



ACCESSIBILITY FOR PwD TOURISTS IN GREEK TERRITORY

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" Accessibility for PwD tourists in Greek territory "

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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.

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ABSTRACT

The present thesis observes the issue of tourism with the examination of the case “accessible tourism” in Greece. The approach "accessible tourism" is so in high demand due to the fact that at least one-fifth of the population will have access issues at least once in their lifetime. This approach examines the current situation in Greece and the touristic phenomenon reflecting the community of People with Disabilities (PwD). Secondly, it reviews the development of accessible tourism in Greece (Aristotelis Naniopoulos, 2016)¹ and search for new trends of tourism through the disabled “eyes” and states a new context to the universal design for PwD. Thirdly, this thesis shows the environment of Greek legislation that rules the accessible tourism (Aristotelis Naniopoulos, 2016)² in Greek territory. Fourthly the aim of this work is to show the clear and rightly acceptable theoretical framework of the disability phenomenon to be used as an interpretative key to expose tourism data and to help displaced people from equal participation in the social phenomenon of tourism. The paper offers truly and direct answers from the PwD living and employed in Greek structures and domes for Disabled groups.

(Aristotelis Naniopoulos, 2016)¹

(Aristotelis Naniopoulos, 2016)²

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‘Every man is made - by his nature - to look up, to envision and to try to touch his dream. But to achieve it, it needs wings to help it get faster and easier. Wings are the capabilities of everyone. Some, however, have smaller wings and feel different. Nevertheless, they can also climb high - they just need to be next to some to teach them how to open their wings and fly higher and higher. People with disabilities have their own unique and wings. Their flying becomes more beautiful when the others gently caress the wings and fly with them. Let us start from today at least to respect the rights of these people in our day-to-day activities. Let us finally become aware that these people are like us but with some differences.’³

³ Anon

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1. INTRODUCTION

“Accessible Tourism for All” and UNWTO

“Accessibility is a central element of any responsible and sustainable tourism policy. It is both a human rights imperative, and an exceptional business opportunity. Above all, we must come to appreciate that accessible tourism does not only benefit persons with disabilities or special needs; it benefits us all.”⁴

Taleb Rifai, UNWTO Secretary-General.

According to statistics up to ten percent of the world’s population, or at least 650 million people, live with a disability. (<https://www.disabled-world.com/disability/statistics/>, n.d.)⁵ They are the world’s largest minority. (UN.ORG, n.d.)⁶ (APPENDIX 1)

The WHO, (WHO, n.d.)⁷ in cooperation with the World Bank, (Bank, n.d.)⁸ issued in 2011, for the first time, a World Disability Report. The online page linking the link indicates that there are more than a billion people in the world who are experiencing disabilities. The report itself (pp. 25-32) refers to research in 59 countries covering 64% of the world’s population and from which a population of 15.6% is experiencing severe physical disability and 2.2 % who is experiencing very serious difficulties due to bodily harm. The research does not distinguish in types of bodily harm.

A study back in 2011 (Turgut Var, 2011)⁹ based on Vignuda (Vignuda, 2001)¹⁰ states that are now widely recognized that people with disabilities in addition to their caregivers, friends, and relatives and the elderly comprise a large potential consumer market segment for the tourism industry and continue that PwD presents an important developing market in the world tourism industry. Nevertheless, the concept of “tourism and people with disabilities” is quite new. (ESCAP, n.d.)¹¹

It is fact that all tourists without any differentiation want unique experiences tailored under to their needs and covered under the umbrella of the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, underlines in its Article 7 that all persons should be able to exercise their right to enjoy tourism without hindrance (UNWTO, n.d.)¹². Accordingly mentioned that among the more than one billion international tourists that travel each year, a high percentage consists of families with young children and/or seniors, and persons with disabilities or other special needs. (UNWTO, n.d.)¹³ As result, we have millions of people able to participate in tourism on equal terms and we see that it is

(Rifai, n.d.)⁴

(<https://www.disabled-world.com/disability/statistics/>, n.d.)⁵

(UN.ORG, n.d.)⁶

(WHO, n.d.)⁷

(Bank, n.d.)⁸

(Turgut Var, 2011)⁹

(Vignuda, 2001)¹⁰

(ESCAP, n.d.)¹¹

(UNWTO, n.d.)¹²

(UNWTO, n.d.)¹³

crucial for destinations to develop universal accessibility measures.(UNWTO, n.d.)¹⁴
Any destination that makes environment, products, and services suitable and tailored for everyone will enhance their supply, enable a better tourist experience and improve the quality of life of the local population and visitors as well . (UNWTO, n.d.)¹⁵

Mentioned by Barlow (Barlow, 2012)¹⁶ tourists search for authentic experiences from visited destinations with historic environment and a crucial component of tourism is the remaining authentic and that atmosphere encourages new visitors. All the ancient buildings were built in a time when accessibility for PwD was not a vast issue. Nowadays PwD continue to grow as a number due to the aging population, sickness and longer life expectancy (Barlow, 2012)¹⁷. The will to participate and travel around, as well the desire for authentic experiences, an ancient site will be enjoyed by all interested visitors only when it is accessible to all (Heather, 2013)¹⁸.

1.1. THESIS

In this diploma thesis, I was interested in whether our country can meet the needs of the disabled people, whether there are adequate facilities for the hospitality of the disabled people. Primary and secondary research was carried out. Secondary research includes bibliography, articles and the internet for the creation of the theoretical part, which analyzes the categories of PwD, the legislation in Greece and the accessibility infrastructure for people with disabilities. Primary research includes the use of a questionnaire (APPENDIX 2) conducted in 100 disabled people and their companion in the Greek territory and interviews. The survey lasted four months, from September to December 2018, covering almost all PwD, including factors such as the availability of appropriate travel and accommodation facilities for PwD (Convention, 2017)¹⁹ and the degree of satisfaction of PwD tourists, relation both to existing infrastructures and to the provision of services. The phenomenon of tourism and the legislation governing the issues of people with disabilities that affects him is inexhaustible. The aim is to judge as the right and humanitarian parameters. I have tried to present the image of Greek reality regarding the issues that regulate the term accessibility in Greece and reflect the current situation. (Nirje B 1994)²⁰

Accessible tourism, accommodation, service, transportation, and environment of accessibility in Greece are the key elements of the research. This research gives a hand of help for new tasks offering questions concerning the developed accessibility in tourism Greek industry. PwD have the same needs and desires for tourism as others according to Loi & Kong (Loi & Kong, 26-30 JUNE 2015)²¹and the result is that the

(UNWTO, n.d.)¹⁴

(UNWTO, n.d.)¹⁵

(Barlow, 2012)¹⁶

(Barlow, 2012)¹⁷

(Heather, 2013)¹⁸

(Convention, 2017)¹⁹

(NirjeB, 1994)²⁰

(Loi & Kong, 26-30 JUNE 2015)²¹

accessible tourism market segment is growing rapidly as Bowtell said and in fact more than other market segments. (Bowtell, 2015)²²

The significance of accessible tourism as Darcy mentioned is a whole life approach. (Darcy, 2009)²³ Accessible tourism as a niche market related to PwD and seniors including a major factor in human life span and a phenomenon. Khatri said that every disabled tourist has a right to experience the tourism product and service whenever and whatever they desire without any barrier. (Khatri, 2012)

"Accessible Tourism is a form of Tourism that involves collaborative process between stakeholders that enables people with access requirements, including mobility, vision, hearing and cognitive dimensions of access, to function independently and with equity and dignity through the delivery of universally designed tourism products, services and environments " (Darcy, 2011)²⁴

Accessible tourism enables tourists with specific access needs to enjoy tourism experiences with dignity, equality,²⁵http://www.accessibletourism.org/resources/accessible_tourism_nfdn_marc_h_2017.pdf social inclusion and independence. (Grant, 2007)²⁶

Tourism has become a basic need for all people and the fact that PwD market segment is the largest minority generates a great business opportunity, and according to Nicolaisen tourism literature on tourists with disabilities is still in its infancy. (Nicolaisen, 2011)²⁷

Tourism for PwD can say that is a bouquet of services and facilities that can let a person with special needs to enjoy holidays and to entertain himself on vacation, without problems . (Ryderb, 2003)²⁸ As Mike said the focus should be on special needs tourism more than others, due to their urgent need for entertainment, because he mentioned that they are prisoners of the health situation, and should be assisted and supported to overcome the challenges they face. (Mike W., 2006)²⁹

2. TOURISM

United Nation World Tourism Organization declare (UNWTO)³⁰ that tourism is a diverse industry, which is a central economic driver for socio-economic development in several areas and destinations throughout the world. Tourism is a whole system of transportation, airlines, travels and tours agents, hotel industry, ferry companies, the

(Bowtell, 2015) ²²

(Simon Darcy,2009)²³

(Buhalis Darcy, 2011)²⁴

(A.T., n.d.)²⁵

(Grant, 2007)²⁶

(Nicolaisen, 2011) ²⁷

(Ryderb, 2003) ²⁸

(Mike W., 2006)²⁹

(UNWTO, n.d.)³⁰

Information technology industry and host community of tourism destination. Additionally, tourism connects people who travel and businesses. Also, people act in other than their everyday environment avoiding usual problems, exercising activities and for a period of time, not more than one year. (UNWTO, n.d.)³¹

Accessibility is an important fact interacting with the human needs starting from the travel planning process to the transportation level and the reach of the final its special components. The participation to travel and tourism opportunities is regarded as a key social right (European Disability Forum, 2001),³² so the tourist product has to be equal and sometimes better to the right of the traveler and his needs.

Buhalis mentioned that (2003)³³ tourism is a highly networked industry dependent on co-operation and collaboration with the competition. Tourism characterized as a complex of components due to the fact that for the final result take part many other different industries and sectors such as accommodation, communication, transportation and characterized as an economic factor because there is always an economic final result. Co-operation and collaboration bring the opportunity to the success which is depended on the decision, the right time of decision and action. Successful is a business when service or products are on high demand.

The tourism industry is a network of different ingredients such as amenities, attractions, ancillary services, activities, available tourism packages and accessibility, sellers whom the main target serve the different oriented buyers. Buhalis also says that "A variety of stakeholders are involved which often have conflicting needs, wants and interests in the industry" (Buhalis, 2003)³⁴ and continues with the 6 A's which are amenities, attractions, ancillary services, activities, available tourism packages and accessibility (Buhalis, 2000)³⁵.

2.1. FUTURE TRENDS

International tourism is about to influence the picture of the global tourism market and change the balance of the industry. Tourists today usually do not ask for an individual experience or a destination with massive or highly specialized experiences. They usually require a combination of experience, infrastructure, and services. This is being offered by an increasing number of possible destinations. In Europe, there are many rural tourism options for graduation (mild and specialized rural tourism) and a variety of activities. (Sotiriadis M., 2009)³⁶

According to World Tourism Organization estimates, the tourism industry will be the fastest growing sector on global economy over next years. The forecast is that in 2020

(UNWTO, n.d.)³¹

(European Disability Forum, 2001)³²

(Buhalis, 2003)³³

(Buhalis, 2003)³⁴

(Buhalis, 2000)³⁵

(Sotiriadis M., 2009)³⁶

international arrivals will exceed 1.5 billion. Of these 717 million will be made in Europe, 397 million in East Asia and Pacific region and will follow North and South America with 282 million arrivals.

Based on the World Tourism Organization's calculations, if the conditions are relatively stable over the next 5 to 10 years, there will be an average annual increase in tourist traffic of between 4% and 4.5% at international level. This is due to both large tourist growth in markets such as China and Malaysia and a fall in the number of tourists in markets such as Germany . (Sfakianakis, 2012)³⁷

Undoubtedly, tourism is a continuously evolving industry that encounters challenges and obstacles that could not go unnoticed, for many countries it is one of the most important economic players. In addition, tourist trends are always at the heart of tourist organizations due to their constant change and evolution.

2.2. WORLD

For UNWTO tourism has become the world's quickest and biggest growing industry, and that development shows a continuously day to day increase. International travelers were up to one billion by the end of 2012, countries strategy is to develop tourism as part wellbeing for their communities. The success of tourism depends on infrastructures, human factor, and service, safety is the key element for a destination and convenient transportation as well. A necessary element for destinations is to meet the needs of PwD, including infants and the elderly without any exclusion (UNWTO, n.d.)³⁸

Tourism is an important social phenomenon that is experiencing rapid growth nowadays. It is perhaps the largest global industry today, accounting for 10% - 12% of the World Gross Product. In many developing countries around the world, tourism is one of the main sectors of the economy, if not the main one, with various implications for a society. (Varvaresos, 2010)³⁹

2.3. EUROPE

A recent Survey (2012) study from the University of Surrey in England has shown that 127 million European citizens, or 27% of Europe's population, could benefit from accessible tourism and that this "hidden" industry is worth more than 80 billion of Euro per year. It is estimated that 10-20% of European citizens, the figures vary from country to country, have a kind of disability and these rates are gradually increasing with the aging population.

(Sfakianakis, 2012)³⁷

(UNWTO, n.d.)³⁸

(Varvaresos, 2010)³⁹

It's wrong to assume that accessible tourism is a niche market. PwD and elderly people, who increasing dramatically want and are able to travel, "will soon make up 25%" of the European population. Millions of people want to share holidays with their families and their friends.

In 2003, which was the European Year for PwD, the EU Council of Culture Ministers has voted a resolution on "Accessibility of People with Disabilities in Cultural Infrastructures". This resolution gave a new impetus to the fight against discrimination against PwD and significantly improved conditions for people with disabilities in many places, including accessibility to travel and tourism. Various private initiatives are being developed from time to time, but to date there has been little progress in this area.

2.4. GREECE

In Greece, due mainly to its climatic conditions, both the development of winter tourism and the progressive improvement of the summer are favored. It is generally believed that this is a sea country even though it is a mountainous country because the mountains cover a large area and its mountainous population is 9.87% of the total (Venetsanopoulou, 2006)⁴⁰.

Regarding summer tourism, Greece is a pole of attraction for foreign tourists due to the natural, cultural and climatic factors that represent the tourist heritage. The elements contributing to the development of Greek tourism are the natural environment, climatic conditions, and cultural monuments. More specifically, the Greek natural environment, the beauty of the Greek landscape, the beaches and a large number of islands are undoubtedly a strong attraction to tourist flows and are a prerequisite for the development of Greek tourism. For this reason, these elements will be a powerful incentive to attract tourists in the future, because it is observed that this kind of tourism responds to the psychology and attitude of the modern man. (Venetsanopoulou, 2006)⁴¹

Another factor that contributes to the attraction of tourists is the favorable climatic conditions, as the climate of Greece in relation to other tourist destinations of the Mediterranean, presents a peculiarity and is characterized as the Mediterranean. For this reason, it has become privileged among others and has been established as a suitable place of residence throughout the year (Venetsanopoulou, 2006)⁴².

The tourism development of private sector in Greece came without any measures of control by the state, led to the anarchy of constructions the accommodation sector, traditionally dominated by family-run small and medium-sized enterprises, in the decades after World War II. (Papadaki-Tzedaki, 1997)⁴³ According to Papageorgiou (Papageorgiou, 2008)⁴⁴ a big part of the accommodation sector was thus developed

(Venetsanopoulou, 2006)⁴⁰

(Venetsanopoulou, 2006)⁴¹

(Venetsanopoulou, 2006)⁴²

(Papadaki-Tzedaki, 1997)⁴³

(Papageorgiou, 2008)⁴⁴

somewhat casual, without creatively know-how and, mainly without any long-term political and managerial vision. International TOs' demands for contracting led hotel owners to negotiate negatively as the early boom of mass tourism appeared to be the least demanding and most lucrative vehicle for a fast return on (minimal) investment. This, however, led to the dependence of inbound tourism in Greece on foreign TOs, ultimately leading to a downward spiral for small and medium-sized enterprises as recognized by Buhalis (2001)⁴⁵.

Greece nowadays ranks 24th among 136 countries, from the 31st that was two years ago to the competitiveness index of tourism, recently published by the World Economic Forum (WEF)⁴⁶, which confirms that tourism remains the main exit mechanism of the country from the crisis and development pillar. Our country, this year, has "climbed" seven positions in the Tourism Competitiveness Index, according to the World Economic Forum, Greece's representation is mainly attributed to the country's outstanding efforts to exploit its natural resources, both through upgraded digital demand and through protection of the environment and the following marketing policies. (Money-Tourism, 2017)⁴⁷ (APPENDIX 3)

At the same time, Greece has a competitive price advantage, mainly due to the reduced cost of hosting services for international tourists, fuel costs and airport taxes and charges. These policies, according to the WEF, have helped attract more outcoming arrivals, but have generated confusion in income results. In order to maximize arrivals and income, Greece needs to have a friendlier business environment, with fewer barriers to foreign direct investment, a reduction in business taxation and a more effective legislative framework. Also, greater use should be given to the use of new technologies, since to date businesses are still limited in both B2B and B2C transactions. In addition, it is noted that improving the visa policy is another issue that could affect revenue and massive arrivals, requiring small financial investments. Greece is ranked highest in Health and Hygiene, Priority in Travel and Tourism, Tourist Services and Infrastructure. The key indicator of the competitiveness of the countries, based on 14 individual indicators, is published every two years by the World Economic Forum in its Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2017. (Money-Tourism, 2017)⁴⁸

According to International Key Indicators Travel & Tourism Competitiveness (IPK, 2017)⁴⁹ latest report tourism contributes significantly to the growth of the Greek economy.

