

ΑΡΙΣΤΕΙΑ II

Η συλλογική δράση των «αγανακτισμένων
πολιτών» στην Ελλάδα
αίτια, περιεχόμενο, ενέργειες,
και συμπεράσματα για φορείς
χάραξης πολιτικής

ΚΩΔ. ΕΡΓΟΥ: 5334

Επιστημονικά Υπεύθυνος

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ΕΝΟΤΗΤΑ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑΣ 10

ΠΑΡΑΔΟΤΕΟ 10.5

1 δημοσίευση



Emotions and politics in the mass media. The 2015 Greek referendum.

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The political context

- Victory of SYRIZA in January 2015
- The first party of the radical left to gain power in the history of EU.
- Coalition government with the far right party of Independent Greeks (ANEL).
- “Unholy alliance” stemming from a contingent division which came up during the financial crisis: the pro-anti-bailout position.
- The new government wanted to show its firm decisiveness on resisting austerity and bringing an end to the bailout.
- 5 months of unfruitful negotiations between Greece and its European partners over a deal to extend the bailout program
- 4 days before the bailout was due to expire the Prime Minister announced that he would put the issue of the forthcoming EU/ECB/IMF-Greek agreement to a referendum.
- The referendum was planned for July 5th.
- 62,25% of 9.914.244 registered citizens voted in the political process.
- The No vote gained 61,31%, whereas the Yes got 38,69%.

Polarization

- Context of unprecedented polarization.
- Two opposed camps
- The “No” camp: the coalition partners – SYRIZA and ANEL – and the right-wing extremist Golden Dawn campaigned against the agreement.
- The “Yes” On the other side, the pro-European parties ND, PASOK, DIMAR (moderate left), POTAMI (centre, liberals) campaigned in favor of the bailout.

Issues which polarized the agenda

- Institutional matters related to the norms of the referendum
 - Very short notice (one week)
 - Very complicated question
 - 2 technical documents, one in English
 - The structure of the bulletin: No in front of Yes
 - Fiscal implications vs. serious national issue

Issues which polarized the agenda

- Capital controls, bank holiday
 - Big losses in flows of capital since the victory of SYRIZA
 - Bank run since the announcement of the referendum
 - Queues in ATMs and gas stations, over-supplies from the supermarkets
 - Problems in market liquidity

Framing of opposite narratives

- The “Yes” narrative: No will bring financial impasse, GREXIT and possible exit from EU. The government divides the society; had a hidden plan to get the country out of EU ; has lost credibility.
- The “No” narrative: No will be a weapon in the hands of government in order to negotiate. Yes equals more austerity and the revival of the old party system.

Partisan narratives

- The vote was divided along the partisan lines.
- Different preference profiles between the Yes and the No supporters.
- A substantial part of No voters wanted a different status *vis-à-vis* the EMU and the EU.
- All Yes voters wanted to stay in the euro and the EU.
- Differences in expectations about the repercussions of a No outcome seemed to be even larger.
- More than 90 % of No voters expected their vote to lead to continued negotiations.
- The majority of Yes voters were convinced that a No outcome would lead directly to Grexit.
- The narratives about the implications of the referendum result were more powerful in explaining vote intention than preferences about the euro or the EU.
- Material interest-based evidence, once the effects of the bank holiday and capital controls were taken into account.
- About 1/5 of the respondents affirmed that the imposed bank holiday had affected their vote intention. Most of them actually switched their vote intention towards Yes.

➤ Jurado I., Konstantinidis N., Walter S., *Why Greeks voted the way they did in the bailout referendum*, EUROPP - LSE blogs.

