

# Comparison of Tourism Education Programs in Turkey and Greece and Future Challenges

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## **Abstract**

*The power of an educated human being is getting a meaningful aspect and provides activities for the physically employed staff in the tourism sector. The qualification of the educated human being provides the fulfillment of the expectations of the tourist. The comprehension of the importance of tourism by the society and sector being provided with enough qualified staff are both necessary to enable it to enter the World Tourism Market where a harsh concurrence is being encountered. The education of the qualified staff is only possible with an education of tourism of high quality.*

*It is only possible to succeed with a well educated staff in order to obtain more from the piece of tourism market both for Greece and Turkey who have the similar products in the Mediterranean area. The activities of education of tourism are held by 2 types of educations in Turkey: organized education and diffused education. The education of tourism which is part of organized education consists of 3 dimensions, 20 postgraduate education programs, 34 graduate programs and 121 associate level programs the whole totally making up 172 programs. In Greece, on the other hand, the education of tourism is carried out by 6 universities through their institutes bound to them. This study will give proposals for the future in comparing the education of tourism at the university level both in Turkey and Greece.*

**Key Words:** Turkey, Greece, tourism, education.

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## Introduction

Tourism sector has a different structure from the other sectors. Because, it associates labor at its every level with the consumer continuously. That's why it is a must for students of every level who get tourism education to understand the international nature of tourism products and markets (Baum, 2005).

Tourism is one of the most labor intensive industries in the world. The quality of tourism product is not only related to the countries' natural resources. On the other hand, it depends on the characteristics of the workers. Today education is playing an important role for the successful development of good quality tourism. According to the strategical success factors of touristic destinations and regions, better management of service organisations, the preference behaviors of customers in market dynamics; the human resources team should be managed and improved efficiently (Heskett, 1988).

The qualified workforce offered to service sector depends on the shaping of the human resource. At sectors dominated by small and medium sized enterprises, this kind of labor and individual education systems can be accepted as a general development type (Weiermair and Bieger, 2005).

## Development of Tourism in Turkey

The first statistical data for tourism in Turkey gathered shows tourism began in 1963. As seen in Table 1, tourism income is following an ever-increasing trend. Even in years 1966, 1976, 1982, 1986 and 1991 some downtrends are seen, the increase in general does not change. The reason of decline of 1986 compared with the previous year is Chernobyl nuclear accident and the double reservation problem faced at the south bays. In the year 1991, because of Gulf War, important decline was seen in tourism income. The decline in other years was getting its roots from the instable politic environment in the country. As the decline during the years told above does not destroy the general increasing trend, the dummy variables relating to these years were not taken into consideration for the model.

**Table 1: Number of Tourists and Tourism Revenue According to Years**

Years	Number of Foreign Visitors (thousand person)	Change%	Foreign Visitor Expenditure (Million US\$)	Change %
1963	198	*	7	*
1973	1 341	29,7	171	66
1983	1625	16,8	411	11,1
1993	6 500	-8,1	3 959	8,8
2003	14 030	5,3	9 677	14,1
2004	17 517	24,86	12 125	25,3
2005	21 122	20,59	13 929	14,8
2006	19 819	-6,2	12 553	-9,8
2007	23 341	17,77	13 990	11,4

Resource: <http://www.tursab.org.tr>: 18.05.2009.

**Table 2: The Developments of Our Tourism Market Shares at Regional Level**

	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
EU (new members in 2007excluded)	49,1	53,2	57,2	58,2	55,1	54,7	54,3	52,11	50,25
Central/South America	0,60	0,90	0,81	0,3	0,3	0,2	0,3	0,3	0,4
Total Africa	1,8	1,6	1,5	1,4	1,3	1,1	1,1	1,18	1,11
North America	4	5,5	4,2	2,2	1,9	1,9	2,4	4,1	3,32
Asia/Pacific	4,3	2,7	2,5	2,3	2,1	1,91	2,3	2,2	3,01
Middle East (Israel excluded)*	7,6	5,6	4,6	5,2	5,7	6,07	7,1	7,2	7,5
Middle East (Israel included)*	11,5	8,6	7,3	7,2	8	7,9	8,9	9,0	9,7
Commonwealth of Independent States	17,6	13,3	12,3	12,5	14,8	15,9	16,2	18,9	20,6
Eastern Europe	8	11,4	11,2	12,9	13,4	13,1	12,5	11,8	11,7
Neighbour and near countries**		31	28,2	30,3	34,8	33,9	36,2	35,4	34,9

