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Thessaloniki Monuments & Events

Nikolaos-Grigorios Karapostolou

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Student Name:

Nikolaos-Grigorios Karapostolou

SID:

1109150019

Supervisor:

Dr. Katsaliaki

I hereby declare that the work submitted is mine and that where I have made use of another's work, I have attributed the source(s) according to the Regulations set in the Student's Handbook.

Abstract

This dissertation is written as part of the MSc in Hospitality and Tourism Management at the International Hellenic University.

This dissertation explores the possibilities of expanding the touristic activities and events that take place in Thessaloniki transforming it into an eventful city taking advantage of the UNESCO monuments and more specifically the religious ones. Firstly, the current situation is analyzed by identifying its positioning. In order to identify the current position, a thorough research will be held, identifying the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the city of Thessaloniki.

In addition, the functioning of the processes will be analyzed that together with the protection (tangible and intangible wise) will eventually lead to the enhancement and promotion of Thessaloniki as an eventful city that combines modern touristic activities with the promotion of its historical-cultural monuments.

Keywords: Thessaloniki, UNESCO, Monuments, Culture, Events, Marketing Pan

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Introduction

The rapid tourist development that has taken place internationally, especially since the 1960s, has led to a significant increase in tourist demand and on the other hand the massification of the tourist phenomenon. The increasing internationalization of tourism, the emergence of new tourist destinations, the greater the degree of maturity of tourists, the increase in incomes, and the search for new leisure and tourism activities, led to diversifying tourist demand and creating new forms of tourism and tourist products that will meet new needs - requirements (Lagos et al., 2008). Attention should be paid to the momentum appearance and introduction of new countries - destinations they offer, in competitively priced tourist products, slightly differentiated from those of them established - traditional host countries. These countries are expected to be particularly competitive with the use of new technologies in offering and promoting their tourist product but, and to be favored from the new tourist expedition markets that have already begun to appear. The increase in urban tourism is mainly related to changes of the way of life that has taken place in recent years. As in today's people are working harder, with fewer work benefits security and greater job mobility than in the past; the time they have available for travel and leisure breaks has fallen. The result is the decline in demand for long and long journeys, and respectively, the increase in demand for travel to nearby tourist destinations. In addition, the offer from many airlines for ticket bookings with low cost, but also the organization of cheap tourist packages from the travel agencies has led to new growth prospects. Estimates show that in 2004 there were 360 million tourists' trips, of which 135 million had as a tourist destination some city.

City tourism is one of them major tourist activities of European metropolitan areas destinations, especially on weekends. "Traveling to cities account for 38% of all outgoing tourism in Europe, while 60% of this rate, i.e. more than 35 million trips per year, concerns the urban tourism sector. According to data provided by IPK International - World Travel Monitor, between 2000 and 2004 in the European Continent, city tourism has increased 108% on the number of trips abroad. If this compares with an increase of 8% in holiday travel and a 19% increase in travel business trips, then its dynamics and importance are evident urban tourism. It is of interest, the fact that two-thirds of it of total demand for city tourism come from 5 countries - sources: Germany, England, Italy, Spain and France. The same countries, in different order (France, Italy, Germany, Spain and England) receive more than 50% of the trips for city tourism (SETE, 2005). Many cities that have developed this kind of tourism have shown an average annual growth rate of over 5% over the last fifteen years. According to Igoumenakis and Kravaritis (2004), city tourism is usually carried out by people of higher education and income level, living mainly in large urban centers and most of them traveling without being accompanied by their families. These trips are organized and carried out primarily by travel agencies and tour operators. Often, a pole of attraction for many people involved in City tourism is the nightlife, the fun, the shopping, the interesting excursions and the beautiful environment. So, people who prefer the urban tourism is (Karamanidis, 2008): individual professionals, delegations to conferences and exhibitions, weekend excursionists, visitors to relatives and friends, excursionists or groups of tourists using an urban center as escort of escapes, tourists in short or long holiday periods. The purposes of visiting tourists in European cities, according to research took place at

European level for city tourism, analyzed as follows: "27% of tourists going to a city for leisure, fun and holiday, 45% for business and professional reasons, followed by 8% visits to friends, with 2% health reasons, while 18% concern all of them other purposes "(Lagos et al., 2008, p. 3). In the coming years the age of potential tourists will shift to ages older than 45 years.

The new profile of tourists and their future trends will be as follows (Lagos et al., 2008): greater conservatism in tourist preferences (search for amenities, quality and safety), increased demand for comfortable means of transportation - transportation, increased demand for a la carte products, increased tourist traffic in off-peak periods, an increase in demand for city-breaks, for specially selected products impulsively and for small hotel units with "personality", reduced demand for bed and breakfast model. However, one question is whether and how a city can be, as it is Thessaloniki, to become a tourist destination for youth and not to be addressed exclusively for people over 40-45 years old. In addition to this, the parameters that must be considered when promoting a city as a tourist destination there are many, such as intense competition between city and tourist destinations, available disposable income, changes in requirements of tourists. In this context, the Branding for a tourist destination, and especially the one in this case, city branding plays an important role. The concept of city branding is part of the broader concept of place branding, which is aimed at diversification of a tourist destination (Aitken and Campelo, 2011). The purpose of this paper is to explore the concept of city branding in case of Thessaloniki and examine the extent to which city branding can make Thessaloniki a tourist attraction for foreigners.

The creative city idea emerged as a development of a concept that focused on the importance of design, cultural industries and cultural amenities as key resources for livable cities. In the 1970s, the Council of Europe introduced such notions linked to cultural rights, and organizations such as Partners for Livable Communities (www.livable.com) were created to apply concepts to urban planning strategies in the United States. In the 1980s and 1990s, conceptions of cultural planning linked to creativity were introduced by Bianchini, 1990; Mercer, 1992. Following a first study on Glasgow: The Creative City and its Cultural Economy (1994), which emerged from the city's new strategies that had been developed in response to its designation as ECOC in 1990, and in work by (Landry and Bianchini, 1995), the creative city was subsequently publicized more widely in Landry's (2000) book entitled *The Creative City: A toolkit for urban innovators*. The creative city relates to a key strategy of urban development that emphasizes the importance of the 'creative industries', and more recently the attraction of the 'creative class'. Florida argues that economic development is driven in large measure by lifestyle factors, such as tolerance and diversity, urban infrastructure and entertainment, which can attract creative talent. In contrast to the entrepreneurial city, which treats culture as one element of the symbolic economy, the creative city model places culture and creativity at the forefront of inter-urban competition. (Richards & Palmer, 2010)

The Image of the city

How is the image of a city shaped?

According to Kotler, Haider and Rein (1993), the image of cities is a set of beliefs, ideas and impressions that people have or shape about the city or a particular destination. The image of the city represents a simplified form of all the affairs and information associated with the aforementioned. This image can be created on the basis of narratives, TV news, the internet, the city's communication marketing policy, etc. Urban areas, cities, regions and states around the world are looking for strategies to improve their image and reputation. It should be clarified that a marketing / branding strategy is not related to advertising or sale, since the site does not function as a "product". It is the creation and use of communication tools so that a city, a region or a country can improve its image and reputation, attract visitors, investments or new residents and create feelings of pride and pride in existing inhabitants. At the same time, it includes the attempt to reverse or cancel any negative images.

