

EXPLORING INTERNATIONAL TOURISM TRENDS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN: CONVERGENCE OR BIG DIVERGENCE

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ABSTRACT

Triggered by the phenomenon of globalisation and unrest on both sides of Mediterranean, during recent decades there has been a process of tourism travelling re-switching in the tourism expenditure domain; hence the debate over convergence or divergence of the international tourism flows, caused by abruptly fall out of vogue of some destinations due to negative shocks produced by unrest in that volatile region, has never ended. Following on the extensive multidisciplinary literature on this issue, the purpose of this paper is two-fold 1) to apply a traditional analysis of convergence (sigma and beta convergence) in tourism demand flows and Principal Component and Cluster Analyses to investigate on the existence of different international tourism models, 2) to analyse tourism receipts expressed as a share of total and derive a possible classification of the countries and its profiles by means of a multivariate approach. This paper tries to test the hypothesis of convergence of tourism demand in Mediterranean area. We considered a sample of 20 Mediterranean countries, and used data from the World Indicator Database 1995-2015, keeping all relevant variables that interfere with international tourism demand in that region. The expected results of this paper can be interpreted as a further contribution to the literature on contemporary positive economics in the international tourism domain.

Keywords: Tourism demand, receipts, arrivals, convergence, Principal Component Analysis, Cluster Analysis