



# **POSSIBILITIES OF ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF MOUNTAIN TOURISM ON MOUNT OLYMPUS**

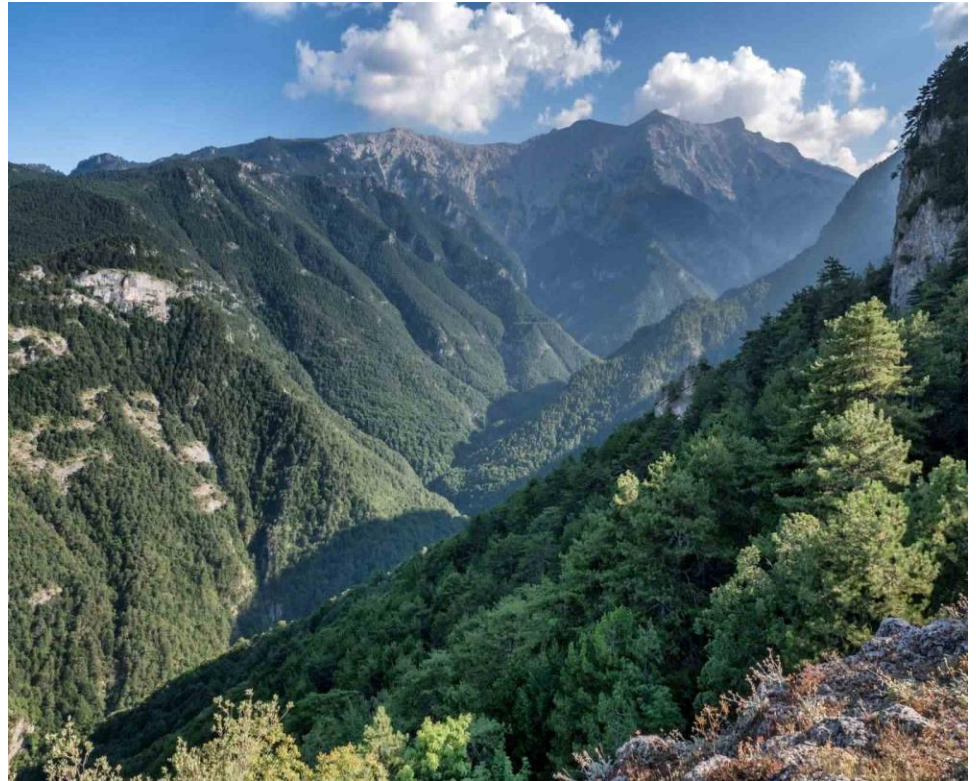
# MOUNT OLYMPUS



- One of the most well-known mountain globally.
- National Park since 1938
- The highest mountain in Greece (2.918m), with the most visitors
- Over 250.000 visitors from 70 countries every year.

# MOUNT OLYMPUS - GEOLOGY

- One of the youngest mountains in the world.
- Mytikas (2918,80m) and more than 55 peaks over 2.000m.
- Very intense morphology.
- Mostly limestone rocks, no water over 2.000m.





# MOUNT OLYMPUS - CLIMATE



- Just 18km distance from the sea -> special microclimate.
- Snow-covered over 2000m for almost 6-7 months most years.
- Dry and hot summers, but there has been snow even in July.
- Winds are a daily phenomenon

# MOUNT OLYMPUS – FLORA & FAUNA

- Several small ecosystems, with significant differences.
- Hosts 1.700 species of plants, 25 of them are endemic
- Home to 34 species of mammals, 129 species of birds and 19 species of reptiles and amphibians.





# MOUNT OLYMPUS – HISTORY & RELIGION

- Emblematic mountain → Residence of the 12 Gods of ancient Greeks.
- Important archaeological findings
- Stronghold and refuge for rebels and disobedient groups throughout the greek history
- Many monasteries and churches.



# MOUNT OLYMPUS-HIKING PATHS & MOUNTAIN SHELTERS

- E4 European path
- Extensive network of trails



- 7 organized mountain shelters and 6 emergency shelters.



# MOUNTAIN TOURISM

- Mountain areas: the 2nd most popular tourist destination after coasts and islands
- 15-20% of annual world tourism
- Often confused with mountaineering and adventure tourism, it is a broader concept.

