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MSc Advanced Product Design Engineering and Manufacturing
(ΠΜΣ Προηγμένα Βιομηχανικά Συστήματα Παραγωγής)

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Introduction

The Postgraduate Dissertation (MScDis) is the final stage of the postgraduate programme and provides the student the opportunity to demonstrate that he/she has acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to organise and carry out a research project.

On successful completion of the module, students will be able to:

1. Formulate a research problem, clearly defining the objectives of the proposed research methodology, developing and clarifying the boundary conditions for its completion
2. Carry out a thorough literature search in order to develop a comprehensive and sufficiently in-depth appreciation of the chosen research area
3. Collect, discern and classify existing literature related to the research topic, identifying gaps and areas requiring further investigation.
4. Create a comprehensive research plan on the basis of which their thesis will be implemented.
5. Demonstrate skills in applying research findings to related disciplines and problems.
6. Demonstrate critical analysis skills consistent with graduate-level work and express hypotheses, analyses and conclusions in a clear, concise and objective manner.
7. Gain the ability to present project results in a concise, coherent and structured manner.

The MScDis is an official document and there are rules governing the way it is presented. It should be composed on a series of chapters including: the introduction, the review of relevant literature, the justification of the data used for the relevant analysis, the research methodology to be followed, the results of the data analysis and, finally, the conclusions and recommendations for practical applications of the research findings, as well as suggestions for further research in the field. The appropriateness of the topics of the MSc are subject to the approval of the MSc Steering Committee.

This guide is intended to support the student to perform the required steps of the MScDis process. It only offers recommendations and does not 100% guarantee the successful completion. However, these recommendations have been proven over time to be practical and effective.

MSc students should read this guide before starting their MSc dissertation and it is essential that they refer to it throughout the process. This will help them at the start of their MA and make their meetings with their supervisor more effective.

2. Objectives, learning outcomes and style of the MScDis

2.1 The objectives of the MScDis

The usual objectives of the MScDis are:

- the application of theories and theoretical concepts taught during the programme
- the in-depth study of a topic in the field of the MSc
- the combination of relevant theoretical frameworks to generate alternative theories
- encouraging interaction with people from public and private sector enterprises
- the demonstration by students of their ability to plan, manage and schedule a project

At the end of the MSc, students should:

- be able to define, plan and deliver a project that meets rigorous academic criteria
- understand the relationships between the theoretical concepts taught in the classroom and their application to solving administrative problems
- demonstrate a deep knowledge of their chosen discipline including a critical evaluation of previous approaches
- understand the practical applications and limitations of the topic they have worked on
- understand the process and decisions required for the management and scheduling of the context of their work

The thesis writing time cannot be less than six (6) months or more than eighteen (18) months.

2.2 The style of the MScDis

The MSE is required to demonstrate the student's knowledge and understanding of the subject of study at a level beyond that of the objectives of a corresponding undergraduate project and those taught in the classroom during the postgraduate programme. All MAs must demonstrate appropriate academic style and appropriate structuring that, at the same time, support the objectives of the dissertation. The term academic style refers not only to clarity of expression, writing free of grammatical and syntactical errors, use of references and citation of relevant literature, but also refers to a clearly structured approach to justifying and validating facts, theories and opinions presented to form an argument.

Given the different subjects you studied during the MSc, the type of MSc will vary. Once the dissertation has been completed and handed in, there will be a process of advocacy by the author before a three-member committee of MSc professors.

3. Supervision of MScDis

3.1 Supervision

The dissertation will be supervised by a member of the teaching staff of the MSc. The Director of the MSc will announce to the postgraduate students the procedure by which they will be assigned a supervisor. Ideally, the supervisor of the MSc should have academic experience in the subject. However, if this is not possible, then the supervisor may be in a related subject. Also, the number of Dissertation assignments per academic cycle to a particular lecturer should not exceed a certain number set by the Steering Committee. This threshold applies to all members of the teaching staff without exception.

3.2 The role of the supervisor

The supervisor of the MScDis guides the students in the preparation of the dissertation. Responsible for the quality and content is the postgraduate students. The responsibilities of the supervisor are as follows:

- To advise the postgraduate student on the feasibility of the project he/she wishes to undertake and the possible risks inherent in it. For example, existence of problems in accessing the literature, possible low response rates to field surveys.
- To help the student to adapt their research proposal to possible time and other constraints.
- Assist the student in searching for appropriate literature.
- To advise the student in the selection of appropriate research methodologies.

