

## RELIGIOUS MONUMENTS AND TOURISM, THE CASE OF CHIOS

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### **Abstract**

*The religious and historical monuments are attractive tourist destinations. The religious element involved obviously with the historical and cultural. The cultural and religious tourism are an integral part of international and Greek tourism. These emerging forms of tourism aimed towards quality and sustainable development. These forms of tourism emphasize the preservation, revival and enhancement of cultural resources for the creation of tourist flows.*

*The main aim of this article is to explore the prospects of development of religious and cultural tourism in Chios Prefecture. This objective is implemented by conducting primary research through surveys of which seeks to ascertain whether the religious - cultural activity of the island can contribute to tourism development thereof.*

*The investigation showed that Chios as religious - cultural destination has not been developed enough, but there is plenty of growth potential. The island has all the necessary conditions for the further development of religious tourism in combination with cultural and other special and alternative forms. For this reason it is proposed to develop a framework of tourism policy and strategy that removes obstacles and exploit the comparative advantages of the island.*

**Key words:** *Religious Tourism, Cultural Tourism, Religious Monuments, Historical Monuments, Chios, tourism development*

### **Introduction**

Cultural tourism refers to tour with central motive visiting cultural monuments and cultural heritage resources of a destination such as archaeological sites, historic and religious monuments, built environment and cultural events. Religious tourism exploits the religious element of the space or event. The human movement in space to search for the sacred or divine is a psychological necessity for every person, regardless of race, nationality or religion, involving cultural, social and economic consequences of the various religious destinations.

Chios, which belongs to the islands of the northeastern Aegean, has the potential to develop these forms of tourism. The beautiful natural landscape, created by the harmonious matching of the sun and the sea, is a nice getaway destination for an escape from everyday life. It combines in a unique way both natural and human environment. The northern part of the island conflicts with the south. The northern Chios is mainly mountainous, while the southern Chios is dominated by

mastic trees and a unique natural landscape, where the wild flowers (tulips, anemones, etc.) give a peculiar color.

It is considered by many to be the island of Homer and is known for its unique product, mastic, which is produced only in this part of the world. Chios keeps vibrant culture through customs and traditions that they are still part of everyday life of the island. Both the Byzantine period and the Genovese domination that followed have bequeathed the island special architectural monuments and settlements in traveling time. This is an island which for some reason stayed away from the pressing and unregulated tourism development, which has retained its traditional forms of life and the great architectural and cultural heritage with residents experiencing daily traditions.

## 1. The religious figures to contribute to the tourist development of Chios

In Chios there are more than 30 monasteries and hundreds of churches that testify its rich religious heritage. The richness of religious monuments, myths remain alive over the centuries and the countless miracles that echo the beautiful landscape of the region, attract interest and make Chios the ideal destination for thousands of pilgrims. Piety, devotion and faith make a special trek, which offers visitors tranquility and emotion. The impressive hagiography, mosaics, rare Byzantine icons and priestly memorabilia give visitors the chance to explore and discover the rare historical and cultural past of the island. It is evident, however, that the island of Chios has such remarkable religious monuments that tourists are motivated to visit and admire the great religious value, and numerous other temples where religious festivals are subject for pilgrimage and opportunity to attract tourists (Lagos, 2011: 7-19).

### 1.1. Churches and Holy Monasteries of Chios

Chios has always been distinguished for the devotion of its inhabitants and pronounced ecclesiastical life. This is confirmed - among other things - by the many Parish Churches of the island (109), the Oratories (182), the Chapels (368), the Private Temples (272), and many Monastic Churches (19). On the island there are some of the most important religious monuments in the Eastern Mediterranean, as Nea Moni, which enable it to become a religious travel destination, not only for the Greeks, but for Orthodox of Eastern Europe and the Middle East.

According to Liadis (2011: 59-70) Chios has important religious sights (monasteries and churches), that are an integral part of our national heritage and attract tourists who may be part of the propellant development of religious tourism. It is necessary to formulate a tourism policy framework at the local level, which will include a number of selected activities for the design and management of religious tourism.