A city's marketing / branding strategy draws data from different scientific approaches, takes into account the specificities of urban population groups, the economic and social components of a region and multiple identities (Avraham & Ketter, 2008; Dinnie, 2011; Eshuis, Braun & Klijn, 2012 · Govers & Go, 2009 · Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2008 · Kearns & Philo, 1993 · Kolb, 2006).

The effort of cities and regions to assess their performance at national and global level has created the need for new statistical methods, indicators and comparative studies linking economic performance to urban marketing (Jensen-Butler, Schachar & Van Wessep, 1997). Relevant marketing articles of the site tend to dominate the references to marketing and advertising science approaches and, in particular, to social marketing theory considerations, often ignoring the parameters associated with other considerations. The site marketing research methodology draws evidence from approaches and practices of various scientific fields. At the same time, there is a need for relative flexibility so that strategies can be targeted at different groups, with attention being paid to language, narrative and communication tools. It is, therefore, self-evident that these strategies require a specific professional approach, which also explains the increased interest in integrating the subject into study programs abroad and, to a lesser extent, in Greece. At the same time, there has been a critical attitude toward city marketing / branding, focusing on the inefficiency of methods to measure their success, the lack of social goals and the link with the business perception of growth.

Marketing and branding of cities

Main Trends - Steps

A representative record of history and recent literature on branding and marketing of the site is attempted in his article by Hankinson (2010), linking the development of the subject to other areas such as tourism marketing or destination marketing (Vasiliades, 2003; Middleton & Hawkins, 1998/2004), marketing of services (Gunaris, 2003), urban planning and the economic urban space (Warnaby, 2009).

In particular, city branding strategies tend to be specialized and may have a thematic dimension, e.g. the Eindhoven region with the strategy for the "smartest region of the world" or Toronto for the most "green" city in the world.

Other cities are developing special marketing plans for areas such as conference touring, fashion, luxury shopping, and gastronomy.

It is important that they change the tools used in the context of a marketing strategy / branding of the site. The marketing sector, in general, is significantly affected by the development of new technologies and by the rapid increase in the use of social networks (Facebook, Twitter, etc.). E-marketing, Social Media Marketing and the impact of Information and Communication Technologies are specific fields, with the Internet significantly influencing the way we perceive and experience a city visit, participation in local decisions, information on specific job opportunities, etc., having led to a new reality (Urry, 2011). Internet marketing applications make communication more direct and cost effective.

The practice of city branding and marketing of the site is not exclusively related to tourism or culture, although these two factors are key elements of the promotion strategies.

It mainly targets 5 teams (Hospers, 2011a):

1. Residents
2. Businesses
3. Visitors
4. Employees - Elected Executives of Local Authorities
5. Scientists - People with talent

The relevant methodological approaches are changing and there is no established practice: the use of marketing science tools, either referring to products or services is not directly applicable to the field sciences, or it is therefore necessary to adapt the above-mentioned tools. One of the important elements that emerge from the relevant scientific discussion is that the subject is increasingly decoupling from competition-related objectives (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013). Another important element is complementarity with other strategic planning processes at the local level. It is obvious that a marketing plan needs to come as a follow-up to a wider design process. It includes demanding pre-research and partner management. The practical experience of implementing marketing plans shows that a team of different specialists is required in order for the strategy to be integrated.

Although a methodological model does not prevail in the international literature, a city marketing plan should include some key elements, which are summarized in the following steps (Anholt, 2010; Govers & Go, 2009)

Steps:

STEP 1: Analysis

Collecting projection material, studies, key elements about the city and the local community, information on city strategies with similar characteristics, etc. leads to an assessment of the current situation. Understanding and studying the specific features and values of the city are prerequisites for the process.

STEP 2: Field research

Research with questionnaires to residents, visitors and businesses is a necessary step for assessing the current and desirable image and city identity.

STEP 3: Configure a suggested marketing model

Based on the first two steps, it is decided how the marketing proposal will be developed and implemented, i.e. the method and the main features of the strategy.

STEP 4: Marketing Strategy - Target Groups

The description of the city's strategy, vision and marketing objective (usually over a five-year period) and the description of the main target groups are the most important step. Here is a description of the communication policy (logo, slogan, marketing mix, "placement"), as well as the role of the stakeholders involved.

STEP 5: Create and Description of Special Packages per target market

For selected domains it will be necessary to specify the proposal in thematic "packages", which will include a full description of the actions and timetables.

STEP 6: Consultation - Proposal finalization

Communicating the strategy and consultation with the stakeholders / partners and the local community are necessary steps in order to reach agreement, finalize and specify the proposal.

STEP 7: Organizational Structure - Partner Role

The organization, the special purpose vehicle or the office, which will be responsible for coordination, is described in detail in terms of organization chart and responsibilities.

STEP 8: Evaluation

The implementation of the strategy evaluates the branding and functionality of the city branding project. Usually the evaluation is carried out on an annual basis and results in proposals for improvement or re-formulation of objectives.

In relation to the last step, a separate field is the way to measure and assess the impact of a marketing plan and, more generally, on whether it is successful or not. The concept of "brand equity" - the value of a brand - in relation to the city and the way it can be measured (Kavaratzis & Florek, 2014), holds a central position in the discussion.

Citizens' participation

The concepts of bottom up urban development and participatory planning significantly affect all issues related to urban policy and sustainable urban development. Barber (2014) refers to this trend in his book *If Mayors would rule the world*, where he emphasizes the First Grade of Self-Government and its increased role in dealing with the crisis - it connects the concept of urban resilience primarily with the role of mayors. Also, civil society's role in strategic planning is also very important for city marketing / branding. Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) describe how this trend affects city branding, using the 4Rs model, which replaces or works in addition to the 4 or 8 Ps model (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008 / 2009). The 4 Rs model of Aitken and Campelo (2011) focuses on the social dimension of branding and the effective involvement of residents. Rs include Rights, Roles, Responsibilities, and Relationships among members of a community. These four elements compose the experience of a place and the link between them creates a dynamic, authentic and collective brand for a community that reflects the bourgeois identity and the habits of a place in everyday life and social hierarchy.

City branding increasingly focuses on dialogue, controversy and challenge (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013). Collaboration between residents and partners can bring substantial results. Branding professionals need to start the process and mobilize the rest of the participants in order to get the best result. It is also desirable to portray citizens' opinion on issues related to the city's image. For example, in 2015 an extensive survey was carried out in Amsterdam on the attitudes of residents to the rapid tourist development of the city from a newspaper that circulated a questionnaire as an insert as well as electronically.

