

IMPACT OF THE ORGANISATION OF MEGA SPORTING EVENTS ON SELECTED ELEMENTS OF THE TOURISM SECTOR

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Abstract

Introduction. In the world-wide literature, there is no unanimity in the assessment of the impact of mega sporting events on the tourism sector. Therefore, the main purpose of this study was to quantify the impact of mega sporting events on changes in tourist inflow and the amount of expenditure incurred by visitors. **Material and methods.** In this study, an ex-post analysis of many different categories of mega sporting events was carried out in the context of their impact on selected aspects of the tourism sector in host countries. The study examined events organised in the years 1996-2014 classified into one of four categories: the Summer Olympic Games (SOG), the Winter Olympic Games (WOG), the Football World Cup (FIFA), and the European Football Championship (UEFA). The approach adopted made it possible to analyse the impact of sporting events on the tourism sector over 15 years. Data on both the inflow of tourists and the expenditure generated by them were taken from a single source – reports of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). **Results.** The results obtained are characterised by ambiguity, although the study identified the categories of sporting events and the sporting event phase in which clearly positive or negative effects on the tourism sector could be observed. **Conclusions.** The difficulty in confirming unambiguously positive, tangible effects on the tourism sector resulting from the organisation of mega sporting events makes it problematic to justify the commitment of large expenditure to preparing and conducting these events. It is necessary to look for other, intangible benefits related to the organisation of these events. It also seems appropriate to continue the research undertaken in the future on the basis of data disaggregated at the regional level.

Key words: sporting events, tourist inflow, long-term tourism, Olympic Games, football