REGION OF
EASTERN MACEDONIA
AND THRACE

Eastern Macedonia and Thrace:

A Regional Development Profile

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FOREWORD BY THE REGIONAL GOVERNOR

Our Goal: To Establish the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace as a Model of Regional Renaissance and a Gateway for European Cooperation

Strategically located at the northeastern tip of Greece and the European Union, the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace (REMTh) has in recent years emerged as a hub for significant regional development initiatives, with a strong emphasis on energy, entrepreneurship, and agri-food. The Region's commitment to supporting these sectors stems not only from the exploitation of its comparative advantages but also from the pressing need to address long-standing structural weaknesses in its economic and social fabric.

Energy: REMTh as an International Energy Hub

Our Region has evolved into a critical energy hub for Southeastern Europe, hosting major cross-border energy infrastructure projects such as the Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) and the Interconnector Greece-Bulgaria (IGB). At the same time, investments are underway to enhance energy supply diversification and security, including the new liquified natural gas (LNG) terminal in the port of Alexandroupolis and the 877 MW power generation plant in Komotini, with a total investment exceeding €375 million, along with a similar power plant in Alexandroupolis.

REMTh continues to attract significant funds in the field of Renewable Energy Sources (RES), as evidenced by $1.7 billion in foreign direct investment in solar energy and $303 million in wind energy over the past decade. These investments are aligned with our green transition and sustainable development strategy, positioning REMTh as an active participant in Europe's new energy landscape.

Entrepreneurship and Innovation: From Stagnation to Dynamic Growth

Entrepreneurial activity in REMTh is gradually gaining momentum, driven both by the incentives of the Development Law and the attraction of private investments. Through the Recovery and Resilience Fund, a total of €482 million in investments are being implemented, including €205 million in loans and €68 million allocated to small and medium-sized enterprises—strengthening liquidity and the sustainability of local productive networks.

Nevertheless, according to the recent OECD Report, REMTh continues to perform poorly in innovation and entrepreneurship indicators, with the lowest number of international patent applications (PCT) in Greece. While the employment rate in Research and Development (1.7%) aligns with the European average, the innovation ecosystem remains underdeveloped due to limited private sector investment and insufficient incentives for the creation of start-ups.

To address these challenges, the Region has adopted strategies to improve infrastructure (both digital and transport), strengthen entrepreneurial culture, and promote local production clusters, particularly in the agri-food, manufacturing, and energy sectors. We are confident that these strategies will reshape the Region's development trajectory.

Agri-Food: The Primary Sector as a Lever for Regional Growth

REMTh boasts a robust agricultural base, with 26% of its workforce employed in the primary sector—ranking it among the most agriculturally dependent regions in Greece. Fertile plains in Drama, Xanthi, Rhodope, and Evros support the intensive cultivation of crops such as tobacco, cereals, cotton, tomatoes, fruits, and vegetables.

The Region is increasingly investing in the qualitative differentiation of agricultural production. Notable examples include the internationally acclaimed vineyards of Drama and Kavala and the specialized cultivation of products such as asparagus, kiwi, and aromatic plants. In parallel, forms of agrotourism are being developed, enhancing the local economy and adding value to regional agricultural products.

REMTh actively leverages European programs and financial instruments to modernize irrigation infrastructure and boost agricultural processing, thus strengthening the agri-food value chain. Additionally, the Region's role as a supplier of raw materials for the country's food industry makes it a vital link in national food security.

REMTh is currently at a pivotal turning point. Once marked by structural challenges and development delays, it is now evolving into a dynamic center of energy, agricultural, and entrepreneurial activity. Strengthening energy autonomy, capitalizing on its natural and geographical advantages, and promoting agri-food as a strategic sector form the foundation of our development strategy.

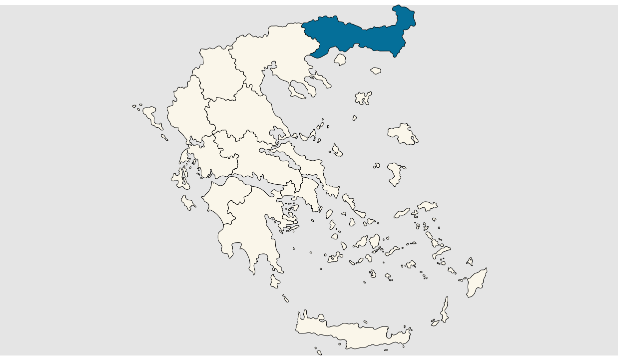
Our commitment goes beyond political declarations—it is reflected in tangible projects, investments, and partnerships with international and European stakeholders. The challenge lies in simultaneously fostering social cohesion, attracting and retaining talent, and integrating innovation into the productive fabric.

Our Region's path toward inclusive and sustainable growth requires synergies, a coherent strategy, and continuous policy evaluation. With planning, consistency, and an international outlook, REMTh can truly become a model of regional renaissance and a gateway for European cooperation.

Christodoulos Topsidis
Regional Governor of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace

1. ANALYSIS OF KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REGION OF EASTERN MACEDONIA & THRACE

1.1. Geographical Location



The Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace is located at the northeastern tip of the country. It borders Turkey to the east, Bulgaria to the north, the Region of Central Macedonia to the west, the Aegean Sea to the southwest, and the Thracian Sea to the southeast. Its total area spans 14,157 km^2, which corresponds to 10.7% of Greece's total land area.

1.2. Administrative – Demographic Data

The Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace is one of the 13 administrative regions of Greece. It constitutes the second-level local authority covering the northeastern tip of the country, namely the eastern part of Macedonia and the entirety of Thrace. It also includes two large islands of the Thracian Sea: Thassos and Samothrace.

It is divided into six regional units: Drama, Kavala, Thassos, Xanthi, Rhodope, and Evros. Its capital is Komotini, and the largest city is Alexandroupolis.

Population Development by Region in Greece, 2019–2023

REGION	2019	2023	%Δ 2019-2023
ATTICA	3,742,235	3,790,842	1%
CENTRAL MACEDONIA	1,873,777	1,782,630	-5%
THESSALY	718,640	682,189	-5%
WESTERN GREECE	655,189	643,188	-2%
CRETE	634,930	622,909	-2%
EASTERN MACEDONIA & THRACE	**599,723**	**559,730**	-7%
PELOPONNESE	574,447	534,345	-7%
CENTRAL GREECE	555,960	504,167	-9%
SOUTH AEGEAN	344,027	326,945	-5%
EPIRUS	333,696	318,890	-4%
WESTERN MACEDONIA	267,008	250,453	-6%
IONIAN ISLANDS	203,869	202,185	-1%
NORTH AEGEAN	221,098	195,509	-12%
GREECE	10,724,599	10,413,982	-3%

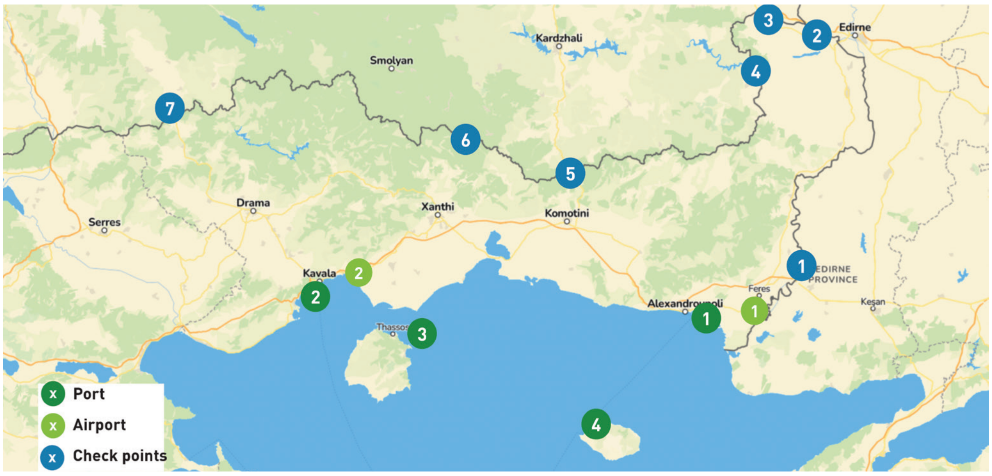
Source: ELSTAT – Estimated Population Processed by INSETE Intelligence

