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([http://www..com/blog/tag/greek mapsnworld -financial-recession/](http://www..com/blog/tag/greek%20mapsnworld%20-financial-recession/))

# Greece: an attractive destination Striving towards development or failure?

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# Content

List of tables and figures .....	4
Acknowledgement.....	5
Abstract .....	6
Introduction .....	7
1.1 Background .....	8
1.1.1 Destination – Greece and its development .....	8
1.1.2 Greece and its economy .....	10
1.1.3 Euro – the beginning .....	11
1.2 Problematization.....	12
1.3 Purpose and problemareas.....	12
1.5 Delimitation.....	13
1.6 Definitions .....	14
1.7 Disposition .....	15
2 Method .....	16
2.1 Methodological choices.....	16
2.2 Why hermeneutics and not positivism .....	16
2.3 Qualitative interview .....	17
2.4 Observation .....	17
2.5 Justification for the selected method .....	18
2.6 Justification for the sample .....	18
2.7 Approach of the collected material .....	18
2.8 Ethics.....	19
2.9 Qualitative analysis .....	20
2.10 Content analysis .....	20
2.11 Critical vetting of methodology using validity and reliability .....	20
3 Previous research.....	22
3.1 The Greek crisis and its affections .....	22
3.2 The National Implications .....	26
3.3 The cutback decisions .....	29
4 Theoretical framework .....	30
4.1 SWOT-Analysis .....	30
4.1.1 Why using a SWOT- analysis? .....	32
4.1.2 What happens next?.....	32

4.1.3 Why this theory? .....	32
4.2 Butlers sequence model.....	34
4.2.1 Models of tourist development.....	34
4.2.2 The seven stages of tourist development.....	34
4.2.3 Why using Butlers sequence model? .....	35
4.3 Push and pull factors .....	36
4.3.1 Push factors .....	36
4.3.2 Pull factors.....	37
4.3.3 Why using this model? .....	38
4.4 Lieper’s model of attraction .....	39
4.4.1 Why using this model? .....	39
4.5 Maslow’s Need Hierarchy.....	41
4.5.1 Abraham Maslow and the hierarchy of needs .....	41
4.5.2 The hierarchy of needs .....	41
4.5.3 Why using this model?.....	42
5 Empirical framework.....	43
5.1 Interviews .....	43
5.1.1 Greek National Tourism Organisation and Apollo .....	43
5.2 Observation .....	49
5.3 Building and restoring destinations.....	51
5.4 Developing tourism destinations .....	52
5.5 Marketing and social media .....	53
5.5.1 The mass media .....	53
5.6 Crisis management .....	54
6 Greece’s future movements.....	58
7 Analysis.....	59
7.1 How can a destination in economic crisis maintain its attractiveness as a tourist goal? .....	59
7.2 How shall Greece re-attract its travelers? And why is it important to do so?.....	62
8 Results .....	65
How can a destination in economic crisis maintain its attractiveness as a tourist goal?..	65
How Greece shall re-attract travelers, and why is that important? .....	65
9 Conclusion.....	66
10 Knowledge Contribution .....	67
11 Suggestion for further research .....	68

Bibliography	
Literature resources .....	69
Internet resources .....	70
Appendix .....	71
Interviews .....	71

## List of tables and figures

Figure 1 Greece's tourism	7
Figure 2 International tourism and the number of arrivals	8
Figure 3 Unemployment in percent	9
Figure 4 SWOT-analysis	33
Figure 5 Butler's sequence model	35
Figure 6 Lieper's model of attraction	40
Figure 7 Maslow's need Hierarchy	42
Figure 8 Pull factors that attract Greek travelers	46
Figure 9 Push factors that affect Greek travelers	46
Figure 10 Does the crisis prevent you from traveling to Greece?	47
Figure 11 What to do in order to re-attract travelers?	47
Figure 12 Which are Greece's strengths?	48
Figure 13 Which are Greece's weaknesses?	48

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- *The Greek National Tourism Organisation*

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*Kiriaki Kiki Grigoriadou*

## Abstract

Greece is a well-known and recommended summer destination since the 1800's. Greece has had its ups and downs however, travelers have always visited the country. When the economic crisis hit the country a reduction in the numbers of travelers and how those travelers spent their money differently became visible. In social media Greece was presented as an unattractive and unsafe destination to be in. Despite that Greece has developed and went from a stagnation phase to a rejuvenation phase. The Greek economy crisis hit the country hard and Greece did not want to lose its largest source of income – their travelers. In order to not lose their travelers Greece needed help. Theories such as push and pull factors, SWOT-analysis and Butler's sequence model will be presented and used on Greece as a tourist destination in need of development.

In order to approach this problem area, selected theories and interviews have been the key factor. By including previous research that touches the problem areas, situations can be explained. The previous research will help readers to see on similar ways of handling crisis problems that have been brought to the surface because of the crisis.

Deeper interviews have been done with Apollo, the Greek National Tourism Organisation, students at Södertörns University and also informers at an event about Greece here in Stockholm.

This dissertation will show that Greece was considered being an attractive destination before and also during the year of the crisis, according to its travelers. Travelers did indeed travel to Greece, however, they did not spend much money or time at the destination as earlier. That requires a re-attraction of travelers and their spendings. In order to re-attract travelers, Greece has to work with its image, marketing and promotion. The figures in this dissertation will show what has to be done, and how to follow some crisis management steps in order to prevent this situation of happening again. As any destination has areas to improve, so has Greece.

**Key words:** Greece, destination, unsafe/unsecure, travelers, re-attract, push, pull, stagnation, crisis, image, marketing, promotion, money, crisis management

## Introduction

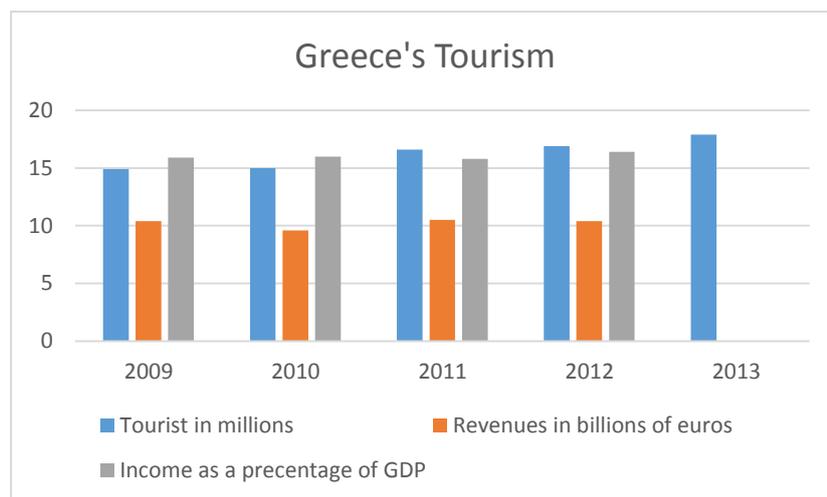
The international travel and tourism is a substantial and rapidly growing segment of international trade. It is known to be a highly competitive and often constitutes an important component of a country's balance of payments. Therefore there is a need to enhance our understanding of the determinants of international tourist flows and also to consider both government and private enterprises engaged in the travel and tourism industry (Crouch and Shaw 1993:175).

Greece is a relatively small country with a huge history and heritage. Ever since the 1800s, tourists have traveled to Greece. The ancient cultural heritage, the sun and the beaches has been the main factor that attracted travelers (Holmertz 2012).

However, Greece have since 2008 been in a downhill. Given to the circumstances in Greece and the economic crisis that the country has been affected by, one can see a change in the touristic patterns, the tourist image and also the marketing shifting. Greece has over a certain time been in a stagnation or decline phase, however the last two years the country has manage to change its downhill and bad reputation (Holmertz 2012).

The dark image of Greece as a country in need of coming out of the Eurozone, with mass unemployment and violent riots have started to thaw out ([www.di.se](http://www.di.se) 2014)

Travelers have been faithful to Greece during the years of the crisis, despite all the headlines about the economy crisis, the financial chaos and the riots. Travelers have been chosing Greece as tourist destination more often, however the travelers have not been spending as much money and time as they used to before the crisis. Mass tourism with sun, sand, ancient monuments and island hopping, has for decades been a highlight of the Greek economy. Today, Greece's GDP is at 16.5 percent. The number of foreign visitors to Greece since 2009 has increased by 20 percent to nearly 18 million. This year it is estimated to reach 20 million. The question is how? ([www.di.se](http://www.di.se) 2014)



**Figure 1** Greece's tourism ([www.dagensindustri.se](http://www.dagensindustri.se))

What has happened in the country since 2008-2009 and how the situation has developed is something that the readers will be able to be a part of in this dissertation.

# 1.1 Background

## 1.1.1 Destination – Greece and its development – consequences

As mentioned in the introduction earlier, Greece has been a major tourist destination since the 1800s. Greece as a destination have had its ups and downs, and as a result of the terrorist attacks against the United States in 2001 and also the Iraq war in 2003 the flow of tourist to Greece temporary decreased. In 2009 it turned, Greece had a record year with over 19 million visitors (Holmertz 2012).

Foreign tourists mainly come from Germany, United Kingdom, Albania, Italy, France and the Netherlands. However the increasing number of foreign tourists come from United States and Russia. The economic crisis that came to the surface in 2009 changed this statistics and less travelers booked trips to Greece (Holmertz 2012). Less trips, less travelers and ofcourse less money staid in the country.

This was a preliminary chart that showed that in 2012 the figures would drop and it was preliminary assessed that the number of foreign travelers would decrease to 10 percent from 2011. The possible reason for this traveler decrease was mainly estimated from previous traveler’s opinions about visting Greece during 2012, and having the crisis and labour strikes in mind (Holmertz 2012).

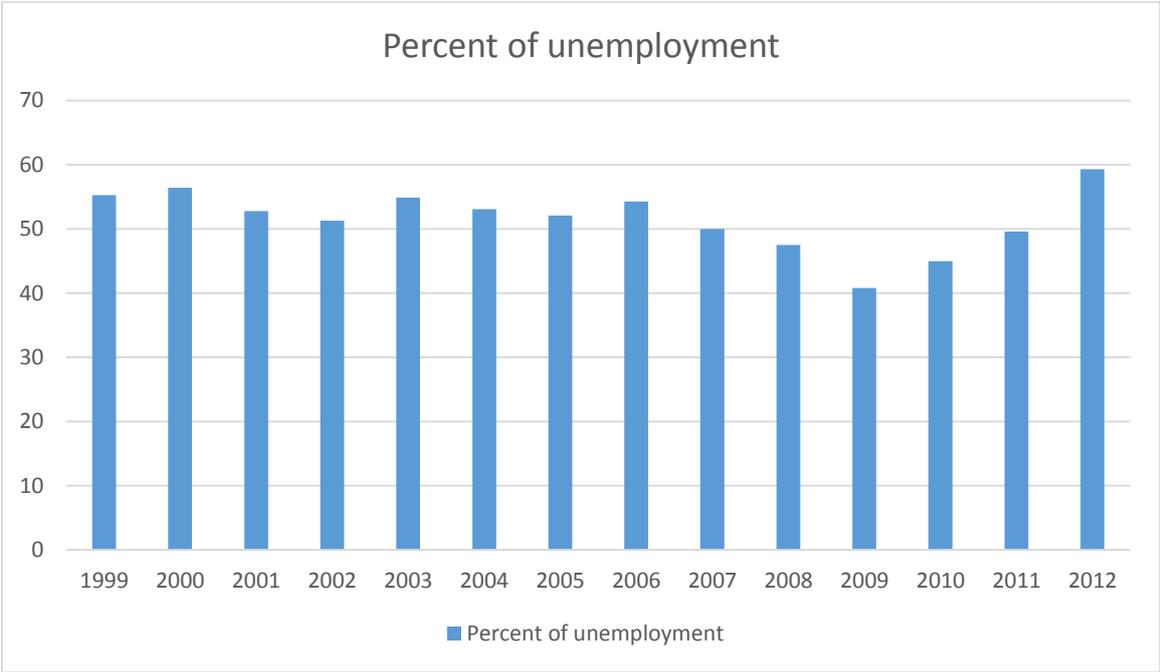


**Figure 2** International tourism and the number of arrivals  
(www.worldbank.org 2014)

The author chose to have statistics before and during the economic crisis in order to show the rapid development. However, the statistics of 2012 are just preliminations. The collected data refers to the number of arrivals and not to the number of people traveling. Which means that a person who makes more then one trip to the country during a given period is counted as a new arrival each time (www.worldbank.org).

Some existing conditions in Greece right now as consequences of the crisis and the various economic unstable conditions prevailing is that, Greece is the country in Europe where there is the highest youth unemployment and the highest proportion of poor people. Nearly four out of ten Greeks live below the poverty line (Svanell 2014).

The last couple of years the Greek governments has raised taxes, lowered payments/salaries and reduced pensions. The Greek government has laid off thousands of public sector workers, sized down public services and received remissions for a countless of billions. Some areas such as airports, seaports and land have been sold out. The Greek debt only got bigger and bigger and figures have shown that during the autumn of 2013 Greece’s national debt was larger that it was when the actual crisis began (Svanell 2014).



**Figure 3** Unemployment in percent  
(www.worldbank.org)

This figure refers to the number of people with continuous periods of unemployment extending for a year or longer, as a percentage of the total unemployment. It shows that unemployment has been shifting and that Greece has had its ups and downs in this area.

### 1.1.2 Greece and its economy

The Greek economy is dominated by a large service sector but particularly the trade sector, the tourism sector, the shipping sector and the public activities. In comparison to other EU countries Greece's agricultural is of economic importance, while the industrial sectors are smaller. Greece's tourism industry accounts for nearly 1/5 of the gross domestic product (GDP) and employs a similar proportion of the workforce (Holmertz 2012).

Corruption is widespread in Greece and the black economy is here estimated to stand around 30 percent of the country's economy (Holmertz 2012).

In 2001, Greece became a member of the EMU and the euro became the current currency. The economic policy was earlier guided of the monetary union, called convergence, the criteria for getting an EMU membership required good finances, for instance a country's national debt of 60 percent of the GDP, low inflation and a government budget of more than 3 percent of the GDP (Holmertz 2012).

Before entering the EMU Greece made a tax reform to increase tax revenue in order to bring in more taxes from companies. Greece had for decades been characterized by large government budgets deficit as a result of hefty spending on the public sector of the country. However, different cuts were made, including staff reductions and pay freezes (Holmertz 2012).

The interesting thing about this situation is that the statistics for the years of 1998 and 1999 of the GDP is what would determine whether Greece could join the EMU in 2001. Those statistics revealed that the country's deficit was on 2.5 and 1.6 percent. Numbers such as 2.5 and 1.6 made it possible for Greece to join the EMU.

However, other statistics got revealed from another government party that the statistical predictions were incorrect. Instead the correct statistics for the years of 1998 and 1999 was, 4.1 percent and 3.4 percent, if those statistics were predicted earlier Greece would not have been able to join the EMU (Holmertz 2012).

In 2004 the EU statisticians came to a conclusion that Greece's budget deficit since 1997 never have been below 3 percent. However Greece did not get punished by the EU, despite that Greece were urged to reduce their deficit to 3 percent by 2006, and to reduce that number to 0.5 percentage annually until 2012 (Holmertz 2012). Nothing of the reductions happened and this is now the current situation of Greece, instead of reducing the percentage things only increased.

### 1.1.3 Euro – the beginning

Since the beginning of the crisis, Greece and other heavily indebted countries such as Portugal, Ireland and Spain, just to mention some, have received a lot of bailouts in order to commence a stability on each country's national economy. Several countries are basically bankrupt and some major powers for example, countries with better economy and abilities to in a way lend some money to these crisis countries are forced to put an extra effort in order to somehow be able to keep the indebted countries under their arms (Norberg 2012:15). The future plans of a common currency was mainly to create a community among countries, cohesion, creating understanding and unity. However, as the facts and situations today implicate, the euro has created everything else except cohesion, the euro brought and created discord and conflicts between the people of Europe, which in a way makes these countries unstable tourism destinations (Norberg 2012:15). The former editor for *Financial Times*, Andrew Gowers had different opinions of the common currency and its results. In the beginning he was one of the persons that struggled and wanted to have a common currency between the European countries. Today he looks at this on an other way, the terms that were promised has not been followed, those has rather embarked into a critical and crucial situation for some of the countries involved (Norberg 2012:16).

Some of the factors that were promised was:

1. Were they had promised greater economic stability, that's where the euro has strengthened uncertainty and volatility.
2. Where the single currency was meant to facilitate trade and integration, there it has instead created new dividing lines.
3. Where it was painted up as a way to give Europe a stronger global position, there the euro has in fact made the EU ridicule internationally.
4. Where it was highlighted as a way to forge closer political cooperation in Europe, as part of efforts to bring the 1990-century war and bloodshed to the story, which has fueled the conflict, undermining democratic structures and revived ancient nationalistic resentment (Norberg 2012:16).

Major European economies falter against bankruptcy, and a faltering European banking system is being desperate to withdraw money from the economy to survive, which deepens the review for everyone else. If the euro falls, there is a serious risk that it brings large parts of our economy, democracy and European cohesion. Yet it seems that Europe's leaders most argue about whom to put the blame on (Norberg 2012:7). Many questions can be asked here, such as; how could it end up like this? When did it began to degenerate? And when exactly did it go wrong? Despite these issues, there were people who then warned that this community may become Europe's fall. As early as 1992, the financial commentator Martin Wolf warned that the common currency could in the end, end up like a classic Greek tragedy (Norberg 2012:17).

## 1.2 Problematisation

This dissertation will mostly be about how a destination that is going through a crisis of some kind still can look attractive and appealing. Two other aspects will also be explained and answered and those are how a destination in economic crisis can maintain its attractiveness as a tourist goal, how to re-attract travelers and why that is important. Given that Greece's largest income source is dependent on their travelers, so must the destination despite the crisis be accessible and attractive. A destination that does not have travelers, that is not accessible and attractive will otherwise stop being visited which will bring consequences for not only the country but its citizens as well. One example on how it will affect Greece's citizens is that people working in tourism related companies will be unemployed.

With this said Greece has since 2008-2009 been in the deepest economic crisis for any country that is a member within the EU. Greece has an enormous public debt which have forced the country to take some austerities and those austerities have unfortunately made hundreds of thousands of people unemployed and consequences of those actions have created poverty that Greece barely have experience since the World War II. The highest risk for Greece is to be forced to simply go bankrupt and to leave the euro zone ([www.landguiden.se](http://www.landguiden.se)).

All the above makes this an accurate problem and it has gained major attention since 2008-2009 and is still accurate in media.

## 1.3 Purpose and problemareas

The purpose with this dissertation is to enlighten the accurate problem in Greece with maintaining the destination as an attractive one, despite the economic crisis and also to look at the country as safe potential tourism destination. Negative effects that the crisis had towards the tourism industry will be presented.

- **How can a destination in economic crisis maintain its attractiveness as a tourist goal?**
- **How shall Greece re-attract its travellers?**
- **And why is it important to do so?**

## 1.5 Delimitation

In this dissertation, a delimitation has to be done because the problem areas are quite wide. The focus will lay on the theoretical research, the empirical research – the interviews and the observation and the answers to those – and of course previous research. The interview responds are the information that will be used as the authors approach to come closer to a potential reality. Why the author says reality is because the travelers and the informers both know and have experienced the situation in Greece. That will help the author to answer even better to the problem issues chosen for this dissertation.

It has been difficult to find previous research about this same topic, so the author has chosen three previous research articles that fitted the most.

However the previous research that has been chosen can and will only be used as theretical guidelines. Those research articles are giving the problem question some wider perspective answers and not straight forward answers. After reading the previous research articles, readers will see that there is so much more in to this problems than just re-attracting travelers, it's maintaining of a positive image, and also to overcome the negativeness that has been associated with the country this couple of years. According to the author no closer previous research suited better for this dissertation.

The author chose to include a finished version of the SWOT-Analysis in the theoretical part because it will be easier for the readers to follow and fully understand the meaning and using of an SWOT-Analysis. By explaining what a SWOT-Analysis is and how it is being used, at the same time the reader will see what the destination already posses and how those factors can be improved, but also what is missing. However, this part is not a result part in the dissertation, it has only been created for the readers guiding and understanding of the chosen theory in the same way as the Butler sequence model and the push and pull factors.

It could have been possible to see this problem from the marketing and promoting side, which also was planned in the beginning, however, it became more as and promoting Greece thesis and that's why it did not continue in that way.

In the beginning the author wanted to compare two countries in crisis, and put up the similarities and the differences, however, the author chosed to focus on Greece and the economy crisis in order to fully understand and explain the different aspects of reasons and possible solutions to this phenomenon.

## 1.6 Definitions

**Tourism:** includes the activities of a persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes (Turistdelegationen 1995:5).

**Traveler:** a person who travels in one or more countries, or to one or more places in the country where he/she lives (Turistdelegationen 1995:5).

**Crisis:** an action or failure to act that interferes with the organisation's ongoing functions and the attainment of its objectives, viability or survival (Beirman 2003:4).

**Crisis management:** to manage is how a person is able to manage situations, and crisis can be seen as a testing period were a destination for instace is being tested to come out of a crisis, or to continue being (Glaesser 2003:21).

**Management:** the word management does usually describe ones leadership of an organizational unit (Glaesser 2003:21).

**Re-attract:** to attract travelers to a given destination

**SWOT-analysis:** the SWOT-analysis theory is a method that is rather popular and well-approved, mostly used to facilitating strategic marketing and management (Weaver & Lawton 2010:194-195).

**Stagnation:** one destination that has been under the phase stagnation, means that not much is developing and that the destination don't exactly know how to work forward towards development. The destination is not going down, but it's not getting forward either (Weaver & Lawton 2010:274-275).

**Unstable/unsecure country:** when a country can't offer a stable visit for their tourists and when the destinations is unsecure, and different occations happens that makes the destination unsecure, such as demonstrations, unstable currency and natural disasters.

**Security:** is the destination safe to travel to and in?

**Euro – currency:** a common currency was mainly to create a community among countries, cohesion, creating understanding and unity (Norberg 2012:15).

## **1.7 Disposition**

### **1. Introduction**

An introduction have been written in order to introduce the problemareas and what is going to be presented in the thesis. In the background information about Greece as a destination, its development, some consequences, the economy and the euro will be presented.

### **2. Method**

The method part will explain and show different techniques that the author has been using through the thesis in order to select and work with the material. Questions such as why this material use or why this method will also get explained under this chapter.

### **3. Previous research**

Previous research shows that similar studies have been done in the same field and by working with previous research ones study only gets more reliabale because different parts have been tested and explained in similar ways. However, the author could not find similar questions asked in the chosen preivous reseach but the information in those articles helps the author to emphasize on getting an answer to the dissertation questions.

### **4. Theoretical framework**

Collected theories and figures will show how to look on this problem from different angles and also the different approaches to a possible solution to this problem. Theories such as the SWOT-analysis, Butler's sequence model, Maslow's need Hierarcy, push and pull factors, Lieper's model of attraction are presented and those help to answer to the problem areas.

### **5. Empirical guidelines**

The approach on how to be an attractive destination and how to re-attract travelers will here be answered through different interviews and one "mini observation". The interview persons are students, informers at Panorama, Apollo travel agency and The Greek National Tourism Organisation.

### **6. Analysis**

All the used material will here get connected and the author will show how the theoretical framework, the empirical framework and the previous research together helps on answering to the problem areas of this dissertation.

### **7. Result and conclusion**

The result of the whole thesis will be presented and an discussion will be made in order to fully answer to the problem areas of this dissertation.

### **8. Suggestion for further research**

Different suggestions and paths for other students to complement their studies, compare or even develop mine.

### **9. Bibliography**

A list of all the used litterature and websites of the select material, all the sources that have been used and reffered though the whole dissertation.

