

Mediterranean Tourism and the Covid-19 pandemic



XIX Annual Strategic Planning Forum

Round Table "International Cooperation for Regional Development"

St Petersburg, 26 October 2020

Dr Nikos Vagionis, ΚΕΠΕ
Prof. Emerita Lila Leontidou, ΕΑΠ

The pandemic and regional differences



- It has lasted for the whole of 2020 and has claimed over 1 million lives.
- It started in the East but escalated in the West and the globalized countries of the North.
- The following map is by the Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center (<https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html>) on 4.10.2020
- Our case study, Greece, then had cumulatively 19613 cases, 405 deaths (now it has reached 25000 cases and 500 deaths)
- <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/greece/>

Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center

<https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html> on 4.10.2020



COVID-19 Dashboard by the Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) at Jo...



Global Cases

34,909,703

Cases by Country/Region
/Sovereignty

7,382,944 US

6,549,373 India

4,906,833 Brazil

1,198,663 Russia

848,147 Colombia

821,564 Peru

790,818 Argentina

789,932 Spain

757,953 Mexico

679,716 South Africa



Cumulative Cases

Global Deaths

1,033,249

209,394 deaths
US

145,987 deaths
Brazil

101,782 deaths
India

78,880 deaths
Mexico

42,407 deaths
United Kingdom

35,968 deaths

US State Level
Deaths, Recovered

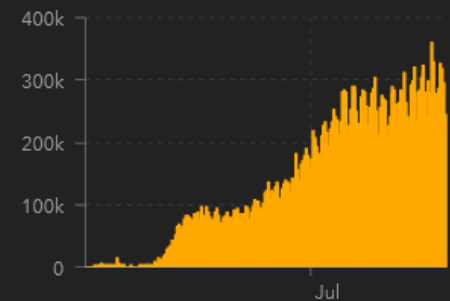
33,197
deaths, **77,004**
recovered
New York US

16,295
deaths, **677,244**
recovered
Texas US

16,135
deaths, **34,979**
recovered
New Jersey US

Global ...

US Dea...



Daily Cases

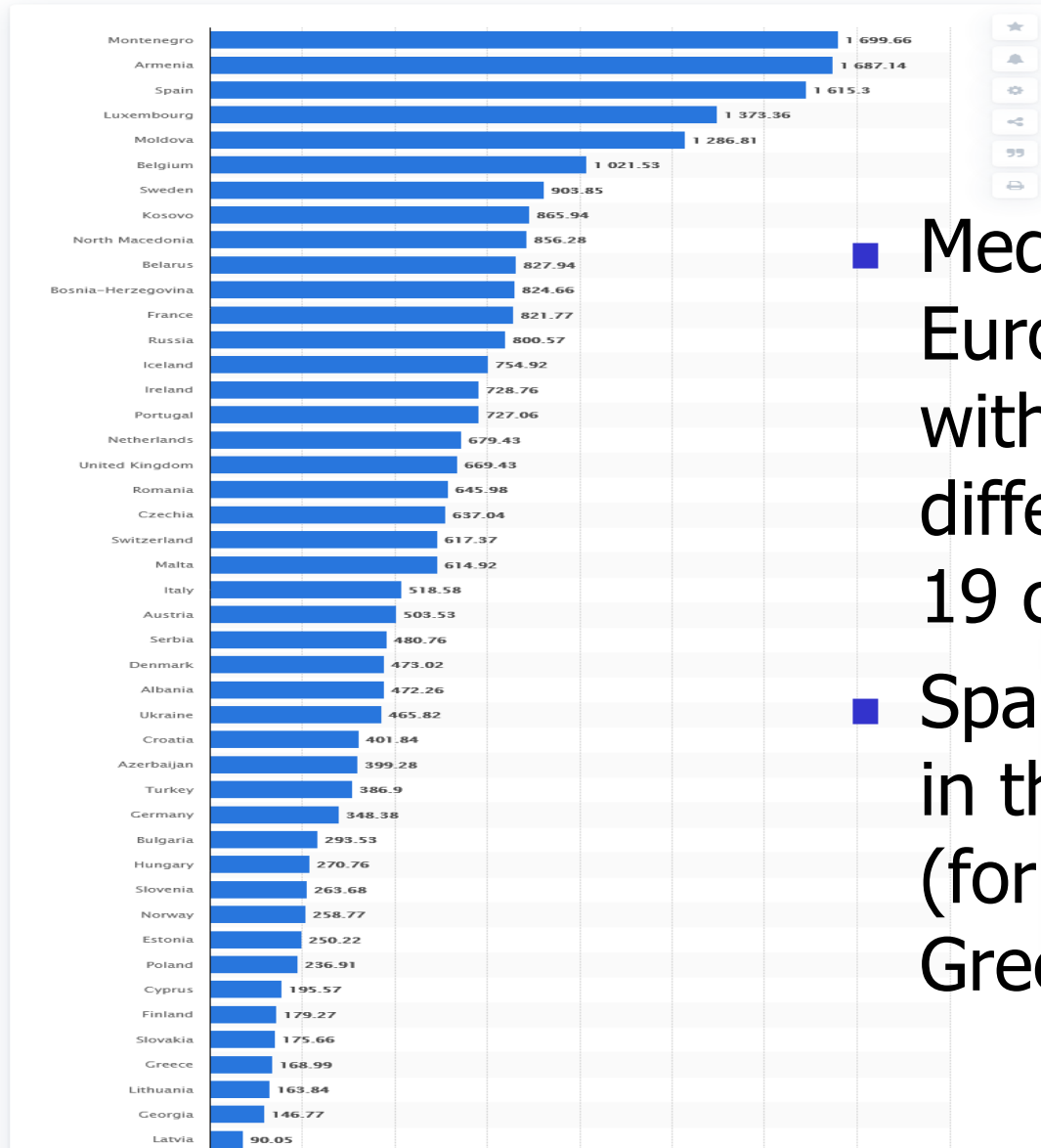
Last Updated at (M/D/YYYY)
10/4/2020, 10:23 AM

188

Lancet Inf Dis Article: [Here](#). Mobile Version: [Here](#). Data sources: [Full list](#). Downloadable database: [GitHub](#), [Feature Layer](#).
Lead by [JHU CSSE](#). Technical Support: [Esri Living Atlas team](#) and [JHU API](#). Financial Support: [JHU](#), [NSF](#), [Bloomberg Philanthropies](#) and [Stavros](#)

Health & Pharmaceuticals > State of Health

Incidence of coronavirus (COVID-19) cases in Europe as of September 30, 2020, (per 100,000 population)



- Mediterranean Europe comes up with acute differences in covid-19 cases.
- Spain high up, Italy in the middle (formely highest), Greece very low...