- To supervise the progress of the dissertation and advise the student on what is needed to successfully complete a satisfactory dissertation.

3.3 The responsibilities of the postgraduate student

- Maintain regular contact with the supervisor. It is the student's responsibility to keep the supervisor informed of the progress of the MScDis and has the first say in the preparation of the MScDis. Any difficulties of any kind must be resolved at the time they arise. Retrospective information is not acceptable.
- Write the MScDis following the syntactic and grammatical rules of the English language, as well as the suggested rules for the use of references and citation of relevant literature. It is not the responsibility of the supervisor to monitor whether the above rules are met.
- To prepare the MScDis under the guidance of the supervisor. The MScDis and the associated research work belongs to the student. The MScDis reflects the student's level of knowledge of the research area under investigation and his/her research skills, not those of the supervisor.
- If, during the course of the MScDis, the focus and direction of the MScDis changes significantly from what was planned at the time of undertaking the MScDis, then the supervisor should be informed immediately and the reasons for this diversion should be discussed.

3.4 Programme of student-supervisor meetings

Students may have meetings with the supervisor during the course of the MScDis. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss the progress of the MScDis and to resolve any difficulties encountered by the student. The student should take an active approach to these meetings

Milestones

Phase A: Topic Search

In this stage the student visits the MSc lecturers, discusses with them and searches for a specific topic for his/her MSc.

Towards this end he combines:

- the main scientific areas
- the subject area of each lecturer; and
- his/her own personal interests and aspirations

This stage takes place and is completed at the end of the 2nd semester of the MSc.

Phase B. Formulation and Acceptance of the Proposal

At this stage, the student finalizes the topic of his/her thesis and, in collaboration with the supervisor, submits a proposal to the Programme Secretariat for approval by the Coordinating Committee of the MSc.

Provided that his/her proposal is accepted, he/she formally starts his/her work at the beginning of the third academic semester.

Phase C. Intermediate Implementation Phase

In this stage, the student works closely with his/her supervisor, completes the literature survey, clearly defines the purpose of the project with the individual questions to be researched and decides, in an informed manner, on the methodological approach to be followed. He/she compiles all of the above in

a text with a coherent structure and contents and presents it to his/her supervisor in a special meeting for this purpose.

Phase D. Final Phase

In this stage the student, always in collaboration with his/her supervisor, completes the writing of the final draft of his/her thesis. Subject to the agreement of the supervisor, the student submits the final draft of his/her thesis electronically for review and evaluation with a presentation before a 3-member evaluation committee.

The thesis is intended to be completed and evaluated at the end of the 3rd semester of the MSc. It is foreseen by these regulations to extend the thesis submission upon students application and positive outcome from the appropriate committee.

4. The Master's Thesis

The preparation of the M.Sc. thesis starts with the Research Proposal, which must be approved by the supervisor and the MSc Committee. The student is required to submit the Research Proposal following the format presented below.

4.1 Preparation of the research proposal

The research proposal forms the basis of the MSE. The proposal must first have the approval of the supervising professor and is submitted to the program secretariat using the appropriate form. A change in the title of the thesis may be made with the consent of the supervisor up to the submission of the MScDis for evaluation.

The research proposal shows that the student has understood the main research objectives, has identified the main sources of primary and/or secondary data collection and has arrived at the research methodology to be used. The research proposal should present the base of the MScDis that will be enriched by the literature review and the results of the application of the research methodology. The research proposal must include:

- The title of the MScDis: the title may change along the way, but it will provide appropriate focus on the objectives.
- Introduction to the subject of the research: Include a brief description of the purpose of the research, the research objectives and the research questions to be answered. Moving from the purpose of the research, to the research objectives and research questions requires considerable effort. However, this methodology enhances the focus on the research process and helps to structure the research process.
 - The research objectives describe what specifically needs to be done to achieve the above objective. They are more specific than the purpose since they identify the dimensions of the research object that are relevant to the overall purpose of the research.
- Preliminary review of literature indicating that:
 - the work done in the research field by other authors has been adequately studied.
 - the student is familiar with the theoretical framework of the scientific area under investigation.
 - the student's contribution to the scientific area is documented through the research he/she intends to carry out.

