

## ANNUAL TOURISM REPORTING TEMPLATE

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Council Decision 86/664/EEC of 22 December 1986<sup>1</sup> establishing a consultation and cooperation procedure in the field of tourism foresees that “each Member State shall send the Commission, once a year, a report on the most significant measures it has taken and, as far as possible, on measures it is considering taking in the provision of services for tourists which could have consequences for travellers from the other Member States”.

With the publication of the “Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism”, the Commission announced that “in order to strengthen the collaboration with and among Member States, their current annual reporting through the Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC) will be used to facilitate the exchange and the dissemination of information about how their policies and actions safeguard the sustainability of tourism”.

This Communication was welcomed by the Competitiveness Council conclusions (22nd-23rd November 2007) and by the Presidency Conclusions of the Brussels European Council of 14th December 2007.

The main aims for the reporting process are:

- to be able to monitor the level of implementation of the “Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism” by Member States;
- to facilitate the exchange of experiences among member States with regard to how they tackle issues which are important for the competitiveness and sustainability of European tourism.

MS reports referring to year  $n$  shall be sent to the European Commission by the end of February of year  $n+1$ .

If the reports are sent in English, the deadline is shifted to the end of April.

### 2. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

This section should provide an overview of the main organisational structure to illustrate how tourism is organised and managed, to identify linkages and to identify the engagement of other organisations/stakeholders.

The information required will only need to be prepared fully in year 1 as it will subsequently only be necessary to provide details of any changes.

**2.1 Please identify the National Bodies responsible for tourism (Ministry and also any separate/related National Tourism Organisation), including key areas of responsibility, and their relationship to other national bodies. (maximum of 1.000 characters)**

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<sup>1</sup> Official Journal L 384, 31/12/1986 P. 0052 – 0053.

The **Greek Ministry of Tourism** is established by virtue of the Presidential Decree 122/2004, with the competences defined in Law 3270/04 (Government Gazette 187/A/11.10.2004). In broad terms, the Ministry of Tourism is responsible for the overall Greek tourism policy as well as for the regulation, planning and programming of the tourism development of the country within the framework of the government policy. Tourism is an intersectoral sector falling under the competence of various other ministries and the Greek Ministry of Tourism has several executing agencies under its jurisdiction. The key areas of responsibility of the Greek Ministry of Tourism include:

- suggesting the necessary measures for the effective operation of the tourism sector to the competent government authorities as well as following up and monitoring its performance,
- examining the ramifications of tourism to the national economy and society as well as the competition rules within the international tourism market with a view to creating the appropriate tourism indexes and indexes concerning the sustainable development of tourism,
- providing guidelines for drawing-up tourism development and infrastructure plans, such as managing the spatial planning of tourism ports, drawing-up and supervising the implementation of concession contracts concerning the use and exploitation of tourism ports and catering for the rational management of the coastal zones according to the principles of sustainability,
- managing issues of casino licences and contracts and supervising their operation,
- attracting investment for the tourism sector,
- cooperating with other relevant to tourism Ministries in order to coordinate the policies aiming to foster tourism development and improve quality and competitiveness of the national tourism product and
- representing the country to the international tourism organisations, promoting

bilateral tourism relations and signing international agreements for tourism cooperation as well as implementing international development assistance programs.

The **Greek National Tourism Organisation (GNTO)** is a Public Entity (PE) supervised by the Ministry of Tourism. Since 1950, the GNTO constitutes the ruling state agency for the tourism promotion of the country and the licensing of its tourism enterprises. According to the Law 3270/04 (Government Gazette 187/A/11.10.2004), GNTO consists of the Head Office located in Athens and the Regional Departments of Tourism (as of 01.01.2005). The structure of the GNTO's services and the competences of each unit are included in the Presidential Decree 343/2001 (Gov. Gazette no 231 A). In particular, the key areas of responsibility of the GNTO are as follows: Studies and Investment, Planning of Tourism Development, Forms of Tourism, Tourism Investments and Information (General Directorate of Development), Quality Control & Market Supervision, Tourism Projects, Technical Services, Physical Planning and Development (Directorate of Tourist Facilities), General Inspection, Complaints and Consumer Protection (Directorate of Inspection), Marketing, Promotional Programs, Conferences and Exhibitions, Publications and Audiovisual Media (Directorate of Market Research and Advertising), Coordination and Support of Services Abroad, Public Relations, Financial Services, Administrative issues, Informatics-Applications, Secretariat, Dispatching, Logistics, Control of Regional Tourism Offices, Tourist Business, Therapeutic-Spa Tourism, Registration of Tourist Enterprises (Directorate of Co-ordination of Regional Tourism Offices), Legal Adviser's Office, Press Office, GNTO Secretary General's Office, GNTO President's Office.

**2.2 Please, describe what organisations/agencies are used to deliver services at the national and regional level and the services that they deliver. (maximum 800 characters)**

Other institutions that are supervised by the Greek Ministry of Tourism, according to Law 3270/04 (Government Gazette 187/A/11.10.2004), are:

- **The Organisation of Tourism Education and Training (O.T.E.K.) (ex. Schools of Tourist Professions)**

The Organisation of Tourism Education and Training (O.T.E.K) is the specialized Greek state institution that provides education and training for professions in the field of Tourism. O.T.E.K operates as a legal entity of Public Law, under the supervision of the Ministry of Tourism. Since its founding in 1937, it has supplied the tourism market with over 200.000 professionals. Today, O.T.E.K includes the former Schools of Tourism Professions and the Schools for Tour Guides. In particular, OTEK operates 2 Advanced Schools of Tourism Education, 8 Vocational Schools (Secondary Education) and 9 Institutes of Vocational Training (Post-Secondary Education). The new form of O.T.E.K signals its role in the reorganization and modernization of tourism education and training in Greece, and in the creation of a modern system for the accreditation of the professional qualifications in the tourism sector. OTEK offers a) Free of charge attendance for Greek & E.U. countries students, b) Paid placement in selected hotels and tourism enterprises in Greece and abroad, c) Scholarships for further studies abroad. Furthermore, the Institutes of Vocational Training of the OTEK provide specialisation in the fields of Culinary Art, Hospitality and Catering Operations, Travel Agencies Operations and Housekeeping Assistance. In the field of alternative tourism, the Institutes of Vocational Training is currently operating three new specializations -Mountain Escort, Thalassotherapy-Spa Specialist, Balneotherapy-Spa Specialist.

