

EXPLORING THE FACTORS WHICH SHAPED THE
EUROPEAN POLICY OF:

GREECE

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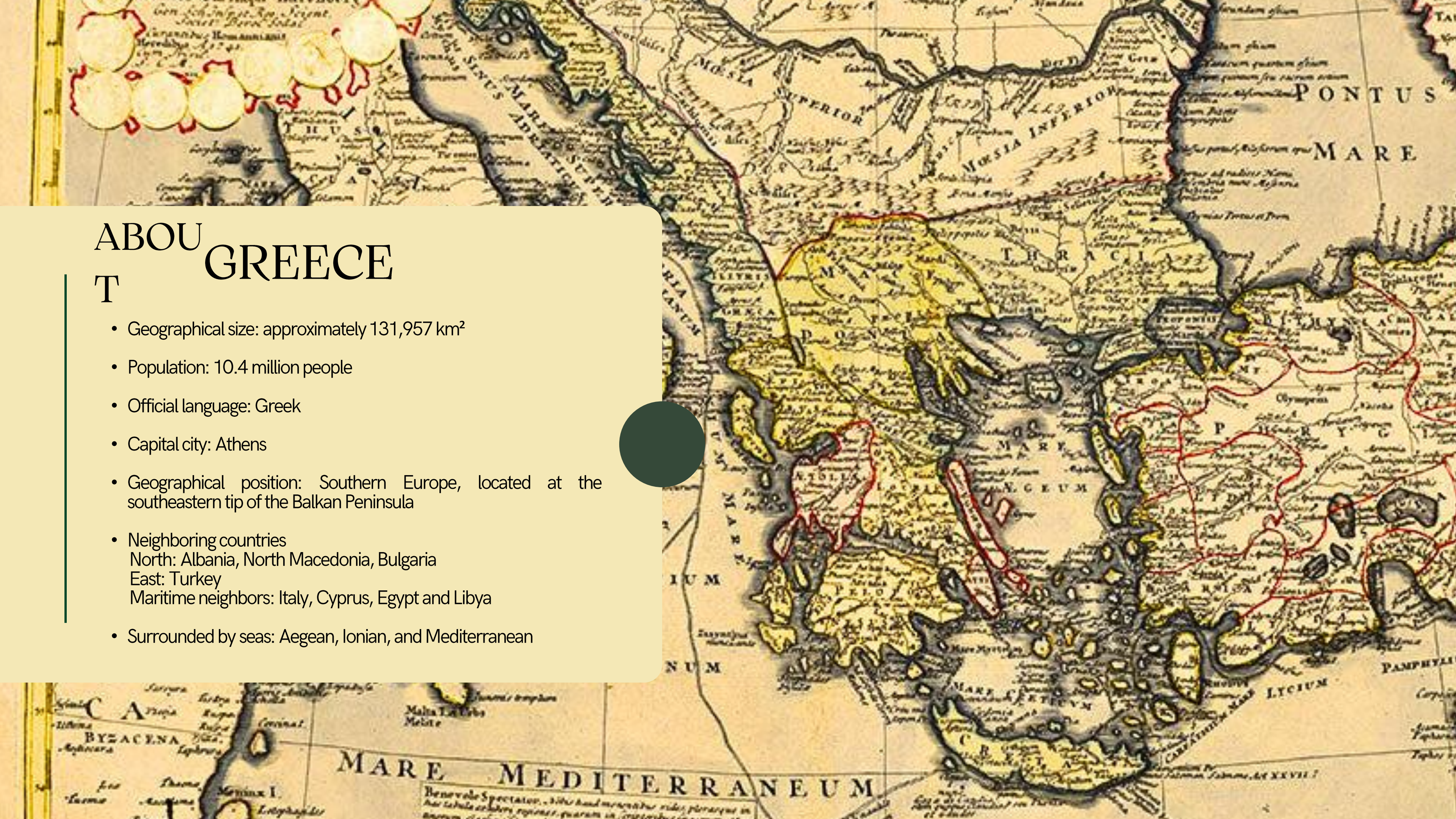
CONTENTS:

- GENERAL INFORMATION
- KEY HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS
- ECONOMY
- POLITICS
- REASONS WHY GREECE JOINED EU
- POSITION ON EU ENLARGEMENT
- EUROSKEPTICISM
- ROLE INSIDE EU



ABOUT GREECE

- Geographical size: approximately 131,957 km²
- Population: 10.4 million people
- Official language: Greek
- Capital city: Athens
- Geographical position: Southern Europe, located at the southeastern tip of the Balkan Peninsula
- Neighboring countries
North: Albania, North Macedonia, Bulgaria
East: Turkey
Maritime neighbors: Italy, Cyprus, Egypt and Libya
- Surrounded by seas: Aegean, Ionian, and Mediterranean







KEY HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

1821

Beginning of the Greek War of Independence from the Ottoman Empire.

