

Greek Social Issues

2-2013

Social perceptions
about the
number of
immigrants in
Greece today:
Visibility and
Co-existence

2012

Publication date
31/1/2013

www.publicissue.gr

Public Issue was established in 2001.
It specializes in political and election opinion polls, as well as media, social and consumer behavior surveys.
Member of: World Association for Public Opinion Research (WAPOR), European Society for Opinion and Marketing Research (ESOMAR), Association of Greek Market & Opinion Research Companies (SEDEA).

Contact details

**16, Vas. Konstantinou St., 116 35, Athens, Greece, t: +30 210 7575000, f: +30 210 7575100,
w: www.publicissue.gr, e: info@publicissue.gr**

Source Public Issue, Public Opinion Polls Data Base, 2001-2013, Nationwide general population telephone surveys.

Social perceptions about the number of immigrants in Greece today: Visibility and Co-existence

The phenomenon of immigration is preoccupying public opinion in Greece. Discussion focuses mainly on the number of immigrants living in the country, their nationality and the possibility of their co-existence with Greek citizens.

The social diffusion of the immigration phenomenon is quite evident, since geographically it affects the entire country. In Public Issue's survey for 2012, 8 in 10 citizens (81%) are aware of the presence of immigrants in the vicinity of their residence (Figure 1). Unsurprisingly, residents of the capital, where the highest number of immigrants are concentrated, are slightly more aware of their presence (83%), relative to residents of Thessaloniki (77%) and the rest of Greece (80%) (Figure 2).

Greek Social Issues

However, according to Public Issue's data for the past decade (2003-2012), the general feeling among Greeks regarding the immigrants living in their neighborhoods is that their number is gradually declining. More specifically, the percentage of citizens who are aware that there are people of other nationalities or religion in their neighborhood fell from 94% in 2003, to 90% in 2006, 89% in 2009 and 81% in 2012 (Figure 3). The gradual decrease in the visibility of immigrants most probably constitutes a strong indication that a number of them have left Greece. To a much lesser degree, it can be explained in terms of social acceptance of the 'Other' (growing accustomed to or becoming more familiar with his/her presence).

As for the nationality of immigrants, on the basis of the subjective assessments of respondents it emerges that the largest ethnic group continues to be Albanians (74%), followed with smaller percentages by Pakistanis (33%), Bulgarians (19%), Russians (9%), Romanians (9%) and Africans (7%) (Figure 4). Of particular importance is the development over time of the 'specific weight' of each ethnic group. During the past six years, the visibility of Albanian immigrants has fallen from 88% (2006) to 74% (2012), while that of Russians from 16% to 9%. In contrast, a significant increase is observed in the visibility of Pakistanis, from 18% to 33% (almost double) as well as of Africans, from 2% to 7% (more than double – Figure 5).

The geographical distribution of the immigrants' visibility is, generally, in proportion to the urbanization of the country's general population. More specifically, 64% of immigrants are concentrated in urban centers, 14% in semi-urban districts and 22% in rural areas. However, the geographical concentration of the different ethnic groups varies considerably.

Nearly 9 in 10 Africans (89%), 8 in 10 Russians (83%), 7 in 10 Pakistanis (71%) and 6 in 10 Albanians (61%) and Romanians (60%) have settled in the large cities and more generally in the urban centers of the country. In contrast, the presence of Bulgarians is spread throughout Greece, though mainly in rural areas, where the comparatively higher percentage of their concentration is recorded (37% - Figure 6).

Greek Social Issues

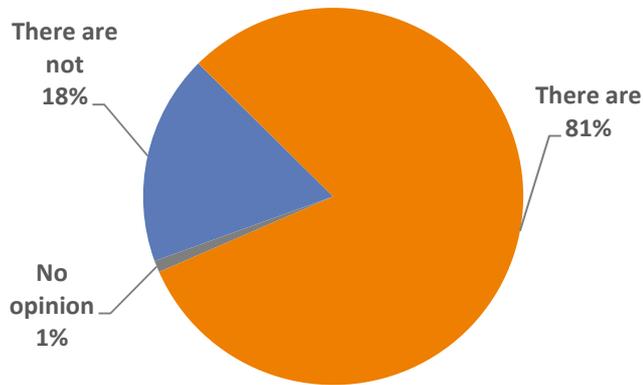
The prevailing view among Greeks concerning the immigrants with whom they co-exist in their residential locale is that they do not cause problems. This view is shared by 8 in 10 respondents (83% - **Figure 7**).

It should be noted however that this percentage fell steadily between 2006 (88%) and the first quarter of 2012 (77%), which suggests that in the matter of 'national co-existence' there has been a deteriorating trend. The social climate appears to be changing following the launch of the police operation codenamed Xenios Zeus aimed at curbing illegal immigration, with a conjunctural reversal of this trend being recorded (**Figure 8**).

