NATIONAL ELECTIONS SEPTEMBER 2015

- Opinion Polls
- Exit Poll Data

καπαresearch

1. "To VIMA", Kapa Research and the opinion polls

An old Greek political insider, whenever asked to predict the election winner, often refers to the words of Konstantinos Karamanlis:

> "You want to know what the dynamics of the political parties are? I'll tell you when the elections are called and the central dilemma is clear.
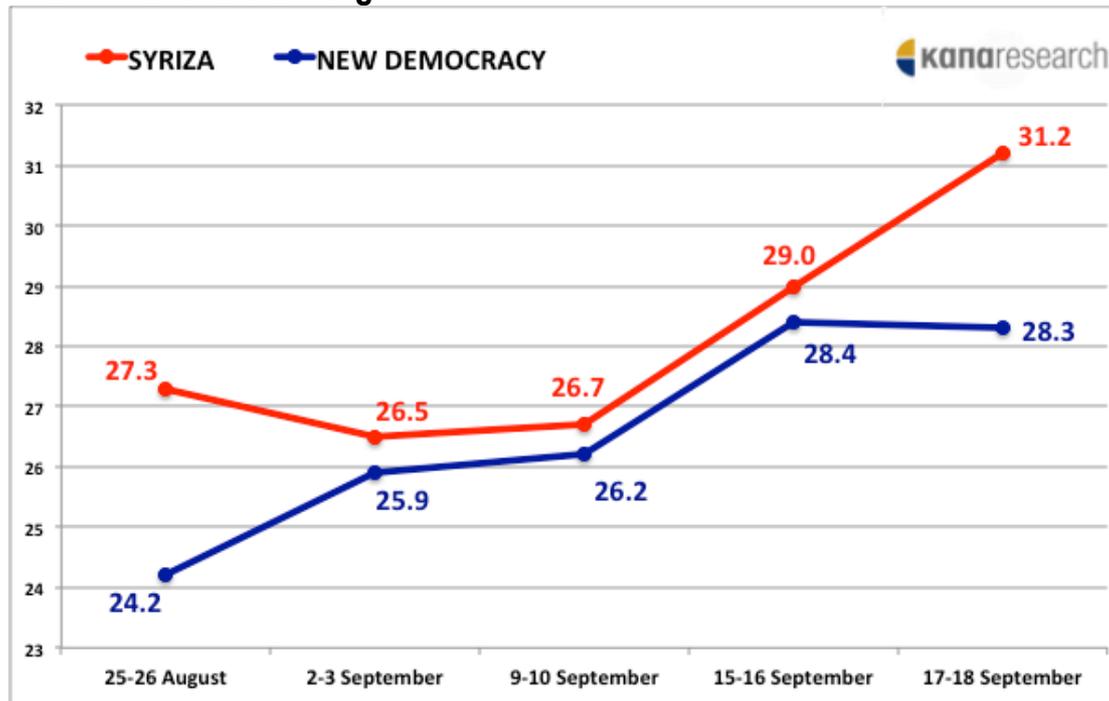>
> You want to know who will win? I'll tell you the last Friday evening."

This informal rule and the recently leaked photo with top Syriza officials' election estimates suggest the following: there is no one who knows the final results beforehand and keeps them from others.

Kapa Research's election polls presented to the readers of To Vima and tovima.gr, clearly recorded the trends, very close to the actual motion of the electorate. Absolutely no party was hurt or benefited by these polls.

