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Who protests in Greece? Mass Opposition to Austerity*

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Abstract

The widespread opposition to unprecedented austerity measures in Greece provides a unique opportunity to study the causes of mass protest. We report the results of a survey of the adult population, with two thirds of the respondents supporting protest and 29 per cent reporting actual involvements in strikes and/or demonstrations during 2010. Relative deprivation is a significant predictor of potential protest but does not play any role in terms of who actually takes part in strikes or demonstrations. Previous protest participation emerges as a key predictor of actual protest. We attempt to set these results in the context of Greece as compared with other countries facing similar challenges and discuss the implications for the future of austerity politics.

Introduction

From the Arab Spring to the Occupy Wall Street movement, the Chilean student demonstrations and the environmental protests of German ‘Wutbürger’ (angry citizens), a new wave of protest is spreading around the world that might even be compared with 1848 or 1968.¹ One of the key contributors to this wave is opposition to austerity policies adopted by several governments following the economic and financial crises of the late 2000s. Given the wide spread of issues addressed and political contexts in which protests take place, the question arises how similar these new protest movements really are. To what extent do these movements constitute a *new* protest culture?² The rise of austerity movements in particular appears to challenge the dominant frame for the analysis of protest behaviour in Western Europe, which has focused on the rise of ‘new politics’ and associated ‘new social movements’ addressing issues such as the environment and peace. The main protagonists of these movements were generations socialized in affluent post-war economies, holding ‘post-materialist values’.³ Anti-austerity protests, on the other hand, focus on ‘material’ issues, such as cuts in public expenditure, unemployment and inequality. Such protests could thus be expected to fit what Harold R. Kerbo termed ‘movements of crisis’ in contrast to ‘movements of affluence’.⁴ A key question for understanding the recent

¹ Stiglitz 2012; Mason 2012; Castells 2012; Kraushaar 2012.

² Hartleb 2011.

³ Inglehart 1977; Barnes and Kaase et al. 1979.

⁴ Kerbo 1982.

mobilization against austerity is whether it represents a further manifestation of the impact of ‘new social movements’ or is indicative of a different protest culture that is more akin to ‘old’ rather than ‘new’ politics.

While anti-austerity protest can be found in many countries, the sovereign debt crisis in the Eurozone that accelerated in 2010 provides a specific focus. The country at the forefront of this development is Greece. To prevent a disorderly default on its debt, in May 2010 the socialist PASOK government negotiated the largest loan ever received by a single country (€110 billion) in return for a draconian structural adjustment programme. Greece was of course not the only one to experience acute economic problems and be forced to adopt austerity policies. Spain, Italy, and Portugal in Southern Europe, as well as Ireland and the UK, among others, also found themselves in similar positions. However, anti-austerity protest appears to have been, at least thus far, much more intense in Greece than elsewhere, including in comparison to those countries that have also had to resort to international financial rescues.

The aim of this paper is twofold. Firstly, it seeks to understand the determinants of anti-austerity protest in Greece in a comparative context, analysing the socio-political profile of protesters and the mechanisms through which they got mobilized in 2010. Despite the prevalence of strikes and demonstrations in Greece’s political landscape, there is a scarcity of empirical research on the

individual and collective drivers of participation in protest activity.⁵ Is there something specific about Greece that explains its higher level of mobilization compared to other countries or is it a precursor of things to come elsewhere? Secondly, this paper seeks to map the characteristics of the anti-austerity movement engaging with broader theoretical debates about the determinants of participation in protest. In particular, given the centrality of economic hardship in the austerity debate, to what extent is the theory of ‘relative deprivation’ able to make a return to the fore of political behaviour, when tested against other classic theories, such as resource mobilization and rational choice approaches?

Crucially, the huge size and frequency of demonstrations and general strikes in Greece offers a unique opportunity to study protest behaviour through the analysis of individual-level data collected with the help of a general population survey. We conducted a survey of the Greek adult population in December 2010. Of 1014 people interviewed, 302 (29 per cent) stated that they had engaged in protest, a sizeable minority of the entire population. Unlike surveys of demonstrators, this survey gives us data on both participants and non-participants of a particular type of political protest. Furthermore, unlike many previous studies of political protest, this survey is about the engagement of individuals in a specific protest movement

⁵ Typically, studies of protest behaviour in Greece are qualitative. For example, see Economides and Monastiriotis 2009; Pechtelidis 2011. One interesting exception is a study reporting the results of various laboratory experiments conducted in the context of the 2008 riots, see Hugh-Jones, Katsanidou and Richter 2011.

and actions that preceded the data gathering process by days, weeks or, at most, months. This will allow us first to scrutinize opposition to austerity policies and support for protest action before exploring who out of this pool of potential protesters ends up taking part in actual protests.

The paper argues that to explain the phenomenon of anti-austerity protest, we need to take adequate account of both the aggregate context at the national level and its dynamic interrelationship with drivers of mobilization at the individual level. It thus begins with a brief overview of Greek protest culture, which informs the subsequent theorization about the individual drivers of protest and helps us generate relevant hypotheses. The collection of data is then discussed, followed by a presentation of the main findings and their theoretical and empirical implications for austerity politics. In the overall analysis, we will examine to what extent the economic circumstances of the austerity crisis or the political context of a highly-developed protest culture are the primary drivers of anti-austerity protest in Greece. As we shall demonstrate, relative deprivation plays an important role to define protest potential but socialization into taking particular forms of political action through prior protest involvement is an essential component of explaining who actually protests.

Protest in Greece: Contextual Factors

According to Charles Tilly, protest behaviour cannot be seen as simply reactive or spontaneous or fully understood by looking at individual level influences alone.

Protest repertoires, Tilly argues, ‘are learned cultural creations’⁶, which carry a different meaning and whose parameters are defined by a shared culture that structures relationships of power and resistance. A range of related concepts have been employed to analyse the nation-specific political context of protest behaviour, including mentalities, ‘political cultures’ and ‘collective action frames’.⁷ What these highlight is that the intensity and character of protest is historically contingent and dependent on a specific socio-political context, which may explain why there is greater protest mobilization in some countries than in others. To understand the drivers of anti-austerity protest in Greece, we thus have to first look at the particular national setting in which the movement developed.

Contentious politics evolved in Greece as a result of historical struggles, which gradually stretched the boundaries of permissible expression of social demands through protest in a way that undermined state authority and glorified resistance to government policies.⁸ A critical juncture to the development of this protest culture in modern Greek history can be traced to the student opposition against the military junta that ruled between 1967 and 1974. The uprising in the Polytechnic on 17 November 1973 is identified in popular discourse as the reason for the regime’s collapse and the return to democracy a year later. The ensuing romanticized vision of collective action, amplified by a widespread suspicion

⁶ Tilly 1995, 26.

⁷ Tarrow 1992.

⁸ Andronikidou and Kovras 2012.

against any attempts by the authorities to impose stricter internal security controls in a nation that had experienced excessive police brutality during the junta, provide fertile ground for new movements to elicit legitimacy and sympathy.⁹ Consequently, various forms of protest, such as the widespread practice of school occupations and the partisan activism of university student politics, have been institutionalized and are widely reproduced in social and political life.¹⁰

The ideology of the groups that led the resistance against the military junta places them at the left of the spectrum. Despite their small size, many extra-parliamentary leftist groups, along with various anarchist groups, continued their ‘struggles’ after the transition to democracy, playing leading roles in almost all the social movements that emerged since.¹¹ The socialist PASOK government in the 1980s was, to an extent, able to contain some of the most militant parts of these movements ‘by promising to change society from above’¹² and forming close relationships with the trade unions that organize the majority of protests.¹³ Meanwhile, parliamentary parties of the Left, notably the Greek Communist Party (KKE) and later the Coalition of the Radical Left (Syriza), actively encouraged collective action but were unable to capitalize in electoral terms on the left-wing

⁹ Karyotis 2007.

¹⁰ Lyrantzis 2011; Andronikidou and Kovras 2012.

¹¹ Kassimeris 2005. Kanellopoulos 2012.

¹² Lountos 2012.

¹³ Mavrogordatos 1997.

orientation of protests prior to the May/June elections of 2012.¹⁴ Successive working class struggles in Greece are thus, according to Lountos, not a manifestation of the organized Left's unifying role but rather the product of sustained activity of 'a layer of militant and radical minorities', whose influence is disproportionately high in the specific context and protest culture within which they operate.¹⁵

A recent example identified in the literature as a manifestation of the influence of a Greek protest culture were the violent demonstrations and riots that followed the shooting of a 15-year old student by a police officer in December 2008.¹⁶ It is difficult, however, to establish a link between such an alleged 'protest culture' and protest events without data on the protesters. Although the historical narrative above suggests such protest culture in Greece, we need cross-national data to assess whether this leads to a greater propensity for protest compared to other countries facing similar conditions that could motivate protest.

Reliable data on past protest behaviour is difficult to come by. One popular approach among social movement scholars has been the analysis of protest events

¹⁴ Left-wing parties did not until 2012 pose any direct challenge against the two major parties, PASOK and New Democracy, which took turns to run the country after 1974. Cf. Lyrintzis 2011, for a recent assessment.

¹⁵ Lountos 2012, 187.

¹⁶ Lountos 2012.

based on media reports. Comparing the yearly mean of protest events between 1990 and 1995 calculated by Nam¹⁷ on the basis of the Protest and Coercion dataset,¹⁸ Greece with 224.17 events came way behind countries such as France, Spain and Italy. However, if one takes into account the different population sizes,¹⁹ Greece with 21.3 protest events per million inhabitants ranks at the same level as France (21.7) and above Spain (14.0), Portugal (6.9) and Italy (6.0), although well behind Ireland (75.1).

Comparative data from population surveys may provide some clues on the number of people that were actually involved in protest activities. The European Values Survey has asked since 1981 about participation in a range of political actions, including ‘attending lawful demonstrations’, but Greece was only involved in just two studies, in 1999 and 2008.²⁰ In 1999, a staggering 48 per cent

¹⁷ Nam 2007.

¹⁸ European Protest and Coercion Data, compiled by Ron Francisco <http://web.ku.edu/~ronfran/data/>, accessed 10 March 2012.

