

public issue

Deliverable

C

AORI

Athens Observatory for
Refugees & Immigrants

«Migration & Refugees
Coordination Center &
Observatory program»

Survey – C

Accommodation Apartments
Refugees and Immigrants Census

Executive summary

January 2017

Public Issue was established in 2001.

It specializes in political and election opinion polls, as well as media, social and consumer behavior surveys.

In early 2004, for the first time in Greece, Public Issue began to monitor trends in public opinion systematically using the method of telephone surveys.

**Member of: European Society for Opinion and Marketing Research (ESOMAR),
Association of Greek Market & Opinion Research Companies (SEDEA).**

[Contact details](#)

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

ATHENS OBSERVATORY FOR REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS

Introduction

The “Athens Observatory for Refugees and Immigrants” (AORI) is a comprehensive research program which combines both census type field surveys and public opinion polls. Its aim is to help the Municipality have a better understanding of the refugee/immigration phenomenon, through a specific analysis of the characteristics of the population, who stay in the hosting facilities of the Athens municipality. In addition, it aims to reflect the residents' attitudes towards the refugee/ immigrant population and their evolution over time.

The AORI surveys constitute a systematic evidence base, providing reliable information on the current situation of the refugees/immigrants within the geographical boundaries of the Municipality, as well as the existing possibilities for their inclusion and integration.

public issue

The present report discusses the results of the Census of the Refugee/Immigrant Population, which conducted at the temporary accommodation apartments in Athens with face-to-face interviews. The census covered all the 190 heads of the refugee households/families* and 901 people in total.

Specifically, the Population Census includes the following axes:

1. Social and demographic profile of the refugee/immigrant population staying at the apartments (nationality, gender, age, marital status, previous social status etc.)
2. Experiences from the journey to Greece (decision to leave the home country, choice of destination country, passage/transit countries)
3. Forms of help and assistance received in Athens (from the citizens, church, NGOs)
4. Living conditions and everyday life in Athens (housing conditions in the apartments, social life, circulation in the city)
5. Current economic situation of the household (expenditures, employment status of family members)
6. Refugees' education level and skills (work experience, language and IT skills)
7. The refugees' future plans and intentions

* As family are also meant the incomplete forms that have arisen as a result of the family losses caused by the war, or the divisions of families caused by unintentional movements.

public issue

Part 1: Population of refugees and immigrants in the apartments

Demographic profile

The refugee/immigrant population who was registered in the two months of December 2016 – January 2017 at the temporary accommodation apartments amounts to 901 people.

- According to the census conducted by Public Issue, during the period of December 2016 - January 2017, it was found that the Syrians represent 60% of the total (3 in 5), the Kurds 20% (1 in 5) and the Iraqis 10% (1 in 10), while the rest of the population in the apartments, which is a total of 9%, consists of Afghans (8%) and Palestinians (1%).
- As for the gender, 51% of the population of the apartments consists of men and 49% of women.
- The population of refugees is notably youthful. The average age is only 20 years.
- Half of the refugees/immigrants hosted (53%) are aged under 18, while 29% (3 in 10) are aged 18-34 years. The age group of 35-54 years represents 14% of the population and those aged 55 years and over only 3%.
- As for the average family size, is five-member.
- During the Census period, a total of 28 pregnant women and 10 persons with disability were recorded in the apartments.

public issue

Education and work experience

- As for the **education level**, because of the youth population, a significant portion close to **38% (4 in 10)** has not attended school. The rest are; graduates of primary education (24%), secondary (33%) and tertiary education (5%).
- As for **economic activity in the country of origin**, the **2 in 10 (22%)** refugees/immigrants were working (were active), while the remaining **8 in 10 (78%)** were unemployed or inactive population. The position they had in employment was mainly: Private sector employees (10%), Employers/ Self-employed (8%), and Public sector employees (4%).

Some of their jobs were: Shop salespersons (10%), cabinet-makers (6%), tailors (6%), primary school teachers (5%), vehicle drivers (5%), hairdressers (4%), farmers (4%), photographers and decorators (3%), engineers (3%) etc.

- Today, in terms of **economic activity in Greece**, all (100%) remain inactive (do not work).

Greek learning

- The **1 in 10** refugees / immigrants (9%) learn Greek, while **9 in 10 (90%)** do not. *It is worth noting here that the percentage of Greek learning is higher among Afghans (28%) and Palestinians (55%). Conversely, it is low for Kurds (3%) and Iraqis (1%).*

IT skills

- About **1 in 3 (33%)** refugees/immigrants knows how to use the computer, while the remaining **2 in 3 (67%)** do not.
- However, the internet user rate is higher (**58%**, or **6 in 10**), mainly due to the possession of smartphones (**49%**).
- During the census in the apartments, only **1%** of the refugees / immigrants owned a portable computer (laptop, notebook or tablet).

public issue

Part 2: Heads of the Families

Demographic profile

The demographic composition of the refugees/immigrants' heads of the families living in the apartments (n=190), is as follows:

Nationality:

- The heads of the families from Syria constitute 60% (6 in 10) of the total, while 2 in 10 (18%) are Kurds. The Afghans represent 11%, the Iraqis 9% and the Palestinians 1%.