Gaps in interpretation

- Cracks in the party system
- 1/5 voters differed their stance from the official line adopted by the party they had voted for in January 2015.
- 1/10 SYRIZA voters voted Yes, whereas half the January electorate of the conservative ND voted No.
- The biggest differentiation was amongst the voters of the centre-leftist (PASOK, KIDISO, POTAMI) and the strongest alignment among parties and voters of KKE and GD.
- Reliance in the partisan cues has not been total.
- Partisan narratives cannot either explain differentiation from the party lines or clarify how individuals reacted in ambiguous messages coming from intra or extra-party channels.
- The financial crisis has produced so intense transformations in electoral choices, that the specific nature of attachment of individuals to their prior party preferences is something that needs systematic exploration.

Emotions and the media

- The nature and impact of different affective reactions on attitude changes and polarization needs to be assessed.
- Throughout the financial crisis, powerful negative emotions related to social displacement or the country's course of action has created a permanently distressing emotional climate. (Davou 2015)
- The media have significantly contributed to this, since they have systematically focused on threatening and destabilizing financial effects. Recent research has shown how emotional reactions to the crisis and the subsequent austerity measures have determined political attitudes and behavior. (Davou and Demertzis 2013)
- Our argument: the referendum has functioned like a discursive opportunity structure (Koopmans and Statham 1999) which has activated the emotional energy accumulated in the previous era, whilst at the same time, through the messages and narratives transmitted during the campaign it has added to this emotional stock new feelings.
- After five years in crisis, the context created by the referendum period is a paradigmatic case of conflict, where ambiguity, contrasting information and uncertainty prevailed.
- Among other channels, like peer-to-peer communication, social media, rallies, the opposing sides used the mass media in order to massively spread their messages.
- We consider the role of the media in the emotional governance (Richards 2007) of the period during the period under study.

Media reliance in times of crisis

- Media-reliance theory ([Ball-Rokeach S., DeFleur ML 1976](#)) : when a society is undergoing social change and conflict, people's media needs and consequently people's dependency on media are heightened.
- The media have a greater opportunity to exert effects during these times of social change and conflict.
- Media messages in this instance may be expected to alter audience behavior in terms of cognitive, affective, and/or overt activity.
 - Creation and resolution of ambiguity
 - Attitude formation,
 - Setting the media-audience agenda.
 - Expand people's system of belief,
 - provide clarification,
 - influence the public's feelings
 - and emotional responses.
 - activation or de-activation effects → readiness for political action.
 - Activation and de-activation of political behavior → voting behavior.
 - Campaigns might elicit affective responses, such as disgust, or abstention.
 - Feelings like fear or anxiety produced by or through media messages about one's own or the country's economic future can impact upon vote choice.