FIGURE 1
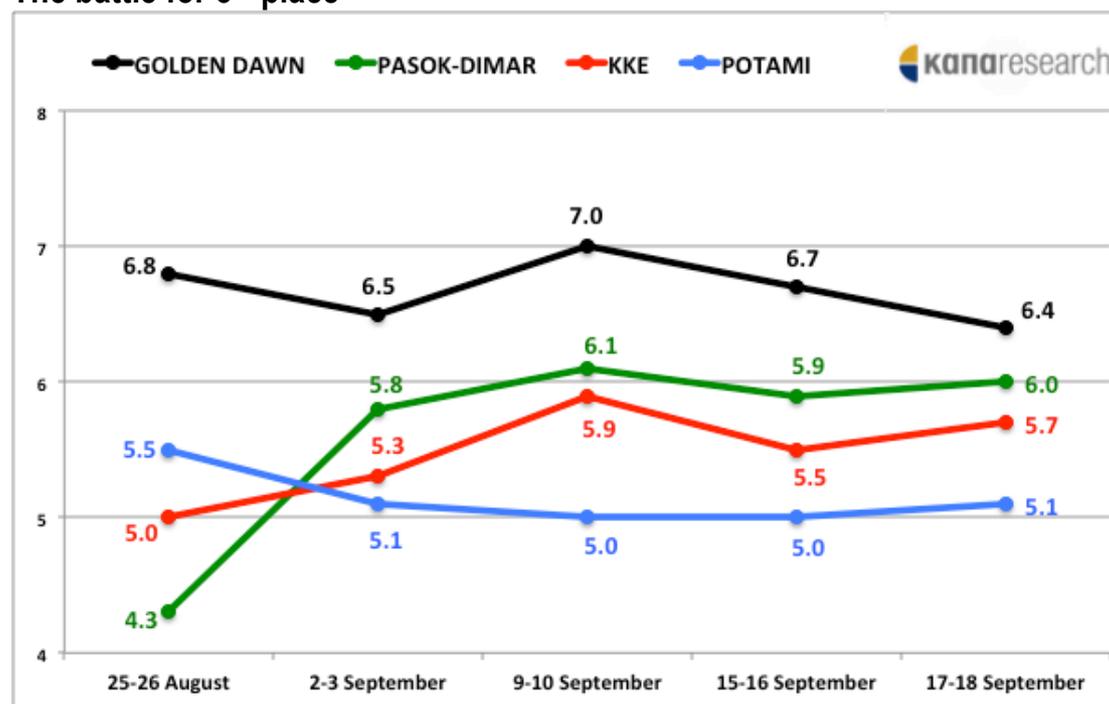### The winner and the margin

The above data are derived from published Kapa Research polls conducted for To Vima newspaper and tovima.gr

After the announcement of snap elections, voting intention data for the two major parties (Figure 1) showed Syriza starting with a significant advantage (+3.1%). The apparent convergence in the meantime was entirely realistic, echoing the detachment/de-cohesion of Syriza's electoral base after the noisy split up of the party, the negative symbolism of A. Tsipras's resigning from the PM's Mansion, and a positive popularity surprise of V. Meimarakis, New Democracy's leader, at the beginning of the election period. In the last week,

and following the logical accumulation of its electoral base, New Democracy showed signs of fatigue and of a slight drop. At the same time, Syriza withstood pressures, rallied its supporters, increased its distance from New Democracy on last Friday, and despite the net loss in votes (-320,000) boosted its electoral percentage to 35.5%, in part due to a higher-than-expected abstention rate. Unlike other survey organizations, which presented the margin between Syriza and New Democracy getting smaller in the last days, Kapa Research showed a clear trend of a widening margin.