Gender:

- Men represent 75% of the heads of the family (3 in 4), prevailing over women (25%).

Age:

- Based on the census, more than half of the heads of the family (56%) are young people aged 18-34 years, 4 in 10 (38%) are aged 35-54 years, while only 6% are 55 years and older.

Marital status:

- The vast majority of heads of the families (85%) say they are married, while 10% say they are unmarried, 5% widowed and 1% divorced*.

Religious affiliation:

- Sunni Muslims represent 87% (almost 9 in 10), followed by Yazidis (6%), Shia Muslims (5%), Christians (1%) and non-religious (1%)

* Note that the percentage of married couples includes also those whose partner is missing (1%)

public issue

Relatives in Greece or abroad (except in the country of origin)

- When asked if they have relatives in Greece or abroad, the majority of heads of the families (94%) answered positively. The 8 in 10 (80%) say they have relatives abroad and 14% that have relatives in Greece.

Most of the relatives abroad are located in Germany (75%), followed by smaller percentages in Sweden (14%), France (5%), Switzerland (4%), Netherlands (4%), Austria (4%), Belgium (3%), Denmark (3%), Norway (3%) etc.

Respectively, from their relatives living in Greece (22%), 18% (about 1 in 5) live in Athens (1% at the accommodation site in Eleonas, 2% in other apartment and 15% elsewhere in Athens).

Moreover, of the married heads of the family, 84% say they live with their husband/wife in the apartment, 16% (1 in 6 married) report that their husband/wife is in another country (mainly in Germany, but also in their country of origin, namely in Syria, Iraq, Turkey etc.), while 1% are unaware of the fate of their partner.

public issue

Previous social status

The population of refugees / immigrants comes from the urban centers of the countries of origin.

According to the declared geographical origin of residence of the heads of the families, the majority used to live in a big city of more than 100.000 people (73%) or in the Capital of the country of origin (15%), while a smaller percentage previously lived in a small or medium-sized city of less than 100.000 people (9%) and very few in villages (3%).

In terms of family income, the social origin of refugees is concentrated mainly in the middle (46%) and lower (45%) social class, while a smaller percentage (9%, 1 in 10) comes from the upper class.

public issue

Personal health and psychosocial conditions

The 3 in 4 heads of the family (74%) evaluate their personal health as "good" (15% "neither good nor bad", and 11% "bad"). Compared with two years ago, the health condition for most (44%) has remained unchanged ("the same"), while a significant proportion (22%), almost 1 in 5, says that "it has deteriorated".

Especially for the female heads of the families, the deterioration rate of health is slightly higher and reaches 28%.

It is also noted that 6 in 10 heads of the family (62%) has visited a **hospital or health care center**. The vast majority of cases, visited a public hospital / health care center (96%) and 8 out of 10 (83%) were satisfied by the services provided to them.

Then, the heads of the family were asked about the **sleeping conditions, good mood and appetite for food**. The replies showed that about 6 out of 10 heads of the family "can sleep well" (61%) and "have good appetite for food" (55%) most of the time, but fewer "are in a good mood" (46%). It should also be noted that in terms of frequency of sleep and appetite, men are better off than women.

public issue

Part 3: Arrival in Greece and assistance received

Journey to Greece

The main reason, for which they left their country (the country of origin) is, obviously, the war (98%); followed in much smaller percentages by political opinions (1%) and personal issues (1%).

All refugees / immigrants came to Greece from the Aegean Sea (100%), which is confirmed by the fact that all (100%) reported Turkey as transit country.

Leaving the country of origin, the majority of refugees / immigrants (69%, 7 out of 10) was primarily planning to go to Germany; followed by smaller percentages to Sweden (6%), the Netherlands (6%), Ireland (3%), Austria (2%), France (2%), Switzerland (2%), Belgium (2%), Denmark (2%) etc. It is noted that none of the heads of the family mentioned Greece as destination country.

In January 2017, when the Census was completed, the respondent refugees/immigrants' duration of stay in Greece was, on average, 10 months.