- It must be understood that the literature review is intended to carry out innovative, insightful and focused research on the topic under investigation. Thus the literature review should guide and substantiate the research objectives and research questions.
- Description of the research methodology to be used: The research methodology section should discuss the methods that will be used to investigate the research objectives. The suitability of the chosen methods should be justified against the other available methods (advantages/disadvantages), given the research objectives and the constraints that may arise (time, accessibility, etc.). Finally, each research method should be related to the needs of each research question separately.

4.2 Writing of the MPE

Indicative structure of the Master's Thesis

A typical structure of the Master's thesis is as follows:

- Cover page
- The cover page: cover page
- Acknowledgements
- Table of Contents
- Abstract (with keywords)
- List of Tables and Figures
- Abbreviations
- Introduction: Definition of the problem and hypotheses of the research, Objective of the study, Methodological approach, Necessity, limitations and boundaries of the research, Brief description of the structure and chapters of the paper, which follow below.
- Study of relevant literature: Classification key points and patterns (models), sub-points, general analytical patterns (models) and research questions or hypotheses.
- Proposed methodology: Reference to methods already used by other scholars, Proposed methodology and its documentation.
- Analysis/processing of data and interpretation of results.
- Analysis and interpretation of results, analysis and interpretation of results. Comparison with the findings of other researchers, conclusions for each research question or hypothesis.
- Overall conclusions and recommendations. Conclusions on the problem addressed by the research, suggestions for application and/or further study, limitations of the research
- Bibliography
- Annexes

Size: The length of the dissertation is between 15,000 - 20,000 words.

4.2.1 Cover page

The cover page of the TOR should be in the form shown in the template provided in the Annex.

4.2.2 Declaration of non-plagiarism and personal liability

This is a concise statement signed by the author of the PSI that includes the following:

- An assurance that the MScDis is the result of the student's personal effort. If the supervisor and/or assessors require evidence of the process of carrying out the research and extracting the results,

the student is required to provide the relevant evidence (e.g. questionnaires, interviews, secondary data sources, etc.).

- This page shall be signed by the student

4.2.3 Acknowledgements

Thanks to those who provided the author with direct assistance for the completion of the MA.

4.2.4 Contents

The contents pages should list the chapter/section titles, appendices, bibliography, and pages where they are placed and can be located in the MScDis. The application of MS Word indexing and style functions will facilitate the creation of the contents.

4.2.5 Summary

The MA must include an abstract, summarising the results of the research work. This summary of the research results gives the readers an idea of what is contained in the MScDis without having to read it in its entirety, as well as to evaluate whether the work done is worthwhile. What the abstract should include:

- Purpose and objectives: What are the main topics or theoretical subjects on which the research is being conducted.
- Theoretical framework: What is the theoretical framework and background of the research.
- Methodology: What were the main research methodologies used to carry out the research
- Results: What were the main findings of the research
- Conclusions: What are the main conclusions drawn from the overall consideration of the study
- Recommendations: What solutions are proposed to the answers to the problems posed in the research objectives

4.2.6 Introduction

The MScDis should be divided into chapters and sections appropriate to the topic and type of work chosen. The following refers to a typical dissertation. In all cases the structure of the thesis should be discussed with the supervisor.

The introduction to the MScDis should identify the background of the research and include the following:

- The context in which the research takes place
- What is the theoretical background and context in which the research takes place?
- Why the research to be carried out is important

and from the above a clear and concise statement of the aims and objectives that the thesis aspires to achieve and the research questions it will answer

The way the thesis is structured: The thesis should be analysed in such a way that the reader and assessor, having sufficient basic knowledge, will be able to understand the scientific area being investigated.

4.2.7 Theoretical foundation of the research - Literature review

This chapter is mainly intended to critically present the nature and significance of the topic studied in the MScDis as well as previous attempts to study the topic.

The purpose and objectives of the research are best served the more focused and up-to-date the literature and articles used. In terms of the focus of the references, it is noted that the critical citation

of theoretical models and research data should focus on the intended purpose and research questions rather than the full range of dimensions of the topic.