Population Development in the Region of Eastern Macedonia & Thrace, 2019–2023

REGIONAL UNIT	2019	2023	%Δ 2019 - 2023
EVROS	147,190	133,467	-9%
KAVALA & THASSOS	133,391	127,545	-4%
XANTHI	111,631	107,686	-4%
RHODOPE	110,666	104,948	-5%
DRAMA	96,845	86,084	-11%
EASTERN MACEDONIA & THRACE	599,723	559,730	-7%

Source: ELSTAT – Estimated Population – Processed by INSETE Intelligence

1.3. Transport Infrastructure



1.3.1 Airports

In terms of aviation infrastructure, the Region has two airports: Alexandroupolis International Airport "Democritus" and Kavala International Airport "Megas Alexandros".

Kavala International Airport "Megas Alexandros"

- Located 30 km east of Kavala.
- Connected to Athens with flights whose frequency varies seasonally. The flight duration is approximately one hour. During the summer months, international flights from various European countries are available.
- It is one of 14 airports under Fraport management and has undergone upgrades including terminal expansion, reorganization of aircraft parking areas, runway renovation, and additional check-in counters.
- In 2018, it recorded its highest arrivals (157,091 deplaned passengers), while in 2019 there was a 22% decrease compared to the previous year. That same year, the upgrade and modernization works were completed.

Alexandroupolis International Airport "Democritus"

- Located 7 km from the city center, along the European Route E90.
- Offers daily flights to Athens with a flight duration of approximately one hour.
- In 2019, it recorded the highest number of domestic arrivals (116,551) in the last five years, marking a 44% increase since 2015. International arrivals primarily come from charter flights, with only 7 international flights landing in 2019—the lowest activity recorded since 2002.
- Facilities cover more than 8,500 m², including a passenger terminal, an administration building, an air traffic control tower, and a fire station. Upgrades are currently underway to increase capacity and improve services, enhancing regional accessibility for tourism and business alike.

1.3.2 Ports

Ports of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace

Eastern Macedonia and Thrace currently hosts nine ports, classified according to their national or local significance. The new commercial ports of Alexandroupolis and Kavala have been designated as ports of national significance and are included among the thirteen most significant ports in Greece in terms of passenger and freight traffic. Meanwhile, seven ports have been classified as locally significant: two in the mainland (Perigiali and Nea Irakleitsa in the regional unit of Kavala), four on the island of Thassos (Thassos, Limenaria, Skala Marion, and Skala Prinou), and one on the island of Samothrace.

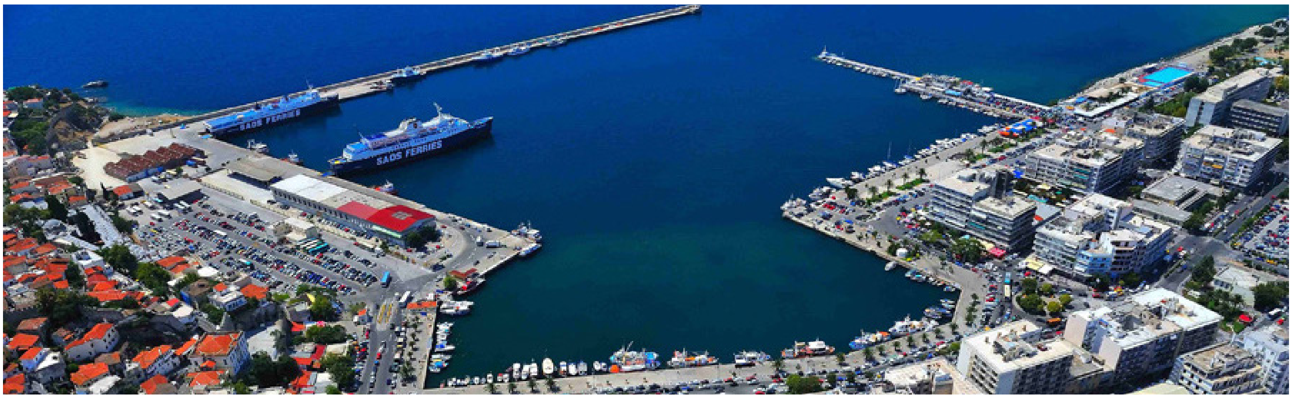
The port of Alexandroupolis is an artificial harbor that stretches along the southeastern open-sea front of the city and operates through two main zones: the new commercial-passenger terminal and the existing port facilities. The new port of Alexandroupolis has been designed and developed with the strategic aim of becoming a key hub for transit traffic. A prerequisite for fulfilling this role is the establishment of strong road and rail connections to Ormenio, thereby connecting it to the trans-European motorway connecting Central Europe with Istanbul.

The main port of Kavala is dedicated exclusively to passenger transport, while the new port, located in the area of Nea Karvali, serves commercial purposes. It meets the growing freight needs of the national hinterland—significantly larger than that of Alexandroupolis—through daily operations and is experiencing steadily increasing traffic.

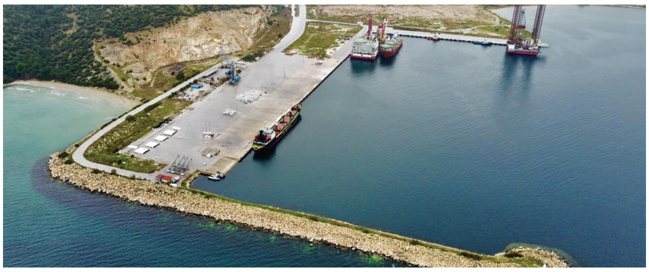
1. Port of Alexandroupolis

- The Port of Alexandroupolis is divided into two sections, one of which was developed in 2016.
- It serves both freight transport and ferry services, with scheduled routes to the ports of the northern and northeastern Aegean islands.
- The port also accommodates the berthing of yachts and fishing boats.
- It has been designated as a Port of International Interest, with upgrade projects classified as a top priority. The strategic objective is to establish the port as a supra-national logistics hub, capable of handling commercial traffic both within Greece and toward neighboring countries.

2. Kavala Port System



Passenger terminal "Apostolos Pavlos"



Commercial terminal "Philippos B"

- The port system of Kavala consists of the "Apostolos Pavlos" Passenger Port, located in the city of Kavala, which connects it with the islands of Thassos, Lemnos, Lesvos, Chios, and Samos; the new commercial port "Philippos B" in Karvali (east of Kavala); the port of Keramoti (also east of Kavala), from which the largest volume of passenger traffic to Thassos is handled; and the port of Eleftheres (west of Kavala), which serves bulk cargo handling, fishing fleet, and tourism.
- The Kavala port system is of international interest and is undergoing intermediate-priority upgrade projects. It accommodates almost all types of vessels (cargo ships, passenger ferries, yachts, fishing vessels, and cruise ships), with functions distributed between the central port (passenger services) and the commercial port. The aim is to establish it as an international logistics and freight hub, as well as a gateway of interest for international tourism.
- It is one of the twenty ports in Greece included in the extensive Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T). The ongoing improvements aim to serve larger vessels and increase cargo capacity, supporting regional trade and economic activity.

