

Xenophobia and Radicalisation in Greece, 2020-2022

1. Legislation

The operation's freedom of NGOs in support of migrants was restricted, on 14 April 2020 by a Ministerial Decision, that adopted to regulate the operation of Greek as well as foreign NGOs through increased rules on the registration of NGOs and all their members, who are active in the sectors of international protection, migration and relocation, or the social integration of migrants. The stated aim of the Decision was to increase the transparency of the NGOs' work. With the adoption on 14 April 2020 of the Joint Ministerial Decision No. 3063 on the operation of the Registry of Greek and foreign NGOs that operate in the areas of asylum, migration and social integration in Greece, and on the Registry of their members, the rules for the registration and operations of such NGOs were made stricter.

- Article 8 of Law 4779/2021 provides that audio-visual media services must not contain incitement to violence or hate against a group of people or a member of a group, which is defined by race characteristics, colour, national or ethnic origin, descent, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or sex characteristics/

ON CITIZENSHIP

1. LAW 4735/2020 adopted new system of acquiring Greek citizenship. It requires stricter rules such as stable job in Greece, deep knowledge of Greek history etc.¹
2. LAW 4674/2020 increases from 3 to 7 the years of residence for refugees that want to acquire the Greek citizenship.

On ASYLUM

Law 4686/20 Improvement of immigration legislation, amendment of provisions of laws 4636/2019 (A' 169), 4375/2016 (A' 51), 4251/2014 (A' 80) and other

¹ Change of the code of Greek citizenship (in Greek Τροποποίηση του Κώδικα Ελληνικής Ιθαγένειας), 2020, [URL:https://www.kodiko.gr/nomothesia/document/644125/nomos-4735-2020](https://www.kodiko.gr/nomothesia/document/644125/nomos-4735-2020)

provisions. Full health care is to be provided to rejected unaccompanied child asylum seekers until their return. In practice, health-care professionals might also provide treatment in the case of non-lifethreatening medical concerns.² The General Directorate of Social Solidarity of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs takes the appropriate measures to ensure the representation of unaccompanied minors, by a commissioner or, where necessary, by assigning the relevant responsibility to an organization charged with the care and welfare of minors or any other appropriate form of representation, in cooperation with the National Center for Social Solidarity and other authorities, according to their competence. The aforementioned authority ensures that the needs of the minor are properly covered during the implementation of this law, by the appointed commissioner or representative of paragraph 1 and regularly assesses the situation of the minor. In particular, it takes the appropriate measures to ensure the necessary representation of unaccompanied and separated minors, in order to ensure the exercise of their rights, as well as compliance with the obligations provided for in this law.³

2. law 4825/21 Reform on deportation and return procedures of third country citizens, attracting investors and digital nomads, issues of residence permits and procedures for granting international protection, provisions of the competence of the Ministry of Immigration and Asylum and the Ministry of Citizen Protection and other urgent provisions. This is a law to facilitate deportations and returns or push backs in combination with a huge attempt of demonization of migration. They “abolished provisions that functioned as pull factors for smuggling rings. Like the provision for the work of illegal residents in the country” as the minister of Migration Mitarakis stated.

3. Law 4959/2022, ratifying an agreement with Bangladesh on seasonal workers

4. Law 5009/2023, Agreement with Egypt on seasonal workers

By means of bilateral agreements Greece signed with Pakistan and Bangladesh respectively. Citizens of the latter countries will be able to apply for Greek visas for the purpose of employment of a maximum of five years in the agriculture sector. Importantly, the legislative and administrative acts allow Pakistani and Bangladeshi citizens already irregularly present in Greece to regularize their stay for the period specified in the bilateral agreements, even though the terms are somewhat restrictive (e.g. excluding residence permits for family members). In 2016, the Ministry of Agriculture introduced a voucher system in the agriculture sector, intended for farmers who wished to employ migrants who do not have residence permits. So far, about 13 000 irregularly present migrants have profited from this scheme, which expired in July 2022. By means of this procedure, irregularly present migrants working in agriculture could temporarily get their status regularised for a six months’ period, renewable. To employ irregularly present migrant workers, the employer must provide the

²² ECRI Report on Greece (sixth monitoring cycle)//Council of Europe, 28 June 2022, p.10. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/ecri-first-report-on-greece-adopted-on-28-june-2022-published-on-22-se/1680a818bf>, pg. 10

³ Change of the code of Greek citizenship (in Greek Τροποποίηση του Κώδικα Ελληνικής Ιθαγένειας), 2020, URL: <https://www.kodiko.gr/nomothesia/document/644125/nomos-4735-2020>

identity of the workers to the police authorities. ECRI considers this a good practice. Additionally, in a direction of law and order more restrictive measures are being adopted. For example, residence permit for humanitarian reasons (also if the migrant was victim of hate incidence) that previously was given ad hoc from the minister now it will be given to those migrants that previously had a residence permit. In general, the approach towards migration under the government of New Democracy has been harsh reflected this also in other law provisions. Since their rise to power, in 2019, laws changed.

Anti-racist legislation

1. Law 4958/2022, on changing gender characteristics of intersex minors. Law 4958/2022 provides for a prison sentence of at least six (6) months and a monetary penalty for doctors who perform operations or treatments on intersex minors.⁴

2. Law enforcement practices affecting minorities - examples in the period under review:

- **discriminatory practices;**
- **anti-discrimination practices, including government support measures for minorities;**
- **combating Hate crime:**
 - ✓ **preventive measures directed against the spread of extremist views in society, against the financing of Terrorism, etc.**
 - ✓ **criminal proceedings;**
 - ✓ **guilty verdicts;**
- **law enforcement practices as a manifestation of the conflict between democratic values and security interests, if any;**

During the pandemic, in the context of police checks on movement restriction measures, harassing behaviors and expression of violence with a racist motive were identified. Based on the victims' testimonies, in some cases, police officers, during checks on movement restriction measures, locate the victims and check only them, despite the fact that they are amongst a wider crowd (eg queues in supermarkets, streets, etc.). Victims believe that they are not picked randomly, but based on their characteristics, such as ethnic origin or colour (profiling). As the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) points out in its

⁴ The rights of Intersex people in Greece (in Greek Τα δικαιώματα των ιντερσεξ ατόμων στην Ελλάδα), 2022, URL: <https://gr.boell.org/el/2022/08/02/ta-dikaiomata-ton-intersex-atomon-stin-ellada#:~:text=4958%2F2022%20%CF%80%CF%81%CE%BF%CE%B2%CE%BB%CE%AD%CF%80%CE%B5%CE%B9%20%CF%80%CE%BF%CE%B9%CE%BD%CE%AE%20%CF%86%CF%85%CE%BB%CE%AC%CE%BA%CE%B9%CF%83%CE%B7%CF%82,%CE%BA%CE%B1%CF%84%CE%AC%20%CF%80%CE%B1%CF%81%CE%AC%CE%B2%CE%B1%CF%83%CE%B7%20%CF%84%CE%BF%CF%85%20%CE%AC%CF%81%CE%B8%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%85%2017.>

recent General Recommendation no. 36 on the prevention and treatment of racial profiling, the identification or selection of a person on the basis of racial profiling in the field of police checks, is the process by which law enforcement is based on generalizations due to race, colour, ethnic or national origin, instead of objective evidence or individual behavior, when subjecting individuals to identity checks and detailed investigations or when concluding about someone's involvement in criminal activity. It is also pointed out that whether it stems from the attitude and practices of individual officers or is a broader culture of law enforcement services, racial profiling is a long-standing practice in many services. That reality, according to the UN Committee, is associated with stereotypes and prejudices, which can be conscious or unconscious institutional and structural.⁵ Stereotypes are the basis for violations of international human rights law when applied to undermine the enjoyment of human rights.

As the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) of the Council of Europe points out in its 2020 report, some government measures that have been introduced in response to the COVID-19 crisis, are targeting groups such as refugees and asylum-seekers, without evidence of any public health risks coming from these groups, have led to further discrimination against marginalized groups, causing a setback in their human rights, that could prove long-term.⁶

The Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs appoints Refugee Education Coordinators (RECs) in all major refugee accommodation centres. RECs are responsible for all aspects of integration of refugee children into schools, thus functioning also as the liaison between students, parents, school principals and teachers. ECRI formed a favourable impression of the work of the RECs. School drop-out rates are nevertheless relatively high, notwithstanding some success stories with refugees entering universities. Besides the RECs, there are also other initiatives in support of asylum-seeking children. One of these initiatives is a project called Schools for All – Integration of Refugee Children in Greek Schools, which was implemented by the Ministry of Joint statement by 19 organisations active on refugee issues in Greece - R.S.A. (rsaegean.org) According to Article 96 of Law No. 4368/16, humanitarian aid in hotspots is controlled by the military. Therefore, NGOs providing food and shelter in those places can be sanctioned. 63 Expert Council on NGO Law, Council of Europe, 2020, Opinion on the compatibility with European standards of recent and planned amendments to the Greek legislation on NGO registration. 20 Education and Religious Affairs, in schools with refugee pupils across Greece. Two further initiatives are worthy of mention. The first is the Accelerated Learning Programme, introduced by the Institute for Educational Policy, together with academic partners and UNICEF, which provided teaching and learning materials to support pupils with different cultural and linguistic background, as well as classroom or reception teachers in secondary schools. The second project is entitled “Assessing Newly Arrived Migrants’ Knowledge in Science and Math using Augmented Teaching Material - Augmented Assessment”, which runs for three years from 1 November 2020 onwards, and has led to the development of materials, practices and knowhow for the evaluation of pre-existing knowledge in Mathematics and Natural Sciences among newly-arrived migrants. Despite the various support measures to improve access to education for asylum seeking children,

⁵ UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), General recommendation No. 36: Preventing and Combating Racial Profiling by Law Enforcement Officials, σελ. 4-5, 24 November 2020. Available at: [CERD_C_GC_36_9291_E.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/cerd/interim-recommendations/36) (ohchr.org)

⁶ European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), Annual Report on ECRI's Activities covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2020, p. 8, March 2021. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/annual-report-on-ecri-s-activities-for-2020/1680a1cd59>

problems remain. In a decision of 26 January 2021, the European Committee of Social Rights found that there had been multiple violations of the European Social Charter, including a breach of Article 17§2 of the Charter due to the lack of access to education for accompanied and unaccompanied migrant children on several islands. For adult migrants, including those granted asylum, free Greek language courses and courses about Greek culture are currently provided by five of the Migrant Integration Centres. Each of them is responsible for the content and duration of the courses. All migrants and beneficiaries of international protection that reside in the municipalities in question may participate in the courses free of charge. Further, there are so-called second chance schools initially established for native Greeks who have dropped out of school, but who later wish to complete it. These schools are also open to all categories of migrant students, an offer which has been taken up by some. ECRI welcomes the courses offered by the Migrant Integration Centres and encourages their extension to other municipalities. It also takes positive note of the access to “second chance” schools granted to migrants.

In December 2020 a National Action Plan against Racism and Intolerance from the National Council against Racism and Intolerance (NCRI) was adopted. The objective of the NAP is to eliminate any kind of racism or discrimination based on “race”, colour, religion, nationality or national or ethnic origin, disability, belief, chronic illness, sexual orientation, gender identity or/and gender characteristics. The NAP is divided into four main areas, namely awareness-raising, education, social integration policies and justice. It allows for setting priorities on an annual basis and will be subject to mid-term evaluations. It also refers to the working definition of antisemitism adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). Groups considered to be vulnerable to discrimination, such as migrants, asylum seekers and those granted asylum, Roma, and LGBTI people are specifically mentioned. NGOs and other civil society actors regarded positively the inclusive and thorough consultation processes undertaken in the preparation of the NAP.

A national strategy for LGBTI equality for 2021- 2025 was prepared and adopted. A further welcome step towards such equality is the inclusion of transgender persons in the Greek Manpower Employment Organisation’s (OAED) programmes for providing work for members of vulnerable groups.

Concerns has been rising with the recent discontinuation of housing support for recognized refugees, as well as those whose asylum applications had been rejected. The first phase of the plan, which was postponed from April to May 2020 because of Covid-19 restrictions, affected over 11 000 people who were required to leave their accommodation by 1 June 2020, following a change in Greek law that came into force on 11 March 2020, whereby, upon obtaining recognition, refugees and subsidiary protection beneficiaries are required to leave their accommodation within 30 days instead of within six months. That said, refugees and subsidiary protection beneficiaries often stay in the reception centers longer, where they, in practice, continue to receive subsistence and other services.

In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, computer tablets were distributed by public authorities to Roma pupils, together with 3 GB worth of internet connection time.

A “*New National Strategy and Action Plan for Roma Social Inclusion 2021-2030*” was drawn up and made available for public consultations in 2021. The text is structured around four pillars that specify its key action priorities: i) preventing and combating poverty and social exclusion of Roma; ii) strengthening equal access for Roma to social services of general

interest; iii) preventing and combating antigypsyism and discrimination; and iv) promoting Roma participation.

However, despite the progress achieved, some issues give rise to concern. Forced evictions of Roma are one of the main problems faced by Roma. Landlords are reportedly reluctant to rent flats to Roma and because of negative attitudes towards Roma prevailing in large parts of Greece, local authorities allegedly have a favourable attitude towards evictions. Reasonable efforts to promote the rights of Roma are made at national level, but not at local level.

The only Equality Body in Greece, the Greek Ombudsman, still does not have the competence to provide legal representation to victims of discrimination or intolerance in court, to pursue strategic litigation or to bring cases before courts. Further, the Ombudsman Office is not allowed to freely select new staff to be recruited. LGBTI pupils continue to face intolerant and discriminatory attitudes and behaviours in school, including from teachers. As regards in particular intersex persons, notably children, they may face serious forms of discrimination and intolerance, including from medical professionals who reportedly often recommend abortion of intersex children to expecting parents, while medically unnecessary surgery on intersex children is also common. Refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants, as well as Roma and members of LGBTI communities remain victims of frequent hate speech, at times involving politicians and even state officials. Despite the commendable work of many NGOs in support of migrants in Greece, their possibilities to support migrants have been put at risk by a 2020 Ministerial Decision introducing stricter registration and operation rules for NGOs active in the sectors of international protection, migration and relocation, or the social integration of migrants. A number of international institutions have expressed concern about the way the registration has been conducted in practice, thereby allegedly leading to the exclusion of some NGOs that support migrants. The level of education among Roma remains low compared to other EU countries and to the mainstream Greek population. Drop-out remain high despite a reported slight decrease. Further, there is not always sufficient infrastructure to ensure smooth school attendance in the areas where some Roma settlements de facto exist. As regards the provision of health care to irregularly present migrants, access to hospitals and clinics is in principle secured in case of emergency or childbirth as well as for underaged children. However, between July 2019 and the last quarter of 2021, more restrictive rules and policies were applied, making access to such emergency health care uncertain, until the rules again allowed unrestricted access.

