

**Tufts Seminar 2019**

ATHENS 2019

# **Briefing Paper - Delegation of Athens**

COMMITTEE:

Julia Gardner: Head of Delegation

Representatives:

Zhihan Chen: Urban Planning

Gordon Horowitz: Economic Integration

Kylie Knieriem: Social Cohesion

Ali Kazmi: Health

Claudio Aguilar: Resilience

## A. Introduction

### **Representative: Julia Gardner**

Almost 3,000 years ago, our civilization was leading the world. Greek culture and knowledge have lived on since our territorial decline. From the Olympics to our rationalistic approach to learning and the ideas of our famous thinkers—Plato, Socrates, Hippocrates, and Aristotle (to name a few)—the Greek legacy has provided the basis for Western thinking and has permeated practically every culture in the modern world. Although Greek culture still thrives, our country is currently in crisis. Between high unemployment rates and a lack of adequate resources, we are not prepared to accommodate the recent influx of migrants fleeing conflict throughout Eurasia. Our geographical location in the Mediterranean Sea makes border protection challenging and faces us with an obligation to rescue refugee ships in distress, thereby making our country one of the most accessible European countries to the world's growing numbers of migrants, particularly those from Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and African nations. In a single month in 2015, over 200,000 asylum seekers and refugees reached our shores, sometimes even at a rate of 10,000 people per day. Although we have made progress in recovering from our debt crisis—which began in 2009—our economy is still struggling to support our own population, let alone hundreds of thousands of new migrants every year. We cannot ignore these people in our country, yet we cannot help them on our own. We need resources that we do not have. This will require help from other European Union nations, as well as the international community at large. Our nation's debt crisis put a tremendous strain on the EU. Without aid for our current migration crisis, we will be a dying limb that will threaten and damage the well being of all of our fellow EU countries. Let's prevent another crisis before it is too late.

## **B. Demographics**

Our city, Athens, is the capital city of Greece and we are Greece's political, economic, and cultural center. Our history extends almost 3,500 years. The Athens Urban area encompasses forty municipalities, 35 of which form Greater Athens, and the other 5 of which make up the Greater Piraeus municipalities, collectively spanning 159 square miles and currently including a population of 3,154,152 people. The city of Athens exists within the Athens Urban area, with a population of around 660,000 people and a territory of 15 square miles.

As of 2018, the majority of our country's peoples—about 79.1%—resided in urban areas. Greek citizens comprise the majority of our nation's population, accounting for nearly 93% of inhabitants. Around 85% of our country's population follows the Greek Orthodox religion. The Muslim minority is our city's largest recognized minority, with followers accounting for 2% of our nation's total population, composed primarily of Turks, Pomacks, and Romani. Our city also includes minority populations of Albanians, Bangladeshi, Bulgarians, Pakistani, and Polish people.

Our nation is currently experiencing a declining birth rate, which has produced an aging problem for our workforce, which is exacerbated by an unemployment rate of approximately 28%. In the past four years, our nation's hospitals have reported 10% fewer births than in previous years. 15.8% of Athens' population is between the ages of 0 and 18, 10.1% between 19 and 24, 33% between 25 and 45, 23.7% between 45 and 65, and 17.4% over the age of 65. With a declining birth rate and a near majority of our population too young or too old to support our workforce, our city will be in intense economic danger in the coming years.

After the global recession in 2008, our country experienced a deep financial crisis, heavily affecting Athens and all other metropolitan and rural areas. The issues of poverty and inequality have been at the forefront of our country's discussions in the wake of economic hardships. In 2013, our nation's unemployment rate spiked at nearly 30%. As of this month, Greece's unemployment rate is down to around 20%, which is still high in comparison to other major countries around the globe. Our nation's GDP in 2017 was 28,580 USD, which was approximately half that of our European neighbors, including Germany (52,574 USD) and Austria (53,895 USD).

At the start of 2009, our country's extreme poverty did not exceed 2.2%. Now, not only is 15% of our population living in extreme poverty, but another 23% in relative poverty. Additionally, our nation is experiencing wide income gaps between our young and old populations. The percentage of extreme poverty among children—17.6%— and young people aged 18-29—24.4%—is extreme in comparison to that of our population aged over 65—2.7%.

Our nation receives large documented and undocumented migrants every year. About half of our nation's total legal immigrants reside in Athens. Recently, our undocumented population has surged due to instability in the Middle East, particularly in Syria, Turkey, and Iraq. Our geography is a major contributor to the inflow of migrants, given that we are accessible via the Mediterranean Sea for migrants seeking entry to Europe. The major entry points for illegal migrants include—but are not limited to—the Greek-Albanian land border, the Greek-Turkish land border, and sea borders between Greece and Turkey. Greece's appeal for undocumented migrants is further exacerbated by Italy and Spain's attempts to combat illegal immigration.