- **The Hellenic Tourism Development Co. (HTDC) (ex-Hellenic Tourist Properties SA)**

The Tourism Development Co. is a public corporation and organisation managing real estate assets which manages public tourism assets, acting in between the public and the private sector in order to assure optimal property development, thereby contributing to meeting tourism property goals. The Company's main scope of activity is to manage and administrate the state-owned tourism property while securing optimal development through modern financial techniques that promote the synergies between the State and the private sector (Private Public Partnerships' strategies). The state owned tourism property portfolio managed by Tourism Development Co., consists of business units - casinos, marinas, hotels, organized beaches, natural springs, campings, ski centers, golf courses, etc. - and undeveloped

sites.

- **The Hellenic Chamber of Hotels (HCC)**

The Hellenic Chamber of Hotels operates as a legal entity governed by public law. Since 1935, the HCC is an important statutory advisor of the State on tourism matters and has by law as members all the hotels operating in Greece. The Chamber is managed by an Administrative Council of elected representatives of the hotels all over the country and representatives of the State. The HCC is member of the Confederation of National Hotel and Restaurant Associations in the European Union (HOTREC). The activities of the Chamber are: a) the study, the suggestion and the application of every measure which contributes to the development of the Greek hotel industry, b) the consultative support of all its members on economic, legal and social matters, c) the drawing-up of studies, d) the supply of information and statistical data, e) the publication of an annual guide of the Greek hotels and a monthly review entitled "XENIA", f) the participation in international tourist exhibitions, g) the provision of information for hotels all over Greece and the granting of pensions.

- **The Agrotouristiki S.A.**

The Agrotouristiki S.A. is a specialized agency under the supervision of the Ministry of Tourism which tries to fully develop alternative tourism forms in Greece by establishing services for the support of relevant businesses and sectors (public information, capital attraction programmes, certifying and granting of agrotourist services quality trademarks etc). One of its most important actions is the launching of the official portal of rural tourism in Greece - [www.agrotravel.gr](http://www.agrotravel.gr), which has gained an important position in the top list of Greek Tourism Portals, contributing to the attraction of high level tourists from Greece and abroad, the lengthening of the tourist season and the coordination of individual efforts to develop rural tourism. The agency also operates the site [www.ruralinvest.gr](http://www.ruralinvest.gr) aiming to provide help to investments related to Rural Tourism – Agrotourism.

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**2.3 Please, describe which other bodies and organisations are involved at the national level and the process for involving them. (maximum 800 characters)**

Other bodies and organizations which are involved at the national level are the following –in alphabetical order: American Society of Travel Agents Association (ASTA) (<http://www.cruiseclub.gr>), Association of Graduate Tourist Guides of Athens (<http://www.tourist-guides.gr/>), Association of Graduate Tourist Guides of Ionian Islands and Western Greece ([cfuguide@otenet.gr](mailto:cfuguide@otenet.gr)), Association of Graduate Tourist Guides of the Dodecanese Islands ([xenosrho@otenet.gr](mailto:xenosrho@otenet.gr)), Association of Graduate Tourist Guides of Northern and Eastern Aegean ([theofels@otenet.gr](mailto:theofels@otenet.gr)), Association of Greek Exhibition and Conference Organisers (A.G.E.C.O.), Association of Greek Incoming Tour Operators (GITO), Association of Greek Tourist Enterprises (SETE) (<http://www.sete.gr/>), Association of Hotels of Halkidiki (<http://www.halkidiki-hotels.gr>), Association of Professional Tourist Guides of Crete and Thira (<http://www.touristguides-crete.gr>), Association of Tourism Entrepreneurs of Ierapetra, Association of Tourist Guides of Thessaloniki ([guideskg@otenet.gr](mailto:guideskg@otenet.gr)), Business Federation of Rented Rooms and Apartments (<http://www.familyhotels.gr>), Campings Association of Halkidiki (<http://www.campsite.gr/>), Greek Car Rental Companies Association ([http://www.steea.gr/index\\_en.htm](http://www.steea.gr/index_en.htm)), Greek Professional Bare Boat Yacht Owners Association (<http://www.sitesap.gr>), Greek Shipowners Association for Passengers Ships, Greek Union of Air Travel Agencies, Hellenic American Chamber of Tourism (HACT) (<http://www.hact.us>), Hellenic Association of Airline Representatives (HAAR) (<http://www.haar.gr/>), Hellenic Association of Travel and Tourist Agencies (HATTA) (<http://www.hatta.gr>), Hellenic Association of Professional Congress Organizers (HAPCO) (<http://www.hapco.gr/>), Hellenic Chamber of Hotels (<http://www.grhotels.gr/>), Hellenic Hotel Federation ([www.hhf.gr](http://www.hhf.gr)), Hellenic Professional Yacht Owners Association (<http://www.hpyoa.gr>, <http://www.epest.gr>), Hellenic Yacht Brokers and Consultants Association (<http://www.hyba.gr>), IATA, Les Clefs D'Or Hellas (<http://www.clefsdor.gr>), Panhellenic Campings Association (<http://www.panhellenic-camping-union.gr>, <http://www.greececamping.org>), Panhellenic Daily Trip Vessels Owners Association, Panhellenic Federation of Catering and Tourist Industry Employees, Panhellenic Federation of Offices for Car & Motorbike Rentals, Panhellenic Federation of

Professional Owners of Tourist Buses, Panhellenic Federation of Tourist Enterprises (POET) (<http://www.poet.gr/>), Panhellenic Guide Federation (<http://www.touristguides.gr/>), Research Institute for Tourism (R.I.T.) (<http://www.itep.gr>), School of Guides, School of Tourist Professions, Thessaloniki Convention & Visitors Bureau – TCVB (<http://www.tcvb.gr/>), Union of Coastal Passengership Owners, Women in Tourism, World Council of Hellenes Abroad (SAE) (<http://www.sae-europe.eu>).

The overall optimisation of tourism products entails upgrading the entire tourism supply chain, including human resources, commercialisation patterns, networking and coordination among several suppliers and other tourism stakeholders. Moreover, tourism policy planning involves the establishment of constant feedback processes in order to obtain information of the outcomes of actions and to define challenges and weaknesses, thereby possibilities for improvements. In this respect, raising the awareness of all public and private stakeholders regarding the need to collaborate constitutes a priority for the Greek tourism authorities. Within this framework, forums, conferences and seminars are widely held at a national as well as regional level, to share experiences and to strengthen the coordination capability among the national public authorities, tourism boards and business associations.

Moreover, in an effort to further involve the relevant bodies and organisations of Greek tourism, the Greek Ministry of Tourism seeks to establish a standardised way of working in the development of national tourism strategies. To this perspective, policy plans and relevant legislation often result from previous consultation and debate with the tourism stakeholders in the fundamental aim to build consensus and achieve majority backing in the choice of strategies and the selected development paths. In this context, it is often necessary for the Greek authorities not only to determine and spread the influential comparative and competitive advantages on which its selected policies or set of actions are based but also, primary to their selection, take into consideration the relational interactions among the different stakeholders as well as their bargaining power which could influence the implementation processes.