Expansion of Covid-19 in Europe:

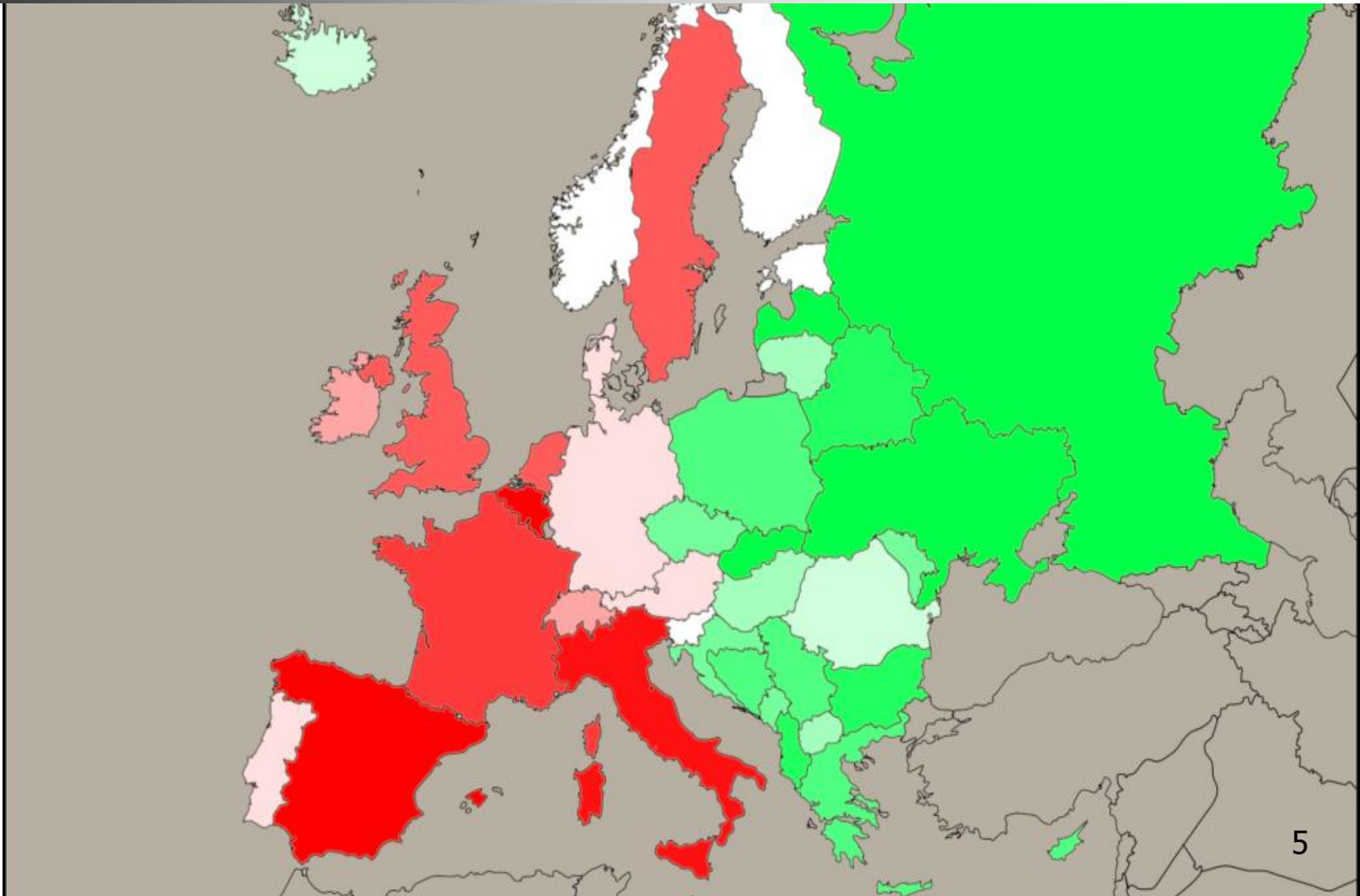
An East-West division in the incidence of deaths

**Deaths till 24
April 2020**

Pink: >880
(Portugal)

Red: >26300
(Italy)

Green: under
680 (Russia)

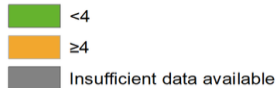


Expansion of covid-19 in EU:

