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Hellenic News, Culture & Lifestyle

## Arrested crystal meth dealers hid drugs in phone cards

Two Filipino nationals alleged to have been selling methamphetamine by packaging it in phone cards have been detained on drug-dealing charges, police in Athens said on Tuesday. The 45-year-old woman and 35-year-old man are alleged to have sold hundreds of cards containing small quantities of the drug from the woman's home in Ambelokipi. According to police, the pair would open up the cards and insert the drugs before putting them back into their plastic packaging.



## Greek tourism showing signs of recovery

The signs from tourism bookings for this year are very encouraging as they are showing an increase of 15 to 20 percent from last year from all markets, according to the general secretary for tourism, Apostolos Liaskos.

Addressing a general meeting of the Hellenic Chamber of Hotels, Liaskos also said the targets of 17 million visitors from abroad and revenues of 11

billion euros this year are attainable.

The head of the chamber, Giorgos Tsakiris, presented data that shows tourist expenditure declined by 5 percent last year compared with 2011, amounting to 10.02 billion. Overnight stays dropped 7 percent, amounting to 141 million, and arrivals fell 6 percent to 15.5 million.

Arrivals from abroad posted a major decline in

January 2013, mostly concerning the terminals in Athens and Thessaloniki, according to the Association of Hellenic Tourism Enterprises (SETE). The number of arrivals declined by 28,460, reaching 162,954 down from 191,414 in January 2012. Arrivals at Athens International Airport contracted by 16 percent year-on-year while those flying in to Thessaloniki shrunk by 13 percent.

## Avramopoulos to seek common ground with Ankara

Foreign Minister Dimitris Avramopoulos (photo) is due in Ankara on Friday for talks with his Turkish counterpart Ahmet Davutoglu that are scheduled to focus on possible areas of bilateral cooperation but where recent Turkish press reports resurrecting claims of the existence of training camps for Kurdish terrorists in Greece may feature on the agenda.

According to sources, the two ministers are expected to assess progress on areas of bilateral cooperation agreed on in May 2010, following a visit by Turkish PM Recep Tayyip Erdogan, in the sectors of the

economy, immigration and energy.

The two men will also examine the potential for new agreements in several other areas, including trade, tourism, education and the environment, as well as the possible cooperation of the two countries' police forces.

Diplomatic sources said that more than 10 agreements are "ripe" for approval.

The outcome of Friday's talks will determine which ministers will accompany Prime Minister Antonis Samaras on a scheduled visit to Ankara on March 4 and 5.



## Vroutsis: Youth unemployment costs 7 billion for Greece

Speaking at the informal meeting of the Employment Council (EPSCO) in Dublin, Labor minister Yannis Vroutsis described the inaction of the Greek youth as an obstacle on the course of Greece and its return to development. In particular, citing figures of recent studies by a European organization, Vroutsis said the cost for the stay of young people outside the labor market and education is disproportionately greater than the cost of implementing programs to stop youth unemployment and actions for their inclusion to the active labor market.

According to the minister, the new inaction implies a high cost to the economy, which amounts to 1.21% of GDP for the European Union and to 3.28% of GDP (about 7 billion euros) for Greece. He added that the resources being given and those that will come in the future to boost youth employment, are expected to have multiplying benefits for the Greek economy and also spoke about the recent actions and interventions of the Greek government under the National Action Plan on youth employment that will directly benefit 63,000 young people