The **National Board of Tourism** is an official council that involves the participation of the most important tourism stakeholders in the tourism policy

decision-making is by encouraging their participation in the. It is chaired by the Greek Minister of Tourism and its mission is to provide a valuable input in order for the Ministry to define the national tourism development policy as well as to ensure that tourism issues are included and reflected in wider policies relating to the environment, culture, transport, communities and sustainable development. In particular, members of this Council are, inter alia: the Chairman of the Greek National Tourism Organisation, the Chairman of the Greek Chamber of Hotels, the Chairman of the Panhellenic Federation of Hoteliers, the Chairman of the Hellenic Association of Tourist & Travel Agencies, the Chairman of the Association of Greek Tourist Enterprises, the Chairman of the Association of Enterprises of Naval Passenger Transport, the Chairman of the Union of Coastal Navigation Shipowners, the Chairman of the Union of Shipowners of Greek Tourist Vessels, the Chairman of the Panhellenic Federation of Tourist Enterprises, the Chairman of the Panhellenic Federation of Tourist Guides, the Chairman of the Panhellenic Federation of Victualling Workers & Tourist Branch Employees, the Chairman of the Panhellenic Union of Camping Owners, the Chairman of the Association of Tourist Car Rental Enterprises, the Chairman of the Confederation of Rooms for Rent Operators of Greece and & Greek Prefectures, the Chairman of the Association of Greek Exhibition and Congress Organizers and the Chairman of HELEXPO Exposition Centre.

**2.4 Please provide a diagram/organogram of the organisational structure for tourism identifying the relationship between national, regional and local bodies. Provide also a short description of the core responsibilities and competencies of each of the organisations. Include also information regarding the direct and indirect links between other departments, stakeholder organisations and unions. Information about mechanisms of decision making process participation from outsider organisations, e.g. forums, advisory committees is also requested. (maximum of 2.000 characters)**

Generating mechanisms favoring the participation of all stakeholders in the process of tourism development involve intensification of consultation not only among the private tourism sector but also within the Greek public administration as well as within local communities and the Greek society as a whole.

In implementation of the Prime Minister's Circular Y190/18.7.2006 regarding the regulatory reform, i.e. the adaptation of law preparation to the principles and the



procedures of good legislation, the promoted regulations are submitted for public consultation, in order to give the parties involved the possibility to submit their opinions (in 2008, the following law drafts were submitted for public consultation: a) Draft of Presidential Decree for the classification of Organised Tourist Camps into categories according to stars and the determination of their technical and operational specifications, b) Draft of a General Regulation of Operation of the Thermal Treatment Unit, the Thalassotherapy Centers and the Revitalisation Centers, c) Law draft for the operation of tourism agencies). Moreover, forums bringing into contact national tourism authorities with regional authorities and local communities are often organised in order to foster cooperation, build consensus where needed, and identify their responsibilities in achieving sustainable, responsible and equitable tourism in Greece.

Coordination of the policies within the public administration is achieved by bringing closer the Heads and Senior Officials of the Ministries whose competencies have direct links to tourism within the framework of the **National Board of Tourism**, such as the Ministry of Development, the Ministry of Rural Development and Foods, the Ministry of Transport and Communications, the Ministry of National Defence, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the Ministry of Mercantile Marine and the Ministry of Culture. Furthermore, the local administration is represented in the National Board of Tourism by the Chairman of the Association of Municipalities and Communities with Thermal Springs of Greece, the Chairman of the Greek Union Prefectoral Self-Governments and the Chairman of the Greek Central Union of Municipalities and Communities.

The mission of the National Board of Tourism is to programme, follow-up and update -if necessary- the National Development Strategy after achieving broad stakeholder (both employers and employees) consensus as well as mobilise all the productive sectors to implement the Strategy and coordinate their efforts. Its principal aim is to contribute to the improvement of the national competitiveness taking into account the relevant international assessment systems and promote the country's role within the international market as well as the regional markets so as to take the lead in the Balkans and South-East Europe.

By virtue of the Law 3498/06, article 32, the assigned competencies of the

Regional Tourism Offices (Π.Υ.Τ.) are executed by the Greek National Tourism Organisation. Their responsibilities include the approval of plans, the issue, withdrawal or suspension of licenses to tourism enterprises as well as the opening or closing of proceedings for administrative penalties.

**2.5 Please provide information about financial data, including spend/budget on tourism as a percentage of overall government spend/budget, the level of national funding support for tourism marketing, the amount of EU funding support made available for tourism and data concerning the support to SMEs and Destinations. (500 characters)**

The National Public Investment Programme for the Economic Year 2008 amounts to 9.300.000.000€. For the Greek Ministry of Tourism credits account for 72.000.000€, namely 55.000.000 for the co-funded programs and 32.000.000 for the programmes funded entirely from national economic resources, which means barely 0.93 percent of the Public Investment Programme. The percentage of tourism spending as part of the Regular Budget is near 0.07 percent, namely 66.380.000€.

Additionally, for the year 2008 the expenditures of the advertising campaign abroad amounted to 58.876.918 euros.

In the framework of the 3rd Community Support Framework, the following co-funded programmes, concerning the support for SMEs, ran in 2008:

- Quality modernisation of hotels and tourist campings of minimum 3<sup>rd</sup> class on the basis of the National Development Law.  
Declared expenditure: 6,161,973.41€
- Quality modernisation of hotels and tourist campings and furniture rooms and apartments to let that are not subject to the National Development Law.  
Declared expenditure: 8,164,577.36€
- Business plans of SMEs of all sectors, subject to the National Development Law.  
Declared expenditure: 1,801,447.33€
- Continuous investments of the National Development Law.  
Declared expenditure: 1,850,007.11€
- Promotion and diffusion of the Greek Cuisine and support of enterprises for acquiring the GNTO sign for the Greek Cuisine. Action subject to the National Development Law.

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Declared expenditure: 4,337,177.43€

- Private investments on installations of special tourist infrastructure for the development of thematic tourism.

Declared expenditure: 4,510,986.00€

- Promotion of entrepreneurship in Alternative Forms of Tourism under the National Development Law.