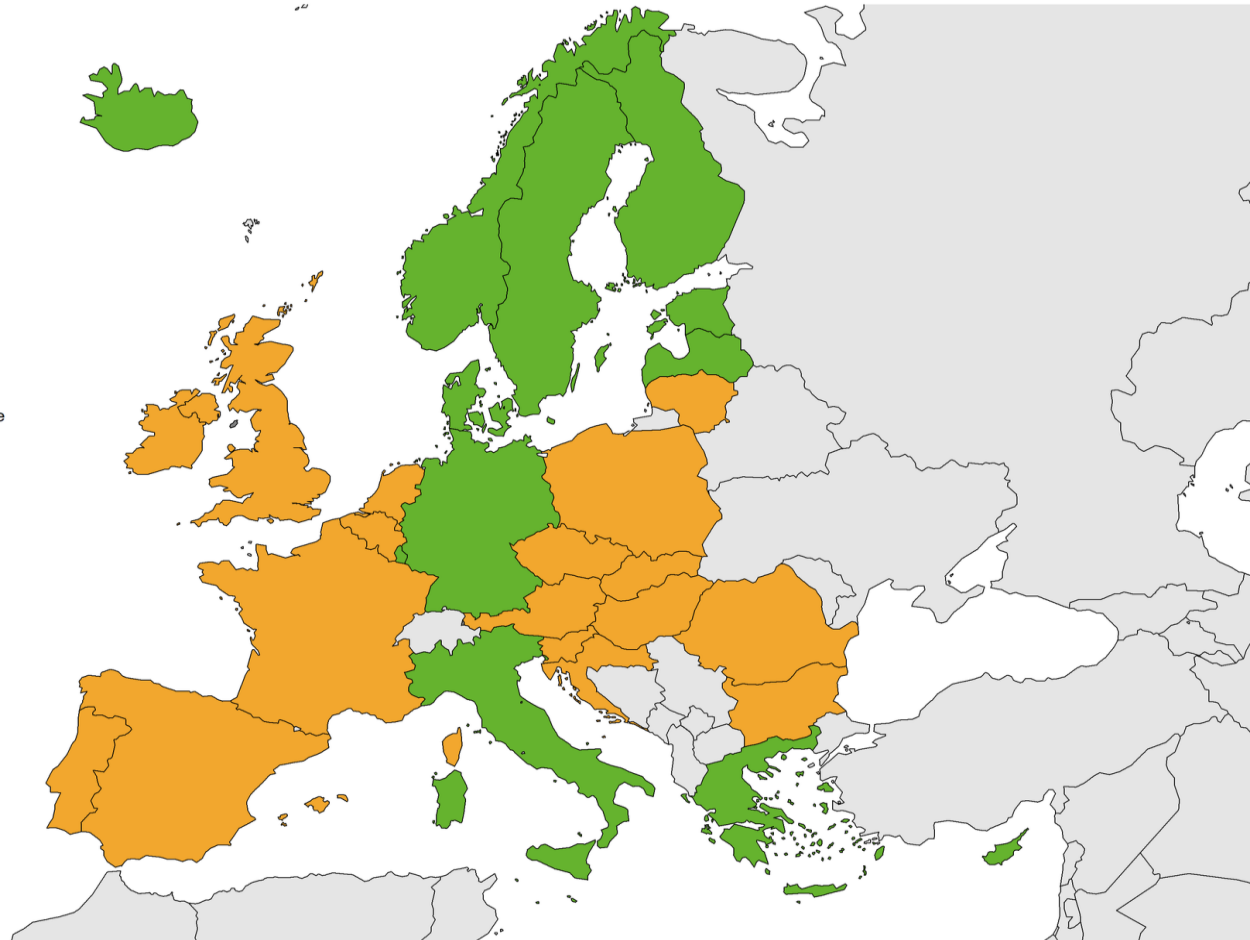
October 2020: Positivity Rates



Positivity rate week 41



Countries not visible in the main map extent



Administrative boundaries: © EuroGeographics © UN-FAO © Turkstat.
The boundaries and names shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the European Union. ECDC. Map produced on: 16 Oct 2020

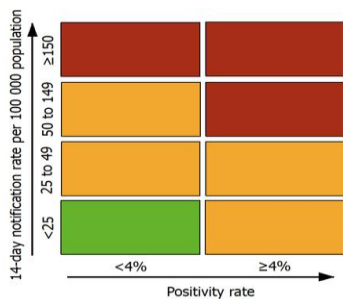
Source: <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/covid-19/situation-updates/weekly-maps-coordinated-restriction-free-movement>

Expansion of covid-19 in EU:

October 2020: Positivity and Quarantine Rates



14-day notification rate and test positivity for EU, EEA and UK weeks 40 - 41



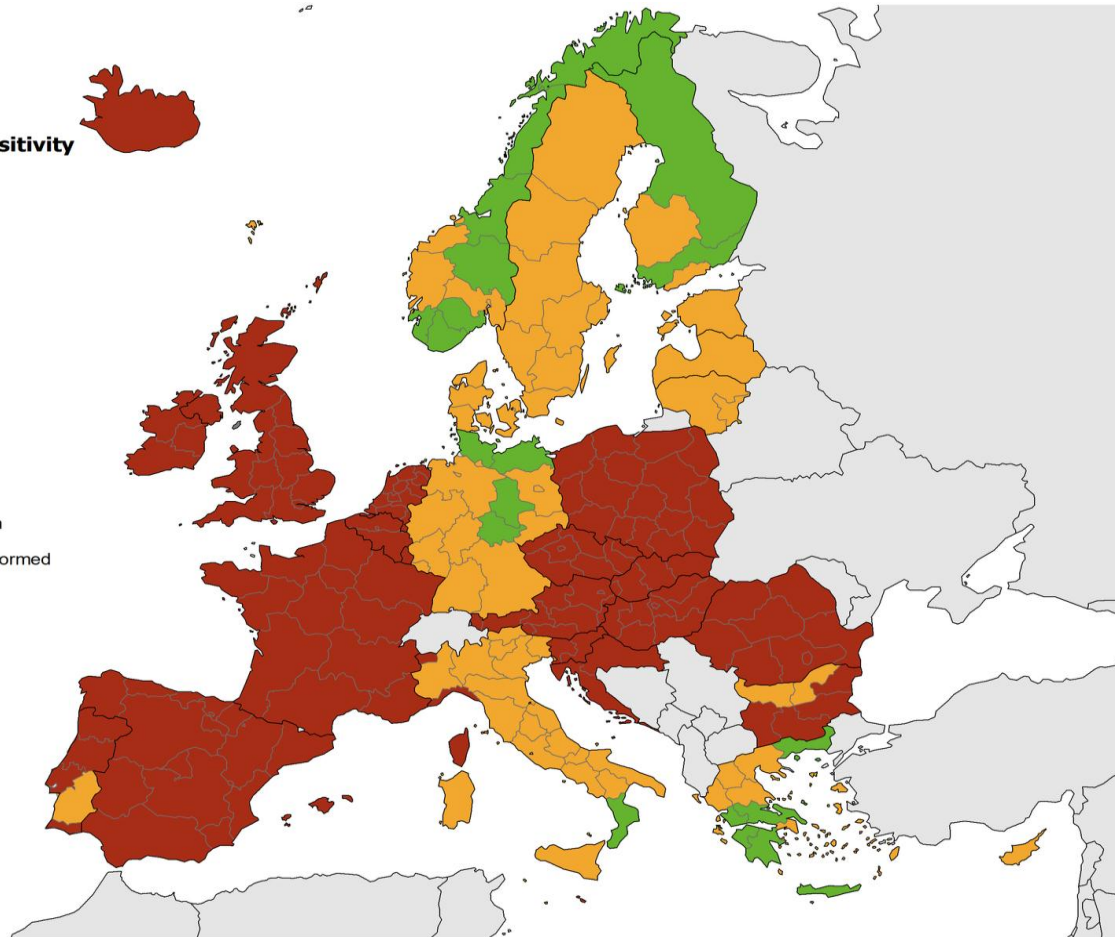
- Testing rate < 300 per 100 000 population
- No data available on number of tests performed

Regions not visible in the main map extent

- Azores
- Canary Islands
- Greenland
- Madeira

Countries not visible in the main map extent

- Malta
- Liechtenstein



Administrative boundaries: © EuroGeographics © UN-FAO © Turkstat © Kartverket © Instituto Nacional de Estadística - Statistics Portugal. The boundaries and names shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the European Union. ECDC. Map produced on: 16 Oct 2020