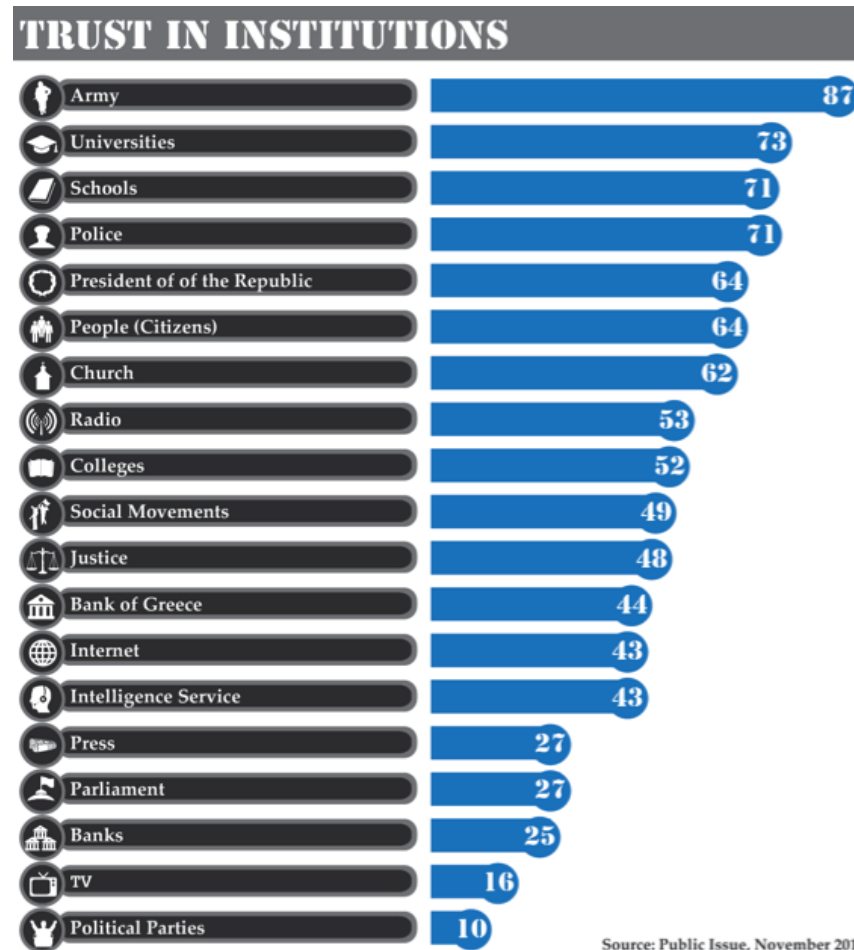
Selective exposure

- Different patterns of news may lead people to develop different impressions of the social reality and current affairs.
- Selective exposure research according to which individuals are driven in media channels or information, which match their beliefs, has produced inconsistent results.
- Among early researchers, [Klapper \(1960\)](#) has demonstrated people's exposition to material in accordance to pre-existing beliefs, whilst [Kinder \(2003\)](#) and [Zaller \(1992\)](#) showed that selective exposure is not prevalent except for very special conditions, which do not imply mass persuasion effects.
- More recent research supports that all the more people are seeking for likeminded views.
- When confronted with a variety of options in the contemporary media environment, individuals may choose to expose themselves to diverse viewpoints and learn more about perspectives with which they are unfamiliar.
- When it comes to politics, people are keener to selective exposure; they follow habitual media exposure patterns. ([Stroud 2008](#))

Media persuasion and affect

- Framing, priming, agenda-setting – can foster negative affective reactions, pushing towards attitude change and polarization.
- Anxiety enhances political learning processes, leading individuals to collect information from diverse sources (Valentino et al. 2008) , being more prone to vote switching (Brader 2000; Markus et al. 2000).
- Anger has been found to have different effects. It impedes information-seeking processes (Valentino et al. 2008), leading individuals to rely more on existing convictions to decide on political issues (Mac Kuen et al. 2010).
- Research on emotions and voting in EU referendums has found that anxious voters rely on substantive EU issues and angry voters rely on second-order factors relating to domestic politics, like partisanship and satisfaction with government (Garry 2014).
- Will focus on the persuasion mechanisms and more particular the emotions expressed and activated through the media, in order to understand the complex nexus of affection, political opinion and behavior in the 2015 Greek referendum campaign.

Trust in the institutions, November 2015.



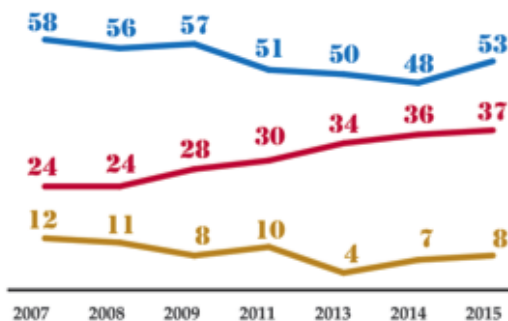
Source: Public Issue, November 2015

Trust in the media, 2007-2015.

