

***WORK PLACEMENT AND EMPLOYABILITY  
PROSPECTS OF THE TOURISM BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENTS  
GRADUATES IN GREECE***

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**ABSTRACT**

The link between the Labour market and education constitutes a basic condition not only for the professional career placement of graduates, but also for the competitiveness amongst enterprises and the growth of the economy in general. The tourism sector in Greece constitutes an important sector for employment and regional development.

Public Technological Educational Institutes have hitherto played a leading role in the education of tourism business administration in Greece, aiming to prepare proficient executives for the specific sector.

In the present article, the results of research that took place in 2009, in the departments of Tourism enterprises at the Technological Educational Institute in Larissa and in Heraklion, are presented. The location of these two Departments is

very different regarding the tourist development and tourism infrastructures in each region. The scope of the research was to record graduate employability prospects in the tourism market, and also to identify the work placement problems and opportunities of the respective graduates.

The parameters individually examined are the employability of graduates, the types of professions, career preferences, graduate mobility, problems during placement and other parameters concerning differences between the two departments.

Based on the results of the research, proposals will be suggested in regards to the study, the career placement of graduates and their future professional opportunities.

**Keywords:** Tourism education, Work placement, Employability prospects, Professional opportunities

## **INTRODUCTION**

In the present paper, the results of research that took place in 2009 in Greece, in the departments of Tourism Business Administration at the Technological Educational Institutes of Larissa and Heraklion, are presented, concerning the employability prospects of the graduates in the tourism market, and also to identify the work placement problems and opportunities of the specific graduates.

In countries which have significant inbound tourism, the effects on employment are very important. In these countries, education and vocational training in tourism professions is essential to the quality of services in tourism. On the other hand, the link between the Labour market and education constitutes a basic condition not only for the professional career placement of graduates, but also for the competitiveness amongst enterprises and also the growth of the economy in general. The relationship between higher education and employment is among the most frequently discussed issues of higher education, but systematic knowledge of this connection is relatively poor (Teichler 2000).

According to the Manila Declaration on World Tourism of 1980, Part B for "Human Recourses" (WTO, 1980):

- Vocational training and the continual upgrading of technical expertise in the field of tourism are fundamental, not only for the recipient but also to society in general.
- Professional ability largely depends on the quality of basic, general and technical education.
- In the tourism development scheme, the education of specialised personnel must be interconnected with the creation of a tourist product.

Tourism education began as a development of technical/vocational schools in Europe. These schools emphasised training in core competencies such as hospitality, hotel management and related business skills (Butler, 1999; Morgan, 2004). However, the great interest and demand both from the public and private sectors acted as a motivating factor for the rapid growth of tourism studies. As a result, in addition to technical schools, there was a constant development and establishment of departments with tourism-oriented study programs at the higher level of education. (Butler, 1999). The aim of these programmes is to provide students with the actual needs in training and education. Tourism programmes have been the centre of discussions with debates focusing on the balance between the vocational and academic orientation of studies. Tourism curriculums at universities often have a vocational character (Busby, 2001) with educators focusing on producing skilled and knowledgeable managerial personnel for the industry.

Many studies have used income levels or employment status as employment outcome rates (Teichler 2002). Some studies have operationalised employability as the time that elapses between graduation and employment (Brown 1990). Some others, as dependent variables stipulate the number of years spent in a career or an occupational field (Knight and Yorke 2002; Purcell and Quinn 1996). Busby (2001), argues that as a result of tourism studies, the useful skills in addition to practical experience in the industry are the sources for the high employment rate of tourism graduates.

The international character of the tourism market place in addition to technological changes and the replacement of long-term job prospects with short-term based project positions (Le Heron & Hathaway, 1999) make imperative the need to provide students with the necessary skills and attributes to face these

challenges. In a competitive educational environment with a huge number of different tourism courses offered at various universities, it is possible for candidate students to compare graduate employability prospects in order to better decide on their tourism studies orientation (Nunan, 1999; Symes, 1999). This is the reason that higher education institutions have used graduate employment figures and examples of successful graduates, as a key marketing strategy to attract new students (Le Heron & Hathaway, 2000). Most universities, for example, have statements that identify graduate attributes and their link with workplace skills. The viability of tourism courses are strongly connected to market factor viability (Symes, 1999). Courses are based mainly on student demand which in turn is based on their perceptions of workplace requirements and career opportunities.