Declared expenditure: 896,358.57€

### 3. POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

3.1 Is there a current National Strategy for tourism? Yes  No

If yes, please, provide information in bullet point format about the key aims, objectives and priorities of the strategy highlighting those that are designed to address sustainability issues in economic, environmental and social terms in particular those related in the six aims included in the Agenda. In preparing the tourism strategy, explain how consideration has been given to the 9 principles set out in the Agenda (para2.3 p5) and given in the appendix. (maximum 1.000 characters)

Tourism represents 18% of Greece's Gross Domestic Product and around 20% of the total employment (both direct and indirect employment). Revenue from tourism contributes essentially to the balance of payments of the country while tourism is the instrument of regional development par excellence. The National Strategy for tourism can be summarised in the following: modernisation of the product, systematic promotion of the country around the world and upgrade of tourism-saturated areas. In particular, the National Strategy for tourism involves:

- Enriching the tourism offer with new and diversified tourism services throughout the country, broadening and diversifying widely the Greek national product by encouraging the development of special forms of tourism as well as upgrading its quality in order to mitigate seasonality
- Optimal management of the state-owned tourism property (new tourism products, works procurement notice, Private Public Partnerships' strategies).
- Accommodation's upgrading (technical specifications, incentives)
- Encouraging mergers of tourism enterprises in order to increase their size and their respective competitive position
- Adaptation of tourism enterprises to the new tourism economy (use of new

technologies to ensure sustainability of the nature-based and human-made tourism product, e-commerce, tour operating etc)

- Cope with issues pending related to tourism and linked to interministerial arrangements
- Continuous learning and training of human resources in the field of tourism by introducing for instance new specialisations.

In order to attain its aims, Greece follows, *inter alia*, a concrete strategy of product development and respective promotion which incorporates nine distinct tourism sectors: Seaside Tourism, Nautical Tourism, Cultural Tourism, Touring, MICE, Countryside - Rural - AgroTourism, Health and Wellness Tourism, Luxury Tourism and City Breaks. Within a highly competitive global environment, the international advertising campaign of the Ministry and the GNTTO is of decisive importance for the maintenance and enhancement of tourist flows to Greece. During the past few years, Greece has been building a new image based on new aesthetics and a new communication strategy in order to re-introduce the Greek tourism product to the world with a new brand identity, aiming to move beyond the unidimensional "sun and sea" model. As regards in particular the advertising campaign abroad, a single advertising campaign for different countries-targets with variations in the creative idea, the text adaptation per language, as well as the creative part for each country-target, so that it is effective both globally and locally (per country-target), has been effectuated on the basis of the work of the Counsellor for the Strategic Marketing Plan and the Branding System of Greek Tourism.

The campaign mainly promotes special features of Greece:

- "Unknown", unspoiled Greece, authentic - natural colours, unique in Greece, variety and contradictions
- Gastronomy
- Traditional villages with special character
- Urban culture
- Countryside locations, ideal for ecological tourism and touring
- Mountains, lakes, rivers, natural and sea parks
- Real human Greek moments, not only during the vacations
- Thematic roads
- Natural therapeutic springs and diversified services of health and wellness
- Artistic creation and cultural events
- Greece of feelings and experiences.

In terms of the continuous improvement of the competitiveness of the Greek tourism product, new institutions, new infrastructure and new development tools are constantly established. In this respect, the Greek government has proceeded to many new horizontal policies and necessary appropriate reforms:

- In terms of planning, the **Greek Government strategy for the programme period 2007-2013** focuses on theme and special forms of tourism, on the reinforcement of cooperation among the enterprises of the tourism sector at national and international level, while placing particular emphasis on respecting the criteria of sustainability and on the improvement of human resources incorporating the revised Lisbon Strategy. Encouraging innovation through the promotion of broad use of the contemporary tools of the Information Society and of modern Information and Communication Technologies is another government priority and is meant to dramatically improve the effectiveness of development methods, promotion, monitoring, evaluation and management of Greek tourism.
- Seeking to secure the position of Greece as one of the world's top tourist destinations and also enhance the Greek tourist product with quality features that differentiate it from other destinations while innovating the tourism activity, the **New Investment Incentives Law for the period 2007-2013**<sup>2</sup> was introduced by the Greek Ministry of Economy and Finance in 2006 to improve the previous investment incentives law (L.3299/2004, modified by L.3522/2006) and has been warmly received by the business community since the beginning of its implementation (March 2005). The new law is placing particular emphasis on regional convergence and on the provision of important incentives for new investment projects.

In particular, this law:

- Improves the competitiveness of the economy
- Encourages investment activities of small and medium-sized enterprises
- Simplifies complex procedures for the evaluation of investment projects
- Achieves regional convergence

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.mnec.gr/en/metarithmisi/investment/>

The Investment Incentives Law 3299/2004, modified by law 3522/2006 (Article 37, Government Gazette 276 A', December 22, 2006), is summarized and presented at the website of the Hellenic Centre for Investment.

- Fosters technological change and information networks
  - Increases employment and incorporate personnel and clients' safety concerns
  - Boosts entrepreneurship, infrastructure integrated modernisation and adaptation to the needs of persons with disabilities
  - Encourages savings of energy and natural resources.
- **A Special Service of Coordination, Management and Implementation of Co-funded Actions** in tourism within the National Strategic Reference Framework is constituted in the Ministry of Tourism, according to L. 3614/2007, art. 5, par. 3b. The Service comes under the Special Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism. It exercises the functions of a beneficiary as well as those of an intermediate management body of the Operational Programmes of the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) for actions falling into the scope of competences of the Ministry of Tourism.
- **A spatial master plan for tourism** has been prepared to guide investment decisions and provide specifications for the type and intensity of tourist development in tourist areas. Its aim is to widen new development possibilities for the Greek tourism by the thematic, spatial and temporal expansion of the tourism activity under the conditions of sustainability and quality.
- To face international competition, Greek tourism needs to be not only attractive but also cost-effective. In this respect, the Greek Ministry of Tourism has proceeded to the establishment of the **Tourism Satellite Account** as well as the **National Observatory for Tourism**, both of whom are expected to be completed soon.
- Because of the paramount importance of safety and security issues in the tourism industry, the Greek Ministry of Tourism has very recently decided to implement an integrated strategy on crisis management. Based on a thorough longitudinal study of the industry, the Ministry's communication consultant has prepared a report about the potential threats faced by the industry and the respective risk assessment along with scenario planning for the different crisis that could occur. The first priority that derives from the above is the formation of **three Crisis Communication Teams**: the CCT of the Ministry of Tourism, the CCT for the Greek Tourism, and the Cross Sector CCT. The CCT of the Ministry of Tourism will operate on the highest level, taking decisions on a strategic level and providing with guidelines the CCT for the

Greek Tourism, which will hold an executive role. The Cross Sector CCT will consist of executives from other Greek Ministries as well as social partners that operate in the tourism industry.

**3.2 Who was the initiator and who is responsible for its implementation? (maximum 200 characters)**

The Ministry of Tourism, which also coordinates the actions of other Ministries (mainly the Ministry for the Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Transportations and Communication) with which it shares the responsibility to implement the National Tourism Strategy.

