Is tourism development associated with employment of low quality?

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Structured Abstract

Purpose: To analyze whether higher tourism development in a region is associated with lower-quality employment in that region.

Design/methodology/approach: The analysis is based on the last two editions of the European Working Conditions Survey and on the tourism development of European regions. Two samples were studied (2015 and 2021).

Findings: Tourism development does not affect the quality of employment in regions. The institutional regime of the country to which the region belongs is associated with the job quality in the region.

Originality: Research on the quality of employment in tourism has mostly focused on tourism occupations without considering determinants other than industry characteristics. This research is unique because it includes both the institutional view of job quality and the overall regional employment.

Research limitations/implications: Only subjective indicators of employment quality are considered in the analysis.

Practical implications: The quality of employment is related to the institutional regime. Policymakers should consider the institutional factors of social democratic countries to improve the low quality of tourism occupations.

Keywords: tourism development, job quality, institutional theory, decent work, employment

1   Introduction

The quality of employment in the tourism is often described as low (Baum et al., 2020; Maggi and Vroegop, 2023). Trade unions and other social actors associate tourism development with employment of low quality (Hughes, 2018). Although residents recognize that tourism provides employment opportunities, they also perceive the negative aspects of tourism employment (Almeida-García et al., 2015¸ Stamolampros et al., 2020). By contrast, institutions such as the World Trade & Tourism Council (WTTC, 2021) highlight the benefits of tourism for employment

in those regions where this activity transpires. These benefits primarily refer to the number of jobs associated with tourism development. Relying on tourism to provide more employment opportunities to residents is a common practice of policymakers.

Evidence shows the low quality of tourism jobs (Robinson et al., 2019). This low job quality (JQ hereinafter) is often justified according to some of the economic characteristics of the tourism activity (e.g., low-skilled work, seasonality, and extended hours and weekend activities). These characteristics may affect specific segments of the workforce (e.g., migrants, millennials) differently (Janta and Ladkin, 2024; Raub et al., 2024). Such evidence does not necessarily indicate that tourism development is associated with low JQ in those regions where tourism activities occur. On the one hand, tourism development also generates non-tourism employment. On the other hand, institutional factors influence JQ. These approaches have been disregarded in studies about job quality in tourism (e.g., Dolcet et al., 2022). Studies have focused on tourism occupations without considering institutional factors.

The aim of this research is to analyze whether tourism development in regions is associated with low quality employment. The analysis is performed using two different JQ indices from the last two editions of the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS). The tourism activity of the regions was measured using Eurostat data on overnight stays.

2   Literature review

2.1   Job quality in tourism

A general agreement about the meaning of JQ is lacking (Muñoz de Bustillo et al., 2011; Stefana et al., 2021). JQ is widely believed to reflect the dimensions of the jobs that have a clear and direct impact on the well-being of workers (Muñoz de Bustillo et al., 2011; Stefana et al., 2021). Notwithstanding the absence of a definitive list of JQ dimensions, most studies consider key factors such as autonomy, compensation, security, working conditions, environment, skill requirements, relationships with others, and work–life balance (Stefana et al., 2021). These factors can be measured objectively or subjectively.

Tourism development fosters employment growth (Turner and Sears, 2013). Research confirms the low quality of many tourism jobs (Knox et al., 2015; Robinson et al., 2019). The tourism industry embraces different economic activities. However, Eurostat (2022) shows that four out of five individuals employed in the industry work in hospitality. Evidence confirms that tourism promotes occupations in these activities that are usually characterized by a low JQ: maids, housekeepers, cleaners, and food service workers (Lacher and Oh, 2012).

JQ determinants are categorized into different levels. Both Muñoz de Bustillo and De Pedraza (2010) and Simões et al. (2015), propose a similar categorization: the individual level (e.g., age, education), the firm level (e.g., size, economic sector), and a third level which includes the country, the labor market (e.g., workforce supply), and the institutional framework. Simões et al. (2015) found that JQ is influenced by variables belonging to the three levels. The most important variables at the individual level were employment status and education. At the firm level, the economic sector. They also found that JQ was higher in the Nordic countries.