International tourist arrivals 23,599,455

International tourism inbound receipts US \$15,672.7 million

Average receipts per arrival US \$664.1

(Buhalis, 2001)⁴⁵

(WEF, 2017)⁴⁶

(Money-Tourism, 2017)⁴⁷

(Money-Tourism, 2017)⁴⁸

(IPK, 2017)⁴⁹

T&T industry GDP US \$14,704.1 million % of total 7.6%

T&T industry employment 400,983 jobs % of total 11.3%

Tourism demand in Greece has been steadily increasing since 2012 and has a 40% increase between 2014 and 2017. EU-28 countries are the main source of tourism for Greece, accounting for 68% of the total and presenting. (WTTC, n.d.)⁵⁰ (UNWTO, n.d.)⁵¹

The prospects for Greek tourism are good, in keeping with the structural constraints of the sector. The arrivals are increasing, the length of stay is not diminishing rapidly, the average daily expenditure is constant, the number of significant tourist origin is increasing. On the other hand, arrivals remain "sharp", daily spending (according to international standards) remains limited, and the same destination destinations attract most of the demand.

Economic performance reflects demand/supply mismatches as well as the relative competitiveness of hotel units. Cost efficiency varies by region, star rating, and unit size. Competitiveness moves alongside performance

Hotels in Greece are, in general, internationally competitive. They are the majority of the main destinations, and they tend to be in category 4 * and are units of smaller size.

The Greek market is gradually upgraded to 5 * hotels. Between 2010 and 2015, investments of €1.8bn were made. Focusing primarily on large 5 * hotels, in major destinations

Greek tourism is one of the main powerful factors for the growth of the Greek economy, but some strategic adjustments are needed to increase its value

Four interlinked policies must be systematically implemented to address the problems and increase the value of tourism: Attract high-income tourists, Introduction of complementary products, Expansion of demand in secondary destinations, Extending & upgrading the tourist product. Greek Hospitality (2017) 27.2 million arrivals of tourists (non-residents) €14.6 billion tourist receipts.

3. PwD (People with Disabilities)

First, it behooves to mention the meaning of disability, as referred by the World Health Organization (WHO, n.d.)⁵² according to the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF)⁵³. The WHO (2001) recognizes disability as “the outcome or result of a complex relationship between an individual’s health condition and personal factors, and of the external factors that represent the circumstances in which the individual lives”. Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights

(WTTC, n.d.)⁵⁰

(UNWTO, n.d.)⁵¹

(WHO, n.d.)⁵²

(ICF, n.d.)⁵³

of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2006)⁵⁴ specifies that “persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others”. WHO (WHO, n.d.)⁵⁵ and the UN (U.N., n.d.)⁵⁶ explain the disability as a special “relationship” between a “health condition” (disorder or disease) and “the environment” (in the broad sense). As defined by the UN (1975) «a disabled person is a person who cannot serve the needs of himself because of a mental or physical disability».

ICF recommends careful use of the following terms, which have attempted to define and illustrate using the International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF) classification and definitions as benchmarks.

The hearing is essentially a passive function that provides access to the auditory world via the perception of sound. It concerns the presence of sounds and discriminating the location, pitch, quality of sounds. In the ICF classification system, hearing is located impairment domain.

Listening is the process of hearing with intention and attention. Listening is an activity. People engage in hearing for a purpose. intent on the part of an experience auditory stimuli and listening requires the expenditure of effort.

Comprehending is an activity undertaken beyond the processes of hearing and listening. Comprehending is the reception of information, meaning or intent. Often, this takes place as part of a discourse, although the concept is not necessarily limited to discourse. It is a unidirectional concept.

Communicating bi-directional transfer of information, intent between two or more people. Although non-auditory communication is possible, in the auditory context communicating requires that both participants are hearing, listening, and comprehending. Communication activity and participation.

Deficits in the system result in an impaired hearing. In the cascade between hearing and communication, many diverse non-auditory factors intervene to modulate (either positively or negatively) on communication. The first section of our consensus paper proposes a and synthesis of these factors, mechanisms, and people who are older and have a hearing loss.

3.1. DEFFINITION

Definition of disability

The definition of the World Health Organization, as it is given in its online page on Disabilities, is: "Disability is a term-umbrella that includes injuries, activity constraints,

(U.N., n.d.)⁵⁴
(WHO, n.d.)⁵⁵
(U.N., n.d.)⁵⁶

and participation barriers. Damage is a problem of physical functioning or construction. Restricting activities is a difficulty facing a person while performing a task or action. The impediment is a problem experienced by a person in everyday situations. Disability is, therefore, a complex phenomenon that reflects the interaction between the characteristics of a person's body and the characteristics of the society in which that person lives. "

In the same vein, American political scientist (and disabled person) Harlan Hahn claims that "disability stems more from the failure of a structured social environment to adapt to the needs and aspirations of disabled people than to the disability of a person with a disability to adapt to the demands of society" (Hahn, 1986)⁵⁷.

As Oliver defines "All disabled people experience disability as a social constraint, whether this constraint appears as a consequence of an inaccessible environment or because of questionable concepts of intelligence and social skills or disability of the general population to use sign language, or lack of readings in Braille or public aggressive behaviors in people with invisible disabilities." (Oliver, 2008)⁵⁸

This definition shows disability as a phenomenon that derives from a person's physical condition. The everyday difficulties faced by PwD in their different social activities and their everyday life are perceived as a result of their physical harm and therefore the social dimension of the issue is limited to the peculiarity of the characteristics of PwD as a social group and which are based on their own body.

3.2. ATTITUDES, PERCEPTIONS AND STEREOTYPES

It is now known that individuals characterized as disabled have different treatment than others. Every day "communication" of PwD with "healthy" people often brings intense looks, "special" treatment and a childlike way of speaking to people with physical disabilities, which enhance the person's disability and therefore racism due to the perception of non-disabled people about the characteristics that physically differentiate the disabled person. Physical damage is not a disability, but the way of dealing with them identifies them as helpless, or "disabled." The most common cognitive mistakes that may be related to the formation of stereotypical perceptions may be:

- The arbitrary conclusion where the individual draws conclusions without having the necessary information to justify these conclusions.
- Selective deduction where the person focuses on details and does not consider all the data of a situation.
- Focus when the individual gives a different dimension to a situation, exaggerating or underestimating it.

(Hahn, 1986)⁵⁷
(Oliver, 2008)⁵⁸

- Hyperinflation in which the individual generates general conclusions from an isolated event " (Charila, 1995)⁵⁹.

Disabled persons are therefore a large group of people who face severe problems of discrimination and prejudice and who do not enjoy or have almost all the essential elements of a democratic society, which is, in the main, the equal access of all to the opportunities it offers the society in question and the elimination of discrimination. People are more comfortable with familiarity. It is easier to class someone in a certain way because most people do not trust the change and the unpredictability. Thus, in their need to walk into the familiar, they create "labels". People will feel more comfortable with any label they have given to people with disabilities. However, when dealing with contradictions, people's prejudices contradict (Berry, 2007)⁶⁰.

PwD can mention many of discrimination examples caused by barriers. The architectural design, the environment and sometimes the offered service doesn't help the accessibility in any circumstance. Railway stations platforms, entrances to banks and public buildings, pathways and many other examples are with no prediction for PwD and the result for those people is to live in the "corner". As Dickinson says "The same design barriers, of course, are a challenge to parents with children in push-chairs and prams, shoppers with shopping bags, travelers with suitcases and employees occupational health and safety". (Dickson, 2009)⁶¹

3.3. CATEGORIES PwD

Mental Deficit is the under-the-average mental function that occurs during the child's development period (up to the age of 18) and is associated with disorders in adaptive behavior. (Grossman, 1973)⁶²

Disabilities can be divided into four types: physical, necessary for the practice, sensory and perceptual skills for the gathering of information from the environment, mental-cognitive, learning-related and new-experience and emotions. Often, disability affects not only a person's functional area but also other areas, e.g. cases of multi-aging ". (Stathopoulos, 1999)⁶³ Stathopoulos mentioned that the categories of disability that occur are: a) deafness or hearing impairment b) blindness total or partial c) motion disability (hemiplegia, paraplegia, quadriplegia) d) disabilities - paralysis of the brain (spasticity) e) mental retardation f) other disabilities and chronic diseases 1) epilepsy, 2) Hansen's disease, 3) renal failure, 4) Mediterranean anemia or congenital hemorrhagic mood, 5) chronic diseases-bodily lesions, 6) severe disabilities of 67% and over-psycho diseases.

(Charila, 1995)⁵⁹

(Berry, 2007)⁶⁰

(Dickson, 2009)⁶¹

(Grossman, 1973)⁶²

(Stathopoulos, 1999)⁶³

"In more detail, motor lesions, perhaps more than any other form of harm, are manifold, both in their etiology and in their forms of manifestation. They may be permanent or temporary, and sometimes create few problems in human life, while others require a long-term rehabilitation process to enable a person with disabilities to join society and live in a world that is typically made for the average population". (Efstathios, 2000)⁶⁴. In terms of mental functions, cognitive functions are divided into general ones such as consciousness and intelligence and specific ones such as memory, attention, perception, thought, and emotions. This category also addresses mental retardation and autism.

"Finally, mental disorders affect the mental functions as they are shaped over the course of life so that the individual can create reciprocal social transactions within the framework of common meanings and purpose. Psyche and personality regulate the way everyone reacts in different circumstances. Consequently, disorders at this level constitute mental illness whose chronicity creates conditions of disability ". (Stefanides, 2004)⁶⁵

3.4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK IN EUROPE

Article 26 of the Charter of E.U. "recognizes and respects the right of people with disabilities to benefit from measures that will ensure their autonomy, social and professional integration and participation in community life". (EU, n.d.)⁶⁶

According to the European Commission on Public Health (2011), PwD must have equal rights as all habitats in Europe. To be able to take advantage of these rights, the European Union first recognizes the problems faced by this social group. Although this right is recognized, this social group faces difficulties in various areas of everyday life, as they refer to equal opportunities for education, employment, entertainment, health care, social participation. The main aim should be for these people to respond to their role and obligations as citizens, to have the same choices and to regulate their lives, such as people without disabilities. "The actions should aim to ensure accessibility and social inclusion on equal terms with others" (European Commission, 2011). "According to the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (NAPNN), people with disability fulfills all the criteria to be considered socially excluded, a fact for which the constitution itself provides for beneficial provisions:

"Disabled people have the right to enjoy the measures that ensure their autonomy, integration, and participation in the social, economic and political life of the country" (Constitution, Article 21, paragraph 6). All necessary measures are taken to protect and facilitate the Disabled. Access to Education - tailor-made to individual learning needs, providing the Less Extremely Closer or Separate Learning Environment (NSPAP). Actions and interventions to strengthen and protect people with developmental

(Efstathios, 2000)⁶⁴

(Stefanides, 2004)⁶⁵

(EU, n.d.)⁶⁶

difficulties are specialized in the following areas: Pre-Training, Training, Support, Promotion of Employment ". (Papanis, 2008)⁶⁷

3.5. LEGAL FRAMEWORK IN GREECE

In Greek Legislation, there are laws and articles that preserve the rights of PwD :

In particular, (FEK ' 78, 1997) (FEK, n.d.)⁶⁸: people with disabilities are considered (A) (b) those with visual impairment, (c) those with severe hearing problems, (d) those with speech or speech problems, (e) those who suffer neurological or orthopedic disorders; f) those with health problems; g) those with learning disabilities (such as dyslexia); h) infants with disordered personality; and i) those with epilepsy.

- According to Article 4 of the Constitutional Framework for the Legal Protection of Disabled People, all Greeks are equal and have the same rights and obligations.
- Article 21 (2), mention that those who suffer from incurable physical or mental illness are entitled to special care by the state.
- Article 21 (3) talks about the care and protection measures that the state takes for PwD.
- Article 21 (6) mentions the rights of people with disabilities, highlighting the characteristics of "People with disabilities have the right to enjoy measures that guarantee their autonomy, integration, and participation in the social, economic and political life of the country".
- Article 22 establishes the right of PwD to work.

Areas of action to support PwD are:

- Social support for the individual, the family, and the wider social environment.
- Care at social and pedagogical level.
- Provision of counseling on social integration or reintegration.
- Financial support for any housing problems of the family.
- Sleeping mode for people experiencing motor and sensory or mental problems.
- Assistance in moving to pre-training, training, internship, and employment.
- Appropriate ergonomic adaptation of pre-training areas, training, exercise, and employment.
- Creating networks of mutual support and self-help – Function 'Day Centers'.
- Enhance the deinstitutionalization of target group members.

(Papanis, 2008)⁶⁷
(FEK, n.d.)⁶⁸

- Strengthening the skills of these individuals in the areas of autonomy, self-preservation, and hygiene - Learning basic social behavior rules.
- Awareness and proper awareness of representative voluntary organizations for people with disabilities.
- Raise awareness of the public and employers, combat social exclusion and stigmatization and remove prejudices and obstacles.
- Raise awareness of companies or organizations promoting internship opportunities for permanent employment of disabled people professionally trained.
- Establishment and operation of an information bank.
- Creation of networks for exchange of information and experience at a national and transnational level.
- Establishment of a Registry for People with Kinetic Difficulties and Sensory Problems'. (Papanis, 2008)⁶⁹

3.6. STRUCTURES AND DOMES IN GREECE (Day Centers)

Structures in Greece for Disabled People

As figured in Table 2 (APPENDIX 4-5) in Greece we have 1176 domes and structures of Day Care centers. The aim of the Day Care Center for PwD is the provision of services such as transportation to the beneficiaries, accommodation, and nutrition, personalized benefit program (occupational therapies, speech therapy, etc.), creative employment activities - entertainment, other services on self-handling issues, etc.).

The aim of the Day Care Center is to Provide Psychosocial Support, Socialization, Counseling, Rehabilitation, Self-Care, Entertainment, and Sports Services to people 8 years of age and over who are mentally disabled, providing all the services required for a Midnight Center - Daily Disabled Care.

Considering the specificities of PwD and especially those with intellectual disabilities, whereas a population group needs the support and rehabilitation services of «Lifelong», in order to be able to meet the daily requirements of their living, a program has been developed which the beneficiary should participate daily in these. In addition to the programs, provided daily by the structures to the beneficiaries is the transportation with the school bus to and from the Center before and after the start of the daily program, medical monitoring, breakfast and lunch served by qualified staff. Also provided supporting programs such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, trainer and parents counseling, social-trafficking programs in the development of daily living skills and autonomy. Also provided entertainment, create employment, gymnastics and sports programs. Included training and education through the workshops such as hagiography, design and Graphic Arts (Graphic Design), computer science, cooking, folk art,

(Papanis, 2008)⁶⁹

jewelry, packaging of aromatic and medicinal plants, handmade bookbinding, silk screen printing, secretary service. Trainees also take part in training groups in theatrical performances, traditional dances, and musical instruments. (AMEA, n.d.)

According to Mr. Karapoulios CEO of “Care for the mentally disabled of Pieria”, aka “Merimna Katerinis” in Greek, is a non-profit NGO that was founded in 1979 in Katerini. (APPENDIX 4) Its purpose is to advance the rights and well-being of disabled persons and specifically the one with a mental disability. Back then persons with disabilities ended up disconnected, living in isolation and facing discrimination. Merimna is recognized from the state as an Official Provider of social support. The foundation is also in collaboration with the Association of People with Disability promoting the message of the UN’s 2030 Agenda that pledges to “leave no one behind”. Our organization also teams up with the local municipality of Katerini by promoting mutual plans, in favor of the mentally disabled. This collaboration resulted recently in a common program that advocates the UN’s Sustainable Development Agenda. Finally, the foundation is in collaboration with numerous Level 5 and above educational organizations (according to ISCED 2011), that educate caregivers for the disabled. The cost of Merimna’s operation is mainly covered either by insurance funds or programs of the EU Cohesion Fund. Still, a part of the cost is covered by donations from the local society. (KATERINI, n.d.)⁷⁰

4. HUMAN RIGHTS

U.N. in 2006 for PwD states that there must be provision of accessibility for everyone ‘to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas’ accordingly the participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport are crucial for the full enjoyment of life by PwD. (Disabilities, 2006)⁷¹

4.1. TOURISM FOR ALL

“Tourism for All” is on a high level of interest for the tourism industry. U. S. of America and Australia as well, have created rules and standards for the provision of human rights and access to leisure and tourism for PwD on the other hand according to Cameron et al. other countries are still in the very early stages of developing a barrier-free environment . (Kim Cameron, 2003)⁷²

The project Tourism for all and Accessible Tourism address to a huge travel market and by itself is a kind of tourism that involves communities and destinations to PwD

(KATERINI, n.d.)⁷⁰

(Disabilities, 2006)⁷¹

(Kim Cameron, 2003)⁷²

and families to function independently and with equity and dignity through the delivery of universally designed tourism products, services, and environments . (Darcy, 2011)⁷³ Also, including groups are people with permanent disorders, seniors and families with young children as well. The PwD like all of us needs to accept the services and facilities without restrictions from the stakeholders for enjoying their leisure time at all tourism destinations. The specific help and support to PwD is depended upon the quality and accessibility on transportation, accommodation, and traveling. (Khatri, 2012)⁷⁴

5. PwD & TOURISM

Tourism used to present as a sector for the health and well-being persons and this image created as a privilege for happiness without problems in a period full of fun. By the way, tourism is a fact that affects all people all over the world with no restriction ability and disability. (Baum, 2006)⁷⁵

Differentiation is the main component of every man and every visitor is different, with different needs, desires and motivations and especially when a tourist is a PwD should be respected and considered. (Angeloni, 2011)⁷⁶

According to the United Nations “A destination that proves to be capable of meeting the needs of tourists with disabilities is a destination able to meet the needs of all tourists, being committed to meeting the needs of more sophisticated tourists.” (UN, n.d.)⁷⁷

Tourism is a component of life that can and must improve a person ’s physical, mental and psychological health according to Deirdre at al. (Deirdre Scully, 1998)⁷⁸

5.1.THE EFFECTS OF TOURISM ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

People always had the need to engage in recreational activities, regardless of cultural, racial or various other peculiarities. Today in modern societies, with the development of technological culture, leisure is a biological need for emotional and psychosomatic balance. The balance of recreational activities has been frequently commented on in the literature in recent years. Caroline Kelly (Kelly, 1990)⁷⁹ attributes that participation in these activities makes it possible to approach family members or other social groups, resulting in an environment where people live in greater harmony. People who are often

(Darcy, 2011)⁷³

(Khatri, 2012)⁷⁴

(Baum, 2006)⁷⁵

(Angeloni, 2011)⁷⁶

(UN, n.d.)⁷⁷

(Deirdre Scully, 1998)⁷⁸

(Kelly, 1990)⁷⁹

engaged in recreational activities are less susceptible to heart problems, problems in the spine, diabetes, obesity and some types of cancer than sedentary people. (Eichstaedt & Lavay, 1992)⁸⁰ Their participation also contributes to the development of mental health. (ISSP, 1992)⁸¹ Improving physical fitness through leisure activities is directly related to increased self-confidence and the self-esteem that the individual has for himself and his abilities.

