
PART III

CASE STUDIES

The 2008-09 economic and financial crisis or the EU enlargement received a greater attention and editorial space during the elaboration of this atlas. However, during the past year two major disruptions shook the world, the daily life, and the public discourse in ways we have never witnessed before. Both disruptions will play a critical role in the following decade, and while we are not yet able to predict their long-term impact, we considered necessary to allocate case studies meant to provide a better understanding of the implications and repercussions of such events.

The first disruption is represented by the constant increase in frequency of the heat waves, a clear expression of the climate change affecting the planet. While this disruption manifested continuously during the last decades, no proper attention was given until the 2021 climate reports of UN. According to these reports, the frequency and intensity of heat waves will continue to rise during the following years. To this end, we considered that a better understanding of such type of events is mandatory in order to enhance the preparedness of local and national actors.



European summer heat wave of 2003

A case study detailing the medium and long-term impact of the 2003 heat wave corroborated with the magnitude and the intensity of the shock was developed. It should be mentioned, nevertheless, that if 2003 was to that point the hottest year in Europe (at least, since 1500), that record was broken several times since. What seemed only isolated events in the past, will become ordinary in the following decades. In the analysis of heat waves impact, the tremendously high number of losses of human lives, as well as the medium and long-term impact upon agriculture must be taken into account, besides the immediate economic cost. The case study highlighted extremely concentrated effects on Central and Southern parts of the continents, although minor to moderate impacts could be observed throughout all regions.

The second disruption is embodied by the COVID-19 pandemic, which represents the biggest health-related shock since 1918. At the moment of writing this atlas, the COVID-19 pandemic is still ongoing, and while several sectors are currently resuming (partially or totally), it is difficult to predict when the pandemic will end. Due to this limitation it is currently extremely difficult to evaluate the resilience performance of the territories affected by the shock. However, several studies which took place during the project lifetime helped us understand the initial impact and the first reaction of local communities.



Wellbeing during pandemic in Romania

This case study focused on wellbeing during the pandemic period in Romania. Data has been collected during the second pandemic wave (November 2020) at individual level, with a sample of 1201 respondents that is representative for Romania's population. The analysis was based on the items and the aggregated score of the Wellbeing index developed by the World Health Organisation (World Health Organization, 1998). The case study highlighted, among other aspects, noticeable gender differences in wellbeing values.



Tourism and the COVID-19 pandemic: the case of Romania

This case study focused on what represented, without a doubt, the most impacted economic sector during the pandemic – tourism. Worldwide, the year 2020 recorded the most dramatic fall in the number of visitors in the history of the modern tourism, with YTD changes varying from -68% to -84% depending on the tourism macroregion. Several attempts of measuring the international and macroregional impact were conducted, but giving that the pandemic still affects a large part of the global economies and the recovery process is unequal, such attempts have only a limited practicality. This case study focused on the impact that the pandemic had at local level on Romanian tourism destinations and on the seasonal changes that occurred between 2019 and 2020. Despite the overall negative impact of the pandemic, the destinations that had little to almost no tourism activity, proved to be the most capable to recover from the shock, being advantaged by the new preference of the tourists for destinations less predisposed to gathering large masses of tourists.



Social media & compliance with COVID-19 preventive measures

The last case study investigated the extent to which people complied with the preventive measures and the factors that influence the compliance in order to identify the correct measures that local and regional authorities should take for increasing the ability of communities to face the pandemic. Applied on the metropolitan area of Cluj-Napoca, it is one of the first studies of this kind conducted in Romania. Results underline the important positive effect of specialized journals/websites, TV and official press releases on compliance with the preventive measures, but also the significant negative effect of social media.