¹⁹ Own calculations based on Nam’s 2007 data and 1992 population size data obtained from the US census website, <http://www.census.gov/population/international/data/idb/informationGateway.php>, accessed 10 March 2012.

²⁰ Own analysis of European Values Study data, 1981-2008; design weight applied. *European Values Study Longitudinal Data File 1981-2008* (Cologne, Germany: GESIS Data Archive, 2011) [ZA4804 Data file Version 2.0.0, [doi:10.4232/1.11005](https://doi.org/10.4232/1.11005)].

of Greek respondents claimed to have taken part in a demonstration at some point in their lives; by 2008, this figure had fallen to 24 per cent. The 1999 figure was the highest figure ever recorded in the European Values Survey – France coming closest with 46 per cent in 2008– and could thus be seen as evidence of an exceptionally strong protest culture. However, the 1999 figure appears to be a reflection of specific factors applying at the time. Apart from a high level of protest against the military dictatorship in the 1970s, the 1990s also saw mass protest on a huge scale, in particular the movement on the Macedonian issue in which protest was actively supported by all political forces.²¹ The 2008 figure of 24 per cent, immediately preceding the 2010 protests, brought Greece back in line with other Southern European countries that have always displayed a rather high preponderance for protest behaviour, in particular Italy (2009: 38 per cent) and Spain (2008: 39 per cent).

More recent figures were collected by the European Social Survey (ESS) since 2002, with a question on participation in ‘lawful’ demonstrations in the last 12

For more information on the EVS study, see <http://www.europeanvaluesstudy.org>, accessed 26 March 2012.

²¹ Two mass demonstrations took place in 1992, among others, in Athens and in Thessaloniki, with the participation of 1.3 and 1 million people respectively; see Danforth 1995, and European Protest and Coercion Data, ‘Greece 1980-1995’ file.

months.²² The results for Greece and a host of other countries affected by the austerity crisis are plotted in Figure 1. These confirm the slowing down of protest in Greece, as far as demonstrations were concerned in the 2000s, a period of economic growth and prosperity, during which Spain and Italy had a higher share of protesters.

--- Figure 1 about here ----

On the other hand, Greece clearly stands out from others when considering general strikes, which are largely absent from the repertoire of trade union actions in Northern Europe, including Ireland and the UK, and are uncommon in Southern Europe but had become a regular feature of Greek life well before the austerity protests. Back in the early 1990s, there were multiple general strikes in protest against welfare retrenchment and cuts.²³ Over the last ten years, there has been at least one general strike called in Greece per year (except in 2003), peaking at seven in both 2010 and 2011 (see Table 1). The role of trade unions is crucial here, as they are responsible for calling the strikes. Although figures on trade union membership do not suggest that Greece is as a particularly radicalized

²² European Social Survey Rounds 1-5, Data file editions 6.2 (Round 1), 3.2 (Round 2), 3.3 (Round 4), 4.0 (Round 5), 2.0 (Round 6) (Oslo: Norwegian Social Science Data Services – Data Archive and Distributor of ESS Data, 2002-2010).

²³ Cf. European Protest and Coercion Data.

society,²⁴ case studies have shown that unions have maintained a high degree of organizational cohesion and activism.²⁵

--- Table 1 about here ---

In terms of the economic outlook for Greece, the comparative data are fairly devastating; on all macro-economic indicators such as gross national product, unemployment and gross national debt, Greece was doing worse than other countries hit by the sovereign debt crisis.²⁶ This has severely impacted on individual citizens who are most pessimistic in their self-evaluations of their economic circumstances, a sentiment captured in Eurobarometer surveys, plotted in Figure 2. Since early 2010, Greeks perceive themselves to face the toughest

²⁴ According to OECD statistics, trade union density in 2008 was 24 per cent in Greece, compared to 32.2 in Ireland , 33.4 in Italy, 20.5 in Portugal, 15 per cent in Spain and 27.1 in the UK; http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=UN_DEN, accessed 11 April 2012.

²⁵ Kretsos 2011.

²⁶ With 5 per cent negative growth and its national debt estimated to over 160 per cent of its GDP in 2011, Greece topped all indicators of deprivation, with the exception of unemployment, where it was second to Spain's 20 per cent rate. See comparative data in IMF World Economic Outlook, available at <http://www.imf.org/external/data.htm>, accessed 5 April 2012.

economic conditions, with more than 60 per cent considering their economic positions to be 'rather bad' and 'very bad'.

---Figure 2 about here ----

The overall analysis of patterns of activity suggests that Greece has some similarities with Spain and Italy, with which they also share an authoritarian past, and stark differences with others, including Ireland, Portugal and the UK. The combination of media reports and population survey data show that Greece has a group of activists that generate a lot of protest events that can occasionally mobilize a sizeable number of people. Furthermore, while the socio-political context illustrates the presence of left-leaning protest culture in Greece, not all of major past protest events are linked to radical left-wing politics, while the number of people mobilized greatly exceeds the electoral support radical left-parties have received (before 2012). These imply that there is a large reservoir of people who have been engaged in protest before and who any protest mobilization in Greece may be able to draw on. Therefore, in our analysis of individual-level determinants of participation in the anti-austerity movement, we will need to pay specific attention to these contextual factors, particularly previous protest participation, which may play an important role in accounting for involvement in protest activities in 2010. Another contextual factor that sets Greece apart is the

depth of the economic hardship experienced. This reinforces the idea that any attempt to explain protest participation should consider the possible impact of factors linked to economic deprivation.

Theorizing Individual Drivers of Protest

Many different theories have been discussed for the explanation of who becomes involved in protest behaviour, with some more or less fashionable at different times. Considering the widespread, detrimental impact of the crisis on individuals' circumstances, as well as the suddenness in which grievances were imposed,²⁷ the first group of factors that we should investigate focuses on the idea of protest as a response to injustice and deprivation. This is one of the oldest theories of protest and revolution and an important element of Marxist debate since the 19th century. In the 1940s and 1950s, the empirical analysis of social behaviour generated a major refinement of the theory. A range of studies suggested that the 'absolute' level of deprivation, such as poverty and inequality, was not linked to protest behaviour; other factors needed to be present. This led to the theory of 'relative deprivation', which focused on a range of other conditions necessary to turn the stimulus of 'absolute' deprivation into active protest. The most important aspect in Ted Robert Gurr's influential model, which included

²⁷ On the concept of 'suddenly imposed grievances' providing a spur to the recruitment of protest participants, cf. Walsh 1981.

numerous other intervening variables, was that the ‘deprivation’ had to be perceived as ‘depriving’ in relation to what an individual feels to be entitled to.²⁸

Relative deprivation, however, fell out of fashion in the 1970s. One key reason was its apparent inability to explain individual involvement in as well as the size of protest events, such as the black ghetto riots in US towns in the 1960s.²⁹ There appeared to be a widespread consensus in the academic community analysing social movements by the 1980s and 1990s to reject relative deprivation theory and turn to rival explanations,³⁰ with only social psychologists continuing to express support for it.³¹ More recently, relative deprivation models were used in analyses of various forms of political behaviour, such as turnout in elections,³² protest potential,³³ and past protest behaviour,³⁴ generally confirming the lack of explanatory value of the theory.

The anti-austerity movement in Greece, which appears to be chiefly motivated by a ‘deprivation’ type stimulus, offers an ideal setting to test the theory. While there

²⁸ Gurr 1970.

²⁹ Brush 1996.

³⁰ Gurney and Tierney 1982.

³¹ Crosby 1976; Walker and Smith 2002.

³² Clarke et al. 2004, 237-40.

³³ Sanders et al. 2004.

³⁴ Dalton, van Sickle and Weldon 2009.

are no detailed data on how each individual is affected by the measures, our survey is able to capture the level of deprivation by asking respondents a number of questions about their past and future economic situation. This allows us to measure the perception of the size of the economic deprivation, which could be seen as an approximation of the ‘felt’ deprivation that is a key predictor of protest.

Apart from the actual experience of economic hardship, an essential element of deprivation theory involves aspects of ‘fairness’ and ‘blame attribution’.

Conditions will not be perceived as ‘depriving’, unless individuals perceive that they are treated unfairly and are not themselves to blame for their situation.

Within the Greek political discourse on austerity, issues of fairness and blame play an important role. A broad range of actors such as financial institutions, both international and domestic, and other foreign bodies such as the EU, Germany, or ‘globalization’ in general have been held accountable. While all sides appear to share some elements of blame attribution, the main division lines between proponents and opponents concern questions about the effectiveness and fairness of the policies proposed. We would thus expect a perception of unfairness to play an important role in the decision to protest. Furthermore, relative deprivation theory would suggest that those adopting an ‘internal’ blame attribution, for example, unemployed people blaming themselves for their inability to find a job, are less likely to protest.³⁵ The test of relative deprivation theory would thus

³⁵ Cf. Walker, Wong, and Kretzschmar 2002.

involve a range of variables that measure economic experiences and perceptions, as well as considerations of unfairness and blame.

Historically, relative deprivation theory was replaced as the dominant theory of protest in the 1960s and 1970s by approaches focusing on the resources of individuals. If we are going to test whether relative deprivation makes an independent contribution to the explanation of protest in the context of the extreme austerity situation that applied in Greece in 2010, a first group of variables that we need to control for are defined by 'resources'. Within political science, the earliest major empirical study aiming to cover the entire range of political actions taken in the USA promoted resource-based explanations of behaviour.³⁶ People participated in politics who had the resources to do so; this placed variables such as education, occupation and income - the 'socio-economic status' (SES) - at the centre of the analysis.

How can we adapt 'resource' based theories of social protest to the Greek situation? We propose to concentrate on two types of resource based variables, namely 'biographical availability' and 'social networks'. First, we can easily test a basic model of political participation with reference to variables of 'biographical availability'³⁷ of individuals, such as age, gender, marital status, caring for children, and education. Protest behaviour has in the past mainly been related to

³⁶ Verba and Nie 1972.