After a long process of almost six years, in a judgment delivered on 7 October 2020, the Athens Criminal Court of Appeals found the seven members of the “Golden Dawn” leadership guilty of directing a criminal organisation. The ruling comes as a reminder that the fight against racism and racist violence and the response to violent, xenophobic groups through legal means, is a matter of strengthening human rights and respect for the rule of law. The impact of the verdict against Golden Dawn expresses in practice the protection provided by law to each individual, as well as to each member of a community who is targeted by individuals or groups with racist, xenophobic, homophobic or transphobic motives.

Two court decisions in 2020 racist motive was recognized as an aggravating circumstance in committed crimes. In addition, one decision applies the institutional framework for incitement to hatred and violence, while in the second, an important case law is recorded, as it is the first time a court introduces racist motives on the basis of the victim’s gender identity.

On 17 March 2021, a committee consisting of relevant legal experts and civil society representatives was set up with the mandate to draw up a national strategy for LGBTI equality for 2021-2025. The strategy was adopted following public consultations.⁷

As concerns same sex couples, Law 4356/2015 provides for an extension of the civil partnership pact to them and recognizes family ties between the parties, conferring rights similar to those deriving from marriage.

As regards intersex persons, both interviews with relevant experts and members of the intersex community, as well as FRA's (2020) data, indicate that intersex persons all too often fall victims of discrimination in Greece.

The authorities took action at various levels in recent years to prevent and combat hate speech, both offline and online. On 25 January 2017, Greece ratified the Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime, concerning the criminalisation of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature committed through computer systems. The Protocol entered into force in Greece on 1 May 2017. The Greek Criminal Code was also amended by Law 4619/2019, as a result of which Article 184 of the Code provides that whoever publicly, by any means including the internet, causes or incites the commission of a crime and puts in danger the public order, is punished by one year of imprisonment or with a fine. If the intention was to perform violent acts against persons who are defined by race characteristics, colour, national or ethnic origin, descent, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or sex characteristics, the sentence may reach three years of imprisonment.

A police website through which hate speech and hate crime incidents can be reported was created. The Cybercrime Division of the Hellenic Police is also involved in both preventive and investigative action against hate speech online. In 2018, the Prosecutor General issued guidelines³⁶ on how to deal with hate speech cases. In the area of self-regulation, the Journalists' Code of Conduct, which applies to TV and radio programmes, sets an obligation to treat citizens without discrimination. The National Council for Radio and Television (NCRTV) supervises radio and TV broadcasts. The NCRTV may act ex officio or following complaints. It may impose administrative sanctions, such as fines, and it may suspend transmissions of TV or radio programmes or even all transmissions of an offending broadcaster. The NCRTV can act rapidly to prevent further harm. Its decisions are made public. In order to prevent hate speech and thus being sanctioned by the National Council, many Greek broadcasters use a technical delay function, whereby the actual emission of "live" broadcasts are slightly delayed, in order to allow TV and radio stations to stop any statements which would constitute hate speech from being broadcasted. In spite of all the measures described above, refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, Roma and LGBTI communities are frequent targets of hate speech, involving at times politicians and even state officials and, in the case of LGBTIphobic hate speech, representatives of the Greek Orthodox Church. There are only some ten prosecuted cases of hate speech of a criminal nature in the last ten years, with the majority

⁷ ECRI Report on Greece (sixth monitoring cycle)//Council of Europe, 28 June 2022, p.10. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/ecri-first-report-on-greece-adopted-on-28-june-2022-published-on-22-se/1680a818bf>

not resulting in a sentence, or even, in the worst case, with the complainant ending up accused and sentenced for libel instead.⁸

According to Article 82A of the Criminal Code, a bias motivation must be established when the victim was selected (targeted) by the offender “due to his/her ‘race’, colour, national or ethnic origin, descent, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender characteristics”. However, in practice, police, prosecutors and judges appear reluctant to investigate, prosecute and sentence racist crime under Article 82A. Following the adoption of Article 21 of Law 4356/2015, it is no longer required to prove that the offender was motivated by hatred against the victim for a crime to be punished with stiffer penalties as a racist one, but it is sufficient to establish that the victim has been targeted by the offender on the basis of his/her characteristics. Regrettably, the actual impact of Article 82A of the Criminal Code in recent criminal cases is still rather limited. There have been delays in the investigation of bias motivated crimes. In a number of cases, the possible racist motivation was not, in practice, investigated by the police and the prosecutors did not address the issue either. In this connection, one main finding of the Greek Ombudsman as National Mechanism for the Investigation of Arbitrary Incidents is that the victims are all too often not formally interviewed and that medical and other evidence is ignored. Alternatively, the victims are called to be heard by the investigators only months after the incident, which especially in the case of asylum-seeking victims often makes them hard to find. A case in point is when residents of the island of Lesbos in April 2019 attacked asylum seekers who were protesting against the notoriously poor conditions in the Moria camp. Alleged perpetrators were identified in the course of the investigation. However, by November 2021, no date for any court hearing had been set. There is an overall reluctance by police and prosecutors to consider hate motivations in police investigations and to prosecute hate crimes as such. This state of affairs is confirmed by the disproportion between registered hate crimes compared with the number of prosecutions and sentences for crimes motivated by hate. **The number of convictions for hate crimes is remarkably low in relation to the recorded incidents** At present, students of the Policy Academy attend lectures on amongst others action ag⁹ainst discrimination, racism and xenophobia, as well as on the rights of LGBTI individuals. In 2021, 151 police officers received in-service training about combating racist violence. On 21 February 2022, a broader training programme aimed at 17 000 serving police officers was initiated. It covers the themes of racist and domestic violence, as well as the protection of LGBTI persons and people with disabilities. At present there are 70 police entities with police officers specialised to work against racist violence. These specialised police officers are,

⁸ One of the relatively few successful prosecutions of hate speech was against an Orthodox priest, who got sentenced for inciting violence against homosexual persons (for more details, see Greek metropolitan sentenced to 7 months for “hate speech and incitement to violence” against homosexuals / OrthoChristian.Com). On the other hand, two NGO human rights defenders from the Greek Helsinki Monitor filed a complaint against a Greek Orthodox bishop, accusing him of incitement to discrimination, hatred or violence following an allegedly antisemitic statement he had published. In December 2019, their complaint was rejected by the prosecutor in charge of the case. The Bishop instead made a complaint against the NGO activists in question, who as a result on 15 February 2022 were sentenced to one-year suspended prison terms for raising false accusations against the bishop (for more details, see <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur25/5237/2022/en/> and “Activists convicted of ‘falsely accusing’ Greek bishop of hate speech”, 15 February 2022 The Guardian).

⁹ Greek National Commission for Human Rights: page 16 of its 28 September 2021 observations on Greece’s combined 23rd and 24th periodic report to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

according to civil society sources met by ECRI, conducting their tasks in an exemplary manner, contrary to many of their non-specialised colleagues. There are also 24 specialised prosecutors appointed for investigating racist crime. According to Prosecutor's Circular No. 5/2018, a systematic handling of all cases of hate speech and hate motivated violence is required. Prosecutors have been instructed to focus on gathering evidence for the motive of bias. The National School of Judges' initial education curriculum for judges and prosecutors includes courses on human rights issues, as well as specialised courses on racism and xenophobia and migration law. The Greek authorities, without specifying the place, informed ECRI of seven court decisions for 2022 in which the defendants have been sentenced for crimes with a racist or LGBTI-phobic motivation recognised by the court, including a racist murder, which resulted in a sentence of 21 years and 5 months for the perpetrators.¹⁰

There is a 24/7 hotline number operated by the Hellenic Police specialised in combating racist violence (see paragraph 53 above), to which suspected incidents of racially motivated crime can be reported, confidentially and/or anonymously. It provides relevant information about support services for victims, as well as their rights, as do the anti-racist police units if victims contact these units directly. Callers to the hotline can also be referred to the RVRN, which can help further, including in languages other than Greek or English. However, the hotline is not available throughout the country. ECRI encourages the authorities to ensure that the hotline is accessible nationwide. According to Article 61 of Law 4478/2017, police officers to whom hate speech or hate crimes are reported should be able to refer the victims to support services. Crimes can further be reported on the website of the Hellenic Police. According to Article 44, paragraph 1 of Law 3386/2005, residence permits for humanitarian reasons may be granted to victims of racist crimes, provided that there is a related court decision and/or that the victim needs medical treatment. ECRI considers this a good practice. The Ministry of Justice along with the National Council Against Racism and Intolerance recently produced a guide in nine languages (English, French, Farsi, Urdu, Arabic, Pashto, Albanian, Russian and Georgian) for hate crime victims that includes the existing legal framework on the rights of victims of racist crimes, instructions on the necessary steps to be taken by those affected by racist crimes, as well as a list of services that can assist the victims.¹¹ It is expected to be distributed to police and prosecution services, civil society organizations, public hospitals and reception centres for migrants. ECRI encourages the authorities to take further action, beyond publishing the guide in a wider range of languages (including Romani), to facilitate victims' access to support and remedies.

3. The attitude of the society towards immigrants, foreigners, ethnic, religious and sexual minorities:

– have sociological surveys or other studies been carried out in your country to determine the motivation of public sentiment towards these groups? If yes, what are the results? What, in your opinion, had a decisive influence on the formation of this motivation (the activities of

¹⁰ ECRI Report on Greece (sixth monitoring cycle)//Council of Europe, 28 June 2022, p.10. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/ecri-first-report-on-greece-adopted-on-28-june-2022-published-on-22-se/1680a818bf>, pg.16

¹¹ Guide for the rights of hate crime victims, 2021, URL: https://moj.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Guide_for_the_rights_of_hate_crime_victims_02022022.pdf

political parties and NGOs, the media, any events in the socio-political and economic spheres, government actions, etc.) - without a Pandemic and the war in Ukraine;

– how the general attitude of society towards immigrants, foreigners, other minorities has changed;

– describe negative social manifestations in relation to immigrants, foreigners, ethnic, religious and sexual minorities, give examples;

– radical manifestations by minorities groups towards the majority of the population, if any. What are the reasons for these manifestations in your opinion?

Immigration has a negative impact on the country for 64% of Greeks, according to a survey investigating the perceptions surrounding this phenomenon, while the majority of respondents have a negative view of the work of institutions and NGOs for the management of flows.¹² However, at the same time, Greeks support the refugees' right to movement and a large percentage of them say they are against the practice of sending ships with refugees and migrants back to Libya.

This research was carried out in Greece, Italy, Austria and Hungary, within the framework of the "CIAK Migration" program, funded by the European Commission. The aim of the survey, carried out by the company Ipsos (in Greece in collaboration with ActionAid) was to investigate the perceptions and stereotypes of the citizens of these four countries regarding immigration. In each of the countries, 1,000 interviews of people aged 18-70 were conducted between June 27 and July 5, 2019.

Greeks seem to struggle to find positive aspects in the impact that immigration has had on the country. Only 6% are positive and 29% believe it has had no effect, while at the same time 64% said immigration has had a fairly or very negative impact on the country. Greeks seem to be the most critical, followed by Italians (57%) and Hungarians (56%). Austrians expressed slightly less negative views, although the population is divided, between those who believe that immigration is negative (49%) and those who see it as a phenomenon that has had neither a positive nor a negative impact (29%) or are positive (20%).

The great majority of Greeks (70%) attach great importance to respecting the traditions and habits of immigrants, as long as they do not break the law, but only a small percentage (13%) considers that immigration has a positive effect on the cultural life of the country (the lowest percentage among the four countries as the corresponding percentage in Austria is 36%, in Hungary 17% and in Italy 26%). In fact, 56% of Greeks consider that immigration has divided society and for this reason they perceive it as negative.

Regarding employment, although Greeks largely agree that there is frequent exploitation of immigrants in the Greek labor market (74%), that immigrants are often employed in professions that Greeks no longer want to engage in (68%) and that the labor market should recognize their skills and qualifications (74%), at the same time more than 50% of citizens believe that because of immigrants Greeks find it more difficult to find work (59%) and that companies must give priority to Greek workers when hiring staff (55%).

¹² Research on what Greeks believe (in Greek), 2020, URL: <https://www.skai.gr/news/greece/ereyna-ti-pisteyoun-oi-ellines-gia-to-metanasteytiko-prosfygiko>

Regarding access to welfare services, half of the respondents (53%) believe that there is a kind of competition with immigrants, stemming from the idea that they are given "priority" over Greeks in accessing services. This belief seems to be particularly widespread in the 35-54 age group and in families with minor children (65%).

Despite these fears and despite the fact that a large number of respondents stated that Greece can no longer accept any more migrants and that, as a consequence, the borders should be closed (40%), the majority of Greeks appear to be positively disposed towards the refugees and to support the right of reception (63%). Besides, 72% believe that refugees are different from other immigrants because they are forced to leave their homeland.

A survey of the European Commission (Eurobarometer) on the perceptions of Greek citizens on a series of critical issues in relation to Greece and the EU found negative perception on a series of issues.. The survey (regular Eurobarometer 92.3) was conducted between November 14-29, 2019 in the 28 member states of the European Union and the 5 candidate countries for accession, covering the population of the countries, aged 15 and over. 1,008 citizens participated in the Greek part of the survey, covering the Greek territory.

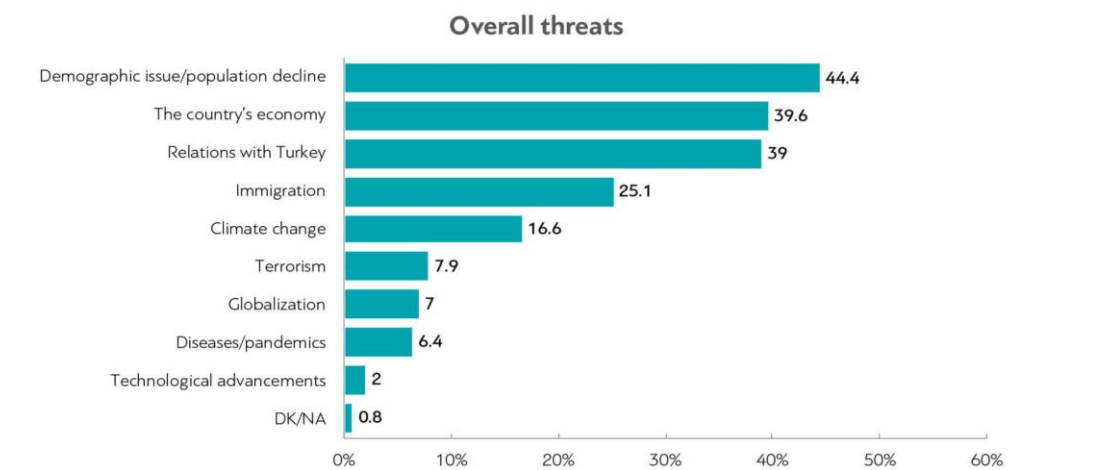
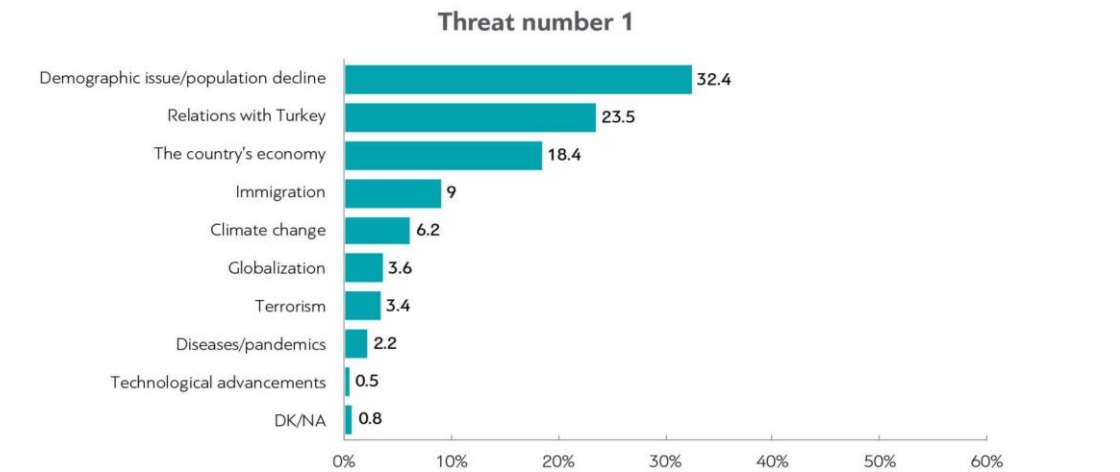
Immigration (for the first time and with an increase of 25%) is the most important problem faced by Greeks, with unemployment (44%), the economy (38%) and public debt (19%) following.