**C. Key Points**

- a. We will continue accepting migrants—refugees, economic migrants, asylum seekers, and more—but cannot do so without limits. Our welfare system is already stretched thin by our citizens, our unemployment rate is far too high, and our debt crisis strained our resources, making it difficult for us to support a growing migrant population.
- b. We will continue to make Athens an accommodating place for all migrants by working together with organizations to create data-driven policy and supporting initiatives that aid with integrating migrants into Greece’s culture and economy and promoting cultural awareness and diversity.
- c. We wish to promote the presence of NGOs in our city in order to accommodate for incoming migrants and those found in camps in areas such as health care, food security, and more.
- d. We seek to reduce the accumulation of trash in our country by establishing better infrastructure (such as recycling centers) for properly disposing waste, thereby reducing the landfills we have created.
- e. We aim to increase funding from our supporters during this time in order to create a more equitable society for our own people and keep them safe from the dangers that immigrants can pose when not properly integrated into society.

- f. As the economy regains its footing, we will continue to offer assistance to migrants seeking jobs and pursue funding for both Greek language courses and systematic recognition of foreign qualifications and skills.
- g. We seek to relocate migrants and refugees more efficiently from temporary camps into permanent housing in order to prevent further backlogging and overcrowding.
- h. We wish to be able to provide members living in temporary migrant camps access to basic human rights such as electricity, clean water, and internet access, and decrease the amount of violence in the camps as well.

#### **D. Background Information**

Our city is one of the oldest cities in the world: our history spans at least 5,000 years. We began as a city-state during the Ancient Greek civilization, which started during the 8th century B.C.E. Legend holds that the name “Athens” is derived from the Greek goddess, Athena. Our geography—the security of the Acropolis, central location in Greece’s ancient empire, and access to the sea—facilitated our rise to power as a leading center for trade. When the Persian empire tried to take Greek territory in the 5th century B.C.E, our city-state led Greece to victory.

By the 5th century B.C.E, our city-state was experimenting with a democratic-style government, which is typically considered to be the first known democracy in the world. Although participation in our democratic system was limited to adult male citizens, our style of government laid the foundations for subsequent empires and eventually nations. At the time, citizens and slaves comprised the majority of our city’s population. Athenian style democracy

was suspended during Ancient Greece's rule by the Macedonians as Alexander the Great transformed our city-states into an empire that spanned across Eurasia.

The modern history of Athens begins with the Ottoman Empire's attack of our city in 1458, bringing the Greek and Turkic populations together. The Greek orthodox Church was the main force keeping the Greek language alive. When Greek insurgents recaptured our city from the Ottomans in 1833, our city was home to only about 4000 people. Our ancient monuments—particularly the Parthenon—suffered greatly during Ottoman rule. Following Ottoman occupation of our city, Otto, the Prince of Bavaria, took control as the first King of Greece and designated Athens the capital. During this time, our city experienced growth as key institutions developed that set the groundwork for subsequent education and governing practices. For example, the University of Athens (1837), National Library of Greece (1842), the Old Royal Palace (which is now the Greek parliament building; 1843) and the City Hall (1874) were all established. Moreover, we hosted the 1896 Summer Olympics.

After the Greco-Turkish War (1919-1922), our city experienced immense population exchange with Turkey. Over one million Greek refugees from Asia Minor were resettled in Greece. Refugee settlements on Athens' outskirts led to the formation of suburbs such as Nea Ionia and Nea Smyrni. During World War II, Greece was occupied by Germany. Our city suffered greatly from the Great Greek Famine as food, water, and shelter in our city were sparse. After Germany was ousted from Greece in 1944, our city's population began to grow again due to rural to urban labor migration. Greece joined the European Union in 1981, which brought capital investment to Athens, yet also exacerbated our city's social and environmental issues, threatening our infrastructure.

At the close of the 20th century, European Union funds allowed both the city of Athens and the Greek government to take on infrastructure projects (such as the Athens airport and a new metro system) and address air pollution through restricting automobile use in our city center. Athens hosted the 2004 Summer Olympics, which boosted our international status and brought tourism revenue to our city. By the start of the 21st century, the City of Athens had a population of 745,514, the Athens Urban Area had 3,130,841 residents, and the Athens Metropolitan Area contained 3,761,810 people, an increase of about 3 million people over the course of two years.

Most recently, Greece has been recovering from its debt crisis that followed the 2008 Global Recession. Estimates placed Greece's public debt at 120% of GDP in 2010. In effect, domestic and international confidence in Greece's ability to repay its debts were limited. In 2010, Eurozone countries and the IMF provided Greece with \$45 billion rescue package, with total funds subsequently reaching \$110 billion. Greece's economic hardships have resulted in protest and unrest among our people. In 2017, we received additional rescue funding from the Eurozone (\$9.5 billion in credit and \$8.5 billion in loans). Our bailouts were declared successfully ended in August of 2018. Throughout the crisis, our country's GDP dropped nearly 25%, leading to an increase in the debt-to-GDP ratio from 127% (2009) to approximately 170% (2013).