People with mental retardation can and participate in all leisure activities programs. Among the most beloved are handicraft, dance, theater, music, games, fitness programs. (Chroni, 2001)⁸² Recreational programs can include one-day trips of up to a few weeks; they can offer, among other things, people with intellectual disabilities feelings of autonomy and freedom. Fishing, swimming, diving, forest excursions, fire lighting, bird behavior observation are some ideas that can be held in small or large groups of people, less or less organized tours. However, trips involving adventure and risky missions have more benefits than some people assume. (Chroni, 2001)⁸³

As McCabe mentioned (McCabe, 2009)⁸⁴

it is obvious that a trip can offer huge impacts in health and well-being relation to the cure of stress, related illnesses and disorders as well in a range of other possible treatments in terms of children on Education, child growth, social inclusion, skills development, and life satisfaction. Holidays have a special bond with communities and social inclusion; family stability and cohesion; feelings of happiness and a better quality of life; improvements in mental health, stress, and stress-related illness . (Report, n.d.)⁸⁵

Tourism may and must contribute to the improvement of an individual's physical, psychological and mental health. (Deirdre Scully, 1998)

5.2. WORLD

Researches all over the world revealed that PwD tourists are a huge market. The percentage of Australian tourists PwD has been calculated at about 11% of the total number of tourists. The U.K. found in a survey conducted in 2009 that 12% of all domestic tourists were PwD. PwD tourists stayed longer than the normal tourist and spent more than the average. In the U. S. of America statistics have shown that adults PwD spend an average of \$ 13.6 billion annually on travel . (A.T., 2013)⁸⁶

(Eichstaedt & Lavay, 1992)⁸⁰

(ISSP, 1992)⁸¹

(Chroni, 2001)⁸²

(Chroni, 2001)⁸³

(McCabe, 2009)⁸⁴

(Report, n.d.)⁸⁵

(A.T., 2013)⁸⁶

5.3. EUROPE

In the European continent, people with disabilities are over 120,000,000 and 89,300,000 of them have the ability to travel and seek accessible destinations with appropriate infrastructure while 10% of the general population worldwide face disability and Greece is a place that wants to offer the right for free access to the seas. (ENAT, 2008)⁸⁷

6. BENEFITS OF HOLIDAYS

Quality of life can be better for PwD if they act like normal people in tourism and they have to be encouraged by their families and friends to start travel activities and journeys as per Lord. (Elisabeth Lord, 2008)⁸⁸ The importance of recreational activities for the PwD are many such as societism, activation, encouragement, acceptance from the social environment and events certainly highlight the value, the importance of recreation and the correspondence. (Munroe, 2014)⁸⁹

The participation of PwD in tourism activities is a "bridge" bringing together two different worlds, with different attitudes and different practices, offering equal existence and acceptance of people with different and special abilities. The participation of PwD in the touristic product that take place in nature or else, such as horse-riding, climbing, and other activities brings the feeling of joy, pleasure, and self-esteem. Porretta wrote that a person with mobility problems involved in simple and non-competitive leisure activities and experiencing success through this participation then seeks to participate in even more difficult situations that require more effort. (Porretta, 1991)⁹⁰

The importance of a holiday for PwD is the mix of activities, experiences and new places, a tourism system so complex but so interesting with all those components that nowhere else could be found. "Tourism is a chance to break routines where linked to illness or disability this connected strongly with other studies on disabled tourists experiences." (Shaw, 2004)

PwD's holidays is a chance to forget for a while the disability or the special ability in themselves and important to offer relief from the stress and help people to face their medical conditions better on their return (Miller, 2009)⁹¹.

(ENAT, 2008)⁸⁷

(Elisabeth Lord, 2008)⁸⁸

(Munroe, 2014)⁸⁹

(Porretta, 1991)⁹⁰

(Miller, 2009)⁹¹

6.1. ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility is the main element of the inclusion for PwD. An accessible world with no barriers is the big bet in order to create an environment for free participation. Accessibility is an open term including all aspects of making sure that PwD can participate and have the same choices as persons with no disabilities. . (BANK, 2011)⁹²

“Grey tourism” (Kofler, 2010)⁹³ goes hand by hand with PwD needs and Accessible Tourism, a chance derives from the Accessible Tourism market that brings together the access needs of the ‘grey tourism’ and disability. Information and marketing promotion for easy tourism facilities from one hand, as Accessible Tourism organization mentioned and from the other competitive advantage for the destination and the providers against others for gathering these growing specialized markets. (A.T., 2013)⁹⁴(http://www.accessibletourism.org/resources/10_barrierfree_tourism_asia_pacific_en.pdf, n.d.)⁹⁵

According to Khatri wheelchairs, walking sticks and crutches, people with visual and hearing impairments, “grey tourism”, pregnant women, and families with children, travelers with heavy suitcases, and travelers with trolley bags are the key players of accessible tourism. (Khatri, 2012)⁹⁶

The base of Accessible tourism is the PwD and the elderly market as mentioned before, we can also include people who may suffer a disability at any time of life caused by an accident at any age.

6.2. PLAN OF A TRIP

As Angeloni refers to a wider consideration of constraints might lead to a better understanding of tourist motivation, decision-making, and destination image. (Angeloni, 2011)

The first thing you need to plan, and then make, a trip is a piece of right information about accessibility. Great importance for people with disabilities when traveling has all the accessibility information. Tens of millions of people with mobility problems, elderly people, families with young children want to travel, entertain, get to know new places. All these people are now a registered trend. Greek tourism can only win when and if it is accessible to all categories of citizens. PwD should have a barrier-free environment that will let them participate and associate with the rest of the world. Attitudes perceptions prejudices and stereotypes are an everyday living factor due to the fact from facing limitations in specific times and

(BANK, 2011)⁹²

(Kofler, 2010)⁹³

(A.T., 2013)⁹⁴

(http://www.accessibletourism.org/resources/10_barrierfree_tourism_asia_pacific_en.pdf, n.d.)⁹⁵

(Khatri, 2012)⁹⁶

places of their lives such as education, work, entertainment, and travel. (Council., 2012)⁹⁷

The human needs made the stakeholders and the society to research the tourist experience of PwD for equity and social justice from the ethic point of view. Information and communication technologies (ICT) as well have been able to push up the record of tourist travels from T.O. However, ICTs are an even more important tool for PwD, who often use technology tools in places that there is no existence of accessibility help for from the destination provides and the stakeholders. According to Buhalis, it implies that tourists with disabilities provide the important of incentive function, pushing the organizations to be at the forefront of ICT and ancillary technologies. (Buhalis, 2008)⁹⁸

6.3. REGULATIONS

Regulation (EU) 1107/2006 relating to the rights of PwD when traveling by air. (U.N, 2017)⁹⁹

This regulation aims to protect PwD from unfair and discriminatory treatment and to provide help in the use of air transport services.

Regulation (EU) 181/2001 on passenger rights travelling by bus and coaches (U.N, 2017)¹⁰⁰

The European Union, in its demand to ensure equal access to buses and coaches, issued the Regulation 181/2001, 'having regard to Article 9 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of PwD' and that 'passenger services with buses and coaches should be offered to the benefit of citizens in general. (U.N, 2017)¹⁰¹

Regulation (EU) 1177/2010 on passenger's rights on sea vessels and internal freight transport (U.N, 2017)¹⁰²

Having invoked the same principles as Regulation (EC) 181/2001 on the rights of bus and coach passengers and the principle of the construction and adaptation of ports to accessibility standards, this Regulation makes provisions on the rights of passengers with disabilities (Articles 7-15).

Regulation (EU) no 1371/2007 on rights and obligations of railway passenger

Stressing similar principles to the above, this regulation also states that railway undertakings and station management undertakings should ensure that access is guaranteed to all travelers. (APPENDIX 7)

(Council., 2012)⁹⁷

(Buhalis, 2008)⁹⁸

(U.N., 2017)⁹⁹

(U.N., 2017)¹⁰⁰

(U.N., 2017)¹⁰¹

(U.N., 2017)¹⁰²

6.4. ACCESSIBILITY INFRASTRUCTURES

Years back but not that far, the buildings were not easily accessible. Over the years and in accordance with human rights of free movement, in accordance with the free will of all and equality as part of the independence of people, creates a new society with benefits for PwD. "Reasonable adaptation" means the necessary changes and adaptations which do not impose an unjustified burden, where needed in a case, so that PwD enjoy life or exercise, on an equal basis with others, all rights, and fundamental freedoms. " (U.N, 2017)¹⁰³

To qualify as an accessible space, it has to meet a large number of criteria covering each disability and a special need: to have access from the outside to the interior but also to move inside it, to have a lift with a Braille system and a toilet for PwD, the rooms are specially designed for the height of the bed, switches, basins, sinks, there are bars in the corridors for the blind or the elderly, the danger signs are in colors that if there are carpets, they must have the appropriate thickness so that they can move the wheelchair, have driving dogs. (Sport, 2002)¹⁰⁴

Following the infrastructure improvements that took place in view of the 2004 Olympic Games, Athens is a decent city in terms of accessibility and its historic center is quite friendly to people with disabilities. Generally, however, for Greece, the picture is not what one would expect from a country whose heavy industry is tourism. (FOUNDATION FOR ECONOMIC & INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH, 2015)¹⁰⁵

In the capital, the "scepter" on accessibility matters is kept by the areas of culture, with the Acropolis Museum being the top one, while hotels, especially the four and five stars, are well rated as accessibility is among the prerequisites for high categorization. (www.greece4all.eu/en, n.d.)¹⁰⁶

Accessible infrastructure is a key objective for tourism participation, (Pühretmair, 2004)¹⁰⁷ a fully accessible environment is unlikely to be achieved in the short to medium term. In contrast, the provision of accurate and reliable information can be dealt with in the short term (Darcy, 1999)¹⁰⁸ and is regarded as the most effective means for opening tourism opportunities for PwD. As per Pühretmair PwD's need extra time than normal to plan and make sure that their needs are met (Pühretmair, 2004)¹⁰⁹, special and accurate information needs to arrive at the destination, coming back home, show around at the destination as well as for finding availability and

(U.N., 2017)¹⁰³

(Sport, 2002)¹⁰⁴

(FOUNDATION FOR ECONOMIC & INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH, 2015)¹⁰⁵

(www.greece4all.eu/en, n.d.)¹⁰⁶

(Pühretmair, 2004)¹⁰⁷

(Darcy, 1999)¹⁰⁸

(Pühretmair, 2004)¹⁰⁹

appropriate accessible accommodation, accessible places of interest and other amenities. (Veitch, 2004B)¹¹⁰

Destination management and stakeholders can only win from A.T., taking under consideration sustainable tourism. "Sustainable tourism" definition based on the principles of sustainable development; it is a form of tourism "that takes account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and host communities" (UNWTO, 2005).¹¹¹

The key indicator for improving the accessibility of a destination is the cooperation of the stakeholders, the state, the local community, PwD, and the many others involved in the touristic model such as transportation and many other factors. "Stakeholder collaboration is a developing affordable tourism solution, recognizing the value of the market and capitalizing on it". (Iakovidou, 2009)¹¹²

6.4.1. TRANSPORTATION

The public transport such as coach, bus, metro, tram, taxi service, minivan service, air service, ferries, and water taxi which provides transportation to the public usually operates according to the timetables and it is the most common means of transportation in Greek territory.

6.4.1.1. COACHES (KTEL)

Coach services use coaches on main roads to carrying numerous passengers on bigger distances through the mainland. Coaches operate with certain human capacity on low budget cost for larger cities and smaller cities. Coaches are less convenient for PwD and there are no many with available seats and accessible points, but at the stations, there is always help from the employees and the key factor is that they travel in a big frequency and very good connections from town to town.

6.4.1.2. METRO – TRAM – BUS

Metro, tram, and buses are the most common public transporters in the area of Athens. In the metro, all of the stations are located on the surface and makes the metro friendly for PwD. All station are reachable even they are not on the main roads level and

(Veitch, 2004B)¹¹⁰
(UNWTO, 2005)¹¹¹
(Iakovidou, 2009)¹¹²

escalators or lifts offers the solution. The Metro services are the most reliable service to passengers so that is the most popular transport mode in Athens. Tram also offers stations which are located on the surface and on the main streets and makes tram very friendly transportation mean for PwD. Busses are less convenient for PwD and there are no many with available seats and accessible points, but the stations are on the main roads and in a big frequency.

6.4.1.3. TRAIN

The train is part of public transport as well; it offers quite fast services to suburbs, towns, and villages. The trains have steps, and the platforms are not always at the same level as the train floor. The only available route for PwD is Athens to Thessaloniki and back 3 times a day. Intercity rail is long-haul passenger services that connects just two more cities of the mainland on the route from Athens to Thessaloniki. For any other destination, there must be contact before traveling with the chief of the station to travel and if there is the possibility.

Passenger safety instructions are inside the train carriages. Emergency-stop handles and emergency brake handles are inside the train carriers next to the door. (Embassy of the United States of America, 2012)¹¹³ (APPENDIX 8)

6.4.2 ACCOMODATION

Infrastructure in the hotel

Article 5 Arrangements for PwD (10, JAN 2015)

1. Hotels are subject to the provisions of Article 26 of Law 4067/2012 (A 79) on the services of PwD.
2. The minimum number of rooms for PwD and especially for those with mobility problems in hotels is set at 5% of the total capacity of the accommodation and maximum of five rooms in total.
3. For the design of spaces designed to serve AMCs. the provisions of article 26 of Law 4067/2012 and circular 9 with AP are applied. House 29467 / 13-6-2012 of the Office of Studies for PwD. (APPENDIX 9)

Hotel Chains in Greece

Accommodation is the initial component for a PwD tourist or normal tourist from which can start the process of traveling in a destination. All the planning process of a trip starts with accommodation and transportation. Hospitality is the main element of

(Embassy of the United States of America, 2012)¹¹³

tourism, including Food & Beverages, accommodation and entertainment for the guest in a location away and sometimes unknown from home.

6.4.2.1. HILTON HOTEL

5* Hilton Hotel is situated in the heart of Athens, the disabled tourist can access easily the center of the city. Is a business hotel offering luxury service as well in restaurants and bars. The personnel offer concierge service and tour assistance according to perfections of PwD tourist. The hotel provides electronic information through TV-sets including SAT channels and pay tv, additionally, there are safes and telephone sets in the standard rooms. PwD tourist can enjoy the Internet without any extra charge. The hotel provides reservation bonus for PwD up to 10% for 10 overnights. There are no cancellation fees whenever a PwD cancel a booking. (<https://www.hiltonathens.gr/>, n.d.)¹¹⁴

6.4.2.2. RADISSON BLU HOTEL PARK & BEACH

The Radisson Hotel chain offers luxury accommodation in Greece. Radisson Blu hotels are located in the city center of Athens and in Crete island. World-class hotels known for great facilities. The hotel chain provides disabled rooms with all equipped facilities (<https://www.radissonblu.com/en/hotels/greece>, n.d.)¹¹⁵.