The low quality of tourism occupations is usually explained based on the economic characteristics of the industry (Riley and Szivas, 2009). Tourism activities demand low-skilled workers, suggesting that labor is constantly in surplus supply for some occupations (Forgacs and Dolnicar, 2017). Employers consequently offer low wages, few training programs, low job

autonomy, and limited opportunities for professional growth (Casado-Diaz and Simon, 2016). Tourism activities are affected by seasonal demand, causing temporary employment to predominate (Rosselló and Sansó, 2017). Tourism operations often occur beyond the typical eight-hour working day and on weekends and holidays. These conditions involve long hours, night shifts, work on weekends, and work–family balance issues (Deery and Jago, 2009). Even overtourism, which would create a greater demand for tourism workers and thus improve working conditions, can have the opposite effect due to the influx of migrant workers (Walmsley et al., 2022). Union density in the tourism industry is typically low due to its fragmented structure and the predominance of part-time, temporary and young workers (Camilleri et al., 2024). However, most of the research has been done in the hospitality sector, where more data is available, with less research done in the other areas of tourism or in the tourism sector as a whole.

Some authors have expressed their concerns about the employment quality associated with the tourism activity (Buhalis et al., 2023; Maggi and Vroegop, 2023; Robinson et al., 2019). However, tourism activity does not necessarily have to be associated with low-quality employment in the region due to two reasons. First, institutional theory suggests that JQ has other determinants, such as regulation and unions. Second, tourism activity is associated with the generation of employment in other industries that differ from tourism (e.g., consultants, teachers), in which JQ can be better. These two reasons are examined in detail in the next sections.

2.2   Institutional factors and job quality

Institutional theory states that the rules, practices, and structures of the environment influence organizational practices (Meyer, 2017). In the work domain, institutional factors such as labor regulation, employment policies, and unions are considered to impact JQ (Osterman, 2013). Institutional theory asserts that work and employment conditions vary across countries as a result of cross-national differences in institutional regimes (Holman and Rafferty, 2018). Olsen et al. (2010) consider that there are two main institutional approaches regarding work organization and its influence on JQ: varieties of capitalism and power resources. Varieties of capitalism or production regime theory categorizes countries based on the interrelations between their production and institutional systems (e.g., industrial relation system). Based on how these spheres interact, Kalleberg (2016) states that nations are divided into two basic groups: liberal market economies (e.g., United Kingdom and Ireland) and coordinated market economies (e.g., Germany and the Scandinavian countries). The author states that both regimes differ in the management of job skills, which can affect JQ. Because the pattern of firm-specific skills considerably varies across coordinated countries, some authors have shown concerns about its utility for explaining JQ.

Power resources or employment regime theory emphasizes the different interests of employers and workers (Kalleberg, 2016). It also views worker power, exercised through unions, as a way to improve working conditions. This theory proposes a more detailed cluster of countries. In case of European countries, Holman (2013) categorizes them into social democratic (e.g., Scandinavian countries); continental (e.g., Germany, France); liberal (e.g., the United Kingdom and Ireland); southern European (e.g., Spain, Greece); and transitional (e.g., Bulgaria, Poland). Holman (2013) and Holman and Rafferty (2018) argue that social democratic regimes tend to provide more extensive welfare benefits, support worker training, and have more influential trade unions. By contrast, liberal regimes have weaker employment protection legislation, and their unions have little influence. The other institutional regimes have less employment

protection and less powerful unions than social democratic regimes, but they are above the liberal regimes (continental regimes), present a hybrid model with limited state-sponsored training and education (southern European regimes), and have autocratic management structures (transitional regimes). Holman (2013) empirically confirms that social democratic regimes have the highest JQ, followed by continental and liberal regimes. Southern European and transitional regimes have the lowest JQ. Other research has analyzed specific dimensions of JQ. In the case of job autonomy, the highest levels were found in Scandinavian countries and continental regime countries, while South European and transitional countries showed the lowest levels (Esser and Olsen, 2012). In the case of job security, the highest levels were found in continental and social democratic countries while transitional countries had the lowest levels (Castellacci and Viñas-Bardolet, 2021). Finally, Green et al. (2013) analyzed four JQ indicators (work quality, work intensity, good physical environment and working time quality) and found that social democratic countries had the highest values in the all of them.