**3.3 How is the strategy monitored and how often? (maximum 500 characters)**

It is effectuated in a regular basis twice a year (every six months) by the National Board of Tourism, a statutory collective body of broad composition. Each of the aspects of the National Strategy is controlled and re-oriented (when necessary) by the Ministry's services or close interministerial schemes.

**3.4 What tourism specific legislation exists? (maximum 500 characters)**

Main tourist legislations is as follows:

- L.3270/2004 (Government Gazette 187/A/11.10.2004), "**Competences of the Ministry of Tourism and tourism issues**".
- L.3498/2006 (Government Gazette 230/A/24.10.2006), "**Development of thermal tourism and other provisions**".
- Government Gazette 43/A/7.3.2002: Presidential Decree 43/2002 "**Classification of main hotel establishments under the system of stars and technical specifications of them**", with its modifications.
- L.3299/2004, "**Aids to private investments for the country's economic and regional development and other provisions**".
- L.3229/2004 (Government Gazette 38A/10204), "**Incentives for renewing tourist buses**".
- L.2652/98, "**Rent a car agencies**".

- L.2446/96, **"Tourist Enterprises of transportation by coach"**.
- Government Gazette 1067/B/3.12.1997: Joint Ministerial Decree No T.4400/24.11.1997, **"Specifications of Spa Facilities so as to be eligible under the status of incentives pursuant to the law 1892/90, as in force"**.
- Government Gazette 42/B/26.1.1994, Government Gazette 137/B/2.3.1994: Ministerial Decree No 520010/6/12.1.1994 **"Stipulation of Specifications on Golf courses"**.
- L.2160/1993 (Government Gazette 118/A/19.7.1993): **"Regulations on Tourism and other provisions"**, as amended by 4805/2000, t/3746/01, 7394/2005 (Hotel and complimentary accommodation, Motels, Apartments, Camping sites, Self-catering accommodation (Tourist Villas), Rooms to let, Apartments to let, Youth Hostels, Installations of special tourism infrastructure, Establishment and operation license of tourist installations, Rights and obligations of hoteliers and their clients).
- Government Gazette 208/B/91 & Government Gazette 298/B/91: Joint Ministerial Decision No 23908/91 **"Stipulation of Technical Specifications for the Construction of Conferences Centres"**.
- L.393/76, L.2160/93, **"Travel Agencies"**.
- L.1652/86 & L.2160/93, **"Time sharing"**.
- L.1652/30-10-86, L.5205/31, L.431/37, L.1108/38, L.2160/93, **"Rights and obligations of hoteliers and their clients"**.
- L.2160/93, L.2743/99, **"Yachts for chartering-Yachtbrokers"**.
- L.710/77, L.1545/85, **"Tourist Guides"**.
- Pr. Decree 14/2007 (Government Gazette 10/A/22.1.2007), **"Definition of Specifications for the creation of Race-tracks"**.
- Joint Ministerial Decree No 12061/2007 (Government Gazette 1393/B/3.8.2007), **"Definition of Specifications for Sport and Training Centres so as to be eligible under the status of incentives pursuant to the Law 3299/2004"**.



The above-mentioned legislation is indicative but not exhaustive.	
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#### **4. MEASURES AND INITIATIVES**

This section provides Member States with an opportunity to outline specific initiatives and policies that are or are going to be adopted to manage and develop tourism activity in ways which respond to the key challenges of the Agenda and which fall within the six main aims of the Agenda itself.

##### **1 Economic prosperity**

- a. To ensure the long term competitiveness, viability and prosperity of tourism enterprises and destinations.
- b. To provide quality employment opportunities, offering fair pay and conditions for all employees and avoiding all forms of discrimination.

##### **2 Social equity and cohesion**

- a. To enhance the quality of life of local communities through tourism, and engage them in its planning and management
- b. To provide a safe, satisfying and fulfilling experience for visitors, available to all without discrimination by gender, race, religion, disability or in other ways.

##### **3 Environmental and cultural protection**

- a. To minimise pollution and degradation of the global and local environment and the use of scarce resources by tourism activities.
- b. To maintain and strengthen cultural richness and biodiversity and contribute to their appreciation and conservation.

**4.1 Please set out, briefly, the steps which have been or will be taken, if any, to address the 7 key challenges for the delivery of sustainable and competitive tourism, covered in the TSG report and referred to in the 'Agenda'.**

##### **4.1.1 Reducing the seasonality of demand. (maximum 200 characters)**

An important purpose of the Ministry of Tourism is to mitigate seasonality in tourist demand. In order to succeed, it seeks to enrich and diversify the tourism product through special forms of tourism. The Ministry aims in particular at nine sectors of specialised tourism products (Seaside, Sea, Cultural, MICE, Rural, Health and Wellness, Luxury and "City Break" Tourism). The overall aim is to offer a variety of options concerning the Greek tourism product, penetrate into as many and different markets as possible as well as set an influential tourism pattern, confirming
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the country's capability to meet the expectations of visitors with varied motives and multiple demands.

This differentiation of the tourism product aims at the sustainability of enterprises which have completed 12 months of operation. The main objective is to improve quality in all domains (services, tourist infrastructure, visitors) which will help upgrade the international presence of Greece (new markets, enhancement of traditional markets) and will guarantee the conditions for bigger investments.

**4.1.2 Addressing the impact of tourism transport. (maximum 200 characters)**

The Greek Ministry of Transport and Communication is the competent authority for planning and implementing national policy and for creating the appropriate institutional framework at European and international level for the development of top quality transport and mass-transit under conditions of healthy competition within the Greek territory. As a member of the European Union, however, Greece consults the reports and other specialised documents provided by the competent European authorities in this field. In this respect, Greece is kept regularly informed on the activities of the Committee on Transport and Tourism of the European Parliament which is responsible for matters relating to the development of a common policy for rail, road, inland waterway, maritime and air transport.

In 2008, the Ministry of Tourism participated in a meeting between officers of co-responsible services (Ministry of Transportation and Communication, Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), Ministry of Interior - General Secretariat of Public Order, Ministry of National Defence, Ministry for the Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works), and officials of the EU and the American government with the aim to examine the possibilities to limit the rates of pollutant emissions to the atmosphere from scheduled air traffic. The participants are expected to be notified of the conclusions drawn from this meeting, by the CAA. Please note that the conclusions are not final; they will probably become final and, therefore, binding at international level.

**4.1.3 Improving the quality of tourism jobs. (maximum 200 characters)**

The aim of the Greek tourism employment policy is to create new quality employment without discriminations as well as improve the quality of existing jobs

related to tourism by enhancing career progression and opportunities.

In 2008, within the framework of the operational programme "Competitiveness", the Ministry of Tourism, on the one hand, organised a training programme for the employed and unemployed in tourism, implemented through the Vocational Training Centers (KEK).