FIGURE 2

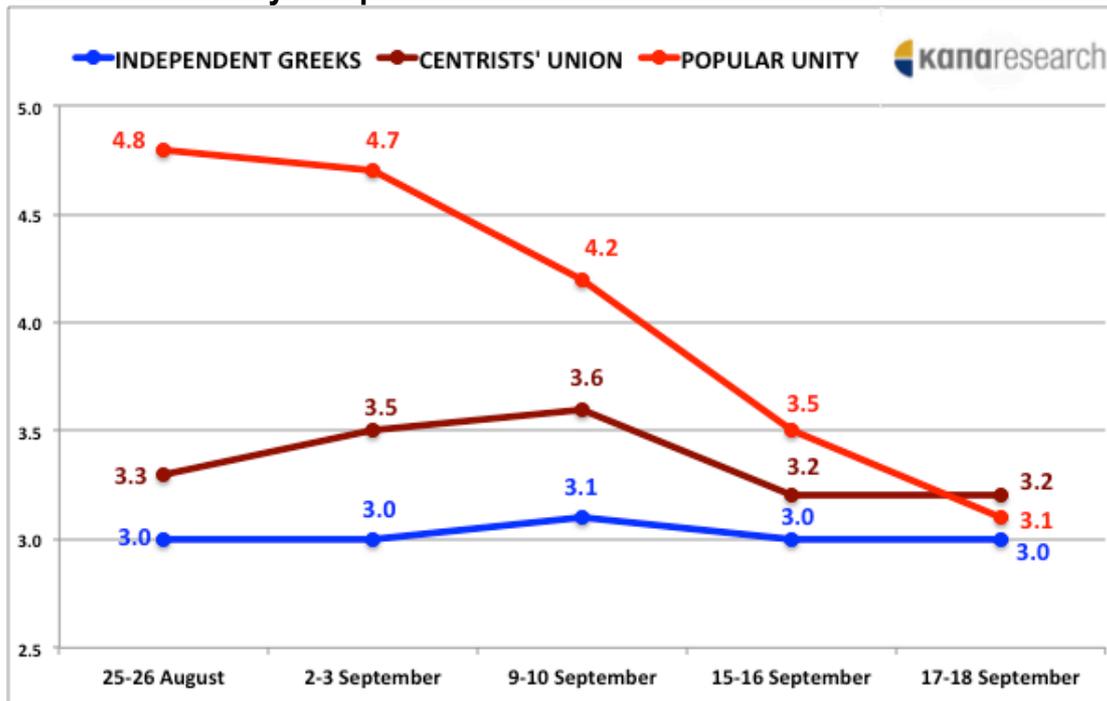## The battle for 3rd place

The above data are derived from published Kapa Research polls conducted for To Vima newspaper and tovima.gr

In the middle group of parties (Figure 2) and the battle for third place, polling was quite accurate and clearly revealed the final ranking. Golden Dawn moved between 6.5 and 7% with a clear indication that it remains the third party in terms of electoral power, the Communist Party moved around 5.5% and fifth place, while the weakening trend of Potami and its retreat in sixth place was also recorded. Pasok, which was the surprise in this group, after it aligned with Dimar (Democratic Left) and George Papandreou's party decided to not run, was rapidly strengthened surpassing the 6% benchmark, but never reaching the goal of the third position, as it was recorded at fourth place until the end.

FIGURE 3

The battle for entry into parliament

The above data are derived from published Kapa Research polls conducted for To Vima newspaper and tovima.gr

In the group of smaller parties (Figure 3), the presence of the Independent Greeks in the next parliament was evident from the beginning, as was the case for the Centrists' Union party, while after its early strong dynamic, it was clear attributed that the Popular Unity party was following a downward trend, starting at 4.8% and ending at 3.1% last Friday and 2.9% on election day.

With respect to the overall discussion on opinion polls and their role, studies have shown that, despite the volume of journalistic material that polls occupy, only 8% of the electorate takes them into consideration during the final selection process and less than 1% admits that they play a role in their final voting choice. On the other hand, the argument that opinion polls influence/manipulate the final vote leads, by itself, to contradictions. Its supporters argue that if all the polling companies showed a 7-point Syriza lead on the last Friday before the election, voters would know the "truth" and therefore would behave differently than they did in reality. Following this reasoning, the final difference would again be different from the polls (either higher or small than the 7-point lead) and opinion polls would be blamed as "mistaken" once again.

In practice, voters were neither influenced by polls that showed New Democracy ahead nor by Kapa Research polls showing Syriza leading by 3 percentage points. This argument is senseless, naive, considers electoral behavior to be fixed and absolutely malleable, and treats national elections as a horse race, citizens as gamblers, and polling stations as horse race betting posts.

Voting intention does not constitute prediction of future results. Intention is one thing, prediction another. Besides, 10% of voters decide which party to vote for during the last week, and another 5% on Election Day. Each poll, at the day it is published, is like yesterday's newspaper. The misinterpretation of voting intention as prediction only illustrates the analytical incapacity of whoever does it, and it happens routinely. Thus, a scientific tool of limited capability turns into a cup of coffee ready to be "read" and the public dialogue into a cafeteria chat.

The fundamental problem rests in the way in which certain parties and the media exploit the excessive number of opinion polls (and polling organizations) to substitute the real political conflict – which requires policy positions, study, hard work, and sincerity – with the cultivation of a "who wins" psychology. (This phenomenon was also present during the critical five days prior to the July referendum. The surprise announcement, the closure of banks, capital controls and the vagueness of the referendum question led to daily reversal of trends. Kapa Research, respecting the readers of To Vima, considered it appropriate not to publish metrics any polls at that time.)