6.4.2.3. INTERCONTINENTAL CHAIN HOTEL

Intercontinental hotel is located in the heart of Athens. The 5* hotel operates under the umbrella of the international chain. The hotel rooms for PwD found the largest in sq.m. and the disabled tourist can feel like home with the vibrating alarm clock and hearing loop. The hotel provides electronic information through television including SAT channels and pay tv, additionally, there are safes and telephone sets in the standard rooms. PwD tourist can enjoy the Internet without any extra charge. (<https://www.ihg.com/intercontinental/hotels/us/en/athens/athha/hoteldetail>, n.d.)¹¹⁶

(<https://www.hiltonathens.gr/>, n.d.)¹¹⁴

(<https://www.radissonblu.com/en/hotels/greece>, n.d.)¹¹⁵

(<https://www.ihg.com/intercontinental/hotels/us/en/athens/athha/hoteldetail>, n.d.)¹¹⁶

6.4.2. BEACHES

A vital role for Greek tourism is the free access in all beaches all over the Greek coastal territory. Greece comes again in second place in the international "Blue Flag" program among 47 countries for 2018. Today, Blue Flag Org. mentions that "Blue Flag has become a truly global program, with an ever-increasing number of countries participating in it. The flag is both a symbol that the beach participates in the Program but also an indication of compliance with the criteria. A beach must be accessible to all (regardless of age, gender, political views, religion) in order to be eligible for Blue Flag accreditation." (www.blueflag.global, n.d.)¹¹⁷ (APPENDIX 10)

"519 Greek beaches, 15 marinas and 1 sustainable tourism boat were awarded with the "Blue Flag", which is the most world-renowned eco-label around the globe. This means that the Greek beaches are not only beautiful but also have the most high-water quality standards in the world, which has contributed to country's showcase into one of the best travel destinations worldwide. As announced by the Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature, which is the national operator of the "Blue Flag" program in Greece, the International Organization awarded this year 3,687 beaches, 679 marinas and 55 sustainable tourism boats around the world. Greece won 12% of the total awards and 14% of the awarded coasts. The Regional Unit of Chalkidiki was featured as the first Greek area with 89 flags." (APPENDIX 11) (<https://yougoculture.com/news/blue-flag-most-high-quality-greek-beaches-2018>, n.d.)¹¹⁸

Almost all coastal municipalities in Greece own blue flag awarded beaches for access to PwD tourists. All of the beaches offer seatrack system. The "Seatrack" (<https://tobea.gr/en>, n.d.)¹¹⁹ system is energy-independent and made of durable materials in the marine environment intended to provide mobile disabled people or persons with limited mobility in general with the possibility of access to the sea independently without the difficulty of passing through of the other visitors - users. It is an environmentally friendly construction that is disassembled during the winter months, which means that its use does not cause environmental damage or have a permanent effect on it.(APPENDIX 12)

(www.blueflag.global, n.d.)¹¹⁷

(<https://yougoculture.com/news/blue-flag-most-high-quality-greek-beaches-2018>, n.d.)¹¹⁸

(<https://tobea.gr/en>, n.d.)¹¹⁹

7. FINDINGS

According to the first figure, we understand we have a mixed sample of all Disabilities with a high rate of 50% on Mental Retardation. Mental Disorders, Visual, Mobility, Autism, Developmental disorders, Down syndrome, and others follow to give us an idea that people with disabilities may have one, two or more chronic kind of disabilities.

Our sample has at least traveled once in the last two years, so we have a reliable result. (Figure 2).

93% of PwD's have traveled in Greece and that is the number that interests us in the investigation for the below answers (Figure 3).

Only a 20 % (Figure 4) from the sample agreed that the money they get from the state for their disorder can cover at least a journey per year in the Greek territory. On the other hand, we have already seen that in Figure 2 more than 75% of the PwD traveled two and more times the last two years. So, we can easily understand that the family and parents motivate PwD's to travel.

A high number of 88% follows those who chose holidays as an answer (Figure 5).

In the question (Figure 6) "with whom you travel" family members and parents are the most common answer and then the friends.

Private Car is the most popular for transportation since PwD mainly travels with family as we saw before. Airplanes and Tourist Buses are in the second place (Figure 7).

The evaluation of transportation to the destination with 95 % positive answers on Figure 8 it is not so objective because PwD uses family cars for traveling. As well on the next 2 questions (Figure 9-10), the evaluation of transportation while on holidays is more than 95% positive using Private Cars and Taxi service.

Just a 20% (Figure 11) used the service of a touristic organization to book accommodation or another touristic product. PwD and families make direct bookings (60%) and internet reservations (30%), probably to accommodation that they have already visited before and there was satisfaction from the accessibility offered.

For accommodation figure 12 offers very useful findings, Hotels 4* 3* and 5* offers accessibility that's why all together get a 55% of the preferences. We also see rented lodgments and camping's in high demand (20% each) because they are cheap and organized from clubs that the PwD belongs and support. Family houses or friends' accommodation are usually free of charge and on high demand with 30%.

A 90% (Figure 13) positive opinion for Evaluation of the Accommodation but as we saw before we have here Hotels with accessibility and cheap houses usually owned by family or friends.

Next question (Figure 14) was, difficulties during stay, many different and useful answers mainly issues for accessibility, stairs, and toilets and if the problem solved the answer for 80% of cases were, of course, no (Figure 15).

Accessible places of interest next to accommodation were unbelievable positive of 45% (Figure 16). But in the next question (Figure 17). we face the truth because we collected all the issues of problems and are a lot. First of all, discrimination and faces looking down because of shame. For sure we get more answers as accessibility, communication, toilets, signals, Info plates stairs etc. (Figure 18) If the problem solved the answer for 84% was no again.

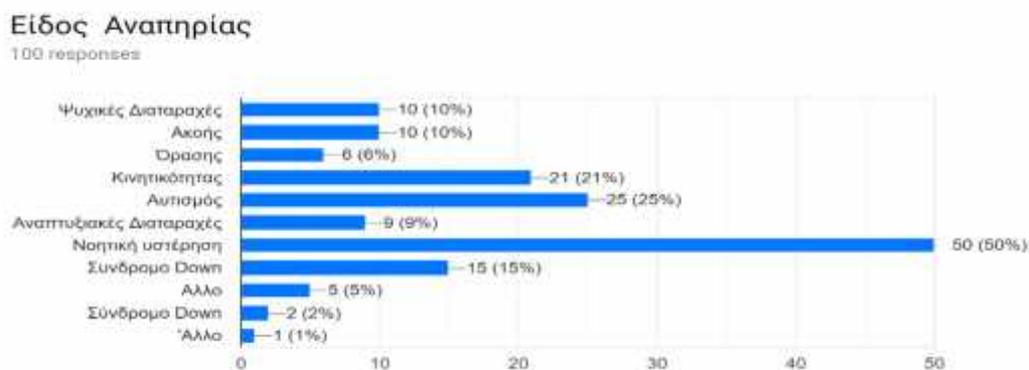
Quality of staff training for PwD at points of interest was the next question and the negative (Figure 19) answer was 65% but the desire of the personnel to serve them was high with almost 80% (Figure 20).

Is there a lack of infrastructure and services for tourists with disabilities compared to other similar European or global destinations? was the last question and the answer for 90% was negative again (Figure 21).

From the sample, we see that we have an average age for PwD 29 Years old between 9 to 58 years old and 60% male and 40% female. Additionally, for the parents - assistants an average age of 44 years old 17 to 71 years old and 55% female.

The e-mail address I collected for thanking back for the help and the assistance answering the questioner was only 45% response with real e-mail address because of PwD afraid even to give a personal element. According to the research, another point I want to mention is that PwD travels mainly on summertime because almost all of the domes and structures that serve them are closed for July and August. They travel especially to the coastal mainland or to the Greek islands. The reason is that almost all over the Greek territory easily someone can find accessible beach awarded with Blue Flag and accessible points of interest nearby.

Figure 1 Type of Disability 1 Mental Disorders - 2 Hear - 3 Vision - 4 Mobility - 5 Autism - 6 Developmental disorders - 7 Mental retardation - 8 Down syndrome - 9 Other



" Accessibility for PwD tourists in Greek territory "

Figure 2 How many times have you traveled in the last 2 years? (min of 2 overnights)

Πόσες φορές ταξιδέψατε τα τελευταία 2 χρόνια (με κατ' ελάχιστον 2 διανυκτερεύσεις).

100 responses

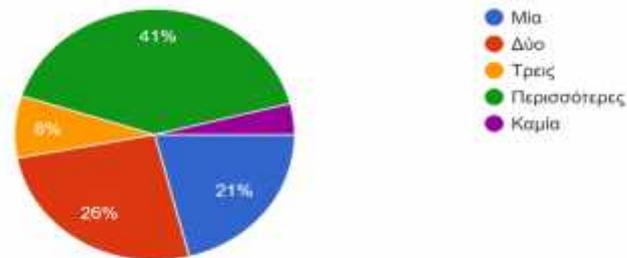


Figure 3 In Greece or abroad?

Στην Ελλάδα ή στο εξωτερικό

95 responses

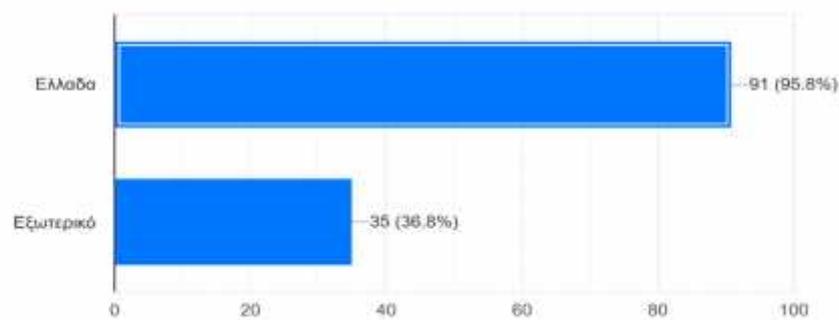
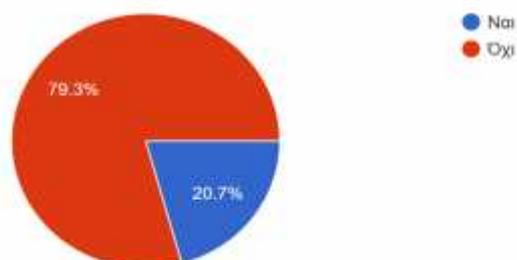


Figure 4 Is state subsidy enough to cover at least one trip a year within borders?

Είναι επαρκής η κρατική επιδότηση ώστε να καλύψει τουλάχιστον ένα ταξίδι ετησίως εντός συνόρων;

92 responses



" Accessibility for PwD tourists in Greek territory "

Figure 5 Purpose of the trip

1 Holidays – 2 Sport – 3 Medical – 4 Educational – 5 Other

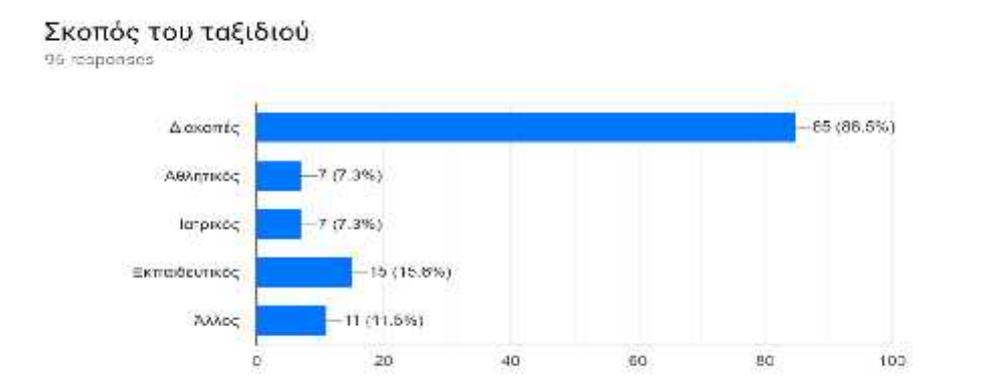


Figure 6 Who you usually travel with?

1 Fellow – 2 Family member – 3 Parent – 4 Friend - 5 Guardian 6 - Other

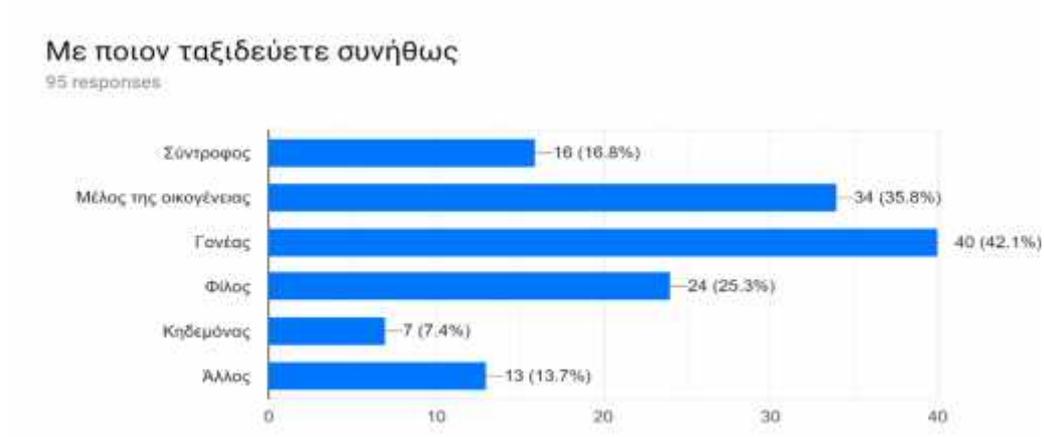


Figure 7 Transportation Means

1 Airplane – 2 Touristic Bus – 3 Train – 4 Rental Car – 5 Private Car – 6 Taxi- 7 Ship – 8 Other

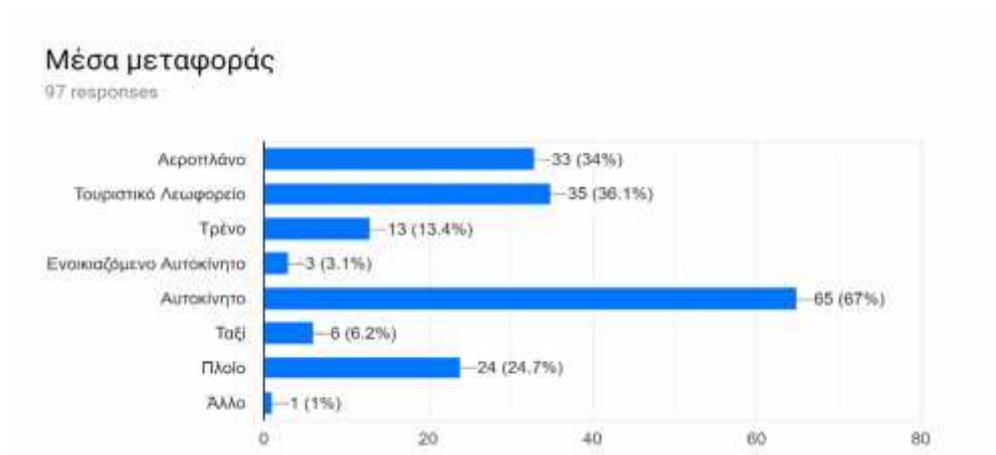


Figure 8 Evaluation of transportation to destination

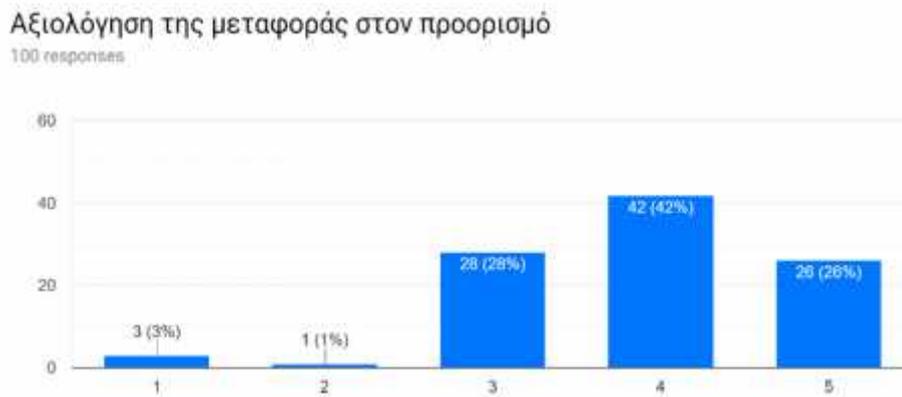


Figure 9 Means of transportation used during stay

1 Airplane – 2 Touristic Bus – 3 Train – 4 Rental Car – 5 Private Car – 6 Taxi- 7 Metro or Public Bus - 8 Mini Bus – 9 Ship or Boat – 10 Other

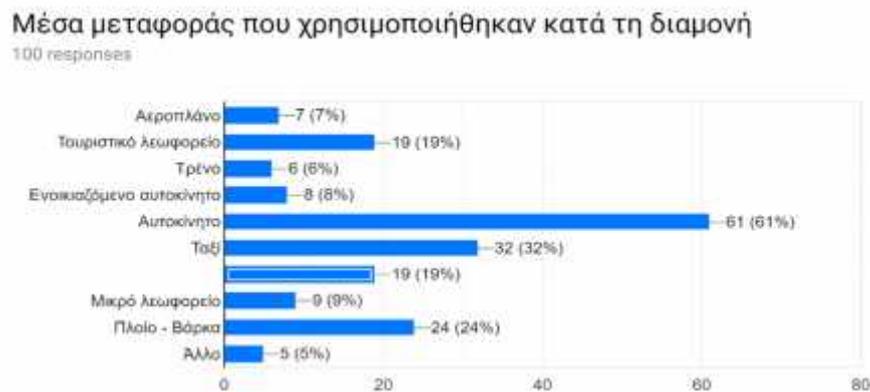


Figure 10 Evaluation of transportation

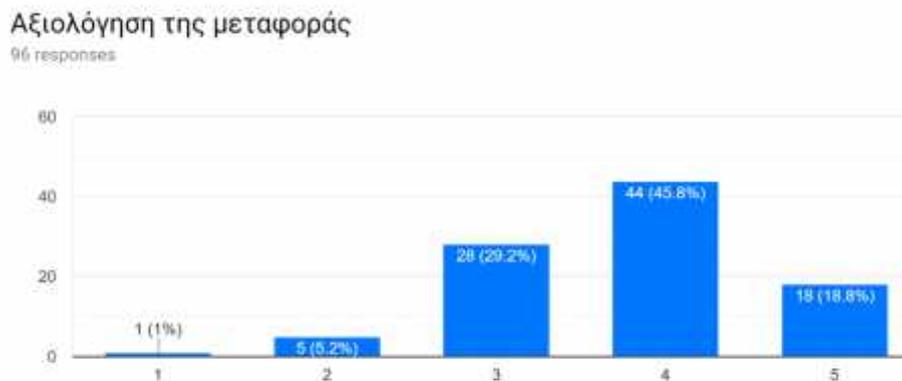
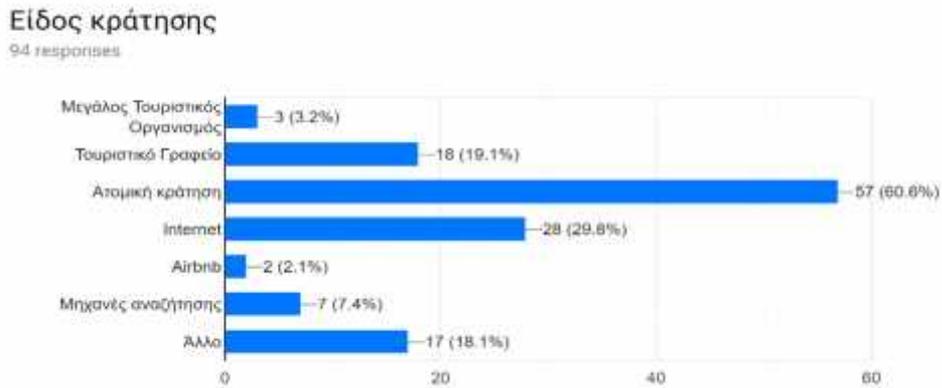