2.3   Indirect and induced effects of tourism

Tourism has a multiplier effect on the economy (Tyrrell and Johnston, 2006). In addition to its direct impact, tourism also has indirect and induced effects. The direct effects of tourism refer to expenditure within the tourism sector. Indirect effects involve intermediate consumption for the production of goods and services in the tourism industry. Induced effects concern expenditure by tourism employees and the consumption of companies that directly or indirectly benefit from the tourism industry (Vellas, 2011). Indirect and induced effects can foster employment in non-tourism activities. For example, Buhalis (2020) shows the importance that information technologies have for tourism businesses. Hotels require them to perform many of their activities (e.g., bookings, check-in and check-out, customer relationship management, inventory management). Hotels also require electricity and gas for their daily operations (Tohmo, 2018). In many cases, hotels use service providers for digital services and for energy supply. Also, tourism is a labor-intensive industry, and its workers and families require education and housing services. All these economic activities draw on jobs characterized by a higher JQ than that of the tourism industry (Green and Mostafa, 2012).

Khan et al. (1995) estimated that in Singapore, tourist expenditure of SGD 1 million created 15 direct jobs and 10 indirect and induced jobs. In the case of Malaysia, Mazumder et al. (2009) calculated that RM 1 million of the tourism industry generated 125 direct jobs and 49 indirect and induced jobs. In the Seychelles, Archer and Fletcher (1996) estimated that 54.61% of the employment generated by tourism expenditure was non-direct employment. WTTC (2021) estimated that for every direct tourist job, nearly two additional jobs were created on an indirect or induced basis. Examples of non-tourism activities stimulated by tourism development include those related to agriculture, fishing, food processing, transportation, education, housing, clothing, health, office machinery and computers, electricity, gas and heat supply, construction, and the public sector (Dwyer et al., 2003; Mathouraparsad and Maurin, 2017; Tohmo, 2018; Vellas, 2011).

3   Objective

Based on the belief that tourism jobs have a low JQ, the tourism industry has been criticized for generating low-quality employment. As JQ is influenced by institutional factors and tourism fosters non-tourism jobs, tourism regions might not be characterized by low-quality

employment. Thus, the objective of this research is to verify whether the development of tourism in regions is associated with a lower quality of employment.

4   Methodology

The last two editions (2015 and 2021) of the EWCS were used in this research. The aim of EWCS is to measure the employment quality in European regions. EWCS has been extensively used in research about JQ (e.g., Clark et al., 2021; Green et al., 2013; Rodríguez-Modroño and López-Igual, 2021). Two JQ indices were used: one from 2015 and the other from 2021. The 2015 survey was included in the analysis because the EWCS 2021 was conducted under the COVID-19 pandemic situation. The pandemic could have had a significant impact on the results. The EWCS covers all of the European Union member states as well as other European countries. The samples for the 2015 and 2021 editions included 43,850 and 71,758 individuals, respectively.

The EWCS 2015 does not include a global JQ indicator. A JQ indicator for the analysis was needed. Hence, one based on Piasna (2017) was created. Piasna's (2017) JQ index is based on six dimensions and sixteen indicators. The dimensions proposed by Piasna were used. Regarding the indicators, Piasna uses different sources. The sources of nine of these indicators are Eurostat and the Institutional Characteristics of Trade Unions, Wage Setting, State Intervention and Social Pacts (ICTWSS) database. In these sources, the indicators are only available at a country level. Therefore, they were mapped to 18 indicators of the EWCS in order to have them at the NUTS2 level. The other seven indicators used by Piasna come from the EWCS 2015, so were kept. This means that the global JQ indicator was composed of six dimensions and twenty-five indicators (see Table 1). Following Piasna (2017) each dimension has the same weight in the final indicator. The weight of each indicator in each dimension is shown in Table 1. These weights were derived from Piasna (2017). The final index ranges from 0 to 1.