³⁷ McAdam 1986, 70; Schussman and Soule 2005, 1085.

younger people; lack of obligations linked to family and occupation could point to young age cohorts (below 30) to be more involved. Engaging in protests such as demonstrations involves a degree of physical activity that may make it less likely that older cohorts, above 50 or 60, are taking part. Education has been found to be strongly associated with both conventional and unconventional political behaviour. In the context of protest associated with 'new politics', education can be linked to the concept of 'cognitive mobilization'. Inglehart conceived of this concept as the basis of a 'newer elite-challenging mode of participation', in contrast to old types that relied on political parties and trade unions.³⁸

However, there are questions about the links between 'biographical availability' at different stages of mobilization and for different kinds of protest. One of the few studies comparing protest potential and actual protest found biographical availability to be an important predictor of potential but not actual protest.³⁹ A study of participation in a movement of homeless people, a protest strongly associated with issues of economic deprivation, showed that those with less biographical availability were more likely to participate.⁴⁰ This may suggest that these variables are less likely to apply to protest that is mainly defined as a 'movement of crisis' in which economic survival is at stake.

³⁸ Inglehart 1997, 169.

³⁹ Beyerlein and Hipp 2006.

⁴⁰ Corrigall-Brown et al 2009.

In the 1990s, the SES approach was supplemented to create an extended model known as ‘civic voluntarism’,⁴¹ which included other resource aspects, such as time but also a social link: people participated in politics if they had the resources but also the opportunity to take part. Those integrated into social networks which generated requests to take part in particular actions could be seen as having more opportunities and were thus more likely to participate. Involvement of individuals in social networks has also been shown to be particularly important in turning ‘potential’ into ‘actual’ participants.⁴² In line with the literature,⁴³ we would expect participation in social networks, such as political parties, trade unions and voluntary organizations to be linked to protest behaviour. In addition to union membership, full-time employment, especially in the public sector, would be particularly likely to increase the likelihood of strike participation, as they would expose individuals to greater mobilization attempts. In general, and contrary to expectations based on considerations of time availability, past surveys have shown that those in full-time employment are generally more likely to be involved in protest.⁴⁴

An additional important variable that can be termed a ‘resource’ is previous involvement in strikes and demonstrations. People socialized into a specific form

⁴¹ Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995.

⁴² McAdam 1986; Klandermans and Oegema 1987.

⁴³ Quintelier 2008; Somma 2010.

⁴⁴ Verhulst and Walgrave 2009, 460.

of collective action could be expected to be more likely to engage in such behaviour in the future, although the probability of remobilization is likely to be affected by both ‘biographical availability’⁴⁵ and ‘social network’ involvement. Previous protesters who were mobilized through informal recruitment networks, such as friends and family links, may more easily resort into renewed protest activity.⁴⁶ In the absence of panel data stretching back to specific previous experiences of protest, however, we have to be careful about the exact nature and direction of causal links. The experience of protest involvement may promote a process of politicization that would see protesters more likely to be involved in trade unions, voluntary organizations, and political parties, thus providing a network connection. Protest involvement could also be thought to be conducive to adopting a left-wing ideology and attachment to left-wing politics. Finally, those with protest experience may have a different perception of the costs and benefits of protest. In order to test the independent effects of such variables, we thus also have to include predictors of ideological position, as well as rational choice criteria.

⁴⁵ For a detailed assessment of influence of protest participation on subsequent political behaviour in the US context, cf. Corrigan-Brown 2012.

⁴⁶ The direct examination of such informal recruitment networks is beyond the scope of our paper. Anti-austerity protests in 2010 involved a large number of individual protest events, and thus it was considered impractical to ask questions relating to specific incidents of protest participation, such as ‘targeting’ efforts by family, friends or trade unions, which might apply to some events but not others.

In terms of political ideology and party politics, Greece has a bi-polar system dominated by the left-right divide. We could expect that left-wing ideology could be an important predictor of protest participation. The parties of the Far Left, such as KKE, Syriza and DIMAR, have been particularly active in the anti-austerity movement, dominating much of its public relations and trying to promote a left-wing, anti-capitalist discourse of austerity politics. A second variable could measure the past attachment to such parties, such as voting for Far Left parties at the 2009 general elections. If the anti-austerity protest essentially should turn out primarily as a movement of the radical left, then past support for left-wing parties should be an important predictor of protest participation.

A key question is to what extent the anti-austerity movement reflects ‘new’ or ‘old’ politics elements. The importance of ‘post-material value change’ for participation in a wide variety of protests has been well documented, even when demands are focusing on material concerns. For instance, movements such as the Spanish *indignados* mainly involve young and highly-educated people not connected with ‘old’ politics mobilization contexts like trade unions and political parties,⁴⁷ who challenge the entire basis of establishment politics and promote demands for more participation and democratization.⁴⁸ In addition to other

⁴⁷ Cf. Anduiza, Cristancho and Sabucedo 2012.

⁴⁸ Rosenmann 2012.

variables, we thus also need to test whether holding post-materialist values is an independent predictor of protest involvement.

Finally, a further theory which we should consider is rational choice, arguably the dominant approach in the analysis of political behaviour. A rational choice approach would predict that only people who perceive the benefits of taking part in protest to be greater than the costs are likely to take part. While some rational choice models of protest focus centrally on the measurement of general notions of political efficacy,⁴⁹ we introduced measurements of the perceived costs and benefits of the specific type of anti-austerity protest that respondents might consider being involved in. The probability of success is measured by two items on the likely effectiveness of taking part in strikes and joining demonstrations. The cost element is measured with a question about the risk of being injured or arrested when taking part in a demonstration. Even with such a basic design, the main problem with the application of a rational choice approach in our case is the limitation of our data to one time point. This means that there has to be a question mark about the direction of causal sequences. Still, the inclusion of rational choice

⁴⁹ We initially followed the example of Sanders et al. 2004, focusing centrally on measurements of ‘political efficacy’. However, these variables were not associated with actual protest participation in Greece at all. For this reason, we did not include them in our model. Also Converse and Pierce 1989 reported in their study of 1968 protest that a general sense of political efficacy was not a predictor of protest.

variables remains important as controls for the assessment of the impact of relative deprivation and other predictors of protest.

We thus have established four general areas from which relevant hypotheses about protest behaviour can be drawn and tested: relative deprivation, resources (biographical availability and social networks), political ideology, and rational choice. Before we discuss our findings, we need to describe our data collection and look more closely at some key methodological challenges.

Data and Methodology

Unusually in the study of involvement in a specific protest movement, the analysis presented here is based on a survey of the general population. This is an approach which has been fairly rarely used in the literature, mainly because the share of the population involved in individual protest events is usually too small to generate enough cases. In the case of anti-austerity protest in Greece, this is different. In addition to seven general strikes during 2010, numerous protest marches were also organised. According to police figures, a total of 7,123 demonstrations took place in Greece during 2010, the vast majority of which we can assume was concerned with anti-austerity protest (see Table 2). Given an average figure of just over 200 protest events per year in the early 1990s, which were seen as a time of high protest incidence, this information about more than

seven thousand events in just one year, with hundreds of marches every month, reveals a staggering degree of political mobilization.

--- Table 2 about here ---

There are few precedents for this kind of approach. As far as we are aware, the only previous attempt to use a general survey representative of the entire population at national level to analyse involvement in a specific set of political demonstrations was carried out by Philip Converse and Roy Pierce in France in the late 1960s.⁵⁰ They conducted a general public attitude survey in the summer of 1968, i.e. after the protest events of May 1968, finding that about 20 per cent of their sample was involved in strikes, and 8 per cent had taken part in demonstrations. Beyond this, two more studies used surveys to measure actual participation in widespread protest action in the East German town of Leipzig⁵¹

⁵⁰ Converse and Pierce 1986.

⁵¹ Mass demonstrations took place in the autumn of 1989 that played a crucial role in bringing down the Communist regime. Karl-Dieter Opp and his collaborators carried out a survey of a sample of the town's population one year later in 1990, finding that 39 per cent claimed to have demonstrated. See Opp and Gern 1993; Opp, Voss and Gern 1996.

and among the Latino population of the United States⁵² but these targeted a specific section of the population only defined on geographical and ethnic grounds. Obviously, the Greek context is radically different from the politics of '68 in France, the Communist regime in East Germany in 1989 and US immigration politics in 2006. In all these cases, however, the very widespread nature of protest action allows an analysis of who was and who was not involved in a specific range of actions and thus some aspects of the previous studies were useful in designing our study of protest in 2010.

The approach chosen has several advantages over more common ways of analysing protest participation. Previous empirical research on protest behaviour could be grouped into three main categories. The first approach is the analysis of protest 'potential'. Pioneered in the 1970s, studies sought to analyse protest on the basis of respondents' expressed likelihood of engaging in protest activity at some time in the future.⁵³ While such an approach has had a wide resonance, in particular in the study of the 'new social movements' and related protest events, with continued popularity in other general attitude surveys,⁵⁴ its main weakness

⁵² Between 3.5 and 5.1 million Latinos mobilized in protest marches against changes to the status of immigrants in the spring of 2006, with 10 per cent of those surveyed indicating that they had taken part in the demonstrations. See Barreto et al. 2009.

⁵³ Barnes and Kaase et al. 1979.

⁵⁴ Sanders et al. 2004; Heath 2008; Jenkins, Wallace and Fullerton 2008.

was always its focus on ‘potential’ or ‘probable’ protest behaviour.⁵⁵ It thus remains uncertain to what extent inferences about actual protest behaviour can be drawn on the basis of survey questions about what type of behaviour an individual might or might not engage in at some unspecified time in the future on an unspecified issue of political controversy. Our data, on the other hand, will allow us not only to analyse the determinants of ‘potential’ protest but also to scrutinize the factors responsible for turning ‘potential’ into ‘actual’ protest.

A second group of studies concentrates on the analysis of past protest behaviour. Major surveys such as the World Values Survey, the International Social Survey Programme, the European Values Study, and the European Social Survey have included questions about past protest behaviour, such as attending demonstrations, either without any time restrictions or with reference to the previous 12 months. A number of analyses have been published on the basis of such large international datasets.⁵⁶ One weakness of this approach is the lack of specificity. Respondents are asked about participation in particular types of political behaviour, such as ‘attending a lawful demonstration’, without any reference to the type of issue or movement that this activity was related to. Thus, a broad range of phenomena, including left-wing, environmental, anti-tax, law and order and other right-wing protest issues are mingled together. In our analysis

⁵⁵ Rootes 1981. For strike action see Buttigieg, Deery and Iverson 2008.