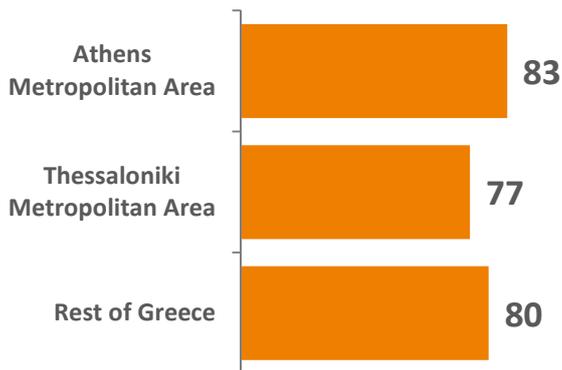
VISIBILITY AND PERCEIVED NATIONALITY OF IMMIGRANTS IN THE RESIDENTIAL LOCALE OF THE RESPONDENTS

F.1 Immigrants' visibility, 9/2012

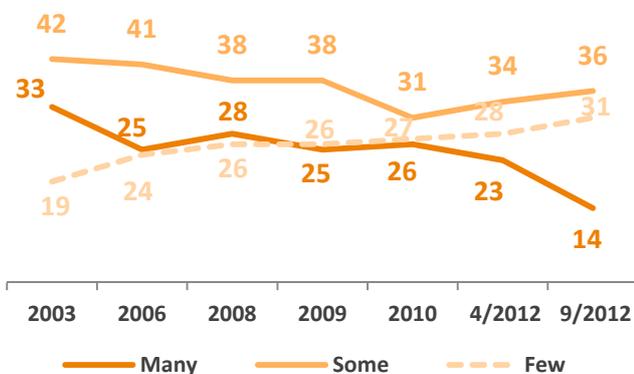
(In the area where you live, are there people of other nationalities?)



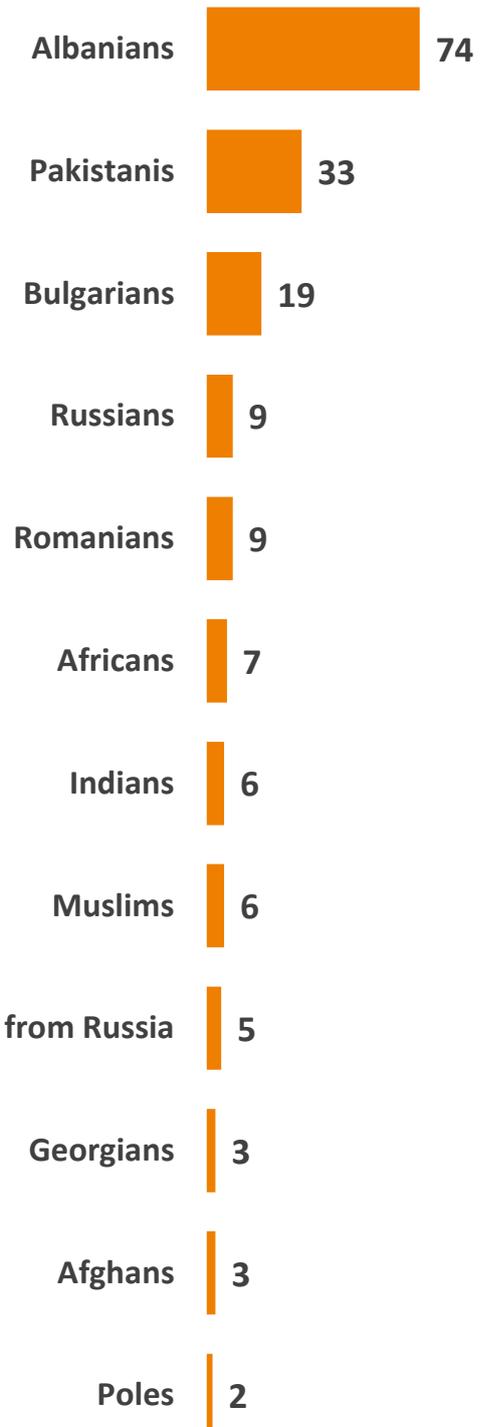
F.2 Immigrants' visibility, by residential area classification, 9/2012