### **Appendix**

All the interviews, figures/models and other potential material.

## 2 Method

### 2.1 Methodological choices

The qualitative method takes into account and focuses on open and ambiguous empirical data, emphasize on the importance of categorizations. Here one assumes that it comes from the study objects perspective (Alvesson & Sköldberg 2008:17) which can be interpreted as issues and significant research. Those will be adapted and assume that only the most significant information will really be studied. According to Hjerm & Lindgren there are characteristics of the qualitative methods which is the data that here consist of words in comparison with the quantitative methods where the information should be composed and interpreted in figures and numbers (Hjerm & Lindgren 2010:83). Hjerm & Lindgren mentions that most current qualitative data that may be used to strengthen ones qualitative study is to include interviews and notes from observations (Hjerm & Lindgren 2010:83).

### 2.2 Why hermeneutics and not positivism

It has been said that hermeneutics is the total opposite to positivism. Hermeneutics means theory of interpretation and is now a scientific method which determine to study, interpret and relate to understanding the basic conditions of human existence. Hermeneutics was at first a method of interpretation of biblical texts. However, after the 1700s hermeneutics was also applied to interpret the non-religious texts. Today the hermeneutics can be used as a method area in various scientific fields such as in human, cultural and social science. Despite that the interpretation of hermeneutics and the use of it differs depending from which area one chooses to study and look on it from (Patel & Davidson 2012:28).

The general humanist-hermeneutic approach is often represented as a counter weight towards the positivist approach which dominated earlier and was the most used approach in the scientific fields (Patel & Davidson 2012:28).

In the contemporary debate between positivists and hermeneutists the positivism often stands for the quantitative, statistical hard data methods of analysis, scientific explanations and the researchers role as invisible and at the same time an objectively researcher. Hermeneutics stands for the qualitative understanding and interpretation systems were the researcher's role is open, subjective and engaged (Patel & Davidson 2012:28-29).

A hermeneutic researcher believe that human reality is of a linguistic nature, and that one through language can acquire knowledge of what is genuinely human. Unlike to the positivist researcher, those are not interested in explaining phenomena. A hermeneutic researcher states that it is possible to understand human life and human existence by expressions in the spoken and written language as well as in people's actions. Continuing, peoples intentions also manifests itself in language and action, and also by the way that some actions can be understood (Patel & Davidson 2012:29).

To sum it up, a hermeneutic researcher is approaching his research objects in a subjective way which is based on his own understanding. The preconceptions, the thoughts, the impressions and the feelings, and also the knowledge that the researcher has, is seen as an asset and not a

hindrance to interpret and understand his research objects. Unlike to the positivist researchers, who study their research object, piece by piece, the hermeneutic researcher is rather trying to see the whole picture of the research problem. This view is rather known and called holism, which can be illustrated that “*the whole is more than the sum of its parts*” (Patel & Davidson 2012:29).

## 2.3 Qualitative interview

Qualitative interviews are characterized among other things by setting simple and straight forward questions and these simple questions to get difficult interpretation. This means that after conducting all the interviews the researcher has infinitely of materials that will help him to deeply understand and contribute to a holistic view of those who the study is aimed to examine (Trost 2010:25).

In order for the material to be used, it must undergo a transcription and then being compiled into a flowing text. Since the qualitative method is chosen as a working method in this dissertation, the interview questions do not have to be standlinearized but more flexible. This means that depending on who is being interviewed so should the questionnaire be well aligned with questions that those specific respondents should be able to answer. This method differs from the quantitative method, which essentially requires that the questions are exactly the same and with a lack of variety. Which means that everyone who reads the questions also understand and interpret the exact same thing, so there will not be room for different interpretations patterns (Trost 2010:39-42).

Ten qualitative interviews have been done with students at Södertörns University, those students have been travelling to Greece somewhere before, during and after the crisis. The author has also done three qualitative interviews with The Greek National Tourism Organisation and Apollo travel agency.

## 2.4 Observation

The author have performed a minor observation. At the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of February Annexet, Globen had an event here in Stockholm called “*Grekland Panorama*”. During this days it was open for the public to visit the event, to taste Greek traditional food, to get leaflets with information about different destinations in Greece, to know more about the culture and much more. The author went to different booths and asked questions which are going to be summed up in the empirical framework as small interviews. If the readers want to read the entire interview it’s going to be available in the appendix chapter.

An observation actually means that the author would have to be in place and visit the country or the place that the author writes about in order to be able to observe the place from the same perspective as the travelers. Then the collected material from the observation shall be used in the empirical framework and later on in the analysis part (Johannessen 2003:88-89). As the author has Greek roots and have been traveling to Greece every year such an observation have been done. However, this dissertations observation part is mostly referring to the Grekland Panorama event.

The author went to ten different booths and had ten minor interviews with the responsible promoter of each booth.

## 2.5 Justification for the selected method

Because this dissertation was designed to explore and understand how a destination in economic crisis can maintain its attractiveness as a tourist goal and how to attract travelers to a destination, the answer to these problems will only be answered and understood properly by using deeper interviews and observations, and therefore the most appropriate choice of method to use is a qualitative study. By conducting interviews and examine all the collected material that come from interviewees and literature, the readers will get a deeper understanding of how to attract travelers to a destination. Therefore, the quantitative survey method has to be excluded from this study, because it would only give numerical explanations and this would not help proving or showing the purpose of this thesis. However, some statistics will be presented through the thesis, in the background and the empirical framework.

## 2.6 Justification for the sample

In order to answer to the first question about *how a destination in economic crisis can maintain its attractiveness as a tourist goal*, it was most appropriate to turn to the literature in order to read and get information which could be useful in order to learn how a destination can develop but in the same way maintain its attractiveness but also how to do this in the most appropriate manner. By reading a lot about crisis management and different theories that can be used in order to fit traveler's demands, one gets a wider perspective of the situation. The use of the information and all the figures gives the author and the reader ways of handling crisis and paths to follow in order to avoid crisis.

In order to answer to the second question about *how Greece shall re-attract its travelers, and why that is important*, the most appropriate way to get answer on those two questions is to ask the travelers, so here the use of interviews and observation will be the best tool in order to get answers on the demands that the travelers have, or may have in the future, visiting one destination.

## 2.7 Approach of the collected material

The first to do even before collecting literature and information is to think about the problem phenomenon; *why travel to a country that's undergoing a crisis? Why re-attract travelers? And how to re-attract travelers?*

By thinking on those questions and the problem areas earlier discussed, some definitions came through the authors mind, those were: *crisis, crisis management, re-attract, risks, demands, stagnation, marketing, destination, euro- currency, unstable/unsecure destination*. Those definitions are going to guide the readers and describe the dissertation problems. As reading guidelines an easier approach on answering to the purpose of this dissertation is being visible.

Sure, a destinations which is suffering from a crisis is indeed a problem, but why is that a problem? For whom is that a problem? And how does this really works?

The selected literature have been used earlier to answer similar questions, and the information has touch the problem questions in this dissertation, that's why those have been choosen.

The approach on how to choose the interview respondents was tricky. By not wanting to interview people that the author already know, the gathering of respondents took more time than expected. Why the author avoid to interview people that she already know, is because the answers can differ because of the relation between the author and the respondents. The respondents answers could possible be formed more "kindly" and in some cases the respondents may respond just the way the author would like them to respond. That could of course happen subconsciously, however, that is a risk that everyone has to take under consideration when choosing respondents that are close to you.

However the author is well awared that it would be easier and also require less time, to interview people that the author already knows.

The author choose to interview people that have visited Greece before-during and "after" the crisis. Those people are the ones that you want to re-attract.

The author chose to interview three employees at the Greek National Tourism Organisation, ten students at the University that has visit Greece, two employees and salepersons at Apollo travel agency and ten informers at Panorama event.

Different and flexible questionnaire will be used to suit the different respondents.

How the author got in contact with the respondents differs, some are students from the University and people that work within the tourism sector such as, travel agencies.

## 2.8 Ethics

This study accounts for two types of people, mostly individuals in form of students and travelers but even companies such as travel agencies. The first group of respondents are mostly people who have traveled to Greece, and the second group of respondents have more knowledge of situations and marketing. The first group of people will be able to answer more through their own experience since they basically have visited and experienced how a country where during the actually crisis. The second group of people will provide a different view to the problem issues, by answering on how a country that has gone through a crisis can attract visitors, and how that country now appears to be a safe destination to travel to.

The respondents would like to appear as anonymous through this thesis because of private reasons. The respondent's approved the sharing of their personal experiences if no names would be mentioned. The respondents had to know in advance what this thesis would examine and also what would happen to the information they choose to share and who would have access to it. That is why a summary of the information has to be sent in advanced so the respondents could give their approval. It is extremely important that all participants receive a copy of the finished version of this thesis so they can approve it before it get published, in order to prevent misunderstandings in the future (Bell 2007:59).

## **2.9 Qualitative analysis**

The collected material and information can be transformed by different analysis in order to give the readers a clear and knowledgeable meaning. By process the material and information through a content analysis (will be explained further down) the reader gets exactly that. Bell argues that the factors which are presented must somehow be put into context for the readers in order for them to be interpreted and further explained to others (Bell 2007:129).

By explaining the definitions that are listed in the beginning correctly, the readers will understand the authors use of them in the dissertation. The explanations and the models to every theory makes it easier for the readers to both understand and follow during the reading part. The readers can see the different aspects and problem areas that together makes a crisis to a huge problem for a destination. By giving solutions and guidelines such as theories and figures the readers and people in general will know what can be done in order to recover and even prevent these occasions to happen again.

The interviews are going to strengthen the importance of the information and the material because experiences and opinions are going to be presented.

During the empirical framework some charts are going to be presented and those charts are results of the answers from the interviews.

## **2.10 Content analysis**

Content analysis is an empirical scientific method that is used to draw conclusions about the content of various types of communication, such as interviews, observation records or newspaper articles (Bell 2007:129-30).

## **2.11 Critical vetting of methodology using validity and reliability**

According to Bell, it is the researcher that has the obligation to consider and assess the results of all the collected material during the dissertation, in order to determine if the tests that have been used actually have been used correctly and as it should which means properly designed and suitable for the purpose and problem issue areas (Bell 2007:91). During the composition some difficulties came up and in order to exclude misunderstandings one has to double check where it got blurry. This can often happen while using qualitative methods such as interviews that is why it is good to keep some kind of contact to the respondents if you will need more information, or for instance clarifying an answer.

With reliability one can measure in which extent the different approaches are going to give you the same result on different occasions but in similar circumstances (Bell 2007:117). This means that if this study would have had other respondents the result would differ a bit. The possible answers to why the result would differ is because one's experiences and answers to certain questions are going to be different and that is something that is given. However, the chosen methods used in this dissertation would give the similar results if this exact study were conducted again, because the same sources would have been used in order for the study to be done from scratch, despite that there are factors that could make some of the information

different. In the end everything is depending on the researcher and how he has used and interpreted the information (Bell 2007:117-119).

The validity however, indicates whether the information that one says really has been the information that has been measured. Validity can be divided into two parts, internal validity and external validity. The internal validity indicates whether the result is credible and the external validity indicates whether the result can be generalized (Holme& Solvang 2010:163-165). With this said the author consider that the final results in this dissertation is credible because of the various literature that indicates and refers to the same occasions and the same information comes out, but also from the interviews because of the compilation of the responses. However, there are other factors that indicates if the results is credible and that is the theoretical foundation (which is presented during the theoretical framework) that has been presented with the support paired from the empirical material (which is presented during the empirical framework). However, this thesis cannot be generalized in its fullness, because it is an qualitative study and according to Johannessen qualitative studies are studies that rarely can be generalized to its fullness, because the qualitative studies refers to a sample of a population with the main purpose is to only examine the indeed complex phenomenon that occurs (Johannessen 2010:246-247).

## 3 Previous research

### 3.1 The Greek crisis and its affections

*“The Greek crisis as a crisis of EU enlargement: how will the Western Balkans be affected?”*  
written by Ritsa Panagiotou (<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/14683857.2013.773178>)

In the introduction of this article that has been chosen as one of the previous research articles the writer Ritsa Panagiotou writes that, because of a strong independence between the EU and Greece, there are some negative repercussions of the Greek crisis in the Western Balkans. This negative aspects were evident on different levels. Those levels includes the effects on the economy such as:

1. Their potential for growth
2. Their ability to reform their social
3. Political and institutional structures and also
4. Their ability to meet the accession criteria.

All those factors together and combined with a growing “enlargement fatigue” is what has created an unfavorable environment for the years 2004-2007 (Panagiotou 2013:89).

Panagiotou continues writing that Greece is the weakest link in the Eurozone and why Greece is considering to be the weakest link is thanks to the instability that the country has due of the economy crisis. The crisis has not only affected Greece as a country, it has affected the:

1. Greek citizens (the unemployment is high)
2. The travelers and their opinions of the country
3. The countrys image

Greece is a country in a freefall right now Panagiotou writes, she means that Greece is experiencing an unprecedented economic meltdown and that we have not seen it all yet, there is still aspects and factors that we are unaware of. Greece’s infrastructure and the political systems are for now fragmented (Panagiotou 2013:90).

Panagiotous paper is only exploring the amount of impacts that the Greek crisis have had on the Western Balkan countries in forms of conequences that not only affected the country wich had economical problems but also the neighbiour countries were some of them are in close negotiation with Greece. Panagiotou writes that it is obvious that the Western Balkan countries has in some way or another been sucked in to Greece’s economical problems and that there is no end in sight for this phenomenon. The impacts on the Western Balcan countries are no longer only concerning the issues on an financial or economical level and are not only related to the countries with EU membership. The problems have been far-reached in social and geopolitical implications which concerns the stability overall of the region. Panagiotou continious by writing that it’s not only Greece’s fault or that in somehow Greece is not the only country that is going through this kind of problems. After the revealing

problems in Greece other countries came along and revealed their economical situation which were bad as well. The European single currency have been existing for thirteenth years now and until now Europe is facing its biggest challenge (Panagiotou 2013:90).

Countries that have similar financial problems as Greece are; Portugal, Irland, Italy and Spain. How other countries in the European Union have been affected of the situations is because, the more powerful and more stable countries have been forced to marshal and help those countries in need. Countries that have helped are Germany and France, but even France have been exhibiting worrying symptoms and are in a risky zone for now. Greece, Portugal and Ireland are for now on life support, and have been receiving considerable bailouts in forms of saving packages in order to keep their economies afloat. However, Spain, Italy and France have high public debts, huge budgets and a low growth. As erlier mentioned Germany is being considering to be the most stable and strong country with good economy of those in the Eurozone, and therefor Germany is feeling the stain in order to support its weaker partner associations, in order to help them to save the common currency and also to somehow come out of the crisis (Panagiotou 2013:90).

Despite this Greece is still the Eurozone's weakest link. Through this struggle Greece is still awilable on the market and after five years of recession Panagiotou writes that one can see changes in Greece's gross domestic product, because it has dropped by approximate 20 percent and for now the official statistic says that unemployment is at 25.1 percent. This numerical statistics may not tell us a lot but things are getting better in Greece (Panagiotou 2013:90).

The industrial production and manufacturing in Greece have collapsed meanwhile hundreds of small business have closed and more are closing day by day nationwide which lead us to the fact that one in four Greeks live below the poverty line today (Panagiotou 2013:90).

Panagiotou writes that discussions have been done referring to Greece's exit from the Eurozone. Many bailouts have been done and those have been necessary for Greece's survival, the implementations has not been forthcoming, which means that a possible scenario of default and exit from the Eurozone have been more conceivable these last couple of years. Some of the consequences that Greece will have to face, or in somehow already have faced are that due to the dire situation and the uncertain outcome of the crisis the impacts have affected the whole regions: 1. Economic growth 2. Political (Panagitou 2013:91)

However Panagiotou writes that a Greek exit from the Eurozone only would trigger a domino effect of instability and insecurity in the whole euroarea. With this statement one could imagine that after Greece's exit more countries would found it not only tempting but necessary to exit in order for them to have a better economical future.

Some facts that are getting the authors attention in Panagiotous study is the way of presenting facts and how statisticts are giving a wider answer on how things really are.

For instace even before these impacts, that the Greek crisis have brought to the surface, the Western Balan economies already had been weakened in ways of exposing the full brunt of the global economy crisis as early as 2008 and until 2011. During this period between 2008-2011 allt the Western Balkan countries had experienced a contracting GDP which could be seen in factors such as;

1. Rising unemployment rates
  2. Falling industrial output
  3. Growing current account
  4. Trade deficits
  5. An decline in remittances
- (Panagiotou 2013:91)

Panagiotou writes that there are areas that have been affected of the Greek economical crisis and those are the neighbor countries which Greece have a relation with, in other words the export condition to the neighbor countries. A contagion affect that has spread from the Greek crisis has particularly been evident in two sectors; 1. The trade sector and 2. The banking sector. Referring to the banking sector, one can also see a declining inflow of how money is handeled, the remittances and the foreign direct investments have been declining. One can also see a fall in demand for import from Greece. Another negative aspect is that, Greece is a country that has been involved in the banking sectors of both Bulgaria and Romania, so the negative impacts that the Greek crisis brought with it has been spilled over into the Western Balkan economies. However, when it comes to trade, investment and financial links Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia are negligible with Greece. The countries which is in need of their trade relations with Greece are Albania, Montenegro and FYROM, because those exports account for 12-16 percent of the total income for those countries. Panagiotou continues by writing that a decrease in the import area was something that happened in Greece in 2009 and until the beginning of 2010. The decrease was just because of the economic crisis in Greece has caused a further reduction in demands for good from those countries earlier mentioned (Panagiotou 2013:92-93).

Some of the consequences of the Greek crisis have a direct impact on the Western Balkans' while other has an indirect impact, less quantifiable but not less important (Panagiotou 2013:96).

Panagiotou is critical to the reasons on why countries join the EU, she writes that over the past decades the membership in the EU has been perceived as a one way path of a countrys stability and prosperity. Until recently the EU's Mediterranean enlargement was considered to be an outright success, and the post-authoritarian countries; Spain, Greece and Portugal were the models of successful transitions. Why these countries were seen as the models of successful transitions was because they had used their EU membership as a mean to:

1. Consolidate democracy
2. Achieve economic prosperity and
3. Secure their place in the progressive European family (Panagiotou 2013:97).

According Panagiotou the Westerns Balkan is rather problematic, for different situations that has taken place there. And she sets the interesting question in her study, the questions is: "*If 'the system' did not take hold in Greece, or Spain and Portugal, how can it be expected to work in regions as problematic as the Western Balkans?*"(Panagiotou 2013:97).

Greece was seen as Balkans savior and represented the Balkans countries in EU. South Europe were in a deep crisis, however, the concern of the Balkan countries was that Greece had dealt with the hardest critique and serious blow. Greece is seen as a Balkan country that

had made the transition from being underdeveloped and marginalised to prosperity and stability (under the aegis of EU) Greece was one of the region's success stories. Thanks to Greece a bridge between the Balkans and Europe was made, and Greece was the only Balkan country that was a member of EU and NATO. Despite that, Greece's downfall shows us in the worst way, that an EU membership is not a one-way, irreversible guarantee of stability or prosperity (Panagiotou 2013:97).

According to Panagiotou, the only thing that Greece stands for and somehow represents to the rest of the countries right now is the political chaos and the worrying signals that the country has sent out. The country is still struggling to establish transparent, functioning western-style democracies. The question one can set here is, "Will Greece ever be able to represent a country that sticks to the standard of the EU?" (Panagiotou 2013:97).

Panagiotou writes that it is clear that the shock and the subsequent actions that the Greek crisis have brought to the surface, is indeed contagious and made the most EU members even more hesitant to embrace countries that are unreliable (Panagiotou 2013:98).

Some of Panagiotou's ending words in her study was that corruption does not only harm the economic growth and development of a country, it also:

1. Distorts markets and fair competition
2. Undermines the rule of law
3. Damages government legitimacy and
4. Creates greater income inequality

(Panagiotou 2013:100)

## 3.2 The National Implications

“The crisis in the Greek Economy and its National Implications” written by Michail Choupis ([http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/mediterranean\\_quarterly/v022/22.2.choupis.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/mediterranean_quarterly/v022/22.2.choupis.html))

Michail Choupis writes in his article that this economic crisis in Greece is a development of the financial crisis that started in the United States, however it is now in a global context and the implication affected the small economies the hardest (Choupis 2011:76). With small economies Choupis means the countries that had some instability in their economies and those countries are the one's that falls the hardest due to the crisis.

Choupis writes that despite the knowledge that every Greek official has had about the financial trends, they have in some way “looked the other way” for these kind of problems. They have ignored the links to the geopolitical uniqueness of the country, its social structure and its traditional. The thing those officials did though was to adopt and construct a language of obscurity in their way of searching for solutions. Those solutions seemed to have been designed in order to frighten the masses and in somehow neutralize the voice of the people (Choupis 2011:76).

There were similar situations created in Greece and in the United States. Those similarities provide a sense of false security to the people. However, in the far end of every problem there will be some sense in how to overcome it by the help of discomfort (Choupis 2011:77).

Choupis continues writing that knowledgeable volunteers were invited to Greece in order to “assist” the country in ways of overcoming their problems. The problems in Greece were in the first place caused externally. Unlike similar crisis situations in the past, the benefactors of the Greek crisis – *the troika of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), European Union and the Central European Band (CEB)* – has to considerate a new set of variables, for instance to focus on the globalization of banking and profit making (Choupis 2011:77).

Choupis sets the question “*Can anybody seriously argue that today's Greek financial crisis is not directly related to the US collapse of 2008?*” There is no exact answer to that because as Choupis continues writing, the troika is more concerned and interested in finding ways to avoid a broader systematic meltdown that could affect broader interest, while the focus should lay in extinguishing the Greek financial fires. Here the Greeks choose to ignore the actual problem in the same way as the Americans did during the US financial meltdown, where no one seemed interested in asking how the fires started, where, by whom or even who were the firefighters when the first flames appeared to the surface. Both the Greeks and the Americans seems to put the focus on hiding the actual problems and not putting their time on finding possible longterm solutions, their focus is on the wrong things (Choupis 2011:77).

Other countries which suffered by crises and used same methods as the Greeks are Chile, Argentina and Japan. They all used antiquated solutions such as:

1. Reduce public expenditures
2. Cut social services and education costs
3. Privatize public corporations
4. Shift the burden of “financial reform” from the superrich to the salary-earners

Those antiquated solutions may have worked then and during those crises but Choupis is critical towards them, because Greece have been in a stagnation phase for years, and especially during the period 2008-2011 (Choupis 2011:77-78). Why Choupis is critical towards those “solutions” is that he consider them to be ignoring the Greek history, the social values and the priorities of Greece. Instead Greece has over the past years achieved an admirable record of building up a middle class that is now under the siege from a foreign financial troika that is at odds with the Greek history and current reality (Choupis 2011:77-78).

Then Choupis turns his focus on how outsiders look on this crisis, he writes about the statement that Greeks lived beyond their means and that this statement is repeated by outsiders and their domestic links in ways that sounds like ethnic stereotyping. Choupis gives the example about when the Northern European bankers realized that Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain were facing the similar problems. Choupis writes that at that point they would routinely attribute their predicament to some uniquely “Southern European” cultural traits. In a way to easier refer to those countries they used those initials and the outcome became “PIGS” which stands for Portugal, Italy, Greece and Spain. The continuing discussion of the current economic crisis in Greece is taking place on two levels, one confusing but still excluding the masses and the other spreading fear and anxiety. Both however, stands for complexity, financial transactions and risk taking by the megabanks (Choupis 2011:78).

Choupis writes that Greece is not the only European nation that lives beyond its means, almost all the EU countries lived on borrowed money, as did the United States. However, when the world entered the murky era of privatization, no one knew what were produced not even by whom, how it was financed or by whom, they did not even know who or where the ultimate beneficiaries were. So with other words, no one realized or cared about the fact that nations had maxed their credit cards (Choupis 2011:78).

