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The impact of the economic crisis on tourism; the case of Greece

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2017 Laurea



Laurea University of Applied Sciences

The impact of the economic crisis on tourism; the case of Greece

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Degree Programme in
Business Management
Bachelor's Thesis
November, 2017

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Year 2017

Pages 52

Tourism is a fast-growing industry and its impact on the economy, social and development of a country has been considerable. The global financial crisis has greatly affected the socio-economic sectors of many countries, but Greece has suffered in particular.

The purpose of the present paper is to examine the causes and consequences of the Greek economic crisis, focusing particularly on the tourism sector, with the aim to investigate how the Greek economic crisis affected tourism sector.

The theoretical section of this study provides a brief overview of the financial crisis in Greece as well as the importance of tourism for the economy. The next part presents the results and analysis of the research conducted by the author of this study.

The research draws on literature and is based on secondary data gathered from print and online sources, journals, and reports. Moreover, self-administrated Internet-mediated questionnaires were conducted with managers from domestic hotels, tourists from the United Kingdom who have visited Greece before, as well as Greek citizens living in Greece. This study was conducted using a quantitative research method.

The findings of the research show that the Greek tourism sector was less affected than other sectors, due to its flexibility and diversified international source markets.

Keywords: Recession, Tourism, Economic crisis, Greece, Greek tourism

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background and choice of the study

In recent decades tourism has become an important conduit of economic growth and in some occasions has been a country's most important source of income. In a rapidly growing and developing world, traveling is not considered as luxury good, but as a good investment. As an important international activity, tourism has faced numerous global changes, such as political, technological, social and demographic. These changes can drastically affect the development of both the tourism sector of a country as well as the aggregate socio-economy of the country. In a global economy, tourists are increasingly informed about their destination both before and while visiting a country and events such as political instability or economic crisis can be reflected on the consumption habits of tourists.

The international economic crisis of the early 2009, affected many global economies which started a chain of events that affected many sectors, tourism was one of the highly affected (Stabler M. J., Papatheodorou A. and Sinclaiier M. T., 2010). These kind of changes can dramatically affect countries whose economy is depended on tourism sector, such as Greece, Portugal and Spain. Greece in particular was one of the heavily affected countries by the International financial crisis in the European Union in 2009 (SETE, 2014). According to United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), 1,087 million international tourist arrivals were recorder in 2013, estimating for 873 billion euros in tourism receipts (UNWTO, 2014). Greece has approximately 1, 5% share of the world tourism market share and 2, 9% of the European.

Tourism represents an important part of the Greek economy, since it has a huge impact on different economic activities, covering up to 11, 5% of total employment of the country (WTTC, 2017). The contribution of tourism to the total employment, the economic growth and development of the country has been huge as it amounts for 16, 4% of the total GDP (SETE, 2014). During the beginning of the economic crisis the tourism sector, as well as other sectors were critically challenged in a time where unemployment rates were increasing rapidly (SETE, 2014).

The aim of this study is to create a brief overview of the impact of the economic crisis in Greece that occurred in the late 2009, early 2010. Moreover it is to describe and analyse the changes that occurred in the tourism sector during that period and whether some of these changes have been beneficial to the Greek economy in its current state. The research and development of this study is based on quantitative research approach, including two self-administrated questionnaires (questionnaires were conducted in October 2017) as well the analysis of the available secondary data.

The author of this study was interested to perform such a research, because of the limited amount of research carried out in this area so far. The main goals of this study is to show that tourism in Greece represents an important economic activity and analyses how the economic crisis of 2008 affected the tourism and travel sector of the country.

1.2 Purpose and implementation of the study

The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of the economic crisis on the Greek tourism sector, analyse how important tourism is for the Greek economy and whether tourism has recovered faster than other sectors. The result of this study will reveal whether, the economic crisis has affected the tourism sector and what were the consequences of such an impact.

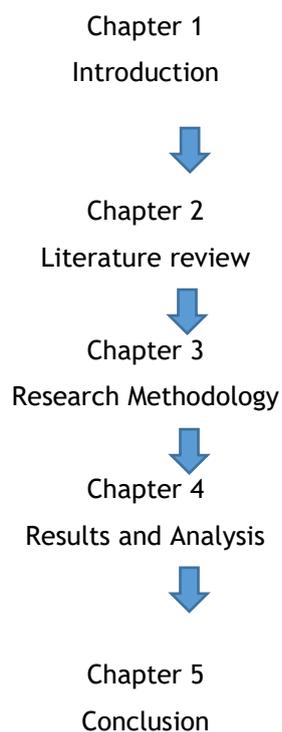
The aim of the research is to obtain information and create a brief overview of the economic situation in Greece, to describe the changes followed by the financial crisis and analyse how the tourism responded to such an event with the analysis of available existing secondary data as well as a survey conducted by the author of this study.

The research question is, 'did the economic crisis in Greece impact the tourism sector of the country and if yes, which were the consequences and what was the reaction'. To find an answer to this question the author investigates the changes occurred to the county's economy, tourist arrivals, the GDP of the country, people living in Greece as well as domestic Hotels. Empirical data were collected through survey, which included two self-administrated internet-mediated questionnaires in order to obtain in-depth information. The respondents of the first questionnaire were British nationality tourists who have previously visited Greece or Greek residents, and in the second questionnaire the respondents were Hotels based in Greece.

1.3 Structure of the study

The study consists of four sections. The first section presents the choice and purpose of the study and its implementations, followed by a brief introduction to the economic crisis and tourism. The next section presents a literature review which discusses the tourism and economic crisis, economic crisis in Greece, tourism as a generic approach and lastly the importance of tourism to Greece. The third section discusses the research approach and methodology chosen to complete the research for this study. The fourth section, data collection and result findings are described as well as the questionnaires which were used as a data collection tool. The dissertation finally ends with a conclusion section, which highlights and summarise the findings of this study.

Figure 1



Framework of the Thesis

2 Literature review

The literature review is structured into four parts. The first part presents the economic crisis and its impact on the tourism sector, the economy and the society, the second part discusses tourism and economic crisis in Greece. The third part views tourism as a generic approach, while the fourth and last part discusses the importance of tourism in the Greek economy and culture.

2.1 Tourism and Economic Crisis

Tourism, according to the widely accepted St. Gallen definition, represents a whole of relationships and phenomena that arise from the travel and stay of persons for whom a place of their stay is neither main or permanent residence or a place of employment (Kaspar, 1996, as cited in Planina & Mihalic, 2002, 29). Tourism is comprised of a multitude of different products and services, which are used by visitors and tourists during their stay. This variety of activities makes the tourism sector highly involved in almost all other sectors. An economic crisis could therefore be a turning point for many sectors, including tourism and that can have a significant effect in the country from a socio-cultural perspective as well (Henderson, 2006).

The decrease in the economic activity - following a big economic crisis - has an obvious impact on the tourism markets. Employed individuals faced with possible layoffs and tighter borrowing conditions, were forced to cancel, change or postpone their travel plans due to their reduced disposable income and therefore reduced travel budget (Steiner, 2011, 29) (Song & Lin, 2010).

As Yeoman (2012) explains, the economic crisis has great effects on the consumer mind-set, tourists are analysing the prices as never before, issues like environmental and social responsibility as well as the country's reputation regarding these issues take prominent place in the planning process and this kind of behaviour is called "green consumerism". On the other hand, tourists are nowadays unwilling to pay full prices, and expectations about generous discounts have sharpened. In 2011 a survey, conducted by the Visa Global Travel Intentions, mentioned that price was the first among other important factors of choice, even before scenery, political stability and variety of activities in the destination (Visa, 2011, 9). Consumers have become accustomed about flash' sales, time limited offers and fluid prices, which even when the troubled economic conditions settle, the behaviour learned during the downturn will not disappear ((Flatters and Willmott, 2009)

An economic crisis may affect tourism as a result of both economic and non-economic factors (Goh 2012). Taking into account a traditional microeconomic approach, an economic crisis is expected to affect tourism as a result of changes in income and prices. To specify, an economic crisis has a big effect on the economy leading to the reduction of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) as well as on the disposable income (Goh 2012).

During a recession - which is defined as a situation where the GDP is negative for two or more consecutive quarters - the consumers are very likely to experience a change in consumption habits (Du and Kamakura, 2012, p. 229). The economic crisis as a result may affect tourism consumption due to reduction in disposable income in two ways. First is about the change, individuals or families usually face the decision of whether to travel or not. Even if they decide to travel they might change the destination they used to enjoy or the length of their holidays, for example instead of travel away for a week now they might decide to travel only for five days (Eugenio Martin, Campos-Soria, 2014). The second effect is a result of tourism substitution due to the income elasticity. Tourism generally counts as an income elastic service, meaning that even a small change of disposable income will immediately affect the choice of destination, services and the demand for tourism. In particular, a reduction in income is expected to affect negatively especially luxurious tourism destinations and positively destinations and services of basic standards (Stabler et al., 2010).

The domestic elasticity is likely to affect among others the relationship between outbound and domestic tourism. Domestic tourism, meaning that the residents of the given country are traveling only within the country; (Shelton and Dwyer, 2010). An economic crisis is likely to make individuals travel domestically instead of internationally, as international travel is more income elastic than domestic travel. According to Sheldon and Dwyer (2010) this theory may have positive implications for the domestic tourism when it comes to employment and income. In periods of serious recession, domestic tourism is largely associated with a rise in VFR (Visiting Friends and Relatives) flow, meaning that people who previously travelled abroad for holidays now they decide not only to stay at their home country but even to go to a relative's or friend's house to avoid spending money on tourism accommodation and services (Papatheodorou, 2010). In such a case, an economic crisis may negatively affect outbound tourism without benefiting providers at a domestic level. Moreover, the above is also a matter of spatial scale, huge difference if you are traveling domestically in USA, from traveling domestically in France, due to the size difference between the two countries (Papatheodorou, 2010).

In addition, a decrease in tourism demand as a result of a reduction in income may also lead to a reduction in prices as tourism services try to stay competitive in the marketplace (Ritchie, 2010). A reduction in prices may prove financially sustainable provided that input production costs also decrease as a result on the recession.

According to Papatheodorou, Rosello and Xiao (2010, 42-44) they mentioned four long term effects of the crisis that may affect tourism and should be taken into account. First, environmentally friendly tourism may become boundless and threat due to the fear in a possible internationalization of negative external effects, may lead to a rise of costs. Second, the outbound tourism from developed countries for example, China could be important to reduce their notable trade surpluses against USA or other advanced economies. Third, tourism sector is structurally associated with peace, relate to this, it is important that intergovernmental bodies, such as UNWTO advertise and promote tourism for its socio-cultural (re)construction and local communities' well-being, instead of its economic function. Fourth view mentions the uncertainty of the currency. It is not possible to say which currency will gain eventually the global dominance, but it is assured that there will be less people and countries relying on US dollar or Euro, which can cause suffer and challenge to certain destinations especially Mediterranean countries such as Italy, Spain and Greece (Papatheodorou, Rosello and Xiao, 2010, p. 42-44).

2.1.1 Tourism and its implications on employment

Tourism is a labour intensive sector. In a period of a financial recession, one might have assumed that the poverty and inequality gap would narrow, as a result of reduction of the

overall income that is most likely to affect those very wealthy. Inequality gap between lower, middle and high social class has been emphasised as one of the main consequences of the economic crisis (Kondo N, 2012, p. 2-6).

Tourism sector due to the nature of its job positions it tends to offer employment and income opportunities, specifically for poor and vulnerable groups such as youth and low-skilled workers, particularly but not exclusively in rural and remote areas (UNWTO, 2013).

Statistically, the implications of the financial crisis on the socio-cultural activity can be translated into an increase of unemployment rates, throwing unemployed people into deeper poverty as well as spreading inequality and lack of access to basic social services. The dramatic changes in unemployment levels, obviously indicates the link between recession and increased unemployment rates (Song, H. and Shanshan, L. 2010, p. 16-30). Moreover, youth unemployment represents another serious implication of the financial crisis upon population. In 2012 it has been stated, that youth unemployment rates, reached 20% in many of the impacted countries and has stretched a dramatic proportion, up to 55% in Greece and Spain (Eurostat, 2012).

In addition to unemployment, the crisis is likely to have a negative impact on the mental and emotional health. Long term unemployment may result into social isolation and poverty, increasing the risk of early mortality rates from ischemic heart or brain disease, particularly in migrants and vulnerable groups (Subramanian SV, Kawachi I, 2006). Economic recession threatens the society with the unpredictability and instability of the working conditions, the severe family tensions and the societal violence as well as an increasing risk of chronic mental disorders inside the population (McInerney M, Mellor JM. Recessions, 2012). According to European data, countries with good formal social protection and health inequalities do not necessarily widen during a recession (Stuckler D, Basu S, Suhrcke M Lancet, 2009). For instance, in Finland and Sweden, over a period of deep financial recession and a large increase in unemployment, health inequalities remained broadly unchanged and suicide rates diminished, possibly because social benefits and services broadly remained and buffered against the structural pressures towards widening health inequalities (Lahelma E, Kivelä K, Roos E, 2002; Hintikka J, Saarinen PI, Viinamäki H, 1999; Ostamo A, Lönnqvist J, 2001). These European findings are echoed by US data linking increased suicide rates with reductions in state welfare spending (Zimmerman SL J Nerv Ment Dis, 2002).

