The Greek Review of Social Research, 2021, 156
Print ISSN: 0013-9696 Online ISSN: 2241-8512

Nikos Koutsiaras[*], *Yannis Tsirbas*[**]

Uninformed partisans? The redistributive preferences of young Greeks

ABSTRACT

This paper adds to the literature on subjective redistributive preferences. It aims at explaining the preferences of young people, a theme which has, paradoxically, been underresearched. The paper explores specific preferences over a range of redistributive policies and labour market institutions. A two-stage research strategy is employed to trace the impact of information, as well as the influence of self-interest, personal economic prospects, ideology, and political attitudes on redistributive preferences in a sample of 533 students. The provision of information – that is, lifting the porous veil of ignorance facing young persons – has virtually no effect on preferences. Two mechanisms are uncovered: an ideological-political and a political-economic one. The latter explains the intensity of redistributive preferences, but not their content and direction.

Keywords*: Economic sociology, redistributive preferences, income misperceptions, welfare state, randomized experiment*

[*] PhD in Political Science, Associate Professor, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, email: nkoutsiar@pspa.uoa.gr
[**] PhD in Political Communication, Assistant Professor, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, email: itsirbas@pspa.uoa.gr

Received: January 27, 2020 Accepted: May 15, 2020 Published: January 26, 2021

Νίκος Κουτσιαράς, Γιάννης Τσίρμπας***

Απληροφόρητοι και μεροληπτικοί; Οι αναδιανεμητικές προτιμήσεις των νέων Ελλήνων

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Το παρόν άρθρο αποσκοπεί στην εξήγηση των (υποκειμενικών) αναδιανεμητικών προτιμήσεων των νέων, μιας ομάδας της οποίας οι προτιμήσεις δεν έχουν τύχει μεγάλης προσοχής, παραδόξως. Διερευνώνται οι προτιμήσεις έναντι ευθέως αναδιανεμητικών πολιτικών και θεσμών της αγοράς εργασίας. Εφαρμόζεται μια ερευνητική στρατηγική δύο σταδίων, με σκοπό να εντοπιστεί η επίδραση της πληροφόρησης και των προσωπικών οικονομικών προοπτικών, της ιδεολογίας και των πολιτικών στάσεων, σε δείγμα 533 φοιτητών. Η πληροφόρηση, δηλαδή η άρση, εν προκειμένω, του διαφανούς πέπλου άγνοιας των φοιτητών, δεν επηρεάζει τις προτιμήσεις τους. Οι τελευταίες διαμορφώνονται μέσω δύο μηχανισμών: του ιδεολογικοπολιτικού και του πολιτικοοικονομικού. Ο δεύτερος επηρεάζει την ένταση και όχι το περιεχόμενο των προτιμήσεων.

Λέξεις-κλειδιά: *Οικονομική κοινωνιολογία, αναδιανεμητικές προτιμήσεις, λανθάνουσες αντιλήψεις για το σχετικό εισόδημα, κράτος πρόνοιας, τυχαιοποιημένο πείραμα*

* Αν. Καθηγητής, Τμήμα Πολιτικής Επιστήμης και Δημόσιας Διοίκησης, ΕΚΠΑ.
** Επικ. Καθηγητής, Τμήμα Πολιτικής Επιστήμης και Δημόσιας Διοίκησης, ΕΚΠΑ.

1. INTRODUCTION

Theoretical and empirical research about preferences for redistribution has been growing during the last decade, if not earlier; it has even taken a boost alongside a surge in the literature on economic inequalities and redistribution, following the publication of Thomas Piketty's authoritative work (Piketty, 2014). Research inquiry has mostly focused on the relative importance of the self-interested utility maximization motive and ideological beliefs in shaping redistributive preferences.

Support for redistribution, or lack thereof, has been studied at the individual level, but explanations have also been sought at the level of the social, labour market, and demographic groups as well as the national level. However, what is striking is the absence of almost any attempt at analyzing the preferences of young persons, particularly those in tertiary education and/or about to enter the labour market for the first time, at least in a formal way. Yet, such persons experience the impact of redistributive policies on their own lives and personal well-being, including on their future employment and income opportunities. And they are subject to the impact of redistributive policies partly as members of their parental families and concerning their parents' tax liabilities and benefit entitlements. Besides, such persons have full voting rights.

Empirical research has mostly relied on social surveys providing information on subjective preferences for redistribution. Subjective redistributive preferences are regularly formed based on perceptions regarding the distribution of income and the agent's position in the corresponding income ladder, but they also reflect the survey respondents' social values and political beliefs. Nevertheless, survey evidence fails to account for the likely sensitivity of subjective preferences to sudden changes in perceptions, mostly associated with (variously activated) increases in the availability, or, merely the visibility and accessibility of information regarding, for example, the evolution of wealth and income inequalities and the effectiveness of policy responses. On the other hand, research has often taken the form of laboratory experiments aiming, *inter alia,* at identifying normative beliefs about fairness, equality, and redistribution, albeit in an artificial world.

However, more often than not, the analysis of individual redistributive preferences has been confined to overall redistribution, having little regard for the range of specific policies and institutions which mitigate (market, pre-tax) earnings inequality and redistribute disposable income, including taxation, labour market policies, social protection, and

provision of social goods and services. Yet, there is substantial divergence across redistributive policy and (welfare state) institutions, both concerning their redistributive effects and because of their implications for economic efficiency. Furthermore, social redistributive policies are often targeted, or, are effectively skewed in favour of certain social groups. Thus, an individual may disapprove of a particular policy but support enthusiastically another, irrespective of her preferences for redistribution overall.

This paper focuses on the redistributive preferences of young Greeks, in particular university students. In the next section, we review the related literature and present our hypotheses and then, in Section 3, we describe our experimental design and discuss the conceptual issues involved. In Section 4, we present our findings and discuss their meaning and their implications for future research. The last section concludes.

