



**International Conference**  
**TOURISM: TRENDS, PROSPECTS AND**  
**IMPLICATIONS FOR ENTERPRISES**  
**AND DESTINATIONS**

**19-21 October 2017, Santorini**

**Book of Abstracts**

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**Book of Abstracts of**  
**the 5<sup>th</sup> University of the Aegean Tourism Conference**  
**& the 13<sup>th</sup> IMIC Conference**

**TOURISM: TRENDS, PROSPECTS AND**  
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**DESTINATIONS**  
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## About the Conference

### Conference Objectives

Modern day tourism presents an ever-changing profile. Trends and practices of five years ago may be considered in some cases obsolete and as product diversity and innovation is becoming increasingly important, every tourism related business is seeking to offer unique experiences in order to create (repeat) guests. On the other hand, innovation, service and experience in the service sector flow from and are delivered through people – the ‘human factor’. In addition, as the distribution of the tourism product and experience is evolving and shifting towards e-distribution, the puzzle becomes harder to solve, the boundaries between sectors become more blurry and the need for continuous training & empowerment on modern trends and skills is paramount.

This conference aims to capture the growing need for focusing on the human element in order to secure the growth of tourism and the necessary involvement. It seeks to identify the actors in online distribution and examine the relationships between them, as well as looking into the current trend of sustainability from a different perspective. Tools, needs, strategies and approaches will be presented, analysed and debated.

### Topics

- Human resources for the service sector: A leader vs. a manager in hospitality and the role of individual department heads. The importance of communication between peers and team members.
- Empowerment: How the strengthening of one department affects/impacts on the performance of an entire hospitality related business
- Tourism planning, policy and development: Where to focus and where to start – infrastructure or people?
- Is the human factor the most important one in hospitality?
- Sustainability: Is it only environmental? Analyze other forms of sustainability and their impact on the sector
- Online Distribution for tourism related enterprises: What are the trends? Painting the picture, identifying the actors, solving the puzzle.
- From property to experience: Modern selection drivers for the contemporary tourist. Past, present and future
- Spreading the knowledge: The importance of scientific conventions in tourism
- Airlines and destinations: A symbiotic relationship. Destination survivability without an airport.
- Hiring for attitude: How modern hospitality businesses (should) hire. The evolution and importance of tourism training in shaping the modern employee’s attitude

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## ABSTRACTS

19 OCTOBER 2017

Session 1: Keynote Presentation

### **The place of tourism in the academy**

*David Airey (University of Surrey, UK)*

Tourism has been developing as a subject for study and research in the academy since about the middle of the 1960s. There were some earlier initiatives to provide education related to tourism and to conduct research into tourism in earlier years, dating back to the 1920s, but it was only after the development of tourism as a major international activity in the mid-1960s that distinct centres of tourism emerged. Since then, through various indicators, for example, the growth in student numbers, the development of academic journals, the establishment of academic conferences, it is possible to plot the development of tourism as a significant component of the academy worldwide. In many ways it has become possible to consider this development as the maturing of tourism as an area of study to take its place alongside other social sciences.

This presentation explores this idea of tourism as a maturing area of study and in doing so, drawing upon a range of sources, it identifies a range of certainties and uncertainties that point toward or away from tourism's maturity. Generally, from this it reaches a conclusion that tourism is maturing. But against this, perhaps more importantly, it also identifies two interruptions to tourism's progress toward maturity. The first of these, the so-called turn towards neoliberalism, has brought considerable disruption. Above all this has come about from the close scrutiny of the contribution that tourism is making to the funding and reputation of individual institutions. Drawing on work by Airey, Tribe, Benckendorff and Xiao (2015) it points to the extent to which tourism's contribution has often been found to be inadequate. As a result there have been programme closures as well as an increasing focus within the academic community on pursuing the measurable objectives related to teaching, research and impact. At the same time, in pursuit of metrics, many in the academy seem to have moved away from emphasising the inherent strengths of tourism as a multi-disciplinary, multi-method area of study well suited to meet the needs of a complex world.

Drawing on the rather negative outcomes of this first interruption, the presentation turns to the second interruption that is currently taking place and which it refers to as the populist turn. Here it reflects on the ways in which the associated isolationism, nationalism, the concern about immigrants and foreigners, the provision of fake news and the distrust of experts might bring consequences for tourism in the academy. The experience from the first interruption and early indications suggest that the response from the academy is likely to be more of the same with a continued focus on the measurable metrics. This is contrasted with a desirable more positive and in the long run more sustainable approach on which those in the academy ought to build, in tourism's inherent strengths as a post disciplinary area of study. Airey, D, Tribe, J, Benckendorff, P and Xiao, H (2015) 'The Managerial Gaze: the long tail of tourism education and research', *Journal of Travel Research* 54(2) pp139-151 doi: 10.1177/0047287514522877

Session 2A: ICT

### **Complexity in the tourism online purchasing process**

*Andreas Papatheodorou (University of the Aegean, Greece)*

*Nikolaos Pappas (University of Sunderland, UK)*

Information Technology has heavily impacted tourism and the way travellers acquire and use relevant information. Over 10 percent of Internet searches are related to travel, while 60 percent of people 15 years old or older tend to use the Web to search travel and tourism information and purchase relevant products. Not surprisingly, therefore, travel and tourism oriented web-vendors have become very active, significantly influencing the access of travellers to tourism products and services. Still, research on the complexity of online travel and tourism purchasing decisions and behaviour is rather limited. This is surprising given the role of technology in shaping consumer behaviour in advanced modern societies.

This paper focuses on website vendors in tourism. It synthesises previous research (i.e. what we know) on the main elements (variables) affecting tourism online purchasing intentions in terms of marketing activities; perceived benefits; risks and confusion by over-choice; price and quality issues; consumer trust; and intention to purchase. Most importantly, however, it steps beyond a simple synthesis to discuss what we do not know very well, i.e. how complexity affects the attributes of tourism online purchasing intentions. Given the sheer scale of online bookings and the inherent risks associated with Internet use, understanding and evaluating consumer behaviour through the theoretical lens of complexity is a relatively uncharted territory worth exploring further. To do so, the paper implements Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA), which is relatively new in tourism research, while only a few studies have generally employed it in the service sector. Eight elements (i.e. marketing activities, perceived benefits, perceived risks, over-choice confusion, price issues, quality issues, consumer trust and intention to purchase) are identified as of principal importance. Based on a sample of 735 holidaymakers, the empirical findings stress the role of perceived benefits in e-marketing activities; the significance of perceived risks for price and quality issues; and the importance of over-choice confusion to e-shopping. QCA results are compared to regression highlighting the possible superiority of the innovative non-linear mixed method. The paper also progresses from fit to predictive validity and discusses several theoretical, methodological and managerial implications.

On these grounds, the contribution of the study is both theoretical and methodological. Concerning literature, it provides a better understanding and possible explanation of online tourism decisions based on complexity theory. In terms of methodology, it applies an innovative asymmetric analysis technique whose possible superiority and suitability for tourism research is assessed by directly comparing its results with dominant linear (i.e. Structural Equation Modelling) regression analysis using Pappas (2015) and its associated dataset as a benchmark.

Pappas, N. (2015). The effect of marketing activities, benefits, risks, confusion due to over-choice, price, quality and consumer trust on online tourism purchasing. *Journal of Marketing Communications*. DOI: 10.1080/13527266.2015.1061037

## **David vs Goliath: How can individual properties hold their own against OTAs**

*Alexandros Dardoufas (University of the Aegean, Greece)*

*Andreas Papatheodorou (University of the Aegean, Greece)*

Hands down, the modern ‘battlefield’ for hotels is the internet. Concepts like “online presence and distribution” have evolved from unknown terms to everyday language. Until 2006, modern online booking giants were smaller and less influential. Essentially, the puzzle of creating, distributing and selling the hotel product had much less pieces.

Fast-forward to the beginning of this decade, and one may observe online booking platforms popping up in the market and (re)selling hotel rooms. Traditional tour operators are slowly but steadily losing their grip and negotiating power while at the same time an increasing number of properties worldwide find themselves helpless and with no influence or control over their online presence. As “ownership of the guest” is shifting to 3rd parties, hotels must find a way to increase their influence and reclaim ownership.

Properties are also in a continuous struggle to maintain independence from 3rd parties usually by increasing direct bookings and delivering their product to the masses (Doman, 2015). With the layout of online presence changing rapidly, an accommodation cannot just speak about long term strategy – it has to have a plan for short term & mid-term distribution as well as unremitting fine tuning, in essence maintaining constant vigilance.

The emergence of the internet created for all properties the chance to find a more direct way of distributing their product. When the first OTAs appeared they presented an appealing way for properties to disengage themselves from ‘older habits’. However, just like any new innovation, the OTAs quickly gathered around them the bulk of the properties. In essence, hotels are now relying on OTAs to increase their occupancy much like how they relied on Tour Operator in earlier years.

It seems therefore that the accommodation sector is locked in a continuous loop of dependence-innovation-new dependence as it is normal in the Tourism Area Life Cycle (Papatheodorou, 2006). Properties can balance this dependence is by creating a powerful brand name and taking steps towards influencing directly as many guests as possible. There are several ways properties can achieve this, either simple and must-haves, or more complex.

- Creating a simple, informative and mobile friendly website. - Managing their content intelligently - Handling their guest reviews: the (electronic) word-of-mouth still remains a powerful tool to drive business - An easy to use booking engine at the property’s website that can also be connected to metasearch sites (Trivago, Tripadvisor, etc) for direct selling of the hotels’ rooms - Using the emerging trend of chatbots for a more complete and thorough concierge and customer service experience - Incorporating Virtual Reality or Augmented Reality to the presentation of their product, thus creating an exact image of what the experience of the prospective customer will be. The idea behind this is to create the need to the guest to visit the real site/property and help the traveller decide on the destination (Graham, 2016).

The main purpose behind the above is to shift the interest from the area and the destination to the property instead – transforming the individual property to an individual destination and brand name.

The researcher will focus on primary research with hoteliers (interviews and questionnaires) in different areas of Greece as well and level of expertise as well as own research in an attempt to ascertain which of the above mentioned tactics are a) known by the hoteliers, b) applied by them or planned to be applied and in general understand the level of digital maturity. The research will use questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaires will list the innovative and standard practices and ascertain whether they are being used by hoteliers and to what extent. (Semi) structured interviews will determine whether professionals are aware of the full potential of these practices and also to what extent (and if) they intend to use them in the future. In addition –while targeting medium and larger size properties- the research will attempt to decide whether if all of these practices are necessary for all properties. The questionnaires will also use Likert scales (e.g. ranked from least likely to most likely) to attempt to indicate the current and future level of digital maturity of properties.

### **The use of augmented reality in developing city brand experience**

*Marcin Lewicki (Poznan University of Economics and Business, Poland)*

*Magdalena Florek (Poznan University of Economics and Business, Poland)*

*Karolina Janiszewska (Collegium da Vinci, Poland)*

Augmented reality, commonly abbreviated "AR" can be defined as computer-generated content overlaid on a real world environment (techterms.com). Despite the fact that one of the very first papers on the subject of AR is dated 1993 (Drascic et al., 1993), it took over 20 years since then for AR to become not only one of the biggest subjects of interest within scientific literature, but recently also within the destination and place branding domain, which currently aims at creating meaningful experiences with their target groups (Hanna & Rowley, 2013; Hudson & Ritchie, 2009).

Experiences are the take-away impressions that customers glean from the various clues (Carbone & Haeckel, 1994) and as such, for city branding purposes, AR is an attractive tool to build these impressions. Although much of the discussion in the literature focus on extraordinary experiences that produce powerful emotional responses and long-lasting memories which all brands want to create and achieve (Arnould & Price, 1993; LaSalle & Britton, 2003), AR is also an appropriate tool to strengthen and intensify the everyday experiences people have with a city as residents or tourists, which Carù & Cova (2003) find also important as they occur as part of everyday life.

The purpose of this paper is to present the continually growing significance and possibilities of AR use in developing city brand experience, especially the present AR solutions that are implemented in different cities. The methods of desk research and case study have been used to support the abovementioned purpose.

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### **Network creation and use of tourism information channels in a destination of religious significance**

*Vicky Katsoni (TEI of Athens, Greece)*

*Androniki Kavoura (TEI of Athens, Greece)*

This paper examines the structure of the tourism information channels employed, as well as the existence of networks for the promotion of religious tourism in the prefecture of Arcadia, in Peloponnese, Greece. Quantitative methodology was employed with the use of a field survey research based on 775 valid questionnaires, in the province of Arcadia, including Greek and foreign tourists. Results regarding the type of the tourism information channels employed from the key stakeholders involved in the promotion of the region of Arcadia, reveal that the existence of networks in regard to religious tourism in Arcadia, Greece, is extremely limited, if not existing at all; religious tourists depend firstly on the traditional channel of word of mouth, as recommendations from friends and relatives is their first information channel choice, followed by the internet and thirdly, by hotel listings. However, all information channels do not take advantage of the density of the region and do not cooperate for marketing the area as a whole; the promotion of specific areas and businesses over others does not allow the expansion of networks to take place, as research has shown. The absence of network creation in the region under study illustrates an area that could be further improved, a goal of significant importance for economic development, especially in a period of economic crisis in Greece.

Session 2B: Destinations

### **Dynamics of Athens tourism and challenges for new directions**

*Paris Tsartas (Harokopio University, Greece)*

*Evangelia Georgitsoyanni (Harokopio University, Greece)*

*Despina Sdrali (Harokopio University, Greece)*

*Panagiota Karametou (Harokopio University, Greece)*

*Efi Saradakou (Hellenic Open University, Greece)*

This paper attempts to review the contexts and dynamics for a strategic shift of focus of Athens tourism, and to discuss the implication of the changes for a sustainable destination development. We will especially focus our research and policy recommendations on crucial topics, issues and policies related to the changes of the city's infrastructure and resources on matters related to the characteristics of a

Metropolitan City which is also a tourism destination. For this purpose a qualitative research on key informants was conducted searching their expert opinions on the prospects of Athens as a competitive tourism destination, highlighting the most important advantages and disadvantages of the city, while attempting to capture the most important actions that will help Athens towards this direction.

The results suggested that Athens has the prospect of becoming an attractive and popular tourism destination. However, the identity of the city should be strengthened with the differentiation of the tourism product. Furthermore, the role of relevant parties, specifically stakeholder, is crucial for an integrated tourism plan. Both the design and implementation of a realistic strategic plan require collaboration, making Athens a dynamic tourism destination as a European city.

According to the strengths/weaknesses and threats/opportunities of the area, the paper suggests sustainable development strategies, regarding the problems which derive on the city's effort to swift into a dynamic tourism destination.

### **Tourism in Bulgaria: the role of human resources in the tourism sector and the impact of internal branding on employee engagement**

*Irena Kenarova (University of Ruse, Bulgaria)*

*Petar Penchev (University of Ruse, Bulgaria)*

Tourism is one of the main branches of the Bulgarian economy. The share of tourism in the Gross Domestic Product of Bulgaria is above the European Union average. The economic potential and employment opportunities of tourism is an important factor for the development of the regions and the economy of the country.

This article reviews the statistics of tourists' visits to Bulgaria in the last 5 years. The results show that there is an upward trend of the number of foreign tourists and the revenues generated by them. An expected increase is forecast for the summer season of 2017. The paper explores the reasons for this positive trend of the sector. Some of the factors pushing up the tourism sector are the new routes of low cost carriers coming to Bulgaria, the improvement of seawater quality in the country, the extension of the summer season and above all the development of different types of tourism on the territory of the country. There is a brief presentation of the different alternatives for tourism, including sea, cultural, ecological, mountain/ski tourism, spa/wellness tourism, rural and congress tourism. The paper investigates the main problems faced by the tourism sector of Bulgaria. The most significant problem is the lack of qualified staff. The partially improved infrastructure is no longer the biggest obstacle to the development of successful tourism. There is lack of specialized personnel especially positions, which are intended to serve the tourists and create a comfortable ambience for them. The paper addresses the problems with the human factor in tourism in the aspect of the insufficient commitment of the staff to the goals of the company. A research is carried out to find out if the lack of motivation of the staff is a consequence of the management's under-assessment of the importance of internal branding. The image of the companies in the tourism sector is worsened by staff's lack of commitment to the job. In the end, this is could be a reason to make customers reluctant to repeat their visits in Bulgaria. An important step in this direction is the introduction of the basic features of the branding and the opportunities that its application gives to increase the quality of service.

The article proposes guidelines for solving the problems, some of which indicate actions already taken by the government and the responsible institutions.

### **Tourism market analysis in Bulgaria - Current condition and perspectives**

*Petar Penchev (University of Ruse, Bulgaria)*

*Irena Kenarova-Pencheva (University of Ruse, Bulgaria)*

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the current conditions of the tourism market in Bulgaria. The authors investigate some of the most important problems facing the tourist industry and search for possible solutions to them. The paper starts with an observation of the worldwide trends in tourism, analysing the impact of this sector to certain parts of the economy including employment and revenues from international tourism and GDP. The research is then narrowed to the Bulgarian touristic market. The exploration, included in the current study, is based on analysis of secondary data. The sources of the general data, concerning the world-wide trends, are from UNWTO, ILO, WTTC, EC and OECD. The country-specific data are primarily from government institutions like the National Statistical Institute, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Economics and Energy. The gathered data is concerning most generally accommodation establishments, seasonality of the bed occupancy and their location, revenues from tourism and workforce.

The first important topic discussed is the seasonality of Bulgarian tourism. The accommodations are mostly used for only three months of the year and namely in June, July and August. The sea resorts attract the majority of the tourist and the hotels there provide about 2/3 of the revenues from tourism. At the same time, the high seasonality of tourism gives the chance to try to find ways to make Bulgaria an all-year-round tourist destination.

Then the research is focused on the uneven distribution of the bed occupancy in the country. Most of the accommodations are concentrated in certain locations on the Black Sea coast. At the same time, there are regions with an underdeveloped infrastructure, which are hardly accessible but could offer excellent conditions for tourism.

Finally, the paper gives suggestions of how to overcome the obstacles in front of the growing tourism sector and ensure its sustainability. It points out the importance of positioning Bulgaria as a well-known and preferred year-round destination with an easily recognizable national identity, preserved culture and nature and a leading tourist location in Central and Eastern Europe. In order to achieve this, it is necessary that the Government should be active in different aspects. It could advertise Bulgaria as a safe reliable place offering ski facilities, hot mineral water springs, divine nature and idyllic small villages in the mountains and numerous historical and archaeological sites. The state could further improve the infrastructure of the country, so that a larger number of potential places of interest could be reached.

