

Work and Tourism



Region of Crete
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Operational Programme Crete and the Aegean Islands 2007-2013
Co-financed by Greece and the European Union





Crete is a popular destination for congress tourism due to its Mediterranean climate and accessibility, but also to the convention, congress and conference facilities provided by a large number of hotel units. There are many people who come to Crete to work in the summer, mainly in tourism, combining work with an enjoyable stay on the island.





Congress Tourism

Every year, Crete hosts hundreds of high standard conferences and seminars with participants from Greece and from all over the world. Congresses and conferences are usually held in luxury hotels or in large congress centers with all the infrastructure – assistance, services, equipment- that is required to ensure the best results.

Participants can enjoy their stay and take advantage of all the possibilities Crete has to offer for relaxation and entertainment. The high quality standards of those hotels provide many services and great hospitality. Customers can relax in swimming pools, gyms, thalasso therapy centers (spa) and of course enjoy the best food and drink in the hotel restaurants and bars.

Most venues are equipped with modern audiovisual techniques and provide excellent access to the net. The conference staff is perfectly trained and includes interpreters, technicians and secretariat support who provide their services to ensure the best outcome.



Perfect climate

The climate in Crete is considered to be one of the best, healthiest and mildest in Europe and Crete is therefore an ideal place to combine work with leisure.

Crete falls under two climate zones: the Mediterranean one to the north and the North African one to the south. The sea temperature seldom drops below fifteen degrees Celsius, especially on the south coast. Crete is an ideal

destination throughout the year and its climate attracts a number of visitors from the colder zones of Europe, people who come for leisure or for work, or for both. Winters are mild, spring and autumn are pleasant and the hot summer months are cooled by north winds in August.



An Ideal location

Crete is located at the south-eastern point of the EU and is strategically placed at the crossroads of three continents, Europe, Asia and Africa, all three at a short—and equal—distance from the island.

This geographical condition is ideal for organizing and hosting congresses and international trade fairs since participants can easily reach the island from any corner of the world.

Due to its privileged location at the heart of the Mediterranean, Crete, relying on its merchant marine vessels, is quickly becoming the ideal focal point for all commercial activities in international goods, and this in turn leads to an increase in employment.



Access and transport

Getting to Crete is very easy. Millions of visitors come to Crete every year from all over the world. The three international airports on the island, in Heraklion, Chania and Sitia are linked to hundreds of other international airports. The largest low cost companies have regular flights to Crete and the most important international airlines organize charter flights.



Ports also play an important role. The three ports of Crete, Heraklion, Rethymnon and Chania, have dozens of luxury passenger ships and ferry boats linking them with Greece's largest port, Piraeus, on a daily basis. Other ship routes include the Cyclades from Heraklion; Rhodes, Karpathos, Kasos, Kithira and Milos from the ports of Sitia, Agios Nikolaos and Kissamos. Additionally, dozens of cruise ships make a stop at the ports of Chania, Agios Nikolaos and Heraklion.

For those who don't have their own means of transport, there is an efficient and cheap network of luxury buses across the island. The main towns of Heraklion, Rethymnon and Chania also have an efficient network of urban buses. And there is of course always the possibility to rent a car, which will allow you to explore the island on its safe and modern road network.

Safety

Due to its very low percentage of criminality, the overall feeling of safety on Crete is another reason for the development of congress tourism on the island. Cretan hospitality and the native goodwill to help foreign visitors is another asset.

The feeling of safety is further enhanced by the large number of well-equipped, efficiently run health stations operating all over Crete 24/7. There are hospitals in the main towns, the largest ones located in Heraklion, and private clinics who lend their services to all the surrounding islands in southern Greece. Additionally, there are health centers in the main villages and rural dispensaries who attend to basic health issues.





Accommodation

Those who come to Crete on business, or to participate in a congress or seminar will enjoy high standard accommodation and the best quality services set against a background of genuine hospitality in the fully equipped hotel units on the island.

Many of the island hotels have been awarded prizes and they are ranked high on international lists. More than 40% of the Greek Green Hotels are located in Crete.