\* Iran included

\*\*Russian Fed., Bulg., Iran, Greece, Isr., Ukraine., Azerb., Serbia/Kara., Gürc., Syria., Mac., Ürd., Leb., Albania, Irak, Armenia.

Resource: T.C. Ministry of Culture and Tourism statistics, <http://www.tursab.org.tr>: 18.05.2009

In order to obtain the yearly trend of tourism income, four different functions were used. Among these functions, the most suitable one statistically was chosen by using the five of the econometric model choosing criteria. First functional relationship is determined linearly (<http://www.ekitapyayin.com/id/025/04.htm>, 03.04.2007).

**Table 3: Yearly Facilities, Bed and Room Capacities**

Years	Tourism Investment Licenced			Tourism Operation Licenced		
	Nº of Establishments	Nº of Rooms	Nº of Beds	Nº of Establishments	Nº of Rooms	Nº of Beds
1970	301	13 372	25 872	292	15 243	28 354
1980	267	13 019	26 288	511	28 992	56 044
1990	1 921	156 702	325 515	1 260	83 953	173 227
1991	1 987	158 379	331 711	1 404	97 260	200 678
2000	1 300	113 452	243 794	1 824	156 367	325 168
2001	1 237	106 683	229 047	1 998	177 371	368 819
2002	1 138	102 972	222 876	2 124	190 327	396 148
2003	1 130	111 894	242 603	2 240	202 339	420 697
2004	1 151	118 883	259 424	2 357	217 664	454 290
2005	1 039	128 005	278 255	2 412	231 123	483 330
2006	869	123 326	274 687	2 475	241 702	508 632
2007	776	112 541	254 191	2 514	251 987	532 262

Resource: [www.kultur.gov.tr](http://www.kultur.gov.tr): 18.05.2009.

## Tourism Education in Turkey

First serious studies on tourism education in Turkey began in 1940s. Until the years 1960s diverse courses were organised and cook and waiters were educated. Later the first Hotel School was opened (Ağaoğlu, 1991).

Nowadays tourism education is handled under two titles: Non-formal and formal education. Formal education is the regular education for the same level of individuals at certain age group and with programs prepared according to an objective under the umbrella of school. Formal education includes pre-school education, primary school, elementary and higher education institutions.

Non-formal education gives services such as;

- To teach how to read and write, to prepare continuous education possibility for the students to complete their missing parts of education,
- To provide the educational possibility for the students facilitating their adaptation to technological, economic, social and cultural developments,
- To make education having a protective, developer, promoter and adopting own national culture values characteristic,
- To gain the familiarity with the common living, solidarity, cooperation, organisation abilities,
- With the economic development direction, and according to the employment policy, create possibilities for having a job,
- To make adopt healthy nutrition and lifestyle,
- To gain the different job owners necessary information and abilities to develop,
- To gain accustomedness of benefiting from free time.

Both public and private sector operate in the formal and non-formal education field.

**Table 4: Turkey Tourism Education System**

DIFFUSED EDUCATION	ORGANIZED EDUCATION
MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND TOURISM Professional Tourist Guide Courses  TUREM (Tourism Education Center) Open Education Faculty, Tourism Education with TV  MEB (Ministry of Education) Food and Beverage Services Apprenticeship Courses	MEB (Ministry of Education) Anatolian Hotel and Tourism Vocational School  YÖK (Council of Higher Education) 2 Years associate degree programs giving tourism education at Vocational Schools 4 Years bachelor's degree programs giving Tourism and Hotel Administration Graduate programs 2 years master and at least 3 years of postgraduate education.

