to understand the various tourism planning policies in place. Additionally, a historical methodology was used to determine the historical dimensions of the emergence of certain destinations. Furthermore, a quantitative methodology was applied to handle various data related to tourist activities, considering them as two significant urban tourism destinations.

### 1- Geographical Location: A Vital, Distinct, and Development-Inducing Factor in Tourism:

The geographical location of a city plays a significant role in creating and developing tourism attractions. This is evident in the case of Sétif, which is situated at the geographic coordinates of approximately 5.43° East longitude and 36.15° North latitude. Its location places it strategically within the Eastern Highlands region, making it a vital regional hub in the urban network of the High Plateaus region. Sétif is central to several important cities, including Béjaïa and Jijel to the north, Batna and M'Sila to the south, Mila to the east, and Bordj Bou Arréridj to the west. It serves as a crossroads connecting the north, south, east, and west through key transportation routes, including National Highway 05, the railway line, and the "East-West" expressway. Moreover, it connects the north to the south through national roads with numbers 28, 09, and 78. All of these factors position Sétif as the capital of the Eastern Highlands and a transit point for various incoming flows (Djaadjou, Benghadbane, 2022), allowing its tourist destinations to be discovered by visitors from various directions (Map: 01).

**Map (01): Geographical location of the city of Sétif (Algeria)**



Source : <https://www.climatestotravel.com/climate/algeria/s%C3%A9tif>

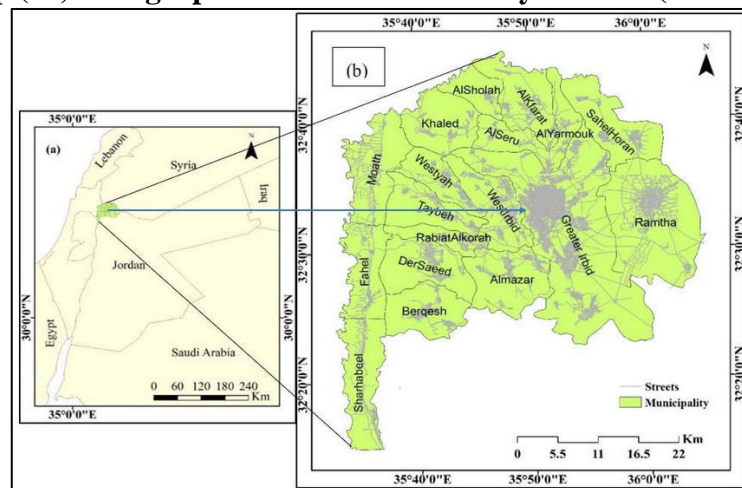
As for Irbid, it is located at approximately 35.84° East longitude and 32.55° North latitude within the vast Horan Plain, extending from the southern region of Syria to the northern region of Jordan. Irbid is situated between the Ghouta of Damascus to the north, the Safa Hills to the east, the Ajloun Mountains to the south, which connect to the Jerash Mountains and

extend to the Golan Heights to the west. Irbid represents one of the largest cities in this region, alongside cities such as Sweida and Daraa in Syria (Hazaymeh et al., 2022).

Irbid is approximately 50 kilometers north of the capital "Amman", and 60 kilometers from the Mediterranean Sea. It is 32 kilometers west of the Jordan Valley, while it is 30 kilometers away from the Jordanian-Syrian border. The climate in Irbid varies, with hot summers prevailing in the province and a milder winter in the border areas with occupied Palestine. The city experiences moderate summers and cold winters in most areas, especially those at higher elevations above sea level. Rainfall is abundant in the city during the winter, and snowfall is common in its elevated regions.

The geographical uniqueness of Irbid, coupled with its rich historical background, has allowed it to offer numerous tourist destinations, which are further enriched by its long and eventful history (Map: 02).

**Map (02): Geographical location of the city of Irbid (Jordan)**



Source: Hazaymeh et al., 2022, p. 05.

## 2- Diversity and multiplicity of urban tourism destinations:

The cities of Sétif and Irbid offer numerous urban tourism opportunities scattered throughout their urban fabric and their respective suburbs. The former is an Algerian city located in North Africa, with a long history of construction and development, bearing witness to the presence of many civilizations. This has turned it into a tourist destination that attracts various tourist flows from within Algeria and beyond.