1.3.3 Road Network

The officially designated primary road network of REMTh includes national roads and the densest provincial road network in the country, totaling 2,847 km. The road network has significantly improved in recent years. National roads are generally in good condition, though issues persist in parts of Kavala and Xanthi regional units, as well as on the Kavala–Drama national road, where urban crossings and roadside construction outside zoning plans create complications. The Egnatia Motorway is a major infrastructure achievement, reducing isolation and improving connectivity. The 258 km stretch through REMTh connects major cities like Kavala, Xanthi, Komotini, and Alexandroupolis. Within the Region, the Egnatia motorway intersects with vertical axes leading to the borders, forming part of the Trans-European Road Network—namely axes A23 (Rhodope), A22 (Kavala – Exochi), and A21 (Evros).

The road network is a key to connecting mountainous areas, linking REMTh with Central Macedonia and enabling interregional cooperation. Its inclusion in international transport networks is closely tied to its road network functionality.

Egnatia Motorway

1.3.4 Border Checkpoints

The Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace has 7 border checkpoints connecting Greece with Bulgaria and Turkey. Four of them are located in the Regional Unit of Evros (Ormenio, Kyprinos, Kastanies, and Kipoi), one in the Regional Unit of Rhodope (Nymfaia), one in the Regional Unit of Xanthi (Agios Konstantinos), and one in the Regional Unit of Drama (Exochi).

- **The Border Checkpoint of Ormenio** is one of the border crossings between Greece and Bulgaria. On the Bulgarian side lies the town of Svilengrad, while on the Greek side is the village of Ormenio, which belongs to the Municipality of Orestiada.
- **The Border Checkpoint of Kyprinos** is also a border crossing between Greece and Bulgaria. On the Bulgarian side lies the village of Slaveevo, while on the Greek side is the village of Kyprinos, which is part of the Municipality of Orestiada.
- **The Border Checkpoint of Kastanies** is one of the border crossings between Greece and Turkey. It is located at the northeastern tip of Evros, on the border with Turkey. It is the only point where the border does not coincide with the Evros River. On the Turkish side, 10 km away, lies the city of Edirne, while on the Greek side is the settlement of Kastanies, which belongs to the Municipality of Orestiada.
- **The Border Checkpoint of Kipoi** is the main border crossing between Greece and Turkey. Visitors cross the river via the well-known Kipoi Bridge. On the Turkish side lies the city of Ipsala, while on the Greek side is the village of Kipoi, which belongs to the Municipality of Alexandroupolis. The ongoing upgrade of the Kipoi Customs Office will modernize its infrastructure, facilitating the transit of goods and tourists, and strengthen its role as a key connection hub.
- **The Border Checkpoint of Exochi** is one of the border crossings between Greece and Bulgaria. On the Bulgarian side lies the town of Ilinden, while on the Greek side is the settlement of Exochi, which belongs to the Municipality of Nevrokopi.
- **The Border Checkpoint of Agios Konstantinos** is one of the border crossings between Greece and Bulgaria. On the Bulgarian side lies the town of Zlatograd, while on the Greek side is the settlement of Thermes, which is part of the Municipality of Myki.
- **The Border Checkpoint of Nymfaia** is the main border crossing between Greece and Bulgaria. It is located 22 km north of Komotini, at the end of the Komotini–Nymfaia vertical axis, part of the A2 motorway (Egnatia Odos). On the Bulgarian side lies the city of Kardzhali, while on the Greek side is the village of Nymfaia, which belongs to the Municipality of Komotini.

2. ECONOMIC DATA – BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

2.1. Economically Active Population by Region, 2016–2023

The Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace accounts for 5% of the country's economically active population. Its share of the population aged 15+ was 51% in 2019 and 50% in 2023. Compared to the other regions, Eastern Macedonia and Thrace ranked 7th in 2019 and 4th lowest in 2023.

2.2. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by Region, 2017–2021

In terms of percentage distribution for 2021, as expected, the Regions of Attica and Central Macedonia, being the heart of economic activity, contributed 61% of the national GDP. The Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace accounted for 4% of the national GDP, showing a 3% increase from €6,9 billion in 2019 to €7,1 billion in 2021.

GDP of the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace by Regional Unit (in million €, current prices), 2017-2021

REGIONAL UNIT	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	%Δ 2017 - 2019	%Δ 2019 - 2021
EVROS	1,780	1,785	1,816	1,697	1,847	2%	2%
KAVALA/THASSOS	1,809	1,849	1,853	1,633	1,820	2%	-2%
RHODOPE	1,167	1,159	1,154	1,140	1,294	-1%	12%
XANTHI	1,069	1,089	1,087	992	1,096	2%	1%
DRAMA	982	1,007	1,032	938	1,059	5%	3%
EASTERN MACEDONIA & THRACE	6,807	6,888	6,942	6,399	7,117	2%	3%

Source: ELSTAT – Estimated Population – Processed by INSETE Intelligence
*Provisional data

2.3. GDP per Capita in the Region of Eastern Macedonia & Thrace, 2017–2021

The evolution of GDP per capita in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace showed a similar trend as the national average, albeit with milder fluctuations. Specifically, between 2017 and 2021, the Region recorded a 6.2% increase in GDP per capita (from €11,308 in 2017 to €12,006 in 2021).

GDP per capita in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace by Regional Unit (in €), 2017-2021

REGIONAL UNIT	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	%Δ 2017 - 2019	%Δ 2019 - 2021
KAVALA/THASSOS	13,486	13,836	13,910	12,325	13,854	3%	-0%
EVROS	12,060	12,114	12,339	11,555	12,645	2%	2%
RHODOPE	10,469	10,449	10,447	10,380	11,870	-0%	14%
DRAMA	10,149	10,401	10,655	9,715	11,050	5%	4%
XANTHI	9,542	9,740	9,750	8,929	9,924	2%	2%
EASTERN MACEDONIA & THRACE	11,308	11,472	11,585	10,723	12,006	2%	4%

Source: ELSTAT – Processed by INSETE Intelligence

2.4. Number of Employed Persons in the Region of Eastern Macedonia & Thrace, 2019–2023

During the period 2019-2023, the number of employed persons in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace increased by 4% (from 215,000 in 2019 to 222,000 in 2023).

Evolution of employed persons in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace by employment category, 2019-2023

SECTOR	2019	2022	2023	%Δ 2017 - 2019	%Δ 2019 - 2021
OTHER SECTORS	196,324	195,750	207,364	6%	6%
FOOD AND BEVERAGE SERVICE ACTIVITIES	15,845	15,772	12,696	-20%	-20%
ACCOMMODATION	2,479	2,096	2,407	-3%	15%
TOTAL	214,647	213,617	222,467	4%	4%

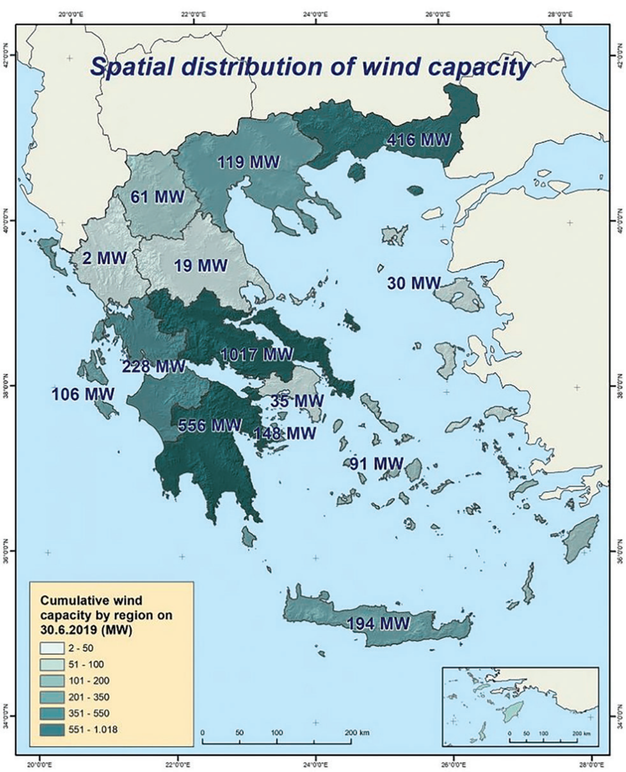
Source: ELSTAT Labour Force Survey – Processed by INSETE Intelligence

2.5. Unemployment Trends by Region, 2019–2023

As regards the distribution of unemployment, the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace accounted for 6% of Greece's total unemployed in 2023. Between 2019 and 2023, unemployment decreased by 26% (from 41,000 to 31,000), and by 17% between 2022 and 2023 (from 37,000 to 31,000). In 2023, the REMTh had the 6th highest unemployment rate among Greece's 13 regions, with 12% of its economically active population unemployed.