The role of culture in city marketing and branding strategies

Culture as a key element of city branding strategies

Cultural heritage, modern culture and leisure activities often have the role of cornerstones of marketing strategies, since they are more closely related than any other sector with the dominant image of a place and the quality of life. On the one hand, the monuments, the museums and the built environment, and the music and cinema festivals, the art exhibitions, as well as the major events such as the European Capital of Culture and the great sporting events, have the power to characterize a city and to help revitalize it. It is often pursued, through strategies, the presence and networking of cultural organizations (museums, theaters, galleries, concert halls, etc.) and creative professionals within the city or region, aiming at social and economic revitalization.

The visibility of "cultural areas" or "epicenter culture" gains a central role in the relevant marketing strategies for many cities, with examples such as the Prenzlauer Berg in Berlin, the Museumsquartier in Vienna or the District 798 in Beijing, demonstrating their different forms (Karahalis & Konsola, 2009). Often certain "cultural neighborhoods" represent the whole city, displaying images of Renaissance, architectural avant-garde and cultural production. The city of London is a prime example: South Bank, Tate Modern, London Eye and Millennium Bridge, is now the dominant image of the city (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2008). In particular, youth cultures offer opportunities for displaying images of animation, experimentation and tolerance, serving marketing objectives - Berlin has supported branding strategy in images of the alternative, youthful scene in the city (Colomb, 2012). In addition to culture, elements such as tolerance, quality of life and innovation are viewed as important comparative advantages for a city. This assumption also relies on popular theoretical approaches, such as C. Landry's Creative City and R. Florida's Creative Class Theory, which also accept criticism of the "tooling" of culture (Florida, 2002; Landry, 2000). More recently Florida (2008), with Household and Happiness research, has shown that for 27,000 Americans the place of residence is at the highest in terms of assessing quality of life and well-being. The city or village where you live is also seen as an important factor of happiness with family or health - a conclusion that highlights the importance of the city's marketing / branding.

In Thessaloniki, many cultural events and performances are organized throughout the year. These include the International Film Festival, the Book Festival, the International Theater Festival, Dimitria (an annual festival organized in October in honor of the patron saint of Agios Dimitrios), a large number of performances by the State Theater of Northern Greece, concerts by the State and Municipal Orchestra as well as exhibitions in the Municipal Art Gallery and private galleries.

Dates of annual cultural events

March: Literary Festival

June: Book Festival

August: Wine Festival

September: International Exhibition of Thessaloniki

September: Greek Song Festival

October: Dimitria

November: Greek Film Festival of Thessaloniki

Strategic planning

The strategic planning for the city of Thessaloniki should be aimed at the followings:

1. Promoting accessibility to the city by tourists
2. Strengthening the infrastructure for the movement of tourists within the town
3. Coordination of the tourist product for the promotion of tourism activities of young tourists and the best possible service
4. Consolidating the image of the city as a source of its competitor advantage
5. Creating new attraction poles for young tourists and exploiting them already existing
6. Enhancing Balanced Growth (Sustainable Urban Tourism)
7. Determine the impact of the arrival of tourists and find ways to reducing them

Destination: Thessaloniki

SWOT analysis

STRENGTHS

Rich, diverse and multinational cultural and religious heritage of Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman, and modern history periods

15 World Heritage Monuments of UNESCO

6km of totally renovated walkable waterfront (Thessaloniki Riviera)

International airport located close to the city center and modern 4*- 5* accommodation facilities

Easy but outdated transportation system

Crossroad of major highways (PATHE, Egnatia)

Close to unique historical heritage attraction sites (Vergina tombs, Dion, Olympus Mountain) religious sites (Mount Athos) and famous beaches (Chalkidiki peninsula)

Youth spirit - active city – City of festivals (3 universities)

Top class medical installations

Adequate conference and convention centers

Hospitality spirit of citizens

Creative areas

WEAKNESSES

Absence of collaboration culture between tourism industry stakeholders, leadership and strategic approach

Non-operational and low-budgeted DMO

Marketing strategies – IT, website, internet presence

Absence of equipped personnel

Lack of information points

Product propositions-organized packages-routes

Outdated 2*-3* accommodation facilities

Pollution of environment

Unknown destination to majority of target markets

Museums and heritage sites opening hours

Few routes of airlines in winter period

Lack of cruise ship incentives for visitation

OPPORTUNITIES

Projections of strong increase of visitation in the region

New development of tourism product is strategic approach applied

Emerging source markets

Investment in emerging economies source markets

Low prices

Unexploited cruise ships visitation

Instability in Middle East and Northern Africa

THREATS

Competitors' evolution in the area

Political unwillingness for strategic tourism development

European and domestic economic crisis

Insufficient airline scheduled flights

Marketing Plan

Currently, Marketing Greece, a non-profit, private initiative by SETE, created an interactive web platform (i.e. www.discovergreece.com) to promote Greek tourism destinations, including Thessaloniki sharing photos, videos, information etc. and additionally provide booking options for hotels in the city. All the promotional actions are based on a marketing plan for Central Macedonia, focused on Thessaloniki, which has been conducted by SETE.

Unfortunately, currently there is neither coherent strategy to be followed by the shareholders nor cooperative actions among them occurring.

Even though a campaign «Many Stories, One Heart» was released promoting the city of Thessaloniki as a young-tourists' destination and as a gourmet city, the shareholders did not coherently support the branding image.

Taking into consideration the current situation, the most appropriate actions to be taken is the redefinition of Thessaloniki as a tourism destination by taking into consideration the 4ps: Product, Place, Price, and Promotion.

Product From a community and economic development perspective, Thessaloniki can be seen as the product that is being sold both to businesses and individuals looking for a place to locate. Attributes such as industry specialties, educated workforce, arts and entertainment, and natural resources all become points of differentiation between cities. Thessaloniki offers the resources that could attract visitors and tourists both for businesses and leisure. Taking it a step further, Thessaloniki can be transformed to a city-attraction that attracts both from the local and the international market, visitors that could enjoy the city itself, its historical monuments together with a variety of events that could make the experience unique.

Price In many ways, price for cities is set by governments. Tax abatements or loans can be given to encourage businesses to locate to a city. The prices can affect the choice to visit and choose or not by looking at the price of a city and the level of desirable amenities provide.

Place This is the most difficult category to draw parallels between marketing and community development because placement of cities is not variable anymore. I cannot pick up Iowa City and move it to a coast. However, Thessaloniki has the ideal citation and can be a cross-section from Asia to Europe and a modern center for the Balkans. The operation of the metro system will significantly increase the accessibility for the city.

Promotion City promotion is quite similar to product promotion. Thessaloniki should use commercials and other paid advertising in order to attract tourists that could enjoy both the city but also the events.

RELIGIOUS TOURISM

Religious tourism is not a new concept invented. It is the oldest and most prevalent form of movement in its history humanity, as members of all societies have sought to communicate with the divine. Greece was one of the first recipients of Christianity and the monuments of Greek Orthodoxy are an integral part of the national heritage, making it a remarkable attraction for visitors from all over the world. The religious trip was a powerful motivation that led Greeks and foreigners to go to religious centers throughout Greece.

