

ТУРИЗМОЛОГІЧНІ СТУДІЇ

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спеціальності 242 Туризм

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THE SITUATION IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IN GREECE BEFORE AND AFTER THE OUTBREAK OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

СИТУАЦІЯ В ТУРИСТИЧНІЙ ГАЛУЗІ В ГРЕЦІЇ ДО ТА ПІСЛЯ СПАЛАХУ ПАНДЕМІЇ COVID-19

Метою публікації є представлення ситуації в туристичній галузі Греції до та після спалаху пандемії Covid-19. Представлено способи, якими Греція може виділитися та відрізнитися від своїх конкурентів, як тільки пандемія буде контрольованою. Методологія дослідження базується на зборі вторинних даних, які були зібрані за допомогою статей у журналах, книгах та на офіційних веб-сайтах. Проведення вторинного дослідження полягає у пошуку, вивченні, аналізі, критиці та поданні даних з опублікованих текстів. Згідно з висновками, кризу слід розглядати як необхідну можливість для змін у плануванні сталого розвитку країни, старанно інтегруючи плани управління кризовими ситуаціями в туризмі у стратегічне маркетингове планування.

Introduction. According to UNWTO statistics (2020), tourist arrivals in 2019 based on the data of tourist destinations worldwide reached close to 1.5 billion, an increase of 3.8% (54 million arrivals) compared to 2018, a steady increase over the last 10 years. According to the WTTC (2019), tourism contributed \$8.8 trillion in the global economy in 2018, a figure that corresponds to 10.4% of world GDP.

But the most important element is that the tourism sector grew by 3.9% in 2018, faster than the overall growth of the global economy 3.2%, surpassing it, for the eighth consecutive year. In other words, based on the course of tourism in recent years, all the organizations and bodies involved in its study, predicted a further increase in arrivals and receipts for 2020, optimistic until recently for profits of states and private entities around the world (Wordlmeter, 2020).

Tourism and its basic element, i.e. travel for every purpose, had to be limited and stopped everywhere. The blow to our planet is enormous, counting thousands of victims around the world. Social and economic damage as well (Nepal, 2020). WTO emphasizes that the forecasts for international arrivals and

receipts in 2020 seem to be negative as tourism is currently one of the sectors most affected. With almost every country on the planet in quarantine, the world community is facing one of its worst periods since World War II. Up to 75 million jobs are at immediate risk in the global travel and tourism sector due to the pandemic, according to the World Travel & Tourism Council. Of course, it is still too early to make serious scientific predictions about what “the next day” will be like, not only for tourism, but in general for the way of life that will follow. Everyday we monitor every step of the scientists in an uncertain future with 1.1 million cases and 61,141 deaths, with these numbers increasing daily according to data by Wordlmeter (2020).

Literature review and the problem statement. In Greece, tourism is the most important sector of economic activity, as shown by its contribution to GDP but also by the jobs it provides as it is undoubtedly the main factor of economic development of the country (Uğur & Akbıyık, 2020). According to the 62nd Statistical Bulletin of SETE (2020), in the year 2019, the incoming travel traffic increased by 1.2 million/4.1% and amounted to 31.3 million travelers, compared to 30.1 million of travelers in 2018, with travel receipts increasing by 12.8% compared to 2018 and amounted to 18.2 billion.

Until February 2020, air arrivals from abroad increased compared to 2019, verifying the forecasts for an increase in arrivals (Sharma & Nicolau, 2020). On the contrary, at the end of the month and at the beginning of March, the appearance of the first cases of COVID-19 began both in Europe and in Greece. What followed is known to all, the beginning of a major crisis in Greece and worldwide (Sigala, 2020). Greece’s economy is in constant decline, with tourism being the biggest «loser» in the case, since most sectors of our economy are directly or indirectly involved throughout the country and mainly in island Greece (closed hotels, traffic ban, closed borders in almost all countries, etc.) (Qiu et al., 2020).