We mention some of the most important religious monuments of the prefecture of Chios, such as:

- **Small church of Saint Theodore in Phana:** Excavations by K. Kourouniotis and the British School of Archaeology provide information about the *Sanctuary of Apollo Phanaios* on the important place of devotion of ancient Chios, with a long tradition since the 9<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Later, in the early Byzantine years it was converted into a Christian center to reach today in a small church of Saint Theodore built in exactly the same place (Chios Prefecture 1988).
- **Early Christian basilica of Saint Isidore (4<sup>th</sup> c.):** Jerome Justiniani mentions that the temple was built by Emperor Constantine Monomahos with Nea Moni. Tradition says that the Emperor Marcian built the temple in the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D.
- **Nea Moni (founded 1042):** The famous "Nea Moni", this huge monastery complex of the Middle Byzantine period, is in the center of the historic island. According to Bouras (1981:

51), Nea Moni is the most important monastery of the island and a monument of international importance, because it is considered the masterpiece of artistry. The building of the Catholic began in late 1042 or early 1043 and lasted twelve years. The architectural formula is the Helladic octagonal, and it is the largest model in the so-called insular octagonal type church, known only in Chios and Cyprus. The mosaics of the "Catholic" of Nea Moni represent the type of strict Byzantine art, and have unparalleled value. The pieces of mosaics which were used are small and faceted to reflect light, made of natural stones or glass. Nea Moni, a Byzantine Monument, is closely associated with the eventful and confrontation march of the nation and our church. This is a page of Greek Orthodoxy in the history of Greek civilization. Nea Moni, because of exceptional importance from the standpoint of the History of Art and Architecture, belongs to the monuments that have been designated as UNESCO World Heritage protected by UNESCO (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Nea Moni of Chios

- **Lady Krina (founded 1287):** Lady Krina, the closest monument to Nea Moni, was built in the late 12th century. The church of Lady Krina belongs to the architectural style of the "insular" octagonal churches in Greece and mimics a limited amount of the Catholic of Nea Moni (Figure 2).

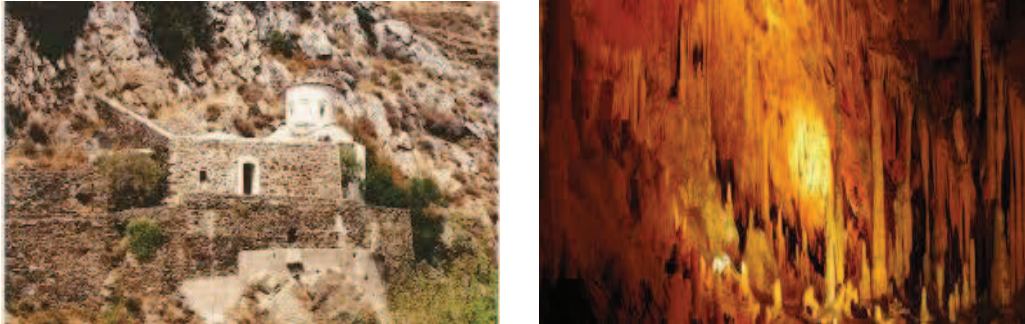


Figure 2: Lady Krina of Chios

- **Holy Apostles of Pyrgi (13th cent.)** Belongs to the architectural style of the insular octagonal churches. It is again a small copy of the Nea Moni and is a highly conserved Byzantine monument (Chalkia - Stephanou, 2003).
- **Church of Saint George in Byzantine Castle of Chios:** Impressive is the Orthodox Church of St. George in Byzantine castle of the city located on Saint George Street. In the same place was originally a Byzantine church of the 10th or 11th century (Monioudi - Gavala, 2001: 57).
- **Agiogalousaina Virgin (13th cent.):** The church is dedicated to the Virgin Agiogalousaina. It is located at the entrance of the cave, claiming that holy milk is dripping there. This is one of the most important caves in Greece in which settled people from the early Neolithic period