The Greeks have always used to express their religious feeling, their deep faith and reverence to God, a basic feature of Orthodoxy for 2,000 years (visitgreece.gr, 2017). Byzantine and post-Byzantine churches, imposing cathedrals, country churches, monasteries, with their remarkable iconography, with mosaics, frescoes and icons, testify to the direct spread of Christianity. Also noteworthy are the monasteries of Greece that played an important role both in the propagation of Christianity and in the preservation of Greek letters and arts, as an example during the Ottoman domination, where people of the church created secret schools where the Greek language flourished. Some of the tourist attractions in Greece are also included in the relevant UNESCO catalog, such as the church of Agios Dimitrios in Thessaloniki, Mount Athos, Meteora, Daphni Monastery, Nea Moni of Chios, as well as the Monastery of St. John the Baptist and the cave of the Apocalypse in Patmos. It should be noted that YNESKO declared the monasteries of Mount Athos and Meteora monuments of world cultural heritage. Throughout Greece the visitor has the chance to admire Byzantine basilicas and early Christian churches built on the ruins of ancient temples, coexisting with the cultural and religious mosaic of ancient doctrines and cultures (gr-beaches.com, 2017).

Religious tourism is a vital part of the tourism industry, according to data from the World Tourism Organization, already in 2007, a specific form of tourism is the fastest growing category so far, 300,000 visitors have been registered in domestic tourism for pilgrimage trips, while their international number is estimated at 300 million, with worldwide turnover reaching 15 billion Euros. The advantage of this type of tourism is that it can also combine pilgrims with religious motivation going to an area exclusively for visiting the religious area, as well as tourists who combine their travel with other tourist activities.

It is a fact that in times of crisis and deep recession, religious tourism opens new streets and is one of the fastest growing forms tourism that can stimulate the economy and attract even more tourists. This type of tourism is much less affected by the economic crisis rather than recreational tourism because it is growing in the twelve months of the year (with more traffic in the months of September - June, that is, essentially outside the peak season of leisure tourism). Approximately 300 million people are traveled each year for religious tourism and the turnover is 15.5 billion Euros, 3 billion people of different religions are potential candidates for religious tourism. In the field of religious tourism, tourists travel by following a tourist package program. Some religious tourism destinations attract millions of visitors every year.

In 2012 at the end of the tourist season, the president of the Hellenic Association Tourist Enterprises Mr. Andreadis stressed that religious tourism earned 16 million visitors and 10 billion Euros, pointing out: "In that we believe that social media through the whose visitors to Greece carried the real image of the country into at least 300 million people. " Religious tourism is an important part of Greek tourism and concerns visits to religious places of worship, such as monasteries and churches for thousands of visitors of all ages (gr-beaches.com, 2013).

In the Prefecture of Thessaloniki, as it is well known, religious tourism is constant, because it possesses a tremendous wealth of Byzantine and post-Byzantine monuments and a keen desire of the Catholic peoples. Thessaloniki is the second most important exhibition of Byzantine monuments after Constantinople, as it has numerous churches and other Byzantine monuments. It is the richest of the cities of the East in Byzantine temples that even have remarkable epigrams and are diverse and diverse decorations. The Prefecture of Thessaloniki is listed on the World Wide List Tourism Organization (WCO) with the most visited Greek sites pilgrimage. The UNESCO Christian Monuments are the Churches of St. Demetrius, Agias Sofias, Panagia Halkeon, Agioi Apostoloi, Agios Nikolaos Orphanou, Agios Panteleimonas and the Latomos Monastery. The Byzantine churches of Thessaloniki are the most important monuments of the Byzantine era.

Via all these Byzantine churches, the religious monuments and monasteries, Thessaloniki attracts every year many tourists from different countries but the one that makes their presence felt is Russian tourists. According to Ms. Eleni Naoumidou, director of the tourist training center "Solun" of the "Mouzenidis Travel" group, visits to the Prefecture of Thessaloniki are mainly concerned Saint Demetrius, Agia Sophia, Vlatadon Monastery, Saint Anastasia, as well as and the Monastery of John the Theologian, where is the tomb of Father Paisios (voria.gr, 2017).

Monuments of UNESCO

1. Holy Church of Saint Demetrios of Thessaloniki

The temple of Agios Dimitrios is included in the early Christian monuments of Thessaloniki. In 1988, it was declared a World Heritage Site by the UNESCO. It is located on the homonymous road and typologically is a five-aisled wooden-roofed basilica with a transverse aisle, a large arch, with rich painting and marble decoration with ornate capitals. In the basement of the temple is the site of the martyrdom of the Saint.

The date of the erection of the temple is not exactly known to us. The first temple, a small prospect, was built over a Roman bath to which the saint martyred in 303 AD. According to tradition, from the point where the saint martyred began to pour myrrh. In 324 that Christianity was designated as the official religion of the state, the Thessalonians built a small three-aisled temple at this point. The reputation of this temple soon spread throughout the Christian world because it turned out that the myrrh had healing properties. Pilgrims arrived from all parts of the world to pray and to be cured. Among them was the prefect of the Illyric, Leontius. According to the tradition, Leontius was healed of an incurable disease that oscillated him and in gratitude to the Saint; he replaced the small three-aisled temple with an imposing Basilica in 413. Basilica existed there until the years of the emperor of Heraklion and then destroyed by fire at 626-634. Immediately afterwards it was built in the place of the five-aisled basilica. The church was ravaged by Saracens, Normans and the 1430 suffered the most brutal looting by the Ottomans. In 1493 the church was converted into a Muslim mosque named "Kazimiy Tzami" (Kasimie) and remained in this situation until the city was liberated. In 1912 he was again attributed to Christian worship. In August 1917 the monument was hit by the great fire that destroyed the city. Finally, the temple was restored on October 26, 1949, on the saint's day. Today's church was inaugurated in 1958. In 1978, the relics of the Saint came back from the sanctuary of St. Lavrentius in Campo, Italy, where they had been transported due to the raids of the Saracens and placed in a silver urn where they are preserved to this

day. Today, in the crypt of the temple there is a museum exhibition with the sculptural decoration of the temple in the various phases of its history.

The mosaics and frescoes of the temple show a peculiarity. The mosaics of the church stand out: the mosaic of the 5th century "the offering of the children," where the Saint stands upright, binding in front of a building with two columns. To the right, a woman leads her child to the Saint and to the left only the form of a child is saved. There is also a mosaic of the 7th century, depicting Saint Demetrius with the two founders, the ecclesiastic and secular ruler. Behind the three figures are depicted the ramparts of the wall of Thessaloniki, of which the patron saint is the saint.

2. St. George's Rotonda

The Rotonda of Agios Georgios is located north of Egnatia Street, a short distance from the arch of Galerion (Kamara) and is one of the most important constructions, morphological and typological buildings that survived since the Roman occupation. Rotonda was part of a larger complex including the palaces, an octagonal building and the hippodrome built by Galerius around 300 BC during the period of the first Roman quadrature, based in Thessaloniki. Originally it was destined for his mausoleum, but it was never used that way, for ultimately his burial became far away from Thessaloniki. It is a century-old imposing structure, which at the end of the 4th century. It was converted into a Christian temple, probably dedicated to the Asomats or Archangels, which was later decorated with mosaics and ortho-marble.