## **E. Issues**

### *Committee on Leadership and Governance: Julia Gardner*

- Political Representation
  - The Greek government has been comprised of about seven major political parties since 2012, which are the New Democracy (ND), the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), the Communist Party of Greece (KKE), the Coalition of the Radical Left (SYRIZA) and the Popular Orthodox Rally (LA.O.S.), the Golden Dawn, and Democratic Left (DIMAR).
    - Historically, the ND and PASOK parties have been dominant
  - Migration from non EU states has increased greatly in comparison to EU member state migration to Greece in the last five years. As a result of the rise in total numbers of non EU migrants, the majority of citizenship status granted has been to migrants from non EU states (97%) while only about 3% has been directed towards migrants from nations within the EU.
- Interactions Among City and Central Government
  - At the start of the 21st century, the central government controlled almost all major decisions about Athenian urban policies, including large scale infrastructure projects and Olympic organization.

- In 2010, reforms introduced a Metropolitan Government in Athens with increased responsibilities in developmental and planning issues in order to benefit from EU funding opportunities.
- Interactions Among City Government and Non-State Actors
  - There are a number of international Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) present in Athens that engage directly with migrants, including:
    - The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)
    - The Children's Fund UNICEF of the United Nations
    - The Hellenic Red Cross, and Doctors of the World.
  - There are also many Greek NGOs, such as:
    - ARSIS (Association for the Social Support of Youth), an organization focused on the rights of children and adolescents, particularly unaccompanied minors.
    - The Greek Council for Refugees attempts to provide full support for refugees and asylum applicants through social and legal advice.
    - The Praksis organization fights poverty and exclusion among the poor, homeless, uninsured, as well as migrants of any form (refugees, asylum-seekers, unaccompanied minors, victims of trafficking and forced prostitution) by providing counseling, education and support.
- Policies Towards Migrants

- Greece was ill-prepared for its transformation from a migrant sending country to a receiving one in the late 1980s. In the most recent century, we have attempted to institute a number of laws and reforms to address migration.
- The Greek National Ministry of the Interior supervises the local authorities and is responsible (along with the Ministry of Public Order and Citizens' Protection) for developing immigration policy.
- Major reforms were put into practice in 2010. Second generation immigrants were granted citizenship under the condition of being born in Greece or having attended a Greek school for six years. Additionally, this law also provided the right of immigrants to vote in local elections. The reform of the local administration system established the Immigrants' Integration Councils (IIC).
- Policies Towards Undocumented Migrants
  - Our national and local governments have initiated discussions with NGOs to secure better policy formation.
  - The government—local and central—has yet to come up with a sufficient approach and policy with respect to undocumented migration.
- Identification and Documentation for Migrants
  - Nearly half of our city's immigrant population remains undocumented. Our government has yet to address a formal strategy or policy for the integration of undocumented migrants.

- The Reception and Identification Services is an independent agency in our country that focuses on people who cross the Greek borders without legal documents and/or procedures.
- The Ministry of Migration Policy manages asylum cases and provides documents such as residence permits and international protection applicant cards.
- Role of Technology
  - The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has developed the MigApp, which uses current technology and the widespread use of mobile telecommunications to bring a secure, objective and user-friendly downloadable app to migrant. The MigApp's purpose is to provide migrants with access to current, reliable and practical information and IOM services.
  - Greece has lost many of its scientists due to the opportunities in foreign nations, so our country seeks to use technology to maintain networks between Greece and our scientists working and researching abroad.
- Overall Attitude of Residents Towards Migrants
  - Most diaspora centers are located in the suburbs of Athens. With the exception of pro-migrant activists groups, the majority of Athenian residents have articulated negative views of the city's large migrant population, which we hope to counteract by better informing our citizens.
  - According to surveys, the most well known foreign groups in Athens among the city's population are Albanians, Pakistanis, Africans, and Syrians.

- The main fears among Athenian residents in relation to migrants are cleanliness, theft, crime, fighting, and lack of sanitation, which we need to solve.
- About 71% of Greeks in Athens and 93% of foreigners believe that migrant children should have access to our public school system.
- Approximately 53% of Athenians believe that refugees cannot be integrated in our city's society.

*Committee on Urban Planning: Zhihan Chen*

- How would you explain the organization of your city (e.g. urban sprawl)?
  - Athens can be classified at three different levels:
    - The municipality of Athens is the city center.
    - The Athens Urban Area consists of 40 municipalities, 35 are Greater Athens municipalities and 5 are Greater Piraeus municipalities.
    - The Athens Metropolitan Area consists of 58 municipalities
  - The core of Athens is built around the municipality of Athens, the center of the city.
- What is the density of your city in terms of population per area?
  - Population density within the municipality of Athens is 44,200 people per square mile.
  - The number of people living outside of the city center significantly decreases, with the Athens Metropolitan Area having a population density of 15,500 people per square mile.
  - Greece as a whole have a population density of 200 people per square mile.

- Are populations integrated in your city or are the communities more provincial, separate?

How did this develop?