2. A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE – AND THE HYPOTHESES TO BE TESTED

What drives demand for redistribution? Are individual preferences largely motivated by self-interest, thereby reflecting individual income and capital resources? Do social values and political ideology weigh in on the formation of individual redistributive preferences? The self-interest explanation implies that those expecting to benefit from income redistribution, i.e. those whose income falls below the mean income, will most likely be in favour of government redistributive policies, whereas those expecting to find themselves on the side of net contributors, i.e. those with incomes above the mean income, will in all likelihood oppose redistribution. Furthermore, as long as spending on social policies is looked at in redistributive terms, those expecting to benefit (lose) from increased social spending will likely be in favour of (oppose) higher welfare expenditures and more progressive tax systems. Yet, attitudes toward redistribution are far from perfectly correlated with (current) income (Piketty, 1995); after all, "soaking the rich" has virtually been ruled out in capitalist democracies, if only for violently distorting work incentives and stalling economic growth.

Indeed, demand for redistribution is found to be stronger amongst groups of the population that benefit most from income transfers and/or rely appreciably on welfare state provisions and programmes. Thus, old-age pensioners, the unemployed, and women are likelier to support income redistribution (and the welfare state, for that matter), the latter owing to their weaker labour market links as well as their more frequent than men's employment in precarious jobs (see, for example, Owens and Pedulla, 2014; Svallfors, 1997). However, sometimes empirical findings seem to run counter to the self-interest explanation. In the US, for example, the elderly and African-Americans have significantly curtailed their

redistributive proclivity and there has been no significant divergence in trends in redistributive preferences between genders, whereas a modest increase in redistributive preferences has been observed amongst richer Americans (Ashok et al., 2015).

At the aggregate level, it is suggested that there is a positive relationship between inequality and demand for redistribution; as inequality increases, thereby widening the distance between the average income and that of the median voter, demand for redistribution is increased too (Meltzer and Richard, 1981). However, empirical evidence in support of that relationship has been in short supply. Demand for redistribution has been generally impervious to rising income inequality in rich OECD countries (Kenworthy and McCall, 2008), whereas in the US, despite a substantial increase in income inequality (Piketty and Saez, 2003; Autor, 2014), support for redistribution has slightly decreased since the 1970s (Kuziemko et al., 2015; Ashok et al., 2015). Being weak at the outset, the relationship between demand for redistribution and economic inequality is, nonetheless, found to vary across the various institutional configurations of the welfare state (Dallinger, 2010). Yet, the relationship between earnings inequality and welfare spending in OECD countries is very weak and even turns negative, depending on the category of welfare expenditures considered (Moene and Wallerstein, 2003).

Given the empirical weakness of the standard rational-choice approach, theoretical explanations of redistributive preferences have been suggested, which incorporate the intertemporal dimension of utility maximization. Thus, a desire for social insurance against the risk of a (permanent) decline in income may imply increased demand for redistribution – more precisely, for redistributive insurance – when income rises (Moene and Wallerstein, 2003). Furthermore, the prospect of upward mobility may curtail demand for redistribution, and may even cause opposition to higher tax rates amongst those whose current earnings fall below the average earnings, but who, nonetheless, take into consideration that they may move up the income scale and, hence, be liable to higher tax rates – this is the POUM (prospect of upward mobility) hypothesis (Benabu and Ok, 2001). Yet, the prospect of upward mobility and, even more importantly, the responsiveness of individual probabilities of moving up the income ladder to the individual effort (as opposed to luck) may not be anticipated completely – for lack of inexpensive information – implying, in turn, that the (adverse) effects of income redistribution on economic incentives may not be properly assessed. Thus, according to Piketty's rational within-the-family learning theory, adult children may rationally embrace their parents' redistributive preferences in full, including the parental family's perception of the relative role of effort in causing income inequality (Piketty, 1995). Still, adult children

may adjust their preferences for redistribution, depending on their own experience of mobility and, consequently, on their perception of the importance of effort in determining individuals' economic status. Hence, children who have experienced downward (upward) mobility and, therefore, are inclined to think that luck (effort) rather than effort (luck) determines individuals' economic status, are more (less) likely to support income redistribution, their preferences also being stronger than children's with no mobility experience (Siedler and Sonnenberg, 2012).

Crucially, individual (and family for that matter) perceptions about the role of effort are intertwined with actual political outcomes, the causality running both ways. But, intertwined with actual political outcomes are, likewise, the psychologically-driven individual desires to believe in a "just world", that is, a world where everyone gets what she deserves (Benabu and Tirole, 2006). Besides their self-evident causal link to political choices for redistribution, rationally learned individual attitudes, desired beliefs, and ideological predilections regarding the relative role of effort in causing income inequality and, therefore, individual preferences for redistribution may also be shaped by actual political choices. Thus, in more unequal and less redistributive polities, it is only rational for people to supply increased effort and, at the same time, to maintain and pass on to their children an optimistic world vision, while detesting a high degree of redistribution and a large welfare state (associated with high taxes). On the other hand, demand for redistribution will tend to be higher in less unequal and more redistributive polities, reflecting *inter alia* that effort is, rationally, relatively underrated (as opposed to luck) and pessimism prevails (as opposed to the belief that the world is just). This argument goes a long way towards explaining differences in welfare spending and income redistribution across countries, particularly between the United States and Europe (Alesina et al., 2018; Benabu and Tirole, 2006; Piketty, 1995), although other explanations have also been suggested, invoking historical differences in political institutions, cultural traditions or ethnic heterogeneity (for example, Alesina and Glaeser, 2004).