In particular, for immigration, as in previous surveys, there is a preference for the immigration of European citizens within the European Union. Specifically 58% of Greek people stated this preference and 69% of the people from 27 countries of the European Union stated this preference. On the contrary, over the "unwelcome" immigration of people from countries outside the European Union 72% of Greek people stated this whereas 47% from 27 countries of European Union stated this. In fact, the Greeks are clearly in favor of strengthening the external borders of the European Union, with more European border guards and coast guards, garnering (together with the Cypriots) the highest percentage of the survey (Greece:91% whereas in the EU27 this percentage is 70% .

More generally, 76% of Greeks consider that immigrants who settle in their country do not contribute much whereas this percentage in the 27 countries of EU is 44% while 1 in 2 European citizens have the opposite opinion, who evaluate the contribution positively of immigrants in his/her country (EU28:52%, EU27:49% Greece:21%). However, Greeks believe that Greece should help refugees (Greece:71% -4, EU28:69%, EU27:68%)

"What Greeks Believe", **diaNEOsis' major survey** was conducted about the values and opinions held by the Greeks on a wide range of important issues. **The greatest threat Greeks see for the future of their country is the "demographic decline"**, with Greek-Turkish relations and the country's economy coming next. Interestingly, in 2022, **9% of respondents thought that the greatest threat Greece is currently facing is "immigration"**, down from 21.7% who had thought so in 2019. Despite the fact that Covid-19 was still claiming dozens of lives on a daily basis at the time that the survey was conducted, **only 2.2% of respondents answered that "diseases and pandemics" were the number one threat to Greece**. Which group considers the demographic issue as a less imminent danger? Young people aged between 17 and 24 place the danger of immigration on a par with "terrorism".

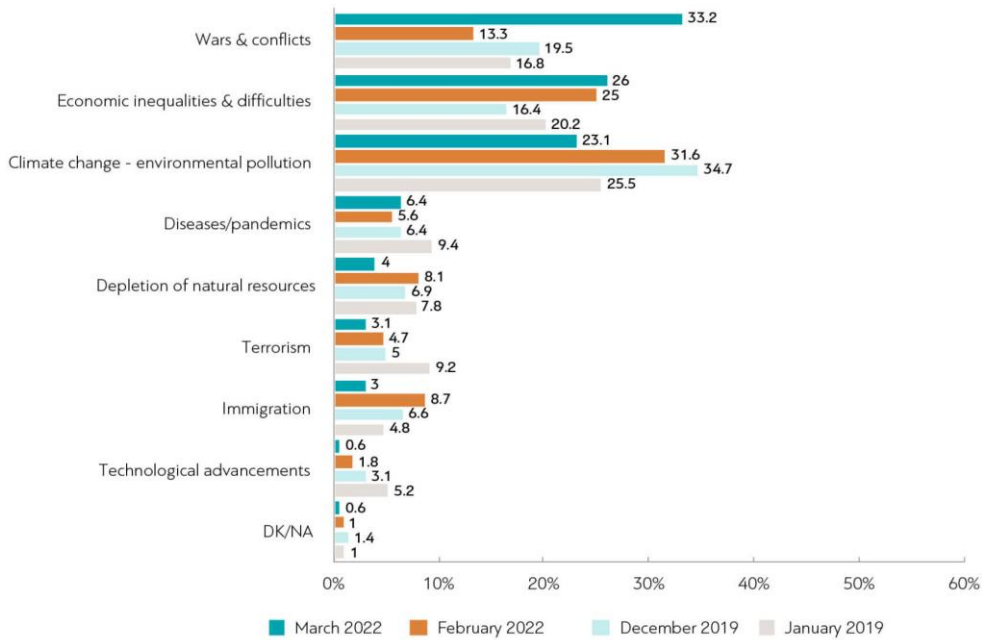
In your opinion, which are the two greatest threats endangering the future of Greek people?



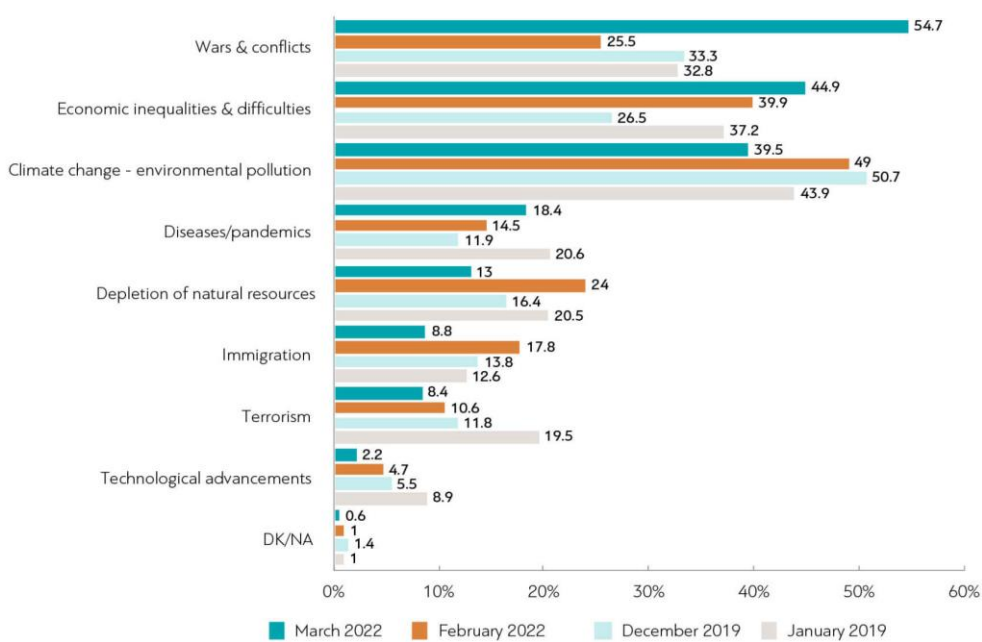
After the invasion of Russia in Ukraine

CHANGES FROM PREVIOUS MEASUREMENTS:

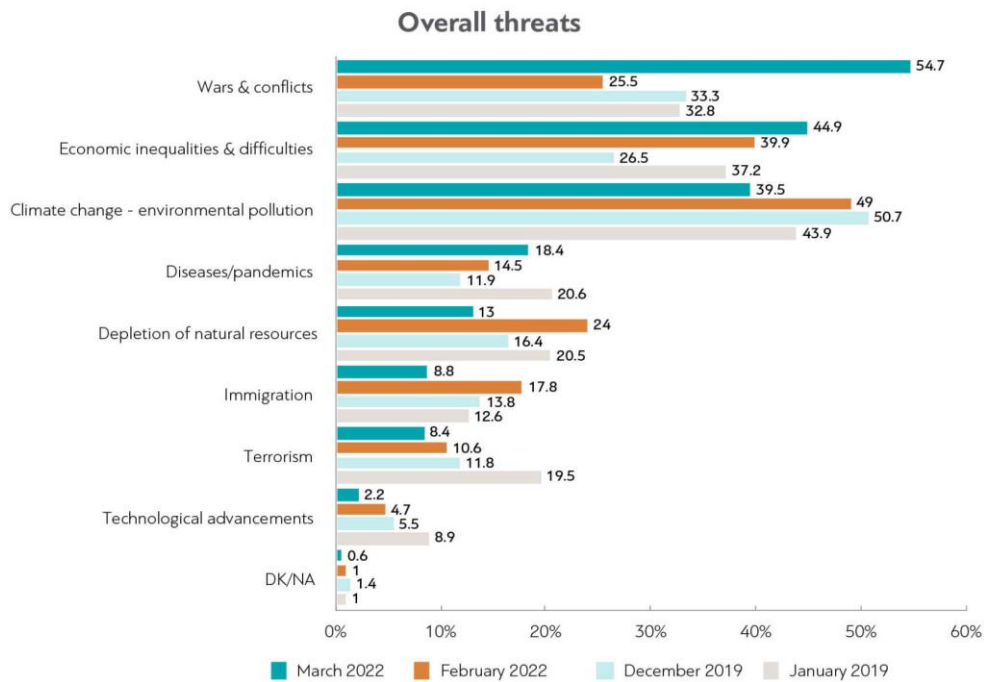
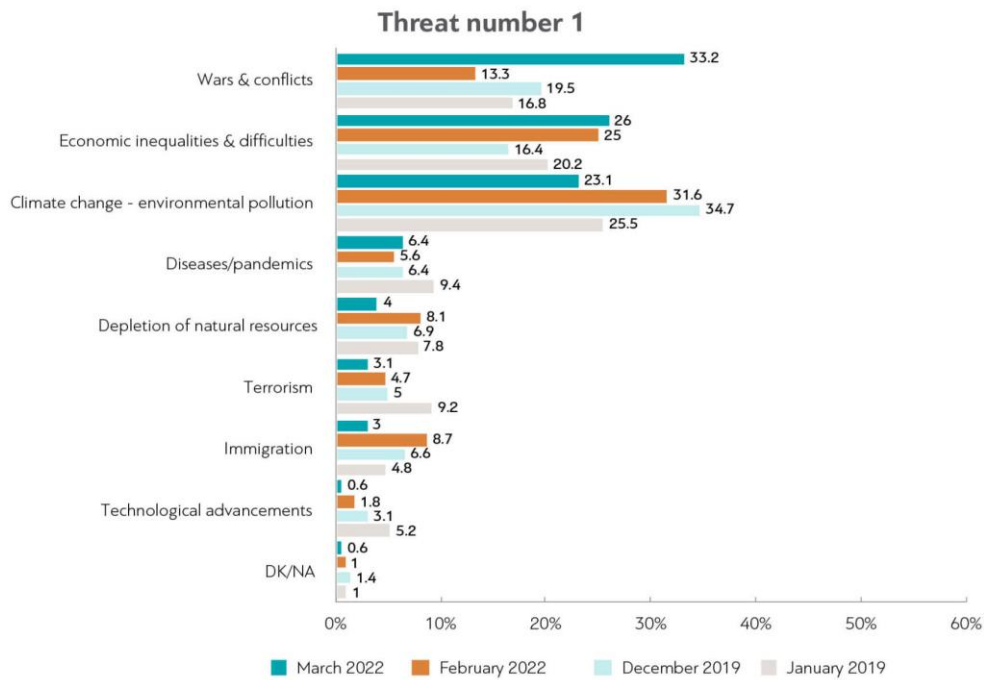
Threat number 1



Overall threats



CHANGES FROM PREVIOUS MEASUREMENTS:

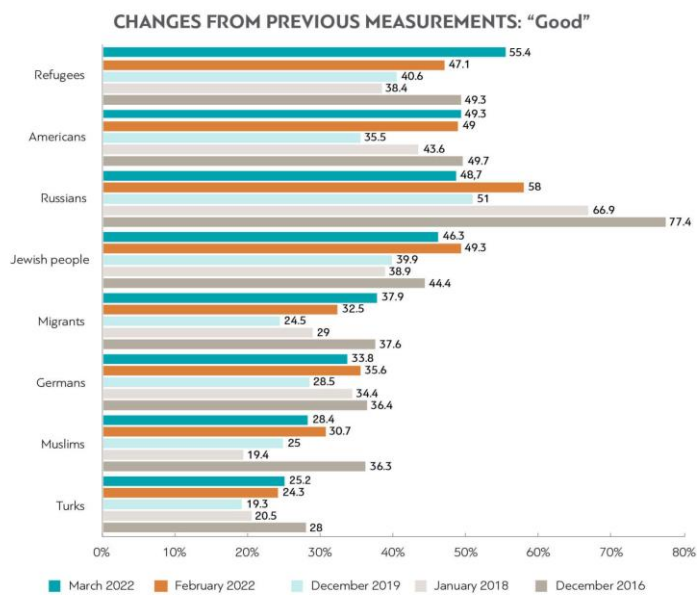
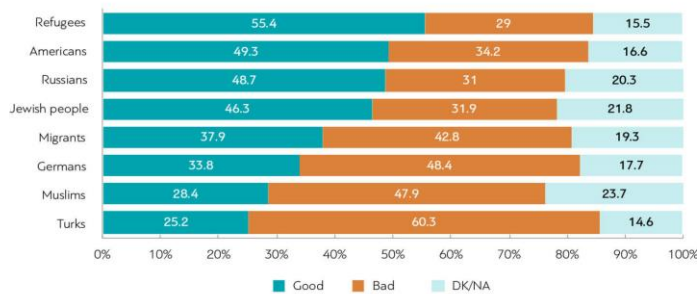


People's attitudes have also shifted in other ways since the beginning of the war in Ukraine. Even though these changes are likely circumstantial and transitory, they are, nonetheless, of great interest, if only as a means of tracing the influence of exogenous factors on the attitudes of respondents.

