



Attitudes Towards National Identity, Immigration, and Refugees in Greece

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ABOUT MORE IN COMMON

More in Common is an international initiative to counter the growing threats to open and democratic societies, and build communities that are stronger, more united and more resilient. The More in Common initiative took shape from work undertaken since 2015 to understand why advanced democracies failed to respond more effectively to the refugee crisis and its impact on domestic politics.

More in Common's objective across its different streams of work is to build closer and more inclusive societies, which are resilient to the appeal of xenophobia and authoritarian populism. We aim to support the efforts of civil society and key influencers who share the values of open and inclusive societies, and help catalyse other new initiatives that advance these values.

More in Common is a non-profit organisation with teams in France, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States. The co-founders of More in Common are Tim Dixon, Mathieu Lefevre and Gemma Mortensen.

For more information, please visit www.moreincommon.com

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Executive Summary

Introduction

This report provides insight into the attitudes of Greek people towards their country and its place in the world, their sense of national identity, and their views on immigration and refugees. It builds on other recent research into these issues,¹ and provides a deeper understanding of the connections between Greeks' perspectives on these and other matters. It does this through the lens of a segmentation study that identifies six main groupings of opinion among Greeks.

Perhaps more than any other country in Europe, Greece has been profoundly affected by the economic fallout from the financial crisis that began in 2008, the subsequent sovereign debt crisis and then by the large-scale arrival of refugees in the mid-2010s, in which Greece operated initially as a transitory country and then as a host country. Few Greeks have been left unaffected, and after a decade of crisis and austerity, progress still feels painfully slow. This contributes to a deep sense of disaffection among Greeks, but a key finding of this study is that for most Greeks, this disaffection has not been turned against those who have come to Greece seeking refuge.

This study demonstrates that Greeks do not divide neatly into two groups that are either 'pro' or 'anti' migrant. Public attitudes are more nuanced, and the majority of Greeks hold a mix of views: a combination of empathy and a commitment to hospitality for those in need on the one hand, and concerns about the impacts of the migrant population on overstretched public resources, and on the retention of Greek culture and traditions on the other hand. The way that some Greeks simultaneously hold these views can sometimes appear contradictory, however it reflects patterns that More in Common's research has found in other countries. By understanding and addressing these concerns - and not misinterpreting those concerns merely as xenophobia - there is a pathway for Greece to navigate the challenges of hosting and integrating newcomers into their culture, as has happened in past episodes of Greek history. There is, in fact, a much greater level of consensus on key questions than what is often assumed.

This research forms part of a larger initiative to address the growing threats to open and inclusive societies. To understand these threats, since 2017, More in Common has undertaken detailed research into public attitudes in five countries: United States, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Italy. Greece is the sixth country in which More in Common has undertaken research, and as with each other country this study uncovers some distinctive elements in how Greeks think about issues of identity and 'otherness'. More in Common's work has examined perceptions of the forces that are driving social fracturing and division, with a particular focus on specific national issues such as political polarisation in the United States and the refugee crisis in European countries. The forces contributing to widening social fractures across all of these countries include economic insecurity, growing inequality, cultural and demographic change, disinformation, the effects of social media and the weakening of local communities. Political systems are being disrupted as insurgent parties engage with people's sense of insecurity and frustration, and advance narratives that promise a stronger sense of national identity and belonging based on the exclusion of targeted minorities such as refugees and migrants. Social media is also elevating conflict in public debate and bringing extreme narratives into the mainstream. More in Common's work aims to create a deeper understanding of public attitudes, with a view to identifying ways to strengthen resilience against the threats to democracy and inclusive societies.

¹ Lipka, M. (2018). *Greek attitudes toward religion, minorities align more with Central and Eastern Europe than West*. Retrieved from <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/10/31/greek-attitudes-toward-religion-minorities-align-more-with-central-and-eastern-europe-than-west/>

Methodology

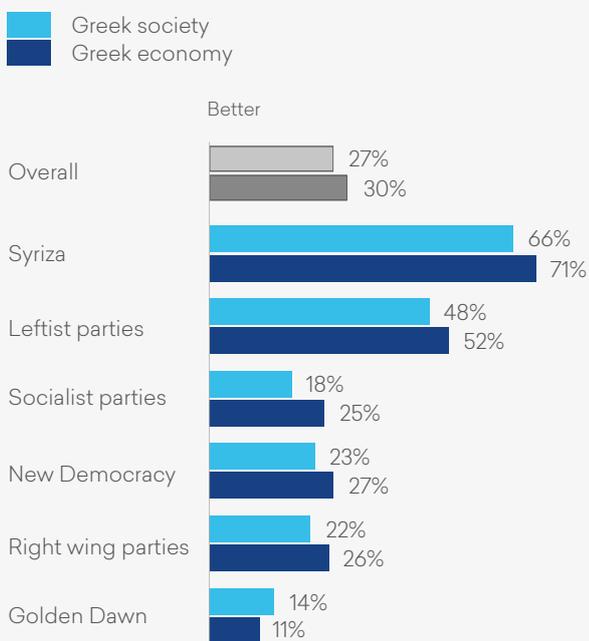
This study employs a population clustering segmentation analysis method that draws on a range of attitudinal characteristics of the Greek public. This form of segmentation provides a rich composite picture of how a population is divided in its views and goes beyond basic demographic factors to show how networks of attitudes and opinions are connected.

The research was conducted by Ipsos in Greece and consisted of phone surveys with a representative sample of 2,000 adults aged 18 to 64. Respondents answered questions regarding: demographics, issues of greatest concern, political views and affiliations, familiarity with refugee and migration issues, understanding of different terminology related to refugees and migrants, personal experiences with refugees, and their responses to different policy approaches and messages. Following an evaluation of the quantitative data and the conclusion of the segmentation analysis, the research was concluded with a qualitative phase involving three focus group discussions with members of each of three segments (for reasons explained below): Moderate Humanitarians, Instinctive Pragmatists, and Detached Traditionalists.

Key Findings

- 1. Greeks are deeply dissatisfied, overwhelmingly feel that their country has lost out from globalisation and have little confidence in their government or institutions.** The words that Greeks are most likely to use to describe their country are ‘angry’, ‘weak’ and ‘fearful.’ Only 15 per cent believe that globalisation has had a positive impact on the Greek economy. Frustration with the status quo is reflected in the 79 per cent of the population who say that traditional parties and politicians do not care about people like them. More believe that things are continuing to get worse than get better, and there is greater pessimism about Greek society than the Greek economy. Only one in three (35 per cent) report that it is ‘easy for someone like me to do well in Greece.’ By contrast, an overwhelming 82 per cent believe ‘the economy is rigged to benefit the rich and powerful.’
- 2. Despite pessimism about conditions in Greece, pride in Greek culture and history is integral to most Greeks’ sense of identity (although they feel that it is in decline).** Feelings of pride in being Greek are held by 77 per cent, and pride in the country’s history by 78 per cent. However, today many worry about a loss of national identity. More than half of survey respondents (54 per cent) believe that Greek identity is disappearing nowadays, and a similar number say that they sometimes feel ‘like a stranger in my own country’ (56 per cent).

Things will get better for...



Do you think things will get better, worse or are about the same for the Greek society/economy?
Source: More in Common (2019)

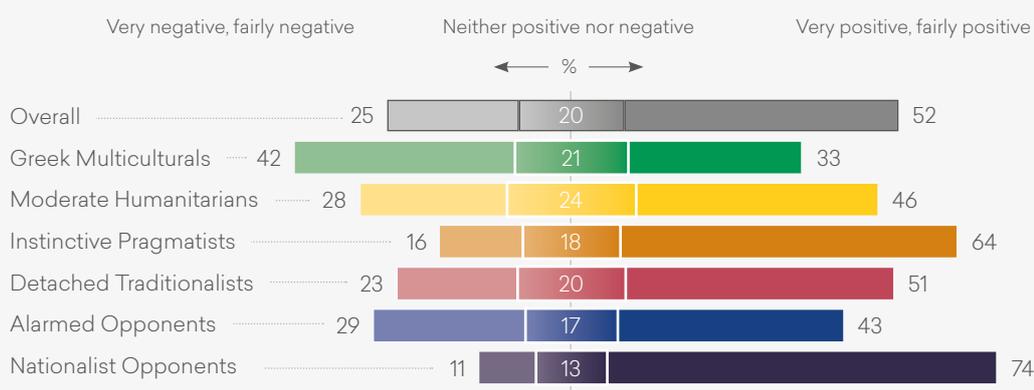
- 3. With the highest unemployment rate in Europe, Greece’s economic woes lead all other concerns.** A majority of Greeks identify either the economic situation (31 per cent) or unemployment (22 per cent) as the top issue facing the country. Greece’s unemployment rate soared from 7 per cent to 28 per cent between 2008 and 2013, and was still high at 19 per cent by the end of 2018, with twice as much unemployment among younger Greeks.² Although many Greeks express concerns about immigration, just 7 per cent see it as the top issue facing the country.

Greek perceptions of the economic outlook correlate to their political identity. The most positive views are held by those who align with the governing Syriza party, with 71 per cent believing that things will get better for the Greek economy and 66 per cent believing that things will get better for Greek society. The most negative views are held by supporters of the far-right Golden Dawn party, with only 11 per cent believing that the economy will improve, and just 14 per cent believing that things will get better for Greek society.

² Trading Economics. (2019). *Greece Unemployment Rate*. Retrieved from <https://tradingeconomics.com/greece/unemployment-rate>

4. **In spite of the immense pressures that have borne down on Greek society in the past decade, the country is less polarised than many other European nations.** Opinions are, for the most part, less sharply divided among different groups, and social interpersonal trust levels remain relatively high.³
5. **Despite their own circumstances, there is substantial empathy for the recent newcomers to Greece, such as seeing them as hard working and well-intentioned.** Fully 77 per cent believe that migrants are willing to work harder and for lower pay than Greeks, and more than half (56 per cent) believe that migrants make efforts to integrate into Greek society. Feelings towards migrants are warmer than in other European countries where More in Common has undertaken national studies.⁴
6. **But most Greeks believe that the effects of immigration are negative, especially in the context of the country's scarce resources.** Few believe that the country can benefit from immigration: just 21 per cent believe that 'immigration is good for the Greek economy.' Suspicion about migrants getting priority in benefits and housing is common (41 per cent) as are concerns about migrants creating public health risks (42 per cent). Overall, 51 per cent determine that immigration is ultimately 'bad for Greece, costing the welfare state and draining resources that could be spent on Greeks'.
7. **While most endorse the principle of welcoming refugees and allowing them to maintain their own traditions, a majority of Greeks question whether recent arrivals are genuine refugees.** A large majority (67 per cent) identify Greece's tradition of 'solidarity and compassion' with welcoming refugees. A similar number (72 per cent) demonstrate a sense of respect for refugees' different cultural backgrounds and believe that they should be able to 'maintain their own traditions'. However, half the country (51 per cent) suspects that 'most foreigners' seeking refugee status 'come here for economic reasons or to take advantage of welfare services.'

Most foreigners who want to get into my country as refugees aren't really refugees and come here for economic reasons/take advantage of welfare services

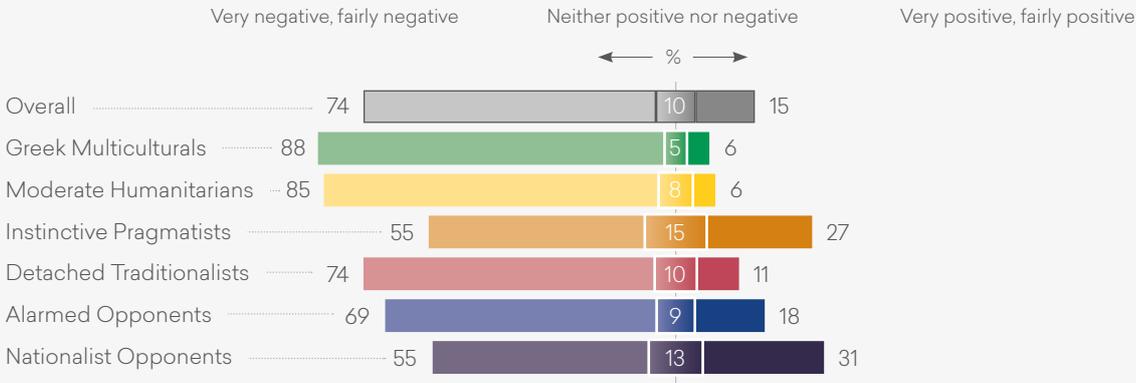


To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

3 Ervasti, H. (2019). Social and Institutional Trust in Times of Crisis: Greece, 2002-2011. *Social Indicators Research*, 141(3), 1207-1231. Retrieved from <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11205-018-1862-y>

4 This study examined the strength of in-group and out-group feelings through a series of questions including a 'feelings thermometer'. Respondents were asked to express their feelings about other individuals or groups in terms of 'warm' or 'cold' feelings.

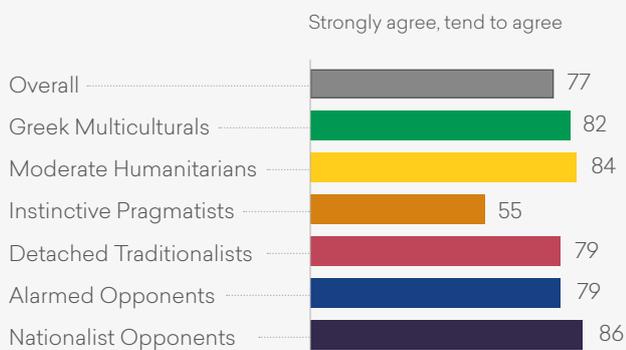
Refugees who are children arriving without any family should be sent back home, not resettled



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

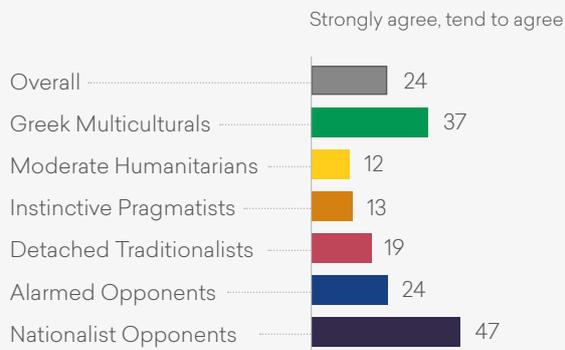
8. **Anxieties about Islam and Muslims are common.** A majority (57 per cent) of Greeks believe that Islam and Greek society are ‘incompatible,’ in part reflecting historic concerns about Turkey and its relationship with Greece. Greeks are relatively evenly split as to whether Muslim women should wear headscarves or veils. These concerns coexist with a broad acknowledgment of discrimination against Muslims in Greece and a clear majority (68 per cent) expressing worries about increasing racism.
9. **Greeks feel able to openly discuss sensitive issues of identity and immigration.** Whereas people commonly cite a dynamic of obligatory politeness or self-censorship in countries such as France, Germany, and the United States on sensitive subjects such as Islam and immigration, Greeks generally do not express feeling encumbered in this way: 85 per cent state that ‘it is acceptable for me to express myself about subjects like immigration and refugees.’ Consequently, the political dynamics of the country show less evidence of people feeling judged by others for expressing their attitudes or resentful of being hushed by a liberal elite.
10. **There is wide distrust in civil society groups and the media.** Fully 62 per cent of Greeks believe that some NGOs are benefitting from the refugee and migration crisis by taking money, and are not in reality helping refugees. Only 19 per cent of Greeks believe that NGOs that should be taking more responsibility to help refugees. These dynamics of distrust are further complicated by low levels of trust in the media’s reporting on these subjects: just 18 per cent of Greeks trust the media’s reporting on immigration and refugees.
11. **There is deep frustration with how regional partners have treated Greece during the refugee and migration crisis.** A large majority of 77 per cent of Greeks believe that their country has been abused by its European partners during the refugee and migration crisis. A similar number (73 per cent) distrusts Turkey as a partner. These particular concerns may reflect a deeper scepticism of how Greece has fared in today’s integrated world: a mere 15 per cent believe that globalisation has been ‘very positive’ for Greece.

When it comes to the refugee crisis, Greece has been abused by its European partners



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

Greece should distance itself from the European Union and the Euro



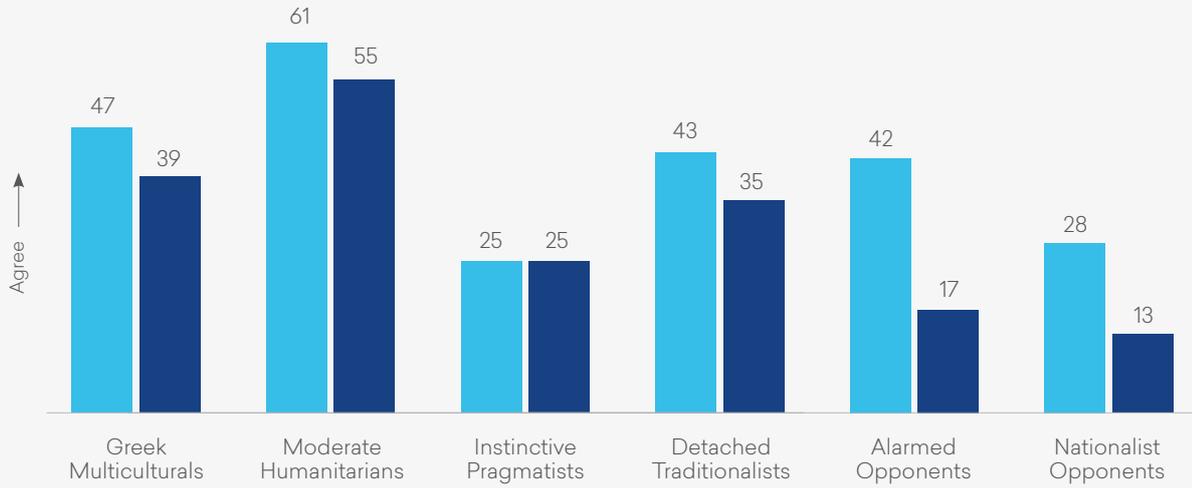
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

12. Despite scepticism and support for some extreme measures, Greeks also show positive attitudes towards refugees rooted in a culture of solidarity and compassion.

- At the personal level, a much larger number of Greeks feel 'warm' towards refugees (56 per cent) than 'cold' (17 per cent), with 27 per cent neutral. Feelings about migrants in general are slightly less 'warm' (50 per cent 'warm' to 20 per cent 'cold').
- Fifty per cent have made a donation of money, food, clothing, or other items in the past year to support refugees.
- Forty per cent report knowing a refugee personally, and 38 per cent know someone who does voluntary work for refugees.
- An overwhelming 94 per cent of the population agrees that when the government makes laws, the number one principle should be ensuring that everyone is treated fairly.
- Sixty-eight per cent are worried about increasing levels of racism and discrimination.
- Most reject the idea of sending minors back to their country of origin (only 15 per cent agree that refugees who are children arriving without any family should be sent back home.)

Refugees/Immigrants are similar to me

 Refugees are similar to me
 Immigrants are similar to me



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

Greece's Segments

This study groups people into different population segments according to their beliefs and values around issues of identity and belonging as well as their relationship to the outside world. These groups are placed on a spectrum between 'open' and 'closed' values:

- Those in the **'closed' groups (Nationalist Opponents and Alarmed Opponents)** tend to have a narrower view of what it means to be Greek and are more hostile to migrants and refugees.
- Those in the **'open' group (Greek Multiculturals)** hold a welcoming attitude towards migrants, and are especially empathetic towards refugees.
- The **three middle segments (Moderate Humanitarians, Instinctive Pragmatists and Detached Traditionalists)** are marked by mixed attitudes, with each group having distinctive views such as concerns about economic insecurity, the preservation of cultural and religious identity or the need for security from outside threats. Some are distinctive for not having strong views on any of these issues.

Each of Greece's middle segments stand out as none are completely in the centre of opinion:

- Moderate Humanitarians lean towards 'open' views as they have a generally positive and welcoming disposition towards migrants and refugees, but their national pride and sympathies with more authoritarian measures distinguish them from the most 'open' Greeks. At 92 per cent, Moderate Humanitarians are more than twice as likely as Greek Multiculturals to be proud of being Greek. They are also twice as likely to be willing to ignore human rights to stop terrorism (28 per cent vs 14 per cent).
- Instinctive Pragmatists are unique in holding optimistic views about the economic consequences of globalisation and they are also the most likely to believe in the economic benefits of immigration. However, they hold colder than average feelings towards immigrants, refugees and Muslims, are very concerned about terrorism, and believe that allowing refugees into the country increases security risks.
- Detached Traditionalists also stand apart from the 'open' and 'closed' segments. Their religious beliefs have made them more protective of Greek heritage although they are less strident in their views. While they are the second most likely segment to want to protect Greece's religious heritage from outside faiths and only 14 per cent believe that Muslims hold similar values to them, they are more hospitable than the 'closed' groups. Only 40 per cent believe that Islam and Greek society are incompatible, compared to 61 per cent of Alarmed Opponents and 81 per cent of Nationalist Opponents.

THE 'OPEN' SEGMENT



Greek Multiculturals

% of population



% Female / % Male



Moral Foundations



Attributes

Younger, highest levels of education, highest earning, least religious (51%)

Key Words

Welcoming, distrustful of institutions

Key Concerns

The economy, high unemployment, poverty and social inequality

- Most likely to believe that it is difficult to succeed in Greece
- Feel least proud of their Greek identity
- Feel a much weaker sense of connection to the Greek Orthodox church than other Greeks
- Highly distrustful of the Greek system and the European Union
- Most likely to believe that immigration has been good for the country, both economically and culturally
- Welcoming towards migrants and particularly refugees
- Concerned about the compatibility of Islam with Greek society

THE 'CLOSED' SEGMENTS



Nationalist Opponents

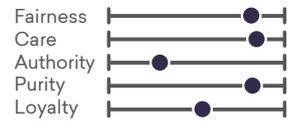
% of population



% Female / % Male



Moral Foundations



Attributes

Middle-aged and older, lowest levels of education and income, 46% in full or part-time employment, 85% identify as religious

Key Words

Older, proud, pessimistic, distrustful

Key Concerns

The economy, high unemployment, immigration

- Pessimistic about the state of Greece's economy and society, at both a national and personal level
- Feel immense pride in their Greek identity and fear that it is disappearing
- Feel a much stronger sense of connection to the Greek Orthodox church than any other group
- Suspicious and distrustful of the government, the European Union and Turkey, and support strong action to defend the nation from threats
- Consistently hold 'cold' feelings towards all migrants, refugees and Muslims and do not see any positive consequences of immigration
- Most likely to report living near a refugee camp



Alarmed Opponents

% of population



% Female / % Male



Moral Foundations



Attributes

Middle-aged, lower levels of education and income, most likely to be retired, 70% are religious

Key Words

Older, pessimistic, supportive of strong measures to fix the country

Key Concerns

The economy, high unemployment, racism and discrimination

- Negative about the state of Greece and believe that the country has experienced both economic and social decline in the past year
- Strong authoritarian tendencies: believe a strong leader is needed and that if the migration crisis continues, everyday Greek citizens should start protecting their shores and borders themselves
- Do not believe immigration has had a positive impact on Greece and hold generally hostile views towards migrants

THE MIDDLE SEGMENTS



Moderate Humanitarians

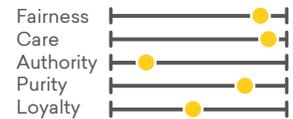
% of population



% Female / % Male



Moral Foundations



Attributes

Younger (20-40), higher levels of education, 58% in full time or part-time employment, 74% are religious, similar pattern of income levels to national average, with slightly more in middle range

Key Words

Proud, positive, empathetic towards immigrants and refugees, tolerant but supportive of stronger measures

Key Concerns

The economy, high unemployment, taxes

- The most optimistic group about their own prospects and about Greece's economy and society
- More likely than any group to say that they are very proud of Greek identity
- Believe it is easy to do well in Greece
- Not convinced that immigration benefits Greece, but hold 'warm' feelings towards migrants, refugees and Muslims
- Most believe that Greece should accept refugees because of the country's culture of compassion and solidarity
- Empathise greatly with the plight of refugees but do not think that they enrich Greek culture
- Above average support for extreme measures to fix Greece's problems



Instinctive Pragmatists

% of population



% Female / % Male



Moral Foundations



Attributes

Middle-aged, low levels of education, 52% in full time or part-time employment, 78% are religious, similar pattern of income levels to national average, with slightly more in lower range

Key Words

Optimistic about state of Greek economy, with higher levels of faith in Greek institutions, security-concerned, calculating, opposed to newcomers, supportive of high measures

Key Concerns

The economy, high unemployment, education, immigration

- Hold above average levels of confidence in Greek institutions, the media etc
- More likely than any other segment to see the economic consequences of globalisation as positive for Greece and are more positive about the economic benefits of immigration
- Least likely to support Greece distancing itself from the European Union
- Concerned about security and are more willing than even Nationalist Opponents to set aside human rights to stop the threat of terrorism
- More likely than average to support sending back unaccompanied minors, instead of resettling
- Close to the average in believing that a strong leader willing to break the rules is needed to fix Greece's problems
- Particularly concerned about the impact of Islam on Greece
- Least likely of any group to feel like they can express their views on immigration and refugees freely



Detached Traditionalists

% of population



% Female / % Male



Moral Foundations



Attributes

Older, lower levels of education, 48% full or part time employment, 79% religious, similar pattern of income levels to national average, with slightly more in lower range

Key Words

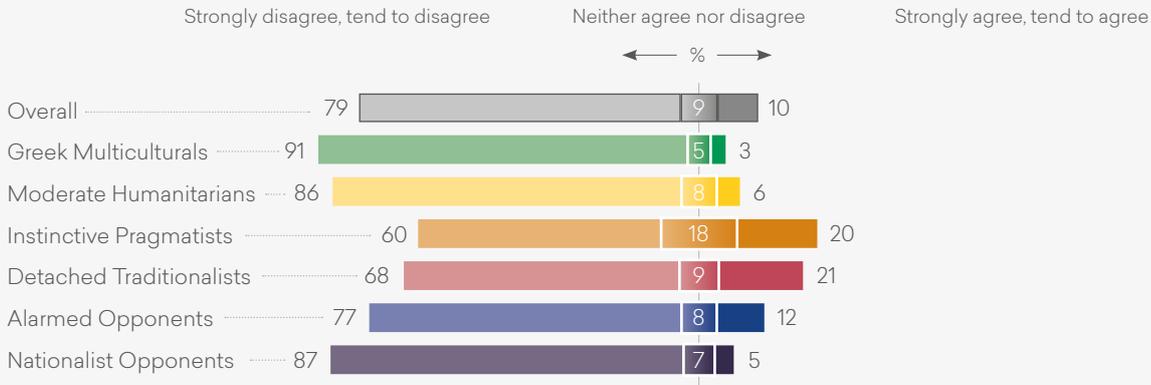
Trust in institutions, tradition, religious, older

Key Concerns

The economy, high unemployment, taxes

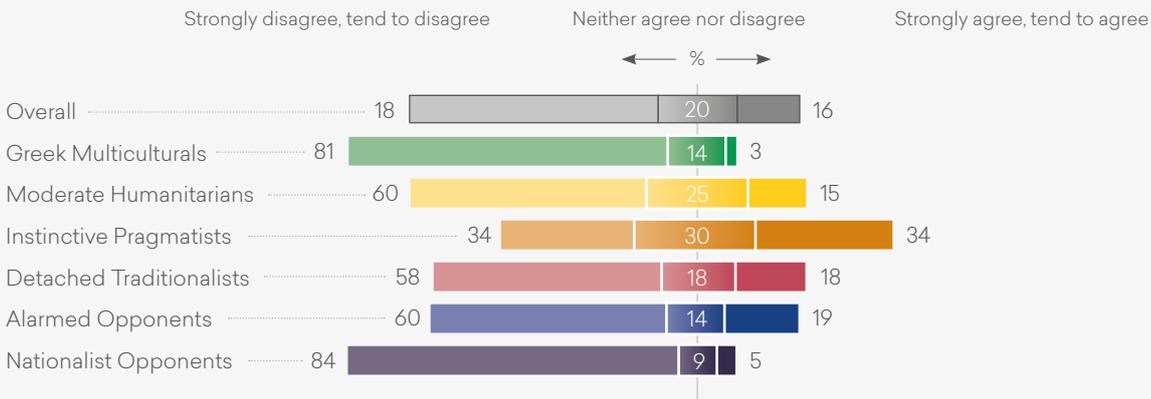
- Feel strongly connected to other Greeks and Europeans
- Very religious and protective of Greece's religious heritage
- On many issues, close to the average of public opinion
- Believe that traditional parties care about them and most likely to believe the media's reporting
- Appear to be more detached than other groups, and are less likely to have a clear political identity
- View immigration negatively but tend to have warmer feelings towards migrants who are already in Greece
- More likely than average to strongly agree that immigrants have made it more difficult for Greek people to get jobs
- Most believe that refugees who are children arriving without any family should be resettled, not sent back home

Traditional parties and politicians care about people like me



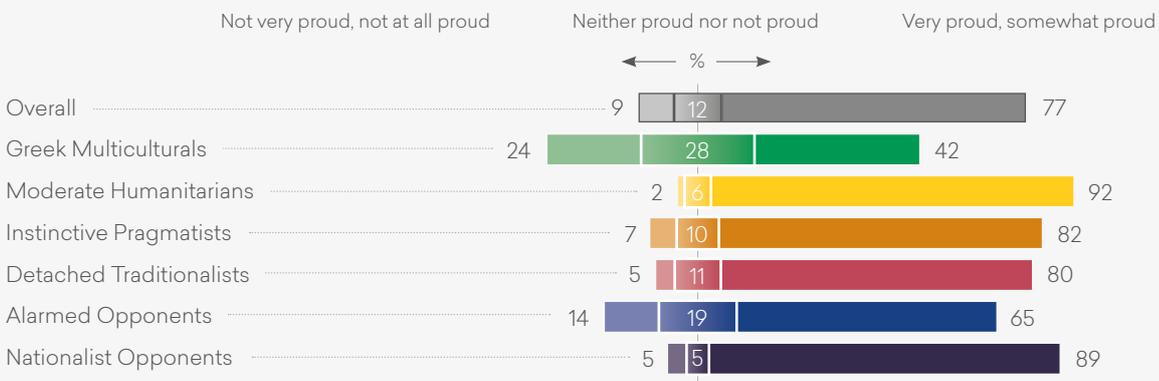
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

The economic consequences of globalisation are very positive



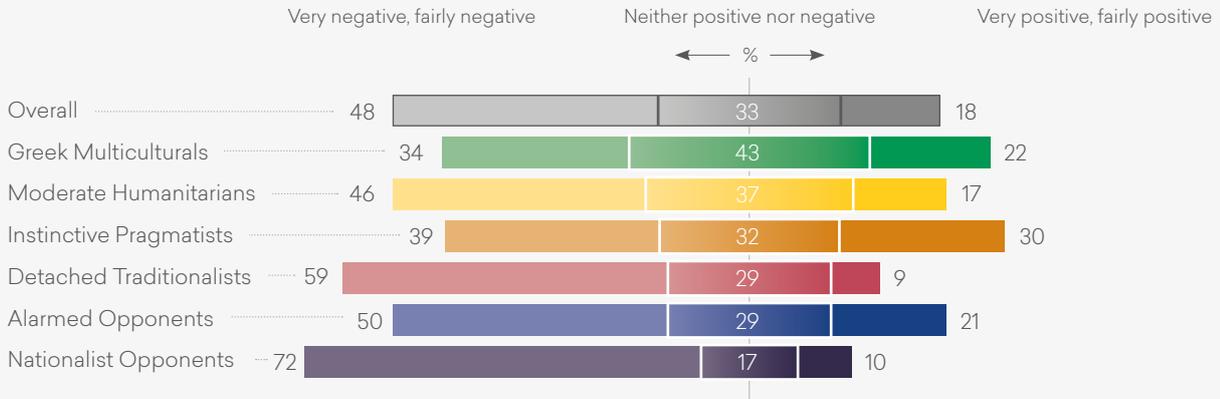
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

To what extent are you proud to be Greek?