Tourism education is dominated by the above market forces given that high market demands was a major contributing factor to the rapid expansion of this sector during the late 1980s to early 1990s (McKercher, 2000). In recent decades, tertiary tourism education has progressed to a mature phase, anticipating a period of instability with a decline in demand and a consolidation of programs (McKercher, 2000). These factors make the need for innovative and progressive curriculum development essential in order for courses to remain commercially viable.

## **TOURISM AND EMPLOYMENT IN GREECE**

According to the National Statistical Agency of Greece, in 2008, the number of employees in the hotel and restaurant–catering sectors in Greece was 315 100. Nonetheless, it should be noted that only a small portion of employees in the restaurant and catering sector can not be included in the tourism industry.

**Table 1: Employment in the Hotel and Restaurant sectors in Greece.**

Year	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	Mean	% to the employment in Greece
2000	235,1	272,8	289	265	265,5	6,49%
2008	288,2	325,5	339,5	307,1	315,1	6,91%

Source: ESYE, (2009).

According to research conducted by the Aegean University for the Association of Greek Tourism Enterprises (SETE), in the year 2000, the number of people directly employed in tourism amounted 255 308, of which 37.9% or 96 759 were employed at hotels in Greece which accounted for 539 990 beds in the same year.

**Table 2: Employment in the Tourism Industry in year 2000.**

Tourism Industry	Employees	Percentage
Hotel enterprises	96.759	37,90%
Supplemental accommodations	24.895	9,75%
Entrepreneur	49.711	19,47%
Travel agencies/Tour operators	19.305	7,56%
Road transportation	7.462	2,92%
Airline transportation	12.136	4,75%
Sea transportation	9.600	3,76%
Other touristic enterprises	35.440	13,88%
Total	255.308	100,00%

Source : SETE 2002

According to the research results of Velissariou & Zagkotsi (2010), the number of hotel employees in 2008 was 145 000, while the bed capacity for the same year was 715 857. When taking into consideration the data from the SETE (2002) study that hotel employees represent 37.9% of the employees in the tourism industry in Greece, then the total number of people employed directly in tourism should amount to 380 000 employees or 8.3% of employment in Greece.

**Table 3: Educational Level of Personnel in Hotels**

Hotel category	Post-graduate degr	University degree	Technical school	Secondary School (Lyceum)	Basic compulsory education	Basic + Lyceum
5*	2,33%	28,49%	26,37%	24,95%	17,86%	42,81%
4*	1,76%	18,86%	21,76%	33,76%	23,87%	57,63%
3*	1,58%	17,54%	16,08%	42,02%	22,78%	64,80%
2*	1,17%	17,25%	12,87%	46,49%	22,22%	68,7%
5*-2*	1,55%	18,80%	17,40%	39,84%	22,42%	62,26%
Seasonal hotels	1,52%	14,19%	16,88%	37,97%	29,44%	67,41%

Source: (Velissariou & Krikeli 2008).

Although the number of people employed in the tourism industry in Greece is quite high, the education level of these employees is low. This is due to the seasonal nature of employment in tourism. It should be noted that Greece is a tourist destination mainly for summer holidays. The fundamental problem among seasonal employees is their lack of education/training in tourism. This is 'covered' by the support of well-trained personnel which makes up the core staff and is that which defines the overall quality of services provided in tourism.

Table 3 shows those employees with only a Secondary School (Lyceum) diploma or only the minimum compulsory education in 2 to 5-star hotels, amount to a total of 64.12% of the overall personnel. It is also interesting to note that seasonal employees in hotels have a lower level of education in comparison with employees in hotels in general. On the contrary, the education level of personnel in 5-star hotels is higher than in the remaining categories. In particular, employees with a university or post-graduate degree represent 30.82% of all personnel, compared to 20.33% in 2-5 star hotels or 15.71% in seasonal hotels (Velissariou & Krikeli 2008).

### **TOURISM EDUCATION IN GREECE**

Tourism studies at the tertiary level are provided in Greece by public Technological Educational Institutes. There are a total of seven departments. Admission to these departments takes place upon the completion of secondary school (lyceum) and on the basis of one's performance on entrance examinations which also assess competency in one foreign language. The length of studies is 8 semesters, the last of which is a work placement. The main areas of education are tourism, tourism administration in general as well as hotel management, travel agency administration and Restaurant – catering sector.