The objective of these programs is to make individuals taking practical tourism education find easily work in the sector.

## Organized Tourism Education

The programs included in organized education takes place within the body of elementary education connected to Ministry of Education(MEB) and at universities connected to Council of Higher Education(YÖK). The programs realised at universities are composed of pre-graduate, graduate, master and postgraduate programs.

### *Organized Tourism Education Made at Schools Connected to Ministry of Education*

Turkey has been trying to develop its vocational education increase the quality of workforce and rise the employment possibilities in every sector for a long time. This effort becomes more meaningful in Turkey's attempts for entering into European Union and its competitiveness versus the important economies of the world.

In order to support these attempts of Turkey at this field, a decision was taken at EU Helsinki Summit in 1999 to make Turkey benefit from MEDA funds. As a result of this, Turkey developed some projects in order to fill the emptiness between the labor needs and the output of the technical and vocational schools. As the first step of this direction, between the Government of Republic of Turkey and European Union, on July 4, 2000, Powering the Vocational Educational System in Turkey Project (MEGEP) agreement (DG1A-D/MEDTQ/04-98) was signed.

The technical Aid Team of the Project began its studies on September 30, 2002. The period of MEGEP is five years, the first 6 months is beginning period, the rest 4,5 year period is application period. Total budget of projects is € 58,2 milion; the € 51 million part of this is donation of the EU, the rest € 7,2 milion part is the local contribution of Government of Turkish Republic ([www.megep.meb.gov.tr](http://www.megep.meb.gov.tr), 18.04.2007).

There are 88 schools giving tourism education connected to MEB. 10,3 million students are educated at primary schools and each year 600 of them takes an exam to enter into elementary school. Among the students taking exam, 119,093 of them are placed to tourism education institutions. ([www.meb.gov.tr](http://www.meb.gov.tr), 18.03.2007).

### *Anatolian Hotel and Tourism Vocational School*

Over the primary school education, giving 4 years of education, these schools grow qualified workers or operators knowing foreign language in the Food and Beverage Services, Accommodation and Travelling Services, Entertainment Services, Food Technology, Beauty and Hair Treatment Services, Sick and Old People Care Services and Navigation fields of the tourism sector having the biggest share of foreign currency that will contribute to national economy. At the first year of education, the students get a common education and in the following classes, they are distributed to seven different fields as mentioned above.

At Anatolian Hotel and Tourism Vocational Schools, accordingly with the Turkish National Educational general aims and principles, programs are applied to gain the students a general knowledge, to make them know the common social and individual problems and to try to find the solutions for them, to gain them consciousness and power to contribute economic, social, cultural development of the country, to gain vocational formation in professional and technical fields, and to prepare them accordingly with their abilities and interests to the work life and higher education.

With the applied programs, the students are not only taught the basic knowledge and abilities about his job, but also it's aimed to grow individuals easily adapting to change and communicating very well with the people around them, attempting to realize their aims that they

set themselves, creative, open to criticism and having vocational competence. (www.meb.gov.tr, 19.03.2007).

#### *Anatolian Chefs and Hotel and Tourism Vocational Schools*

The Anatolian Chefs and Hotel and Tourism Vocational Schools are four year vocational schools preparing students both for the job and the higher education, growing qualified, foreign language knowing chefs who will be employed in Turkish and World cuisines. (www.meb.gov.tr , 19.03.2007).

### **Organized Vocational Tourism Education at Universities connected to Council of Higher Education**

Each year in Turkey, approximately 2 million students take university entrance exam. 344,984 of these are placed to 2 years associate degree programs and 823,740 of them are placed to universities giving 4 years of education. The students completing the associate degree programs can make vertical transfer to 4 years universities if they are successful at the DGS(The Exam for Vertical Transfer). 6,653 students were successful at DGS and they were subscribed to 4 years departments. (www.osym.gov.tr). While the number of students subscribed to associate degree programs of Open Education Universities is 204,997, the number of students subscribed to graduate programs are 447,273 (www.tubitak.gov.tr).