2.6. Energy Footprint of the Region of Eastern Macedonia & Thrace

2.6.1 Installed Energy Capacity



Source: ELETAEN

The Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace ranks third nationwide in terms of wind power capacity, representing 11% of the country's total capacity. As of the first half of 2023, the total wind capacity connected to the Greek grid neared 5 GW (specifically, 4,935.4 MW). This data derives from the biannual Wind Energy Statistics report by the Hellenic Wind Energy Association (HWEA).

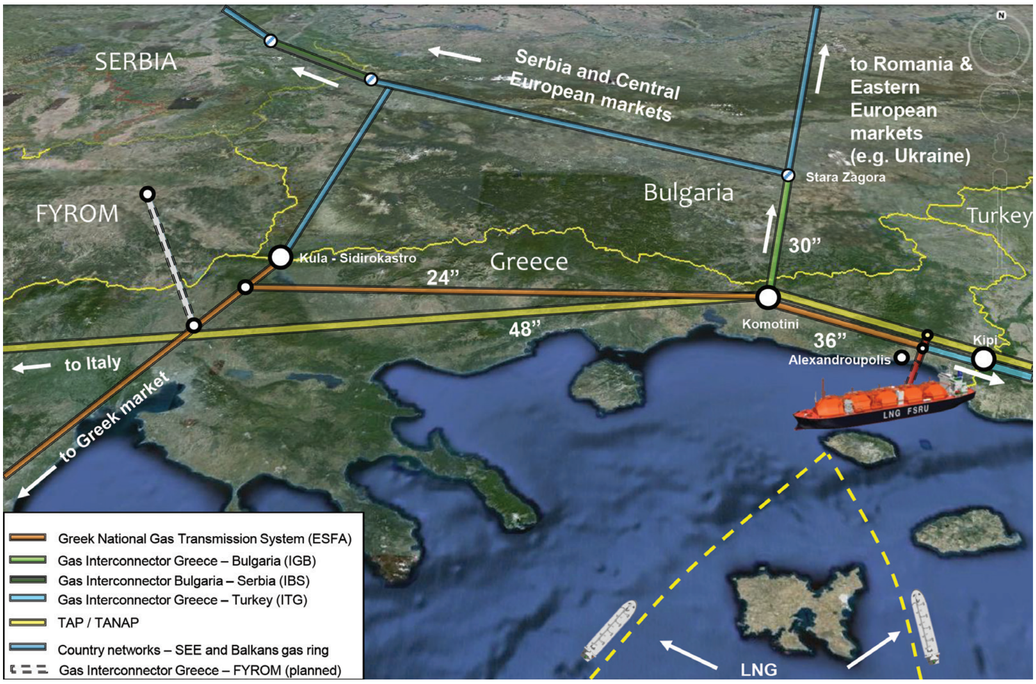
In the first six months of 2023, 77 new wind turbines were connected to the grid, adding a total capacity of 252.5 MW—an investment exceeding €260 million.

This reflects a 5.4% increase from the end of 2022 and more turbines were installed in this period than throughout the entire year of 2022.

This growth was driven by the gradual completion of major wind investments through the concerted efforts of businesses, scientists, and wind energy professionals active in Greece.

By region, Central Greece leads with 2,110 MW (43%), followed by the Peloponnese with 639 MW (13%), and **Eastern Macedonia and Thrace with 534 MW (11%).**

2.6.2 *The Region's Contribution to National Energy Development – Energy Investments*



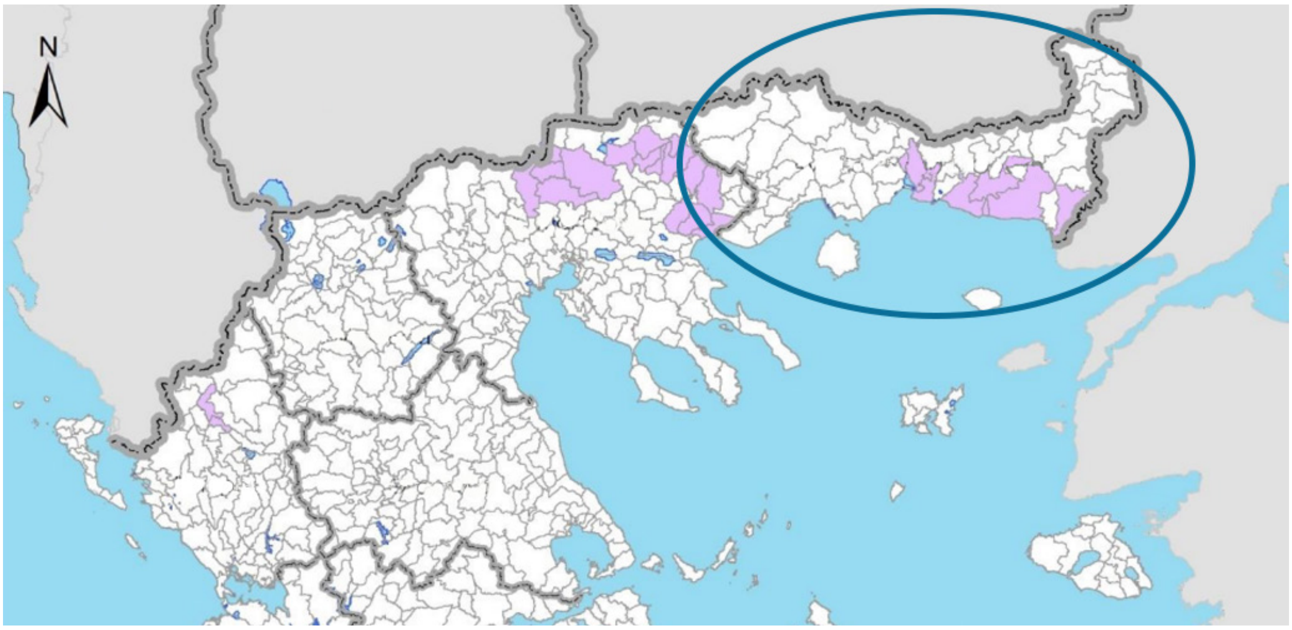
The Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace is expected to become an international energy hub in the near future due to several key developments:

1. Currently, 30% of Greece's electricity from Renewable Energy Sources (RES) is produced here. This share is projected to reach 50% before 2030, when renewable energy will generate 80% of the country's total electricity. There are over 7,000 operational RES plants in Macedonia and Thrace, totaling nearly 3.5 GW. A further 7.5 GW are under development, with future plans nearing 20 GW.

2. A significant portion of the country's natural gas already passes through Northern Greece, i.e., Azerbaijani gas via the TAP pipeline, which terminates in Italy and through its branches supplies Bulgaria and Albania.
3. Alexandroupolis' new LNG terminal is about to start operating, with a connection to the Greek-Bulgarian pipeline at Komotini.
4. Greece's first offshore wind farm will be established in Thrace, a pilot project with an initial 600 MW capacity.
5. Geothermal fields, particularly in Eastern Macedonia (Serres, Kavala, Drama), are being utilized.
6. Major power interconnections with Bulgaria, North Macedonia, and Albania are already operating — and will be further strengthened.