In other words, it is as if the whole country froze at the moment when it was preparing for another good tourist year. At the moment, the main issue is Public Health and tackling the crisis without making hasty moves, although in Greece it is necessary to end the restrictive measures as soon as possible and start the tourist season, in order to restore jobs and support the economy. The worst case scenario would be the spread of COVID-19 in island Greece (Gössling et al., 2020).

How can Greece stand out and differentiate itself from its competitors, once the pandemic is controlled. In order to develop the appropriate tourism promotion strategy, a team of experts (tourism development, marketing, psychology, journalism, etc.) must record the travel trends before the crisis and evaluate those that will be created after its end (Kummitha, 2020).

In the event of the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism promotion campaigns aimed at attracting visitors from international markets

should be suspended until the situation normalizes, because it will be a waste of funds without any result. Many will wonder why it is pointless. The answer is simple, the main countries of origin of Greek tourists such as the USA, the United Kingdom, Italy and Germany, are in a dramatic situation due to COVID-19 and can not yet estimate when the restrictive measures and the quarantine period will end. However, many inbound tourism countries, such as Greece and Portugal, have already launched promotional actions in the midst of a crisis that show optimistic messages about the future choice of destination (Varelas & Apostolopoulos, 2020).

It will be of great importance in the future to strengthen the country's image as a health safe tourist destination for tourists. It may be necessary to make some small or big brand changes in order to regain travel confidence internationally.

The first step for the approach of travelers in this period was made by GNTO and Marketing Greece with the new campaign #Greecefromhome, giving tourists the opportunity to tour the destinations of Greece and plan their next trip, whenever possible (Sigala, 2020).

Public relations and publicity actions, such as advertising spots and interviews with politicians, journalists and health scientists after the end of the crisis, in order to emphasize the stability of the situation and the successful resolution of health problems in the population and in businesses. Similar organization of Fam & Press Trips, as well as synergies with collective tourism actors, culture and productive organizations of the regions (Kyriakakis & Tzirakis, 2020).

Human Resources upgrade and training, i.e. antibacterial hand washing equipment and special air ionizers should be installed in hotels and restaurants. In addition, regular disinfection of public areas should be observed. Restaurants should provide and advertise healthy Mediterranean cuisine. Proper preparation and training of staff will help to be fully prepared, so as to help tourists to comply with the regulations, to inform them of any questions and on the other hand to avoid the feeling of fear and panic. Another measure is the necessary testing of the personnel for COVID-19 infection (Varelas & Apostolopoulos, 2020).

In terms of the orientation of domestic tourism, the focus on domestic tourism in the country could be the goal of the tourism development strategy. There is a need to work intensively to improve the ratio of foreign and domestic tourism. It seems that Greece is in better health than other EU countries, so the tourism industry should take the advantage of the fact that Greeks will not have the immediate intention to travel abroad. The expected result could be the development of domestic leisure tourism and contact with inland nature. It is noted that the same trends of introversion will initially prevail in all tourism markets of the world (Filimonau et al., 2020).

Alternative forms of tourism, which this crisis reminds us since one key problem that the Greek tourism faces is namely the intense seasonality. There is always talk about losing most of the season. The need to extend the tourist season must become a key axis of action of the national tourism strategy, through the development of special or alternative tourism activities. No large special infrastructures are required to develop new thematic forms. Given the support measures and grants from various investment programs, investments should be oriented in this direction, stimulating professional and tourism life in the countryside (Wojcieszak-Zbierska et al., 2020).

A Crisis Management Department for Tourism should also be established. The Ministry of Tourism should create a specialized department that will deal with crisis management. In more detail:

The formation of a team is required, which will consist of experts in tourism development, communication, social media, tourism marketing, financial analysis, etc.

A fund should be established for the provision of funds in emergency situations.