The mosaics are works of high aesthetics with a unique position in the history of Byzantine art and demonstrate the resonance of the Hellenistic past. The main décor is in the dome, forming a single monumental composition. It is divided into three zones, of which only the bottom, which consists of eight divisions, is well preserved. In the center of each one there are full-body figures of two or three martyrs in a stand of obedience, while behind them are depicted two-story buildings in the shape of a niche. The characteristic of these mosaics are the wide garments with rich folds and bright faces with large expressive eyes. Inside this scenery one can see crosses, pearls, symbolic birds of paradise, vases. The mosaics of the dome, combined with the circular shape of the Rotonda, may justify the use of the temple as a "Martyr" as a place of worship of the relics of witnesses. In 1590/1 the temple was turned into a mosque by Sheikh Suleiman Hortatzi Efentis.

The monument was seriously damaged by earthquakes that occurred in Thessaloniki in 1978. The restoration work required extensive interventions in the building and its decoration.

3. Holy Church of Saint Sophia

Agia Sophia is one of the most important churches of Thessaloniki, which is located at the junction of Agia Sophia and Ermou streets. It was used as a metropolitan temple dedicated to the Wisdom of God and celebrates the Feast of the Holy Trinity, as well as that of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

It is an early Christian church of the 7th c. which belongs to the transitional cruciform with a dome and a bourgeois temple, being the most important monument of the group of similar temples. The basilica prevailed in Thessaloniki until the time; this temple introduces a new concept and is the first large vaulted Byzantine temple. The

main square is the square, and with the addition of the dome, it presents the system of the church-shaped church in the shape of a cross. During the Ottoman rule, it was turned into a mosque up to the liberation of the city in 1912 under the name "Agia Sophia Tzami". On June 29, 1913, the temple was once again attributed to Christian worship.

Inside the temple there are three aisles with alternating columns and pillars. The church is distinguished for its decoration, the mosaics and frescoes that belong to different seasons. The most important mosaic is that of Ascension in the dome dating back to 880 representing the revival of painting after Iconoclasm, dominated by the strong expressive style: at the top there is a representation of Christ in a colorful "Doxa", held by two angels and around a composition with the Virgin Mary between two angels and the Apostles. Also, another equally important mosaic of the 11th to 12th centuries, located on the arch of the sanctuary, depicts the Virgin enthroned to hold Christ in her hands. The wall paintings of the temple date back to the 11th century. Forms of saint monks are preserved, and Agia Theodora among them. The sculptural decoration of the temple was completed in different phases. The columns and capitals of the ground floor date back to the 5th and 6th centuries. The pulpit, dating back to the 5th century, was transferred to Constantinople in 1905, while the marble jewelry appears to be contemporary with the erection of the temple.

4. Sacred Monastery of Latomos-Saint David

It is located in the Upper Town southwest of the Vlatades Monastery. He owes his name to the stone quarries that existed in the area. The story of the temple is given by a text entitled "Narration of Ignatius," according to which the monastery's katholikon was founded on Roman ruins around the 5th century. AD, dedicated to the Prophet Zechariah. The shape of the temple is square with a semicircular arch in the east and there are four arches with a dome in the center. The most important mosaic of the Early Christian period is in the hollow of the sanctuary and depicts the vision of the prophet Ezekiel, symbolizing the triumph of Christ. It is a brilliant composition of colors and drawings where the soul world of forms is successfully cleared: Christ, at a young age, rude, is portrayed with grandeur and soft tones in transparent glory surrounded by the symbols of the Evangelists depicted with intense natural colors. At both ends, Abakum is depicted in a staging of self-concentration, and Ezekiel is ecstatic. In the 12th century, during the renovation of the church, renovations are taking place in the frescoes, including Birth and Baptism, where the color harmony, the kindness in the faces, the classicist tendencies, all the works of exceptional quality and the evidence of its artistic currents Thessaloniki in the Komneno era.

During the Ottoman domination the temple was transformed into a Mosque of "Sulutza Mosque", and in 1921 after many changes it was given to Christian worship and dedicated to Saint David, who practiced the 6th century A.D in this area for three years on a tree. The temple today is a metohi and belongs to the monastery of Agia Theodora. Where the color harmony, the kindness of the persons, the classicist tendencies, all the works of exceptional quality and the presumptions of the

5. Saint Catherine's Temple

The temple is located in the northwestern part of the Upper Town, near the Byzantine walls and is a sample of the "Macedonian School", built around the end of the 13th century. It is a composite quadruple, cruciform, engraved with five domes and a closed perimeter gallery. The central dome, engraved on a square cross, rests on four arches, and around the base of the dome there is a lower aisle, extending on three sides (north, south, west) at the four corners of which rise to equal number of

dome, the central one. The church is renowned for its masonry, where niches, columns and archways dominate, and generally dominates the play of tumors with ceramics. Also interesting are the frescoes representing the forms of saints, scenes from the Gospel, the miracles of Christ, typical of the monumental style of the end of the 13th century, where Thessaloniki was the center of Byzantine hagiography, as a result of its relations with the Saint Term.

During the Ottoman domination the temple was converted into a mosque "Jacop-Pasha Mosque" and the frescoes were plastered by the Turks. The temple, after the liberation of the city in 1912, was dedicated to Saint Catherine.

6. Holy Church of St. Nicholas of Orphanos

The temple is located on the northeastern corner of the Upper Town, between Herodotou and Apostolou Pavlou streets, and is a metochio of the Vlatados Monastery belonging to the Patriarchate. The name "Saint Nicholas Orphanos or Orphans" answers in texts of the 17th, 18th centuries and is due either to the unknown founder of the temple or to the fact that the saint was considered a protector for widows and orphans. The date of erection of the temple dates from 1310-1320.

It is a wooden-royal basilica, one-storied with a perimeter that ends in two chapels on the eastern side. Characteristic of the masonry is the combination of birch and stone, as well as a simple ceramic decoration. Inside the church stand the marble columns with the "Theodosian" capitals containing paintings. Also remarkable is the marble temple that is contemporary to the temple. This small and unusual temple stands out for the well-preserved frescoes of the early 14th century, which are representative of the Paleolithic painting, where the rich colors, the synthetic power, the craftsmanship in the rendering of the people and the rich themes dominate. In the main temple are depicted scenes of the Twelve, the Passion, the Anastasimus and the circle of work, and the forms of saints. The depiction, also in the main temple, of St. George of Gorgos and Saint Clement of Ohrid, issues of Serbian iconography, led to the correlation of the wall painting with the Serbian ruler Milutin demonstrating the leading role of Thessaloniki in Balkan art.

7. Holy Church of the Transfiguration of the Savior

The Church of the Transfiguration of the Savior is located in the center of Thessaloniki, at the intersection of the Egnatia and Palaion Patron Germanos streets, between the church of Panagia Gorgepikou and the temple of Ypapanti. It dates back to 1350, as evidenced by a coin found in its dome. It is said that the temple was originally built in honor of the Virgin, as revealed by the revelation of a relic found there and was the inauguration of the temple. It is also characteristic that during the Ottoman domination, thanks to the location of the temple, it was avoided transforming it into a mosque.