Table 1. Components of the job quality indicator for 2015

Dimensions	Indicators	Weighting
1. Wages	• Payment based on individual performance	0.166
	• Payment based on team performance	0.166
	• Payment on company performance	0.166
	• Income from shares	0.166
	• Benefits	0.166
	• Feeling of getting paid appropriately	0.166
2. Forms of employment and job security	• Seniority in the company	0.5
	• Possibility of losing the job in the next six months	0.5
3. Working time and work–life balance	• Share of workers working more than 48 hours a week	0.166
	• Times a month working at night for at least 2 hours	0.166
	• Times a month working on Sundays	0.166
	• Times a month working on Saturdays	0.166
	• At least once that you had less than 11 hours between the end of one working day	0.166
	• Working hours fit with family/social commitments	0.166
4. Working conditions	• Work intensity (working at a very high speed, working to tight deadlines and not having enough time to get the job done)	0.33
	• Work autonomy (can choose/change order of tasks, methods of work, speed of work; can take a break when you wish)	0.33
		0.33

	• Physical work factors (vibrations; noise; high/low temperature; breathing in smoke, fumes, powder, dust, vapors such as solvents and thinners; handling chemical substances; tobacco smoke from other people; infectious materials; tiring or painful positions; lifting or moving people; carrying or moving heavy loads; repetitive hand or arm movements)	
5. Skills and career development	• Complex tasks in main paid job • Necessity to learn new things in main paid job • Training paid for or provided by employer • Training paid by employee • On-the-job training • Other training • Prospects for career advancement offered by job	0.1 0.1 0.1 0.1 0.1 0.1 0.4
6. Collective interest representation	• Employee representation in the company/organization (trade union or works council; health and safety delegate; regular meetings with employees)	1.0

Source: Created by authors based on Piasna (2017).

The EWCS 2021 includes its own JQ index. It is based on six dimensions: the physical and social environment, job tasks, organizational characteristics, working time arrangements, job prospects, and intrinsic job features. The construction of the index is described in Eurofound (2022). The index ranges from 1 to 6. In both JQ indexes, higher values reflect better quality of employment.

The five institutional regimes for the European countries of Holman (2013) were included as independent variables. Therefore, only consider regions in countries that are part of Holman's classification could be considered: Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden (social democratic regime); Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands (continental regime); Ireland and the United Kingdom (liberal regime); Cyprus, Italy, Greece, Malta, Portugal, and Spain (southern European regime); and Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia (transitional regime). Since the data on the unemployment rate at the NUTS2 level were not available for 2015 for Ireland and the United Kingdom, the liberal regime is not included in the 2015 analysis.

The other independent variable was the tourism development of each region. The measurement of this independent variable, based on Eurostat data, involved the calculation of the overnight stays divided by the number of inhabitants in the region (Chica et al., 2021). Two indices were used, one for 2015 and the other for 2019. 2020 and 2021 were disregarded because of the COVID-19 pandemic, which severely affected the tourism industry.

To test whether tourism development is associated with a lower quality of employment, multiple linear regressions of the JQ indices against the institutional regimes of the country to which the region belongs and the tourism development of the region were performed. The tourism development of the regions was obtained from Eurostat. The following control variables were included. The GDP and the unemployment rate of the regions were obtained from Eurostat and were included because they have been considered JQ determinants at macro level. Age, education level and percentage of women in each region were calculated by aggregating the individual responses of the EWCS. These were included because they have been considered JQ determinants at individual level. The regions' GDP adjusted by purchasing power parity (PPP) per inhabitant reflects how many currency units a given quantity of goods and services costs in different countries. Education was measured through the nine levels of the International

Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). For each year, two linear regression models were performed. The first model includes only the control variables and the second model adds the independent variables.

Both tourism development and GDP adjusted by PPP per inhabitant variables were log transformed. Given the heteroscedasticity in regression analysis, the regression coefficients were estimated using heteroscedasticity-consistent standard errors (Long and Ervin, 2000). This method allows for the possibility of heteroscedasticity and adjusts the standard errors to provide valid statistical inference. The linearity assumption of linear regression was tested through the examination of the residuals and residuals plots against the predicted value. The residuals normality was determined through the Shapiro-Wilk W test. Omitted variable bias was assessed through the Ramsey RESET test and the correlations between the independent variables and the residuals. Multicollinearity was assessed through variables VIF.

5   Results

The descriptive statistics of the variables according to the five institutional regimes of the countries in the regions are shown in Table 2. Tourism development and GDP adjusted by PPP per inhabitant variables are not log transformed. The correlations, including variables log transformed, are provided in Table 3.