Creation and addition of an official micro site (for possible crises) on the already existing website of GNTO, which will be made known to foreign media and where there will be immediate information about any developments concerning visitors in any possible crisis (earthquake, accident, etc.). There will also be available texts, scientific research and studies, formal assessments, measures, changes – amendments to the legal framework, advices for tourists staying in the country and statistics.

Regular communication and provision of information at GNTO offices abroad on the course of the crisis and the moves that need to be made.

Conclusions. It must be understood by all political and economic actors, that the reduction of tourism activity will not have negative effects only in the sectors that are directly related to the tourism industry, because it is the beginning of a domino effect, which will affect the supplies of intermediates, final products, tourism support companies (Marketing, Study & Research, etc.), ultimately disorganizing the overall economy of the economically weaker countries with a rapid decline in their GDP.

It is clear that this crisis, along with the risks to our lives, should be treated as a necessary opportunity for change in the design and planning of sustainable development of our country, diligently integrating tourism crisis management plans into strategic marketing planning.

Also, at the local level, the Municipalities and the other collective bodies must take care, in order to include the crisis management in their programs, thus protecting as much as possible, the businesses and the professionals of the area. Finally, the private companies in the tourism sector are required to

prepare and request consulting services/seminars for the training of human resources, so that they can remain on constant preparedness.

In concluding, in addition to the scientific suggestions and advice, in these difficult times we must emphasize that the concept of solidarity comes first. There are many people, who are in the front line (doctors, nurses, supermarket employees, delivery employees, courier employees, etc.), who are away from their families and while facing problems and losses are struggling with time for the public interest.

We should all offer them practical help in any way we can, acknowledging their contribution, showing that we stand by them. Here are some indications of the moves that could be made:

In tourism accommodation and hotels free rooms could be provided for the stay of doctors and nurses. In addition, if the situation worsens and the state needs more beds to treat patients, the hotel facilities and rooms could be converted into hospital infrastructure.

Catering facilities should provide free (or at a very low cost) meals, coffee or juices to the medical and nursing staff.

Volunteering, where in consultation with local authorities, non-vulnerable groups could help distribute food and other supplies needed by people at high risk and unable to leave their homes, the elderly, the homeless etc.

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БУДИНКИ НА КОЛЕСАХ

Постановка проблеми. В умовах розповсюдження коронавірусної інфекції, здійснення традиційних форм туризму та відпочинку є майже неможливим. Подорожі автобудинками є одними з найбільш безпечних та можливими на даний час. Метою даної статті є ознайомлення туристів однією із таких форм здійснення подорожі та відпочинку.

Постановка завдання. Ознайомити потенційних туристів з поняттям автобудинку. Розповісти історію створення такого виду транспорту, основні конструктивні особливості, принципи функціонування та застосування.

Виклад основного матеріалу. Автобудинки – це автомобілі з житловим приміщенням в спеціальному фургоні. Житлове приміщення може перебувати в тому числі в причепі, і всередині самого автомобіля. Житловий модуль встановлюється на шасі легких вантажівок і чіпляється до автомобіля. Кабіна автомобіля при цьому нерозривно пов'язана з житловим відсіком [5].

Ідея автобудинків перейшла від давніх людей. Наші предки використовували вози-фургони для довгих подорожей і військових походів. Ці вози були досить зручні, оскільки в них містилося кілька осіб, а також можна було зберігати провізію, перевозити коштовності і полонених в разі вдалого військового походу.

Вози-фургони використовувалися не тільки військовими, а й купцями, і місіонерами. Перші перевозили в них товар, а також провізію, запасний одяг і зброю на випадок, якщо доведеться захищатися від розбійників. Другі ж просто подорожували по країні, пропагуючи ідеї свого вірування. Для них вози були засобом зберігання скарбу.

Вози-житла найімовірніше використовувалися і кочівниками, проте ті все-таки воліли спати в наметах, а вози використовувати для зберігання особистого майна.

Найперший в світі трейлер для відпочинку був створений