



The Limitation of the Freedom of Movement in Covid-19 Pandemic Times and the Economic Recovery Related to Tourism in Border Regions

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Abstract. This paper has as objective to discuss about the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts in border regions having as special focus the limitation of freedom of movement and the related matters linked to tourism and other economic sectors in border regions. The first aspect to be analyzed is the loss of tourists/travelers because of the closure of borders and the consequences of this reduction to border regions especially. Then it is discussed the economic, cultural and local routine aspects changed in virtue of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the next point it is presented some policies created to overcome or to reduce the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic. It is necessary to foster mass vaccination to avoid the spreading of the SARS-CoV 2 virus. After that it is possible to create special visas to vaccinated persons having recent exams with negative result. At last to maintain the sanitary measures such as social isolation and use of products to avoid the spreading of virus.

Keywords: Border Regions, COVID-19 Pandemic Impacts, Limitation of Movement, Tourism Sector.

1 Introduction

This paper discusses the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on the limitation of freedom of circulation of persons and its diverse effects related to border regions. The main focuses are related to economic, cultural and local aspects. It is also debated the importance of the tourism in these regions and the consequences of COVID-19 pandemic in this sector as well as the possibilities to recover the local economy.

2 Goals

As for the purposes of this paper are as follows:

- To present the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in tourism sector and in the border regions.
- To discuss about the policies of limitation of freedom of movement.

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- To analyze the economic impacts in the border regions in relation to the limitation of freedom of movement.
- To analyze the steps and possibilities to recovery the tourism trade.

3 Methodology

The methods used in this paper are descriptive. It is discussed aspects about the limitation of the freedom of circulation having as reference the COVID-19 pandemic and its relations with the border regions. It is also used UNWTO data to analyze the international tourism changes. Having as reference these UNWTO data it is focused the economic and health circumstances of the border regions usually influenced by the great flow of people, especially tourists and travellers.

4 Discussion

National borders are relevant areas in many aspects. They are places of relevant cultural dialogues, important flow of people as well as they are great places to trade. The flow of people allows that these areas produce a lot of money because these areas are usually a free regions and this aspect attract many people next of far to these regions interested in better prices or the opportunity to see places influenced by different cultures and people. Based on this flow of people tourism is one of the greatest sector of these regions.

COVID-19 pandemic was responsible for a worldwide health problem and two of the first actions to avoid the virus circulation were the social isolation and the closure of borders to receive people of determined countries [1]. Both actions were responsible for a great financial loss in all the countries practically and the border regions were one of the most harmful regions of the countries. Regional studies have been produced to verify if this policy of closure of borders made resulted in the reduction of cases and deaths [2].

According to World Health Organization, there have been 205,338,159 confirmed cases of COVID-19, as well as 4,333,094 deaths in 13th August 2021. Related to the amount of cases in continents, Americas lead with 79,622,691 confirmed cases followed by Europe (62,121,237), South-East Asia (39,706,780), Eastern Mediterranean (13,449,494), Africa (5,246,375), Western Pacific (5,190,818) [3].

This pandemic has produced a great impact in the international travel and tourism sectors. Studies have demonstrated that several tourism and travel sectors have been experimented a significant fall of income [4]. Based on the World Tourism Organization – UNWTO database, there was a loss of 1,1 billion of international tourist arrivals, producing a loss of US\$ 1,3 trillion in tourist exports in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic [5]. Based on these UNWTO data, international tourism returned to levels of 30 years ago.

The matters related to the national closure of borders is broader than the limitation of freedom of circulation itself. Economic, cultural and local aspects are some of the issue impacted by the COVID-19 in the border regions changing peculiar circumstances

of these regions in relation to the local population as well as the travelers and tourists [6].

On the cultural aspects, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the border regions because the peculiar characteristics of these regions are based on the mutual cultural dialogue of the people of these regions. These dialogues produce singular habits and behaviors with no similarity with other regions of the respective countries. This singular culture is a great factor to attract visitors of other places to keep in touch with these local cultural identities.