Compared to the economists' rationalistic accounting for values and (desired) beliefs regarding redistribution, the ideological explanation of individuals' preferences, mostly espoused by political scientists, downplays the importance of (rational) economic motives, attaching, instead, increased weight to ideas and political attitudes (for example, Feldman and Zaller, 1992). Importantly, individual preferences for redistributive welfare spending are found to be aligned with personally-held ethical views, regarding, in particular, equality and freedom (Jacoby, 1994). Furthermore, the alignment of preferences for redistribution with left

and right political orientations is a well-established fact. Thus, in matters of taxation, empirical evidence suggests that, besides self-interest, preferences are strongly motivated by political ideas and that, at higher levels of direct taxation, preferences become heavily polarized along with political affinities (Jaime-Castillo and Sáez-Lozano, 2016). Increased polarization is interpreted, by the aforementioned researchers, as a manifestation of increased mobilization of both left-wing and right-wing voters to pursue their redistributive demands. Mobilization of low-income voters, in particular, is shown to push left-wing parties to the left, entailing *inter alia* a (more) vigorous defence of the redistributive welfare state (Pontusson and Rueda, 2010), thereby probably reinforcing mobilization of low-income as well as high-income voters.

However, empirical (economic and politico-economic) research on the determinants of demand for income redistribution and on their relative importance in shaping real-world redistributive policies has often been confronted with a lack of appropriate data, mostly relying on aggregate data or field evidence. What is primarily at issue in the case of field evidence, though, is that subjective preferences for redistribution, as reported in social surveys, are founded on gross misperceptions of real-world inequality, more often than not presuming that income distribution is considerably more unequal than it is (Niehues, 2014). A large experimental literature has sprung, building on either laboratory or/and survey (social) experiments and focusing on, firstly, the motivation of demand for income redistribution, secondly, the individuals' ethical dispositions and normative considerations regarding the social contract and, thirdly, the role of information in the formation and, especially, in the potential realignment of individual redistributive preferences.

Thus, in a laboratory experiment with various "realistic" attributes regarding, for example, the information fed to subjects and the structure of decision making studied, self-interest has emerged as the dominant motive of subjects' redistributive preferences, although stated choices for redistributive taxation reflect, also, concerns for the poor and beliefs about fairness (Durante et al., 2014). Experimental research has tried to shed light on what appears to be an awkward coexistence of two phenomena, namely, a widespread popular concern about economic inequality, corroborated in laboratory research and associated with acknowledging the importance of equality as a social objective, and a preference for unequal distribution of economic resources revealed in behavioural studies and (other) laboratory experiments in search of individuals' normative beliefs (Starmans et al., 2017). The answer to that paradox consists of experimental evidence suggesting that redistributive preferences reflect perceptions about the origins of inequality, thereby echoing the aforementioned

findings of economic research. Thus, if the determinants of inequality are perceived to be within the realm of individual control, redistributive preferences are watered down and market earnings are considered to be ethically justified (Cappelen et al., 2013). Furthermore, drawing on various laboratory studies and experiments with babies and young children, Starmans et al. (2014) argue that humans are naturally inclined to support fair distributions of economic resources, regardless of their implications for equality, and that when fairness and equality are mutually incompatible, people opt for fair inequality rather than unfair equality.

Finally, the impact of an individual's information about her position in the distribution of income on the demand for redistribution has been studied in various experimental studies. Providing information on an individual's actual social position, thereby correcting their income misperceptions, has been found to give rise to more unequal distributions amongst participants in (variously designed) laboratory experiments, reflecting the adjustment of participants' preferences to self-interested utility maximization (for example, Kittel et al., 2017). On the other hand, evidence from online large sample survey experiments providing customized information on US income inequality and the tax-growth nexus shows that, whereas the respondents' concern about income inequality is very sensitive to information, the effects of information on preferences over a bunch of redistributive policies are small and often insignificant, suggesting that redistributive preferences may be hard to change (Kuziemko et al., 2015). Moreover, when respondents are provided with information that corrects their previous overestimations regarding their economic positions, they tend to demand higher levels of redistribution (Cruces et al., 2013). Also, Bublitz (2016), in a comprehensive cross-national study found that in some countries correcting negative misperceptions through information provision slightly reduces the demand for redistribution.

In this paper, we delve into the redistributive preferences of Greek university students. We ask whether their preferences across a range of redistributive policies are sensitive to information aiming at correcting their misperceptions. And if this is not the case, we proceed with asking whether the redistributive preferences of Greek students are primarily shaped by static and/or intertemporal utilitarian concerns or, on the contrary, are primarily, if not solely, determined by ideas and political attitudes. Therefore, our hypotheses may be summarised as follows:

H_o: Provision of information has no relation to redistributive preferences.

H_1: Provision of information strengthens the utilitarian motivation of individual preferences for redistribution.

H_2: Provision of information reinforces the ideological and political stances toward redistribution.

And if H_o is not rejected:

H_3: Individual preferences for redistribution are primarily or solely motivated by self-interest, thereby reflecting imperfectly informed perceptions concerning own or family absolute and relative level of income.

H_4: Individual preferences for redistribution are primarily or solely shaped by imperfectly informed perceptions concerning personal economic prospects.

H_5: Individual preferences for redistribution are primarily or solely determined by values and ideas about equity and redistribution as well as political attitudes.

3. CONCEPTUAL ISSUES AND RESEARCH DESIGN

In this section, we discuss the conceptual and the technical, and empirical aspects of our research design, including the construction of the dependent and the independent variables.

The dependent variable consists of students' preferences for redistributive policies. Our questionnaire contained 13 redistributive policy actions, to which respondents had to answer on a 5-point scale that ranged from "totally agree" to "totally disagree". To reduce the number of variables and locate possible latent variables, we conduct principal components analysis (PCA), for which our data proves suitable. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy is .846, above the value of .6, which is usually recommended in the literature, and Bartlett's test of sphericity is statistically significant (χ^2 (78) = 1430.91, $p < .05$). The PCA returns four components, with all communalities being above .3 (Table 1).