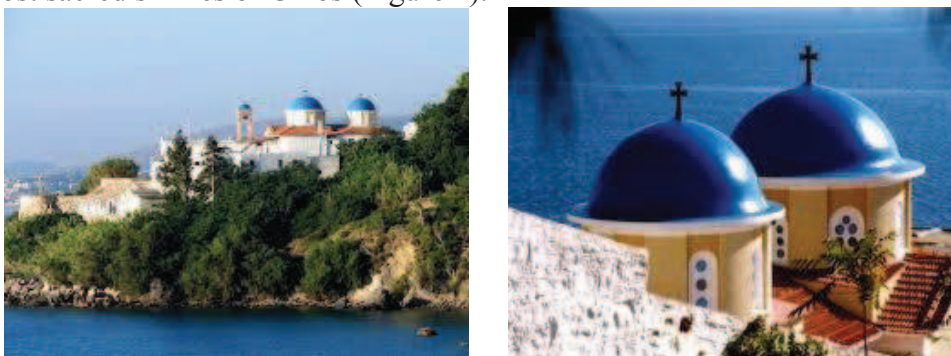


(6000-5000 B. C.) In Chios there are many natural caves. The last years some of the natural caves have been exploited, such as Olympoi, Agio Gala and Lithi (Figure 3).



**Figure 3:** Panagia Agiogalousaina and the cave of Agio Gala

- **Old Taksiarchis of Mesta (15th c.):** It is probably one of the oldest Christian churches in Chios. The date of its construction is not known but is estimated at about 1412 A.D. It has images of the Archangels, in which the church is dedicated to. (Chalkia - Stephanou, 2003: 296). The most important example of architecture that's left is the entrance, the "Portosia" of the church. Especially attracts the remarkable carved wooden icons which have embossed scenes from the Old and New Testaments.
- **Monastery of Prodromos or Monastery Moundon of Diefcha (year of renovation 1582):** The Monastery of Moundon is a priceless treasure in history and art. Rich ecclesiastical history, interesting monastic art, erudite postbyzantine popular mural combines a highly sought art-historical triptych, which locates it in the high position between Aegean and Chian few monuments (Axiotakis, 1985: 9). Still unknown is the exact date of the establishment of the monastery too. The only information that we have from an official written source is the sigils of Patriarch Jeremiah B. the years 1574 and 1578 (Axiotakis, 2001: 54).
- **Monastery of the Assumption of Plakidotissa or Vlakidotissa or Plakouriotissa in Kallimasia (founded 1625):** In 1625 the founder dedicated the monastery to the Virgin Mary church in Nea Moni of Chios, of which was preference share later. In the monastic space there is a museum where are preserved relics of the monastery, like vestments and books.
- **Monastery of Lady Myrtidiotissa in Vrontados or Monastery Myrsinidiou or Mersinidi (founded 1887):** The "Mersinidi" as is commonly known among the Chian people, is one of the newer monasteries of Chios. The Holy Monastery of Panagia Myrtidiotissa or Myrsinidiou or simply "Mersinidi" located just north of the city of Vrontados and is seven kilometers far from the capital. It is considered together with Nea Moni and Monastery of Saint Mina, as one of the most sacred shrines of Chios (Figure 4).



**Figure 4:** Panagia Myrtidiotissa

- ***Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Chios (1888)***: The Holy Cathedral of the island, according to historical testimonies, was built on Genovese (1346-1566), but it is unknown the exact date. Particularly impressive is certainly the pebbled courtyard of the church. Uniquely “liladoto” with wonderful designs (early Christian representations of paradise landscapes, geometric shapes, etc.) (Chalkia - Stephanou, 2003).
- ***Holy Parthenon Lady of Help, Chrysaphitissa in Frangomachala (founded 1930)***: The monastery was founded in 1930 by monk Anthimos Vagianos, in the west of the town of Chios. Celebrates every Monday after Easter as the day it was founded the image of the Virgin in which the church is dedicated. The monastery and communal Bank have been painted in 1934 by the artist-painter Georgios Panagiotaki from the Faculty of Fine Arts of National Technical University.