F.3 Immigrants' visibility, 2003-2012

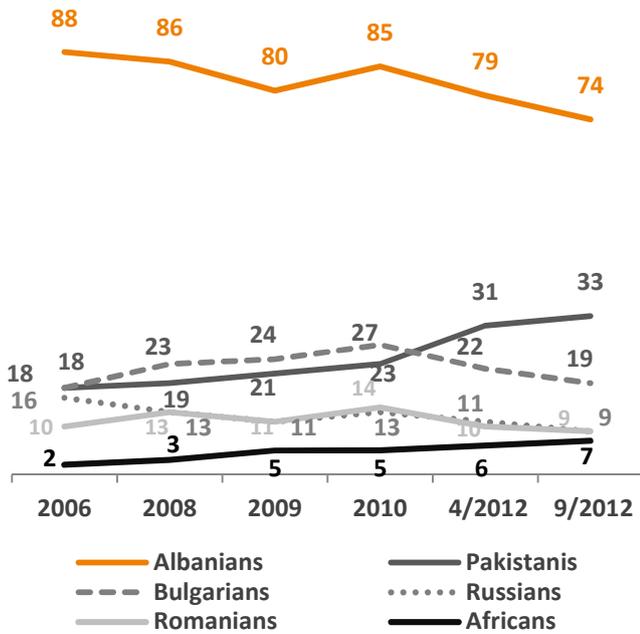


F.4 Perceived immigrants' nationality, 9/2012

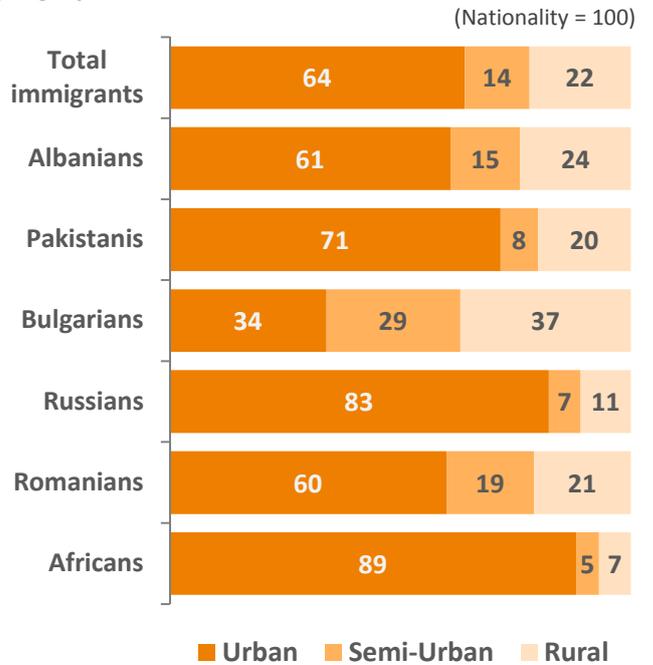


PERCEIVED IMMIGRANTS' NATIONALITY IN THE RESIDENTIAL LOCALE & OPINION ON SOCIAL TENSIONS

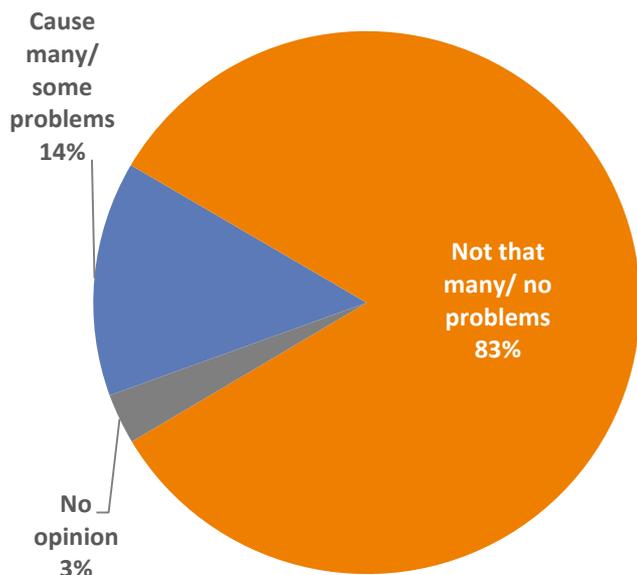
F.5 Perceived immigrants' nationality in the residential locale of the respondents, 2006-2012



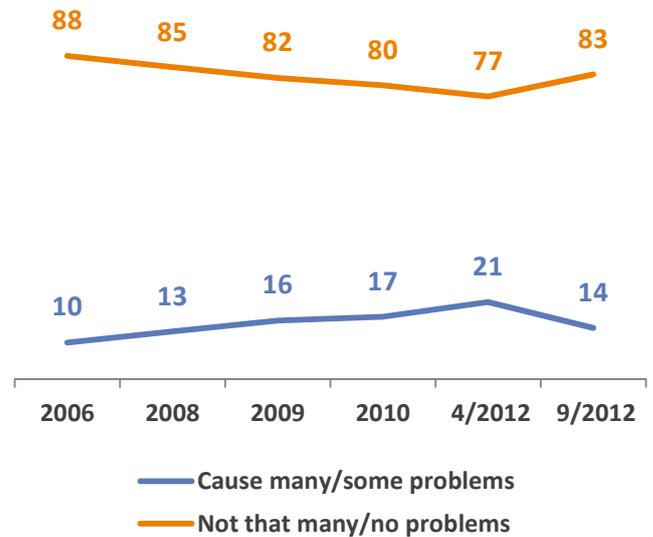
F.6 Perceived immigrants' nationality in the residential locale of the respondents, by geographical area, 9/2012



F.7. Opinion on social tensions due to the existence of immigrants in residential locale, 9/2012



F.8. Opinion on social tensions due to the existence of immigrants in residential locale, 2006-2012





Greek Social Issues

www.publicissue.gr