## **The issue of “grey” holiday/ touristic building. Trends and challenges to Greek tourist destinations**

*Efthymia Sarantakou (Dr. of Planning and Tourism, Greece)*

This proposal examines the role of “grey” holiday/ touristic infrastructure in the development and management of Greek destinations. The term “grey” holiday/ touristic building describes building mainly for touristic and holiday purposes, which by-passes all planning and inspection procedures. It mainly concerns illegal building, but also legal structure that changes its use from being a second home to being a touristic infrastructure, depending on the circumstances created at different periods of time.

In the current period, networking, information and interactivity offered by new technologies, as well as a series of given facts such as the liberation of the touristic laws and the development of sharing economy help unregulated forms of tourism. These data form a series of new challenges in the management of Greek tourist destinations.

The first hypothesis discussed in the proposal is that in the case of Greece spatial and developmental policies applied over the years, favored the creation of “grey” building with non-standard characteristics. The second hypothesis discussed in the proposal is that, in the case of coastal and island areas, “grey” building has acquired an urban planning dimension, as well as that the lack of restriction mechanisms prevents all efforts of having a viable spatial planning and undermines sustainable tourism development. The two research hypotheses are approached through three case studies, specifically those of Athens, Santorini and Chania. Each of the selected areas faces different issues and challenges in managing the “grey” holiday/ touristic building. The methodology approaches the subjects at two levels; at a first level, through the review of the implemented regulation framework and the policies applied along with a critical analysis of their results, and at a second level, through the examination of the issues rising in the management of destinations with specific spatial and developmental characteristics.

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Session 4A: Air Transport

**The role of airports in destinations' development – the Bayesian approach**

*Jakub Gazda (Poznan University of Economics and Business, Poland)*

*Magdalena Florek (Poznan University of Economics and Business, Poland)*

Purpose: This paper is going to evaluate the influence of airport related variables (e.g. dynamic of number of passengers, dummy variable – presence of airport in the region) on destinations development.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The foundation for the study is provided by the database developed by its authors for European NUTS2 regions. Using the BMA (Bayesian Model Averaging) (Gazda 2016) method, a group of explanatory variables was proposed for potential factors responsible for differences in development level. Bayesian inference, along with the MC3 algorithm, allows the selection of the most likely combination of independent variables (i.e. factors responsible for development level) from a very large set of variables to be made, as well as the calculation of the explanatory power of all the interesting models and their ranking from the most to the least likely one, and the averaging of posterior estimations, weighted with the posterior probability of the models (Sala-i-Martin 1997).

Findings: Airport related variables may be located in the group of potential variables responsible for destination's economic development level. As such, marketing support and closer cooperation between airport and destination might be necessary and justifiable.

Originality/Value: The Bayesian approach is new in the field of measuring the impact of airport variables for destinations (regions) that has not been used so far.

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**The role of Low Cost Carriers (LCC) in developing emerging tourist destinations: the case of Thessaloniki, Greece**

*Evangelos Kilipiris (Alexander Technological Educational Institute of Thessaloniki, Greece)*

*Georgios Lamperis (Alexander Technological Educational Institute of Thessaloniki, Greece)*

Tourism industry, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), still remains as one of the most significant sectors in global economy. With a major contribution to world economy, and furthermore increase in investments as well as in human resources employment, place tourism, among others, as one of the most profitable industries (WTTC, 2017). Nowadays the "new tourist" (Poon, 1997) is seeking for new tourism products including experiences related to natural environment, local cultures, gastronomy etc., forcing in this way the industry to evolve rapidly. Thus, while some tourism destinations become established, some new are emerging giving tourists the opportunity to explore and discover them (Butler, 1980). These evolving tourism destinations pass through the basic stages of the Tourism Area Life Cycle model (TALC) which place them to the process from the exploration to the development stage (Butler, 1980). In search for discovering new destinations tourists seek for relevant information. The acquisition of

this specific knowledge is the starting point of tourist decision making progress. The availability as well as the easiness to access these information sources, becomes a key factor for tourists searching either for alternative destinations or relatively well-known ones (Banasree Dey et al., 2009). Today, emerging tourism destinations become more and more popular due to the evolution of tourist behavior and preferences for new alternative, to mass tourism, products. Among other factors, such as accommodation and recreation, air transportation from the place of the origin of the tourist to the destination, plays a critical role for the development of the emerging tourism destination. Transportation as one of the key elements of the tourism industry mostly is operating by private sector companies (Luis Moreno et. al., 2015a).

After U.S. Civil Aviation Board loosened control of airline prices in 1979, Europe followed with the so called deregulation of air transportation that took place in the mid 1990's (Garrett J. van Ryzin et al., 2005). Since that period, the aviation industry has become one of the fastest growing and simultaneously highly profitable industry, transporting every year millions of passengers and gaining huge revenues (IATA, 2017). It is true that over the last fifty years, the air transport industry has been the principal driving force behind international leisure travel (Dwyer et al., 2010). Furthermore, due to the appearance of the so called Low Cost Carriers (LCCs) and the consequent decrease of the air fares, airline passengers have significantly increased (Graham, 2000). According to Khan (2014), the market shares in aviation industry from 2005 until 2014 rapidly increased from 20% to 45%. Operation of LCC's gave, from one side, the opportunity for development of many airports, mostly regional (Carlisle, 2015), and from the other side, they generated a behavioral and interest change of users creating the desire of exploring secondary destinations. Many researchers consider this as a new type of tourism that differs from the traditional one (Mills & Law, 2008). Furthermore, some claim that tourists transform themselves from visitors to citizens fully participating into the local societies (Bouhalis & Law, 2008). Additionally, applying online information and communication technology (ICT) passengers has easy access to tourism information as well as airlines the ability to develop strong e-commerce online (Luis Moreno et al. 2015b). This ICT development has accomplished significant changes to tourism industry and the way the passengers transport from one place to another. The evolution of LCC's has changed the tourism's industry parameters, by fostering new destinations to the detriment of traditional tourist centers (Morgan, 1991; Knowles and Curtis, 1999).

The purpose of this article is to highlight the role of LCC's in developing new (emerging) tourism destinations. As a case study, findings of secondary and primary research will justify to which extent the operation of LCC's to Thessaloniki-Macedonia Airport, promote and sustain the development of Thessaloniki as a city brake, and not only, tourism destination.

### **Destination brand image co-creation strategy jointly planned and implemented by airports, airlines and destination authorities – The case of Athens**

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The latest crucial changes in European Aviation market including air transport liberalization and airport management privatization are interlinked with positive direct and indirect effects in tourism development and destination competitiveness (Efthymiou et al., 2016; Farmaki and Papatheodorou, 2015; Bieger and Wittmer, 2006). Greece implemented the Third Liberalisation Package of EU aviation policy measures in 1998, while Athens International Airport and other fourteen regionals airports today operate as private

entities. As the Greek economy is facing a financial downturn and domestic tourism flows are deteriorated, several initiatives are needed to boost inbound tourism that is evidently linked with air transport (Papatheodorou and Arvanitis, 2014).

In fact, destination stakeholders are aware of the important role that airports and airline networks play in the development of tourism but incentive schemes covering marketing and advertising expenses cannot be applied to the extent of the past, due to the European Commission Guidelines (EC 2014) that adopt a more restricted attitude towards them (Malina et al., 2012; Allrogen et al., 2013). Because of the interrelation of the three parties and the fact that any conflicts between them bear huge transaction costs that in other cases could have led to vertical integration (which cannot be adopted in this case), new collaborative practices that will lead to a triple win situation should emerge and be adopted (Papatheodorou, 2016).

The aim of this paper is to illustrate the way ICTs can be used jointly by Airports, Airlines and Destination authorities in order to reinforce brand image co-creation process and have a direct impact to the destination's tourism development by presenting the case of "Athens Tourism Initiative". The latter consists a partnership of Athens International Airport, Aegean Air and Athens Development and Destination Management Agency that was launched in December of 2016 in order to build Athens brand identity as a city-break destination. This paper contributes to the branding theory by conceptualising current participatory practices that are adopted by the three parties. It also assists destination authorities; airports and airlines to better understand their role in the co-creation process.

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### **Tendencies of the airport infrastructure modernization in Russia and its influence to tourist destination development**

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Increasing interest for domestic tourism in Russia formulated a new challenge for transport infrastructure. Russia has an extremely big territory; the trip through the whole country takes 10 hours by airplane or 8 days by train. It's obvious that the volume of tourism flows is directly correlated with the accessible of territory by land or air. To meet the strong demands on domestic tours, activities of all "market players" mainly focus on the improving infrastructure and service quality.

Local carriers faced a number of problems caused by the economic recession, the declining number of passengers, revenue loss of payments from bankruptcy tour operators. The most important problem was struggle for survival of two biggest national air companies – Utair and Transaero. The first one survived, the second has become a bankrupt. Why does the bankruptcy of the second largest aircraft carrier have negative influence on the Russian tourist market? Firstly, it's clear that the disappearance of the one of the major "players" leads to monopolization. The biggest part of Transaero routes were transferred to Aeroflot Russian airlines and as it was expected, the ticket prices were raised. Secondly, Transaero was not only a regular carrier, but it also performed a lot of charters from different airports in Russia. Direct charters to the popular tourist destinations provided low-cost air tickets and generated a mass tourist flows. Fly connections reduce not only the money, but also save time and provide a bigger comfort for Russians who do not live in Moscow. Finally, there is a problem of poor connectivity between regions and occupancy in local airports. After Soviet period most of regional routes were disappeared and bankruptcy of Transaero made this problem more complex because it operated on local routes too.

For the present investigation we analyze initiatives of private investors to modernize airport infrastructure using different business models for success of destination development. There is an obvious need to consider drivers and barriers to the airport infrastructure modernization in Russia based on multi-level strategical point of view to destination development. Internal route development activity in modernized airports is analyzed. Systemic approach to success destination development includes inter-regional routes. The results give a complex overview of key tendencies of the airport infrastructure modernization.

#### Session 4B: Special Interest Tourism 1

### **The challenges of organizing munches: Insights from organizers**

*Craig Webster (Ball State University, USA)*

*Sotiris Hji-Avgoustis (Ball State University, USA)*

The purpose of this paper is to explore the practical issues and concerns of the organizers of BDSM non-play events. Previous research has shown that these events are critical elements in their lifestyle/community. While something is known about the events and their centrality in BDSM culture, no research has yet investigated the munch from the perspective of the organizer of munches and similar events. This article investigate the munch to show how organizers deal with the challenges of organizing

munches throughout the world. In this work, the data from a survey of over 200 organizers of various non-play BDSM events internationally show what concerns that organizers have had when organizing these events, including practical issues such as parking at venues, food and drink choices at venues, and issues of protecting the confidentiality of participants at munch venues. The findings highlight the practical issues that may be common in many different types of meetings but also shows how a group that needs to protect the confidentiality of its members works in ways to protect confidentiality while promoting open meetings. The findings from this international survey show that the munch organizers face challenges. The research highlights common practice of munch organizers, creating inclusive events that are open to all the public but at the same time protect the identities of participants.

### **Trends and prospect of mountain tourism in Greece**

*Efstathios Velissariou (Technological Educational Institute of Thessaly, GR, Greece)*

*Dimitrios Belias (Technological Educational Institute of Thessaly, GR, Greece)*

*Christos Amoiradis (Technological Educational Institute of Thessaly, GR, Greece)*

Greece is a country gifted with rich flora and fauna, unique beaches, wonderful mediterranean climate, astonishing mountain formations, hospitable people and great historical and archaeological heritage. All these have established her as one of the most important tourism destinations internationally. But now, the consequences from the development of the model of mass tourism are visible more than ever, especially in the coastline areas which have constituted his main field of development. The worldwide competition has increased and the moment has come to re-determine the tourism product that we provide. The main purpose of this study is to explore the potentials for development of mountain tourism in Greece. Given that Greece is a country which is made mostly from mountains, it is essential to examine what can be the potential of mountain tourism into this country. Indeed, Greece has developed a reputation as a summer destination due of the image made within and outside of the country. However, Greece has to offer many hidden treasures, including 21 ski centres and the 80% of the mainland which is made from mountains. Mountain tourism has been on the rise in Greece since the past 10 years. The outcome is that Greece has started to emerge as a key winter destination. This can become a driver of change and of sustainable development for many of its isolated and remote areas. Indeed, much of the hinterland of Greece has been almost forgotten from the tourist industry for years. While the islands and summer destinations have flourished and benefited all those years, on the other hand the rest of Greece has not seen the light of tourist development. This is something that everyone in Greece knows and it was a matter of time till the decisions were taken so to open the chapter of mountain tourism in Greece. It would be absurd having a country which has more than 100 summits which are over 2000 mtrs without having an effective mountain tourism policy. The essay examines the ways that mountain tourism can flourish in Greece but also what are the current policies and practices in mountain tourism in Greece. The aim is to prepare the ground for a future research which will involve the specialists of this industry but also the tourists who will provide their own experiences from mountain tourism in Greece.

### **International Arts Festivals visitors' motives and profile characteristics: the case of Greece**

*Vasiliki Georgoula (University of the Aegean, Greece)*

*Theano S. Terkenli (University of the Aegean, Greece)*

This paper presents an analysis of two renowned international arts festivals visitors' motives and profile characteristics, in Greece: the Kalamata International Dance Festival and the Drama International Short Film Festival. The purpose of the study was to determine the reasons visitors attend these festivals,

necessary for building more concise marketing strategies and, therefore, more successful and sustainable events, with long-term benefits, ranging from the local to the national levels. Primary data were collected with the aid of online structured questionnaires, distributed and collected during autumn 2016. 130 questionnaires were answered by visitors of the Drama International Short Film Festival and 186 questionnaires were answered by visitors of the Kalamata International Dance Festival. Even though both festivals share similar characteristics regarding their organization and their aims, our analysis emphasized the heterogeneity of the motives of attendance, for each event. While some similarities were found, especially between demographics characteristics and visitors' profiles, the general picture to emerge from the findings indicates significant differences between the two cases. Arts festivals-goers do not appear to constitute a single homogeneous market; rather, each event appears to attract different audiences for different reasons. The implications of these findings, deriving from factor and cluster analysis, are discussed and suggestions for further research are outlined. This research aims to contribute to knowledge concerning the marketing strategies of International Arts Festivals in medium-sized cities, useful for research and academic purposes, as well as to local and national authorities and other agencies and bodies, responsible for urban tourism and cultural city/town planning and management.

#### Session 5: Keynote Presentation

##### **Managing crowds and carrying capacity in tourism destinations: doing it smarter not harder**

*Marianna Sigala (University of South Australia, Australia)*

Overtourism and its subsequent negative impacts on destinations due to the overpassing of the limits of carrying capacity are nowadays common problems in numerous destinations. This study explained how the concept and applications of smart tourism can help destinations manage tourism demand and flows in a much better way. Smart destination management solutions go beyond the traditional approaches for managing carrying capacity (namely regulatory measures, market approaches and soft tools). The study gave numerous best practices and examples showing how smart destinations develop applications to: enhance and enrich tourism experiences; manage transportation to and within destinations; make efficient and effective use of scarce destination resources; enhance the quality of life and experiences of permanent residents and visitors; and enable tourists to plan, book, experience and share streamlined, personalized and meaningful destination experiences. The presentation concluded by explaining how Barcelona developed its 2020 tourism strategy to make it a smart tourism destination strategy.

#### Session 6A: Sustainable Development

##### **Exploring the impacts of ecotourism entrepreneurship on local communities through empowerment framework lens: the case of Turkey**

*Emir Ozeren (Dokuz Eylul University, Turkey)*

*Shahnaz Ibrahim (University of Southampton, UK)*

*Mine Karatas –Ozkan (University of Southampton, UK)*

*Pelin Demirel (University of Southampton, UK)*

To date mostly governments, tourism firms, travel agencies have been mainly and significantly paid rather than local communities which have usually gained almost no economic benefits from ecotourism, yet it is

generally taken for granted that ecotourism aids rural residents. Therefore, in this paper in order to better address the need for an approach to ecotourism activities beginning from the concerns and welfare of local host communities, we included the voices of multiple actors (entrepreneurs, NGOs, municipalities) of the sustainable and ecotourism community in which various diverse stakeholders affect/are affected by tourism development.

Given the mixed and inconclusive findings in the literature, we aim to explore under which conditions ecotourism work against and/or in favor of the interests of the local community. Local community perspective with an empowerment approach suggested by Scheyvens (1999) was adopted as the main guiding framework for the in-depth analysis of the social, economic, psychological and political impacts of ecotourism on local communities. We followed a semi-structured interview method, which is preferable when the topic at hand is under-researched. We run 37 in-depth interviews to elicit responses to a set of questions including the life stories of entrepreneurs, motivation to start up their businesses, barriers and challenges they faced throughout the process, their sustainability practices, own perception and understanding of ecotourism, the relationship with the local community including any possible conflicts and tensions between entrepreneurs and locals, any changes introduced in the local community with the emergence of ecotourism initiatives in the region.

One of the main issues of ecotourism which has been pointed out by all the participants is the lack of legislative framework. There is no specific legislation or regulation as well as monitoring mechanism with regards to ecotourism in the Turkish context. Given this huge legislative gap in this field, it remains unclear to what extent the entrepreneurs comply with the criteria and fulfill the indicators of being a “good” ecotourism venture. For most participants, the experiences with bureaucracy became troublesome as bureaucracy posed a significant barrier throughout their entrepreneurial lifecycle. The bureaucratic challenges, licensing issues along with the lack of government incentives and support mechanisms appeared as the major signs of political disempowerment. On the other side, ecotourism activities are very much linked to farming and agricultural production which is no longer seen as economically sustainable due to the major agricultural policy shifts in the last decade. There is certainly a need to economically empower entrepreneurs to maintain their survival whilst creating local impacts for the region in which they are embedded. The entrepreneurs in ecotourism have been found to show great enthusiasm to build a sense of cohesion and integrity with the local community by launching projects to grow awareness and socially empower disadvantaged people in their local context. However, the relationship between the entrepreneur and local community may also involve some tensions and conflicts. Finally, ecotourism can offer invaluable opportunities for the members of local communities by gaining new skills and respects and thereby improving their self-esteem and confidence.