In addition to the Technological Educational Institutes, education in Tourism Profession studies is offered at 2 Tourism High Schools (on the island of Rhodes and at Agios Nikolaos in Crete). Admission to these programs also takes place upon the completion of secondary school (lyceum) and based on the performance of entrance examinations. The length of studies is seven semesters. Each academic year consists of two components of study: A) the theoretical component, beginning in October of each academic year and ending in June of the following year and B) the practical component, a continuation of the theoretical component and an inextricable part of education beginning in the month of July and ending in September.

## **EMPLOYABILITY RESEARCH**

### **Research scope**

The scope of the research was to record the graduates' employability prospects in the tourism market, and also to identify the work placement problems and the professional opportunities for the specific graduates. The parameters examined are the Employability of graduates, the types of professions, career preferences, graduate mobility, the problems during placement and other parameters concerning the differences between the two departments.

### **Research field and methodology**

The TEI of Larissa is located in the city of Larissa, in the Region of Thessaly in the central of Greece. The Department of Tourism Business Administration belongs to the School of Business Administration and Economics and was established in 1984. The Department of Tourism Business Administration in Crete is located in the city of Heraklion, Crete and belongs to the School of Business Administration and Economics at the TEI of Crete. The programs of studies in both departments are quite similar and provide education in tourism theory as well as in the management of tourism enterprises, such as hotel establishments, restaurants and travel agencies.

The primary research was conducted in the Tourism Enterprises Departments of Larissa and Crete, by using a close-ended type questionnaire. The research took place at the TEI of Larissa at the time of convocation or the three graduation days in 2009 (in February, July and October). Candidates filled in standardized questionnaires prior to their graduation ceremony. A total of 100 questionnaires were completed which examined almost all of the graduates. The same process was followed at the TEI of Crete, however only on the single graduation day that took place in May of 2009 where 85 questionnaires were completed, which represents 49.4% of the graduates). It should be noted that the length of time between the completion of one's studies and graduation day differs between the two departments. More specifically, the average length of time between the completion of one's studies and graduation day (convocation) at the TEI of Larissa

is four months; while at the TEI of Crete it is one year and four months (the last convocation took place in June of 2007).

As a result of this difference, graduates from the TEI of Crete had one year longer until their graduation day to find employment than the TEI of Larissa graduates did, thus influencing the research results concerning employment in the labour market.

### **RESEARCH RESULTS OF EMPLOYABILITY**

The most significant research results are presented in this chapter. Table 4 indicates the sex of the graduates in the 2 departments. It is evident that the percentage of female graduates at a rate of 72.3% is much higher than that of male graduates. This number is even higher at the TEI of Crete reaching a rate of 86.2%.

**Table 4: Graduates in 2009 by sex**

Graduates	Male	Female
TEI of Larissa	38,0%	62,0%
TEI of Crete	17,8%	86,2%
Total	27,7%	72,3%

#### **a) Employment during the studies**

Employment during the course of one's studies is common among tourism enterprise students. At the TEI of Larissa, 58.8% of students were employed during the course of their studies while the corresponding number for TEI of Crete students was 66.6%. The higher rate of employment among TEI of Crete students is due to the greater availability of employment. There is a significant difference in the main areas of employment between Larissa and Crete as well,. While in Crete, employment was mainly found in hotels at a rate of 52.8%, the corresponding number in Larissa was only 27.3%. This difference is largely due to the limited number of hotels in the area. On the other hand, most tourism enterprises

students in Larissa find employment in restaurants, cafes or bars at a rate of 54.5% while in Crete the corresponding number is only 26.4%.

**Table 5: Employment during studies**

<b>Graduates</b> <b>Working during the studies</b>	<b>TEI of Larissa</b>	<b>TEI of Crete</b>	<b>In total</b>
Yes	58,8%	66.7%	62,4%
No	41,2%	33.3%	37,6%
Full Time work	18,6%	30.6%	25,0%
Seasonal work	48,8%	44.9%	46,7%
Temporary work	32,6%	24.5%	28,3%
In Hotels	27,3%	52.8%	45,3%
In Restaurant, Cafés or Bars	54,5%	26.4%	34,7%
In Travel agencies	0,0%	9.4%	6,7%
In Other work positions	18,2%	11.3%	13,3%

**b) Employability of the Graduates**

The most fundamental question in the study examined the employment status of graduates at the time of their convocation or graduation day. According to the research results, 61% of TEI of Larissa graduates were employed by their graduation day while the corresponding number for TEI of Crete graduates was 89.3%.