On the other hand, the Organisation of Tourism Education and Training (OTEK) completed the co-funded programmes of:

- **Training and Further Education for workers, seasonally unemployed workers and tourism entrepreneurs** in certified centers of vocational training. The programme of continuing training covered 16 cities of the country.
- **"Training of taxi drivers-owners"**, a pilot programme implemented in four Greek regions (Crete, Peloponnese, Dodecanese and the Ionian Islands).
- **"Establishing a linkage between the tourism education and training and the job market – Career Offices"**. 5 career offices have already begun to operate in Athens, Anavissos, Macedonia, Crete, Rhodes.

Moreover, in the framework of the operational programme "Education and Initial Training II" (EPEAK II), two projects have been funded during 2008: a) "Development of Libraries in OTEK's Initial Training Schools". The organisation has organised and runs 15 libraries in its educational units. b) "Training of the teacher trainers of OTEK's Initial Training Schools".

#### **4.1.4 Maintaining and enhancing community prosperity and the quality of life, in the face of change. (maximum 200 characters)**

In the framework of the implementation of the Principle of Sustainable Development, the maintenance and the improvement of local communities' prosperity and quality of life is mainly effectuated through:

a) the limitation and control of tourism development in the touristically developed zones through the identification of the country's zones in which the incentives of the National Development Law do not apply, namely discouragement of new investments (through the publication of Common Ministerial Decisions issued by the Ministry for the Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works, the Ministry of Tourism and

the Ministry of Economy and Finance)

b) the enhancement of the touristically developing regions of the country through their integration into the incentive scheme of the National Development Law and the provision of financial support to the tourism enterprises through the programmes that are co-financed by the EU (NSRF).

In order to raise public awareness concerning the contribution of tourism in maintaining community prosperity and quality of life, the Greek tourism authorities have over the years organised a number of awareness symposiums, workshops and forums for the residents and the investment communities on the importance of always taking into consideration the long-term social and territorial balance of tourism while retaining income at the community level.

At the same time, priority is given to types of accommodation and facilities that reflect the special character of the visited destination, minimise environmental impacts and deliver value to the whole community. Promotion is focused on strengthening the local supply chain development by encouraging the visitors to use local products and services.

#### **4.1.5 Minimising resource use and the production of waste. (maximum 200 characters)**

The characterisation of certain regions of the country as touristically overdeveloped and the exception of these regions from the incentive scheme of the National Development Law significantly contribute to the prevention of the exceedance of the carrying capacity limits of the above mentioned regions and the minimisation of the use of natural resources and the production of waste.

Moreover, the Ministerial Decisions on Spatial Planning signed by the Ministry of Tourism for each tourism port mention the obligation of the managing bodies, berthed vessels and, generally, users of the tourism port to respect the terms of protection of the environment and prevent sea and shore pollution by oil and oil mixtures, noxious substances or their mixtures as well as waste and greasy waste of any nature and discards. The Ministerial Decisions provide, in particular, for the obligation to draw up a "Contingency Plan" for dealing with occurrences of sea and shore pollution as well as a "Plan for the reception and management of oil residues, used lubricating oils and discards" compatible to the European Directive 2000/59/EC,

as integrated into the national legislation.

The Directorate of Tourism Ports of the Ministry of Tourism participates annually in the National Assessment Committee for the evaluation of coasts and marines in the framework of the National Programme "Blue Flags" managed nationally by the NGO "Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature". Among the main selection criteria, there is the rational environmental management and the development of activities of environmental training and awareness.

**4.1.6 Conserving and giving value to natural and cultural heritage. (maximum 200 characters)**

According to the structure and the competences of the Ministries, our Ministry is only responsible for the promotion of the value of the natural and cultural heritage, which constitutes a very important dimension of its strategy. The participation of Greece in international exhibitions as well as its promotion through the international media (television, newspapers, printed material and sites) lead to the raise of the international visibility of the country through its natural and cultural heritage. Furthermore, the **Greek Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Culture** jointly implement a series of specific projects and interventions, such as the project for the creation of cultural networks and of routes of cultural tourism and ecotourism as well as of alternative forms of tourism which is underway.

In a similar vein, the **Hellenic Tourism Development Co. (HTDC)** encourages the promotion and protection of the cultural heritage at Diros Cave, Achilleion (Corfu), Spinalonga (Crete), the listed Xenia hotels and has undertaken the initiative of treeplanting for the restoration of the natural environment at the Kaiafa forest struck by the disastrous fires in 2007.

Furthermore, the **Agrotouristiki S.A.** supervised by the Greek Ministry of Tourism, is entrusted with the mission to highlight the particularities and beauties of all regions of Greece, promoting through its portal a complete product of alternative tourism. Namely, its objective is to inform prospective visitors about options on traditional accommodation, on local food, genuine cultural or nature-loving activities, purchase of traditional products as well as on ways of familiarization with local tradition and history by, inter alia, gathering the relevant information from all over Greece and drawing a list of businesses specializing in country tourism and

agrotourism. In particular, Agrotouristiki S.A has proceeded to the publication "Entrepreneurship in Agrotourism": The book addresses entrepreneurs who want to get involve or are already involved in Rural Tourism – Agrotourism, aiming at guiding and informing them. There is also the series of publications of the Accommodation Guides "Agrotourism Choices", which addresses travellers who would like to discover unexplored Greece of authenticity and tradition. Until today, there have been published the guides to Peloponnese, Hepirus and Thessalia.

**4.1.7 Making holidays available to all. (maximum 200 characters)**

Greece is in the process of increasing its share concerning accessible tourist facilities in all three areas -restaurants & catering facilities, accommodation establishments and tourism attractions. The tourism public authorities pay particular attention to disability aspects in their socio-economic policies, programmes and projects. For instance, the Presidential Decree no. 43A/2002 provides for specific technical standards for tourist installations adapted to meet the needs of disabled people.

Again in 2008, the GNTTO launched the programme "Tourism for all", granting coupons of Social Tourism to all people, disabled or not.

**1. The programme "Tourism for all" of the 2008-2009** period with its three sub-programmes. The programme supports the tourism activity of low or middle-income persons, employees, pensioners or independent workers, persons with special needs, large families and other categories of insured persons.

**a) Sub-Programme of 8-day Vacations:** subsidises 7 overnight stays in hotels or rooms to let throughout the country for beneficiaries falling into the above mentioned categories.

**b) Sub-Programme of Excursions:** is being implemented through tourism agencies organising excursions of at least 2 overnight stays for the above mentioned beneficiaries in the whole country.

**c) Sub-Programme for the Third Age:** subsidizes 7 overnight stays in hotels or rooms to let throughout the country for pensioners beneficiaries of more than 60 years old.

**2. The pilot programme for persons with special needs** that lasted until March

2008, has been completed.