On the other hand, increased homeless rate is an obvious apparent, due to the financial crisis in Greece as the formal social protection and health inequalities face more challenges (Pickett K, Wilkinson R, 2010). Based on official data, during deep financial strain, the number of Greek and immigrant homeless people increased rapidly in 2011 amounted 2781 homeless people in 2009 and 11,000 in 2011 (Stamatis GA. 2012).

Furthermore, this economic strain, greatly influences children's and young people's well-being. Basic determinants of this situation, including the economic and food insecurity, housing instability, unequal education opportunities, unemployment and lack of a vision for the future, place them at a great risk so as they might be considered as a "lost generation" (Obergeiger, 2011).

2.2 Tourism and Economic Crisis in Greece

The international economic crisis has affected many global economies, which has caused changes in the respective tourism sectors. Any changes in the tourism sector can be vital for countries whose economies are heavily depended on tourism, such as Greece.

From the work carried out in this field, it seems that three elements must be presented in order to develop a crisis; first is a triggering event causing significant change or having the potential to cause significant change; second, the perceived inability to cope with this change; and third, the threat to the existence of organizations (Keown-McMillan, 1997).

Greece was severely damaged by the economic crisis, with effects such as enormous debts and increasing unemployment causing huge difficulties in the positive promotion of the country's image.

The economic crisis apart of the economic instability, has caused a political crisis as well as the legitimacy of the political system is criticised and heavily questioned. This goes further as a significant percentage of the population sees the current management of the country as worrying for the future (Lyrantzis, 2011). Issues like the fact that the government undercounted debt levels and deficits which became the catalyst of the country falling into the crisis in the first place showed strong structural weaknesses in the Greek economy and political respect and recognition

As bad and worrying this situation sounds there might be a glimpse of light down the tunnel for the Greek economy and that is thanks to its tourism sector capabilities. As the international literature on tourism suggests, inbound tourism arrivals can be positively affected in a region that suffers from an economic crisis (Prideaux, 1999). This can be a result of the reaction of the tourism sector providers choosing to lower their prices in order to become more competitive and fight the bad climate around the country's reputation that has damaged their brand name because of the economic crisis.

Additionally, Greece's commitment towards the Eurozone meant that the government had no power over its monetary policy and therefore was not able to independently react by changing the interest rates and getting control of the inflation which are common for the whole monetary zone. That meant that the Greek economy couldn't keep up with the

European economy which at the same time was booming. Combining the inconsistency in the political field with the economic disadvantage towards the other parts of the Eurozone created a highly dysfunctional situation (Kindreich, 2017).

A list, published by the national statistical agency of Greece reported the five main reasons that caused the Greek debt crisis; poor GDP growth, government debt and deficits, budget, budget compliance and data compatibility.

Greece's national statistical agency published a report listing the five main reasons of the Greek government debt crisis, poor GDP growth, government debt and deficits, budget compliance and data compatibility.

Furthermore, the lack of accountability and proper oversight in so many aspects of Greek public finances compounded the problems. At the height of the global financial crisis in the closing months of 2009, however, investors' minds were distracted by the banking crisis in the rest of the world, so the spotlight was not fully focused on the specific issues in Greece. The Eurozone, established for political purposes as a next step on the path to closer economic and monetary union within the European Union, gave rise to a flawed economic structure, and Greece's inclusion in the Eurozone made Greece's crisis inevitable (Ministry of Finance, 2010).

The Greek economy was at a boom since 1990s benefiting from low interest rates and rapid foreign direct investment. This growth however, emerging from the private sector credit bubble, proved to be unsustainable due to unnecessary spending and an increase in the government's debt levels. During the 2008-2010 period Greece faced all the consequences from the previous years and, "hostage" of the European Central Bank (ECB) as it was, it became impossible to devalue its currency or reduce interest rates in order to stimulate growth as the ECB had full control over the country's monetary policies. Moreover, draconian measures and restrictions posed by the ECB through Greece into a never ending cycle of three failing bailouts, totalling a cost of 246 billion euros. These left Greece with a damaged brand image, the country's Real GDP at the one fourth and a struggling human capital (Kindreich, 2017)

Tourism represents an important part of the Greek economy, since it has a huge impact on different economic activities. According to WTTC, in 2012 Greece ranked 40th among the 184 countries by tourism's contribution to economy with the entire GDP of tourism amounted to 30, 3 billion euros or 16, 4% (World 9, 2%). The total contribution of tourism to employment in 2012, was estimated for 689,000 jobs or 18,3% of total employment (World 8,7%) and the depositary receipt from international tourism arrivals in total was 26,4%, which equals to 11,4

billion euros (World 5,2%). The share of the capital investment in tourism was estimated to 13, 7% which equals to 3, 1 billion euros (World 4, 7%). The presented indicators proves the high dependence of the Greece economy on the tourism sector (WTTC, 2013, 1-8).

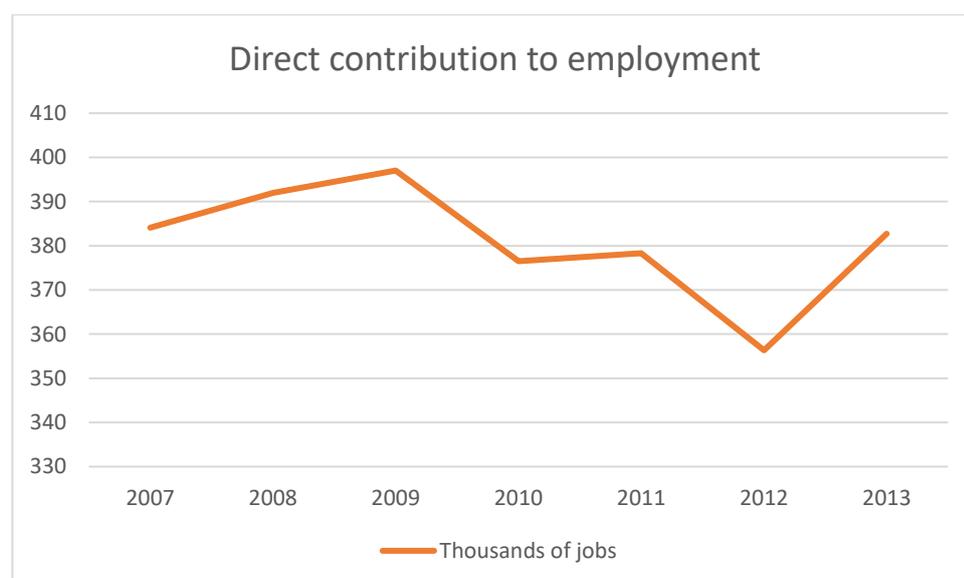
Main Indicators of Tourism's Contribution in Greek economy (%) for the period 2006-2017

Figure 2



Source: WTTC, Economi Data Search Tool, Greece - T&T Total Contribution to Employment, 2017

Figure 3



Source: WTTC, *Economic Data Search Tool, Greece - T&T Direct Contribution to Employment, 2013*

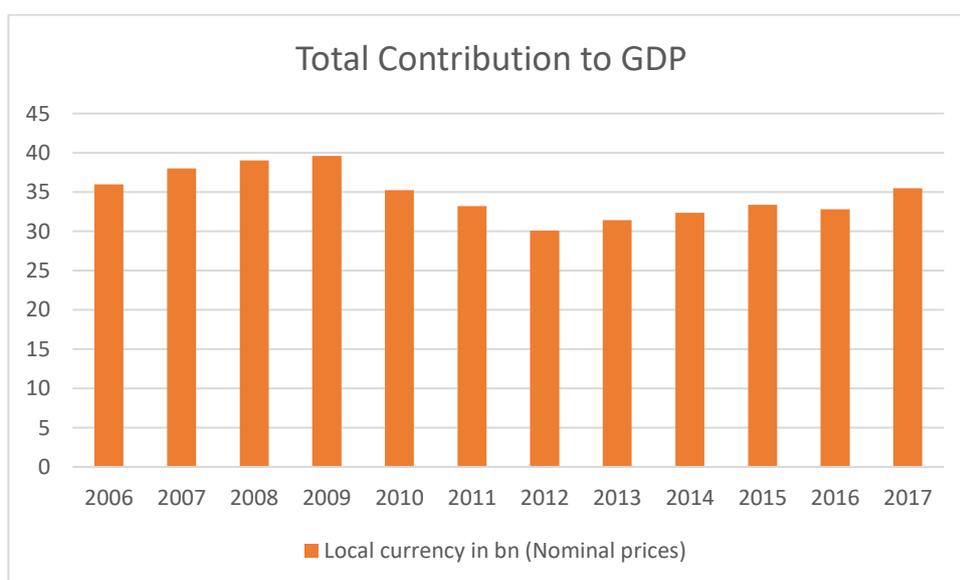
The direct contribution to employment in 2009 was 397,000 jobs and in 2012 it was estimated for 356,300 jobs. From 2009 to 2012 we can notice an obvious decline of 40,700 jobs (WTTC, data search tool, 2013). This was a result of the economic crisis, started in the late 2009, beginning of 2010.

Figure 4



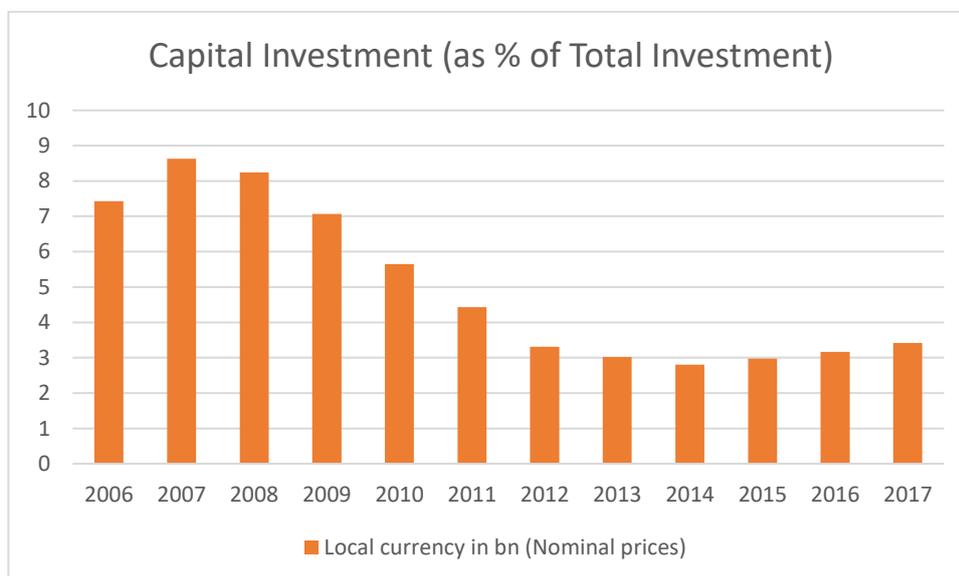
Source: WTTC, *Economic Data Search Tool, Greece - Visitor Exports, 2017*

Figure 5



Source: WTTC, Economic Data Search Tool, Greece - T&T Total Contribution to GDP, 2017
Compare 2009-2012

Figure 6



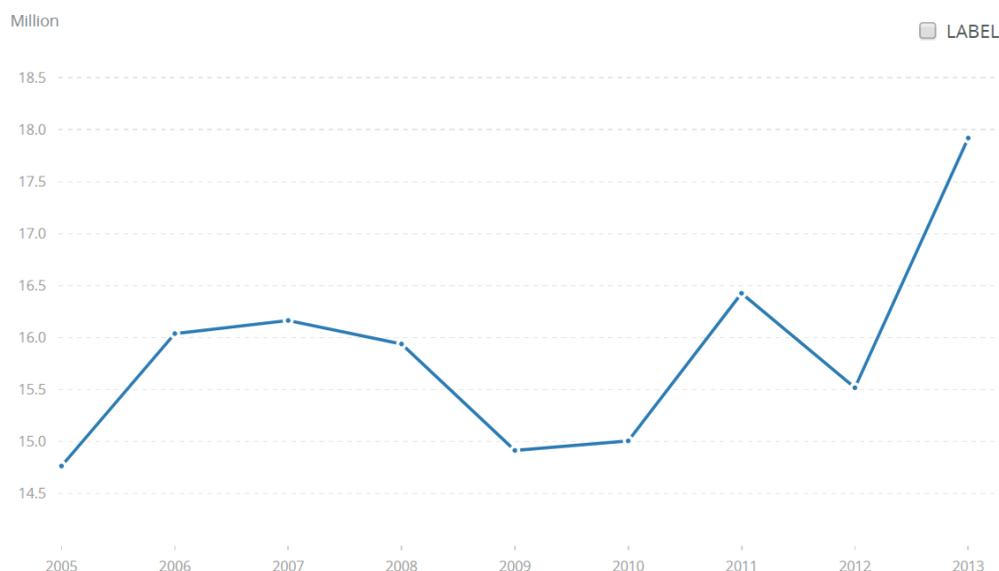
Source: WTTC, Economic Data Search Tool, Greece - Capital Investment, 2017
Compare 2009-2012

According to the movement of the four indicators in period 2006-2017 (Figure 2, Figure 3, Figure 4 and Figure 5), shows a decrease in the contribution of tourism in 2008 for all indicators. All the indicators declined even before 2008, except investments (WTTC - Economic Data Search Tool, 2017). By analysing the above figures we can notice that the capital investment in tourism has been declining, from the occurrence of the crisis, all other indicators declined after 2008, but they eventually improved showing a small but steady recovery.