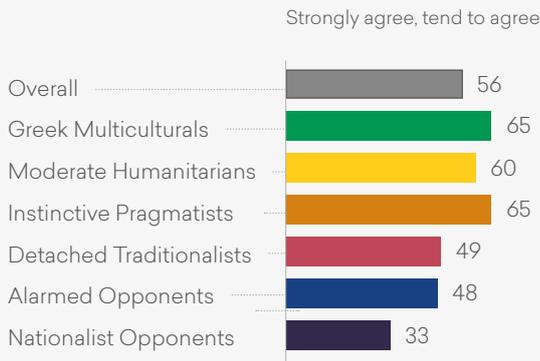
To what extent are you proud to be Greek?
Source: More in Common (2019)

Does immigration have a positive or negative impact on Greece?

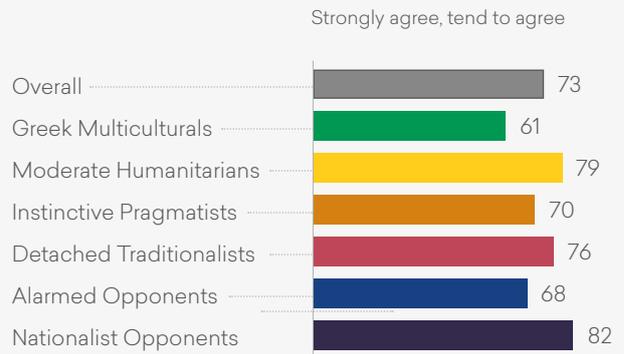


Does immigration have a positive or negative impact on Greece?
Source: More in Common (2019)

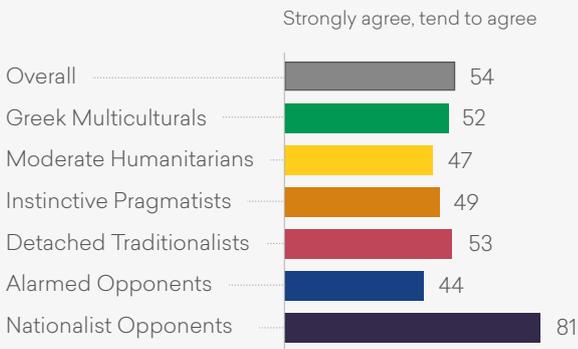
Immigrants generally make efforts to integrate into Greek society



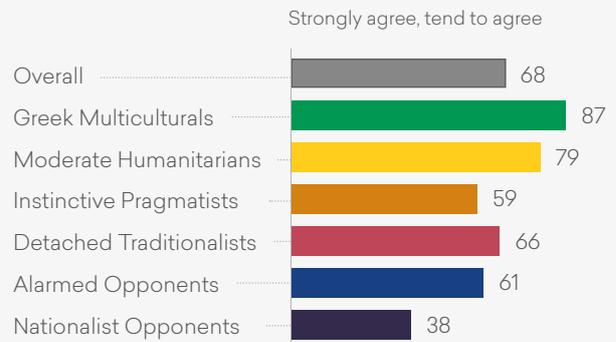
To fix Greece, we need a strong leader willing to break the rules



Greek identity is disappearing nowadays



I am worried about increasing levels of racism and discrimination



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

Recommendations

The key recommendations emerging from this report for those working to strengthen Greeks' sense of unity and its values as an inclusive society are as follows:

- 1. Building a positive and engaging story of Greece's future should start with pride in Greek identity and in the character and efforts of ordinary Greek people at the grassroots of society.** Persistently weak economic conditions and poor prospects, combined with a distrust of institutions, creates a clear risk of divisive populist narratives resonating more strongly with Greeks than they have to date. On the other hand, Greeks' instinctive sense of empathy and fellow-feeling creates an in-built resilience to efforts to divide the population into 'us-versus-them' narratives that target vulnerable minorities. Linking the deep sense of pride in national identity and Greek character to the values of inclusion and welcome can strengthen this resilience and is likely to be far more effective than top-down efforts, given the deep distrust of institutions, from government to business to civil society.
- 2. After a period of great difficulty that is still ongoing, Greeks need to recover their sense of self-confidence and hope.** It is important that Greeks feel that they have the power to affect positive change, and the issue of migration and refugees can be presented as one which provides an opportunity to mobilise and succeed. By promoting a shift from feelings of powerlessness to agency, organisations can increase much-needed feelings of empowerment.

The prolonged economic downturn in Greece has created a sense of disempowerment among Greeks. Efforts should be made to affirm welcoming and inclusive values as core elements of Greek civic identity. What Greece has achieved in the face of enormous difficulties should be emphasised as a source of pride for its people. Such a shift must be attached to a positive vision of engagement with the world and not a retreat that creates hostility to outside forces. It should be linked to national identity. A sense of belonging to the people and culture of their country, matters to Greeks more than to people in most other countries, and this has important implications for communications around political and social issues.

- 3. Communications relating to Greece's refugee and migrant population should underscore that helping migrants and refugees does not come at the expense of the needs of Greeks but rather that their interests are best advanced together.** This might be done through efforts that raise the standards of health care, education provisions and infrastructure for all parts of the Greek community. As most Greeks already feel a genuine sense of empathy towards refugees and migrants, advocating for more compassion is unlikely to change public opinion. Communications should, however, engage the deep wells of empathy in the general population by emphasising the many things that Greeks and migrants have in common, redefining the ingroup in a manner that is inclusive towards migrants. Opportunities for migrants to contribute to and strengthen local neighbourhoods and communities should be advanced.
- 4. Specific efforts should be made to address the high levels of concern that migrants pose a risk to public health.** This is one area of public perception where a sustained effort by trusted voices in the medical community should be able to address those risks and counter perceptions that may otherwise be used to deepen social divisions and the othering of refugees and migrants.

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5. **The European Union should demonstrate its commitment to support Greece in managing its southern borders. Simultaneously, the EU should address the deep sense of disappointment Greeks feel around its stance on the migration crisis.** Stronger support from Greece's European partners will contribute to building greater resilience to the extreme voices within the country which endorse a more aggressive anti-migrant and anti-European approach. Future crises - manufactured or real - should be anticipated, and communications strategies should address Greeks' concern that they will continue to bear a much greater load than other countries in Europe.
 6. **The priority of policy and communications should be the 62 per cent of Greeks who belong to one of the three middle segments.** Greece is less polarised than many other countries, meaning that to a large extent similar communications strategies can resonate with several segments. However, Greek Multiculturals are already convinced of the importance of inclusive values, and it is likely that efforts designed to reach them will resonate less with other groups. Likewise, Nationalist Opponents and Alarmed Opponents are more resistant and less likely to be convinced of shifting well-established attitudes. Messages that target people in the middle groups should engage the values and perceptions common to those segments.
 7. **More work is required to understand how to positively address the financial hardships that Greeks have experienced in the past decade, and to find ways in which the migrant population can contribute to improving economic prospects within Greece.** This would be especially valuable in engaging the Instinctive Pragmatist segments, who are more likely to be supportive if they see Greeks and migrants having a genuine shared interest in a stronger economy, rather than seeing newcomers as competitors in a zero-sum game who compete for jobs and suppress wages. Addressing these concerns more effectively may have more impact on public opinion than any other change in policy or communications.
 8. **Special attention should be paid to the concerns of Detached Traditionalists,** whose concerns are motivated more by anxieties about threats to Greek culture and identity, which they cherish, than by innate hostility towards outsiders. While they tend towards more 'closed' views, Detached Traditionalists are considerably less extreme than those of the Nationalist Opponents. **This group is a prime target for extremist parties that have already locked in support from the Nationalist Opponents. Efforts should be made to reach them in ways that speak to their genuine concerns.**
 9. **In line with UNHCR's out-of-camp policy,⁵ policies that promote co-habitation with host communities and refugees should be promoted, abandoning the present policy of isolation in some parts of the territory.** There is evidence, especially from the qualitative research undertaken for this study, that the relative isolation of people who have arrived in Greece in recent years contributes to a sense of them as an 'out-group' that is not genuinely part of Greek society and that will not integrate. The way in which some focus group participants contrasted past waves of arrivals, who integrated into Greek society, with more recent arrivals who have integrated less due to their isolation, suggests that accommodating refugees in camps rather than within the wider community is not the most effective approach to achieving successful integration.

5 UNHCR (2014). *UNHCR Policy on Alternative to Camps*. Retrieved from <https://cms.emergency.unhcr.org/documents/11982/45535/UNHCR+-+Policy+on+alternatives+to+camps/005c0217-7d1e-47c9-865a-c0098cfdda62>

- 10. Civil society groups need to address proactively their low levels of trust.** This is especially true for those organisations working to assist refugees and migrants. These steps might involve measures to show how their operations work, what results they achieve and how they spend funds. Programmes need to be structured so that they benefit the host community as well as migrants in order to avoid one group being played off against the other and counter perceptions that refugees receive better care or more assistance than Greeks themselves.



Macedonia

Thrace

Athos

Epirus

Thessaly

Ionian Islands

Central Greece

Peloponnese

Aegean Islands

Crete

1

Introduction

In the past decade, Greece has endured two prolonged crises. Both the sovereign debt crisis and the refugee and migration crisis have tested Greek society and placed their country in the international spotlight. While they have both required considerable external assistance, to most Greeks this has felt profoundly inadequate, especially as the causes of the refugee crisis lay outside of Greece. However, due to its geographical location on the southern borders of the European Union, Greece has occupied a central role in carrying the burdens of that crisis, a situation that remains unresolved with large numbers of asylum seekers stranded indefinitely in Greece awaiting the processing of their asylum application. Although arrivals decreased significantly in 2017 and 2018, according to UNHCR, in 2015 (at the peak of the refugee and migration crisis), there were 856,723 arrivals by sea to Greece, 3,783 by land, and 799 dead and missing people, a significant increase from the previous year (41,038 by sea, 2,280 by land, and 405 in 2014).⁶ In March 2019, the European Commission declared the crisis is over.⁷

Issues around identity, immigration, and refugees in Greece play into a complex mix of history and contemporary factors. Greeks take great pride in their identity, more so than many other European nations. The link between ancient and modern Greece remains a delicate issue in the country today. It is not merely a cornerstone of Greek national identity; it also expresses a sense of insecurity about Greece's place in the world today. There is a deep frustration with Greek institutions: the government and traditional political parties, the European Union, and the neighbouring country of Turkey. Debates around immigration and refugees are also influenced by past experiences of emigration, and memories of earlier migratory movements from the population exchange in the early 20th century as well as more recent migration of Albanian into Greece in the 1990s. Perceptions of the more recent movement of refugees from Turkey into Greece are also influenced by the historic relationship between Greece and Turkey and especially the very different religious identities of Greeks and Turks. Most Greeks adhere to the Greek Orthodox Christian faith, while Turkey is predominantly Muslim.

Unemployment has been decreasing since its peak at 28 per cent in 2013. However, by early 2019 it still stood at 19 per cent with a staggering rate of 39 per cent unemployment among the young.⁸ Asked about the most important issues facing Greece today, the economic situation continues to top the list, followed by unemployment. While Greeks agree on the economy and unemployment being the most important issues, there are differences in their perception of the importance of immigration. Only one in five Greeks are persuaded of the benefits of migration. However this does not pose barriers to expressing empathy for those who flee from war or migrate to escape poverty. In this context, Greeks point fingers at those who should be taking more responsibility: namely, the government and the EU, and are sceptical of Greece's capacity to manage those inflows successfully.

The political landscape in Greece has changed significantly since the outbreak of the economic crisis. Since its establishment as a modern democracy in 1964, Greece has had a multiparty system dominated by two parties: the conservative New Democracy and the socialist PASOK. In the 2015 elections, the Coalition for the Radical Left, better known as Syriza, won power and formed a governing coalition with the right-wing party ANEL. In 2018, PASOK, whose votes have plummeted following the outbreak of the economic crisis and the introduction of austerity measures, merged

⁶ UNHCR. (2019). *Operational Portal Refugee Situations. Mediterranean Situation: Greece*. Retrieved from <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5179>; For more statistics facts on refugees and asylum-seekers in Greece see: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/68057>

⁷ Rankin, J. 2019. EU declares migration crisis over as it hits out at 'fake news.' *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/06/eu-declares-migration-crisis-over-hits-out-fake-news-european-commission>

⁸ Trading Economics. (2019). *Greece Unemployment Rate*

into a new party called Movement for Change. At the same time, the far-right party Golden Dawn - often described as neo-nazi, fascist and racist group - has received increasing number of votes since 2012: from 0 seats in 2009 in Parliament to 21 seats in the 2015 elections and 18 in the September 2015.

As one reflection of how pressures are playing out in Greece, compared to other countries where More in Common has conducted research, Greeks are more likely to support extreme measures such as a strong leader willing to break the rules or taking up the defence of borders and shores themselves if the crisis continues. At the same time, Greeks value empathy and solidarity and believe that they are an essential part of Greek identity. They place emphasis on justice and are not willing to support anyone willing to circumvent the most fundamental human rights. Greeks are also worried about increasing levels of racism and discrimination.

Public opinion on matters of identity, immigration, and refugees in Greece is not divided neatly into opposing camps of supporters and opponents. There are efforts to exploit the issue of immigration by heightening the perceived sense of threat from organisations such as the far-right Golden Dawn party. Using divisive narratives that are deployed by authoritarian populist parties around the world, they appeal to the frustrations of the public by defining an exclusionary 'us' threatened by a dangerous 'them' composed of refugees and migrants. These sharply divisive anti-refugee narratives, to date, have not resonated with large numbers of Greeks. Most people, especially those in the middle groups, have concerns about the refugee flows into Greece yet hold other opinions that at first glance seem contradictory.

This report aims to help contribute to the efforts of leaders of civil society, politics and social institutions to understand the attitudes of different parts of the Greek population, to identify the susceptibility of certain groups to dangerous, 'othering' narratives, and to engage the middle segments of the population more effectively.

Greek Public Opinion within the European context

Issues of identity and belonging – and questions about the 'insiders' and 'outsiders' of society - are playing an ever-greater role in public debate in European countries. However, these complex issues are not always well-captured, and by extension understood, by traditional public opinion research. Majorities may support seemingly inconsistent propositions, because people often hold conflicting views on these issues.

More in Common's research into public attitudes aims to develop a deeper understanding of the changing landscape of opinions around values and identity that are profoundly disrupting the patterns of national politics across Europe and beyond. To this end, a series of national studies have explored a large number of questions of a statistically representative sample of populations. The outcome of these studies in each case is a segmentation of national populations into groups with similar attitudes ranging in a spectrum from 'open' to 'closed'. Although this spectrum does not perfectly capture all of the dimensions of debates on these issues, as many commentators have noted, the spectrum powerfully explains many of the profound shifts we are witnessing in many societies⁹ - perhaps more than any other explanatory model.

⁹ The Economist. (2016, July 30). *The new political divide*. Retrieved from <https://www.economist.com/leaders/2016/07/30/the-new-political-divide>; The Economist. (2016, July 30). *Drawbridges Up*. Retrieved from <https://www.economist.com/briefing/2016/07/30/drawbridges-up>; Olsen, H. (2017, September 6). *Forget Left v Right; It's In v Outs*. *Unherd*. Retrieved from <https://unherd.com/briefings/forget-left-v-right-v-outs/>

More in Common has already conducted segmentation studies in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Italy (see Annex I). In each of these countries, the segmentation analysis uncovered between four and seven distinct segments. The attitudinal segmentation model identified segments which can be grouped into three categories: ‘open’, ‘closed’ and ‘mixed’ views. This last group of segments are called the middle segments. On the issues of national identity and attitudes towards immigration, these studies found that:

- Those in the **‘open’ segments** are more positive about engagement with the world, specifically with regards to immigration and globalisation (among the open segments that More in Common has identified in other European countries, Greek Multiculturals are the exception when it comes to viewing the economic impact of globalisation positively). They support the idea of an open society that welcomes migrants and refugees.
- Those in the **‘closed’ segments** are generally suspicious of immigration and globalisation. They are suspicious of elites and hold on to narrower and more exclusive views of national identity. They oppose refugees coming into their country and believe that Islam is incompatible with their society.
- The **middle segments** hold a mix of ‘open’ and ‘closed’ views, and are often driven by different concerns, such as the economic and cultural aspects of immigration, concerns about security from crime and terrorism, or a broader disengagement with social and political debate.

The segmentation analysis for Greece identified six segments. All six segments were distinct, but with less variation in beliefs and opinions than the segments identified in other countries. There was more agreement between the two groups positioned on either end of the spectrum than we have found in other countries - for example, on issues such as a shared scepticism of the benefits of globalisation and in their distrust of Greece’s institutions and the European Union.

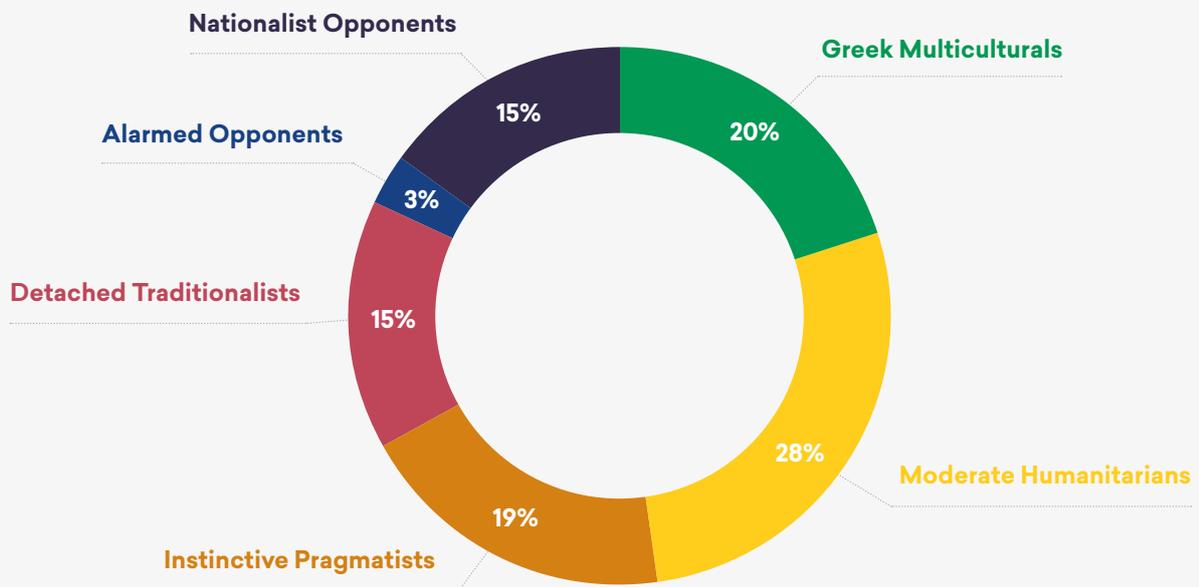
Among the six segments identified in the research:

- At one end of the spectrum, one segment holds more ‘open’ views and its members are more accepting of migrants and refugees (**Greek Multiculturals**).
- At the other end, two other segments hold more ‘closed’ views and are more opposed to migrants and refugees (**Nationalist Opponents** and **Alarmed Opponents**).
- Three segments belong to a middle group. Together, they comprise 62 per cent of the overall population. They are **Moderate Humanitarians, Instinctive Pragmatists, Detached Traditionalists**. However, these groups are distinct from the ‘open’ and ‘closed’ groups in the extent and intensity of their views, the factors that influence their attitudes, and their levels of engagement with those issues. While the ‘open’ and ‘closed’ segments align on some of their views about traditional parties, their dissatisfaction with the status quo and globalisation, the middle segments are often split or express a more moderate position on these issues.

Greece is perhaps the country that most differs from the other European countries in which More in Common has conducted research. This is consistent with the findings of a 2018 Pew Research Center study, which found more similarity between Greek attitudes on national identity and religion with Central and Eastern European nations than with Western Europeans.¹⁰ The Greek public is less polarised than other Europeans, with a stronger commitment to tradition and national identity. There is less ‘othering’ of migrants, and some characteristics of the segments have not been found elsewhere. Yet despite Greece’s distinctive features, the position of around half of the population

¹⁰ Lipka, M. (2018).

in middle groups is consistent with the research findings in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Italy. As in those countries, those belonging to the middle groups in Greece do not share the unambiguous views of those at either end of the spectrum. Each of the three middle segments prioritise different issues and are driven by different values and concerns. Understanding those differences – and especially the characteristics of middle groups – is essential to understanding the landscape of public opinion. Importantly, this approach overcomes simplistic descriptions of Greece as a country uniformly hostile to migrants.



2



Methodology

2.1 Limitations of Existing Research

This report aims to fill a gap in the existing body of public opinion research data in Greece.¹¹ Previous research concerning attitudes towards immigration has typically involved opinion polling at a smaller scale. Often this research has contained responses to questions about specific issues, but limited explanation for those responses has been provided. Some studies have gone further and have associated responses with other social, economic or demographic factors. Other studies have been conducted at the European level, which allow for greater comparability but a less nuanced understanding of the specificities of the country. Few studies have attempted to build a more complete picture of how the Greek population has responded to Greece's role in the wake of the surge of migrants and refugees into Europe in recent years, and how this response is shaped by identity, culture and values.¹²

When looking at public attitudes towards these contentious issues, media coverage tends to focus on people who hold the strongest views at opposite ends of the spectrum. Much less attention is paid to the vast number of Greeks in the middle, who largely hold mixed views about their country's refugee intake, its immigration policies and their country's place in the world. This report suggests that a majority of the Greek population belongs to groups with more mixed views. In previous reports in reference to other European countries, we have referred to these groups as the 'conflicted middle' or 'exhausted majority'. In Greece, we find a set of middle groups that are not distinguished by being 'conflicted' in the way we have found in other countries. The reasons for this will be explained further in the report. This report therefore refers to them as 'middle groups.' Middle groups are generally less attached to fixed ideological perspectives and are often more open to changing their views on a given issue. This report attempts to help identify some of the distinctive characteristics of Greeks in the middle groups.

2.2 Present Research

This study combines the large-scale sampling of professional polling with insights from social science. As such, we believe it provides one of the most comprehensive pictures to date of Greek public opinion on these issues. Nevertheless, this report is far from being a definitive study of Greek society in 2019, and we recognise that a report of this kind cannot do justice to the complexities of public attitudes in Greece. This would require both more qualitative research and greater length. Nevertheless, we believe that it advances understanding of public attitudes and provides valuable pointers for organisations which communicate on issues of identity, refugees and immigrants, and more generally for efforts to foster inclusion and greater social cohesion.

The research methodology was designed with two main aims in mind. The first aim was to provide a portrait of the Greek population derived from observed patterns in beliefs and attitudes, rather than according to their demographic or partisan identities. The second aim was to apply relevant concepts from social science in the domain of traditional polling research.

¹¹ For instance, Greece has not participated in the last waves of the European Social Survey, and therefore attitudinal measures on the issue are limited.

¹² For some of the best studies on attitudes toward immigration and refugees see: Tent. (2017). *Tent Tracker Public Perceptions of the Refugee Crisis Greece Year 2 2016/2017*. Retrieved from: https://www.tent.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/TENT_2016_GREECE_TRACKER_V4.pdf; Pew Research Center. (2017). *Religious Belief and National Belonging in Central and Eastern Europe*. Retrieved from <http://www.pewforum.org/2017/05/10/religious-affiliation/>

Fieldwork and Statistical Analysis

The research contained both a quantitative and a qualitative phase. In the quantitative phase, a total of 2,000 participants were recruited forming a representative cross-section of the Greek citizenry. The research, conducted during the first half of 2018, was undertaken in partnership with Ipsos, a global market and opinion research polling company. It engaged a representative sample that reflects the composition of Greek citizens with quotas on age (18-64), gender, geography, educational level, and income. The survey used Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) and respondents answered questions relating to their demographic characteristics, including gender, age, geography, educational level, income, ethnicity, religious identity, and media consumption habits. They were asked to identify the issues of greatest concern to them (with several open-ended questions), and they responded to questions about their political views and affiliation, familiarity with refugee and immigration issues, their understanding of different terminology in the refugee and migration debate, their personal experience with refugees and their responses to different policy approaches and framings.

This study employed a cluster analysis methodology that draws on a range of attitudinal characteristics of the Greek public. The cluster analysis included a factor analysis, and the use of random forest and discriminant analysis techniques. This form of segmentation provides a rich composite picture of how a population is divided in its views, going beyond basic demographic factors and therefore uncovering how networks of attitudes and opinions are connected. The segmentation analysis identifies the profile of the population segment most supportive in their attitudes of refugees and migrants; the profile of those most hostile; and the profile of the groups with mixed views.

In the qualitative phase concluded in October 2018, mixed-gender focus groups discussions were conducted with the three middle groups: Moderate Humanitarians, Detached Traditionalists and Instinctive Pragmatists.¹³ These three groups were selected as they are the groups where it was felt that qualitative research could provide the most insight, especially as the quantitative analysis for these groups highlighted conflicts in their views and values.

2.3 Moral Foundations Theory

To obtain a better understanding of how Greeks form their moral judgments and how values influence their political behaviour, we deployed insights from social psychology around people's deepest values and beliefs. In particular, we used the framework put forward by Jonathan Haidt and colleagues known as, Moral Foundations Theory, which identifies a set of 'moral foundations' that underlie people's moral judgements. The moral values are:

- Care/Harm: cherishing and protecting others, especially from physical suffering.
- Fairness/Cheating: relating to proportionality, equality, reciprocity, and rendering justice according to shared rules.
- Authority/Subversion: submitting to tradition and legitimate authority.
- Purity/Disgust: abhorrence for disgusting things, foods, sacred violations.
- Loyalty/Betrayal: standing with one's group, family, nation.

¹³ Ipsos Greece recruited and conducted the focus groups in Greek.

Moral Foundations Theory was included in this study of Greek public opinion with the goal of identifying the most relevant foundations for each of the segments and how it explains differences in attitudes. This was done by using an abridged version of the Moral Foundations Questionnaire which assesses people's reliance on each foundation separately. For instance, participants' prioritisation of the 'Harm' foundation is assessed by their agreement with propositions such as 'One of the worst things a person could do is hurt a defenceless animal,' and their prioritisation of the Purity foundation is assessed by their agreement to the proposition that 'People should not do things that are disgusting, even if no one is harmed.'

The alignment of moral foundations to different segments has implications for the effectiveness of the messages that are targeted to those groups. Communications that emphasise the values most relevant to those audiences are more effective, for example, than communications that are grounded in the values of the communicators. This helps explain why efforts at persuasion on contested issues are often ineffective. People have different moral values and priorities, and a better understanding of those different moral priorities can help move people beyond an impasse. By understanding viewpoints on contested social and political issues in terms of values—a process called moral translation—we may be able to find common ground between previously opposed sides, defuse conflict or at least facilitate greater shared understanding.