Choupis seem to use his study in ways of being informative to the rest of the people and he shows different aspects on how this crisis escalated. Choupis writes that Greece did not had the luxury of addressing its crisis at the national level. What he means with this is that only a few years earlier, Greek leaders had forfeited the sovereign right of currency autonomy by vain in hopes that they could outsmart the Europeans into financing their lifestyle. In order to make Greece look more sophisticated and in ways to “Europeanize” the Greek economy, Goldman Sack created a myth so to say, he named the myth “assets” which made the Greeks seem wealthier than they really were so that they could be admitted to the Eurozone as an “advanced” economy (Choupis 2011:79).

As Choupis earlier mentioned the small economies like Greece absorbed the wrong thing that the ratio of national debt to GDP by extension to the family budget did not matter. Actually it did matter (Choupis 2011:81). The 2008 crisis in US had put an end to the euphoria of the roulette known as “the stock market” and ended the lifestyle of ordinary Greeks. Greece hitherto had adopted the figure of the bigger countries such as the United States and France, fashioned policies that paid little attention to the risks entailed when national debt exceeds to GDP. This can be seen as one of the causes for what happened in Greece (Choupis 2011:81).

According to Choupis the biggest problem and reason used as an explanation to the Greek economy crisis is when Simitis, the president during Greece’s entry to the euro was

determined to drag Greece into the Eurozone without even attempting to calculate costs and benefits of such an action. However, during that time the Greek officials saw the EU as too big to sink and the EU, in its turn, saw the Greek economy as too small to affect European trends and economies. By underestimate each other the situation escalated (Choupis 2011:81).

Social media also had its hand in making this a bigger problem than it was according to Choupis, sure it was a huge problem but media and its attention only made things worse. The only thing that's worse than actually trying to find solutions for something that seems to never have an end is the understanding of the current global economic troubles much harder is the cacophony coming from the mass media. The mass media advocate instead of informing. The reasons are actually simple: the mass media, in all advanced economies, have become extensions of corporations, and corporations are in business to profit not the opposite. So in that case the mass media did not enlighten, they only did things worse. The Greek people now suspect the "foreign factors" for in different ways imposing draconian measures of the salaried workers and ignoring the history and values of a country such as Greece that has paid a disproportionate price in defense of Western values (Choupis 2011:82).

Choupis last sentences in his study was referring to senator Bernie Sanders. Choupis writes that as senator Bernie Sanders noted on the senate at the 10<sup>th</sup> of December of 2010, US superbanks have become even bigger after that the Obama administration "reformed" its citizens. Since the collapse in 2008, for banks as Bank of America and Wells Fargo, just to mention some, the system has swallowed hundreds of small banks within the United States. After this occasion the banks were free and able to concentrate on the acquisition of foreign banks. So in this aspect and as an excuse, Greece is emerging as a test case (Choupi 2011:83).

### 3.3 The cutback decisions

“*Economic crisis and tourism expenditure cutback decision*” written by Juan L. Eugenio-Martin and Juan A. Campos-Soria

(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0160738313001217>)

This study explores how households from 165 regions of EU-27 countries react during a crisis. This study has showed that during an economy crisis such as the Greek global economy crisis in 2009 households react cutting back their tourism expenditure depending on GDP, GDP growth and climate in their place of origins. Eugenio-Martin and Campos-Soria writes that tourism as a luxury good is related to the travelers' needs. The climate in your place of resident is the key that determine such preferences, so that regional heterogeneity responds to climate and GDP differences (Eugenio-Martin & Campos-Soria 2013:69).

The writers state that if instability and uncertainty are present in the economy of a country, even if that instability and uncertainty is just shown a little, it is still existing and the consumption depends on the current disposable income and expects changes on such (Eugenio-Martin & Campos-Soria 2013:53-54). During an economic crisis a decrease in households' disposable income is expected to imply a decrease in the total consumption. However, luxury goods are services, for instance traveling and tourism expenditure which are expected to be more sensitive and could decrease during an economic crisis in a country that suffers from a crisis (Eugenio-Martin & Campos-Soria 2013:54).

According to Eugenio-Martin and Campos-Soria that was the case during the crisis in 2009, the world arrivals decreased by 3.8% whereas in Europe they declines by 4.9% and in United States they declined by 5.01% (Eugenio-Martin & Campos-Soria 2013:54). As the writers continue to explain this phenomenon further they mention that it is the way that tourists react during an economic crisis that is not homogeneous. What the writers mean by that is that despite the crisis, there is some people that still are keen on traveling, while other people are reluctant to do so and prefer to save their money which means that they are cutting back on tourism expenditure. However, it is such heterogeneous sensitivity from the travelers that respond to the different preferences and their willingness to pay for expenditure on traveling (Eugenio-Martin & Campos-Soria 2013:54). One of the push factors that indeed pushes the travelers to travel is for instance, bad climate in origin, you as a traveler want to travel to places that appeal and attract you (Eugenio-Martin & Campos-Soria 2013:54-55).

According to the writers one common issue that is relevant in all crises is that they affect the tourism demand. Tourism crises imply shocks to the usual flow of tourists that comes from a region of origin and the destination that they will travel to (Eugenio-Martin & Campos-Soria 2013:54-55). This crisis is characterized by credit constraint that throttles liquidity and at the same time reduces consumption. The aggregate demand and GDP gets reduced as well, unemployment increases and the disposable income decreases. Outbound tourism from countries affected by the crises is reduced, and that has an impact on the number of arrivals to tourism destinations. Despite that destinations can anticipate this demand shift from the travelers, they can:

→ Reduce the prices in order to keep up with the number of arrivals which will decrease the expenditure at the tourist destination (Eugenio-Martin & Campos-Soria 2013:54-56).

## 4 Theoretical framework

### 4.1 SWOT-Analysis

The SWOT-analysis theory is rather popular and well-approved. It is mostly used to facilitate strategic marketing and management. The SWOT-analysis can be considered and used for both companies and destinations. The figure is divided into four parts and each part consist of important helping measurements for the improvement of a destination. The two first parts are the strengths and the weakness, those are referring to the internal environment of the destination. The other two parts are the opportunities and the threats and those two are elements which companions with the external environment (Weaver & Lawton 2010:194-195).

#### **SWOT: Strengths**

The strengths has to be seen from the customer's perspective and not from the company perspective.

Greece has a lot to offer as a destination. Besides the beautiful beaches, rich culture and architecture there is a huge history behind each city's emergence and therefore there are many attractions located in each city (more than one in every city). Basically in every city there are archeological bargains, an example is the city of Thessaloniki, where workers during the last 10 years have tried to build the subway. Even today there is no complete metro system ready and that is because every time the workers are digging in order to complete the metro system they find archaeological allowings which unfortunetley delay the construction. In addition to the wonderful weather that stays wonderful for the most part during the summer, Greece also offer good food, polite and service directed people which contributes to new experiences waiting around the corner for travelers to discover. Greece has mostly been promoted and marked in a positive way in all forms of social media, mostly as a destination which provided good resources and god competence, however, that was changed somewhere during 2008-2009 when the economy crisis appeared in the country. After that we have not seen so positive recommendations, informations and marketing about Greece. Now things are getting back to the positive way of referring to Greece as a destination.

As each country stands for its own originality and culture, archipelago and so on, so stands Greece for her originality.

#### **SWOT: Weakness**

Along with the strengths comes the weaknesses, and without the one the other would not exist. Some weaknesses that Greece cconsider to have today are bad marketing of the destination, the economy crisis, expensive prices on hotels, food and beverage. These factors can also be seen as reasons why travelers won't choose Greece as their destination to travel to.

Greece as a destination can today seem to be to a monotonous destination with nothing new to offer, and that does not attract travelers.

The bad marketing for the summer season is one of the most important elements that has to be better in order to re-attract travelers. Today's travelers only know about Greece as a summer season destination, but in fact Greece is also a winter season destination. During the winter one can go ice skating, sledding, skiing, sleigh and a lot more. Unfortunately, this beautiful side of Greece is still unknown to most of its travelers. This is a huge weakness and in order to overcome that, one has to increase the awareness of all the different aspects that a destination has to offer. By making this to a strength rather than a weakness one will succeed in re-attracting travelers. Let travelers be aware of the whole package, which means that there is still much to see, and that Greece is not a monotonous destination.

The bad marketing during the economy crisis is also one weakness. Just because of the economy crisis in Greece, a lot of travelers have not chosen the destination during the crisis. This is a huge weakness that has to get improved.

### **SWOT: Opportunities**

The opportunities are used as helping elements which supplement the strengths. The opportunities has to become the new strength at the next SWOT-analysis.

The first thing that could be improved is the marketing, if this gets better then travelers would read, see and hear more about Greece and that would probably attract them to travel to Greece again.

It would be a huge opportunity for hotels to slightly lower their prices, or offer something extra in the form of a spa treatment or a free dinner, those are two examples that can be used in order to attract travelers who are already at the destination but without a pre-booked hotel or dinner plans. In that way the travelers can afford to spend another night at the hotel just because they got some money over. Restaurants in Greece basically always offer free dessert in form of Greek pastries, delicatessen or fruit, now they have the chance to spice it up a little extra in the form of serving a glass of their own produced wine. This may create a feeling in the travelers, and on their way home they probably would buy a bottle of wine with them. It is through these approaches that a company creates its own regular customers at the local restaurant on the destination. A family might choose to eat there several times during their stay at the destination.

One could also offer new attractions, such as assistance + guidance + free tickets to another tour, or guided tour + coffee, such packages make travelers happy. Other attractions may be temporary roundabouts or other shows.

Improved technology at the hotel, restaurants, clubs and so on shows that the country keeps up with the technique development. Offering free WiFi for instance.

To succeed to lift the country from a recession to a boom, is the most difficult opportunity, however, it is not entirely impossible.

### **SWOT: Threats**

As mentioned earlier, marketing for the winter season in Greece can be improved significantly, also the marketing of all strengths that Greece continues to offer despite the crisis. And do not forget to expand and develop the already existing marketing for the summer season. Just because there is a crisis in the country it does not mean that the beaches, the weather, the service, the architecture and the history, changes, the truth to the matter is that

these aspects are still there, available and in somehow free for the travelers to experience. If the marketing and the promoting of Greece does not get improved it would be one of the largest threats to Greece.

Greece must reverse its bad reputation which has become quite strong, and move towards better and more recent times → the future.

Today Greece has many competitors and they have increased during the period of the crisis. Countries that today compete with Greece as a destination, are Turkey, Italy and Spain, although Spain is undergoing similar situation as Greece, the prices in Spain are lower than in Greece.

Negative experiences are also something that can contribute to future threats, today the use of social media is one of the top ways to get information out in public. If something negative is written on Facebook, for instance, then lots of people are going to get that advantage of this reading and sharing that information, which contributes to preconceptions which perhaps future travelers will take under consideration when booking a trip. Word-of-mouth is also an example of a negative spread of bad experiences.

#### 4.1.1 Why using a SWOT- analysis?

A SWOT-analysis can become an information and discussion paper that the destination leading marketer will have to hand. This form can be distributed to your key employees to enable them to acquaint themselves with the destination's situation, to be able to think and draw their own conclusions but also make suggestions for further improvement. This information and discussion paper can also be good data for you when you formulate your destinations communication messages, which only implicate that you have taken the opportunities under consideration and made them to reality. If this is executed often and effectively, a destination will slowly reach and offer a flawless destination to its travelers (Weaver & Lawton 2010:194-195).

#### 4.1.2 What happens next?

After you have compiled the SWOT-analysis, you will see more clearly what exactly you need to work more with. You can continue to work in order to see how the strengths and opportunities can be exploited and what you will have to do in order to reduce the weakness and address to the threats that you have provided (Weaver & Lawton 2010:195).

#### 4.1.3 Why this theory?

By using a SWOT-analysis the reader concluded the interview answers on the four different fields and that is what is presented in the model under. The SWOT-analysis made it easier to see what Greece as a destination has to improve and also what is that hinders the country of developing. By improving the threats and the opportunities Greece will be a stronger destination and probably more attractive to its travelers.



**Figure 4** SWOT-Analysis

(Weaver & Lawton + interview answers)

## 4.2 Butlers sequence model

### 4.2.1 Models of tourist development

During 1980 Butler introduced his resort cycle model which was shaped as an S-curve. The purpose of this model was to show that tourist destinations tend to experience different changes while growing under the free market and sustained demand conditions. A destination may start off from being a small, low key, destination to a highly visited and explored destination. Butler divided his S-shaped curve in 5 different stages, those stages are: *exploration, involvement, development, consolidation and stagnation*. However, after stagnation there is three different ways for this S-curve to be continued, *up* which is called rejuvenation, *straight* which means continuing being on the stagnation stage, or *down* which is called decline. According to Butler all destinations go through the same sort of process and stays at different stages for at different times according on what is happening in the destination and of course for a different amount of time. However, were a destination lays depends on the response of the destination managers to the onset of stagnation, and depending on that various scenarios are possible (Weaver & Lawton 2010:268-271).

### 4.2.2 The seven stages of tourist development

**Exploration:** under this stage of the S- curve only a small number of travellers actually visit the area. This also mean that the area is unspoilt, not being used to its fullest, so because of that only a small number of travellers facilities exist (Weaver & Lawton 2010:270).

**Involvement:** under this stage of the S-curve the development from the first stage has begun and the local people has entered this stage with the abilities to start to provide some facilities for the travellers. Which means that it has started to become a recognised tourist awareness and the season is on (Weaver & Lawton 2010:271).

**Development:** under this stage of the S-curve as one already can understand the development is on and the destination is slowly being more available to the traveller's needs. Which means that the destination starts to advertise the area and it has been recognised as being a tourist destination (Weaver & Lawton 2010:273).

**Consolidation:** under this stage of the S-curve the area is still attractive and appealing to the traveler's which means that it continues to attract them. However, some changes has occurred and that is the growth of the tourist number, they are not as fast growing as before and one can "feel the tensions in the air" between the traveler's and the natives (Weaver & Lawton 2010:273-274).

**Stagnation:** under this stage of the S-curve things gets worse in such matter that the traveler's decline the facilities because those are getting old and run down. The most important thing to state under this stage is that the numbers of traveler's are slowly dropping. The destination may not attract you as a traveler anymore. Which means that the destination does not get progressed and is slowly disappearing as a season available destination (Weaver & Lawton 2010:274-275).

**Rejuvenation:** one can say that under this end of the S-curve the most interesting aspects happen. While being here the destination has done major progress and is slowly getting on its

feet's again. Which means the investment and the modernisation is occurring by the introduction of entirely new products (Weaver & Lawton 2010:276).

**Decline:** under this end of the S-curve one is able to see if the destination has got rejuvenated (the earlier stage) which means that it has not walked into modernity and new products, instead people who worked in relation to tourism have lost their jobs and the destination image has become really bad which leads to the area being under all circumstances not capable to handle more traveller's, to not being able to fulfil the traveller's need and in conclusion the whole destination suffers (Weaver & Lawton 2010:275).

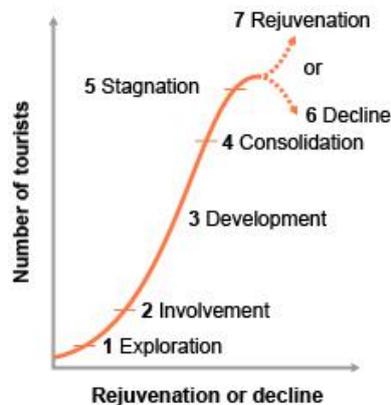


Figure 5 Butler's sequence model

(Weaver & Lawton)

#### 4.2.3 Why using Butlers sequence model?

The model's simplicity and prior applications in areas such as marketing and demography make Butler's curve model accessible and attractive but also readily applicable by the use of the available data such as visitor arrivals or a surrogate such as accommodation units. Butler's S-curve model is a comprehensive and integrated model that allows for the simultaneous incorporation of all facets of tourism in a destination regardless of the visitor numbers that is used to construct the whole curve. With this said this model is one of the most cited and applied models when talking about tourism (Weaver & Lawton 2010:268-271).

## 4.3 Push and pull factors

Push and pull factors are terms often used for migration or travel. Push factors are factors or causes which people tend to be pushed away or repelled from certain locations; while pull factors are those conditions that attract people to a particular location. These factors may be due to *economic, social, demographic, technological and political* factors that stimulate the travelers demand for tourism activity in the way of "**pushing**" travelers away from their usual place, routines and environment (Weaver & Lawton 2010:86).

### 4.3.1 Push factors

Push factors can be seen as factors that motivates the travelers and those includes an individual's internal motivation and desire to travel. The travelers have psychological needs to experience and changing environment. However, it is not only the individual's inner drive that affect travel however, a distinguish of five different factors affecting demand for tourism, those are as presented earlier: *economic, social, demographic, technological and political* factors (Weaver & Lawton 2010:86).

**Economic** factors is primarily on the economic situation of the community, and affects the volume of journeys on the individual level. An example of what that means are for instance the economy in a household, the higher income households have the more money the family has over to spent on leisure time (Weaver & Lawton 2010:59).

The greatest aspect of the **social** factors that significantly have affected travel is undoubtedly the available time the traveler can spend on a destination. In the past, society were more "task oriented" than "time oriented". The line between "work", "rest" and "play" was missing. The social attitude towards leisure began to change and the available time was not perceived any more as to rest between shifts without performing various activities, including travel. Over time, the working days were getting shorter and eventually the four-week vacation plan was introduced (Weaver & Lawton 2010:61-63).

The **demographic** factors can be aspects such as the size of a household. Nowadays, people mostly choose to give birth to fewer children, which in itself leads to increased tourism activities. It is a fact that the money spent during holidays are for the children. The smaller the family is, the more money and free time left over goes to different activities. Trends changed over time and in line with this, women began spending more time on their education and career. Today's society is gainfully employed women as much as men. Plans to have children have ended up among the last priorities in life. Notable are such aspects as population growth, urbanization and increased life expectancy (Weaver & Lawton 2010:63-67).

**Technological** factors represent a significant role of tourism development. Tourism, both domestic and foreign, increased in line with the progressive development of the infrastructure. The rail road made it possible to travel faster and farther. The emergence of motoring contributed to a more flexible tourism where car owners could choose on their own were to spend their holidays, time and focus. The rise of a viation had shrunk the world. Thanks to the possibility of traveling by air, one could travel far in no time, this produced the increase in foreign travel. Another important factor is the emergence of computer and internet, which

simplified all procedures in tourism such as hotel reservation, ticket purchase and collection of information (Weaver & Lawton 2010:68-70).

Tourism also depends on the **political** factors. People must have the freedom to make both domestic and international trips. Sometimes this freedom is limited due political or economic reasons (Weaver & Lawton 2010:68-70).

#### 4.3.2 Pull factors

Pull factors can be seen as factors or facilitators which are externally driven motives governed by the destinations availability and offer attractive prices, cultural proximity, etc. Unlike the push factors the heavy weight and important role here is on the destination. Here one can discern about nine important and useful aspects (Weaver & Lawton 2010:86).

The first one is **geographic** proximity. The countries that are far away from the travelers origin is likely to be excluded during the decision process. This is due to travel on longer distance results in higher costs and require more time (Weaver & Lawton 2010:87).

The second one is **accessibility**. Here, there are other aspects that are interdependent and affect the choice of destination. Firstly, it is a well-developed infrastructure both within and outside the destination. Travelers expect an unhindered access to the attractions, which requires good transport links such as bus/train connections, a well developed highway, ferry and so on (Weaver & Lawton 2010:88-90).

The third one is **political access**, that refers to the conditions under which the travelers are allowed to travel to the destination. Here one can also mention important aspects such as **security**, which is the fourth one, on the selected attraction (Weaver & Lawton 2010:90). For example, the economic crisis has a negative impact on tourism in Greece.

The fifth one is the destination's **availability** that is estimated mostly based on the existing attractions. Attraction ability to attract tourists are usually assessed based on factors such as: *quality, quantity, uniqueness, durability, high level of service* and so on. If one of those factors are missing there is a possibility that the attraction does not get deselected.

The sixth one is **service**, which plays a significant role in the choice of destination. Here counts factors such as: *transportation, adequate housing and food, facilities and availability of health care* (Weaver & Lawton 2010:90-91).

The **price** and the **affordability** is one of the most sensitive factors and that for it is important to have a cost position. Those are also the seventh and eight factors. One must be able to afford the trip and the money has to be enough to get a ticket, accomodation, food, attractions and so on without ending up, not having any money left after the trip. This are factors that affect the choice of destination, type of housing, transportation and also which kind of attractions one will visit (Weaver & Lawton 2010:91).

The desire to experience new places with different **culture** has always been a major and important pull factor, and this is the ninth one. Going away and travelling is usually closed associated with changes in ones everyday life to living in another environment that differs from what one is used to. Despite that, it is important to find some cultural linkes in tourism

destinations, those links are for instance; *forms of similar language, religion and tradition* (Weaver & Lawton 2010:90-92).

If the destination has all the above factors, it creates a positive image for the destination which is the major thing that drives travelers' to choose a destination for their holidays (Weaver & Lawton 2010: 93-94).

#### 4.3.3 Why using this model?

This model explains and provides a wide aspect of what push and pulls travelers to travel. What needs the travelers want to fulfill and what is missing from their country of origins. By using this model, different patterns on what triggers travelers to travel to Greece, becomes more visual.

## 4.4 Lieper's model of attraction

Leipers model was created in 1990 and is one of the leading tourism attraction models today. This model is important because it provides all the destination images a wider sense and explanation and the theory that is used is the actual means of explaining.

Within this model three different parts are described, these parts are used together and the connection between them is what affects a person's motivation and choice of a particular destination. Should one visit this destination or not? What can travelers get to experience and benefit from visiting this destination?

The model is about human vision as a factor, which means that you are a traveler and as a traveler you have certain needs that you want to satisfy. These needs may include the purpose of this which can be; *relaxation, novelty and adventure*. These needs may be seen as a core that provides informative elements in response to tourists' needs. The core is seen as an attribute of what the destination has to offer to its travelers, and what is offered at the destination is what shapes the travelers experience and cater to travelers needs, examples of these attributes is; *the landscape, the culture, the food, the sea and the service*.

The travelers usually seek an adventure, which means, they're looking to see and experience the great natural scenery and to get in contact with new cultures (Weaver & Lawton 2010:20-22).