This small temple belongs to a rare architectural style, the quadruple: four square semicircular niches, one of which is the arch of the Sacred Step, are recorded in the square in the ground plan of the building. The temple consists of a large and tall octagonal dome decorated with successive arches and brick semicolons.

The church stands out for its murals dated between 1350 and 1370 and the ascension of Jesus Christ as well as the Virgin Mary together with the Apostles accompanied by the sun, the moon and personalized winds, while the windows of the dome are depicted by eight prophets. Inside the Church, under the floor there are tombs, which certify that it was a burial monument.

8. Holy Church of Taxiarches

It is located in the northeastern part of the Upper Town and is erected in the second half of the 14th century. It is dedicated to the Archangels and Taxiarches Michael and Gabriel. It is a central wood-paneled building with a perimeter in the three directions (north, south, and west). Underneath the floor of the temple there is a grounded crypt, which may have served as a burying or burial site. During the Ottoman rule, it was converted into a mosque, and a minaret with two balconies, called "Iki Serif Mosque", that is, a mosque of the two exiles, was added later. After 1912 he was again given to the Christians and restored in his present form in 1953. Historical value is the frescoes inside the temple, probably crafted by the famous painter of the time, Georgios Kalligeris. Of these, the Ascension of Christ stands out in the eastern pediment, which is in the form of a triangle and is depicted by Christ sitting in a rainbow surrounded by a light disk holding angry angels. At the base is the Theotokos with a halo, praying, between two trees. On either side of it there are angels directed at the Apostles. Also, "Pentecost" on the west pediment of the temple depicts eight apostles.

9. Temple of Prophet Elias

It is a large and imposing church located at the junction of Olympiada and Prophet Elias streets in Ano Poli and dates back to the second half of the 14th century. It belongs to the so-called Athonite or Athonite architectural style used for the monasteries, from the Byzantine period until today. It stands out for its original architectural design that combines many different architectural elements. It is a cruciform inscribed temple with a large ornate dome in the main space and in the north and south are formed high semicircular niches.

The temple was originally built in honor of Jesus Christ and was the katholikon of a monastery in Thessaloniki at the time of the Palaiologos dynasty. After its conversion from the Turks to a mosque called "Sarail Mosque" and the liberation of the city in 1912, the temple was named Prophet Elias, apparently due to the corruption of the Turkish name.

The masonry follows the standards of Mount Athos using bands of carved stones alternating with rows of briquettes. From the inside of the temple, a few frescoes have been preserved, concerning scenes from Christ's life and forms of saints. They all impress with the intense movements, the realism in the scenes and the emotional loading of the figures. From the frescoes that adorn the chapels of the temple stand out the slaughter of the infants and the treatment of the couples and the blind,

10. Holy Church of Agios Panteleimonas

The church of Saint Panteleimon is located at the junction of Arrianou and Iasonidou streets, a short distance from the arch of Galerius and Rotunda. It is a temple that was a Catholic Byzantine monastery of Thessaloniki dating back to the late 13th-early 14th century, the Monastery of the Theotokos Peripepto. The name came from the homonymous northern chapel of the neighboring church of Panagouda, where the vessels of the temple were transferred during its conversion by the Turks into a mosque named "Isaakie Mosque" (ca 1568-1571).

It is a cruciform four-aisled temple with a narthex and a perimeter gallery, which on the east has two chapels. Today, the narthex, the central cruciform core and the two chapels are preserved in the temple. The frescoes, which date back to the late 13th-early 14th century, are important and indicative of the Palaeological painting and adorn the place of the prothesis and the diaconal, such as Theotokos or Vlachernitsa, saints and hierarchs. In a prominent position in the diaconic, we can see the depiction of St. Jacob of the Brotherhood, synonymous saint with the metropolitan and founder of the temple.

The temple was damaged during the earthquakes of 1978 and its work was restored.

11. Holy Temple of Achiropiitos

The church of Achiropiitos is located in the center of the city, on Agia Sophia Street opposite Makedonomachon Square. It dates back to the middle of the 5th century and is the oldest perhaps preserved temple of the city. The temple is dedicated to the Virgin Mary. His name came from the "unpainted" icon of the Virgin Mary who was kept in the temple. It is a three-aisled wooden-roofed basilica with a narthex. The central aisle ends in a spacious hollow niche. The northern aisle communicates to the east with a chapel that became a chapel in the Middle Byzantine times and today is honored in the name of Saint Irene. On the southern outer wall, the central entrance door carries a monumental prop that shows the church's communication with the most important road of the ancient city, Avenue. Attached to the southern side of the temple, an embrace is considered to be the baptistery of the basilica in one view and the other the original temple of the temple. Throughout the width of the temple to the west there is a splint from which one enters the main temple through a luxurious tribune with columns of green Thessalian marble. Very important are the windows in this type of basilica, as well as the sculptural decoration with the Theodosian capitals with their suffixes, the simple but impressive colonnades. The roof of the temple is twin in the central aisle and lower in the aisles. Originally, the central roof was taller as there was an elevated part of the central aisle that served as a lighthouse, but also the western palace, making the outer volume of the temple seem even heavier.

The mosaics of Achiropiitos draw their subjects from nature and Christianity (crosses, gospels, birds, wreaths, lilies, leaves) and make up lustrous luminaries with rich colors.

Achiropiitos is the only church in the eastern Mediterranean that is preserved until today in its original form and is the first Christian temple to be converted into a mosque immediately after the fall of the city in 1430 by Sultan Murat and was the official mosque of the conquerors during the Ottoman domination, known as the "Eski Mosque". A Muslim mosque remained until the liberation of Thessaloniki in 1912. During the First World War, Achiropiitos housed refugee families, and in 1919 the interior was photographed as a refugee camp. Finally, the temple was redeemed to Christian worship in 1930.

12. Our Lady of the Chalkean

This temple is located at the junction of Egnatia and Aristotelous streets, southwest of the archaeological site of the Roman Agora. The name "Panagia Halkeon" took it from the area where it is located, where from the Roman years until today there are copper chandeliers, shops that make and sell bronze household or ecclesiastical utensils. In the same area there were underground arches, where St. Demetrios taught, and therefore another possible name of the temple is "Panagia Kamariotissa", which refers to a document of the 14th century, although there are objections to it.

According to an inscription found in the marble infrared of the western entrance, the temple was built in 1028 in the place where before there existed an ancient Greek temple, possibly Hephaestus or Kaveiron. The founder of the temple is the royal Christopher Protopspatharios and Katepon (governor) of Lagouardias (Byzantine name of the department of Southern Italy) along with his wife Maria and his children Nikiforos, Anna and Katakis. The tomb of the tenant is located in the middle of the northern wall. According to the same inscription the original name of the temple was "the temple of the Virgin Mary". In 1430 it was converted into a mosque called "Kazantzilar Mosque", a mosque of copper.

