

Chapter 54

The Reflections of the Recent Global Economic Crisis on the Turkish Tourism Sector: The Sample of Fairy Chimneys Area (Cappadocia)

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ABSTRACT

In this chapter, the reflections of the recent global crisis on the tourism sector have been studied. In the first part of the chapter, the effects of the global crisis on the tourism sector in the world and Turkey are examined. The latter parts of the research constitute of the evaluations regarding the effects of the global crisis on the Fairy Chimneys Area in the Cappadocia Tourism Region, and the hotels, motels, and souvenir shops there. Cappadocia was chosen as the research area since it is an important tourism attraction at both national and international level. Therefore, a survey has been conducted at the work places in Avanos, Urgüü, Göreme, and Nevşehir City Center in Cappadocia Tourism Region. The data obtained through the survey has been analyzed by SPSS 17 programs. At the end of the research, it was determined that the effects causing concern in the tourism sector started to be seen on the tourism region as well, although the economic crisis started in the USA and the European Countries.

INTRODUCTION

Being a constantly growing sector, tourism is attracting all countries' attention. In 2010, tourism pie of the world reached approximately one trillion dollar and that makes it a market that no country

could easily reject. According to the estimates of the World Trade Organization (WTO), tourism will be the fastest growing sector in the near future and world tourism revenue will be around two trillion dollars in 2020. Some countries attach a great importance to tourism within their economies. In

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such countries as Turkey having a rich touristic attraction (Alvarez, 2010), tourism is among the most important income items.

Today tourism is limited to the sea sides to a large extent. However, coasts which have lost their natural beauties with man-made facilities divert people to alternative tourism areas with natural beauty. That is why there is a gradually increasing interest in rural areas having sceneries and natural resources. In Turkey Cappadocia Tourism Region (CTR) is the leading alternative tourism area. Being an important destination for world tourism travels, CTR is attracting a great number of national and international tourists

CTR is in the central region of Turkey, mostly covering Nevşehir, Kırşehir, Aksaray, and some parts of Kayseri. The major attraction in this region is the fairy chimneys. Fairy Chimneys are the column or tower forms of surface erosion on the plateaus previously covered with thick volcanic tufa (see Figure 1). Fairy chimneys are attracting people with their different colors, shapes, sizes and intensities. In addition, since they are easily processed, fairy chimneys have been used as house, temple and residential area, too. CTR is hosting

several touristic attractions. Apart from their rare nature and interesting landscape, fairy chimneys are important for culture and faith tourism as well. Besides, it is attracting attention thanks to the possibility of observing the rural life.

Most of the trips to the CTR are culture tours. Culture tourism is regarded as an important sector because it brings higher income and contributes to the protection of the cultural values. Especially those having higher education levels, higher income groups, and over a certain age are more likely to attend the culture tours (Ozgülç 2007). The social status of the participants of these tours are higher than the average tourists. These visitors are more curious, and they can spend more money and time.

In this research, the effects of the economic crises faced in European Union countries starting from Greece and Spain and also in the United States on the Turkish tourism sector have been analyzed focusing on the example of Fairy Chimneys Area on Cappadocia (FCAC). The research aims at determining the level of influence of the economic crises on the business sector in FCAC.

Figure 1. Location map (drawn by Semra Günay Aktaş)



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