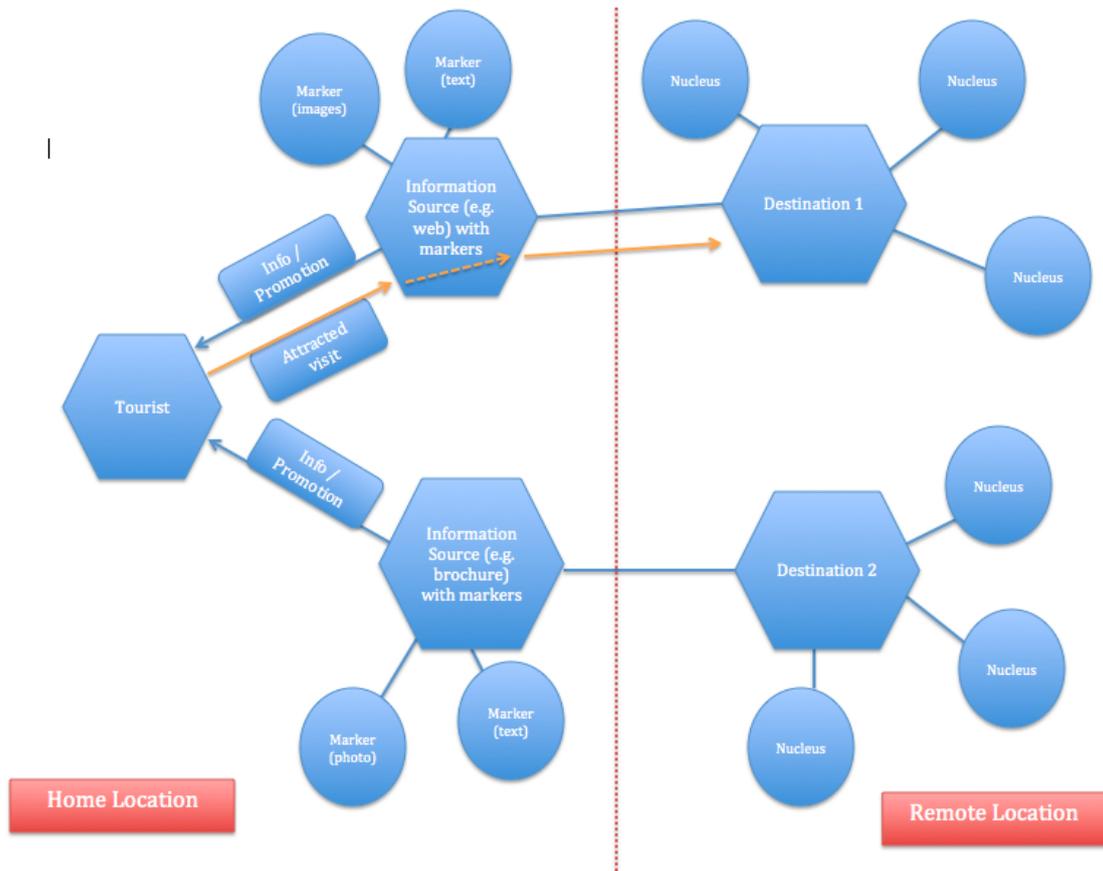
This is why it is important that the core as mentioned earlier should be linked to different markers. These markers have information on what can be experienced at the destination, and it is precisely this information that arouses interest, feelings and expectations for travel and the discovery of a destination.

If the genre that information markers give rise to, create feelings of attractions and offer positive expectations, then the travelers needs will be met (Weaver & Lawton 2010:20-22).

With that said, the information markers can have different informational elements in form of, face to face contact, in the form of text, audio and even visual elements, then images is one of the most important aspects in this message that the destination offers to the tourist. Despite this, there is an objective imitation of reality that the producer activates to contribute to a change, this change may as well be the reality, and it is precisely this that makes the destination a strong communication medium to deliver information within and about the area with a view to further marketing and with a variety of experiences to its travelers (Weaver & Lawton 2010:20-22).

### 4.4.1 Why using this model?

This model explains what attract travelers to a specific destination. As explained earlier travelers have needs that they want to fulfill and they are traveling to a destination that provides what they seek. By using this model the author come closer to explaining both the needs which could be relaxation, novelty and adventure, but also that Greece offers the attributes that mentioned earlier landscape, culture, food, sea and services.



**Figure 6** Lieper's model of attraction

([http://hyperdisc.unitec.ac.nz/ia11s1/spencm03/ham/theory/leipers\\_model.html](http://hyperdisc.unitec.ac.nz/ia11s1/spencm03/ham/theory/leipers_model.html))

## 4.5 Maslow's Need Hierarchy

### 4.5.1 Abraham Maslow and the hierarchy of needs

One of the greatest scientist in travel motivation is Abraham Maslow and he is best known for his hierarchy of needs which are useful in different areas, one of them is in advertising research. What is unique with Maslow and what makes him differ from other scientist is that he tried to merge his research from various fields involving motivations while scientist before him mainly focused on specific areas one at the time. Maslow believed that a person from the basic growth had a congenital task, and that task was, self-realization (Weaver & Lawton 2010:170).

### 4.5.2 The hierarchy of needs

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a model that explains human needs and the needs of traveling are being prioritized. According to Maslow, all needs that a person has, can be divided into five categories and each category has a certain level of priority for people. This hierarchy of needs exists simultaneously with the needs of the higher categories, but those are not so important for people until the lower needs have been met. This means that when the lower needs have been met the person's needs are getting bigger and therefore one can climb, one step further on this hierarchy (Weaver & Lawton 2010:170).

We all begin as small children, which means that we start from the bottom of the hierarchy and we work our way upwards, despite that, everyone does not reach to the higher levels and therefor we are able to move between levels due to external circumstances such as a war or any crisis for that matter. The crisis can in some matters also be personal such a divorce (Weaver & Lawton 2010:170-172).

The *first four levels* contain requirements which only motivates us to new behaviors when the already existing behaviors are not met.

**Level 1.** The first need that a person priorities is to meet the physiological needs, which consists of basic needs such as food, water and oxygen. At this level we also find the needs to avoid some feelings such as pain, sleep and exercise (Weaver & Lawton 2010:170-172).

**Level 2.** When the physiological needs are satisfied the individual begins to focus on things like safety and security. People have a need for a stable living, routines and simpler rules to not feel anxiety and fear. Fear of the horrors that could happen and also the feeling of not knowing what comes next (Weaver & Lawton 2010:170-172).

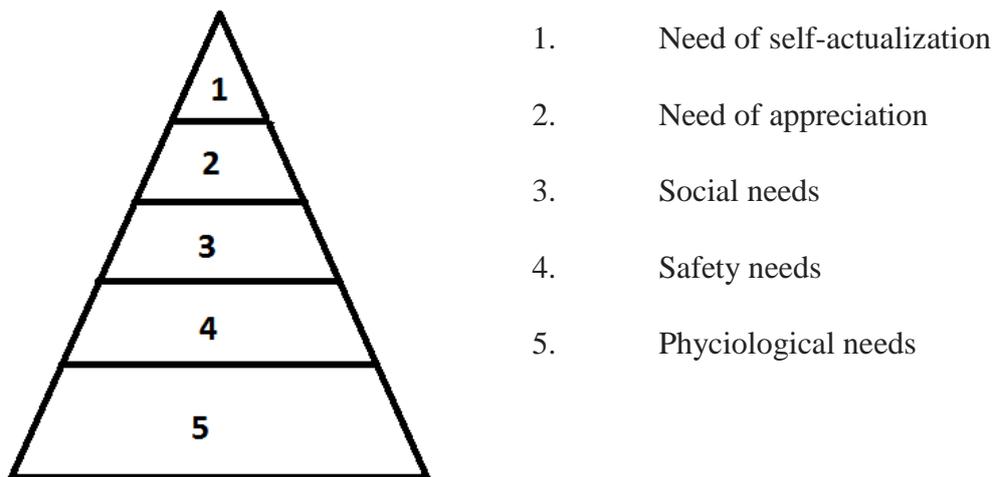
**Level 3.** If the individual feels safe, she begins to seek fellowship with other people, friends, children and love. We all want to feel that we are part of something bigger than ourselves (Weaver & Lawton 2010:170-172).

**Level 4.** If we feel that we have something in common with others we kind of awake the next need in us, the need for appreciation. Some easier need of appreciation can be higher feelings such as having/getting power, fame or respect from others while more complex needs are confidence, skills and self-respect (Weaver & Lawton 2010:170-172).

**Level 5.** Need for self-actualization is located on the fifth and final level in the hierarchy of needs. This is not about a need that can be fully met but as a need that constantly changes. The need to be the most complete version of yourself that you can be, using all of your resources and potentials. Only a small percentage of the worlds population reaches this level because one must first satisfy the underlying needs in order to focus on self-realization (Weaver & Lawton 2010:170-172).

#### 4.5.3 Why using this model?

By using this model the author wanted to enlighten that the needs of traveling is being prioritized. Travelers travel in order to fulfill their personal needs, and those needs differs from traveler to traveler. By knowing on which level on Maslow's need hierarchy one is placed on, one also knows what he has to work better with in order to proceed to the next step. By coming one step further one also comes one step closer to getting his needs fulfilled, but also getting to know him/herself better.



**Figure 7** Maslow's need Hierarchy  
(Weaver & Lawton 2010:170-172)

## 5 Empirical framework

### 5.1 Interviews

The interviews have been information channels in that way that the author has come close to the people travelling to Greece and by listening to the respondent's experiences of the destination. However, the questions has to differ as erlier mentioned in the method part, because of the different positions that the respondents has, for instace some are students, informers at Panorama event, at the Greek National Tourism Organisation and others at Apollo travel agencies.

The interviews have helped he author in ways of getting more knowledge about how media interact and changes peoples opinions and also if word-of-mouth have changed peoples choise of travel. The respondents shared their own opinions about what pulls and pushes them to travel, what strengths and weaknesses they think that Greece has to offer and further develop, their opinions about Greece's future and what demands *they* as travelers want to fulfill with their trips, if there is something that prevent the from traveling to Greece, if they consider that Greece still is an attractive destination to travel to and so one.

#### 5.1.1 Greek National Tourism Organisation and Apollo

Travelers from Scandinavia have been traveling to Greece from the late 50's/early 60's. Over the years, the number was held at about 1.5million Scandinavians annually. The crisis did affect the flow but not to the extent as one would imagine, considering the negative publicity from Scandinavian media. The tourism flow from Sweden to Greece increased in 2013 by about 8% in one year! From Denmark it went up from 250.000 to 330.000 in a year. The pattern is similar in all Nordic regions. The basic difficulty was faced with Athens a few years ago, but things are now even better than before regarding Athens as a City Break destination (Greek National Tourism Organisation).

Greece is being promoted through participations in International Travel Fairs which are directed to both trade and public. Cooperation's with Tour Operators that sell Greece as a destination is another factor of promoting. The importance is based on good relations with the media and arranging press trips to various destinations. By organizing events that will promote the multi-dimensional character of Greece, so people can understand that there is much more to this country than Sun and Sea (Greek National Tourism Organisation). Here Apollo works more traditionally, being behind the desk and not as much out on the field as the Greek National Tourism Organisation.

Greece is very special to Apollo, because, everything kind of started in Sweden and further more to Greece. For more than 25 years ago Apollo's first plane took off to Athens, and over the years they have constantly expanded and improved their Greece-program.

As a traveler you have a lot of choices, whether you prefer a modern tourist resort with partying around the clock and nice beaches, or if you want to stay more inconspicuous closed to the sea and the beautiful nature. The choice is yours. The promoting is mostly done by catalogues, Apollo's homepage and the information that is there available, by word-of-mouth, advertising in newspapers and so on (Apollo).

In order to re-attract travelers the Greek National Tourism Organisation changed their strategies a bit but not entirely. They do not believe that people have lost their "trust" in Greece as a destination. However, it is possible that for a certain period of time, when a country is undergoing a given situation politically/economically the travelers opt for what they believe to be more "secure" and people's opinions are inevitably swayed by the media. There is plenty of competition in the tourism industry. The focus has to be on selling what is beautiful and appealing from each country. By examine the political/social/economic situation of other countries and see the inflow of tourism we can re-attract and compete about the travelers with other countries. Word-of-mouth is also incredibly powerful (Greek National Tourism Organisation).

Also the way of publishing is something that has changed over time, with widespread social media coverage, they use them all as much as possible and they said that there are positive results by those. People using social media do get positively influenced by images uploaded by others. The Tourist Organisation do not print brochures as much since people use the internet much more (about 80% Swedes book online) and publishing is very costly. When it comes to advertising we work mostly with Tour Operators and Agencies (Greek National Tourism Organisation).

Apollo in somehow changed their way of promoting Greece, depending mostly on the traveler's needs and demands. Sometimes the tourist towns feel a little well-developed for Apollo's travelers with the wariaty of scoters and all the available souvenir shops in every corner. The last couple of years Apollo promoted Greece in the way that one can pack his suitcase and instead join them to the islands such as Halki, Milos or Alonissos. Those are small islands where mass tourism never reached. Halki is so small that there is not even any hotels to stay overnight, instead you live in an apartment rented by the islanders. This is charming, genuine and high-class Greece-factor! (Apollo). Traveler's demands changes over time, however, travelers always wants to travel to a secure place, they do not want to spend their money on expensive tickets and then be thinking of which street they should avoid or which hours they should be at their hotel. The travelers demand more secure destinations and most of them want to plan the activities in advance so they have a schedule to follow (Apollo).

Changes in traveler's demands have also affected Greece, because Greece has now to adopt to patterns that the country is not used to. During the last years, travelers are seeking for new destinations in Greece, apart from the well-known ones. So they are looking for alternative activities and sometimes they want to combine it with the typical "sun and beach" holidays. They are definitely more demanding regarding accommodation and food quality. This is related to the rise of many attractive destinations with very nice hotels. Moreover they are always looking for direct flights (scheduled or charter) to the destination they have chosen (Greek National Tourist Organisation).

Due to the crisis the travelers concerns growed highly. A few years ago, some travelers' concerns (who had never been to Greece) were safety (if they would go to Athens). They were not aware of how Athens was laid out and where exactly the demonstrations were. They seemed much less hesitant to go to Athens, after explaining that the demonstrations at that

time took place at a particular Square and there was no need to worry if you stayed a few kilometers away. Last couple of years Athens has regained its visiting power (Greek National Tourist Organisation). Also concerns about the security in Greece, due to an unpleasant image, mostly shown in the media during the last few years. The Greek National Tourism Organisation assured their travelers that they would not face any problem, if they want to visit Greece (Greek National Tourism Organisation).

The Greek National Tourism Organisation have had some difficulties that they have encountered along the way. After the beginning of the crisis a misconception about safety in Greece has been noticed. Because of some advertisements, some people were worried if they could find money in ATMs, which was absolutely unreal. Another problem was the labor strikes that took place during summer months. The difficulty was to make people realize that Greece has always been an absolutely secure and safe country and that a tourist, visiting Greece, was not affected from a possible economic crisis (Greek National Tourism Organisation).

The Greek National Tourism Organisation have not been thinking a lot on how to re-attract traveler's back to Greece because there was not very hard affected destination in Greece. People continued visiting the country and there was hardly any problem noticed regarding hotel accommodation, restaurants, local shops etc. (Greek National Tourist Organisation). According to Apollo the thing that one can do is to keep promoting Greece as a beautiful and accessible destination to travel to because that is what Greece is. They have to keep improving our trips and adjust the destination according to traveler's needs and demands (Apollo).

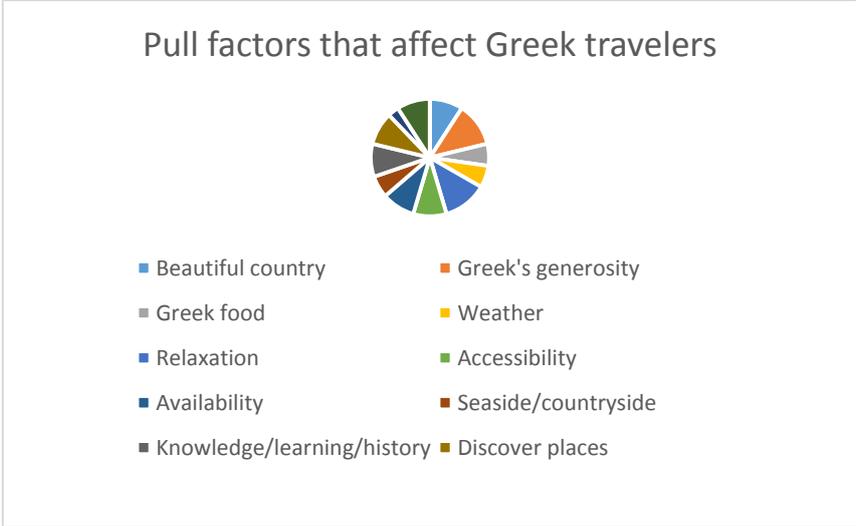
Today The Greek National Tourism Organisation do not have any concerns because everything is absolutely normal in Greece. Greece was the big winner in Scandinavia last year (2013) and it is said that it will be the destination of the year in 2014. Greece is an absolutely accessible, available and secure destination to travel to (Greek National Tourism Organisation). According to Apollo the travelers concerns is – as the Greek National Tourism Organisation mentioned – about the security, how secure the capital – Athens is, if the unsecure situations occur at the islands as well. What time it is best to get home, if there is pickpockers on the roads (Apollo).

The Greek National Tourism Organisation can now see the turning point of Greece, because Greece is a country that offers visitors thousands of experiences. Each place offers something unique, so people keep coming over and over again in order to discover cultural wealth, gastronomy, exciting cities and beautiful summer destinations. Moreover the tourism product has been improved during the years and more flexible packages are now available (Greek National Tourism Organisation).

The future of Greece is that the country will continue attracting thousands of visitors from all over the world. What The Greek National Tourism Organisation are trying to do is to help potential tourists discover the endless alternatives that Greece offers. They are also trying to keep the numbers of visitors high during the winter by promoting city breaks, culinary trips, walking tours, religious tourism, eco-tourism etc. (Greek National Tourism Organisation). Here Apollo states similar things and even further develop Greece's future: Greece's future is bright, the country will still attract travelers because of its history, culture, food, services and

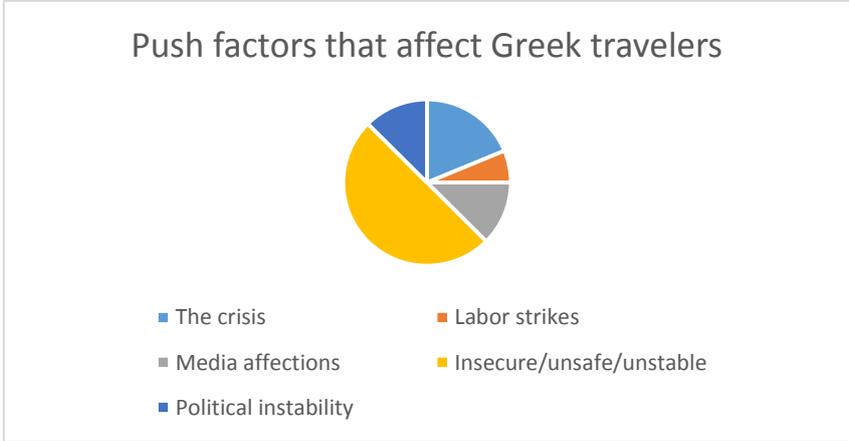
beautiful islands. Apollo as a travel agency are working in order to show travelers what there is still to discover because there is a lot, also Apollo have to organize trips to new island where mass-tourism don't exist. Apollo have to adjust to travelers needs and never stop growing as a destination, that's why Apollo started to promote Greece as a winter destination as well, which many of our travelers never thought was possible. Visit Greece during the winter? (Apollo).

Some of the answers from the student respondents have been put into figures so the result of those could be more visible to the readers. Here comes some charts, the whole interview is available in the appendix.



**Figure 8** Pull factors that affect Greek travelers (interviews)

This chart show which pull factors that the Greek travelers think of and want to please while traveling to a destination.



**Figure 9** Push factors that affect Greek travelers (interviews)

This chart show which push factors that pushes the travelers away from a potential destination. The student respondents would not want to visit a destination where those factors exists. Media's affections has been a huge part of why travelers did not visit Greece during the crisis situation.

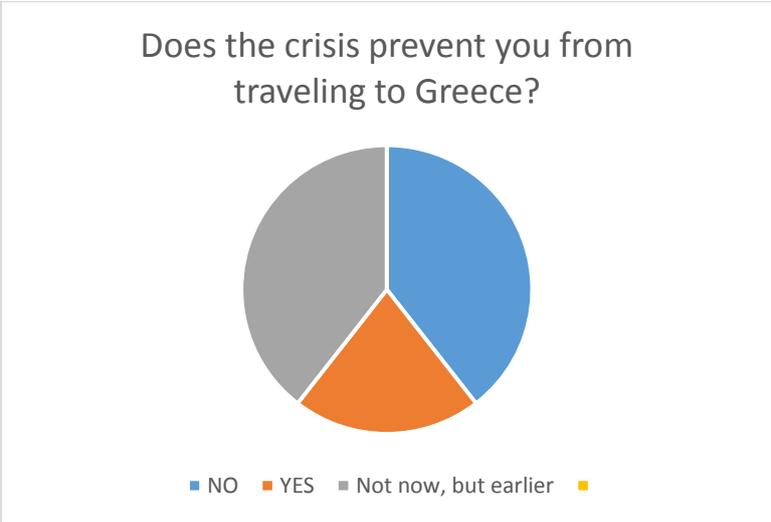


Figure 10 Does the crisis prevent you from traveling to Greece? (interviews)

Here the student respondents that answered *NO* on the question “*if the crisis prevent them from traveling to Greece*” are also included in the *Not now, but earlier*, because they answered in such way that the crisis did affect their choice of traveling to Greece during the years of 2008-2012, however, they feel that the crisis has passed and that Greece now is a safe destination to travel to.

The interesting thing during the student interviews were that everyone answered positively on the question “*Even though Greece is suffering from a crisis, how can Greece be considered as an attractive destination to travel to?*”, Greece never stopped being an attractive destination to travel to, not even during the crisis period.



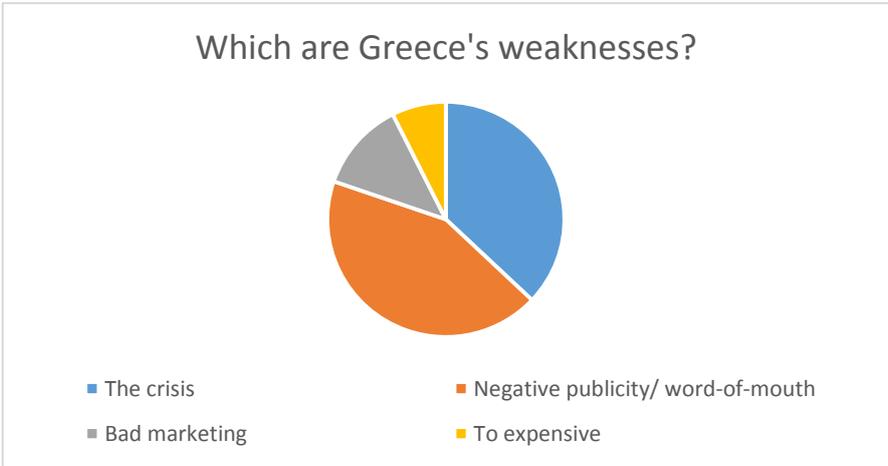
Figure 11 What to do in order to re-attract travelers? (interviews)

The student respondents mentioned those factors as possible tools in order to re-attract travelers to Greece. One respondent could mention more than one of those factors.



**Figure 12** Which are Greece’s strengths? (interviews)

Greece is a country that provide its travelers with a lot, and those listed strengths are what the student respondents mentioned when they thought about Greece. The respondents could mention more than one of those factors.



**Figure 13** Which are Greece’s weaknesses? (interviews)

According to the student respondents Greece’s biggest weakness is the negative publicity in media and word-of-mouth, due to the crisis. This factor is what could possible contribute potential travelers to not visit Greece.

According to the student respondents the three countries that are Greece’s highest competitors are Turkey, Spain and Italy. Those countries offer the similar factors as Greece and therefor the respondents mention those.

All the included respondents such as; travel agencies, the Greek National Tourist Organization, the students of Södertörns University and the informers at Panorama answered positively on Greece’s future. Some of the answers were:

*“I think that Greece is going to survive this crisis, I don’t know when exactly but they will sure survive it, so I would say that the future is bright”* (Interview person 1 at Södertörns University).

*“The future would be even more appealing and beautiful, I believe in Greece and the future of this country. Believe me, we have not seen it all yet”*(Interview person 3 at Södertörns University).

*“Greece is still suffering from some issues, however those issues are not preventing Greece as a tourist destination to grow and develop, and that is why no one should put their faith down on Greece. With other words Greece is the future developed and tourist destination to be in”* (Interview person 8 Panorama).