The first component comprises six variables, each indicating the level of agreement with one of the following six policy actions, respectively: strengthening of protection against dismissals, an increase in the minimum wage, an increase in employers' contributions for social security, an increase in public expenditure for the elderly (mainly pensions), an increase in the rate of tax levied on high incomes, and an increase in public expenditure for unemployment benefits. The first component has an initial eigenvalue of 4.04 and accounts for 31.1% of the total variance. The other three components account for less than 10% of variance each, two of them comprising two variables and one comprising three. Hence, when it comes to the specification of our composite dependent variable, the first component is the statistically dominant choice: it is way ahead of the other components in that it accounts for a far larger percentage of the total variance. Besides, the choice of the first component accords well with theory and factual evidence; and it consequently passes the test of (internal)

coherence, with a Cronbach's a of .756, exceeding the .7 value which is commonly thought to demarcate internally consistent composite variables from inconsistent ones.

Thus, each of the six constituent variables of the first component and the policy action referred to therein has concrete redistributive content; and solicited preferences for redistribution across the range of policy actions captured by the six constituent variables are plausibly maintained. However, empirical evidence, particularly for Greece, on the expected redistributive effects of the six policy actions contained in the first component has been in short supply. For example, there is scant empirical evidence on the redistributive effects of employment protection legislation or the effects of increased expenditure on income support for the unemployed. Yet, one may hardly dispute their redistributive potential – still, of unknown size – or, for that matter, their appeal amongst those supporting redistribution. On the other hand, the impact of the minimum wage on poverty and income inequality is found to be negative (poverty and inequality are lowered), though negligible in size, despite – or, because of – lack of conclusive evidence on the (dis)employment effects of the minimum wage (for example, Fotoniata and Moutos, 2009; Karageorgiou, 2004; Karakitsios, 2018). Furthermore, contrary to the predictions of standard economic theory, the incidence of employers' social contributions on gross wage earnings is found to be averted, thereby allowing for the realization of redistributive effects (Saez et al., 2012). On the other hand, whereas the redistributive impact of public spending on pensions is widely acknowledged, it falls short of remedying poverty amongst the elderly, owing to the very low level of minimum pensions and a large number of people in noncontributory schemes (Petmesidou and Glatzer, 2015). Therefore, the redistributive effects of increased spending on pensions largely depend upon their allocation in favour of those at the low end of the pension scale.

Table 1: *Principal components analysis (PCA): Preferences for redistributive policies (DV)*[1]

Totally agree- Totally disagree	Components				Communalities
	1	2	3	4	
Strengthening of protection against dismissals	***.741***	.015	.183	-.029	.583
Increase in the minimum wage	***.660***	.193	.210	-.163	.543
Increase in employers' contributions for social security	***.659***	.136	.037	.191	.491
Increase in public expenditure for the elderly (mainly pensions)	***.576***	.439	-.159	-.203	.590
Increase in rates of taxation levied on high incomes	***.534***	.200	.070	.425	.511
Increase in public expenditure for unemployment benefits	***.525***	.340	.256	.135	.475
Increase in public expenditure for education	.140	.792	.080	.037	.655
Increase in public expenditure for health services	.285	.758	.088	-.021	.664
Increase in public expenditure for family protection	.031	.676	.207	.105	.512
Establishment of guaranteed minimum income, with income criteria and on the precondition of active employment seeking	.047	.206	.823	.084	.728
Establishment of basic income	.316	.097	.722	-.100	.641
Increase in property tax	-.080	.037	-.089	.844	.727
Increase in "solidarity tax", paid for by high incomes	.455	-.003	.217	.467	.472
Initial eigenvalues	4.043	1.281	1.189	1.089	
% of variance	31.1	9.9	9.1	8.4	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Our main independent variable is the provision of information through experimental video treatments; we discuss the forms later. In addition to the experimental treatments, we measure our respondents' views on fairness, equality, and the welfare state through a battery

[1] A correlation matrix of redistribution preferences can be found in the Appendix.

of 15 theory-informed questions. The answers to these questions are also reduced to four variables through PCA. The four components were ‘‘Social Investment Welfare State’’, ‘‘Egalitarian welfare state’’, ‘‘Fairness, not equality’’, and ‘‘Equality as fairness’’ (KMO=.825, Bartlett’s test of sphericity [$\chi 2$ (105) = 1859.56, $p < .05$]). Notably, the emerging clustering accords almost fully with the insights of the economic theory of labour markets and social policy (e.g. Boeri and van Ours, 2013), as well as political sociology and comparative politics, including typologies of the welfare state (e.g. Esping-Andersen, 1990; Hemmerijck, 2017), the only exception being the classification of the *better targeting* provision in the ‘‘egalitarian welfare state’’ composite variable, along with the *universal welfare state* provision. The components, the variables that constitute them, their factor loadings, their exponents’ signs, and communalities are presented in Table 2. A variety of other variables are also measured: gender, age, years of study, political interest, political participation, self-placement on the Left-Right axis, objective economic position, the respondents’ income misperceptions, and their perceived personal economic prospects. Regarding the latter, the reason we rely on perceptions of economic prospects, instead of mobility expectations *per se,* is the lack of reliable objective data on social mobility, thus hardly allowing for proper evaluation (and measurement) of individual mobility prospects.