The main reasons for reviewing the literature are as follows:

- To present and critically analyse that part of the published work that is relevant to the subject of your research, and which serves as a basis for a better understanding of the context in which the research is carried out.
- Serve as the background against which the outcome of the MA will be analysed and evaluated
- Demonstrate that the student's knowledge of the cognitive area of interest is sufficiently detailed and that they have the ability to highlight unexplored aspects of it.

At the end of the chapter on the theoretical foundation of the study, the research hypotheses and/or the research questions should be stated. Hypotheses are specific predictions of expected outcomes, while exploratory questions are more general statements that indicate the researcher's intention to help clarify specific ambiguities in the topic under study.

4.2.8 Research methodology

This chapter will provide the student with the opportunity to present the process by which the research questions arising from the review/analysis of the relevant literature were answered. The chapter on research methodology should, diligently, support and justify any decision made about the organisation of the research.

4.2.9 Findings, results, data analysis

This chapter presents evidence and/or results of the primary research that has been carried out. Depending on the scientific area of the topic addressed, it may include detailed quantitative models, hypothesis testing, qualitative techniques for structured content analysis, description of case studies, etc.

The main part of the chapter takes place in the presentation of the data obtained. This data should be organized in a logical and coherent manner so that the process of analysis and interpretation you follow is clear to the reader.

4.2.10 Discussion of the results

The introduction to this chapter begins by reminding the reader exactly what the research objectives of the thesis were. The introduction should also explain how the results will be presented.

This section is the heart of the thesis and should include more than just a description of the results. This section should include an analysis of the results obtained from the research and the results included in existing published work.

4.2.11 Conclusions

The aim, in this chapter of the thesis, is to demonstrate how the initial research design was managed in order to draw conclusions based on the evidence of the research findings. No new evidence or references are provided in this chapter. The conclusions should include a statement of the extent to which each objective of the work has been achieved.

You should include a brief subsection on any suggestions for further research for those who may wish to conduct new research in this area in the future. There should also be a brief reference to the limitations of the research.

4.2.12 Bibliography

All of your bibliographical references that appear in the body of your thesis should all be included in the bibliography. The bibliography is listed in alphabetical order by the last name of the first author. The Harvard system will be used to record the bibliography.

4.2.13 Appendices

Only ancillary material should be included in the appendices. Students should not assume that the Appendices will be read in detail by examiners.

5. Format of the MPE

5.1 Formatting

Number of words	15.000 - 20.000 words maximum, excluding the abstract, bibliography and annexes
Page size	A4
Margins	Top 2.54 cm - Bottom 2.54 cm Left 3.17 cm – Right 3.17 cm Gutter 0 cm Gutter position Left
Spacing between lines	Spacing: At least After 16pt
Page numbering	From the Acknowledgements to the Introduction, the numbering i, ii, iii, iv, v, vi, vii,... From the Introduction to the end, the numbering is 1, 2, 3, 3, 4, ... The number is placed at the bottom of the page in the centre
Text	Calibri 11 point format Justified
List of diagrams	Mandatory (all diagrams in the main body of the thesis must be numbered and subtitled)
Table list	Mandatory (all tables in the main body of the thesis must be numbered and subtitled)
Abbreviations	Optional
Formatting of chapter, section and subsection titles	Chapter title: Bold font and numbering (12 point format, Spacing: After 10pt). The beginning of each chapter will be on a new page (e.g. Chapter 1) Section Title: Bold font and numbering (11 point format, Spacing: After 10pt) (e.g. 1.1) Subsection title: numbering (11 point format, Spacing: After 10pt). (e.g. 1.1.1)
Bibliography	Harvard style
Annexes	Title of Annex: Bold font and numbering. Each annex will start on a new page (e.g. Annex 1)

5.2 Language of the text

Use language that is simple and concise. Avoid using long sentences and emphasize the scientific documentation of your positions.

General writing rules

Always leave a space after punctuation marks. Avoid long sentences that exceed 4-5 lines. Ensure that the speech is simple, concise, and clear so that the sentences become more understandable.

Divide the text into paragraphs at reasonable intervals. Avoid very short paragraphs that do not fully develop a topic. Make sure to present both the information that emerged from your readings and the evaluation, based on your own judgment/experience, of this information.

Prefer the use of the third person singular. Where this is not feasible, use the first person plural or passive voice.