Related to the economy issues, COVID-19 pandemic has reduced the flow of people in the border region of each country and between the border regions of these countries. It was usual that these regions received a great amount of tourist and travelers because it is great places to have contact with two or more cultures and a different way of life. Other important economic aspect linked to the flow of people of other cities and regions is that it is usual that border regions are also tax free regions. It allows that the tourist/traveler may visit the region to go to places with cultural, natural or historical importance and also to purchase products with better prices than other regions. The prohibition to pass through the national borders to avoid sanitary matters impacts the economy of border regions hardly.

On this issue the tourism has been one of the most harmful sector because of this pandemic. The hard reduction of freedom of circulation in national and international produced loss reduction of clients. The lockdown and social isolation policies make the tourism less attractive because it is probable that the places with tourist interest would be closed or with reduction of capacity which makes more difficult and perhaps more expensive to buy a ticket to enter in these places. Other aspects that influences the choice of not to travel is the possibility to contaminate to be exposed in different environments with diverse levels of government and tourism stakeholders engagements to avoid the spreading of COVID-19.

Tourism in border regions is one of the most important economic activities. It has the capacity to create income and to foster other economic activities. In border regions the tourism sector is important to receive the persons of other regions interested on the cheaper price of product because it is usual that these regions are tax free regions as well as to keep in touch with a singular culture based on the dialogue of two populations.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the closure of national borders have also influenced the habits of the local population. In border regions it is usual the local population to make your daily routine passing through the national border. It is common that people live in one side of the national border and work, study or make shopping in the other side in border regions. This aspect impacts the local way of life and economy in the two sides of the border region making simple and habitual activities more complex.

Some actions are suggested to overcome these obstacles and to try to begin the economic recovery. The first action is the massive vaccination. The implementation of a broad vaccination campaign is still the most effective policy to reduce the spread of coronavirus. The more people are vaccinated lower is the possibility of spreading COVID-19 reducing the rate of hospitalizations and deaths [7].

The second possible action is the creation of special visas. To be qualified to receive one of these special visas it is necessary that the person is vaccinated with double or single (in the case of vaccines with single dose) doses [8,9]. Meeting these requirements some authorities that it is possible to allow the entering of a person in a country or in a region such as the border regions. In all the cases it is necessary to reinforce the surveillance and to indicate quarantine to tourist/traveler with positive exam and to make a new exam in the end of this isolated term [10].

The third possible action is to maintain the sanitary measures. This aspect is very important in border regions because they are places that attract a lot of people of other cities and regions. This characteristics is capable to foster the spreading of COVID-19. Because of these points it is necessary to maintain policies such as social isolation, use of masks and alcohol-based hand sanitizer together with the aforementioned two actions it is possible to maintain the commercial establishments opened contributing with the local economy.

A better control of spreading of the coronavirus will be the fundamental point to begin the recovery of the tourism and travel sectors producing a gradual rise of the economic indicators. This economic recovery will also benefit the border regions because they usually are areas of a great flow of persons either they have tourism attractions such as Iguazu Falls or they offer an economic benefit being a free trade area.

It will be necessary that the tourism and travel supply chains engage to create and maintain devices and behaviors to avoid the spread of COVID-19 in their establishments [11]. All tourism sector stakeholders must contribute to reduce the circulation of SARS-CoV 2 in their possibilities to avoid a great amount of cases and deaths resulting lockdowns and closure of establishments.

5 Conclusion

SARS-CoV 2 has been responsible for the greatest pandemic in the recent times. This sanitary matter makes a great impact in the economy as well as in the daily habits of the population. This impact is harder in the border regions because there are two different flow of person. On the other hand the people of other regions that travel in virtue of leisure or culture. On the other hand there is the local population that uses the two sides of the borders to make daily activities.

To create means to protect these areas of spreading of COVID-19 is very important. Mass vaccination, creation of special visas/certificate whose took two or single doses as well as the maintenance of sanitary measures are important action to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic and to recover the economy in a medium term.

Border regions are zones with circulation of different people of diverse origins. Because of this aspect it is necessary to reinforce the attention and concern about the possibility to be a focal point to spread the coronavirus to other regions of these countries.

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