Table 2: *Principal components analysis (PCA): Views on fairness, equality and the welfare state*

	Components				
Totally agree- Totally disagree	Social investment welfare state	Equality as fairness	Egalitarian welfare state	Fairness, not equality	Communalities
A fair society ensures equality of opportunities for its members	.713	.026	-.110	.045	.522
A fair society protects its members from poverty and deprivation	.689	.214	.128	-.145	.558
A fair society should guarantee that all its members satisfy their basic needs	.581	.141	.158	-.088	.390
The appropriate policy includes supporting the standard of living of the unemployed	.581	.183	.384	-.080	.524
The appropriate policy includes the improvement of employment prospects for the unemployed	.514	.066	.433	.171	.486
In a fair society, extreme economic inequalities (in income and wealth) must be limited	.139	.830	.097	-.102	.728
In a fair society economic inequalities (in income and wealth) must be limited	.207	.816	.089	-.215	.763
Economic inequalities (in income and wealth) harm democracy	.110	.640	.203	-.329	.571
The appropriate policy consists in strengthening labour market regulation in order to protect jobs	.027	.239	.733	.079	.601
The appropriate policy consists in strengthening labour market regulation in order to increase the take-home pay of the lower paid	.159	.247	.707	-.135	.604
The appropriate policy consists in strengthening the universal welfare state, funded by high taxation	.086	-.045	.579	-.228	.397
The appropriate policy consists in better targeting provisions to the benefit of the poor	.445	-.070	.503	-.017	.457
Economic inequalities (in income and wealth) are acceptable when they do not hamper social mobility prospects	-.029	-.115	-.088	.827	.705
Economic inequalities (in income and wealth) are morally acceptable when they reflect	-.034	-.148	-.084	.810	.686

individual merit					
Economic inequalities (in income and wealth) are an unavoidable consequence of a dynamic economy	*-.042*	*-.326*	*-.007*	*.544*	*.405*
Initial eigenvalues	4.222	1.999	1.160	1.016	
% of variance	28.1	13.3	7.7	6.8	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Our respondents' perceptions divergence from reality is operationalized by way of subtracting their actual economic position on a 10-point scale based on the reported income in Euros[2] from a subjective economic position on a 10-point scale[3]. If a respondent had an absolute difference between the two measures of more than one standard deviation, then they were considered as misperceiving their position (by having either a higher or a lower perception than their actual position). If the difference was within the boundaries of one standard deviation, then the respondent was categorized as having no or small misperceptions.

Research design

Our research design is divided into two parts and is ''endogenous'' in nature. We characterize it as endogenous because what happened in the first part would define what would happen in the second part or if we proceeded to the second part at all. The first part aims at testing whether the provision of relevant information affects preferences for redistributive policies, either by altering them towards more utilitarian positions (Hypothesis 1) or by reinforcing their ideological drive (Hypothesis 2). If information provision did not play a statistically significant role, then the second part of our design would be initiated, to identify whether preferences are motivated by self-interest (Hypothesis 3), intertemporal utility considerations (Hypothesis 4), or are, instead, driven by ideology and political attitudes (Hypothesis 5). We should state at the outset that both parts of our research design were carried out because the provision of information did not affect preferences.

[2] Respondents were asked to report their income in Euros (family income if they were unemployed or had part-time jobs, personal income if they had full-time jobs) and were assigned to deciles according to official data from the Hellenic Statistical Authority.

[3] Question wording: "If this ladder represents different income levels in Greek society, in which step of the ladder would you place yourself, if 1 represents the lowest and 10 represents the highest income level?"

The first part of our research design falls under the category of a post-test only control group experimental design, which abides by the most important prerequisite of such a design, namely the random assignment of respondents to different groups. Had it not have randomization of participants, it would resemble more to a static group comparison (Campbell 1957, p. 304). In terms of its treatments, it is a pre-decisional manipulation design because the information stimuli are inserted before the dependent variable, to test whether they affect it or not (Sniderman and Grob, 1996). The first known application of this kind of design, to which our research bears a considerable resemblance, was Gosnell's famous experiment, more than ninety years ago, about what motivates people to vote, where he randomly divided voters of Chicago into two groups, provided the members of only one group with information stimuli and wanted to test whether this information would affect the turnout rate (1926). A great bulk of research has since been developed along those lines.

Our research was conducted on 533 Greek university students of all levels (undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral candidates) of three Universities in the Greater Athens area, namely the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, the Agricultural University of Athens, and Harokopeio University. Participation was voluntary and we provided no incentives for it. We employed convenience sampling. It is well known that one of the disadvantages of convenience sampling is the lack of control over initial differences between experimental and control groups, possibly resulting in issues of validity and distortion of results due to outlying cases (Farrokhi and Mahmoudi-Hamidabad, 2012). However, convenience sampling is widely used for experimental designs and it has been shown that it is a reliable technique that can even yield results similar to probability sampling (Mullinix et al., 2015), making it suitable for survey purposes as well. In any case, generalization claims to a wider research population constitute a marginal aim of the present study. The study was conducted in computer laboratories of the three universities between October 2016 and May 2017, in groups of ten to twenty students. The questionnaire and the data collection were administered through the Qualtrics platform and instructions were given to respondents live by three research assistants.

The respondents were randomly assigned to three different groups, each of which was administered a different treatment. At a certain point of the online questionnaire, respondents were asked to click a link to a private YouTube video. The members of the first group were shown an 11-minute video, describing the economic situation in Greece, presenting data about economic inequalities and the policies to tackle them, as well as some comparative information about other European countries. The members of the second group were shown a

16-minute video, which contained data enabling them to figure out their relative position and economic prospects, in addition to the information contained in the first video treatment (for a detailed list of the information shown in the video treatments see Appendix). Finally, the members of the third group (the control group) were shown a video just thanking them and asking them to return to complete the rest of the questionnaire. In terms of treatment logic, our research design bears resemblance to Stoker's research on affirmative action, where she administered three different information treatments (or ''conditions'') to respective groups: a baseline condition, a representation condition, and a discrimination condition (Stoker, 1995). Accordingly, our treatments could be characterized as a control condition, a contextual condition, and a comparative condition. In sum, our respondents answered the same set of questions up to the point where they were randomly assigned to the three groups and shown a different video treatment. After watching the treatment, they returned to the questionnaire and they all answered the same questions about our dependent variable.

