



The mild recovery of the Greek economy in the three-year period of 2017-2019 had a positive effect on the corporate sector, whose performance was remarkable.

In **2018**, Greek companies managed to further strengthen their competitiveness and improve their results for a **fourth** consecutive year. From the consolidated results of a large sample of **15.168** Greek companies (excluding Banks/Insurance), it becomes evident that in 2018 the companies achieved an increase in their turnover and a significant expansion of their net profitability. In particular, the turnover of all companies increased by **9.8%** to €154.6 billion, while net profits amounted to €6.2 billion increased by approximately **23%** compared to that of the previous year.

In **2019**, the messages for Greek companies were more positive, as the corresponding financial results of 164 companies, listed on the Athens Stock Exchange, show a small increase in their turnover by **2.5%** in the first half of the year, but an explosive increase of profitability by **117%**. Even if the banking sector, which was universally profitable, is excluded, the increase is **41%**.

While **2020 started with good conditions** for the Greek economy and **growth forecasts at 2.5% and above**, the unexpected burst of the Covid-19 pandemic changed the conditions that prevail worldwide and in our country very quickly and rapidly, leading to a **reversal of the positive outlook**. The partial operation and closure of many businesses, as part of measures taken to curb the spread of the pandemic, are seriously hurting economic activity and consequently employment, causing severe short-term problems in most of the business sectors.

Due to the current situation, Greek companies are once again operating in an environment of **intense concern and uncertainty**, making every effort to better manage their costs and reduce their losses as much as possible. Certainly, while the **support measures** implemented by the State to mitigate the adverse effects on the country's economic activity are necessary and in the right direction, **they are not enough** on their own to solve the multiple problems.

**MOST PROBABLY OUR ECONOMY WILL TURN INTO A DEEP RECESSION (-5% UP TO -10%) IN 2020 AND EXPERIENCE A STRONG YET AT A LOWER PACE UPTURN (3% UP TO 6%) IN 2021.**

So, amid the enormous difficulties of the gradual lifting of restrictive measures, Greek companies are **once again** called upon to manage a severe crisis with unpredictable, long-term, repercussions. I believe that Greek CEOs who are **high level** for 2020 and now have **a lot of experience in crisis management**, will succeed, to keep the losses of their companies to the lowest possible level.

**Nikitas Konstantellos**  
Group CEO