#### *Tourism Education at Associate Degree Level*

According to YÖK laws, the associate degree education includes a program of at least 4 semesters based on elementary education. In addition, at some programs, 2 semesters of obligatory foreign language education is added. The aim of associate degree education is to grow intermediate staff for certain jobs. At YÖK, tourism at associate degree level began in the mid 1970s. This education was realized with the name “Tourism Administration” (Ünlüönen, Boylu, 2005). These programs include “Tourism and Hotel Management”, “Tourism and Travel Management” and “Tourist Guidance” departments. In fact, the aim of the associate degree level tourism education is to give the knowledge and ability to students and to gain them the characteristics that the intermediate staff working in tourism sector have (Rutter, 1991).

**Table 5: Number of Vocational Training School Students According to Field of Study**

	New Admissions	Total Number of Students	2006-2007 Academic Year Graduate
Tourism & Hotel Management	10111	28187	7051
TOTAL	10111	28187	7051

Resource: www.osym.gov.tr : 18.05.2009.

#### *Tourism Education at Graduate Level*

Graduate education includes at least 8 semesters of program which is based on elementary education. Additionally, at some programs, 2 semesters of foreign language education is given. The graduate education at YÖK began at 1965-66 academic year. The aim of this school is to raise teacher for the elementary level commerce and tourism vocational schools. Being 3 years at the beginning, the education period became 4 years dating from 1967-68 academic

year onwards. The aim of this type of education is to raise beginner level managers at tourism sector (Pauze, 1993). Besides, to raise scientists.

Elementary education, associate degree and graduate level education programs include short period of practical education besides theoretical education (Çetin, 1995).

**Table 6: Number Of Undergraduate Students According To Field Of Study**

	New Admissions	Total Number of Students	2006-2007 Academic Year Graduate
Tourism & Hotel Management	825	3666	364
Tourism & Tour Guidance	136	532	56
Tourism & Travel Management	552	2696	316
Catering Management	93	171	-
Ticketing Management	685	2983	354
Tourism Management	372	2061	233
Tourism & Hotel	42	274	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2705</b>	<b>12383</b>	<b>1338</b>

Resource: [www.osym.gov.tr](http://www.osym.gov.tr) : 18.05.2009.

#### ***Tourism Education at Master Level***

The aim of the program is to raise and gain the working life the tourism experts who can work at leading tourism enterprises of Turkey and World. Master education includes at least 3 semesters period. .

#### ***Tourism Education at Post-Graduate Level***

Tourism education given in order to make research and solve problem for the academic success at tourism discipline, develop teaching and communication abilities and being equipped with the highest standards of information and by this means contribute the development of the sector scientifically.

The period of education at post-graduate level being 4 years, the person having the phd degree becomes manager at high level or works as titled instructor at universities giving tourism education. (Demirkol and Pelit, 2002).

**Table 7: Number Of Graduate Students According To Field Of Study**

	New Admissions			Total Number of Students			2004-2005 Akademik Year Graduate		
	Total	Master	Doctorate	Total	Master	Doctorate	Total	Master	Doctorate
Tourism & Hotel Management	99	84	15	335	283	52	43	42	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>1</b>

Resource: [www.osym.gov.tr](http://www.osym.gov.tr) : 18.05.2009.

## Diffused Tourism Education

The general characteristics of educational programs giving diffused education are;

- Gain basic tourism abilities at high school level,
- Give certificate to those finishing successfully the educational programs of 6 months to 3 years,
- The educators on duty at the programs are the people who worked or working at the sector (Demirkol ve Pelit, 2002).

### *Ministry of Culture and Tourism - Professional Tourist Guidance Courses*

Candidates being the Republic of Turkey citizens fulfilled 18 years, and graduated from at least 2 years of vocational school can apply for the exam at the City Cultural Tourism Directorate with the necessary documents declared by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

The candidates are first taken to general culture- written and oral and foreign language written and oral exams. The successful candidates attend a course for 7 months. At the end of the course, after completing 36 days of application tour all around the country, another exam of general culture and foreign language is taken. If successful, a Professional Tour Guide ID Card is collocated for the person.