### **Gendered dynamics in sustainable tourism: A Bourdieusian perspective**

*Emir Ozeren (Dokuz Eylul University, Turkey)*

*Mine Karatas –Ozkan (University of Southampton, UK)*

*Pelin Demirel (University of Southampton, UK)*

*Shahnaz Ibrahim (University of Southampton, UK)*

This paper aims to examine ecological and sustainable tourism projects in Turkey from the viewpoint of gender aware framework drawing on 30 in-depth interviews with women and male entrepreneurs, local municipalities and local communities in which sustainable tourism activities take place. This research has a potential to make a significant contribution to the mainstream research in the area of sustainable and

ecotourism which can be considered to a great extent as “gender blind” except a few noteworthy attempts (such as Dilly, 2003; Reimer & Walter, 2013; Schellhorn, 2010; Scheyvens, 2007; Tucker & Boonabaana, 2012).

Only few studies in the literature point out the unequal gendered power relations embedded in the tourism sector in general (Schellhorn, 2010; Vandegrift, 2008) and sustainable tourism in particular (Ferguson & Alarcon, 2015). Accordingly, the current literature on gender and tourism is far from transforming unequal gendered power relations in the industry. Based on Ferguson & Alarcon (2015), this situation stems from the fact that sustainable tourism dominant paradigm shows resistance to adopt post-structuralist feminist arguments and challenge the hetero-patriarchal order in the field. To date, beyond the studies discussed above, relatively little research has examined gender as a social construct and as an analytical category in community-based ecotourism (Tran & Walter, 2014; Reimer & Walter, 2013; Weaver & Lawton, 2007).

Gendering of tourism experiences and processes is part of a much wider discursive framework grounded in complex, multidimensional cultural, social, and historical systems (Pritchard & Morgan 2000: 887). This is why we have adopted Bourdieu theory of capitals (economic, social, cultural and symbolic) in this paper to account for the contested, multifaceted and relational nature of gender in sustainable and ecotourism. Based on insights from Karatas-Ozkan & Chell (2015), we demonstrate the gendered dimension of underlying structures in sustainable tourism by raising the following key questions: • How might the application of Bourdieu’s conceptual framework elucidate the nature of gendered experience in the context of sustainable tourism? • How gender relations are constructed in ecotourism projects in Turkey? • How gender is understood and negotiated in this context?

Given the aforementioned facts and arguments, it can be clearly seen that there is still much more work required for gender to be incorporated into the theory, practice and the agenda of sustainable tourism. To address this gap in the scholarly research, we undertook qualitative research by bringing critical aspects to the area of gender in sustainable tourism in the context of Turkey. It is important to examine in-depth how activities, products, services, daily work, gender relations (masculinities/femininities) and identities (male and female identities) are constructed, (re)produced, performed and negotiated in the context of agro/eco tourism projects in Turkey. This study seeks to explore the motivation and strategies for women’s entrepreneurship within rural/agro and ecotourism and the conditions, possibilities and restrictions imposed on women’s daily lives, the role of rural tourism on women’s livelihood strategies and practices and finally to the extent these livelihood practices adopted by women reflect or challenge traditional gender relations and identities.

### **Marketing the local authenticity for sustainable tourism development: the case of “we do local” project**

*Alexios-Patapios Kontis (Scientific Collaborator at University of the Aegean, Greece)*

*Sofoklis Skoultzos (Scientific Collaborator at Technological Educational Institution (TEI) of Sterea Ellada, Greece)*

*Theodoros Stavrinoudis (University of the Aegean, Greece)*

The increasing international tourist competition forces local public and private sector bodies to take initiatives to enrich and diversify tourist products. Especially for mass and mature destinations is vital of applying enriched mixtures of tourism products, in order to achieve their touristic rejuvenation), as well as

the repositioning at the international tourism markets. As globalized markets are steadily moving towards the homogenization of consumer's behavior and productive practices, the exploitation of local authenticity seems to be a promising option to diversify and shield the competitiveness of tourism destinations. Tourism industry has currently turned its attention to the creation of modern tourist products based on local authenticity. These products are related to local gastronomy, traditional markets, local "way of living" and amusement, and offer creative combinations of entertainment and culture.

The compound and promotion of new tourist products at destination level, through dynamic private initiatives, is an alternative that already has tangible results in Greece. An indicative example of these practices is the island of Crete which is a well-known destination of the traditional "mass-tourism product" in the Mediterranean. Despite the established image of the destination a group of entrepreneurs from the wider tourism sector has create the "We do local" concept. The product aims to satisfy the internal needs of returning to one's own roots and having a better quality of life - elements that Crete is well known. The philosophy behind the "we do local" project focuses on spreading the local customs and traditions, introducing local cuisine, supporting local producers and workforce, with respect to the environment and sustainability. The question is whether this seemingly reasonable strategy direction yields the expected results in practice. The aim of the current research is to investigate the perceptions of participants about the impact of "we do local" project on their businesses and customers from the marketing perspective.

### **The role of employees' innovation behavior in the travel agency sector**

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*Kwang-Ho Lee (Ball State University, USA)*

*Sotiris Hji-Avgoustis (Ball State University, USA)*

Innovation, which was initially introduced by Rogers (1995) is considered a critical catalyst for both individual and organization's performance (Jiménez-Jiménez & Sanz-Valle, 2011; Mattsson & Orfila-Sintes, 2014). Given the importance of understanding employees' innovation behaviors in diverse organizations, a social network theory helps employees to pursue innovative behaviors and perceive a high level of occupational performance. In this regard, it is necessary to understand employees' needs and wants based on the paradigm of adopting the advantages of social network activities (i.e., network size, network range, and network tie strength) in their successful performance (Bhandari & Yasunobu, 2009).

In an extended knowledge approach, integrating a social network theory (focusing on the internal social network activities) and the role of innovation is of considerable importance for promoting organizational performance. According to Kaasa (2007), those who pursue a variety of desired information are more likely to reduce the level of uncertainty when it comes to performing unfamiliar tasks at an organization, which in turn leads to their positive attitudes toward innovation behavior. This reveals that obtaining useful and diverse information from a variety of internal sources is critical for developing organizations' internal social network strategies that help facilitate not only individual's innovation behavior but also occupational outcomes. (Lee, Cho, & Hwang, 2013). Therefore, it is required to examine the role of social network factors (i.e., network size, network range, and network tie strength) in determining employee's innovative behaviors and organizational outcomes in tourism firms (Cohen, & Levinthal, 1990; McFadyen & Cannella, 2004; Tortoriello, Reagans, & McEvily, 2012).

To reduce the research gap, the current study proposes a comprehensive research model underlying employees' social networks that allow them to obtain novel knowledge and information, which in turn

help generate employees' innovative service implementation in travel agencies. More specifically, the current study aims to extend an empirical model that explores the causal relationship between three types of social networks (i.e., size of network, network range, and tie strength), innovation behavior, occupational outcomes (job performance and job satisfaction).

The proposed research model was developed by incorporating previous studies underlying study constructs in a variety of research domains. A structural equation modeling analysis was conducted using data from travel agency employees (n=234) in South Korea. The results showed that the associational activity of network size had a positive effect on innovation behavior, while the network range of network size had a significant negative effect on innovation behavior. Subsequently, innovation behavior positively influenced job performance and job satisfaction, respectively. Based on the results of the hypothesized model, the current study suggests valuable implications regarding not only a theoretical model that helps tourism scholars to extend the cognitive-behavioral model in a travel agency setting but also management guidelines for travel agency operators from a theoretical and practical perspective. Keywords: Social network theory, Network size, Network range, tie strength, Innovation behavior, Job performance, Job satisfaction.

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#### Session 6B: Economics

#### **Inter-regional allocation and spatial specialization of key tourism activities in Greece under the impact of economic crisis**

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*Dimitrios Lagos (University of the Aegean, Greece)*

Tourism is a multidimensional activity which has beneficial effects on enterprises and spatial units (cities, regions and countries) as well. Many researches have highlighted the crucial role of tourism in national and regional development.

Unfortunately, the ongoing economic crisis has affected the tourism industry, as all others, attracting much attention from researchers, especially since this affect has appeared in an uneven way among regions. However, recent data reveal that tourism is one of the industries that, although affected, at least not to the extent that this has happened to other industries, it has been the most resilient one. Of course, this resilience has uneven spatial results.

It is well known that Greece has been a major tourist destination and attraction in Europe. It has attracted 26.5 million visitors in 2015, making Greece one of the most visited countries not only in the Europe but also in the world. But at the same time, Greece is the country most hit by the economic crisis from any other country in Europe.

In this framework, the purpose of this article is to analyse the inter-regional and inter-prefectural allocation and also the spatial specialization of key tourist activities in Greece under the impact of economic crisis. These activities include the branches “accommodation and food service activities” and “activities of travel agencies, tour operators and other reservation services and related activities”, which, as it is well known, are strictly connected with the tourist industry.

The methods used are Location Quotient and Shift-Share Analysis. Location Quotient is used to see the sectoral specialization of the spatial units. It estimates the share of an economic activity in a spatial unit compared with the corresponding share of this activity in the national economy. Shift-Share analysis attempts to identify the causes of regional economic changes over time (for a specific time period) of an economic variable within branches (or even for a specific economic branch) of a regional economy. It helps identify branches where a local or a regional economy has advantages over the national economy. In this framework, we explore the specialization and the spatial allocation (at regional and prefectural level) of the two above mentioned economic branches related to tourism in two comparing time periods, the pre-crisis period which refers to the years 2000-2007 and the period of crisis which refers to the years 2008-2015. The variables used are employment and gross value added in these branches of economic activity, according to the Hellenic Statistical Authority data. This analysis will help us to see the changes occurred to the specialization of the spatial units due to the economic crisis, as well as the changes in the spatial allocation of the branches related to tourism.

### **TSA for Greece: a pilot project**

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This paper summarizes the main results and data issues of the first Tourism Satellite Accounts (TSA) pilot exercise for Greece, 2015 being the reference year, realized within a Structural Reform Support Service (SRSS) provided by the European Commission to the Greek Ministry of Tourism during 2016-17 regarding the development of monitoring and reporting tools for Greek tourism.

Tourism Satellite Accounts are an internationally accepted framework for the measurement of the importance of tourism in an economy. Greece is one of the remaining countries in Europe that still has not developed a TSA, a fact that has deprived policy makers and scientific community from a measurement tool of tourism’s direct impact on production, imports, gross value added and employment.

The exercise involved a close collaboration with main data producers, namely the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) and the Bank of Greece (BoG), contained the documentation of available sources in terms of their consistency with TSA-concepts, checking the completeness and quality of the data, identifying data gaps, providing recommendations for improvements and filling the data into the pilot TSA Tables; The pilot character of the tables is due to the fact that certain data issues are not resolved and some of the data used are provisional; final TSA tables might differ in some results from the ones obtained from this project. A routine wise operation of TSA for Greece should be conducted by ELSTAT.

From establishing the tables total expenditures of inbound, domestic and outbound tourism as well as their structure by consumption categories are defined, which constitute the first step to relate tourism consumption with production and imports of products in the economy and measure the impact triggered by the additional demand that tourism generates. Additionally, results show how crucial it is for tourism analysis to properly measure all components included in tourism consumption, such as international transport of passengers and imputed value of owned vacation homes, and to separately treat overnight from same-day visitors.

### **The impact of public subsidies on firm performance: Evidence from the hotel industry in Thira (Santorini) Island, Greece**

*Stella Kostopoulou (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, University of Economics, Greece)*

*Evaggelia Stergiou (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, University of Economics, Greece)*

The tourism sector is widely targeted by regional development funding programs, therefore public subsidies' effectiveness in tourism is receiving increasing research interest. This paper aims to provide an empirical investigation of the relationship between capital subsidies' allocation and the economic performance of hotel industry firms in Thira (Santorini) Island.

Capital subsidization relates to public funding provided to enterprises aiming at implementing investment projects. Public subsidies constitute a widespread regional and industrial policy instrument in many European Union countries. In Greece, regional development funding programs have a long history in continuously providing financial incentives to firms.

Research on the impacts of financial aid to firms is well developed in the regional development literature during the last years. A number of research works have examined the influence of capital subsidization on the performance of recipient firms, and have provided strong evidence of various effects. In Greece, most studies have mainly addressed the impact of capital subsidies on macroeconomic indicators at national and/or regional level, focusing on the impact on employment (job creation/maintenance), national or regional product and income.

This paper examines the effect of public subsidies on the financial position of firms, focusing on the hotel industry. The empirical domain of the analysis is the hotel industry on the Island of Thira (Santorini), one of the main tourism destinations in Greece. The first part of the paper expands on a brief review of the literature regarding regional subsidies policy, at the European and national level, with particular reference to the South Aegean Region and more specifically Santorini Island. Next, the structure and the development of the hotel industry in Santorini over the last years are analyzed, followed by an overview of the proposed methodology.

Working on the dataset of a representative sample of hotels operating in Santorini, the paper attempts to shed light on the impact of public subsidies on the performance of large, medium and small hotel businesses. The dataset used is obtained by several data sources, namely the Hellenic Chamber of Hotels, the Ministry of Economy, Development and Tourism, and the companies' websites. By conducting a comparative analysis between subsidized and non-subsidized hotel enterprises, their economic performance is investigated based upon four financial dimensions: efficiency, profitability, leverage and growth. We examine particularly whether there are differences based on hotel firm size. Finally, conclusions based on the research findings are drawn, to provide evidence on whether subsidized hotels compared to non-subsidized ones had substantial benefit from public subsidies, whereas proposals and issues raised for further research are highlighted.

### **The influence of taxation on the competitiveness of the Greek tourist agencies: A case study**

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*Nikolaos Mougios (Hellenic Open University, Greece)*

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of the tax burden on the travel agencies sector in Greece, compared to the corresponding effect of taxes on the tourist offices of the competing countries in tourism. As part of this investigation a concise record of major changes in underlying direct and indirect taxes imposed by the Greek legislation in recent years is attempted. Next a comparison of the Greek tax system with the tax systems of the main competing countries which include: Spain, Italy, Croatia, Malta, Cyprus and Turkey.

A primary survey conducted with the participation of tourist agents in the area of Athens regarding the impact of taxation on the tourism sector of the country in relation to the tourist offices of the competing countries. The sample consists the 2.93 % of the 1,162 tourist agencies of Athens and about 0.71 % of the 4,790 tourist agencies of Greece.

The results of the research show that with the exception of Croatia (concerning V.A.T), Malta and Italy (concerning business income taxation), the rest of the competitive countries implement higher tax rates than Greece. The results of the research showed that the turnover increases with a decreasing trend in the years 2014-2016, while the package tours sales are falling, and the higher decrease is recorded in external package tour sales (-6.17%). The sales of internal package tours record a decrease of -1.44%.

The tourist agencies believe they have financial losses and competitiveness decline because of the increase in income tax and VAT. Compared to competing countries the Greek tourist agencies consider that they experience a fall of approximately 2.67% in gross sales, as a results of losses from Cyprus, Turkey and Spain, due to the difference in rates in the taxation of VAT. They also consider that the difference in the income tax rates results to a drop of approximately 1.80 in gross sales, which mainly are estimate that come from Cyprus, Turkey and Croatia.

Besides, the Greek tourist agencies appreciate that the level of their competitiveness (based on of the differences in income tax and VAT rates) is the lowest (1.57) in relation to the competitor countries,

valuing as more competitive tourist agencies those of Cyprus (3.23) followed by those in Turkey (3.00), Spain (2.87), Croatia (2.60), Italy (2.40), Malta (1.93).

The limitations of this work include the issue of fiscal policy which focuses and explores the main taxation of income and VAT and their rates. Other "secondary" taxes, fines, etc. were ignored, as well as other parameters which affect the competitiveness of the tourist offices, such as safety, the economic situation in Greece and in the inbound tourist countries, infrastructure, training of the workforce, modernization of the product, costs etc.

This work concludes with the impact of tax policy and proposals for a more efficient tax policy for Greece.

### **Terrorist incidents and tourism demand: Evidence from Greece**

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*Dimitrios Asteriou (Oxford Brookes University, UK)*

*Stathis Polyzos (University of the Aegean, Greece)*

*Dimitris Kenourgios (University of Athens, Greece)*

The purpose of this paper is to examine the impact of terrorism on tourism demand in Greece using monthly data from 1977 to 2012. We aim to investigate whether this relationship is bidirectional and whether it exhibits persistence in the long run, by employing a large dataset of terrorist incidents. We perform cointegration and long-run causality tests. Also, we correct our data for cyclical seasonality and apply PCA to construct a terrorism proxy according to the severity of the incident in order to avoid multicollinearity issues. Our findings show concur that terrorism has a significant negative impact on tourist arrivals to Greece and that causality is noted from terrorism to tourism only. Additionally, this effect is persistent in the long run and thus cannot be neglected by authorities. The established need to minimise the economy impact of terrorism means that authorities should establish firm measures against terrorism. Further actions should be taken to promote tourism, safety and security, as a response to terrorist incidents. Our study is, to the best our knowledge, the first to approach terrorism using a three-factor proxy, which includes qualitative features, using an error correction model to establish the long run relationship between terrorist incidents and tourism demand.

**20 OCTOBER 2017**

Session 8A: Special Interest Tourism 2

**Trade fairs, city and tourism development: The concept of the "Honored Country" at the International Fair of Thessaloniki (TIF), the case study of China at the 82nd TIF**

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Trade Fairs throughout their long history have always had a multi-level interaction with the cities that hosted them. The significant contribution of trade fairs to the tourism development of the host cities was and still remains undisputed. Furthermore, this contribution is so important that it has become one of the strongest motives for local authorities leading them to adopt the strategy of organizing trade fairs in the direction of tourism development.

The city of Thessaloniki with the International Fair of Thessaloniki (TIF) records a long and remarkable historical tradition in the organization of trade fairs. Since 1926, when the first TIF was organized in Thessaloniki, until today, the Exhibition and the City have had parallel courses, capturing the particularities and historical events of each period. The international character of the trade fair activity in Thessaloniki and in particular of TIF, has always been significant and imprinted periodically through the concept of the "Honored Country". Thus, in many occasions, an honored country that presented its important achievements (economic, cultural, etc.) as well as its most important businesses was the focal point of the International Fair of Thessaloniki. This concept faded out during the past decades, while in recent years an attempt has been made towards its revival by selecting as honored countries, three geopolitically powerful and potentially important economic partners for our country, namely Russia in 2016, China in 2017, and the USA in 2018.