All these elements collectively demonstrate the dynamic potential of the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace in the energy sector, transforming the area into a critical hub for energy production, transmission, and distribution. At the same time, the development of Renewable Energy Sources ensures the region's sustainability and energy autonomy. These are projects and activities which, although they may not individually possess the impressive characteristics of major infrastructure works or high-profile institutional events, nonetheless play a significant role in laying the foundations for a sustainably developing future — one that must not, and cannot, be underestimated.

2.6.3 New Spatial Framework for RES: Seven Wind Priority Areas (WPA) in the Region of Eastern Macedonia & Thrace



A stricter framework for the installation of green projects is being proposed through the new Special Spatial Plan for RES, introducing "exclusion zones" and new restrictions, such as maximum coverage per municipal unit and buffer zones around sensitive areas and uses.

It establishes stricter regulations for installing photovoltaic systems while increasing the number of Wind Priority Areas (WPA) to 68 nationwide—areas identified as having comparative advantages for wind development.

Crete now accounts for 32% of all WPAs and has been included in the national RES plan for the first time, due to its strong wind potential (22 of the 68 national WPAs are in Crete).

Macedonia ranks second with 16 municipal units, followed by Euboea with 12, Eastern Macedonia & Thrace with 7, Central Greece with 7, the Peloponnese with 2, and Epirus also with 2.

3. TOURISM – ATTRACTIONS

3.1. Archaeological Sites – Museums

3.1.1 Archaeological Sites

The Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace is home to a wealth of archaeological sites across its territory. Notable prehistoric sites include Sitagroi in the plain of Drama; Dikili Tash (Orthopetra) near the ancient city of Philippi in Kavala; the prehistoric mound of Paradimi; the cave of Maroneia and the caves in the In-Dere Gorge of Strymi in the Regional Unit of Rhodope; the prehistoric mound and cave of Makri in Evros; the prehistoric acropolises of Agios Georgios in Petrota; and the prehistoric cemetery with the open-air rock art sanctuary near the village of Roussa in Evros. These sites have yielded traces of life dating back to the Neolithic period, the Late Bronze Age, and the Early Iron Age.

Along the coastal areas of the Region, remnants of ancient Greek colonies can still be found, including Abdera, Dikaia, Strymi, Maroneia, and Mesembria-Zone. In the hinterland, several other ancient and Byzantine sites are preserved, such as the organized archaeological site of Philippi, north of Kavala (a UNESCO World Heritage Site); the Sanctuary of Dionysus in the village of Kali Vrysi, Drama; the castle of Kalyva and the Macedonian tomb of Stavroupoli in northwestern Xanthi; Anastasioupolis (Peritheorion) and Maximianoupolis (Mosynoupolis) west of Komotini; the ruins of monastic communities on Mount Papikio northwest of Komotini; Traianoupolis east of Alexandroupolis; Didymoteicho; the castles of Avantas and Pythio north of Alexandroupolis; and the burial mound of Mikri Doxipara, among many others.

In addition, the islands of Thassos and Samothrace also host significant and well-organized archaeological sites. On Thassos, visitors can explore the ancient city at Limenas and the archaeological site of Alyki in the island's southeast. On Samothrace, the Sanctuary of the Great Gods in Paleopolis stands as a prominent example of the islands' rich archaeological heritage.

P. Merakos - visitgreece.gr

3.1.2 Museums

Museums in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace by Regional Unit

DRAMA	EVROS	THASSOS	KAVALA	XANTHI	RHODOPE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF DRAMA	ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF SAMOTHRAKI	ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF THASSOS	ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF KAVALA	CHILDREN'S ART ACADEMY AND MUSEUM	ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF KOMOTINI
ECCLESIASTICAL MUSEUM OF DRAMA	MUNICIPAL ART GALLERY OF DIDYMOTEICHO	KALLIRACHI FOLKLORE MUSEUM	ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF PHILIPPI	FOLKLORE MUSEUM OF XANTHI	CONSTANTINE KARATHEODORIS MUSEUM
FOLKLORE MUSEUM OF DRAMA	ETHNOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF ALEX-ANDROUPOLIS	LIMENARIA FOLKLORE MUSEUM	MUNICIPAL FOLKLORE MUSEUM	ECCLESIASTICAL MUSEUM OF XANTHI	ROMA BASKET WEAVING MUSEUM
MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY	ECCLESIASTICAL MUSEUM OF ALEX-ANDROUPOLIS	THEOLOGOS FOLKLORE MUSEUM	HISTORICAL AND LITERARY ARCHIVE OF KAVALA	ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF ABDERA	THRACIAN EDUCATION MUSEUM
	HISTORICAL AND ETHNOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF DIDYMOTEICHO	POLYGNOTOS VAGIS MUSEUM	HISTORICAL AND ETHNOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF NEA KARVALI	FOLKLORE MUSEUM OF XANTHI	ETHNOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF MARONEIA & FOLK-LORE MUSEUM
	FOLK ART MUSEUM OF SOUFLI	THASSOS OLIVE MUSEUM	TOBACCO MUSEUM	FOLKLORE MUSEUM OF STAVROUPOLI	TAVANIOTIS MANSION
	SILK MUSEUM OF SOUFLI		WAX MUSEUM		MILITARY MUSEUM
	NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF ALEX-ANDROUPOLIS				FOLKLORE MUSEUM OF KOMOTINI
	MILITARY MUSEUM OF DIDYMOTEICHO				
	CAPPADOCIAN FOLK MUSEUM				
	HISTORICAL AND FOLKLIFE MUSEUM OF ORESTIADA				
	SARAKATSANI FOLKLORE MU-SEUM				

Source: Ministry of Culture & Sports – Processed by INSETE Intelligence

3.2. Key Inbound Tourism Data by Region, 2019–2023

Between 2019 and 2023, visits to Greece declined by -1% (from 36.6 million in 2019 to 36.1 million in 2023). All regions recorded a decrease in visits.

The Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace recorded a significant decrease (-67%), from 3.8 million visitors in 2019 to 1.8 million in 2023, ranking 13th among the 13 regions of Greece.

However, between 2022 and 2023, the Region experienced a +17% increase in visits (from 1.1 million in 2022 to 1.3 million in 2023).

3.3. Visitor Origin in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, 2019–2023

In 2023, the regional visitor distribution was:

- Turkey: 40% (compared to 14% in 2019)
- Germany: 14% (3% in 2019)
- Romania: 12% (8% in 2019)
- Bulgaria: 12% (57% in 2019)
- Other countries: 22% (18% in 2019)

3.4. Number of Tourist Units / Rooms / Beds

In 2022, the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace accounted for 4% of the total hotel units, 3% of the rooms, and 3% of the beds in Greece. The region hosts 383 hotel units (1-5*), with 11,412 rooms and 22,777 beds, ranking 10th among Greece's 13 regions.