In a country where everything falls apart and everything can be vilified (economy - institutions - media - politicians) it is reasonable to expect attacks on opinion polls. Vilification, however, does not isolate wrong from right and does not fix anything. Instead, the self-awareness to which social research contributes is a factor of progress.

2. Exit Poll data

TABLE 1

Party cohesions – Voter mobility

MOBILITY	SYRIZA	ND	GD	POTAMI	KKE	ANEL	PASOK	KINIMA	CU	TOTAL
SYRIZA	76,3	5,0	6,0	23,0	14,4	12,3	11,4	21,9	5,5	35,5
NEW DEMOCRACY (ND)	5,2	83,1	9,3	16,2	0,4	18,1	7,0	3,1	8,2	28,1
GOLDEN DAWN (GD)	1,1	2,3	78,6	0,7	0,7	2,2	0,0	3,1	1,4	7,0
POTAMI	0,6	1,8	0,4	46,0	0,0	2,2	3,5	9,4	2,7	4,1
KKE	2,4	0,4	0,0	0,4	79,6	3,6	0,0	0,0	2,7	5,6
INDEPENDENT GREEKS (ANEL)	2,1	1,0	1,8	1,8	0,4	44,2	0,0	0,0	4,1	3,7
PASOK-DIMAR	1,8	1,1	0,0	6,1	0,4	1,4	76,8	59,4	1,4	6,3
CENTRISTS' UNION (CU)	2,3	3,3	1,8	2,5	0,7	3,6	1,3	3,1	58,9	3,4
POPULAR UNITY (LAE)	5,8	0,2	1,4	1,8	1,9	4,3	0,0	0,0	2,7	2,9
OTHER PARTIES	2,4	1,7	0,7	1,4	1,5	8,0	0,0	0,0	12,3	3,5
TOTAL	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

The above data are derived from Kapa Research's Exit Poll conducted on Election Day on a sample of 5,000 voters and was published on tovima.gr, tanea.gr, and in.gr

Syriza:

At the end of the election period as Syriza finally managed to maintain its party cohesion at a satisfactory 76.3%.

Its most significant losses:

- Popular Unity: 5.8%, not as considerable as one would expect at the end of August
- New Democracy: 5.2%, conservative voters that have turned to Syriza in January due to taxation,
- About 2% lost to KKE, ANEL, Pasok-Dimar, Centrists' Union and Other Parties.

The main inflows:

- New Democracy: a significant 5% convinced by the negotiating effort of A. Tsipras,
- Potami where 1 in 4 (23%) of its voters moved to Syriza,
- 14.4% of KKE, 12.3% of ANEL and 11.4% of Pasok,
- 1 in 5 (21.9%) of Kinima (George Papandreou's party),
- Insignificant inflow recorded from Golden Dawn (6%).

New Democracy:

It managed to maintain the high party cohesion rate evident from the beginning of the election period to 83.1%. However, this was not sufficient to reverse the situation, as inputs from other parties were insufficient.

The most significant losses:

- 5% to Syriza,

- 3,3% to the Centrists' Union,
- About 2% towards Golden Dawn, Potami and Other Parties.

The main inflows:

- 5,2% of Syriza,
- 16,2% of Potami,
- 18,1% of ANEL,
- 9,3% of Golden Dawn and 7% of Pasok.

Golden Dawn:

They maintained almost 8 out of 10 (78.6%) voters, while also had some gains from Syriza and New Democracy, which allowed them to raise their final percentage.

Potami:

Its de-cohesion - only 46% of their voters chose Potami in these elections - was a catalyst for the weakening the party. The substantial leak to the two-party system (almost 40%) was impossible to make up for by the limited inflows from other parties' voters.

KKE:

KKE kept its electoral forces with a high cohesion rate of about 80%, while the leak to Syriza was replaced by former KKE voters who had opted for Syriza in previous elections.

Independent Greeks:

Despite the loss of 1/3 of their power to the two major parties, ANEL pulled in a small but critical portion of Syriza and New Democracy voters and succeeded to enter the new parliament.

Pasok-Dimar:

The Democratic Coalition was strengthened mainly because of limited leaks to the two-party system. a significant inflow from Syriza and New Democracy and, as expected, by the inflow of 6 out of 10 former Kinima voters.

Centrists' Union:

While CU failed to retain more than 6 out 10 of its January 2015 voters, it achieved decisive inflow from Syriza (2.3%) and New Democracy (3.3%) (around 1.5 to 2 percentage points from the two parties), and secured a comfortable entry in parliament.