Also, other important religious monuments are:

- Lady Agrelouou or Agreloupousainas (Kalamoti) (14th c.)
- Saint John Argenti (Old Katarraktis) (14th c.)
- Monastery of the Archangels Michael or Taksiarchis (Nenita) (1305)
- Monastery of Tourlotis or Troulоти (Frangomachalas) (15th c.)
- Monastery of Saint Matrona of Chiopolitidos or Monastery Chalandron (Mesa Didyma)
- Monastery of the Holy Fathers (Karyes, 1570)
- Saint Georgios (Anavatos)
- Assumption Monastery or Monastery Rouchouniou (Katarraktis)
- Monastery of Archangels (Nenita, 1844)
- Taksiarchis (Anavatos, 1882)
- Saint Isidoros Petrokokkinou (Kampos)
- Parthenon or Holy Monastery of Saints Constantine and Helen (Frangovouni, 19th c.)
- Grand Taksiarchis (Mesta, 19th cent.)

### ***1.2. Holy pilgrimage of Saint Markella***

In the bay of Saint Markella between trees, has been built the church dedicated to the Saint. This is one of the most important shrines of Greece, where are many cells that can accommodate the pilgrims. The temple which was built in the Holy place of her martyrdom has the shape of the bush and dates about 1500. This image of Saint Markella considered miraculous. On 22 July, Memorial Day Holy, when the priest reads the request to the point of martyrdom of St. assumed that the sea water “boils”. After the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, the faithful receive the miraculous holy water to protect them (Chalkia - Stephanou, 2003: 116-123). On this day a great festival takes place and pilgrims come from all over the island, but also Greece and abroad (Figure 5).



**Figure 5:** Saint Markella of Chios

### **1.3. Religious celebrations of Chios - Fairs ("Panigyria")**

Beyond the religious monuments of the island, located in specific religious sites and attract potential tourists motivated by the existence of any religious building with high artistic, historical and monumental importance, take place religious festivals of great importance, the so-called "panigyria", during which the memory of Saints is honored in village squares and accompanied by dance activities such as:

- The feast of Panagia of "Rouchouniotissas" (Easter Monday in Katarraktis)
- The feast of All Saints (moveable feast in early June in Kampos of Chios)
- The feast of Saints Anargiron (in Thymiana of Chios, 1 July)
- The feast of Saint Marina (in Ververato of Chios, 17 July)
- The feast of Saint Markella (in Volissos of Chios, 22 July)
- The feast of Saint Paraskevi (in Zifia and Kalamoti of Chios, 26 July)
- The feast of Saint Panteleimon (in Vassileoniko, in Dafnona and Saint George Sikousis, 27 July)
- The feast of Our Lady (in Halkios, Saint George the Sikousis, in Katarraktis, 15 August)
- The feast of Saint Vassa (in Kampos of Chios on 21 August)
- The feast of Saint John the Baptist (in Kampos and Spartounta of Chios, August 29)

It should be noted that in almost every village of the island takes place "panigyri" during the summer months and particularly when the central church is celebrating, the so-called "chorioekklisia." Also, on the pretext of the main stations of life such as the birth, the baptism, the engagements and the marriage, but also other religious festivals and anniversaries are kept countless rituals and traditions with broad social impact.

### **1.4. Byzantine and Ecclesiastical Museums of Chios**

The cultural, historical and religious environment of the island is particularly rich in monuments, ancient and modern with global range and fame. An important part of the local culture and tradition has to do with the customs and traditions, traditional lifestyle, clothing, and production activities and occupations of the past. Particularly noteworthy are the Byzantine monuments and museums of the island, such as:

- **Byzantine Museum of Chios:** The museum is housed in an old mosque that was built with a grant of Sultan Abdul Metzit the mid-19th century in the town square of Chios (Metzitie Mosque).
- **Byzantine Museum of the Holy Monastery of Nea Moni:** The Museum is located on the first floor of the building, which consists of two rooms and a small space, while the ground floor is a chapel and warehouse. Several interesting ecclesiastical and secular silverwork of the 17th, 18th and 19th century, ecclesiastical gold embroidery, as well as images of the same era are exhibited. The most important item is the famous "Pefki" large silk cloth with gold and silver motifs, excellent example of Chian weaving.
- **Byzantine Museum in Vavili of Chios:** Exhibited objects of inestimable value and wonderful images of the Virgin Lady Krina.
- **Ecclesiastical Museum of the Church of Saint John the Theologian in Kourounia of Chios:** We find remarkable paintings of the painter N. Panagiotaki.