Hotel capacity of the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace by Regional Unit, 2023

REGIONAL UNIT		5*	4*	3*	2*	1*	TOTAL
DRAMA	UNITS	1	3	12	1	3	**20**
	ROOMS	73	173	235	26	49	**556**
	BEDS	147	365	479	48	92	**1,131**
EVROS	UNITS	3	2	21	29	8	**63**
	ROOMS	386	142	642	694	109	**1,973**
	BEDS	784	293	1,238	1,305	232	**3,852**
THASSOS	UNITS	7	17	51	91	40	**206**
	ROOMS	578	1,179	1,435	1,811	588	**5,591**
	BEDS	1,255	2,566	2,980	3,662	1,117	**11,580**
KAVALA	UNITS	2	7	18	19	10	**56**
	ROOMS	179	368	702	383	154	**1,786**
	BEDS	359	664	1,332	723	325	**3,403**
XANTHI	UNITS	1	2	11	1	2	**17**
	ROOMS	100	62	424	34	34	**654**
	BEDS	183	125	845	74	66	**1,293**
RHODOPE	UNITS		4	16		1	**21**
	ROOMS		167	595		90	**852**
	BEDS		320	1,108		90	**1,518**
TOTAL	**UNITS**	**14**	**35**	**129**	**141**	**64**	**383**
	ROOMS	**1,316**	**2,091**	**4,033**	**2,948**	**1,024**	**11,412**
	BEDS	**2,728**	**4,333**	**7,982**	**5,812**	**1,922**	**22,777**

Source: Hellenic Chamber of Hotels – Processed by INSETE Intelligence

The average hotel occupancy rate across all Greek regions during 2019–2023 was 40%, placing Eastern Macedonia and Thrace in 6th place nationally.

Beyond hotels, **rental rooms in the region** reached 1,152 units in 2023, with 7,322 rooms and 17,160 beds.

3.5. Hotel Performance Indicators in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace

Based on data from 76 hotels comprising 3,714 rooms in the 5*, 4*, 3*, and 2* categories:

Hotels' Economic Performance Indicators in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, 2022

CATEGORY	5*	4*	3*	2*
ROOMS	1,316	2,068	3,939	2,940
REVENUE (€)	23,234,955	36,430,143	24,619,029	10,443,911
EBITDA (€)	5,935,013	8,087,639	6,734,351	2,843,540
EBITDA / REVENUE	26%	22%	27%	27%
NET PROFIT (€)	1,983,077	3,845,981	2,331,971	980,108
NET PROFIT / REVENUE	9%	11%	9%	9%
NET ASSETS (€)	98,744,343	66,564,452	24,945,757	14,369,900
EQUITY (€)	78,378,703	77,463,390	77,896,517	49,580,201
LONG-TERM DEBT (€)	30,756,077	18,550,223	19,865,522	7,403,326
LTD / EQUITY	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.1
LTD / EBITDA	5.2	2.3	2.9	2.6

Source: : ICAP, Hellenic Chamber of Hotels – Processed by INSETE Intelligence
*Figures are subject to revision

Key Hotel Indicators per Room in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace

CATEGORY	5*	4*	3*	2*
REVENUE / ROOM (€)	17,656	17,616	6,250	3,552
NET ASSETS / ROOM (€)	75,034	32,188	6,333	4,888
EQUITY / ROOM (€)	59,558	37,458	19,776	16,864
LONG-TERM DEBT / ROOM (€)	23,371	8,970	5,043	2,518

Source: ICAP, Hellenic Chamber of Hotels – Processed by INSETE Intelligence (provisional data)
*Figures are subject to revision

In addition, short-term rental properties reached 7,725 units in July 2023, with 14,047 rooms and 33,274 beds (ranking 8th nationally).

Short-term Rentals in Eastern Macedonia and Thrace by Regional Unit (July 2023)

REGIONAL UNIT	UNITS	ROOMS	BEDS	ROOMS / UNIT	BEDS / UNIT
KAVALA	3,004	6,142	14,408	2.0	4.8
THASSOS	3,403	5,789	13,516	1.7	4.0
EVROS	825	1,307	3,253	1.6	3.9
XANTHI	220	366	956	1.7	4.3
RHODOPE	184	312	783	1.7	4.3
DRAMA	89	131	358	1.5	4.0
TOTAL	**7,725**	**14,047**	**33,274**	**1.8**	**4.3**

Source: ICAP, Hellenic Chamber of Hotels – Processed by INSETE Intelligence
*Figures are subject to revision

The Hotel Guest Satisfaction Indicator (GRI) in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace remained stable during 2019-2023 (from 86.7% in 2019 to 86.4% in 2023).

Hotel quality indicators in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace by class, 2019-2023

HOTEL STAR RATING	2019	2023
5*	89.8%	86.5%
4*	85.1%	86.0%
3*	88.0%	88.0%
1* - 2*	85.1%	85.0%
TOTAL	**86.7%**	**86.4%**

Source: Review Pro – Processed by INSETE Intelligence

In 2022, the Region ranked 6th lowest in hotel customer satisfaction among the 13 Greek regions.

3.6. Cruise Tourism in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace (2019–2023)

In 2022, the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace accounted for just 1% of the country's cruise traffic.

During the period 2019–2023, **the port of Kavala** (the only port in the region with cruise traffic) experienced a 414% increase in cruise ship arrivals, from 7 in 2019 to 36 in 2023.

Cruise Ship Arrivals in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace 2019-2023

PORT	2019	2022	2023	%Δ 2019-2023	%Δ 2022-2023
KAVALA	7	35	36	414%	3%
EASTERN MACEDONIA & THRACE	7	35	36	414%	3%

Source: Hellenic Ports Association – Processed by INSETE Intelligence

Passenger arrivals at the port of Kavala also rose significantly, showing a 680% increase from 2,699 in 2019 to 21,052 in 2023. From 2022 to 2023, passenger numbers increased by 58% from 13,000 in 2022 to 21,000 in 2023.

Cruise Passenger Arrivals in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, 2019-2023

PORT	2019	2022	2023	%Δ 2019-2023	%Δ 2019-2023
KAVALA	2,699	13,315	21,052	680%	58%
EASTERN MACEDONIA & THRACE	2,699	13,315	21,052	680%	58%

Source: Hellenic Ports Association – Processed by INSETE Intelligence

3.7. Air Connectivity in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace (2019–2023)

International Arrivals

In 2023, the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace accounted for 1% of all international air arrivals in Greece.

Between 2019 and 2023, the region's airports experienced a marginal decline of -0.5%, from 123,000 to 122,000 arrivals.

International air arrivals in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace

UNIT	2019	2022	2023	%Δ 2022-2023	%Δ 2019-2023
KAVALA	122,892	100,689	122,337	-0%	21%
EVROS	41	864	5	-88%	-99%
EASTERN MACEDONIA & THRACE	**122,933**	**101,553**	**122,342**	**-0%**	**20%**

Source: HCAA, AIA, FRAPORT – Processed by INSETE Intelligence

Domestic Arrivals

In 2023, the Region represented 2% of the national total for domestic air arrivals. From 2019 to 2023, domestic arrivals increased by 10%, from 151,000 to 167,000.

Domestic air arrivals in the Region of Eastern Macedonia & Thrace, 2019-2023

UNIT	2019	2022	2023	%Δ 2022-2023	%Δ 2019-2023
EVROS	117,328	121,573	139,203	19%	15%
KAVALA	33,935	21,944	27,851	-18%	27%
EASTERN MACEDONIA & THRACE	**151,263**	**143,517**	**167,054**	**10%**	**16%**

Source: HCAA, AIA, FRAPORT – Processed by INSETE Intelligence

3.8. Coastal Ferry Connections in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace (2019–2023)

In 2023, the Region accounted for 7% of domestic ferry passenger traffic. Passenger traffic increased by 8% between 2019 and 2023, from 4.6 million to 4.9 million. All ports (Kavala, Thassos, Alexandroupolis) showed growth: Kavala +6%, from 2.2 million in 2019 to 2.4 million in 2023; Thassos +8%, from 2 million in 2019 to 2.2 million in 2023; and Alexandroupolis +29%, from 271,000 in 2019 to 350,000 in 2023.