3

Attitudinal Segments in Greece

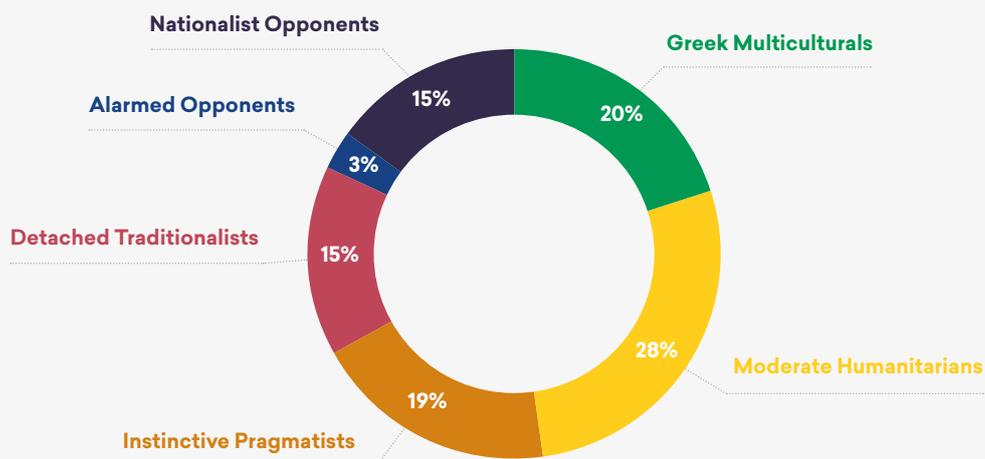
3.1. The Segments

The six segments based on observed patterns in beliefs and attitudes are:

- Greek Multiculturals
- Moderate Humanitarians
- Instinctive Pragmatists
- Detached Traditionalists
- Alarmed Opponents
- Nationalist Opponents

One way of understanding the differences among these groups is to see them as a spectrum of ‘open’ to ‘closed’ values.¹⁴ Being ‘open’ refers to the cosmopolitan orientation towards celebrating diversity and multiculturalism, while being ‘closed’ refers to the more traditional orientation of preserving and prioritizing national, cultural, and religious norms. The cluster analysis yielded one ‘open’ segment (Greek Multiculturals), two ‘closed’ segments (Alarmed Opponents and Nationalist Opponents) and three middle segments (Moderate Humanitarians, Instinctive Pragmatists and Detached Traditionalists). They should not be seen as groups situated in an axis of ‘closed’ to ‘open’ in an incremental way. While these middle groups are distinctive in many of their views, what unites them is that their views are more mixed. Combined, these middle groups represent the majority of the population.

Despite various attitudinal differences, Greeks seem to be united in their distrust of the system, fatigue with politics, and negative views of globalisation. They nevertheless feel a deep sense of pride in their country and its history. This makes Greeks a more uniform group than those in other countries. Regional disparities also play a smaller role in differentiating the segments than is the case in countries such as Italy and Germany. There are large regional disparities in Greece, with most Greeks residing in Attica and Central Macedonia, but none of the segments is concentrated in one particular area, and all segments can be found in all regions.



¹⁴ All frameworks have their benefits and flaws. While we recognise that the ‘open’ to ‘closed’ framework does not map perfectly, in an incremental way, for all segments identified in this research, it is the most useful segment to study attitudinal groups on issues of migration, refugees, and identity.

THE 'OPEN' GROUP

20%



Greek Multiculturals

20%



Key Words Welcoming, distrustful of institutions, highest levels of education, younger, highest earning

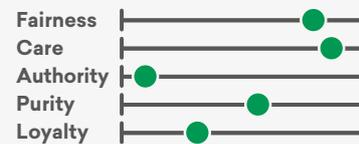
Political Identity

Feel closest to left leaning parties such as Syriza and the Communist Party of Greece (KKE). Zero per cent support the Golden Dawn Party

Central Issues

The economy, high unemployment, poverty and social inequality

Moral Foundations



General Perspective

Greek Multiculturals hold the most 'open' views among the segments, and are most positive towards immigration. The issues that most concern them are the state of the economy and the resulting issues of high unemployment and taxes. This focus makes them the group with the strongest conviction that it is difficult to succeed in Greece. Although they do not feel as strongly connected to other Greeks and are less proud of their Greek identity than the other segments, 52 per cent of them sense that Greek identity is disappearing. They also hold considerably high levels of distrust in the Greek system and the European Union. For instance, 70 per cent believe that the Greek economy is rigged to benefit the rich and powerful, while 63 per cent believe that other European countries have not done enough to assist Greece in managing the refugee and migration crisis. Nevertheless, Greek Multiculturals hold generally

welcoming views towards outsiders, and the majority are worried about increasing levels of discrimination.

Views on Immigration

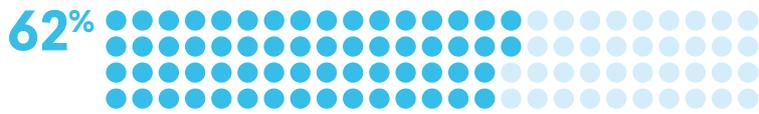
Greek Multiculturals are more likely than any other segment to believe that immigration is good for the Greek economy and that it enriches Greek cultural life. They recognise that migrants make efforts to integrate into society and that they are willing to work harder than Greeks for much lower pay. Their welcoming disposition can be seen most clearly in their attitudes towards refugees. Nearly 60 per cent believe that accepting refugees reflects the Greek cultural value of solidarity. Greek Multiculturals also view refugees as being in genuine need: nearly 60 per cent distinguish refugees from other migrants as people who had no choice but to leave their home countries. A large majority (72 per cent) believe that people should be able to take refuge in other countries, including

Greece. An overwhelming 96 per cent believe that all refugees should be accepted, regardless of whether they are Christian or Muslim. A further 64 per cent also believe that refugees should be able to maintain their own traditions. Nevertheless, Greek Multiculturals have concerns about Islam. Nearly half (45 per cent) believe that Islam is incompatible with Greek society, which is more than those who disagree (37 per cent) within this segment.

Demographics

Over half of Greek Multiculturals have attended university, making them the segment with the highest levels of education. Over half are also in full-time or part-time employment. Greek Multiculturals tend to be female and younger. Most are aged between 20-29, although a large proportion are also aged between 40-49. At 51 per cent, they are the least religious group and the segment that attends church the least.

THE MIDDLE GROUPS



Moderate Humanitarians



Key Words Proud, positive, tolerant but supportive of stronger measures, similar pattern of income levels to national average, with slightly more in middle range

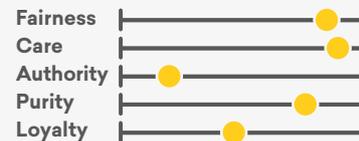
Political Identity

Support is divided between the conservative New Democracy party and left-leaning Syriza

Central Issues

The economy, high unemployment, taxes

Moral Foundations



General Perspective

Moderate Humanitarians are the most 'open' of the middle segments and like Greek Multiculturals, they have an accepting and positive attitude towards migrants and refugees. While they are concerned about the economy, they are the least likely group to think that the Greek economy has worsened in the past year (with 51% believing this) and they are actually more likely to believe that it is easy for someone like themselves to do well in Greece today. Moderate Humanitarians feel very proud to be Greek. They are less likely to think that their Greek identity is disappearing and do not feel like strangers in their own country. Though they describe Greece as 'angry' and 'fearful,' many also believe that Greece is 'tolerant.' However, Moderate Humanitarians also show support for more extreme

solutions. They are twice as likely as Greek Multiculturals to be willing to ignore human rights in order to stop terrorism, while nearly 80 per cent believe that a strong leader willing to break the rules is needed to fix Greece.

Views on Immigration

Moderate Humanitarians differ from Greek Multiculturals in that they, like most Greeks, do not believe that immigration is good for Greece either politically or economically. Nevertheless, they hold generally 'warm' feelings towards migrants, refugees and Muslims, and compared to other segments, they often see these groups as similar to them. They appear to be especially concerned about the economic impact of immigration: the proportion of this group that believes that migrants have made it harder for Greeks to get jobs is larger than the proportion that

does not believe so. Sixty per cent recognise that migrants generally make efforts to integrate but possibly are largely sceptical due to the conditions in the country and the lack of resources and infrastructure.

Demographics

Moderate Humanitarians are the most likely segment to be in full or part-time employment (58 per cent). They otherwise tend to be similar to Greek Multiculturals in their demographic characteristics. They are more likely to be female and have above-average levels of education: 41 per cent of the segment attended university. However, they are considerably more religious than Greek Multiculturals (and therefore closer to the Greek average), with 74 per cent stating that they are religious, although most rarely attend church.



Instinctive Pragmatists

19%

Key Words Optimistic about state of Greek economy, with higher levels of faith in Greek institutions, security-concerned, similar pattern of income levels to national average, with slightly more in lower range, calculating, opposed to newcomers, supportive of high measures

Political Identity

Highest support for New Democracy, the conservative party. Lowest levels of uncertainty about their political identity

Central Issues

The economy, high unemployment, education, immigration

Moral Foundations



General Perspective

Instinctive Pragmatists hold a mixture of 'open' and 'closed' values. Unlike many Greeks, they still have confidence in many of Greece's institutions. For instance, Instinctive Pragmatists are more likely to see the economic consequences of globalisation positively, and they do not see the Greek economy as rigged to benefit the rich. Similarly, they are the group least likely to believe that Greece should distance itself from the European Union and the Euro. On the other hand, they have much higher levels of concern about terrorism and believe that the Greek government should do everything in its power to stop it, even if this requires setting human rights aside. Yet, they are also less likely than the national average to believe that the way to fix Greece's

problems is to have a strong leader who is willing to break the rules.

Views on Immigration

Although they recognise some of the benefits of immigration and believe that it has brought new skills, opportunities and drive to succeed in Greece, Instinctive Pragmatists are unsure about whether Islam is compatible with Greek culture. They are one of the most likely segments to believe that immigrants generally make efforts to integrate into Greek society, but they still hold colder than average feelings towards immigrants, refugees and especially Muslims. They also feel more reluctant to express their opinions about topics of immigration and refugees. They would prefer for Greece to only accept refugees who are not Muslim

and also object to Muslim women wearing headscarves in Greece.

Demographics

Instinctive Pragmatists are more likely to be male and aged between 30-39. They have relatively low levels of education, with a higher proportion than average having finished school at junior high. However, they are more likely than Detached Traditionalists and the 'closed' groups to have attended university. Similar to Greek Multiculturals and Moderate Humanitarians, just over half are in full or part-time employment. Over three quarters of Instinctive Pragmatists state they are religious although most attend church less than once a month.



Detached Traditionalists

15% 

Key Words Trust in institutions, tradition, religious, older, similar pattern of income levels to national average, with slightly more in lower range

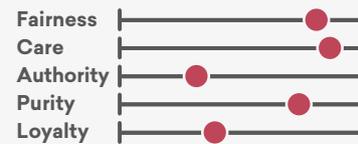
Political Identity

Most likely to identify with traditional conservative party, New Democracy, but are lower than most other groups on political identity

Central Issues

The economy, high unemployment, taxes

Moral Foundations



General Perspective

Detached Traditionalists have the greatest faith in the Greek system, despite their frustrations with the economy. As a group, they are more likely than average to believe that traditional parties and politicians care about them and that the media's reporting on immigration and refugees is accurate. They also feel strongly connected to other Greeks and Europeans. Detached Traditionalists are deeply religious and believe that Greece should protect its Greek Orthodox religious heritage from other faiths and beliefs. They are somewhat drawn to authoritarian solutions to deal with the crises Greece is facing today.

Views on Immigration

Detached Traditionalists generally view immigration negatively and are mostly concerned about its economic impact on Greece. They are more likely than average to strongly agree that immigrants have made it more difficult for Greek people to get jobs and that immigration is costing the welfare state and draining resources which could be spent on Greeks. Nevertheless, they hold warmer than average views towards those migrants and refugees who are already in Greece. They are unsure about Islam and its compatibility with Greek society, likely because they have strong views about the need to preserve Greece's Orthodox Christian heritage.

Demographics

Detached Traditionalists tend to be female and are more likely to be in older age ranges. Most are aged between 40-49, while the highest proportion of 60-64 year olds are also in this group. They have lower levels of education than most other groups, most having not completed any qualifications beyond high school. Almost 80 per cent of Detached Traditionalists state that they are religious, and almost one quarter attend church services more than once a week.

THE 'CLOSED' GROUPS

18%



Alarmed Opponents

3%

Key Words Older, pessimistic, supportive of strong measures to fix the country, lower levels of income

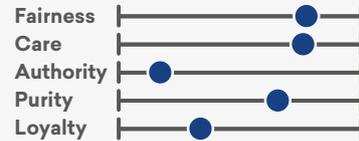
Political Identity

Highest proportion with no clear political identity

Central Issues

The economy, high unemployment, racism and discrimination

Moral Foundations



General Perspective

Alarmed Opponents constitute the smallest attitudinal group in Greek society. They hold similar views to Nationalist Opponents but they are less driven by a deeply rooted ideological background. Like most Greeks, they cite the economic situation and unemployment as their greatest concern, but they also see racism and discrimination as an important issue. Alongside Nationalist Opponents, they are the only group to believe that both economic and social conditions have deteriorated in the past year. Alarmed Opponents exhibit strong authoritarian tendencies,

believing that Greece needs a strong leader to fix the country. They also support measures to stop terrorism at all costs, even if human rights are ignored.

Views on Immigration

Alarmed Opponents generally believe that immigration is bad for Greece and that it is placing strains on the welfare system. They further worry that immigration is sharply dividing Greek society. Members of this group report that they sometimes feel like a stranger in Greece. Alarmed Opponents support the principle of giving asylum to people fleeing war or persecution, and they do not hold consistently hostile

views towards migrants themselves. Nevertheless, they think that migrants create health risks and are inclined to believe that if the refugee and migration crisis continues, ordinary Greek citizens should start taking direct action to protect Greece's shores and borders.

Demographics

Alarmed Opponents are more likely to be male, with most aged between 30-39. With lower levels of education, only 41 per cent are in full or part-time employment. They are highly religious and 66 per cent attend church at least once per month, the highest among all groups (tied with Nationalist Opponents).

Note that because it is such a small segment, some of the data associated with Alarmed Opponents may be less meaningful than for other segments.



Nationalist Opponents

15% 

Key Words Older, proud, pessimistic, distrustful, lowest levels of education and income

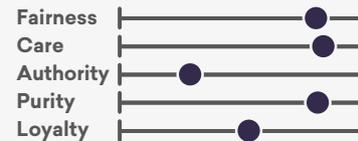
Political Identity

Identify most with right-leaning parties such as New Democracy. Highest levels of support for ultranationalist party, Golden Dawn

Central Issues

The economy, high unemployment, immigration

Moral Foundations



General Perspective

Nationalist Opponents hold the most 'closed' values of any group. They are pessimistic about the state of Greece's economy and society, and believe that the situation has also become worse for them personally in the past year. Nationalist Opponents are more proud of their Greek identity than any other group, and they strongly feel that Greek identity is disappearing. They are supportive of strong action to defend the nation from threats, and are especially suspicious of Turkey. They are also disappointed in the EU's lack of support for the refugee and migration crisis and believe Greece should not do more to help refugees.

View on Immigration

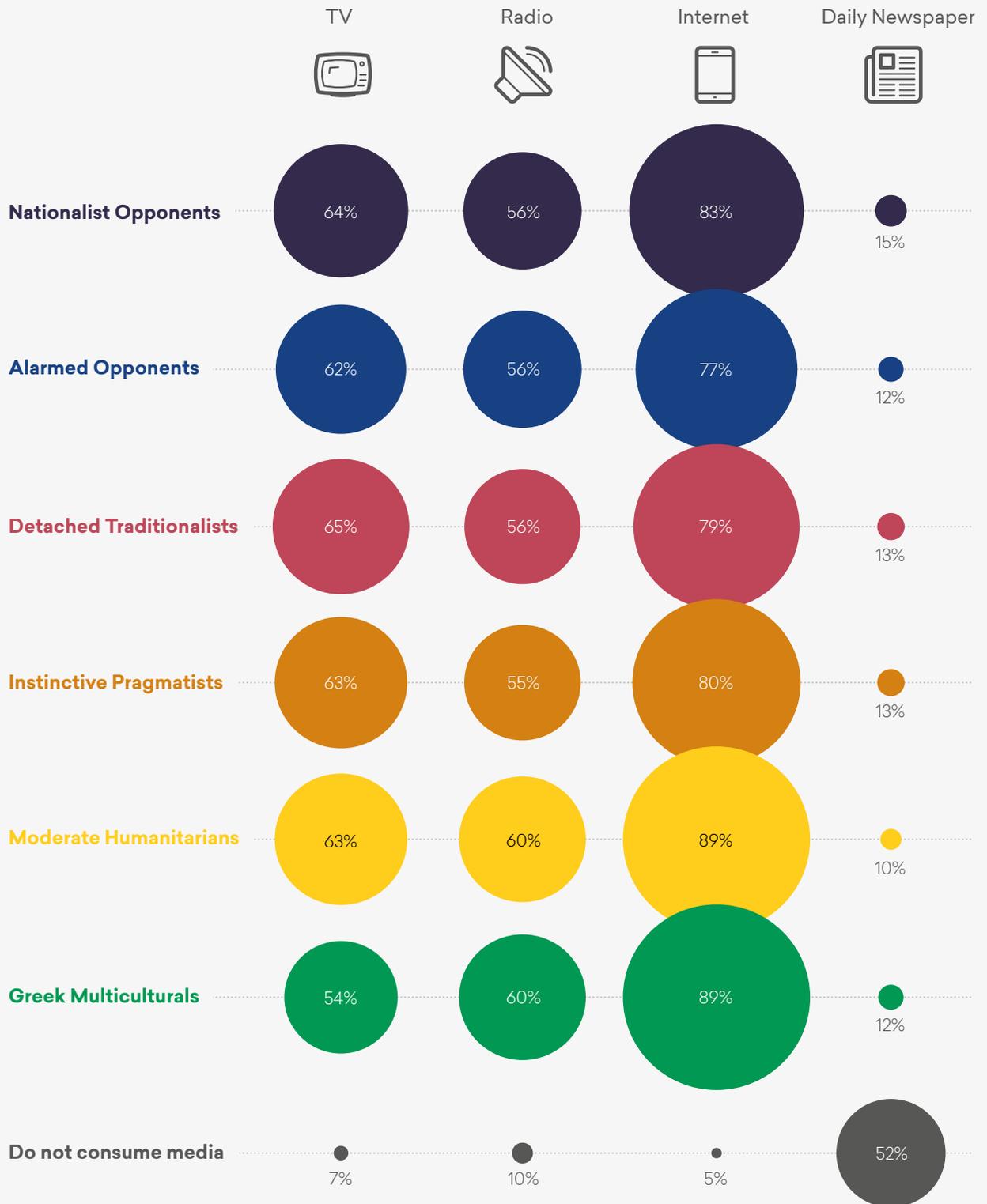
Nationalist Opponents consistently hold 'cold' feelings towards all migrants and refugees, and even colder towards Muslims. They are less likely than any other group to see any benefits to immigration, and believe that this has divided Greek society and created burdens on the welfare system. They concede that migrants are often prepared to work harder than Greeks but resent the fact that migrants have made it more difficult for Greeks to get jobs. Nationalist Opponents believe that the media is biased in favour of refugees. Simultaneously, they believe that refugees receive preferential treatment with regards to benefits and public services.

Demographics

Nationalist Opponents are mostly male and older. They have the highest proportion of males (62 per cent) out of any segment with most aged between 30-59. They also have the lowest levels of education and are the least likely out of all the groups to have attended university. Just under half (46 per cent) of Nationalist Opponents are in full or part-time employment and are the most likely group to be unemployed but looking for a job. They are highly religious and 66 per cent attend church at least once per month, the highest among all groups (tied with Alarmed Opponents).

3.2. The Media Consumption Habits of the Segments

How do you consume media everyday/almost everyday?

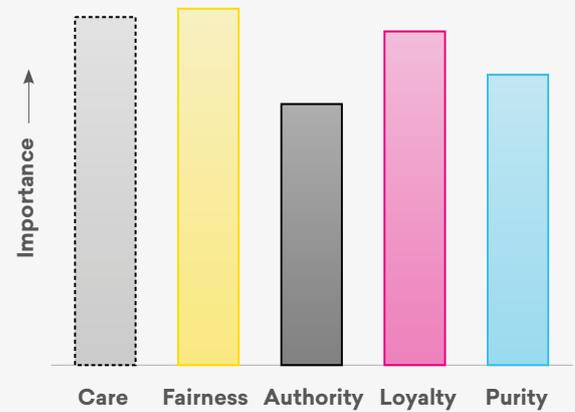


How do you consume media everyday/almost everyday?
Source: More in Common (2019)

3.3. The Moral Foundations of the Segments

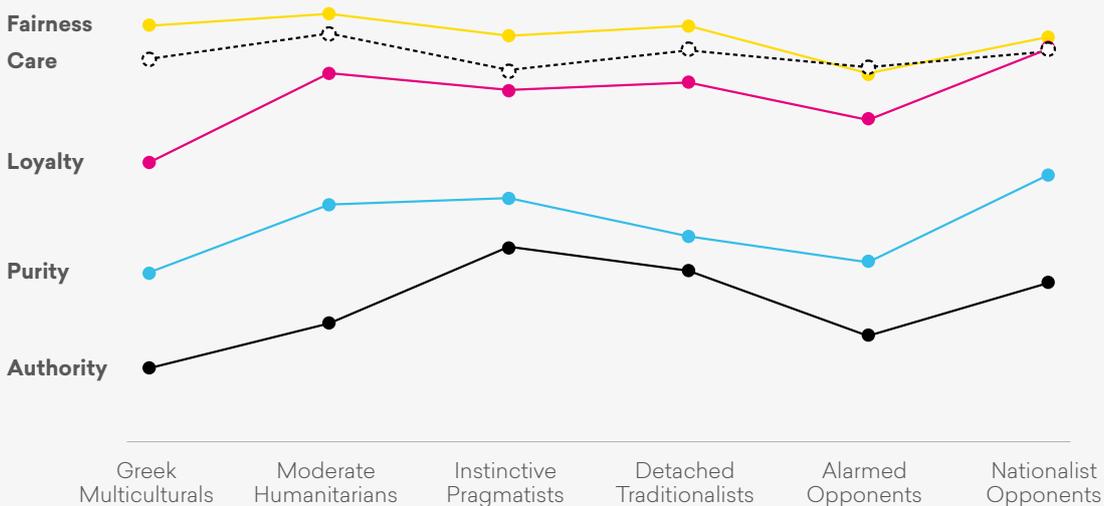
To better understand the underlying values that shape their attitudes, the survey adapted a set of questions drawn from Moral Foundations Theory, a way of understanding moral judgment that has become prominent in recent years owing to the work of American academic Jonathan Haidt.¹⁵ Based on the analysis of tens of thousands of responses to questions from cultures around the globe, Moral Foundations Theory observes that humans form moral judgements based on a set of distinctive ‘foundations.’ These foundations reflect how individuals process and prioritise among competing moral impulses. The foundations that support each segment’s moral system can help explain why different arguments and messages resonate more effectively with some groups and not others. Broadly speaking, those with conservative values give higher priority than those with liberal values to three foundations: authority (respect of their group’s leading figures, traditions and institutions), loyalty (commitment to one’s in-group), and purity (responsiveness to disgust, often in religious contexts).

Relevance of Moral Foundations in Greece



Source: More in Common (2019)

Moral Foundations by segment



Source: More in Common (2019)

15 Haidt, Jonathan. 2012. *The Righteous Mind*, Pantheon Books: New York, NY.

The question of prioritisation of values is especially relevant in the context of refugees and migration. Host country citizens must consider the harm and injustice that the migrants are escaping (care and fairness foundations), while simultaneously considering the impact that irregular migration from different countries has on respect for the law (authority foundation), cultural norms and morality (purity foundation) and preservation of their group's interests and institutions (loyalty foundation).

As is the case in most countries across the globe, in Greece we found that the care and fairness foundation are the most prominent and widely shared. These two foundations are the highest for all segments (for the Hostile Nationalists, loyalty is also at the top). Yet in the case of the other foundations, there are distinctions between the segments. While the immediate reaction for most people will certainly be influenced by instinctive feelings of care and fairness, for many it will also be mediated by an interpretation based on respect for authority, loyalty, and sanctity - this does not necessarily occur at the conscious or rational level but is rather an emotional interpretation.

Loyalty is important for the middle segments, more than for the Greek Cosmopolitans, who are less driven by it and also rank the lowest for authority and purity. Authority is highest for the Instinctive Pragmatists, followed by the Detached Traditionalists and the Nationalist Opponents. Purity is highest for the Nationalist Opponents, followed by the Instinctive Pragmatists and the Moderate Humanitarians.

The moral judgments of Moderate Humanitarians rest heavily on care and fairness, but also on loyalty as well. Jonathan Haidt has identified the original trigger for the Loyalty foundation as "anything that tells you who is a team player and who is a traitor, particularly when your team is fighting for other teams." It seems that the Moderate Humanitarians could be triggered to view migrants and refugees as individuals who - as foreigners - are less likely to be loyal to the country and more likely to betray it by attacking it.

Detached Traditionalists and Instinctive Pragmatists have similar moral matrices. Akin to Moderate Humanitarians, they view issues mostly through the lenses of care, fairness, and loyalty, but to them purity and authority are also higher than for the most open segments. They oppose cheating (another side of the fairness foundation) and could potentially perceive migrants and refugees as individuals who cheat the system and benefit unfairly from it. Messages that tap into this sentiment are thus more likely to be convincing. They also rely more heavily on the purity/disgust foundation than other segments which can be a possible explanation of why concerns around health risks stemming from immigration resonate with them. Political rhetoric around diseases brought by migrants may activate the purity/disgust foundation for these groups and in their case they already display high levels of agreement with the idea that immigrants create a health risk for Greece (52 per cent of Detached Traditionalists and 55 per cent of Instinctive Pragmatists).

The authority foundation is tied to the urge to respect hierarchical relationships. Authority is remarkably high for Instinctive Pragmatists, who are the most concerned about terrorist threats. For these two segments, Instinctive Pragmatists and Detached Traditionalists, migrants and refugees who do not respect Greek laws and culture, defying Greek structures and identity present challenges to the government's ability to establish control in the country, a control that they already view as weak (and which, they believe, requires a strong leader that will enforce it). This also helps explain why they express more willingness to take aggressive action to maintain the border, even at the risk of endangering the lives of migrants.

We would highly recommend that anyone designing communications or campaigns, or analysing public opinion, takes into consideration the moral foundations of the segments we have identified, and what can trigger them. Far-right populist movements have been - probably unconsciously - very effective at exploiting fears and anxieties by underscoring messages that tap into the purity, loyalty, and authority foundations. This is in stark contrast to messages based on the care and fairness foundations sent by most organisations in the social sector. Exploring how to positively trigger the moral foundations of each group could be a new avenue to build support for pro-migrant and refugee policies and activities.

4

Perceptions of the State of Greece and the World

“

‘I think that the future is difficult: young people with no jobs, [only] a handful of jobs are available, families are economically impoverished, primary residences are auctioned, people left homeless. On the streets I see too many homeless people, the situation progresses slightly... I would like many things to change.’

Moderate Humanitarian

”

4.1. Greeks' Outlook

After years of economic bonanza, growth, and prosperity in the early 2000s, Greece's economic situation took a sharp turn for the worse as a result of years of structural flaws exposed by the global financial crisis in 2009. The economic downturn lasted longer than even the Great Depression in the United States. This prompted the most expensive financial rescue of a country ever, borrowing over €300 billion, as well as the largest adjustment programme implemented by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in its history.¹⁶ The implementation of the programme was marred with hardship and went hand in hand with the largest fiscal adjustment and the largest debt write-down history since the end of World War II. As part of the conditions for this borrowing, Greece was forced to undertake extensive reforms, embrace austerity and accept cuts to wages and pensions. The crisis exposed an economy seeped in clientelism and patronage, an oversized and unsustainable public service and dishonest public accounts.

While unemployment has been decreasing, by early 2019 it still stood at almost 19 per cent with a staggering rate of 39 per cent among the young.¹⁷ Asked about the most important issues facing Greece today, the economic situation (chosen by 31 per cent of the population) continues to top the list, followed by unemployment (22 per cent). While Greeks agree on the economy and unemployment being the most important issues, there are differences in their perception of the importance of immigration although no segment considers it the most important issue today. Immigration is listed as the most important issue today by 15 per cent of the Nationalist Opponents, while not even ten per cent of any of the other segments would say that this is the most relevant issue.

Analysed through the lens of partisan identity, immigration is one of the most important issues facing the country today for almost 14 per cent of the extreme-right/Golden Dawn supporters, while only 6 per cent of the supporters of New Democracy and 5 per cent of Syriza supporters think it is one of the top issues.

Most Greeks believe that conditions have remained the same or have gotten worse in the past year - whether in connection with their personal situation, economic conditions or the state of Greek society. They are even more negative about Greek society overall than for their personal circumstances and for the economy.

Greeks are slightly more optimistic about their own circumstances and for the Greek economy. Thirty-five per cent of Greeks believe that the future will be better for them and their families, as opposed to 33 per cent who believe it will be worse. In this context, some variation across segments is noted, with Nationalist Opponents being the most pessimistic.