Also, some other interesting Ecclesiastical Museums are:

- Ecclesiastical Museum Holy Decree "Panteleimon Fostini"
- Ecclesiastical Museum of the Monastery Panagia Plakidiotissa Kallimasia



- Ecclesiastical Museum of the Church Assumption Kallimasia
- Ecclesiastical Museum of the Church of Saint George in Vrondados
- Ecclesiastical Museum of the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Chios

Undoubtedly, Chios may be an attraction for persons of religious tourism, as the combination of Shrines, Monasteries and Museums is an opportunity to achieve this goal.

### ***1.5. The Saints of Chios***

- The Saints Fathers (Nikitas, Ioannis and Joseph)
- Saint Minas, Victor and Vincent (Patron Saints of Chios)
- Saint Markella
- Saint Isidoros (Patron Saint of Chios)
- Saint Anthimos
- Saint Nikephoros of Chios (1750-1821)

### ***1.6. Byzantine church musical tradition of Chios***

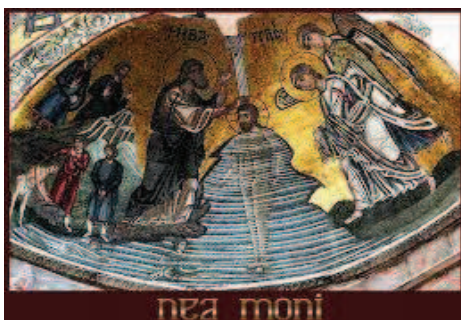
Across Chios is deeply rooted the Byzantine church musical tradition. Found particularly fertile ground to grow and cultivate under the vaults of the Metropolitan Church of the island. Great and faithful musical personalities left indelible traces and created tradition for how to perform the Liturgical Sequences and performance of Byzantine music. Great chanters moved Byzantine music from the center of Orthodoxy, Constantinople, to Chios.

### ***1.7. Woodcarving - Sculpture***

The religious art developed in Chios primarily in sculpture and particularly woodcarving. Chios has famous carved wooden icons, which were widely spread in the 17th-19th century in the Aegean and Asia Minor. The Chian carved wooden icons are a typical formula which combines orthodox iconography with rich decoration of the data derived from the Byzantine and western Christian art. It is characteristic the sculpted representation of the Crucifixion at the top of the carved wooden icon by the symbols of the Divine Passion. Important examples of this art are the carved wooden icons of Taksiarchis in castle village of Mesta (1833) and Saint Dimitrios in Vessa (1840-1841).

### ***1.8. Art of mosaic***

Nea Moni of Chios owes its great reputation on a national and global level in brilliant mosaics that adorn the walls of its “Catholic”. Both the style and technique of construction have excellent quality and make the “Catholic” of the Monastery one of the most important Byzantine monuments of Greece, on par with the monumental churches of Constantinople (Figure 6).



**Figure 6:** Mosaics of Nea Moni

### 1.9. Technique of pebbled floors

The pebbled floors are since the times of classical antiquity to the present day a fine example of decorating courtyards of Chios. The pebbled floors were not the privilege of the nobles of Kampos, and we find them in many churches. The diverse and unique pebble designs still fascinate and create a special impression (Figure 7).



Figure 7: Pebbled courtyards of Chios

### 1.10. Traditional custom – Rouketopolemos (rocket war) in Vrondados of Chios (Easter)

The rocket war (rouketopolemos) - which has its roots in the times of the Turkish occupation - is a spectacular custom which takes place every Easter Saturday during the Resurrection in Vrondados of Chios. Named by Chians, is in fact a bloodless "war" between the parishes of Saint Mark and Panagia Erythiani at the top two opposite hills. The goal for the parishioners of Panagia Erythiani is the dome of Saint Mark and the target for the parishioners of Saint Mark's clock of Panagia Erythiani. The rocketwar replaced the cannons and guns "sourntada" provoked strong explosions, which threw during the Ottoman Occupation Vrondadians on Eastern Saturdays. When the Turks because of fear that led to a revolt withdrew them in 1889, the Vrondadians launched the rocket war. Hundreds of rockets are launched from opposite sides offering a spectacular sight (Figure 8).