Regarding to the purpose of travel in 2012, 94,3% of the direct contribution of tourism to GDP (20,5 billion euros) amounted from leisure travel spending, while spending on business travel amounted for 5,7% (1,2 billion euros) of tourism contribution. In order of country of origin, 55, 2% was foreign tourists' consumption, while domestic tourists amounted for 44, 8% (WTTC, 2013, 6).

International tourism, number of arrivals in Greece for the period 2005-2013

Figure 7



Source: The World Bank | *International tourism (number of arrivals)*, 2013

Based on the World Bank, 2013 the international economic crisis has affected international tourist arrivals in Greece, which was reduced in the first years of the crisis. The number of tourists' arrivals witnessed a drop that had Greece moving from 16th in 2008 to 17th in 2011 and was slowly overtaken by other popular tourist destinations, such as Thailand and Saudi Arabia (World Bank, 2013). According to the movement of figure 7, a dramatic decline on the number of international arrivals can be detected, due to the economic crisis in the early 2008, which increased in the late 2010.

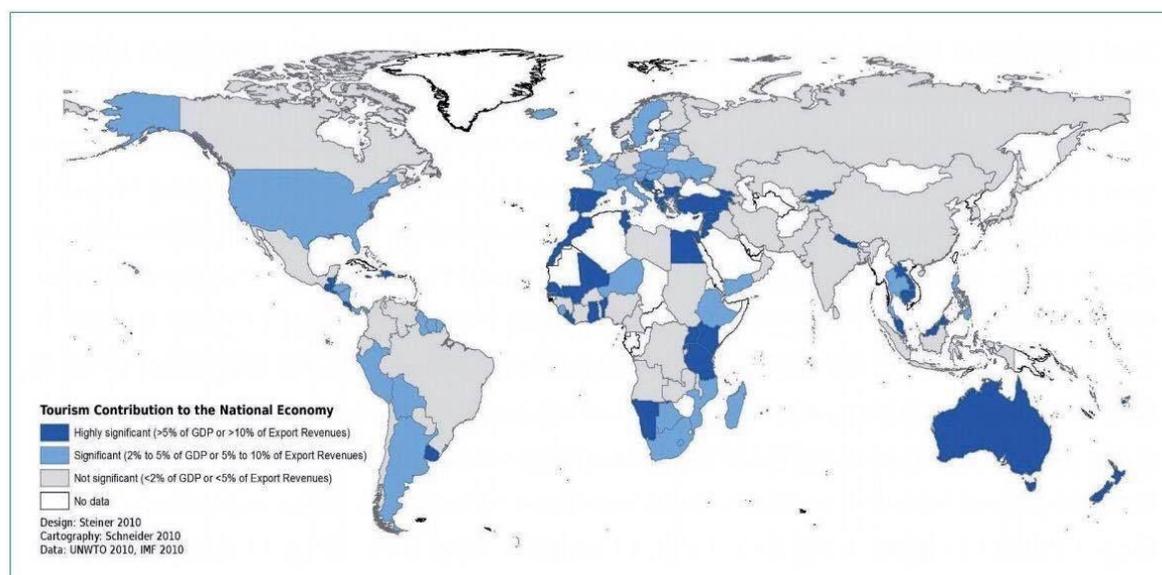
2.3 Tourism - A Generic Approach

The term "tourism" is originated from the word "tour", which means transferring people from their place of residence to another place for cultural, leisure or business reasons (Karagiannis & Exarchos, 2006, p.40). The tourism industry is one of the world's largest industries. It is a highly profitable and valuable industry to the global economy, and its impact on the financial and social sectors is tremendous worldwide, with direct and indirect consequences.

Tourism is an important factor for the economy of approximately half of the low income and lower middle income countries, mainly in Central and South America as well as Asia and the Pacific, but also in the Middle East and North Africa (see Figure 8).

Figure 8 Implication international tourism for national economies, international tourism receipts as a percentage of GDP and overall exports, 2007

Figure 8



Source: Computed from UNWTO and IMF data (2010).

Travel and Tourism generated 108,741,000 jobs directly in 2016 (3.6% of total employment) and this is forecast to grow by 2.1% in 2017 to 111,013,000 jobs (3, 6% of total employment). This includes employment by hotels, travel agents, airlines and other passenger transportation services (excluding commuter services). It also includes, for example, the activities of the restaurant and leisure industries directly supported by tourists. Money spent by foreign visitors to a country (or visitor exports) is a key component of the direct contribution of Travel and Tourism. Worldwide, the tourism industry has experienced steady growth almost every year. In 2016, the world generated 1203.78 billion euros in visitor exports. In 2017, this is expected to grow by 4.5%, and the world is expected to attract 1,290,780,000 international tourist arrivals (WTTC, 2017).

Tourism is a powerful tool for economic-social development and has been characterised by the ability to become the core of a new development policy, focused on overcoming economic crises through inbound tourism income (Galanos, 2013, 131). According to Smith (1994, pp.582-595), one of the few researchers in recent decades to analyse the tourism product, mentioned five elements which tourism consists. The five elements mentioned were the physical plant, the service, the hospitality, and lastly, the freedom of choice and involvement. Tourism is considered successful when these five elements are combined to attract customers as well as to cover all their needs (Budowski, 1976). The combination of these elements creates the best experience of tourism product to the customers (Doswell, 2002, pp. 62-66).

Tourism has been described as a distinctly export oriented activity, closely connected with other economic sectors, under direct and indirect impact of global trends (Dwyer, Edwards, Mistils, Roman in Cott, 2009, 65-67). In the same study they mentioned six megatrends which influence the global trends of a change in tourism. First, political drivers including international power, security and regional and ethnic conflict. These can have a big influence of a tourist's decision making as they are considered to be of great importance, especially safety as it is vital for spending a smooth time during a visit in a foreign country. Second, environmental drivers. Tourism and the environment are closely connected and are both getting more and more attention with many organisations publicly shaming countries that do not comply with international rules of protecting the environment, the local flora and fauna as well as keeping the public spaces clean for all visitors. A reduction of environmental pollution and raise of environmental awareness may become crucial due tourism development. For a country like Greece for example this could be very important factor of forming strong relationships with eco-friendly tourists as Greece as a country values the protection of its natural resources. Third, technological driver, connection with transport technology and information. Development of new technology will enable tourist companies to add value to products and services as well as offering flexibility and access to the offered products for customers to decide how to spend their time and money. Fourth, demographic trends, which included aging population, education, urbanisation, gender, health and quality of life. Demographics as well as social changes can have profound effects on social institutions. Fifth, economic trends including improved macroeconomic policies, defection of information technology, deregulation/liberalization, increasingly dynamic private sector and globalization which results in easier to other borders across the world, which means for the tourism sector more foreign travellers, as well as increased competition globally for tourist destinations. The sixth and last trend which affects tourism is the social trends, which introduces changes in human values, needs and expectations (Dwyer et al, 2008, 64-67). All the mentioned trends are important for tourism as all the trends together creates the context which the global tourism will develop and change to 2020 (Dwyer et al, 2008, 64-67).

The key demand for tourism in the early 1950s, was so called 'wanderlust' (SETE, 2010), focusing on exploring new cultures and traveling to new places (Sklias, P. and Tzifakis, N., 2013). In the early 80's, a new model was developed mainly in the Mediterranean countries where sun and sea is one of the countries' main product, described as 'the sun lust', which was focusing mainly on travel for resting and enjoying the sea and sun (Sklias, P. and Tzifakis, N., 2013). This model was characterised as the '3S' referring to sea, sun, sand (SETE, 2010).

Tourism can be a main cause of change, it is also changing itself due to external factors. Tourism is a large and complex phenomenon, with implications such as environmental,

sociocultural, and economic. Tourism as much as any other economic and social element, cannot be examined out of context. It is a result of the interplay of the local, national and international forces, trends, mind-sets, together with the influence of individual key stakeholders and political ideologies, world events and changing tastes of consumers (Sutheeshna, S., Sitikantha, M. and Bivraj, P., 2008).

2.4 Tourism in Greece

Greece is a Mediterranean country on the archipelago with a rich economic, religious and intellectual activity that takes place in this area for more than three and a half millennia. It has a long tradition in the field of tourism and hospitality, mainly due to its history and ancient civilization. Already in ancient Greece, visitors were considered sacred. Namely Zeus, the supreme god of Greek mythology or god of sky and lightning, was also the god of hospitality, who protected visitors and inspired local people to care for them (Buchalis, 2001, 440).

The development of modern industry in Greece for the tourism demand started in the 1950s. According to Buhalis (2001, 449), the main Greek tourism product is an amalgam of natural, cultural and historical attractions, which is reflected in large part by its 18 UNESCO world heritage sites, spread throughout the country, and also the great variety of services offered often by SMTEs.

Additionally, 15,000 miles of coastline and 2,500 islands, an average of 300 sunny days yearly, with a unique flora and fauna as well as an excellent climate with mild winters and warm summers. Greece owns such a variety of natural attraction with approximately 25,000 registered monuments and archaeological sites, museums and another 500 traditional settlements (Buhalis, 2001, 449). The main products of the Greek tourism are sun, sand, sea, known as the '3S model', and a plethora of history, culture, scenery and tradition. Greece's tourism is well develop to cover the twenty first century's diverse and needs. Greece has been positioned as a year around destination, covering all seasons, winter as well as summer.

Along with exports of goods, tourism is expected to constitute one of the main sectors that will contribute towards the recovery and growth of the Greek economy in the coming years, by assisting in attracting investments, supporting other economic sectors and boosting employment. Tourism has already contributed decisively in this direction, since it recorded an impressive recovery in 2013 (SETE, 2016).

Greece's employment is also highly depended on tourism as the direct contribution of travel and tourism in 2016 amounted 423,000 jobs (11,5% of total employment) and the total contribution of travel and tourism was estimated 860,500 jobs in 2016 (23,4% of total

employment) which both are forecast to rise by 2027. In 2015 Greece has attracted 26.5 million visitors and 30 million visitors in 2016, making it one of the most visited countries in Europe and the world (WTTC, 2017).

There is a growing competitiveness among countries due to high costs, which force destinations to over-function and reduce prices, oversupply, which affects the balance between demand and supply and results in price-reduction, the features of the competitors, which defines the extent of competitiveness and finally demand growth, delay in demand growth means great competitiveness among destinations (SETE,2005).

2.4.1 SWOT analysis of Greek tourism

A SWOT analysis which stands for strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats, is an analysis tool helping the researchers or planners to identify and prioritize the business goals, and to further identify the strategies of achieving them. Ommani, (2011) and Hollensen (210,p. 238) define the internal environment as ‘the strength and weakness of a firm which includes key dimensions such as financial performance and resources, human resources, production facilities and capacities, customer perceptions of product quality, price, market share, product availability and organizational communication’ (Hollensen, 2010).

A SWOT analysis have been carried out for the Greek tourism to evaluate its competitiveness, based on strategic management research undertaken (Buhalis, 2001; Varvaressos & Soteriades, 2011).

As demonstrated in Figure 9 below, we can detect strengths of the Greek tourism to be its natural and cultural resources/attractions, tourism providers flexibility, health and hygiene systems as well as entrepreneurial activity as family involvement which improves their customer satisfaction and service quality. Main weaknesses of the Greek tourism are management and marketing, lack of economies of scale, financial constraints, and lack of quality standards, general high cost of living, rules and regulations as well as seasonality. Main opportunities for the Greek tourism are information technology, low cost transportation, European Union support, trends in tourism demand, infrastructure development as well as new emerging markets such as China and Russia. Threats for the Greek tourism are environmental degradation, oversupply, concentration and globalisation, political as well as terrorism crises.