Table 2. Sample, means, and standard deviations

	Total	Social Democratic	Continental	Liberal	Southern European	Transitional
2015						
Number of regions	166	20	33	12	55	46
Job quality index[1]	.51 (.05)	.60 (.01)	.54 (.02)	.52 (.02)	.47 (.03)	.48 (.03)
Tourism development	7.70 (11.03)	5.70 (2.00)	9.10 (10.68)	6.86 (3.06)	11.89 (15.96)	2.77 (2.30)
GDP	26,148.31 (11,129.31)	32,016.83 (6,617.06)	34,732.27 (11,534.08)	37,754.14 (10,854.01)	22,718.83 (6,223.60)	18,511.59 (9,303.22)
% women	49.78 (.08)	48.68 (.06)	52.05 (.07)	45.82 (.04)	46.97 (.10)	53.02 (.06)
Age	45.07 (2.81)	46.23 (1.34)	44.97 (1.81)	45.13 (1.72)	45.46 (4.00)	44.17 (2.01)
Education[2]	4.79 (.56)	5.35 (.32)	5.05 (.49)	4.87 (.40)	4.39 (.57)	4.81 (.36)
Unemployment rate	7.69 (4.79)	6.69 (2.21)	5.33 (2.41)	---	12.31 (4.92)	4.74 (2.35)
2021						
Number of regions	263	20	91	41	59	52
Job quality index[3]	4.28 (.28)	4.46 (.14)	4.35 (.30)	4.16 (.25)	4.18 (.24)	4.30 (.26)
Tourism development	7.70 (9.16)	6.23 (2.17)	7.51 (8.01)	8.32 (6.11)	11.66 (14.61)	3.64 (2.80)
GDP	31,291.16 (14,728.10)	39,890.97 (13,349.23)	35,410.49 (10,022.79)	35,502.62 (25,560.26)	25,940.66 (7,783.27)	23,445.69 (11,041.72)
% women	46.09 (.08)	48.59 (.04)	46.34 (.06)	45.34 (.08)	42.07 (.10)	50.24 (.05)
Age	42.82 (2.54)	44.98 (2.77)	41.81 (2.08)	44.38 (2.93)	43.43 (2.42)	41.87 (1.53)
Education[2]	5.73 (.52)	5.88 (.37)	5.70 (.41)	5.87 (.55)	5.35 (.43)	6.06 (.52)
Unemployment rate	9.20 (6.26)	7.01 (1.95)	6.73 (3.11)	5.44 (1.97)	17.75 (7.36)	7.60 (2.53)

Source: Created by authors.

Table 3. Correlations

	Job quality	Tourism development (log)	GDP (log)	% women	Age	Education
2015						
Job quality	1					
Tourism development (log)	.09	1				
GDP (log)	.53*	.38*	1			
% women	.16	-.11	.05	1		
Age	.20	.07	.07	.06	1	
Education	.51*	-.11	.33*	.23	-.17	1
Unemployment rate	-.37*	.17	-.24	-.32*	-.05	-.24
2021						
Job quality	1					
Tourism development (log)	-.01	1				
GDP (log)	.25*	29*	1			
% women	-.09	-.16	-.05	1		
Age	-.08	.05	-.11	.01	1	
Education	-.04	-.23*	.15	.16	-.18*	1
Unemployment rate	-.30*	.02	-.43*	-.17*	-.01	-.11

Source: Created by authors.

*$p < .05$

Tables 4 and 5 show the results of the linear regressions for 2015 and 2021. Model 1 covers the control variables, whereas Model 2 includes in the regression the institutional regime and the tourism development of the region.

For 2015, Model 1 (R^2 = .46; F = 33.31; $p < .01$) shows that JQ is influenced by three of the four control variables: GDP adjusted by PPP per inhabitant (β=.045; $p<.01$), age (β=.001; $p<.01$), and education (β=.04; $p<.01$). Model 2 (R^2 = .74; F = 84.28; $p < .01$) keeps the influence of these and reflects that JQ is not related to tourism development ($p > .05$). The institutional regimes of the countries in the regions make a significant contribution to the explanation of JQ. Compared to the social democratic regime, which is taken as the base one in the regression, the other regimes affect JQ in a negative manner (β coefficients are negative; $p < .01$).