Figure 11 Type of Reservation

1 Tour Operator (T.O.) – 2 Travel Agency - 3 Individual reservation – 4 Internet – 5 Airbnb – 6 Search Engine Machines -6 Other



Figure

12 Accomodation

1 5*Hotel – 2 3-4* Hotel – 3 1-2* Hotel – 4 Apartment – 5 Camping – 6 Rental House – 7 Friends or Family House – 8 Other

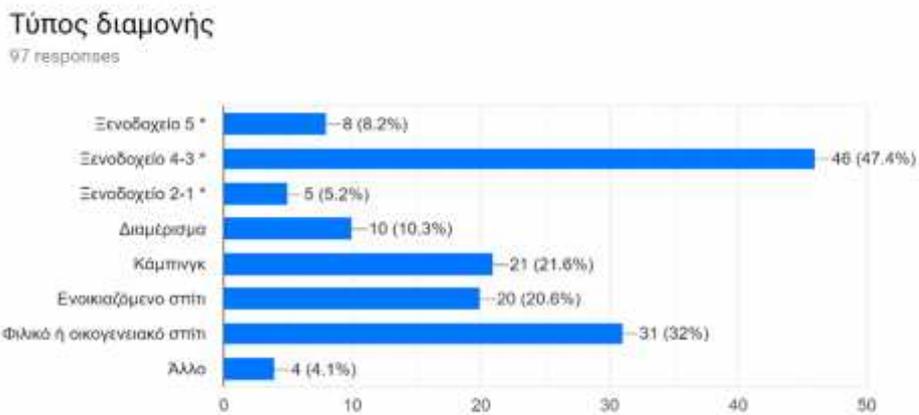


Figure 13 Evaluation of the Accommodation

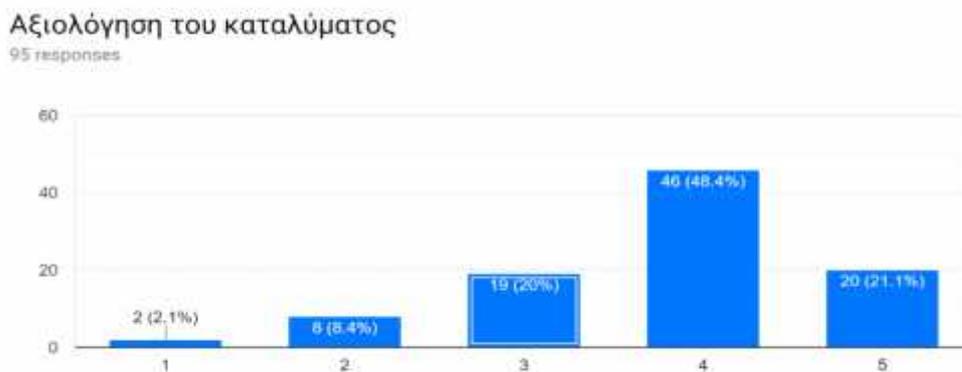


Figure 14 Main difficulty during stay



Figure 15 Problem Solved?

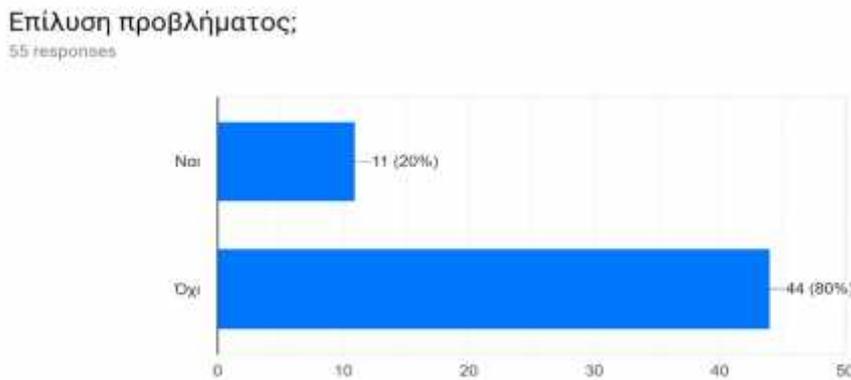


Figure 16 Evaluation of accessibility next to accommodation, places of interest, shops, restaurants and bars

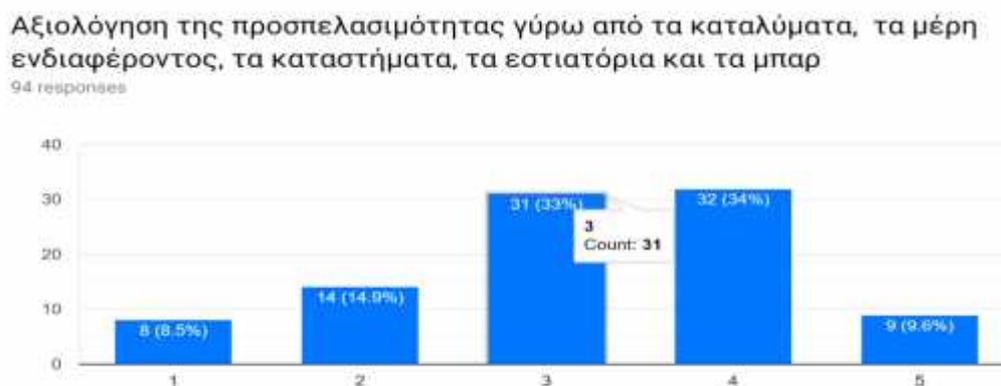


Figure 20 Any disposal for special service from the personnel to PwD?

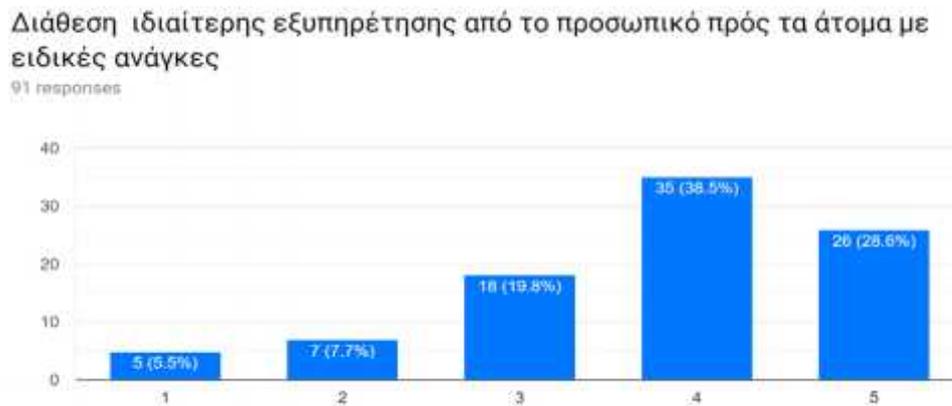


Figure 21 Is there a lack of infrastructure and services for tourists with disabilities compared to other similar European or global destinations?

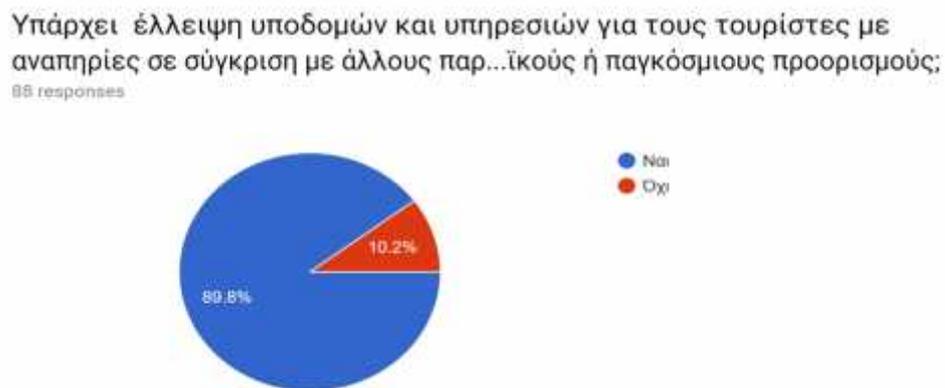
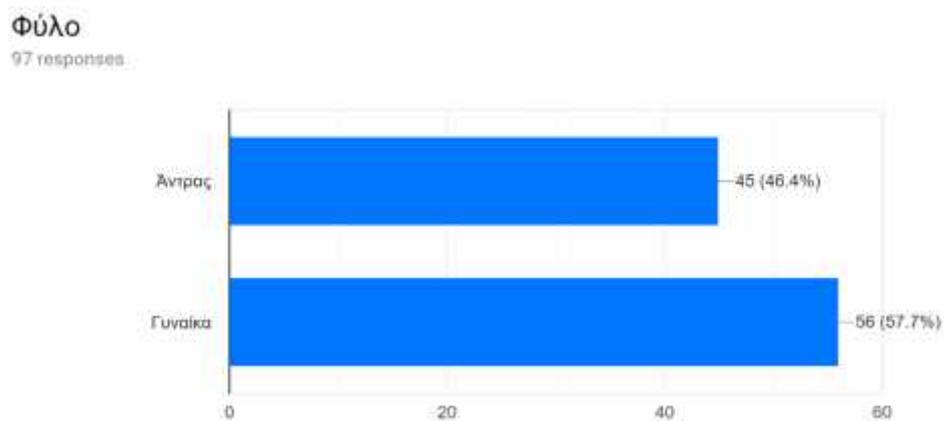


Figure 22 Gender



" Accessibility for PwD tourists in Greek territory "

Figure 23 Age

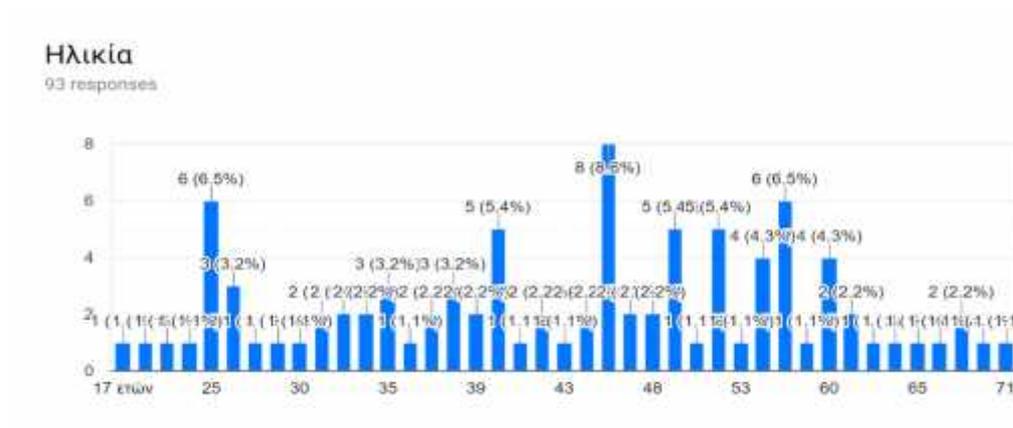


Figure 24 Gender

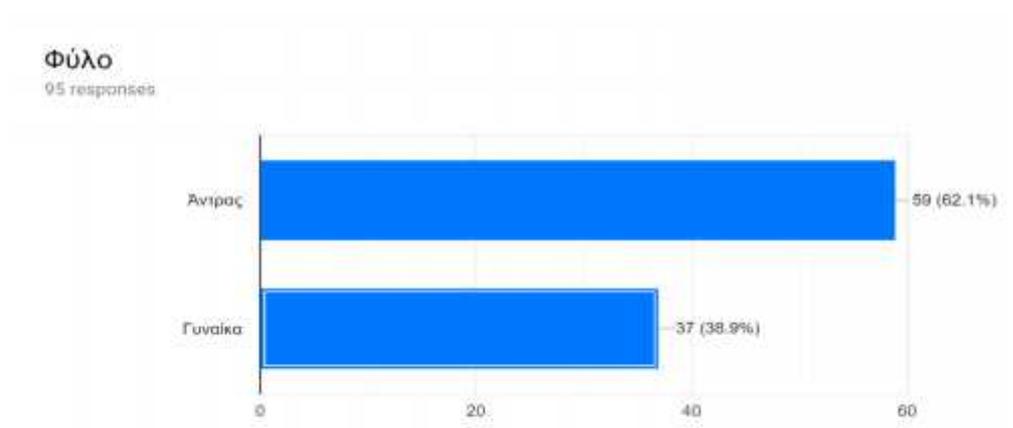
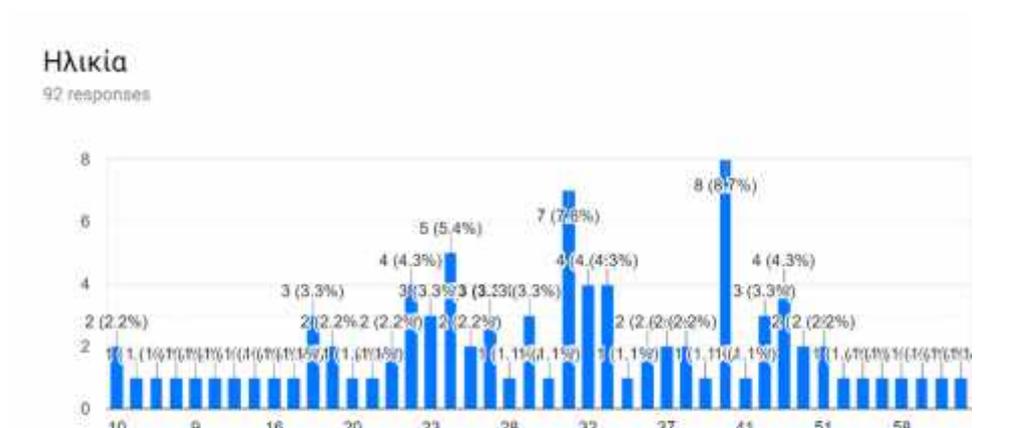


Figure 25 Age



A touristic destination can earn only if the accommodation sector and the public transportation sector offer accessibility to all tourists. The development of the touristic sector has to rely on stakeholders on the private sector and the public sector in order to upgrade the popularity of the touristic place. Accessibility has universal importance

including incoming and outgoing tourism for PwD tourists. The accessible infrastructure of the community, the specialized for PwD provided customer service increases the length of stay. The research shows from the answers that there is will from the stuff to help PwD travelers but there was not enough knowledge and training. For that reason, it is really important to understand what accessible tourism needs and it is no other than recommended training and study from the private and public sector.

A bigger problem is found in restaurants and cafes, which usually do not have special toilets, even when it is possible to approach and move people with disabilities inside. Any attempts and ambitious plans by owners for targeted renovations in order to enter the map of accessible structures usually "stumble" at the high cost demanded by the work and the lack of an institutionalized framework that will encourage and subsidize such initiatives. There are many, of course, and those who do not realize that having accessible infrastructure and disability-friendly destinations is not charity but business movement. "Also, a major problem is created by the bias that faces people with disabilities as lonely, blocked, negative in the possibility of travel and holidays. Leaders in tourism for people with disabilities are, of course, Scandinavian countries, who may not have the Greek sun and the sea, but they have friendly mindsets and buildings accessible, while it is a matter of principle for the state as well as for the citizens to facilitate all people, with and without disabilities". (www.greece4all.eu/en, n.d.)¹²⁰

8. CONCLUSIONS

“Accessibility throughout the tourism value chain avoids the creation of “accessibility islands” that compromise the security and integrity of the tourism experience. A person needs to make the trip with maximum independence and satisfaction, starting from the planning stage up until the return home.” (UNWTO, n.d.)¹²¹

Tourism market is one of the world’s fastest growing and bigger markets, in the condition of industries if we have accepted tourism as an industry however the Greek tourism has only to win but at the same time to develop this segment for the PwD.

The study tried to confirm a kind of accessibility in Greece to PwD and the main goal from the beginning of this study was to examine the level of accessibility to Greeks PwD in the Greek territory.

For the transportation mean to the destination or the removals during the stay at the destination the evaluation is positive as a general picture and no added observations found for analysis.

Special infrastructures services such as ramps, escalators for wheelchairs, elevators with bigger cabins, arrow signs for the destination, W.C. for PwD, wide inside doors and bigger entrances needed to have better access for the travelers. All findings were according to the study and the questioner revealed. Another important indicator in the

(www.greece4all.eu/en, n.d.)¹²⁰
(UNWTO, n.d.)¹²¹

hospitality sector for Pwd who visited the destinations is that there were no special skills or different training for the personnel even though the desire for help is on a very high level.

As usual Greek PwD's opinion for 80 percent of the total sample believe that there is a lack of infrastructure and services for PwD compared to other similar European or global destinations due to the fact that Greeks complain about everything all the time and believe that all the other world has completely higher standards than theirs. But it is still a score and there is respect for the final result.