SWOT Analysis of Greek tourism

Figure 9

Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Natural and cultural attractions/resources ▫ Tourism providers' flexibility ▫ Tailor-made product delivery ▫ Personalised relationships with suppliers, consumers and employees ▫ Entrepreneurial activity and family involvement ▫ Air transport infrastructure ▫ Health and hygiene systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Information technology ▫ Transportation (low-cost carriers) ▫ European Union support ▫ Increase in tourism demand size ▫ New emerging markets, China and Russia ▫ Trends in tourism demand ▫ Infrastructure development
Weaknesses	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Management and Marketing ▫ Dependence upon tour operators ▫ Lack of economies of scale ▫ Financial constraints ▫ Seasonality ▫ Human resources management ▫ Lack of quality standards ▫ High cost of living (in general) ▫ Policy rules and regulations ▫ Environmental sustainability ▫ Ground transport infrastructure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Environmental degradation ▫ Oversupply ▫ Concentration and globalisation ▫ Lack of visibility in GDSs ▫ Infrastructure ▫ Political crises/Wars/terrorism ▫ Political intervention

Source: Buhalis, 2001; Varvaressos & Soteriades, 2011; WEF, 2013.

2.5 Summary of the theoretical discussion

The literature review provides an overview on how tourism can impact the economy of a country, an understanding on the Greek financial crisis and tourism as well as how important is tourism sector to the Greek economy. All in all, the research and secondary data gathered in the literature review section, proved that tourism is an important activity for the socio-

economic sector for countries, whose economy is heavily depended on tourism, such as Greece, Spain and Portugal. Depending on the country the factors that affects the economy can vary.

3 Research approach and methodology

According to Adams and Brace (2006), research is defined as “the collection and analysis of data from a sample or census of individuals or organizations relating to their characteristics, behaviours, attitudes, opinions or possessions”. This definition enunciates, that the purposes and meaning of researches are fact building, information analysis, study and review of information, data as well as supports in reaching new conclusions. Additionally they stated that research consists of the primary and secondary segment. Primary research is concerned with uncovering data that have never existed before, while secondary research has to do with reviewing already existing data. Despite having two segments, research has as main objective to gather information, review and develop insights and solutions to solve the problems that gave rise to the need for research (Adams & Brace 2006, 4, 20). The main purpose of the following methodology section is to describe the nature of the research design, the sampling plan, the data collection and analysis procedure.

3.1 Methodological approach: Quantitative

Having reviewed all the various methodological approaches to research projects, choosing the right method is crucial for researchers. It is essential in order to come up with the most reliable and valid results because it determines what research method is appropriate for the research problem as required by literature of earlier studies presented on the subject. Quantitative as well as qualitative research methods are known to be data gathering principles. However, the quantitative method offers the opportunity of collecting a much larger sample as it gathers information using the questionnaires and surveys responses, while qualitative uses detailed information of discussions and interviews of respondents through feelings, opinions and reactions (Adams & Brace 2006, 34, 38).

The research method used in this study is Quantitative research. This method was chosen as the researcher wanted to quantify data, generalize results and measure the incidence of various views and opinions from a larger sample than it would have been possible using the qualitative method (Ghuri & Gronhaug, 2005, 150-155). Data were collected through self-administrated internet-mediated questionnaires. Questionnaires were sent to all respondent through email, face-to-face and social media platforms.

The investigator of the study, decided to create two separate self-administrated questionnaires to investigate both perspectives, this way rich information will be obtained. In

this case, the first questionnaire was considered valid for to Greek citizens, living in Greece who could offer a local overview of situation, feelings and opinion and British nationality tourists who have visited Greece before. The second questionnaire was considered valid for hotels based in Greece. The outset of the survey “requires heavy emphasis on using formalized standard questions and predetermined response options in questionnaires or surveys administered to large numbers of respondents” (Hair 2003, 211).

3.2 Validity and reliability

Validity includes checking if results and findings of the research are truly about what they assume to be, reliability on the other hand, focuses more on the data collection methods or procedures of analysing and if these measures will give a dependable and regular results (Saunders and Rojon, 2014). However, validity and reliability, faces some threats. Validity faces the threat of history which is affected by the post-product recall opinions. According to Miller (2011) reliability has been defined as the extent to which a questionnaire, test, observation or any measurement procedure produces the same results on repeated trials (Miller, 2011). Reliability faces as a threat, mistakes. As part of subject or participant, some of the threats that arise in the course of data collection are; subject or participant error and bias, and observer error and bias (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009, p. 156-157). According to Wilson (2010) reliability issues are most of the time closely related with subjectivity and once a researcher implements a subjective approach towards the study, the level of reliability of the work is going to be compromised (Wilson, 2010).

The author of this research laid more emphasis on questionnaires and secondary data, to ensure validity and reliability is not compromised, as well as attention and care was paid to the sources of information used in the study. Some sources were double checked before adding them into the research. For validity and reliability purposes the author chose as respondents of the questionnaires people who have visited Greece before, Greek citizens who have gone through the financial crisis as well as local hotels.

It is important to emphasise, that although threats to research reliability and validity can never be totally eliminated, researchers need to work and make sure to diminish this threat as much as possible.

3.3 Data Collection

This study of the study examined the case of tourism through the Greek economic crisis, aiming to get an overview and valid opinion and experience from local people, tourists as well as domestic hotels. In order to achieve this, a quantitative method was the suitable option owing to the fact that the research is being conducted from people and businesses who have

experience the situation and the tourism culture of the country. So as a result, information from internet sources is vital as well as questionnaires were conducted to support the research. The following study was based on a survey questionnaire conducted in October 2017. The survey included two self-administrated internet-mediated questionnaires (Saunders et al., 2012). The first questionnaire was considered valid for Greek citizens, living in Greece as well as British nationality tourists who have visited Greece before and the second questionnaire was targeting Hotel based in Greece.

In the first questionnaire included a total sample of 207 respondents, out of 6 respondents were eliminated because of incomplete responses, and in the second questionnaire included a total sample of 41 hotels.

The theoretical background of the research was obtained from books, reports, articles, journals and other publications. Secondary data is basically primary data collected from other individuals apart from the investigator, and it might be collected for a different purpose.

Using secondary data is not only useful to find information to solve a research problem, but it also provides the investigator/researcher with a better understanding and explanation of the research problem (Ghuri, Gronhaug, 2005, 90-93). Some advantages of using secondary data is obviously saving time and money and it is also high quality as they are collected and compiled by experts using rigorous research methods (Ghuri, Gronhaug, 2005, 94-96).

Primary data is the data collected when the secondary data is not available. There are many different methods to collect primary data in quantitative research. Questionnaires are one of the most common method used to collect data from individuals and it is also used in almost every professional area and academic field (Kumar, 2011).

The author and the thesis supervisor, decided that the most effective data collection method for this study is to analyse two different perspectives. In this case, we decided to send self-administrated internet-mediated questionnaires to Greek citizens, living in Greece and British nationality tourists and also to contact through e-mail or telephone call, hotels based in Greece to persuade them to participate in the research. However, several e-mails were exchanged, and 41 hotels were willing to participate in the research. The next step included sending them an e-mail attached with the online questionnaire to be answered.

3.4 Online Questionnaire

The online questionnaires accomplished the quantitative approach of the research. This study has designed two different questionnaires to investigate different perspectives and obtain rich information.

The first questionnaire was considered valid to Greek citizens, living in Greece as well as British nationality tourists who have visited Greece before. The questionnaire was combined from 14 appropriate set of close questions using an online tool to design it. The second questionnaire targeting hotels based In Greece was combined from 8 appropriate set of close questions using the same online tool as in the second questionnaire. For the second questionnaire a cover letter was written in advance, to inform the respondents about the aim and the nature of the survey.

The author tested both questionnaires by sending them to fellow students, friends and to the thesis supervisor. The feedback received was positive but few changes were required. The questionnaires were granted by the authority and tested so the link to the questionnaire were sent through e-mail, telephone call or social media platforms to possible respondents. The survey was taken down and completed when the number of respondents reached the satisfaction of the author.

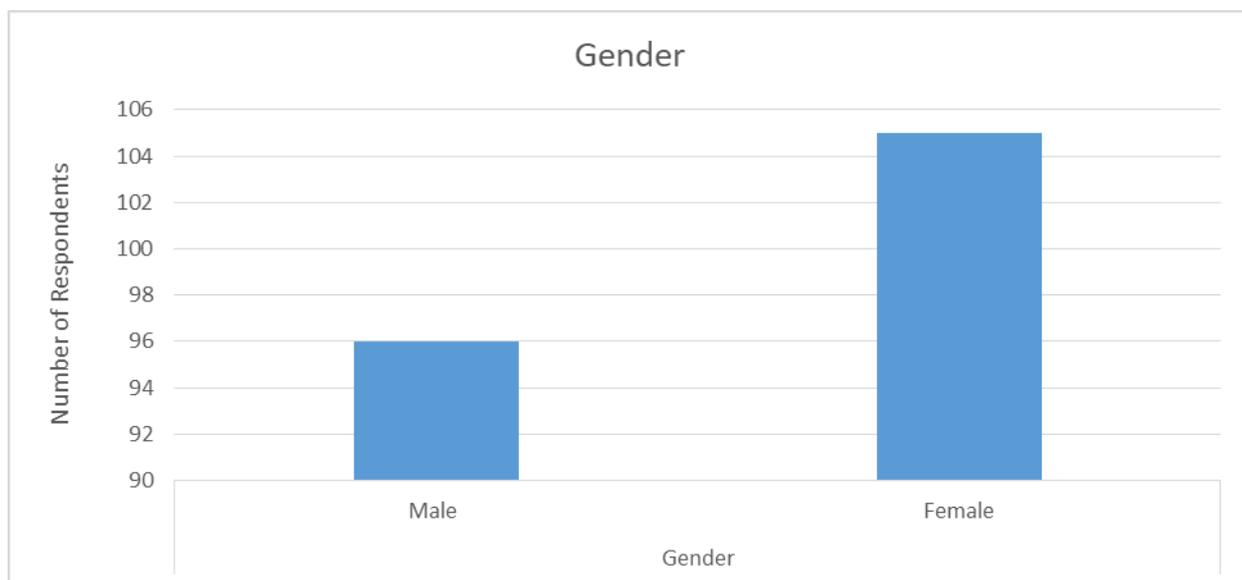
The first questionnaire targeting to Greek citizens, living in Greece as well as British nationality tourists who have visited Greece before included a total sample of 207 respondents, out of 6 respondents were eliminated because of incomplete responses, and the second questionnaire targeting hotels based in Greece included a total sample of 41 respondents. Both questionnaires contained background questions which were required. All the questions in both questionnaires were multiple-choice, focusing on their personal experience/opinion on the Greek crisis and tourism. The questionnaire was available online for three weeks before the investigator initiated the analysis of results.

4 Results and Analysis

In this chapter the author is analysing the results of the survey that took place in October 2017. As mentioned earlier in this study two self-administrated internet-mediated questionnaires have been conducted. The first Questionnaire was addressed to Greek citizens and British nationality tourists who have visited Greece before. The population of the international tourists that had visited Greece before consisted mainly by British citizens due to two main reasons. Greece is a very popular destination for UK citizens to visit and therefore they could offer a more reliable answer. Secondly, the author had access to more UK citizens than of other countries due to the easier communication as the study was conducted in English. The second questionnaire was targeting domestic Hotels (Hotels based in Greece). All the below findings are presented according the author's research and the results of the survey conducted.

4.1 Questionnaire

Figure 10



The figure 10 shows the total number of the genders that took part in the survey. 96 of the respondents were Male, and 105 were Female.

Age group of respondents

This question was addressed for all respondents regardless of nationality

Figure 11

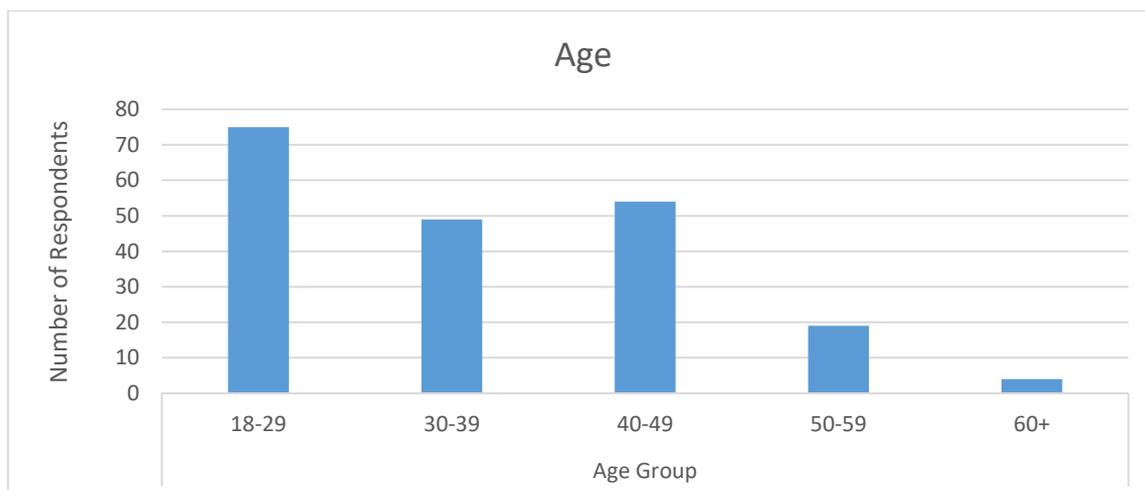


Figure 11 shows the age group of the respondents. 75 of the respondents were 18-29 years old, 49 respondents were 30-39, 54 of the respondents were 40-49 years old, 19 were 50-59 years old, and 60+ were only 4 of the respondents.