Domestic air arrivals in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, 2019-2023

REGIONAL UNIT	2019	2022	2023	%Δ 2022-2023	%Δ 2019-2023
KAVALA	2,246,326	2,097,170	2,389,832	6%	14%
THASSOS	2,042,972	1,903,160	2,200,736	8%	16%
EVROS	270,844	326,038	350,289	29%	7%
EASTERN MACEDONIA & THRACE	**4,560,142**	**4,326,368**	**4,940,857**	**8%**	**14%**

Source: ELSTAT – Processed by INSETE Intelligence

3.9. Marinas

The Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace hosts two marinas with a total of 580 berths:

- Alexandroupolis: 300 berths.
- Thassos: 280 berths.

Additionally, three designated tourist mooring areas have been established: two in Thassos and one in Kavala, offering an additional 184 berths.

4. REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM – EASTERN MACEDONIA AND THRACE (2021–2027)

The National Development Program (NDP) 2021-2025 was established to implement a comprehensive system for planning, managing, monitoring, and controlling interventions funded by the national resources of the Public Investment Program (PIP).

The NDP consists of 19 Sectoral Development Programs (SDPs) and 13 Regional Development Programs (RDPs), each prepared by the competent Ministries and Regions, respectively. These programs include medium-term development objectives within their respective domains and are aligned with the overall planning and resource allocation of the NDP.

Below is a brief overview of our Region’s current Development Program (RDP), the funding bodies, actions, and tools for financing both Public and Private Investments.

Regional Development Program (RDP) 2021-2025 for Eastern Macedonia and Thrace

The RDP for Eastern Macedonia and Thrace is designed to utilize national PIP resources to meet the region's medium-term goals. The approved budget for the REMTh for the 2021-2025 period amounts to €188 million.

European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) 2021-2027
(National Strategic Reference Framework 2021-2027)

The European Regional Development Fund 2021-2027 (NSRF 2021-2027) is a significant funding framework outlining Greece’s development priorities for the coming years. It includes 22 Programs in total: 9 Sectoral and 13 Regional Programs, one for each region of Greece, including the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace.

The total public budget for the REMTh under the NSRF 2021-2027 amounts to €639 million, of which €543 million is funded by the EU and €96 million by national contributions.

Key NSRF action areas for the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace include:

- Completion of critical infrastructure connecting the REMTh with national and international transport, energy, and telecommunications networks, strengthening its geostrategic role, while also creating a favorable and competitive environment that can attract human resources, investments, and visitors, thus contributing to regional development.
- Promotion of a sustainable production model focused on tourism, culture, environment, and agri-food.
- Investment in clean energy, circular economy, green and blue entrepreneurship.
- Enhancement of human capital through research, innovation, and digital skills development.
- Expansion of existing social infrastructure and services.
- Innovative solutions for underdeveloped regions and marginalized populations.
- Combating discrimination, promoting equal opportunities, enhancing social cohesion, and strengthening the education and healthcare systems in the Region.

Further resources for NSRF 2021-2027 (REMTh):

https://www.espa.gr/el/Pages/espa2021-2027.aspx

https://www.espa.gr/el/Pages/staticPEasternMacedonia-Thrace.aspx

4.1. PRIVATE INVESTMENTS

A key financial and incentive tool for implementing private investments across various economic sectors is **the new Development Law 4887/2022**.

This law aims to support the digital and technological transformation of enterprises, green transition, economies of scale, and innovation-driven projects that integrate technologies such as "Industry 4.0", robotics, and AI. It also promotes tourism and manufacturing investments, the agri-food sector, with special provisions for investments in regions undergoing a Just Transition, offering higher subsidy rates.

Thirteen thematic state aid schemes are introduced for the first time to incentivize private investment:

1. Digital and technological transformation of enterprises
2. Green transition – Environmental upgrade of enterprises
3. New Entrepreneurship, supporting new entrepreneurs across sectors
4. Just Transition scheme
5. Research and applied innovation
6. Agri-food – Primary production and processing – Fisheries
7. Manufacturing – Supply chain
8. Business extroversion
9. Enhancement of tourism investments
10. Alternative forms of tourism
11. Major investments, aimed at providing special support to investment plans significantly affecting local economies and the growth of sectoral economic indicators
12. European value chains
13. 360° Entrepreneurship

4.1.1 Subsidy Rates

Applicable for the period 01.01.2022-31.12.2027

Maximum aid intensities for regional state aid in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace vary by business size:

EASTERN MACEDONIA & THRACE	LARGE ENTERPRISES*	MEDIUM ENTERPRISES*	SMALL AND MICRO FIRMS*
BUSINESS SIZE	50%	60%	70%

* A "micro- enterprise" is defined as a business employing up to 10 employees. A "small enterprise" employs between 10 and 49 employees and has an annual turnover of up to €10 million. A "medium-sized enterprise" employs between 50 and 249 employees and has a turnover exceeding €10 million. A "large enterprise" is one that employs more than 251 employees.

4.1.2 Incentives

Available incentives include:
1. Tax exemption
2. Subsidy
3. Leasing subsidy
4. Subsidizing the costs of the created employment

SPECIAL AID CATEGORIES

In order for a business to be eligible for support in the form of a capital grant, it must fall under the category of Micro or Small Enterprises. The percentage of support in the form of a grant is defined as 80% of the maximum aid intensity specified in the Regional Aid Map. For a business to receive 100% of the aid intensity provided for in the Regional Aid Map—depending on the applicable aid scheme—it must fall under at least one of the following categories:
1. It implements an investment plan eligible for submission under the New Entrepreneurship or Just Transition scheme.
2. It implements an investment plan in special designated areas, as defined in a relevant annex of the law (e.g., mountainous, insular, border, or areas affected by natural disasters).
3. It implements its investment plan in Industrial and Business Areas (IBA), Business Parks—excluding Business Parks of Intermediate Organization, Technology Parks, Innovation Hubs, or Organized Recipients of Manufacturing and Business Activities, provided the investment does not concern the modernization or expansion of existing structures of the supported enterprise.
4. It implements an investment plan in buildings designated as preserved, up to 90% of the Eligible Expenditure Budget.
5. It implements an investment plan involving the reopening of industrial units that have ceased operation, where the value of fixed equipment of the unit to be reopened accounts for at least 50% of the eligible cost of the investment plan.
6. According to the provisions of the aid schemes, Medium-sized and Large enterprises are primarily entitled to incentives in the form of tax exemptions, leasing subsidies, and wage cost subsidies, whereas Small and Micro-businesses may receive all forms of support, including capital grants.

EXCEPTIONS FOR MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES IN THRACE

For medium-sized enterprises, all types of support are available except grants. Exceptions are made for businesses in the Regional Units of Evros, Rhodope, and Xanthi, where a grant incentive of 60% is provided in Evros and 30% in Rhodope and Xanthi — with the remaining support being tax exemptions at 40% and 70%, respectively.

4.1.3 Maximum Subsidy Amounts (per project)

The maximum subsidy amounts vary depending on the size of the enterprise, as outlined below:

a) For small enterprises (employing fewer than 50 people and having an annual turnover of up to €10 million):
- Up to €3,000,000

b) For medium-sized and large enterprises (employing more than 50 people and having an annual turnover exceeding €10 million):
- Up to €5,000,000 (in the form of tax exemption)
- Up to €3,000,000 (in the form of leasing subsidy and wage subsidy for new job positions)

4.1.4 Minimum Investment Thresholds

Depending on whether a business is classified as micro, small, medium-sized, or large, the new Development Law sets a minimum eligible investment budget.

Accordingly, the law establishes the minimum investment amounts for which an application can be submitted, as follows:
- €100,000 for Micro-businesses
- €250,000 for Small Enterprises
- €500,000 for Medium-sized Enterprises
- €1,000,000 for Large Enterprises
- €50,000 for Social Cooperative Enterprises, Agricultural Cooperatives, Urban Cooperatives, Producer Groups, Agricultural Corporate Partnerships

Further information on Development Law 4887/2022 and its aid schemes is available at:

https://ependyseis.mindev.gov.gr/el/idiotikes/ypostiriktiko-yliko/anaptiksiakos

4.2. Strategic Investments (Law 4864/2021)

Strategic Investments are projects of high importance to the national or regional economy, capable of boosting employment, restructuring production, and showcasing the country's natural and cultural environment. These projects align with the principles of socially inclusive, balanced, and sustainable development and emphasize attracting investment capital, extroversion and export orientation, innovation, competitiveness, integrated planning, resource efficiency within a circular economy framework, and high added value, especially in internationally tradable goods and services.