- Populations within Athens are separated. The city of Athens originally started with only one municipality, and the city expanded in all directions over time, including more and more municipalities.
  - The municipality of Athens, the city center, is considered “the city” while the outer municipalities are all considered the suburbs.
  - The population of the municipality of Athens has maintained a balance between 0.5 million to 1 million people from 1938 to 2011. However, during that same period, the suburban population rose from 0.5 million to 3.5 million. There is not enough space in the city.
- Where is the migrant population in your city concentrated?
    - One popular destination for migrants in Athens is the municipality of Athens. With the arrival of migrants, many of the wealthy in the municipality of Athens moved into the suburbs. With this came a demographic change in the center of the city.
    - Most of the other migrants are housed in the city edges in camps and government provided housing.
  - How are migrants housed in your city?
    - The vast majority of migrants and refugees are housed in detention centers and camps in the city periphery. With more money provided by the E.U., the Greek

government is trying to move them into hotels and apartments. This is not a permanent solution; once the money runs out there will be a problem.

- Do migrants have access to safe housing in your city?
  - Unfortunately, they do not. The very few people who are in the process of being integrated into Greek society might have access to safe housing. For the vast majority in camps and detention centers, they face violence and potential danger everyday.
- Do you face a housing shortage? Why?
  - Yes, there is a housing shortage. Although recent government efforts to bring migrants into hotels and apartments are helping, most of the people are still stuck in camps, living in makeshift homes.
  - Especially since Greece is still trying to recover from its recent economic crisis, it is not equipped to handle the situation (or willing to build free houses).
- Do migrants in your city have adequate access to social welfare programs based on where they live?
  - Migrants have access to many different assistance programs, yet migrants are often unaware of the opportunities available to them, often due to language barriers, which we need to address.
  - Examples include: UNHCR's (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) ESTIA program with the goal to provide cash to refugees and programs alike to facilitate the transition process, GCR (Greek Council for Refugees) and HIAS (Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society), both which seek to provide free legal counsel to

migrants, IRC (International Rescue Committee) which provide aid packages and emotional counseling.

- ESTIA's goal of providing funding has only been somewhat successful. While more migrants are moving out of camps and into government housing, many complain that the apartments are simply not livable because of rodent infestation, defective plumbing, dirtiness, and insufficient heating. Despite our city's efforts, keeping all of our migrants in good conditions is challenging.
  - There is also a tremendous amount of backlogged migrants purely due to the fact that there are too many people.
- Do migrants have adequate access to transportation?
  - Greece's judicial system has decreed that migrants living in Greece can freely travel around the country in April 2018. This does not apply to people already living in the detention centers.
  - Athens does have many public transportation systems set in place: trains, buses, trams, taxis. Few camps are established close to trains, but the infrastructure is there.
  - Legally, physically, and economically, migrants do have limited access to transportation.
- Are migrants in your city connected to the power grid?
  - According to the data from World Bank, 100% of Greece had access to electricity in 2016. For those living within the city, it can be presumed that they are



connected to the power grid. For temporarily established migrant camps, it is uncertain, but most likely not.

- Do they have reliable access to electricity?
  - People living in city centers have access to electricity. However, there are many people who cannot afford to pay for electricity; a study in 2015 shows that about 300,000 families in Athens cannot afford the bill.
  - In migrant camps, there is little to no electricity.
- What about other commodities/necessities such as clean water, or even access to internet?
  - Many charitable people and organizations attempt to help migrants with food, though there are always long lines and small portions.
  - Clean and/or hot water is rare to nonexistent. Lights are rare and there are no lights in the toilets, prompting attacks at night. There are mice infestations and sewage issues. Women spend a lot of their money on sanitation products. WiFi is limited and migrants frequently have no outlets to charge their phones. That is why our country needs assistance from the European Union and other international organizations

Committee on Economic Integration: Gordon Horowitz

- How would you describe the economy in your city?
  - Although the economy of Greece as a whole has grown for the past nine quarters led by exports, the situation in Athens is still dire. In the wake of the Greek debt crisis and European Union's \$305 billion bailout, our banking system remains weak, especially in lending to both businesses and individuals.

- Despite low costs of conducting business in Athens, poverty and inequality are high, wages are substantially depressed, and pensions are shrunken. Foreign investment in Athens remains low.
- What are its important sectors?
  - Our economy is primarily service-based. Two out of three jobs are in the tertiary sector, with finance, insurance, and real estate being dynamic sectors of the city's economy. However, a lack of sustained foreign investment has hindered the expansion of these sectors substantially.
  - The shipping and manufacturing sectors constitute another significant portion of our economy. Goods that are important to Athens's shipping and manufacturing industries include chemicals, machinery, petrochemical products, cement textiles, soap, glassware, food, soft drinks, pottery, alcoholic beverages, paper products, leather goods, etc.
- In which specific sectors of the economy do migrants participate?
  - Migrants are over-represented in low skill jobs that are generally considered less desirable to Greeks. Many work in construction, which has been particularly impacted by the debt crisis, or in any low-status jobs available to them, such as cleaning, bussing, or beauty salon jobs.
  - Although the government has made efforts to improve accessibility, many migrants do not have access to proper documents for work. As a result, many work below minimum wage in “under the table,” often black market jobs. This

type of employment decelerates integration and creates an additional barrier to integrating into the legal and social system.

