

Chapter 11

Forest Fires and the Pandemic in Mediterranean Tourism: A MEREC–CoCoSo–Based Emergency Response State Budget

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ABSTRACT

Using the MEREC-CoCoSo method, this study evaluates the impact of pandemics and forest fires on the tourism sector in Greece, France, Spain, Turkey, and Italy,

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proposing a Mediterranean Tourism Emergency Response Budget. It addresses the potential benefits of such a fund in preserving the tourism industry during disasters, particularly examining the impact of the 2020 pandemic and forest fires as well as explores whether pre-emptive creation of such a fund could allow these nations to safeguard their tourism industry and the extent of potential benefits. The study emphasizes the need for proportional financing based on the MERECCoCoSo method to ensure fairness and cooperation among participating countries, offering a potential model for other regions. The findings suggest that if implemented, the fund could notably benefit France, fostering regional cooperation and setting a precedent for sustainable tourism practices.

INTRODUCTION

Motivating Factors Behind the Research

The common preference of governments is to ensure a high standard of living for their citizens through stable economic growth and sustainability (Demir and Bahar, 2021). The volume of gross domestic product (GDP), used in measuring the standard of living, refers to the sum of the added value of households, the government, and other units operating in the economy measured at fixed prices. The contribution of sectors to economic growth is measured by the increase in added value in the current year compared to the specified base year (World Bank, 2024). When measuring the sectoral sizes, four main sectors are mainly addressed as being agriculture, industrial, production, and service sectors, according to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2024). According to the data for 2021, the sector volumes were determined to be 4.16% for the agriculture sector, 19.20% for the industrial sector, including construction, 11.93% for the manufacturing sector, and 64.70% for the service sector. The tourism sector is a subcomponent of the service sector. Considering the OECD member countries, the tourism sector accounts for an average of 4.4% of the GDP and 6.9% of the employment, while it accounts for 21.5% of service exports (OECD, 2020). Tourism-based activities are considered one of the sources of growth, especially in countries experiencing economic difficulties (Nene and Taiwan, 2017). The sector contributes to the economy by encouraging employment and the possibility of establishing business networks with the opportunities it provides (Cortes-Jimenez and Pulina, 2010). In addition, it allows the elimination of payment deficits by increasing foreign exchange reserves

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