The General Directorate for Strategic Investments is responsible for implementing the national investment policy to attract strategic investments and monitor the progress of projects under the Strategic Investment regime. These include projects under Law 3894/2010 (A' 204, Art. 1, Chapter A), Law 4608/2019 (Art. 10), and Law 4864/2021 (Art. 2). Key responsibilities include:

a) Planning, organizing, monitoring, and controlling Strategic Investments.
b) Licensing Strategic Investments as a one-stop shop.
c) Specifying incentives provided to Strategic Investments under national and EU law.
d) Facilitating and coordinating licensing for projects qualifying as Strategic Investments as ex-officio accepted or due to specific legislative provisions.

The General Directorate acts as a one-stop shop and offers investors:
- Acceleration of procedures
- Issuance of Special Spatial Development Plans for Strategic Investments (ESHASE)
- Centralized Licensing

Further information on Strategic Investments and their incentive schemes can be found at:

https://ependyseis.mindev.gov.gr/el/stratigikes

https://ependyseis.mindev.gov.gr/el/stratigikes/p/katigories-kai-kinitra

5. DEMOCRITUS UNIVERSITY OF THRACE (DUTH)

The Democritus University of Thrace (DUTh) was established by Legislative Decree No. 37 on July 27, 1973, and started to run in the academic year 1974-1975 with the admission of its first students to the Department of Civil Engineering in Xanthi and the Department of Law in Komotini.

It was named "Democritus" in honor of the ancient Greek philosopher Democritus, whose origin was from the town of Abdera in the Prefecture of Xanthi. The administrative seat of the University is located in the city of Komotini, which is the capital of the Administrative Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, while administrative services are also provided in all four cities of the university.

Since its founding, the Democritus University of Thrace has been the first Greek regional multi-campus university, that did not solely serve purely educational objectives. Its operation across multiple campuses, initially in Xanthi and Komotini, Alexandroupolis and Orestiada, and later in Kavala and Drama, has constituted a significant intervention in the economic development of Thrace. At the same time, it has greatly contributed to strengthening the national and cultural identity of the broader Thrace area, as well as to upgrading the living standards and social status through direct and indirect initiatives.

The Democritus University of Thrace is classified among the largest universities in Greece in terms of active student population. Geographically dispersed across the entire Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, with 10 Schools, 28 Departments, and a multitude of Postgraduate Programs, with approximately 42,000 students (undergraduate students, postgraduate students, and PhD candidates), and with a research and teaching staff that exceeds 700 people, it continues to be the only university institution in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace.

The structure of the offered course curricula covers the majority of modern scientific fields, including the School of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences in Orestiada, the Schools of Health Sciences and Education Studies in Alexandroupolis, the Schools of Law, Classical & Humanity Studies, Social Political & Economic Sciences, and the School of Physical Education & Sport Science in Komotini, the Polytechnic School in Xanthi, as well as the Schools of Exact Sciences and the School of Administration Science and Accounting in Kavala.

From this description, it is evident that the university demonstrates multidisciplinary capabilities both in the provided education and in the research undertaken. Additionally, the international academic dimension of the University's presence in Thrace and its staff's longstanding commitment to the quality of educational services result in a prominent footprint in Greece's academic landscape as well as in the broader geographical region.

In a highly changing environment, DUTh continues to aim for both educational and research excellence, building upon the challenges and demands of the future.

It is reorienting its research strategy based on innovation, entrepreneurship, technology, the new digital era, large-scale development, and attracting funding from both domestic and international sources.

Today, the mark of DUTh is reflected in its innovative international postgraduate programs, as well as in initiatives that allow it to overcome modern bureaucracy and geographical barriers.

DUTh also strives to strengthen its research profile through collaborations and projects that continue to establish it as one of Greece's leading research institutions.

6. EASTERN MACEDONIA & THRACE: A LAND OF OPPORTUNITIES

6.1. Investment Profile of the Region

The Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace offers a broad spectrum of investment opportunities spanning natural resources, innovation, and skilled workforce.

Key Sectors for Investment:

I. Tourism

II. Manufacturing

III. Renewable Energy Sources

IV. Food & Beverage

I. Tourism

Competitive advantages allow for diverse investment options, including:

- Cultural tourism: Archaeological sites, monuments, museums that cover all periods of Greek history
- Conference and exhibition tourism
- Ecotourism: Forests of Elatia and Frakto, Rhodope Mountains, Delta of Nestos and Evros, Pomak villages, scenic coastlines, impressive mountains and forests
- Wellness tourism: Mud therapy in Krinides, thermal baths in Thermes and Potamia (Xanthi), Samothrace, and Traianoupolis
- Agrotourism: Potential for creating hospitality facilities across all regional units

II. Manufacturing

- Extensive network of industrial zones with essential infrastructure for business development
- Potential for cross-border business clusters at competitive costs
- Rich mineral deposits (gold, copper, silver)
- Prominent marble quarries
- Strong tobacco processing industry
- Favorable incentives under the Development Law

III. Energy

Eastern Macedonia and Thrace is emerging as an energy hub for Greece and Southeast Europe due to:

- The presence of TAP and IGB gas pipelines; additional pipelines planned (500 km)
- Offshore LNG terminal under development at the port of Alexandroupolis
- Domestic oil production near Kavala
- New power plant in Komotini Industrial Zone (€375+ million investment, 877 MW, gas-fired)

Energy Investment Opportunities:

- Power generation from RES and clean thermal units
- Distribution infrastructure for gas and electricity
- Hydrocarbon exploration (onshore/offshore)
- Energy efficiency and storage projects
- Energy-related R&D initiatives
- Waste-to-energy (WTE) plants

IV. Food & Beverage

Drama: Cereals, cotton, tomatoes, tobacco, vineyards, fruits, and vegetables.

Kavala: Seafood exports, tobacco, cereals, rice, legumes, kiwi, cotton, vegetables, olives, grapes, asparagus.

Xanthi: Renowned aromatic tobacco, cotton, wheat, corn, kiwi, vegetables, traditional sweets. High fish production from the Vistonida Gulf and Porto Lagos.

Rhodope: Cotton, tobacco, cereals, corn, sugarcane, sunflowers, cherries, kiwi, vegetables

Evros: Cereals, legumes, berries, almonds, apples, pears, olives, vegetables, sunflowers, sesame, sugarcane

6.2. Regional Competitive Advantages

The Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace holds significant growth potential with its strategic location, developed infrastructure, and diverse resources:

- Gateway to the Balkans, Turkey, and Europe (50M+ potential market)
- Numerous industrial areas and parks (BIPs & BIPAs)
- Democritus University of Thrace (DUTh)
- Abundant water resources (Evros & Nestos Rivers)
- Extensive coastline with numerous accessible beaches (24 Blue Flag beaches in 2020)
- High wind energy potential
- Evolving energy resource capabilities
- Strong interregional and international connectivity (Egnatia Highway and vertical axes)
- Strategic cities (Kavala and Alexandroupolis), with two international airports and ports
- Diverse development assets (water resources, RES, energy, natural and cultural environment, minerals, agriculture, forests, fisheries, geothermal fields)
- High-quality local agricultural products
- Robust mining/export sectors (e.g., Drama marbles)
- Rich cultural and historical heritage
- Multi cultural identity
- Rising trends in tourism and alternative tourism

REMTh-Gr

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