

# **Women's Cooperatives in Greece and the Niche Market Challenge**

by

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**Journal of Rural Cooperation, 31(1), 2003:25-45**

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## **Abstract**

Rural tourism is a field of activation for women within the broader process of promotion of reconstruction measures for the development of the countryside via integrated and endogenous procedures. The running of private or cooperative nature accommodation in rural areas and the establishment and development of the women's cooperatives for the better exploitation of local products, traditions and cultural heritage comprise the main axes of women's involvement in the field of rural tourism activities in Greece. The present work approaches the issue under a niche market perspective. Initially, it presents the institutional framework supporting the respective activities and the successive development phases of rural tourism in Greece. It further provides three typical case study examples of respective women's cooperatives in Greece regarding their evolutionary process and a number of major aspects of their profile. In the end, the cooperatives are considered and evaluated with a view to creating, developing and maintaining a niche market organization in rural tourism. It seems that for a number of reasons the rapid increase of the numbers of the women's cooperatives in Greece has not been accompanied by the development of all those necessary conditions that would make them successful niche market examples.