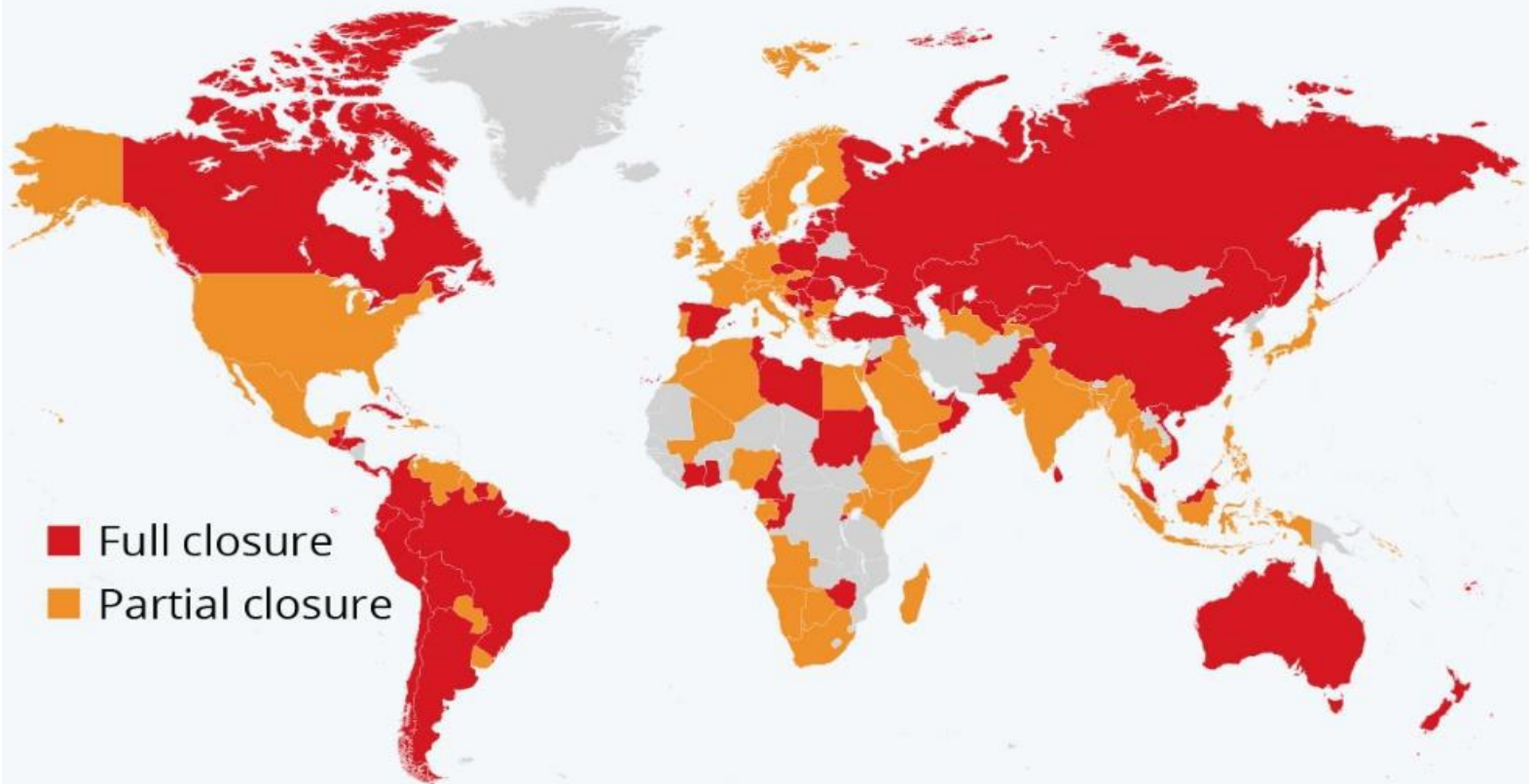


Border closures

- The first ones were administered in March 2020 and affected tourism in a terminal manner.
- Besides the lockdown in each country, which was imposed in the spring, new restrictions are administered in the autumn of 2020, and
- Travel restrictions keep being introduced by many countries, closing the borders or administering quarantines for travelers. See next slides
https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/council-proposal-coordinated-approach-restriction-movement_en.pdf

The Status Of Global COVID-19 Border Closures

Countries that have closed borders to noncitizens and nonresidents (as of March 31, 2020)