**Table 6: Employment status of Graduates in 2009 at the time of convocation**

Graduates Employment Situation	TEI of Larisa	TEI of Crete	Male	Female	Totally
Employed	61.0%	89.3%	73.6	74.0%	73.9%
Full time employment	82.0%	54.7%	69.2%	66.0%	66.9%
Seasonal employment	18.0%	37.3%	28.2%	28.9%	28.7%
Not specified the duration of employment	0.0%	8.0%	2.6%	5.2%	4.4%
Not working	39.0%	10.7%	7.6%	26.0%	26.1%
Not seeking work	6.0%	2.4%	1.6%	3.8%	4.4%
Unemployed at time of convocation	33.0%	8.3%	6.0%	22.1%	21.7%

A significant difference, which is largely a result of the length of time between the completion of one's studies and the convocation ceremony (graduation day), is noted between the two departments. Whereas this length of time is relatively small (a mere four months) at the TEI of Larissa, it is 16 months at the TEI of Crete. Convocation ceremonies take place only once a year at the TEI of Crete, therefore the length of time between the completion of studies and convocation provides more opportunity to find employment.

The above results may be interpreted as follows, that 61% of the departments' graduates were already working by the time of their graduation, while after one year this number rose to 89.3%. In both cases these rates are quite high when

taking into consideration that 4.4% of graduates do not actively seek employment after the completion of their studies.

On the other hand, a significant difference was noted in the permanency of employment. While 82% of TEI of Larissa graduates stated that they had full time employment, only 54.7% of TEI of Crete graduates did. This may be due to the fact that a large number of tourism-related businesses in Crete are seasonal in nature.

Apart from the state of employment, it is interesting to examine the types of businesses where graduates are employed. Table 7 indicates that the majority of graduates (44.9%) work in hotels, while graduates working in travel agencies come in second place at a rate of 16.9%.

**Table 7: Work Position of Tourism enterprise graduates**

<b>Enterprise</b>	<b>Graduates</b>	<b>TEI of Larissa</b>	<b>TEI of Crete</b>	<b>Totally</b>
Hotel		47.5%	42.7%	44.9%
Travel agency / Tour Operator		19.7%	14.7%	16.9%
Airline / Airport		0.0%	9.3%	5.1%
Restaurant / Café/Bar		11.5%	1.3%	5.9%
Self-employed		0.0%	2.7%	1.5%
Other company		13.1%	22.7%	18.4%
Public or Local authority ( in tourism)		3.3%	2.7%	2.9%
Not specified		4.9%	4.0%	4.4%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

About 18.4% of graduates are not employed in the tourism industry. Merely 13.1% of these graduates are from the TEI of Larissa, while 22.7% are TEI of Crete graduates. Other significant differences between the graduates of the two departments are evident in employment in airports or airlines and at restaurants or café/bars. More specifically, 9.3% of TEI of Crete graduates work at airports or airlines, while the corresponding percentage of TEI Larissa graduates is 0%. On the other hand, 11.5% of graduates from the TEI of Larissa work in restaurants or café/bars while only 1.3% of TEI of Crete graduates do.

**Table 8: Employability of Graduates by Gender**

Enterprise \ Graduates	Male	Female	Total
Hotels	59.0%	39.2%	44.9%
Travel agencies / Tour Operators	15.4%	17.5%	16.9%
Airlines / Airports	0.0%	7.2%	5.1%
Restaurants / Café/ Bars	7.7%	5.2%	5.9%
Self-employed	5.1%	0.0%	1.5%
Other company (not in tourism)	10.3%	21.6%	18.4%
Public or Local authorities	0.0%	4.1%	2.9%
Not specified	2.6%	5.2%	4.4%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Differences are also noted with regard to employment and sex of the graduates. It is reported that 59% of male graduates are employed at hotels while the

corresponding percentage for female graduates is 39.2%. However, employment at airlines and airports is almost exclusive to female graduates (7.2%). Placement rates are the same for both sexes at travel agencies and tour operators. Mainly female graduates are employed at non-tourism related business at a rate of 21.65% while the corresponding percentage for male graduates is 10.3%.