Country of origin of respondents

This question was addressed for all respondents regardless of nationality

Figure 12

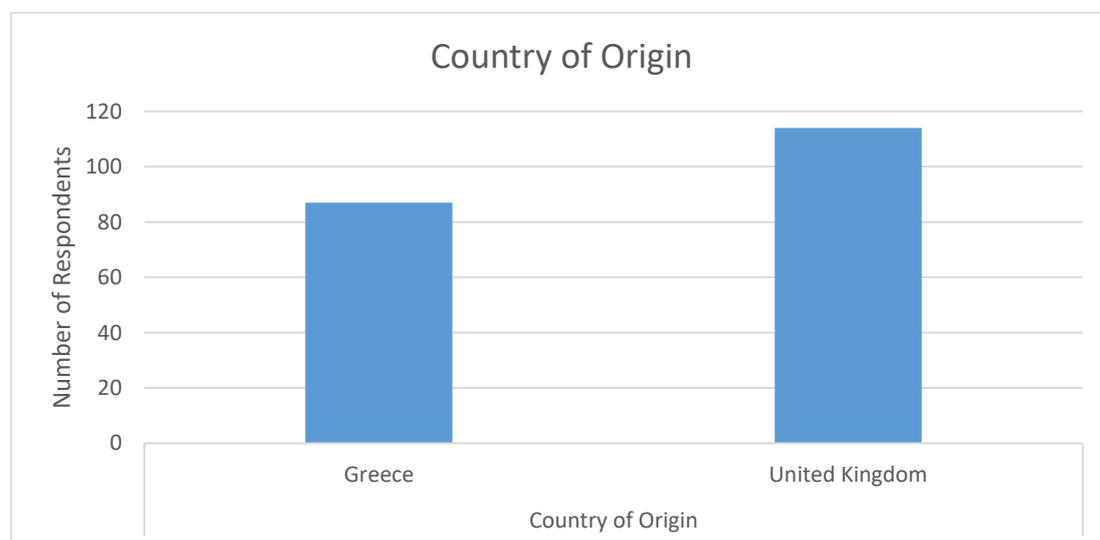


Figure 12 reveals the country of origin of the participants took part in this survey. 114 of the respondents were British nationality and 87 were Greek citizens living in Greece.

How many time have you visit Greece.

This question was addressed to British nationality respondents

Figure 13



This question reveals how many times the British nationality respondents have visited Greece. 77 from the respondents have visited 1-2 times and 37 have visited 3+ times Greece.

*Which was the main reason to visit Greece recently
This question was addressed to British nationality respondents*

Figure 14

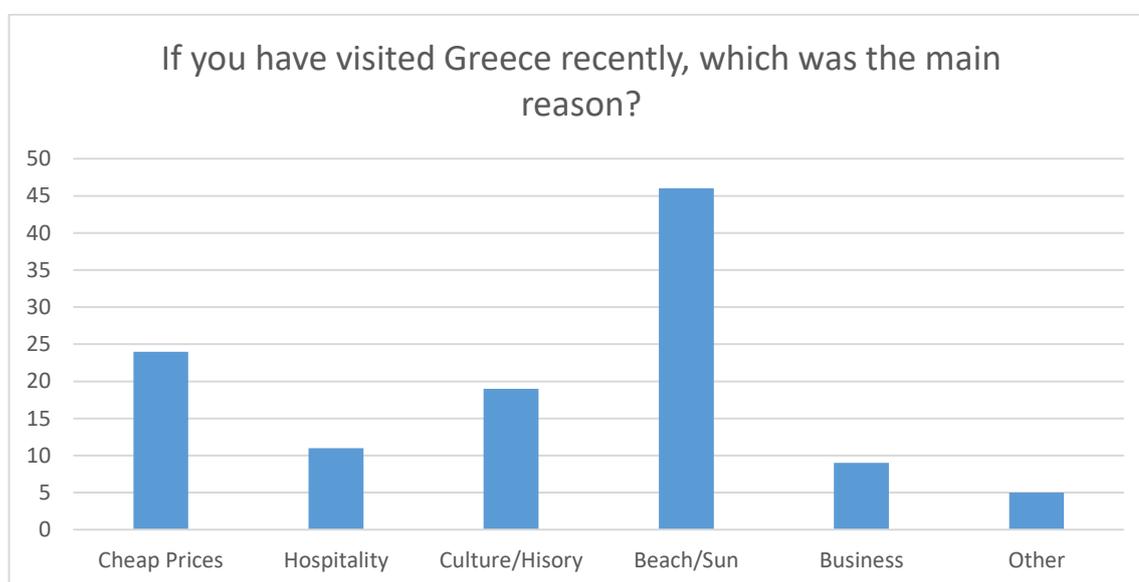


Figure 14 shows the reason that British citizens have visited Greece. 46 of the respondents chose to visit Greece because of 'BEACH/SUN', 19 of the respondents chose 'CULTURE/HISTORY' as their main reason to visit Greece, 24 respondents chose 'CHEAP PRICES', 11 chose 'HOSPITALITY', 9 of the respondents chose 'BUSINESS', and finally 5 chose 'OTHER' reason to visit Greece. Figure 13, proves that Beach and sun dominated as the main reason to visit Greece

as consumers and especially green consumers value crystal clear waters and clean beaches. As mentioned in the literature review 3S is one of the appreciated natural resources of Greece. Second main reason is cheap prices, which was followed by the financial crisis in order to stay competitive in the marketplace.

Was your decision of going or not to Greece affected by the economic crisis that Greece has been going through?

This question was addressed to British nationality respondents

Figure 15

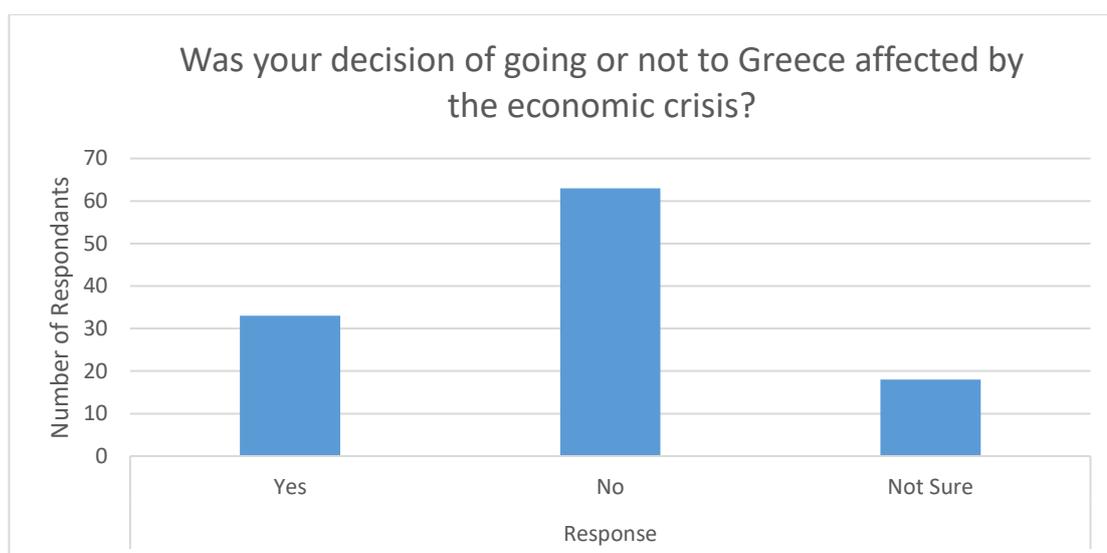


Figure 15 reveals if the decision of going or not to Greece has been affected by the economic crisis that Greece has been going through. 63 of the respondents chose 'NO', meaning that their decision of visiting the country was not affected by the economic crisis, 33 chose 'YES', meaning their decision has been affected and 18 of the respondents chose 'NOT SURE' as their answer. It is interesting to see that they still visit Greece, showing that Greece's attractiveness as a tourist destination was not affected by the economic crisis as much as other socioeconomic sectors.

Would you travel to Greece in the near future?

This question was addressed to British nationality respondents

Figure 16

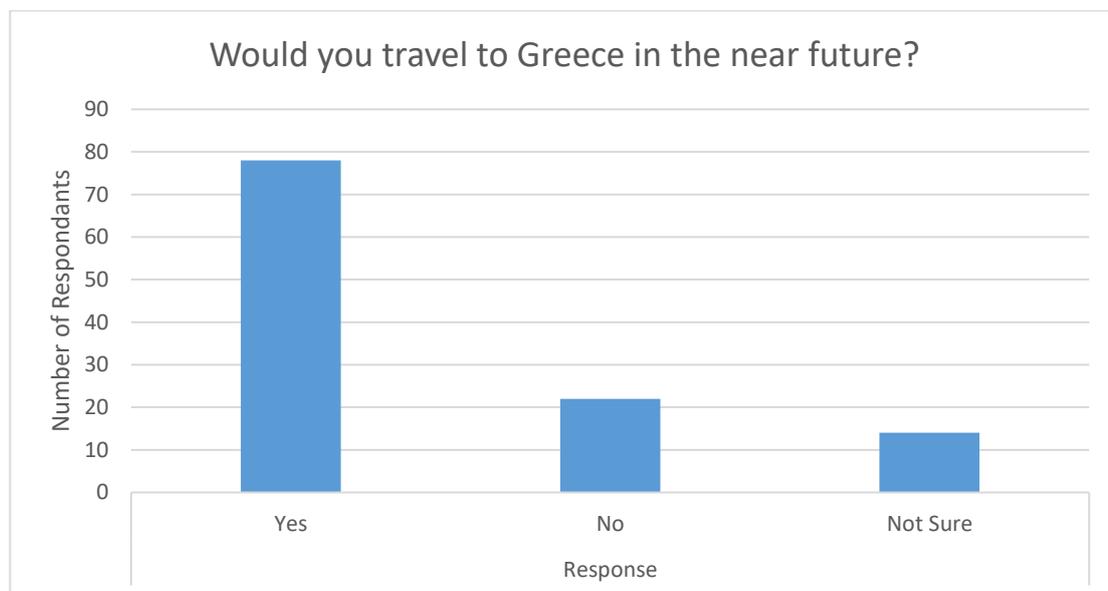


Figure 16 shows whether people are planning to travel to Greece in the near future. 78 of the respondents said 'YES', meaning that they would travel to Greece in the near future, 22 of the respondents said 'NO' meaning they would not (or not planning) travel to Greece in the near future and 14 said 'NOT SURE'. This shows us that most of the respondents are not afraid to visit and travel to Greece.

What would you consider as a main reason to visit Greece in the future?

This question was addressed to British nationality respondents

Figure 17

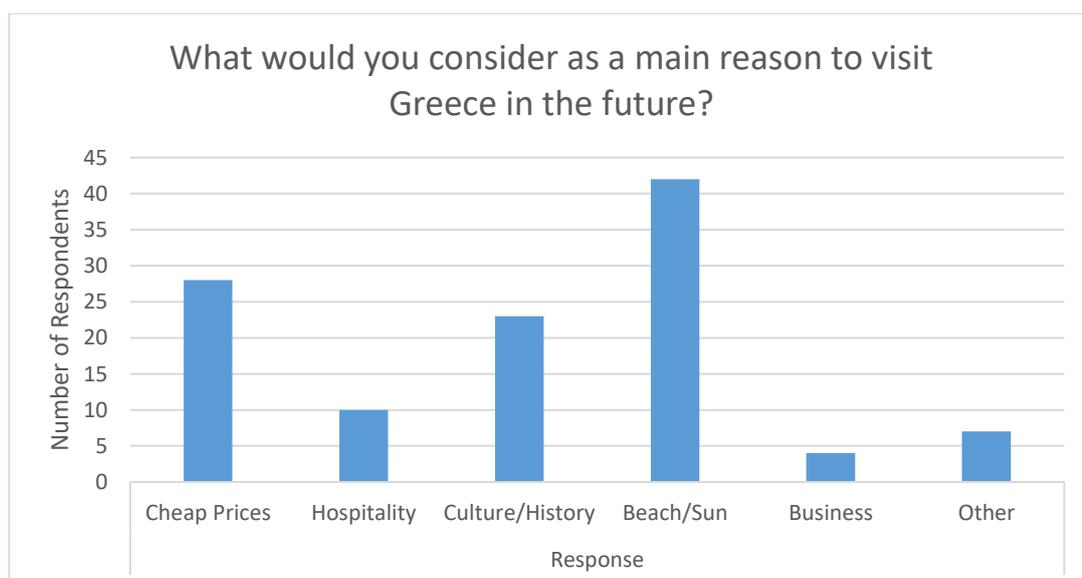


Figure 17, take a closer look at the main reason of the respondents to visit Greece in the future. 42 chose as their main reason 'BEACH AND SUN', 23 chose 'CULTURE/HISTORY', 28 chose 'CHEAP PRICES', 10 respondents would visit Greece for 'HOSPITALITY' reasons, 7 chose 'OTHER', and finally 4 chose 'BUSINESS'. Comparing it to the main reason that people visited Greece (Figure 17), the reasons that people visited and will visit haven't change much after the crisis as people are still choosing as their main reason to travel/visit Greece, the county's main products beach/sun/sand (35), culture/history as well as cheap prices.