This paper attempts to examine the concept of the honored country within the framework of the International Fair of Thessaloniki historically and explore its multiple role. The central hypothesis of this paper concerns the exploration of the multiple role of the concept of the honored country during TIF and the highlighting of its impact on the city's tourism development. The exploration will take place both over time through the study of the historical archives of TIF-HELEXPO, as well as through the case study of the 82nd TIF, where China will be the Honored Country.

Methodologically, in this paper we are moving on two axes: first of all, we will study the archives of TIF-HELEXPO, and examine the concept of the honored country during TIF and its role in every historical period. Secondly our investigation will focus on the case study of the 82nd TIF and China's participation in it. During the 82nd TIF, a primary quantitative survey will be carried out with the use of a questionnaire while a qualitative survey will follow including semi-directed exploratory interviews to representatives of the Chinese enterprises and organizations participating in the 82nd TIF.

## **Running events in Greece: Key factors for strategic development of sports tourism in Greece**

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*Chrysa Agapitou (University of Piraeus, Greece)*

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Tourism is one of the most important sectors of the Greek economy. The European identity of Greece, combined with its' natural landscape, the countless islands, the coastline, the pluralism of its mainland, as well as, its' unique history and ancient monuments make it a popular destination. Greece has a goal to extend the Greek tourism season and these can be achieved by enhancing country's image as a tourist destination for special forms of tourism like ecotourism, cultural tourism, medical tourism, sport tourism etc.

A form of tourism that has been developing systematically in recent years worldwide is sport tourism. Sport Tourism is an emerging key component of tourism supply and many tourism destinations are offering specific Sport and Tourism related services and experiences. These events enable destinations to attract travelers who are keen on getting in touch with nature, and enjoy more healthy and interactive holidays. Especially, the trend towards a healthy life, exercise and seeking for experiences is constantly increasing, becoming a global phenomenon that motivates tourists and travelers to either plan their travels based on a particular sporting event or to seek activities at their holiday destination.

Greece, the cradle of the Olympic Games and the birthplace of Marathon Run, has the opportunity to take advantage of the growing sport tourism market, enriching and diversifying greek tourism product with sport tourism events so as to support all-year-round tourism season. It must be mentioned that many running races already taking place every year throughout the country.

The study examines how the trend towards running and endurance events could contribute to tourism development of Greece. Furthermore, explores the barriers of planning and policy making and also the opportunity factors of supporting running sport events in Greece. In support of the foregoing, empirically generated insights will be collected, by conducting a survey among the organizers and race directors of running, trail running and triathlon events in Greece.

The survey also will explore the nature and the role of various types of event organizers, their objectives and also the barriers and the prerequisites of further development of event sport tourism in Greece and especially that of running movement.

It is hoped that the findings will provide a strategy planning framework for event managers, local municipality decision-makers and other stakeholders involved, which can be taken account in setting priorities, making decisions, planning strategies, promoting future sport tourism events.

## **The case of Epirus: Tourism - Culture - Gastronomy / Gastronomic paths of Epirus**

*Spyridoula - Dimitra Souki (Hellenic Open University, Greece)*

*Ouranía - Panagiota Rompora (Hellenic Open University, Greece)*

1. INTRODUCTION With the present study, through the projection of triple tourism - culture - gastronomy, it is proposed a strategic development plan for the region of Epirus.

2. PURPOSES – Diversification of the local tourist product – Create "Brand Name"

3. HOW TOURISM IS LINKED TO CULTURE AND GASTRONOMY? The development of a network of partnerships between local entrepreneurs, local and state institutions coupled with rich cultural heritage, excellent natural beauty and plenty of local traditional products, are considered to be conducive to achieving these goals. Taking advantage of the conjuncture that integrates Epirus into the "Strategic Plan for Sustainable Urban Development", the wider region acquires a unique comparative advantage (Epirusnews.eu, 2017). Although geographically isolated, the completion of the Ionian Road gives the region a further lead and the creation of the conditions and measures that will allow the realization of an integrated "Cultural Route for the Ancient Theaters of Epirus" (Dodoni - Ioannina, Nikopoli & Kassopi - Preveza, Amvraki - Arta, Gitanas - Thesprotia) are expected to make a positive contribution to the tourist development of the area (Region of Epirus, 2017). According to UNESCO, cultural incentives are the most substantial and qualitative dimension to specific forms of tourism, combining sustainable tourism development with local economic growth (UNESCO, 2017a), while in the last few years the term "Cultural Heritage" has been further expanded, incorporating new areas of interest, such as "gastronomic tourism" (UNWTO.ORG, 2012).

4. STEPS FOR A "SUSTAINABLE GASTRONOMY" The consumption of "Food", besides being a biological necessity, is also a social practice, which in a way is linked to the history and customs of a country. - According to the WTO, about 44% of travelers around the world, consider the food as one of the most attractive elements of the place to visit (Culturepolis, 2017). Consequently, a policy of "sustainable gastronomy" should serve the following two basic principles: i. Protection of resources in order to reduce as much as possible the pressure exerted on different ecosystems in order to produce goods, and ii. To ensure that working conditions which are adequate for the performance of their duties are met by those working in the sector (UNWTO, 2012:50).

5. OBJECTIVE: "THE GASTRONOMIC PATHS OF EPIRUS" According to the "Cultural Routes", "Olive Streets" (UNESCO, 2003) and "Wine Roads" of the Council of Europe, or in line with the "Creative Cities Network" (UNESCO, 2017b) and "Gastronomy Cities" by UNESCO (UNESCO, 2017c), it is proposed to implement the action "Gastronomic paths of the Epirus". This action aims to create a "Gourmet Route" that goes beyond the predetermined visits to areas of Epirus with local products (Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) Products, eg, Metsovone cheese) (Ministry of Agricultural Development & Food, 2012) and will include, respectively, visits to historical, archaeological or cultural sites. The above action could also be combined with other special forms of tourism, such as religious tourism or mountain tourism, ideal forms of tourism due to the geomorphology of the area.

6. EXPECTATIONS The implementation of a "4E tourism model" (Environment and Clean Nature, Educational Tourism- Culture and History, Event and Mega Event, Entertainment and Fun) (Varvaresos, 2009:7), according to new tourism standards, is expected to bring benefits for the region, such as: – Differentiation of the tourist product: Enhancing the sense of respect for the cultural heritage and the traditional values of local communities – Promotion of quality in infrastructure and services: Incorporating tourism sustainability and quality indicators to reduce the wasteful use of environmental resources and protect biodiversity – Reduction in business operating costs: Implementation of "Green Policy" using innovative technologies or alternative forms of energy – Prolongation of the tourist season: Time distribution of demand outside the peak periods for tourism 12 months a year – Increase in customer base - Opening up new markets: Emerging market penetration strategy with higher income criteria (eg senior

tourism, special interest tourism, foreign tourism - especially with support after 30/05/2017 from Ioannina airport and international charter flights) – Increase in business turnover: Stimulate the local economy, but also create a wider network of partnerships – Creating new jobs: Reducing unemployment rates, especially in vulnerable social groups (young, female, self-employed)

7. CONCLUSIONS In order to rebuild the tourist image of the region of Epirus, it is necessary to implement a development strategy, which will be oriented towards innovative actions, especially in the cooperation of bodies, government and citizens, always respecting the environment and the specific cultural identity of the region.

### **Geographical mapping of thermal springs in Greece**

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Thermal tourism is a type of tourism with a history of many centuries and also of great importance for Greece, which has a rich thermal potential, in different environments of the Greek geographical area. This paper presents the geographical mapping of Thermal Springs in Greece using digital maps containing thematic levels of information. Geographic Information Systems have many applications in the tourism industry in microeconomic (tourism businesses) and macroeconomic (national, regional, local sector), as both in terms of supply and demand is linked to the concept of geographic information. The designed application is an effective tool for companies and public sector to show cases and takes advantage of the tourist product. Moreover, the geographical mapping gives the opportunity to the user to have access to dynamic maps by receiving information regarding the thermal services, pinpointing the location of the thermal springs, enabling the user to turn the information into effective actions by providing personalized services.

### **Inclusion of traditional Greek foodstuffs in the breakfast menu: knowledge, attitudes & opinions of hotel owners**

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*George Boskou (Harokopio University, Greece)*

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Introduction: Studies have shown that the type of breakfast offered by hotels is identified by travelers, as an important component of quality in the hospitality industry. Identifying and promoting the local, Greek traditional breakfast food products, to the traveller, will offer him/her the opportunity to better understand the culture, history, philosophy, dietary habits and dietary perceptions of the Greek people. The purpose of the current study is to measure and evaluate the knowledge, attitudes and opinions of the hotel industry regarding the promotion of the Greek traditional breakfast, as an alternative to the convention breakfast models.

**Methods:** A specially designed electronic questionnaire, consisting of predominantly close ended questions, aiming at measuring predominately knowledge, attitudes and opinions regarding the promotion of the Greek traditional breakfast, was administered to hotel owners, in different areas of Greece. Possible social sustainability markers of the promotion of the Greek traditional breakfast, as an alternative to the convention breakfast models, were also assessed. In total 253 hotel owners and employees of the hospitality industry (64% male), took part in the study. The sample consisted predominantly of hotel owners (43.9%) and hotels managers (36.8%).

**Results:** The majority of the participants identified the inclusion of traditional Greek foodstuffs in the breakfast menu, as an important advantage. Twenty percent of the hotels businesses were certified by the “Greek breakfast” program (Hellenic Chamber of Hotels), whereas, 1 in 10 participants, stated that they were not aware of the existence of the above program. Fifty percent of the participants stated that they are offering Greek breakfast, 28.4% offer continental breakfast, 24.1% American breakfast, 2.4% American Breakfast & 1.2% of the participants stated that they are offering Mediterranean breakfast. The main barrier to the inclusion of traditional breakfast foodstuffs in the breakfast menu were mainly the high price of these products and the lack of adequate production and supply of local produces, to cover the needs.

**Conclusion:** A number of barriers to the inclusion of Greek traditional products in the breakfast menu have been identified by the hotel industry and further studies are needed to explore ways to overcome these problems.

## Session 8B: Marketing and Branding

### **Nation branding and strategies for combating tourism crises and stereotypes towards destinations**

*Eli Avraham (University of Haifa, Israel)*

Nearly every country and its people are associated with both positive and negative generalizations and stereotypes. As can be expected, these perceptions serve as a key mechanism to categorize and deal with the enormous quantity of information that flows from a wide range of sources regarding all of the world’s countries. But how do marketers and national leaders react when these stereotypes constitute a barrier to tourists, investors and international status? This issue is even more frustrating and challenging in cases where such officials feel that the negative perceptions of their destination—as “dangerous”, “primitive”, or “gray”, for example—has no connection to reality. Despite of the fact that stereotypes can be a serious barrier to the arrival of tourists, comprehensive studies, focused on strategies that countries’ leaders and marketers have chosen to deal with the stereotypes, have rarely been conducted to date.

The “theory of image repair” is one of the central theories in crisis communication through which organizations, companies and brands can analyze efforts to restore their image. Despite the variety of strategies mentioned in the image repair models—such as denying, reducing offensiveness, bolstering and redressing—the use of most of them might be problematic when seeking to restore a nation’s image. Avraham and Ketter (2016), on the other hand, in their “multi-step model for altering place image”,

suggest twenty-four strategies to restore place image, divided into three the broad categories of source, audience and message (SAM strategies). Using this model the aim of this study is to examine the strategies that countries around the world have chosen to deal with stereotypes and negative perceptions towards them. Three main research questions are examined in this study: 1. What kinds of stereotypes are the focus of the campaigns? 2. What are the most popular strategies used by countries seeking to change stereotypes or negative perceptions and how are these strategies used in the campaigns? 3. Do the strategies used to change negative perceptions differ either according to the continent where countries are located or according to the type of political regime? This examination made use of quantitative and qualitative analysis of 70 ads, that were uploaded to YouTube, produced by 47 countries.

The quantitative analysis was done using a coding page that contained 15 variables, including name of the country/continent, kind of advertising, stereotype's field/type, target audience, strategies used, and kind of regime. In the qualitative analysis, several specific case studies that used the strategies were analyzed. The analysis shows that marketers were creative in fighting such stereotypes. We mainly saw the use of three kinds of marketing strategies: source (such as personal testimonies, "Come see for yourself", blaming the media for the distorted image), message (expanding the image, celebrities, confessing to the stereotypes, opposite message to the stereotypes, turning negative to positive, ridiculing the stereotype, promising a great future, softening the hard image, and association to prestigious places), and audience (target audience values and changing the target audience).

Avraham, E., & Ketter, E. (2016). *Marketing Tourism for Developing Countries: Battling Stereotypes and Crises in Asia, Africa and the Middle East*. Palgrave-McMillan.

### **Exploring the gap in brand and image perception between tourists and stakeholders – A case of Roman heritage sites in Serbia**

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The main aim of the paper is to determine if there is a difference in image and brand personality perception of the Roman heritage sites in Serbia between tourism stakeholders and tourists who have visited those sites. The initial assumption was that stakeholders in tourism have a more realistic perception of the current destination brand and image and that they are more aware of advantages and disadvantages related to the development of the analyzed Roman sites. It is also assumed that tourists' perception of the image and brand personality can be shaped by various factors (different sociodemographic characteristics, personality, and tourist behaviour). To achieve the main aim of the study, the research has been done in two phases. The first phase included the survey done on the sample of 502 tourists who have visited some of the Roman sites in Serbia, while the second phase included an interview with 10 tourist stakeholders - employee of the Roman Heritage Museum, two professors of cultural tourism, one history professor, two managers of the Roman sites, one tourist guide and one archaeologist (employed at the Roman site), two employees of the Tourist Organization of Serbia, one of whom is working on the product development - cultural tourism. The results show that tourism stakeholders have a more positive perception of both cognitive and affective image, with a special emphasis on affective image where the differences are quite large. In addition, the results indicate that tourists and tourist stakeholders equally perceive the analyzed Roman sites as Exciting. On contrary,

tourist stakeholders have a better perception of all other dimensions of the brand personality, with the biggest difference being noticed in the perception of Ruggedness and Competence. This means that tourism stakeholders more than tourist perceive these sites as a raw and competent destination. Further differences will be discussed in the paper.

### **Negative MWOM and value co-destruction for destinations**

*Alkmini Gkritzali (University of Surrey, UK)*

*Eleni Mavragani (International Hellenic University, Greece)*

*Dimitris Gritzalis (Athens University of Economics & Business, Greece)*

This paper examines the impact of microblogging word of mouth (MWOM) through Twitter on value co-destruction for destinations facing sustained crises. The paper's main aim is to explore the role of online communities in value co-destruction – as both an individual and interactive concept – in order to contribute to current literature, which has mostly focused on how social media enable value co-creation in tourism. Using the case of the Greek capital, Athens, we explore the extent to which Twitter influencers, such as travel bloggers and news broadcasters, can, accidentally or intentionally, act as value co-destroyers (Ple & Chumpitaz Caceres, 2010) for the destination under study. We argue that, as major influencers, lifestyle accounts and news broadcasters disseminate negative narratives about the destination which, when shared with their followers, can lead to significant value co-destruction within the online community. Acknowledging the argument that consumers are more influenced by negative WOM and MWOM (Chakravarty et al., 2010; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2015), we aim to identify how lifestyle accounts and news broadcasters on Twitter contribute to value co-destruction for destinations in sustained crises as a result of the crisis they are communicating and, that way, amplifying the crisis itself and contributing to the decline of the destination well-being.

We explore the case of Athens as a city destination facing a sustained financial crisis. Our analysis focuses on three years from 2013 to 2015, which have been the most eventful years of the Greek financial crisis so far (Gkritzali et al., 2017; Gkritzali, 2017). During this period, we look at the top five Twitter influencers, according to their klout scores, that are sharing stories about Athens (using the hashtag #Athens) and are a mix of news broadcasters and lifestyle accounts. We use the method of sentiment analysis to capture the attitude and prevailing emotion of the influencers (Dickinger, Költringer, & Körbitz, 2011; Godnov & Redek, 2016; Gkritzali, 2017) throughout the years after study. In addition, we map the journey of the online narratives about Athens that are produced and disseminated by the Twitter influencers, through various retweets and retweeting accounts. This way, we capture the shared online value formation process between Twitter users, who are a mix of stakeholders, such as influencers, residents and visitors. Viewing online value formation as a collective process, we do not focus on individual differences, but rather explore the direction of value formation (co-creation or co-destruction) as well as the volume of online sharing throughout the three years that lie in the heart of the Greek financial crisis.

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### **Communication and online distribution of gastronomy and destination brand**

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*Cristina Barroco (Polytechnic Institute of Viseu, Portugal)*

The branding process has assumed an increasing importance in tourism (Kim & Lehto, 2012), and has aroused the interest of professionals and academy. Gastronomy emerges as a fundamental resource in the differentiation and promotion of a tourist destination (Horng & Tsai, 2010). Considered an identity mark of destination (Bessiere, 1998) and a form of cultural tourism (Horng & Tsai, 2010), it allows direct experience with local culture and knowledge. The results of a study conducted by Folgado-Fernández, Hernández-Mogollón and Duarte (2017) show that gastronomic experiences have a positive effect on destination image and loyalty. Gastronomy needs to be identified and crafted as a resource of the destination brand (Rand, Heath & Alberts, 2003).

The destination brand is perhaps the most powerful marketing tool for tourism destinations, with tourists increasingly seeking the development of lifestyles and destination experiences (Morgan & Pritchard, 2004). Gastronomy arises as one of the essential elements of the tourist experience (Chaney & Ryan, 2012; Hall & Sharples, 2003). The sensory pleasures that food provides constitute the experiential part of the tourism experience (Richards, 2002). So, gastronomy contributes strongly to tourism sustainability and destination authenticity (Rand, Heath & Alberts, 2003), because it offers new products and different activities in the destination (Folgado-Fernández, Hernández-Mogollón & Duarte, 2014).

The websites can be strong vehicles of developing destination brand (Morgan & Pritchard, 2004) and of destination communication, being crucial the presentation of useful content of websites (Horng & Tsai, 2010). In fact, digital media can enhance the image of destinations by regularly disseminating consistent and coherent content and messages of endogenous products, which define the gastronomic identity of a region.

