

EU citizens hold Greek government responsible for debt crisis

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London – An Ipsos survey of citizens of nine European Union countries finds most people hold the Greek government responsible for the ongoing debt crisis. Some 88% say the Greek government is a great deal, or a fair amount, to blame for the crisis –rising to 94% among German respondents. The German government was mentioned by 46%, attracting less blame than the Greek populace, the IMF and the European Commission overall.

The survey also found broad agreement (61%) that the austerity measures being imposed on Greece are making their economy worse. Those in Italy and Spain are most likely to raise such concerns and those in Poland and Sweden least likely to think austerity is exacerbating the problem.

Despite the consensus that austerity is damaging the Greek economy further, a clear majority (73%) think Greece should repay all of their debts, so as not to encourage other countries to default on debt in future. Only 46% agreed that some of Greece's debt should be written off, with the Italians, Poles and Brits being most in favour of some debt relief.

The results also suggest some concern among EU citizens about whether the Eurozone is resilient enough to weather the current storm - across all nations, only 51% think the Eurozone is strong enough to survive the crisis without serious damage, and 72% think it likely the recent crisis could be repeated in another Eurozone country.



Head of Political Research, Ipsos MORI, **Gideon Skinner**, said:

“These results highlight the different perspectives of the EU nations on the debt crisis, and shows Italy and Spain in particular, tend to have more sympathy towards their struggling neighbour. That said, a clear majority of people in all countries pin the blame on the Greek government, rather than the IMF, the European Commission or other EU countries’ governments. Whilst there’s a broad understanding that austerity is making the Greek economy worse – there’s no clear verdict on whether Greece should have some of its debts written off, and indeed many are concerned this could pave the path for similar debt crises in other EU nations.”

Detailed findings include:

In all nine countries the Greek government is seen as most to blame for the crisis in Greece, although views differ on who is second place. Polish, German and Swedish citizens rate the Greek people as second most culpable, whilst in other countries including Britain, France, Italy and Spain, citizens rank the European Commission or the International Monetary Fund (members of the “troika”) as second most responsible. Two thirds of Italian and Spanish citizens (67% and 66% respectively) said that the German government is to blame for the Greek crisis.

There is broad agreement across most of the countries that the austerity measures being imposed on Greece are making their economy worse. Agreement ranges from 75% of Italian citizens to 38% of Swedes. Over half of the



German public (58%) also agree that the austerity measures imposed on Greece are making the Greek economy worse.

EU publics are split on the issue of Greek debt relief, with roughly half in support and half opposed to creditor countries writing off some of Greece's debts. Majorities in Poland (68%), Italy (58%), Britain (54%) and Spain (51%) are in favour of debt relief, whilst majorities in all other countries are opposed. The French and German publics are most hard-line in opposition to a debt write-down; two thirds (67%) are opposed to creditor countries writing off Greek debts.

There is broad concern in all countries that if the Greeks do not pay back their debts it would encourage others countries to borrow beyond their means. This view is most prevalent in Poland, where 86% agree that Greek debt relief would set a precedent. Even in Italy, the country least convinced of the logic of this argument, two thirds (64%) agree that the Greeks should pay back all their debts.

There is a widespread expectation that there will be a similar crisis in the Eurozone in the future. This belief is equally strong in struggling Eurozone economies such as France (81%), Italy (80%) and Spain (77%) as it is in Germany (76%). Britons are just as pessimistic (80%) that such a crisis will recur in the Eurozone whilst the Swedes (64%), Poles (59%) and Hungarians (51%) are slightly more optimistic.

Respondents aged 16-64 were interviewed via the Ipsos Global Advisor Online Panel in Belgium, France, Great Britain, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Spain and Sweden



between July 24 - August 7, 2015. Approximately 1000+ individuals participated on a country by country basis with the exception of Belgium, Hungary, Poland and Sweden where each have a sample of approximately 500+.

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