For example, when people were asked to tell whether words describing a person's ethnic or religious identity, or referring to some trait characteristic of their situation, evoke something "good" or "bad" to them. In March, the majority assigned a "bad" connotation to the

words "Turks" (60.3%), "Muslims" (47.9%), "Germans" (48.4%) and "migrants" (42.8%). The participants viewed the "Americans" (49.3% considered them as "good"), "Jewish people" (46.3%), "refugees" (55.4%) and "Russians" (48.7%) as more "good" than "bad". It is in the last two categories that a considerable change has been observed since the outbreak of the war. Before the war, at the beginning of February 2022, the percentage of respondents who were positively disposed towards "refugees" was 47.1% (up from only 40.6% in 2019). Similarly, 58% of respondents answered they view the Russians as "good" back then. It is worth noting that this figure was already significantly lower than the 77.4% recorded in 2016. As T. Gerakis notes in his report, *"this is the first time that the Greeks are, however marginally, more positively disposed towards the Americans than towards the Russians"*.¹³

I will read out some words and I would like you to tell me if these words represent something "good" or "bad" for you



In 2022, most Greeks continue to believe that children born in Greece by parents who are legal immigrants should be granted Greek citizenship (59.1%), although this figure is significantly lower than its 2015 equivalent (75.2%). Here too, the agreement is higher among the youngest age groups, students, those on the left of the political spectrum, and the

¹³ What Greeks believe, 2022, URL: <https://www.dianeosis.org/en/2022/09/what-greeks-believe-in-2022-part-a/>

affluent, while disagreement was higher among participants politically identifying with right or far-right parties. With the exception of the shift noted in the reception of the word "refugee", in all other questions relating to migration the Greeks continue to maintain a negative stance. 64.1% of the people interviewed believe that Greece should adopt a "stricter" policy line when it comes to managing migration flows.

In 2020 the youth organisation Colour Youth based in Athens carried out a survey of attitudes towards LGBTI pupils and students in schools, which concluded that the situation of LGBTI children in Greek schools was "still deplorable."¹⁴

The stance and perception of Greek society towards intersex people moves between ignorance, (medical) pathologisation and hostility. Hiding being intersex and/or harassment and discrimination on the grounds of sex characteristics in everyday life, particularly in health, education, and the employment sector, appear to be constantly present aspects of an intersex person's life in Greece. They experience stigmatization, institutional and verbal discrimination, harassment, lack of medical care, lack of legal recognition, and lack of visibility of their bodies at any age. "Invisibility", "ignorance", "hostility" are among the key words, which could describe the status of intersex people in the four countries. Intersex people still face numerous problems in a variety of areas, the most serious of which are registration at birth, medical treatment, and legal gender recognition¹⁵

4. COVID -19 Pandemic and its impact on the level of Xenophobia and the Radicalization of the Society.

Both the corona pandemic and the border crisis with Turkey in March 2020 near the border have triggered tough deterrence policies, even outright violations of international law and refugee rights, always in the name of containing the health crisis and of national security. National and religious populism has re-awakened, with the complicity of the Church and a portion of the Press. Those who tried to react to this dominant narrative have been denounced as fanatics of political correctness and potential censors. Freedom of expression has thus often become a pretext for promoting hate speech.

The coronavirus pandemic, together with the events in Evros at the Greek-Turkish border in February 2020, marked a change in Greece's migration and refugee policy. The trend toward a more restrictive refugee policy had already begun to emerge shortly after the Conservative Party of New Democracy took office in July 2019, as the party had already opted for a tougher line on immigration and asylum policy in the run-up to the elections. The emergence of the new coronavirus and the crisis in Evros at the beginning of the year provided an opportunity for the government to promote a change of course under the blessing, or at least forbearance, of the EU and only on rarer occasions under its critical eye. For refugees and migrants trapped at the border — often living in inhumane conditions — the consequences of the deterrence

¹⁴ GALE, the Global Alliance for LGBT Education (2020, March 15), In Greece, even teachers make homophobic remarks about LGBT students, referring to ILGA Rainbow Digest March 2020, Colour Youth, 2020, First Greek National School Climate Survey. For detailed findings, see https://www.gale.info/en/news/local_news/200315-in-greece-even-teachers-make-homophobic-remarks-about-lgbt-students

¹⁵ 2 The Status of Intersex People in Greece, BRING-IN, national Situational Analyses Report, Athens, March 2021, page 39, available at Deliverables | Bring-In

policy are particularly detrimental, especially for those who are waiting for their asylum application to be examined, but also for those who have already acquired the right to stay and are trying to stand on their own two feet in Greece. In its pre-election program, ND presented a set of proposals on migration, which included, among other things, closed reception centres and the acceleration of the asylum process. ND advocated tightening border controls and stricter controls of migrants' and refugees' legal papers, promising transparency in the management of the financial resources related to refugees and pushing for European resources to implement its policy. The first move ND made upon coming to power was to close the Ministry of Migration Policy and transfer responsibility to the Ministry of Civil Protection, sending a clear message that immigration is mainly a security issue. Non-governmental organizations received criticism for their role in mismanaging the refugee crisis and financial matters, in particular.¹⁶ The government immediately tried to change the agenda, stressing that Greece no longer faced a refugee crisis, but migration crisis, as the majority of people arriving in Greece and the EU were economic migrants. The aim was to make it easier for the government to take a tougher stance, because public opinion does not view economic migrants as being at-risk. Soon, however, it became clear that many of the announcements could not be implemented and the government had to review its original plan. Six months later, the Government created the Ministry of Migration and Asylum, which took over responsibility from the Ministry of Civil Protection and started to implement the ND program from scratch. The new minister's announcements included guarding of the borders, closed controlled camps, acceleration of asylum procedures and returns. Social integration continued to be absent. Events in Evros and the pandemic will make any effort to develop a coherent migration policy that includes integration even more difficult. In early March 2020, thousands of people tried to enter Greece through the land border at Evros, with Turkey playing an extremely dangerous game, having used and instrumentalised those people's needs. Greece described this as an attempted invasion by Turkey, and refugees and migrants turned into an enemy of the state. There were many complaints of excessive force used by the Greek authorities against those who managed to pass, but also complaints about people being shot and killed from the Greek side. These complaints were rejected as a provocation by the Turkish side. Following this incident, Greece suspended access to asylum for 30 days for those who entered Greece in March, in an unprecedented move that violated international law. Any call for restraint, calm, respect for international law and respect for human rights was rejected in the name of defending the national line. Immediately afterwards, the country entered lockdown because of the pandemic, and once again refugees were targeted because they were considered a risk for the transmission of the virus. The measures applied to the camps to limit the spread of the virus were more stringent than the corresponding measures taken for the general population. The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control stresses that "whilst there is no evidence to suggest that SARS-CoV-2 transmission is higher amongst migrants and refugees, environmental factors such as overcrowding in reception and detention centres may increase their exposure to the disease. Outbreaks in reception and detention centres can also spread quickly in the absence of adequate prevention measures." It is important to mention that, in an effort to combine events in Evros with the pandemic, a theory was widely circulated that Turkey would send refugees infected with the virus by sea

¹⁶ Dimitris Gatsios: 'K. Mitsotakis: The five pillars proposed by the ND', capital.gr, 16/11/2017. URL: <https://www.capital.gr/politiki/3254769/k-mitsotakis-oi-pente-pulones-pou-proteinei-i-nd>,

after the failure of the operation at the land border. Once again in public discourse, refugees were described as dangerous, this time for reasons of public health.

An example of the consequences of just such an approach are the events in Kammena Vourla. Residents of the area, with the backing of the municipality, refused to accommodate 39 unaccompanied minors, even preventing them from accessing food supplies, citing fear of the spread of the coronavirus. Local media seemed to support the reactions of the residents without criticism, and even incite them, although clear information was provided that all children had undergone coronavirus testing and were negative.¹⁷

Education has borne the brunt of social shocks within the broader environment. When the schools reopened, there were incidents in which refugee children were denied access to school. A typical example is the reaction of parents and pupils at the High School of Kilkis to the attendance of 46 refugee children in joint classes, with health and educational reasons being invoked. In another case, the local mayor declared that the Municipality was unable to provide “any assistance to additional students on top of the existing number of students in the municipality,” referring to children from the refugee structure of Ritsona. Similar reservations were also expressed by parents from the Municipality of Vyronea following coronavirus cases in an accommodation facility for refugee children.⁹³ The climate was exacerbated by newspaper reports under headlines such as “Refugee and elderly structures are sources of risk”.¹⁸

We must point out that tolerance of racist acts and acts of violence against migrants and refugees had grown well before the Greek-Turkish crisis. The 2019 Report of the Racist Violence Recording Network underscores the increased normalization of everyday racism, accompanied by the growing climate of impunity created in specific areas of the country by the relevant public prosecutor services and judicial authorities. At the same time, it points out that public figures and politicians are sending messages to the public through hate speech and xenophobic stereotypes, which are used to justify racist behaviour.

Also, the Greek Church was aligned in this approach. The first reactions of the Church to the events in Evros came from the local Dioceses. The Metropolitan of Didymoticho said on 29 February 2020: “Can we remain silent and indifferent in the face of events taking place at our borders? The armed forces and the Greek border guards have been waging a war recently. An undeclared war with illegal immigrants as weapons... We pray for all those, who are not few in number, who are waging a war for the homeland and the dignity of our people. Local society stands as a whole by those who defend our borders.”¹⁹

Beyond public discourse, populism is also ‘expressed’ in practice. Many of the statements mentioned above were made not only by the Dioceses’ offices, but also in the context of visits to the borders by the four Metropolitans in Thrace and the Archbishop, who wanted to witness the situation on the ground and raise the morale of locals and the forces protecting the borders. These were visits of high symbolic value, which were combined with the delivery of a public speech by the representatives of the Church and high-ranking representatives. In

¹⁷ Kammena Vourla: Reactions by residents towards refugees - Extraordinary municipal council’, lamianow.gr, 23/9/2020, URL:<https://lamianow.gr/kamena-voyrla-antidraseis-ton-katoikon-gia-toys-prosfyges-ektakto-dimotiko-syluylio-eikones-et-veo/>

¹⁹ Maria Manaka: “Didimoticho: An undeclared war with illegal immigrants as weapons”, Romfea, romfea.gr.URL: <https://cutt.ly/Bfel2Hz>

this case, discourse accompanies the actions of the Church and is reinforced by them. But it is not only a matter of the above visits that took place during the Evros crisis. Since the beginning of the year, as was the case in similar instances in the past, a number of priests, particularly in provincial towns and villages, have attended protest rallies against migrants and against the opening of migrant facilities in their region, often expressing themselves through anti-migration and anti-Islamic speech. The presence of a local priest or a Metropolitan at an event of such content has a special symbolism, since it offers support, sometimes tacit and sometimes more dynamic, to the narrative of population change, cultural alienation and Islamisation. The meeting of the Archbishop of Athens and other Metropolitans with the Minister for National Defence in the summer of 2020, following the events in Evros, is a case in point. They gave the Minister, as a gift from the Church, four pairs of state-of-the-art thermal binoculars worth €40,000 for use in the defence of the Evros border.²⁰

Therefore, due to the politicization of migration, anti-migration rhetoric has become part of a process of enhancing the nation-state concept by differentiating citizens from immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees. Right-wing populists embed the will of the people—the so-called ‘silent majority’—while rejecting minority groups, especially migrants. In Greece, for example, the political party ‘Elliniki Lisi’ which ranked 5th in the 2019 national elections at 3.7%, in November 2019 called for the closure of the borders for refugees and the transfer of refugees and migrants to uninhabited island. In July 2021 they did not attend the event for the anniversary of the restoration of the Republic at the Presidential Mansion due to the presence of representatives from migrant and LGBTI communities. On the Athens-Thessaloniki train route, when at the Lianokladi station, a legal migrant from Cameroon was forced off the train, because they believed that he had coronavirus. During the inspection of his ticket, it was found that he had purchased a ticket to Livadia and bore a document stating that he had contracted coronavirus in May 2020, four months previously. The passengers panicked and demanded he get off the train. The inspector asked him to sit on the floor until they reached the next station, where he left the train, while the police and the National Center for Emergency Care (EKAV) were informed²¹. In another incident that took place on the Athens-Thessaloniki route on November 2021, the train was stopped to disembark 27 Bangladeshi nationals as the rest of the passengers were disturbed by their presence and asked the specific people to be checked for the required health certificate.²² At the port of Thermi in Lesvos Island²³ a group of citizens from the area blockaded the port, not allowing the disembarkation of refugees and migrants who had been taken there by the Coast Guard. There were approximately 50 people on the boat, including many children. The representative of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, journalists and photographers were attacked and insults were directed towards a municipal councilor. In another incident that took place in

²⁰ Press releases of the Holy Synod, ecclesia.gr, 2/6/2020. URL:<https://cutt.ly/XfeDM00>

1. ²¹ iEfimerida. Unthinkable: A 48-Year-Old Immigrant was Thrown Out of the Train in Lamia because They Thought He Had Coronavirus, 5 August 2020, iEfimerida 2020. URL: <https://www.iefimerida.gr/ellada/ton-petaxan-apo-treno-nomizan-oti-eihe-koronoio>. (In Greek).

1. ²² iEfimerida. Lianokladi: Incident with Unvaccinated Irregular Migrants on the Train from Thessaloniki to Athens. 2 November 2021. URL: <https://www.iefimerida.gr/ellada/anemboliastoi-metanastes-treno-thessaloniki-athina> (In Greek).

²³ Nisi, S. Clashes at the port of Thermi: They do not Allow Arrivals to Disembark. 1 March 2020. URL: <https://stonisi.gr/post/7298/epeisodia-sto-limani-ths-thermhs> (In Greek)

Chios on 12 August 2020, a Greek citizen was arrested following a complaint by the Racist Crime Observatory about a racist post on social media calling to action against the refugees; in the post, the Greek stated that ‘they are destroying our land and property. Wanted Dead or Alive.’²⁴

5. Armed conflict in Ukraine and its impact on the level of Xenophobia, Legislation and Law Enforcement practice of the country, on the activities of radical groups.

The Ukrainian conflict is impacting Greece’s strategic fundamentals. Greece was among the first countries to send arms to Ukraine, besides adopting a very harsh language towards Moscow. Greece has already supplied weapons to Ukraine.²⁵ It thus seems to be breaking with its traditional position consisting in adhering to EU and NATO policies, while, at the same time, keeping working relations with Russia where possible. Indeed, Greece is trying to use the opportunity offered by the Ukrainian conflict to enhance its position in the regional security architecture in the making, to secure its interests. This move is especially vis-à-vis Turkey, still perceived as a threat, given the apparent benefits of the war in Ukraine for Ankara and NATO’s indulgence towards its designs in the Aegean Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean.

To bolster its strategy, Greece strives to mobilise the three vehicles that amplify the country’s international influence: the maritime world, Orthodoxy and the diaspora. The Ukrainian conflict happens to involve them all. Founders of Mariupol in 1780 and accounting for a quarter of its 400,000 inhabitants, the Greeks of Ukraine are established precisely in the arch of crisis from Odessa to the Donbass. For Athens, the stakes are twofold: to play a leading role in their protection and, at the same time, to cement its rapprochement with this community – which has long been distant from Greece because of the Iron Curtain – in order to acquire a vector of influence in Ukraine.²⁶

However, recent opinion polls show that more than one out of two Greeks do not support the government's policies.²⁷ While refugees from Ukraine are welcomed with open arms in Greece, many Greeks reject the EU measures against Russia. According to one survey, more than 60% are decidedly opposed to arms shipments — they see culpability for the war in both Moscow and Kyiv.