To test whether information provision affects preferences for redistribution, we employ an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA). ANCOVA controls for the effects of variables' differences between groups, ensuring between-group similarity after respondents' random assignment to the three different groups (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013, p. 52). To run ANCOVA we also need to make sure that the error variance between the three groups is not statistically significant. Indeed, Levene's test of equality of error variances returns a p-value of .260, confirming that the error differences between the three groups are not statistically significant and that we can proceed with the ANCOVA. In other words, we try to identify differences in redistributive preferences between the three different groups, while at the same time controlling for several variables, to ensure maximum between-group similarity. The results of the ANCOVA, which indicate that information provision (''Video treatment'') does not affect preferences for redistributive policies, are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: *Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA): The no effect of correcting for income misperceptions*

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: **Preferences for redistributive policies**						
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	2346.470[a]	15	156.431	15.976	.000	.487
Intercept	662.404	1	662.404	67.652	.000	.212
L-R self-placement	4.546	1	4.546	.464	.496	.002
Political interest	32.493	1	32.493	3.319	.070	.013
Age	4.588	1	4.588	.469	.494	.002
Income misperceptions	11.959	1	11.959	1.221	.270	.005
Years of study	4.585	1	4.585	.468	.494	.002
Political participation	1.812	1	1.812	.185	.667	.001
Personal economic situation	8.050	1	8.050	.822	.365	.003
Social investment welfare state	290.835	1	290.835	29.703	.000	.105
Equality as fairness	304.588	1	304.588	31.108	.000	.110
Egalitarian Welfare State	914.701	1	914.701	93.419	.000	.270
Fairness, not equality	189.832	1	189.832	19.388	.000	.071
Gender	156.988	1	156.988	16.033	.000	.060
Perceptions on economic prospects next 12 months	4.375		4.375	.447	.504	.002
Video Treatment	**12.761**	**2**	**6.380**	**.409**	**.522**	**.005**
Error	2758.804	252	9.791			
Total	47619.000	268				
Corrected Total	4813.892	267				

[a.] R Squared = .487 (Adjusted R Squared = .457)

It becomes apparent from Table 3 that correcting misperceptions has no effect on redistributive preferences. Since preferences for redistributive policies are not associated with the information fed to our respondents, the null hypothesis is not rejected and, hence, the alternative hypotheses 1 and 2 are not accepted. Accordingly, we are then entitled to treating our sample as a unified whole and, to test Hypotheses 3, 4, and 5, initiate the second part of

our research design, which effectively is a cross-sectional survey with a convenient sample of Greek students. In other words, in the second part of our research design, our goal is to identify other possible causal mechanisms that explain the formation of preferences for redistributive policies. As will be thoroughly presented in the next part of the paper, we first identify different attitudes towards redistribution for our whole sample, and then we perform discriminant analysis to locate the processes that could account for these differences.

4. (FURTHER) RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The fact that the provision of information does not affect redistributive preferences, as was presented in the previous section, is the first finding of our research. In the present section, we will proceed to the presentation and analysis of the findings of our total sample. Firstly, a brief description of our sample in comparison to the general population is necessary. Our respondents are 59% female and 41% male (51% and 49% respectively in the general population); their average age is 25 years, while the average age of the Greek adult general population is 49 years[4]. In terms of their level of study, 76% are undergraduates, 21% postgraduates, and 3% doctoral students. Concerning their political predisposition, their mean self-placement is 4.41 on the 11-point Left-Right scale, where 0 is the utmost left point and 10 is the utmost right point (5.44 in the general population[5]). Finally, our respondents' vote on the notorious July 2015 referendum in Greece was quite representative of the actual results, since 64.2% reported that they voted ''No'' and 35.8% ''Yes''[6].

Regarding our dependent variable, we recode the previously mentioned composite scale into three categories. The first category, ''Support for redistribution'' comprises respondents who agree/rather agree with all six questions on redistributive policies (see the previous section). Respondents who agree with more variables than they disagree with, that is, they disagree or express no opinion to less than 3 of these questions, are assigned to the second category, called ''Cherry-picking''. All the rest, that is, those who disagree with most or all the questions, are classified to the ''Opposition to redistribution'' category. The absolute majority of our young in age, left-leaning, student sample proved to be supportive of

[4] Source of all demographic data: Hellenic Statistical Authority (www.statistics.gr).
[5] Prorata, December 2016.
[6] From January until June 2015, Greece had engaged in prolonged negotiations with its creditors (European Commission, European Central Bank and International Monetary Fund). In late June 2015, Greece, facing immediate default, was proposed a harsh austerity and structural reforms package in exchange for a new bail-out loan agreement. The Greek government then proclaimed a referendum to be held only eight days later, on July the 5th, with the Greek electorate rejecting the proposed agreement, with 61.3%. Nevertheless, the Greek government, which also opposed the proposed agreement, agreed to a similar one, a mere week later.

redistribution (53.2%). Almost one in five of our respondents (18.7%) are cherry pickers, while 28.1% oppose redistribution (Table 4). It is interesting that 59.9% of female respondents support redistribution, as do only 43.6% of male respondents (χ^2 (2, N = 513) = 21.364, p = 0.000) (not shown). The reason for this gender difference must be the fact that the females in our sample are significantly more left-leaning, with a mean score of 4.13 on the Left-Right 11-point scale than male respondents (mean score of 4.80). When we control for ideological self-placement, the association between gender and redistributive preferences ceases to exist. Unsurprisingly, those who support redistribution are self-positioned towards the Left (mean score of 3.77), those who express a cautious stance are positioned at the center (4.98), while those who oppose redistribution are positioned slightly right-of-centre, with a mean score of 5.33, in statistically significant differences ([F(2, 470)=32.858, p=0.000)]. Correspondingly, 76.2% of redistribution supporters voted "No" to the July 2015 referendum, as did 59.3% of those who are cautious towards redistribution and only 44.9% of those who oppose redistribution. Among the latter, the absolute majority (55.1%) voted "Yes" to the referendum ((χ^2 (2, N = 368[7]) = 30.831, p = 0.000) (all the findings of this paragraph are not shown). No statistically significant relationships are detected between redistributive preferences and other variables, like age, income, perceived economic position, year of study, occupation, and perceptions on economic prospects.