The latter is a Jordanian city in the Middle East that was chosen to be the Arab Capital of Culture for the year 2022 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Irbid earned this designation due to its historical, cultural, and civilizational significance and its diverse tourist destinations that reflect this rich heritage.

Therefore, the most important urban tourism destinations in these two cities can be summarized as follows:

### 2-1- In the city of Sétif:

In addition to its significant geographical location in the Eastern High Plains, the city of Sétif is distinguished by its Mediterranean climate, known for heavy rainfall and snowfall during the winter season. With a rich history as one of Algeria's major cities, it boasts numerous tourist attractions spread throughout its urban fabric. These sites attract both local and international visitors for leisure, recreation, and spending their leisure time. Some of the most notable attractions in Sétif include:

- **The historical monument of "Ain El Fouara":** Located in the city center, this historical landmark is a water fountain that draws tourists from all over. It was constructed in 1898 and is situated along the tramway line, which is the primary means of access.
- **"8 May 1945" Amusement Park:** This centrally located park is situated approximately 100 meters north of the historical landmark "Ain El Fouara". It features a significant area, a zoo, green spaces, sports facilities, and more, providing entertainment services to both local residents and visitors from across the country. The Park underwent renovation, introducing various new entertainment options for all age groups, enhancing its appeal to tourists.
- **The "Al-Ali" commercial center:** This project, one of the most significant urban developments in Sétif (Photo: 01), has greatly boosted the practice of shopping and entertainment tourism. It offers modern commercial services, promotes high-end international brands (Hacid, 2016), and includes entertainment services, in addition to accommodation and business facilities.

**Photo (01): The "Al-Ali" commercial center**



Source: Authors, 2018.

- **The "Raïs" commercial center:** Positioned in the northeastern part of Sétif in the "El Hidhab" neighborhood, it is located at the intersection of two major transportation axes, ensuring easy access. "El Raiss" Shopping Center provides diverse shopping services and hosts various annual cultural events, celebrating the city's traditions and customs (Hacid, 2016).
- **The Byzantine Castle:** This heritage site, dating back to the Byzantine period, was built in 540 AD. The castle underwent restoration work to reintegrate it into the tourism sector, welcoming tourists interested in its historical significance.
- **The Antique Mosque:** One of the oldest mosques in Sétif, established during the Ottoman era, located adjacent to the historical landmark "Ain El Fouara". It serves as a historical memory for the city and attracts tourists.
- **The European Center:** As the nucleus of the city's formation, this area consists of interconnected buildings with architectural characteristics dating to the colonial period. It is supported by a grid plan of roads, and the center is a hub for commercial, service, and specialized craft activities that support the tourism sector in Sétif.
- **The National Museum:** The National Museum serves as a tourist space in Sétif, offering a detailed insight into the various civilizations that succeeded one another in the city through its exhibition halls.
- **The Islamic Cultural Center:** This extensive project is located at the eastern entrance of the city, in the "Tibinet" neighborhood, along the "May 8, 1945" transportation axis, adjacent to



the tramway line. The Islamic Cultural Center hosts a variety of cultural and Islamic activities throughout the year, contributing to the promotion of cultural tourism.

- **“El Amir Abdel Kader” archaeological park:** This Park, located 50 meters west of the historical landmark “Ain El Fouara”, is at the intersection of the main axes “Said Boukhresa” and “Ibn Sina”. The Park features various types of flowers and rock inscriptions dating back to the Roman period. It attracts visitors from different regions, significantly supporting cultural tourism in Sétif (Benghadbane, Djaadjou, 2021).

- **The archaeological site “Djemila”:** Situated 50 kilometers east of Sétif, this archaeological site has seen increasing interest from tourists nationwide. It showcases Roman civilization landmarks that are still preserved today, such as the theater, Roman baths, the market square, the “Caracalla” Triumphal Arch... (Fertas et al., 2022), covering an area of approximately 42 hectares (Photo: 02).

**Photo (02): The archaeological site “Djemila”**



Source: <https://www.fancyalgeria.com/djemila>

## 2-2- In the city of Irbid:

The city boasts some of the most beautiful archaeological sites, numerous parks, and recreational areas where nature enthusiasts can unwind and enjoy the tranquility. It also features excellent shopping centers and markets for shopaholics (Omoush, 2019). Additionally, it houses numerous historical landmarks, with some of the most famous being:

- **The old city:** Representing the heart of Irbid, known as “Downtown”, this area is home to various old buildings, lively squares, and vibrant markets. Some of the significant commercial stores and markets include the Central Gold and “Al-Hisbah” Market, reminiscent of the famous Damascus Al-Hisbah Market. Downtown Irbid also features many renowned streets, such as Al-Hussein Street leading to it, and the Cinema and Hashemi streets, which are full of commercial shops (Haddad, Fakhoury, 2016).