This exploratory study aims to understand the role of websites in the communication of destination brand through gastronomy. It is intended to present the main results and conclusions of the preliminary study applied to the Dão Lafões and Alto Paiva Region (DLAPR).

Websites of the Regional Tourism Entity Centro de Portugal, five Municipalities and two Gastronomic Brotherhoods of DLAPR were analyzed. Literature review allowed the construction of a measurement scale of gastronomic identity elements of the destination, with 40 indicators and 6 dimensions, of binary response: relevant information, information resources, useful information, initiatives gastronomic, dialogic dimension and the hierarchy of information. The methodology is based on quantitative content analysis of the data collected.

Results confirm that in Municipalities websites, contents about the description of endogenous products are privileged, while the Brotherhood websites disseminate content with their own events. Several initiatives have been developed for the promotion and communication of the endogenous products and the gastronomy of the DLAPR, however these need to be improved. There are weaknesses of information and online communication of the region as gastronomy destination. This study brings a scientific and practical contribution, as it deepens the knowledge about regional brands, suggesting guiding clues for different actors of gastronomic destination. The analysis of a small number of entities (8) is a limitation of the study. Future investigations can applicate this methodology to other entities (farmers, restaurants).

#### Session 9A: Mobility

### **Urban mobility from hub airports to centrally located hotels: Comparison among case studies in South America (Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires) and Western Europe (London, Milan and Vienna)**

*Claudia Astorino (UFSCar, Brazil)*

This research aimed to analyze urban mobility between hub international airports and hotels located in central areas of the chosen destinations: Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, London, Milan and Vienna. It was carried out as a qualitative and descriptive study based on the comparison among two case studies in South America (Rio de Janeiro International Airport Tom Jobim and Buenos Aires Ezeiza International Airport) with three case studies in Western Europe (London Heathrow Airport, Milan Malpensa Airport and Vienna International Airport). In order to obtain objective results, the criteria adopted for the comparison of the urban mobility from/to the airports to/from the selected hotels were: terminal, journey time, timetable, intermediate stops, inter-modality. The methodology consisted of three steps: secondary research on the selected airport websites, an in loco study to analyze the conditions of the urban mobility offered to passengers, and later, comparison with specialized and non-specialized media reports on the selected airports' mobility. Concerning the cases of Rio de Janeiro International Airport Tom Jobim and Buenos Aires Ezeiza International Airport, the respective special buses were the objects under analysis, since these two airports do not have a rail system (metro nor train). As for the selected airports in Western Europe, the metro was the transport chosen for the London Heathrow Airport, the regular train from/to Milan Malpensa Airport and the City Airport Train for the Vienna International Airport. The research revealed that only the Buenos Aires special bus has its own terminal for the passengers on the way to the airport. The results showed that in the two South America case studies (Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro), urban mobility may suffer delays since it is vulnerable to road traffic conditions. In addition, the road modal is also more susceptible to urban safety issues. The London case study revealed that the journey time may vary depending on the variation of the time the metro stops in each intermediate stations. Both the Milan and the Vienna case studies led to a similar result in terms of predicting the time spent traveling, revealing more punctuality in comparison to the others. As for the fare, the trains proved to be more expensive than other means of transportation to/from the airports, followed by the special bus from/to Buenos Aires airport. And finally, concerning the timetable, the metro available at London Heathrow Airport proved to be the most frequent means of transport in this research universe.

## **Airport customer services for people with disabilities: A customer centric approach**

*Georgia Karra (Hellenic Open University, Greece)*

People with disabilities have always needed help in their everyday lives. The mentality that prevailed was to keep these people isolated in homes, shelters and special hospitality centers away from the eyes of others, having to deal with the practical problems created by their physical diversity, as well as the emotional and psychological problems caused by this social isolation. Recognizing and accepting that Disabled People have equal rights to quality service and unhindered mobility is an issue that is being more discussed and developed over the past 10-15 years. It is, therefore, a modern and growing field of research and action, where all stakeholders have room for improving the living conditions of People with Disabilities.

With the liberalization of markets and increased competitiveness being the main features of modern times, businesses have no choice but to turn to customer-centric systems of organization and service. The main goals of businesses that want to offer quality products and services are flexibility, reliability, and fast service. When the above are achieved, while at the same time meeting the needs of all those involved in the provision of services (business, staff and customers), then the successful outcome of the project is certain. With regard to the aviation industry, following the changes in the ownership regime and in order to be able to meet the varying requirements of different users, it is evident that they are diversifying their services.

Accessible Tourism allows people with accessibility requirements to operate independently, with self-sufficiency and dignity within the global tourism service. Particularly worrying are the statistics showing steadily rising rates of people with disabilities and motor problems, as well as the prediction for a rapid increase in the number of people with disabilities in the coming decades. The Accessible Tourism sector is an untapped market with great potential for growth and profit. People with disabilities and generally all people with accessibility requirements, as illustrated by the empirical analysis, are not adequately served by the travel and tourism industry, despite the positive willingness of all airport directors, who mobilize their personal work experience to respond with dignity to the needs of people with disabilities.

They demand and require appropriate assistance and support for their work and efforts by businesses, government agencies, federations and associations of people with disabilities. The aim of the first part of the presentation is the theoretical approach of issues from a customer centric approach, concerning the qualitative provision of services amid the influence of human and environmental factors. The aim of the second part is to be presented all the results of the empirical survey carried out through questionnaire as well as the key points of the interview of the airport managers of Athens International Airport "Eleftherios Venizelos".

## **Extravagance afloat: The triple bottom line and the cruise holiday**

*Richard Farr (University of Bolton, UK)*

*Christine Hall (University of Bolton, UK)*

The cruise industry inspires tremendous confidence in investors, having delivered growth at a compound rate averaging 6.55% per year since 1990 [CMW 2015]. 2015 saw industry capacity increase to 1.8 million passengers worldwide, and this trend shows no sign of slowing [Mintel, 2016]. This popular and lucrative

form of business is conducted at a cost to society and the natural world however, with modes of harm that are not readily visualized.

This paper examines the pollution associated with the industry, with the aim of identifying the “full cost” of cruising – as distinct from the price paid by a cruise package holiday customer, and the costs incurred by the operator.

The authors examine in particular the consequences of the industry’s widespread reliance on heavy fuel oil, and discuss some of the steps now being taken to reduce the impact of operations at a time when the media is becoming increasingly critical of the industry. Building upon earlier work that revealed the carbon footprint of cruising to be more than four times that of an equivalent stay in a land-based hotel [Farr and Hall 2015], emissions other than those responsible for climate change are now examined.

### **Needs, trends and best practices of accessible tourism across Europe**

*Matina Loukea (CERTH/HIT, Greece)*

*Maria Panou (CERTH/HIT, Greece)*

*Evangelos Bekiaris (CERTH/HIT, Greece)*

*Ivor Ambrose (ENAT, Belgium)*

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), over a billion people live with some form of disability. This means that nearly 15% of the world’s population has very significant difficulties in functioning, while rates of disability are also increasing due to population ageing (as roughly 12% of the world’s population is over 60 years old ) and global increase.

The Tourism sector, which is one of the key areas affecting a person's life, is still nowadays encountering accessibility problems and sometimes to such an extent that people with disabilities (PwD) are often prevented from participating in it. Considering the need for more sustainable tourism and transport, accessibility will become even more important in the coming years and it is therefore essential to be included in all strategies and policy initiatives. If one accounts people with reduced mobility (PRM) and their families’ members (traveling with them), roughly 33% of the world’s population is directly affected by disability, controlling commonly 8 trillion € of purchasing power.

Accessibility is often still treated like a luxury that is taken into account too little and often too late. Even though several legislative initiatives to improve accessibility of tourism and transport on EU level exist, they are still focusing too much on a single sector, while the issue of accessibility should be universal and mainstreamed in all strategies, legislative proposals, projects, and other initiatives.

For most PwD and PRM, lack of accessibility in tourism and transport services affects significantly their everyday lives. Such accessibility problems clearly restrict their options and limit their opportunities and chances for social inclusion, integration and recreation. Removing physical obstacles is one way of improving the free mobility and the quality of life of these travellers, but accessibility is not just a matter of physical obstacles. The provision of appropriate and accessible tourism and transport services, as well as access to communication and information (since we shift more and more towards an information society) is equally important. Smart ticketing, real-time information, websites, mobile applications, and

online booking of tickets are only a few examples of how accessibility of ICT is a vital part of accessible tourism.

In this context and in view also of the European Accessibility Act (EAA) development, a study is being implemented, contracted by the EU Parliament, titled "Transport and Tourism for Persons with Disabilities and Persons with Reduced Mobility". The study aims to describe the state of play of accessibility in EU Member States of both tourist destinations and transport services for persons with disabilities and reduced mobility, as well as the framework of efforts and initiatives for their inclusion into mainstream transport and tourism activities, based upon the principles of equality and the concept of sustainability of solutions and measures.

This paper will present the findings of this study, focusing on the relevant needs, trends and best practices concerning the modern day tourism and its outlines for 12 EU member states, plus extra European ones.

#### Session 9B: Hospitality 1

### **The empowerment of human resources in the hospitality industry: An empirical research from Greece**

*Theodoros Stavrinoudis (University of the Aegean, Greece)*

*Leonidas Maroudas (University of Patras, Greece)*

*Soultana Samara (Greek Open University, Greece)*

The purposes of this manuscript are: a) to point out the importance of Human Resources (HR) empowerment as a basic condition for the survival and development of hotels, and b) to identify the factors which influence and support HR perceptions and attitudes towards empowerment. The literature review suggested that empowerment increases job satisfaction of HR (Gumasluaglu and Ilsev, 2009) while contributing crucially to their effectiveness in the workplace (Stavrinoudis and Simos, 2013). Employees participating actively in empowerment activities tend to have a more creative behaviour in the workplace while the support and encouragement by their managers increase their self-esteem and commitment (Yah, 2014). The impact of said empowerment on hotels is vital, since it ensures that employees possess the necessary knowledge, skills and most importantly the authority to decide on certain matters related directly to their jobs, thus facilitating administrative procedures (Miller et al, 2007).

For the achievement of the aforementioned purposes, a primary research was conducted between June and July 2016 using a structured self-completion questionnaire. Prior to the finalisation of said questionnaire a pilot research was carried out. The questionnaires were distributed to the employees of a well-known hotel group and were collected afterwards by one of the researchers. Sealed envelopes have been used in order to ensure that all questionnaires have been filled out anonymously. 398 questionnaires were correctly filled out. The analysis of the results was performed using the package SPSS 21, while a factor analysis was conducted in order to identify any common factors in the same group of variables (Costello and Osborne, 2005). Furthermore, an one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) as well as a T-Test have been carried out for two separate samples. Finally, a Chi-Square test has been conducted in order to examine the relation between qualitative variables and to compare the frequencies resulting from each group of variables with the estimated frequencies (Casella and Robert, 2004). The reliability of the internal coherence was evaluated with the use of Cronbach's alpha.

The research's results confirmed on the one hand the major role and utility of HR empowerment in management, regardless of their working relationship with the company, and on the other hand its impact on the enhancement of employees' productivity. The research identified the relationships between the administration and the group's HR and the HR strategies that aim at and -to a great extent- achieve the enhancement of the job satisfaction and staff commitment coefficients. The extent to which the group's employees can take initiatives has been investigated while the results revealed an increased level of HR autonomy as well as a continuous effort to improve HR skills. Individual differentiations have been investigated with regards to the age, work experience and working department of the employees.

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### **The creation of the ReSCulture research tool, for the investigation of the role of rewards and recognition systems in changing the organizational culture in hotels**

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*Theodoros Stavrinoudis (University of the Aegean, Greece)*

This manuscript resumes a systematic four-year scientific work. It aims to present the logical- scientific process of creating the ReSCulture research tool-questionnaire which will be suitable for exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. The main objective of the questionnaire is to investigate and measure in depth the role of reward and recognition systems in processes of organizational culture change in the Greek hospitality industry. In line with the above- mentioned main objective, the literature review will be divided into two strands and will summarize the central theoretical findings on: a) organizational culture and its change and b) reward systems within an organization.

In relation to the first strand, the codification of the literature (Stavrinoudis & Kakarougkas, 2016) showed that the change of the organizational culture can occur at individual, group and organizational level due to the choice of organization's management according to the formal dimension (Lewin, 1958 and Burnes,

2009), or due to social evolution according to the informal dimension (Lewin et al, 1960; Thurley, 1979 and Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005) or due to a combination of the above, based on the hybrid direction of change (Hinings & Malhotra, 2008; Carlström, 2012 and Kotter, 2012). Every attempt to change the culture of an organization is confronted with many obstacles that can disorientate or even stop the change on: individual, group and organizational level (Torres Jr & Gati, 2011; Tanser & Lee, 2012; Lozano, 2012 and Cameron & Green, 2012).

In relation to the second theoretical strand, based on the encoding of the motivation theories (Stavrinoudis & Kakarougas, 2017), it was found that a rewards and recognition system within an organization depends on five interrelated and interdependent sets of elements: human/ employee (Koole, 2009; Lawrence & Jordan, 2009 and Von Gilsa & Zapf, 2013), organization/ rewards and recognition system (Wiley, 1997; Milkovich, Newman & Gerhart, 2011 and Caudill & Porter, 2014), work within an organization (López-Cabrales, Real & Valle, 2011; Snell & Bohlander, 2013; Downes & Choi, 2014 and Hall-Ellis, 2014), rewards/ recognition (Amaratunga & Baldry, 2002; Robbins & Judge, 2010 and Abadi et al, 2011) and needs (Islam & Ismail, 2008; Koole, 2009; Fisher, 2010 and Von Gilsa & Zapf, 2013).

Through the conceptual synthesis of the above findings of the two theoretical strands, eleven specialized and complex hypotheses have been modeled, and presented in this manuscript, which are being investigated by one hundred eleven variables/ items. The integration of these variables/ items into the research questionnaire and the analysis- investigation of the eleven specialized and complex hypotheses will lead to the conclusion of the main research objective. At the same time, it will allow the creation of specialized models imprinting the role of reward systems by area of interest within the processes of organizational culture change in the Greek hospitality industry.

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### **HRM – a necessity for small hotels**

*Philia Tounta (Apokoros Hotel Club Craft Deco&Activities, Greece)*

A vital aspect of providing high quality service in the hotel sector is the human resource management (HRM) system employed in the hotels concerned. As Baum (2007) supports; in most service industries it is the HR that creates the competitive advantage to the organization. It is imperative to point out that the economic performance of every country's economy is strongly linked to the SME sector and SMEs rely seriously on their workforce and on their HRM practices for their success.

It is a fact that the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are playing vital role in the economies around the world in irrespective of the countries development stage.

SMEs are now considered as the leading source of economic growth. However, as a result of the dynamic environment and globalization, SMEs are struggling for their smooth survival. Internationally there are thousands of small-medium sized hotels that are facing challenges relating to service quality aspects. The hotel industry is a service industry and hence it strongly relies on human labor; that is, its service quality is directly connected to its staff quality. There is generally a worldwide view that internationally the Hotel and Catering Industry has a number of personnel related problems and poor employment practices and conditions, especially the smaller hotels. Larger hotels have more advantage in human resource (HR) recruitment and development because the higher level of remuneration and benefit that they can offer

makes them the number one choice for highly competent and skilled staff. Hotels justify the absence or neglect of HRM functions with the size of the organization. Smaller hotels with limited financial resources claim to be restricted in developing and implementing HR systems in comparison to larger hotels. It is a fact that small and large organizations typically differ in terms of resources, money, and time. Still, all businesses—whether small or large—must hire employees to run the daily operations. Despite the size, employees are vital assets. A well-established and maintained HR department offers a solid structure which is an organizational advantage that is vital to success.

#### Session 10: Keynote Presentation

### **Tourism as a research field of Economics – Further Developments**

*Egon Smeral (Modul University Vienna, Austria)*

There is an ongoing debate: is there a stand-alone science of tourism or is tourism only a research field of different disciplines? Fact is, that researchers from many different disciplines are involved in the knowledge production, as a result the outcomes of tourism research are very fragmented. However, the acceptance as own science needs the existence of own methods. The methods are borrowed from other disciplines. Examples are: Opportunity costs (Economics), Product cycle theory (Economics), Travel cost approach (Economics and Geography), Tourism area life cycle (Economics and Geography), Prospect theory (Economics and Psychology), Segmentation approaches (Economics, Psychology, Sociology, etc.). In this study we follow the principle that tourism is a research field of different disciplines, in which the most important are Philosophy, Economics, Law, Political Science, Geography, Sociology and Psychology. Here we analyze the research field tourism with the tools of economics. We use consumption and foreign trade theory, public economics, the theory of service production, utility theory and the theory of financial markets. We conclude tourism cannot be seen as stand-alone discipline. The main tools of scientific analysis in tourism are methods of not tourism-related disciplines. There is also no accepted context allowing a theoretical relation of the independently conducted research activities.

#### Session 11A: Special Interest Tourism 3

### **Sport Tourism: The case of Athens Authentic Marathon and its contribution to the development of tourism in Greece**

*Fanouria-Ritsa Loukatou (STAND ENG CONSULTANTS SA, Greece)*

The concept of sport related tourism in Greece has become more prominent in the last few years as an increasingly popular tourism product. Sport and tourism professionals alike are realizing the significant potential of sport tourism and are aggressively pursuing this market niche. The increased emphasis on health and fitness and increased use of sports events by cities to attract tourists made sport tourism one of the fastest growing sectors in the tourism industry. As a tool, sport tourism, can be used to achieve many things - to generate significant revenues, create thousands of new jobs, regenerate urban infrastructure, and to develop or reappraise entire destinations.

The term sport tourism includes: active sport tourism, which refers to people who travel to participate in sports; event sport tourism, which refers to travel to watch a sports event; and finally visits to sports museums, famous sports venues, and sports themed cruises. Marathons are sport tourism events taking place in many cities around the world and are used as promotion tools to attract visitors. Besides the short term economic benefits that are related with the visitors during their stay (hotels, transports, restaurants etc.) there are also positive long term (post event) effects.

The Athens Authentic Marathon is one of the few events worldwide that have both an athletic and cultural aspect. Based on a unique historical event, the battle of Marathon (490 BC) and the achievement of an Athenian soldier, the Athens Marathon is not just another running race. Over the last years, has turned into the biggest, most massive and most significant of all sport events in Greece bringing thousands of people from all around the world, highlighting the city of Athens and Greece worldwide. Runners and spectators from all over the world are toning up financially the city on a time period that is not so active since the Marathon is organized on November of every year.