Do you consider Greece to be a cheap destination?

This question was addressed for all respondents regardless of nationality

Figure 18

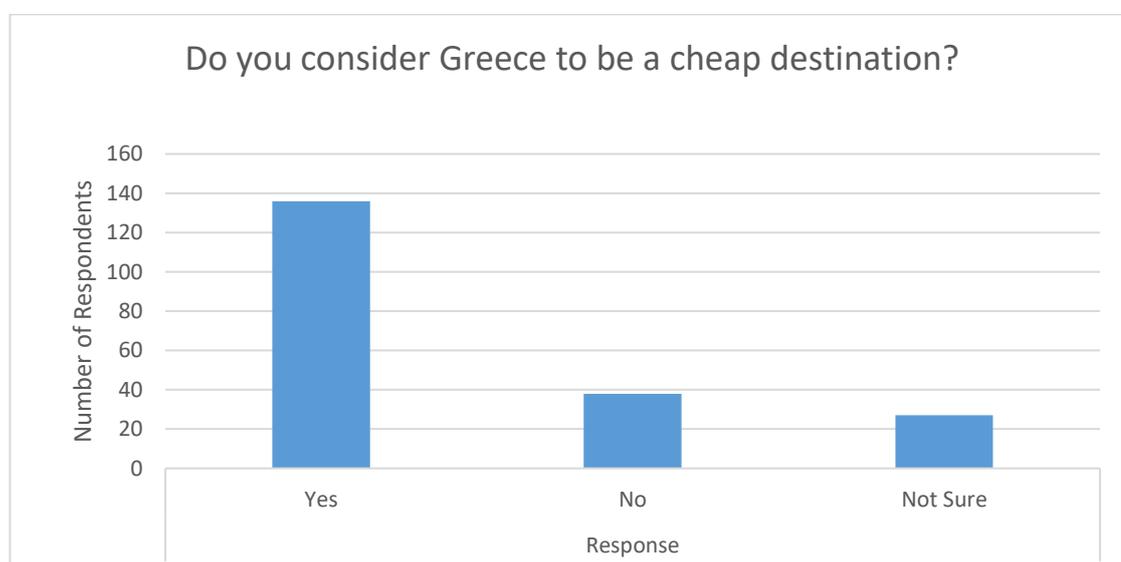


Figure 18 shows how many of the respondents consider Greece to be a cheap destination. 136 of the respondents said 'YES', meaning that they consider Greece as a cheap destination, 38 respondents, said 'NO', meaning they do not consider Greece as a cheap destination and finally 27 respondents said 'NOT SURE'. Cheap prices tend to make the country more competitive and attractive towards tourists.

Could Greece be competitive to other Mediterranean countries, as a tourist destination?
This question was addressed for all respondents regardless of nationality

Figure 19

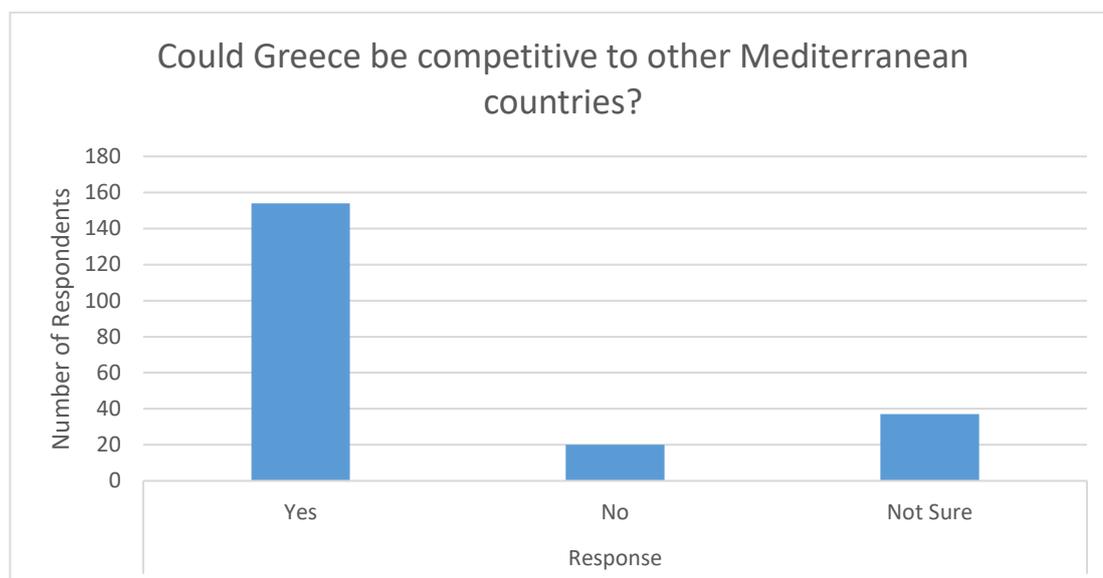


Figure 19 shows if Greece could be a competitive to other Mediterranean countries as a tourist destination. 154 said 'YES', meaning they consider Greece as a competitive to other Mediterranean countries (as a tourist destination), 20 said 'NO', meaning they do not consider Greece as a competitive to other Mediterranean countries and 37 respondents said 'NOT SURE'. Competitors of Greece include Spain, Italy, Malta as well as Cyprus.

Are you satisfied with the hospitality services you received in Greece
This question was addressed for all respondents regardless of nationality

Figure 20

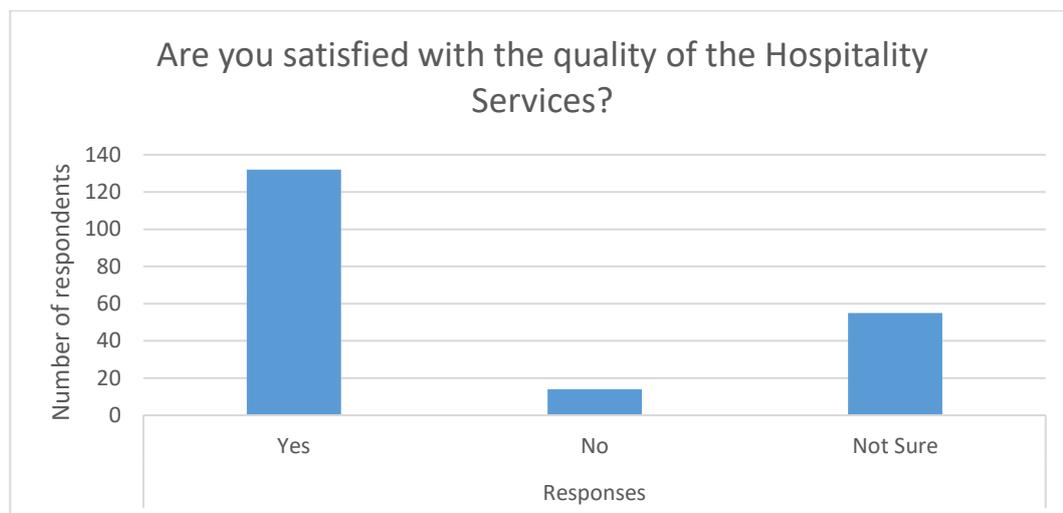


Figure 20 shows whether the respondents of the questionnaire are satisfied with the hospitality services received in Greece while their stay. 132 said 'YES', meaning that they are satisfied with the services received in the country, 14 said 'NO', meaning they are not satisfied with the quality of hospitality services received in Greece while their stay, and 55 said 'NOT SURE'.

*Would you consider Greece to be a safe country for tourists to visit?
This question was addressed for all respondents regardless of nationality*

Figure 21

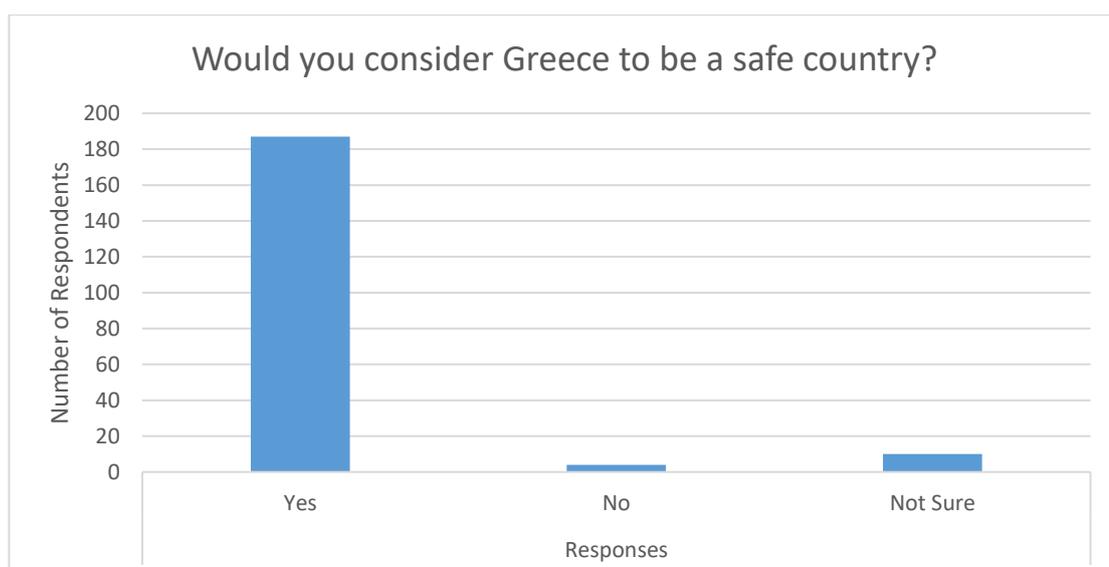


Figure 21 shows whether the respondents of the questionnaire consider Greece to be a safe country for a tourist to visit. 187 said 'YES', meaning they consider Greece to be a safe

country for a tourist to visit, 4 said 'NO', meaning that they do not consider Greece as a safe destination and 10 respondents said 'NOT SURE'. According to Mansfeld, A. and Pizam, Y., (2006) safety and security of a country has a huge impact on the tourism sector. It seems that the majority of the respondents supports that Greece is a safe country to visit for a tourist.

Did the Greek economic crisis affected your income
This question was addressed to Greek nationality respondents

Figure 22

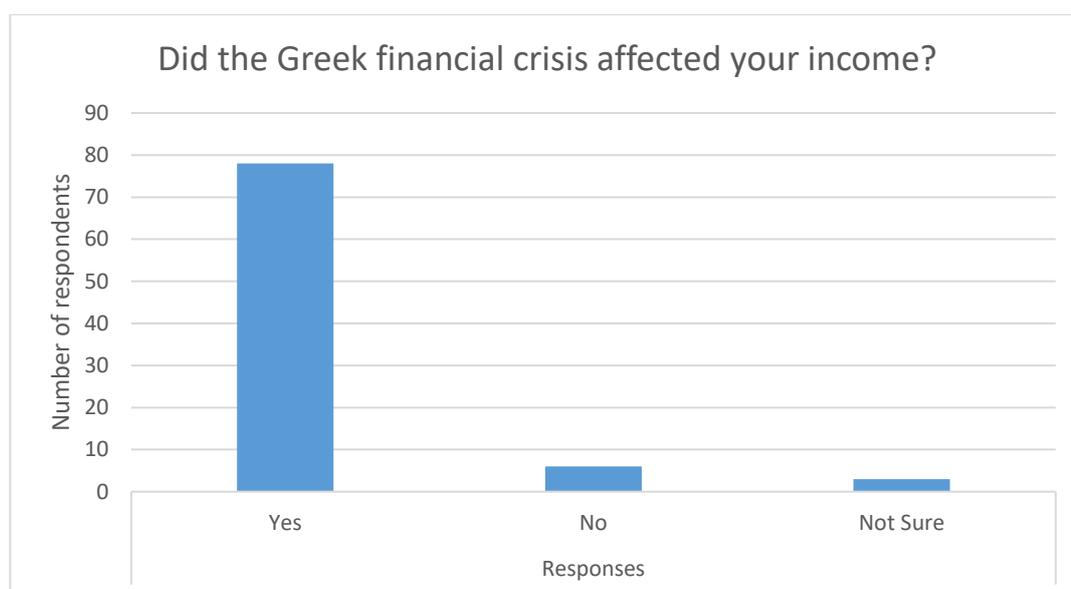


Figure 22 show how the Greek financial crisis affected the income of the Greek citizens. 78 of the respondents chose 'YES', as their answer, meaning that the Greek economic crisis affected their income negatively, 6 said 'NO', meaning their income was not affected by the Greek economic crisis negatively, 3 said they are 'NOT SURE'. 78 of the Greek citizens had a negative effect on their income meaning that they would not be able to spend as much as they did, proving the mention theory in Literature review section that a small decrease in the disposable income might affect the outbound tourism and benefit the inbound.