⁵⁶ Cf. for example Schussman and Soule 2005; Dalton, Sickle and Weldon 2009; Marien, Hooghe and Quintelier 2010.

of a specific protest movement, we can also examine what accounts for past protest involvement and assess the role of such an experience for participation in a contemporary movement.

A third group seeks to sidestep the limitations of general attitude surveys by surveying those engaged in protest directly, an approach that has become the dominant method of sociologists of social movements to analyse movement participation. After some pioneering empirical work in Belgium,⁵⁷ major comparative research projects involving surveys of demonstrators were conducted in the 2000s.⁵⁸ Such studies allow for excellent assessments of the background of demonstrators engaged in specific actions and on different types of movements but are restrained by their inevitable lack of data on non-demonstrators.⁵⁹ This makes it very difficult, if not impossible, to analyse the recruitment process and answer the question of what determines whether an individual protests or not.

In order to take advantage of the unique opportunity to study protest behaviour presented by the events in Greece, a telephone survey was conducted by Kappa

⁵⁷ Van Aelst and Walgrave 2001; Norris, Walgrave and Van Aelst 2005.

⁵⁸ Walgrave and Rucht 2010; for later surveys of demonstrators, see Klandermans 2012 and other papers published in that journal issue as well as the website: <http://www.protestsurvey.eu>, accessed 28 February 2012.

⁵⁹ There are very few studies comparing actual strikers and non-strikers, see Snarr 1975; McClendon and Klaas 1993; Dixon and Roscigno 2003.

Research, Athens, in early December 2010. The selection method used was a stratified quota sample. Quotas were defined according to census data for gender and age. Telephone codes were first selected corresponding to each region in relation to its population size. The remaining dialling digits were generated randomly by computer software. The suitability of each respondent was first queried in terms of minimum age (18) and voting rights (Greek citizen) before proceeding with each interview. Only one interview could be conducted per household. This process generated a dataset with 1014 valid responses that is representative of the distribution of the Greek population in terms of geographical location, gender and age.

How do we analyse the determinants of anti-austerity protests and test our hypotheses? The design of our study is primarily inspired by the pioneering work of Bert Klandermans and Dirk Oegema,⁶⁰ who distinguished a number of steps in the analysis of protest involvement. In adapting this model to our data, we identify four steps that can help us dissect the individual drivers for protest, while also allowing for the influence of contextual factors to shine through: (i) Motivation potential: agreement with/sympathy for the goals of the protest; (ii) Protest potential: attitudes towards protest action; (iii) Protest opportunities: perceived access to protest, and (iv) Actual participation.

⁶⁰ This model is adapted from Klandermans and Oegema 1987, 524; cf. also van Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2010, 190.

The first step is to concentrate on the explanation of opposition to the government's austerity policy. Without controlling for the degree of opposition, it will be impossible to identify the factors that explain actual protest behaviour rather than the strength of attitudes on austerity. We asked respondents: 'To what extent do you support or oppose the government's austerity programme?' 54 per cent expressed opposition to the programme. The second step in our model concerns attitudes to protest. Some respondents may be opposed to the austerity programme but may not support the idea that people should protest against it. Respondents were asked to react to the statement 'People should protest against the austerity measures'. 28 per cent strongly agreed and 37 per cent agreed. A clear majority of the population was thus in favour of protest. Of those opposed to government's policy of austerity, more than 80 per cent supported protest.

The third step is to look at other obstacles that may prevent opponents of austerity willing to protest from joining an actual protest. As a wide variety of protests and strikes were organized during 2010, one might assume that everybody could have found some kind of protest to join. While this might be true in the larger cities, in particular Athens where more than half of all demonstrations, 4268, took place in 2010, it could not necessarily be assumed to apply in the rural and island communities. Protest behaviour is collective behaviour, i.e. individuals are joining a strand of behaviour that involves many others. The vast majority of people participating in protests are not involved in the organization of protest. That poses a problem in that non-participation may simply be a reflection of no protest

having been organized in the community in which the respondent lives. On the other hand, many people travelled specially to attend protest events outside their communities.

We asked respondents whether they were aware of any protest activities in their local community before going on to inquire about their own protest participation. This essentially follows the approach by Converse and Pierce in France. Such a construction also allows us to use this variable as a measurement of the opportunity to protest. One third of respondents reported that no strikes had been taken place in their community and slightly more than one third, 37 per cent, reported that no demonstrations had been organized. About 57 per cent of respondents lived in towns or communities in which both strikes and demonstrations took place and 26 per cent of respondents reported neither taking place. Given the widespread nature of strikes and demonstrations in 2010, this is rather higher than we expected. A closer look at the localities of respondents reveals that there is a major gap between the major cities, smaller towns and country villages. About 80 per cent of respondents residing in big cities reported strikes and demonstrations. This drops to between 47 and 55 per cent in the suburbs and small towns, and to 38 per cent in country villages. There is thus evidence that protest opportunities were much smaller in rural areas. This echoes Converse and Pierce's finding that protest in 1968 had also predominantly been an urban phenomenon.⁶¹

⁶¹ Converse and Pierce 1989, 422-3.

In order to develop an overall model of protest involvement that assesses the effect of various individual-level variables, we also have to consider past protest involvement. As suggested in our earlier discussion of the socio-political and historical context, this may be indicative of the influence of a particular protest culture, or it may simply mean that participation barriers are reduced through the previous protest experience.⁶² Asked about previous participation in strikes and demonstrations, 8 out of 10 anti-austerity protesters in 2010 had taken part in either demonstrations or strikes, or both, before. We thus have a closer look at the factors explaining both past and present protest, and compare models with and without the previous protest involvement variable, in order to assess the relative effect of various possible predictors of protest.

About one fifth of all respondents, 21 per cent, reported that they had taken part in strike action. 19 per cent said that they had taken part in demonstration in their local community. In addition, we also asked whether respondents had taken part in demonstrations ‘outside’ their own town or community; 8 per cent of respondents said they had done so. With some taking part in more than one form or protest, the total share of people taking part in at least one form of protest was slightly less than one third, 29 per cent. Our main dependent variable is thus protest participation, including all forms of such protest. As we do expect some

⁶² Verhulst and Walgrave 2009.

differences between participation in strikes and demonstrations, both forms of protest are also analysed separately.

We begin by discussing opposition to the government's austerity programme, support for protest against the programme, and the perception of opportunities to join the protest. Analytically, we are particularly interested in the analysis of 'potential protest' that could be the subject of mobilization efforts defined by opposition to the austerity programme combined with the belief that people should protest against it. The primary purpose of this is, however, to define control variables for the analysis of actual protest participation. Accounting for opposition to austerity, support for protest and the opportunity for protest, which factors predict people actually turning out to take part in strikes and demonstrations?

To develop an overall model of protest involvement which assesses the effect of various individual-level variables, one factor that we should include and are particularly interested in – following our discussion of Greek protest culture – is previous protest involvement. We thus have a closer look at the factors explaining both past and present protest activity, and compare models with and without the previous protest involvement variable in order to assess the relative effect of various possible predictors of protest.

Findings

The results of the first step in our analysis, seeking to explain opposition to austerity, support for protest, and perception of protest opportunities are presented in Table 3. The strength of opposition to the austerity programme is associated with relative deprivation variables. Previous protest participation and other aspects of biographical availability play no role. Opposition is particularly strong, as could be expected, among supporters of far-left parties (KKE, Syriza). Also the perception of the effectiveness plays a role.

--- Table 3 about here ---

Controlling for opposition to the austerity programme, what determines support for protest against the policy? Again, relative deprivation variables are associated with protest potential. Apart from supporters of far-left parties and rational choice variables, some aspects of biographical availability and political resources also play a part. Potential protesters are younger, less likely to have been to university, and less likely to be members of political parties. Interestingly, previous protest involvement plays no role for the generation of protest potential.

With regards to perception of protest opportunity, place of residence is the most important predictor. Respondents in big cities are considerably more likely to perceive an opportunity to protest in comparison with rural residents. Previous protest involvement also makes it more likely that respondents perceive protest

opportunities, as is a perception that demonstrations are an effective form of political action. Otherwise, neither relative deprivation, biographical availability nor ideology play a role.

Turning to the main question of who protested against austerity in 2010, one aspect that is clearly of central importance is the role of previous protest involvement. More than 4 out of 5 protesters had participated in protest in the previous ten years. The first part of our analysis of actual protest behaviour is thus a comparison of the determinants of 2010 protest involvement in comparison with protest in previous years. Relative deprivation variables, for which we do not have historical data, and control variables that are only relevant to the austerity movement are omitted from this analysis (see Table 4).

--- Table 4 about here ---

The analysis of previous protest involvement (column 1) confirms most of the classical hypotheses about protest involvement: protesters are found to be younger, male, highly educated, working in the public sector, members of trade unions and/or voluntary associations, with a left-wing ideology as well as post-materialist values, and with high perceptions of the effectiveness of protest and low perception of cost. Remarkably, the analysis of 2010 protest (column 2) fits the same model rather well, with only a few exceptions: 2010 protesters are not as predominantly male, are married or living with a partner, and are in full-time

employment. These results strongly suggest that protest in 2010 is essentially a continuation of previous protest trends rather than a radical break from the country's history of contentious politics.