Asylum seeking and forms of assistance received in Athens

About 2 out of 3 heads of the family (65%) have applied for asylum (asylum seekers) and 9 in 10 (92%) are registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Regarding the forms of help they received in Athens, they mainly come from Non-Governmental Organizations (47%) and to smaller percentages from the Greek citizens (16%), the church (10%) and their compatriots in Greece (6%).

public issue

Part 4: Living conditions and everyday life in Athens

Housing conditions in the apartments

In general, the vast majority of heads of the family (87%) are satisfied with the living conditions in the apartments.

Some problems of the apartments, mentioned spontaneously, are: the accommodation (23%), furniture (5%), the overcrowded rooms (4%), lack of money (3%), noise (2%) etc.

Then, the respondents were asked in more detail to express their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the house facilities and the heating in the apartments. The responses indicate **universal satisfaction** both with the **house facilities (93%)** and the **heating (88%)**.

public issue

Socializing and social relationships

The population of refugees / immigrants living in the apartments feels particularly safe.

The satisfaction rate recorded in the issue of security is also universal and close to 97%. Similarly, high satisfaction is also found in terms of interpersonal relations of refugees both with the accommodation personnel (97%) and the neighbors (95%).

In general, about 9 in 10 heads of the family (94%) are "satisfied" with the everyday life in the apartments.

Regarding the engagement with social media (such as Facebook, Twitter, Google+ etc.), 8 out of 10 heads of the family (82%) say they maintain an account, while 75% (3 in 4) use their services daily. This means that the majority of heads of the family does not live in isolation, but on the contrary, it is in contact with the global community of the Internet.

public issue

Circulation in the city

The refugees move regularly in the city. The 9 in 10 heads of the family (90%) say they regularly get out of the apartments, either on a daily basis (73%) or several times a week (17%), while almost everyone (98%) say they visit the center of Athens.

Incidents of xenophobia

It is particularly important that during their stay in Athens, the majority of heads of the family, close to 97% (almost universally) has not encountered any incident of xenophobia.

However, a percentage of 2% report they have experienced some sort of offence, without differentiation between women (2%) and men (2%).

public issue

Part 5: Economic situation of the household and access to work (HOF)

Household economic situation

The majority of heads of the family (97%) holds a prepaid or debit card for their daily purchases, which has been distributed mainly by the United Nations (61%) and the NGO International Rescue Committee (32%).

On average, a refugee / immigrant family which is hosted in an apartment in Athens spends 132 euros per week.

The main categories of costs, which amount to 92% of the refugees' consumer spending, are in hierarchical order:

- Food and drinks (91€)
- Milk and baby care (16€)
- Cigarettes and tobacco (8€)
- Phone cards and mobile phone cards (6€)

Minimum amounts refer to expenditure for tickets (1€) and nothing for newspapers or magazines.

public issue

Employment of the HOF

None of the heads of the family (100%) claimed to work in Greece.

I should be stressed that 3 out of 4 heads of the family (76%) respond negatively to the question of whether they want to work in Greece.

Of the rest (23%) who respond positively, 27% are willing to do "any job". The reported preferable jobs, in ranking order, are:

- **Tailors (9%)**
- **Cooks (5%)**
- **Shop salespersons (5%)**
- **Builders (5%)**
- **Car / motorcycle drivers (5%)**
- **Bus / heavy truck drivers (5%) etc.**

public issue

Part 6: Education and skills of the HOF

Education and previous work experience

Half of heads of the family (49%) have completed **secondary education**. The rest are graduates of primary (31%) and tertiary education (8%), while a significant number has not attended school (12%).

Regarding the economic activity of heads of the family in the country of origin, 8 out of 10 (80%) say **they worked**, mainly as private sector employees (37%) or self-employed (31%).

The occupations mainly practiced were:

- **Shop salespersons (12%)**
- **Vehicle drivers (7%)**
- **Engineers (5%)**
- **Cabinet-makers (5%)**
- **Tailors (5%)**
- **Farmers (5%)**
- **Office clerks (3%)**
- **Hairdressers (3%) etc.**

public issue

IT skills

Half of heads of the family (51%) know how to use the **computer**, but only 13% say "very well".

Regarding the **use of the Internet** is quite widespread, since 9 out of 10 heads of the family (89%) say they use it, and almost 8 out of 10 (78%) regularly, namely "several times a day". The widespread use of the Internet is due to the **almost universal possession of smartphones (94%)**, while a smaller proportion (4%) says that it also has a **portable computer (laptop, notebook or tablet)**.

public issue

Language skills

The predominant native languages in the population hosted in the apartments are:

- Arabic (58%)
- Kurdish (31%) and
- Persian (Farsi, Dari) (10%)

As international language, English is spoken by the 34% of heads of the family at a moderate level in general (speaking, reading and writing).

Regarding Greek, only a small percentage of heads of the family (2%) can speak, read and write at a low level.