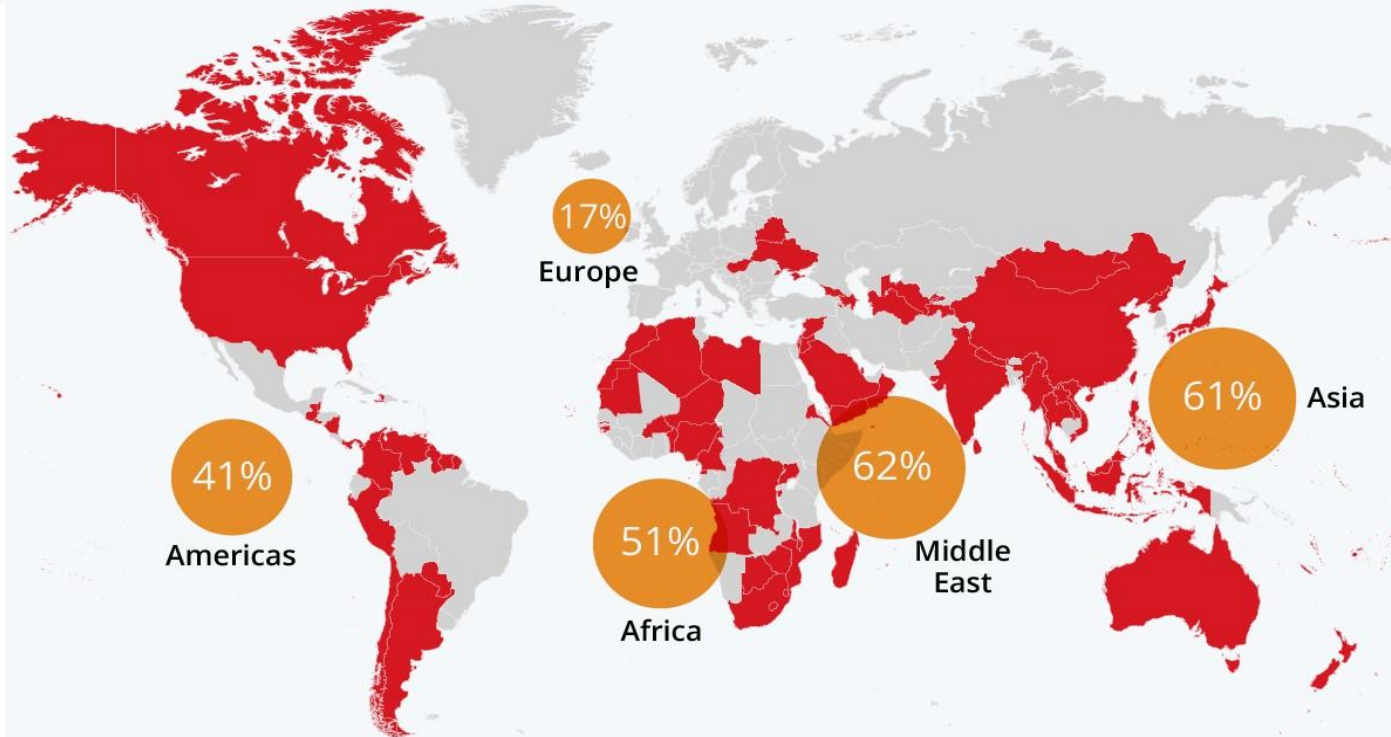
Source: Pew Research Center



Border Closures Remain

as of Sep.2020, and become stricter as winter comes.

Countries which have not opened their borders for travelers in the COVID-19 pandemic and regional totals



As of September 1, 2020.

Source: U.N. World Tourism Organization

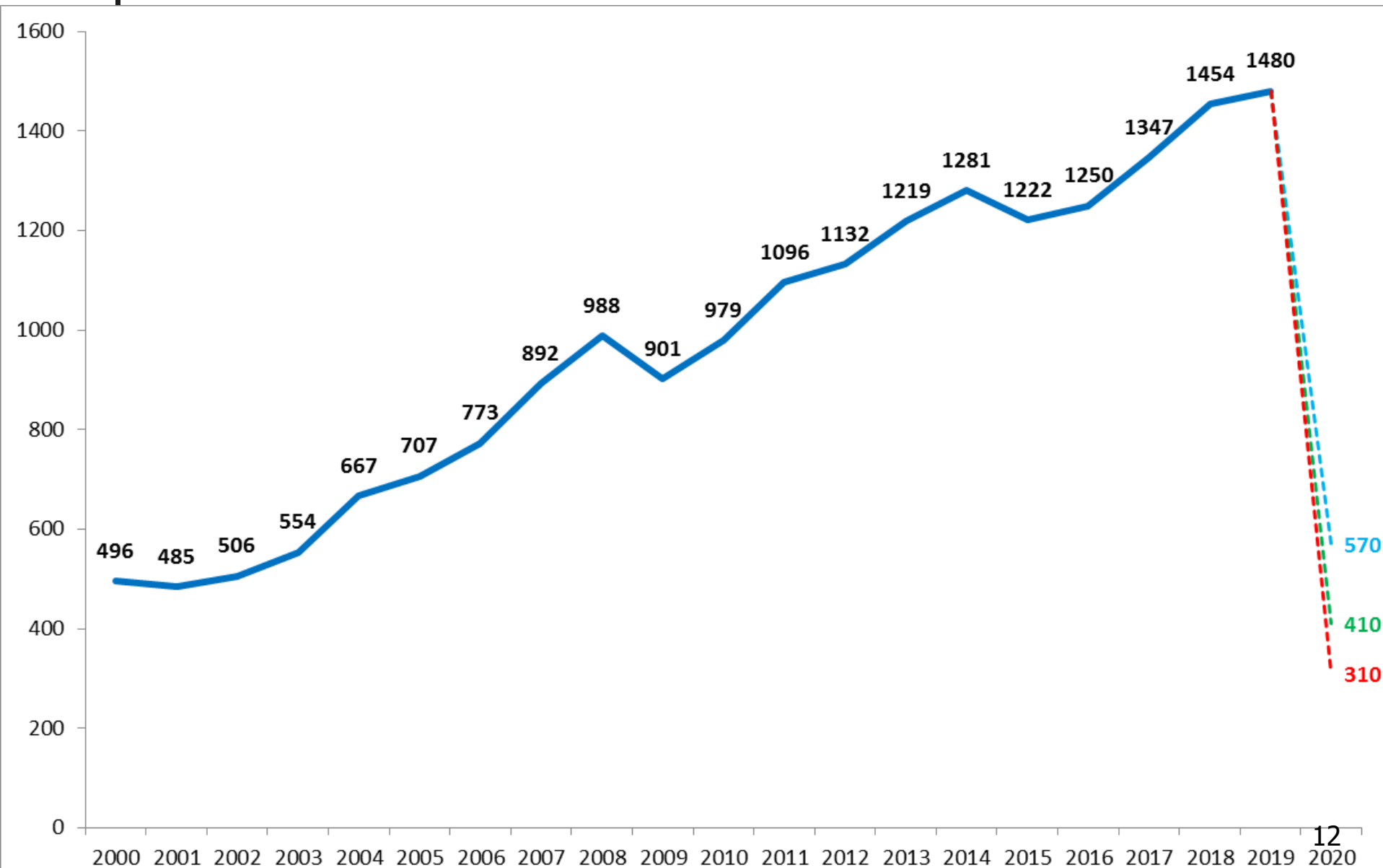




Traveling at a standstill

- There were other factors of tourism recession besides border closures.
- Institutional travel restrictions have been enhanced by individual behaviour for fear of contracting covid-19
- But also the worst economic recession after consecutive crises, caused by repeated lockdowns, has boosted unemployment and left less disposable income for travel and tourism.