How do these predictors of protest participation stand up if we control for the specific features of anti-austerity protest, namely opposition to austerity policies, support for protest against these policies and the perceived opportunities to join a protest? To what extent does the predictive power of relative deprivation also makes a contribution to the explanation of how potential is turned into actual protest? The results of the analysis shown in column 3 (Model 2) demonstrate quite clearly that relative deprivation is not a factor when it comes to mobilizing people to take part in actual protest. Otherwise, the co-efficients of Model 2 are remarkably similar to those in Model 1 not including the control variables. While the effect of trade union membership does not pass the test of statistical significance in this model, a separate analysis of strike participation (details not shown) suggests this variable together with full-time employment to be important predictors in the public sector. Looking at the relative importance of different types of predictors (details not shown), network involvement and political ideology have the highest impact on protest participation, followed by rational choice. The effect of biographical availability is very small by comparison.⁶³

⁶³ This assessment is based on the comparison of AIC (Akaike's Information Criterion) and BIC (Bayesian Information Criterion) statistics for various models in which the relative quality of models including relative deprivation, biographical

Overall, this model of 2010 protest participation confirms the earlier analysis that the significant individual-level predictors of anti-austerity protest, with some more minor exceptions, fit the pattern of variables responsible for previous protests.

Moving on to our final analysis (column 4) which adds previous protest experience to our model, we seek to answer two additional questions. First, how important is previous protest participation once we control for opposition to austerity policy, protest potential and protest opportunity, as well as all other individual-level predictors of protest, ranging from relative deprivation to resources and biographical availability, political ideology and rational choice? Second, once we control for previous protest participation, which of our variables explains the new mobilization process?

Dealing with the second question first, we have already seen in the analysis in column 1 that biographical availability, network involvement, political ideology and rational choice variables are all independent predictors of previous protest involvement. This analysis confirms most of the standard theories of protest mobilization. But do the same factors also play a role in mobilizing new protests? Here the results throw up a few unexpected findings.

availability, network involvement, political ideology and rational choice variables, is compared.

Age does not quite have the anticipated effect. Younger people are slightly more likely to engage in protest but once previous protest is controlled for, the coefficient is not statistically significant any more. This contradicts not only our theoretical expectations but also many of the journalistic accounts that often focus centrally on the role of youth culture and the internet as key elements of a new generation of protest.⁶⁴ Our results challenge these accounts. The Greek protesters of 2010 are not particularly young; their average age is only marginally lower than the national average; the age group with the highest share of both strikers and demonstrators consists of those between 45 and 54 years; 48 per cent of this age group went on strike and 43 per cent attended a local demonstration. Even among those over 65, involvement in protest is still strong, with 20 per cent attending demonstrations; the oldest demonstrator in the sample is 88 years old. Therefore, unlike the social unrest of December 2008,⁶⁵ mass protest against the austerity measures in 2010 is not the preserve of the young but involves people of all ages, particularly the middle-aged.

Similarly, gender is not as important as could be expected for new mobilizations and those who are married are slightly more likely to engage in strikes and demonstrations, while having children discourages people from taking part in protest. As far as employment status is concerned, those in full-time employment are more likely to be mobilized in 2010. Otherwise, education, membership of

⁶⁴ See, for example, Mason 2012.

⁶⁵ Pechtelidis 2011.

trade unions and voluntary associations, and political ideology are not significantly associated with the mobilization of anti-austerity protest, once we control for past protest involvement. These results thus show that while factors such as age (youth), gender (male), education, public sector employment, membership of trade unions and voluntary organisation, left-wing ideology and post-materialism have an indirect effect on 2010 protest behaviour through past protest experience, they do not have a direct effect, once past protest involvement is controlled for.

The analysis presented in this model combines a number of different processes and types of protest. What factors determine whether ‘veteran’ protesters are re-mobilized in 2010 or not? What accounts for the recruitment of novice protesters? Are the effects different for strikes and demonstrations? We conducted analyses of all these separate mobilization processes; the main differences we found are between strikers and demonstrators, and separate models are presented for each form of protest in columns 5 and 6.

Age is not a relevant variable in these more detailed analyses. However, gender features surprisingly strongly for participation in strikes, and a comparison of new and veteran strikers (details not shown) suggests that women are particularly noticeable among new recruits in strike action. Being married or living with a partner is positively associated with both striking and demonstrating. This variable is very strongly associated with the mobilization of veteran protesters

(details not shown). Having children is negatively associated in protest participation, in particular for strike action. Being in full-time employment is a strong predictor of mobilization for strikes (for both new and veteran strikers). Finally, neither trade union membership nor left-wing ideology plays a role for either strikers or demonstrators, with the sole exception of trade union membership as a statistically significant predictor of new strike recruits.

What are we to make of these results? Some of these detailed findings may be the product of the specific mobilization context experienced in 2010. The violence associated with protest in 2008 as well as 2010 may have made parents more conscious of the risks involved; the extreme nature of the austerity measures could have motivated people not previously associated with protest to become active. Overall, the main thrust of these results appears to support the notion that people faced with extreme economic hardship may become mobilized, contrary to expectations on the impact of biographical availability factors.⁶⁶

This leaves us now with what clearly is the most important group of predictors, namely previous protest involvement. With 80 per cent of protesters having taken part at least once in either strikes or demonstrations before, this is perhaps not surprising. Looking at the role of the frequency of previous protest involvement provides an additional perspective. In Model 3 (Table 4, column 4), we find that

⁶⁶ Cf. Corrigan-Brown et al. 2009.

the more often respondents had taken part in demonstrations before, the more likely they were to become involved in anti-austerity protest in 2010.

The strength of the predictive power of previous protest involvement is underlined even further, once we combine the frequency of taking part in demonstrations and strikes. This analysis (details not shown) suggests that those who have been involved in both strikes and demonstrations multiple times before are the most likely to take part in anti-austerity protest. Those who have either taken part in both strikes and demonstrations more than 5 times over the last ten years, or who have taken part more than 5 times in one and at least 2-5 times in the other, are considerably more likely to take part in protest in 2010. Keeping all other variables constant (at their mean), the predicted probability of protest participation was calculated in relation to previous protest experience, combining the frequency of participation in strikes and demonstrations on a scale of 0 to 6. The result displayed in Figure 3 shows emphatically that protest participation in 2010 is to a large extent a function of the degree of previous protest involvement.

--- Figure 3 about here ---

Discussion

What does our analysis of the Greek case tell us about drivers of political protest in general and the anti-austerity movement in particular? A key finding is that

different variables matter at different stages of the process: the drivers change as our focus shifts from explaining opposition to austerity, to protest potential and, ultimately, actual protest participation.

Starting with the influence of economic deprivation and feelings of injustice, our results show that these contribute to protest behaviour in Greece as significant predictors of opposition to austerity policies and support for protest. However, relative deprivation is not a predictor of turning potential into actual participation. The second group of variables associated with resources (biographical availability and network involvement) performs somewhat better in explaining actual protest. In line with the main tenets of civic voluntarism, people protest if they have the resources and the opportunity to protest. However, against expectations, some key variables, not least education, do not play the expected role in the Greek case. Yet, this, in combination with other factors, characterizes the type of protest quite well. This is not a protest movement of a middle-class educational elite, being active in their spare time, as most 'new social movements' in Western Europe have been in recent decades. This is a mass protest in which ordinary people of all educational backgrounds and ages take part. It is also those in full-time employment who are most likely to be involved, in both strikes and demonstrations, and this variable remains an independent predictor with previous protest being controlled for. In other words, those involved most closely in economic life, rather than others on the margins or outside of the labour force, are the main carriers of this protest movement.

In terms of the recruitment of protesters, it is the traditional network of trade union and voluntary group membership, as well as public sector employment that play a key role. However, these exert their influence through past protest experience; none of these network factors are independent predictors of protest, once past protest is controlled for. The same applies to political ideology variables, left-wing ideology and post-materialism, which are both significant predictors of past and present protest but are not independent predictors of anti-austerity protest, once past protest experience is taken into account.

The dominance of the role of past protest engagement should caution us to interpret this result in terms of the marginality of the involvement in social networks as a predictor of protest participation. What is beyond doubt is that anti-austerity protest involves to a large extent the mobilization of an existing pool of experienced strikers and demonstrators. The share of those without any previous participation is fairly small. There are hints that there are some new aspects in 2010, for example the role of women among strikers, but the drivers of first-time mobilization is a separate question altogether, which requires further elaboration.⁶⁷

Finally, one of the most intriguing findings is that the rational choice variables are found to play a role at all stages of the protest recruitment process. A high

⁶⁷ This question is explored in greater detail in Rüdig and Karyotis 2011.

evaluation of the effectiveness of protest, in particular demonstrations, is an independent predictor of opposition to austerity, protest potential and perception of protest opportunity. Moreover, rational choice variables are also independent predictors of not only past but also actual protest in 2010, even when controlling for protest potential and the degree of past protest experience. Despite the inherent limitations of interpreting these results with a one-time survey, their robustness across the board suggests that rational choice considerations should be taken seriously in any model of protest behaviour.

Conclusion

Anti-austerity protest in Greece constitutes a mass movement, with our survey reporting that about 30 per cent of the entire population engaged in some type of protest in 2010. The analysis of the profile of protesters demonstrates that protest is not the preserve of those with a high socio-economic status, high levels of education or lots of time on their hands. Equally, it is not primarily students, political extremists or dropouts that were involved in the actions. Protesters mainly came from the political left but otherwise, it was the average Greek who took part, those in full-time employment, married, not particularly young or old, or highly educated. In other words, the protests came from the heart of society and lacked the ‘new social movement’ characteristics emphasized by the literature on protest of recent decades. Howard Kerbo’s distinction between ‘movements of affluence’ and ‘movements of crisis’ offers a useful way to capture these differences – anti-austerity protest clearly falls in the latter category.

Protest against austerity also has a feeling of ‘old’ politics about it that may be reminiscent of the strike movements of previous decades. With four out of five participants having taken part in protest before, it is evident that many of the usual suspects were re-mobilized, i.e. people in employment, who are trade union members and have left-wing political views. Still, protest in Greece is historically not limited to followers of Far Left parties. Once the influence of previous protest participation was accounted for, ideology does not play that much of a role, indicating that the high degree of mobilization of veteran and new protesters in 2010 was not limited to left-wing activists alone.