One of the reasons for the ambivalent attitude is that Greek conservatives traditionally see Russia as an ally. In 2019, five years after the annexation of Crimea, Mitsotakis, who was

²⁴ Nea, T. 42-Year-Old Man Arrested for Racist Posting—‘Wanted Dear or Alive’. 13 August 2020. URL: <https://www.tanea.gr/2020/08/13/greece/syllipsi-42xronou-gia-ratsistiki-anartisi-katazitountai-zontanoi-i-nekroi/>

²⁵ Greece sends more weapons to Ukraine angering the opposition, 2022, URL: https://www.euractiv.com/section/politics/short_news/greece-sends-more-weapons-to-ukraine-angering-the-opposition/

²⁶ War in Ukraine. What are the stakes for Greece, 2022, URL: <https://fmes-france.org/war-in-ukraine-what-are-the-stakes-for-greece/>

²⁷ In Greece, Russia Sympathies Die Hard Despite Ukraine War, 2022, URL: <https://www.voanews.com/a/in-greece-russia-sympathies-die-hard-despite-ukraine-war-/6481936.html>

opposition leader at the time, traveled to Moscow. Underlining a "relationship of trust" between his New Democracy party and Putin's United Russia party, he promised Russia would always find Greece to be a "trustworthy dialogue partner."²⁸

SYRIZA's PM George Katrougalos and former Foreign Minister, stated that if SYRIZA governed the country would have sent more humanitarian aid instead of military support to Ukraine (13). The leader of the communist party KKE, Dimitris Koutsoumpas argued that Greece should not involve and follow the lead of NATO and the EU. He characteristically stated "US-NATO have been promoting their positions by expanding NATO, aiming at a military encirclement of Russia". The far-right wing party National Solution with an official announcement declared that Greece should find a diplomatic solution and not directly involve to the war conflict, avoiding exposing to danger the ethnic Greeks in Ukraine. Moreover, the statement argued that Greece should not allow Turkey to appear as a "peacemaker" instead of apologizing for its ongoing crimes against Greece and Cyprus. It should also be mentioned that Yanis Varoufakis the leader of Mera25 sent a letter to the leaders of SYRIZA and KKE to coordinate antiwar actions.²⁹ The attitudes of the general population towards refugees and immigrants seem to have acquired a more favorable and positive character after the invasion of Ukraine, as evidenced by international and domestic reports. The open welcome for those leaving Ukraine is said by many to be in stark contrast to the treatment of previous waves of refugees from places like Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan. After the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, the attitude towards refugees became even more positive and thus the percentage of 47.1% in February 2022 became 55.4% in March, an improvement in attitudes of 8.3%.³⁰

Regarding immigrants, a smaller proportion of 37.6% of the population in 2016 thought they represented something good and this percentage decreased in February 2022 to 32.5% thus indicating a "less good" signaling of immigrants in relation to with the refugees.

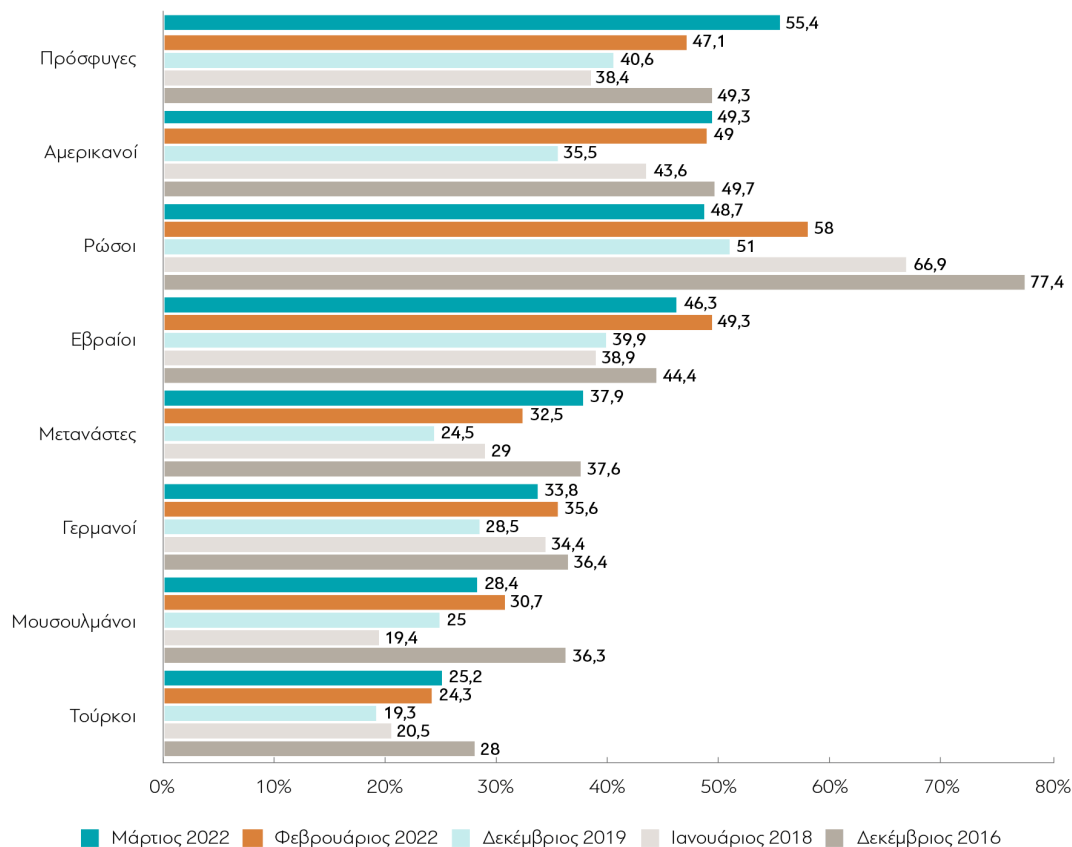
²⁸ Why some Greek residents are reluctant to condemn Russia, 2022,
URL: <https://www.dw.com/en/ukraine-russia-war-greek-government-and-public-dont-see-eye-to-eye/a-61585099>

²⁹ The Greek response to the war in Ukraine, 2022, URL: <https://china-cee.eu/2022/03/08/greece-external-relations-briefing-the-greek-response-to-the-war-in-ukraine/>

³⁰ The attitudes of Greeks towards refugees and migrants (in Greek), 2022,
URL: <https://www.dianeosis.org/2022/05/oi-staseis-twn-ellinwn-apenanti-stoys-prosfyges-kai-toys-metanastes/>

Θα σας διαβάσω ορισμένες λέξεις και θα ήθελα να μου πείτε εάν για εσάς προσωπικά αντιπροσωπεύουν κάτι «καλό» ή κάτι «κακό»

ΜΕΤΑΒΟΛΕΣ ΑΠΟ ΤΙΣ ΠΡΟΗΓΟΥΜΕΝΕΣ ΜΕΤΡΗΣΕΙΣ: «Καλό»



1_Refugees 2)Americans 3_Russians_4_Jews 5_Migrants 6_Germans 7_Muslims 8_Turks

From March 2022 February 2022 December 2019 January 2018 Decembr 2016.

6. Activities of radical groups. Radical Right groups and parties:

– the emergence of new neo-Nazi and nationalist groups, movements, political parties and groups

(brief description);

– the main events of the far right in 2020-22;

– how the influence of neo-Nazis and radical nationalists on civil society, local and central legislative/ executive authorities has changed over the period;

Following the criminal prosecution of Golden Dawn and the conviction of its leadership, the landscape of the far right has been in a state of disarray. Golden Dawn has now been convicted before the courts as a criminal organisation, after it had already collapsed electorally, having lost its parliamentary representation in the summer of 2019, but also internally, being split between the parent organisation of Nikos Michaloliakos and the imitations launched by the previous Golden Dawn deputy leaders, Ioannis Lagos and Ilias Kasidiaris.

The Golden Dawn audience (beyond that of Kyriakos Velopoulos, whose Greek Solution party entered parliament, albeit with smaller percentages) is sought after by many far-right parties and formations that, in most cases, range from extremely small to single-person organisations and are often communicating vessels, sometimes announcing mergers and pacts and sometimes splits.

The small Nazi and fascist organisations that – unlike the parent organisation – exist exclusively under the cloak of illegality and try to fill the gap left by the Golden Dawn assault squads, which were withdrawn due to the trial, are similarly communicating vessels.

Despite the existence of all these forms, the fragmentation of the far right after the revelations that arose in the Golden Dawn trial and the fact that part of this ideological space is filled by New Democracy, the ruling liberal-conservative party, a void remains in the far right of the political spectrum that does not preclude the emergence of other aspiring contenders.

Far-right extremist activity has been curtailed following the arrests of members of Combat 18 and the Non-Aligned Meandrist Nationalists (AME), and the conviction of Golden Dawn's leadership, according to a classified report prepared by Greece's anti-terrorism service.

It said that following these arrests for attacks on anarchists' hangouts, "far-right extremist activity has been limited."

Anti-terrorism analysts did however note an increase in far-right organizations but stressed that far-right extremist activity is limited to slogan writing, distribution of leaflets, and organization of rallies.

The report is titled "The Presence of the Far-Right in Greece" and among its many conclusions is that there is no active terrorist organization in Greece. The report also noted nonetheless that the economic crisis, migration and the pandemic have led to the spread of far-right ideology, with Kasidiaris' National Hellenes Party seeking to become the sole spokesman for the far-right, nationalist space. Moreover, the conviction of Golden Dawn led to a fragmentation of the far-right, while the Russia-Ukraine war was a cause for further division. Commemorations, such as the 27th anniversary of the Imia crisis, and the mobilizations, until recently, of the anti-vaccination movement serve to "spread their positions and keep them in the limelight in the run-up to national elections."³¹

Unaligned Meandrian Nationalists / Combat 18 Hellas

³¹The secret report of Anti-terror service on Far right (in Greek), 2022, URL:<https://www.kathimerini.gr/politics/562261546/fakelos-akrodexia-stin-ellada-i-aporriti-ekthesi-tis-antitromokratikis/>

In essence, these are two names for the same Nazi group, as appears from the public information in the case file against them. It is a small marginal organisation that tried to imitate Golden Dawn, copying its Nazi formation, its paramilitary action, its hierarchical structure, its slogans, and even its symbol, the meander, which is also used in its name. But in contrast to the large organisation that conceals its ideology and tries to cover up its criminal activities under the guise of a “legitimate political party”, the Unaligned Meandrian Nationalists / Combat 18 Hellas (AME/C18) publicly espoused Nazism and acted exclusively under the cloak of illegality, maintaining the anonymity of their members. In fact, they did not miss the opportunity to praise Periandros (Antonios Androutsopoulos), the former Golden Dawn deputy leader, whom Michaloliakos abandoned after his conviction for the attempted murder of Dimitris Kousouris. After all, members of AME/C18 were drawn directly from Golden Dawn.

At first, they acted only as AME. The name Combat 18 Hellas first appeared in March 2015, when the organisation claimed responsibility for the desecration with swastikas of the Pavlos Fyssas memorial at the murder scene in Keratsini, Piraeus, while they also stated that they were behind the Molotov cocktail arson attack on the self-managed social space Pasamontana in Korydallos, Piraeus, on 24 February 2015. Since then, AME/C18 claimed responsibility for a series of attacks against and social spaces, desecrations of Jewish cemeteries while they have systematically targeted the Roma community. Their criminal activity escalated in June 2017 in Menidi, northern Attica, after the murder of an 11-year-old student by a stray bullet during celebrations marking the end of the school year. This set the ground for collectively blaming the Roma community for the death and launching racist attacks on Roma people. By escalating their activities, they tried to take advantage of the absence of the Golden Dawn assault squads, which the party was forced to withdraw due to the trial.

As for the choice of the name Combat 18, it is an imitation of the international neo-Nazi organisation Combat 18, founded in 1992 in Britain and which has been involved in many murderous attacks, arsons and terrorist acts. Its name references Adolf Hitler, since the number 18 symbolises the position of his initials in the alphabet (A = 1, H = 8). The first admirer of the international terrorist organisation in Greece is no other than Golden Dawn, who presented Combat 18 in its party youth magazine, Counterattack, in 2001, in an article signed by Golden Dawn’s then theoretician and fanatical Nazi Giorgos Misiakas (Mastoras). The AME/C18 Nazi group collapsed when its members were arrested by police in March 2018.

Apella

Another Nazi group among the “orphans” of Golden Dawn, which is confirmed by the leading role that Alexandros Tzoulios plays in it. Tzoulios is known for his activities as a key official in the local Golden Dawn branch in Piraeus and was a local council candidate in Piraeus in 2014 alongside former Golden Dawn MP Nikos Kouzilos. Apella itself stated on its website that it was officially founded in 2016 and it is another admirer of Periandros Androutsopoulos, with its members stating that they were “inspired” by the speech given by the former Golden Dawn deputy leader in Larissa, Thessaly, in March 2015. Apella openly praises Hitler and the Third Reich, making use of well-known Nazi slogans of Golden Dawn, and also had links with the Unaligned Meandrian Nationalists. Its downfall came with the arrests of its members – including Tzoulios – in January 2018 for the arson attack on Favela, a free social space in Piraeus, on 29 August 2017. In addition to Apella flyers, Golden Dawn leaflets were found in

the homes of those arrested. Few months earlier (on 2 April 2017) Favela came under another attack during which the perpetrators painted swastikas and Celtic crosses on the wall of the building. AME/C18 claimed responsibility at the time. The second attack was committed by Apella and the third, the most recent and murderous (on 25 February 2018

Autonomous Nationalists

Autonomous Nationalists was another Nazi group that operated at the start of the decade with its members coming from Golden Dawn. In January 2010, 50 neo-Nazis, wearing hoods and helmets, launched a violent attack with poles and on against an antifascist rally in Panormou, Athens, causing serious injuries to three people. The Athens Three-Member Criminal Appeal Court tried the Autonomous Nationalists. However, of the 32 defendants, only 8 were convicted. Nevertheless, this ruling effectively spelled the end of the activities of the group.

ProPatria

A hard-line Nazi organisation directly linked to Golden Dawn, with its members photographed alongside well-known figures of the great parent Nazi organisation. ProPatria is one of the groups that is cautious enough to act under the cloak of illegality, trying to fill the gap of the Golden Dawn assault squads, which were withdrawn due to the trial. In 2018 members of ProPatria were among the Nazis who raised the “black sun” (Schwarze Sonne) flag, one of the darkest symbols of the Nazi period, at the Olympic Athletic Centre in Athens.

Greek Socialist Resistance (ESA)

Another Nazi organisation that admires Perikandros Androutsopoulos. Similarly, it does not hide its national socialist ideology, which it projects through its website, but also by painting swastikas on walls, such as at the School of Philosophy of the University of Athens, in October 2018. The “S” it uses in its name is, of course, inspired by the symbol of Hitler’s SS, while the name itself refers to the Special Investigation Department of the Greek Military Police (EAT-ESA) during the junta. It had a strong presence in November 2018 during the nationalist-inspired occupations on the occasion of the name dispute over North Macedonia, turning schools, where they distributed leaflets, into a field of action.