**Table 9: Employment preferences in the Tourism Industry**

<b>Enterprise</b>	<b>Graduates</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>TEI of Larissa</b>
Hotel enterprise		52,94%	35,7%	42,22%
Travel agency / Tour Operator		23,53%	25,0%	24,44%
Public sector in tourism		5,88%	16,1%	12,22%
In Tourism (general not specified)		2,94%	8,9%	6,67%
Airlines		2,94%	5,4%	4,44%
Not in tourism		5,88%	1,8%	3,33%
Restaurant / Catering		5,88%	0,00%	2,22%
Airport		0,00%	3,6%	2,22%
Entrepreneurship in Tourism		0,00%	1,8%	1,11%
Shipping (tourism)		0,00%	1,8%	1,11%
Total		100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

**c) Employability preferences by the graduates**

Table 8 depicts the preferences of TEI of Larissa graduates as to where they would like to be employed. It is interesting to note the differences between male and female graduates. Hotels are the most desired place for graduates to find employment at a rate of 52.9% for male graduates and 35.7% for female graduates. Travel agencies come in second place at a rate of 24.4% without a significant difference noted between genders. Employment in the Public Sector comes third in the female graduates' preference at a rate of 16.1%. However, only 5.9% of male graduates showed this preference. Approximately 6.7% of all graduates stated tourism in general as their choice of employment without specifying a particular area. Female graduates preferred employment in Airlines and in Airport services, while men preferred restaurant and catering work. Only a small percentage of graduates (3.3%) which were mainly male expressed a desire not to work in tourism. Finally, it should be noted that a very small percentage of graduates (1.1%) expressed an interest in starting their own business in the tourism industry.

#### **d) Employability Problems**

The problems faced by graduates during the employment seeking process are not so much related to finding employment (19.5%) as in finding a job to their liking (26.8%). This is more prevalent in male graduates at a rate of 29.4%. On the other hand, the work schedule posed a bigger problem for female (16.9%) than male (10.3%) graduates. Salary issues came third and were of concern to both genders equally at a rate of 18.3%. Work location was the least significant problem, and was mentioned by only 6.1% of those surveyed.

#### **e) Preferences for a career in Tourism**

The last questions in the study investigated whether graduates were satisfied with their choice of studies in general and if they were interested in pursuing a career in tourism. The results showed that 87% of the graduates wanted to pursue a career in tourism. This ratio was higher in male graduates (90.6%) and slightly lower for female graduates (85.5%).

**Table 10: Problems in the Employment Seeking Process**

<b>Problems \ Graduates</b>	<b>TEI of Larisa</b>	<b>TEI of Crete</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Finding employment in general	24,3%	15,8%	20,6%	19,1%	19,5%
Find desirable employment	29,9%	24,5%	29,4%	25,8%	26,8%
Work Location	6,5%	5,8%	5,9%	6,2%	6,1%
Work Schedule	12,2%	17,3%	10,3%	16,9%	15,0%
Seasonality	8,4%	18,0%	14,7%	13,5%	13,8%
Salary	17,8%	18,7%	17,6%	18,5%	18,3%
Other	0,9%	0,0%	1,5%	0,0%	0,4%

The last question examines graduate mobility relative to one's career in tourism. In particular, it looks at whether graduates prefer work, without much potential for advancement but close to their residence as opposed to a career in tourism with potential but far from their permanent residence.

**Table 11: Graduate Preferences for a Career in the Tourism Industry**

Graduates Career in Tourism industry	TEI of Larisa	TEI of Crete	Male %	Female %	Total
YES	91,0%	82,1%	90,6%	85,5%	87,0%
NO	9,0%	11,9%	9,4%	10,7%	10,3%
No answer	0,0%	6,0%	0,0%	3,8%	2,7%
Sum	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

The results showed that the majority of graduates, at a rate of 58.7% would prefer a promising career regardless of location. 35.9% would prefer employment close to their home even with less potential. This percentage was slightly higher in female graduates (37.4%) than in male graduates (32.1%).

## **CONCLUSIONS AND DOCUMENTATION**

Tourism accounts for a significant employment sector in Greece. Employee education level is definitely a factor determining the quality of the services provided. (Parasuraman, et al 1985). Nevertheless, based on the research results, the educational level of employees in the hotel sector in Greece is particularly low since 62.3% of all hotel employees and 67.4% of seasonal hotel employees have only a Secondary School (Lyceum) diploma or the minimum compulsory education.