A more plausible explanation is that the usual suspects in Greece, through their organizational infrastructure, act as first-movers in the generation of protest opportunities, which trigger the latent protest socialization of a broader public that is not strongly defined ideologically in left-right terms. This may also have some implications for the phenomenal rise in the vote for parties of the left, particularly Syriza, in the double elections of 2012. Their electoral success may partly be attributed to their ability to attract opponents of the austerity policy who are not necessarily radicalized in terms of ideology. If this holds true, the future electoral behaviour of these voters is likely to be in flux and largely defined by how the debt crisis develops and how it is managed by the governing coalition.

Nevertheless, the medium to long-term political impact of the anti-austerity movement remains completely open and cannot be established with a one-time survey alone or without panel data.

From the above, there are two main theoretical and comparative implications for austerity politics, which are of broader relevance beyond the Greek case. First, the factors that predict protest potential are not a good measure of who actually takes part in protest. High levels of deprivation are able to bring large sections of the population to embrace the idea of protest against government policy. However, while deprivation increases the potential for austerity protest, it is not an independent predictor of actual protest. The probability of significant anti-austerity protest movements will thus depend on other contextual factors.

Second, the most significant implication for other countries is that previous protest participation on its own constitutes an important recruiting pool for actual protest. People are recruited into strikes and demonstrations through a process of having been socialized into taking particular forms of political action. In light of this, we should expect that the potential for protest in the wake of austerity measure will depend notably on the extent to which people have been engaged in prior protest. In countries where there is a strong, established protest culture, where a significant minority regularly engages in such activities, it should be easier for protest potential to be transformed into actual protest participation. This would suggest that anti-austerity movements might struggle to reach high levels of mobilization in countries such as Ireland, the UK, and Portugal, but are likely to have a broader appeal in Italy and Spain.

We obviously have to be careful in formulating conclusions about cross-national differences in protest behaviour on the basis of the analysis of individual-level data. The combination of taking into account both the drivers of mobilization at the individual level and the aggregate context at the national level offers the most promising avenue for developing our understanding of protest behaviour. The analysis in this paper clearly demonstrates the central role of the Greek protest culture and its dynamic interrelationship with individual drivers to produce anti-austerity protest. Future cross-national comparative research is necessary to take account of other contextual variables, such as the relative power of parliament,⁶⁸ in the explanation of the emergence and development of anti-austerity movements.

⁶⁸ See Nam 2007.

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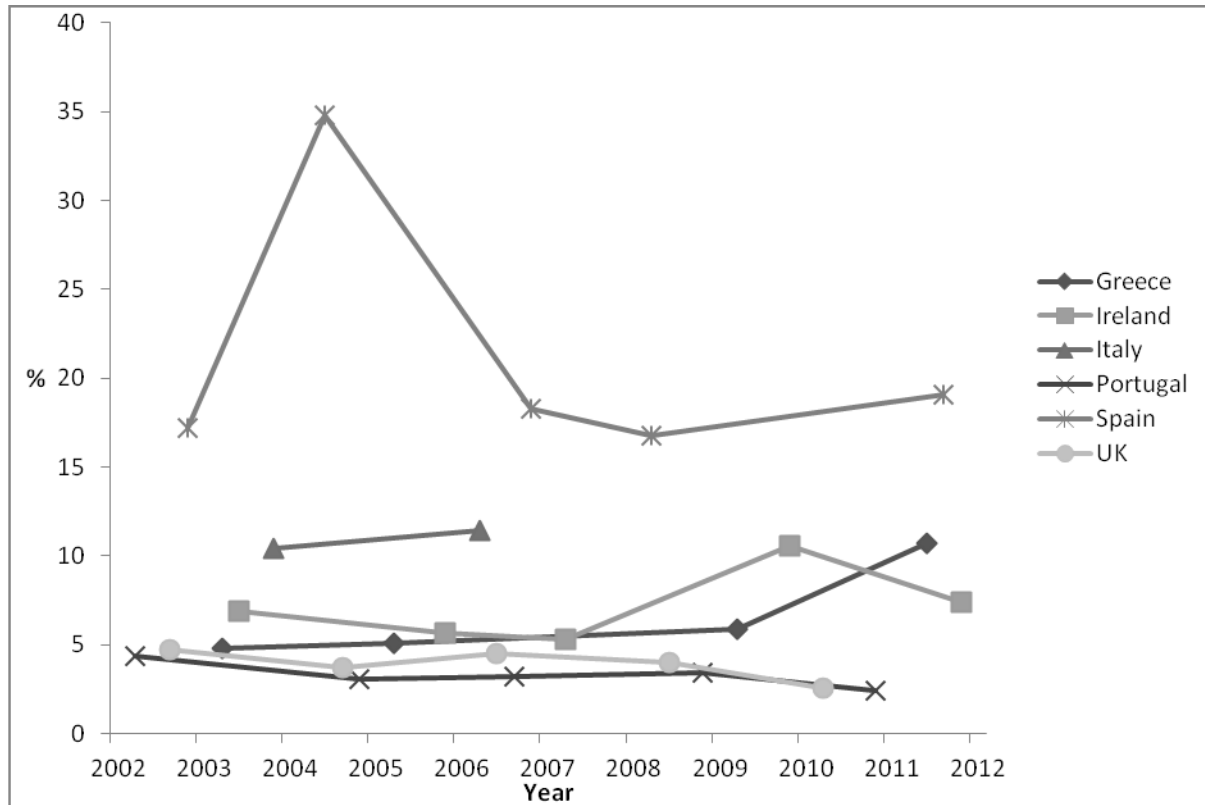
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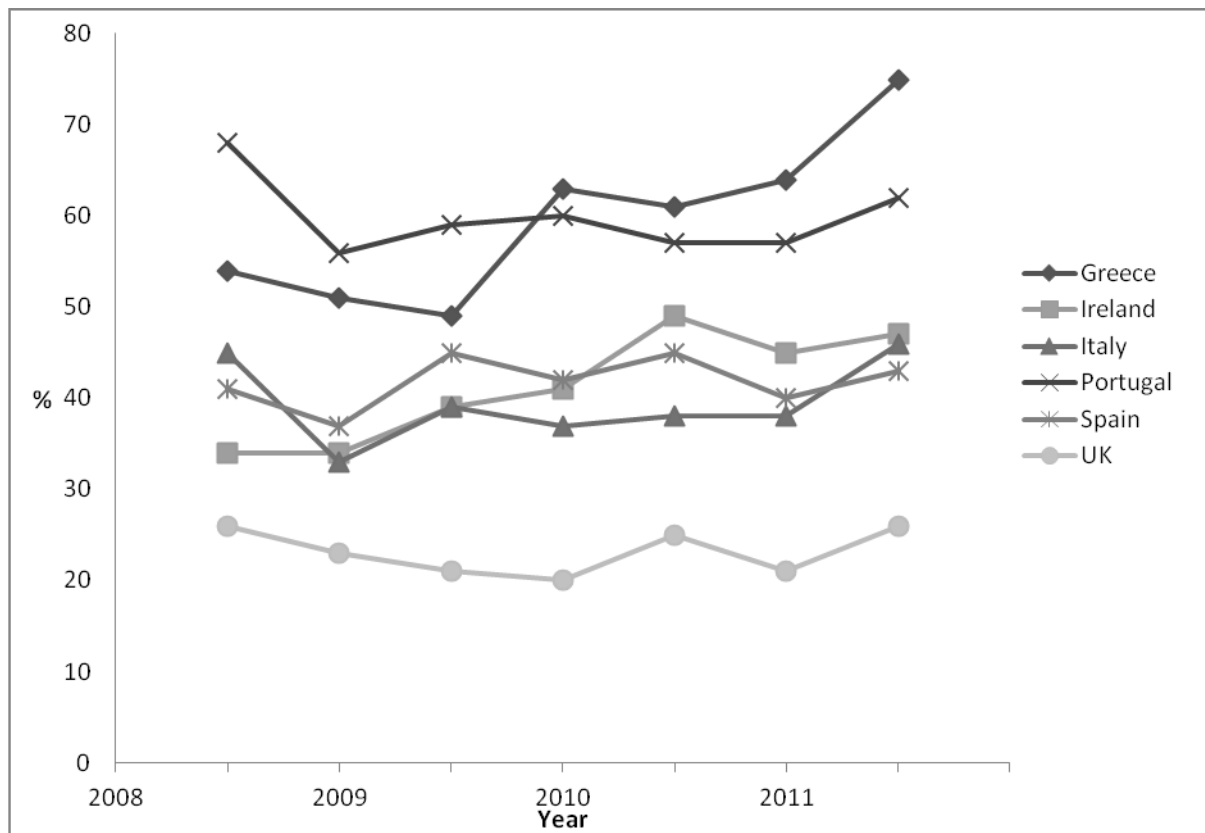
Figure 1: Participation in ‘lawful’ demonstrations in the last 12 months, 2002-2011 (in per cent)



Source: European Social Survey, Waves 1-5, 2002-2011, <http://ess.nsd.uib.no> [accessed 2 April 2012]; own analysis restricted to citizens of the country aged 18 or over, design weight applied.

Question wording: ‘During the last 12 months, have you done any of the following: - taken part in a lawful public demonstration? (Yes/No).’

Figure 2: Current Financial Situation of Household ‘rather bad’ or ‘very bad’ (2008-2011, in per cent)



Source: Standard Eurobarometer 70-76, 2008-2011,

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb_arch.en.htm [accessed 2 April 2012]. Question

wording: ‘How would you judge the current situation in each of the following? - The financial situation of your household – Very good, rather good, rather bad, very bad.’