¹⁶ Kalyvas, S. (2015). *Modern Greece: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

¹⁷ Trading Economics. (2019). *Greece Unemployment Rate*

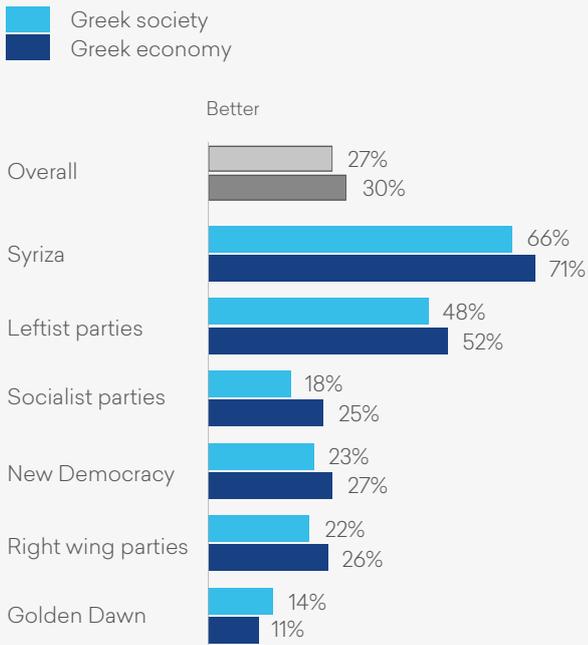
Words that best describe Greece



Words/phrases best describe Greece today?
Source: More in Common (2019)

Thirty per cent of Greeks expect the economy to get better, 39 per cent expect it to get worse, and 28 per cent predict it will remain the same. Nationalist Opponents, at 49 per cent, are the most pessimistic, followed by Greek Multiculturals at 36 per cent.

Things will get better for...



Do you think things will get better, worse or are about the same for the Greek society/economy?
Source: More in Common (2019)

Greeks are most concerned about the broader outlook for their society with 42 per cent believing that circumstances will get worse in the next year while the rest are evenly split at 27 per cent between ‘better’ and ‘about the same.’ Nationalist Opponents are the most concerned about the future of Greek society while Moderate Humanitarians are the most optimistic; 42 per cent among them believe that conditions will get better.

Levels of optimism and pessimism do not vary greatly by demographic group. Analysed through the lens of region, there are small differences. The largest difference is between Western Macedonia, where only 16 per cent of Greeks expect things to improve for Greek society, and Epirus, where 33 per cent believe things will indeed get better.

In contrast, there are large differences in outlook according to political identity. Among those who align with Syriza, as many as 71 per cent believe that things will improve for the Greek economy and 66 per cent believe that things will get better for Greek society. At the other end, only 11 per cent of those who support Golden Dawn believe that the economy will improve and 14 per cent believe that things will get better for Greek society.

4.2. Distrust of the Government

The government could stop turning a blind eye to tax evasion and stop bleeding dry the innocent. Not that we are all innocent. Nobody is innocent. But we are not going to pay because some others want more money in their pocket.

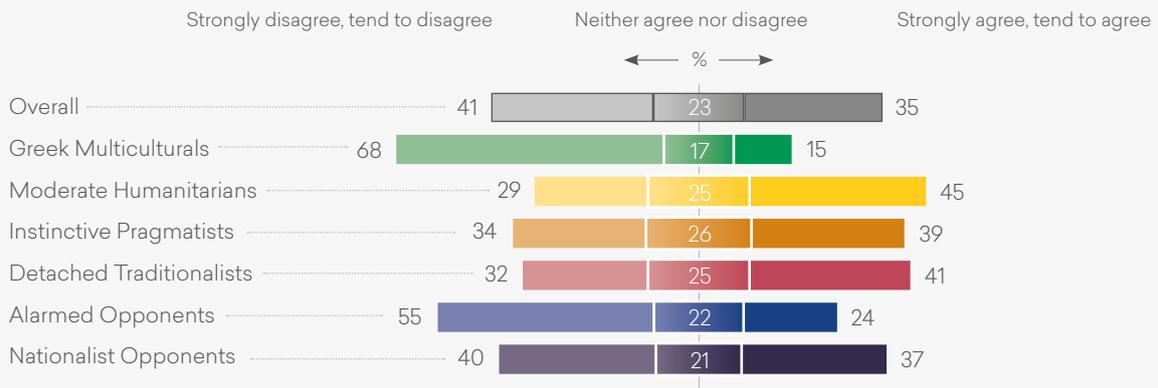
Moderate Humanitarian

Greeks have very low levels of trust in their government and institutions. Only 13 per cent of Greeks say they are satisfied with their national government, 44 per cent with the education system, and 42 per cent with the judicial system. Based on the Democracy Perception Index, as many as 60 per cent of Greeks state that ‘the system never or rarely works in my interest.’¹⁸ This is unsurprising, given the scale of fraud and dishonesty revealed in the past decade.

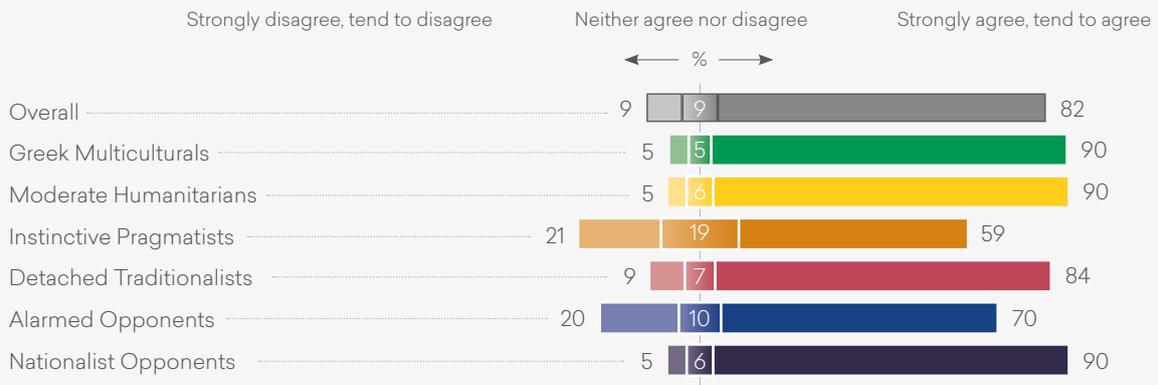
¹⁸ Dalia Research, Alliance of Democracies & Rasmussen Global. (2018). *Democracy Perception Index*. Retrieved from <http://www.allianceofdemocracies.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Democracy-Perception-Index-2018-1.pdf>

Consistent with the electoral losses of parties that until recently dominated politics in Greece, it makes sense that only 10 per cent of Greeks believe that traditional parties care about people like them, while 82 per cent believe that the economy is rigged to the benefit of the rich and powerful. Additionally, only 35 per cent believe that it is easy for them to do well in Greece. Among the segments, there are significant differences on some of these questions.

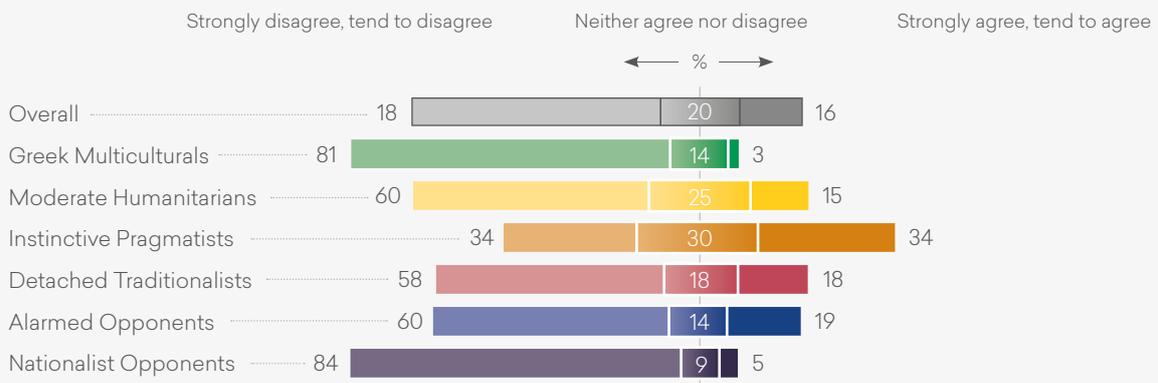
It is easy for someone like me to do well in Greece



The Greek economy is rigged to benefit the rich and powerful



Traditional parties and politicians care about people like me



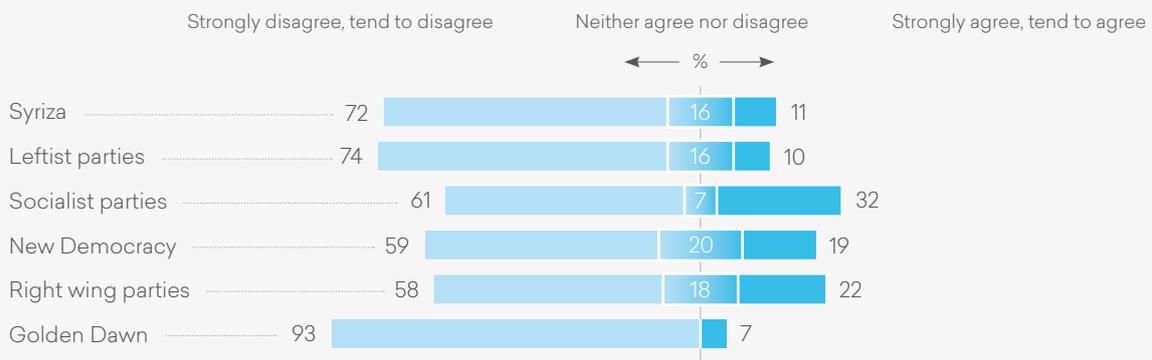
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

The most ideological groups, the Greek Multiculturals and Nationalist Opponents, hold similar levels of anger and distrust toward the system and traditional parties. Contrastingly, the middle segments, composed of the Moderate Humanitarians, the Detached Traditionalists, and the Instinctive Pragmatists, appear slightly more satisfied, especially when it comes to whether traditional parties care about people like them. More specifically, 21 and 20 per cent of Detached Traditionalists and Instinctive Pragmatists respectively believe that traditional parties care about people like them. However, only 3 per cent of Greek Multiculturals, 5 per cent of Nationalist Opponents, and 6 per cent of Moderate Humanitarians agree with them.

More in Common has found in other European countries, such as the Netherlands and Germany, that the most ‘open’ segments tend to be more optimistic in their outlook and have more faith in the ‘the establishment’ than ‘closed’ groups. In this regard, Greek Multiculturals differ from other countries’ ‘open’ groups, displaying as much distrust, if not less, as the most opposed segment.¹⁹ The Greek Multiculturals also differ from other ‘open’ segments in other aspects, such as viewing globalisation negatively. In Greece, this segment also includes members of the communist party, which, although ‘open’ in some respects, is conservative in others (e.g. members of the communist party did not support same-sex unions).

While trust in traditional parties is low across the board, there are differences between those who sympathise with the far-right, those whose views align more with ‘leftist’ parties, and those who support the parties that dominated politics during most of the 20th century democratic Greece. None of the sympathisers of the extreme-right Golden Dawn party strongly believe that traditional parties and politicians care about people like them. Only 9 per cent of those who sympathise with ‘leftist’ parties – including Syriza, KKE, ANTARSYA, and Pleafsi Eleftherias – generally express confidence in traditional parties. Notably, amongst Syriza sympathisers, the percentage is 11. In contrast, 31 per cent of those who sympathise with the more mainstream ‘socialist parties’ – a group that includes the party formerly known as PASOK²⁰ – and 19 per cent of New Democracy sympathisers believe that traditional parties and politicians do care about them.

Traditional parties and politicians care about people like me (by party)



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

¹⁹ These themes are highlighted in More in Common’s published studies in France, Germany and Italy, and forthcoming brief on the Netherlands. See www.moreincommon.com

²⁰ In 2018, the party merged into a new party called Movement for Change (KINAL).

These results underscore the extent of dissatisfaction with the system. While PASOK and New Democracy dominated politics since the country's transition to democracy in 1974, Greece's political landscape has experienced profound change in the past decade with the strengthening of parties that had been at the fringes or did not even exist until then. As seen in electoral results during the 2012-2015 period, Greek citizens became disenchanted with the performance of traditional parties after the outbreak of financial crisis, a fact that resulted in their abandonment of established parties.

In their own words...

Attitudes toward the role of the state and the government have been exacerbated by both crises that have afflicted Greece in the past decade. The austerity measures aimed at reforming the public sector have created even more resentment. There is a strong belief that the state is not doing enough, and its management failures have been further brought to the fore by the refugee and migration crisis.

In the focus group conversations, many Greeks displayed mixed feelings towards Greece's government and society. They revealed compassion towards those in need, disgust at the situation in which they find themselves, concern about the threats to Greek customs and traditions from immigration, and simultaneously highlighted that migrants and refugees cannot be blamed for problems such as inadequate infrastructure of services. Members of the middle segments expressed their concerns about the government caring for others while failing to take care of Greeks. They reflected on how to balance solidarity with competing priorities, and what was the main cause of the failure to provide for those who are in need.

The emphasis should be on Greeks, on Greece and the economy.

Detached Traditionalist

They should offer certain rights to migrants. Or better, they should distinguish between refugees and migrants. They should open borders for those people who want to leave, so they are free to go wherever they want. Those who are going to stay should be provided with jobs.

Detached Traditionalist

[The country] is going in the worst direction it could be, both politically and economically. Socially, however, I believe it is going in the right direction. While there are no proper facilities, nowhere to host people that come here, there were people in the Aegean and in Mytilene that saved lives even though everything was still a mess [...] Of course it depends on the person, but I believe that society as a whole is trying to maintain its humanity. I think that most people behave humanly.²¹

Moderate Humanitarian

[Immigration] is a sensitive issue. For many it feels like the country cannot look after itself and we can't take any more. But maybe also it's because the state is not helping, because there is no infrastructure and we have not been prepared adequately.

Instinctive Pragmatist

I am worried about a new corruption scandal emerging, relating to money that the government received. If that happens, we will fall flat on our face again.

Instinctive Pragmatist

The focus groups found little agreement about where the emphasis should be placed, but all agreed that Greece is at capacity and that the country is struggling and rife with corruption and inefficiencies.

²¹ Mytilene is the capital city of the Greek island of Lesbos, which hosted large numbers of refugees and has been at the centre of controversies due to the management of the Moria refugee camp.

4.3. Distrust of the Media and Public Discourse

Just as they have low levels of trust in government, Greeks also have low levels of trust in the media; only 18 per cent of Greeks say that they trust the media’s reporting on immigration and refugees. Nevertheless, views differ significantly among the segments. Only 6 per cent of Nationalist Opponents and 9 per cent of Greek Multiculturals agree that the media is trustworthy although the reasons why strongly differ. Trust is highest among Detached Traditionalists, of whom 37 per cent say that they trust the media’s reporting on this issues.

According to 70 percent of Nationalist Opponents, the media are afraid to portray migrants negatively even when it is accurate. Forty-two per cent of Greek Multiculturals and 39 per cent of the Detached Traditionalists also agree with this proposition.

Unlike other countries such as the United States or Germany, where More in Common has found that there is a strong sensitivity about the stifling of debate by the culture of political correctness, Greeks do not seem to feel that their freedom of expression is constrained (Italians do not feel this way either). Almost all Greeks, namely 85 per cent of them , say that it is acceptable to express their feelings about subjects like immigration and refugees. In fact, this also became evident during conversations with Moderate Humanitarians, Detached Traditionalists, and Instinctive Pragmatists.

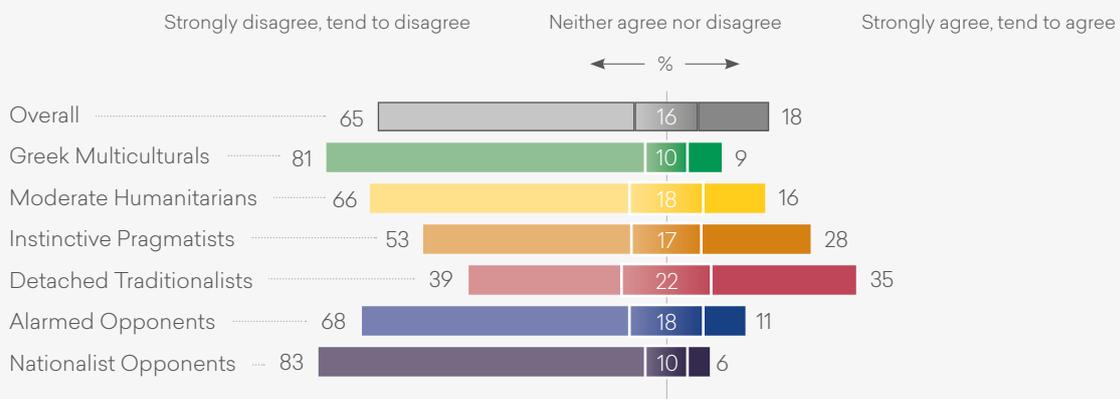
In their own words...

All opinions must be heard. Those that are in favor and those that are against should be heard.
Moderate Humanitarian

Greeks often argue with each other. We might disagree.
Moderate Humanitarian

Regardless of whether we want migrants to be here or not, all opinions must be listened to.
Moderate Humanitarian

In general, I trust the media’s reporting on immigration and refugees



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

[Moderator]: Do you feel it is acceptable to you to express yourself about subjects like immigration and refugees?

Yes.
I do.
Of course.
Yes. Still.

Detached Traditionalist

[Moderator]: Do you feel it is acceptable for you to express yourself about subjects like immigration and refugees?

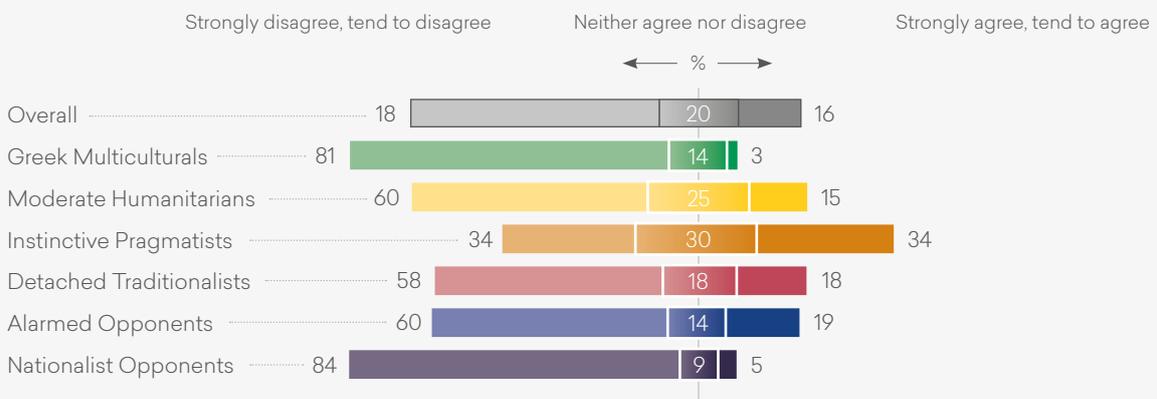
Yes, for every matter of interest to my country.
Depending on the circumstances. You're not going to go to the offices of Golden Dawn...
Or if you are in a group of people and you see that there's another vibe, you're not going to engage further.

Instinctive Pragmatist

4.4. Greeks' Perceptions of Globalisation

Only 15 per cent of the population believe that the economic consequences of globalisation have been good for the country. One of the most distinctive aspects of Greek attitudes towards globalisation is that the group with 'open' values, Greek Multiculturals, holds the most negative view of globalisation's consequences of any segment. This contrasts with findings in other European countries where the most 'open' values segments are usually more positive about globalisation. While this is a socially 'open' segment, it is also very critical of the EU, a peculiarity of the Greek context, where many on the political left are also very nationalistic. In Greece, the two poles again find themselves agreeing on this question, while middle groups see globalisation more positively than the 'open' and 'closed' groups. Instinctive Pragmatists stand out for their more positive view: 35 per cent agree that it has been positive while 30 per cent do not see it as either positive nor negative.

The economic consequences of globalisation are very positive



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

Comparative polling of national attitudes by Eurobarometer rank Greeks as among the most skeptical about the benefits of globalisation. The public in Greece is convinced that globalisation increases inequalities, only benefits large companies, and threatens national culture.²² Similar views are found in France, Cyprus and Slovenia.

4.5. Greece’s Relationship with the European Union and Turkey

As far as the debt problem goes, the European Union is strict: It forces us to do things. Of course, this Union, this alliance is first of all an economic one. But it had also to be a coalition for humanitarian aid. It’s not ok for us to be forced to pay our debts and follow their rules and be forced to take responsibility for what is a worldwide problem. This problem is a global challenge.

Moderate Humanitarian

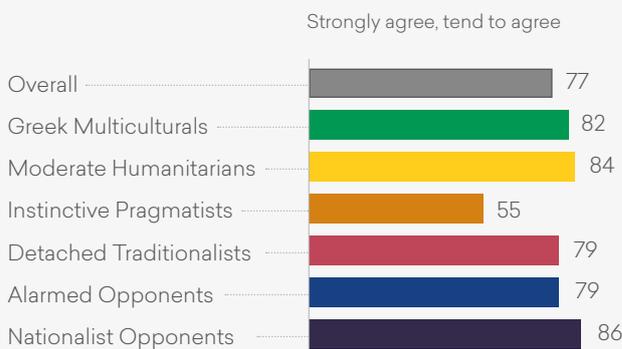
In foreign policy, we should demonstrate a stronger and more robust policy than we are given by the European Union, to show that we won’t simply accept and comply with all of the demands of (European) partners, regardless of what those demands are.

Instinctive Pragmatist

Greece has long had a complicated relationship with the rest of Europe, one often described as a ‘love-hate’ relationship. Greece lays claim to being the birthplace of Western civilization, sitting at the intersection of East and West and holding a history that includes Ottoman influence alongside the early history of Athenian democracy. Greece has embraced its membership of the European Union since joining in 1981, yet Greeks today feel deeply frustrated at their treatment by the European Union, believing that they are treated poorly and taken advantage of.

More than three in every four Greeks share a sense of discontent with the European Union and feel that the EU should do more. Additionally, despite with the EU-Turkey migration agreement, most Greeks do not trust Turkey to help with the refugee situation.

When it comes to the refugee crisis, Greece has been abused by its European partners



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

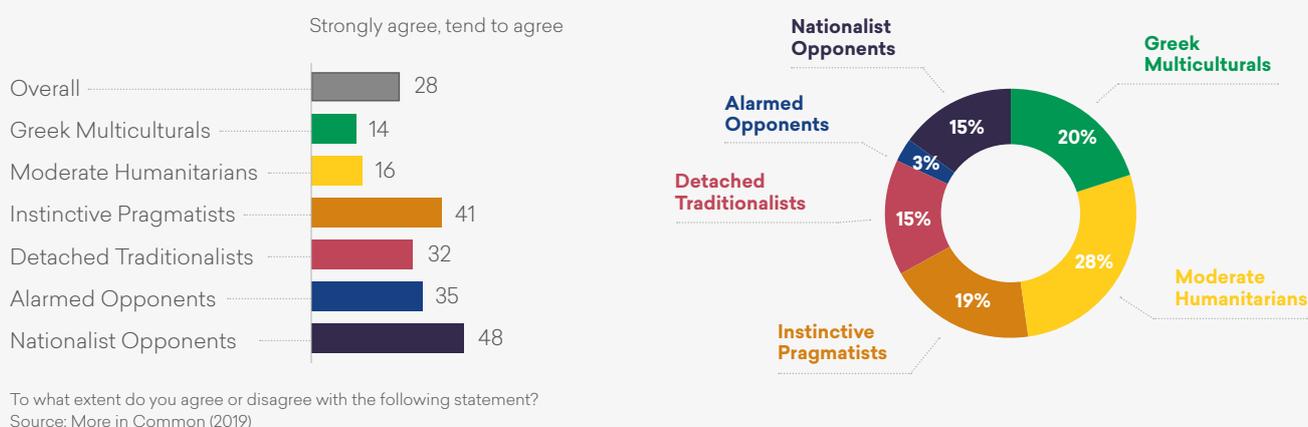
²² Steiner, N.D (2019). *Which European countries love/hate globalization?*. Retrieved from <https://www.nilssteiner.com/2017/01/which-european-countries-lovehate-globalization/>

Frustrations about the EU are inevitably tied to people’s experience of the Euro-crisis and the Greek public debt crisis. As many as 77 per cent of Greeks believe that when it comes to the refugee and migration crisis, Greece has been abused by its European partners.

Greek disappointment with the EU, heightened as a result of economic demands imposed on Greece, has been compounded further by Greeks’ perceptions that the EU has only provided limited and insufficient help during the refugee and migration crisis. European authorities argued that responsibility lies with Greek authorities considering nearly a billion euros had been allocated towards the crisis by early 2018, but there are strong views from the Greek side that more than financial aid is needed. Indeed, former migration minister, Yiannis Mouzalas, has repeatedly placed blame on the EU for failing to provide support to the asylum services by providing extra staff and for taking too long to relocate refugees.²³ Sixty-six per cent of Greeks state that the EU should take more responsibility in resolving the refugee and migration crisis and 51 per cent say their national government should take more responsibility. At the other end of the spectrum, 28 per cent believe that the EU should not help refugees with food, housing, and assistance if it does not help Greeks first. The segments differ significantly on this question with almost half of Nationalist Opponents believing that Greeks should be prioritised over refugees. Instinctive Pragmatists also support this proposition at 41 percent and therefore more strongly than other groups. However, Instinctive Pragmatists appear to make calculations based on self-interest rather than opposition to immigration or refugees per se, while Nationalist Opponents are more driven by antagonistic feelings derived from seeing migrants and refugees as a threatening ‘out-group.’

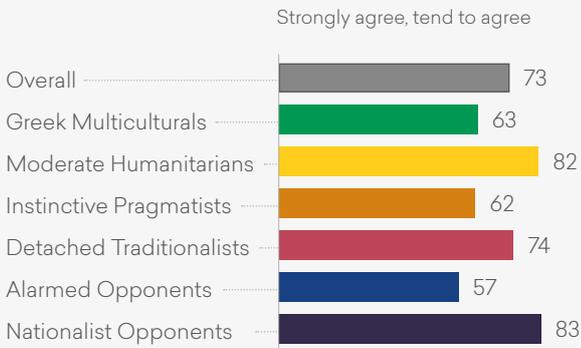
Another dimension of Greeks’ perceptions of refugees is the way in which those perceptions are related to the historic Greek distrust of Turkey. Greco-Turkey relations have gone through many phases over time, with flash points after the First Balkan War, in the mid-1950s over Cyprus and conflicts over the Aegean Sea. While the relationship between the two countries has been more stable since the late 1990s, distrust persists.

The EU should not help refugees with food, housing and assistance if it does not help Greeks first



²³ Kakissis, J. (2018). 'Europe Does Not See Us As Human': Stranded Refugees Struggle In Greece. NPR. Retrieved from <https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2018/03/09/589973165/europe-does-not-see-us-as-human-stranded-refugees-struggle-in-greece?t=1552473817836>; Ekathimerini. (2016). Greek minister lashes out at EU for not helping with refugees. Retrieved from <http://www.ekathimerini.com/205386/article/ekathimerini/news/greek-minister-lashes-out-at-eu-for-not-helping-with-refugees>

Greece should not trust Turkey as a partner in managing refugee issues



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

Over the past few years, a series of incidents between the two nations have highlighted these tensions. In the aftermath of the failed coup d'état in Turkey in 2016, eight military personnel claimed asylum in Greece. A Greek court first ruled that they could be extradited to Turkey, but Greece's Supreme Court overruled that decision and denied the extradition. Diplomatic encounters between the leaders of Greece and Turkey have also been tense and old sources of conflict have been revived.²⁴

In this context, it is unsurprising that Greeks were not enthusiastic about the European Union choosing to work closely with Turkey to manage the flow of refugees in 2016. Asked whether Greece should trust Turkey as a partner in managing refugee issues, almost three quarters of the population (73 per cent), say 'no'. Only 16 per cent of Greeks would say that Turkey is a trustworthy country on this matter.

This scepticism is reflected in the comments of participants in the focus groups:

[Turkey] cooperated. Though not very well.

Detached Traditionalist

This is how Turkish politics has always been.

Detached Traditionalist

Turkey is getting paid abundantly and it is negotiating this every time: 'if you don't do for me what I want, I am not going to accept any more people and I am going to send them off to you.' Since they [Turks] are using it as a means in order to put pressure on the European Union, this is not cooperation. 'You are not doing this? I am opening the borders and the refugees are drowning! Exactly! If we add the word 'extortion' after cooperation, yes. But cooperation does not exist. The Turks act according to their own benefit.

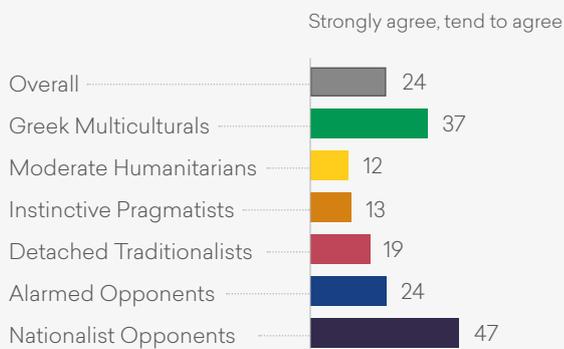
Instinctive Pragmatists

Frustrations should not be misinterpreted as support for leaving the EU. In Greece, there are strong feelings about remaining in the union. A majority of 59 per cent of Greeks reject the notion that Greece should distance itself from the EU and the Euro. Out of this 59 per cent, as many as 48 per cent strongly disagree with the idea of distancing. Only 15 per cent strongly agree that Greece should distance itself from the EU and 9 per cent tend to agree.