**1912–
1922**

Balkan Wars and Asia Minor Campaign

**1967–
1974**

Military Dictatorship (The Junta)

1981

Entry into the European Economic Community

**2001–
2002**

Entry into the Eurozone

1830

Official recognition of the modern Greek state

**1940–
1949**

World War II and the Greek Civil War

1974

Restoration of democracy and the beginning of the "Metapolitefsi" era

2000

Accession to the Schengen Area

**2009–
2018**

Financial Crisis and Bailout Programs

GREEK ECONOMY

Key Characteristics:

- Chronic public debt since the country's foundation → Long-term strain on the economy
- 2009 sovereign debt crisis followed by successive bailout programs

Key Economic Sectors:

- Services & Tourism
- Shipping
- Agriculture

Economic Indicators (2024):

- Trade with EU → Exports 52.3%, Imports 47.9%
- Unemployment → 10.1%
- National debt → 153.6% of GDP



GREEK POLITICS



- **Form of government:** Parliamentary Republic with executive, legislative, and judicial branches
- **President of the Republic:** Ceremonial head of state, elected by Parliament for 5 years
- **Prime Minister:** Real executive power; leads the government and Parliament majority
- **Parliament:** 300 members, elected every 4 years: passes laws and supervises government
- **Electoral System of Greece:** Reinforced proportional representation, the leading party receives a majority bonus (20-50 seats) depending on its vote share → System designed to favor single-party majority governments

GREEK POLITICS



- **Major political parties:** New Democracy, SYRIZA, PASOK-KINAL, KKE, Others: Hellenic Solution, NIKI, Course of Freedom, New Left
- **Local government:** Regions and municipalities BUT pretty weak power
- **Foreign & European policy:** Pro-EU and NATO, active in regional stability and EU enlargement, ongoing diplomacy with Turkey
- **Recent trends:** Focus on economic reforms, defense modernization, digital governance, and green policies

GREEK PARTIES IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT (2024–2029)



- **New Democracy** (7 seats) → European People's Party (EPP)
- **SYRIZA** (4 seats) → European United Left-Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL)
- **PASOK - Movement for Change** (3 seats) → Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats (S&D)
- **Greek Solution** (2 seats) → European Conservatives & Reformists (ECR)
- **Communist Party of Greece (KKE)** (2 seats) → Non-attached Members (NI)
- **Niki - Democratic Patriotic Movement** (1 seat) → Non-attached Members (NI)
- **Course for Freedom** (1 seat) → Non-attached Members (NI)
- **Voice of Reason** (1 seat) → Patriots for Europe

REASONS WHY GREECE JOINED THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY

Historical Background

1961: Greece signs the Association Agreement with the EEC

1967-1974: Military dictatorship → political relations become strained, but the Association Agreement does not formally stop

1974: Restoration of democracy → Greece requests the reactivation of the Association Agreement

1975: Greece formally submits its application for full EEC membership

1979: Accession Treaty signed at Zappeion

1981: Greece becomes the 10th member of the EEC

Political & Strategic Goals

- Consolidate and safeguard democracy after 1974
- Strengthen political stability through deeper European integration
- Enhance Greece's geopolitical position within a changing Western environment



REASONS WHY GREECE JOINED THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY

Economic & Development Goals

Economic Modernization

- Access to the Common Market → more exports, trade & investments
- European capital for modernization of industry & infrastructure

Agriculture & Regional Development

- Benefits from the Common Agricultural Policy → subsidies & modernization
- Support for rural areas and reduction of development gaps

Overall National Strategy

- Transformation of Greece from a peripheral to a fully integrated European state
- Long-term economic and institutional modernization through EEC membership