The graduates from the universities' Tourism Guidance departments also should finish the Turkey tour of 36 days and they have to succeed at KPDS(language exam) at least C degree or be successful at exams opened by Ministry of culture and Tourism, in order to apply for taking this card mentioned above. ([www.kultur.gov.tr](http://www.kultur.gov.tr), 18.04.2007).

According to the Professional Tourist Guide Profile research done in 2005, English, French and German are the first rank preference of foreign language for tourist guides. At 2. and 3. rank even if there are not so many varieties, there are differences of ranging. The reason for this difference is the change at nationality of the tourist arrivals to Turkey by years. For example in the year 2001, according to Aktaş and others, 56,3% of the tourists coming to Antalya were German. As 4. and 5. Bulgarian, Armenian, French, Hebrew, English, Japan, Portuguese, Serbian and Bosnian languages were found out to be written. The guides answering the questionnaire tell that their Professional Tourist ID Cards include 1 foreign language for 81.2% (n=1843), 2 foreign languages for 16.2% (n=368), three languages for 2.1% (n=49), four for 0.3% (n=9) and five languages for 0.08%(n=2)(Yıldız, 2006) (Aktaş,A. and others 2003).

### *TUREM (Tourism Education Center)*

Tourism Education Centers founded by the Ministry of Tourism in order to raise qualified intermediate staff for the tourism sector. At TUREMs, the

1. "Job guaranteed" and "costless"
2. "Basic Education Courses for raising Personnel for Tourism Establishments" named vocational tourism education programs are organized for the young people who want to work at tourism establishments ([www.turizm.gov.tr](http://www.turizm.gov.tr),18.04.2007).

### *Faculty of Open Education University*

Distance education is a contemporary education which "students learn by profiting from the communication technologies". Distance education is a system applied in many developing and developed countries by means of which, every age, wealth or job group person can continue their education without losing their productivity, by arranging their learning according to their own speed and capacity. It's an educational philosophy letting benefit the people from the



era's technology; including educational models which bring the students, instructors, and educational tools at different places together with communication technologies.

Anatolian University Distance Education System is the first institution in Turkey using this model in higher education.

This program aims to raise intermediate staff who will work for hotel and food and beverage industry. At the program, there are lessons about general tourism, tourism agencies, hotel management, accommodation and food and beverage services. The lessons at this department are yearly and the educational period of department is 2 years. According to the Open Education System, the students join three sessions of exams per year. Students take these "Middle, final and make-up examinations" at the city that their dependent office is situated. The students graduating from the department have the possibility to transit vertically to organized or Open Education system programs according to "Regulation about the Graduates of Vocational Schools and Open Education at Associate Degree Level". ([www.aof.anadolu.edu.tr](http://www.aof.anadolu.edu.tr), 18.04.2007).

## Development of Tourism in Greece

According to statistics, tourism began in Greece in 1961. According to National Tourism Organization, in 1961, 30,884 rooms and 57,022 beds were available. The same year, foreign tourist arrivals were approximately 494,191 and the tourism income was \$ 62,5 million. Today, with 28,966 room capacity, 1584 hotels are available. According to NTO, 51,9% of tourists coming to Greece are European (40,7% English, 40,2% German, 30,2% French and 26,3 % Yugoslavian).

10 years later in 1971 the yearly tourism revenue became \$ 300 million and foreign tourist arrival number increased to 2,257,994. 16% of increase can be realized between years 1961-71. In 1981, foreign tourist arrival is more than double of 1971: 5,577,109. Revenue is \$ 1700 million. Number of rooms in these 10 years showed an increase of 111%. Between the period of 1971-81, Greece was chosen as main destination by North European countries. Number of tourists in 1991 was 8,036,127, the increase in number of rooms was 50,6 % and total revenue became \$ 2,560,1 million. In 1997 number of tourists was 10,558,489 and the revenue was \$ 3,770,6 million (Christou, 1999).