There are significant differences between segments on Euroscepticism, with higher levels of agreement noted on the ideological poles and much less support among middle groups. Euroscepticism in Greece can be found both in the ideological left and right, while traditional mainstream parties have maintained

²⁴ Smith, H. (2017, December 7). Confrontational Erdoğan stuns Greek hosts on Athens visit. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/dec/07/turkish-president-erdogan-to-make-landmark-visit-to-greece>

Greece should distance itself from the European Union and the Euro



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

Multiculturals and Nationalist Opponents are the most likely to support Greece distancing itself from the EU and the Euro. This proposition enjoys very little support among Moderate Humanitarians and Alarmed Opponents. Ultimately, however strong the negative perceptions of the EU, these negative perceptions do not translate into widespread support for leaving the union. In terms of regional differences in support for a distancing from the EU, there are not extremely large differences.

a pro-EU stance.²⁵ In the 2012 elections, parties were divided between those that supported the terms of the bailout agreements at the time, (mainstream parties PASOK and New Democracy) and those who opposed them, the Greek Community Party (KKE), Syriza, the Democratic Left (DIMAR), the Independent Greeks (ANEL), and the extreme-right Golden Dawn.²⁶ The 2015 elections propelled the SYRIZA – ANEL coalition to power, but in government their more Eurosceptic positions were moderated.

As noted, the ‘open’ and ‘closed’ ideological spectrum in Greece does not map directly onto the traditional left-right spectrum of politics, a fact also present with regards to political parties. Yet, the distribution among segments of Euroscepticism is broadly analogous to that of the left/right partisan spectrum. Greek

²⁵ Vasilopoulou, S. (2018). Euroscepticism in times of crisis: The case of Greece. *Politics*, 38(3), 311-326. Retrieved from: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0263395718770599>

²⁶ Vasilopoulou. (2018)

5

Greek Identity

“

‘We are progressive people rooted in the past’

Detached Traditionalist

”

5.1. Greek Identity and Cultural Insecurity

National identity plays an important role in the way most Greek people see themselves. Greece is a relatively small nation, but Greeks inherit an extraordinary cultural legacy of civilisations stretching back three millennia which has profoundly influenced world history. Yet the glories of Ancient Greece and influence are long removed from the contemporary experience of the Greek people. Greece's sovereign debt crisis exposed deep-seated problems not just in Greece's government but in its entire economic and social order. The crisis brought a period of severe austerity imposed by outside countries and institutions with severe effects on many Greek people. In particular, this has created tensions with Germany, one of Greece's biggest lenders. Chancellor Angela Merkel has long been criticised for driving a hard bargain with Greece but the 2015 bailout deal provoked a strong reaction, reviving the image of Germany as harsh and cruel.²⁷ Greeks accused Germany of trying to humiliate them using the imposition of new, punitive demands while Germany was determined to remain tough.²⁸ The crisis also dragged Greece into European public discourse in a way which it had not appeared before. The country was singled out as news of its ordeal spread. Other countries in Europe started to portray Greece as a mendicant nation, requiring massive loans to prevent a devastating economic collapse. For instance, in visual representations and political cartoons in the UK, France, Austria and Slovakia, Greeks were often depicted negatively as poor, lazy and in danger or dehumanised as animals while European leaders were depicted as orderly, powerful and in control.²⁹

At the core of Greek identity, according to political scientist Stathis Kalyvas, is a powerful belief in the seamless continuity of Greek civilisation from antiquity to the present.³⁰ But as the country enters the 2020s, Greeks struggle to reconcile their realities with the august story of Greece's historic achievements. Many in the country believe that Greece's problems are the result of foreign meddling and that Greece's path back to greatness lies in a stronger assertion of Greek power and identity. Strong nationalist sentiment is also associated with a suspicion of newcomers. This is made stronger by Greeks' unfamiliarity with migrants, with the country only being a destination for immigration since the 1990s, initially with migrants from Eastern Europe. Notably, a law creating a pathway for second-generation migrants to become citizens was only passed in 2015.

Greeks remain proud of their history and their identity. Almost four in every five Greeks expressed pride in their country's history. Compared to Italians, of whom just 52 per cent express pride in their national identity,³¹ pride in Greek identity is very strong at 77 per cent of the population. Only 9 per cent of Greeks say that they are not proud of their Greek identity. The only group for whom less than half of respondents express pride in Greek identity is Greek Multiculturals, who similarly have less pride in their country's history than other segments. This perhaps reflects their more cosmopolitan outlook in combination with their frustration with elements of Greece that they see as backwards or anti-modern. In this respect, they are remarkably different from Moderate Humanitarians, whose 92 per cent agreement with pride in Greek identity is some 50 percentage points higher. Though these groups share a welcoming disposition towards outsiders, they are coming from very different places when considering their personal feelings about Greek identity.

27 Faiola, A & Kircher, S. (2015, July 16). Greece bailout revives image of the 'cruel German'. *Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/greece-bailout-revives-image-of-the-cruel-german/2015/07/16/bcf468d8-2a74-11e5-960f-22c4ba982ed4_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.ecccc3532dd7d

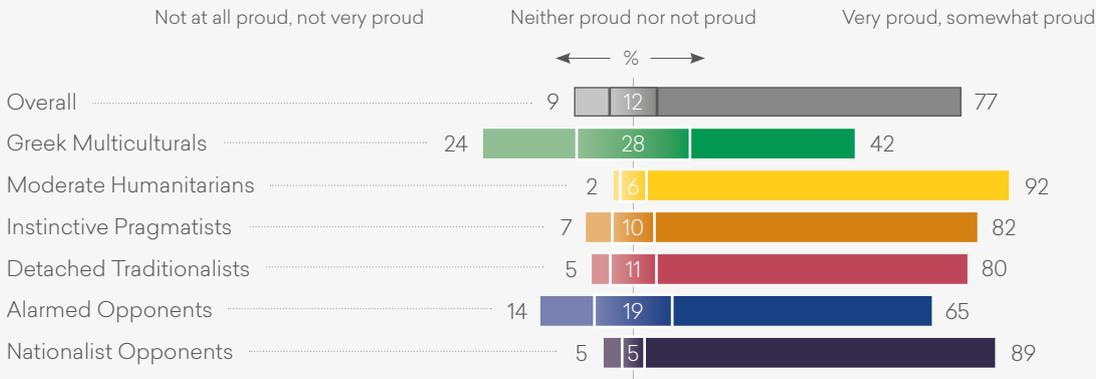
28 Kambas, Michele & Williams, M. (2015, July 12). Angry at demands, Greeks rail at German 'humiliation.' *Ekathimerini*. Retrieved from <http://www.ekathimerini.com/199359/article/ekathimerini/news/angry-at-demands-greeks-rail-at-german-humiliation>

29 Chálaniová, D. (2013). Turn the Other Greek. How the Eurozone Crisis Changes the Image of Greeks and What Visual Representations of Greeks Tell Us about European Identity. *Perspectives*, 21 (1), 5–41. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23616198>. An article about an incident depicting Greece that made it to the courts can be accessed here: <https://eu.greekreporter.com/2012/04/03/innocent-the-editor-of-focus-for-obscene-aphrodite-milos/>

30 Kalyvas. (2015)

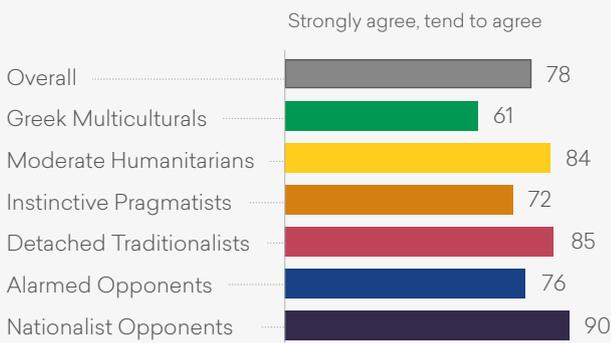
31 More in Common. (2018). *Attitudes towards National Identity, Immigration and Refugees in Italy*. Retrieved from <https://www.moreincommon.com/italy-report1>

To what extent are you proud to be Greek?



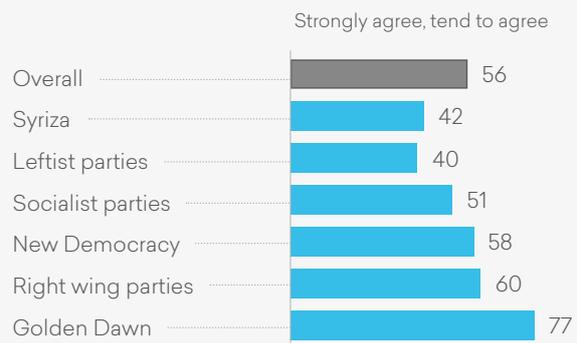
To what extent are you proud to be Greek?
Source: More in Common (2019)

I am proud of my country's history



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

Sometimes I feel like a stranger in my own country (% agree)



Examined through the lens of political identity, pride in being Greek is significantly stronger for those who identify with right-wing parties than on the left. Some 87 per cent of far-right supporters express pride in being Greek compared to 53 per cent of those who identify with the left. Nevertheless, it is important to note that a majority of left-leaning Greeks feel pride in their Greek identity. Similarly, feelings of being a stranger in their own country are much more common among supporters of Golden Dawn than those of Syriza (77 per cent compared to 42 per cent). The trend is similar on the question of whether Greek identity is nowadays disappearing (86 per cent compared to 42 per cent).

The feelings of being a stranger in their own country are similarly strongest among the 'closed' segments. The attitudes of Alarmed Opponents, who report lower levels of pride, appear to be influenced by a very personal sense of disconnection. They feel less connected to the institutions and organisations of Greek social and political life. They feel less connected to their country, their neighbourhood and their company or party than other Greeks. The only strong institution with which they feel a strong connection is the Orthodox Church.

Nationalist Opponents are substantially more pessimistic about the loss of Greek identity than any other group with 81 per cent feeling that Greek identity is disappearing, compared to around 50 per cent for the other segments. They are also more protective of Greece's religious heritage, with 82 per cent of them showing concern about the threat of outside faiths and beliefs when the overall average amounts to 60 per cent.

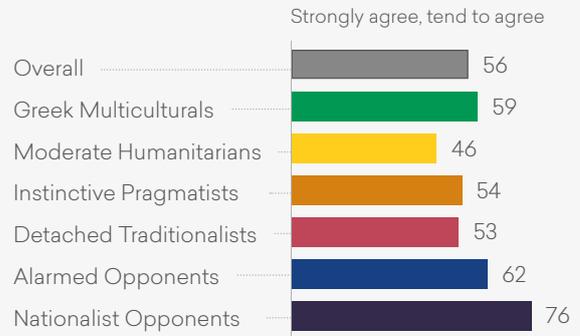
Despite the greater intensity of nationalist sentiment among the more 'closed' groups, pride in Greek identity is widely shared across the population and can be a unifying force. Asked about how connected they feel to a variety of institutions and places, Greeks report feeling most connected to their country (67 per cent) and to their neighbourhood. In contrast, few (just 16 per cent) identify strongly with a political party.

A sense of belonging to a group is a deeply important part of human psychology. Group identities play a significant role in shaping people's attitudes, behaviours and sense of belonging. Scholars have noted that perceptions of threat and insecurity can push people into narrower group identities and us-versus-them narratives.³² When people feel threatened, they often retreat to a narrower or more 'closed' sense of group identity. The combination of the sovereign debt crisis and Greece's migration inflows has created a sense of threat against Greeks from external forces that are beyond their control. In both instances, these issues have often played out as Greece versus other European countries, rather than as a partnership between Greece and the rest of Europe, leaving Greeks bitterly disappointed. It is unsurprising in this context that a strident nationalism has resurfaced, seeking to exploit the anti-European frustrations as has also occurred in Italy.³³

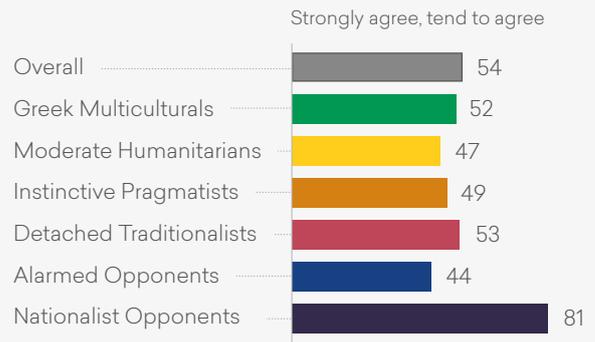
³² Stenner, K. (2005). *The Authoritarian Dynamic*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press

³³ More in Common. (2018). *Attitudes towards National Identity, Immigration and Refugees in Italy*

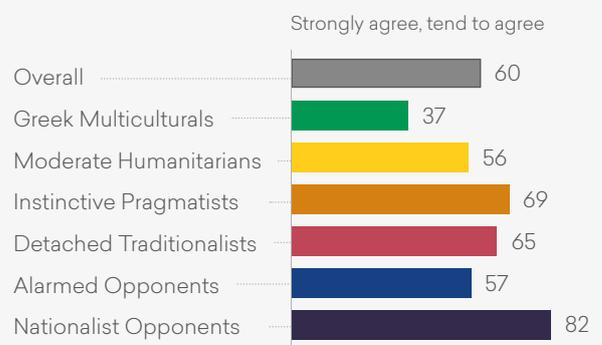
Sometimes I feel like a stranger in my own country



Greek identity is disappearing nowadays



As a Christian country, we should protect Greece's religious heritage from outside faiths and beliefs



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

5.2. The Middle Segments and National Identity

National identity debates play out differently among the middle segments. People in all three middle groups - Moderate Humanitarians, Detached Traditionalists, and Instinctive Pragmatists - feel extremely proud of Greece and Greek identity and Hellenism more generally.³⁴ In the focus group conversations, Greeks expressed pride in their culture, tradition of hospitality, and their family orientation: *'a distinctive element when compared to other European countries, especially those in the north, is the warmth of the family'* and how tight this relationship is.

Nevertheless, the middle groups differ in important ways:

- **Moderate Humanitarians** are among the proudest of Greeks, with 95 per cent stating they take pride in their country's history. Yet, conversations with them showed that they held more nuanced opinions and were conscious of the complexity of the issue of Greek identity. They referred to Greece as *'a country with great history, cultural heritage, but also now a country member of the European Union, a country that received refugees from other countries.'* Other key elements of being Greek for them are Greek culture, ideals, values, and 'philotimo' (philotimo encompasses the concepts of pride in self, pride in family, pride in community, and doing the right thing).³⁵ Moderate Humanitarians in focus groups also discussed the Greek trait of creativity and of believing in things that can be *'far from realistic.'*

We are a continuation of our history. We remain very creative around the world. Not only in our homeland. The Greek excels everywhere. We are doers. We are free, stubborn, we do not quit easily. That is also part of our history. It is also in our DNA. We have definitely a more open mind now than in past decades – past centuries – since we are a part of the European continent, among other things.

- **Instinctive Pragmatists** place emphasis on family, religion, pride, dignity and hospitality. Indeed, they are the most likely of the middle groups to strongly agree that people should be loyal to their families even if they have done something wrong. Instinctive Pragmatists value the sense of a shared understanding: *'not only that I might be from the same village as you, but if we meet abroad, at some point, we would come together.'* However, beliefs about who can claim to be Greek, appear slightly more exclusive than for the other segments. In fact, only 25 per cent reported feeling similar to migrants and refugees. This is lower than the national average of 43 per cent. Some participants in the focus group argued that the only way to be genuinely Greek is if you are born in Greece, have a Greek parent, and have lived in Greece.
- **Detached Traditionalists** value ancestry and culture as something that makes them Greek, although they have differing views on the role of ancient history versus modern Greece. To them, a Greek person is someone who identifies with being Greek, who lives in Greece and shares Greek culture and lifestyle. They stated that skin colour has nothing to do with it although language and religion are important due its impact on culture. Indeed, Detached Traditionalists are the most religious of the middle groups and their emphasis on Greek culture is reflected in their attitudes towards migrants and refugees. Nearly 80 per cent believe that refugees should be welcomed in the country as long as they respect Greek culture and accept Greek laws, while 84 per cent believe that learning Greek should be mandatory for refugees. As some expressed:

³⁴ Hellenism refers to Greek culture, and an appreciation of Ancient Greece in particular. It can also refer to to Greek civilisation and the wider community of Greeks outside the country.

³⁵ Schafer, J. (2015, August 16). *Philotimo: A Greek Word Without Meaning but Very Meaningful*. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/let-their-words-do-the-talking/201508/philotimo-greek-word-without-meaning-very-meaningful>

[One] has to learn to operate within the cultural framework of the local culture, which consists of a lot of things such as education, schools, folklore, family...

If someone tells me that he feels Greek, he identifies himself as Greek, I also see him as Greek, regardless of skin colour

Greece has a very large diaspora and the status of Greek emigrants is important to debates around Greek identity. Whether a person who has Greek ancestors can claim to be genuinely Greek is contested, but focus group participants seemed mostly open to consider them Greek if they 'feel Greek.' Moderate Humanitarians consider the Greek language to be important to Greek identity as they consider their language as uniquely rich. However, they recognise that someone from the Greek diaspora who does not speak the language can still feel Greek.

Greek nationals who do not live in our country and can speak Greek very well or not at all, feel Greek nonetheless

Moderate Humanitarian

[Moderator] In order to view somebody as a 'Greek' should he/she be generation after generation Greek or could it also be somebody who was born in Greece? Or somebody who has one Greek parent...What do you think?

It's a matter of how everyone feels about him/herself

Instinctive Pragmatist

I see as Greeks all those who feel Greek and respect Greece

Detached Traditionalist

Religion plays an important role in Greek national identity. The constitution recognises the Orthodox faith as Greece's prevailing religion, and around 90 per cent of people describe themselves as Greek Orthodox.³⁶ The origins of the formation of the Greek Orthodox church (which involved breaking away from the Eastern Orthodox church in the 19th century) gave it a distinctively nationally-oriented identity. Despite its cultural dominance, most Greeks do not expect that all Greeks should ascribe to the Orthodox faith (for more on religion, see section 7).

³⁶ Pew Research Center. (2017). *Religious Belief and National Belonging in Central and Eastern Europe*. Retrieved from <http://www.pewforum.org/2017/05/10/religious-affiliation/>

6

Attitudes towards Immigration and Refugees

“

We are some sort of filter.
Not a filter. We are storage space.

Detached Traditionalist

”

Both ancient and modern Greek history is replete with stories of internal conflicts and external wars and the consequent movement of people. This history plays an important role in Greek perceptions of migrants and refugees. The focus groups conducted for this study surfaced these deeper echoes of history and layers of nuance, suggesting that history plays a greater role in shaping Greek perceptions of migrants and refugees than in most other countries.

Generation after generation in modern Greece has seen large scale migration, chiefly through emigration to other Western nations. For example, between 1880 and 1920, the United States welcomed 370,000 Greeks which amounted to almost one seventh of the at-the-time Greek population. The Greco-Turkish War in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars led to a mass population exchange in 1922, which was formally ratified in 1923.³⁷ At the time, this was the world's largest organised refugee movement, involving the compulsory displacement of almost two million citizens, with approximately 1,300,000 Christians forced out of their homes in Turkey into Greece, and 585,000 Muslims forced out of Greece into Turkey. Although the resettled population ultimately integrated into Greek society, this was a traumatic event that remains part of the country's collective memory.³⁸

For the most part, Greece's migration experience has focused on emigration rather than immigration. In the years following the Second World War, many Greeks migrated to fill gaps in the labour market in Northern European countries and beyond. By the mid-1970s net migration rates had become positive, with the inflow of ethnic Greeks from Egypt, Turkey, Cyprus and Zaire.³⁹ Net migration remained positive until the financial crisis that began in 2009 prompted an exodus of younger workers, resulting in negative net migration until the larger inflows of refugees again made net migration positive. More recently, World Bank data had recorded a positive net migration rate of nearly 50,000 per year.⁴⁰

Greeks are conscious that many younger people are moving abroad for a better future, an issue that was often raised in focus groups. Anxieties about the loss of Greek identity are heightened by the way that this pattern of emigration and demographic trends have combined with an influx of newcomers from different cultures. Experiences of emigration are very much present in Greeks' minds and are often discussed in conjunction with concerns over integration, an issue that many worry about.

This study found that the attitudes of Greeks towards immigration are far more nuanced than is often suggested in public debates. The country is not divided between two clearly defined pro- and anti-immigration viewpoints. Many Greeks, especially those in the middle groups, hold opinions that might at first glance seem contradictory. They have anxieties about immigration that are often connected to Greece's wider economic problems, but these concerns sit alongside deep humanitarian impulses. The evidence from this study suggests that many of these concerns can be addressed without adopting exclusionary immigration policies.

37 Kalyvas. (2015)

38 Kalyvas. (2015)

39 Triandafyllidou, A. & Veikou, M. (2002). The hierarchy of Greekness: Ethnic and national identity considerations in Greek immigration policy. *Ethnicities*, 2(2), 189-208. Retrieved from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1468796802002002656>

40 The World Bank. (2017). *Net Migration*. Retrieved from <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SM.POP.NETM?locations=GR>

6.1. Refugees and Migrants: Distinct Categories?

They are all migrants. There is no difference between refugees and migrants. They come here for a specific reason, the situation is the same. They both do the same thing irrespective of the reason that led them here.

Moderate Humanitarian

We can distinguish them. It's a different story if you were forced to leave your country because of war....it's another story if you left seeking a better life or a better future.

Detached Traditionalist

One dimension of the attitudes examined in the study is the extent to which Greeks distinguish between refugees and other categories of migrants. Before proceeding further it is imperative to underline two key findings from More in Common's studies in other European countries. There are:

- High levels of public comprehension of the distinctions between different types of migrants and refugees, and
- Highly correlated attitudes towards both groups.

In other words, the vast majority of people hold similar perceptions towards people arriving in their country, no matter whether they are refugees or migrants. Merely understanding the different regimes that apply to each group does not result in perceiving newcomers in different ways. Both migrants and refugees are frequently seen through the common lens of 'the other,' rather than as two distinct categories.

Greek public opinion reveals a similar pattern to our previous four European studies. Fully 77 per cent of Greeks state that refugees are different from other migrants because they had no choice about leaving their home country. However, as elsewhere, many Greeks question whether those arriving in their country are genuine refugees (see section 6.4.). For example, participants in a focus group of Instinctive Pragmatists recognised the legal differences between migrants and refugees (*'the refugee is a migrant by necessity'*), but then noted that in reality, the differences between the different reasons for migrants fleeing their homeland are *'so complex that I can't see the difference'* and that *'both categories experience the same conditions.'* Across different segments, this study found that Greeks focused less on the legal distinctions and more on the lived experiences of those arriving on their shores:

It is impossible not to be touched by the tragedy of these people. They have been forced to flee their country [...]. On the other hand, there are people that don't want to live in their own country simply because they have absolutely nothing. I don't think that we should say to them 'Did you come here to find a job? We can't have you here, because your country is not in the middle of war.' I don't think that we should do that.

Moderate Humanitarian

I believe that in Greece, the way that conditions are structured, everybody is going through the same channel, everyone is making the same journey, everyone is living in the same places and neighborhoods. No matter whether they are or they aren't migrants or refugees.

Instinctive Pragmatist

We feel more compassion for refugees. But I cannot tell the difference in the street. If I want to offer help, I don't know if the person I see is a refugee or a migrant.

Detached Traditionalist

One useful instrument to probe people's perceptions of migrants and refugees is to ask the extent to which they can relate to people who belong to either of those categories. This helps identify their vulnerability to 'us-versus-them' narratives which often target newcomers. In assessing whether migrants and refugees are similar or different to them, Greeks judge both groups similarly. More in Common uncovered a similar pattern in Germany, France, the Netherlands and Italy. Similarly, Greeks made little distinction between refugees and migrants when thinking about their characteristics - peaceful or violent, good or bad, and honest or dishonest.

Greeks have slightly more positive views of refugees than migrants. However, differences are very small, amounting to 5 per cent or less. Importantly, Greeks are more likely than the remaining Europeans surveyed to empathise with migrants and refugees. For example, compared to Italians, Greeks' perceptions of both migrants and refugees are typically around 10 percentage points more positive overall.⁴¹ For example, 36 per cent of Italians describe refugees as similar to themselves compared to 43 per cent of Greeks.

This sense of empathy was also highlighted in the focus group conversations. More specifically, when discussing public disturbances, members of the middle segments reflected on the civilian bombings that Syrians have fled. This highlighted that, in times of despair, people sometimes have no alternative but to turn to illegal means to survive.

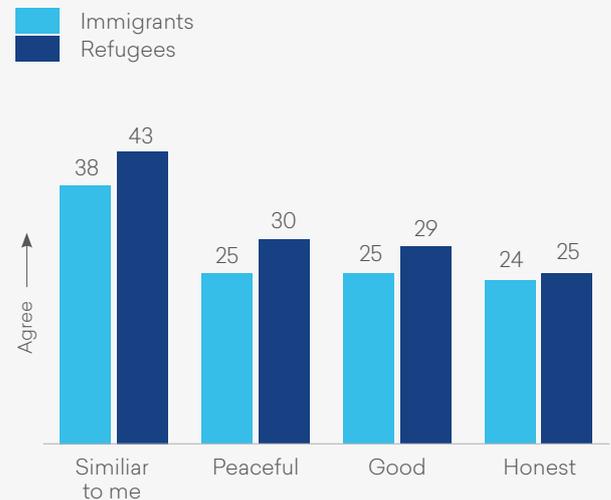
True! A gloomy picture for Athens but also for my neighborhood. I have lived there for 10 years and lately the picture has become ugly. It is not a bad thing that we have them here, but it is bad for our country that they are in such poor conditions. We should not be like this. This is not what Greece should be. We should have better infrastructure. People are crammed into lines outside this office just to be helped.

Moderate Humanitarian

Criminal activity exists wherever lots of people gather together. When I see children that have come over, I think, 'not long ago bombs were being dropped on their heads, but now they are here, they no longer need to be frightened.' Yet when I see them, I don't feel like they are here for good. I think that their presence is transitional, although I know that some will end up staying. I don't think their living conditions are great, but just imagine having your home disappear and not knowing if you are going to stay alive

Instinctive Pragmatist

Degree of agreement. Immigrants/Refugees are... to me



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

⁴¹ More in Common. (2018). *Attitudes towards National Identity, Immigration and Refugees in Italy*

6.2. The ‘Othering’ of Refugees and Migrants

It's not exactly co-existence. We are not half and half. The ratio is one Greek to five migrants.
Detached Traditionalist

Group identities play an important role in shaping how people perceive others and process information. The group or groups to which we belong, defined by factors such as race, religion, tribe or ideology, influence the way in which we interpret the world around us, often without us even being consciously aware of those influences. This influence becomes more significant when people are feeling more threatened as it is a natural reaction to retreat to more narrowly defined group identities.⁴²

In circumstances of increased uncertainty and change, many people feel an increased need for belonging. Group identities can become an anchor that help provide a response to that need. People become more likely to view issues through the group identity lens of an in-group that is being threatened by hostile out-groups - in other words, ‘us’ versus ‘them’. Consequently, they begin to interpret complex issues through the lens of the potential gains or losses to the in-group. Xenophobic populists intensify the strength of group identities by advancing polarising narratives centred on conflict between the interests of in-groups and out-groups. In Greece, the public has a generally negative view of the impact of immigration, for different reasons depending on each segment. Like other far-right political parties at various points in its history, Greece’s Golden Dawn party has sought to elevate these concerns.

Research on social dynamics and group affiliation shows evidence for what is known as intergroup bias. In essence, this means that individuals favour their own group over others, creating what is known as an ‘empathy gap’ toward outsiders. For instance, it can create an empathy gap among members of the host community toward newcomers.

Group membership influences not only people’s beliefs about the world but also how they perceive others’ motivations. They are more likely to view people who belong to rival or threatening groups as being all alike, while they recognise individual differences within their own group. In the case of refugees and migrants, this process can lead to a perception of them being a large and homogenous group, partially contributing to dehumanisation.