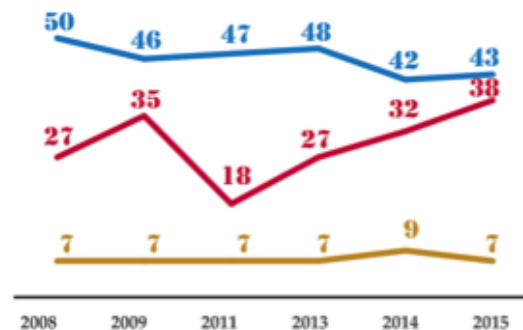
TRUST IN MEDIA (%), 2007-2015



RADIO



INTERNET



PRESS



TELEVISION



Mostly Trust

Mostly don't trust

Neither

Source: Public Issue, November 2015

Positive correlation between high levels of viewing TV and a Yes vote

Vote in the referendum, July 5 th 2015						
		YES	NO	VOID/BLA NK	DIDN'T VOTE	TOTAL
Frequency of watching TV news programs	Very frequently	53	67	1	7	128
		41,4%	52,3%	0,8%	5,5%	100%
	Frequently	34	41	4	15	94
		36,2%	43,6%	4,3%	16%	100%
	Not frequently	18	51	5	7	81
		22,2%	63%	6,2%	8,6%	100%
	Not at all	13	42	2	8	65
		20%	64,6%	3,1%	12,3%	100%
Total		118	201	12	37	368
		32,1%	54,6%	3,3%	10,1%	100%

High correlation between preferred channel and vote in the referendum

Vote in the Referendum, July 5 th 2015						
Channel in which frequently watching news on TV		YES	NO	VOID/BLANK	DIDN'T VOTE	TOTAL
	MEGA	23 51,1%	18 40%	0 0%	4 8,9%	45 100%
	ANT1	18 34,6%	26 50%	1 1,9%	7 13,5%	52 100%
	ALPHA	4 11,8%	26 76,5%	0 0%	4 11,8%	34 100%
	NET	9 23,7%	26 68,4%	2 5,3%	1 2,6%	38 100%
	SKAI	32 56,1%	20 35,1%	1 1,8%	4 7%	57 100%
	STAR	4 22,2%	12 66,7%	2 11,1%	0 0%	18 100%
	OTHER	5 18,5%	16 59,3%	3 11,1%	3 11,1%	27 100%
TOTAL		95 35,1%	144 53,1%	9 3,3%	23 8,5%	271 100%

Channel preferences of Yes and No voters

Vote in the Referendum, July 5 th 2015						
Channel in which frequently watching news on TV		YES	NO	VOID/BLANK	DIDN'T VOTE	TOTAL
	MEGA	23 24,2%	18 12,5%	0 0%	4 17,4%	45 16,6%
	ANT1	18 18,9%	26 18,1%	1 11,1%	7 30,4%	52 19,2%
	ALPHA	4 4,2%	26 18,1%	0 0%	4 17,4%	34 12,5%
	NET	9 9,5%	26 18,1%	2 22,5%	1 4,3%	38 14%
	SKAI	32 33,7%	20 13,9%	1 11,1%	4 17,4%	57 21%
	STAR	4 4,2%	12 8,3%	2 22,2%	0 0%	18 6,6%
	OTHER	5 5,3%	16 11,1%	3 33,3%	3 13%	27 10%
	TOTAL	95 100%	144 100%	9 100%	23 100%	271 100%

Research hypotheses

- To what extent and in what sense have the TV channels backed the Yes or the No vote?
- Is variation in the media content among the TV channels capable of explaining variation in the vote choice?
- Are certain feelings “owned” by specific channels or party actors?
- Stemming from 5 years of crisis, polarization and political turbulence, emotional connotations cut across the left-right axis.
- H1: The persuasion mechanisms are expected to be rather emotional than rational.
- It is the emotions in which each side invested that are different or differently emphasized.
- We assume that the Yes camp capitalized on fear of exiting the euro, shouldn't the agreement between Greece and the EU partners be reached and anger towards the coalition government for playing on the edge with the EU partners.
- The No campaign was framed by anger for the terms of the agreement, fear for more austerity measures and an eventual comeback of the old protagonists of the party system and hope for a better agreement, through the pressure exercised by the referendum.
- We expect to find variation between positive and negative messages along with partisan alignments.
- H2a: There is variation in the nature of emotions expressed by each camp.
- H2b: Variation in terms of positive/negative tone is expected to follow the two camps division. Whilst negative tone is present in both camps, the pro-No camp is expected to privilege positive emotional messages.