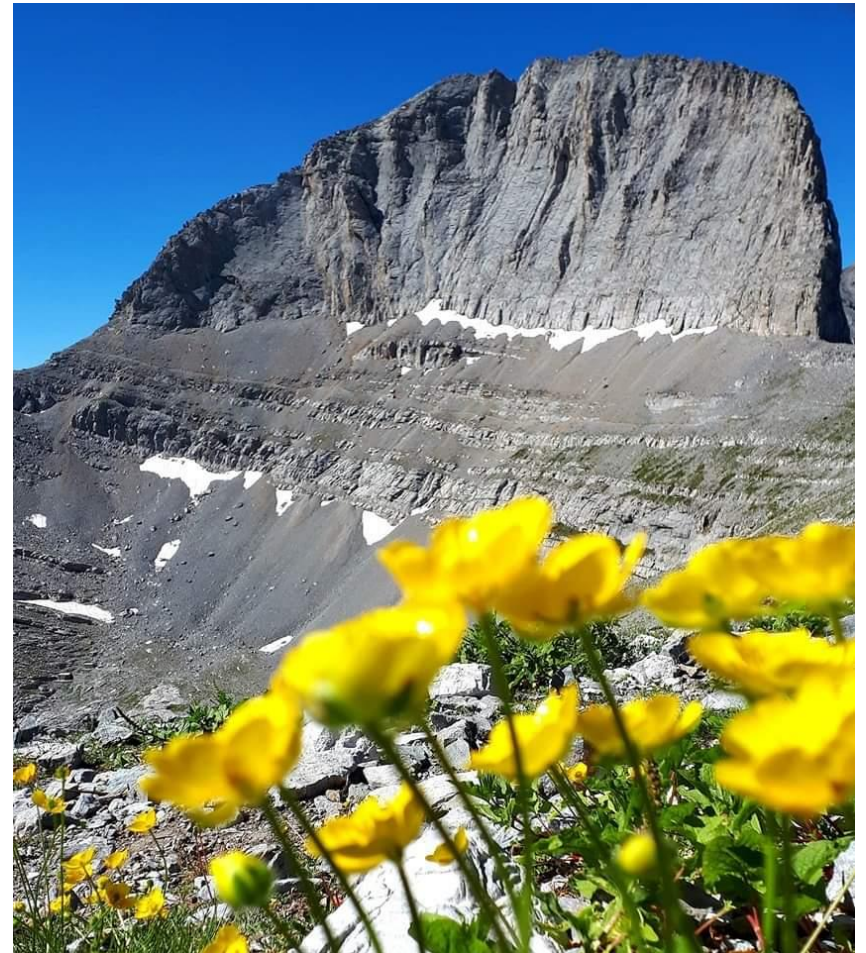


# CONTRIBUTION OF MOUNTAIN TOURISM TO SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

- Can be milder and more environmentally friendly.
- Enhances regional development , reduction of economic disparities.
- Reduces seasonality.
- Improves living standards for the locals.
- Develops growth in various industries.
- Contributes to retention and even the return of the population to the province.
- Promotes infrastructure development in the mountainous areas.

# MOUNTAIN TOURISM - OLYMPUS MOUNTAIN

- Rapid growth, especially after Covid-19.
- Visitors have tripled in the last 10 years.
- More and more and professionals active in the area.





# ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF MOUNTAIN TOURISM ON MOUNT OLYMPUS

- MOUNTAINEERING/TREKKING
- HIKING
- CLIMBING
- SKI & MOUNTAINEERING SKI
- TRAIL RUNNING
- CANYONING
- MOUNTAIN BIKE & DOWNHILL
- OTHERS (Paragliding, Caving, Archery, Horse Riding, Agrotourism, Wine Tourism etc)



# MOUNTAINEERING / TREKKING

- Higher altitudes, special equipment.
- Often difficult conditions, requires knowledge, experience and a good physical shape.
- Every summer thousands of visitors climb the highest peak (Mytikas)
- Many trekking and hiking companies, unclear legal framework.
- Some control on summiting may be needed to avoid accidents.
- Dispersal of visitors could help.



