

MEASURES TO OVERCOME THE COVID-19 CRISIS IN THE TOURIST SECTOR: THE EXPERIENCE OF SPAIN

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In 2020, the tourism sector in many regions of the world suffered heavy losses. Global restrictions on travel, requirements to stay at home have had negative consequences for the tourism sector. Countries that are heavily dependent on tourism, faced with a difficult financial situation, have been forced to radically reconsider marketing, business model and ways to diversify business. The multiplier effect of tourism is manifested in the development of firms that meet not only tourism needs but also the development of related markets. The topic of restoring the tourism sector is also relevant for Ukraine, as the country has also suffered losses in the field of tourism. The tourism business in Ukraine has already lost more than \$ 1.5 billion. Thousands of workers in Ukraine's tourism sector have lost their jobs. In this study, we examined the impact of the pandemic on regions of the world, and analyzed in more detail the consequences for Spain.

The tourism sector plays an extremely important role for Spain. Spain is one of the most visited countries in the world with a large number of tourists per year. Spain is the second most visited country after France and the second most visited by the United States in terms of tourism spending. Thus, the country's experience in combating the effects of the pandemic in the tourism sector is important because it can be applied in Ukraine.

The most important measures of economic support for the tourism sector implemented by Spain were the following:

- labor measures: programs to support the population who lost employment - 3,386,000 applications;
- financial assistance through an application for bank loans with state guarantees - 6,500 million euros;
- support for self-employed workers in the tourism sector through financial benefits - 250,000 workers received assistance;
- tax measures, which are determined in the deferral of debts and taxes on business activities for a period of six months.

It should be noted that some hotels have taken the initiative to combat the effects of the pandemic. Thus, five Spanish hotel groups (Meliá Hotels International, Iberostar Hotels & Resorts, Barceló Hotel Group, Riu Hotels & Resorts, NH Hotel Group) have set a common goal - to protect the health of customers and their employees, adhering to strict hygiene standards in institutions, by enhancing digitalization.

Our research has shown that the most important role in developing effective measures in response to economic challenges in the tourism sector is played by constructive interaction between the state and the private sector. Acting unilaterally, the government is unable to eliminate the causes and consequences of the crisis, nor to ensure economic stability and the restoration of tourism. Further research will focus on the experience of other European countries in overcoming the effects of the crisis in the tourism sector.

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