

## **Regional Airports in Greece: A Hidden Treasure?**

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### **Abstract**

The emergence of the low cost carriers phenomenon over the last ten years in Europe has been largely associated with point-to-point services connecting satellite and regional airports. Nonetheless, Greece remains out of this buoyant market: its regional airports are relatively underdeveloped while large areas in the mainland have still no easy access to airport facilities. This paper addresses these issues and explores the market potential for airline and airport services in the Greek regions. In particular, a preliminary discussion about the impact of airports on regional economic development is followed by a presentation of the Greek airport market profile, characterised by large asymmetries and high concentration: regional airports in Greece face substantial difficulties and some of them survive purely because of public service obligation services. Still, the results of the subsequent correlation and spatial asymmetry analysis reveal that although the islands are well-served in aggregate, passenger numbers in the mainland remain below its true potential in terms of income and population. Consequently, a latent critical mass for outbound services seems to exist: this may sustain successful flight operations in the future especially if combined with incoming traffic from low-cost carriers. In any case, appropriate consultation of all related stakeholders is required; hence, the paper proposes a questionnaire to collect suitable primary data for discrete choice and stated preference analysis.