TABLE 2

Vote by Gender

GENDER	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
SYRIZA	31,8	39,2	35,5
NEW DEMOCRACY (ND)	28,8	27,4	28,1
GOLDEN DAWN (GD)	9,0	4,9	7,0
POTAMI	4,4	3,8	4,1
KKE	6,0	5,2	5,6
INDEPENDENT GREEKS (ANEL)	3,9	3,5	3,7
PASOK-DIMAR	6,5	6,1	6,3
CENTRISTS' UNION (CU)	3,7	3,1	3,4
POPULAR UNITY (LAE)	2,5	3,3	2,9
OTHER PARTIES	3,4	3,5	3,5
TOTAL	100,0	100,0	100,0

The above data are derived from Kapa Research's Exit Poll conducted on Election Day on a sample of 5,000 voters and was published on tovima.gr, tanea.gr, and in.gr

Men - Women

Women proved to be A. Tsipras's strong hand as he received 12% more women votes than the ND (39.2% - 27.4%). Golden Dawn showed strength in the male population, while it seems that Fofi Gennimata's (Pasok leader) campaign targeting women paid off as Pasok balanced its appeal in both genders, which was not the case in the recent past.

TABLE 3

Vote by Education Level

EDUCATION LEVEL	ELEMENTARY	SECONDARY	HIGHER	TOTAL
SYRIZA	40,1	36,9	32,4	35,5
NEW DEMOCRACY (ND)	30,9	27,2	28,1	28,1
GOLDEN DAWN (GD)	7,6	9,6	4,0	7,0
POTAMI	2,2	2,1	6,9	4,1
KKE	6,9	5,5	5,2	5,6
INDEPENDENT GREEKS (ANEL)	4,5	3,4	3,8	3,7
PASOK-DIMAR	5,9	6,1	6,7	6,3
CENTRISTS' UNION (CU)	0,3	3,9	4,0	3,4
POPULAR UNITY (LAE)	1,3	3,0	3,4	2,9
OTHER PARTIES	0,3	2,4	5,5	3,4
TOTAL	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

The above data are derived from Kapa Research's Exit Poll conducted on Election Day on a sample of 5,000 voters and was published on tovima.gr, tanea.gr, and in.gr

Education Level

Syriza and Golden Dawn performed best in voters with elementary (especially Syriza) and secondary education, while Potami and Centrists' Union did better in more educated voters. The other parties were balanced in all three categories at percentages around their average.

TABLE 4

Vote by Age Group

AGE	18-23	24-29	30-35	36-41	42-47	48-53	54-59	60-65	65 +	TOTAL
SYRIZA	37,8	37,6	35,8	35,2	37,2	38,6	35,9	32,4	31,7	35,5
NEW DEMOCRACY (ND)	17,2	20,1	22,2	27,7	25,6	26,8	29,5	35,5	40,9	28,1
GOLDEN DAWN (GD)	8,5	7,2	9,6	7,8	7,0	4,7	5,0	5,8	3,6	7,0
POTAMI	4,4	4,0	5,7	6,8	6,0	4,4	4,9	3,7	2,4	4,1
KKE	9,3	7,3	6,0	4,0	4,5	6,5	7,9	5,0	6,3	5,6
INDEPENDENT GREEKS (ANEL)	3,0	3,6	3,6	3,9	5,1	5,0	4,3	2,9	2,0	3,7
PASOK-DIMAR	2,5	3,0	3,5	5,0	5,2	5,4	6,3	9,1	10,4	6,3
CENTRISTS' UNION (CU)	5,4	6,5	5,9	3,6	3,7	2,8	1,4	0,7	1,1	3,4
POPULAR UNITY (LAE)	4,9	4,4	2,7	3,0	2,3	2,8	3,5	2,6	1,3	2,9
OTHER PARTIES	7,1	6,3	5,0	3,0	3,5	2,9	1,3	2,2	0,3	3,4
TOTAL	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

The above data are derived from Kapa Research's Exit Poll conducted on Election Day on a sample of 5,000 voters and was published on tovima.gr, tanea.gr, and in.gr

Age groups

As in previous years, Syriza maintained its prevalence in the younger (18-40) and middle (41-59) ages, while ND had the upper hand in voters over 60 years old. More specifically, ND's performance in younger voters is worse than that of January (it was then recorded at rates close to its average in the ages of 25-34) and better in the elderly. Syriza's penetration in age categories is more balanced than in previous years, as in almost all age groups its percentage is close to the average (even at older ages Syriza recorded near 32%).