Arma

The Nazi formation of Stefanos Gekas, an old Golden Dawn member and deputy leader of Nikos Michaloliakos, who openly espouses Adolf Hitler. In January 2017, staking a share in the National Socialist space, he incited acts of racist violence against refugee accommodation facilities, circulating a vast amount of leaflets on the streets and distributing them on cars in Kalamaki, Alimos and Paleo Faliro, Athens. In those leaflets, he referred to refugees as “illegal settlers” and unleashed racist hatred against them. On the back cover there was a map that recorded the refugee accommodation facilities throughout Greece and called on “patriots everywhere to quickly organise and act in order to deal with these developments that are most unfavourable for the homeland”.

National Popular Consciousness (Elasyn)

In July 2019, Ioannis Lagos, MEP, Golden Dawn Piraeus regional organisation chief, a close associate of Nikos Michaloliakos and a leading member of Golden Dawn, who was involved in all the murderous and bloody actions of the organisation investigated by the Athens Three-Member Criminal Appeal Court, suddenly announced his withdrawal from Golden Dawn. Other leading members of Golden Dawn, such as Giorgos Germenis, Panagiotis Iliopoulos and Nikos Kouzilos, followed him; he also kept for himself his salary from the European Parliament, thus demonstrating the decay of the Nazi organisation. He then announced that he was creating a new "body" under the National Popular (that is, National Socialist) Consciousness (Elasyn). And remaining loyal to Hitler, he chose the date of 9 November for his "founding declaration", coinciding with Hitler's Beer Hall Putsch of 1923 and the date of the infamous "Night of the Broken Glass" (9 November 1938), the deadly anti-Jewish pogrom ordered by Hitler and which was the first step towards the Holocaust. Of late, Lagos has been engaged in the reproduction of all kinds of conspiracy theories on the occasion of the COVID-19 pandemic, while he has tried to reach out to church circles. He is now convicted of

Popular Greek Patriotic Union (Lepen)

The withdrawal of Christos Rigas from Golden Dawn was part of the first wave of internal crises caused by the trial of the Nazi organisation. On 21 May 2015, Rigas, a regional councillor in Western Greece and member of the Golden Dawn central committee, resigned, challenging the Golden Dawn leadership, just one month after the trial began. He founded Lepen, collaborating with the former Golden Dawn deputy leader Dimitris Zafeiropoulos (convicted of participating in a Golden Dawn attack on members of the leftist organisation OSE in Kypseli, Athens, in April 1996). In February 2019, Lepen merged with Synadinos' Patrie, before collaborating with Lagos' Elasyn and finally turning to Ilias Kasidiaris.

National Creation – Coalition of Liberals, Patriots, Reformers

National Creation was formed in May 2022. It claims the "national urban space" (alt-right), combining neoliberalism ("the Ottoman-Soviet model of the Greek state is hostile to entrepreneurship"), authoritarianism on the issues of security, immigration and Islam, ultranationalism and anti-communism. Its president is Thanos Tzimeros, founder of the Create Again party. After 2.15% in the first descent in parliamentary elections (May 2012), Tzimeros was elected in 2014 as a councilor in the Attica Region, while in 2019 his faction elected two more councilors. As a professional advertiser and opponent of "political correctness", Tzimeros systematically indulges in provocations: in 2012 he proposed worsening the living and working conditions of immigrants, in 2017 he was expelled from the Regional Council for punching a KKE regional councillor.

The vice president of National Creation is the head of New Right, Failos Kranidiotis, former president of ormer president of the anti-Turkish Network 21 (1997-2014). A political friend of Antonis Samaras already in Political Spring and a regular columnist (antinews.gr, Dimokratia, newsbreak), Kranidiotis was deleted from the ND in 2016 because he called for the execution of the then minister Yiannis Mouzalas in Goudi, while in other interventions he openly

supported the war with Turkey ("new 1897). In August 2022, the president and vice president removed Constantinos Bogdanos, citing his stance on wiretapping. The party defends the ND against criticism from the left, while overpromoting the candidacy of ex-footballer Ciarta, hoping thanks to her to overcome the 1-1.5% poll.

Patriotic Union – Prodrimos Emfietzoglou

The Panhellenic Patriotic Union was founded in November 2021 and was soon renamed the Patriotic Union. Its 85-year-old founder, Prodrimos Emfietzoglou, is the owner of the construction company "Michaniki", a company with turnover in Russia, Bulgaria, Ukraine and Egypt, as well as participation in public projects in Greece. It used to support the ND, while since 2007 it has been openly aligned with LAOS. The Patriotic Union considers hydrocarbon mining a solution that would have prevented the memoranda, adopts the Nazi-origin conspiracy theory of the "replacement" of the Greek population by immigrants, and frequently writes in favor of rapprochement with Russia. Its president addresses "all patriots, without ideological distinctions", in the Karatzaferi model. He is building the profile of a national benefactor: in 2020 he founded the NGO "Averof II Hellenic Fleet Fund", with the aim of privately financing a Navy frigate to deal with Turkey. The former Halkidiki member of parliament of Golden Dawn, Sotiria Vlachou, is in politics with the Patriotic Union.

Greek Solution - Kyriakos Velopoulos

The Hellenic Solution was founded in 2016 and in the 2019 elections it elected 10 members of parliament. Since 2007 Kyriakos Velopoulos has been a Member of Parliament for Thessaloniki of the Popular Orthodox Alarm. In 2012 he joined New Democracy and left in 2015. He became known for long-hour TV shows on regional channels: combining telemarketing (controversial nutritional supplements and alternative medicine items, items such as Jesus' handwritten letters and anti-coronavirus creams) with analyzes of geopolitical issues, consistently expressing Russia's positions. Stations hosting his shows have been repeatedly fined for misleading audiences, spreading fake news and hate speech. His positions are the Greek version of the harsh alt right agenda: death penalty, chemical castration, repression. He spearheaded nationalist conspiratorial rhetoric about Macedonian, while he has been accused of contacts with organized crime figures. In recent years he has been investing in anti-vaccination. In the opinion polls, he seems to secure his entry into the Parliament.

Patriotic Force of Change (PATRIDA) – Konstantinos Bogdanos

Konstantinos Bogdanos was elected in 2019 as a member of parliament with New Democracy, from which he was removed in 2021 for acute civil war reasons. In April 2022, he announced the establishment of the National Accord and proceeded to collaborate with the leaders of Creation Again, Thanos Tzimeros, and New Right, Failos Kranidiotis. For a while he was a vice president in the new body, but in August 2022 the other two removed him. Soon he founded the Patriotic Force for Change (PATRIDA) with Aphrodite Latinopoulou as Vice President, known for her very reactionary positions. Bogdanos maintains privileged relations with special units of ELAS, from where he derives part of his appeal. He expresses xenophobic views, advocates harsh repression, favors violent refoulements and has proposed settling refugees on uninhabited islands. He is pro-gun ownership and has proposed banning the burqa and

niqab. He has supported same-sex marriage. While she says she does not challenge the current abortion legislation, she has supported the 'Let Me Live' campaign.

Greek Assembly – Artemis Sorras

The Hellenic Assembly was founded in 2015 by self-proclaimed entrepreneur and former bodybuilder Artemis Sorras. In 2017 it had more than 200 offices and around 12,000 members. In the European elections of 2019, it collected 0.52%, while in the parliamentary elections of the same year, 0.25%. Archaeology, irrationalism, anti-politics, nationalism and the worship of the leader are its main characteristics.

In June 2018, the fugitive Sorras was arrested and imprisoned for defrauding the State, spreading false news, establishing and directing a criminal organization. He claimed to own 40 shares of the former Bank of the East, worth 675 billion euros each (!), according to the economist, "expert" on EEZ issues, Theodoros Karyotis. With this amount, he would supposedly buy the public debt. He convinced thousands of citizens to submit "authorizations" to the tax authorities and insurance funds, with which they would allegedly be freed from debt to the State. According to the prosecutor's report, Sorras filed a zero tax return, while Karyotis connected Sorras' movement with goldsmiths and dodecatheists. The deception of the public was largely based on the television exposure provided to Sorras since 2011 by Makis Triantafyllopoulos. Sorras was released on parole in 2020.

Greek National Party - Ilias Kasidiaris

Former member of parliament (2012–2019) of the Golden Dawn party and first-timer of Michaloliakos, Ilias Kasidiaris was the most prominent of the Golden Dawn members. He participated in pogroms against immigrants and in training gold miners in weapons. He was a candidate for mayor of Athens in 2014 and 2019, both times under trial. He is a Holocaust denier, denies being a neo-Nazi while sporting a swastika tattoo. At the ACA trial, he was sentenced at first instance for directing a criminal organization to 13 years and 6 months in prison. He has been serving his sentence ever since. In 2020, he left the AXA and founded the Hellenes for the Homeland party, later the Hellenes National Party. The "movement" defines itself as nationalist and patriotic. It aspires to be the continuation of the AX. Kasidiaris has a constant presence on social media from prison, partly with the tolerance of the authorities.

GREEKS have published a government program in 24 areas, including "illegal immigration", "political cleansing", "orthodoxy". These positions differ little from the Golden Dawn positions. They also support the anti-vaccination movement. The party's executives are former members of parliament/MEPs of the ACA, members of self-governing councils, the former basketball player Steve Yatzoglou and active police officers.

Polls show that he is likely to enter parliament. On 8/2/2023, a legislative regulation was passed in the Parliament which seems to block the participation of the party in the elections

People's Association Golden Dawn

Golden Dawn is a neo-Nazi organization that developed into a political party and gained strength and popular appeal in the 2010s. It was founded as an organization in 1980, with a clear Nazi character and ideology, and had parliamentary representation from 2012 to 2019.

Its founder and leader he is Nikos Michaloliakos. It strengthened after 1990 by participating in mobilizations for Macedonian and took political advantage of the economic crisis. The electoral rise of the party begins in 2010 with the election of Michaloliakos to the Municipal Council of Athens. In all its phases the ACA has always been a violent racist organization, with hundreds of violent attacks against foreigners and Greeks. It maintained ties with neo-Nazi organizations abroad, while its members participated as volunteers in war crimes in the former Yugoslavia (Hellenic Volunteer Guard).

Verbally, he gradually abandoned Nazism and paganism. It defined itself as a nationalist party with Greek-Christian ideals and loyalty to the dictatorships of Metaxas and Papadopoulos. The leader never stopped accepting and preaching National Socialist theories about race and blood, especially when speaking to members of the organization. In September 2013, after the murder of Pavlos Fyssas, the criminal investigation into the crimes of AXA began. At the behest of the Appeals Council, in 2015, a total of 69 persons were referred to a trial, which lasted until October 2020. Golden Dawn was unanimously found to be a criminal organization by the Tripartite Court of Criminal Appeals, which imposed prison terms on the leadership, former MPs, and to many of its members. The trial is ongoing in the second degree.

The participation of the organization in the upcoming elections in May 2023 is not certain.³²

7. Activities of radical groups. Islamists.

- the emergence of new Islamist parties and groups (brief description);
- the main activities of the Islamists in 2020-22;
- how has the influence of Islamists changed over the period on Muslims in your country, as well as on local and central legislative/executive authorities;

Despite diverging views and reports regarding the presence of radical Islamist links in Greece, not a single Islamist terrorist attack has taken place in the country until now. This is impressive taking into account that Greece has a record of imported international terrorism, as at the end of the 1960s, Middle-Eastern and Arab terrorist groups imported their activities into the country. Moreover, according to official sources, there are no recorded cases of organised Islamist radicalisation on Greek soil or cases of Greek Islamists fighting abroad. These facts are also impressive taking into consideration that Greek anarchists have recently joined forces with Kurdish fighters against ISIS in Syria. Moreover, not long ago, during the Kosovo war, members of the Albanian migrant community in Greece joined the Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK), while Greek nationalists participated in the Srebrenica genocide during the war in Bosnia.

In recent years, Greece has been used as a transit country by individuals who travel to and from conflict zones with 'unclear motives'. Only in 2016, 15 suspected Jihadists were arrested transiting through Greece, according to the recent Europol annual report. At the same time, there are various risk factors that render the country a potential target of Islamist terrorists, despite the fact that it lacks the symbolism and strategic interest that such individuals seek. More specifically, the regimes in the Arab world with which Greece maintained good

³²Elections and Far Right (in Greek), 2023, URL: <https://simeio.org.gr/nea/ekloges-kai-akrodexia-1>

diplomatic relations in the past do not exist anymore. Radical Islamist groups could participate in low-risk assignments, such as recruitment, funding, propaganda and training in the country. Furthermore, Greece is in close geographic proximity to countries that 'export' radicalism. Additionally, the grave economic crisis has created fertile ground for the potential development and adoption of radical ideologies and attitudes. On top of that, all key countries-targets are present in Greece in the form of embassies, corporations, and other institutions. Finally, Greece appears in the maps of ISIS as part of the so-called Islamic Caliphate.

According to Greek officials, Islamist radicalisation does not constitute a serious threat to the country for the time being. Greece was not a major player in the 'War on Terror', as the country did not deploy any troops in Iraq apart from a mobile medical unit, while the troops in Afghanistan participated mainly in low visibility and risk engineering and medical activities, as well as training missions. In addition, Greece had no involvement in the recent airstrikes against ISIS in Syria. Moreover, the Greek and Islamic civilisations are both ancient and coexisted with each other for centuries, while Greece did not have any involvement in the colonial wars. Finally, Greece has long-term good relationships with the Arab world, which started to develop in the early 1980s.

However, ISIS sympathizers have set up logistical, recruitment, and financial cells in Greece in order to facilitate travel flows. Members of the terror group have also occasionally provided housing to the transiting foreign fighters and returnees and helped them to evade security services. Similarly, some used Greece as a stopping point to transport weapons into Syria. Moreover, ISIS operatives have used Greece to coordinate attack plots in Europe. For instance, Abdelhamid Abaaoud, mastermind of the November 2015 Paris attacks, allegedly communicated by cell phone from an apartment in Athens with several members of an ISIS cell in Belgium to plot a major gun and bomb attack. (Source: CTC Sentinel) Compared to other EU countries, Greece has shown a significantly lower threat level of homegrown Islamist radicalization. While Greece's secular-leaning Muslim minorities have largely resisted radicalization efforts, there has been concern about radicalization among immigrant communities. In particular, the presence of unregistered mosques in large immigrant communities have created a potential information black hole for authorities. Since 2015, about 80 makeshift mosques appeared in the greater Athens area, none of them registered, including some with purported ties to the Muslim Brotherhood.