Figure 3: Predicted Probability of Protest Participation 2010 in Relation to Previous Protest Participation

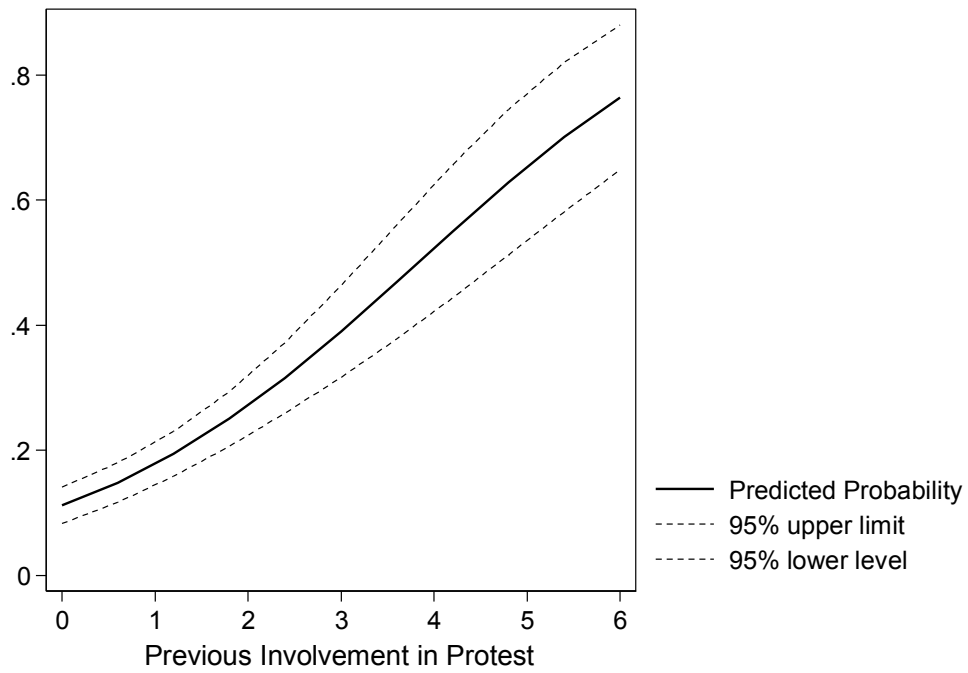


Table 1: Number of General Strikes in South European Countries, 2002-2011

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Greece	1	0	1	3	2	1	1	1	7	7
Italy	2	2	2	1	0	0	1	1	1	2
Portugal	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
Spain	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0

Sources: Hamann, Johnston and Kelly 2013; European Industrial Relations Observatory (EIRO);

<http://eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/index.htm> [accessed 5 April 2012]; authors' database.

Table 2: Number of Demonstrations in Greece in 2010

Month	Number	
	Nationwide	Athens
Jan	580	250
Feb	551	257
March	603	316
Apr	544	364
May	856	425
June	791	513
July	552	343
Aug	189	150
Sept	694	461
Oct	739	611
Nov	695	492
Dec	329	86
TOTAL	7123	4268

Source: Hellenic Police Statistics, Personal Communication with Press Office, 2 April 2012

Table 3: Determinants of Opposition to Austerity, Protest Potential and Perceived Protest Opportunity*

	Opposition to Austerity Programme (1)	Potential Protesters (People should protest) (2)	Perceived Protest Opportunity (3)
<u>Controls</u>			
Opposed to austerity programme	-	0.500*** (0.060)	-0.044 (0.066)
People should protest – agree	-	-	-0.131 (0.073)
Place of Residence (Reference: farm or village) - Small town, suburb - Big city	-	-	0.331 (0.218) 1.706*** (0.215)
<u>Relative Deprivation</u>			
Personal Financial Situation (compared to a year ago) - worse	0.399*** (0.086)	0.190* (0.078)	0.037 (0.091)
Economic Expectations (next 12 months) - worse	0.488*** (0.065)	0.218** (0.066)	-0.056 (0.075)
Blame – each and everyone of use – not at all responsible	0.470* (0.225)	0.461 (0.241)	-0.190 (0.241)
Burden not fairly distributed - agree	0.063 (0.072)	0.237*** (0.068)	-0.012 (0.070)
<u>Biographical Availability</u>			
Age (older)	-0.002 (0.005)	-0.022*** (0.005)	-0.008 (0.006)
Male	0.067 (0.133)	-0.165 (0.135)	0.045 (0.150)
Married or living with partner	-0.099 (0.194)	0.129 (0.200)	0.012 (0.221)
Children	-0.141 (0.217)	0.153 (0.241)	-0.179 (0.235)
Education (university)	-0.173 (0.136)	-0.333* (0.139)	0.115 (0.166)
<u>Networks</u>			
In full-time employment	0.197 (0.151)	-0.286 (0.146)	-0.296 (0.166)
Public sector	0.006 (0.162)	-0.126 (0.155)	-0.323 (0.169)
Member of Political Party	0.117 (0.246)	-0.474* (0.232)	0.450 (0.258)
Member of Trade Union	0.302 (0.258)	0.215 (0.228)	0.510 (0.290)
Member of Voluntary	-0.032 (0.166)	-0.205 (0.167)	0.048 (0.196)

<u>Association</u>			
Previous Participation in Demonstrations (Reference: never)			
- once	0.379 (0.371)	-0.313 (0.376)	0.272 (0.433)
- 2-5 times	-0.301 (0.191)	0.071 (0.216)	0.560* (0.252)
- More than 5 times	0.356 (0.280)	0.314 (0.272)	0.472 (0.339)
Previous Participation in Strikes (Reference: never)			
- once	-0.095 (0.326)	0.327 (0.354)	0.889* (0.432)
- 2-5 times	-0.108 (0.227)	0.340 (0.244)	0.179 (0.263)
More than 5 times	0.034 (0.248)	0.309 (0.247)	0.690** (0.265)
<u>Political Ideology</u>			
Left wing (left-right scale)	-0.071 (0.154)	-0.081 (0.150)	0.142 (0.160)
Voted for party left of PASOK in 2009	1.061*** (0.224)	0.551* (0.235)	-0.211 (0.248)
Postmaterialism	0.031 (0.070)	0.132 (0.069)	-0.099 (0.074)
<u>Rational Choice</u>			
Effectiveness of participating in demonstrations (high)	0.162* (0.071)	0.275*** (0.075)	0.156* (0.073)
Effectiveness of participating in strikes (high)	0.140 (0.073)	0.144* (0.069)	-0.060 (0.075)
Cost of taking part in a demonstration (low)	-0.032 (0.055)	-0.013 (0.058)	0.051 (0.057)
<u>Log pseudolikelihood</u>			
Log pseudolikelihood	-1200.217	-1082.124	-762.041
McKelvie & Zavoina's Pseudo-r ²	0.254	0.381	0.245
AIC	2460.435	2226.248	1588.082
BIC	2604.104	2374.706	1741.329
N	888	888	888

*Cell entries are ordered logit regression coefficients, robust standard errors in parentheses; tests of statistical significance: * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001; AIC: Aikake's Information Criterion; BIC: Bayesian Information Criterion (both AIC and BIC are reported in the version as 'used by STATA', cf. J. Scott Long and Jeremy Freese, *Regression Models for*

Categorical Dependent Variables Using Stata, 2nd ed. (College Station, TX: Stata Press, 2006), pp. 110-113

Table 4: Determinants of Protest Against Austerity Policy

	Previous protest involvement	Actual Protest Participation (2010)				
		Strikes and/or Demonstrations			Demonstrations	Strikes
		Model 1	Model 2	Model 3		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	
<u>Controls</u>						
Opposition to austerity programme	-		-0.012 (0.079)	0.006 (0.088)	-0.236 (0.093)	-0.017 (0.105)
Protest Potential	-		0.439** (0.099)	0.403*** (0.107)	0.356** (0.112)	0.526*** (0.137)
Perceived Protest Opportunity	-		1.068*** (0.138)	0.979*** (0.153)	0.866*** (0.171)	2.048*** (0.226)
<u>Relative Deprivation</u>						
Personal Financial Situation (compared to a year ago) - worse	-		-0.016 (0.117)	-0.103 (0.121)	-0.078(0.139)	0.145 (0.158)
Economic Expectations (next 12 months) - worse	-		0.063 (0.102)	0.084 (0.110)	0.082 (0.125)	0.149 (0.133)
Blame – each and everyone of use – not at all responsible			0.411 (0.261)	0.382 (0.272)	0.484 (0.290)	0.096 (0.304)
Burden not fairly distributed - agree	-		0.023 (0.086)	0.028 (0.087)	0.007 (0.094)	-0.122 (0.104)
<u>Biographical Availability</u>						
Age (older)	-0.022*** (0.006)	-0.021** (0.007)	-0.016* (0.007)	-0.011 (0.009)	0.001 (0.009)	-0.015 (0.011)
Male	0.483** (0.163)	0.223 (0.173)	0.251 (0.188)	-0.061 (0.213)	0.281 (0.224)	-0.496* (0.247)

Married or living with partner	-0.006 (0.256)	0.644* (0.280)	0.771** (0.283)	0.803** (0.296)	0.689* (0.341)	1.003** (0.365)
Children	0.221 (0.291)	-0.445 (0.302)	-0.565 (0.313)	-0.834* (0.332)	-0.649 (0.385)	-0.878* (0.408)
Education (university)	0.441* (0.170)	0.129 (0.184)	0.127 (0.210)	0.073(0.229)	0.038 (0.243)	0.189 (0.281)
<u>Networks</u>						
In full-time employment	0.325 (0.175)	0.687*** (0.183)	0.884*** (0.210)	0.622** (0.237)	0.052 (0.254)	1.196*** (0.276)
Public sector	0.625*** (0.179)	0.479* (0.194)	0.597** (0.211)	0.399 (0.238)	0.144 (0.260)	0.483 (0.268)
Member of Political Party	0.081 (0.286)	0.515 (0.278)	0.420 (0.299)	0.308 (0.340)	0.442 (0.358)	0.007 (0.384)
Member of Trade Union	1.265*** (0.306)	0.609* (0.299)	0.416(0.337)	0.076 (0.395)	0.426 (0.362)	0.539 (0.445)
Member of Voluntary Association	0.535* (0.208)	0.468* (0.222)	0.553* (0.239)	0.310 (0.267)	0.086 (0.289)	0.480 (0.305)
Previous Participation in Demonstrations (Reference: No)	-					
- Once				0.726 (0.455)	1.403** (0.517)	0.089 (0.541)
- 2-5 times				0.942** (0.280)	1.446*** (0.284)	0.115 (0.368)
- More than 5 times				2.005*** (0.431)	2.261*** (0.401)	0.881* (0.403)
Previous Participation in Strikes (Reference: No)	-					
- Once				1.476*** (0.414)	1.089* (0.456)	2.161*** (0.476)
- 2-5 times				1.472*** (0.319)	.820* (0.348)	2.011*** (0.390)
More than 5 times				1.174** (0.347)	-0.078 (0.378)	2.146*** (0.376)
<u>Political Ideology</u>						
Left wing (left-right scale)	0.403* (0.168)	0.607** (0.179)	0.531** (0.204)	0.403 (0.236)	0.371 (0.238)	0.005 (0.283)
Voted for party left of PASOK in 2009	0.985** (0.307)	0.389 (0.303)	0.241 (0.331)	-0.096(0.353)	-0.102 (0.316)	0.349 (0.438)
Postmaterialism	0.160* (0.080)	0.189* (0.086)	0.241* (0.098)	0.140 (0.110)	0.181 (0.117)	0.080 (0.134)