- Are migrants entrepreneurial in your city?
  - In the current economic state in Athens, migrants are not legally allowed to exercise independent economic activity, as in starting their own businesses. We no longer issue “work permits,” and migrants are permitted to work upon receiving their international protection applicant card, provided that they work for salary and do not participate in formal entrepreneurship.
- Are there services in place to assist migrants with finding work?
  - Among several government agencies and involved NGOs, our most central agency for assistance in finding work is the Employment and Manpower Agency (OAED), which serves both migrants and Greeks as effectively as it can in an unfavorable job market. OAED provides counseling sessions for registered members and some access to vocational training and Greek classes. OAED frequently acts as a matchmaker in demand and offers, although offers exceed demand significantly.
  - Separately, from 2012 to 2015, the Athens Development and Destination Management Agency conducted a project to offer counseling to 37,000 job-seekers from vulnerable populations, although it did not apply specifically to migrants or refugees.
  - Local Actions for Integrating Socially Vulnerable Groups (TOPEKO), an offshoot of the Athens Development and Destination Management Agency (ADDMA),

have included six projects in recent years to prepare individuals in need for the labor market. The first five projects assisted 400 people, 30% of whom were migrants, while the final project addressed only migrants.

- What are the unemployment levels for residents and for migrants?
  - In Athens, 51% of population is registered as unemployed, compared to 19.5% unemployment in Greece as a whole for residents, which is the highest in the EU. Unemployment among the youth in Athens is potentially even higher, as there is 44% unemployment for Greeks under age 25.
  - Unemployment rates among migrants likely even higher still, but statistics are unreliable.
- What skills are migrants coming to your city with and are there instances of “brain waste?”
  - Athens has no major institution for skill assessment and validation or formal recognition of foreign qualifications, which presents a significant hindrance to integration into the labor force. Additional funding is needed for this purpose, as many migrants with qualifications are either unemployed or are overqualified for their job.
- Does your city/nation provide welfare to migrants?
  - Migrants with work permits can register with the system and get national unemployment benefits of EUR 400 per month for 15 months, contingent on some work history.

- Under a non-discriminatory policy, five-year or student residence permit holders in municipalities have access to the Social Solidarity Income, which provides a safety net to those in poverty.
- All children of migrants are eligible for education and daycare services, provided that there is space available.
- There are no systematic Greek language courses for migrants, and in Athens some NGOs, including Sunday School for Migrants, International Rescue Committee, and Melissa-Network of Migrant Women, provide them. More government funding is needed for language courses.
- As to medical care, Athens operates and finances six preventative/primary care facilities open to all people, regardless of insurance or irregular status as migrants.
- Are they a strain on the social services system?
  - The welfare services of Athens are already at capacity with residents alone
  - 44% of Athenians believe that migrants are a threat to society, while only 41% said they are not.
  - In the same survey, 72% said that the children of refugees should have access to national education and be required to attend school
- Are migrants seen as contributing to the economy?
  - 58% of Athenians think that the presence of migrants increases unemployment
  - With so few existing employment opportunities for migrants and high unemployment, many perceive that the labor force cannot accommodate more

job-seekers and that migrants willing to work for below minimum wage are dangerous.

Committee on Social Cohesion: Kylie Knieriem

- Migrant population demographics
  - Religion(s)
    - Islamic and Christian
  - Families or individuals
    - Refugees are often families while migrant workers are often individuals
  - Age
    - Over 35,000 people are between the ages of 40 and 49
    - Around 25,000 each are aged 0-14, 30-39, 50-59
- Current relations
  - The Athens Observatory for Refugees and Migrants survey of public attitudes of the Municipality of Athens on refugees published in 2017
    - Should refugees' children have access to the Municipality's day care facilities?: Yes-65%; No-16%
    - Are refugees a threat to national security?: Yes-44%; No-41%
    - Should refugee children attend school?: Yes-72%; No-13%
    - Can refugees integrate into Greek society?: Yes-28%; No-57%
  - Continually increasing discontent for migrants by Greek nationals and existing migrant communities because more financial aid to migrants means less social and welfare services for them

- Why migrants choose Athens
  - As a member of the EU, Greece has been seen as an oasis of stability in the tumultuous Balkans
    - Even poorly paid irregular migrant workers can earn as much as four to six times the wages they could earn at home
  - Greece has a strong informal economy (around 30% of the GDP) which needs cheap, unskilled labor to survive
    - Young Greek natives are unwilling to accept employment like this
  - Greece falls at the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and Africa; has a large coastline so policing migrants entry is very difficult; relies heavily on tourism so borders have never been adequately policed
    - Athens is the largest city in Greece so naturally people will migrate there
  - Greece has an “in-transit” country status because only about 8% of documented immigrants will apply for asylum in Greece and the rest will attempt to find asylum in Northern European countries
    - This has posed problems concerning social cohesion because migrants are very disinclined to integrate since they’re mostly planning on leaving
- Historical context
  - Up until the collapse of the Grecian military dictatorship in 1974, Greece had mostly been a country of emigration, not immigration
  - After the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989, Greece had to re-think their restrictive immigration legislation to let in more workers