3. The programme of **Winter Tourism** in the fire-struck regions, which lasted until March 2008 and was addressing to 3,000 employees of Tourism and Restauration Businesses.

- Efforts to enhance special infrastructure for people with disabilities are currently underway. In the Athens International Airport (AIA), for example, there are specially designed toilets for people with disabilities, wheelchair services, ramps, ample-spaced elevators, special walkways for people with eyesight problems etc.

4.2 As key challenges may change over time, please identify any other areas that are becoming a new challenge. (maximum 600 characters)

New promising tourist markets constitute for Greece a great challenge to explore and penetrate into, while creating, at the same time, an international conceptual framework concerning the sustainable tourism development. In this respect, Greece seeks to set a vivid example of how a country can accomplish things for itself and at the same time be a positive influence for others. Exploring new markets and in accordance with the **fourth key objective of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy (“Meeting our International Responsibilities”)**, which calls for the active promotion of sustainable development worldwide, the Greek Ministry of Tourism is building networks of cooperation that foster mutual trust as well as set the grounds for the further development, under the principles of sustainability, of our region.

To begin with, the Greek Ministry of Tourism actively participates in the works of the **UNWTO Committee on Sustainable Development**. In particular, the Greek Ministry organised the 6th session of the above-mentioned Committee which met in Athens on 3-5 June and during the meeting Greece was elected to chair the DST Committee for the next four years.

In a similar vein, said Ministry has introduced sustainability issues into the discussions of the **Working Group on Tourism of the BSEC organisation**, since the early beginnings of its works. It is also worthnoting that Greece has organised several programmes (i.e. seminars and on-the-job training for students and staff of

the tourism industry) aiming at helping the BSEC countries to incorporate the principle of sustainability (Tourism, a factor of sustainable development - ARTICLE 3 of the Global Code of Tourism Ethics) into both their tourism policy and mainstream tourism education and training. Moreover, the Greek Ministry of Tourism, in cooperation with HATTA, has organized a very successful forum to bring the public authorities and the associations of tour operators of the Black Sea Region closer and establish a network of cooperation with a view to encouraging sustainable tourism within the Region since tour operators continue to have a major influence on consumer choices, while attracting more tourists from the third markets.

Furthermore, Greece firmly supports the **Adriatic-Ionian Initiative** whose Chairmanship assumed on June, 1<sup>st</sup> 2008 for one year. Within the framework of its Chairmanship, Greece has, for the first time, set as priority the introduction of sustainability issues in the agenda of the discussions of the participant countries with regard to natural environment, spatial organisation, heritage sites and visitor management. At the Round-Table on Tourism organised in Athens in 17/10/2008, great emphasis was placed on the cooperation for the sustainable development of tourism which create new jobs and yield substantial financial receipts while conserving the environment and local tourism resources.

**4.3 Please identify and describe a specific initiative, which is related to the 7 key challenges, that is innovative/successful and which would be of interest to or of help to other Member States. (maximum 2.000 characters)**

The **Hellenic Tourism Development Company S.A.** promotes the construction of tourism facilities, by adopting procedures based on the principles of "green" planning, which contribute to the protection and promotion of the natural and cultural heritage and guarantee sustainable development, operating all year long. In this framework, the company plans to do an extended and multilateral intervention on the thermal springs of Kaiafa that belong to the public tourism property which is managed by the company. This estate comprises a forest of unique beauty and variety and a lake that shares the same name (the region is integrated into the programme Natura Network 2000). The whole intervention is part of the "New Programmes" of HTDC S.A. and concerns the implementation of sustainable actions



for the integrated environmental performance – operation of the special tourism infrastructure in the company's land.

More precisely, with the purpose to upgrade the region in terms of both the environment and the tourism development, the HTDC programmes the creation of an important pole of soft tourism development in the land of Kaiafa, a model center of ecotourism, wellness and recreation with an emphasis on the environment, the restoration of the natural ecosystem, green tourism, ecotourism in combination with soft activities of nautical sports. Moreover, in the framework of the restoration of the natural environment of the Kaiafa forest after the extended disasters it suffered during the fires that stroke the region in 2007, the HTDC undertook the initiative to plant 40.000 seedlings of pine trees with the aim to restore the natural ecosystem, following a reforestation study approved by the Forest Authorities. At first 7,000 seedlings of pine trees were planted. The reforestation project is being implemented in cooperation with the Forest Service of Olympia and the participation of a great number of volunteers, pupils and the Fire Brigade.

In addition, a the **Greek National Tourism Organisation** organized a pilot youth volunteer programme for the development of action plans in fire-struck regions so as to promote the awareness and active participation of the young in environmental issues. The programme has been implemented in common with the General Secretariat for Youth (co-funded).

## **5. MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

Three mechanisms for implementing the Agenda were identified in the "Agenda": sustainable destinations, sustainable businesses and responsible tourists.

**5.1 Sustainable destinations: What support is given to strengthen destination management at the regional/ destination level (supportive policy environment, knowledge networks, training programmes, establishment of measures/indicators for benchmarking, etc.)? (maximum 600 characters)**

In the 4th Programme Period 2007-2013, whose principal and declared aim is to enhance entrepreneurship and competitiveness, know-how on destination management is mainly provided to the decentralised administration (i.e. the General Secretariats of the 13 Regions) and the local authorities (the Prefectures).

Destination management can be of strictly public nature or take the form of cooperations with collective professional bodies, chambers and tourism business units. An important development in destination management could also come from the anticipated development of clusters (cooperation networks) in the sector of tourism.

At European level, Greece participates in the European Destinations of Excellence (EDEN) project of the European Commission, which aims to promote sustainable tourism development models across the Union. The winning destination of last year, whose theme was "Tourism and local intangible heritage", was the prefecture of Grevena that lies in the south west part of Western Macedonia.

The EDEN project helps to spread the sustainable practices used in the chosen destinations across each country and the Union and to turn these places into all-year-round venues, therefore decongesting over-visited tourist destinations.

**5.2 Sustainable businesses: What support is given to strengthen the sustainability and competitiveness of businesses (supportive policy environment, orientation of business support services to sustainability, training, financial incentives, etc.)? (maximum 600 characters)**

The enhancement of tourism entrepreneurship in the framework of the principle of sustainable development is effectuated through the implementation of the National Development Law. The provisions in force provide for three kinds of support (subvention, leasing subsidy, tax exemption & subsidy of the cost of the created by the investment plan employment) to the hospitality industry as well as the facilities of special tourism infrastructure. In the framework of subsidised modernisation, special reference should be made to the environment friendly supported forms of production and energy savings e.g. Systems of electricity co-production and of assistance of electricity production from soft energy paths Solar/Wind energy (photovoltaic, solar water heaters, wind generators, power packs etc.), systems of automatic operation of the electrical works for energy savings.