In our days, the Athens Authentic Marathon, is generating revenues of up to 20 million euros in just five days but has the potential of much higher following the example of cities like London or New York. To achieve this, sport, tourism and cultural organizations have to collaborate and see the opportunities and benefits (both short and long term) that arise from the organization of such events. Very important is also the role of marketing in differentiating the Athens Authentic Marathon from the rest of the Marathons.

There are 10 million people all over the world that are participating in Marathons. It has been calculated that 20% of them would travel to run a Marathon. They wouldn't want to run the Athens Marathon? The Authentic Marathon? More than 2 million people are travelling every year around the world to run a Marathon and only 7,500 of them are participating in the Athens Authentic Marathon. There is too much room for growth.

### **The prospects for the development of religious tourism in Lesvos. A reference to public & private sector positions**

*Konstantinos Mouratidis (University of the Aegean, Greece)*

*Maria Doumi (University of the Aegean, Greece)*

*Anna Kyriakaki (University of the Aegean, Greece)*

Religious tourism is a special form of tourism with international range and is recognized as a dynamic sector of the modern tourism industry. However, religious tourism is regarded as an economic, environmental, social power and a political phenomenon (Richter, 1989) and generates revenue in a way as no other kind of tourism does (Karar, 2010).. The latest research show religious tourism is of great potentials to make a high rate of income for the countries and attract thousands of tourists a year (Yalghouzaghaj, & Shorbolagh, 2013). According to Griffiths (2011) religious places have consist some of the most visited and valued destinations in the world, not only for religious but for general tourists as well. Nowadays, taking into consideration that the world's Christian population is more than 2 billion, and with the assumption that a large part of this population is potential religious tourists, it is becoming clear that religious tourism offers significant development prospects for Greece and its regions.

This article presents the current situation, explores the potential and prospects for the development of religious tourism on the island of Lesvos and attempts to formulate policy proposals for its systematic

development, which will contribute to the establishment of Lesvos as a pilgrimage destination and promotes the religious tourism in the region of the North-East Aegean.

The exploration of the research objectives was carried out by quantitative research. A structured questionnaire was used and shared to representatives of the public and private sectors -directly or indirectly - involved in the tourist development of Lesvos. The questionnaire included 30 multiple choice questions and consisted of three sections, which investigates: the profile of respondents and their relation to religious tourism, the views of the agencies on the existing religious tourism demand in Lesvos and the prospects for the development of religious tourism on the island. The survey took place in Lesvos, in the first half of February 2017, using the inventory method. A total of 70 questionnaires were shared, of which 53 were answered (73% response). The data collected were based on descriptive and inductive statistics.

According to the results of the primary research, despite the assumption that religious tourism in Lesvos can be developed throughout the year and contribute dynamically to the tourist development of the area, giving economic, social and cultural benefits to the local community, the public and the private sector considers to a significant extent that the development of religious tourism is limited.

The majority of respondents attributed particular importance to Lesvos as the exclusive destination of religious tourism at certain times of the year, considering that tourists' visits happened according to the Orthodox calendar. Particular reference is attributed to Lesvos as a main pilgrimage destination of the North Aegean region, or even as a tourist destination, capable of responding to other interests of tourists through the promotion of special and alternative forms of tourism.

In view of the fact that Greek and Cypriot pilgrims note the greatest number of visitors to the island, the search for new markets is pursued. At this point, the public and private sectors showed their preference for the emerging markets of the same religion Balkan countries, Russia and the former Soviet Union countries. The majority of the Orthodox Christian tradition is associated with the Russian Orthodox Church, which lists 101,450,000 believers reflecting 39% of the world Orthodox population and 50.6% of the Orthodox population of Europe (Pew Research Center, 2011).

In addition, according to the respondents, the increase in the pilgrimage flows to Lesvos can be achieved through the constructive cooperation of stakeholders, the upgrading of transport to religious monuments and the combination of religious tourism with organized packages holidays and other special forms of tourism. In order to support and encourage religious tourism, the local authorities can include the worship places in various protection and preservation programs, including international ones (Tala, 2008).

The survey highlighted the need for the implementation of an integrated strategic planning for local tourism development, which through targeted actions will cover the basic strategic directions for the development of religious tourism in Lesvos.

### **Heritage sites and cultural landscapes: A planning challenge**

*Maria Vrasida (TEI Stereas, Greece)*

*Harry Coccossis (University of Thessaly, Greece)*

World cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, is our inheritance from previous generations of Humans and our legacy for those to come. It is an irreplaceable repository of knowledge and an invaluable

resource for economic growth, employment and social cohesion. The focus of this paper is in tangible heritage sites and cultural landscapes within a rural and an urban environment and the planning implications of such sites to the attractiveness of the greater area as a place to live, work, and visit.

Cultural heritage is a shared resource, and like such, it can be vulnerable to physical over-exploitation and under-funding, which can result in neglect, decay and, in some cases, oblivion. Urban planning and heritage management though, have often been positioned as opposing powers in the management of historic urban landscapes. To reconcile them, the goal is to recommend a holistic, integrated and multidisciplinary management of resources, by means of a new approach in heritage management, which will focus not only on protection and restoration, but also on entrepreneurial, economic and marketing management of a much greater area than the heritage site. Accordingly planning (urban, regional and land-use) is called upon to incorporate and integrate a valuable site mirroring the past, in a forward-looking planning proposal for the future. The challenge is inclusion, rather than working around heritage sites and the in-depth realization that as a tourism asset for heritage, alternative sustainable tourism, no monument or building can act as an island. The environment around the site (built or natural) is part of the overall tourism experience and has to reflect and acknowledge the existence of such an historic site while still acting as a host for tourists and residents to evolve in the modern society thus creating a new interpretation of the cultural landscape.

Three case studies of different sites will help highlight the planning and heritage management challenges in this context. All three sites are chosen from the UNESCO world heritage sites list, and they represent a rural example (Delphi), an urban example with low residents- - high tourist demand (Venice) and an urban example where heritage sites are part of everyday resident's life (Thessaloniki). Historic cities, towns and villages face the most complex problems in terms of preserving the urban fabric while generating sustainable growth and employment. Heritage management can be successful and sustainable, for example through the energy-efficient re-use of historic buildings, and the promotion of greener transport and cultural tourism. Thanks to the attractiveness of their urban and natural environments, heritage sites often host clusters of cultural and creative industries.

### **Certification of the traditional cuisine. A tool to promote culinary tourism**

*Evangelia Katsoli (Harokopio University Athens, Greece)*

*George Palisidis (Harokopio University Athens, Greece)*

*George Boskou (Harokopio University Athens, Greece)*

Culinary tourism or food tourism or gastrotourism is the experience of dining out at touristic destination that provide foods and beverages of exquisite or particular perception. It could be also the quest of unique and memorable eating and drinking experiences. Culinary tourism differs from agrotourism in the sense that culinary tourism could be part of cultural tourism (cuisine is a manifestation of culture). However there are several common concepts between food tourism and agrotourism such the origin of the food products and the manufacturing processes. Culinary tourism is often misconceived as gourmet eating, but this is not the case in all aspects. The culinary tourist or gastrotourist maybe in the pursuit of local cuisine at plain outlets that depict the culinary traditions of the land he is visiting. In this study an extensive review of existing certification systems for local or ethnic cuisine are presented and compared. For Greece there are several certification standards such as the "Greek Cuisine" of the National Ministry of Tourism,

the “Cretan Cuisine” of the Cretan Quality Consortium, the “Aegean Cuisine” initiative by the Chambers of Commerce of Cyclades and Dodecanese and the “Greek Breakfast” initiative by the Hellenic Hotel Chamber. The Italian standard for “Ospitalita Italiana” is one of the most successful standards with international recognition. All the above mentioned standards were compared upon the procedures of certification, the basic criteria of certification, the certification costs and the market segmentation. The output of the comparison summarizes the common and different aspects for each certification system. Eventually some suggestion for certification aspects that are not covered or should be covered are proposed. A discussion is raised about the promotion and communication of these standards and the possible sustainability in the tourism market as recognizable labels. Is there a place for more standards? What about the other local cuisines, the Corfu cuisine i.e. Should there be a national standard for the traditional Greek restaurant, the “taverna”. Should there culinary standards be focused on the restaurants within Greece or at the Greek restaurant scattered all around the globe? Is culinary certification a luxury service or a profitable added value? These and some more issues are to be addressed at our presentation.

## Session 11B: Hospitality 2

### **Exploring the buying behaviour of hotel businesses in a B2B marketing context**

*Athina Nella (Hellenic Open University, Greece)*

*Eleni Pavgelou (Hellenic Open University, Greece)*

Research aims and context: Hotel procurement and supplies are critical not only in terms of cost effectiveness but also in terms of service quality, product differentiation, brand image and positioning. This study aims to examine various aspects of hotel buying behaviour and decision making. Industrial buyer behaviour is distinctive, mostly because of the rationalism that characterizes decision making in a B2B marketing context, thus urging suppliers to use customised marketing strategies to fulfil clients’ special needs. As service quality in hotel services relies significantly on raw materials, equipment, products and services used, this study focuses on hotel buying behaviour; procurement procedures, choice criteria for B2B transactions, products, services and suppliers are examined within this context. Special emphasis is put on attitudes and buying behaviour of hotel businesses towards eco-friendly products and services. In order to meet research objectives, a quantitative study was designed and implemented among hotel managers and owners. The study took place in 2017 with the participation of hotel managers & owners from the island of Zakynthos, Greece, a well-known tourism destination where almost 300 hotel businesses operate during full season.

Main research findings: The main findings of the study clearly highlight the dominant role of product quality and cost for buyer’s decision making and choice selection. Customer service levels and distribution aspects proved particularly important as well. Hotel business owners seize multiple roles in the buying process, performing all kind of tasks in order to ensure business success. In addition, perceptions and attitudes towards green and e-commerce tools for procurement issues are examined. Furthermore, eco-friendly products add elements of innovation that empower sustainable tourism but also differentiate both B2C services and the enterprise as a whole by creating positive brand associations. As a response to increasing demand for unique and memorable tourism experiences, hotels companies try to provide

offerings with additional customer value and clear differentiation; green products and services provide additional value thus attracting hotel customers who are environmentally concerned.

Hotel managers acknowledge this market trend which is expected to contribute to sustainable business growth and tourism development. Eco-friendly products are evaluated as an extremely important factor in the buying process even though it is rated last. Hotels managers also acknowledge the importance of sustainability and try to adopt relevant business practices, but they still face important barriers for extended usage of green products: higher prices, limited recognition of customer awareness for environmental issues, and the inadequacy of the legislative framework to influence business decision making, definitely let room for improvement in terms of environmentally friendly buying behaviour.

Conclusions and practical implications: According to the findings of this study, green procurement seems to be in its infancy in the hotel sector, open to further exploitation and development which can be achieved with the aid of B2B marketing. Practical implications for both business customers and their suppliers are discussed within this sectoral, B2B context. Further research is necessary for the generalization of findings and a more integrated and holistic examination of the issue.

### **Estimation of the tourism ecological footprint in the Greek hotel sector**

*Dimitrios Parpairis (University of the Aegean, Greece)*

The research activity relates to the assessment of the key variables i.e. energy, water, waste and soil, that make up the Ecological Footprint (EF) within the tourism framework. This structured assessment is translated into the Tourism Ecological Footprint (TEF). Scope of this research is to present the methodological framework for assessing the Ecological Footprint and its components within the Hellenic Hotel Sector, nationally and per accommodation typology (4 & 5 star hotels) for the period 1990-2012.

Initially, through the theoretical background, an introductory approach is carried out on the research object and the methodological approaches of the Ecological Footprint and its Components (energy, water, waste and soil), are registered distinctly. Moreover, a bottom-up analytical process is introduced that calculates, for the hotels in reference, the footprint of each component separately and the total TEF accordingly. We then compare the results with the total EF of the country and draw important conclusions.

The challenge generated from this research activity is to develop a contemporary strategy for utilizing the TEF as a methodological tool that will support the “green” energy transition of the topline hotel sector of Greece, into achieving carbon neutrality, tackling climate change and safeguarding long term sustainability, through the introduction and utilization of Renewable Energy Sources (RES) and Rational Use of Energy (RUE).

Within this context, it seems reasonable to expect a significant benefit to the hotel industry, and the environment in general, through actions associated with the TEF, such as reducing energy consumption, water and waste going to landfill. At the same time, the possibility of tourism infrastructures i.e. major hotel chains, to exploit the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, with the sale of allowances given by the emissions trading mechanism, and thus acquire a financial benefit, provides a solid and sustainable basis, that will enhance their competitive advantage within regional tourism markets and boost their growth potential.

## **Identifying the attributes of value co-creation in web technologies for the hospitality industry**

*Wm Lim (University of Plymouth, UK)*

*Jonas Cernivicius (Plymouth University, UK)*

**Purpose:** This paper aims to identify the attributes of value co-creation in the use of web technologies within the hospitality industry. While the value of technology and e-commerce has often been discussed, the attributes of value in technology use have frequently been established from the perspective of the service providers. Examples of these studies ranged from Amit and Zott's (2001) study of value creation in e-business to Lyon et. al.'s (2009) paper investigating human and automated services. A shift in perspective was introduced in Ng et. al.'s (2011) study on the use of technology for value co-creation. Highlighting the importance of 'means driven-ness' in the increasing digitization of businesses, the study suggested that technology enables both service operation optimization and becoming a service itself. As value co-creation assumes sufficient knowledge and skill from both the service provider and customer, in order to deliver a service, this study examines the necessary attributes of value creation from the perspective of customers.

**Design/methodology/approach:** The study focuses on technology use by hospitality businesses in the south west of England. From an extensive review of literature, the study compiled a matrix of attributes for value co-creation and value attributes of web technologies. Survey questions were then developed from core attributes identified. The survey instrument was administered using an online web survey tool- Qualtrics. A factor analysis of the attributes and a canonical correlation analysis were also conducted.

**Findings** While research on value, value co-creation and in particular technology use has evolved and expanded considerably in the general business discipline, the combined investigation of these salient topics within the hospitality and tourism sector appear to be in decline over the same period. Overall, the analyses indicated that three distinct factors 'perceived control', 'service standardisation' and 'enabled customer service support through varied channels' were underlying customer responses to the items where the factors were found to be internally consistent. 'Enabled customer service support' was reported to be the most important by customers, with a negatively skewed distribution, whilst 'perceived control' and 'service standardisation' were perceived as considerably less so and had positively skewed distributions.

**Practical implications:** The findings provide many useful insights into the necessary attributes for value co-creation within the context of technology use in the hospitality sector. Implementation of these attributes could be applied in practice where future research could measure their effectiveness and or augment the relevance these attributes.

**Originality/value:** This study conducted a comprehensive review of the attributes from literature and theories in both value co-creation and value in technology use. While studies in value co-creation and value in technology use, on their own are abundant, the combined evaluation and investigation from the consumers' perspective is unprecedented.

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## Session 12: Keynote Presentation

### **Tourism and everyday life at the destination: New geographical approaches and tools**

*Theano S. Terkenli (University of the Aegean, Greece)*

This paper addresses the fluidity, complexity, reflexivity and hybridity of interrelationships developing at tourist destinations between the two sides coming into contact (the tourist and the local sides) and lays out the relevance and applicability of new approaches (both theoretical and methodological) and relevant tools of assessment and analysis of such interrelationships, from the part of the geographical discipline—and specifically, Cultural Geography. The broader theoretical context of this endeavour is the ‘moral turn’ in tourism research, in the 1970’s; since then, however, little scholarly attention has been given to tourist spaces as complex moral realms of performance and negotiation between hosts and guests. In order to remedy this shortcoming, new ways are proposed here in approaching (especially alternative) tourism as a phenomenon that embeds local people in their living spaces and creates new and complex relations, imbued with spatial, personal, social/ communal, moral and professional implications. The paper highlights issues of morality in tourist-local encounters and argues for transcending essentialism and dichotomies in the construction of tourism space, shared by locals and tourists, i.e. views of tourism as ‘sinner or saviour’; the problematic of rural vs urban tourism; or compromises sought in alternative tourism concerning ‘money or mission’.

Resting on the groundwork which Tourism Geography has been building during the past few decades, this undertaking views tourism from a multi-scalar perspective, with a focus on the mundane, everyday level of encounter and interaction, placed in its broader context (globalization, market system, capitalist modes of production/ processes of accumulation, etc.). In this regard, this study lays out new theoretical underpinnings for conducting ethical, committed research in tourism destinations, such as relational geography (post-structuralism), mundane/ everyday life geographies, more-than- (or non-) representational geography, and time-geography. It also proposes a series of mainly qualitative methods, such as focused ethnography, narrative analysis, in-depth interviews, reflective/ reflexive openness, coining appropriate language, etc., in order to capture the relational experiences of living with tourism and the ethical and moral aspects of managing tourism complexity and plurality, while allowing for transformative learning among guests and sustainable community living for the hosts, and remaining mindful of issues of issues such as researcher’s situatedness, subjectivity, creativity, reflexivity etc. The paper, thus, represents a critical perspective to tourism studies, with agency (both social and material) at its centre, towards ushering new, open, reflexive and more honest and sensitive routes/ approaches to getting to the core of the performative and relational realm of guest-host encounters, in the context of (alternative) tourism.

**21 OCTOBER 2017**

Session 14: Keynote Presentation

**From destination governance to destination design – Problems and perspectives of interconnections between DMO's and businesses**

*Harald Pechlaner (Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Germany)*

Destination research has made great progress in recent years. Much has been achieved in the areas of destination planning, i.e. the planning of destination development with special consideration given to organizational and planning challenges in destination management, special network perspective, and the management-specific challenges of the destination management organization (DMO); moreover, achievements have been made in the areas of destination governance, which considers cooperation between actors and institutions, as well as destination leadership, which places the leadership competence of actors in the destination network at the center of discussion. Without a doubt, many of these considerations have already arrived in the tourism industry and have affected its associated policies, thereby contributing to professionalization in the destination areas.

Nevertheless, there is still much to do, and the research fields continue to be under-researched, especially considering how important this area has become in recent years, specifically for the economic sector. In order to be equipped to handle the challenges of a continually globalizing world and to counteract the fast-paced technological developments of progressive digitization, an interplay of high-tech and high-touch in the sense of an inter- and trans-disciplinary interaction between actors not only of the tourism industry is needed more than ever.

