

Cooperative initiatives in the field of Tourism: the Greek stakes

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Tourism is a constantly evolving socio-economic phenomenon, closely interwoven with Greece, which is expressed in various forms in response to the different and increasingly complex demands of society.

Particularly in recent decades, Social Entrepreneurship, linked to the fight against unemployment and social exclusion, is beginning to integrate, also in our country, tourism into its plans.

While, therefore, the interconnection of social enterprises with tourism is known and established practice in countries such as Spain, Italy, France, Austria and England, in Greece, it is a hybrid phenomenon with visible dynamics.

Thus, while some worthwhile initiatives are recorded with the cooperation of some Local Authorities (LAs), with a positive social impact, and contribute to local development and the integration of vulnerable social groups into the labour market, they are limited in scale and do not follow the dynamics of tourism development.

This paper examines the degree of development of a culture of cooperation between SSE and LA entities and investigates the problems identified as well as the problematic elements that arise and result in the lagging of Greece in the effectiveness of cooperative ventures in the field of Tourism.

In order to investigate the research questions, a comparative study was carried out between Greek projects and similar initiatives in other European countries. The literature review was accompanied by empirical research with the formulation and use of an appropriate questionnaire in order to detect the specific characteristics of SSE entities in the field of Tourism in Greece and to identify and interpret those factors that limit or make less effective or even barren many such initiatives.

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