6. Use and citation of bibliographic sources

The correct presentation of sources (bibliographic references) is of paramount importance when writing a scientific paper. The authors we cite must be listed at the end of the paper (in the bibliography) in alphabetical order and without numbering. The way the references are made is Harvard style.

7. Evaluation of the MScDis

7.1 Commencement of the evaluation process, appointment of the members of the three-member examination committee, and the examination date

The final stage of the preparation of the thesis is the 'Examination and Final Evaluation'. The student submits the final draft of the thesis they have prepared to the professor who supervised it. The supervisor evaluates the student's work and sends the student any necessary corrections, including the results of the plagiarism check. The student proceeds with the suggested corrections and resubmits the thesis to the supervising professor. When the supervisor considers that the result of the student's work is ready for defense, they submit a request to the Graduate Program Secretariat for the acceptance of the evaluation proposal, which is validated by a decision of the Graduate Program Coordinating Committee.

In the same decision, it is stipulated:

- The members of the three-member examination committee, one of whom is the supervising professor and the other two are instructors of the postgraduate program, holders of a doctoral degree, with a field of expertise related to the topic of the thesis, and
- The date of the examination, which should be at least three days after the date of the announcement.
- The submission and presentation date of your thesis can be any period within the winter or spring semester according to the academic calendar, which is officially announced on the University website (<https://www.uniwa.gr/epikairota/akadimaiko-imerologio/>), provided there is prior agreement between you and the supervising Professor.

At this point, it is particularly noted that in the event the results of the plagiarism or copying check indicate that a large-scale plagiarism attempt was made by the student, and this is additionally confirmed by the supervising professor with a relevant written report to the Graduate Program Coordinating Committee (GCC), the work will not be accepted for presentation and evaluation. The student is summoned by the Director of the Graduate Program for a disciplinary review in a special

meeting of the Coordinating Committee (in which the supervising professor also attends), and in case the attempt of plagiarism is substantiated, the student faces consequences that may extend to their permanent expulsion from the Graduate Program.

7.2. Examination and defense of the postgraduate thesis before the three-member examination committee

The student for whom the examination date has been announced submits the final draft of their work in electronic form to the members of the three-member committee and prepares for the examination in an open public session of the committee.

The examination and defense of the dissertation lasts up to 30 minutes and is divided into two parts. In the first part, the student presents the thesis using visual aids. In the second part of the process, the candidate must successfully answer the questions of the Evaluation Committee. During the examination, each member of the three-member evaluation committee fills out a special form with the overall score of the candidate, as it results from the individual evaluation criteria of the dissertation.

The Evaluation Committee assesses the quality of the master's thesis and grades it based on the following qualitative and scientific criteria:

- Theoretical background, scope of the topic, and objective goals
- Structure and analysis
- Methodology and documentation
- Conclusions, limitations, and recommendations
- Bibliography
- Presentation of the work

The weighting of the importance of the criteria is predetermined and cannot be changed.

7.3. Range of Scores and Evaluation Results

The weighted average of the scores on the evaluation criteria constitutes the final score of each member of the examination committee. The arithmetic mean of the scores of the three members of the examination committee constitutes the final score of the Master's Thesis.

The 'natural' significance of the grading range, which must always be in relation to the quality level of the postgraduate thesis, is given in the table that follows.

Grade	Table of Descriptive Grading Terms
Excellent 8,5 – 10,0	A work of excellent quality, with complete coverage of the literature, a clear methodological approach, interesting findings, and elements of originality. It could be published in an internationally recognized scientific journal or presented at a reputable Greek or international scientific conference, in its current form or with minimal additional effort. The student worked with particular zeal and creativity, developing their own initiatives. They have truly