**Table 12: Preferences for a Career in the tourism industry dependant on residence**

Graduates Preference for	TEI of Larissa	TEI of Crete	Male	Female	Total
a work place near one's residence (without potential)	38,0%	33,3%	32,1%	37,4%	35,9%
a Career in tourism independent of one's residence	62,0%	54,8%	58,5%	58,8%	58,7%
No answer	0,0%	11,9%	9,4%	3,8%	5,4%
Sum	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Research investigating graduates from the two tourism business administration departments showed that on average 73.9% of graduates were working by the time of their convocation ceremony, while 4.4% was not looking for employment and only 21.7% were unemployed. It should be noted that the percentage of graduates from the TEI of Crete who were employed by the time of their convocation was 89.3%. This number is high when compared to that of the TEI of Larissa graduates. This is due to the lengthy period of time between the completion of studies and the convocation ceremony, which amounts to 16 months. The above rates of employment immediately after the completion of studies may be considered quite high, especially at a time when unemployment among young people in Greece is particularly high. In January of 2010, unemployment in Greece reached a rate of 11.3%. However, in the 15-24 year-old age group it was 30.4% and amongst 25-34 year-olds the rate was 14.6% with women at 14.9% and men at 8.7% (ESA, 2010).

It is important to note that the vast majority of graduates, at a rate of 80% are employed in the tourism sector especially when considering the fact that it is very

common in Greece for graduates to be employed in positions that are unrelated to their studies. (Karamesini Maria, 2008).

The employability prospects are favourable for both male and female graduates since the employment rates are much the same for both sexes. Nonetheless, the main differences between male and female graduates are related to their preferences as to the type of enterprise they would like to work at in their future career. Although hotels rank first for both genders, the percentage is smaller for women than for men. Moreover, the preference for employment in Travel Agencies, the Public Sector, Local Authorities and Airlines is stronger in female than in male graduates. On the other hand, males show a stronger preference for employment in hotels and restaurants than females do.

It should be noted that graduates are for the most part employed by hotels at a rate of 44.9% and Travel Agencies at a rate of 16.9%. The main differences that were recorded in graduate employment between TEI of Larissa and TEI of Crete graduates was that a large percentage of TEI of Crete graduates worked for Airlines and at the airport (9.3%), while a significant rate (11.5) of TEI of Larissa graduates worked in restaurants and café/bars.

A special characteristic of the students in the departments of Tourism Business Administration which was recorded in the study was the fact that many were employed at the time of their studies. More specifically, 62.4% stated that they had worked during the course of their studies with 25% having worked on a regular basis. Employment was mainly found in hotels, restaurants and café/bars. Significant differences were noted among TEI of Larissa and TEI of Crete graduates in this area both in terms of the rate of employment during the course of their studies which was higher for TEI of Crete students but also mainly in the type of business that the students were employed at. TEI of Crete students were primarily employed at hotels whereas by and large, TEI of Larissa students found employment in restaurants and café/bars.

The main disadvantage in tourism-related employment is its seasonal nature. Of the total number of working graduates, only 66.9% had permanent jobs. TEI of Crete graduates are more readily absorbed by the labour market (89.3%) yet also show a higher rate of seasonality in their employment (37.3%). Graduates stated that the main problem in seeking employment was to find a position to their liking

(26.8%). Finding employment in general came in second place at a rate of 19.5%, the rate of pay came in third place at a rate of 18.3% and the work schedule came in fourth place at a rate of 15.0%.

In conclusion, it can be argued that Tourism Enterprise graduates in Greece have favourable employability prospects in the tourist labour market, even in a period of high unemployment. These prospects are favourable for both male and female graduates. The fact that 87% of graduates are interested in being employed in the tourism industry indicates that it is a field that is especially attractive to young people and justifies their choice of studies.

The research results indicate that the Departments of Tourism Business Administration at the above-mentioned institutions should give emphasis to studies dealing with Hotel Administration, the operation of Travel Agencies and Airline Services. Moreover, attention should be given to new trends and developments in the field of tourism, particularly with regard to preferences and demand as well as new technological applications and management techniques. In this way, in addition to the graduates being better prepared for the job market, there will be an improvement in the quality of services provided.

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