It is a cruciform temple dome-registered, dominated by the Macedonian emperor's dynasty. It is a particularly elegant church that has accepted the influence of the architecture of Constantinople, as it

appears both in the type of church and in the construction of the walls. Besides, the use of brick as exclusive building material gave the temple the popular name "Red Church".

The wall paintings of the temple are around 1030

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1040 AD and have an anti-tactical character. It is remarkable the representation of Ascension in the dome, as well as in Agia Sophia of Thessaloniki instead of the most common Pantocrator. Also in the sanctuary is Panagia (Demoni), while at various points of the temple are adorned with feasts of despotic feasts. Finally, in the narthex one of the most complete performances of the Second Coming is preserved, quite rare for that time. After the earthquakes of 1978, work was carried out to fix the monument and preserve its frescoes.

13. Holy Monastery of Vlatadon

It is located in the Upper Town of Thessaloniki, in the Northwest end of the Byzantine walls and is the only monastery of the Byzantine period of the city that still works today. It is characterized as patriarchal, cruciform, because it belongs to the Ecumenical Patriarchate. It is also characterized as a basilica, because it was founded after the sponsorship of Anna Palaiologou and with royal golden-sealed.

It was founded in the middle of the 14th century in a place that probably hosted an older temple, from the Cretan descent of the metropolitan of Thessaloniki Dorotheos Vlatis and his brother Marco, students and friends of Saint Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessaloniki.

From the original building only the sacred and few other architectural elements are preserved. Close to the Catholic Monastery, which is honored in the name of the Transfiguration of the Savior, there is a vaulted chapel of the 14th century with frescoes of the Palaiologos. According to local tradition, the monastery is built at the place where Apostle Paul preached or lived while staying in the city. It is noteworthy that in 1801 the temple was renovated by the great merchant of Thessaloniki, Ioannis Goutas Kaftantzoglou.

Of architectural interest is the way of supporting the dome on the walls of the sanctuary and on the western piers without the existence of columns, which characterizes the temples of our country in the 9th to 12th centuries. Also interesting are the frescoes of the temple that were created before the conquest of the city by the Turks in 1430, as well as many marble "slats", portable icons and various heirlooms kept in the monastery's museum.

14. Holy Church of the Holy Apostles

The Church of the Holy Apostles is one of the most important Byzantine monuments of Thessaloniki and represents architecturally the Palaiologian period. It is located near the western walls of Thessaloniki, at the beginning of Olympus Street. It was built in the period 1310-1314 by the Ecumenical Patriarch Nyphon the First, as the inscriptions of the church bearing its name imply.

It is worth mentioning that it initially functioned as a monastery dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Evidence of the original operation of the temple is the part of a prompt, the part of the eastern side of a building south of the temple, and a built water basin on its northwest side. From the capacity of the water reservoir (about 750 cubic meters of water) it is concluded that many people lived there, apparently during the period of its peak. It belongs to the cruciform temples of the so-called "Macedonian School", as its high central dome rests on the square, forming four arched cross-shaped

arches. Moreover, as in Saint Catherine, on the three sides of the temple, apart from the sanctuary, a lowered aisle is created, at the four corners of which are raised the same number of domes smaller in height than that of the center. As a monument, apart from the particular aesthetic morphology of its volumes and its individual architectural elements, it is distinguished by its very interesting and elaborate masonry (plinth). Particularly in the east, decorative shapes, such as meanders and toothed bands, are shown to be of exceptional beauty, proving high-level building art. At the highest points of the main temple are saved fragmentary masterpieces of the 14th century, such as the Pantocrator and the prophets in the dome, the Evangelists in the spherical triangles, the Dodecanese in the arches and the western wall and holy martyrs.

During the Ottoman domination, the temple was converted into a mosque called "Soak-Su Mosque" and its walls were coated with mortar. Restoration works in 1941 brought to light remarkable frescoes and mosaics of fine art from the Paleolithic period (14th century).

15. The Byzantine Bath

The Byzantine Bath of Thessaloniki is the only preserved bath of the Middle Byzantine period throughout Greece and dates back to the late 13th and early 14th centuries. It is located in the Koule Cafe district of the Upper Town, and more specifically at the entrance of the district, close enough to other Byzantine monuments of the city. It is a rectangular building consisting of three main spaces, each of which is divided into two apartments. The first area, the anteroom of the building, was cold and its apartments were used as locker rooms. The second area, the lukewarm, functioned as a preparation area for the bath and had an average temperature. Finally, the third space, the thermal was the main bath. Underground hot air circulated for underfloor heating, while with hot air ducts this hot air set the temperature of each room. According to the historical sources, it was a neighborhood bath and was routed as a man and woman.

It worked for about seven centuries. Its operation continued even during the Ottoman domination, during which it was known as the "Kouble Cafe Bath", but with some changes due to the religious traditions of the Muslims. More specifically, the Qur'an imposed the use of flowing water for this, and its baths, a feature of Byzantine baths, were removed from the bath. Its operation ceased in the 1940s and then abandoned for many years. In 1952, it was declared a preserved monument by the Ministry of Culture, while in the 1970s the Archaeological Service made some exploratory work that resulted in the revelation of one of its sides, which due to the altitude difference was mostly forged. After the 1978 earthquake, temporary substructures of mainly semicircular arches and domes were made because they were severely cracked. The project "Rehabilitation - fixing of the Byzantine Bath in Thessaloniki ", of the Operational Program Macedonia-Thrace 2007 – 2013, achieved the complete restoration of the damages of the bath.

16. The Byzantine Walls of Thessaloniki

The Byzantine Walls of Thessaloniki constitute an important fortification work, an integral part of the city's culture. The walls have about 5 kilometers perimeter and are built with stones and bricks, often made of arches and their height ranges from 9 to 10.5 meters. It is one of the few cases of extensive wall retention in a modern city. A similar fortification is the Byzantine walls that survive in Constantinople.

The first fortification of the city is made by its founder, Kassandros, King of Macedonia in 315, and proved to be life-saving for the city during hostile raids. However, the most important addition to the

fortifications was made by the emperor Mega Theodosius, who made Thessaloniki its temporary seat due to its geographical position.

The contribution of Empress Anna Palaiologina, which constructed two new gates in the eastern walls to the acropolis, is remarkable. In an attempt to strengthen the defense of the city, the White Tower was built at sea (during the Ottoman rule) and the Tower of the Trigon or the Solution in the Upper Town.

The Walls of Thessaloniki had the shape of a quadrilateral with both sides perpendicular to the sea, the eastern and western walls, and two parallel, the seaside wall and the wall of the Acropolis on the hill. Along the walls out there was the so-called

"Outside wall or pre-casting" and among them there was a moat with seawater and wooden bridges.

It is noteworthy that, from the many gates of the walls, until today only one survives, that of Anna Palaiologina in Upper Town near its tower Triangle. By 1869 Thessaloniki was surrounded by its Byzantine walls, exactly after a large part of the walls was demolished by the Turks in their attempt to embellish the city.