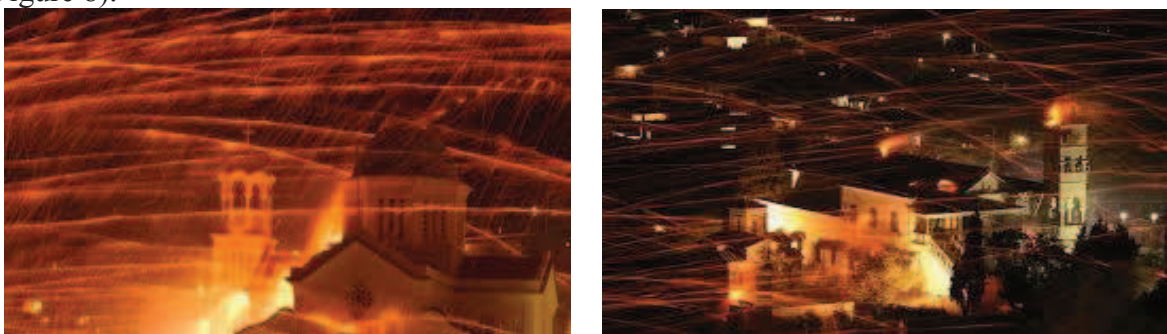


Figure 8: "Rouketopolemos" (rocket war) in Vrondados of Chios (Easter)

### 1.11. Ottoman monuments of Chios

- **Ottoman Cemetery (Turkish Cemetery):** In the Castle there is the old Cemetery of prominent Ottomans. Eminent Turks are buried in it from 1822 until 1890, including Kara - Ali, Captain Pasha of Turkish fleet whose flagship blew Constantine Kanaris in 1822.
- **Bairakli Mosque or Mosque Bairakli:** It is located in the Byzantine Castle and was built in the early 20th century.
- **Metzitie Mosque or Sultan Metzit Mosque:** It is located in the Square of Vounaki. After the release of Chios was used as an Archaeological Museum and now houses the Byzantine and post-Byzantine finds.



- **Osmanie Mosque:** It is located in the town of Chios and was built in 1892.

### **1.12. Catholic monuments of Chios**

- Western Cathedral (Saint Nicola di Bari) and Diocese in Saint Iacovos in the city
- French Capuchins Church (Saint Felice)
- Catholic Cemetery in Kofina
- French Nuns Monastery
- Catholic Church in Frangovouni

### **1.13. Jewish monuments of Chios**

- Jewish Cemetery
- Jewish School
- Jewish Synagogue
- Jewish Signs
- Jewish Quarter in the Byzantine Castle of Chios

Inside the walled space of castle of Chios was located the Jewish district, called Giudecca or Ghetto. It was in the "Top Portello." Probably Jews lived in the castle before the earthquake of 1389, and lived in the city outside the castle after the earthquake of 1881 (Monioudi - Gavala, 2001: 25, 31).

## **2. Primary empirical research**

### **2.1. The methodological framework of empirical research**

As to the methodology it was chosen quantitative research using questionnaires. This research was carried out in four stages. The first phase included the design of the questionnaire, which was based mainly in closed type questions. In the second stage were received the completed questionnaires from organizations involved in the development of tourism and various tourism businesses. The third step was the processing of the data using the software SPSS. In the last stage were interpreted and evaluated the various results obtained from the statistical analysis of the collected information - data. The method of sampling and selected single person associated with the development of religious tourism in Chios, both by public institutions and the tourism enterprises was used. Specifically, the institutions which were selected were the church, the public institutions involved in tourism and tourism businesses. A number of 205 questionnaires were processed which were correctly and fully completed. The number of responses is considered satisfactory, both to ensure the effectiveness of statistical processing and export of reliable scientific conclusions.