Do you travel mostly domestically for your holidays?
This question was addressed to Greek nationality respondents

Figure 23

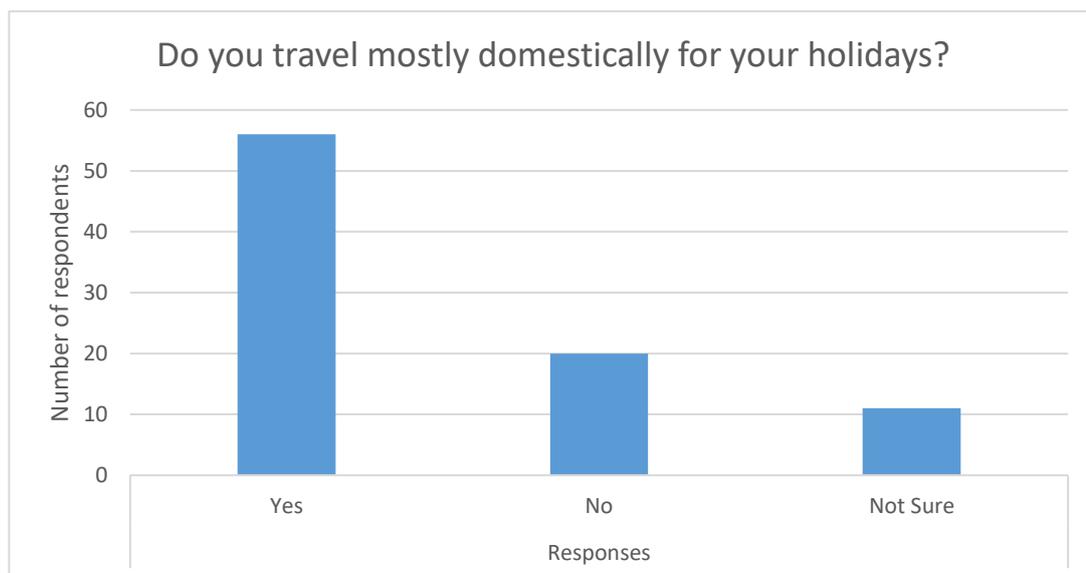


Figure 23 shows if the Greek respondents of the questionnaire are traveling mostly domestically for their holiday. 56 said 'YES', meaning they are traveling for their holidays in the country, 20 said 'NO', meaning they are not traveling mostly domestically and 11 said 'NOT SURE'. This supports the theory mentioned in the literature review as well as in figure 23, even a small change in the individual's disposable income, might benefit the domestic travel (inbound tourism) and negatively affect the outbound tourism.

4.2 Questionnaire

Region of the domestic Hotels which took part in the Questionnaire
This question was addresses to Hotels Based in Greece

Figure 24

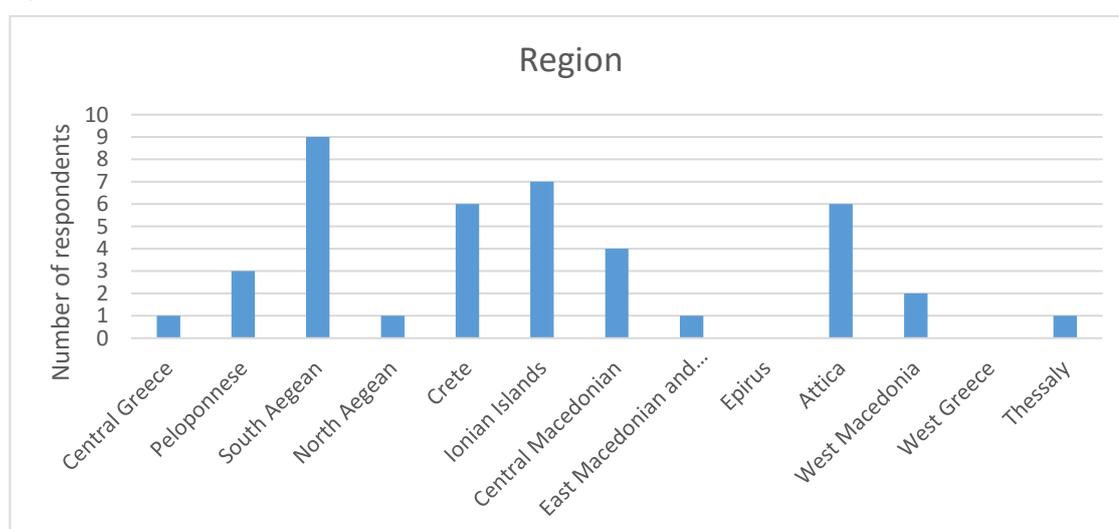


Figure 24 shows all the Regions of the Hotels which took part in the questionnaire. South Aegean 9 Hotels, was the most responding region as well as Ionian Islands with 7 Hotels, Attica region 6 Hotels and Crete 6.

*What kind of guests visit your hotels the most
This question was addresses to Hotels Based in Greece*

Figure 25



Figure 25 shows what kind of guests visit the hotels where the survey was conducted. 27 said that their main guests are tourists, 9 said that their main guests are businessmen, 9 Hotels chose as their main guest Families/couples, and finally 4 said convention members.

*Do you believe the economic crisis has affected the tourism sector?
This question was addresses to Hotels Based in Greece*

Figure 26

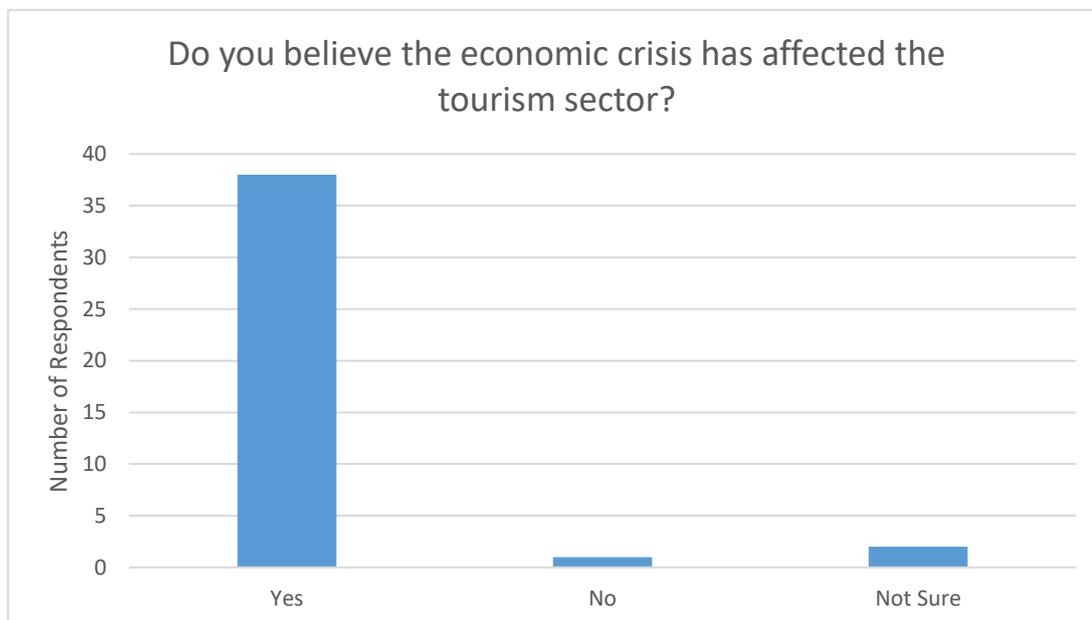


Figure 26 reveals whether the local hotels in Greece believe economic crisis has affected the tourism sector, 38 said, 'YES' meaning they support the fact that the economic crisis has an impact on the tourism sector, 1 said 'NO' and 2 chose as their answer 'NOT SURE'

*Do you believe the economic crisis affected the disposable income of your guests?
This question was addressed to Hotels Based in Greece*

Figure 27

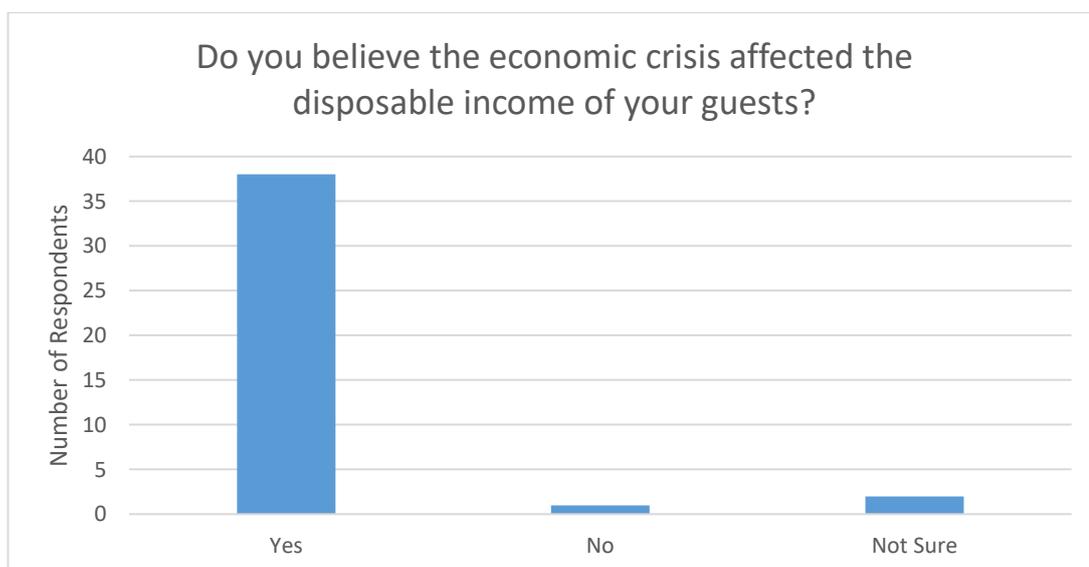


Figure 27 shows if the hotels in Greece have noticed any changes on the disposable income of their guests. 38 Hotels said 'YES', meaning that they believe the economic crisis has affected the disposable income of their guests (by spending less on their stay), 1 Hotel replied 'NO', meaning the disposable income of their guest was not affected and 2 said 'NOT SURE'.

Did you receive more Greek citizens during the economic crisis than before?

This question was addresses to Hotels Based in Greece

Figure 28

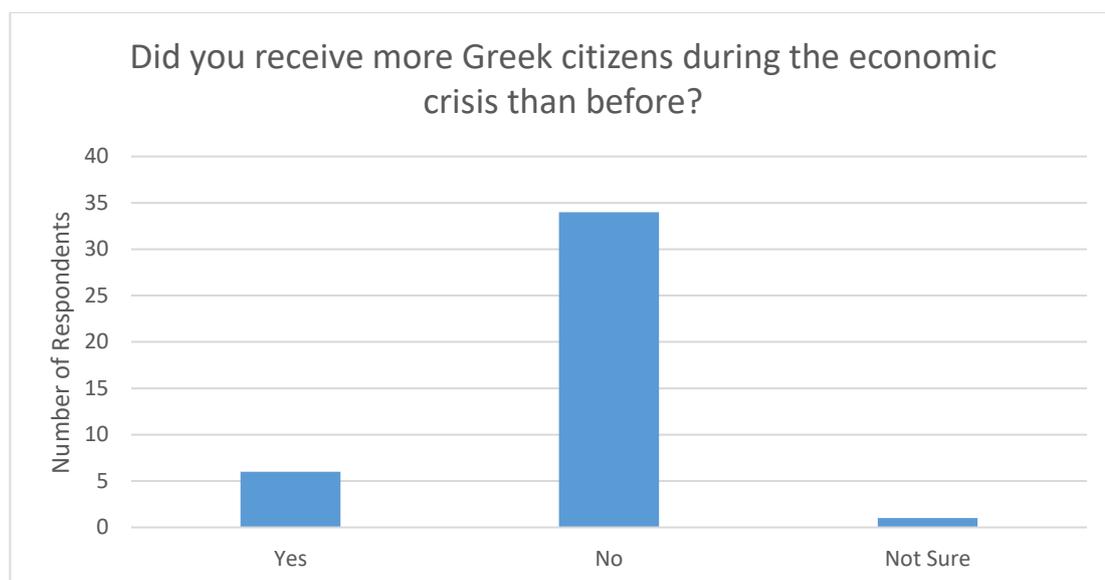


Figure 28 show the outcome of the question if the domestic hotels received more Greek citizens than before, 34 said 'NO' meaning that they did not received more Greek citizens during the crisis, 6 said 'YES', they did received more Greek citizens and 1 answered 'NOT SURE'. Although the literature review showed that due to the economic crisis there is an increase in domestic travel, the questionnaires showed that Greeks did not increase their domestic holidays. This might show that Greeks were so much affected by the economic crisis that not even traveling in their own country was an option.