- In the mid-1990's, the Greek immigration policy relied mostly on the mass deportation of Albanian immigrants in order to discourage immigration
  - This was also in part due to the Greek nation-state's strong ties to an ethnically based identity rooted in a common ancestry, language, and Orthodox religion, which was being diluted by the immigrants which posed a threat to their cultural and ethnic purity and authenticity
  - Public opinion skyrocketed from 29% of people in 1991 thinking the amount of immigrants living in Greece was "too high," to 69.2% in 1994
  - About 85-90% also believed that immigrants were responsible for increased levels in crime and unemployment
- Policies
  - Until 1991, immigration policy dated back to the 1920's
  - Greece has a multi-level, highly centralized governance so municipalities, like Athens, are limited in their ability to play a decisive role in migrant integration
  - Assimilation, integration, adaptation
    - The first few pieces of legislation included the right to be informed in a language one understands while in detention and an obligatory 9 years of education for migrant children
    - No additional funding was given to the Kallikratis Plan of 2011, a social reform bill that could have aided tackling social exclusion and marginalization of immigrants, so migrant integration programs are sporadic at best



- Exclusion
  - In 1991. The first Law on Aliens was enacted, restricting and discouraging migration
    - Any attempt to enter the country illegally could be punished with imprisonment ranging from three months to five years
    - To enter legally, you had to have a work permit prior to arrival
- Pervasiveness of discrimination
  - 2013: Greek government launched a police operation aimed at cracking down on irregular immigration and crime in Athens
    - Police conducted identity checks to verify the legal status of individuals presumed to be irregular migrants
- Is religion helpful or detrimental?
  - The prevailing religion, as written in the Greek Constitution, is Greek Orthodox
    - For those who are not Greek Orthodox, it is naturally harder to become a part of the society
    - In 2015, about 67% of the Greek population was comfortable with working with a Muslim, similar to the EU's average of 71%
    - However, the first Public Mosque was built in Athens in 2018 and has been a symbol of increased immigrant integration
- How does gender affect acceptance?
  - Greece has the highest female migration rate in the Europe
    - 70%-80% of most migrant populations are female

- Women are particularly vulnerable to exploitation
  - Participation of women in the labor force has been very low due to a lack of formal employment opportunities, an overabundance of unpaid activities in small family businesses or agricultural work, and prevailing cultural attitudes in Greece about the domestic role of women
  - Demand for cheap, migrant labor in areas related to household and care work in Greece that is largely filled by female migrants
- Sex trafficking is on the rise; over 20,000 migrants are trafficked into Greece for the purpose of sex work
- The Melissa Network is an organization started by refugee women in Greece that promotes empowerment, communication, and active citizenship
  - Provides Greek language lessons, workshops, childcare, and support to migrant and refugee women throughout Greece
- Media influence
  - Greek Media tends to look at things from a logistical and numerical perspective
    - In comparison to German media, analysis is much more quantitatively based
    - Political leaning of the publication is very important when examining conclusions
      - Conservative newspapers (Kathimerini) discuss the violence that occurs within high refugee populated areas, More liberal/centrist ones reported on bad living conditions within refugee camps

- Numerical perspective quantifies outrage from both sides:  
from both sides of the aisle, more refugees, conservatives  
fear more violence, liberals see more human rights abuses,  
drives sensationalism + profits
- Terrorism is not a primary concern of Greek media, mentioned far more  
by British/American outlets. Immigrants are largely portrayed as victims  
and a group to sympathize with

Committee on Health: Ali Kazmi

- How would you describe the healthcare available to your citizens?
  - ‘Solidarity’ health clinics created, but ran by regular citizens and volunteer  
doctors. Lack of payrolls for workers has caused a massive decline in  
employment at hospitals.
  - Many no longer have access to healthcare because of financial crisis.
  - Lack of medical staff and supplies — losing your jobs means losing your health  
insurance as well in many cases, forcing many to seek aid at the last minute.
- How would you describe the healthcare available to migrants/refugees?
  - National and Kapodistrian University of Athens gathering doctors and other  
required forces to provide healthcare services and volunteer service.
  - Enhancing PHC for refugees, assessing all the health needs of those trying to  
reach Europe
- What happens in your city when someone is unable to pay for healthcare?