Perceiving people from a group that is ‘other’ does not always translate into fear or hostility. Analysts sometimes distinguish between perceptions of different groups that are an ‘internal positive Other’ versus an ‘internal negative Other.’⁴³ Those seen positively are usually in a minority group that lives in the same political territory as a majority nation, who are not considered as a threat to the identity and integrity of the majority group. Those perceived negatively are often migrant groups ‘against whom the identity of a nation is constructed, and who, as a result, usually live and work in a climate of discrimination, marginalization and racism.’⁴⁴ Historically, Turkish people have been most commonly present in Greek consciousness as the ‘other’ and often perceived in ‘us-versus-them’ terms as a threat.⁴⁵

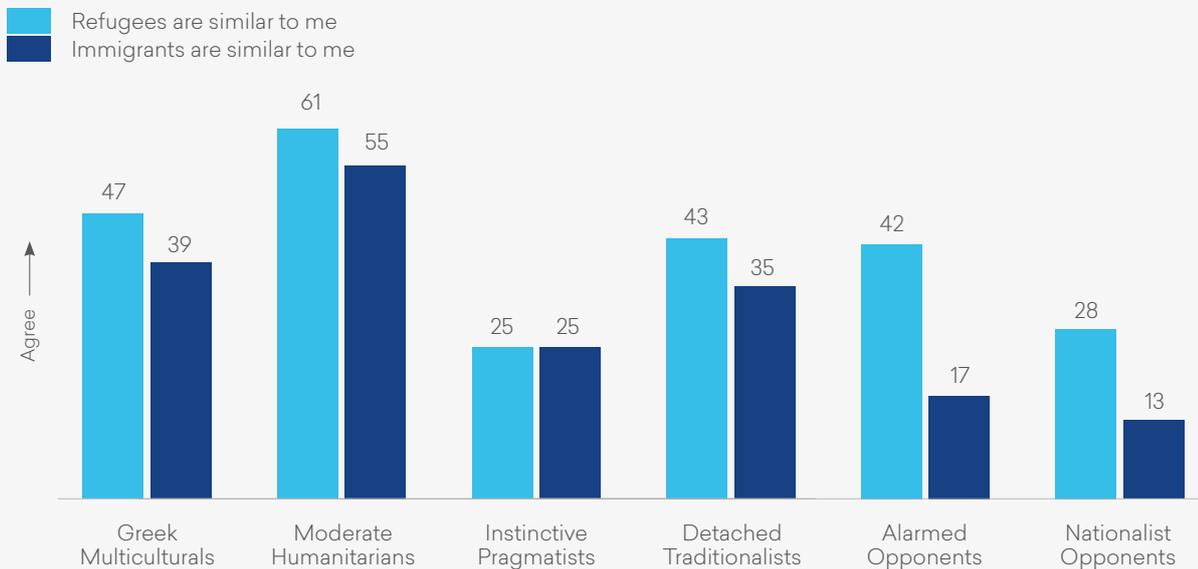
⁴² See Yudkin, D. (2018). *The Psychology of Authoritarian Populism*. Retrieved from <https://www.moreincommon.com/the-psychology-of-authoritarian-populism>

⁴³ Petersoo, P. (2007). Reconsidering Otherness: Constructing Estonian Identity. *Nations and Nationalism*, 13(1), 117–133. Retrieved from <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1469-8129.2007.00276.x>. The external positive Other is usually a neighbouring nation or state perceived not as a threat by the nation in question, but rather as a positive reference point. An external negative Other ‘An external negative Other may be a neighbouring state. For example, Triandafyllidou describes ‘rival nations (or nation-states), neighbours of the ingroup, which contest some part of the ingroup’s homeland or which are in possession of lands that the ingroup claims as part of its own territory, namely the nation’s irredentia.’

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Millas, H. (2004). National Perception of the ‘Other.’ In Mustafa Aydın & Kostas Ifandis (Eds.). *Turkish-Greek Relations* (1st ed., pp. 55–66). London and New York: Routledge

Refugees/Immigrants are similar to me



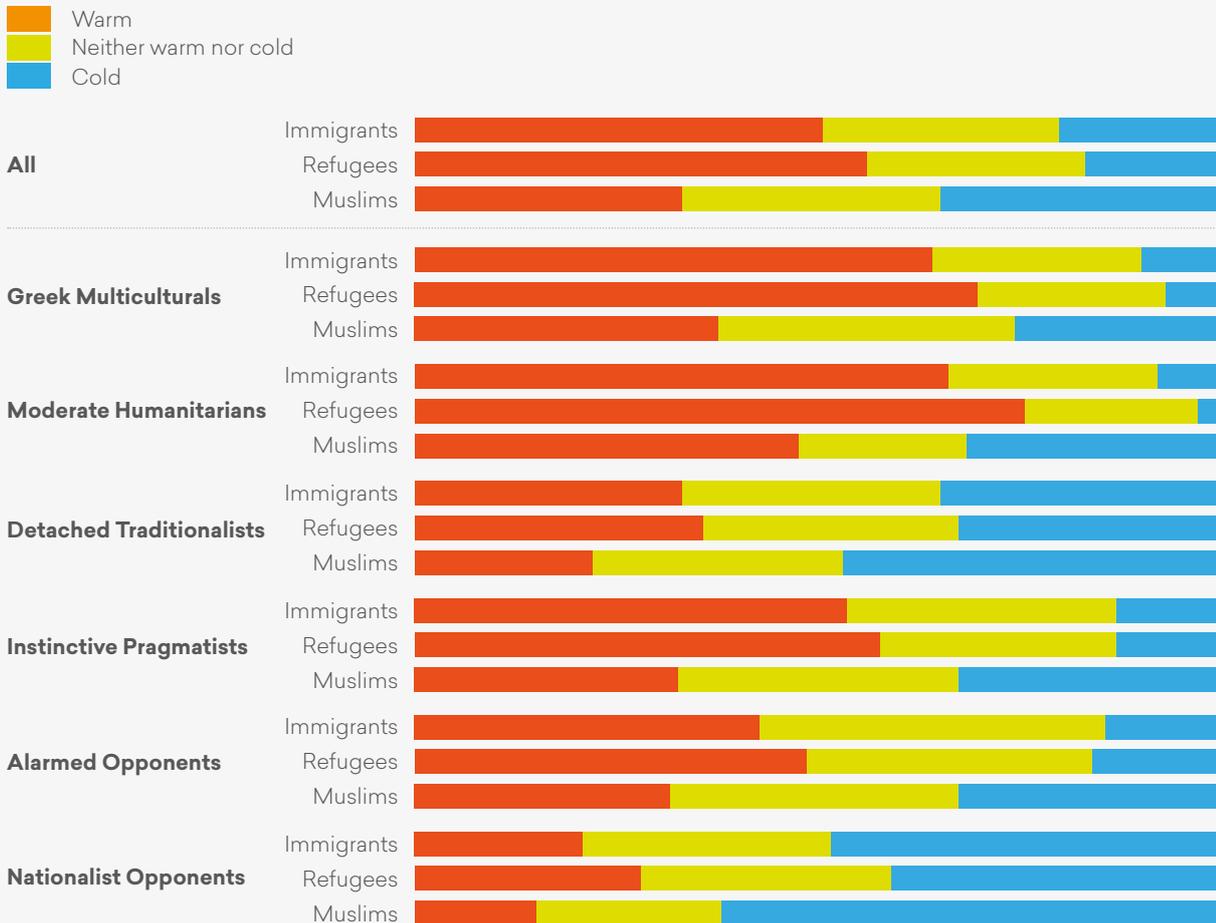
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

Although migrants and refugees are often seen as an out-group, 43 per cent of Greeks view refugees as similar to them, indicating that Greeks tend to identify more with newcomers than people in other countries, as explained above. Further analysis of these perceptions shows large differences between the ‘closed’ and ‘open’ segments. Moderate Humanitarians mostly identify with both refugees and migrants, followed by Greek Multiculturals. Detached Traditionalists feel closer to refugees than migrants, a trend that is much stronger for Alarmed Opponents and Nationalist Opponents. Among the middle groups, Instinctive Pragmatists make little distinction between refugees and migrants, reflecting that their calculations are based on what an ‘other’ means for the benefit or detriment of themselves and the country, regardless of the circumstances of that ‘other’.

The study also examined the strength of in-group and out-group feelings through a series of questions including a ‘feelings thermometer.’ This is a device commonly used in public opinion research in which respondents are asked to express their feelings about other individuals or groups in terms of ‘warm’ or ‘cold’ feelings. ‘Warm’ feelings suggest that respondents identify positively with that individual or group, while ‘cold’ feelings suggest weak connection or even hostility towards them.

Overall, Greeks have ‘warm’ feelings towards refugees and only 17 per cent report ‘cold’ feelings. Again, we find large differences in attitudes between the segments. Those in the ‘open’ and middle segments feel warmer to migrants and refugees, and are more likely to view them as part as the in-group than those in the ‘closed’ groups. The differences in perception are large, ranging from Moderate Humanitarians’ 74 per cent ‘warm’ feelings toward refugees to only 28 per cent of Nationalist Opponents sharing that sentiment. Feelings are slightly less ‘warm’ towards migrants, with the exception of the two ‘closed’ groups where the difference in perception between migrants and refugees is much larger. Identification with Muslims is weaker, but even so only 35 per cent of the Greek population reports feeling ‘cold’ towards Muslims. The 62 per cent of Nationalist Opponents who report feeling ‘cold’ towards Muslims represent almost double the percentage of the overall population.

Thermometer: Immigrants, Refugees, Muslims



Source: More in Common (2019)

Empathy and limited resources

We Greeks are not all good people. We are not always right. We have our problems, including psychological problems! We are capable of doing wrong. Like us, not all of them are good people, people who are responsible for their families, respectable people. Some of them are like us and will become more so!

Moderate Humanitarian

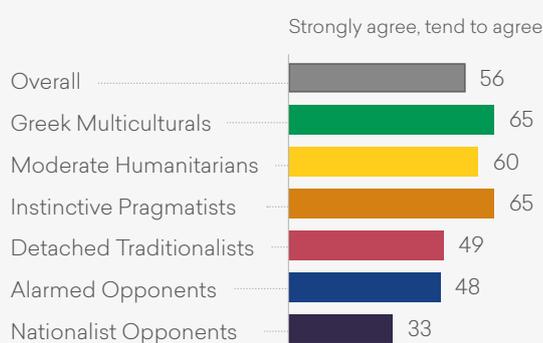
Greece differs from other European countries in that there is a greater empathy toward migrants and refugees, alongside an awareness of their country's limited capacity to provide for them. This means that these feelings of empathy and solidarity do not always result in support for 'open' migration policies. Greeks do not trust the ability of institutions in their country to meet the need for assistance. They are sceptical about the likely integration of migrants and refugees, but this is often connected with a criticism of the management of integration policies. Opposition to immigration and welcoming refugees is therefore influenced by institutional and structural forces much more than in other countries, and less by the othering and dehumanising of migrants and refugees, even if those sentiments are still present in some segments.

The hardships suffered by Greeks in the past decade appear to have given them a greater sense of compassion for others' suffering and empathy toward refugees and migrants. When asked in the focus groups how they would describe refugees and migrants, the descriptions of Detached Traditionalists and Moderate Humanitarians included 'fighters,' 'hunted,' 'unlucky,' 'unhappy,' 'dispossessed,' 'isolated,' and 'frightened.' When questioned about whether those adjectives would apply to Greeks as well, participants replied with a resounding 'yes'. There was little evidence in these groups of discomfort around identifying Greeks' conditions with those of refugees and migrants, perhaps a surprising outcome given the destitute condition of many newcomers. Similarly, when more critical descriptions of migrants and refugees such as 'dirty' and 'criminal' were raised, most participants in the focus group pushed back against such generalisations. Yet the same participants felt that Greece has little room for manoeuvre to help more people due to the lack of infrastructure and limited capacity in the country, and, to some extent, the European Union's failure to provide enough support. As one person in the Instinctive Pragmatists segment remarked:

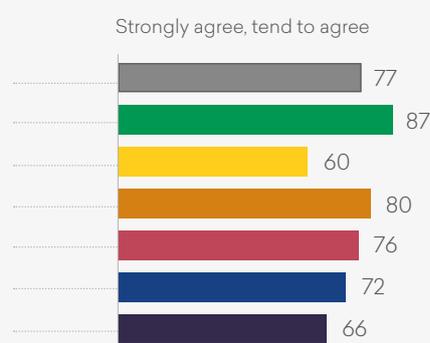
It is a misfortune that arrival of the migrants coincided with the years of the economic crisis... the boatloads in Mytilene⁴⁶ and Chios [while we were] simultaneously stuck in austerity programs. That unfortunately did not leave us with a capacity to empathise with those people. There is little we could do about it. When you are deprived, it is difficult to help the other person.

This response suggests that Greeks are more likely to distinguish between people and policies. The majority of Greeks have negative perceptions of immigration but only one in five hold 'cold' attitudes towards migrants themselves. There appears to be an instinctive resistance to 'othering' migrants and refugees in broad terms. In a range of responses asking participants to choose between characterising migrants as good or bad and honest or dishonest, the majority of all segments, including the most 'closed' groups, answered that migrants were neither one or the other. Notwithstanding the views of the 'closed' groups, overall, Greeks' views on immigration appear more driven by circumstance rather than inferences about the character of migrants.

Immigrants generally make efforts to integrate into Greek society



Immigrants are often prepared to work harder for lower pay than Greek workers



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

⁴⁶ Mytilene, the capital of the island of Lesbos, is often used by Greeks to refer to the whole island.

This nuanced perspective is reflected in all segments except for Nationalist Opponents who believe that migrants make efforts to integrate. Fifty-six per cent of Greeks agree with this proposition and the middle segments hold views that are close to the most 'open' group. Some Greeks also appear reluctant to believe that refugees and migrants are given preference over Greeks in the provision of services, housing and benefits (41 per cent believe they are given priority). But Greece's profound economic problems are their primary concern. Migrants might make efforts to integrate, but the enabling context for successful integration does not exist.

These insights are valuable for public communications efforts in Greece. They suggest that advocating for more compassion for refugees and migrants is unlikely to change public sentiment, since most Greeks already have a genuine sense of empathy. What concerns Greeks more are the practical limitations of capacity when services are so stretched and so many of them experience personal hardship. Communications that recognise the reality of these circumstances are likely to be more effective in engaging Greek audiences. In addition, when Greeks speak compassionately about refugees and migrants, they tend to do so in reference to their national character and history, suggesting that communications that tap into positive sentiment around national identity will be more effective.

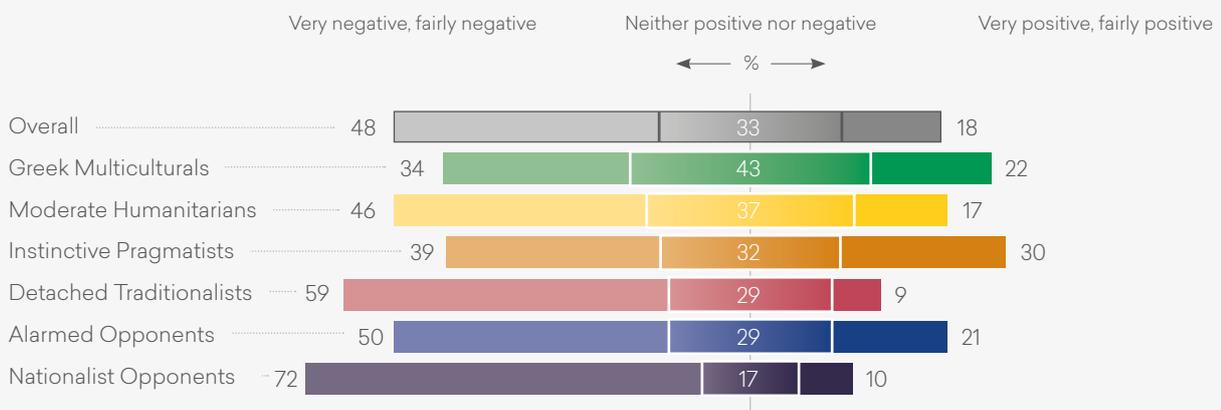
6.3. Impact of Immigration

It's something unprecedented for the inhabitants. They're coming, coming again, coming again and they're not leaving.

Instinctive Pragmatists

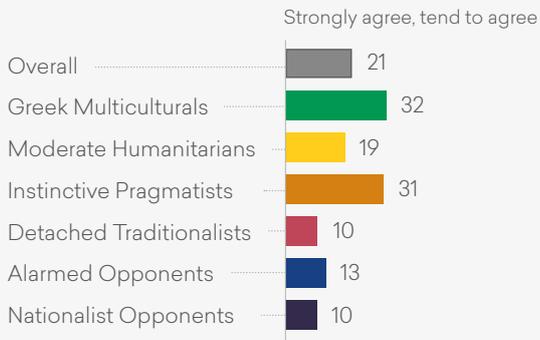
Notwithstanding the higher degree of empathy for migrants and refugees, Greeks hold negative views on the impact of immigration on their country for both economic and cultural reasons. Only 21 per cent of Greeks believe that immigration is good for the economy, and over half (51 per cent) believe that immigration is costing the welfare system and draining resources. There is little support for other economic arguments in favour of immigration, such as the potential benefit of younger migrants whose taxes contribute to the pension system. In a similar vein, just 22 per cent believe that immigration makes Greece a more vibrant and exciting place to live, with 52 per cent rejecting the argument that immigration has enriched Greek cultural life. These sentiments align with Greeks' scepticism towards globalisation as both a cultural threat and a driver of increased inequality (see section 3.4).

Does immigration have a positive or negative impact on Greece?

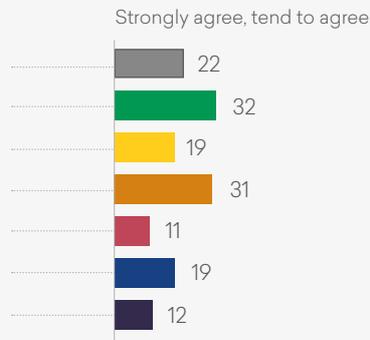


Does immigration have a positive or negative impact on Greece?
Source: More in Common (2019)

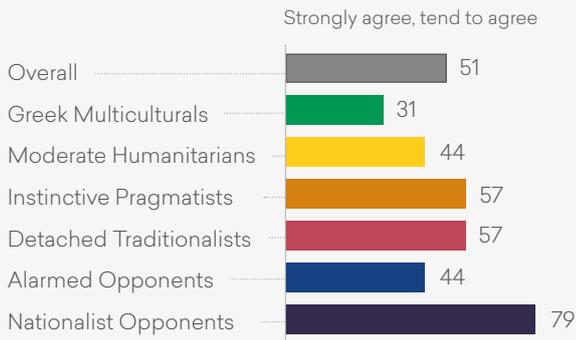
Immigration nowadays is good for the Greek economy, bringing in new skills, new opportunities and drive to succeed



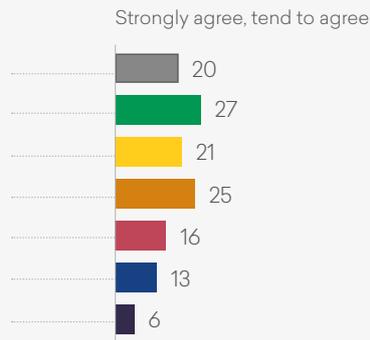
Immigration nowadays is good for the Greek cultural life, making Greece a more vibrant and exciting place to live



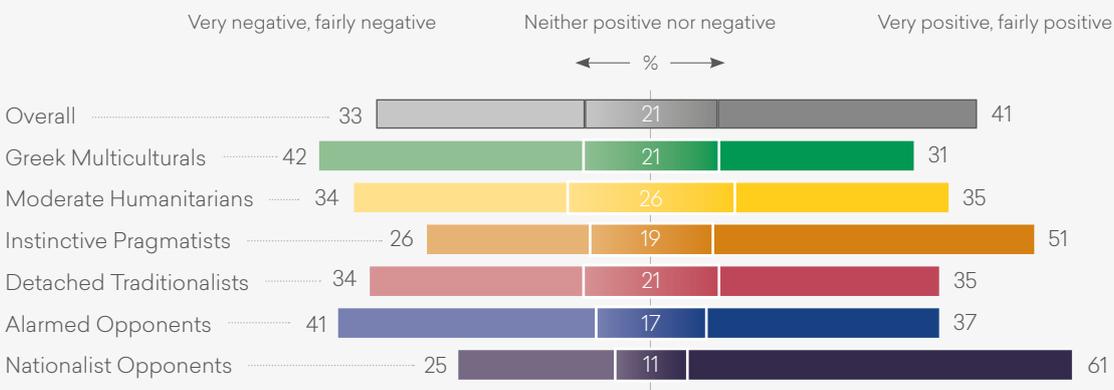
Immigration nowadays is bad for Greece, costing the welfare state and draining resources which could be spent on Greeks



Young immigrants are good for Greece because they pay into the pension system

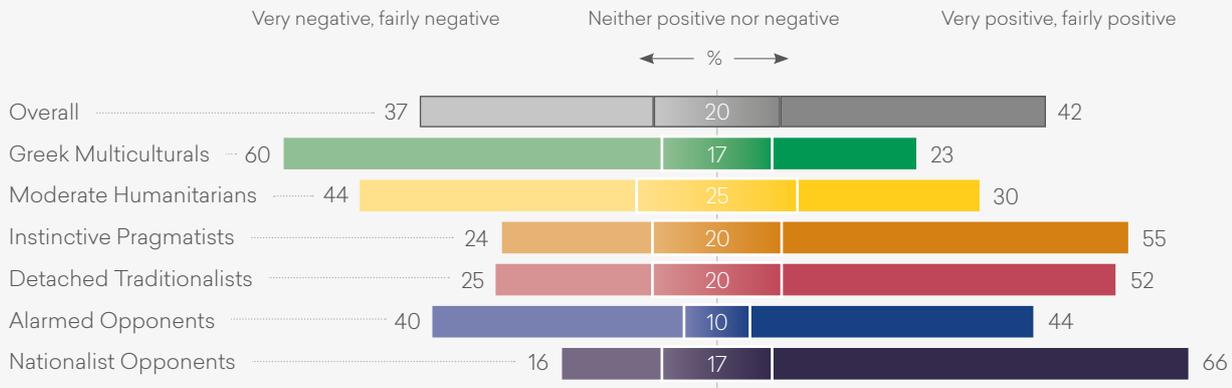


Immigrants are given priority over established residents when it comes to benefits, housing or using public services



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

Immigrants create a health risk for Greece



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

There is greater negative than positive sentiment about immigration in every segment, even amongst the most ‘open’ group (by a margin of 35 to 22 per cent). Nevertheless, Nationalist Opponents stand out from the other segments with significantly more negative views. The most surprising outcome is perhaps the level of positive sentiment among Instinctive Pragmatists, who are just one point lower than Greek Multiculturals. This underscores the pragmatic characteristic of this group, with around one in three identifying positive characteristics associated with immigration for their country.

Regional differences also play a role in influencing Greek attitudes towards immigration. Those residing in Attica are the most likely to say that immigration is good for the economy (28 per cent), followed by those in Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, and in Western Macedonia and Ionian Islands (all at 27 per cent). Greeks in Central Macedonia are the least likely to agree with this statement (at 17 per cent). There is a similar geographical pattern for perceptions of the impact of immigration on Greek cultural life.

While 77 per cent of all Greeks agree that migrants are prepared to work harder than Greeks, given the high level of unemployment, they are also worried that migrants have made it more difficult for Greek people to get jobs. Such concerns are highest among Nationalist Opponents (73 per cent), Detached Traditionalists (57 per cent) and Instinctive Pragmatists (62 per cent). More specifically, in focus group discussions, Detached Traditionalists voiced concerns that migrants had taken over Greece and Greek workers were no longer as important. As one focus member group expressed:

It doesn't have to do with the economy. It's not a matter of racism. Even Jesus said that if you have two of something, give the one to one in need. My friend had a job and she was forced to quit, because she did not have any child support. She met all the requirements, but then there was no vacant position for her, because they were given to foreigners. I don't know why our country doesn't give us priority.

This frustration was echoed by a fellow focus group member who added:

There are consequences for Greeks. We are no longer the priority. The state doesn't care if a poor Greek doesn't have the means to buy food. Foreigners first.

Just as we found public health concerns associated with refugees arriving into Italy with possible diseases, we found concerns about the health risks from migrants in every Greek segment other than Greek Multiculturals and Moderate Humanitarians. In focus group discussions, this prompted lively discussion which centred on sanitary conditions, overcrowding and antisocial behaviour. While some talked about incompatibility between the cultural practices of newcomers (especially in relation to Muslims - see section 7), most blamed the antisocial behavior and overcrowding on factors that are beyond the control of migrants and refugees.

They lie in the streets or they do the laundry in the streets. My point is not the aesthetics. The point is that public health that has to be protected. Likewise if you forced ten Greeks to live together in such a limited space, there is going to be a problem. It's not a matter of racism.

Detached Traditionalist

You are also more vulnerable when you have nothing. You are more likely to engage in illegal activity.

Instinctive Pragmatists

They come to this land to start afresh, but the infrastructure they need does not exist, as has rightly been said. This leads to crime, because they are on the streets, they earn as little as 50 cents, or even less. But are we only talking about those coming from the East or Africa?

Moderate Humanitarian

There is no consensus about whether immigration divides Greek society or not. Almost half of survey respondents feel that immigration is bad for Greece because it divides society into sharply contrasting groups of opinions and beliefs: 30 per cent disagree and 23 per cent remain neutral. While the pattern of responses among the segments is consistent with other questions, the range of responses - from 32 per cent among Greek Multiculturals to 68 per cent among Nationalist Opponents - highlights the fact that there is a narrow range of attitudinal differences among Greece's six segments. In other words, Greek society is less polarised on these issues than many other countries. Greek Multiculturals are less stridently 'open' than similar groups in other countries, and Nationalist Opponents less rigidly opposed than similar 'closed' groups.

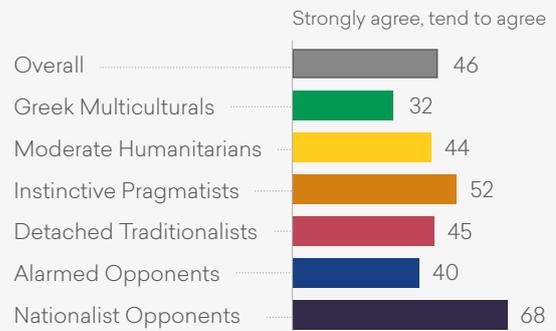
In Their Own Words...

In conversation with members of the middle groups, integration was discussed extensively. As is often the case, integration is sometimes conflated with assimilation. The lack of jobs, infrastructure, and the current financial situation of the country are issues that are prominent in Greeks' minds. One of the topics that was also raised in connection with integration is the notion that concentrating immigrants and refugees in one specific area only might be less effective than relocating them across the territory. Participants also raised differences between rural and urban areas.

Why not integrate them into society? Integration in every aspect: employment and insurance. That would have other positive effects. It would boost productivity and society would benefit. It would also increase their standard of living.

Moderate Humanitarians

Immigration nowadays is bad for Greece, dividing society into sharply contrasting groups of opinions and beliefs



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

If [immigration] is done with the infrastructure and with skilled workers, the dangers will be minimal. If it is organised well. But this requires organisation, preparatory work.

Instinctive Pragmatist

Things have started to get a little out of hand. We cannot tolerate people not respecting the fact that the majority of people in this country are Christians. For them to be burning holy images... this personally offends me.

Instinctive Pragmatist

They do not try to adapt. For instance, they don't understand that by taking their laundry into the street, they create a problem. There are people passing by, kids, mothers with strollers. Tomorrow, it might be their own kids. They don't seem to understand. They react. As if they tell you that since they are more important than you, they are going to do as they please.

Detached Traditionalist

I think they would settle into a village better than a city. A village will embrace the migrant who might be a shepherd or a grandfather who might have no money. They will welcome him more warmly. In the big cities, it is easier for society to ignore them, with all the bureaucracy and institutions.

Instinctive Pragmatists

6.4 Attitudes towards Refugees

Fifteen people live in a 25 square metre space, small children are in there, new-borns, elderly... More and more people have suicidal behaviour. The burden is too much for us to endure. This is a prime example that unfortunately we cannot afford to accept more people. We should help out, but we need extra help.

Moderate Humanitarian

This study confirms a key finding of research published by the Tent Foundation in 2017 that highlighted greater empathy for refugees and migrants among Greeks than people in most other countries. Greeks are consistently above international averages for empathy and belief in the need to assist refugees. They are less likely to believe that refugees are just looking for handouts, that they are a threat to national security or that Greece has no responsibility to accept refugees.⁴⁷ Over 80 per cent of Greeks express agreement with the principle that someone fleeing violence or persecution should be able to seek refuge in another country, with a remarkable 56 per cent indicating a strong agreement.

Concerns about refugees exist alongside a strong majority belief of 67 per cent that in light of the country's culture of solidarity and compassion, refugees should be welcomed in Greece. Greek empathy for refugees remains despite an incredibly challenging context:

- Greek living standards have declined sharply in the past decade. Greece has experienced prolonged tensions with the European Union over austerity measures.
- Most Greeks also feel that the EU has not provided them with adequate support to address the shared challenge of refugee arrivals and neighbouring countries have instead focused on securing their borders with Greece.
- Refugees have been arriving from Turkey, a country with whom Greece has a history of conflict. In this context, a growing number of Turkish nationals seeking asylum in Greece has been noted, as freedoms are increasingly curtailed in Turkey.

⁴⁷ Tent. (2017). *Tent Tracker Public Perceptions of the Refugee Crisis Greece Year 2 2016/2017*. Retrieved from: https://www.tent.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/TENT_2016_GREECE_TRACKER_V4.pdf

One factor that influences Greek attitudes towards migrants and refugees is a generally positive perception of Greece's experience of integrating Albanian refugees into Greek society in the 1990s (notwithstanding the reality that many Albanians experienced hostility when they first arrived). This experience appears to give Greeks more confidence that they can successfully integrate newcomers, despite the immediate challenges. In the focus groups, some explicitly drew a distinction between Greece's policy of isolating recent newcomers from the community and past integration policies.

I think that they haven't yet integrated into society as Albanians did years ago. They are in a way more isolated: in accommodation centres, in islands... Back then, migrants entered the job market and our children went to the same school. I believe they are kept isolated.

Moderate Humanitarian

[Albanians]...were very decent from the beginning. They did not want to cause any problems. They had little kids, they adapted... their kids don't speak Albanian any longer.