### **2.2. The results of empirical research**

The majority of informants is men and specifically refers to 64.16%, while women account for 35.84% of the sample. The age of informants ranges from 18 to 65 + years. We have four age groups and the highest percentage (55.49%) corresponds to the age group of 36 - 50. The rate of the public sector is 22.54% and applies to services that are directly related to tourism, such as: Regional Unit of Chios (Department of Tourism and Tourism Matters Vice Prefect) and the Municipality of Chios (Tourism Office, Office of Public Relations, Special Committee on Tourism Promotion and Development of Chios).

The percentage of the church is 23.70% and refers to the Metropolis of Chios, Psara and Oinoussai and the priests of the churches and monasteries of the island. Finally, the percentage of tourism enterprises is 53.76%, which includes hotels, travel agencies, tourist shops, restaurants and lodgings.

Tourism generally is little developed in Chios with rate 51.45% and the religious tourism is little developed too. The public sector, the church and tourism businesses said that religious tourism has developed a little with corresponding percentages 51.3%, 46.3% and 49.5% (Table 1).

**Table 1:** The development of religious tourism in Chios

		Is religious tourism developed in Chios?					Total
		At all	Little	Quite	Very	I don't Know	
Sector	1.Public sector	30%	<b>51,3%</b>	15,4%	2,6%	0%	100%
	2.Church	2,4%	<b>46,3%</b>	31,7%	19,5%	0%	100%
	3.Tourist companies	35,5 %	<b>49,5%</b>	12,9%	0%	2,2%	100%

As for the prospects of developing the religious tourism in Chios in the three institutions prevail the view that there are several prospects for this development on the island with respective rates of 48.7%, 43.9% and 34.4% (Table 2).

**Table 2:** Prospects for the development of religious tourism in Chios

		Do you think that Chios can support religious tourism?				
		At all	Little	Quite	Very	I don't know
Sector	1.Public sector	2,6%	23,1%	<b>48,7%</b>	25,6%	0%
	2.Church	0%	29,3%	<b>43,9%</b>	26,8%	0%
	3.Tourist companies	18,3%	31,2%	<b>34,4%</b>	14%	2,2%

Inadequate tourism promotion, high prices compared to other destinations, and deficiencies in infrastructure are some of the obstacles to development of tourism in Chios. The majority agrees

that the island was not enhanced, which show the percentages obtained in particular 53, 8% of the public sector, 65, 9% of the church and 86% of tourism businesses (Table 3).

**Table 3:** The projection of Chios

		Is sufficient the projection of Chios?		Total
		Yes	No	
Sector:	1.Public sector	46,2%	<b>53,8%</b>	100%
	2.Church	34,1%	<b>65,9%</b>	100%
	3.Tourist companies	14%	<b>86%</b>	100%

About the deficiencies in infrastructure on the island, it is observed that both affirmative and negative responses averaged approximately the same rates. In particular, we note that 50.3% of all three agencies said yes and 49.7% answered negatively.

Natural beauties - lures, local hospitality, monuments, accommodation and focus gather high scores impressions of visitors. Regarding the natural beauties of Chios, high rates identified the 'excellent' natural beauties of Chios, 46.2%, 51.2% and 64.5% respectively in the public sector, the church and the tourist industry. We must mention the rate 0% encountered in both the public sector and in the church about the answer "good" impressions (Table 4).

**Table 4:** The impressions of tourists for the natural beauties of Chios

		What are the impressions of tourists for the natural beauties of the island?				Total
		Good	Quite good	Very good	Optimal	
Sector:	1.Public sector	<b>0%</b>	7,7%	46,2%	<b>46,2%</b>	100%
	2. Church	<b>0%</b>	4,9%	43,9%	<b>51,2%</b>	100%
	3. Tourist companies	1,1%	9,7%	24,7%	<b>64,5%</b>	100%

Regarding the lack of coordination between agencies related to tourism, respondents believe that indeed there is no cooperation and coordination and the rates are distributed as follows: 87.2% for the public sector, 80.5% for the church and 80.5 % for tourism businesses. It is noteworthy that the percentages exceed 80%, which confirms the great lack of coordination.

As for policy measures to be taken, it is observed that the majority of respondents believe "a lot" that should create the infrastructure for tourists - pilgrims and specifically we have the following rates of 48.7% for the public sector, 63.4 % for the church and 60.2% for tourism



businesses. It should be noted that the public sector displays in that question greater proportion of the church.