- When unable to pay for healthcare, many seek to come for aid at the last minute, often making medical issues worse due to their unwillingness to address their conditions earlier
- Many head to ‘solidarity’ health clinics, though the medical supplies and staff there are often limited and do not completely satisfy a person’s needs.
- What is the quality of healthcare in your city?
  - Compared to the rest of the country, Athens has a relatively better healthcare system.
  - Due to the lack of healthcare workers in the system, the quality is being crumpled by the increasing amount of people coming to Athens.
  - The costs of receiving care in Athens is therefore higher, as well as the fact that medical supplies are on the decline.
  - There is more medical staff available here than in rural areas of Greece. Many doctors speak English and other European languages, and many volunteer doctors are arranged to be here than in other areas.
- Are there systems to map and follow up treatment plans?
  - Lack of recorded data on those who are received into hospitals, particularly refugees.
  - Lack of medical screening as well as a need of systematic data collection promotes patients to be subject to medical conditions/issues that aren’t well provided for, due to limited supplies and lack of information on how to properly treat them.

- Treatment plans are costly, forcing many to go when absolutely needed, as opposed to returning regularly.
- How might those need to change for migrant communities?
  - The availability of NGOs (Non-governmental organizations) in Athens is crucial to providing such necessities
  - With their collection of data and providing of basic services, NGOs can set up healthcare provisions at a much more local level and be able to support those that are unable to do so themselves.
  - NGOs are able to reduce the costs that refugees are required to pay for hospital aid (such as vaccinations).
- Do your citizens have easy access to food, especially nutritional food?
  - Growing need for food — evident in the fact that children at school are surviving on less and less rations.
  - Many, including them, are searching through trash cans, and living off items such as ketchup and pasta.
  - Issue continues to become more prevalent as families have no one that is employed, resulting in hungrier families and apparent need to survive
  - 10 percent of Greek elementary and middle school students facing “food insecurity.”
  - Bread lines, as well as soup kitchens, formed around Athens as a response to this hunger problem, with added pressures from migrants and refugees also in need.

- Malnutrition apparent in the new diets formed, such as “cabbage-based diets” and foraging of snails.
- Do migrant communities face food insecurity? Why or why not?
  - On the edge of facing hunger. No governmental or international organizations currently providing meals for the refugees
  - Makeshift kitchens, made out of refugee boats and other materials, are placed around Athens, particularly by the shores
  - Meals provided are often adhered to the dietary codes these refugees abide by, particularly since there are muslim refugees coming in
  - Vegetarian food, as well as the occasional halal meat. But without these kitchens, people will face food insecurity
  - Agreement regarding EU and Turkey to stem flow on migrants into Europe, stalling migration within Greece — this resulted in a sharp decline in the meals provided by organizations such as the Giving FoodTruck
- How will you treat incoming migrants who may be malnourished, and what does ongoing care look like?
  - Potential introduction governmental organizations focused on providing food to incoming refugees
  - Have incoming refugees enter camps, where a more organized system of delivering food can happen and refugees will be able to support themselves

- Support the presence of volunteer organizations that are in charge of kitchens and bread lines arranged by the shores — perhaps providing supplies for them will be beneficial as well
- What resources currently exist for mental health and malnourishment treatment?
  - Mental health services receive little attention as it is, with malnourishment treatment being responded with things such as makeshift kitchens that serve hot meals, as well fruits, vegetables, and other food items to refugees.
  - Little support for mental health support and for asylum seeking.
- Will those need to be expanded with the influx of migrants?
  - Migrants are prone to severe mental health issues, often leading them into attempted suicide, untreated psychological trauma.
  - This is especially prominent in camps, despite aid groups primarily focused there.
  - Consistent waves of migrants entering, adding pressure onto the conditions that are already being seen within this area.
  - Will need to expand these resources, perhaps starting with more efficiency dealing with asylum seeking applications.
- What is your current system of addressing sanitation?
  - Wastewater treatment plant in Athens, but recent discharges of untreated municipal sewage has brought attention to the system
  - Usage of landfills (creation of illegal landfills as well) to dump waste — unable to be disposed properly

- Plastic and other single-use items thrown into these landfills, often finding its way into waters and various areas
- What percentage of your citizens have access to indoor plumbing?
  - Around 55% of citizens in Athens have access to the urban water sector.
  - Water consumption has been increasing due to financial crisis as well as lack of clean water, but indoor plumbing has suffered
  - 2010 reform
    - Reorganization of the Greek local administration led to higher costs of water supply provisions.
  - Excess waste water often traversing through these camps, with portable toilets not being well connected to the sewage waste system
- What percentage of migrants/refugees have access to indoor plumbing?
  - Significantly lower than that of the citizens — lower attention being given
  - Many refugees live in camps, so resources are minimal and distributed to the refugees
  - Indoor plumbing isn't a priority when it comes to migrants/refugees, but the access of it won't be getting any higher
- Have you had any recent public health concerns/scares?
  - Mass exodus of doctors to other countries that are physician-poor and pay them well.
  - Slashes to the healthcare budget — resulting in the lack of proper treatment and medication.



