

The prefecture of **Messinia** is in the southwest part of the Peloponnese. It covers an area of 2,991 km² and has a population of 166,707, 57,620 of whom live in Kalamata, the prefecture's capital. The Taygetus mountain range dominates the eastern part of Messinia and many rivers cross this region rich in both surface and underground water resources. The economy of Messinia is primarily based on agricultural production although in recent years efforts are being made toward the development of activities in other sectors such as tourism. The tourist development observed is mainly attributable to the promotion of important archaeological sites, as well as to the beauty of the landscape and to the cultural and sporting events organised throughout the year.

Main agricultural products are olive oil, Kalamata table olives, figs, and black raisins (sultanas). The variety of agricultural products is complemented by a small amount of stockbreeding products (beef, milk, sfela cheese, honey) and fish from the Gulf of Messinia.

There are many small- and medium-size firms involved in the processing and standardization of agricultural products. There are also a number of enterprises devoted to wood processing, furniture manufacturing, and metal construction. Messinia has an ideal natural and social-economic environment for the development of alternative tourism, especially cultural tourism, agrotourism, sports tourism, and congress tourism.