For 2021, Model 1 (R^2 = .13; F = 7.56; $p < .01$) shows that JQ is influenced by GDP adjusted by PPP per inhabitant (β=.098; $p<.05$) and negatively by employment rate (β=.-012; $p<.01$). Model 2 (R^2 = .22; F = 10.80; $p < .01$) keeps the influence of these variables and includes education (β=.011; $p<.05$). As in 2015, Model 2 reflects that JQ is not related to tourism development ($p > .05$) and that the institutional regimes of the countries in the regions make a significant contribution to the explanation of JQ. Institutional regimes behave in the same way as in 2015.

In both Models 2 of 2015 and 2021, variables VIF were all below 5. Residuals distributions were normal according to the Shapiro-Wilk W test ($p >.05$; 2015, z= .15; 2021, z = 1.03). The Ramsey RESET test was non-significant ($p>.05$; 2015, F=.61; 2021, F=1.04) and established that the

models had not omitted variables. Furthermore, correlations between the independent variables and the residuals were not significant ($p>.05$).

Table 4. Determinants of job quality in 2015

Dependent variable	Job quality (2015)			
Model	1		2	
Constant	-.252***	(.075)	.369***	(.095)
GDP (log)	.041***	(.006)	.007	(.009)
Percentage of women	-.010	(.040)	.084**	(.030)
Age	.004***	(.001)	.002*	(.001)
Education	.036***	(.006)	.010**	(.004)
Unemployment rate	-.002***	(.001)	-.001*	(.001)
Tourism development (log)			-.003	(.003)
Institutional Regime				
Social democratic			Reference	
Continental			-.047***	(.005)
Southern European			-.096***	(.007)
Transitional			-.101***	(.009)
R^2	.52		.78	
F-statistic	33.42***		86.72***	
Observations	148		148	

Source: Created by authors.

*** Significant at 1% level; ** Significant at 5% level; * Significant at 10% level. Robust standard error in parentheses next to the estimated coefficients.

Table 5. Determinants of job quality in 2021

Dependent variable	Job quality (2021)			
Model	1		2	
Constant	4.197***	(.676)	3.918***	(.725)
GDP (log)	.098*	(.059)	.131**	(.067)
Percentage of women	-.378	(.316)	-.556*	(.304)
Age	-.009	(.007)	-.002	(.007)
Education	.044	(.039)	.011**	(.047)
Unemployment rate	-.012***	(.003)	-.011**	(.005)
Tourism development (log)			-.020	(.028)
Institutional Regime				
Social democratic			Reference	
Continental			-.121***	(.047)
Liberal			-.306***	(.053)
Southern European			-.168**	(.073)
Transitional			-.074	(.068)
R^2	.13		.22	
F-statistic	7.56***		10.80***	
Observations	263		263	

Source: Created by authors.

*** Significant at 1% level; ** Significant at 5% level; * Significant at 10% level. Robust standard error in parentheses next to the estimated coefficients.

6   Discussion

Seven variables that could explain JQ in the European regions were considered. The JQ indices for 2015 and 2021 are different, but they reflect a common pattern in the determinants of the

quality of employment in regions. Out of the six variables analyzed in both regressions, two variables behave in a consistent way: institutional regimes are significant predictors of JQ, but tourism development is not. The other JQ determinants were significant in one or more regressions, but not in all of them.

Regions vary in their tourism development. Compared to other regions, southern European regions have a higher level of tourism development (see Table 2). Although an ANOVA shows that JQ in these regions is the lowest in 2015 ($F = 87.61$; $p < .05$) and among the two lowest in 2021 ($F = 8.28$; $p < .05$), regression analyses show that tourism development does not have anything to do with JQ. In other words, regions with more tourism activity have lower JQ but this cannot be attributed to their higher tourism development.

JQ is higher in regions with social democratic and continental regimes and lower in Southern European regions. The result that the social democratic regime is the one that is more positively associated with JQ confirms the prediction of employment regime theory that this regime promotes a higher JQ. These results are obtained considering a variable, tourism development, that many authors and social actors such as trade unions consider to be associated with low JQ. In addition, institutional factors appear to have a strong influence on firms' employment practices, as evidenced by the low standard deviations of JQ in the regions of the five employment regimes (Table 2).