The penetration of Golden Dawn to young people, although important, seems somewhat mitigated in this election mainly because of good performance of other "anti-systemic" parties like the Communist Party, Popular Unity, and Centrists' Union.

TABLE 5

Vote by Occupation

OCCUPATIONS	PUBLIC SECTOR	PRIVATE SECTOR	FREE-LANCERS	BUSINESS OWNERS	FARMERS	HOUSE-WIVES	PESNIONERS	UNEMP-LOYED	STUDENTS	TOTAL
SYRIZA	42,9	37,2	30,3	30,3	27,8	42,2	31,9	44,3	37,6	35,5
NEW DEMOCRACY (ND)	24,0	22,7	29,3	34,8	33,8	29,2	36,8	12,9	19,9	28,1
GOLDEN DAWN (GD)	5,7	7,5	7,5	10,6	11,5	4,9	4,2	11,0	4,7	7,0
POTAMI	3,6	6,4	7,7	7,6	4,3	3,2	4,0	2,1	5,3	4,1
KKE	5,3	6,9	5,6	3,0	6,4	3,4	6,4	6,9	9,3	5,6
INDEPENDENT GREEKS (ANEL)	3,9	2,5	3,3	3,0	0,9	3,8	2,3	2,6	2,5	3,7
PASOK-DIMAR	5,3	3,9	4,8	1,5	10,7	5,8	10,3	2,9	3,1	6,3
CENTRISTS' UNION (CU)	2,9	4,6	3,8	1,5	1,3	2,1	1,0	4,3	5,9	3,4
POPULAR UNITY (LAE)	2,8	3,9	4,6	6,1	1,7	3,8	2,2	6,9	5,6	2,9
OTHER PARTIES	3,6	4,3	3,0	1,5	1,7	1,5	1,0	6,2	6,2	3,4
TOTAL	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

The above data are derived from Kapa Research's Exit Poll conducted on Election Day on a sample of 5,000 voters and was published on tovima.gr, tanea.gr, and in.gr

Occupation categories

Syriza dominated in employee categories - civil servants (42.9%), private employees (37.2%), compared to 24% and 22.7% respectively of ND - housewives, unemployed, and students. On the other hand, ND showed an above average dynamic in freelancers, business owners, farmers (33.8%, in the only sector that ND made promises) and pensioners. A strong presence in farmers was recorded for Golden Dawn (11.5%) and Pasok (10.7%). Impressive numbers for Golden Dawn in business owners (10.6%) and the unemployed (11%). Pasok earned a double digit (10.3%) in pensioners.

TABLE 6
Referendum Voters

VOTE IN THE REFERENDUM	NO	YES	TOTAL
SYRIZA	53,1	7,6	35,5
NEW DEMOCRACY (ND)	7,7	60,2	28,1
GOLDEN DAWN (GD)	9,7	2,7	7,0
POTAMI	2,1	6,8	4,1
KKE	6,9	3,1	5,6
INDEPENDENT GREEKS (ANEL)	5,3	1,2	3,7
PASOK-DIMAR	2,7	12,1	6,3
CENTRISTS' UNION (CU)	3,4	3,0	3,4
POPULAR UNITY (LAE)	3,8	1,4	2,9
OTHER PARTIES	5,3	1,9	3,4
TOTAL	100,0	100,0	100,0

The above data are derived from Kapa Research's Exit Poll conducted on Election Day on a sample of 5,000 voters and was published on tovima.gr, tanea.gr, and in.gr

NO and YES voters

Syriza clearly won the battle of NO voters - 53.1% of them chose Syriza at the ballot – against other NO-supporting parties such as Golden Dawn (9.7%), the Communist Party (6.9%), ANEL (5.3%) and Popular Unity, which got just 3.8% of the NO voters – a big failure for them.

Similarly, as expected, ND attracted the largest part of YES (60.2%), but that was not enough to reverse Syriza's lead. Good performance in this audience was recorded for Pasok (12.1%), while Potami's was mediocre (6.8%).