Detached Traditionalist

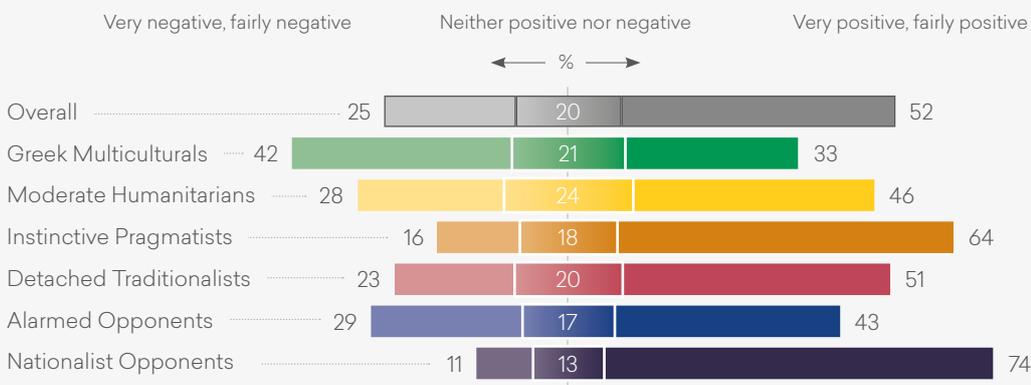
There are migrants who have come and have stayed and have worked and those people have been established. These are fine.

Instinctive Pragmatist

Nevertheless, Greeks hold concerns about several aspects of the refugee and migration crisis, including:

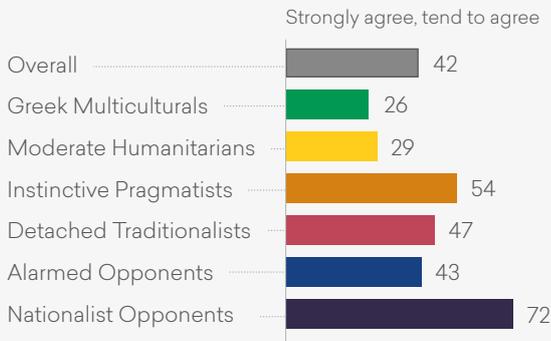
- Doubts about whether those arriving in Greece are genuine refugees or economic migrants.
- Concerns about economic impacts related to Greece's limited resources.
- Perceptions of disorder and authorities' loss of control of the situation.
- Apprehension about whether refugees create a security threat, through increased crime or the risk of terrorism.
- Unease about the integration of refugees into Greek society and culture.

Most foreigners who want to get into my country as refugees aren't really refugees and come here for economic reasons/take advantage of welfare services

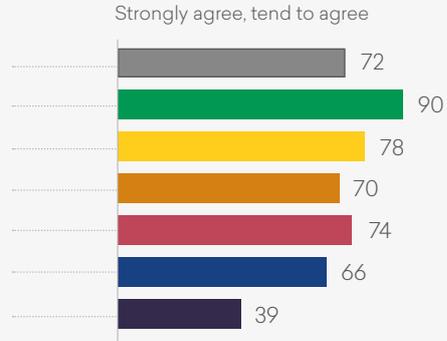


To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

It is too dangerous to let refugees into Greece as there is a major threat of terrorism from people coming to Greece as refugees



Refugees coming to Greece should be allowed to maintain their own traditions



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

Refugees or economic migrants?: Just over half of all Greeks believe that most foreigners wanting to enter the country are not genuine refugees, but that they are coming for economic reasons. There seems to be a recognition of the legitimate motives of newcomers, but Greeks also see their own circumstances as so difficult that they worry about being expected to provide for large numbers of people from another country. In addition, 73 per cent of Greeks worry that allowing refugees in will encourage more who are not genuine refugees to seek to enter Europe.

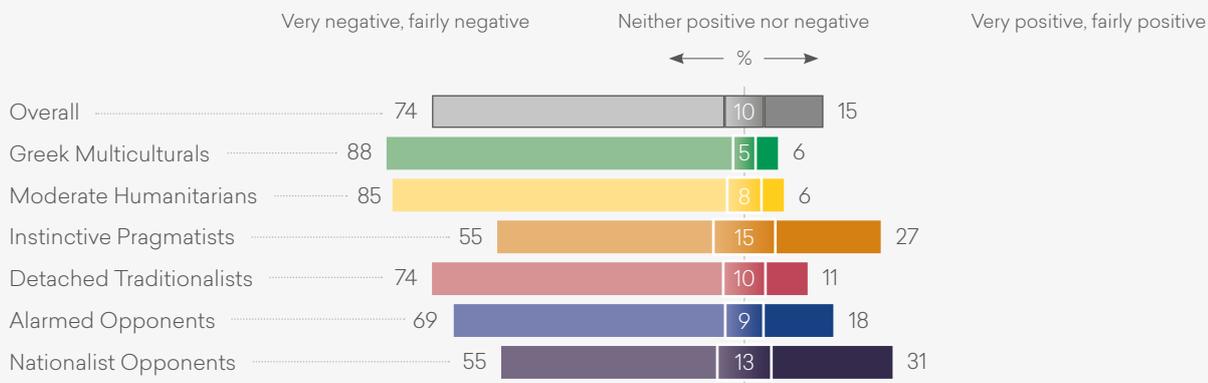
Loss of control: Greeks are frustrated by a sense that their authorities have lost control of the situation, a concern often expressed in terms of the poor social conditions within Greece and less in terms of the arrival of refugees.⁴⁸ Fully 60 per cent of all Greeks believe that ordinary Greek citizens should start taking control of the situation themselves if the refugee and migration crisis continues (potentially through trying to turn boats back from Greek shores and protecting borders themselves). Alarmed Opponents and Nationalist Opponents stand out in their support for this sentiment.

Security fears: Concerns about the risk of terrorism and increased crime are present in all segments, but much stronger in the ‘closed’ groups. Overall, 42 per cent of Greeks agree with the proposition that it is too dangerous to let refugees in the country due to the threat of terrorism. Nationalist Opponents stand out with the highest agreement (72 per cent), while Greek Multiculturals display the lowest agreement (26 per cent).

Integration and culture: Concerns about integration and the retention of Greek identity and culture are the key caveats of Greek support for welcoming refugees. This reflects the importance most Greeks ascribe to their national identity. Another reflection of this is that the strongest consensus around welcoming refugees is evident when Greeks reflect on their values and traditions. Overall, 67 per cent of Greeks agree that ‘we should accept refugees in Greece as we have always had a culture of solidarity and compassion.’ A majority of Greeks in all six segments, except the Nationalist Opponents, agree with this sentiment.

⁴⁸A forthcoming More in Common report in 2019 will examine the relationship between attitudes towards immigration and refugees, and underlying core beliefs in the United States of America.

Disagree: Refugees who are children arriving without any family should be sent back home, not resettled



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

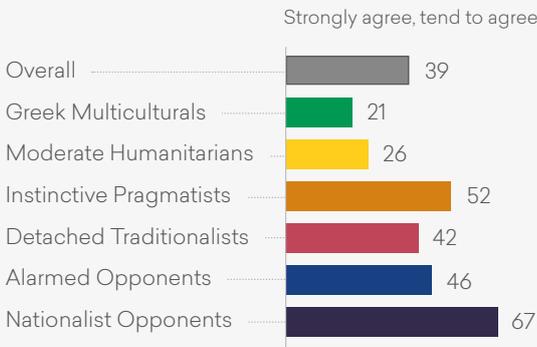
An even higher proportion - 80 per cent of the total population - say that if refugees respect Greek culture and accept Greek laws, they should be welcome in the country. This includes 68 per cent of both Nationalist Opponents and Alarmed Opponents, the most 'closed' groups, reflecting the extent to which their opposition to migrants and refugees is connected to their concerns about the loss of Greek culture and identity. Yet this strong support for the acquisition of Greek language and culture does not, in the minds of most Greeks, mean that newcomers need to abandon their cultural identity. A majority in all segments, except Nationalist Opponents, believe that refugees coming to Greece should be allowed to maintain their own traditions.

The proposition that refugees should learn the Greek language receives 80 per cent support, with large majorities in every segment. Indeed support for this proposition brings together the Greek Multiculturals and the Nationalist Opponents, with 84 per cent and 83 per cent of them in agreement respectively.

A similar consensus exists in connection with allowing refugees who are unaccompanied minors to stay in Greece. Only 15 per cent of Greeks support the proposition that children arriving without any family should be sent back home and not resettled. A majority of every group disagrees with sending unaccompanied children back, even including 55 per cent of Nationalist Opponents. The protection of children appears to resonate especially strongly with Greeks, and it was often raised during the focus group discussions as one of the issues that worried participants the most.

Taking all of these factors into account, the overall balance of opinion in Greece tends to be in favour of refugees, but with several caveats. The proposition that Greece should not accept any more refugees and should close its borders is accepted by 39 per cent of Greeks, but rejected by 43 per cent. Majorities for this proposition only exist among Nationalist Opponents (68 per cent) and Instinctive Pragmatists (53 per cent). There is an expectation that refugees should leave Greece once the situation in their own countries has improved, rather than be given the option to live permanently in Greece. The 76 per cent support for this proposition includes a majority of all groups, including the Greek Multiculturals and Moderate Humanitarians.

We must close out borders to refugees entirely – we can't accept any at this time



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

There is clear support for the principle of asylum, but there are deep concerns about the capacity of the authorities and economy to provide the necessary support. There is a strong expectation that refugees should respect Greek customs and acquire the language, and strong support for active measures to this end.

Finally, as we also saw in Section 6.3, there are some differences in opinion based on region. Greeks in Western Macedonia appear to be more distrustful than others of foreigners trying to enter the country as refugees, with 67 per cent believing that those who do so are not really refugees followed by 65 per cent of Greeks residing in the Peloponnese. The lowest percentages for distrust of refugees' motives were found in Attica and Northern Greece with 45 and 46 per cent respectively.

6.5. Greek Public Opinion about Civil Society Activities in Support of Refugees

NGOs. Who knows what kind of game they play?

Detached Traditionalist

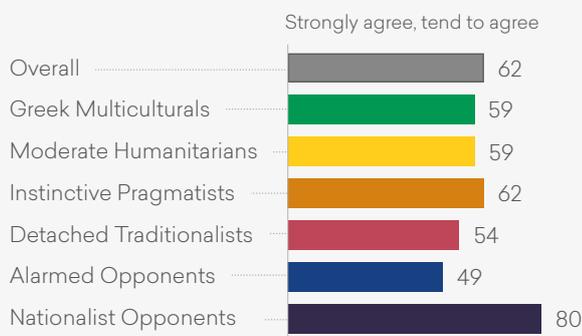
As a side note to probing Greek attitudes towards migrants and refugees, the study also examined perceptions of civil society efforts to provide assistance. The refugee and migration crisis has increased the profile of non-government organisations (NGOs) in Greece, making them an important voice in the public conversation. NGOs are also sometimes the target of criticisms, especially for aspects of their location operations. Accounting for their influence on the course of public debates, it is imperative to understand better how they are perceived by the Greek public.

As noted in Section 4.3, Greeks have low levels of trust in institutions. This scepticism extends to the international humanitarian organisations that have had much greater profile in Greece during recent years. Fully 62 per cent of Greeks agree with the proposition that NGOs are benefitting from the refugee and migration crisis by taking donations, but in reality they are not helping refugees. At the same time, only 19 per cent of Greeks identified NGOs as the organisations that should be taking more responsibility regarding refugees.

Despite significant differences between the segments on their perceptions of NGOs, more than half of Greeks believe that NGOs are using the crisis for their own ends. Eighty per cent among Nationalist Opponents have a negative opinion of NGOs, as do 62 per cent of Instinctive Pragmatists, 59 per cent of Greek Multiculturals and Moderate Humanitarians, and 54 per cent of Detached Traditionalists. This high level of agreement, even among the Moderate Humanitarians who support the mission of these organisations, is especially striking.

Some variability by region on this question exists, despite the majority in all regions still feeling that NGOs are benefiting without helping. For instance, distrust is lowest in Eastern Macedonia/Thrace and Attica (56 per cent agree that NGOs are benefitting) and highest in Western Macedonia and Epirus (77 and 74 per cent respectively agree).

NGOs are benefiting from the refugee crisis by taking money but not actually helping refugees



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

Analysed through the lens of party identities, supporters of Golden Dawn are far more likely to say that NGOs benefit from but do not help refugees (84 per cent). At the opposite end of the spectrum, 58 per cent of the supporters of Syriza share this distrust.

Another measure used in the survey related to individuals' personal feelings about these NGOs. Only 33 per cent of Greeks report feeling close to human rights NGOs (while just 15 per cent report feeling strongly connected to them). Greek Multiculturals feel closer to them than other segments, at 41 per cent, ranging down through the segments to just 21 per cent of Nationalist Opponents. However, focus group conversations suggested that there was low awareness of the humanitarian organisations who are assisting refugees. While

there is a strong sense of distrust that has been fed by negative media stories, this appears to be related to the larger context of perceptions of disorder and failure around the management and integration of refugees.

In their own words....

They take advantage of the migrants and treat them as slaves.

Moderate Humanitarian

I heard something bad about them recently. I read it in an article on a site. They embezzled funds and they misused the money.

Moderate Humanitarian

I think NGOs are good as they can help ease the burden on society. Of course, we don't know whether they are a part of an international company or whether they've been created as NGOs just to evade tax. However, overall, NGOs have had a positive impact on society. They provide infrastructures, medicines, food, shelter and clothes.

Moderate Humanitarian

It's not clear for me who the NGOs are.

Instinctive Pragmatist

I thought they were doing a great job but now I am torn. It's hard to judge what is being done right and what is not from what we are hearing in the media.

Instinctive Pragmatist

The picture is blurry but I am aware of the good work that certain NGOs do, so don't spoil it for me! I think there are other organisations out there though that are pretending to be NGOs and taking advantage of funds.

Instinctive Pragmatist

The online media project, Refugees Deeply, has calculated that \$803 million have come into Greece since 2015 to deal with the refugee and migration crisis, representing the most expensive humanitarian response in history. However, there is evidence that these resources were not well

spent, resulting in a loss of trust in NGOs in Greece.⁴⁹ In 2016, over 80 NGOs were recorded as operating on the island of Lesbos which sees hundreds of thousands of refugees pass through. This has been overwhelming and unsettling for an island which usually has a population of about 87,000. While the generosity of help has been recognised, the lack of cooperation between the organisations and local authorities together with the chaos, has contributed to the levels of mistrust among the local residents about the presence of NGOs. In fact, of those 80 NGOs, only 30 were officially registered.⁵⁰ Yet, the lack of trust in civil society groups that raise money for refugee assistance does not appear to have diminished Greeks' practical efforts to help refugees. The values of compassion and solidarity are still very much in practice, with half of the survey respondents having made donations of money, food or clothing during the previous 12 months. Large numbers in all groups made donations, and the range between the lowest and highest proportions of donors is quite small (39 per cent of Nationalist Opponents and 62 per cent of Greek Multiculturals). Only 40 per cent stated that they had taken no action to support refugees in Greece.

⁴⁹ Howden, D. & Fotiadis, A. (2017, January 10). Where did the money go? How Greece fumbled the refugee crisis. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/mar/09/how-greece-fumbled-refugee-crisis>

⁵⁰ Nianias, H. (2016, January 5). Refugees in Lesbos: are there too many NGOs on the island?. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2016/jan/05/refugees-in-lesbos-are-there-too-many-ngos-on-the-island>

Personal actions taken past 12 months to support refugees in Greece

	General	Greek Multiculturals	Moderate Humanitarians	Detached Traditionalists	Instinctive Pragmatists	Alarmed Opponents	Nationalist Opponents
Made a donation of money, food, clothing, or other items	50%	62%	56%	46%	42%	49%	39%
Shared positive stories about refugees online	5%	6%	7%	3%	5%	5%	2%
Contacted a politician or signed a petition	2%	4%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%
Volunteered some of your time	9%	13%	11%	7%	6%	8%	4%
Personally welcomed one or more refugees into your home	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%	2%
Taken part in a rally to support refugees and their rights	5%	12%	6%	2%	1%	2%	1%
Other	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Don't know	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%
None of these	40%	24%	34%	46%	47%	42%	57%

7

Religion and Islam in the Context of Greece

“

I think that religion is a splinter. The majority of them believe in Islam and that makes things more difficult. If there were bombs dropping in Malta and they were all coming here with their millions, we wouldn't have a problem. Or Christian Russians, Ukrainians...

Instinctive Pragmatist

”

Religion plays a significant role in Greek national identity and in shaping attitudes towards refugees and migrants. According to Pew Research, 90 per cent of the adult population in Greece belongs to the Orthodox faith.⁵¹ Religious identity remains an important part of Greek national identity, in a way true of few other European Union nations.

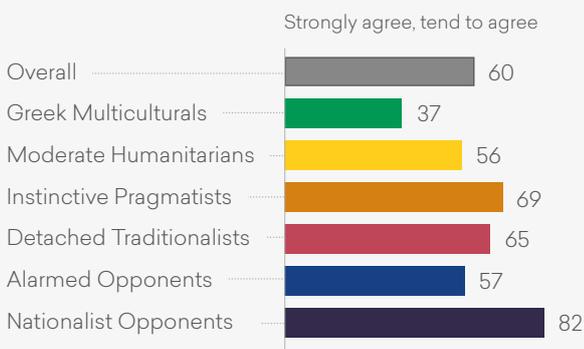
The Greek Orthodox Church is part of the communion of Eastern Orthodox churches, but it has a specifically Greek identity. It possesses significant status and influence, and enjoys many legal privileges even though Greece’s constitution formally declares the separation of church from state. For instance, for many years the church played a large role in resisting the construction of a mosque in the country’s capital.⁵² Indeed, until 2006, the construction of all religious buildings in Greece required the permission of the local Orthodox bishop. It was only in November 2018 under the Syriza government that agreement was reached to remove the civil servant status of bishops and priests. Earlier in 2018, the government had defied the opposition of the church to pass a gender identity law intended to improve legal protections for transgender people.

Being part of the Orthodox church is a part of Greek national identity (indeed, 55 per cent declare it is very important to them) although the proportion reporting that they actually feel close to the church is lower, at 44 per cent, perhaps indicative of Greeks distinguishing between religion and faith on the one hand and the church as an institution on the other. On this issue, there is a large gap among the segments: 63 per cent of Nationalist Opponents feel close to the Orthodox Church while that sentiment is shared by just 22 per cent of Greek Multiculturals. The distrust of the Orthodox Church’s motives was reflected in a comment from an Instinctive Pragmatist during a focus group while discussing whether the church is doing something to help migrants and refugees: ‘I believe that what the Church will do first of all is to safeguard and protect its interests.’

In contrast to Italians, who are more likely to associate hospitality and welcoming the stranger with their faith, Greeks seem to attach these values more to their national character than to their Orthodox faith. Eighty per cent of Greeks claim that faith does not influence their views about refugees and migrants, and in focus groups several expressed surprise at the idea that religious faith might be a springboard for providing assistance to refugees.

Understanding the connections between attitudes towards Islam and Muslims in the context of immigration and refugees is particularly complex in Greece given Greek-Turkish relations and the fact that a minority of the population is Muslim. Greece is a linguistically and culturally homogeneous society with small religious and linguistic minorities; only the Muslim community of Western Thrace is officially recognised by the Greek state as a religious minority.⁵³

As a Christian country, we should protect Greece’s religious heritage from outside faiths and beliefs



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

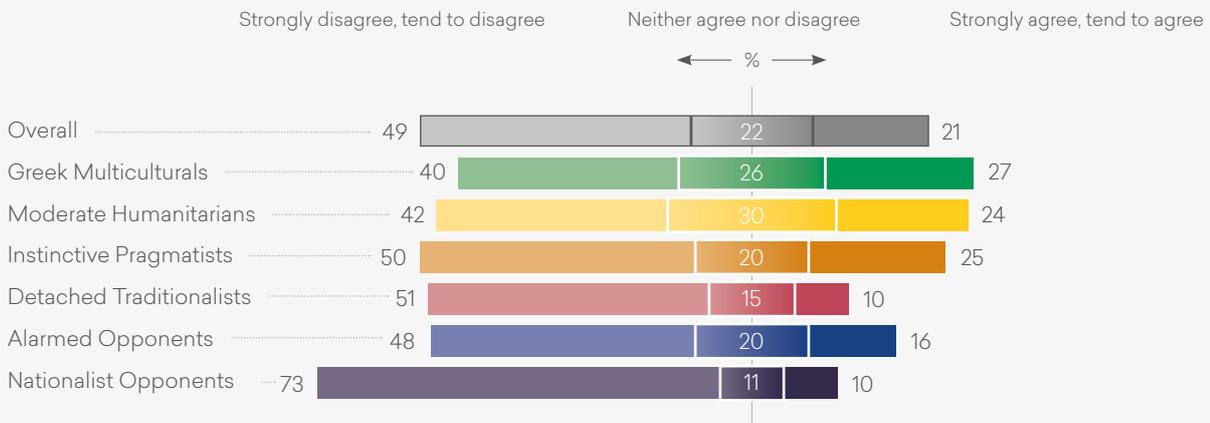
⁵¹ Pew Research Center (2017, May 10) Religious Belief and National Belonging in Central and Eastern Europe. Retrieved from <http://www.pewforum.org/2017/05/10/religious-affiliation/>

⁵² TRT World (2018, December 12). Athens will soon have its first mosque. Retrieved from <https://www.trtworld.com/europe/athens-will-soon-have-its-first-mosque-22419>

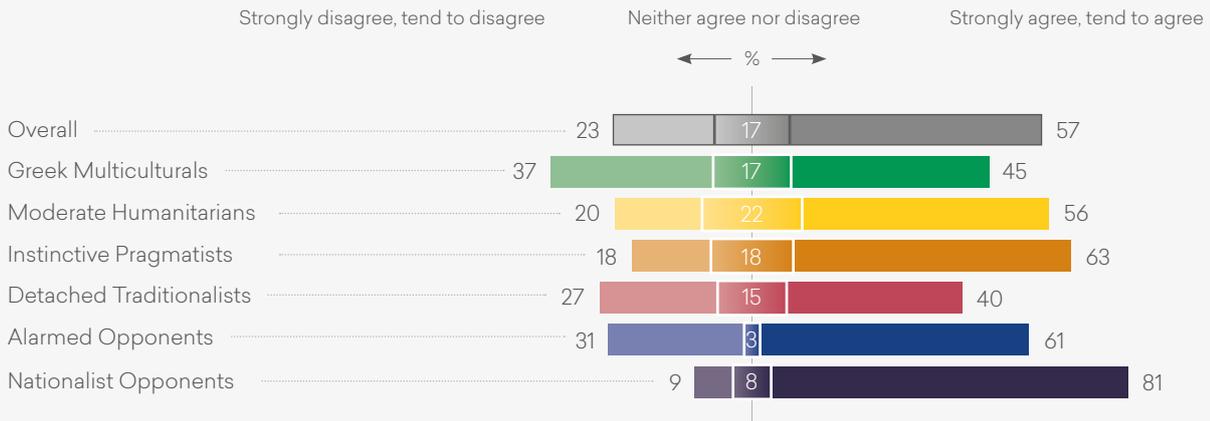
⁵³ Borou, C. (2009). The Muslim Minority of Western Thrace in Greece: An Internal Positive or an Internal Negative ‘Other’?. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 29 (1), 5-26. Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13602000902726723>

Sharia law is in place in Western Thrace, a region bordering Turkey, where there is an approximately 120,000-strong Muslim minority (although it is not a homogeneous population). Sharia law has been in place there since the 19th century when Greece gained independence from the Ottoman Empire, although Turkey itself abolished Sharia law in 1924. In fact, Greece is the only country in the EU with Islamic religious courts. Since January 2018, Greece has made the application of Sharia law to Muslims in the region optional rather than obligatory⁵⁴. This decision was welcomed by many of Greece's Muslim minority as the new legislation enables them to sidestep sharia law in family disputes (indeed, leading Muslim MPs actually advocated for the sharia courts to be fully abolished).⁵⁵

Islam is a peaceful religion



Islam and Greek society are incompatible



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

54 Stamouli, N. (2018, December 19). European Court Rules Against Greece Over Shariah Law. *The Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved from <https://www.wsj.com/articles/european-court-rules-against-greece-over-shariah-law-11545242182>

55 Smith, H. (2018, January 11). Greece's Muslim minority hails change to limit power of sharia law. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/10/historic-step-greek-pm-hails-change-to-limit-power-of-sharia-law>

Although the longstanding presence of Muslim Greeks could be expected to break down some of the ‘otherness’ of Muslims, it is complicated by the fact that the Muslim minority of Western Thrace is often ‘connected with the continual diplomatic collision between Greece and Turkey.’⁵⁶ Although the ‘Muslim minority...cannot disrupt the religious and cultural order of Greece, it may definitely be perceived as a political threat that supports internal and external tendencies and thus challenges the country’s unity.’⁵⁷ On the other hand, a wider historical perspective highlights that ‘at different moments of the Greek history, depending on changes in internal policies or the foreign relations with the neighbouring nation-states, Muslims were viewed as the ‘Self’ or the ‘Other.’⁵⁸

Security concerns are a key factor in influencing Greek attitudes towards Muslims. Only one in five Greeks believe that Islam is a peaceful religion (21 per cent) while 49 per cent disagree that it is peaceful. A majority of Greeks are also more inclined to believe that Islam is incompatible with Greek society (57 per cent). Unsurprisingly, Nationalist Opponents stand out in both cases as harbouring the most negative feelings towards Muslims and are the only group to have a majority expressing a strong sentiment. Fully 81 per cent of Nationalist Opponents agree that Islam and Greek society are incompatible (64 per cent strongly) while 73 per cent strongly dispute that Islam is a peaceful religion (59 per cent strongly). But these concerns are shared more broadly, even among Greek Multiculturals, with more believing that Islam is not peaceful than those who do not.

Despite concerns, most Greeks also recognise that Muslims suffer unfair discrimination. While many fear or disagree with some Islamic practices such as women wearing headscarves, or worry about the population impacts of Muslims having large families, all segments except Nationalist Opponents hold a mix of views. While Greek Multiculturals and Moderate Humanitarians are unsure about how compatible Islam is with Greek society, many of them are comfortable with the idea of a mosque being built near their home (59 and 45 per cent respectively). Similarly, while Detached Traditionals are the least likely to identify personally with Muslim values, they are also the mostly likely to believe that Muslim women in Greece should be allowed to wear veils or headscarves. Many Greeks are also concerned about the level of discrimination Muslims are facing, while simultaneously being concerned that Greeks who criticise Islam are judged as racist or ignorant.

Nevertheless, the largest difference in attitudes towards Muslims amongst the segments is in their levels of openness. Overall, 32 per cent of Greeks believe that most Muslims hold similar values to them personally and 54 per cent agree that Muslims are discriminated against in Greece. While Greek Multiculturals may be as unsure as other Greeks about the place of Islam in Greek society, nearly 60 per cent state that they would not mind if a mosque was built near their home, making them the only group with a majority supporting this.

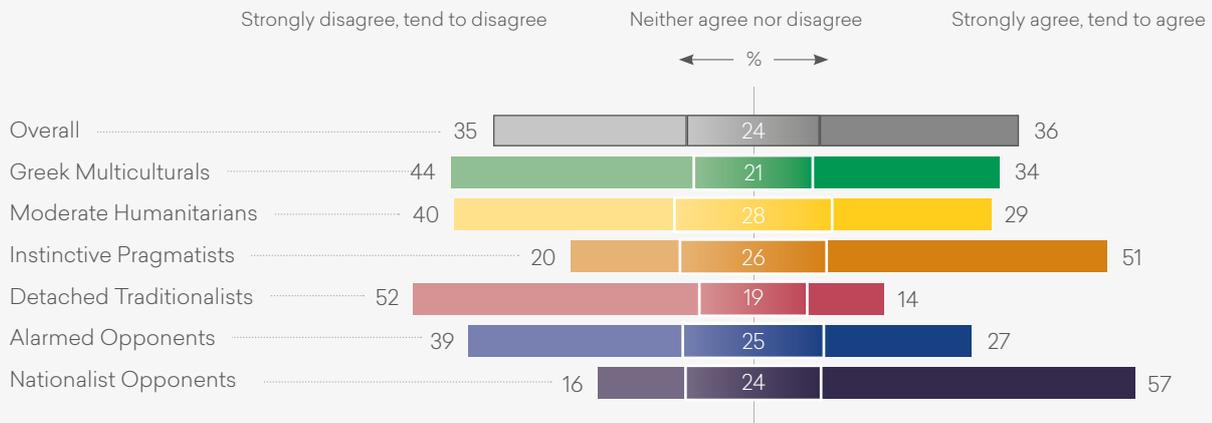
Attitudes towards Islam are one area where regional differences exist, although only to a small degree and perhaps hinting at the differences in attitudes between rural populations and town and city dwellers who have been more exposed to Muslims in their daily lives. On the question about whether Islam is a peaceful religion, most people express similar views, with Western Macedonia, Central Macedonia, Thessaly, and the Peloponnese showing the lowest levels of agreement (around 17 per cent, below the average of 20 per cent) while in Epirus, 25 per cent agree. In terms of sharing similar values, Greeks in Epirus are more likely to believe that most Muslims share similar values to them (45 per cent), whereas in Attica and Crete and the Aegean islands this percentage goes down to 33 per cent. Regional variations on the question of cultural compatibility also exist, with a high of 69 per cent of people in Thessaly believing that Islam and Greek society are incompatible, compared to lows averaging around 53 per cent in Western Macedonia, Attica, and the Peloponnese.