## 5.2 Observation

During the “mini observation” that the author tended at, in Globen, some of the questions asked was how the different destinations (were every booth represented one of Greece’s all destinations) are promoting their destinations, how they promote the different Greek raws especially because it was an gastronomy focused event as well, if the different destinations could see an increase/decrease of their travelers and also if they re-attract their travelers differently than before the crisis and to sum it up the last question asked were about their opinions of Greece’s future as a destination. Ten different booths were interviewed.



In some answers the author could see a similarity, for instance on the question *“How are you promoting your destination?”* here the most common answer were mainly through; events like this “Panorama”, Internet which is a big promotion channel for destinations, but also through newsletter, advertising in Television, webpages, commercials, by pictures and positive feedback that travelers share with us and of course through travel agencies.

On the question about *“How they are promoting the Greek raws”* the respondents first mentioned some typically raws for the destination and what their travelers often takes with them back. The promoting factors of Greek raws were; word-of-mouth, pictures, cook books and personal interest in food.

On the question “*If an increase or decrease has been visible*” the answers were quite similar as well, in some way all the respondents agreed that an increase have been visual, however some of the respondents said that this increase sometimes were minor. The importance however, is that an increase were there and that the statistics did not decrease.

One question that for some respondents took time to answer was “*If they re-attract their traveler in a different way than earlier*”, their answers were positive in such matter that they have understand that bad promotion did exist and that they had to change their destination marketing in order to still look attractive and appealing for travelers due to the negative effects of the crisis. Every single respondent said that changes in the marketing for re-attracting travelers have been taken under consideration and also been done. It may not have been done fully but changes have at least been done, and it helped because the numbers increased.

On the last question which was about “*Their opinions about Greece’s future*”, the respondent’s opinions was that Greece’s future is yet to come, that we as travelers have not seen it all, and that positive changes are going to get reveal. Here comes some of the positive answers;

*“Greece’s future is yet to come. We believe in our destination and we still have faith in it. We are aware of that we have a lot of work to do but we are slowly getting there. Personally I think that this is Greece’s year. We can already see some increase in the booking aspects even though it is a small increase, but the important thing is that we can see that things are going better and up!”* (interview 1).

*“We can already see some changes, we are more than hopeful for the future to come. Corfu is a beautiful Island and I think that a visit here would give travelers a lot in form of beauty, sights, beaches and good food”* (interview 3).

*“The future of Greece is bright I would say, and here I think people will agree with me once again. Things have got better in our country and our tourism on the Island have gained. I don’t know how much but we can see changes from 2012 to 2013 and even from 2013 until now, even though the season haven’t started yet”* (interview 5).

*“Greece is still suffering from some issues, however those issues are not preventing Greece as a tourist destination to grow and develop, and that is why no one should put their faith down on Greece. With other words Greece is the future developed and tourist destination to be in”* (interview 8).

*“Greece’s future is changing positively and we have not seen it all. Not only our travelers but we as well”* (interview 9).

### 5.3 Building and restoring destinations

In order to restore one destination, one has to be aware that international tourism is the dominant source of foreign currency income for Greece. Which means that a slump in the inbound touristic department such as Greece's tourism will directly have impacts on the Greek economy. In other terms, if an decrease in the tourism to Greece is occurring such decrease will also occur in the country's foreign exchange earnings (Beirman 2003:9).

One thing that Greece has to do in order to still look and be attractive to its travelers is to; be strongly supported by the Greek government with strong moral and financial support. In order to be available on the market Greece also has to embark on a possible marketing restoration program so the country can be able to work as an appealing and re-attracted destination (interview 5). An example that worked in the same guidance is the earthquake that happened in Turkey around 1999-2000, Turkey was a country that worked hard to re-attract and be appealing to its travelers just because they are a country that also are in need of their travelers (Beirman 2003:166).

Greece knows that tourism is a strategically important source of foreign exchange and goodwill. With good services at the destination such as; transports that works and could take you from place A to B without complications, cheap local restaurants and a possible cheap stay at the hotel, travelers will somehow be appealed to visit Greece again. That is at least a start in order to re-attract, after that Greece can of course start to develop more and offer other services at well, but the price level is a start that will awake travelers eyes in ways of booking trips and longer stays (Beirman 2003:167). Products that works outside of those services mentioned earlier are always going to be available for the travelers, those kind of services are for instance; *the culture, the archipelago, the monuments and all the history behind those services* (interview 5).

During the earthquake in Turkey 1999-2000 the first priority that the Turkish tourism offices had was the mobilization of media. Turkey worked closely with different information and promotion channels in order to appeal and re-attract their travelers. The major tour operators that Turkey worked with was; Turkish Airlines, and that is also one common thing to do while a country is in a crisis situation (Beirman 2003:166-168), to use all the help from well known companies that basically are from the crisis destination in order to make things better for the destination overall (Beirman 2003:168).

As Turkey so did Greece by working closely with one of their major tour operator; Apollo. Greece opened new markets in that way and could finally be seen as a destination that once again could be choosed as a potential holiday destination. By working with Apollo, the common goals was to be a choosen and visited destination in the future. By advertising trailers around 2010 Greece started its promotion through Apollo (interview with Apollo). Apollo marketed Greece as a developed and appealing destination while promoting Greece's destinations strengths. Some of the strengths that were on those advertising trailers was for instance: *the beach and the romantic aspects (like cuddling with your loved one), the weather, the nice people and the good services, good food and the cultural background of Greece with all the monuments and the archeological sights*. Those trailers got a lot of positive critique and publicity, and the number of booked tickets and hotel reservations increased (interview with Apollo).

As Beirman writes; “ Many countries have invested heavily in tourism and have acquired a high level of economic dependence on inbound tourism...” (Beriman 2003:5) and so has Greece (interview 5). Greece’s biggest income source is the international tourism. Without their travelers the country is kind of naked, if we choose to see it from the income aspects. Sure the country has a lot to offer but we have to ask for whom? – For its travelers, and that’s why Greece has to re-attract their travelers again (interview 4).

## 5.4 Developing tourism destinations

A destination is a location or an area that people have a notion about, and a place that we chose to travel to. When talking about destination development one can refer to a local community's development as a destination. Increased consumption contributes to positive economic effects as increased employment and economic prosperity for every citizen (Pearce 1998:6).

In economic terms, tourism is considered as the value of a spatially displaced consumption (Turismens begreppsnyckel). A significant part of the consumption that travel gives rise to, is the one that takes place on the destination visited. The revenue that tourism generates locally within the destination provides the conditions for economic activities in areas such as trade, transport, hotels and restaurant businesses and in various experiential activities such as amusement and theme parks, museums and theaters. These activities are what contributes job creation and increased local tax base, while it may affect the local site's identity positively (Pearce 1998:6). This is also the case in Greece, the majority of economic income comes from tourism and tourists' holidays in the country (interview 4). This can also in turn contribute to an increased willingness to invest in the local community. A well-developed tourism industry may mean that the basis for a local variety of restaurants, shops and other social services is increasing, which would only benefit the residents. This will contribute to a further development of the destination and a growing interest in developing, residents will look at the future and be excited (Pearce 1998:6).

As the travelers are dependent on access to different types of services an incurred relationship-dependency occurs between the producers and accelerations, those relations can also be further developed between the relations itself. These dependencies and relationships are not limited to operators within a geographically defined area, they are limited to operators outside this given area, such as for instance carriers and intermediaries whose role is to mediate and/ or package to sell the various services to others. In the producers' perspective, the destination consists of a network of different operators offering services related to a geographic area, to different travel target groups (Hall 2000:6). Those conditions occur in Greece as well, the operators are in need of the tourists, otherwise they would not be able to offer services or even further develop their tourism product in order to appeal and re-attract the travelers to the destination (Greek National Tourism Organisation).

Despite this, tourism can also have negative effects. Those can be, *that places are over exploited that the adverse impacts occur on natural and cultural opportunities. It can also create intolerance between travelers and locals.* However, there are ways to avoid this, and it's partly through those responsible for social planning, they shall conduct a planning and a plan for the future, this plan has to be sustainable and long term development. It is this

touristic development in the destination that plays the biggest role in the development of the whole local community and everything that is offered there (Hall 2000:1-5).

## **5.5 Marketing and social media**

### **5.5.1 The mass media**

The media has a crucial role when it comes to crises and also a significant role because, media can easily influence and sometimes even change a person's opinions by the use of massmedia in forms of interest-grabbing headlines and feature articles. However these effects tend to be temporary. When something negative happens and media present it, they usually make it sound and look even more negative just because media wants to keep the awareness up and emphasis that it is indeed a problem. That is exactly how it goes with crisis as well, in order to spread the information about what actually has happened and by sharing information about a crisis which is a sensitive topic for many, the awareness is spreading (Glaesser 2003:20).

To examine the role of international and social media is here an important path. Media has the tendency to report and publish cases in different ways in order to make headlines more attractively. Sometimes media tends to ignore important elements which end up in injustice for the cases being published. Media tends to focus more on the “bad news” of an occasion. With this said an actual crisis has a higher probability and possibility of being the chosen subject as media coverage, rather than the recovery and possible restoration of a destination. It also makes it more interesting to read about something that goes bad rather than something that goes for the better (Beirman 2003:12-14).

According to Regester and Larkin the virtue of media believability represent the most important used channels in order to shape people's beliefs and behaviors. People are gullible and can therefor easily be influenced of news that media present. One way to see this is by looking at newspapers, television and radio news as “products”. Why we can choose to look on those media tools as products is because, those which best meet the readers and listeners demands of the prevailing marked is the ones that sell the most, are watched the most and also listened to the most. In other words those products are affecting more people at once and can easily change ones beliefs quickly (Regester& Larkin 2005: 176).

## 5.6 Crisis management

The word management does usually describe one's leadership of an organizational unit. One can make one differentiation in this kind of leadership, where one part is called institutional and the other is called functional, however, both this kind of leadership are ways of thinking. The institutional thinking means that management is the descriptions of several of groups of people who have different management tasks, activities and function to handle. The functional thinking however, uses the word management as a term for all the tasks and processes which are closely connected with how to run a working organization. So the functional perspective does include a person-or material-related consideration (Glaesser 2003:21). One can say that a crisis is a term that consider 'a testing time' or an 'emergency event'. It can also be seen as a critical event and if this is not being handled in an appropriate and timely manner or in the worst case if not handled at all it will get bigger and end up as a disaster or catastrophe (the free encyclopedia).

There is a communication strategy that fit the problem areas and the crisis that Greece has. With this strategy Greece would be able to recover and slowly apply on its market in order to be attractive to its travelers. By the use of communication, people and companies get closer and an understanding among them can be formed (Bernstein 1996).

Communication and understanding are two important elements in the tourism sector. To communicate with one's customers and to have an understanding will only help firstly the destination that is going through the crisis and then the travelers because, they are getting the information about **what** really happened which will only contribute their understanding towards the company and the employees. So in order to win the potential travelers understanding, you always have to tell them the truth and never leave them in the dark with possible thoughts and assumptions (Bernstein 1996).

*So what is a crisis then? – A crisis is any given situation that is threatening or that could be threaten to harm people, your or others property, to interrupt business, to damage a company or peoples reputation and also have a negative impact to the people or the company offering something.*

By following the 10 steps of any effective crisis communication the tourist director would not be in the place that he would have to lie, which is a very important element to follow – no lies. An tourist director can not hold back on information, in any given situation, especially information that is important for travelers to know – which means never keep your travelers in the dark, and by informing them the tourist director would also develop some holding statements for the coming seasons, which will ensure his traveler that the fear is over, and that they are safe at the destination. The tourist director's highest priority is the health and safety of his travelers and staff. In order to get that information out the tourist director would use the social media due it is the most effective way to reach as many old and new travelers, and it is a sure way that will be seen by a lot of people (Bernstein 1996).

With that said, every organization is vulnerable to crises, any crises for that matter, small or big. There are a lot that companies, people and employees can do in order to make the crisis communication more effective. The basic steps of effective crisis communication require

advanced work in order to minimize damage. Unfortunately the slower the response, the more damage is incurred. This model is about:

1. Crisis Response 2. Crisis Prevention 3. Crisis Planning and 4. Crisis Training.

*There are 10 steps of crisis communication, and the first seven of them can and should be undertaken before any crisis occur (Bernstein 1996).*

### **1. Anticipate Crises**

Being proactive and preparing for crises means to gather your Crisis Communications Team for intensive brainstorming sessions on all the potential crises that could occur at your organization. There are at least two immediate benefits to this exercise:

1. You may realize that some of the situations are preventable by simply modifying existing methods of operation.
2. You can begin to think about possible responses, about best-case/worst-case scenarios, etc. Better now than when under the pressure of an actual crisis (Bernstein 1996).

### **2. Identify Your Crisis Communications Team**

A small team of senior executives should be identified to serve as your organization's Crisis Communications Team, ideally, the organization's CEO will lead the team. Other team members are typically the heads of your major organizational divisions, as any situation that rises to the level of being a crisis will affect your entire organization. And sometimes, the team also needs to include those with special knowledge related to the current crisis (Bernstein 1996).

### **3. Identify and Train Spokespersons**

Categorically, any organization should ensure, via an appropriate policy and training, that only authorized spokespersons speak for, and this is particularly important during a crisis. Each crisis communications team should have people who have been pre-screened, and trained, to be the lead and/or backup spokespersons for different channels of communications. →All organizational spokespersons during a crisis situation must have:

1. The right skills
2. The right position
3. The right training

(Bernstein 1996)

### **4. Spokesperson Training**

Two typical quotes from well-intentioned organization executives summarize the reason why your spokespersons should receive professional training in how to speak to the media:

"I talked to that nice reporter for over an hour and he didn't use the most important news about my organization."

"I've done a lot of public speaking. I won't have any trouble at that public hearing."

Regarding the first case, hundreds of people are being sharply criticized because they thought that they knew how to talk to the press, obviously they did not. In the second case, most executives who have attended a hostile public hearing have gone home wishing they had been more prepared or done something differently. They didn't learn, in advance, the critical

differences between proactive PR, which focuses on *promoting* your organization, and crisis communications, which focus on *preserving* your organization (Bernstein 1996).

All stakeholders, internal and external, are just as capable of misunderstanding or misinterpreting information about your destination as the media, and it's your responsibility to minimize the chance of that happening.

*Spokesperson training teaches you to be prepared, to be ready to respond in a way that optimizes the response of all stakeholders.*

## **5. Establish Notification and Monitoring Systems**

Looking back and remembering when the only way to reach someone quickly was by a single phone or fax number, assuming they were there to receive either one?

Today, we have to have - immediately at hand - the means to reach our internal and external stakeholders using multiple modalities. Many of us have several phone numbers, more than one email address, and can receive SMS (text) messages or faxes. And then, of course, there is social media. This may be the best/fastest way to reach some of our stakeholders, but setting up social media accounts for this purpose and developing a number of followers/friends/contacts on the various social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+) is not something you can do *after* a crisis breaks, because nowhere does news of a crisis spread faster and more out of your control than on social media (Bernstein 1996).

Intelligence gathering is an essential component of both crisis prevention and crisis response. Knowing what's being said about you destination on social media by your employees, customers, and other stakeholders often allows you to catch a negative "trend" that, if unchecked, turns into a crisis. Likewise, monitoring feedback from all stakeholders during a crisis situation allows you to accurately adapt your strategy and tactics (Bernstein 1996).

## **6. Identify and Know Your Stakeholders**

Who are the internal and external stakeholders that matter to your destination? One should consider his employees to be your most important audience, because *every employee is a PR representative and crisis manager for your organization whether you want them to be or not!* But, ultimately, all stakeholders will be talking about you to others not on your contact list, so it's up to you to ensure that they receive the messages you would like them to repeat elsewhere → like word-of-mouth (Bernstein 1996).

## **7. Develop Holding Statements**

While full message development must await the outbreak of an actual crisis, "holding statements," – which is messages designed for use immediately after a crisis breaks, can be developed in advance to be used for a wide variety of scenarios to which the organization is perceived to be vulnerable.

An example of holding statements by a hotel chain with properties hit by a natural disaster, before the organization headquarters has any hard factual information, might be:

*"We have implemented our crisis response plan, which places the highest priority on the health and safety of our guests and staff"* (Bernstein 1996).

*"Our hearts and minds are with those who are in harm's way, and we hope that they are well"*

The organization's Crisis Communications Team should regularly review holding statements to determine if they require revision and/or whether statements for other scenarios should be developed (Bernstein 1996).

### **8. Assess the Crisis Situation**

Reacting without suitable and appropriate information is a classic "shoot first and ask questions afterwards" situation in which you could be the primary victim. However, if you've done all of the above first, it's a "simple" matter of having the Crisis Communications Team on the receiving end of information coming in from your team members, ensuring the right type of information is being provided so you can proceed with determining the appropriate response (Bernstein 1996).

Assessing the crisis situation is, therefore, the first crisis communications step you can't take in advance. A hastily created crisis communications strategy and team are never as efficient as those planned and rehearsed in advance.

### **9. Finalize and Adapt Key Messages**

With holding statements available as a starting point, the Crisis Communications Team must continue developing the crisis-specific messages required for any given situation. The team already knows, categorically, what type of information its stakeholders are looking for. What should those stakeholders know about *this* crisis? Keep it simple.

Have no more than three main messages that go to all stakeholders and, as necessary, some audience-specific messages for individual groups of stakeholders (Bernstein 1996).

### **10. Post-Crisis Analysis**

After the fecal matter is no longer interacting with the rotating blades, the question must be asked, "What did we learn from this?"

A formal analysis of what was done right, what was done wrong, what could be done better next time and how to improve various elements of crisis preparedness is another must-do activity for any Crisis Communications Team (Bernstein 1996).

## 6 Greece's future movements

Greece is now working even more efficient and the promoters such as travel agencies and the Greek National Tourism Organisation are lifting up Greece's strengths and opportunities for the future. The local owners of tourism related businesses such as; rent a car, museums, transfer, hotel and tavernas are focusing and listening on the customers demand more closely and accurately. Greece as a destination wants to develop and so will its citizens.

While gathering all the interview answers the positive thoughts and opinions of the future of Greece were in every single interview. The respondents had one thing in common, and that was their positive attitude toward the future of and for Greece. Some common key words that the respondents used was; bright future, golden year and that 2014 is Greece's year. Further down the readers will be able to take a part of the answers regarding the future of Greece.

*I think that Greece is going to survive this crisis, I don't know when exactly but they will sure survive it, so I would say that the future is bright (interview 1).*

*I think that the future for Greece only going to get better, because the flaws that the country now has, is something that they are aware of, so they know what to change or even develop. The future is going to be even more appealing for the tourist (interview 2).*

*The future would be even more appealing and beautiful, I believe in Greece and the future of this country. Believe me, we have not seen it all yet (interview 3).*

*Greece is heading for the golden year in its tourism business I would say. This year is all about visiting Greece (interview 4).*

*We can only expect great things from Greece. Greece is a country that never lets its travelers down and that is something that everyone will realize soon. The future is bright, very bright! (interview 6).*

*"Greece will continue attracting thousands of visitors from all over the world. What we are trying to do is to help potential tourists discover the endless alternatives that Greece offers. We are also trying to keep the numbers of visitors high during the winter by promoting city breaks, culinary trips, walking tours, religious tourism, eco-tourism etc" (Greek National Tourism Organisation).*

*"Greece's future is bright, the country will still attract travelers because of its history, culture, food, services and beautiful islands. We as a travel agency has to show travelers what there is still to discover because there is a lot. We have to organize trips to new island where mass-tourism don't exist. We have to adjust to travelers needs and never stop growing as a destination. We have started to promote Greece as a winter destination as well, which many of our travelers never thought was possible. Visit Greece during the winter? They get chocked. As I said, there is a lot that travelers are not aware of and now is the time to make them discover whole of Greece" (Apollo).*

## 7 Analysis

The theoretical framework combined with the empirical framework will here be answering to the problem questions presented in the beginning of this thesis.

### 7.1 How can a destination in economic crisis maintain its attractiveness as a tourist goal?

The previous research chosen to guide the author through this dissertation have showed that Greece in some ways did not always considered being an attractive destination. Panagiotou did in her study mention that Greece is the weakest link in the Eurozone thanks to the economy crisis in the country. Greece's infrastructure and the political systems have been fragmented, those affected by this is of course firstly Greece's citizens, then the travelers and their opinions about the country but mostly Greece's image. Those are often "hidden" factors that the travelers do not see in advance while booking a trip, those factors can only be seen from the destination and its citizens.

However, the regular travelers could see a minor shift which affected their choice of traveling to Greece during the crisis. Greece has during the crisis been considering as an unsafe destination for travelers, and that aspect may only grow bigger if a Greek exit from the Eurozone becomes true. As mentioned in the beginning of this dissertation, the future plans with the common currency euro was to create a community among those involving countries, to create understanding, unity and cohesion. In some ways the common currency bought that. For Greece however, that is not the case. This discord and conflicts made Greece an unstable tourism destination. So a further exit from the Eurozone will only trigger a domino effect of instability and insecurity in the whole euroarea, unfortunately affecting other countries as well. According to Panagiotou, Greece only stood for political chaos and worrying signals. Despite this, the statistics and the interviews done for this dissertation showed that, although this negative effect pointed at Greece were and still are horrible, those never made the destination an unattractive and unsafe destination to travel to.

The chosen theories and the interviews have been used in order to come close to a possible answers to this question. By using the respond from the interviews and creating a SWOT-analysis the readers could see what strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats the respondents consider that Greece has to offer and improve in order to maintain its attractiveness. Here the focus should lay on the strengths and the opportunities that Greece has which shows that Greece is indeed an attractive and safe destination to travel to.

The strengths (**S**WOT) that the respondents mentioned are factors that exist and working in the destination, some of those are: *the weather, attractions, culture and history, the food and the beaches.*

The respondents were quite equal on the weaknesses and the word crisis were in all the respondents answers. Some other weaknesses (**S**WOT) that the respondents mentioned were: *lack of marketing, to high prices, bad publicity and that some vacations can be too monotonous.* This is aspects that Greece as a destination has to focus on improving in order to be seen as an attractive and safe destination to travel to.

According to the respondents who are recurrent travelers to Greece, this is what makes Greece look attractive even during the crisis. When it comes to the opportunities (**S**WOT) that

can help to improve the destination the respondents had a lot to suggest, and some of those suggestions are: *to lower their prices, to improve their marketing, to offer new attractions, to market Greece as a winter destination as well and not only as summer destination and to improve Greece's export of Greek raws.*

The factors that are existing as threats for Greece however, can also be improved so in the future those aspects may not exist in this column of the SWOT-analysis. Some of the threats (SWOT) according to the respondents are: *the crisis in general, bad publicity that is also mentioned in the weaknesses part, bad reputation thanks to bad service at the destination, word-of-mouth and Greece's competitors of course.* Greece has to offer variety and focus on all these factors that the respondents mentioned in order to be an attractive and safe destination to travel to.

In order to see where a destination is and in what direction it can develop Butler's sequence model have been used. Greece has during the crisis been in a stagnation phase, which means that things were stable for a while. Slowly the number of travelers dropped and the destination did not attract many travelers due to the crisis. All this contributed to the destination not getting any progress and travelers chose other destinations to travel to. However, something that did not happen in Greece which is one of the describing factors of stagnation is; to slowly disappear as a season available destination. Travelers in somehow, did not stop traveling to Greece, they did not spend so much money and time on the destination as they used to. According to Apollo and the Greek National Tourism Organisation Greece did many improvements as a destination during the crisis 2008-2012 which can be explained as Greece chose to take the *rejuvenation* direction in Butler's S-curve. *Rejuvenation* means that Greece improved as a destination, and have done major progress which means that Greece slowly got on its feet's again.

