

"What if it never happened?" Measuring the earthquake's effect on the tourism supply side

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Inserisci l'Abstract (max 200 parole).

Using the Synthetic Control Method (SCM), this study examines the impact of the 2009 earthquake in L'Aquila on the local tourism industry by analysing the effects of the earthquake on the key indicators of tourism performance. Therefore, we built a balanced panel dataset with a time series from 2002 to 2019 based on ISTAT census data, including statistical data from 7,940 Italian municipalities and ORBIS - Bureau Van Dijk budget data for 247,520 firms. According to our results, while in the short term, there was a slump in tourism supply, mainly due to the extensive earthquake damage, in the medium term, the decisive contribution of economic aid led to a surprisingly rapid recovery of the sector. Overall, L'Aquila's tourism sector is a resilient industry to shocks, with significant potential to pull the local economy out of the crisis if supported by virtuous policies. These findings have important policy implications, especially in light of the increasingly frequent natural disasters. The study aims to partially bridge the gap between the available demand-side literature and the lack of supply-side evidence and paves the way for future developments by using big data mainly at the NUTS1 level.