- **University Street :** Regarded as one of the city's liveliest streets, University Street was even listed in the Guinness Book of World Records in the 1990s for having the most internet cafes in the world. It is lined with restaurants, cafes, and shops. The street hosts the University Roundabout, featuring Yarmouk Mall, surrounded by many youthful cafes and student libraries (Fakhoury, Haddad, 2017).

- **Galaxy Park Irbid:** Galaxy Park in Irbid City Center is a place where various attractions come together. It caters to a diverse age range due to the wide variety of games it offers, making it an excellent place for family outings. Located in Irbid City Center, it provides an opportunity to combine thrilling fun with a fantastic shopping experience.

- **Dar As-Saraya Museum:** The Dar As-Saraya Museum is located in an old building made of basalt rocks located directly behind the City Hall (Photo: 03). This building was constructed in 1886 by the Ottomans and is a typical building for the type of caravans that were established along the Hejaz Railway. It includes rooms arranged around an inner paved courtyard, and it was used as a prison until 1994. Today, the museum houses a large

collection of local archaeological pieces that tell some details about the history of Irbid city (Al-kheder et al., 2009).

### Photo (03): Dar As-Saraya Museum



Source: Authors, 2023.

- **Heritage Museum:** The Jordan Heritage Museum aims to display rare archaeological artifacts that tell the story of Jordan's history. It is one of the best tourist spots in Irbid and a prominent museum that includes a diverse collection of prehistoric, pre-Christian, and early medieval artifacts. The museum provides visitors with a chance to explore the history of Jordan and the culture of Irbid, including handicrafts (Al-kheder et al., 2009).

- **Jordan Natural History Museum:** The Jordan Natural History Museum is located within Yarmouk University's premises. It was one of Jordan's first projects in terms of vital and scientific landmarks. The museum features a distinctive and diverse array of botanical, animal, and geological exhibits. It includes scientific publications and documents that have added to its importance. This museum has become a significant scientific reference for those interested in the study of nature and the environment.

- **"Araar" Cultural House :** The museum has set its location in the house of the poet "Mustafa Wahbi Al-Tall." Known as the "Jordanian poet" and referred to as "Araar," this old house is built in the Damascene style, with several rooms surrounding a paved inner courtyard. The museum exhibits the life and manuscripts of the poet, with the interior walls made of adobe and straw. In the center of the house, there is a more than 100-year-old mulberry tree. The museum is one of the most important tourist spots in Irbid, located on Hashemi Street (Photo: 04).

### Photo (04): "Araar" Cultural House



Source: Authors, 2023.

- **Parks in Irbid:** Irbid features numerous parks and gardens, providing a great place for leisure and relaxation in the lap of nature. Some of the notable parks include King Abdullah II Gardens, Al-Jalil Park, Al-Ashrafieh Park, Irbid Development Park, Tunis Garden...
- **Oued "Al- Shalala":** Shalala Valley is one of the natural tourism destinations in Irbid, It is also known for rural tourism, surrounded by a vast fertile agricultural area in the Hauran region. The valley connects to many other important Jordanian valleys and contains several visit-worthy sites such as "Khirbat Al-Zirqoun" and "Yarmouk Tunnel." The valley spans 19 kilometers and holds many ancient locations, including remnants of a Roman bridge, Roman and Byzantine rock-cut tombs.
- **"Umm Qais" site:** Umm Qais is primarily known for its proximity to the ruins of the ancient city of Djadara. It's also a former bishopric known as the Latin Catholicism. It is located atop a hill 378 meters above sea level, overlooking the lake "Tabaria", the Djolan Heights, and the Yarmouk River.