Of the rest who do not speak Greek at all (98%), 16% say “they are learning”, 17% “want to learn”, while -it is worth noting- that 65% do not want to learn. It is pointed out that learning the language of the host country is one of the major facilitators for the inclusion and integration of refugees and immigrants.

public issue

Part 7: Future plans

Information about country of origin and host country

Nearly 3 out of 10 heads of the family (31%) are regularly informed (daily or several times a week) about the situation in their home country, while the respective percentage about the news in Greece does not exceed 17%.

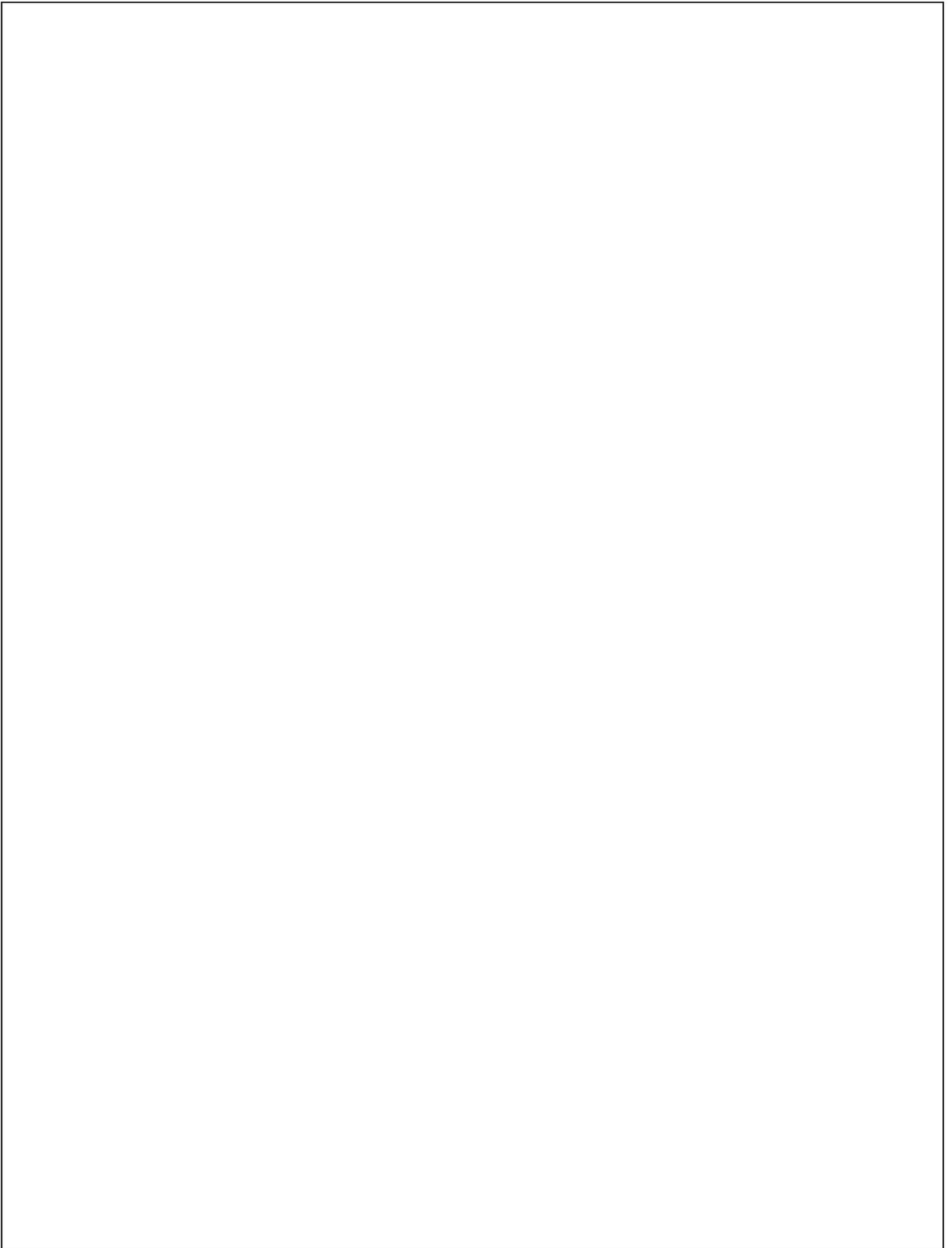
Intention to return / to stay

The percentage of heads of the family who intend to return home, once the situation returns to normal, amounts to 35% (that is, 1 in 3).

Of the rest, who do not intend to return, only 2% would like to remain in Greece.

The main destination country remains Germany (64%), followed by:

- The Netherlands (7%)
- Sweden (5%)
- France (5%)
- Ireland (4%)
- Switzerland (3%) etc.





www.publicissue.gr