After all, tourism is also rapidly changing, as tourists seek less to be “tourists” and more to be guests and travelers who base their experiences on the living conditions of the locals and make localhood the deciding factor for decisions concerning a visit to a particular destination. At the least, it could lead to a greater polarization of mass tourism phenomena on the one hand and sophisticated tourism in terms of quality and depth on the other. It is necessary to make a substantial step forward in destination research. Design can help us as a possible meta-discipline to mediate and coordinate between many disciplines. More than ever, the skills of integration and collaborative connections are needed to at least understand, let alone design and influence, the interfaces in a world of hybridization and globalization. A multitude of scientifically recognized disciplines focus on shaping the challenges of this world. There is an increasing need, however, for the ability to integrate all of these disciplines and, above all, to focus on a vision. Destination design becomes necessary when there are too many players in the game and when it becomes almost impossible to coordinate all of the stakeholders. Atmospheric design refers to allocating a suitable ratio of stakeholders to fill a space. Too many stakeholders create a chaotic atmosphere, and too few create boredom. Destination design creates confrontation and irritation to enable new possibilities and to stimulate the appropriate level of involvement by means of co-creation. But destination design also provides the guarantee that this involvement leads to emotions that constitute something unique, not least of all because they make use of the basics taken from the interdisciplinary and disciplinary.

Destination design requires a completely new understanding of quality in the field of mobility space – a space that provides access to infrastructure in the field of transport and mobility; in the area of activity space, a space that provides services in the areas of accommodation, catering, and attractions; and in the area of experience space, a space that transforms emotions stemming from various perspectives and disciplines into an experience that reflects the credibility and sustainability of the destination.

#### Session 15A: Special Interest Tourism 4

### **Ways of the green tourist in Europe**

*Martin Falk (Austrian Institute of Economic Research, Austria)*

*Eva Hagsten (University of Iceland, Iceland)*

In 2016, almost one out of five adults in Europe take into account environmentally-friendly practices of the destination in his or her choice of vacation. Similarly, 14 percent of the Europeans cherish environmentally-friendly practices of the accommodation (e.g. energy or water saving measures, recycling, fair-trade food, etc.) as important for the choice of destination. Environmentally certified destinations (such as the European green city award) also affect the travel plans, although to a lesser degree (ten per cent of the European travelers). Another important aspect of green travel is the choice of the transportation mode. About 16 percent of the travellers prefer a transport with a limited impact on the environment (low carbon travel or slow travel). However, the percentage of travellers that regards both environmentally-friendly practices and low carbon travel as important factors for their choice of holiday destination is surprisingly low, around six per cent.

This study investigates the characteristics of so called green travellers in Europe, who regard environmentally-friendly practices at the destination as important for their choice of. In addition, individuals that choose a low carbon transportation mode, receive specific attention. A seemingly unrelated regression (SUR) probit model is used to estimate jointly the individual correlates of two different criteria for the destination choice: Individuals who find environmentally-friendly practices at the destination as important, those who consider a low carbon transport mode attractive and those who judge both factors equally important. Cross-country differences are taken into account as well as the role of demographic and socioeconomic characteristics in shaping the different attitudes towards environmentally-friendly travel. Data underlying the analysis originate from the 2016 Flash Eurobarometer on 20,000 individuals from European countries who travelled at least once in 2015.

This paper contributes to the ongoing discussion of the importance of environmentally-friendly tourism and slow travelers and the extent to which environmentally based travel motivations differ across country of residence and sociodemographic characteristics (It is well known that ecological footprint of tourists is mainly driven by the choice of transport mode rather than the actual holiday activities. Previous literature finds that leisure related air travel is the main contributor of global warming. People using more carbon friendly forms of transportation differ significantly in their characteristics.

The novelty of the study is the joint modelling of two environmentally related travel decisions, including way of travel and green destination. Previous studies have often used a single-equation approach to study the different motivations. In addition, the use of internationally comparable data for a large set of countries is also new.

Results based on the bivariate probit model show that the probability of considering environmental practices at the destination depend significantly on socioeconomic and demographic characteristics as well as on country of residence. Nature based tourists and sport tourists as well as women are more likely to choose a destination with environmentally friendly practices while older and skilled persons are less likely to bother. Furthermore, there are remarkable cross-country differences in the probability of choosing destination with environmentally friendly practices with the highest levels recorded in the UK, Ireland, Belgium and Luxembourg, and the lowest in some eastern European countries. When it comes to low carbon travel mode, individuals who spend their main holiday in their home country or undertake city trips are more likely to pay attention to their carbon footprints. In contrast, socioeconomic and demographic characteristics do not play a role in choosing a low carbon transport mode.

### **The importance of community involvement at event tourism: Cases from Greek festival market**

*Sofoklis Skoultzos (Scientific Collaborator at Technological Educational Institution (TEI) of Sterea Ellada, Greece)*

*Alexios - Patapios Kontis (Scientific Collaborator at University of the Aegean and at the Technological Educational Institute of Athens, Greece)*

Various researches have been argued that a determinant for sustainable tourism development is community involvement to several stages of destination planning and management. There are cases that underline the significance of integrating local people to the process of tourism development. Current paper focuses on community involvement in the implementation of events and event tourism in destinations. Specifically, hallmark events are examined. These events tend to be distinctive characteristics of the host destinations, mainly because of their success and yearly recurrence.

Hallmark events are considered to be an important sector of festival market globally, and play a significant role to the development of host communities. Various destinations utilize such events as tools for economic, cultural, tourism and social development. As a result, they become vital elements of local culture and they interact with locals and host communities, regardless of their theme and the connection with the local tradition. It has been argued that hallmark events are capable of supporting local tourism product and business and improving the image of the host destination. In this context, the necessity of their success is vital for the overall performance of the destination.

This paper argues the importance of community involvement to the success of a hallmark event based on secondary and primary research. Firstly, the relative theoretical background is presented together with findings from previous researches that highlight the significance of engagement of local people. The paper presents findings from cases from the Greek festival market and comes up with important statements for destinations that focus on events to support and develop their own tourism image and product.

### **Analyzing the offerings of Greek hotel spas**

*Dimitris Koutoulas (University of Patras, Greece)*

*Argyro Kourtesi (University of Patras, Greece)*

The present paper represents a benchmarking exercise focusing on the range of treatments, facilities and other services offered at Greek hotel spas. The aim of the paper is to determine what is actually offered at

Greek hotel spas and to provide actionable input to any hotel interested in creating or upgrading such a department in accordance with – or with the aim of surpassing – the industry “average”.

The method employed for conducting the empirical research has been a content analysis. This analysis utilized information provided in the spa menus that were downloaded from the respective hotel websites.

The content analysis covered a sample of 100 Greek hotels that made their spa menus available for download on the websites. Previous research has shown that approx. 330 Greek hotels are operating spas, however not all of them featured complete menus on the website. Thus, the present sample of 100 hotels can be considered as representative for the sector of hotel spas in Greece.

A detailed checklist was used for extracting information from the spa menus that was used for preparing a series of statistical indicators. These indicators can be grouped as follows:

- Wellness facilities provided at Greek hotel spas
- Range of massage treatments on offer
- Range of body treatments on offer
- Range of facial treatments on offer
- Range of beauty treatments on offer
- Range of special treatments on offer
- Sports activities on offer
- Treatments emphasizing body, mind and soul balance
- Signature treatments on offer
- Treatments aimed at couples, men and at children

The findings from the content analysis are then used for formulating several recommendations aimed at properly designing and upgrading the offerings of a hotel spa. Specifications for operating a hotel spa include the proper combination of treatments as well as wellness facilities. Recommendations also cover aspects of effectively marketing a spa on the respective hotel websites.

### **The dynamics of the Chinese luxury tourism**

*Konstantina Adami (Konstantina Adami & Maria Zisouli, Greece)*

*Maria Zisouli (Konstantina Adami & Maria Zisouli, Greece)*

Asian travelers provide record numbers to the global tourism industry. By 2030, 50% of all global travelers are expected to origin from Asia. The number of young wealthy Chinese tourists that show an interest for long distance travel is continuously increasing. Greece is one of their top choices as a romantic destination where the outstanding sunsets and blue waters, found mainly in the Aegean islands, are the center of attention for the young visitors.

A new channel in the tourism industry is rapidly growing with great investing and economic potential, with the luxury traveler being the main point of interest. There is no clear definition for luxury tourism; it mainly includes qualitative services and products provided to the visitors in a convenient and extraordinary way. The Asian luxury visitor is very different from the ones with European or American origin, they travel often and look for unique and exclusive experiences. What are the characteristics of this group of tourists? How do they choose their destinations and what do they prefer on their travels? Are some of the first questions that should be examined.

Chinese travelers are redefining their travel needs and 50% of the total Chinese tourists choose to travel in luxury, paying great attention to the “quality” of the trip. The wealthy and experienced Chinese travelers

have more exclusive tastes with many travel programs and tours being insufficient for their needs. Most wealthy Chinese tourists are in search for quality, personalized experiences, greater flexibility and tend to spend money on adventures, gastronomic delights and wine tasting. Furthermore, they are highly environmentally sensitive, they prefer nature-encountering events, while they are willing to pay extra for their stay in an eco-friendly accommodation.

The new generation of luxury Chinese tourists use very specific channels to interact with the outside world. The increasing dependence from the mobile technology shapes the way smartphone users interact with commercial industries. Websites and user-friendly apps are the rule not the exception anymore. Luxury accommodation and travel services that do not provide easy access to necessary information and products are risking alienation from their target groups and will eventually lose their reliance in the years to come.

With the rapid increase of Chinese travelers going global, there are some vital questions that are still to be answered; What are the technological needs for the high class trips? How will the market adapt in the needs of the luxury Asian consumers? What is the outcome of luxury travel for local communities? The answers to those questions must be given promptly while tourism destinations and industries shall adapt their services to the expectations of the Chinese luxury traveler, in order to secure a spot in the market of Asian luxury tourism.

### **Promoting Portugal as a tourism destination via Erasmus students: An exploratory study**

*Suzanne Amaro (Polytechnic Institute of Viseu, Portugal)*

*Cristina Barroco (Polytechnic Institute of Viseu, Portugal)*

*Carmen Martins (Bournemouth University, UK)*

*Joaquim Antunes (Polytechnic Institute of Viseu, Portugal)*

Erasmus is the world's most successful student mobility programme that has provided millions of European students with the opportunity to go abroad and study at a higher education institution or train in a company. Many studies have been carried out to examine the impact that Erasmus mobility has on professional careers and academic development and its effects on skills enhancement, employability and institutional development. However, there are no studies focusing on the impacts that Erasmus students may have on the country where they study. Indeed, Erasmus students are similar to tourists that visit other cities within the country, creating a certain image of the destination. Afterwards, when returning to their home country they may recommend the country to friends and family, contributing to the development of a positive image of the country which, in turn, can contribute to the development of tourism. Indeed, research has consistently evidenced that the image of a destination directly influences intentions to revisit and recommend the destination to others (Alcaniz et al., 2005; Bigné et al., 2001; Qu et al., 2011).

In the past 10 years Portugal has received more than 60,000 Erasmus students. Therefore, it is crucial to assess the image they have of Portugal and their contribution in promoting Portugal in their home countries. This study is exploratory and consists of interviews with 12 students from different nationalities that have done Erasmus in Portugal. The interviews were conducted in order to examine students' perceptions of Portugal and how they have contributed in promoting Portugal. The findings of this research will provide insights that will be useful to understand how the Portuguese brand is perceived by

foreigners that live for short periods in Portugal and how they can contribute to the development of Tourism.

### **Business clustering and the cross-sectoral nature of intelligent tourism: Case study the Peloponnese health tourism network in Greece**

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As part of the strategic redesign of the tourism product of Greece, is growing rapidly the model of the "smart tourism", which on basis constitutes a model of tourism and policy development and aim to the promote of tourism process and the broader development of the strengthening of all economic activities, where the intervention area shows local comparative or competitive advantages.

Greece has recently entered the health tourism market, which is a specialized segment with significant dynamics both because of the expected revenues and the ongoing liberalization of medical services in Europe.

Several studies that have occasionally drawn up, according to the literature, regarding "sustainable" tourism development based on alternative and special forms of tourism. Only few, if non-existent, are the studies of those who propose a new model for regional tourism development, grounded in business clustering and "Smart Tourism" with the active participation of all stakeholders and optimal use of available tourism resources.

This paper aims to investigate the opportunities for the increase of regional economy and entrepreneurship through the development of business clustering of thematic forms of tourism such as health tourism via the use of the model of "Smart Tourism" which is based on economic and development characteristics of the geographical unity of Peloponnese.

To achieve the aims and purpose of this research proposal is necessary to use both the secondary and primary research. Regarding the secondary research will be a complete analysis of International and Greek literature of Smart health tourism, the institutional framework as well as an inventory and assessment of the current situation (in general and socio-economic data, supply and demand). The trends and the basic parameters of the study area regarding the health tourism through the analysis of available data involved relevant departments, organizations, institutions and business networks will also be examined. The primary research will be applied in the geographical unit of Peloponnese with the ultimate goal to investigate development of Cooperative Business Figures (Clusters) of Thematic Forms of Tourism and specifically Health Tourism, as a means of strengthening local development and economy and the strategic redesign of the tourism product through "Smart Development" which requires the best use of "strong" points of the local economy, the exploitation of local social capital and the commitment of productive parties (stakeholders) for high quality standards. The method of stratified sampling will be applied using a structured questionnaire and a sample survey are defined as entrepreneurs in tourism and health sector and the other institutions (public and private) which are involved in the development process (stakeholders) of Peloponnese.

Through appropriate statistical processing and analysis will attempt to draw useful conclusions regarding the investigate questions that have been already be mentioned and develop proposals for political strengthening of this new model of "Smart Tourism development" for Peloponnese

**Water as a capital element of cross border networking towards environmental protection actions. Destination management & destination development tools during implementation of Waternet EU project**

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*Sasho Korunovski (UKLO - University of Bitola, Macedonia)*

*Angela Vasileska (UKLO - University of Bitola / Faculty of Tourism & Hospitality in Ohrid, Macedonia)*

*Evangelos Christou (Alexander Technological Institute of Thessaloniki, Greece)*

The main purpose of this paperwork is to represent the developing proposals for understanding the importance of the Water as key element to the Destination Management System in Destination Development, during the process for the WaterNet EU Cross Border Project implementation. First part of the paper is focused on the theory and concepts related to the topic while in the second part presented a benchmarking approach for comparisons between other EU areas in the SE Europe for better understanding the best practices improving the Destination Management Networking activities in the cross border area of Thessaloniki-Edessa-Ohrid as a useful tool to Destination Management Competitiveness. The last part contains the conclusions and the proposals for improving the tool of EU Project as an activity of the Destination Management towards Environmental Protection Actions.

**Heritage site management and sustainability: A review of Turkey's world heritage sites management plans**

*Nilgün Güneş (Akdeniz University Tourism Faculty, Turkey)*

*Nurşah Çokbankir Şengül (Akdeniz University Tourism Faculty, Turkey)*

Tourism is one of the world's largest and most dynamic forms of social and cultural exchange, economic activity and also a driver of development. The major components of contemporary tourism are world heritage sites and their cultural and natural values and that this reality will continue. On the one hand tourism is a substantial tool to protect cultural and natural values of the heritage sites and to cope with poverty by generating economic income (Hall&Piggin, 2002) but on the other hand growth of tourism has created new problems for heritage areas in terms of increasing number of visitors and potential harmful effects on the nature that is evident in unique and fragile environments such as world heritage sites (Gilmore et al., 2007). Bandarin (2007) states that the second most reported danger after development pressures in world heritage sites is tourism. As the components of the tourism assests, preserving natural and cultural properties through management plan is vital for development of sustainable tourism in world heritage sites. Cultural heritage management as a systematic preservation of the cultural values of cultural heritage assets for the benefit of present and future generations (McKercher&Cros, 2002). Without a management plan for the protected area; activities for the conservation and development of the area will take place in a unsustainable way. As a result, resources and values of the area will be destroyed in an irreversible manner (Thomas et al., 2003). Protecting the values of world heritage sites and providing them with the experience of tourists without the environmental, economic and socio-cultural damaging effects can be achieved with a sustainable management approach. Within this context, "Sustainable

Tourism Principles in World Heritage Sites" was approved by the World Heritage Committee in 2010. Integrating sustainable tourism principles into world heritage site management plans may provide mitigation of tourism damaging impacts on heritage sites. The main purpose of this study to analyze Turkey's world heritage sites -Turkey has 17 cultural property inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List as of 2017- management plans through sustainable tourism principles and to examine the focal point of management plans about sustainability (social, economic and environmental). The paper will summarise the fundamental relationship between sustainable heritage management and tourism in the context of world heritage site management plans.

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#### Session 16A: Hospitality and Distribution

##### **The importance of soft skills in achieving leading positions in the hospitality industry**

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*Suzanne Amaro (Polytechnic Institute of Viseu, Portugal)*

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It is difficult to find a consensus definition of soft skills (Matteson, Anderson, & Boyden, 2016). Rainsbury, Hodges, Burchell, and Lay (2002) define them as "interpersonal, human, people, or behavioral skills, and place emphasis on personal behavior and managing relationships between people" (p.9). A more recent definition views soft skills as a combination of personal qualities and interpersonal skills that help an employer perform their job (Wesley, Jackson & Lee, 2017). Some of the most important soft skills identified by executives are Communication, Flexibility, Integrity, Interpersonal Skills, Positive Attitude, Professionalism, Responsibility, Teamwork and Work Ethic (Robles, 2012).

Several studies have stressed the importance of soft skills. For instance, research has shown that soft skills complement hard skills (Shulz, 2008). In the hospitality field, studies have shown that soft skills are the most essential competencies for hospitality graduates to possess (Sisson & Adams, 2013) and are needed in entry-level hospitality management positions (Weber, Finley, Crawford and Rivera, 2009). A study conducted by Kim, Erdem and Jeong (2011) found that Hotel employees are aware of the importance of soft skills to be successful at their workplace, identifying serving customers properly, working with diverse groups, responsibility, sociability, self-management, problem solving, participating as a team member as some of the most important soft skills.