Additionally, the establishment of a special institution for the development of religious tourism in Chios is 'enough' essential particularly in the public sector accounts for 59% of the church corresponds to 56.1% and finally the tourism industry rate of 47.3%.

Worthwhile are the estimates of potential respondents for cost reduction measures in the county. The highest rates occurring in the affirmative, namely 61.5% for the public sector, 68.3% for the church and 53.8% for tourism businesses, which confirms that high prices is a negative factor in tourism development.

It is observed that it has become clear the contribution of new technologies to the development of tourism in the region. A key role is played by the use of new technologies and specifically the construction of a site for the promotion of the island. In particular we have the following rates: 59% for the public sector, 53.7% for the church and 51.6% for tourism businesses (Table 5).

**Table 5:** Construction related website to promote the island

	Do you think is necessary to construct relevant website for the promotion of Chios?			Total
	Little	Quite	Very	
Sector 1.Public sector	5,1%	35,9%	<b>59%</b>	100%
2.Church	12,2%	34,1%	<b>53,7%</b>	100%
3. Tourist companies	17,2%	31,2%	<b>51,6%</b>	100%

Is it necessary to coordinate all agencies related to tourism? Respondents argue this view and especially note the following rates: 48.7% for the public sector, 63.4% for the church and 60.2% for tourism businesses (Table 6).

**Table 6:** Is it necessary to coordinate institutions for the development of religious tourism in Chios?

	Is it necessary to coordinate institutions for the development of religious tourism in Chios?			Total
	Little	Quite	Very	
Sector 1.Public sector	23,1%	28,2%	<b>48,7%</b>	100%
2.Church	2,4%	34,1%	<b>63,4%</b>	100%
3.Tourist companies	11,8%	28%	<b>60,2%</b>	100%

In conclusion, it is evident that Chios has not developed satisfactorily in religious tourism, although it has important historical and cultural monuments. Clearly, there are obstacles to the development of religious tourism, but there are many prospects. Specifically targeted policy measures and actions of the players involved in tourism can contribute decisively to the development of tourism on the island.

### **3. Conclusions of empirical research and policy measures for the development of religious tourism of Chios**

According to the results of primary research, religious and cultural tourism are not developed on the island, as there was and there is no plan for tourism development. Regarding the current situation of religious tourism in Chios, the estimates of institutions noted that:

- religious tourism is not sufficiently developed
- the locals are not informed enough about tourism
- there are many perspectives to support the development of religious tourism in the island
- the status of religious monuments is satisfactory
- the natural beauty is unique

As the obstacles detected by the stakeholders in the development of religious tourism on the island we say the following:

- Lack of general tourism promotion of the island.
- shortage of appropriate infrastructure
- high prices of the services provided
- lack of coordination between them

On policy measures to be implemented for the development of religious tourism in Chios, we note:

- the establishment of an institution suitable for the development of religious tourism
- the cost reduction of service
- the improvement of the infrastructure of the island
- the development and maintenance of religious - historical monuments
- the construction of a relevant site
- the cooperation of all stakeholders, which are related to tourism
- the enhancement of the expertise of the University of the Aegean

In conclusion, Chios retains vibrant culture through customs and traditions that are still part of everyday life. It is possible Chios to support religious tourism and thus tourism in general. Prerequisite for tourism promotion and advertising of the island is the cooperation of all stakeholders and to establish a general framework for tourism policy with specific strategies. Chios has the potential to increase demand of the tourism product by developing religious and cultural tourism because has strong comparative advantages. The existence of many monuments, monasteries and churches can contribute significantly to the development of local tourism.

The religious monuments which have parallel and historic interest, gather most tourists - pilgrims. The development of religious tourism in Chios can be combined with the components of cultural tourism. Specifically, anything that has value historical, cultural, aesthetic and anthropological is able to be viewed and used alongside religious tourism. Religious tourism in synergy with the cultural tourism can open new avenues of growth, stimulate the economy and attract more tourists to the island of Chios. Of course, it is necessary, Chios to acquire a dynamic tourist identity through unique religious and historical monuments which has got.

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