Please note that the facilities of special tourism infrastructure, many of which are directly oriented to sustainability [tourism ports & pleasure yachts (marines), conference centres, golf courses, thermal springs facilities, thalassotherapy centres, health tourism centres, ski centres, training –sports tourism centres, auto-moto clubs

& theme parks], are subsidised –at high rates- in the whole country. On the contrary, in the framework of the implementation of the principle of sustainability, hospitality investments are excepted from the aforementioned subsidies in many of the country's regions characterized as touristically overdeveloped.

In addition, the Operational Programme Competitiveness promotes the clustering of tourism SMEs. The related co-funded programme aims to enhance the competitiveness of SMEs of all tourism sectors through the support of SMEs business plans concerning SMEs participation in business clusters – networks, in order to establish their position in the market through these improved organisational schemes (Public funds: 50% - Private participation: 50%).

Furthermore, in order to encourage sustainable businesses, the Greek Ministry of Tourism has disseminated the Global Code of Tourism Ethics of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation in many tourism industry associations. In addition, being official affiliate members of the UNWTO, other Greek industry associations and institutions directly consult the web-site of the Organisation in order to improve the actions and measures they have already taken so as to put into practice the wide range of provisions related to sustainability that are contemplated in the Code.

**5.3 *Responsible tourists*: What support is given to promote responsible choices by tourists (e.g. sustainability in education, national marketing and media campaigns, promotion of certification schemes)? (maximum 600 characters)**

Given that sustainable tourism development is an overarching objective of the Greek Government, many conferences and forums promoting "tourism conscience" are organised on a national scale, in order to raise the domestic awareness about tourism and the principles which are linked to it by the general public as well as to ensure public participation in providing better hospitality and more pleasant experiences for tourists. Moreover, many articles concerning the adoption of the Global Code of Tourism Ethics have been published in the Greek Tourist Press over the years. Besides, the Code can be downloaded from the sites of many regional portals of the country related to tourism promotion. More important still, the ethical dimensions of tourism services production and those related to the travelling mentality have been incorporated in the curricula of many Technological Education

Institutes and other Greek tourism schools.

## 6. DATA AND INDICATORS

Eurostat will provide, as an annex, the key statistical data required to support the reporting process covering around 20 indicators<sup>3</sup>. These are mainly related to the aim of 'economic prosperity'.

**Please, identify indicators that are being used or developed which could add to the range of information being provided by Eurostat, particularly in relation to social and environmental issues (other indicators from the TSG report, visitors/ residents satisfaction, etc.). (maximum 500 characters)**

## 7. COMPLEMENTARY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**If necessary use the following box to provide additional complementary information that has not already been covered.**

After a long period of increase in the national tourism receipts, Greek tourism seems to enter a particularly difficult period due to the recent global economic crisis and the problems the sector is facing. At any rate, the Greek government has declared its determination not to allow one of the national economy's main "powerhouse" to be stunted by it, since tourism is widely considered as vital in determining Greece's overall performance during the global slowdown.

In this respect, in December 18, 2008, the Greek Prime Minister announced the following measures designed to boost Greece's tourism industry:

1. Spending on advertising and promoting Greece, as a tourist destination, will be increased by 50 percent in order to maintain current numbers of visitors.
2. The Uniform Property Tax on buildings and land will be reduced from 1 percent of the building's value and 6 percent on the land's value to 0,033 percent for the years 2009 and 2010.
3. The fee levied by banks on the sum of loans taken out by tourism enterprises, as provided for in law 128/75, will be suspended for one year.

<sup>3</sup> These indicators have been selected from the 50 TSG indicators on the basis of the possibility to calculate them at the European level.

4. Tourism enterprises will be made eligible for funding under the "Programme for Reinforcing Liquidity in the Economy".
5. The 2007-2013 National Strategic Reference Framework that provides funding for activities involving tourism infrastructure, services and enterprises, will be immediately activated.
6. The tariff levied by local government for the stay of travelers will be reduced from 2 percent to 0,5 percent. The lost revenue for local government will be compensated for by a 20 percent increase of funds from vehicle road taxes.
7. Local tax offices will be instructed to immediately return any tax due.
8. Tourism enterprises will be able to get start-up capital with fully subsidised interest, up to the sum of 350,000 euros, from the Guarantee Fund for Small and Micro-Enterprises.
9. Priority will be given to the payment of any subsidies due to the tourist enterprises included in the Investment Law under the Public Investment Programme.
10. The long-standing problem of regulating the operation of hotels will be dealt with.
11. The seasonal unemployment benefit will be converted into an employment benefit.
12. The number of state-subsidised Social Tourism tickets offered via the Labour Housing Organisation (OEE) will be increased by 21 percent in 2009. The Ministry of Tourism Development just increased the Social Tourism tickets by 41percent the previous year.
13. A training programme combining theoretical and on-the-job training, in which the participating enterprises will be obliged to then employ 30 percent of those trained, is currently running.
14. Particular attention will be given to boosting hotels and related enterprises in the centre of Athens that were damaged during the rioting and demonstrations of the past weeks.

# GREECE TOURISM REPORT 2008

## APPENDIX

Principles of sustainable tourism:

- **Taking a holistic and integrated approach**

All the various impacts of tourism should be taken into account in its planning and development. Furthermore, tourism should be well balanced and integrated with a whole range of activities that affect society and the environment.

- **Planning for the long term**

Sustainable development is about taking care of the needs of future generations as well as our own. Long term planning requires the ability to sustain actions over time.

- **Achieving an appropriate pace and rhythm of development**

The level, pace and shape of development should reflect and respect the character, resources and needs of host communities and destinations.

- **Involving all stakeholders**

A sustainable approach requires widespread and committed participation in decision making and practical implementation by all those implicated in the outcome.

- **Using best available knowledge**

Policies and actions should be informed by the latest and best knowledge available. Information on tourism trends and impacts, and skills and experience, should be shared across Europe.

- **Minimising and managing risk – the precautionary principle**

Where there is uncertainty about outcomes, there should be full evaluation and preventative action should be taken to avoid damage to the environment or society.

- **Reflecting impacts in costs – user and polluter pays**

Prices should reflect the real costs to society of consumption and production activities. This has implications not simply for pollution but for charging for the use of facilities that have significant management costs attached to them.

- **Setting and respecting limits, where appropriate**

The carrying capacity of individual sites and wider areas should be recognised, with a readiness and ability to limit, where and when appropriate, the amount of tourism development and volume of tourist flows.

- **Undertaking continuous monitoring**

Sustainability is all about understanding impacts and being alert to them all the time, so that the necessary changes and improvements can be made.