3 scenarios for tourism receipts (UNWTO)



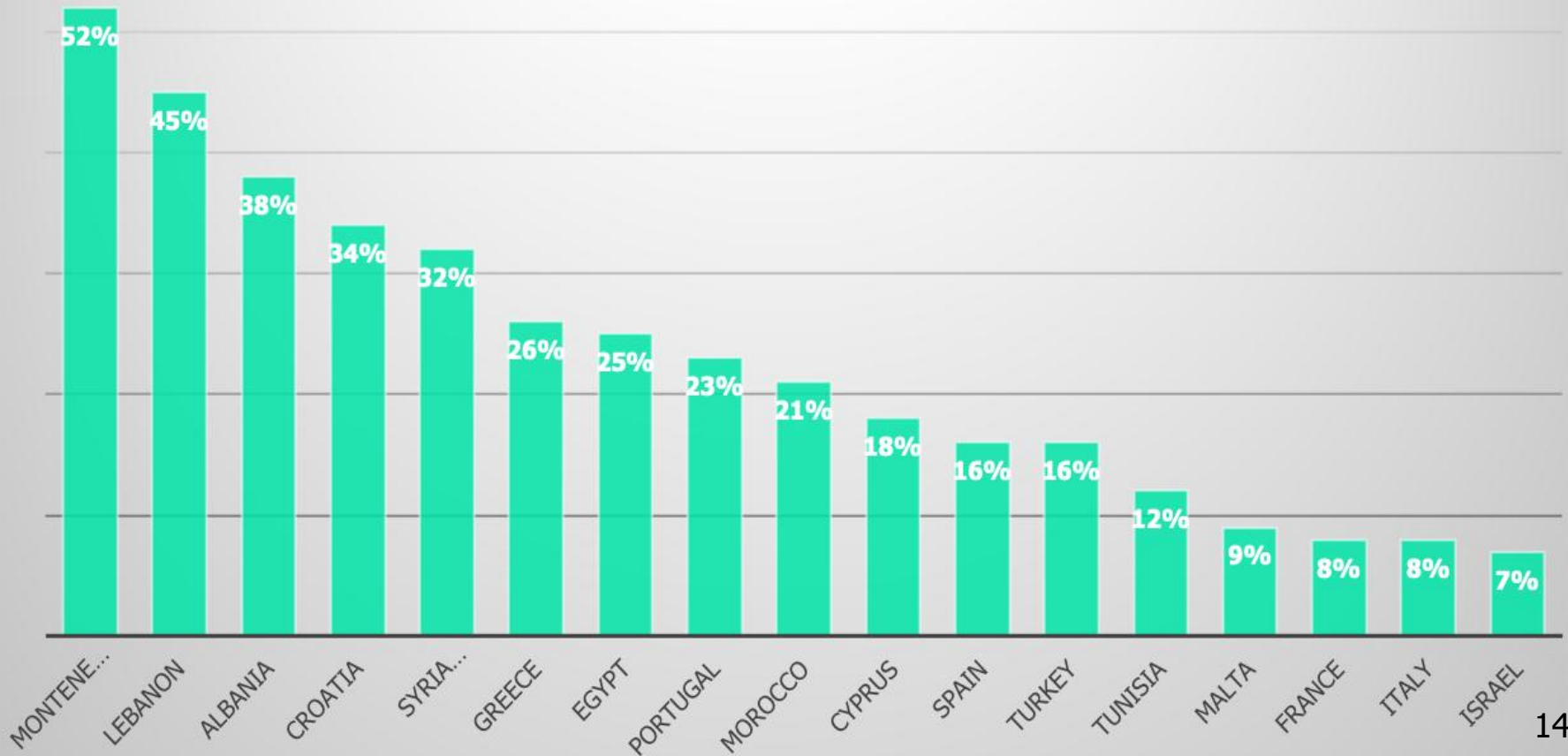


Regional imbalances

- For some countries, this slump in tourism receipts is detrimental for their economies, which are highly dependent on tourism, and therefore very vulnerable.
- Most Mediterranean countries are among them, topped by Montenegro, Lebanon, Albania, Croatia, Syria and Greece.

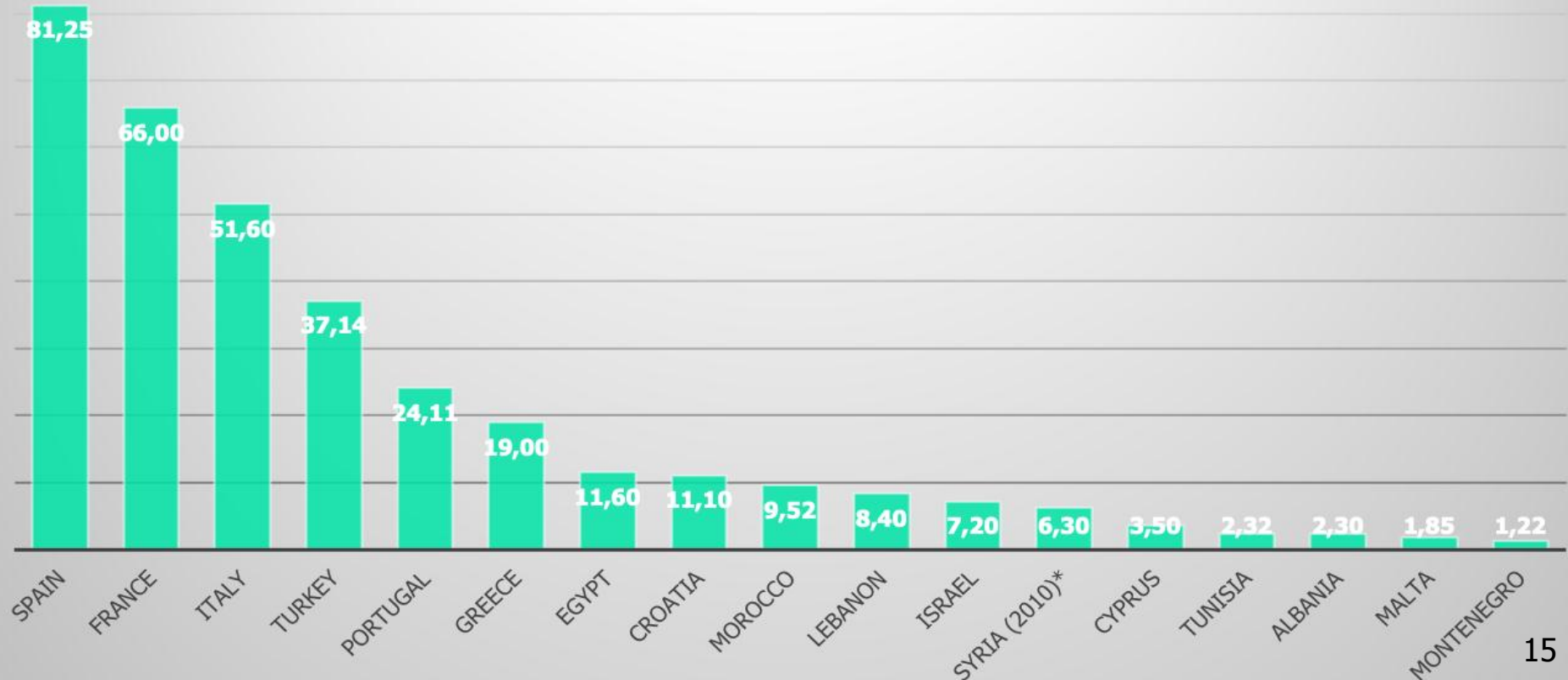
Tourism dependence in the Mediterranean

Mediterranean Countries (Dependent on Tourism)
Tourism Receipts as % of Total Exports, 2019