9. SUGGESTIONS

PwD needs access, appropriate design, and convenient accommodation according to disability standards. The stakeholders of the tourism sector ought to search and give active solutions in accommodation for PwD and make sure that at the planning procedure of a trip they meet the needs of the PwD.

Taking really good care in the accommodation sector for PwD tourists and the offer of quality accessible service in public transportation generates a feeling of complete participation in tourism experience, safety and independence. The disappear of social isolation which provided has as result the increasing of the length of stay and the increase of traveling frequency. Transportation must be safe and flexible.

Accurate information needed to the PwD and families for the matter of providing access to social media and networks in order to reduce the issue of social isolation and remain active during holidays.

Special trainers should educate the personnel with sessions and seminars for PwD needs, this is the perfect solution for staff to face and solve the daily problems and issues in the tourism sector. The feeling that staff members can handle any strange and difficult situation after training gives the safety that any situation is handled. Also, PwD visitors feel safe when the informed and trained personnel have the responsibility of providing any kind of service.

10. BARRIERS

The aim for PwD travelers is to get over the physical barriers and the infrastructure barriers and to make their life easier to the destination on holidays and to reach easily through appropriate transportation the final destination.

But they face problems such as incomplete information on destination and accessibility issues, difficulties in booking accommodation and lack of communication with the providers of service. Extra cost needed for special service and existing economic exclusion found because the state subsidy is not enough to cover at least one trip per

year. Financial restrictions called from Shaw and mention that “are clearly associated with disabilities in that these restrict access to the world of work”. (Shaw, 2004)¹²²

‘Tourism For All’ and "Accessibility for all" is mainly the target and in the final result faced that PwD is not properly served by the tourism sector due to the existence of the barriers in the destinations. (Darcy, 1999)¹²³

Imagination and expectation create a crucial picture in the final choice, which leads PwD to travel. According to Darcy “among people who live with a disability, the idea of leaving behind one’s everyday surroundings and going on a journey can create significant anxiety”. (Darcy, 2009)¹²⁴

Limited physical and comprehensive access on the interviewed PwD took part. Just a few questioners couldn’t answer at all the questions and needed the help of career or the parent to fill up the empty questionnaire.

11.RESEARCH

The main purpose of this research is to investigate the grade to which our country can meet the needs of PwD, this study explores the image of these people for the Greek territory and reality, by measuring the degree of satisfaction of the disabled people in relation to the existing infrastructure and the corresponding services provided to them.

The real objective of the questions is to find the extent of access to tourism for PwD in Greece and, understanding the main barriers faced by those people additionally to let the tourism industry know better the needs for accessible tourism and meet PwD’s wants.

A total of 192 people took place in answering the questionnaire. The majority of the participants were PwD with mental disorders, visually impaired people, deaf people mobility, autism, developmental disorders, mental retardation, Down syndrome, physical impairments, wheelchair users, people with learning disabilities and people with communication support. PwD’s traveling in Greece and family members or carers in general of PwD who are responsible for all the procedure of reservation and travel component. It was important to have the opinion of the family or the companion to make sure that the real experiences PwD are under a supervisor’s eye and the travel experience was real and not fictional.

(Shaw, 2004)¹²²

(Darcy, 1999)¹²³

(Darcy, 2009)¹²⁴

12. APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Fact sheet on Persons with Disabilities

Overview

- Around 10 per cent of the world's population, or 650 million people, live with a disability. They are the world's largest minority.
- This figure is increasing through population growth, medical advances and the ageing process, says the World Health Organization (WHO).
- In countries with life expectancies over 70 years, individuals spend on average about 8 years, or 11.5 per cent of their life span, living with disabilities.
- Eighty per cent of persons with disabilities live in developing countries, according to the UN Development Program (UNDP).
- Disability rates are significantly higher among groups with lower educational attainment in the countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), says the OECD Secretariat. On average, 19 per cent of less educated people have disabilities, compared to 11 per cent among the better educated.
- In most OECD countries, women report higher incidents of disability than men.
- The World Bank estimates that 20 per cent of the world's poorest people have some kind of disability, and tend to be regarded in their own communities as the most disadvantaged.
- Women with disabilities are recognized to be multiply disadvantaged, experiencing exclusion on account of their gender and their disability.
- Women and girls with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to abuse. A small 2004 survey in Orissa, India, found that virtually all of the women and girls with disabilities were beaten at home, 25 per cent of women with intellectual disabilities had been raped and 6 per cent of women with disabilities had been forcibly sterilized.
- According to UNICEF, 30 per cent of street youths have some kind of disability.
- Mortality for children with disabilities may be as high as 80 per cent in countries where under-five mortality as a whole has decreased below 20 per cent, says the United Kingdom's Department for International Development, adding that in some cases it seems as if children are being "weeded out".
- Comparative studies on disability legislation shows that only 45 countries have anti-discrimination and other disability-specific laws.
- In the United Kingdom, 75 per cent of the companies of the FTSE 100 Index on the London Stock Exchange do not meet basic levels of web accessibility, thus missing out on more than \$147 million in revenue.

Education

- Ninety per cent of children with disabilities in developing countries do not attend school, says UNESCO.
- The global literacy rate for adults with disabilities is as low as 3 per cent, and 1 per cent for women with disabilities, according to a 1998 UNDP study.
- In the OECD countries, students with disabilities in higher education remain under-represented, although their numbers are on the increase, says the OECD.

Employment

- An estimated 386 million of the world's working-age people have some kind of disability, says the International Labor Organization (ILO). Unemployment among the persons with disabilities is as high as 80 per cent in some countries. Often employers assume that persons with disabilities are unable to work.
- Even though persons with disabilities constitute a significant 5 to 6 per cent of India's population, their employment needs remain unmet, says a study by India's National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People, in spite of the "People with Disabilities" Act, which reserves for them 3 per cent of government jobs. Of the some 70 million persons with disabilities in India, only about 100,000 have succeeded in obtaining employment in industry.
- A 2004 United States survey found that only 35 per cent of working-age persons with disabilities are in fact working, compared to 78 per cent of those without disabilities. Two-thirds of the unemployed respondents with disabilities said they would like to work but could not find jobs.
- A 2003 study by Rutgers University found that people with physical and mental disabilities continue to be vastly underrepresented in the U.S. workplace. One-third of the employers surveyed said that persons with disabilities cannot effectively perform the required job tasks. The second most common reason given for not hiring persons with disabilities was the fear of costly special facilities.
- A U.S. survey of employers conducted in 2003 found that the cost of accommodations was only \$500 or less; 73 per cent of employers reported that their employees did not require special facilities at all.
- Companies report that employees with disabilities have better retention rates, reducing the high cost of turnover, says a 2002 U.S. study. Other American surveys reveal that after one year of employment, the retention rate of persons with disabilities is 85 per cent.
- Thousands of persons with disabilities have been successful as small business owners, according to the U.S. Department of Labor. The 1990 national census revealed that persons with disabilities have a higher rate of self-employment and small business experience (12.2 per cent) than persons without disabilities (7.8 per cent).

Violence

- For every child killed in warfare, three are injured and acquire a permanent form of disability.

- In some countries, up to a quarter of disabilities result from injuries and violence, says WHO.

- Persons with disabilities are more likely to be victims of violence or rape, according to a 2004 British study, and less likely to obtain police intervention, legal protection or preventive care.

- Research indicates that violence against children with disabilities occurs at annual rates at least 1.7 times greater than for their peers without disabilities.

<http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/toolaction/pwdfs.pdf>

APPENDIX 2

"Dear Sir / Madam,

My name is Karagounis G. Theodoros and I am a graduate of the MSc in Hospitality and Tourism Management at the School of Economics and Management of the International Hellenic University of Thessaloniki.

In the framework of my diplomatic work on the above Master Program I quote a questionnaire on "Traveling in Greece, Research for People with Disabilities supported by Greek social structures".

In order to collect a good sample for this research and the writing of my diploma thesis, I quote a link to the questionnaire I have prepared on the subject.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe74NnFvzphSXk5ZoWVa1BHuvBaPHFbAbWGM29xajFyQ2YDJg/viewanalytics>

Please ask if it is feasible to forward the above questionnaire to members or their escorts in order to be able to complete it.

Completion lasts 5 minutes, and responses are anonymous. The data to be collected will only be used for the purposes of the above survey. Your results will be communicated to you upon completion of the questionnaire collection.

The research is under the guidance of Dr. Mavraganis Eleni

Thank you in advance for your help and I remain at your disposal for any information or clarification.

Yours sincerely,

Karagounis G. Theodoros

" Accessibility for PwD tourists in Greek territory "

.....
..... μ μ
..... μ "

teokaragounis@hotmail.com

MSc

μ

μ

Dr

"Traveling in Greece - Research for people with disabilities supported by Greek social structures"

Karagounis G. Theodoros teokaragounis@hotmail.com

MSc in Hospitality Management and Tourism at the International Hellenic University

Research led by Dr Mavragani Eleni

1. Email address

.....

2. -Type of Disability

-Mental Disorders

-Hear

-Vision

-Mobility

μ -Autism

-Developmental disorders

-Mental retardation

μ Down- Down syndrome

-Other

3. 2 (μ ' 2
) . How many times have you traveled in the last 2 years (with a minimum of 2 overnights).

-One

-Two

-Three

- More

μ -None

" Accessibility for PwD tourists in Greek territory "

4. - In Greece or abroad?
 - Greece
 - Abroad
5. ? - Where in Greece?
.....
6. ; - Is state subsidy sufficient to cover at least one trip a year within borders?
 - Yes
 - No
7. - Purpose of the trip
 - Holidays
 - Sport
 - Medical
 - Educational
 - Other
8. - Who you usually travel with?
 - Fellow
 - Family member
 - Parent
 - Friend
 - μ - Guardian
 - Other
9. μ - Transportation Means
 - Airplane
 - Touristic Bus
 - Train
 - μ - Rental Car
 - Private Car
 - Taxi
 - Ship

" Accessibility for PwD tourists in Greek territory "

2-1 * - 1-2* Hotel

μ μ -Apartment

μ - Camping

μ – Rental House

– Friends or Family House

- Other

21. μ – Evaluation of the Accommodation

1 2 3 4 5

- Insufficient

- Excellent

22. μ - Main difficulty during stay

.....

23. μ ; - Problem Solved?

– Yes

- No

24. μ , μ , μ - Evaluation of
accessibility next to accommodation, places of interest, shops, restaurants and bars

1 2 3 4 5

- Insufficient

- Excellent

25. μ μ . - Issues you may
have faced during various visits?

.....

26. μ ; - Problem Solved?

– Yes

– No

27. μ μ μ
. - Quality of staff training for PwD at points of interest.

1 2 3 4 5

- Insufficient

- Excellent

28. μ μ
- Any disposal for special service from the personnel to PwD?

1 2 3 4 5

μ - None μ - Huge

29.

μ . - What is the main factor for choosing a new destination?

.....

30.

μ ; - What are your

expectations for such a destination?

.....

31.

μ μ μ μ ; - Is there a lack of infrastructure and services for tourists with disabilities compared to other similar European or global destinations?

- Yes

- No

32.

; - If so what?

.....

μ - Demographic Questions

- Companion

e-mail.....

33.

- Age

34.

- Gender

- Male

- Female

μ - Demographic Questions

μ - Pwd

e-mail.....

33.

- Age

34.

- Gender

- Male

-Female

μ

μ

I hope my research will give answers to the academic community for people in need of special care. Thanks for your time and your answers.

APPENDIX 3

<https://money-tourism.gr/epta-thesis-stin-pagkosmia-katataxi-antagonistikotitas-skarfalose-o-ellinikos-tourismos/> 12/04/2017

Greece ranks 24th among 136 countries, from the 31st that was two years ago to the competitiveness index of tourism, recently published by the World Economic Forum (WEF), which confirms that tourism remains the main exit mechanism of the country from the crisis and development pillar. Spain still ranks first, while Switzerland fell four points to 10 in the ranking. Our country, this year, has "climbed" seven positions in the Tourism Competitiveness Index, far ahead of Turkey and Cyprus (44th and 52nd respectively). Spain, followed by France, is ranked first, with Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom, the USA, Australia, Italy, Canada and Switzerland completing the top ten. According to the World Economic Forum, Greece's performance is mainly attributed to the country's outstanding efforts to exploit its natural resources (32nd of 46th), both directly through stronger digital demand (19th) and indirectly through protection of the environment (39th from 61st) and the following marketing policies (43rd from 62nd). At the same time, Greece has a competitive price advantage (in 90th place since 113th), mainly due to the reduced cost of hosting services for international tourists, fuel costs and airport taxes and airport charges. These policies, according to the WEF, have helped attract more international arrivals, but have generated mixed income results. In order to increase arrivals and revenues, Greece should have a friendlier business environment (103rd), with fewer barriers to foreign direct investment, a reduction in business taxation and a more effective legislative framework. Also, greater use should be given to the use of new technologies (51st), since to date businesses are still limited in both B2B (98th) and B2C transactions (82nd). In addition, it is noted that improving the visa policy (73rd) is another measure that could affect revenue and international arrivals, requiring small financial investments. Greece is ranked highest in Health and Hygiene (11th), Priority in Travel and Tourism (15th), Tourist Services and Infrastructure (18th). The key indicator of the competitiveness of the countries, based on 14 individual indicators, is published every two years by the World Economic Forum in its Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2017.

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tourism strategies, tourism forecasts, tourism marketing concepts and tourism master plans for successful tourism development on a regional, national and international level.

IPK International is a member of the European Society for Opinion and Market Research (ESOMAR), the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA).

Greece makes an impressive climb of 7 places to reach the 24th position in the global rankings. This performance is linked to Greece’s exceptional efforts to value its natural resources (32nd, up 14 places), both directly, via stronger digital demand (19th) and indirectly, through environmental protection (39th, up 22 places) and marketing activity (43rd, up 19 places). At the same time, price, competitiveness has increased significantly (90th, up 23 places) thanks to declining cost of accommodation for international tourists, lower fuel cost and reduced ticket taxes and airport charges to incentivize tourism directly. These policies have contributed to generate more international arrivals, but have produced mixed results in terms of revenues. To increase arrivals and revenues, Greece should focus on making its business environment (103rd) friendlier, with lower impediments to FDIs, reduced taxation on profits and enhanced efficiency of the legislative system. In today’s tech-savvy world, Greece also needs to become more ICT ready (51st). To date, businesses still make little use of new technologies for business-to-business (98th) and business-to-customer (82nd) transactions. Improving its visa policies (73rd) is another measure that would impact revenues and international arrivals with little financial investment required.

Greece 24th / 136

Key Indicators Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index 2017 edition

International tourist arrivals 23,599,455

International tourism inbound receipts US \$15,672.7 million

Average receipts per arrival US \$664.1

T&T industry GDP US \$14,704.1 million % of total 7.6%

T&T industry employment 400,983 jobs % of total 11.3%

Sources: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC)

APPENDIX 4

Χρηματοδότηση του τομέα των υπηρεσιών για ΑμεΑ από το NOES1.gr

Περιφέρεια Ελλάδας	Γενικός πληθυσμός Ελλάδας το 2011	Φορείς / Δομές που ενοικιάστηκαν
Αττική	3.627.624 (32,4%)	305 (24,2%)
Κεντρικής Μακεδονίας	1.850.058 (17,4%)	106 (10,5%)
Θεσσαλίας	732.762 (6,8%)	71 (16,3%)
Δυτικής Ελλάδας	679.796 (6,3%)	62 (13,9%)
Κρήτης	623.065 (5,8%)	54 (14,0%)
Ανατ. Μακεδονίας και Θράκης	608.182 (5,6%)	26 (5,0%)
Πελοποννήσου	577.903 (5,3%)	63 (13,0%)
Στερεάς Ελλάδας	347.390 (3,1%)	61 (17,0%)
Ηπείρου	336.856 (3,1%)	39 (15,2%)
Νοτίου Αιγαίου	306.975 (2,9%)	40 (13,2%)
Δυτικής Μακεδονίας	283.689 (2,6%)	67 (14,2%)
Ιονίων Νήσων	207.838 (1,9%)	33 (12,8%)
Βορείου Αιγαίου	199.231 (1,9%)	32 (12,8%)
Γενικό σύνολο	10.813.306	1.176

Πηγή: NOES1.gr / Δεδομένα υπηρεσιών @ ΠΡΟΧΩΡΗΣΕ (www.prosxores.gr)

Στατιστική τράπεζα διαθέσιμη με ειδικές εκπαιδευτικές ανάγκες και αλληλεγγύη με ανάπηρους (ΑμεΑ). Πρόσβαση επιθυμητή/βολευμένη: 2016/2017. Τα δεδομένα από τον παγκόσμιο χάρτη της Ε.Ε.Σ. (ΑΤ)

Σημείωση: Αν οι υπηρεσίες της "Εταιρείας" καταχωρηθούν με βάση τον παγκόσμιο χάρτη, θα πρέπει να υποστηρίξουν επαρκώς (πρόσβαση επί του εδαφού/πλοία) σε όλες τις ειδικές ανάγκες "ΑμεΑ" και "Άλλων" φύσης. Με παρόμοια διαδικασία, ετοιμάζονται οι Χάρτες όπου υποστηρίζουν άλλους υπηρεσίες από τα ενδιαφέροντα, ανά τα πρόσωπα εμπλεκόμενα οι Περιφέρειες με παρόμοια/αλληλεγγύη από το ενδιαφέρον.

the mentally disabled. This collaboration resulted recently in a common program that advocates the UN's Sustainable Development Agenda. Finally, the foundation is in collaboration with numerous Level 5 and above educational organizations (according to ISCED 2011), that educate care givers for the disabled. The cost of Merimna's operation is mainly covered either by insurance funds or programs of the EU Cohesion Fund. Still, a part of the cost is covered by donations from the local society.