About 30% are five-star hotels and meet all demands providing the state-of-the-art equipment as well as the high standard services that congress tourism requires.





Education and Research

There is a number of Research and University centers in Crete which are remarkable for their work not only in Greece but in Europe. Hundreds of students, professors and researchers come to Crete from all over the world to study or work and enjoy the unique lifestyle of the island.





The University of Crete is one of the best in Greece and has its premises in Heraklion and Rethymnon. On the other hand, the Polytechnic School of Crete is located in Chania, whereas the Heraklion-based Technological Educational Institute of Crete has annexes in Chania, Rethymnon, Agios Nikolaos and Sitia. Annexes of the Open University of Greece and of the School of Technological and Pedagogical Education are located in Archanes.



The Foundation for Research and Technology (FORTH) in Heraklion is the best research center in Greece. It hosts the Science and Technology Park of Crete (STEP-C) and the European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA).

The Hellenic Center for Marine Research (HCMR) in Goumes is in charge of the remarkable Cretaquarium and carries out substantial research on marine biology in the Mediterranean. The Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Chania and the Orthodox Academy are both located in the prefecture of Chania.





Workshops and seminars

The state-of-the-art perfectly equipped premises in Crete that are suitable for every type of congress or pedagogical activity are set against a rich historical and cultural background.

Academic institutions and research centers often organize educational lectures, seminars, special pedagogical programs, workshops and summer schools for participants that come from every corner of the world.



On the top of the list we have the Onassis conferences with prominent professors who are acknowledged members of the international scientific world, many of them Nobel laureates.

Reputed scientists at the cutting edge of scientific developments are at the head of these programs.

Trade Fairs

Besides being situated on the crossroads of three continents, Crete has exhibition centers with the infrastructure and experience that is required to successfully host trade fairs.



Crete hosts a range of trade fairs from expos for local produce in various towns and villages to large international exhibitions in spacious venues such as the International Exhibition Center of Crete. The high organization standards ensure the promotion of commercial customers.

The various entities of the island, such as the municipalities and the Region of Crete, play an important role by funding and promoting exhibitions with a view to enhance the competitiveness of local businesses.

Business meetings

Special meetings, such as interviews and business discussions, can be successfully organized in the venues in Crete which are equipped with all the required infrastructure for this purpose.





To ensure the best results, local authorities and companies can take on the organization of business meetings providing equipment and professionally trained staff.

Guests who come for business from Greece and abroad can discuss and conclude new agreements in perfect surroundings and conditions that include a gourmet dinner prepared both by international and local Mediterranean diet award-winning chefs.



Working in Crete

Many are those who come to Crete every year to work in one of the companies and research centers of the island, taking advantage of the favorable conditions and the labor legislation in Greece. Thus, they are able to work in a beautiful place, while enjoying the sun, the sea and the magical landscapes of the island.



Moreover; representatives of large companies, business groups, and even political leaders often come to Crete where the conditions provide a fertile ground for new agreements on new services and products.







Local trade associations, the bodies of the island and the local Chambers of Commerce facilitate the conclusion of new trade agreements via guided tours of the island, meetings with local businessmen and a general positive climate.







Volunteering in Crete

Many young people from around the world come to Crete to work in one of the many organizations for the protection of nature. The organizations provide free accommodation and work in a pleasant environment and the volunteers have the opportunity to make new friends while discovering the beauties of Crete.



Well-known international environmental organizations, such as the WWF, have permanent working units on the island for the protection of wetlands, birds, forests and other ecological issues. In the summer, dozens of young people offer their services to organizations such as Archelon, to save loggerhead turtles on the beaches of Rethymnon, Chania and Messara. After a short training

program, the volunteers set out to raise public awareness on the need to protect hatching nests, they care for injured animals and help the baby turtles to find their way to the sea.



Volunteering in Crete is widespread and practiced by a large number of local organizations and committees.

Besides the various environmental associations fighting against environmental degradation and industrial renewable energy methods, there are volunteer groups that deal with specific matters, such as the protection and preservation of

traditional architecture, rising public awareness in cancer; promoting blood donation, fighting domestic violence and other similar issues.