⁵⁶ Borou. (2009)

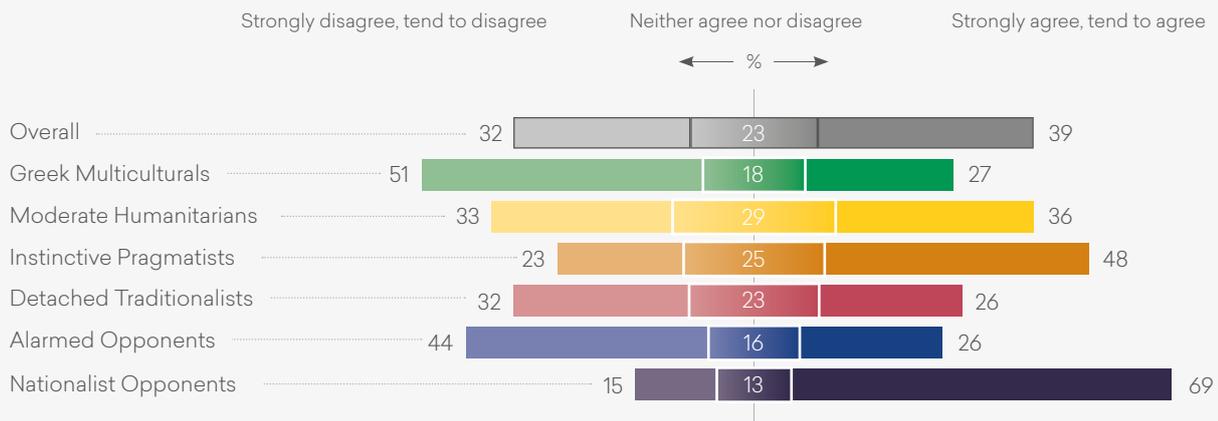
⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

Muslim women in Greece should not wear veils or headscarfs



Traditional Greece is being taken over by Muslim families that have too many children

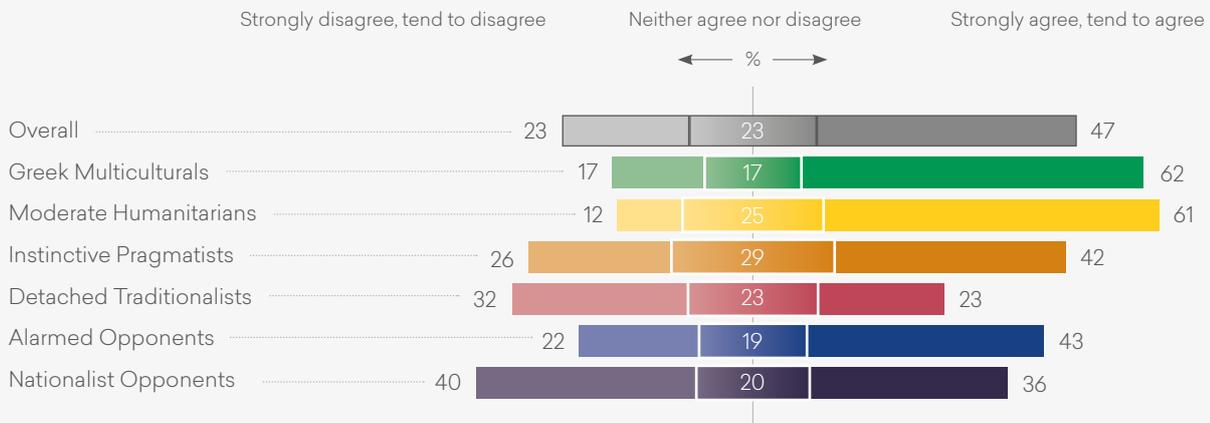


To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

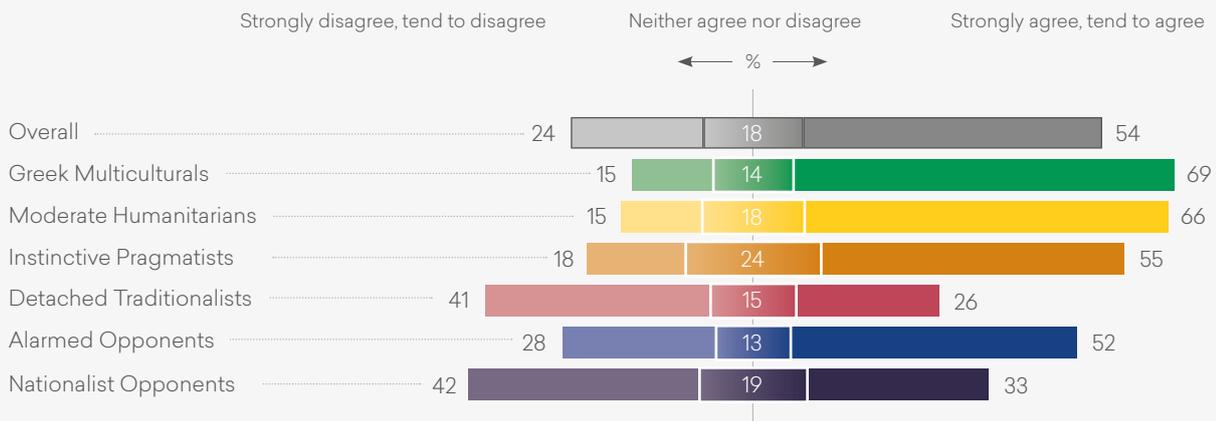
In any case, while Greeks remain unsure about their feelings towards Islam, this does not translate into discriminating against Muslims when providing refuge to those in need. A majority in all segments, including Nationalist Opponents, reject the idea of only accepting refugees who are not Muslim. Notably, only 14 per cent of Greeks agree that Greece should only accept refugees that are not Muslim, with a slightly above-average level of 19 per cent of Greeks in Crete and the Aegean islands.

The focus group with Detached Traditionalists highlighted a link between concerns about the place of Muslims in Greek society and changes in Greece's demographic makeup. Greece has a low fertility rate (1.33 births per woman in 2016 according to the World Bank, the European average, considered low, is 1.6), and a conversation was sparked when one participant said that she thought that 'in a few years, no pure Greeks are going to be around'. Others then engaged on these issues:

Greek people who criticise Islam are judged as ignorant or racist



Muslims are discriminated against in Greece



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

- Let alone that in few years there won't be any Greek population. We are going to be a small minority.
- Since we only have one child per family...
- Whereas Muslims have five each...
- And how many abortions take place every year...

Instinctive Pragmatists voiced fears about a variety of issues:

- I am scared of stereotypes about the woman's place, about violent situations...
- And the relentless and intolerant character of that religion.'
- They can't see where from the sun is rising.
- Yes, but that is a stereotype.
- This is valid.
- It isn't. Some have progressed, advanced!

Also, in relation to Turkey:

The Muslim population near the borders and especially the islands would be negative. If this population increases substantially, Turkey may invade. Turkey is another Muslim state, so they may invade because for example we do not treat Muslim migrants well. That is a great risk. In general, I would say that we can only gain cheap labour.

Ideas about the role of women in Islam feature prominently in conversations about the integration of Muslims in Europe. Many extremist movements have adopted the defence of women's and LGBT rights as an argument against allowing Muslims into their country in a rhetorical exercise that has been labelled as 'pinkwashing.' Gender norms feature prominently in these debates. In Greece, the persistence of traditional gender role models was underlined by responses to the question of whether 'men and women each have different roles to play in society.' Some 40 per cent of Greeks say yes, with a relatively small variance between segments: 46 per cent of Nationalist Opponents believe in different roles for men and women, versus 34 per cent of Greek Multiculturals.

8

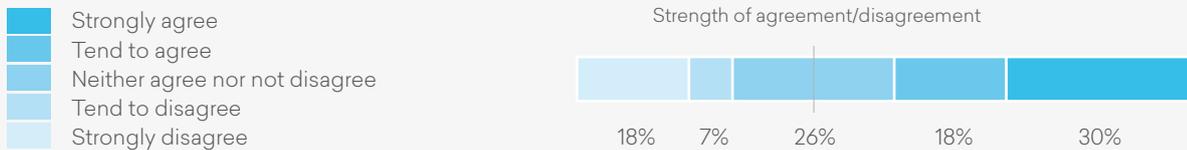


Challenges to the Rule of Law and a Culture of Solidarity

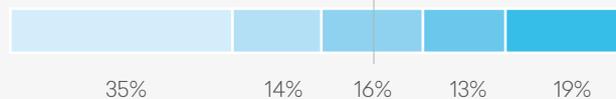
The rights of minorities are generally best protected in countries that place a high value on the rule of law, and constraints on political authorities. On this count, Greeks display a weaker commitment to the role of the law than many European countries, and a greater agreement with measures that are usually considered authoritarian or authoritarian-leaning, typically espoused by parties and leaders who are also populist. At the same time, Greeks also hold the idea of justice in high regard and most are concerned about increasing levels of racism and discrimination. The strong sense of solidarity that Greeks feel for outsiders to their culture does not translate into a strong confidence in institutional or legal safeguards, perhaps reflecting the low trust in Greek authorities.

As many as 60 per cent of Greeks believe that if the migration crisis continues Greeks should start protecting the shores and borders themselves (39 per cent strongly agree), reflecting support for vigilante-style measures to address this challenge. There is variance across segments, but with the exception of Greek Multiculturals, at least half in all other segments considers this to be a good idea. Support for these measures is highest among Nationalist Opponents (85 per cent). Among the middle segments, 50 per cent of Moderate Humanitarians, 68 per cent of Detached Traditionalists, and 71 per cent of Instinctive Pragmatists also agree, revealing that they could be persuaded to support radical measures but are not fully committed to them.

It is acceptable for the government to limit rights when there is a threat to public order



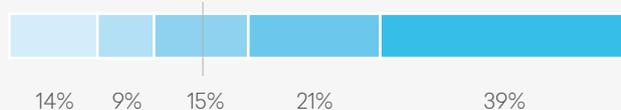
Greece should stop terrorism at all costs, even if that means ignoring human rights



To fix Greece we need a strong leader willing to break the rules



If the migration crisis continues, everyday Greek citizens should start protecting their shores and borders themselves



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

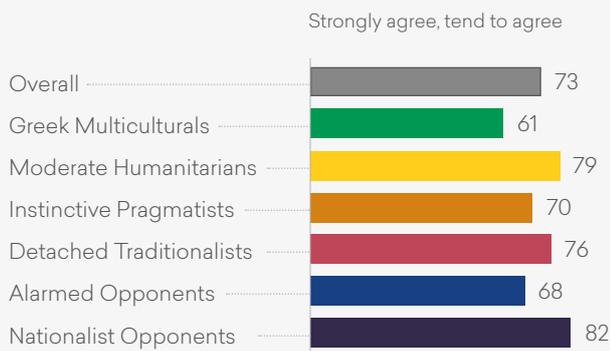
The proposition of protecting shores and borders themselves has the greatest support in Western Macedonia where as many as 78 per cent agree with this idea (followed by 72 per cent in the Peloponnese.) In contrast, there is only 50 per cent agreement in Epirus, followed by 56 per cent in Attica and 59 per cent in Crete and the Aegean islands.

One measure of a country’s vulnerability to authoritarianism is its appetite for a strong leader free of the constraints of negotiating with parliaments, bureaucracies and sub-national governments.⁵⁹ In Greece, there is remarkably strong support for a strong leader, higher than in any of the countries where we have conducted studies (indeed, some have described Greece as a populist democracy, although this description is contested).⁶⁰ This is perhaps a result of the populist nature of politics in Greece, combined with feelings of frustration with the system. Asked whether they believe that Greece needs a strong leader willing to break the rules, 73 per cent agree with this notion (53 per cent strongly agree), and only 15 per cent disagree. Among the segments, there is overwhelming support from Nationalist Opponents (82 per cent), followed by Detached Traditionalists (69 per cent). Even among Greek Multiculturals, 60 per cent agree with this proposition.

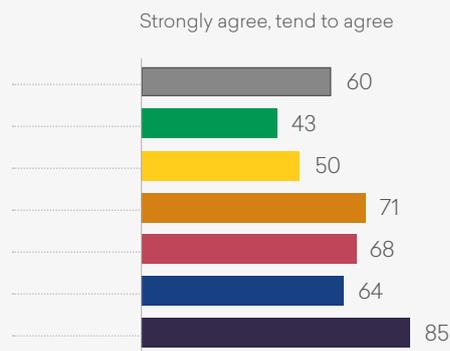
Yet when it comes to circumventing human rights, levels of support sharply decrease. Forty-nine per cent of Greeks oppose the idea that it is acceptable to ignore human rights if it is necessary to stop terrorism, while 32 per cent believe this to be an acceptable measure.

There is a hunger for leadership that will break with the traditional practices of the past which have failed Greeks. Yet focus groups also highlighted reservations about the embrace of undemocratic approaches.

To fix Greece, we need a strong leader willing to break the rules



If the migration crisis continues, everyday Greek citizens should start protecting their shores and borders themselves

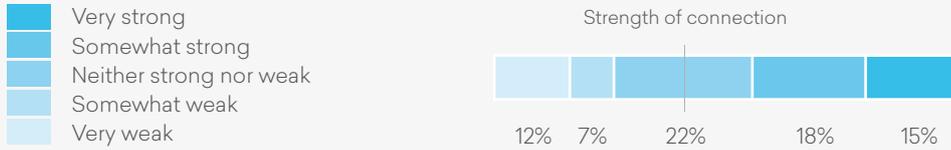


To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

⁵⁹Mounk, Y. (2018). *The People Versus Democracy*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University

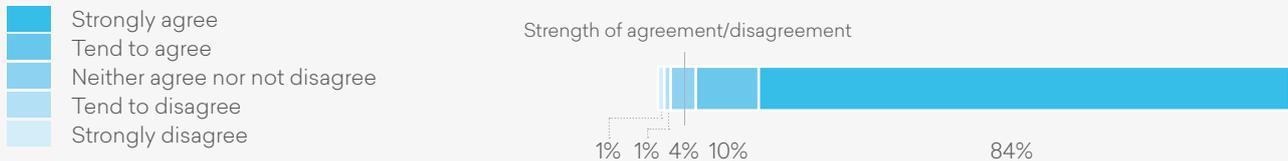
⁶⁰Pappas, T.S. (2013). Populist Democracies: Post-Authoritarian Greece and Post-Communist Hungary. *Government and Opposition*, 49(1), 1–23. Retrieved from https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/C25A68B6B8AD01966AD8C3E6488E7BC7/S0017257X13000213a.pdf/populist_democracies_postauthoritarian_greece_and_postcommunist_hungary.pdf Pappas describes a populist democracy as a democratic subtype in which, besides the party in office, at least the major opposition party (and even other parties) are also populist. He describes this kind of populism as democratic illiberalism characterised by the following 1) the idea that a society is split along a single cleavage, dividing the good ‘people’ from some evil ‘establishment’, 2) the promotion of adversarial and polarizing politics rather than moderation and consensus seeking, and 3) the adherence to the majority principle, as well as certain predilection for personalist authority over impersonal institutions and rule of law.

How connected do people feel about NGOs that defend human rights?



How connected do people feel about NGOs that defend human rights?
Source: More in Common (2019)

When the government makes laws, the number one principle should be ensuring that everyone is treated fairly



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

In Their Own Words...

The leader who 'breaks the rules' writes the rules. That means he can't actually break the rules. He just makes the rules that are in his or her interest.

Moderate Humanitarian

Since he has the power of legislating, he does not have to become an authoritarian. At any given moment he can just legislate anything in the Parliament, just in one day.

Moderate Humanitarian

I like it. And I think that because right now there aren't any leaders, I don't see anyone behaving like that right now. One of the characteristics of a leader is that he must go beyond the rules and build a system of rules of his own where for better or worse he will try to change some things that have been established.

Instinctive Pragmatist

The world has resilient leaders, most of whom are flirting at least a little with dictatorships and authoritarian regimes. Putin, Erdoğan, Kim Jong... They say that they're breaking the rules, that they are in charge, and that they're going to lead their countries into prosperity. But in reality this is deceptive. I'm not interested in someone coming out and saying 'I'm decisive' if he's flirting with that...

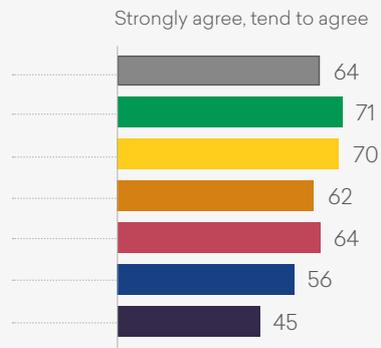
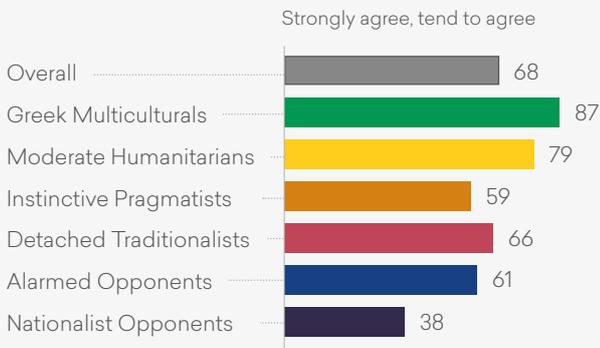
Instinctive Pragmatist

A leader must simultaneously do two things: on the one hand, respect people's liberties – rights etc. and not have any tendency to authoritarianism at all, on the other hand he must have the strength, the leadership, to control the behaviour of self-serving, opportunistic interests. It is hard to do both.

Instinctive Pragmatist

I am worried about increasing levels of racism and discrimination

As a Christian country, we should help provide the needs of those entering Europe as migrants



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Source: More in Common (2019)

Sometimes a ruler has to overstep limits. What kind of overstepping? This sounds somewhat weird. Democracy has certain limitations. This is what the law is all about. Not in the sense of authoritarianism. To go all the way.

Detached Traditionalist

The findings suggest that this appetite for a strong leader is tempered by other views. As noted in Section 6.5, one third of the Greek population feels connected to human rights NGOs. An overwhelming majority of Greeks also feel that fairness should be the number one principle when the government makes laws. A majority of Greeks in every segment, except Nationalist Opponents, also express concern about increasing levels of racism and discrimination. Overall, 68 per cent state that they are worried about it (45 per cent strongly agree). Eighty-seven per cent of Greek Multiculturals feel this way, while only 38 per cent of Nationalist Opponents do. At least half in all other segments are worried about increasing racism and discrimination.

The study also tested responses to specific messages around refugee protection. Unlike in Italy, where framing the refugee and migration crisis through the lens of Catholicism seemed to increase willingness to support assisting refugees, framing these issues through the lens of Greece's Christian heritage did not have the same effect. In conversation with members of middle groups, most said that their beliefs about welcoming refugees are anchored in their shared humanity. In the focus groups, framing those values through the lens of Christian heritage, especially for Instinctive Pragmatists and Moderate Humanitarians, actually appeared to raise suspicion. They saw these as messages that would only come from the Orthodox Church. The one exception was this comment from a Detached Traditionalist: *'I think the message is more significant the way it is, with the reference to being a Christian country added. That puts more pressure on me to say that I agree with that.'*

It is a matter of being human. It has nothing to do with religion or race. I can think of an opposite example. There was a Greek woman who fell in the street. Greeks kept passing by and nobody helped her. It was a black guy who helped her.

Detached Traditionalist

Why do you put Christian at the beginning of the sentence? As a Christian country and not as humans?

Moderate Humanitarian

I would delete 'as a Christian country.' The 'country' is enough.

Instinctive Pragmatist

Another message tested in the qualitative stage was around whether '*saving lives shows the best of us as Greeks*'. This was well received by all segments, who responded in the following terms:

I like that this phrase refers to Greece. Other countries did not do what Greece has done. It is good to speak the truth. We did something that shows character.

Moderate Humanitarian

Mercifulness is a characteristic of the Greek.

Moderate Humanitarian

We are warmer people, more human, I think.

[Moderator] Who do you think would send this kind of message?

Patriots.

Most Greeks.

Except for racists, Golden Dawn and the like.

It's funny - they claim to be Christians, but they target migrants.

Detached Traditionalists

When there were images of grandmothers in Mytilene, on the benches, holding the small children in their arms. It was a really nice message. It was showing a very nice image. There are all kinds of examples like this.

Instinctive Pragmatists

In summary, the survey responses suggest that Greeks feel committed to the values of justice and fairness and believe these values are strongly connected to their identity. They are also worried about an increase in bigotry. At the same time, they give less weight to legal obligations to offer protection and are susceptible to populist notions of the need for a strong leader. Deep frustration with the government, increased feelings of powerlessness relative to the EU, and nervousness toward Turkey help explain this sentiment.

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Conclusions and Recommendations

Questions of national identity and the dynamics of how people think about themselves and their relationship to out-groups are at the core of national debates about immigration and refugees. This study demonstrates that differences also exist within each country, differences that go beyond a simplistic depiction of two opposed sides. Public attitudes in Greece are more nuanced, and the majority of Greeks hold a mix of views: a combination of empathy and a commitment to hospitality for those in need on the one hand, and concerns about the impacts of the migrant population on overstretched public resources, and on the retention of Greek culture and traditions on the other .

These differences underscore the importance of understanding the different drivers and concerns that motivate the attitudes of each segment of the Greek population. The combination of the segmentation analysis in the study, plus the range of issues on which Greeks offered their opinions, illuminate the unique ways in which Greece defines itself, the values that are associated with its national identity, and the way in which its citizens relate to outside groups such as refugees.

In some respects, Greece resembles other European nations. More than half of its population belongs to one of three middle groups. Greek Multiculturals, like the cosmopolitan groups in other countries, embrace the values of diversity and welcoming refugees but diverge from the values of other Greeks in significant ways. Greece's population, like the population in other European nations such as Italy, is also vulnerable to far-right narratives that associate refugees with public health threats and Muslims with terrorism.

In other ways, Greece is distinctive. It is less polarised and less ideologically driven, with fewer differences across the segments than we find in other countries. Its people empathise with refugees and also economic migrants. In fact, around one half of the population is active in volunteering to support these populations. Yet at the same time, many Greeks embrace the undemocratic idea of a strong ruler willing to break the rules to fix things in Greece - a reflection of the economic issues that concern them far more than the refugee crisis.

A study of this kind has its limitations. Nevertheless, we believe this study breaks new ground and provides new directions for efforts to engage the Greek public in ways that can be more effective in the year ahead.

Recommendations

The key recommendations emerging from this report for those working to strengthen Greeks' sense of unity and its values as an inclusive society are as follows:

- 1. Building a positive and engaging story of Greece's future should start with pride in Greek identity and in the character and efforts of ordinary Greek people at the grassroots of society.** Persistently weak economic conditions and poor prospects, combined with a distrust of institutions, creates a clear risk of divisive populist narratives resonating more strongly with Greeks than they have to date. On the other hand, Greeks' instinctive sense of empathy and fellow-feeling creates an in-built resilience to efforts to divide the population into 'us-versus-them' narratives that target vulnerable minorities. Linking the deep sense of pride in national identity and Greek character to the values of inclusion and welcome can strengthen this resilience and is likely to be far more effective than top-down efforts, given the deep distrust of institutions, from government to business to civil society.
- 2. After a period of great difficulty that is still ongoing, Greeks need to recover their sense of self-confidence and hope.** It is important that Greeks feel that they have the power to affect positive change, and the issue of migration and refugees can be presented as one which provides an opportunity to mobilise and succeed. By promoting a shift from feelings of powerlessness to agency, organisations can increase much-needed feelings of empowerment.

The prolonged economic downturn in Greece has created a sense of disempowerment among Greeks. Efforts should be made to affirm welcoming and inclusive values as core elements of Greek civic identity. What Greece has achieved in the face of enormous difficulties should be emphasised as a source of pride for its people. Such a shift must be attached to a positive vision of engagement with the world and not a retreat that creates hostility to outside forces. It should be linked to national identity. A sense of belonging to the people and culture of their country, matters to Greeks more than to people in most other countries, and this has important implications for communications around political and social issues.

- 3. Communications relating to Greece's refugee and migrant population should underscore that helping migrants and refugees does not come at the expense of the needs of Greeks but rather that their interests are best advanced together.** This might be done through efforts that raise the standards of health care, education provisions and infrastructure for all parts of the Greek community. As most Greeks already feel a genuine sense of empathy towards refugees and migrants, advocating for more compassion is unlikely to change public opinion. Communications should, however, engage the deep wells of empathy in the general population by emphasising the many things that Greeks and migrants have in common, redefining the ingroup in a manner that is inclusive towards migrants. Opportunities for migrants to contribute to and strengthen local neighbourhoods and communities should be advanced.
- 4. Specific efforts should be made to address the high levels of concern that migrants pose a risk to public health.** This is one area of public perception where a sustained effort by trusted voices in the medical community should be able to address those risks and counter perceptions that may otherwise be used to deepen social divisions and the othering of refugees and migrants.

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5. **The European Union should demonstrate its commitment to support Greece in managing its southern borders. Simultaneously, the EU should address the deep sense of disappointment Greeks feel around its stance on the migration crisis.** Stronger support from Greece's European partners will contribute to building greater resilience to the extreme voices within the country which endorse a more aggressive anti-migrant and anti-European approach. Future crises - manufactured or real - should be anticipated, and communications strategies should address Greeks' concern that they will continue to bear a much greater load than other countries in Europe.
 6. **The priority of policy and communications should be the 62 per cent of Greeks who belong to one of the three middle segments.** Greece is less polarised than many other countries, meaning that to a large extent similar communications strategies can resonate with several segments. However, Greek Multiculturals are already convinced of the importance of inclusive values, and it is likely that efforts designed to reach them will resonate less with other groups. Likewise, Nationalist Opponents and Alarmed Opponents are more resistant and less likely to be convinced of shifting well-established attitudes. Messages that target people in the middle groups should engage the values and perceptions common to those segments.
 7. **More work is required to understand how to positively address the financial hardships that Greeks have experienced in the past decade, and to find ways in which the migrant population can contribute to improving economic prospects within Greece.** This would be especially valuable in engaging the Instinctive Pragmatist segments, who are more likely to be supportive if they see Greeks and migrants having a genuine shared interest in a stronger economy, rather than seeing newcomers as competitors in a zero-sum game who compete for jobs and suppress wages. Addressing these concerns more effectively may have more impact on public opinion than any other change in policy or communications.
 8. **Special attention should be paid to the concerns of Detached Traditionalists,** whose concerns are motivated more by anxieties about threats to Greek culture and identity, which they cherish, than by innate hostility towards outsiders. While they tend towards more 'closed' views, Detached Traditionalists are considerably less extreme than those of the Nationalist Opponents. **This group is a prime target for extremist parties that have already locked in support from the Nationalist Opponents. Efforts should be made to reach them in ways that speak to their genuine concerns.**
 9. **In line with UNHCR's out-of-camp policy,⁶¹ policies that promote co-habitation with host communities and refugees should be promoted, abandoning the present policy of isolation in some parts of the territory.** There is evidence, especially from the qualitative research undertaken for this study, that the relative isolation of people who have arrived in Greece in recent years contributes to a sense of them as an 'out-group' that is not genuinely part of Greek society and that will not integrate. The way in which some focus group participants contrasted past waves of arrivals, who integrated into Greek society, with more recent arrivals who have integrated less due to their isolation, suggests that accommodating refugees in camps rather than within the wider community is not the most effective approach to achieving successful integration.

⁶¹ UNHCR (2014). *UNHCR Policy on Alternative to Camps*. Retrieved from <https://cms.emergency.unhcr.org/documents/11982/45535/UNHCR+-+Policy+on+alternatives+to+camps/005c0217-7d1e-47c9-865a-c0098cfdda62>



10. Civil society groups need to address proactively their low levels of trust. This is especially true for those organisations working to assist refugees and migrants. These steps might involve measures to show how their operations work, what results they achieve and how they spend funds. Programmes need to be structured so that they benefit the host community as well as migrants in order to avoid one group being played off against the other and counter perceptions that refugees receive better care or more assistance than Greeks themselves.

Greece's ten years of economic and social crisis has turned many Greeks against the country's institutions and elites, but not against individuals such as refugees. As this report illustrates, most Greeks hold a mix of 'open' and 'closed' views. They regard hospitality and welcoming people as fundamental traits of Greek society. They also want integration to be managed competently and fairly, and they want newcomers to integrate, respect Greek culture and contribute to society.

This report demonstrates that despite public concern about migration policy, most Greeks reject curtailing human rights and sacrificing justice, embracing extremists or dehumanizing migrants and refugees. However, new approaches are needed to counter the growing influence of narratives that set one group of Greeks against another. New infrastructure and strategic, targeted approaches are needed to respond to the increasingly sophisticated, well-resourced and targeted communications strategies of authoritarian populists and 'othering' narratives.

More effective public engagement starts with a better understanding of the public. But this is insufficient in of itself. If the threat of extremism is to be resisted, these insights need to be translated into new initiatives by political parties, civil society, philanthropic actors and a much wider range of Greek institutions. Like other Europeans, Greeks seem to be in search of new narratives that offer both hope and realism. This is urgently needed if Greeks are to turn the tide on fundamental threats not only to minorities within Greece, but to the character of Greek society and the integrity of democracy.

Annex I

In a series of national studies, More in Common has explored a large number of questions of a statistically representative sample of populations. The outcome of these studies in each case is a segmentation of national populations into groups with similar attitudes ranging in a spectrum from 'open' to 'closed'. In Europe, More in Common has conducted studies in France, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, and Greece on the issues of national identity and attitudes towards immigration and refugees. While similar patterns emerge, segments differ from country to country and some are unique to the national context. In the US, More in Common conducted a study of America's polarised landscape titled 'Hidden Tribes.' This study is broader in scope and identifies different segments within the population based on their core beliefs.



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