<https://www.merimnakaterini.gr/>

APPENDIX 7

Regulation (EU) 1107/2006 relating to the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility when traveling by air

This regulation aims to protect people with disabilities and reduced mobility from unfair and discriminatory treatment and to provide assistance in the use of commercial air transport services. Obliges air carriers and their / their travel agents / agents not to refuse to detain and board disabled persons, to provide them with information in formats suitable for their personal injuries, to set out points of departure and arrival at airports, receive and communicate with each other that they are going to serve disabled people, as well as assisting them at the airport and in flight. At the same time, it binds the parties involved to have well-trained personnel for the treatment of people with disabilities, while imposing compensation for loss of or damage to mobility equipment.

Regulation (EU) 181/2001 on passenger rights travelling by bus and coaches

The European Union, in its effort to ensure equal access to buses and coaches, issued the Regulation

181/2001, 'having regard to Article 9 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities' and that 'passenger services with buses and coaches should be offered to the benefit of citizens in general. " Indeed, one of the subjects of the amendment is 'non-discrimination and the compulsory provision of assistance to disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility' (Article 1 (c)). Furthermore, Article 9 (1) states that 'carriers, tour operators and tour operators shall not refuse to accept a reservation, issue or otherwise provide a ticket to, or to board, persons as a result of invalidity or reduced mobility'. (4), "that person may ask to be accompanied by another person of his choice who can provide him with the assistance needed to eliminate the grounds referred to in paragraph 1". ensures accessibility to vehicles and venues that meet technical accessibility standards, but does not impose it, by offering the alternative to escort, that is to say, by imposing admission to dependence instead of institutionalizing the lifting of

Regulation (EU) 1177/2010 on passenger's rights on sea vessels and internal freight transport

Having invoked the same principles as Regulation (EC) 181/2001 on the rights of bus and coach passengers and the principle of the construction and adaptation of ports to accessibility standards, this Regulation makes provisions on the rights of passengers with disabilities (Articles 7-15). The reflection developed in the Bus and Coach Regulation applies. Annexes II to IV also set out how to assist disabled persons both in

ports, on embarkation and disembarkation, and on board, while specifying the information and training of the officials concerned as referred to in Article 14.

Regulation (EU) no 1371/2007 on rights and obligations of railway passenger ships

Stressing similar principles to the above, this regulation also states that railway undertakings and station management undertakings should ensure that - in accordance with the applicable Community provisions on public procurement - access is guaranteed to all architectural constructions and all trains at the time of purchase or construction or on the occasion of major modifications, with the gradual removal of physical barriers and functional deficiencies. He then devotes all of the fifth chapter (articles 19-25) to the specific issues concerning people with disabilities. Article 23 therefore states: "The railway undertaking shall provide disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility with free assistance on board the train when boarding and disembarking from it ...

"Train assistance" means any reasonable effort to provide assistance to a disabled person or person with reduced mobility ... where the disability or reduced mobility of the person does not allow him to access these services in an independent and secure manner. " That is, disability and reduced mobility are targeted for lack of security in access to rail services. Therefore, perhaps, railway undertakings are committed to simply making every "reasonable effort" to assist the disabled passenger. Obviously, the text is deliberately far from naming specific ways of helping people with disabilities. As much as it is understandable that adaptation to accessibility conditions is difficult and costly, given that railway undertakings, many of them in the EU. are of public interest, serve the public interest and do not work to maximize profit, ensure the right to move and not be impeded, a legal text supposed to ensure that "persons with disabilities or persons with reduced mobility, regardless of whether it is due to disability, age or any other factor, should have the potential for rail travel comparable to that of other citizens "(preamble Regulation) responsible, remains wishful thinking, mocks people with disabilities and turns the right to move to de jure privilege of those without injuries and obstacles.

APPENDIX 8

Embassy of the United States of America

Athens, Greece

February 2012

INFORMATION FOR THE DISABLED

Disclaimer: The following information is presented so that you have an understanding of the facilities, laws and procedures currently in force. For official and authoritative information, please consult directly with the relevant authorities as described below. Your flight to Greece: Disabled passengers and passengers with limited mobility are encouraged to notify the air carrier/tour operator of the type of assistance needed at least 48 hours before the flight departure. Athens International Airport facilities for the disabled include parking spaces, wheelchair ramps, a special walkway for people with impaired vision, elevators with Braille floor-selection buttons, etc. For detailed

information on services for disabled passengers and passengers with limited mobility, please visit the airport's website, www.aia.gr

Hellenic Railways Organization (O.S.E.): In Athens, the railway office for persons with disabilities is at Larissa main station. Open from 6 AM to midnight, it can be reached at tel.: 210-529-8838, in Thessaloniki at tel.: 2310-59-9071. Information on itineraries, fares and special services provided by the O.S.E. is available at: <http://www.ose.gr>. Recorded train schedule information can be obtained via tel: 1440 and 1110.

Ferries: The Greek Ministry of Merchant Marine reports most ferry companies offer accessibility and facilities for people with disabilities and has posted a list of companies on its website, www.yen.gr. For information concerning ferry schedules, please consult www.gtp.gr

Athens Metro: Metro service connects Athens International Airport directly with city center. Escalators, lifts, and special areas for people with disabilities are available.

Detailed information can be found at <http://www.amel.gr>, via recordings at tel.: 210-519-4012 (7 AM - 7 PM) or the main government information tel.: 185. Email inquiries can be sent to pservice@ametro.gr.

Buses: The Organization of Urban Transportation of Athens and Thessaloniki provides free transportation for the disabled within each city and can be reached via tel.: 1130 (6 AM - 10 PM, Mon - Sat and 8 AM - 3 PM Sundays). Requests must be made two days prior to the date transport is desired.

Hotels: Confirm with hotels by phone or fax to be absolutely certain any reserved room will indeed be accessible for your particular situation.

Sailing Charters for the disabled: Information available at:

www.disabledsailingholidays.co.uk/greek.htm

Museums: Most of museums in the Athens area are accessible to persons with special needs. Audio guides are provided in a few museums in the Athens and Thessaloniki area. For detailed information concerning individual museums and accessibility for disabled persons, please consult the Ministry of Culture website at <http://www.culture.gr>, e-mail aepka@culture.gr, tel. 210-321-4172/173.

The Panathenaic Stadium: A classical cultural monument of Greece directly connected to the Modern Olympic Games from their revival in 1896 until the Athens Olympic games in 2004. After a multi-year renovation, it is once again open to the public. For information please visit, www.panathenaicstadium.gr

Tactical Museum (established by the Lighthouse for the Blind of Greece) at 198 Doiranis Street, Kallithea (south of central Athens) is open 9 AM - 2 PM, Monday – Friday. Entry is free for handicapped individuals and their escorts. The exhibits consist of statues, vessels, sculptures and artifacts which are exact replicas of the originals in the museums of Greece. It also includes a Byzantine section with wood carved alters, epitaphs, icons, other religious artifacts and a model of a Byzantine Church. For more information, visit www.tacticalmuseum.gr

Information for Disabled Residents in Greece: Under Greek law, all persons having visual acuity less than 1/20 in both eyes are entitled to monetary assistance. In addition, the blind and all handicapped with more than 67% disability who are high school or technical school graduates can register for a school of higher education or classes of their choice without having to take any exams. There is also a one-year course for telephone operators located in Nea Smyrni that gives visually-impaired individuals the opportunity to study and become telephone operators. Blind or disabled individuals are also entitled to a discounted telephone bill, an unlimited travel card for all means of public transportation, and culture cards for museums, theaters, movies, cultural events, and bookstores.

The Greek National Confederation of Disabled People is located at 236 El. Venizelou Street, 163 41 Illioupoli, tel.: 210-994-9837, fax: 210-523-8967, email: esea@otenet.gr

The Lighthouse for the Blind of Greece, may be reached at www.fte.org.gr .

https://photos.state.gov/libraries/greece/38517/uscitizens/disabled_info_jan2012.pdf

APPENDIX 9

Infrastructure in the hotel

Article 5 Arrangements for persons with disabilities or persons with disabilities

1. Hotels are subject to the provisions of Article 26 of Law 4067/2012 (A 79) on the services of people with disabilities and persons with disabilities.

71. Accessibility is a feature of the environment that allows all people without discrimination on the basis of gender, age and other characteristics such as physique, power, concept, nationality to have access to it, to have autonomous, safe and comfortable access, and use of infrastructures, but also services (conventional and electronic) and goods available in that environment.

2100 THE GOVERNMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT (FIRST EDITOR)

Article 26 Special rules for the service of disabled persons or obstacles 1. In all premises of new buildings other than residential buildings for which the building permit is issued after the publication of this law, it is necessary to ensure the horizontal and vertically autonomous and safe access for disabled or disabled persons and their servicing in all outdoor and indoor areas of the buildings, in accordance with the design instructions of the draft Treaty of the Ministry of the Environment, Climate Change for All, as amended and in force in time. These buildings also require 5% of the total sanitary space to be accessible to people with disabilities or persons with disabilities for sharing or, at least, at least one complex of sanitary facilities that may be mixed (male / female). The above affordable hygienic facilities will be calculated on the number of sanitary spaces imposed per use by other appliances. As these buildings have parking spaces, then 5% of them or at least one will be suitable for use in wheelchairs. Especially for residential buildings, it is necessary to ensure the autonomous and safe horizontal and vertical access of people with disabilities or obstacles to all external and internal public spaces of residential buildings as well as to ensure conditions for easy conversion of dwellings to future disabled users / without affecting the structure of the building.

2. The accessibility of all buildings individually and safely by disabled persons or persons with disabilities and their servicing is ensured by accessible horizontal and vertical routes starting from the level of the pavement and reaching the lift door and their internal and external spaces buildings and consist of elements of appropriate specifications, such as ramps, elevators, lifts, by providing sheltered accessible waiting areas in case of emergency of a floor space with when the floor area is less than 200 or 1 space with two wheelchair spaces when the floor area is greater than 200.

3. The common open-air areas of the land on which the buildings referred to in paragraph 1 are constructed shall be appropriately designed if the land is allowed to be used by disabled persons or persons with disabilities.

4. State-owned legal entities governed by public law, private law bodies of the wider public sector, charitable organizations, first-tier and tier-type local authorities existing before the entry into force of this law, or public gatherings (conference rooms , exhibitions, museums, concerts, sporting or cultural merger, temples, theaters / cinemas, restaurants / bakeries / cafes / entertainment centers, multipurpose halls, waiting rooms passengers, banks / bureaus, etc.), temporary residence, education, health and social welfare, justice and correction, offices and commerce, industry and crafts, as well as car parks and service stations, so that their working spaces can be accessed by people with disabilities or handicapped persons. The configurations listed in this paragraph shall be made in accordance with the Design Guidelines of the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change, referred to in paragraph 1 above and must be completed by 2020, with the condition that the main body of the building is affected otherwise buildings will be considered arbitrary. Especially in the case of existing buildings referred to in this paragraph, it is exceptionally permitted to provide a lift with the minimum internal cabin dimensions as prescribed by EL0T-EN 81-70 "Safety rules for the construction and installation of lifts - Special applications for lifts passenger and goods - Part 70: Accessibility to lifts of persons including disabled persons' for a wheelchair user and at least one accessible to persons with disabilities hindered toilet space people with shared male / female. Existing commercial and office buildings, other than buildings housing offices of the public and wider public body, legal persons governed by public law, private law bodies, first and second tier local authorities, as well as health showrooms with table-ware development in the indoors or outdoors, with a gross area of less than 100 m². can only be exempted from the obligation to create accessible public areas if this causes a disproportionate burden on their owners. More specifically, the issues related to the adaptation of the above buildings can be regulated by a decision of the Minister of Environment, Energy and Climate Change and the competent Minister, as the case may be

5. The provisions of the preceding paragraphs exclude buildings with unique access to a graded road or on plots in which the minimum difference in ground level in the building line from the pavement surface is greater than 2,50 m. the buildings referred to in paragraph 1 shall be exempt from the requirement to provide access to above-ground floors or internal terraces or stairways provided that: (a) the area of indoor or outdoor terraces is up to 50 % of the area of the main room and not more than 100 sq.m. and its use is the same as that of the main room or the internal balconies or terraces have auxiliary use; (b) the total gross floor area above the ground floor is less than 200

sq.m. and (c) the gross floor area of each floor is less than 70 square meters. The exceptions referred to in subparagraphs (b) and (c) of this paragraph do not apply if the use of the building is the only one in the settlement and at the same time above on the ground floor there are uses to serve a different audience than those on the ground floor.

6. In the design or reconstruction of communal areas of agglomerations (such as pedestrian traffic areas such as squares / pedestrian walkways / pavements / islands, green areas / hills, stops / docks, etc.) the morphology of the ground, it is necessary to ensure the accessibility of persons with disabilities or handicapped persons with pedestrian routes / blinds / ramps without ramps up to 5% incl. / accessible mechanical means of covering altitudinal differences, suitable for the installation of urban equipment such as shelters, living rooms, lighting posts, litter bins, signs, etc., and 5% of parking spaces or at least one for use of wheelchairs in accordance with the Directives, standards and regulations referred to in paragraph 1 above. On sidewalks, pedestrian walkways and other public areas of the non-base pavement network, provided that the terrain does not permit the creation of fully accessible traffic areas for persons with disabilities accessibility for other categories of users is always ensured. 7. In case of need for an opinion on specific accessibility issues that arise in the application of the above provisions, the competent advisory / audit bodies, such as the SCAA, Building Auditors, Architecture Councils may refer to the "Accessibility Committee", recommended by decision of the Minister of the Environment , Energy and Climate Change and is headed by the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change. The Commission may propose to the Minister for Environment, Energy and Climate Change and specific arrangements concerning accessibility. The above decision determines the bodies to be represented in it, including representatives of the National Confederation of People with Disabilities (EAKAAA), the membership of the members, the way of its constitution and operation and any other relevant detail. 8. The specific arrangements for servicing persons with disabilities or handicapped persons provided for in this article concern the drafting, presentation of the accessibility study as defined in Law 4030/2011 (249) Article 3 paragraph 2b and Article 9 (6) and in the Presidential Decree issued by the Minister for the Environment, Energy and Climate Change on the authorization of the above law. Similarly, by virtue of the abovementioned law, the control of the works and works of construction specified in Article 4 of the UN is carried out. House 9875/2012 (B469). SEN 2099

2. The minimum number of rooms for people with reduced mobility (AMS) in hotels is set at 5% of the total capacity of the accommodation. The application of the above percentage is mandatory up to the number of five (5) total rooms for .

3. For the design of spaces designed to serve AMCs. the provisions of article 26 of Law 4067/2012 and circular 9 with AP are applied. House 29467 / 13-6-2012 of the Office of Studies for Disabled Persons of YPEKA.

https://cert.grhotels.gr/Content/docs/%CE%A6%CE%95%CE%9A_10%CE%92_2015%20.pdf

APPENDIX 10

(www.blueflag.global).

The required map elements should include and show the location of: lifeguards or lifesaving equipment ,the area patrolled (for beaches with lifeguards), first aid equipment, telephones, toilets (including toilets for disabled people), drinking water, car and bicycle parking areas, authorized camping sites at/near the beach, recycling facilities, location of water sampling point(s), access points and access for disabled persons, zoning (swimming, surfing, sailing, boating, etc.) where applicable, nearby public transport, footpaths, demarcation of Blue Flag area, location of other information boards, rivers and inflows, local landmarks (where applicable), storm water outlets, nearby sensitive natural areas and direction (North) scale bar. The number of toilets/restrooms available at the beach must reflect the average number of beach visitors during the peak season, the length of the beach and the number and location of major access points. The toilet or restroom facilities must be easy to locate through signage and through information on the map on the Blue Flag information board. The presence of showers (on the beach or in the buildings), changing rooms and nappy changing facilities are furthermore encouraged. Restrooms/toilets may also be located in nearby shops, restaurants, cafeterias or other establishments open to the general public. Facilities for disabled visitors should also be provided. Toilet or restrooms facilities must be equipped with washbasins, soap and clean towels (paper or cloth) or a hand-dryer. Access to the toilet/restroom facilities must be safe. Consideration should also be given to the design and maintenance of these facilities. They should be well integrated within the built and natural environment and they must be regularly maintained so as to present a well-maintained appearance and to prevent vandalism of buildings. The public must have access to Blue Flag beaches without being a client of a certain hotel or beach club. Access to the beach should preferably be free. Access to the beach must be safe. Beaches that are physically challenging must have facilities for safe access, like secured steps with handrails. Similarly, there must be designated pedestrian crossings on busy roads in the vicinity of the beach. Beach promenades and steps onto the beach must be complete and in good condition. The car park surface must be in good order. Parking places reserved for the use of disabled persons must be available and must be clearly marked. Other access paths must also be safe, with regulations for cars and bicycles. Bicycle paths should be encouraged whenever relevant. Where promenade edges are higher than 2 metres above the beach, warning signs and/or a barrier must be in place to prevent accidents. This is especially important where the beach surface is rocky. Consult criterion 33 regarding access for people with physical disabilities. Visitors to the beach should be safe while on the beach. Information about safety must be readily available. The times of availability of lifesaving services and first aid must be clearly marked on the Blue Flag information boards or at the lifeguard station. It is strongly recommended that all Blue Flag beaches have facilities that allow access by the physically disabled, granting them access to the beach, surrounding buildings, and the restroom facilities. It is a Blue Flag requirement that at least one beach in every municipality must provide these facilities. It is a Blue Flag recommendation that at this beach, if possible, there is access to the water for the physically disabled. Access to the beach must be facilitated by access ramps designed for users with various disabilities. It is recommended that the ramp design and material fit the natural environment and, wherever possible, environmentally friendly materials are used, like recycled composite plastics.