While the number of foreign fighters from Greece is not well documented, Greece has become and, as of 2019, remains an attractive transit point for jihadists traveling to and from Syria. In September 2019, CBS News revealed there are clandestine human smuggling syndicates all over Athens. These operations move not only migrants and refugees, but also family members of well-known jihadists—such as Abu Musab al-Zarqawi—through Greece into other parts of Europe. A significant number of European foreign fighter returnees used Greece as their point of re-entry to Europe. For instance, several members of the cell responsible for the 2015 Paris and 2016 Brussels attacks transited through the Greek island of Leros, posing as Syrian refugees. According to Greek then-Foreign Minister Evangelos Venizelos speaking in September 2014, "We do not have a problem with jihadists in Greece, but there is a problem in our wider area." This is due in part to the country's proximity to Turkey, as well as its long land and maritime borders. In early 2015, one anonymous counterterrorism official estimated that around 2,000 people have used Greece as a stopping point to join jihadist groups in Iraq

and Syria. EU inspections of Greek sea and land border sites revealed “serious deficiencies in the carrying out of external border control by Greece, in particular due to the lack of appropriate identification and registration of irregular migrants at the islands, of sufficient staff, and of sufficient equipment for verifying identity documents.” (Sources: CBS News, Hürriyet Daily News, CNN, Greek Reporter, Telegraph, Greek Reporter PBS Frontline, CTC Sentinel)

According to Europol’s 2022 Terrorism Situation and Trend Report, in Greece, a 33-year-old Syrian citizen accused of being a member of Jabhat al-Nusra was arrested in January 2021 in Thessaloniki under a European Arrest Warrant issued by the Netherlands. A 28-year-old Moroccan IS FTF was also arrested in Thessaloniki in July 2021 as a result of an international arrest warrant issued by Morocco.³³ In 2023, Greek authorities arrested two suspects accused of planning an attack at Jewish center in a busy downtown area of the Greek capital. The two men, described of being of Pakistani origin were charged Tuesday with terrorism offenses, while a third man believed to be in Iran was charged in absentia. Rabbi Mendel Hendel, who runs the Chabad Jewish center, said he learned about the planned attack on the news Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu late Tuesday said his country’s intelligence agency Mossad helped Greece prevent the terrorist attack. A statement from his office maintained the attackers were linked to Iran. The paid terrorists, in addition to the attack on the synagogue-restaurant in the Psirri neighbourhood of Athens, were planning to plant a bomb in the centre of Athens, a blind attack on an island, as well as the murders of a bearded man and a videotaped businessman.

As revealed by the transmission presented by Proto Thema, the 27-year-old leader of the Greek arm and resident of Zakynthos, Irtaza Haider, his 29-year-old compatriot resident of Sparta, Hussein Abid, under the orders of the 30-year-old Pakistani living in Tehran, Sayed Fakhar Abbas, wanted to:

1. Cause an explosion, with homicidal intent, in the Orthodox Jewish synagogue "Chabad of Athens" on 10 Aesopou Street in Athens, using explosives or igniting a gas bottle, as well as an armed attack at the same place.
2. The placement of a backpack of explosives in a crowded area of Athens or Zakynthos during the Christmas holidays of the year 2022, with homicidal intent and seeking to cause the maximum possible number of deaths.
3. Committing crimes against life or property against nationals doing business in the territory of Israel.
4. The homicide of at least two people on a Greek island without being able to determine the exact location during the preliminary investigation"

³³ Europol’s annual EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TE-SAT), 2022, URL:<https://www.europol.europa.eu/publications-events/main-reports/tesat-report>

8. Activities of radical groups. Radical left groups and parties:

- **the emergence of new ultra-left parties and groups (brief description);**
- **the main activities of the ultra-left in 2020-22;**
- **how the influence of the ultra-left has changed over the period on civil society, on local and central legislative/executive authorities;**

Since the end of Greece’s military dictatorship in 1974, Greece has been subject to a host of domestic terrorist groups and an ongoing series of extremist left-wing and right-wing attacks. Notable attacks on Greek soil include those from extreme leftist groups November 17 (17N), Revolutionary Popular Struggle (ELA), Revolutionary Struggle (EA), and Sect of Revolutionaries (SE). Other attacks were borne from anarchist group Conspiracy of Fire Cells. More recent violent terrorist groups that have popped up since 2013 include Wild Freedom – Instigator of Social Explosion, the Group of Popular Rebels, and Green Nemesis, an environmental terrorist group.

According to Europol’s Terrorism Situation and Trend Report of 2018, the anarchist extremist milieu in Greece has provided fertile ground for radicalization and recruitment and as such functioned as an “antechamber to terrorism.” Greek anarchists have also supported imprisoned anarchist terrorists with solidarity and fundraising activities. Moreover, they appeared to be somewhat interconnected throughout Europe—exchanging messages of solidarity and sharing propaganda online. Left-wing and anarchist groups in Greece and Italy have claimed to comprise an international network, called Informal Anarchist Federation/International Revolutionary Front (Federazione Anarchica Informale/Fronte Rivoluzionario Internazionale, or FAI/FRI).³⁵

The Conspiracy of Fire Cells (Synomosia Pysinontis Fotias, a.k.a. Conspiracy of Fire Nuclei, a.k.a. Conspiracy of Cells of Fire) is a prominent anarchist and anti-authoritarian organization active in Greece. The group emerged in 2008 with a wave of 11 fire-bombings against luxury car dealerships and banks in Athens and Thessaloniki. In November 2010, Conspiracy of Fire Cells carried out a parcel bomb campaign targeting international leaders outside of Greece. On October 13, 2011, the U.S. Department of State designated Conspiracy of Fire Cells as a terrorist entity under Executive Order 13224. In March 2017, the group claimed responsibility for ten parcel bombs sent to EU leaders, institutions, and multinational companies, including the German Finance Ministry and the International Monetary Fund headquarter in Paris. One bomb exploded and slightly injured one person, while the other nine devices were intercepted prior to reaching their intended destinations

³⁴ Terror plot in Greece, 2023, URL:<https://greekcitytimes.com/2023/04/03/terror-plot-in-greece-pakistanis/>

³⁵Extremism and terrorism report on Greece,2018, URL:<https://www.counterextremism.com/countries/greece-extremism-and-terrorism/report>

Counter-terrorism officers in Greece arrested a suspected member of the now defunct Revolutionary Self-Defense urban guerrilla group⁹⁰ in Thessaloniki. The 49- year-old suspect was arrested during the attempted armed robbery of a bank branch in Thessaloniki. Revolutionary Self-Defense, a militant organisation active in the metropolitan area of Athens since May 2014, became known when it attacked the headquarters of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) party in 2014 and 2017, as well as the Mexican Embassy in Athens in 2016. The group also claimed responsibility for a hand grenade attack on the French Embassy in November 2016, which injured a police officer.

In 2021 there have been numerous violent left-wing and anarchist extremist incidents, which were not classified as terrorist attacks. The modus operandi used to execute the attacks and incidents reported in 2021 is similar to that observed in previous years, including incendiary attacks on infrastructure or on private companies. One important area of activism for the anarchist scene is doxxing. Doxxing (also doxing), while not purely a left-wing phenomenon, is an increasingly common way for left-wing and anarchist extremists to out right-wing extremists, conservative and right-wing politicians, journalists, and government personnel such as police officers. Doxxing refers to the collection of private and sensitive information, such as names, addresses and other personal data, and the publication of this information usually on the Internet and without consent. The publication of such sensitive data constitutes a great risk to the personal safety of the victims and their relatives, as it might inspire left-wing and anarchist extremists to physically attack or threaten the concerned individuals or damage their property. For that purpose, leftwing and anarchist extremists use websites, blogs, and other social media platforms. In July 2021, the Greek anarchist group 'Organisation Anarchist Action' published the names and home addresses of 21 police officers serving in various Police Departments in Thessaloniki, Greece on an anarchist website.³⁶

The majority of left-wing violent extremists adhere to the MarxistLeninist ideology. They want to achieve a revolutionary change in the current political and economic system and establish a socialist alternative to capitalism, eventually leading to communism. The left-wing extremist scene relies on structured groups, often with prominent leaders. The anarchist extremist scene, also referred to as autonomous or insurrectionary, advocates for a life free from rules and rejects authority, the existing political order and societal norms. Its objective is to carry out violent actions and to destabilise the social order. They are characterised by a strong tendency towards violence and destruction. Especially during demonstrations, anarchists, often loosely falling under the umbrella term of the anti-fascist movement (Antifa), actively start and engage in violent confrontations with perceived opponents and police forces, sometimes making use of dangerous weapons. The common choice of clothing for the anarchist scene is completely black, very often covering their faces to prevent prosecution. The scene has no prominent leader figures, consists of unstructured groups and it is an informal and rather loose movement with flexible membership. This entails greater difficulty for law enforcement in identifying groups and individuals.

9. Hate crime (statistics and summaries), law enforcement actions, criminal cases, racist attacks,

³⁶ Europol's annual EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TE-SAT), 2022, URL:<https://www.europol.europa.eu/publications-events/main-reports/tesat-report> , pg.65-66

violence and terror over the period (data from government agencies and NGOs):

– **vandalism in cemeteries, attacks on religious buildings;**

– **interethnic clashes;**

– **cases of violence on racial, ethnic, religious grounds, attacks on human rights activists and anti-**

fascists;– hate killings;

– **terrorist attacks based on radical nationalism and religious fanaticism.**

As the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance characteristically states in its Annual Report for 2020, racist and xenophobic incidents associated with the outbreak of the pandemic are widespread. They include verbal and physical attacks, social exclusion, denial of access to essential goods and services, restrictions on free movement and quarantine policies, as well as intolerant rhetoric by public figures, especially politicians and media professionals⁹. In the same context, the Network expresses its concern about other incidents of discrimination against refugees and migrants. The Network monitors these incidents, even when they are not in the context of racist violence, due to their qualitative characteristics, which give more complete picture of the manifestations of racism and how they are evolving within the unprecedented context of the pandemic. Specifically, the Network was briefed by its members, migrant and refugee communities, on issues of access to health care as well as specific cases of discrimination regarding the access of asylum-seekers and refugees to hospitals across the country. Although issues of access to healthcare for asylum-seekers were observed even before the pandemic -e.g. delays in granting PAAYPA (Provisional Social Security and Health Care Number)-, in the current period, in order for public hospitals to allow access to asylum-seekers residing in accommodation sites, they ask for a negative COVID-19 test, which refugees are required to pay themselves.³⁷

The members of the Hellenic Network for Recording the Racist Violence³⁸ (rvrn) recorded through interviews with the victims, 107 incidents of racist violence with the following characteristics:

In 74 incidents the targets were migrants, refugees, or asylum-seekers due to their ethnic origin, religion or/and color, human rights defenders due to their association with refugees and migrants, as well as shelters or facilities providing other services for the said groups.

In 30 incidents the victims were LGBTQI+ individuals.

In 3 incidents the victims where Greek citizens who were targeted due to ethnic origin.

³⁷ European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), Annual Report on ECRI's Activities covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2020., p. 6.

³⁸ The Racist Violence Recording Network - RVRN (2020:8) - established in 2011 by the Greek National Commission for Human Rights (GNCHR) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Greece (UNHCR) – is, today, comprised of 52 NGOs. RVRN was established on the basis of the following two findings: “a) the identified absence of an official and effective data collection system on racist violence and b) the need to coordinate organizations which recorded, on their own initiative, incidents of racist violence against people who sought their services”

In 50 incidents the targets were more than one victim, whereas in 77 incidents the assault was committed by a group (of at least 2 persons).

Regarding the perpetrators profile:

In 23 incidents the perpetrators were law enforcement officials, while in 4 the perpetrators were public officials.

In 59 incidents civilians were involved.

In 3 incidents the perpetrators were employers.

In 3 incidents the victims believe that the perpetrators are associated with extremist groups.

In 13 incidents the victims identified the perpetrators as mixed groups of civilians and members of extremist groups, while in 2, the victims reported that they were harassed by law enforcement officials, who were called by the perpetrators.

The qualitative and quantitative characteristics of the attacks, as described above, highlight a periodically increasing intensity in areas where there are Reception and Identification Centres or accommodation sites for asylum-seekers as well as unaccompanied minors, caused by organised, informal (or not) xenophobic groups, acting as law enforcement services against refugees and human rights defenders, with repeated attacks until their goal is achieved. During the incidents, these groups state that they are imbued by xenophobic ideologies, adopt the respective vocabulary and practices, in some cases carry weapons, mostly improvised, and behave as if they are on a mission. They do not hesitate to resort to extreme violence such as arson of facilities, obstruction of movement (roadblocks) or prevention of disembarkation of newly arrived refugees, while making racist comments, attacking and damaging property and equipment of organizations providing services to refugees, bullying but also physically harming refugees and supporters. Within this framework of action, a supportive framework is being developed by some of the local communities where the incidents take place. This support is expressed either by participating in the above organized actions, or by reproducing xenophobic behaviours and racist violence in other aspects of their daily lives, or through social media posts. Essentially, due to the tensions created in the respective local communities on the management of refugee and migration flows, there seems to be an increase in the attraction of members from the local communities by extremist groups, and in harassing behaviours, verbal and physical attacks, as well as occupations of public spaces to identify, intimidate and attack refugees and human rights defenders. The above-mentioned manifestations of violence with a racist motive are predominant in the public space of local communities, with strong elements of structured organizations, in any circumstance that allows the resurgence of such action (eg announcement of installation of reception or accommodation sites). However, they do not disappear when the effect of each incident fades out. On the contrary, they continue, usually at a lower intensity and spread.³⁹

The new reality brought about by the pandemic has strongly affected the recordings of incidents of racist violence. The restrictions on the operation of the Network members services and facilities, as well as the movement restrictions (lockdown), led to the limited arrival of beneficiaries to those services and facilities. Despite the restrictions on victims access to recordings, the total number of the Networks recordings for 2020 is slightly higher

³⁹Annual report, 2021, URL: https://www.unhcr.org/gr/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2021/05/ENG_ETHSIA_EKTHESH.pdf, pg.27-28

than the previous year (100 incidents recorded in 2019) and in general stands at the same levels as the Networks recordings in recent years. This indicates that in 2020 the Networks recordings are, more than ever, the tip of the iceberg. In 2020, the Network recorded also an increase in incidents of racist violence against refugees, migrants but also human rights defenders who were targeted due to their affiliation with the above-mentioned groups. In 2019, the incidents against these groups were 51, while in 2020 they amounted to 74. The periodic intensification of these incidents is inextricably linked to the institutional targeting of refugees, migrants, and supporters. At the same time, the restriction of movement for refugees in public spaces, in the context of measures adopted against the pandemic, combined with reduced flows, seems to contribute to the invisibility of the specific target group and to the reduction of recorded incidents against them.