According to Burns (1997), Hospitality gains profitable value-added from the highly developed social skills of its so-called 'unskilled' labour force. However, there are few studies analyzing the importance of soft skills in leading jobs in the hospitality industry. It is crucial to investigate and identify the essential competencies in order to meet these demands. According to Weber et al. (2009) the identification of competencies needed by hospitality managers has been investigated since the 1980s, however a comprehensive list of soft skills has not been identified.

This study examines which soft skills are more important to achieve leading jobs in the hospitality industry. In order to accomplish this, 44 employees of one of Portugal's biggest hotel groups – Montebelo Hotels & Resorts - were examined. Montebelo Hotels & Resorts has 12 hotel units distributed between Portugal and Mozambique and over 400 employees. The employees that were examined occupy leading positions at these hotels, such as hotel managers and assistants, restaurant managers and kitchen managers. When hired, all of them were evaluated by trained personnel and their soft skills were assessed.

The findings of this study are important to several parties. First of all, to people that are searching for leading jobs in the hospitality industry. By knowing which soft skills are the most important, they can enhance their chances to be recruited (Weber et al., 2009). It is also important for recruiting managers in the hospitality industry. Finally, the findings are also important for hospitality industry educators, in order to revise the curriculum to develop the skills that are necessary to achieve top leadership jobs in the hospitality industry.

### **A resource dependence view to the distribution channels of tourism: Booking.com case**

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Tourism distribution channels are important players of the industry as they are the intermediaries to bring buyers and sellers together by providing convenient points of sale away from the location of production (Middleton, 1994). Conventionally tour operators and travel agencies (TAs) are recognized as the main members of tourism distribution channels (Buhalis, 2000). However, by the development of the Internet and by the growing inclusion of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the industry, electronic intermediaries started to challenge these traditional distributors (Buhalis & Law, 2008). ICT developments are discussed to impact the competitiveness of enterprises (Porter, 2001) and also to shift the power balances in the field of tourism distribution channels (Berne et al., 2012). As ICTs threaten the survival of traditional intermediaries, Buhalis and Law (2008) argued that they are forced to reconsider their operations and strategies. Additionally resource dependence theory suggests that organizations do not adapt passively to their environments but they have strategies to enhance their autonomy and to pursue

their interests (Davis & Cobb, 2009). To minimise their environmental dependencies and to manage power relations in favour of themselves, organizations try to be a member of a larger and powerful associations (Hillman et al., 2009). Where organizations are unable to control the larger systems of the environment, like in the case of global distribution channels, Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) argue that they could also attempt to use political mechanisms to manipulate environmental contingencies. According to theory, organizations may try to shape governmental regulations and control their interdependencies through law to create a favourable environment. In this respect, “booking.com case” of Turkey could be examined as a typical case of political action to manage competition between tourism distribution channels. Recently, Association of Turkish Travel Agencies (TURSAB) sued against booking.com by the reason of unfair competition and consequently, access to the website to book a room in Turkey is restricted for Turkish customers by the court decision. The claim was that the international company does not follow the regulations of Turkey for TAs, which requires all TAs to be a member of TURSAB and to pay a certain amount of tax to the state. Hotels’ reaction to TURSAB was strong, who accused the association for not considering what the best is for tourism industry of the country but only a few TAs’ interests. In response to the arguments and to the media coverage, TURSAB declared that it is their responsibility as a professional union to protect its members’ economic interests and to prevent unfair competition. As yet, the restriction for booking had provided an opportunity for its competitors in domestic tourism market. For example, a Turkish company experienced a 30% of increase in its online reservations (Eser, 2017). This might not be the best strategy for sustainable competitive advantage for TAs in the long run. However “booking.com case” of Turkey presents a recent example of ICT threat to traditional intermediaries cited in the literature (Buhalis & Law, 2008; Berne et al., 2012) and also the strategies of organizations to create a favourable environment by using the power of associations and also political mechanisms through law and sanctions (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978).

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#### **The hotel - travel intermediaries relationship: A conflict negotiation analytical framework**

*Lemonia Papadopoulou-Kelidou (University of the Aegean, Greece)*

The main target of the extant paper is to get into real depth and to conduct a discursive analysis over the areas of conflict of interest among hotels and tour operators as well as over the strategies of negotiation that are being used and could be used for the benefit of all the involved parties. The globally raised issue is

that tour operators possess airlines, large hotels chains etc. The majority of hotels neither are owner of airlines nor of tourism mediators. Tour operators' vertical integration allows them to affect the tourism demand and hence the price of the tourism product. Tour operators are the wholesalers of the tourism product, while hotels are the retail sellers. Tour operators press room prices as much as low they can. On the other hand, although hotels struggle to resist on that downward pressure they don't come up with positive results. The fear of "no booking" and having "empty rooms" make hotels to give in and sell their rooms at low prices that make them suffer economic losses and perform at a level below average cost.

The research is being divided in four basic parts: rivals' configuration of initial conflict behavior, creation of power budget to allocate power properly and efficiently, investigation of the efficient use of power under given conditions and fourthly evaluation of various alternative types of negotiating behavior along with their concomitant consequences and selection of the most beneficiary behavior. The investigation of the conflicts of interest and the possible and feasible strategies of negotiation for the resolution of them are of paramount significance and importance. The aforementioned significance of the paper is hidden in the fact that tour operators seem to influence not only the tourism demand but also the marketing strategies and the type of management of hotels. Hotels' economic losses from the pre mentioned dominance create the intensifier need to change the landscape, the terms and the result of the negotiation among hotels and tour operators, which also creates the field of our research, and drive us forward to deeply analyze hotels' and tour operators position in the market and in the negotiation.

The principle objective of the paper is to explore new, alternative and innovative strategies of negotiation among the two rivals for their mutual benefit. Respectively, the specific objectives are: a) to detect and estimate the size of that conflict, b) to outline the structure of the relationship between the disputants, c) to discover whether there is a manifest conflict or a perceived conflict (Pondy 1967 Conflict Model), d) to estimate the amount of disposable power of each rival and how this is being allocated over both the areas of conflict we are interested in as well as over the parallel fields of conflict the rivals are confronted with, e) to outline the conditions (economic, political, social, technological, temporal, cultural, legal and supplementary conditions) under which conflicts are taking place and f) to create alternative mutually beneficial strategies of negotiation based on the Best Alternative To a Negotiated Agreement (BATNA) of each player and predicting the consequences of potential negotiating behaviors (disputants' reaction to alternative negotiating scenarios and actions).

The unique and innovative feature of the paper is that the well and broadly known conflict among hotels and tour operators is being analyzed for the first time on the scientific base of conflict and negotiation theories. Theretofore conflict and negotiation scientific theories are dependent theories, officially distant from tourism theories and tourism industry. This is the first effort at combining conflict and negotiation theories with scientific tourism theories and tourism industry for the anatomy of the aforementioned conflict and the resolution of it.

### **Hotels are not just for sleeping, they are also for dreaming**

*Claudia Maria Astorino (UFSCar, Brazil)*

With the advent of mass tourism, the saying "Hotels are just for sleeping" became more and more popular. This research however went toward the opposite direction as it aimed to investigate in which extend hotels may be an important part of the tourist experience at the destination. The methodology consisted essentially of exploratory studies and field researches in tourist destinations in 23 countries in

both Latin America and Europe: Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, Ecuador, Panama, Costa Rica, Spain, Italy, Austria, The Netherlands, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, The Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Bosnia, Republic of Macedonia, Romania and Ukraine, where the author of the research had ordinary guest experiences. The results showed that there are hotels that offer more than a good night sleep and might be a plus to the tourist experience, even improving his/her interpretation of the destination. In order to organize this growing and flourishing offer, the results of the investigation are shown and discussed through the following categories: (i) historical hotels; (ii) thematic hotels; (iii) hotels that had artists and other celebrities among their guests; (iv) hotels where artists or other celebrities lived in the past; (v) hotels with spectacular views; (vi) hotels where an important fact took place; (vii) hotels that are installed in refuncionalized former buildings; (viii) hotels which building is an architecture icon; (ix) hotels installed in ships and boats.

#### Session 16B: Systemic Relationships, Work and Entrepreneurship

### **Entrepreneurship and opportunity recognition: The influencing factors for novice entrepreneurs in Greece**

*Eleni Goniotaki (University of Groningen, Greece)*

The process of opportunity recognition is an important theme of research in entrepreneurship. Most researchers try to answer: “why some people can recognize business opportunities and some cannot?” in order to discover the influencing factors in the process of identification of the opportunities to start a business (Baron, 2006). It has been shown in the literature that alertness plays an important role, and people who possess it have more possibilities to recognize business opportunities. At this point, in my research I am going to explore whether people who are alert and influenced by their social networks and by their prior knowledge have the advantage, the ability to identify more business opportunities than others. The power of information is the key aspect in the process. This study aims to broaden our understanding of opportunity recognition, by analyzing the influencing role of social networks and prior knowledge in the identification process of a sample of 116 novice entrepreneurs in Greece, in the hospitality industry. According to the empirical findings of my study, alertness has a positive effect to the opportunity recognition, thus confirming the previous literature on the topic. On the other hand, social networks and prior knowledge do not influence the relationship. This finding is surprising. I conclude by discussing potential reasons and implications of the results of this study.

### **An ecosystem-based framework for transforming the tourism sector**

*Konstadinos Kutsikos (Business School, University of the Aegean, Greece)*

*George Bithas (Business School, University of the Aegean, Greece)*

Over the last few decades, driven largely by digital technologies and massively increased connectivity, the economy has been moving beyond narrowly defined industries built around large, vertically integrated, and mainly “self-contained” corporations. New means of creating value have been developing everywhere in the form of ever-denser and richer networks of connection, collaboration, and interdependence. Successful businesses are those that evolve rapidly and effectively. Yet innovative businesses can’t evolve in a vacuum. They must attract resources of all sorts, drawing in capital, partners, suppliers, and customers to create business ecosystems (Moore, 1993; Lansiti and Levien, 2004; Kelly, 2015).

Ecosystem thinking provides a new frame and mindset that captures a profound shift in the economy and the business landscape. The importance of relationships, partnerships, networks, alliances, and collaborations is obviously not novel—but it is growing. As it becomes increasingly possible for firms to deploy and activate assets they neither own nor control, to engage and mobilize larger and larger numbers of participants, and to facilitate much more complex coordination of their expertise and activities, the art of the possible is expanding rapidly (Kelly, 2015).

According to Deloitte's (2017) and Accenture's (2017) Tech Trends Reports, business ecosystems are one of the key trends that will transform the business landscape in 2017 and beyond. Businesses around the world are responding. Some view the rise of ecosystems and the transformation consequences as an opportunity for creating powerful new competitive advantage.

Companies in tourism businesses increasingly participate in and compete against business ecosystems that are comprised of: tourism service providers; regulators; technology providers; communities; and consultants (Baggio and Chiappa 2014, Kline et al. 2014). The competition is complemented by an increased cooperation in order to boost agility, flexibility and efficiency, often leading to an environment of cooptation (Sigala 2008, Kylanen and Rusko 2011).

Recently, research has highlighted the relevance of managing a wide range of shared capabilities towards common goals, and collaborating to co-create and co-deliver sustained value for all network partners leading to the need for effective strategic management across tourism business ecosystems (Gereffi et al. 2005, Gligor and Holcomb 2012, Halldorsson et al. 2007, Lemmetyinen and Go 2009, Pechlaner et al. 2014, Romero and Tejada 2011, Stank et al. 2011, Wong et al. 2012).

The investigation of the governance issues arising from the integration of new tourism distribution channels at the wider business ecosystem in a tourism context addresses a gap in the literature, as recently stated by Song et al. (2013). The latter also argue that "research on the governance environment, structure, mechanisms, and outcomes in the tourism value chain has been carried out mostly in isolation, with their interrelationships largely ignored. These relationships should be extensively investigated" (Song et al., 2013).

In today's tourism environment, every tourism company needs an ecosystem strategy to move forward. A strategy that prepares them for a future of disruptive innovation and enables them to explore the myriad of new value creation opportunities. To that extent, our research aims to create a framework for tourism-related organizations who wish to engage in ecosystem-based growth. The practical implication is to help tourism businesses transform, in order to carve their desired roles in the fragmented and saturated tourism markets by co-creating new forms of value and competitive advantage.

### **Addressing traveler "micro-moments" through local B2B affiliations**

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The goal of every business owner in the travel industry is to maximize sales of their holiday products or services. In this paper we show that there is hidden value and potential revenue to be acquired even after they sell their products/services. This potential revenue is hidden their clients "micro-moment" needs.

After defining micro-moments we focus on how the concept can be moved to the offline world and become a way to enhance traveler experience while providing added value and revenue to holiday businesses.

According to Google micro-moments are moments when people turn to a device with intent to answer an immediate need. In this paper we focus on micro-moments that: a) occur during the travel experience b) are based on information needs of a traveler at a specific time c) tend to incorporate a sense of urgency and d) are usually tied to mobile devices. An example of a micro-moment in the travel industry is when a client turns to his/her smartphone while in a hotel room when they start feeling hungry. They will probably search for restaurants nearby and choose a restaurant from the first page of a SERP that has good reviews.

There are several micro-moments that occur when travelling. They can occur before, during or even after the travel experience. According to Google there are: dreaming, planning, booking and experiencing moments. We will focus on the "experiencing" micro-moments. These can be broadly defined as moments when a traveler has a need for a new experience while on vacation and turns to a device for a solution.

Once a traveler is all set-up at a destination, experiencing moments start popping up: I need to eat, I need to visit an attraction, I need to go to the closest beach, I need to buy an extra SD card. These moments can occur in a hotel room, in a car while driving, while walking, while in a shop, while eating at a restaurant and so on. The traveler will impulsively turn to their smartphone (probably Google) to get answers. This is where online advertising through SEM comes into play and can be very successful. By predicting potential micro-moments a company can be in the right place (on top of a SERP) at the right time (when the user turns to their devices for answers) and get that client.

In the online world addressing micro-moments is based on the concept of individual businesses working independently. Every business focuses on their product or service and gets revenue out of selling it. A hotel doesn't care about addressing their clients' micro-moments that don't concern them. For example hotels don't care where clients eat or which beach they go to. But this is not true in the real world. Even if hotels don't care, clients will ask them.

Based on that observation, in this paper we use the micro-moments online concept and show how it can be used in the real world (offline) by any holiday business to produce new streams of revenue. Hotels should care and maybe even influence where their clients eat. Our approach is based on the idea that a holiday company that has acquired a client can operate in a way that influences that client's decisions as a response to their micro-moments. We call this business practice the MCF (My Client First) model. We analyze the model extensively and show that it is based on mutual references based on B2B affiliations (cluster based model). We show how the model can be implemented by holiday business in a way that is beneficial and transparent to the customer, how it can produce extra revenue streams and how it can increase traveler satisfaction. A version of the MCF model exists today in the online world. When Easyjet for example, proposes hotels after you've booked a ticket, it's actually saying that "since you are my client, now I have the right to address your next micro-moment which I anticipate will be to book accommodation". Here, we move this online model to a local travel destination and show how it can be implemented. We first present a timeline of possible traveler micro-moments based on research findings

and then show how local businesses can take advantage of that timeline to address the next anticipated travel micro-moment.

In this paper we turn well known and practiced digital advertising concepts, practices and techniques such as micro-moments, affiliated marketing and search engine marketing into real world (offline) business practices through the introduction of the MCF business model. We show that this model is very practical and apart from creating new and still unexplored revenue streams for holiday businesses, can lead to the creation of holiday business clusters that depend and promote each other. All of this would be very beneficial to local tourism based economies.

### **Greek millennials' structure of work values**

*Emmanouil Papavasileiou (University of Portsmouth, UK)*

*Dimitrios Stergiou (Hellenic Open University, Greece)*

Since the turn of the century an increasing number of scholars have drawn attention to the work-related behaviours of the prevalent generations of workforce. Much of the focus has been on the work value priorities of generations within current workforce (Lyons & Kuron, 2014). For most observers, this interest is motivated by the belief that each generation “shares a different set of values and attitudes, as a result of shared events and experiences” (Parry & Urwin, 2011, p. 80). Emphasis has therefore been placed on the identification of the work value priorities of the young generation of workforce who has been referred to as Generation Y, Nexus Generation, Nexters, Gen Me and Millennials (Barnard et al. 1998; Johnson & Johnson, 2010; Strauss & Howe, 2000; Twenge, 2006; Zemke et al, 2000). In this study, the term “Millennials” is used to describe the generational cohort born after 1980, to keep up with the popular literature.

Indeed, the work values priorities of Millennial-aged samples have been reported extensively in studies across the globe in countries such as the US, Canada, Australia, Taiwan, Japan, Slovenia, Malaysia, Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, and South Africa among others. Papavasileiou and Lyons (2015) have recently summarised the results from this strand of international research. Their study highlighted the intrinsic, prestige, extrinsic, and social typology of work values as a common typology for identifying the work identity of Millennials across different cultural contexts. Although this study provides an important first step in relation to the conceptualisation of Millennials’ work values, the structural relationship between the common types of work values (intrinsic, prestige, extrinsic, and social) has not been explicitly explained. Our study addresses this crucial gap in extant literature by providing a structural analysis of Millennials’ work values using a sample of Greek Millennial-aged undergraduate students.

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### **The Greek regulation of relations between hoteliers and their customers**

*Michael Roumeliotis (University of the Aegean, Greece)*

The relations between the hotel and its customers are, in Greek civil law, regulated by the “Regulation of the relations between a hotelier and his customers”. A bylaw in its origin in 1976, when it was enacted by the general secretary of the National Organization of Tourism, it later acquired the status of law, when in 1982 it was included in statute 1652/82.

The provisions within this regulation still apply, insofar as Greek law is applicable, in every hotel guest’s contract with the hotel. They also apply, under the same condition, in every hotel contract, that is negotiated with a tour operator or travel agent. All this naturally in the context of the general civil law provisions, regarding all contracts and lease contracts in particular.

A great variety of issues of interpretation have arisen, as a result of poor legislative craftsmanship, and subsequent not thoroughly thought out amendments; but also because this regulation was mostly overlooked in the past by the legal academia. The text of the regulation has also suffered from the start for a variety of reasons, not least because of the somewhat rough transition from the official and legal Greek language of the seventies, to the one of today.

As a result, a need has arisen for a critical edition of the text of the regulation, and for a thorough commentary on its provisions and their meaning. Having undertaken such an endeavour lately, I present this paper as a small contribution to this effect.



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