Of great interest is the match of our respondents' perceptions to reality: 52.3% have no or small misperceptions, 44.5% perceive themselves as worse-off than they are, something that is expected in times of economic crisis, while only 3.2% think that they are in a better economic position than they are. In Table 4, the association between preferences for redistributive policies and respondents' misperceptions is presented. No or limited misperceptions are linked to less support for redistributive policies, in a statistically significant way. Of those who demonstrate a good match between their perceived and their actual economic position, 46.4% support redistribution, 21.5% cherry-pick redistribution policies and 32.1% oppose redistribution (Table 4). It is among those latter that both opposition to redistribution and caution towards redistribution are at their highest. On the contrary, support for redistribution exceeds 60% among those who misperceive their economic position, either believing that they are worse-off (support for redistribution: 60.3%) or better-off (62.5%) than they are. At the same time, both opposition to redistribution and cherry-picking of redistributive policies are at their lowest among those less well-informed.

[7] Respondents who casted a valid ballot at the referendum. The rest voted blank, invalids, did not vote, did not remember or refused to answer.

Table 4: *Preferences for redistributive policies by income misperceptions.*

		Income misperceptions			
		No or limited misperceptions (52.3% of the total sample)	Lower perceived position than reality (44.5% of the total sample)	Higher perceived position than reality (3.2% of the total sample)	Total
Preferences for redistributive policies	Support for redistribution	46.4%	60.3%	62.5%	53.2%
	Cherry-picking	21.5%	15.9%	12.5%	18.7%
	Opposition to redistribution	32.1%	23.7%	25.0%	28.1%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

χ^2 (4, N = 513) = 10.305, p = 0.036

After outlining the profile of respondents who support redistribution and establishing the statistically significant association between preferences for redistribution and income misperceptions, a more comprehensive approach, which entails the testing of a potential causal mechanism, is in order. In other words, it is now necessary to test our third, fourth, and fifth hypotheses, which suggest that, since the provision of information does not matter, self – interest, perceptions regarding personal economic prospects, income misperceptions, and political predispositions, along with views on fairness, equality and the welfare state may affect preferences for redistributive policies of young Greeks. To test these hypotheses we carry out the discriminant analysis. Discriminant analysis can determine the optimal combination of independent variables (i.e. ‘‘functions’’), which explains why respondents are allocated to the three different categories of our dependent variable.

The discriminant analysis produced two statistically significant functions. The overall predictive accuracy of our model is represented by a hit ratio of 63.0% while the highest prior probability was 54.2% and the probability of by chance discriminating group membership was 33.3%. That signifies an almost 30% difference between the classification ability of our

model and maximum by chance classification when the commonly agreed threshold is 25%. Hence, our model is accepted.

More specifically, our data is projected onto two different dimensions that best discriminate respondents between the three categories of our dependent variable. Five variables demonstrate a higher correlation with the first function: placement on the Left-Right scale and the prior views on the four notions of equality and welfare state that were previously presented. This function, which may be called the ‘‘ideological/political orientation dimension’’, accounts for 82.7% of the total variance in our dependent variable. The other function also comprises five variables, namely political participation, interest in politics, objective economic position, perceptions on economic prospects next 12 months, and income misperceptions, has a discriminating ability of 17.3% and embodies a ‘‘political activism, economic self-awareness and self-interest’’ dimension (Table 5).

Table 5: *Discriminant Analysis: Structure matrix*[8]

	Function	
	1	2
L-R self-placement	.560*	.083
Egalitarian Welfare State	.515*	.423
Fairness, not equality	-.407*	.046
Equality as fairness	.382*	-.114
Social Investment Welfare State	.320*	.172
Interest in politics*	-.001	.668*
Political participation#	-.405	-.437*
Income misperceptions	-.135	-.399*
Personal economic situation	.019	.223*
Perceptions on economic prospects next 12 months	.001	-.185*

Pooled within-groups correlations between discriminating variables and standardized canonical discriminant functions. Variables ordered by absolute size of correlation within function.

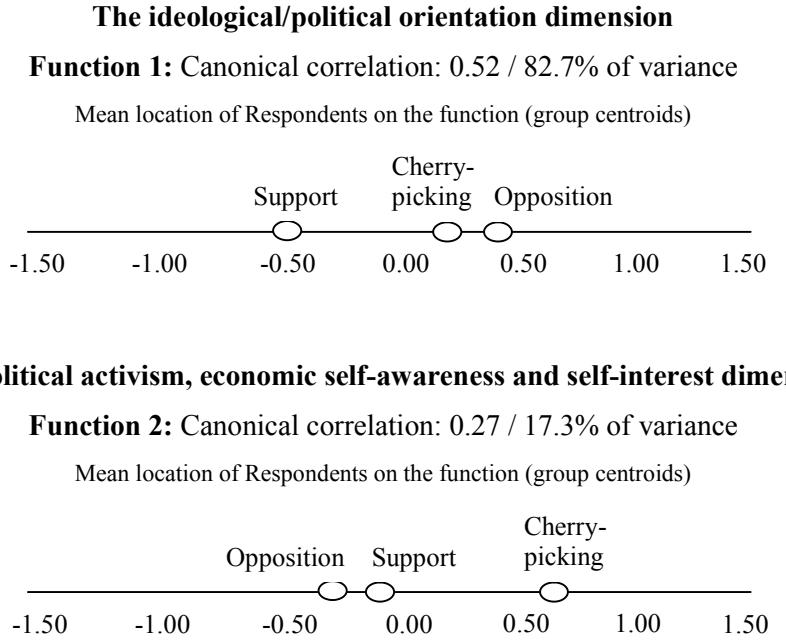
*Coding: 1-4, 1=Very interested.