### 3- Diverse planning policies to promote urban tourism:

In light of the multiple tourist destinations in the cities of Setif and Irbid, different urban tourism enhancement policies have been identified in both cities:

#### 3-1- In the city of Sétif:

In order to develop tourist activities and boost urban tourism, Sétif's local authorities have implemented ambitious planning policies. These policies encourage the active participation of stakeholders in the city, including:

- The completion of numerous urban projects, involving changes in the use of urban land with the establishment of new service activities and the reconfiguration of urban functions. These changes have provided spaces for relaxation and leisure, catering to the city's residents and visitors. These transformations are expected to have a significant impact on the activation of urban tourism.
- An increase in accommodation capacity with the construction of several new hotels. The number of hotels increased from 40 in 2016 to 45 in 2018 out of a total of 72 hotels, including three hotel chains: "FOUR POINTS BY SHERATON", "BEST WESTERN", "ACCORHOTELS (IBIS & NOVOTEL)" (Benghadbane, Djaadjou, 2021).
- Enhancement of urban transportation networks, which are crucial for the development of urban tourism. These networks link various tourist sites and facilitate access to them. Local authorities in the city have worked to strengthen public urban transportation lines.
- The completion of the "Tramway Line" project, which is a highly important initiative aimed at providing safe and environmentally friendly transportation. The project primarily consists of three carefully planned tram lines. Only one of these lines has been completed, entering into service in 2018. It spans 22.4 kilometers and can accommodate approximately 5000 passengers per hour in one direction, passing through 22 stations. Five of these stations are directly associated with historical landmarks and urban tourism projects (Madani, 2017)., including the "Mohamed Boudiaf" station located near the Islamic Cultural Center, the "Mustafa ben Boulaïd" station adjacent to the National Museum, the High Commercial Center, and the Amusement Park, the "Saal Bouzid" station near the historical site of "Ain El Fouara" and the "Ancient Mosque", and the "Five Deprived" station close to the "Amir Abdelkader" Archaeological Park and the Mausoleum Station (Photo: 05).



**Photo (05): The Tramway in the city of Sétif**



**Source: Authors, 2018.**

These diverse policies reflect the commitment of the local authorities in Sétif to promote urban tourism through urban planning, infrastructure development, and improved transportation systems.

- Completion of other projects related to all services that support the tourism sector in Sétif. This includes banks and financial institutions working to stimulate tourism development, with approximately 15 banks located mostly in the city center.
- Ensuring the city's cleanliness through sweeping operations and urban waste collection in all neighborhoods to present it in the best light for optimal urban tourism.
- Initiating the expansion of parks and public gardens, increasing their number to six public parks, including three communal gardens, two amusement parks, and four decorative gardens. Additionally, there are nine public squares and two urban forests, with a total area estimated at around 76.31 hectares.
- Providing upscale restaurants, such as "Al Yamama" restaurant located at the eastern entrance of the city, "Mashawi Aleppo" restaurant, "Dar Al-Diyaf" restaurant in the western part of the city, and more.

### **3-2- In the city of Irbid:**

The local authorities in the city of Irbid are keen on continuous tourism planning to ensure balanced tourism development following the guidance of the Jordan Tourism Board. The key aspects of the city's tourism development plan include:

- Rehabilitating and developing the city's heritage sites and monuments, such as the ancient Roman city of Jerash and the historic Ajloun Castle, to preserve them and promote cultural tourism.
- Investing in the development of new tourist sites and attractions, such as the "Irbid Heritage Village" project, which aims to promote local heritage and crafts and enhance tourism in the city (Alzouby, Attia, 2022).
- Enhancing the city's infrastructure, including urban transportation and accommodation facilities, to provide a better experience for tourists visiting the city.
- Overall, these diverse planning policies in both cities aim to create a more attractive urban tourism destination that can meet the needs of different types of tourists, both locally and internationally.
- In the city of Irbid: Local authorities in the city of Irbid are committed to continuous tourism planning to ensure balanced tourism development according to the guidelines of the Jordan Tourism Board. The most important aspect of the city's tourism development plan includes:
- Initiating an urban project to revitalize the city center in order to make the area a tourist attraction and connect the memories of generations to the place. The project revolves around demolishing some buildings, acquiring others for expansion, creating squares, renovating and

maintaining certain buildings. This will improve the city center's status, especially if these buildings are transformed into restaurants, museums, or tourist attractions. The local community can benefit from the buildings constructed on the ruins of dilapidated buildings by renting them as small shops for craftsmen, artisans, and gift shops.

- Establishing market squares for handicrafts to provide employment opportunities and reduce poverty and unemployment actively and significantly involving the local community.
- Developing a promotional plan for tourism in some destinations, such as Dar Al-Nabulsi (Photo: 06), Dar Arrar, Dar Al-Saraya, the old municipality building, and Dar Jumah Al-Atar (Al-kheder et al., 2009).