Research hypotheses

- Each side developed arguments on who is to blame for the critical situation of the country on the specific context of the referendum and the agreement. We expect to find variation in the priming mechanism used by each side.
- H3: Variation between supporters of the Yes and the No figures in terms of priming and more specifically on where the blame is put by each side.
- We expect a certain variation to exist on the themes that each side brings into the agenda. For instance, the Yes camp tried to capitalize on the negative effects of the capital controls and the default status of the Greek economy, once the program expired. The No camp invested on declarations and comments of the EU partners fostering the feeling of national humiliation.
- H4: Framing of Yes and No arguments is also expected to vary in terms of the themes that each camp prefers to associate its arguments with. We expect certain themes to be preferred by each side.

Persuasion Mechanisms

Persuasion Mechanism	Frequency	%
Rational	53	40.5
Emotional	44	33.6
Both	34	26
Total	131	100

Persuasion Mechanism and News Type

	Journalist presentation	Coverage	Journalists in studio	Live broadcast of political statement	Coverage of political statement	Press conference	Total
Rational	6	19	4	2	22	0	53
Emotional	15	16	2	1	10	0	44
Both	4	11	6	0	11	2	34
	25	46	12	3	43	2	131

Themes	Sums	% of 131 coding units	% of 325 themes' references
Referendum	105	80%	32%
Banks (capital controls, recapitalization)	31	24%	10%
EU (negotiations, stance	60	46%	18%
Public debt	5	4%	2%
Measures of the agreement	10	8%	3%
Default / Payment to IMF	10	8%	3%
Payments of pensions, salaries, etc.	11	8%	3%
Market liquidity	16	12%	5%
Difficulties in transport	7	5%	2%
Rallies, demonstrations	0	0%	0%
Political statement	0	0%	0%
Social crisis	13	10%	4%
Criminality	0	0%	0%
National security	0	0%	0%
Sufficiency of goods	14	11%	4%
GREXIT / Currency Dilemma	34	26%	10%
Tourism	5	4%	2%
Enterpreneuriat / Market	4	3%	1%
TOTAL	325		100%

Themes	Sum (day 1)	% of 73 coding units	Sum (day 3)	% of 58 coding units
Referendum	66	90%	39	67%
Banks (capital controls, recapitalization)	12	16%	19	33%
EU (negotiations, stance	27	37%	33	57%
Public debt	3	4%	2	3%
Measures of the agreement	4	5%	6	10%
Default / Payment to IMF	8	11%	2	3%
Payments of pensions, salaries, etc.	0	0%	11	19%
Market liquidity	3	4%	13	22%
Difficulties in transport	0	0%	7	12%
Rallies, demonstrations	0	0%	0	0%
Political statement	0	0%	0	0%
Social crisis	5	7%	8	14%
Criminality	0	0%	0	0%
National security	0	0%	0	0%
Sufficiency of goods	4	5%	10	17%
GREXIT / Currency Dilemma	19	26%	15	26%
Tourism	2	3%	3	5%
Enterpreneuriat / Market	1	1%	3	5%
TOTAL	154		171	

News Tone

The news tone has been massively negative.

The second most frequent tone is neutral.