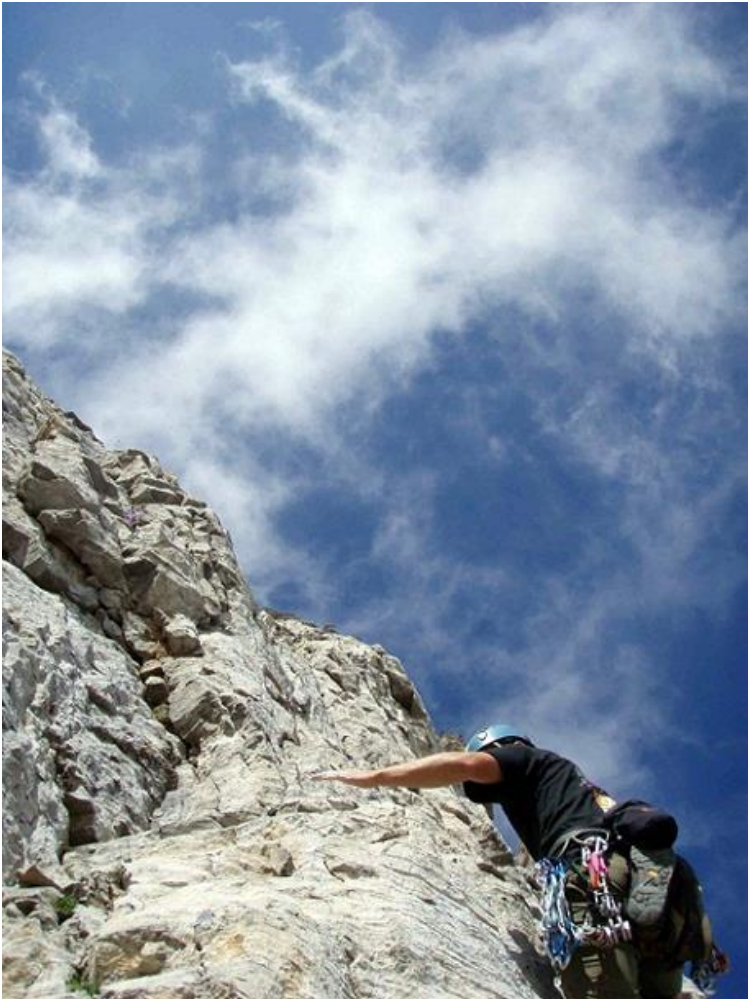


# HIKING

- Walking in mountainous environment, no special equipment. Usually lowest altitudes.
- Easier, almost for anyone.
- In Olympos, the majority of visitors move along specific "famous" routes.
- Other paths need to be utilized more.
- Alternative forms: hiking in religious monuments, birdwatching, kids hiking, orientation etc.



# CLIMBING



- More demanding, more dangerous.
- Requires knowledge, experience, special equipment, good physical shape.
- Alpine climbing: higher altitudes, done mostly by unorganized groups.
- Potential for sport climbing (often easier-safer) in the lowlands.



# SKIING

- Ski center in a military camp in the west side. Often out of order.
- Organized and functional ski center in nearby mountain range of Pierian mountains.
- Some ski centers in a distance of 200 km.



# MOUNTAINEERING SKI



- All-autonomous, off-piste skiing.
- Has evolved out of prehistoric man's necessity to move over hilly and mountainous terrain

# MOUNTAINEERING SKI

- Huge possibilities of growth on Mt Olympus:
  - Suitable weather and terrain conditions
  - No special infrastructure needed (besides rescue)
  - “Virgin mountain” – attracts the sport lovers





# TRAIL RUNNING



- Highly developed in the area
- Over 20 races throughout the year on the mountain.
- Does not require any special infrastructure.
- Reduces seasonality of tourism in the area.
- Develops volunteering and strengthens the community.

# CANYONING



- Crossing/going down a canyon with special equipment.
- Very popular , can be done only in the east side.



# MOUNTAIN BIKE & DOWNHILL

- Less developed, few professional guides, few visitors.
- Possibilities for growth, many forest roads connected to the paths.
- Environmental friendly.



*Image: Downhill from the top of Profitis Ilias, 2.803m.*



# OTHER ACTIVITIES

## PARAGLIDING



## HORSE RIDING



# OTHER ACTIVITIES

- Caving (no major caves)
- Archery
- Agrotourism
- Wine Tourism (some local wineries are open to visit and wine tasting)



# WHAT WE SHOULD DO:

- Greece: 70% mountainous, great potential.
- *Strategic planning for sustainable development.*
- *Measures for the environmental protection.*
- *Infrastructure improvement.*
- *Financial and other motives to professionals.*





# MOUNTAIN/AERIAL RESCUE

- Today: by firefighters and volunteers.
- Difficult and slow (high altitudes, terrain, no roads over 1000m).
- It is announced by January but not done yet.



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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!**