Range of Tourism Receipts Mediterranean Countries

**Tourism Receipts, Mediterranean Countries
2019, Billion \$**



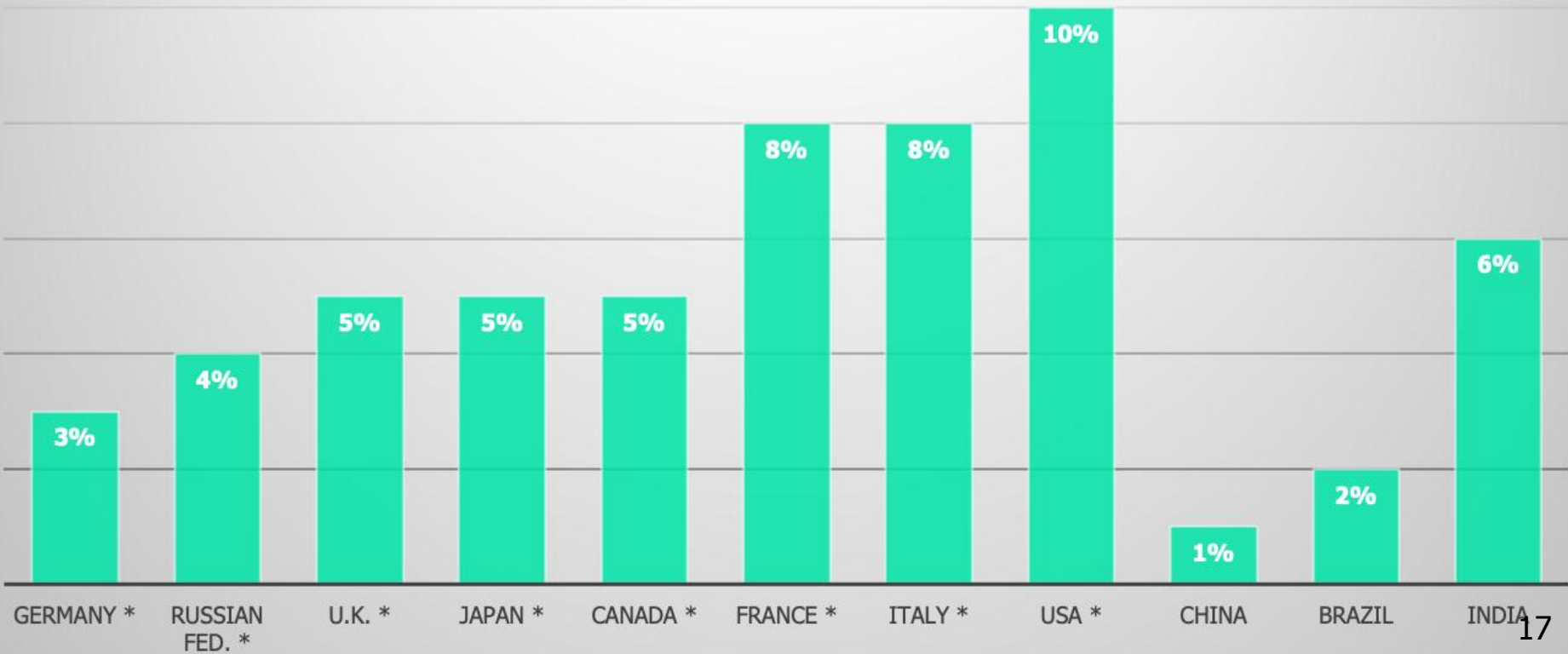
The other end of regional imbalances



- By contrast, large industrial countries are least dependent on tourism, especially G8 countries,
- as well as the large countries most affected by covid-19: China, India and Brazil.
- The impact of covid-19 on other industries is what causes recession in these countries.

G8+ Industrially Developed Countries Less Dependent on Tourism

G8+ Countries (Less Dependent on Tourism)
Tourism Receipts as % of Total Exports, 2019





Covid-19 in Greece in comparison with neighbours

- Spain and Italy were hardest hit and will recover later. Also Portugal and Southern France.
- Greece had less certified cases and less deaths in all the Mediterranean
- The government had imposed an early lockdown to this effect, and the positive results served as a basis for advertisement for travel and tourism.
- So Greece enjoyed a comparatively successful tourist summer 2020, improving its relative position in Mediterranean tourism.



Tourism vs 'Staycation'

- Domestic tourism prevailed in the Mediterranean and elsewhere during the summer of 2020.
- There were several cancellations of international tourism.
- UK residents talked of a turn from Vacation to Staycation!
- Short-distance travel by car rather than train, plane or boat seemed to survive and, in fact, increase.



Spain & cases of insecurity

- Cancellations were caused by insecurity.
- Among the worst was reported in Spain.
- British residents in resorts like Benidorm & Torremolinos were shocked by the sudden 14-day quarantine imposed by the UK to those returning from Spain.
- Such sudden changes in policy affect tourism for a period longer than the actual measures. They create insecurity and affect long-term reservations.

Benidorm in the 1990s (photo by L. Leontidou)





Counter-urbanization

- Another long-term effect of covid-19 related to tourism and vacation, is the departure from cities.
- The initial lockdown forbidding travel to second homes in the countryside, or abroad, created frustration to urban residents,
- which led afterwards to a counter-urbanization wave, that in many cases becomes permanent while the pandemic lasts, and possibly further on.
- Littoralization may intensify in Europe, largely also due to the dissemination of digitization.



Digitization results

- Digitization has intensified and spread globally during the pandemic.
- It includes teleworking, but also:
 - Education and scientific conferences
 - Political and cultural meetings, interactions and performances
 - E-commerce and services
 - Government and administrative services to citizens
- Digitization facilitates communication without travel on all levels and allows decentralized living.



Digitization and surveillance

- However, digitization also facilitates surveillance.
- This increased, starting with the control of lockdown violations
- It continued with the tracing of covid-19 contacts.
- Covid-19 may thus lead a transition from the welfare to the Orwellian state...



Conclusion: Covid 19 possible permanent effects on tourism

- Digitization is the most important permanent outcome. It came to stay.
- Counterurbanization after lockdown frustration may last for a longer period, facilitated by digitization and bringing about littoralization.
- A lingering mentality of insecurity and doubt permeates all walks of life, including tourism.
- This has adverse effects on long-term planning of vacations and tourism by the population.