<u>Rational Choice</u>						
Effectiveness of participating in demonstrations (high)	0.232** (0.076)	0.382*** (0.085)	0.275** (0.090)	0.282** (0.103)	0.302* (0.120)	0.020 (0.118)
Effectiveness of participating in strikes (high)	0.268*** (0.077)	0.147 (0.085)	0.104 (0.090)	-0.079 (0.108)	-0.001 (0.124)	0.062 (0.117)
Cost of taking part in a demonstration (low)	0.147* (0.064)	0.227** (0.069)	0.229** (0.072)	0.180* (0.083)	0.102 (0.086)	0.281** (0.098)
Constant	-2.609*** (0.396)	-3.456*** (0.505)	-6.895*** (0.860)	-6.190*** (0.897)	-6.757*** (0.971)	-9.687*** (1.234)
Log pseudolikelihood	-501.572	-452.593	-386.196	-328.104	-302.903	-242.102
McKelvie & Zavoina's Pseudo-r ²	0.343	0.332	0.491	0.578	0.532	0.709
AIC	1037.145	939.185	820.393	716.208	665.806	544.204
BIC	1119.398	1021.547	935.489	859.877	809.475	687.873
N	933	939	894	888	888	888

Cell entries are and binary logit regression coefficients, robust standard errors in parentheses; tests of statistical significance: * p<.05,

** p<.01, *** p<.001; AIC: Aikake's Information Criterion; BIC: Bayesian Information Criterion.

APPENDIX

Definition of Variables

Dependent Variables

1. Opposition to Austerity Programme

To what extent do you support or oppose the government's austerity programme?

(1) Strongly oppose, (2) Oppose, (3) Neither support nor oppose, (4) Support, (5)

Strongly support

[Recoded: (1) Strongly support, (2) Support, (3) Neither support nor oppose, (4)

Oppose, (5) Strongly oppose]

2. Support for Protest

I will read out some things people have said about the economic measures. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of them?

e. People should fight against the measures

(1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Agree, (5)

Strongly agree

3. Protest Opportunity

In protest against the austerity measures..

a) Have there been strikes in the town or community where you live? (1) No (2) Yes

c) Have there been any demonstrations in the town or community where you live?

(1) No (2) Ye

[Recoded as: (0) Neither strikes nor demonstrations in town or community; (1)

Either strikes or demonstrations; (1) Both strikes and demonstrations

4. Actual Protest Participation

In protest against the austerity measures..

a) Have there been strikes in the town or community where you live? (1) No (2) Yes

b) If so, have you taken part in any of these strikes? (1) No (2) Yes

c) Have there been any demonstrations in the town or community where you live?

(1) No (2) Yes

d) If so, have you taken party in any of these demonstrations?

e) Did you take part in any demonstrations outside your town or community?

[Recoded as:

Strikes: (0) not taken part in strikes (1) taken part in strikes

Demonstrations: (0) not taken part in demonstrations (1) taken part in demonstrations

(either in or outside their town or community, or both)

Protest: (0) not taken part in any strikes or demonstrations (1) taken part in either

strikes or demonstrations or both

Independent Variables

I. Relative Deprivation

1. Personal Financial Situation

Compared to a year ago, your financial situation is ... (1) Much worse; (2) A bit worse; (3) About the same; (4) A bit better; (5) Much better

[Recoded, scale 1 (Much better) to 5 (Much worse)]

2. Economic Expectations

How do you think the economy will be in 12 months?

(1) Much worse; (2) A bit worse; (3) About the same; (4) A bit better; (5) Much better

[Recoded, scale 1 (Much better) to 5 (Much worse)]

3. Blame

Who is to blame for the crisis? How responsible for the crisis would you say each of the following is?

j. Each and every one of us

(1) Not at all responsible; (2) Slightly responsible; (3) Somewhat responsible; (4) Moderately responsible; (5) Extremely responsible

[Recoded: 0 all other responses 1 Not at all responsible]

4. Distribution of Burden

I will read out some things people have said about the economic measures. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of them?

(1) Strongly disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Neither agree nor disagree; (4) Agree; (5) Strongly agree

b. The burden of the measures is not distributed fairly to all citizens

II. Biographical Availability

1. Age

In which year were you born?

[Age computed as 2010-year of birth]

2. Gender

What is your gender? 1. Male 2. Female

[Recoded Female 0; Male 1]

3. Marriage status

What is your marital status? (1) Married; (2) Living with partner (but not married); (3) Widowed; (4) Divorced/Separated; (5) Single (never married).

[Recoded as 0 Widowed/Divorced/Separated/Single; 1 Married or Living with Partner]

4. Children

Do you have children? (1) Yes; (2) No

[Recoded 0 No 1 Yes]

5. Education

What level of education have you completed or are currently studying for? (1) Primary school; (2) Secondary (3 years); (3) Secondary, Lyceum (6 years); (4) Post-secondary trade/vocational school; (5) University, undergraduate; (6) University, postgraduate); (7) Nothing

[Recoded as: 0 Primary to Post-secondary trade/vocational school; 1 University, undergraduate and postgraduate]

III. Networks

1. Employment Status

What is your current employment status?

(1) Full-time (more than 30 hours per week); (2) Part-time employment (less than 30 hours per week); (3) Self-employed; (4) Homemaker; (5) Student; (6) Retired; (7) Unable to work; (8) Unemployed

[Recoded as: (0) not in full-time employment; (1) in full-time employment]

2. Employment Sector

Which type of organization do you work for?

(1) Private sector firm or company; (2) Public sector employer; (3) Charity/Voluntary Sector (e.g. charitable companies, churches, NGOs, trade unions); (4) Never worked

[Recoded as: (0) not in public sector; (1) public sector employer]

3. Membership of Political Parties, Trade Unions and Voluntary Organizations

Are you yourself or anyone else in your household a member of any of the following organizations?

(a) A political party

(b) Trade Union or Labour Organization

(c) Voluntary Organization (e.g. neighbourhood group, churches, cultural groups, non-governmental organizations etc.)

(1) Yes, I am; (2) Yes, someone else is; (3) Yes, both me and someone else are; (4)

No

[Recoded as: (0) No and Yes, someone else is; (1) 1 Yes I am, and Yes, both me and someone else are]

4. Previous Protest Involvement

Prior to the current economic crisis, did you in the last 10 years ever take part... [If yes, how often?]

a. In a strike

b. In a public demonstration

(Yes, once 1; Yes, 2-5 times 2; Yes, more than 5 times 3; No 4)

[Recoded as: (0) no; (1) once (2); 2-5 times; (3) more than 5 times]

IV. Ideology

1. Left

In politics people sometimes talk of ‘left’ and ‘right’. Where would you place yourself on this 0-10 scale, where 0 means the left and 10 means the right?

0 Left – 10 Right

[Recoded as:

0 5-10; 1 0-4]

As item non-response was quite high, an attempt was made to enter a value for the left-right scale for these missing cases on the basis of two attitude questions which have generally been regarded as providing a good approximation of left-right position:

Q. It is the responsibility of the government to reduce the differences in income between people with high income and those with low incomes

Q. Private enterprise is the best way to solve Greece’s economic problems

(Scale: 1 Strongly disagree; 2 Disagree; 3 Neither agree or disagree; 4 Agree; 5 Strongly agree).

Those who take a position of either/or pro-redistribution and anti-private enterprise and do not take an anti-distribution and pro-private enterprise position are coded 1

(left wing), others are coded 0 (centre right); 3 cases with no response on either question were coded as missing.

2. Voting

And which party did you vote for in the last general election of October 2009?

3. KKE

4. Syriza

[Recoded: 0 other voters and non-voters 1 KKE and Syriza voters]

3. Postmaterialism

If you had to choose between the following things, which of them would you say should be the country's first priority? And which one would you say should be the country's second highest priority?

1. Maintaining order in the nation
2. Giving people more say in important government decisions
3. Fighting rising prices
4. Protecting freedom of speech

[Coded as: 0 Materialists; 1 Mixed-Materialists; 2 Mixed-Postmaterialists; 3 Postmaterialists;

Note: Those giving preference to options 1 & 3 are classified as materialists, those choosing 2 & 4 are postmaterialists; other combinations are classified as mixed, with

the nature of the first option determining whether they are coded as mixed-materialists or mixed-postmaterialists]

V. Rational Choice

1. Effectiveness of participating in demonstrations and strikes

Many people have protested against the government's austerity measures in recent months. How effective do you think each of these actions is in pressing for changes?

a. Attending demonstrations

b. Joining in strikes

(1) Not at all; (2) Slightly effective; (3) Somewhat effective; (4) Moderately effective;

(5) Extremely effective

2. Cost of taking part in a demonstration

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following...

d. Taking part in a demonstration could cause me to be injured or arrested

(1) Strongly disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Neither agree nor disagree; (4) Agree; (5)

Strongly agree

[Recoded: (1) Strongly agree; (2) Agree; (3) Neither agree nor disagree; (4) Disagree;

(5) Strongly disagree]

VI. Control variable (Table 3)

1. Place of Residence

How would you describe the place where you live?

- (1) A big city; (2) The suburbs or outskirts of a big city; (3) A small city or town;
(4) a country village; (5) A farm or home in the country

[Recoded as: (1) A country village or a farm or home in the country; (2) A small city or town or the suburbs or outskirts of a big city; (3) A big city]