GREECE'S POSITION ON EU ENLARGEMENT



Principles

- Supports enlargement for stability, democracy, and security
- Favors accession only with full compliance to EU criteria

Regional Focus

1. Western Balkans

- North Macedonia: Blocked accession for years → support after Prespa
- Albania: Support conditioned on minority rights & maritime dispute
- Serbia: Strong and consistent supporter
- Montenegro: Strong supporter
- Bosnia & Herzegovina: Support tied to institutional reforms
- Kosovo: Non-recognition but support for EU-led dialogue

2. Cyprus

- Strong supporter of Cyprus' EU accession (2004)

Strategic Goals

- Enhance Greece's political and economic influence in SE Europe
- Promote democratic reforms and modernization in neighbors
- Strengthen economic integration and regional cooperation
- Improve security, dialogue, and stability across the region

GREECE'S POSITION ON TURKEY'S EU ENTRY

1980s–1990s: Repeated Greek vetoes linked to Aegean & Cyprus disputes

1995 Customs Union: Greece lifts its veto in exchange for an EU package addressing Greek interests

1999 Major shift: Greece supports Turkey's EU candidate status

2005–2016 Accession negotiations: Greece does not block any chapters, Some chapters are frozen by the EU Council or France

2018–Today: The EU declares the accession process at a standstill due to Turkey's domestic political situation

2024–2025 – SAFE Programme:
Greece blocks Turkey's participation in the EU's new SAFE defense program, reflecting ongoing security concerns



GREECE AND THE EUROZONE CRISIS



- Greece was the hardest-hit debtor state in the Eurozone crisis (2009–2018)
- Entered three bailout programs (2010, 2012, 2015)
- Severe recession (-25% GDP), high unemployment, austerity, capital controls.

Government Positions

2010–2014: Governments aligned with EU policy and accepted austerity + structural reforms

2015: SYRIZA attempted renegotiation , 2015 referendum → eventually accepted 3rd bailout

Post-2016: Broad political consensus on remaining in the Eurozone

EUROSCEPTICISM

IN GREECE

Historical Background

Early 1980s (PASOK – Andreas Papandreou): Strong left-wing Euroscepticism

Main Causes of Modern Euroscepticism

- Severe economic hardship during the debt crisis (2010–2018)
- Perceived loss of national sovereignty due to EU bailout conditions & strict regulations
- Political frustration & distrust toward EU institutions
- Perception that EU policies did not sufficiently protect Greek interests

Types of Euroscepticism:

- Hard Euroscepticism

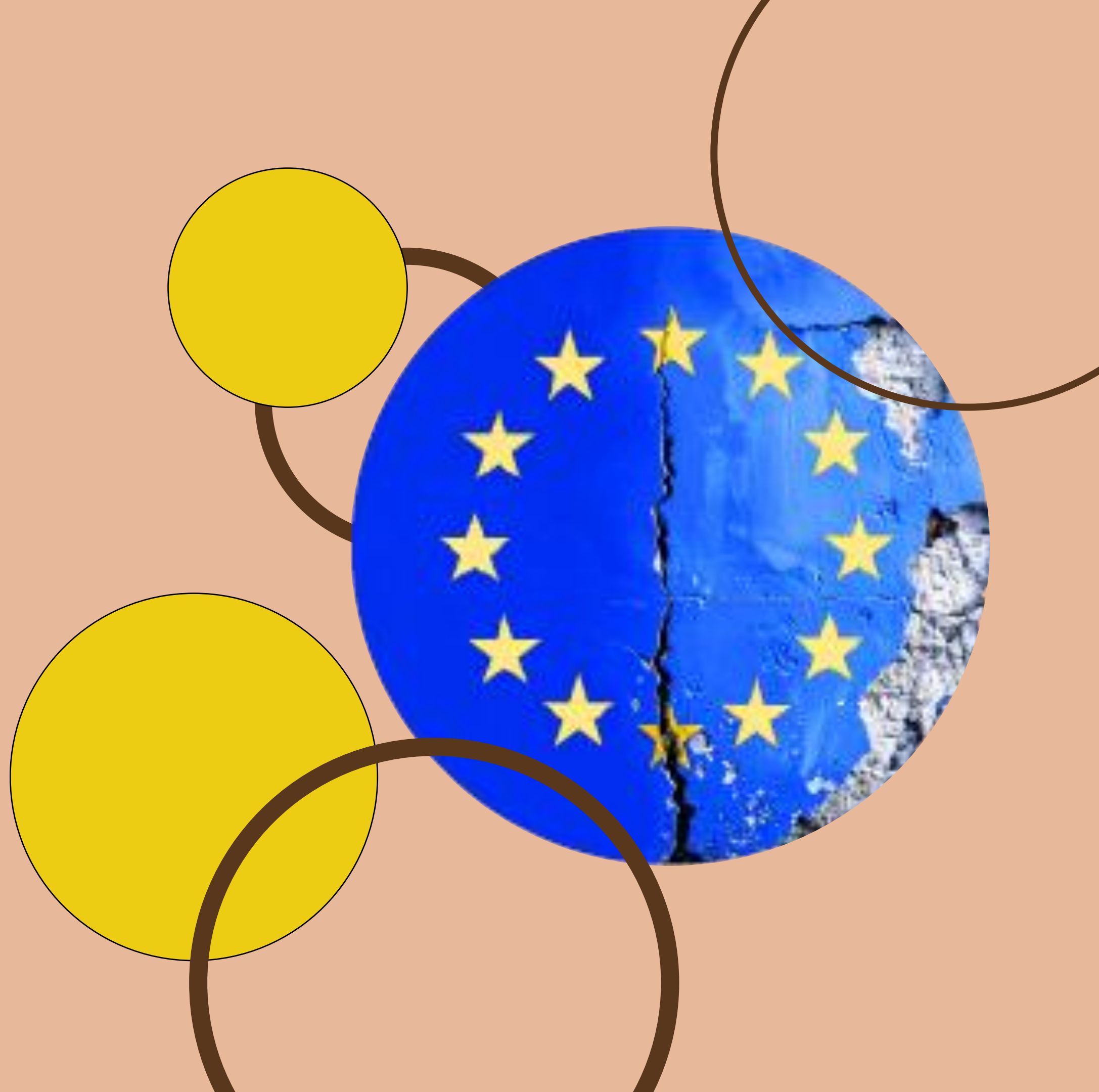
Support for leaving the EU

→ Eurobarometer 2024: 27% of Greeks believe Greece would be better off outside the EU

- Soft Euroscepticism

Criticism of EU policies without supporting exit.

→ Eurobarometer Spring 2025: 63% say the EU is going in the wrong direction



EUROSCEPTICISM

IN GREECE

Mixed trends now: Greeks are critical of EU policies, but a strong majority still supports EU membership

Greek Political Parties with Eurosceptic Positions

- KKE (Communist Party)
- Golden Dawn
- NIKI
- Greek Solution
- MeRA25
- SYRIZA + ANEL (until 2015)



WHAT KIND OF EUROPE DOES GREECE WANT?



Overall Approach

- Supports deeper European integration in selected areas

More Europe in:

- Defence & Security → Support for stronger EU strategic autonomy and common security initiatives
- Digital Policy → Active involvement in shaping European digital sovereignty

Complex / Mixed Position in:

- Climate & Energy Policy → Participates in EU climate initiatives but also pursues new fossil fuel exploration and has diverged from EU positions in some maritime climate negotiations

Less Europe in:

- Areas related to national cultural, educational or taxation preferences → Greece does not push for deeper integration here

EU Budget:

Greece is a net beneficiary of EU funding → Supports a strong and well-funded EU budget



GREECE AND THE RUSSIA–UKRAINE WAR

Ukrainian refugee arrivals: 25,000 Ukrainians registered in Greece (mostly refugees)

Cyber-security → Increased alert levels and awareness of cyber threats since 2022

Foreign policy → Greece remains aligned with EU/NATO, condemns Russia's invasion despite their traditional, cultural and religious ties

Energy diversification: LNG via Greece → Vertical Corridor to Ukraine

Military assistance: Greece provides IFVs, artillery, ammunition, and pilot training (F-16)

EU Sanctions: Greece supports successive EU sanctions on Russia and backs accountability mechanisms

EU Enlargement: Greece endorses EU accession prospects for Ukraine and Moldova

Public & Political Opposition: Some political parties (especially on the left) and parts of public opinion question deep military involvement or large arms transfers

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

FEEL FREE TO ASK ANYTHING OR SHARE YOUR
THOUGHTS

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