The SWOT-analysis and Butler's sequence model and the impacts of those two can here be linked to the next theory which is the push and pull factors. The push factors is what tends to push away the travelers and the pull factors are those that attract travelers to the given destination. In the interviews the respondents got this as questions, *what pull factors that contribute their choice of travel?* and *what push factors that would prevent their choice of travel?* Some of the terms are the same that are being mentioned in the theory part but new ones came along, overall the respondents wants to get away from their everyday life and in some way "switch their minds of", to not have deadlines and looking on their clock every ten minutes. The respondents seek to experience, learn and see Greece in different ways at every single trip. By offering pull factors such as accessibility, availability, service, affordability, culture and geographical aspects Greece will continuing being an attractive and safe destination to travel to.

This takes us to Leiper's model which workes as providing destination images a wider sense, explanation and theory which helps people understand the meaning behind an fulfill and developed destination.

Leiper's model works as a tool of satisfying the travelers needs. This needs are as mentioned in the theory part, fulfilling the purpose of traveling which can be; *relaxiation, novelty and adventure.* This core is what answers to what a destination has to offer to its travelers, and it can be all from *landscape, culture, food, sea and services available.* Those aspects fit the respondents answer on what the travelers demand from a destination are, and also what pulls

them to travel. It is important that the cores that mentioned earlier are linked to the different markers that exists, because this markers has information on what the destination can provide. This is what arouses interest, feelings and expectations for travel and discovery of a destination, which would contributes to the facts that Greece sure is an attractive and safe destination to travel to.

The model Maslow's need hierarchy explains how human needs are prioritized especially when traveling. In order to be capable to choose a destination that appeals and attract you as a traveler, you must first start fulfilling your needs. As we all begin as small children and work our way up on the hierarchy so are are needs developing and changing over times. As the hierarchy contains of five levels only the first four levels have requirements that will motivate us to new behaviors. We as humans must fulfill our need of self-actualization, appreciation, social and safety needs and final physiological needs. Not everyone comes to the last level and that is not required to happen either. However if the needs of the first four levels are not being pleased in every person they will not be able to travel to a destination that has problem areas. For instance if a traveler does not feel social connected and safe between others or in another environment, how would that person be able to be located at an destination that has it own problems and is in the middle of a crisis? It would not be possible.

Marketing and social media's role has been an involving factor through the years of the crisis in Greece, in such way by offering people information about the crisis. Despite this, the negative aspects have gained more media attention than the positive ones. Some things have even been enlarged to that extend that in some cases it has affected people's choice of traveling. Media has the tendency to report and publish cases in different ways just to make headlines more attractively. Which ends up with media ignoring important elements and creates injustice for Greece as a potential and available destination to travel to. The respondents shared that media has to some extent been a factor that has contriduted many peoples choice to travel to other destinations and excluding Greece as an option. However, the respondents chose to follow their own perceptions and hunch about choosing Greece or not.

The chapter about Crisis management has been an important guide, due to the ten steps presented. As mentioned earlier the first seven steps should be undertaken and planned before an actual crisis has showed elements of arising. The following three steps are about how to handle a crisis and what to do better when next crisis occurs.

In Greece's case we can not know if this three steps have been taken under consideration or even been performed. The three steps have been informative and are also easy to follow. The first step to handle after a crisis have appeared, is step eight, which means that one is being responsible for a large proportion such as getting information out to stakeholders who may be relatives or travelers. This means that the spokesperson has to have the right information available for both himself and the people listening. The spokesperson should know what his talking about and how to deal with issues or questions that comes up during his speaking, especially if media is there. This is created when the spokesperson and the crisis communication team has a meeting and discussion about crisis and how to handle them infront of the public eye. In other words, this is the first thing that has to be assessed in advance. A hastily created crisis communication strategy is never as efficient as those planned and rehearsed in advance. Step nine is to keep it all simple. At this stage the spokesperson already knows what information the stakeholders are seeking, and he also knows how to

performe it. Step ten is a reflection of “*What did we learn from this*”?

The question to ask here is, have this been done in Greece’s case?

By being aware of how to handle crisis and by having an available crisis communication team ready to handle all this potential information, a destination can prepare itself from being in a crisis. Greece obviously did not have this, otherwise the economical crisis should not have affected the destination and its citizens as it did.

By the use of the SWOT-analysis, Butler’s sequence model, push and pull factors, Lieper’s model, social media and crisis management, the author has summed the most important aspects of how a country that is going through a crisis can be seen as an attractive destination to travel to, but also how a destination in economic crisis maintains its attractiveness as a tourist goal.

## **7.2 How shall Greece re-attract its travelers? And why is it important to do so?**

The previous research showed that despite the crisis some people were keen on traveling, while others were more reluctant and preferred to save their money, while cutting back on their tourism expenditure. This implicated that crisis do affect tourism demands and also travelers thinking as Eugenio-Martin and Campos-Soria mentioned. Tourism crisis as this economy crisis in Greece imply that the usual flow of travelers that visits a destination decrease due to the situations. Applying and developing the destination by reducing the prices one keeps up the number of travelers which only decreases the expenditure at the tourist destination. In that way Greece’s re-attraction begun and that helped the country grow and slightly overcome (not to its fullest) some of the major touristic problems.

The SWOT-analysis has showed that there are things that can be improved in order for Greece to re-attract its travelers and the focus should here lay on the weaknesses and the threats. As mentioned earlier the weaknesses that the respondents mentioned are: *lack of marketing, to high prices, bad publicity and that some vacations can be monotonous*. If those factors gets improved Greece will be able to re-attract travelers and also make Greece a better destination which is important. It is important because, in order to restore Greece as a destination, one has to be aware of that the international tourism is the dominant source for Greece to get an income. The threats of the SWOT-analysis is also something that has to be taken under consideration because in order to get improved and better at something one has to know who and what one are competing with. Greece has a lot of competitors that mostly offers the same packages, however if the country improves the mentioned aspects in the SWOT-analysis things will only get better and maybe some of the competitors may no longer be seen as competitors and just as other destinations.

The push and pull factors can also be seen as answers on how to re-attract traveler to a destination that is suffering from a crisis. By seeing what pushes the travelers from their origin countrys to another and by providing something different, one are attracting travelers. The push factors that pushes away people are involving; *economical, social, demographical, technological and political aspects*. And during the crisis 2008-2012 one could say that Greece pushed away not only its travelers but also its locals. The push factors actually represented Greece, and that is not something positive.

According to the respondents, Greece is a destination that never stopped attract travelers, however, in order to re-attract even more, or to raise the number of travelers the destination has to restore and be re-built. Here one can not ignore that the international tourism is the dominant source of foreign income in Greece, and by not having travelers at the destination will have its consequences. Some of the consequences takes us back to Butler's sequence model. If the destination do not attract its travelers it will soon be back on the stagnation phase and slowly also disappear as an available destination. In order to prevent that, the re-attracting of travelers is one of the most important elements that Greece has to work with.

As mentioned during the building and restoring destination chapter earlier, Greece worked in similar ways as Turkey did during the earthquake. Both this countries have through years been well visited during the summer seasons and those have also invested heavily in their tourism because their biggest income comes from this source. This may also be one of the reasons on why the respondents thought that Turkey is one of the countries that are Greece's biggest threat on the tourism market. The countries are geographical closed to each other, they offer similar experiences, they have been through similar situations, however, in Turkey travelers gets more for their money as the country is cheaper than Greece, which also got mentioned in the interviews.

By building and restoring Greece in order to be a better destination, we come in to the next thing that re-attracts travelers, which is development. An increased consumption contributes to positive economic effects such as increased employment and economic prosperity for every citizen. If a destination reflects this positive effects they are one step closer at being attractive to both its citizens and its travelers. When citizens have a job and a positive prosperity the destination itself appears as more attractive. As mentioned during the developing tourism destination chapter, the revenue that tourism generates locally within the destination provides the conditions for economic activities in areas that appeal travelers. Those areas are: transport, hotels and restaurants, amusement and theme parks, museums and theaters. So by not developing those factors, travelers will be aware that the destinations economy is bad, that many lost their jobs, that riots take place here and there and especially that the destination itself does not offer their travelers a safe holiday, no one will choose this particular destination to travel or spend money in.

Social media is a tool to use when publishing something that one wants to come out quick and be seen from many at once. As media has the tendency to report and publish cases in ways to make the theme more attractively in order to get more readers, things that are bad looks even worse. During the crisis Greece was indeed affected of what was said and written in media. Situations escalated and Greece was pictured worse than it actual was. That is one possible way of seeing what indeed gained the readers attention and affected peoples' choice of traveling to Greece. Now when Greece is developing and going through an restoration so to say, not much is written in media, and one can ask, how that comes? During the marketing and social media chapter, the answer to a question like this can get revealed – an actual crisis has a higher probability to be chosen as a media cover subject because it gets more attention than the recovery or a restoration of a destination. With this said, Greece needs to use social media in a positive way, such as publish and make people more aware of what progress the destination has done.

Crisis communication is something that could re-attract travelers to a crisis affected destination. If a destination follow the first seven steps mentioned in the crisis management chapter the destination will in somehow prevent situations like this of happening. However, by handling such situation properly the destination shows that it can be reliable and handle

difficult situations, and by following this steps the destination also shows that it at least tries to prevent them from happening again.

## 8 Results

Short result of the analysis and a conclusion part of this dissertation.

### How can a destination in economic crisis maintain its attractiveness as a tourist goal?

According to all the collected material Greece never stopped being an attractive destination to travel to, which means that Greece did indeed maintain its attractiveness as a tourist goal through the years of the crisis. The respondents, the previous research and the theories gained a whole picture to this phenomenon by adding parts to the destination, the travelers needs and demands and Greece as an available destination, fulfill those. Every respondent knew and had in some way felt the crisis during their vacation in Greece from 2008-2012 however, it never affected the travelers as it affected the Greek citizens. When something happens in a country, usually those who are directly involved are the ones that notice it first, those who are only there for a while, such as travelers only sees the superficial damages. Those damages are often things that affect the travelers the most, such as high prices, bad reputation, non available transportation and so on. The only thing that the respondents had to say as a possible affection on those were the high prices, the bad publicity and word-of-mouth that could probably change their opinions about Greece. Nevertheless, travelers did not give up their hope on Greece and continued traveling to the destination during and after the crisis. Changes has been done and the travelers can already see those. According to the Greek National Tourism Organisation, Apollo and the respondents, 2014 is going to be Greece's golden year of travelers and revenue income.

### How Greece shall re-attract travelers, and why is that important?

As mentioned earlier travelers did not lose their hope on Greece entirely, they still traveled to Greece, however, they did not spend their money as they did earlier, due to the high prices. Sure a re-attraction of travelers has been done, by publishing more selling headlines in news papers and leaflets, the Panorama event and similar event to that have gained travelers attention and re-attracted them to Greece.

It has been important to re-attract travelers because as mentioned earlier Greece is in need of its travelers and by tourism being the highest revenue of income to the destination it is important to have high percent of travelers coming annually. By promoting Greece as a winter destination as well, that will probably keep the procentage high and make Greece expand as a flexible tourism destination.

## 9 Conclusion

The economy crisis has brought Greece into a vicious circle that seems rather difficult to get out of. The austerity have increased the unemployment dramatically and the living standards has shrunk. Shops and small businesses have disappeared and less and less money “flows” around the system. The already large black economy has probably increased when people try to use services and exchange favors. The state’s ability to collect taxes has never been particularly good, and the more they raises taxes in order to reduce their deficits, the more it gain people to try to avoid paying them in every kind of way. If one looks at Greece from this perspective the country is not attracted at all. On the other hand, travelers and their main goals when traveling or choosing destinations are not this listed above. As a traveler yo do not see things as the Greek citizens, you see it through the travelers’ point of view. You do not see this side of Greece – if we exclude the media’s slant – and this is perhaps better to not be seen? The travelers Greece’s and the Greeks biggest source of revenue, and it will probably continue to be so. The services that attract travelers to Greece have not changed due to the crisis, and that is precisely why the travelers see Greece as an attractive holiday destination to travel to.

By continuing to work in the ame way, and by using the constraints that have already been taken under consideration there is a risk that Greece does not end up in the same position as it have been in this recent years. This is far from over yet, and therefore, one should not completely forget what difficult times this country has gone through. The involving stakeholders see a brighter side of this situation, and takes this happening as a lesson for the future to come.

## 10 Knowledge Contribution

More and more authors are trying to understand this phenomenon and what actually lays behind different destination crisis. This thesis is a contribution to the knowledge already existing in this subject. By linking different theories with empirical material and previous research this is the outcome. Perhaps this is not a full scale research, because other question could possibly be answered through all the collected material and different statistics could be found if the time was not hinder. The interviews and observation adds a wider perspective on how this crisis could be seen from both the travelers' and the researchers' side.

## 11 Suggestion for further research

I suggest that a further research on this theme will continue with a possible comparison to a destination that has been through or is going through the same kind of crisis. It does not necessarily need to be an economic crisis, it could be a crisis in form of natural disaster or war for instance. The common paths and themes though will be how to market and promote a country where their tourists have lost their faith in? How to re-attract old travelers and also how to appeal new travelers. The possible comparison can be to countries such as; Spain, Thailand, Croatia or Turkey. Just some pointers though.

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# Appendix

## Interviews

### *Interview 1*

*student at Södertörns University*

**1. Which pull factors would contribute your choice of travel?**

Well, it is first of all Greece is very beautiful country to visit. Some of the first things you will hear about Greece is the generosity of Greeks, good Greek food and that Greece is a perfect country to visit with your family especially when you have young kids.

**2. Which push factors would prevent your choice of travel?**

Well that would be the current situation that is going on there. The crisis, the labor strikes, the demonstrations and so on. You hear so much on TV about the situation over there so you always think twice in order to book a trip to Greece and that is sad because as I mention earlier, it is a really nice and beautiful place to visit.

**3. Which demands would you as a tourist like to please/think of when I mention Greece as a destination?**

For me Greece stands for a place that offers relaxation, sun, landscape and is a place that I think everyone has to visit in order talk about it to others. It is not enough to see Greece in brochures and on TV, you have to really visit the place in order to understand and see the whole beauty that Greece stands for and also offers.

**4. When did you visit Greece for the first time?**

When I was 12 and I'm 26 now.

**5. When did you visit Greece for the last time?**

Summer 2011

**6. Is there anything preventing you from visiting Greece in the near future?**

To be honest no, but if the situation continues like it is right now, or as it was last year when I was there, I will prefer to visit other destinations.

**7. What are your opinions about the crisis in the country? What do you think lays behind this?**

There is not only one thing that lays behind the situation. It is different things that all together made this happen. It is like a bubble that just gets bigger and bigger, you now that

it soon will explode. I feel sorry for the citizen because they are the victims of this situation.

**8. Is there something that has affected your previous opinions about Greece? (like word-of-mouth, bad experiences, bad publicity and so on).**

I have been in Greece so many times, that I can't even count them. Since I was 12 and I'm still visiting the country. Why I tell you this is because I have already made my decision and opinions about the country. Shure it is very easy to believe the things you see on TV and the things you read in the papers, but I think that if you have been in Greece several times you know what to believe from the media. Shure everyone has different opinions and sure we have various experience from places but one bad experience will not stop me from visiting a country one more time. One cannot blame the whole country for the mistake that for example a hotel did. Shure word-of-mount is something that is spreading very fast but I have not heard so much negative things about Greece in such matter.

**9. Even though Greece is suffering from a crisis, how can Greece be considered as an attractive destination to travel to?**

Greece is a fantastic and beautiful place to visit. I think that Greece only gets more attractive year by year. Shure the crisis has affected some destinations but the islands are mind-blowing. I think that Greece has to focus more on the beauty that they as a country can offer to their travelers, to promote the beaches, the archipelago, the history and the good food.

**10. Do you consider Greece a safe destination to travel to?**

I will not say that it is an unsafe destination but I would not either say that it is a super safe destination either. As I mention earlier the conditions such as demonstrations and the risk of being attack by pickpockets is possible scenarios but nothing further I would say.

**11. What do you think Greece can do in order to re-attract tourists?**

Remember what Greece stands for and all the beauty that the country has to offer.

**12. What do you mean with "What Greece stands for"?**

I mean that Greece has so much things to offer to its travelers, and that it is unfair to judge one whole country just because of the crisis situation that is existing there.

**13. Why do you think it is important to re-attract tourists?**

Tourism is an very important income source for Greece and its citizen, I think that if Greece does not re-attract travelers they will not get new visitors only visitors that have been there before and that have positive things to say about the country, like me for

instance.

**14. Which are Greece's strengths?**

Greece's strengths are the things that also attracted me to visit it. Good services, beautiful country, things to see and things to experience, rich history (if one wants to visit attractions and so on) sun and good beaches.

**15. Which are Greece's weaknesses?**

Well the crisis first of all. Negative things that people have experienced and then spreading with word-of-mouth and reviews on the Internet. They could also have better marketing. Maybe cheaper accommodations and so on.

**16. Which destinations are Greece's competitors and threats?**

Right now I would say Turkey. But also Spain, they offer more or less the same kind of choices. Spain is also under a crisis so I think the biggest competitor is Turkey, and it is super cheap there as well.

**17. What are your thoughts and opinion on Greece's future?**

I think that Greece is going to survive this crisis, I don't know when exactly but they will surely survive it, so I would say that the future is bright.

*Interview 2*

*student at Södertörns University*

**1. Which pull factors would contribute your choice of travel?**

Greece has for me and my family all the factors we seek from a holiday. The good weather, good food, kind people, relaxation and free time for our children. The beaches are well adapted for our children's to play at.

**2. Which push factors would prevent your choice of travel?**

Maybe the things we hear on TV and read in the papers about the crisis in Greece, which is a shame when the country has so much to offer.

**3. Which demands would you as a tourist like to please/think of when I mention Greece as a destination?**

That would be the climate, the sun and the things one can experience in Greece. We have only good experiences from this destination and that's why we keep going back. Many destinations

has similar things to offer, but Greece has always offered those kind of things. The other destinations can be seen as developed and new. However, Greece has an originality, something that stand for the Mediterranean beauty. Except from the people, the food and the weather there as so much history and culture representing this county, it doesn't matter how many times one visits Greece, because you will never see or experience it all. One time is not enough.

**4. When did you visit Greece for the first time?**

My first time in Greece was a family vacation when I was 8 years old, so that was for 30 years ago.

**5. When did you visit Greece for the last time?**

Last summer

**6. Is there anything preventing you from visiting Greece in the near future?**

Not now, the crisis would maybe prevent my opinions of traveling to Greece before, like 2-3 years ago. But not now, I was there last year and everything worked out fine.

**7. What are your opinions about the crisis in the country? What do you think lays behind this?**

It sure is a lot behind this, otherwise it would not have been so much resurrection about it. I think there is many people to blame for the situation in Greece but on the other hand there is far more people that could help this country "get better".

**8. Is there something that has affected your previous opinions about Greece? (like word-of-mouth, bad experiences, bad publicity and so on).**

I have my own experiences from Greece since I have been visiting the country so many times and for so many years. Sure others experiences affect but not in that matter that I would not travel to Greece just because someone had a bad experience there.

**9. Even though Greece is suffering from a crisis, how can Greece be considered as an attractive destination to travel to?**

Well it is still an attractive country to visit despite of the bad conditions happening there. The weather and the sights has not been affected from the crisis and that is something that is appealing and attractive in one country.

**10. Do you consider Greece a safe destination to travel to?**

Yes

**11. What do you think Greece can do in order to re-attract tourists?**

Just continue to offer an originality and focus on the positive things rather than all the negative, I know that that is something difficult but that would only help Greece as an destination to grow and re-attract old and new tourists.

**12. Why do you think it is important to re-attract tourists?**

It is important for every destination to have tourists and even more important to re-attract those. In Greece's case it is important because they are in need of tourists thanks to this situation. It is also one of their biggest economic income I would say.

**13. Which are Greece's strengths?**

Their history, culture and weather I would say.

**14. Which are Greece's weaknesses?**

Bad reputation, bad marketing, and the crisis of course.

**15. Which destinations are Greece's competitors and threats?**

Those who offer the same things I would say, maybe Turkey, Italy and Spain.

**16. What are your thoughts and opinions on Greece's future?**

I think that the future for Greece only going to get better, because the flaws that the country now has, is something that they are aware of, so they know what to change or even develop. The future is going to be even more appealing for the tourist.

*Interview 3*

*student at Södertörns University*

**1. Which pull factors would contribute your choice of travel?**

The seaside and the country's accessibility

**2. Which push factors would prevent your choice of travel?**

If the destination that I have chosen to visit, in some way will be insecure.

**3. Which demands would you as a tourist like to please/think of when I mention Greece as a destination?**

Greece is a country that is familiar to me. I have many good memories from holidays in Greece, and I still want to visit the country. The demands that I seek in my travel is firstly to explore and get to know more about a country. And I think Greece is such a destination that you can explore and learn more about. I want to visit museums and see sights.

**4. When did you visit Greece for the first time?**

My first time in Greece was summer 1996

**5. When did you visit Greece for the last time?**

Three years ago

**6. Is there anything preventing you from visiting Greece in the near future?**

No, not really. I think that the conditions in Greece are only getting better and better so therefore I would not say that something is preventing me from visiting Greece, I would rather say that I'm curious to see how the Greeks handled the situation and made the destination better than before.

**7. What are your opinions about the crisis in the country? What do you think lays behind this?**

There is no specific answer on what lays behind this crisis because I think there is a lot. However, my opinions on about the situation is that sure it is tragic that such a beautiful country which provide its travelers with such a beauty and basically good travel memories has been through all this but in the end I know that Greece will be even more attractive to its travelers. The Greek people and its government are going to take all this under consideration and they are going to handle it very good. I also think that in 2-5 years we will be able to see a new and developed destination that will appeal us even more, and yes I talk about Greece.

**8. Is there something that has affected your previous opinions about Greece? (like word-of-mouth, bad experiences, bad publicity and so on)**

No, nothing has affected my opinions in that matter. Sure I have heard a lot and I have seen a lot in the media but it has not affected me so much because I also know to not believe in everything you see and hear in the media. Media has a tendency to overact and exaggerate situations and I'm not falling for that.

**9. Even though Greece is suffering from a crisis, how can Greece be considered as an attractive destination to travel to?**

I think that Greece as a destination never stopped looking attractive. Sure thanks to the situation and the different occasions going on there people started to look on the destination differently. However, that is just how we people handle situations, as soon as we see or hear something negative about a destination we form and shape our own bad and negative thought about it and it is those specific thought that prevent us from travelling and really experience the destination with an opened mind.

**10. Do you consider Greece a safe destination to travel to?**

Yes, I consider Greece to be a safe destination to travel to. As the matter of fact I will travel to Greece this summer. That is how safe I consider it to be.

**11. What do you think Greece can do in order to re-attract tourists?**

The tour operators are already thinking and seeing potential in this destination, I think that the Greeks need to feel more secure and believe more in their country as a destination. To continue being available and beautiful for their travelers.

**12. Why do you think it is important to re-attract tourists?**

Well it is important because Greece needs its tourists and Greece is mostly a summer destination which means that without its tourists during the summer their income would be less and that would not benefit Greece as a destination. Mostly because Greece is not so familiar or known to be a winter destination, despite that there is winter accessibility for their tourist.

**13. Which are Greece's strengths?**

Greece's strengths are to still look and be available, to represent the uniqueness that the country always represented and to always find new ways to appeal its travelers. The archipelago, the sea and the beautiful beaches, the culture and mostly their heritage and history.

**14. Which are Greece's weaknesses?**

The potential weaknesses are to still look at the crisis as an obstacle, and to not look at the future to come. People and destinations that can't see the future are just wearing "blinkers".

**15. Which destinations are Greece's competitors and threats?**

That would be Spain and Italy maybe

**16. What are your thoughts and opinions on Greece's future?**

The future would be even more appealing and beautiful, I believe in Greece and the future of this country. Believe me, we have not seen it all yet.