Facilities must be designed for wheelchair and other disabled users and should comply with the ISO Standard Code for Access. The beach must comply with national regulations regarding access and facilities for people with disabilities. In addition, parking areas must have reserved spaces for disabled parking. If access ramps cannot be provided due to the topography, at steep cliffs, the local authority must apply for a dispensation for this criterion. If none of the Blue Flag beaches in a local authority can provide access and facilities for the disabled, a request for a dispensation for this criterion must be documented in the application.

APPENDIX 11

Greece comes again in second place in the international "Blue Flag" program among 47 countries for 2018. The Blue Flag Program for beaches and marinas is run by the international, non-governmental, non-profit organization FEE (the Foundation for Environmental Education). The Program started in France in 1985. It has been implemented in Europe since 1987 and in areas outside of Europe since 2001, when South Africa joined. Today, Blue Flag has become a truly global Program, with an ever-increasing number of countries participating in it. The Blue Flag Program promotes sustainable development in freshwater and marine areas. It challenges local authorities and beach operators to achieve high standards in the four categories of: water quality, environmental management, environmental education and safety. Over the years, the Blue Flag has become a highly respected and recognized eco-label working to bring together the tourism and environmental sectors at local, regional and national levels. The flag is both a symbol that the beach participates in the Program but also an indication of compliance with the criteria. The applicant may be a local municipality, private hotel, national park, or private beach operator. A beach must be accessible to all (regardless of age, gender, political views, religion) in order to be eligible for Blue Flag accreditation. It is preferable that beach users be granted free access to a Blue Flag beach. FEE, and the National Operator in a country, reserve the right to refuse or withdraw Blue Flag accreditation from any beach where the local authority/beach operator is responsible for violations of national environmental regulations or otherwise acts in discord with the objectives and spirit of the Blue Flag Program.

In particular, 519 Greek beaches, 15 marinas and 1 sustainable tourism boat were awarded with the "Blue Flag", which is the most world-renowned eco-label around the globe. This means that the Greek beaches are not only beautiful but also have the most high-water quality standards in the world, which has contributed to country's showcase into one of the best travel destinations worldwide. As announced by the Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature, which is the national operator of the "Blue Flag" program in Greece, the International Organization awarded this year 3,687 beaches, 679 marinas and 55 sustainable tourism boats around the world. Greece won 12% of the total awards and 14% of the awarded coasts. The Regional Unit of Chalkidiki was featured as the first Greek area with 89 flags. As for the world ranking, Spain gain the first place in the field of coasts, while Turkey, France and Italy respectively occupied the 3rd, 4th and 5th places. In the ranking for all coasts, marinas and boats, France ranked 3rd, after Spain and Greece, with Turkey and Italy following.

<https://yougoculture.com/news/blue-flag-most-high-quality-greek-beaches-2018>

Environmental education activities promote the aims of the Blue Flag Programme by: increasing the awareness of, and care for, the local environment by recreational users and residents, training personnel and tourist service providers in environmental matters and best practices, encouraging the participation of local stakeholders in environmental management within the area. The activities should focus on the environment, environmental issues, Blue Flag issues or sustainability issues. At least some of the activities should be carried out at the beach and have a direct focus on the beach environment. The environmental education activities must be clearly disseminated to the public. Furthermore, these environmental education activities must be offered for free. (www.blueflag.global).

Independent, safe and decent access to many beaches in the country is expected to ensure that the government has access to disabled people and generally to all disabled people (elderly, pregnant, injured, etc.). It is estimated that several mechanisms and ancillary infrastructure will be placed in the seas and beaches of our country in order to have access to those with disabilities to the sea and of course access and use of infrastructure will be free of charge. Specifically, the program concerns the supply and installation of non-permanent assembled mechanisms for the independent access (without the assistance of any escort or other person) of disabled persons to the sea. In addition, non-permanent auxiliary facilities, such as changing rooms, portable sanitary facilities, corridors and ramps, shading areas and bathers' protection, parking facilities for disabled people, etc. will be provided. The relevant call for the program published by the Ministry of Economy aiming to bring the relevant action in the summer of 2018.

The objectives of the program are to guarantee the rights of people with disabilities, to make Greece a world attraction for disabled people and to benefit those who are handicapped, disabled, pregnant, elderly, injured, etc.

As stated by the Ministry of the Economy, "we are harmonizing and leading as a country the full economic and social participation of people with disabilities, which is an important parameter for the success of the EU 2020 Strategy and the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The rights of people with disabilities recently became a law of the state and provides, inter alia, for the state to ensure equal access for the disabled to the natural, structured and electronic environment.

This program is part of a comprehensive government policy of the government to safeguard the rights of people with disabilities, remove the barriers (physical and bureaucratic) faced by themselves and their families. "

www.onmed.gr

<https://www.newsitamea.gr/amea-mechri-kalokairi-tou-2018-aksioprepis-prosvasi-se-polles-paralies/>

Supporting 12 municipalities with a total of 2 million euros for infrastructure projects that will provide independent access to seas and beaches for people with disabilities and other categories of people with limited mobility, announced the Ministry of Economy and Development.

The projects concern the supply and installation of non-permanent assembled infrastructures for the independent access of disabled people and other persons with limited mobility (pregnant, elderly, injured, etc.) to beaches and sea baths, as well as the installation of auxiliary facilities, , portable hygienic spaces etc These projects are funded by the Municipalities of Katerini, Almiros, Ilida, Agia, Filiates, Igoumenitsa, Glyfada (Prefecture of Attica), Artaia, Sithonia, Komotini, Chios and Lokris.

The total budget of the action, designed in collaboration with the Social Policy Bureau of the Prime Minister's Secretariat, has tripled to €15 million (from €5 million) to meet the increased demand from the agencies.

The decision to integrate the projects into the Operational Program "Competitiveness, Entrepreneurship and Innovation" (EPANEK) was signed by the Special Secretary of the Sectoral Operational Programs ERDF & CF, Evgenia Fotonita.

To finance the projects, Deputy Economy and Development Minister Alexis Charitsis said: "We are focusing on socially relevant actions, which at the same time enhance the growth prospects of local economies. That is why we designed this program and then increased the budget in order to respond to the large number of proposals from the municipalities and to make the necessary infrastructure projects in as many beaches as possible in the country. "

"In cooperation with local authorities, we are implementing projects that ensure equal access for all our fellow citizens to seas and beaches, contributing to the development of tourism for the disabled and other people with limited mobility in the coastal areas. We take advantage of the growth potential of the coastal front of Greece in terms of sustainability and social justice, "added Mr. Haritsis.

<https://www.dikaiologitika.gr/eidhseis/koinonia/214645/xrimatodotisi-meso-esp-gia-aftonomi-prosvasi-amea-se-thalasses-kai-paralies>

Southern Aegean

The project concerns the provision of access and servicing equipment for the needs of people with mobility problems at the islands' bathing coasts of the South Aegean Region. The program is implemented on 20 beaches of 15 islands, namely Sifnos (Kamares), Thira (Kamari), Naxos (Agios Prokopios), Ios (Mylopotas), Paros (Chryssi Akti), Mykonos (Kalafatis) (Kriti, Kardamena, Tigaki), Patmos (Kambos), Syros (Kini), Andros (Batsi), Tinos (Kionia), Rhodes (Ialyssos, Tsambika, Faliraki, and Kalymnos (Cassons or New Beach-Pothia). The project was implemented by the South Aegean Region in cooperation with the Municipalities of these islands.

The equipment for each beach includes two amphibious carts, corridor for the movement of the carriage and access of the bather from the parking area to the sea, umbrellas and changing rooms and minimum a hall of sewage and WC (Cabin).

<http://newpost.gr/taksidi/268534/prosbasimes-se-amea-20-paralies-toy-notioy-aigaioy>

Municipality of Volos (MAGNISIA)

The municipality will submit a proposal for funding and interventions on four beaches of the municipality of Volos to better serve the disabled. Specifically these are the

following beaches: Alykes beach, Anavros beach, Nea Anchialos and Kato Lechonia beach (Karnagio location).

The selection of the above places was made based on the tourist and tourist characteristics of the area. The soil morphology, which is suitable for interventions. All four of the proposed beaches have direct accessibility and connection to the road network.

Each of the above beaches requires the installation of an assembly of non-permanent equipment that will provide independent access for people with mobility disabilities or limited mobility (elderly, pregnant women, visually impaired people, etc.), thus contributing to the service and the removal of marginalization by the community.

The complex of each beach will include: People with disabilities, handicapped people, wheelchairs with built-in showers, wooden walkway (about 40m - 45m depending on the beach), shade umbrellas, marked with appropriate information signage. The commission is considered necessary both for the improvement of the life of citizens and visitors and for the protection of Public Health, as well as for the improvement of the municipal infrastructure of the Municipality.

<https://www.thessaliatv.gr/news/55714/dbolou-prosbasi-gia-amea-se-tesseris-paralies/>

Kavala's region

On June , 2017, the municipality of Kavala was immediately declared the completion of the two autonomous access mechanisms to the sea Seatrac on the beaches of Kalamitsa and Perigialio, so that this summer season the people with mobility disabilities enjoy the sea bath unhindered.

The municipality of Nestos, offers the respective autonomous mechanism of access to the sea Seatrac so that disabled people, residents and visitors can swim of the municipality area.

At the same time, the municipality of Kavala has promised to install directly another Seatrac on the beach of the municipality, making the Regional Unity of Kavala fully accessible to the enjoyment of the bathing of disabled people in the area, as well as to the visitors who face motor problems.

<http://www.kavalapost.gr/179143/dimos-kavalas-perni-arista-stin-kalypsi-tou-etimatos-ton-amea-gia-prosvasi-sti-thalassa/>

Attica Region has installed 17 new autonomous access facilities for people with disabilities in Attica beaches. More specifically, Attica Region proceeds to place additional electrically powered bathing ramps for people with motor problems and to simultaneously modernize and technically upgrade the already existing provisions on beaches belonging to the administrative district of Attica.

In cooperation with the respective Municipalities, corridors leading to the ramps with the special seat are to be placed in order to allow people with disabilities to enjoy the sea and swimming, which besides the right is a necessity, as well thalassotherapy is the most appropriate method of rehabilitation for patients with disabilities and motor problems.

The new provisions are to be placed on the beaches: Kineta Beach (Megara Municipality), Beach of Psatha, Porto Germeno beach, Nea Peramos Beach, (Municipality of Mandra), Skala Beach (Municipality of Agistri), Ag. Marina (Municipality of Mesagro), Canali Beach (Municipality of Poros), Beach Megalohori-Vathi, Loutropolis of Methana, (Municipality of Trizinia-Methana), Ag. Pelagia, (Municipality of Kythira) Vouliagmenis beach, Voula Beach, Varkiza Beach (Municipality of Vari-Voula-Vouliagmeni), Pountazeza Beach, (Municipality of Lavreotiki), Porto-Rafti beach, (Municipality of Markopoulo), Artemidas beach,(Municipality of Spata-Artemida), Agion Apostolos beach, (Oropou Municipality)

<http://www.enallaktikos.gr/ar25576el-se-aytes-tis-17-paralies-topothetoynantai-rampes-gia-amea.html>

Since the beginning of summer season 2018 Limnos island, access devices were installed at sea, specifically at the beaches of Romeikos Gialos and Evgatis.

The main objective is to serve disabled people by providing equal opportunities for all citizens to access the sea.

SEATRAC was built to function as an accessory used by people with mobility impairment or mobility to facilitate their access to water. The main idea behind its creation was to give people with disabilities the chance to enjoy a simple activity like swimming without any other help.

www.citypost.gr/limnos-se-leitoyrigia-to-systima-prosvasis-amea-sti-thalassa/

Corfu island beaches include facilities such as direct access ramps, wheelchairs or SEATRAC, which have occasionally been provided by the Municipality of Corfu, the Prefectural Association of People with Disabilities in Corfu and the Region of the Ionian Islands.

The map also mentions the location and type of installation, since each disability has different needs. The facilities provided are not only for people with disabilities, but also for the elderly or people with kinetic difficulties due to illness.

The beaches of Corfu are accessible to disabled people in Sidari, Roda, Kassiopi, Ipsos, Dassia, Gouvia, Alevi Potamou, Mon-Repo, Benitses, Ioannis Peristeron, Moraitika, Lefkimmi (Bouka), Marathias, Ag. Georgios Argyradon, Issos, Paramonas, Glyfada, Paleokastritsa, Ag. George, Arillas and St. George, Stephanos.

<https://www.startmedia.gr/kerkyra-eidhseis/paralies-me-prosvasi-se-amea-sti-dimosiotita-o-chartis-tis-kerkyras-pagkosmia-protia-me-21-filikes-se-amea-paralies/>

Access to beaches of Pieria, Nei Pori and Olympic Coast will have people with disabilities through the pioneering "Seatrack" access system, following the signing of the intercity cooperation agreements to establish this system between the Regional Unity of Pieria and the Municipalities of Dion-Olympus and Katerini.

The "Seatrack" Disabled Access Contracts, signed in order to meet the increased needs for disabled people's access to the beaches of the area during the summer season.

Piraeus Port Authority owns the Seatrack, while the Municipalities of Dio-Olympus and Katerini have staff for the necessary tasks, namely the annual installation, maintenance, disassembly and storage in their own enclosed spaces.

The "Seatrack" system is energy-independent and made of durable materials in the marine environment and is intended to provide disabled people or people with limited mobility in general with the possibility of access to the sea independently without the difficulty of passing through other visitors - users.

It is an environmentally friendly construction that is disassembled during the winter months, which means that its use does not cause environmental damage or have a permanent effect on it.

The Regional Unity of Pieria delivered the first non-permanent assembly unit "Seatrack" in the Municipality of Dion - Olympus, which settled on a coast in Neo Pori in August 2016.

The choice of location was made by the Municipal Authority so as to allow unhindered access for disabled people and at the same time to be next to a lifeguard station.

The Regional Unity of Pieria, continuing its social policy, handed over the second unit of the non-permanent assembly "Seatrack" to Pieria in the Municipality of Katerini and was placed from the Pieria Beach in Olympic Beach for the first time in August 2016.

Easy to use and safe for the occupant and / or his companions, the "Seatrack" system, installed last summer on the beaches of Olympic Coast and New Pori, allows people with disabilities to enter the beach without having to escort assistance. The "Seatrack" system is energy-independent and made of durable materials in the marine environment intended to provide mobile disabled people or persons with limited mobility in general with the possibility of access to the sea independently without the difficulty of passing through of the other visitors - users. It is an environmentally friendly construction that is disassembled during the winter months, which means that its use does not cause environmental damage or have a permanent effect on it.

<https://tobea.gr/en>

<http://www.keana.gr/%CF%80%CF%81%CF%8C%CF%83%CE%B2%CE%B1%CF%83%CE%B7-%CE%B3%CE%B9%CE%B1-%CE%B1%CE%BC%CE%B5%CE%B1-%CF%83%CE%B5-%CF%80%CE%B1%CF%81%CE%B1%CE%BB%CE%AF%CE%B5%CF%82-%CF%84%CF%89%CE%BD-%CE%B4%CE%AE%CE%BC%CF%89/>

Ionian Islands

In Lygia, the first mechanism was installed in Lefkada, which facilitates the entry into the sea of people with mobility problems. This is the innovative seatrac system that has already been deployed on several beaches in Attica and is a major step in eliminating the restrictions faced by disabled people.

The installation was made by the Lefkada Regional Unit.

<http://aromalefkadas.gr/%CF%83%CF%84%CE%B7-%CE%BB%CF%85%CE%B3%CE%B9%CE%AC-%CE%BB%CE%B5%CF%85%CE%BA%CE%AC%CE%B4%CE%B1%CF%82-%CF%84%CE%BF%CF%80%CE%BF%CE%B8%CE%B5%CF%84%CE%AE%CE%B8%CE%B7%CE%BA%CE%B5-%CE%BC%CE%B7%CF%87%CE%B1/>

Stereia Ellada

Three special ramps for access for the disabled to the sea will be placed by the Region of Sterea in Riovies - Karavos and Karystos

Three special disabled ramps for people with disabilities at sea will be placed in the beaches of Euboea by the Region of Sterea Ellada, according to the Region's timetable, special ramps for disabled people will be installed in Karavos Aliveri, in a region where, there is a large population with mobility problems, in Rovies, Evia and Karystos where space is not yet determined.

<http://www.eviakosmos.gr/index.php/koinonia/item/4100-treis-aidikes-rampes-gia-prosvasi-amea-sti-thalassa-tha-topothetisei-i-perifereia-stereas-se-riovies-karavo-kai-karysto>

At the beaches of Thessaloniki first installed the innovative Seatrack system in Neo Epivatades and Asprovalta for access to the sea for people with disabilities, in cooperation with the local municipalities of Thermaikos and Volvis,

SEATRAC (APPENDIX 12) has been built to function as ancillary equipment that can be used by people with mobility impairment or mobility to facilitate their own access to the sea. The main idea behind its creation was to give people with disabilities the chance to enjoy a simple activity like swimming without any other help.

The mechanism consists of rails, on which a specially designed seat is moved. The user, by pressing a button on his remote control, moves from the beach into the water at a safe depth. Once he finishes his bath, he boards the chair again by pressing a button returning to the land.

It is energy-independent as it is powered by a solar panel and is not a permanent installation, since it can be placed on the beach in early summer and removed in the autumn.

<https://tobea.gr/en>



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