This presentation draws freely on:

- Vagionis, N. & Leontidou, L. 2020 (in Greek). Mediterranean cultural and residential tourism: alternative forms as outlets from seasonality and vulnerability. *Region & Periphery*, vol. 9, ISSN 2623-4920.
- Leontidou, L. 2020 (in Greek). Urban planning and the pandemic in the compact city: Socio-geographical collateral damage from covid-19. *The Greek Review of Social Research*, 154: 11-27
- DOI: 10.12681/grsr.23234. Open access at <https://ejournals.epublishing.ekt.gr/index.php/ekke/article/view/23234>.



More relevant works by the authors/ presenters

- Apostolopoulos Y., Loukissas P. & **Leontidou** L. (eds) 2001. *Mediterranean tourism: Facets of socio-economic development and cultural change*. London: Routledge
- Apostolopoulos Y., Loukissas P. & **Leontidou** L. 2001. Tourism, development, and change in the Mediterranean. Στο Apostolopoulos κ.α. (επιμ.): 3-13
- Βαγιονής Ν. & Καφούρος Β. 2007. *Τουριστική Ανάπτυξη στην Ελλάδα και στη Μεσόγειο: Μια συγκριτική Ανάλυση*. Αθήνα: ΚΕΠΕ, Σειρά ΕΚΘΕΣΕΙΣ, No.53
- **Βαγιονής** Ν. & Σκούλτσος Σ. 2016. *Ο Πολιτισμικός και Θρησκευτικός Τουρισμός ως συνιστώσες του Εθνικού Τουριστικού Προϊόντος*. Αθήνα: ΚΕΠΕ, Σειρά ΕΚΘΕΣΕΙΣ, No.77
- Kasimati E. & **Vagionis** N. 2012. Post-Olympic Use of the Olympic Venues: Financial Analysis and Tourism Development Potential. Conference proceedings in *The 2012 Athens Tourism Symposium: International Scientific Congress on Current Trends in Tourism Management & Tourism Policy*
- Kasimati, E. & **Vagionis**, N. 2017. Cultural Tourism and the Olympic Movement in Greece. Στο Carson, S. & Pennings, M., *Performing cultural tourism: Communities, tourists and creative practices* (London: Routledge): 147-163
- Κομίλης, Π. & **Βαγιονής**, Ν. 1999. *Τουριστικός Σχεδιασμός: Μέθοδοι και πρακτικές αξιολόγησης*. Αθήνα: Προπομπός
- Kostopoulou, S., **Vagionis**, N., and Kourkouridis, D. 2013. Cultural Festivals and Regional Economic Development: Perceptions of Key interest Groups. In A. Matias, P. Nijkamp, M. Sarmento (επιμ.) *Quantitative Methods in Tourism Economics* (Heidelberg: Springer): 175-194.
- **Leontidou**, L. 1990/ 2006 (2nd edn). *The Mediterranean city in transition: Social change and urban development*. Cambridge University Press
- **Leontidou**, L. 1991. Greece: Prospects and contradictions of tourism in the 1980s. In Williams, A. & Shaw, G. (eds) 1991 *Tourism and economic development: Western European experiences* (London: Belhaven Press): 84-106
- **Leontidou**, L. 1993. Postmodernism and the city: Mediterranean versions. *Urban Studies*, 30, 6: 949-965
- **Leontidou**, L. 2020. Mediterranean cities of hope: Grassroots creativity and hybrid urbanism resisting the crisis. *City: Analysis of Urban Trends, Culture, Theory, Policy, Action*, 24(1-2): 263-275. DOI 10.1080/13604813.2020.1739906
- **Leontidou**, L., Gentileschi, M.L., Aru, A. & Pungetti, G. 1998. Urban expansion and littoralisation. In Mairota, P., Thornes, J.B. & Geeson, N. (eds) *Atlas of Mediterranean environments in Europe: the desertification context* (J. Wiley & Sons, London): 92-97
- **Leontidou**, L. & Marmaras, E. 2001. From tourists to migrants: international residential tourism and the 'littoralization' of Europe. In Apostolopoulos Y., Loukissas P. & Leontidou L. (eds) *Mediterranean tourism: Facets of socio-economic development and cultural change* (Routledge, London): 257-267.



Other Bibliography

- Agamben, G. 2020. Lo stato d'eccezione provocato da un' emergenza immotivata. In *Il Manifesto – Quotidiano Comunista*, 25.2.2020
- Afouxenidis, A., Gialis, S., Iosifidis, T. & Kourliouros, E. (eds) 2019 (in English and Greek). *Geographies in a Liquid Epoch: Critical Essays for Space, Society and Culture in Honour of Lila Leontidou*. Athens: Propobos
- Davis, M. 2020. The Monster Enters. *New Left Review*, 22, March-April: 7-14
- D'Eramo, M. 2020. The Philosopher's Epidemic. *New Left Review*, 22, March-April: 23-28
- ESPON-SIESTA 2013. *Territorial Dimensions of the 'Europe 2020' Strategy*. Luxemburg: ESPON, EU, http://www.espon.eu/main/Menu_Publications/Menu_ATLAS2020/ (accessed in 14.02.2017)
- Kalandides, A. 2020. The epidemics behind urban planning. In 2 parts in <http://blog.placemanagement.org/2020/03/25/the-epidemics-behind-urban-planning1/> and <http://blog.placemanagement.org/2020/04/03/the-epidemics-behind-urban-planning2/> (accessed in 25.4.2020)
- King, R. 2019. From Cadiz to Nicosia: more narratives for the Mediterranean city. In Afouxenidis et al. (eds): 98-109
- Kradonellis, K. 2001. Spatial dimensions of marine tourism. In Apostolopoulos Y., Loukissas P. & Leontidou L. (eds) 2001. *Mediterranean tourism: Facets of socio-economic development and cultural change* (London: Routledge): 268-77
- Μαραβέγιας, Ν. 2020. Η Ευρωπαϊκή ενότητα στην εποχή της πανδημίας. *Real News* 21.04.2020, https://www.real.gr/real_editors_guest_editor/arthro/h_europaiki_enotita_stin_epoxi_tis_pandimias-629965/ (accessed in 24.4.20)
- Murphy, R.T. 2020. East and West: Geocultures and the Coronavirus. *New Left Review* 22, March-April: 58-64
- Orwell, G. 1949. *1984*. London: Secker & Warburg.