*Interview 4*

*student at Södertörns University*

**1. Which pull factors would contribute your choice of travel?**

I usually look on how accessible a country is before I visit it. Accessible in the matter of what a tourist seeks to find. I mean I want to be able to visit other parts such as cities nearby so the transportation system is something that has to work. I also double check if the beach is closed to the hotel, otherwise transfer has to be included. I want typical local restaurants nearby because I want to take with me parts of the country back. In such matter I want the country to be accessible and please me as a tourist.

**2. Which push factors would prevent your choice of travel?**

Such things as is the country is unstable and unsecure, because I usually travel with family. I remember the situation in Thailand, and how unsecure the country was after the tsunami, I didn't want to visit the country even though we look on tickets just a month earlier. The country that you choose to spend your time and money in has to provide some kind of security and also appeal you as a tourist.

**3. Which demands would you as a tourist like to please/think of when I mention Greece as a destination?**

Well I live in Sweden and as both you and me know we live in a country where routine is one of the things that rules our lives, so when we talk and think about vacation we want to come away from the routine and just relax. To get some color and come back rested in order to be able to get back to the routines. If you ask me Greece is the right place to do just that, relax, get color and just forget about our everyday "problems", to rest and come back rested. Greece has a lot to offer not just relaxation don't get me wrong, I have visited the country many times and each and every time I discover something new. It can be a new place such as a new taverna, or just another beach that I like more than the first one. Also Greece has a huge heritage along with its history, and I make sure that on every trip in the country I also get a bit more knowledge about the background and the history of the country. I recommend this to everyone because you as a tourist get to know the country more, and appreciate its beauty and its history much more after you know more about it. It's important to get something from each and every trip, knowledge I would say is the best gift after a trip because you carry it with you through your whole life and it will only be useful for you.

**4. When did you visit Greece for the first time?**

I visited Greece for the first time when I was a little kid, we went on vacation with my family, I think I was like 9 years old then.

**5. When did you visit Greece for the last time?**

Last year

**6. Is there anything preventing you from visiting Greece in the near future?**

I visited the country last year and I think that it was secure enough, sure things are better now than they were before 2-3 years ago, but Greece has to develop more in order to get where they were before the economic crisis. They have already worked well on the publicity and marketing aspects. As I mentioned in the beginning, Thailand also survived after a crisis, sure it was a different one, but by working hard on its image as a destination they are on top today, and I would say that they attract more tourists today than before the tsunami. And it is in those terms Greece also has to work with, to survive as a destination because the country is in its need of their tourism income. Nothing is preventing me to travel to Greece now, but it did earlier, like two years after the crisis.

**7. What are your opinions about the crisis in the country? What do you think lays behind this?**

My opinions are that this is a situation that Greece can come out of, only if they work hard and not doing the same mistakes again. A lot can lay behind this as reasons for the crisis, I don't think anyone knows exactly what lays behind this, because there are not only one thing, there are several things, and together they explode. I also think that media is one of the things that have made the situation worse, because as we all know media tends to overreact and people here in Sweden has to read between the lines I would say. I recommend them to visit a country before getting an opinion about it.

**8. Is there something that has affected your previous opinions about Greece? (like word-of-mouth, bad experiences, bad publicity and so on).**

Sure media affect it a bit but as I told you I visit the country often and I will not let media affect my opinions on something before getting my own information about it. When you say word-of-mouth I have only heard positive things about Greece as a destination and that even during the crisis. Tourists are optimistic customer that are not quick to judge destinations I would say that they are rather curious so they will want to find out on their own if it is like this or like that.

**9. Even though Greece is suffering from a crisis, how can Greece be considered as an attractive destination to travel to?**

If we put the crisis on the side, what was it that attracted tourists before the crisis? It was its beauty, originality and the peace (silent, services, weather, accessibility, history) in forms of travelling. The tourist could not get enough of Greece, and even before leaving the

country they had already planned for their next trip. Sure the crisis will have affected many potential travelers thinking of traveling to Greece, but in the end as all know that Swedish people love Greece. It is still an attractive destination to travel to and it has always been if you ask me.

**10. Do you consider Greece a safe destination to travel to?**

Yes I do, maybe not as safe as for 4-5 years ago but sure it is safe. And ever for 4-5 years ago the crisis was not there, I'm sure other aspects could have been presenting Greece as a minor safe destination to travel to. There is like this for many destinations not only Greece.

**11. What do you think Greece can do in order to re-attract tourists?**

Greece can focus on the marketing aspects and how to re-appeal tourist in order to get them to choose Greece before other destinations. Marketing is the key element for a successful destination. I think Greece is already getting there and that this year will be a golden year for the Greeks and Greece.

**12. Why do you think it is important to re-attract tourists?**

Mostly because Greece has a lot to offer to their tourists and also because the tourist income is one of the biggest income for the country, and Greece is in need of their tourists.

**13. Which are Greece's strengths?**

The weather, the good food, the polite people and services, the beautiful sea and landscape, the knowledge one gets while leaving the country and of course the reinvention in someone's soul (inner peace) after a vacation in Greece.

**14. Which are Greece's weaknesses?**

The economical situation there, because it sure affects some of the potential travelers to the country, and also that Greece as a destination offers monotonically vacations, maybe they should offer more adventure in order to re-attract others and new travelers.

**15. Which destinations are Greece's competitors and threats?**

Competitors may be Spain because the situation is similar there, and Greece's and Spain's touristic range is also similar.

**16. What are your thoughts and opinions on Greece's future?**

Greece is heading for the golden year in its tourism business I would say. This year is all about visiting Greece.

**1. Which pull factors would contribute your choice of travel?**

I think that the first thing that someone seeks while choosing a country to travel to is if the country has something else to provide then the original country that one lives in. It also depend on what someone wants to get from the vacation. I want to get knowledge and see places that I have not seen until now. To get knowledge is something that one gets from each and every trip, this knowledge can be about the country itself or in forms of expectations and how those expectations tend to be satisfying or not.

**2. Which push factors would prevent your choice of travel?**

Maybe if the country is unsafe in somehow. Like natural disaster or political instability.

**3. Which demands would you as a tourist like to please/think of when I mention Greece as a destination?**

Vacation for me means that I travel to a place that has something else to give me than my original country. I travel to that place in order to have a good time, to experience new things and to come home rested. When I think about Greece I think about the sea and how calm I would feel just lying at the beach and listening to the waves, the good food that Greece is known to have and all that there is to see in Greece.

**4. When did you visit Greece for the first time?**

The first time was when I was 10 years old, in 1970

**5. When did you visit Greece for the last time?**

My last time in Greece was summer 2011

**6. Is there anything preventing you from visiting Greece in the near future?**

I can say that I have been thinking a lot about visiting Greece but the situation down there have had its ups and downs. It's better now than it was during my summer of 2011. So you can say that the situation in Greece have preventing me from visiting the country after my last visit, yes. But I believe that things are better now so, no nothing is preventing me of visiting Greece in the near future.

**7. What are your opinions about the crisis in the country? What do you think lays behind this?**

There is not only one thing that has caused this crisis in the country, and there is not much that I could say or mention about it. The thing that I can say though is that this gives Greece the opportunity to further develop the country and listen to the travelers' demands even more.

**8. Is there something that has affected your previous opinions about Greece? (like word-of-mouth, bad experiences, bad publicity and so on)**

No I would not say that. I have heard a lot but that is often the case when a destination is traumatized with negative occasions. I still think good thoughts about Greece and I can say that I'm more curious to see what have been developed and reconstructed after this crisis in the country.

**9. Even though Greece is suffering from a crisis, how can Greece be considered as an attractive destination to travel to?**

By developing and adapting to new travel patterns. This crisis have given the country positive things as well. Now the country can develop and get even stronger, with new things to offer and to still be attractive on the market. I think that more tourists will visit Greece after this crisis. In order to still look attractive for their travelers Greece as a destination has to embark on a possible marketing restoration program.

**10. Do you consider Greece a safe destination to travel to?**

Yes I do. I think that the "fear" is over so to speak.

**11. What do you think Greece can do in order to re-attract tourists?**

As I mentioned earlier, to develop and adapt the new travel patterns. To listen even more to the travelers and their demands. To not let this crisis tear the country apart but to see it as something positive, which yes is hard but the country have been through worse conditions.

**12. Why do you think it is important to re-attract tourists?**

Because Greece is mostly a summer available destination and the country is in need of their tourists and the money that those spend in the country.

**13. Which are Greece's strengths?**

A country like Greece has a lot of strengths, firstly the country itself is a magical place to visit and I think that everyone that has visited Greece have great and beautiful memories from this

country. In my mind I have a few pictures of the beaches, the splendid food, the warmness that I got from the people and the different sights I visited. I remember sitting on a cliff near the sea for hours, I just watched the sea and felt the breeze on my neck. That is my most powerful memory from Greece, the calmness that one gets just by sitting on a cliff, the view and the harmony in ones body. Those for me are strengths that Greece provides, no matter which kind of crisis the country are going through because those moments are always there, for everyone to experience.

#### **14. Which are Greece's weaknesses?**

Every country's weaknesses is to be stack on the negative things that once affected these. Every country has weaknesses and that is a fact. However Greece's weaknesses these couple of years is the crisis. It is time for Greece to provide something new for its travelers in order to overcome the weaknesses now existing.

#### **15. Which destinations are Greece's competitors and threats?**

Spain, no question about it.

#### **16. What are your thoughts and opinion on Greece's future?**

We can only expect great things from Greece. Greece is a country that never lets its travelers down and that is something that everyone will realize soon. The future is bright, very bright!

### ***Interview 6***

*student at Södertörns University*

#### **1. Which pull factors would contribute your choice of travel?**

I'm interested in learning about one country's history and really in to the geographical aspects so for me visiting a country that provides me with this, is just a blessing. I also feel that a country that is available for me and other travelers such as me is an important factor that should be taken under consideration.

#### **2. Which push factors would prevent your choice of travel?**

If the country that I have been thinking to visit is in some political/economical or even social unstable situation than those factors would prevent me from travelling there.

#### **3. Which demands would you as a tourist like to please/think of when I mention Greece as a destination?**

As a person and also as a traveler I would like to please my demands of visiting another country. I would like to experience and seek something extraordinary, something that is there

and is available for me as a tourist.

When you mention Greece I think in those terms of course, but on the other hand, I have been visiting Greece for years now, and I can't in a way fulfill my knowledge or expectations because after every trip I found new and interesting places in Greece which I want to visit. In those terms for me Greece has still a lot to offer.

**4. When did you visit Greece for the first time?**

When I was 8, it was a family vacation.

**5. When did you visit Greece for the last time?**

Last year

**6. Is there anything preventing you from visiting Greece in the near future?**

I'm very informed about the situation in Greece, because I often travel to the country. As the situation was and looked earlier, that is something that would prevent me from traveling there yes, but not now. Things have been better in Greece the last two years I would say, and that is something that I could experience during my visit there last year.

**7. What are your opinions about the crisis in the country? What do you think lays behind this?**

It is not only one thing that lays behind this, and we as travelers may not know everything that lays behind it as well. I don't even think that the Greek citizens know everything about the situation in their country. There is a lot that has been hidden and that still is hidden. Media and other social factors can state and write what they want but still, the whole truth is not out yet, and that's why it is impossible for me to know.

My opinion though is that it was just a matter of TIME until Greece would be in a situation like this. A lot of people states that the euro would be Greece's fall and that Greece would collapse in one way or another.

**8. Is there something that has affected your previous opinions about Greece? (like word-of-mouth, bad experiences, bad publicity and so on).**

No not really, because I'm currently traveling to Greece, I have friends in Greece and I'm in constant contact with my friends. Media could have affected my opinions about the country and its citizens but I prefer to talk to people that knows and lives in those places, or at least visiting those places in order to get my own opinion about something.

**9. Even though Greece is suffering from a crisis, how can Greece be considered as an attractive destination to travel to?**

Even during the crisis Greece looked and was an attractive destination to travel to, but maybe Greece wasn't so available or accessible for the tourist. No one wants to travel to a destination where there is some ways of insecurity.

**10. Do you consider Greece a safe destination to travel to?**

Not during the actual crisis, but before the crisis it was safe, and now "after" the crisis I also consider it to be safe.

**11. What do you think Greece can do in order to re-attract tourists?**

To continue to market and promote Greece as a beautiful and accessible country for its travelers.

**12. Why do you think it is important to re-attract tourists?**

I think that it is important for every country that firstly is a summer destination to be attractive and to always attract and re-attract its travelers.

**13. Which are Greece's strengths?**

The beautiful location of the country, everything that Greece has to offer from good food to impressive and important knowledge to all the people. It is also super important I would say to know where all those important words and meanings come from, we use the Greek language daily, sometimes even by not knowing it.

**14. Which are Greece's weaknesses?**

The situation that had affected the country of course. The Greek citizens and the country is still "paying" for that situation (paying in such matter a decrease of travelers and tourism income).

**15. Which destinations are Greece's competitors and threats?**

Destinations that offers the same kind of traveling like Greece. Spain I would say.

*Interview 7*

*student at Södertörns University*

**1. Which pull factors would contribute your choice of travel?**

Most of all I want to be able to lay on the beach and hear the waves and know that I and my kids don't have a deadline, or a special time to leave the beach. I want to eat good food and experience new things. The country side have always made me calmer and when I travel I

want to blend in with the locals and live a quaint life.

**2. Which push factors would prevent your choice of travel?**

Problems in the country. I travel with my kids so I want both me and my kids to feel secure at the destination.

**3. Which demands would you as a tourist like to please/think of when I mention Greece as a destination?**

Greece for me stands for summer vacations, long walks on the beach and typical dinners at a tavern close to the beach. Demands that I would like to please are to see my children happy and to be quite honest they always are during our vacations to Greece. I also want to experience new places and that is why we never travel to the same place in Greece.

**4. When did you visit Greece for the first time?**

Very long time ago, I can't even remember, it is a beloved child memory.

**5. When did you visit Greece for the last time?**

2010 I think

**6. Is there anything preventing you from visiting Greece in the near future?**

Well during this couple of years Greece have been unstable if you ask me. It has not been the first place that I have been considering while booking our summer vacations. However, as I said earlier we visited Greece during the crisis in 2010 and I could not see so much changes. We were in Korfu and at the island one could not feel the crisis. Sure things were more expensive and we could see that people manage their economy to the limit but that has not affected us as travelers.

**7. What are your opinions about the crisis in the country? What do you think lays behind this?**

A lot lays behind this and I'm sure that no one knows exactly everything behind this situations. People and media of course make things worse and that is something that has affected traveler's choices.

**8. Is there something that has affected your previous opinions about Greece? (like word-of-mouth, bad experiences, bad publicity and so on).**

Not mine, but others I would say. I think that many people listen to others, and if one or two have had a negative experience in Greece during the crisis they tell it to others and that sure affect their choice. Why traveler to Greece and be worried about different things when you can travel to Spain or Croatia?

**9. Even though Greece is suffering from a crisis, how can Greece be considered as an attractive destination to travel to?**

According to me Greece never stopped to be an attractive destination to travel to. And the crisis could not affect its beauty.

**10. Do you consider Greece a safe destination to travel to?**

Yes I do, maybe not Athens during the crisis but overall yes.

**11. What do you think Greece can do in order to re-attract tourists?**

They have special target groups. Focus on them and try to develop new attractions and places to visit.

**12. Why do you think it is important to re-attract tourists?**

Greece is a summer destination, without their tourist they would not have so much income.

**13. Which are Greece's strengths?**

The country overall I would say. Greece is beautiful and has a lot to offer to us all. It is a country that gives you a smile on your face and a mind without times to fit or problems. That aspect just closes and you can focus on having a good time.

**14. Which are Greece's weaknesses?**

Word-of-mouth, this is affecting travelers especially during the crisis. The expensive prices.

**15. Which destinations are Greece's competitors and threats?**

Spain and Turkey I would say

*Interview 8*

*student at Södertörns University*

**1. Which pull factors would contribute your choice of travel?**

To take boats as transportation to different places in the country, instead of taxi or bus. I want to explore places and see things that not many have seen. By taking a boat to an island and also join tours around island I can see and photograph beautiful sights. I want to have a vacation and to create memories with places that I have visit. I also want to come away from my everyday life.

**2. Which push factors would prevent your choice of travel?**

The difficult situations in Greece, and all the bad publicity. How the media tend to show all the negative things, to be quite honest that affects a lot.

**3. Which demands would you as a tourist like to please/think of when I mention Greece as a destination?**

To fulfill my passion which is photography. To have seen the beauty and to catch it on picture which both will be a memory for a lifetime

**4. When did you visit Greece for the first time?**

I actually got married in Santorini and that was also the first time in Greece, in 2007.

**5. When did you visit Greece for the last time?**

I was there in 2010-2011

**6. Is there anything preventing you from visiting Greece in the near future?**

Since 2011 it has been the crisis that prevented me to visit Greece, but now we have actually booked a trip to Mykonos, and we are staying for 2 weeks. We leave in July.

**7. What are your opinions about the crisis in the country? What do you think lays behind this?**

There is no direct answer to that question and I think that no one can answer that. There a lot of different factors that together brought Greece to its current situation.

**8. Is there something that has affected your previous opinions about Greece? (like word-of-mouth, bad experiences, bad publicity and so on).**

Not much have affected my opinions but I would lie if I told you that I haven't been listening on what other people say about Greece. Mostly have been negative things but it never affected me in such way that I chose to not experience or visit the country.

**9. Even though Greece is suffering from a crisis, how can Greece be considered as an attractive destination to travel to?**

Greece never stopped being an attractive destination to travel to. Sure the situation there was terrible but the country's beauty is still the same.

**10. Do you consider Greece a safe destination to travel to?**

I consider it to be a safe destination now but not during 2008-2011 especially not Athens.

**11. What do you think Greece can do in order to re-attract tourists?**

To continue providing trips where travelers can see the true beauty of the country. To focus on expand their target groups and have cheap accommodations.

**12. Why do you think it is important to re-attract tourists?**

Because every tourism related country is in its need of its travelers, so are Greece.

**13. Which are Greece's strengths?**

The country overall, the beauty, the accessibility, the climate and the beautiful beaches. Greece stands for vacation and originality for me.

**14. Which are Greece's weaknesses?**

Of course the negative affections of the crisis, the poverty that now exists. The expensive accommodations and people's bad opinions.

**15. Which destinations are Greece's competitors and threats?**

Italy and Turkey

***Interview 9***

*student at Södertörns University*

**1. Which pull factors would contribute your choice of travel?**

If the destination is accessible, fits and answers to my demands. I want a destination to be available and to have attractions that I can discover.

**2. Which push factors would prevent your choice of travel?**

If things are not working in order to fit my demands. I don't want to have strict boundaries when I'm travelling, so in no such way I want to hear avoid that street or beach.

**3. Which demands would you as a tourist like to please/think of when I mention Greece as a destination?**

I'm a good researcher and before booking a trip I want to see what the destination has to offer such as; culture, countryside, beaches, food, hotels and so on.

**4. When did you visit Greece for the first time?**

During the summer of 2006, I spent 1 week in Greece and 1 week on Cyprus.

**5. When did you visit Greece for the last time?**

In 2010

**6. Is there anything preventing you from visiting Greece in the near future?**

No nothing in the near future

**7. What are your opinions about the crisis in the country? What do you think lays behind this?**

I don't have a lot to say honestly, I only have positive memories and experiences from Greece. And according to what lays behind I do not know, probably a lot.

**8. Is there something that has affected your previous opinions about Greece? (like word-of-mouth, bad experiences, bad publicity and so on).**

No, not really, of course people talk and I listen but I always have and make my own opinions.

**9. Even though Greece is suffering from a crisis, how can Greece be considered as an attractive destination to travel to?**

Did it stopped being attractive? The crisis that affected the country did not affect Greece's attractiveness. It affected the economy and the country's citizens.

**10. Do you consider Greece a safe destination to travel to?**

Now it is safe I would like to say

**11. What do you think Greece can do in order to re-attract tourists?**

To change the things that did not work in the earlier years. To focus on what the country has to offer and to offer flexible packages. To listen to their travelers.

**12. Why do you think it is important to re-attract tourists?**

I think that Greece's biggest income comes from their travelers

**13. Which are Greece's strengths?**

Everything that stands for Greece. The sea, the archipelago, the beaches, their hospitality and polite people, their kindness.

**14. Which are Greece's weaknesses?**

Greece's weaknesses are probably their bad publicity and that it is expensive.

**15. Which destinations are Greece's competitors and threats?**

Turkey because they offer similarities

*Interview 10*

*student at Södertörns University*

**1. Which pull factors would contribute your choice of travel?**

The service and the things that a destination has to offer.

**2. Which push factors would prevent your choice of travel?**

If the destination doesn't fit to my demands, which means if it is problematic situations.

**3. Which demands would you as a tourist like to please/think of when I mention Greece as a destination?**

I think of the archipelago, the blue sea, and the beautiful nights walking on the beach, the service if it would be good or bad, if the accommodations will work for my budget

**4. When did you visit Greece for the first time?**

Summer of 2003

**5. When did you visit Greece for the last time?**

Summer of 2013

**6. Is there anything preventing you from visiting Greece in the near future?**

No

**7. What are your opinions about the crisis in the country? What do you think lays behind this?**

A lot. There is not just one thing. This happened and the important thing is to overcome that situations.

**8. Is there something that has affected your previous opinions about Greece? (like word-of-mouth, bad experiences, bad publicity and so on).**

No, I have very strong opinions on my own for someone to affect or change them.

**9. Even though Greece is suffering from a crisis, how can Greece be considered as an attractive destination to travel to?**

Greece has always stand for something beautiful. I don't think that travelers ever stopped traveling to Greece, sure they decrease but they never lost their faith in Greece as a destination to spend their holidays in. As a frequent traveler you know more or less what you expect from a destination, and until now Greece always delivered.

**10. Do you consider Greece a safe destination to travel to?**

Now I consider it to be, but not during 2008-2011

**11. What do you think Greece can do in order to re-attract tourists?**

To lower their prices and spend more money and time marketing new places that have not been discovered by many tourist yet, also offer flexible packages that are well-suited to their target groups.

**12. Why do you think it is important to re-attract tourists?**

Greece is a country that is in need of its travelers overall. Greece works and sells more during the summer and during the winter not much happens yet. So by doing the things I mentioned

earlier I think that Greece will re-attract and attract travelers.

**13. Which are Greece's strengths?**

The weather, the architecture, the accessibility and that it is a well-known tourist destination.

**14. Which are Greece's weaknesses?**

Other countries that offers the similar packages and that has great beaches

**15. Which destinations are Greece's competitors and threats?**

Spain, it is close and the country is cheaper

*Observation at Panorama (1/10 interviews)*

**How are you promoting your destination? (Crete)**

Mainly by leaflets and newsletters, we have also has some advertising spots in the Apollo commercials, and also our own commercials in order to promote our destination.

**How are you promoting the Greek laws?**

This is something that also happen through our commercials but at the destination as well. At the local tavernas and in leaflets. In this kind of events as well, "on tour" so to speak. This kind of events are important for every way of promoting and marketing.

**Have you seen an increase or a decrease of travelers to your destination? (if you possible can answer this question)**

We have seen and felt a stagnation in such manner during 2008-2012 but after that we could see an increase of booked trips, hotels and so on. The economic situation in Greece has surely affected the amount of travelers, booked trips and rented hotel rooms, we can gladly say that such matters are starting to be fewer and fewer.

**Are you re-attracting your travelers on a different way than earlier? (I mean before the crisis and now after the crisis)**

Well yes, because now we have to prove that we are getting through this situations and we have to show that we still are an attractive destination to travel to, that we have a lot to offer despite the economic situation that affected our destination. Earlier we didn't work in those terms, in order to prove something, we only marked and promoted something that for us was simple and easy to handle. We have more "selling" titles and we focus more on the selling aspect than the pure market aspect I would say.