Cultural events and festivals

Social occasions and festivals Cultural occasions and celebrations once more play a critical part in the arrangement and reinforcing of social tourism in today's tourism industry. These programs "offer the visitor extra reasons to visit a put over and over the standard social item advertised. Frequently since occasions are one-off and take put in a restricted time period and since celebrations offer a concentrated and regularly interesting advertising in a constrained time-period, they frame an extra reason for social visitors to visit a put. They can cause a put to rise on the waitlist of places the traveler has in his or her attitude of alluring goals. Celebrations and occasions are both successful rebellious in drawing in to begin with time guests as well as rehash guests due to the differential advantage they can offer.

Agreeing to later studies we can state that the larger part of social sightseers are persuaded to take portion in occasion and celebration tourism as according to recent surveys we can state that the majority of cultural tourists are motivated to take part in event and festival tourism as well, since 88% agreed on an internet questionnaire that cultural festivals and events are important reasons for cultural tourists to choose to specifically visit a place. Of course, entertainment (of events and festivals) as a motivation in tourism is really diverse to analyze but we can state that these events, festivals and parades mainly cover cultural thematic such as music festivals and events and all the other forms of fine arts festivals and events (of course we can highlight gastronomy, religion, folk, film, history etc. topics as well). The different festivals can contribute to the development of the given areas or regions and promote the cognition of the local population or residents of an area. A very important role of festivals and events that (however they usually produce a timely concentration in the high season in majority) they act against seasonality, since a vast amount of festivals and events are organized in the low season. On the other hand, if we take into consideration the size of the megaevents and the carrying capacity of places for instance – so the huge amount of the number of people visiting these places in a relatively short time – we have to stress that cultural events and festivals could have a seriously negative impact on the environment and on the local population as well.

In the 21st century the tourism global market creates an organic and interdependent system in which the supply and demand side experiences significant changes both in time and space and also from the perspectives of the quantitative and qualitative aspects or components. Newer and newer regions and tourism products will be involved in the international and domestic tourism trends as well and in the ever-growing competition only such a tourism destination of tourism actor can survive which or who can provide an ever-growing standard of quality. RICHARDS (2009) states that "Culture and tourism were two of the major growth industries of the 20th century, and towards the end of the century the combination of these two sectors into 'cultural tourism' had become one of the most desirable development options for countries and regions around the world." According to the recent changes of tourism trends it is obvious that visitors are more strongly involved in cultural activities than earlier although we must highlight that the role of the 3S (or 4S as sun, sand, sea and sex) in mass tourism will still be (very) dominant. On the other hand, as the new generations of visitors appear on the tourism market, now we can talk about a new 3S group or generation of tourists now mainly motivated by sport, spectacle and satisfaction. (Csapó & Matesz, 2007)

Consequences of Tourism

Greek tourism is the main source of revenue and the rapid growth of this sector has resulted in positive and negative impacts. As every human activity has an impact on the natural and social environment, tourism has favorable and negative changes to it. Tourism development affects the social system both positively and negatively. This depends on the type of tourism that is being developed in the region, but the role of state actors is decisive, since by adopting measures they can limit the negative effects. The most important areas that are usually affected are the economy, society and the natural environment of tourist areas. Tourism has undoubtedly been recognized as the first economic form global activity, so they also use the term "tourist industry". The tourism industry is one of the largest in the world and has many positive effects on the economy in our country.

How it positively affects the economy (National Conservation Unit, ncu.org.cy, 2017):

- ❖ Creating new jobs (reducing unemployment)
- ❖ Creating individual income
- ❖ Regional local development with additional investments and improving the balance of payments

Employment

Increasing tourism creates new jobs in the tourism sector although unemployment has increased in recent years in Greece. This has the ability to give employment opportunities to a large number of all specialties, as a result to notice a decrease in unemployment during tourism period. Indeed, until recently the tourism employed the lowest in educational level of human resources in relation to its other branches economy. But this fact begins to change drastically since it is observed in a high degree of influx of scientists and technologists who are executed by them lower hierarchy posts such as waiters, tourist-employees offices up to those of the supreme leadership of tourism businesses.

It is a source of foreign exchange inflow and balance of payments, the foreign exchange receipts from inbound tourism, which is very much important in our country, help to cover a part of its deficit Trade balance (payments and receipts for imported and exported goods). If that were not the case, our country would be forced either to cut imports and to increase exports, which is very difficult, or to borrow from abroad, resulting in an increase in our country's dependence on them lenders and the transfer of our own debts to the coming generations (Kokkosis, 2001, p.20).

It widens the educational and cultural horizons of the people. The movement of social groups gives the opportunity to people from different groups' cultures and different educational levels to meet and exchange views. The character of this diffusion of knowledge and cultures is two-way and concerns both the visitors of a country and the inhabitants of that country.

CONCLUSION

Thessaloniki has every potential to become a city-attraction for both the domestic and the international tourism-market. By taking advantage of its location together with a well-organized system that will together coordinate the local community-shareholders will lead to a boost of the following sectors: economic, social and national. Its urban community can form unique events that will create to the travelers mind the association of Thessaloniki as a unique historical city with a unique event-program all year long.

Based on the current trends, those asking for the everyday lives of a city together with the arrangement for special events, unique experiences for a lifetime, Thessaloniki can become a Metropolis for the Balkans not to say for the entire Europe. The responsible authority of the city will be liable to organize events and promote them to the according target markets via the most suitable channels in order to create eventfulness. This development assorted with high quality services for Thessaloniki gives new chances to the urban community to develop. on outfit the innovative force of their nationals to create occasions The organizing and development of events for example, festivals, shows, exhibitions, fairs and championships, have become a special part at the urban improvement methodology worldwide.

By including the immaterial part of the society of the city, events become a perfect opportunity on which people's contact is possible, not only superficially, but in depth becoming familiar and optimally loyal visitors to Thessaloniki. Along these lines the community starts to define the city itself. In this sense, events' need turned a real gear in the transform to as claimed 'place making'.

In this situation, social occasions are no more simply a social matter; they turn into a wider urban errand that leads to the city's revitalization. By moving inventiveness of the focal point of the urban agenda, another part need been provided for on social occasions similarly as those inventors (rather over preservers) for importance. This new vision likewise matches developing models of the association of the postmodern or post-industrial city: that entrepreneurial city, that imaginative city what's more a greater amount recently, those intercultural city.

Thessaloniki by developing a number of intercultural events, which deliberately set out with cross-culture can create a unique experience for every visitor.

Social occasions have risen as a method for enhancing the picture of cities, including without limitations, the city's roads as the perfect background for happenings. The most important element of this transformation is the image that needs to be consistent and coherent from all the shareholders for a long period of time, broadcasting the appropriate message to the appropriate communication channels.

Concerning the events, they should be implemented and gradually turned into a habit for the local of the city. Furthermore the city should turn into a hotspot of inventiveness that gives the opportunity to its visitors to enjoy the well-developed and unique happenings that will eventually be beneficial for both the visitors and the locals.

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