However, the causes of the problem, but also the perpetrators motives, continue to exist. The involvement of the same perpetrators in more than one recorded incident, constitutes an indication of the above (this trend was recorded in 21 incidents, compared to 7 that were recorded in 2019). A specific characteristic of the above is the fact that the incidents where the perpetrators are citizens and/or members of extremist groups, take place in areas where refugees and migrants gather, mainly in areas with accommodation and reception facilities, while in certain periods there is an intensification of incidents, such as the first quarter of 2020, as well as in September-October 2020. In these cases, perpetrators act in organized groups, moving either on motorcycles or on foot. They are dressed in black and sometimes in military trousers, wearing helmets or having their faces covered. The most common practice is “patrolling” by black-clad men, either pedestrians or motorcyclists, as self-appointed “militia”, attacking refugees and migrants on the street, squares and other public places. In comparison to the previous years, the increase in incidents of racist violence recorded by the Network on the islands is indicative. From 2015 to 2019 the attacks on the Aegean islands with the most refugee flows (Lesvos, Chios, Samos, Kos, Leros, and Rhodes) ranged from 8% to 20% of the total recordings, while in 2020 they exceeded 40%.

Regarding incidents against LGBTQI+ individuals amidst the pandemic, those are observed in very specific public spaces (e.g. squares, streets), while in previous years they were scattered in many different areas of the public space. An additional element of the new conditions is that half of the incidents against LGBTQI+ individuals take place either inside the victims residence, combining domestic violence with the racist motive, or online. For LGBTQI+ individuals, confinement in the home environment is associated with the expression of violent behaviours by family members who do not accept the individuals’ sexual orientation or gender identity.

In 2020, the problematic and highly harassing behaviour against transgender individuals by employers and colleagues, public officials, but also people unknown to ordinary civilians, challenging the right to self-determination, is verified once more. These recorded incidents show that transgender people suffer verbal abuse or other kind of violence which intensifies as their transitioning progresses and becomes more visible. At the same time, RVRN finds that in a significant number of incidents due to gender identity, the victims experience racist violence in their workplace.

According to statistics gathered by the Hellenic Police, there were 51 hate speech incidents in 2020, 34 of which were online. The corresponding numbers were 92 (38 online) in 2019; 63 (39 online) in 2018, 88 (48 online) in 2017 and 29 (15 online) in 2016. Apart from these figures, there is little systematic gathering of data on hate speech.

According to data reported by the Greek authorities to the OSCE/ODIHR, there were in total 171 hate crimes of which 34 prosecuted.⁴⁰

Racist and xenophobic hate crime=103, Anti-Roma hate crime=8, Anti-Semitic hate crime=4, Anti-Muslim hate crime=16, Anti-Christian hate crime=2, Anti-LGBTI hate crime=22, Disability hate crime=6

Law 4443/2016 designated the Ombudsman as the National Mechanism for Investigation of Arbitrary Incidents, with a broad mandate to collect data; to record, evaluate and forward for disciplinary control cases of illegal acts, including notably those with a racist motivation, allegedly perpetrated by inter alia uniformed police officers or coast guards during the performance of their duties. The body investigated under this mandate is legally obliged to comply with any recommendations issued by the Ombudsman at the end of his investigation. 108. The number of incidents reported to the National Mechanism has increased rapidly since its creation. In its third report, published in 2020, the Ombudsman lists typical cases investigated, including alleged arbitrariness against migrants. *Police illtreatment of foreign migrants constitute the most common cases, but complaints of offensive behaviour with a racist motive are also common in relation to identity checks of members of other vulnerable groups, including Roma who are Greek citizens and sometimes file complaints against the police.* In this context, one may refer to the incident in which one Roma boy was shot dead by police officers, and another one was seriously injured at the end of a car chase, in which seven police officers involved in the chase allegedly used excessive violence, in that while knowing that the car they chased was occupied by Roma boys, they fired between 30 and 40 bullets at the boys in the car. The seven police officers involved in the incident were briefly detained, during which time the Minister of Citizens' Protection, who is the minister responsible for police forces, paid what appears to have been a supportive visit to the detained police officers. Reportedly, the police officers concerned were not suspended and returned to their usual active duty soon after.

A general tendency of police officers apprehending individuals and taking them to a police station without any apparent reason was also underlined in the 2020 report of the National Mechanism for Investigation of Arbitrary Incidents.

As for 2021, there were recorded 110 cases of which 2 prosecuted and 1 sentenced.⁴¹

Racist and xenophobic hate crime=67, Anti-Roma hate crime=3, Anti-Semitic hate crime=3, Anti-Muslim hate crime=6, Anti-Christian hate crime=3, Other hate crime based on religion or belief=2, Anti-LGBTI hate crime=17, Disability hate crime=3

During January-December 2021, RVRN recorded, through interviews with victims, 72 incidents of racist violence.

⁴⁰ Hate crime reporting, 2020, [URL:https://hatecrime.osce.org/greece?year=2020](https://hatecrime.osce.org/greece?year=2020)

⁴¹ Hate crime reporting , 2021, [URL:https://hatecrime.osce.org/greece?year=2021](https://hatecrime.osce.org/greece?year=2021)

In 28 incidents, migrants, refugees or asylum-seekers were targeted due to their national origin, religion or colour, as well as human rights defenders due to their association with refugees and migrants. In one of the incidents, refugees as well as a minor Greek citizen were targeted at the same time, due to their nationality and ethnic origin respectively.

In 5 incidents, the targets were Greek citizens due to their ethnic origin.

In 2 incidents, the targets were Jewish sacred sites.

In 36 incidents, the targets were LGBTQI+ individuals as well as human rights defenders, due to their connection with the LGBTQI+ community. In three of these incidents, refugees were targeted due to their sexual orientation and gender identity.

In 1 case, the target was the victim's disability.

In 19 incidents, the victims stated that they have experienced racist violence before, while in 39 incidents the attack was carried out by a group (of at least 2 people).

Regarding the perpetrators' profile:

In 43 incidents, there were civilians involved.

In 7 incidents, the perpetrators were public servants.

In 20 incidents, the perpetrators were law enforcement officials.

In 1 incident, the perpetrator was an employer in agricultural works and based on the victim's testimony, he was a police officer by profession.

In 1 incident that occurred at the country's sea borders and appears to have resulted in the informal forced return of the victims, the latter were attacked when they arrived on land by a group of hooded men riding in cars and motorbikes.

On the basis of the incidents recorded by the Network for 2021, the victims' access to complaint mechanisms was shaped as follows:

One (1) incident was reported to the police at the time it was recorded by RVRN.

One (1) incident has been reported to the Greek Ombudsman.

Criminal procedures were initiated for 5 incidents.

In 8 incidents, the victims said that they had not reported the incident to the police but intended to do so.

In 46 incidents, the victims said that they would not take further action due to fear, lack of trust in the authorities, as well as because of bureaucracy.

The RVRN recordings for 2021 showed a decrease in incidents of organized violence, to which contributed the court ruling condemning Golden Dawn as a criminal organization at the end of 2020. However, the specific pattern of attacks seems to be applied in other targeting frameworks in 2021, such as within the school environment. This highlights the need for constant vigilance on the part of competent authorities, in order to focus on policies to effectively prevent and combat any relevant trend of organized violence

In most of the incidents recorded by the Network and involving refugees and migrants, the victims identify law enforcement officials among the perpetrators. According to the Network's recordings, racially motivated police violence sees a growing trend in recent years (2018-2021), especially during the pandemic.

The aversion to diversity and an oversimplified perception about blood ties were also reflected in incidents against individuals considered "less" Greek citizens, including in a flagship police violence case in 2021 against a Roma Greek citizen that resulted in homicide. Incidents of vandalism of a Jewish sanctuary were also recorded.

For yet another year, was found that LGBTQI+ individuals were targeted by a wide range of perpetrators, including ordinary citizens, public officials, law enforcement officials, and even family members. Attacks against LGBTQI + individuals intensified amidst the pandemic, with domestic violence and harassing behaviors during controls of measures to contain the pandemic, being predominant.⁴²

During January-December 2022, RVRN recorded, through interviews with victims, 74 incidents of racist violence.

In 33 incidents, migrants, refugees or asylum-seekers were targeted due to their national origin, religion or colour. In one of these incidents, a person was targeted both due to national origin as well as sexual orientation and gender identity.

In 1 incident, the target was Roma Greek citizens (ethnic origin).

In 2 incidents, a mosque and a Holocaust memorial were targeted.

In 38 incidents, the targets were LGBTQI+ individuals as well as human rights defenders, due to their connection with the LGBTQI+ people/persons. In this context, RVRN has recorded incidents of domestic violence, as well as intra-school or intra-university attacks, targeting LGBTQI+ people.

In 22 incidents, the victims stated that they have experienced racist violence in the past. In 39 incidents the attack was carried out by a group, while in 28 incidents only one perpetrator was reported.

Regarding the perpetrators' profile, according to the victims:

In 41 incidents, there were civilians involved.

In 15 incidents, the perpetrators were law enforcement officials. Based on the victims' testimony, almost half of these incidents took place near the country's borders.

In 7 incidents, the perpetrators were public servants.

In 2 incidents, the perpetrators were employers in agricultural works.

In 6 incidents, the perpetrators were identified by the victims as members of racist violence groups.

In 3 incidents, the perpetrators were identified as mixed groups of citizens and members of racist violence groups.

Regarding the victims' access to complaints mechanisms:

In the majority of incidents (44), the victims said that they would not take further action. Main factors seem to be the fear for secondary victimization or re-victimization.

Fourteen (14) incidents had been reported to the police at the time they were recorded by RVRN.

Criminal procedures were initiated for 5 incidents.

In 4 incidents, the victims said that they had not reported the incident to the police but intended to do so.

The above shows that underreporting of incidents of racist violence continued as a trend for one more year. RVRN stresses the need for the State to take immediate action to address secondary victimization, and violence in general, so that victims and targeted communities can have more trust in the authorities. In addition, the competent authorities should prioritize the creation of an effective support and protection system for victims of racist violence.

Based on the RVRN findings for 2022, the key trends are the following:

Existence of racism against refugees/migrants and LGBTQI+ individuals in the context of managing their daily lives (i.e. incidents of racist violence and/or racist behaviours during the daily activities of the victims, e.g. in public transportation, in the neighbourhood etc. These incidents are usually of low intensity and their perpetrators are individuals.)

Occurrence of incidents of organised racist violence, although to a limited extent, against refugees/migrants and LGBTQI+ individuals.

Targeting of human rights defenders, within Greek territory, especially those operating at the borders.

10. Conclusions for the period

Refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants, as well as Roma and members of LGBTI communities remain victims of frequent hate speech, at times involving politicians and even state officials. Despite the commendable work of many NGOs in support of migrants in Greece, their possibilities to support migrants have been put at risk by a 2020 Ministerial Decision introducing stricter registration and operation rules for NGOs active in the sectors of international protection, migration and relocation, or the social integration of migrants.

The level of education among Roma remains low compared to other EU countries and to the mainstream Greek population. Drop-out remain high despite a reported slight decrease. Further, in the last two years an increase of incidents against Roma community from the law enforcement officials has been observed.

The abovementioned patterns are aligned with a general turn of Politics since 2019 when the conservative party of New Democracy won the elections.

The rhetoric of immigrants coming in Greece portrayed in terms of an invasion has been embedded in the public discourse coupled with changes in geopolitics and Turkey stance toward the refugees and a change in public attitudes that the country has a lot of migrants. The term “immigrant” has absorbed the term “refugee”.

11. Recommendations:

–General recommendations for adjusting the legislative framework

In-depth study and discussion among scientific and professional bodies on how to adapt restorative justice to racist crimes (Article 63 of Law 4478/2017).

ECRI recommends as a matter of priority that the authorities strengthen the support and litigation function of the Greek Ombudsman, in line with ECRI’s General Policy Recommendation No. 2 (revised) on equality bodies to combat racism and intolerance at national level, in particular by introducing legislation enabling the Ombudsman to intervene as *amicus curiae* before courts.

ECRI recommends that the authorities establish a comprehensive monitoring system for hate speech incidents, including online, building on the experiences and expertise of the police and prosecuting services, equality bodies and national human rights institutions, self-regulatory bodies and relevant civil society organisations

ECRI recommends that the Greek authorities launch public awareness campaigns against hate speech, in which the dangers posed by hate speech are underlined and the falsity and unacceptability of its foundations stressed, involving responsible political and religious leaders engaging in counter-speech.

(§64) ECRI recommends that the Greek authorities review the application of the new registration rules to ensure that NGOs can provide suitable support services to migrants, including asylum seekers and recognised refugees.

ECRI recommends that the Greek authorities develop appropriate infrastructures and implement a set of activities for ensuring that the share of Roma 30 children, including Roma girls, completing obligatory schooling increases significantly.

(§101) In line with §§ 6 and 17 of ECRI’s General Policy Recommendation No. 13 on combating antigypsyism and discrimination against Roma, ECRI recommends that the Greek authorities ensure that Roma are not evicted illegally without proper notice or opportunity for rehousing in decent accommodation and, in this context, enjoy effective access to adequate legal aid.

(§103) ECRI recommends that the Greek authorities expand their initiatives to encourage the employment of Roma, in both public and private sectors.

–General recommendations for executive authorities in the field of law enforcement, ensuring public safety and observance of human rights.

Reinforcement and proper staffing of the Hellenic Police Services against Racist Violence.

2. Continuous training, for the entire personnel of the Hellenic Police, with the assistance of international and European organizations with expertise and experience in training law enforcement officials and judicial bodies

Continuous evaluation of the police response to ensure compliance with the circular entitled “Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination in Policing” (8.11.2014).

Protection of human rights defenders and ensuring the safety of humanitarian workers and members of civil society

Introduction of a specific procedure in the framework of disciplinary control within the Hellenic Police Force for faster processing of racially motivated arbitrary acts.

Disclosure of the qualitative and quantitative trends regarding incidents of racist violence based on the findings of the national mechanism for recording and addressing incidents of racist violence, as well as the progression of such incidents at the level of prosecution authorities and courts.

Resumption of the Working Group, which was set up following the agreement with ODIHR (OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights), to coordinate the actions for addressing racist crimes.

Establishment of an operational plan and protocol for the coordination of support services for victims of racist violence according to Law 4478/2017 and especially for minors, as well as for their protection from secondary victimization.

Strengthening of the National Action Plan against Racism with actions that promote the fight against discrimination effectively, as well the equal and unhindered access (regardless of race, colour, national or ethnic origin, descent, and religion, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity or gender traits) to education, healthcare and accommodation services for all.

Adoption of a legislative provision for the protection of human rights defenders.

Significant improvement of reception conditions, especially for vulnerable persons, as well as creation of security conditions with respect for human dignity, in all reception sites such as the Reception and Identification Centers and the mainland sites.

A holistic approach to issues related to migrants and refugees, with long-term planning across the country, aiming at the smooth integration of refugees and migrants into the Greek society.

Promotion of an intercultural and inter-religion dialogue to address stereotypes and prejudice.

Development of a comprehensive handbook for school communities on understanding and addressing racial, homophobic, transphobic-motivated incidents of violence, and training of the educational community in these areas. Connection of the school community with experienced civil society actors who are implementing such special programmes