- Rising mortality rates, as well as large increases in infections such as HIV.
- Suicides have become trending, despite the rate of suicides being one of the lowest in the world.
- Is the city government responsible for trash collection? If it is, in all parts of the city including informal settlements? If not, what is the system for trash collection and disposal?
  - Creation of landfills and lack of care for pollution for air and water is costing government a lot — facing a future loss of euros if the EU's request of getting rid of illegal landfills isn't obeyed
  - Government is responsible, including for informal settlements. With more pressure on such a city to provide for and attempt to accommodate both citizens and refugees, effective waste management is needed
  - Makeshift dumps may be required to get rid of trash, but will be a problem later on due to overflowing of waste as well as the warmer temperatures
- How can you use technology to prepare for, mobilize around, and address the health issues of migrants in your city?
  - Lack of infrastructure is part of the problem — creation of recycling centers to promote better waste disposal will be gradual steps towards a cleaner environment.
  - Slowing down the volume of trash in landfills by forcing local areas to conform to environmental preservation practices (such as stop selling plastic bags in supermarkets)

- Volunteer organizations and NGOs being supported by government
  - These organizations have a much more local effect on both citizens and incoming migrants — proper equipment provided will have boosted effects
- Increase employment as well as make health care services more affordable
  - Employment through cleaning up the environment is one of the needed professions in Athens at the moment.
- Have programs that are centered on helping those with mental health issues to reduce needs to rely on drugs and willingness to take one's own life
- Technology and medical resources involving medical screening will be useful to understand medical conditions and better prepare for health accommodations
- The Greek technology center is one of Greece's stronger spots — opportunities to help boost public health in areas of Athens if tech business can bring in funds
- Improved systems of waste disposal — by better improving the quality of water, areas such as refugee camps and local neighborhoods will be able to have access to a safer supply — this will also call for a need in better supplying of water to these areas

*Committee on Resilience: Claudio Aguilar*

- Athens
  - Athens has 15,000 refugees and asylum seekers. Of our city's refugees, approximately 50% are from Syria; others are from Afghanistan, Palestine, Iran,

and Kurdistan. Additionally, 97% of refugees arrived through Turkey. Refugees rely on services and the support of Athens.

- Despite our city's large refugee population, only about 8% are willing to stay in Greece, meaning 92% are hoping to reach other European nations as their final destination.
- Many Greek residents struggle. Our nation's total unemployment rate is 27%, which is significantly higher among our nation's youth (65%).
- Athens needs to address multiple problems at once: the economic crisis and the refugee crisis.
- Resilience Strategy for 2030
  - Athens pledged to be open, green, proactive, and vibrant.
    - Open
      - Athens wants to be transparent and accountable.
      - Athens wants to have data-driven policies.
    - Green
      - Athens wants to have a sustainable city.
      - Athens pledges to be environmentally conscious.
    - Proactive
      - Athens pledges to empower municipal representatives and local communities.
      - Athens will engage with neighborhoods.
    - Vibrant

- Athens wants to promote creativity and entrepreneurship.
- Waves of Migration to Athens
  - A major surge in migration to Athens occurred after the collapse of the Eastern Bloc in 1989. There was a massive movement of economic migrants from the Balkans, Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa, contributing to a 463.91% increase in migration from 1991-2011.
    - The movement of Greek population to the suburbs left vacancies in dense city centers.
  - Between 2014 and 2015, almost one million refugees arrived in Athens as a stop on their journey to other parts of Europe.
    - City squares and parks became meeting point and home for thousands of refugees. Athens had very little infrastructure in place or experience with receiving refugees. There was a 5% increase in population.
- Athens' Plans
  - One of our plans is to rent 200 apartments to refugees with relocation status, which we hope will eventually be able to host up to 3,000 beneficiaries, with 6 beneficiaries in each apartment. However, this is a short term goal.
  - We will set up the Migration and Refugee Coordination Center (MRCC), which will prepare refugee integration strategy by:
    - Coordinating city actors and manage aid to refugees.
    - Working with UN Refugee Agency's housing program.
    - Preparing to provide emergency services in the case of a crisis.

- Athens will create the Observatory for Refugees and Immigrants, whose goal is to collect data on refugees. It will also support and inform the MRCC and will inform policies and planning decisions that relate to migrants and refugees.
  - Again, this is a short-term goal.
- We have already created the Coordination Center for Migrant and Refugee issues (ACCMR). It includes 92 of the most prominent national and international organizations that work together to:
  - Share data and resources.
  - Address current and future needs of refugees.
  - Inform policy and spending.
  - Prepare for future refugee crises by mapping services and infrastructure, identifying challenges, and developing emergency scenarios.
  - Develop a Strategic Action Plan for refugee and Migrant Integration that can influence other parts of Greece, train staff, and teach refugees to code.
  - Maintain the Cities Network for Integration, which includes 12 municipalities, and promotes refugee integration and shares experiences and best practices.
- Athens is also creating spaces to bring people together.
  - For example, the Melissa network is a community-based integration center for refugee women. It helps women from 45 nationalities and more than 100 women commute from shelters and camps each day. Women are

taught to code, speak Greek, develop leadership skills, and spot false news reports.

- The Together program transforms day care facilities into places where migrant and native families can meet, promoting integration.
- Our city supports the construction of places of worship.
- We plan events to celebrate cultural diversity.