**Photo (06): Dar Al-Nabulsi**



**Source: Authors, 2023.**

- Working on creating a traffic plan to solve traffic congestion issues by unifying the pathways within the city, creating wide roads that are in harmony with the city's expansion, and reducing narrow streets. This will alleviate the traffic crisis, revive the downtown area, facilitate access to the existing heritage houses (Beit Arrar, Al-Nabulsi, etc.).
- Emphasizing the importance of linking tourism, heritage, and local communities for sustainable development, aligning with the market's needs, and providing job opportunities for graduates. Additionally, empowering residents economically by offering marketing platforms for local products, artisans, and services to tourists and visitors, with the participation of various stakeholders, including Yarmouk University, to create an attractive investment environment for tourism.

#### **4- Multiple problems hindering the development of urban tourism:**

Despite the urban planning policies and prominent voluntary efforts by decision-makers to promote urban tourism in the cities of Setif and Irbid, there are several impediments that can be summarized as follows:

##### **4-1- In the city of Sétif:**

- Absence of tourism promotion for the mental image of Sétif, especially on an international level capable of increasing the tourist influx.
- Almost complete absence of local community involvement in the urban development strategy of Sétif.
- Lack of a tourist map for Sétif, outlining the city's key tourism opportunities.
- Issues related to the quality of tourism services, evident through their low standards (transport, accommodation, etc.).
- Weakness in the restoration of historical sites and their lack of classification makes them susceptible to various forms of destruction.
- Security issues of various kinds in many tourist sites.

- Problems related to parking, especially in areas with historical landmarks like ‘‘Ain El Fouara’’, as well as recreational and shopping areas like the High Commercial Center and the Amusement Barn.

#### **4-2- In the city of Irbid:**

- Significant accumulation of waste in the city center and it’s spread in most neighborhoods, with merchants failing to meet the minimum cleanliness standards. They leave and dispose of their shop waste in the streets, including wastewater and solid waste, in addition to the deficiency in waste collection by the municipal authority (Alzouby, Attia, 2022).
- Delays in the restoration of historical buildings in the downtown area.
- Inadequacy of available legislation in deterring violations by stakeholders, especially merchants, residents, and others.
- Insufficient financial resources, weak funding, and an inadequate budget.

#### **5- Recommendations to enhance urban tourism within the international challenges:**

In light of the raised issues afflicting the tourism sector in the cities of Sétif and Irbid, a series of recommendations can be put forward to activate urban tourism in these cities amidst international challenges. These recommendations include:

- Establishing principles and orientations for the 2030 tourism development plan in Algeria and the Jordan Tourism Board, and working towards their practical implementation to promote urban tourism.
- Necessity for adopting a new planning policy that focuses on localizing projects with an impact beyond the borders of the two cities to achieve international tourism appeal.
- Resolution of problems and disputes related to tourism investment projects, whether they are stalled or have not yet commenced.
- Active engagement of the local community in all urban development projects to support urban tourism. The local community plays a significant role in promoting the cultural products of the two cities by enhancing local industries and traditional crafts.
- Enhancing the rich heritage sites within and around the cities of Sétif and Irbid.
- Ensuring diversification of tourism activities, given the availability of various tourism opportunities in both cities.
- Ensuring the safety and security of tourists, both domestic and international.
- Resolving all issues related to transportation and promoting the use of public transportation to reduce the number of private cars.
- Drawing from successful urban tourism experiences in advanced cities and adapting their positives to the unique characteristics of the two cities.

#### **Conclusion:**

From all of the above, the multiple opportunities for urban tourism in the cities of Sétif (Algeria) and Irbid (Jordan) become evident. These opportunities have been bolstered by urban planning policies aimed at providing recreational and leisure areas and enhancing leisure services, especially in terms of transportation and accommodation. This has the potential to increase the number of tourists, both local and foreign. However, various challenges across different areas hinder the development of urban tourism in these two cities. Addressing these challenges requires collaboration among all stakeholders and decision-makers, which would have various implications on urban structures and the activation of their urban economies. This collaboration will pave the way for tackling the challenges and elevating urban tourism through multiple urban development projects and a strategic approach to investment. It will also create employment opportunities through the continuous renewal of promotional methods at various domestic and international levels.

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