News Tone	Frequency
Positive	11
Negative	75
Both	10
Neutral	35
Total	131

News tone and party ID

	ND	SYRIZA	PASOK	ANEL	XA	KKE	RIVER	KIDISO
Positive	0	8	0	1	0	0	0	0
Negative	5	13	3	1	2	1	2	0
Both	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Neutral	4	10	2	0	1	2	1	1

Themes	Positive	Negative	Both	Neutral
Referendum	9	58	6	32
Banks (capital controls, recapitalization)	1	22	4	4
EU (negotiations, stance	4	37	8	11
Public debt	0	1	3	1
Measures of the agreement	0	8	2	0
Default / Payment to IMF	0	6	2	2
Payments of pensions, salaries, etc.	0	8	2	1
Market liquidity	0	11	2	3
Difficulties in transport	0	5	1	1
Rallies, demonstrations	0	0	0	0
Political statement	0	0	0	0
Social crisis	1	9	1	2
Criminality	0	0	0	0
National security	0	0	0	0
Sufficiency of goods	0	12	1	1
GREXIT / Currency Dilemma	0	22	1	11
Tourism	1	3	0	1
Entrepreneuriat / Market	0	4	0	0

References to vote choices

Reference to vote	Frequency	%
Yes	7	5.3
No	23	16.8
Both	22	17.6
None	79	60.3
Total	131	100

References to vote by Party ID and News Tone

Reference to vote	ND	SYRIZA	PASOK	ANEL	XA	KKE	RIVER	KIDISO
Yes	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	0
No	2	12	1	2	1	1	0	0
Both	2	2	2	0	1	0	0	0
None	3	18	2	0	1	2	2	1

	Positive	Negative	Both	Neutral
Yes	0	7	0	0
No	7	10	0	5
Both	0	15	1	7
None	4	43	9	23

Party ID

SYRIZA representatives the most frequent in ALPHA channel in the days coded.

Party ID	Frequency of appearances
ND	9
SYRIZA	34
PASOK	5
ANEL	2
XA	3
DIMAR	0
KKE	3
RIVER	3
KIDISO	1
LAOS	0
EK	0
TELEIA	0
OTHER	0
TOTAL	60

Emotions in Frames

Emotion	N of appearances
Fear	28
Anger / Indignation	8
Aversion / Disgust	0
Shame / Humiliation	2
Pride	2
Stress / Worry / Anxiety	63
Hope / Joy / Happiness / Optimism	0
Guilt	0
Sadness	0
Pessimism	3
Malignant aggressiveness	0
Envy	0
Surprise	4
Total	110 in 74 coding units within Emo_Frame

Emotions in Content

Emotion	N of appearances
Fear	34
Anger / Indignation	54
Aversion / Disgust	20
Shame / Humiliation	19
Pride	19
Stress / Worry / Anxiety	47
Hope / Joy / Happiness / Optimism	29
Guilt	2
Sadness	8
Pessimism	6
Malignant aggressiveness	3
Envy	0
Surprise	11
Total	252 in 106 coding unit within Emo_Content

	ND	SYRIZA	PASOK	ANEL	CA	DIMAR	KKE	RIVER	KIDISO
Fear	4	3	3	0	0	0	0	2	0
Anger / Indignation	9	17	3	2	2	0	2	1	0
Aversion / Disgust	0	10	1	0	2	0	2	0	1
Shame / Humiliation	1	8	1	2	0	0	0	1	0
Pride	0	16	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Stress / Worry / Anxiety	3	4	3	0	1	0	1	3	0
Hope / Joy / Happiness / Optimism	0	19	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Guilt	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sadness	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Pessimism	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Malignant aggressiveness	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Envy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Surprise	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Fear

GREXIT and financial deterioration the most frequent fear.