**What are your opinions on Greece's future?**

Greece's future is yet to come. We believe in our destination and we still have faith on it. We are aware of that we have a lot work to do but we are slowly getting there. Personally I think that this is Greece's year. We can already see some increase in the booking aspects even though it is a small part, but the important thing is that we can see that things are going better and up!

*Observation at Panorama (2/10 interviews)*

**How are you promoting your destination? (Rhodos)**

Mostly by television advertising but also through webpages and our official page-booking page

**How are you promoting the Greek raws?**

That is one thing that mostly happens while the travelers are at the destination. Here they can taste and smell everything, see how it gets cooked and so on. Today everyone can buy Greek raws at special stores in each and every country which makes Greek food and raws available for everyone.

**Have you seen an increase or a decrease of travelers to your destination? (if you possible can answer this question)**

Well as everyone knows, the economic situation in Greece affected traveler's choice of travel and in that way we all could see a decrease. However things are getting better now.

**Are you re-attracting your travelers on a different way than earlier? (I mean before the crisis and now after the crisis)**

I think every destination that in one way or another has been affected of a crisis, it could be a war, natural disaster or economic crisis, has changed their way of attracting their travelers. The marketing, the promotion, the prices and the places are being performed differently now than earlier.

**What are your opinions on Greece's future?**

Things are already getting better so hopefully Greece will soon recover and be available to its travelers again.

*Observation at Panorama (3/10 interviews)*

**How are you promoting your destination? (Corfu)**

Corfu is a summer related destination so we focus on promoting the positive sides that Corfu has to offer. There is good hotels to stay in, we have well-known beaches and the according on where on the Island you are the beaches differs. For instance, on the west coast you have beaches which are wide and sandy with crystal clear water, those beaches are Glyfada, AgiosGordis and Agios Georgios, You have the beaches which have caves and pebble beaches, and those are in Paleokastritsa, then on the north side of the Island you have sandstone cliffs and sandy beaches such as Sidari. Corfu is well known for being a green countryside surrounded by bays and trees.

We put all this strengths that Corfu has to offer on our leaflets and television commercials. Mostly done by Apollo, while promoting the whole country Greece as a destination.

**How are you promoting the Greek raws?**

Our travelers are already familiar with our raws. I will say that while visiting the Island one gets the opportunity to come closer to our raws and food culture. We produce something called kumuquat liqueur which is made of small oranges grown on the Island.

**Have you seen an increase or a decrease of travelers to your destination? (if you possible can answer this question)**

Corfu has always been one of the Island that have a huge amount of visitors every year. We could however see a decrease of travelers during the period of the crisis.

**Are you re-attracting your travelers on a different way than earlier? (I mean before the crisis and now after the crisis)**

Sure. The basic promotion is still there but in somehow we have to start promoting other aspects which we didn't promote earlier. We focus more on prices and availability of the Island to our travelers.

**What are your opinions on Greece's future?**

We can already see some changes, we are more than hopeful for the future to come. Corfu is a beautiful Island and I think that a visit here would give travelers a lot in form of beauty, sights, beaches and good food.

**Observation at Panorama (4/10 interviews)**

**How are you promoting your destination? (Santorini)**

Santorini is a beautiful Island that has a lot of Scandinavian visitors every year. In Santorini you can find a mix of pleasure and history. As known the Island was once a volcano. However not everyone or every traveler is interested in history or culture. Therefore we have been promoting Santorini and its gastronomy which is a mix between one places culture and food, so the focus is more about learning how to cook and how to use the right spices and ingredients. Those ingredients are representing Santorini and the way we on Santorini cook differs from example how people from Crete cook. By promoting and showing this side of Santorini as well we have expanded our promotion of Santorini.

**How are you promoting the Greek raws?**

As I mention earlier the way we cook differs from other Islands and also the herbs and raws differs. Because of the volcanic eruptions the earth on Santorini is very fertile. However the products that are manufactured at Santorini are not many in quantity however it is a very high quality on those. The wine from Santorini is famous throughout the world and it is known to have a strong and rich flavor. Typically specialties in Santorini is for instance; *fava* which is a vegetable that is smaller than a pea, and then we have *kapari* which is often used in Greek salads. Santorini is also known for their cherry tomato that only can be found on the Island. On the Island we also produce a special cheese which is made of goat milk, the cheese is called *chloro*.

**Have you seen an increase or a decrease of travelers to your destination? (if you possible can answer this question)**

I would rather say that we have had a type of stagnation for some years, but we could see changes started from last year. More booking in both hotels and travel tickets. Many tourists rented quad bikes and scooters and we were happily and finally seeing some changing patterns.

**Are you re-attracting your travelers on a different way than earlier? (I mean before the crisis and now after the crisis)**

As I mention earlier we are promoting our gastronomy better and more than earlier. We are promoting the Island and putting forward the cheaper stays and good qualitative restaurants more than earlier as well. We used to promote restaurants that had a view over the lagoon but

the better the view of the restaurant is the more expensive the food used to be, so now we are promoting other choices.

**What are your opinions on Greece's future?**

Things has already getting better with Greece as a destination. We can see more bookings and more trips to Greece, this increase is something that we could see during the summer of 2013 already. With this said my opinions on Greece's future is that things are getting even better and that this season is going to be golden. Both for the mainland and for the Islands.

**Observation at Panorama (5/10 interviews)**

**How are you promoting your destination? (Lefkas)**

We are promoting Lefkas by pictures and travelers experiences. At nearly every hotel here in Lefkas we have questionnaires where our travelers fill in after their staying here. Some of the questions asked is: What was the most beautiful place here in Lefkas? What can you recommend to other travelers? Name one place in Lefkas that travelers must not miss during their vacation here.

We use the Internet a lot, not only for promoting Lefkas but for promoting Greece in general.

**How are you promoting the Greek raws?**

We have a local wine at Lefkas called Vertzamo, our wine is pretty famous among travelers to not only Lefkas but to Greece in general. However, it is a local product that many travelers want to bring with them back home. As in whole Greece, even at lefkas we have the famous olive trees and we promote our own oil.

**Have you seen an increase or a decrease of travelers to your destination? (if you possible can answer this question)**

Well, more selling headlines I would say. And I think that everyone would agree with me on that. Lefkas old town is well worth town to visit and has charming squares, beautiful and white beaches and restaurants with splendid food. As a traveler you can take a break and sit in the shade of an olive tree with a glass of our local wine Vertzamo. On the west side of Lefkas the beaches are longer and are surrounded by cliffs which secures and protects the beaches.

Porto Kaziki and Kathisma are among the best listed beache's in Greece with crystal clear water in colors of turquoise blue. Lefkada means white in Greek and the cliffs that surrounds the island are indeed white, that is where the island got its name.

**Are you re-attracting your travelers on a different way than earlier? (I mean before the crisis and now after the crisis)**

We have used one slogan that is relatively new and that is: *Authentic atmosphere and hospitality with a mixture of Greece and Italy, in both architecture and in the food culture – Do we need to say more?* In this way we want to show to our travelers that we have a lot to offer and that it is not entirely focused on what's new, we have places that are inspired from the Roman Empire and that is still left in Lefkas.

Nowadays we have excursion boats that comes from Nidri and can take our travelers around the surroundings of the island, especially to one place that is very attracted: Onassis Island – Scorpis.

**What are your opinions on Greece's future?**

The future of Greece is bright I would say, and here I think people will agree with me once again. Things have got better in our country and our tourism on the Island have gained. I don't know how much but we can see changes from 2012 to 2013 and even from 2013 until now, even though the season haven't started yet.

***Observation at Panorama (6/10 interviews)*****How are you promoting your destination? (Zakynthos)**

Our promoting of Greece and especially of Zakynthos is mostly handled on and by the Internet. Apollo is one of the biggest promotion channels that Greece has today and through some clips on the Internet and on TV people gets more aware of what Greece has to offer. Zakynthos has very nice beaches and are also famous by the sea turtles "CarettaCaretta" which are large protozoa and can be up to one meter in diameter and weight up to 180 kilo. In recent years, authorities and people who subsist on tourism have discovered the value of the turtles and therefor made some rules and restrictions. Some beaches and areas have now been a national marine park.

**How are you promoting the Greek raws?**

Our local products are cheese and we have a wide range of different cheeses such as: Ladotiri which is an oily cheese. We have also good wine and olives which Zakynthos is known of. The best period to taste our variety of local wines are in the end of August and beginning of September.

We have different offers and catalogs at the restaurants which is an excellent way to promote and taste our local products.

**Have you seen an increase or a decrease of travelers to your destination? (if you possible can answer this question)**

I think that Greece in general can see an increase in its travelers. During this difficult time that the country have had things are indeed getting better. I don't know how much (in digits) that the increase is at but we have sure increased than the earlier years.

**Are you re-attracting your travelers on a different way than earlier? (I mean before the crisis and now after the crisis)**

Zakynthos has the famous CarettaCaretta as I mentioned earlier. And now that we have the restricted area for the turtles the interest have increased and we have received several tourists who wants to visit those areas. During recent years we have re-attracted travelers and their families to these places as something interesting to see and experience especially when you have small kids.

Something that you as a traveler should not miss when visiting Zakynthos is the old town which is a romantic square which you can see while on horse-drawn carriage. Those can be found near to Solomos town.

**What are your opinions on Greece's future?**

Greece's future is bright and we have not seen it all yet.

### *Observation at Panorama (7/10 interviews)*

#### **How are you promoting your destination? (Lesvos)**

The lush, green island of Lesvos, or Mytilini, is like no other Greek island. It is the third largest of the islands in Greece behind Crete and Evia. Virtually unaffected by the mass tourism that has turned other islands into amusement parks, Lesvos is the perfect place to visit for people who want to experience the real Greece. For the Greek Island traveler who is worried about not having enough to do, Lesvos is the perfect destination. We mostly promote Lesvos through this kind of events, our home page and all the travel agencies that sell trips to us.

#### **How are you promoting the Greek raws?**

We have typical “tavernas” on the island that makes Greek specialties such as: Sardeles from Kalloni which is a fish that catches right in front of you if you so want. We promote Greek food and the Greek cuisine is well-known all over the world.

#### **Have you seen an increase or a decrease of travelers to your destination? (if you possible can answer this question)**

Sure we have seen an increase but during the crisis we experienced a decrease, not a huge one but it was there.

#### **Are you re-attracting your travelers on a different way than earlier? (I mean before the crisis and now after the crisis)**

We still keep promoting our island as usual but Lesvos is an island that is not mass-tourished yet and that is one thing that keeps us on the market. However, soon this island as well as others will be mass tourished and then we have to come up to flexible solutions.

#### **What are your opinions on Greece’s future?**

Greece is now getting on its feet’s again and now we have possibilities to gain the loss we made during the crisis.

### *Observation at Panorama (8/10 interviews)*

#### **How are you promoting your destination? (Athens)**

Mostly by Television and marketing campaigns mostly done by Apollo and different tour agencies. We have different sites and thanks to the Internet information is always available for travelers or people that are interested in learning about Greece in general but of course information about Athens, Greece’s capital. Different occasions just like this on is happening worldwide during different periods and this is a way of promoting Greece and every part on Greece.

#### **How are you promoting the Greek raws?**

Every place of Greece have local raws that stands out from every other place. Greece is well known for its production of tasty and healthy products, as well as local souvenirs and handicrafts. Of course, like in every tourist country, the best places to by good quality products are the small villages and islands. Nevertheless, Athens also has some few places where you can find what you are looking for.

Food in Greece is a very important issue. It is well known for its high quality products and unique taste. The coffee lovers should definitely experience the Greek coffee in one of the

traditionalkafenion in the center of Athens. To buy good Greek coffee, try to find one of the coffee shops around Syntagma or near Athens Avenue. The Central Market in Athens will fill your senses with amazing colours and odours. Here you will find a delectable range of culinary delights such as sweets, plump olives, good quality cheese, nuts, colorful spices, herbs, amber honey and bottles of the famous pure Greek olive oil.

In which way we promote our raws differs depending on how one chooses to see things. Traveler's tastes traditional food at local Greek restaurants and they often asks how it is cooked or what oil the cooks have been using. Travelers often buy traditional raws back to their base. We mostly promote our raws by word of mouth, travelers own experience and so on...

**Have you seen an increase or a decrease of travelers to your destination? (if you possible can answer this question)**

We have seen both ups and downs, despite that I would say that we have seen an increase in travelers these last couple of years.

**Are you re-attracting your travelers on a different way than earlier? (I mean before the crisis and now after the crisis)**

That is a difficult question to answer. I'm sure that different aspects have been taken under consideration and that promoters thinks different in promoting Greece. However, Greece has always stand for something and will always stand for something. For some the situations in Greece have made them think twice in order to travel to Greece. Sure some have seen Greece and especially Athens as an unsafe destination to travel to – and that is quite logic. However, Greece never stopped selling the picture of what Greece actually stands for. And as any given situation, crisis occurs in countries and after a few years thing hopefully gets better. And this is the case with Greece as well.

**What are your opinions on Greece's future?**

Greece is still suffering from some issues, however those issues are not preventing Greece as a tourist destination to grow and develop, and that is why no one should not put their faith down on Greece. With other words Greece is the future developed and tourist destinatio

*The observation at Panorama (9/10 interviews)*

**How are you promoting your destination? (Thessaloniki)**

Through different channels such as; television, radio, tour agencies, brochures and so on. Thessaloniki is also known as the second capital of Greece so it is a place that is well known in traveler's heads. The city is beyond Greece's second industrial, commercial, financial and cultural center also Southeastern Europe's most important trade and transportations hub. What I mean by that is that Thessaloniki's port is seen as the majority of the Balkan countries' supplies transportations channels.

**How are you promoting the Greek raws?**

Through different cook books, occasions like this and also by the local restaurants at every destination.

**Have you seen an increase or a decrease of travelers to your destination? (if you possible can answer this question)**

An increase for sure. Hopefully it will stay like this for the seasons to come

**Are you re-attracting your travelers on a different way than earlier? (I mean before the crisis and now after the crisis)**

Sure we are. I would say that we put a lot of our focus on re-attracting travelers because they have already been in our country and we are sure that they had a pleasant stay. It is easier to re-attract old travelers than to attract new ones. Because have at least seen patterns on what travelers demands, and what they were positively surprised with. So by offering similar trips or experiences we at least have a special target group that is interesting. We surely are more carefully in what we are promoting and to what target groups. Those are just some things that have changed parallel with the crisis situation.

**What are your opinions on Greece's future?**

Greece's future is changing positively and we have not seen it all. Not only our travelers but we as well.

*Observation at Panorama (10/10 interviews)*

**How are you promoting your destination? (Samos)**

Through media such as television and tour operators. Samos is an island that has during a long period of time been receiving travelers. Despite that, Samos is an island that consist of peace that is hard to find on the more famous tourist islands of Greece. If you visit Samos, do not miss to experience Kokkari or one of the other mountain villages. Travelers say that the coziest mountain village is Manolates, because the way to reach this village is through the stunning nightingale valley.

**How are you promoting the Greek raws?**

Mostly by word of mouth and by travelers that have tasted our food and asks us for the recipes. Greek food is very well known and at every tourist dinner table you can at least see a traditional Greek salad and tzatziki.

**Have you seen an increase or a decrease of travelers to your destination? (if you possible can answer this question)**

I would say that we have had better years in the past however things have increased and gotten more stabilized I would say.

**Are you re-attracting your travelers on a different way than earlier? (I mean before the crisis and now after the crisis)**

Promoting all the positive and beautiful places in Samos, trying to attract other target groups and offering different packages.

**What are your opinions on Greece's future?**

The island did not have so much problems with their travelers during the crisis, however things have been better in the past. We are hopefully and excited about Greece's overall future.

## *Interview with Apollo travel agency*

### **1. How are you promoting Greece?**

Well let me start by telling you that Greece is very special to us here at Apollo. Everything begins in Greece. For more than 25 years ago our first plane took off to Athens, and over the years we have constantly expanded and improved our Greece-program. As a traveler you have a lot of choices, whether you prefer a modern tourist resort with partying around the clock and nice beaches or if you want to stay more inconspicuous closed to the sea and the beautiful nature, the choice is yours. The promoting is by catalogues, our homepage and the information that is there available, by word-of-mouth, advertising in newspapers and so on.

### **2. Has something changed in the way you promoted Greece before the crisis and now?**

In somehow we have. Sometimes the tourist towns feel a little well-developed for our travelers with all the range of scoters and all the souvenir shops. The last couple of years we promoted Greece in the way that one can pack his suitcase and instead join us to the islands such as Halki, Milos or Alonissos. Those are small islands where mass tourism never reached. Halki is so small that there is not even any hotels to stay overnight, instead you live in an apartment rented by the islanders. This is charming, genuine and high-classGreece-factor!

### **3. Have you seen any changes on the traveler's demands?**

The travelers want to travel to a secure place, they do not want to spend their money on expensive tickets and then be thinking of which street they should avoid or which hours they should be at their hotel. The travelers demand more secure destinations and most of them want to plan the activities in advance so they have a schedule to follow.

### **4. Have travelers shared some of their concerns or thoughts about their choice of traveling to Greece? And can you mention some?**

Well most of their concerns is about the security, how secure the capital – Athens is, is the unsecure situations occur at the islands as well. What time it is best to get home, if there is pickpockets on the roads, and to get scammed by the locals.

### **5. What more can you do in order to re-attract travelers?**

We have to keep promoting Greece as a beautiful and accessible destination to travel to because that is what Greece is. We have to keep improving our trips and adjust the destination according to traveler's needs and demands. We have to keep promoting Greece as a beautiful and accessible destination to travel to because that is what Greece is. We have to keep improving our trips and adjust the destination according to traveler's needs and demands. We also helped to promote Greece by opening new markets available, and to show that Greece is a potential holiday destination for its travelers. Our common goals was to be a chosen and visited destination in the future. The ways of promotion Greece started in forms of advertising trailers around 2010. We promoted Greece's strengths and once again showed the world that Greece never stopped being attractive and appealing. Some of the strengths that were on those advertising trailers was for instance: the beach and the romantic aspects (like cuddling with your loved one), the weather, the nice people and the good services, good food

and the cultural background of Greece with all the monuments and the archeological sights. Those trailers got a lot of positive critique and much publicity, and the number of booked tickets and hotel reservations gained a procentage increase.

**6. How do you look on Greece's future as a destination?**

Greece's future is bright, the country will still attract travelers because of its history, culture, food, services and beautiful islands. We as a travel agency has to show travelers what there is still to discover because there is a lot. We have to organize trips to new island where mass-tourism don't exist. We have to adjust to travelers needs and never stop growing as a destination. We have started to promote Greece as a winter destination as well, which many of our travelers never thought was possible. Visit Greece during the winter? They get chocked. As I said, there is a lot that travelers are not aware of and now is the time to make them discover whole of Greece.

***Interview with Greek National Tourism Organisation***

***How are you working towards re-attracting travelers to Greece?***

Tourists from Scandinavia have been going to Greece from the late 50's/early 60's. Over the years, the number was held at about 1.5million Scandinavians annually. The crisis did affect the flow but not to the extent as one would imagine, considering the negative publicity from Scandinavian media. Just to give you an idea, tourism flow from Sweden to Greece increased in 2013 by about 8% in one year! From Denmark it went up from 250.000 to 330.000 in a year. The pattern is similar in all Nordic regions. The basic difficulty was faced with Athens a few years ago, but things are now even better than before regarding Athens as a City Break destination.

***How are you promoting Greece? And are you promoting Greece differently that earlier?***

Greece is being promoted through participations in International Travel Fairs which are directed to both TRADE and PUBLIC. Also cooperation's with Tour Operators that sell Greece as a destination. Importance is also based on good relations with the media, arranging press trips to various destinations. Organizing events that will promote the multi-dimensional character of our country so people can understand that there is much more to this country than Sun and Sea.

***Have you changed any strategies in the way you promoted and re-attracted travelers?***

I don't believe People have lost their "trust" in Greece as a destination. It is possible that for a certain period of time, when a country is undergoing a given situation politically/economically the travelers opt for what THEY believe to be more "secure" and people's opinions are inevitably swayed by the media. There is plenty of competition in the tourism industry. We all focus on selling what is BEAUTIFUL and APPEALING from our country. Examine the political/social/economic situation of other countries and see the inflow of tourism. Check out the popularity of certain countries Scandinavians travel to. Is the situation "perfect"? I believe WORD OF MOUTH is also incredibly powerful.

Think of how influential our photos on all social media can be. Also when you go for coffee with your friends to tell them about your holidays...

***What are you publishing? (Destinations that not many knows of, or the same as before? Has anything changed in the way you used to publish before?)***

With widespread social media coverage, we use them all as much as possible and I could personally say... there ARE results. People using social media DO get positively influenced by images uploaded by others. We don't print brochures as much since people use the internet much more (about 80% Swedes book online!) Publishing is very costly too. When it comes to advertising we work with Tour Operators and Agencies.

***Have you seen any changes in the traveler's demands while choosing Greece as one of the possible destinations to travel to?***

During the last years, travelers are seeking for new destinations in Greece, apart from the well-known ones. So they are looking for alternative activities and sometimes they want to combine it with the typical "sun and beach" holidays. They are definitely more demanding regarding accommodation and food quality. This is related to the rise of many attractive destinations with very nice hotels. Moreover they are always looking for direct flights (scheduled or charter) to the destination they have chosen.

***Have travelers shared some of their concerns or thoughts about their choice of traveling to Greece? (I'm referring to the situation in Greece the last couple of years)***

A few years ago, some travelers' concerns (who had never been to Greece) were safety (if they would go to Athens). They were not aware of how Athens was laid out and WHERE the demonstrations were. They seemed much less hesitant to go to Athens when we explained that the demonstrations at that time took place at a particular Square and there was no need to worry if you stayed a few kilometers away. Last couple of years Athens has regained its visiting power.

***Can you mention some of the travelers concerns about visiting Greece?***

There has been some concerns about the security in Greece, due to an unpleasant image, mostly shown in the media during the last few years. We have assured the travelers that they would not face any problem, if they want to visit Greece.

Some of them are also asking if they can use means of transport in late hours, how they can move from one place to another etc.

***Can you mention some typical questions that you received from potential travelers about this topic?***

→ Is it safe to visit Greece / Athens?

→ Is there any danger being outside during night hours?

***What difficulties have you encountered along the way? (I mean from the beginning of the crisis situation in Greece until now, when you still promote and market Greece)***

After the beginning of the crisis a misconception about safety in Greece has been noticed. Because of some advertisements, some people were worried if they could find money in ATMs, which was absolutely unreal. Another problem was the strikes that took place during summer months. The difficulty was to make people realize that Greece has always been an absolutely secure and safe country and that a tourist, visiting Greece, was not affected from a possible economic crisis

***What more can you do in order to re-attract travelers to an affected destination?***

Fortunately there was no hard affected destination in Greece. People continued visiting the country and there was hardly any problem noticed regarding hotel accommodation, restaurants, local shops etc.

***Do you have any concerns about the situation in Greece right now? (That maybe have/or could have affected your work a bit)***

Right now everything is absolutely normal in Greece. Greece was the big winner in Scandinavia last year (2013) and it is said that it will be the destination of the year in 2014.

***Do you think Greece is an accessible, available and secure destination to travel to right now?***

Greece is an absolutely accessible, available and secure destination to travel.

***Things are changing right now and we can see a turning point, potential travelers are once again choosing to travel to Greece, why is that do you think?***

Greece is a country that offers visitors thousands of experiences. Each place offers something unique, so people keep coming over and over again in order to discover cultural wealth, gastronomy, exciting cities and beautiful summer destinations. Moreover the tourism product has been improved during the years and there is always good value for money.

***How do you look on Greece's future as a destination?***

Greece will continue attracting thousands of visitors from all over the world. What we are trying to do is to help potential tourists discover the endless alternatives that Greece offers. We are also trying to keep the numbers of visitors high during the winter by promoting city breaks, culinary trips, walking tours, religious tourism, eco-tourism etc.