What was the average per guests' number of overnight stays during 2009-2012?

This question was addresses to Hotels Based in Greece

Figure 29

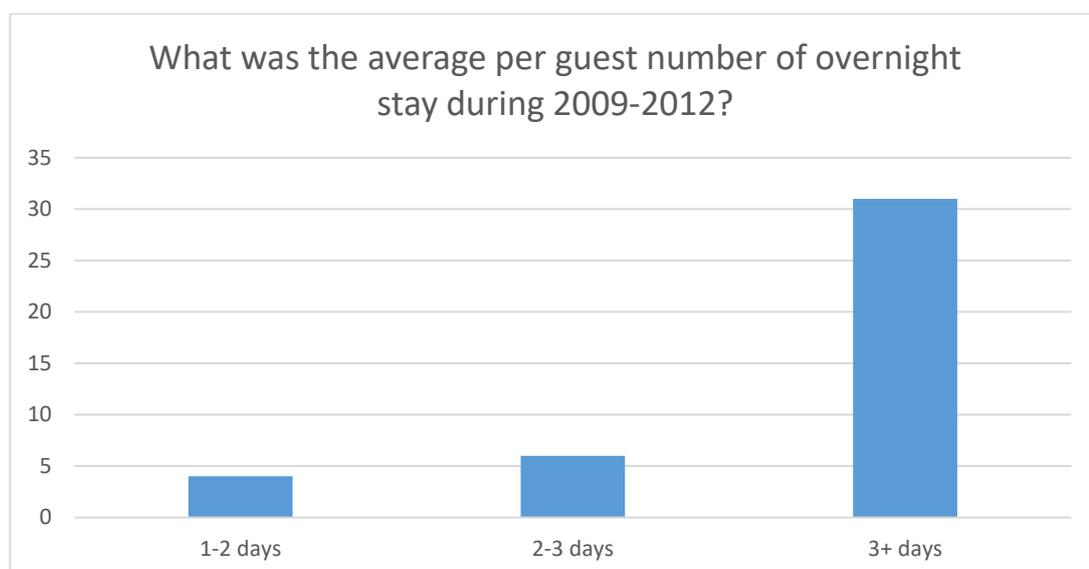


Figure 29 reveals the average per guests' number of overnight stays during the period of 2009-2012. 31 said '+3', 6 of the hotels experienced a '2-3' overnight stays and 4 respondent that their average per guest number overnight stay was '1-2'. We can see that as the main guests of the hotels are tourists from other countries, they also tend to stay on average more than 3 days. This is extremely positive for the hotels as they can be booked in advance for more days per year without worrying. It can bring stability and employment.

What was the average per guests' number of overnight during 2013-2016?

This question was addresses to Hotels Based in Greece

Figure 30

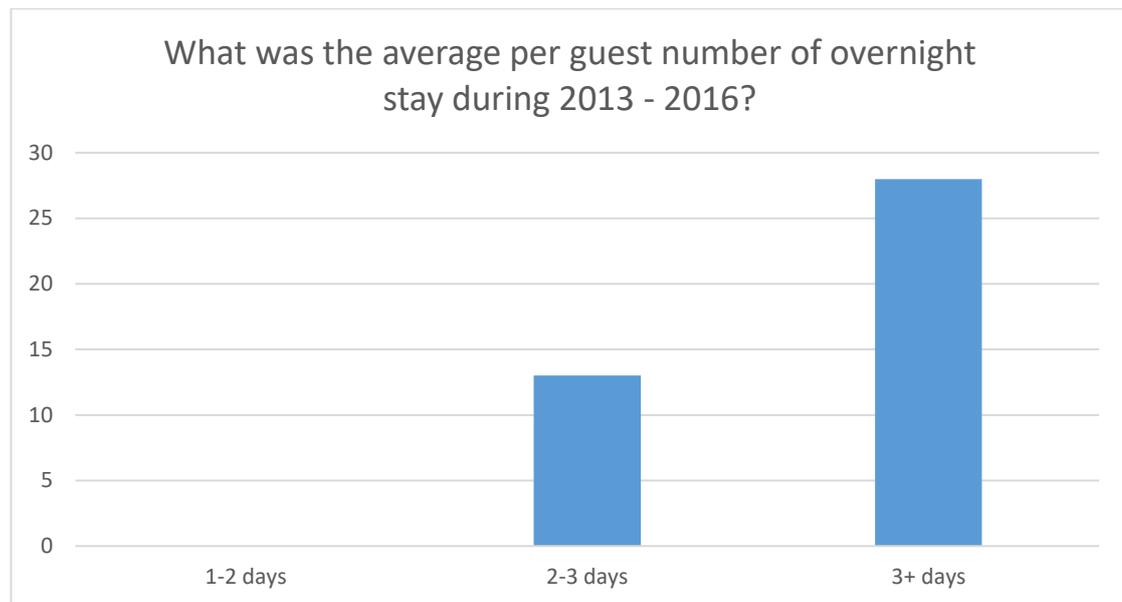


Figure 30 reveals the average per guests' number of overnight stays during the period of 2013-2016. 28 Hotels replied '+3', 13 Hotels said '2-3', and finally 0 hotels responded as their average per guest number of overnight stay to be '1-2'.

Was the number of arrivals in 2009-2012 at your hotel decreased/declined
This question was addresses to Hotels Based in Greece

Figure 31

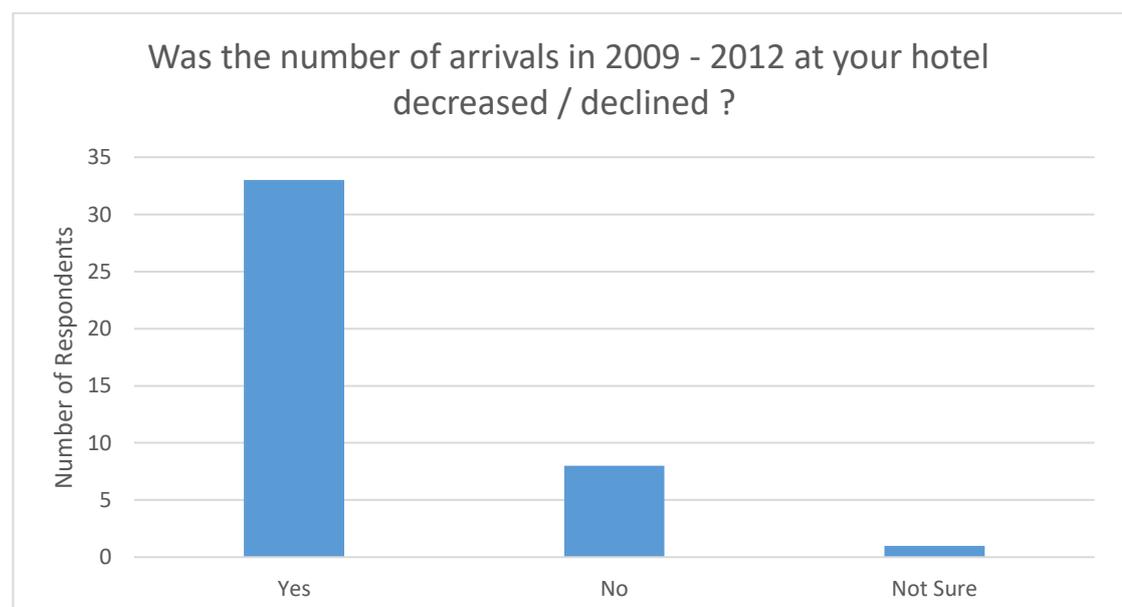


Figure 31 reveals whether the number of arrivals in the period 2009-2012 decreased. 33 answered 'YES', meaning the number of arrivals decreased in the mentioned period, 8 chose as their answer 'NO', and 1 answered 'NOT SURE'. It was declined as not only tourists were not sure about the stability of the situation in Greece, but the Greeks also were financially damaged and could not afford to travel, not even domestically.

5 Conclusion

Critically analysing the research based on the results and information gathered, the author find that the Greek tourism sector was affected through the financial crisis, but it relatively quickly recovered, comparing to other sectors, likely due to the needed changes imposed, becoming a far more welcoming and inviting country for tourists. Reasons for attracting tourists even in the country's worse period was the cheap prices as well as the country's natural resources the sun and the sea (Sklias, P. and Tzifakis, N., 2013).

Tourism was and will be one of the biggest conduits of exchanging ideas and cultural traditions. People have always enjoyed to travel for either to feel their need to explore and learn more about a country or just take a break from their normal routine. Either way Greece has always been one of the go to places for both reasons.

This continuity and connection between tourism and the Greek culture has made Greece to me globally respected and admired for its beautiful natural resources and true hospitality. That reputation, as the literature has shown, came in handy when Greece faced one of the most difficult situations of the past years. The country was deep into the financial crisis because of uncontrollable government spending and inability to sustain its enormous debt. Tourism was the only sector that managed to recover quickly and efficiently managing to contribute to the GDP and get the country back on track.

Analysing the questionnaires this study confirmed the previous literature pointing that by lowering the prices, a country can become more competitive towards inbound tourism, while maintaining the same or at least a similar level of hospitality services and safety cements a country's position as an attractive destination (Mansfeld, A. and Pizam, Y., 2006).

While the hotels analysis showed that they still had satisfying levels of visitors, at the early stages of the crisis most of them were locals while later on, when the foreigners got triggered by the low prices hotels managed to get booked again for longer periods of time.

In general, this study has shown that a country with the right maturity and determination from its Human Resources is able to recover faster if the country makes its products appealing to foreign investors (In this case tourists).

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7 Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaires

7.1 Questionnaire 1

• * 1. Gender

- Male
- Female

* 2. Age

- 18 - 29
- 30 - 39
- 40 - 49
- 50 - 59
- 60 +

* 3. Country of origin

- Greece
- United Kingdom
- Other (please specify):

4. How many times have you visited Greece? (IF YOU ARE A GREEK CITIZEN, SKIP Q 4 AND CONTINUE TO Q 9)

- 0
- 1 - 2
- 3 +

5. If you have visited Greece recently, which was the main reason?

- Cheap prices
- Hospitality
- Culture / History
- Beach / Sun

-
- Business
 - Other (please specify):

6. Was your decision of going or not to Greece, affected by the economic crisis that Greece has been going through?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

7. Would you travel to Greece in the near future?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

8. What would you consider as a main reason to visit Greece in the future?

- Cheap prices
- Hospitality
- Culture / History
- Beach / Sun
- Business
- Other (please specify):

* 9. Do you consider Greece to be a cheap destination?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

* 10. Could Greece be competitive to other Mediterranean countries, as a tourist destination?

- Yes
- No

-
- Not sure

11. Are you satisfied with the quality of Hospitality services you received in Greece?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

* 12. Would you consider Greece to be a safe country for a tourist to visit?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

13. Did the Greek financial crisis affected your income? (FOR GREEK CITIZENS ONLY)

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

14. Do you travel mostly domestically for your holidays? (FOR GREEK CITIZENS ONLY)

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

7.2 Questionnaire 2

- * 1. Region:
 - Central Greece
 - Peloponnese
 - South Aegean
 - North Aegean
 - Crete
 - Ionian Islands
 - Central Macedonian

-
- East Macedonian and Thrace
 - Epirus
 - Attica
 - West Macedonia
 - West Greece
 - Thessaly

* 2. What kind of guests visit your hotel the most?

- Businessmen
- Tourists
- Families / couples
- Convention members

* 3. Do you believe the economic crisis has affected the tourism sector?

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

* 4. Do you believe the economic crisis has affected the disposable income (the amount of money that households have available for spending and saving after income taxes have been accounted for) of your guests?

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

* 5. Did you receive more Greek citizens during the Greek economic crisis than before?

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

* 6. What was the average per guests' number of overnight stays during 2009 - 2012?

-
- 1 - 2
 - 2 - 3
 - 3 +

* 7. What was the average per guests' number of overnight stays during 2013 - 2016?

- 1 - 2
- 2 - 3
- 3 +

* 8. Was the number of arrivals in 2009 - 2012 at your hotel decreased / declined?

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

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Figure 4	15
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