	fully understood the theoretical background of the research and excellently correlated it with its results.
Very Good 7,0 – 8,4	A very high-quality paper, with sufficient coverage of the literature, a well-structured methodological approach, and interesting findings. It could be published in a scientific journal or presented at a Greek or international scientific conference, with some additional effort and supplementary material. The student worked methodically, fully responded to the supervisor's suggestions, and has largely understood the theoretical background of the research and its results.
Good 6,0 - 6,9	A good quality work, readable and with satisfactory structural composition. However, there are also points with weaknesses and flaws. The size and complexity of the work meet the usual requirements of a master's thesis. Its overall image is good, but there may still be considerable room for improvement. The student worked consistently and showed quite a bit of ability and creativity.
Marginally Acceptable 5,0 – 5,9	A marginally acceptable quality paper, with several weaknesses and flaws in its structure, methodological approach, and composition. There are several points in the text that lack completeness in development and documentation. The student barely met the requirements of the master's thesis, without understanding the theoretical background of the research and its results in depth, but only superficially.
Accepted after corrections 4,0 – 4,9	Low-quality work, with many issues of coherence and structural composition, with several gaps and serious errors in the completeness of development and documentation. The student did not fully meet the requirements of the master's thesis; however, they could be given the opportunity, after a sufficient period of additional study and research, to make substantial improvements to their texts and resubmit their work.
Not accepted 1,0 - 3,9	Work of unacceptable quality, with serious problems in structure and content, in the completeness of development and documentation, as well as in the results. The student failed to understand the theoretical background and objectives of their work and additionally seems to lack the ability (or willingness) to meet the requirements of the postgraduate thesis and the possibility of obtaining the degree.

After the examination, the three-member examination committee, in a closed session, decides by majority that:

- i. the candidate immediately obtains the degree, or
- ii. the candidate will obtain the title after completing improvements and corrections to the text of their thesis to a limited extent, or
- iii. the candidate will obtain the title after making substantial improvements and corrections to the text of their thesis and after obtaining the approval and consent of the members of the three-member examination committee, or
- iv. the candidate must, after a sufficient period of study and research, resubmit their work for examination and defense before the three-member examination committee, or
- v. the candidate should not be given a title.

For cases I, II, and III, the three-member examination committee completes evaluation form and submits it to the M.Sc. Secretariat. The evaluation results are announced to the student by the supervising professor after the meeting is concluded, although the official announcement of the grade by the M.Sc. Secretariat takes place later.

For case IV, the examination and support process before the three-member examination committee begins with the submission of a new evaluation proposal by the student, who must make the proposed corrections of the three-member committee and submit the revised thesis to the supervisor. The supervisor then submits to the Graduate Program Secretariat once again the MScDis defence proposal, in which it is commented whether the student responded to the suggestions of the three-member examination committee.

7.4. Submission of the Thesis to the Repository of PADA

After the completion of the evaluation, the student must make any final corrections (according to the decision of the three-member committee) and then send the final text of the thesis to the Supervisor. The student cannot obtain the degree before incorporating any corrections and/or supplementary material into the work according to the indications of the three-member examination committee.

If the Supervisor Professor determines that the student has prepared the Thesis according to the instructions of the 3-member committee, they will place their digital signature on page 3 of the file and resend it to the student's email.

The student uploads the signed thesis form to the Institutional Repository "Polynoi". Upon submission of the electronic form and the accompanying files, the system notifies the submitter of the successful submission of the thesis and forwards the details of the electronic form and the related files to the authorized Library staff, who proceed to check the metadata and the digital files.

In order for a paper to be published, the authorized personnel checks the validity of the form fields, fills in the required metadata according to the rules applicable to each collection, and finalizes the acceptance of the paper.

If for some reason the depositor's work is rejected, an email is sent to them stating the reasons for the rejection.

The depositor (student) is required to make the necessary corrections to the existing electronic submission according to the instructions of the Library staff.

Following the aforementioned review and acceptance, the work is uploaded to the Institutional Repository, and the depositor is notified by email about its publication.

Additionally, an automated informational email is sent confirming the relevant posting to the Secretariat of the Department to which the student belongs.

The thesis form in .pdf format, the confirmation email from the library service certifying the successful posting in the Institutional Repository "Polynoe," the thesis declaration form, the thesis grading form with the corresponding digital signatures of the supervisor, the certificate of no outstanding debts for books from the Library, and finally the certification of no outstanding tuition fees from the University Research Committee (ELKE) must necessarily accompany the student's file so that the Graduate Program can proceed with the graduation declaration.

In the following links, you will find the Policies, the User Guidelines of the Institutional Repository "Polynoi," as well as the necessary templates and the Author Declaration form.

The text you provided is a URL and does not require translation. If you need assistance with something specific on that website, please provide more details.

<https://www.uniwa.gr/idrymatiko-apothetirio-polynoi/>