Loss of EU identity and abandonment the second most frequent

Object of fear	Frequency
Personal financial loss, hardship, impoverishment of society, humiliation	13
Civil disorder, violence, social disturbance	5
Loss of national ID, independence, agency, autonomy	1
Loss of EU ID, abandonment, not belonging to a supranational coalition	16
Grexit, financial deterioration, imbalance in Eurozone / markets	36

Object of fear according to Party ID

	ND	SYRIZA	PASOK	ANEL	CA	DIMAR	KKE	RIVER	KIDISO
Personal financial loss, hardship, impoverishment of society, humiliation	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Civil disorder, violence, social disturbance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Loss of national ID, independence, agency, autonomy	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Loss of EU ID, abandonment, not belonging to a supranational coalition	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	0
Grexit, financial deterioration, imbalance in Eurozone /markets	4	2	3	0	0	0	0	2	0

Anger Target

Coalition government

EU

Target of Anger	Frequency
EU	27
Coalition Government	34
Previous Governments / Opposition	10
Political system as a whole	0

Anger Reason

Stance in negotiations (can be either the government's stance or the EU stance).

Lost national pride the second most frequent (can be because of the government strategy or because of the EU stance).

Reason of Anger	Frequency
Lost national pride	18
Deteriorated personal circumstances	3
Suffering of others in society	9
Stance in negotiations	53

Reason of anger according to Party ID

Reason of Anger	ND	SYRIZA	PASOK	ANEL	CA	DIMAR	KKE	RIVER	KIDISO
Lost national pride	2	8	0	2	2	0	0	0	0
Deteriorated personal circumstances	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Suffering of others in society	1	4	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Stance in negotiations	9	17	3	1	1	0	2	1	0

Positive Emotions

Mainly towards Greece and the people.

From both national and foreign actors.

Positive emotion towards	Frequency
Government	11
Prime Minister	1
SYRIZA	1
ANEL	1
EU	3
IMF	1
Greece	21
People	22

Positive emotion according party ID

Positive emotion towards	ND	SYRIZA	PASOK	ANEL	CA	DIMAR	KKE	RIVER
Government	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prime Minister	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
SYRIZA	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
ANEL	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
EU	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
IMF	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Greece	0	14	0	1	0	0	0	1
People	0	17	0	1	0	0	0	0

Blame

Who is to blame?	Frequencies
EU	34
Germany	7
IMF	8
Coalition government	53
Opposition	9
Greek political system	0
Society	2
Media, journalists	3
Immigrants	0
Capital, elites	0
Jews	0
Other	0

Blame related to news type

	Journalist presentation	Coverage	Journalists in studio	Interview in studio	Live broadcast of political statement	Coverage of political statement	Press conference
EU (institutions, officials, MPs, MEPs, creditors)	1	12	4	0	0	16	1
Germany	0	2	0	0	0	5	0
IMF	0	3	0	0	0	5	0
Coalition government	7	15	8	0	0	22	1
Opposition	0	3	2	0	0	3	1
Greek political system (MPs, institutions, political personnel)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Society	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Media, journalists	0	0	0	0	1	2	0
Immigrants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Capital, elites	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jews	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Blame related to profession

	Journalist	Greek politician	EU politician	US politician	Interest group representative	Academic	Party
EU (institutions, officials, MPs, MEPs, creditors)	9	23	0	1	1	0	0
Germany	0	7	0	0	0	0	0
IMF	1	7	0	0	0	0	0
Coalition government	19	22	7	1	3	0	1
Opposition	2	7	0	0	0	0	0
Greek political system (MPs, institutions, political personnel)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Society	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Media, journalists	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
Immigrants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Capital, elites	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jews	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Concluding remarks

- The content projected has not been massively emotional as initially expected.
- We did not find variation in the dominant emotions in each camp: both camps are dominated so far by anger, which is followed by positive emotions in the Yes camp and by fear in the No camp.
- There was nonetheless variation in the target of angriness: the Yes camp addressed it to the coalition government, whereas the No camp to EU partners.
- There was also variation in terms of positive and negative tone between the two camps, since only the No camp expressed a positive tone.
- When it comes to blame attribution, the variation between the two camps is clear, with the Yes camp blaming primarily the coalition government and the No camp the EU partners.