According to 2006 data, the tourist arrival in 2006 was 11,649,631 and bed capacity was 484,226 ([www.statistics.gr](http://www.statistics.gr)).

## Tourism Education in Greece

The educational system in Greece is carried out depending on the Ministry of National Education. Decision system is central for both primary and secondary education. Very little part is carried out by educational institutes.

Ministry of National Education is responsible for higher education especially concerning the subjects such as general arrangements and financial aid needs. At primary and secondary educational levels, both public and private institutes exist while at higher education only public institutes are available. All higher education institutes are financed directly by government. Different from the international application, the books and education are without payment. The higher education at institutes are made at 2 ways:

**Table 8: International Tourism Revenues and Arrivals Revenues (2004) (WTO)**

Country	Revenues (\$US Billions)	Ranking Revenues	Arrivals (millions)	Ranking Arrivals	Average Spending Revenues/Arrivals (\$US)
United States	74.5	1	10.0	10	1,616
Spain	45.2	2	49.2	2	844
France	40.8	3	67.7	1	544
Italy	35.7	4	32.5	3	962
Germany	27.7	5	14.9	8	1,373
United Kingdom	27.3	6	19.5	5	984
China	25.7	7	4.09	21	616
Turkey	15.9	8	14.9	7	944
Austria	15.4	9	17.4	6	792
Australia	13.0	10	1.26	39	-
Greece	12.9	11	12.7	9	-
Canada	12.8	12	2.2	31	671

\*2003 statistics

Source: World Tourism Organisation

- 4-6 years departments at universities,
- 3-4 years of courses given by Technological Educational Institutions (T.E.I.).

TEIs resemble structurally to British Polytechnics. They mainly provide studies in applied professional disciplines and not in theoretical or philosophical ones.

6 T.E.I.s giving tourism education are available:

**Table 9: T.E.I.s in Greece**

T.E.I.
Athens
Thessaloniki in Northern Greece
Patras in the Pelloponese
Epirus
Heraklio in Crete
Larissa in Central Greece

Apart from TEIs, there are School of Tourist Professions (S.T.P) which depend on Ministry of Tourism and two Training Centres of Advanced Studies (A.S.T.P) at degree of Hospitality and Tourism Management level being one at Rhodos and other at Chios Islands.

According to unwritten resources each year approximately 900-1100 students graduate from T.E.I. and A.S.T.P.

Even if the higher education is organized by the Greek Government and its without payment for all the citizens, there is a demand for private universities. Private institutes are not acknowledged by the Greek Government. These institutes give service under Laboratory of Liberal Studie (L.L.S.).

The courses organized by L.L.S. are made according to the needs of the Greek students and establishments. The students pay between fees of \$ 3500 and \$ 6000 for each academic

year. The educationa period is 2-4 years and after finishing the course, the students continue their education at universities that L.L.S. have a contract with. Many courses given by L.L.S is acknowledged and authorized by foreign universities. Some of these universities are in Great Britain and America (Christou, 1999).

In addition, there is a tourist Guidance School performing under the control of National Tourism Organisation. This school is at vocational school level and there are 2 educational center one at Rhodos, other at Macedonia (Theopistou, 1992).

## Conclusion

As a result of the comparison of the tourism education systems of two neighbour countries and rival destinations of Mediterranean Region, it is realised that a standardisation for tourism education is needed. Also the education systems should benefit from the international network in order to keep up with the ever-changing environment of tourism sector worldwide.

As a service-based industry, tourism education should be based on the necessities of the sector and the changing consumer trends of the international tourism.

Standardization at education level should be focused on as an important point and by this way, the circulation of the students and educators should be made possible for both theoretical and practical phases of the education.

For tourism education studies field, web-based or distant education should be extended and by this means, efficient solutions in a shorter period should be found for education and for providing the necessary qualified workforce and porfessionnal academicians.

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