Data on the share of tourism employment in total employment in European regions are unavailable. If this share were low in highly touristic regions (i.e., those with higher tourism development), then tourism development would not be expected to generate enough low-quality tourism occupations to negatively affect the global JQ in those regions. Through national and regional statistics offices, data about employment in NACE Section I (i.e., "accommodation and food service activities") was found for some highly touristic regions. These regions are among the top 10 tourism regions in Europe (refer to Table 6). Employment in accommodation and food service activities represents approximately 19% of employment in these regions. These activities are the second largest economic activity in terms of employment after the activities of Section G, which includes "wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles." These figures reflect that employment in tourism is important in regions with higher tourism development.

Table 6. Accommodation and food service activities employment in highly touristic regions in 2019

Touristic Region	Tourism Development	Order in the Sample[1]	Accommodation and Food Service Activities Employment (in %)	Source (Statistics Office)[2]
Bolzano	63.44	3	19.35	ISTAT
Balearic Island	57.55	4	20.43	IBESTAT
Algarve	52.39	6	18.20	INE
Canary Island	43.55	8	18.70	ISTAC

Source: Created by authors.

[1] Out of the 263 regions considered in 2021, this number shows the order of these regions when regions are sorted from more to less touristic based on their tourism development.

[2] ISTAT: Istituto Nazionale di Statistica; IBESTAT: Institut d'Estadística de les Illes Balears; INE: Instituto Nacional de Estatística; ISTAC: Instituto Canario de Estadística

Because tourism promotes employment growth, Buhalis et al. (2023) argue that tourism can contribute to the achievement of sustainable development goals. In this sense, those authors argue that the tourism industry should improve some employment practices (e.g., job security,

wages). The importance of institutional factors for these types of practices related to JQ is reflected in the results of this study.

Baum et al. (2016, p. 18) state that workforce research in tourism should "[…] investigate discourses of work and how tourism employment perpetuates or challenges these narratives". A common discourse is that tourism activity is based on low quality employment. Social actors such as trade unions and some politicians base their objections to tourism development on this discourse. This study challenges and nuances this view. It proves that tourism development is not associated with the JQ of regions. Furthermore, this research engages with previous works that reject some of the negative effects that are blamed on tourism. For example, Seetanah et al. (2023) show that tourism can reduce income inequality, although with different effects depending on how dependent the region is on tourism.

7   Conclusion and future research

This research uses samples that include a large number of regions, some with high levels of tourism development and others with low levels. The results indicate that tourism development in regions is not associated with low-quality employment. The most important factor associated with JQ is the institutional regime. Therefore, to ensure JQ, policymakers, trade unions, and other social actors should consider those aspects of the social democratic and continental regimes that are not present in their regions.

Data about the indirect and induced employment related to tourism activity in the European regions are unavailable. Otherwise, it could be analyzed if this employment has a higher JQ than the more frequent tourism occupations have. This issue has yet to be studied. In addition, in this research, both JQ indexes are based on subjective measures. Objective indicators such as wages and the type of labor contract that are usually mentioned in JQ literature have been disregarded in the analysis. Hence, future research should include objective indicators of JQ. The data used in this research has two main limitations: secondary sources were used and the methodology for measuring JQ is different from 2015 to 2021 due to changes in the EWCS. This research has focused on European countries, using the EWCS and the data of NUTS2 regions as a source. Future research should examine the situation in other contexts. Although it is shown that tourism development is not associated with lower JQ in regions, following Janta and Ladkin (2024), some segments of the regions' workforce (e.g., migrants) may be more negatively affected than others. This is something that should also be tested in the future.

Finally, tourism data from 2019 was used, as data from 2020 and 2021 were significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, job quality data from 2019 could not be used because the ECWS is only conducted in certain years. Therefore, the data from the second instance of the ECWS that was used, that of 2021, will likely be affected by the pandemic. It is not possible to predict how this impact might have occurred, and whether the impact on job quality might have been different for tourism jobs than for other jobs.

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