#Coding: 0-9, how many of the following activities they have participated in or it is possible that they would: membership in a political organization/party, petition, boycott, legal demonstration, protest, legal strike, illegal strike, occupation of a public building, destruction of public property.

[8] A table of descriptives of variables entered in the Discriminant analysis, as well as a table containing the Standardized Canonical Discriminant Function Coefficients, can be found in the Appendix.

In Figure 1, functions in group centroids are presented. Group centroids represent the mean score for each dependent-variable group of respondents on the respective function or dimension. What is of greater interest in dealing with group centroids is their relative position on each dimension. On the ‘‘ideological/political orientation dimension’’, which has the greatest discriminating ability, it is evident that the three groups of our dependent variable are ordered in a fashion that by and large corresponds to a classic redistributional Left-Right axis, with those who support redistribution being at the opposite extreme from those who oppose it, while cherry pickers are positioned in the space between them (Figure 1). In essence, this finding corroborates our fifth hypothesis, about the role of prior beliefs and political attitudes in the formation of redistributive preferences.

Figure 1: *Discriminant Analysis: Functions at Group Centroids*



On the political activism, economic self-awareness, and self-interest dimension, the group of respondents who oppose redistribution are placed at the one end, but the group closest to them is the group comprising those who support redistribution. Those who have a cherry-picking stance on redistributive policies are positioned rather far away, at the other end of this dimension (Figure 1). Taking into account the direction of loadings of each variable to each function and the way those variables were coded (Table 5), it can be asserted that those who hold relatively firmer views on redistribution – those who are more partisan – are likelier to engage in politics and more pessimistic regarding their economic future, whilst

also being relatively less well off but maintaining inaccurate perceptions of their true economic position (Figure 1). On the other hand, it seems that the ‘‘cherry-picking’’ end of this dimension is characterized by limited or no misperceptions regarding the personal economic position of respondents, less active political participation, lower levels of political interest, economic optimism, and a higher position in the actual income ladder. The fact that those who are disengaged politically and more self-aware economically are more cautious in terms of their redistributive preferences, might reflect, to some extent, their increased awareness of the workings of Greek social policy (and its questionable legacy), which leads them to more moderate positions. Additionally, the finding that cherry-picking of redistributive policies is preferred by the relatively better off and/or those with optimistic expectations regarding their future, might mean that the less threatened one feels the more they are willing to engage in some kind of calculation and rationalization regarding redistributive policies. On the other hand, a lower place in the actual income ladder combined with a perception for further deterioration leads to resorting to firmer positions either for or against redistribution. In a nutshell, insecurity makes for partisanship. Thus, regarding the role of self-interest and of perceptions of personal economic prospects which pertain to our third and fourth hypotheses, it can be asserted that they do not directly shape preferences but they rather have an auxiliary or reinforcing role. In sum, the first dimension which discriminates our respondents’ preferences for redistributive policies seems to be about the content of redistribution and the second about its intensity.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Given the lack of (sufficient) policy adjustment to widening economic inequalities, survey and experimental research on subjective preferences for redistribution has been seeking to provide an answer, focusing on the determinants of redistributive preferences. This paper adds to the literature via studying the preferences of young persons, in particular Greek university students, that is, a group of the population whose redistributive preferences have, thus far, received scant attention. A further innovative feature of this paper is that preferences for redistribution are treated in a disaggregated fashion; thus, preferences are specified across a broad range of redistributive policies (and welfare state) institutions.

Thus, we hypothesized that the provision of objective information would (a) either strengthen the utilitarian motivation of individual redistributive preferences or (b) reinforce existing ideological stances towards redistribution. If no association existed between information provision and redistributive preferences, we hypothesized that redistributive

preferences would be affected by (c) self-interest, (d) perceptions on personal economic prospects, and (e) political attitudes and prior values and ideas about equity and redistribution.

Our research design, therefore, had an endogenous nature, in the sense that the conduction of the second part was dependent upon the results of the first part. The first part was a post-test only control group experimental design, where we tested the effects of information provision, in the form of two different experimental treatments. Since an association was not established, the second part of our design was implemented, in the form of a regular cross-sectional survey, where we treated our sample as a whole. To test the first couple of hypotheses, we implemented analysis of covariance, as an additional way to ensure between-group similarity, besides random assignment of respondents to groups. The method of analysis for the testing of the three other hypotheses, of the second part of our research design, was discriminant analysis. Our dependent variable had three categories: support for redistribution, opposition to redistribution, and cherry-picking of redistributive policies.

In summary, our findings suggest that the provision of objective information has virtually no effect on subjective preferences for redistribution, thus echoing the findings of recent social experimental research. Besides, the discriminant analysis identified two dimensions on which redistributive preferences are formed: an ideological dimension and political activism, economic self-awareness, and self-interest dimension. Redistributive preferences are found to primarily reflect individual social values, ideological beliefs, and political engagement; utilitarian motives are found to merely reinforce ideology-driven preferences for redistribution. Relative ignorance of one's position in the actual distribution of income, as well as feelings of economic insecurity, are found to intensify preferences for redistribution, both in support for and against redistributive policies.

Further research on subjective redistributive preferences is certainly required. A promising way forward may likely entail research on the preferences of certain social groups, particularly those with a weak connection to the labour market, such as the unemployed and those employed in rather precarious jobs. Moreover, examining redistributive preferences in a comparative perspective and introducing complementary research methods, like the qualitative evaluation of the notion of redistribution, would shed new light on the issue at hand.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors of this paper would like to thank Dimitris Raidos, Faih Skoula, and Irene Tsaknakis for their research assistance. The authors would also like to thank the Department of Political Science and Public Administration of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens for the funding of the research project "Lifting the veil of ignorance: A social experiment for redistributive preferences in Greece".

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alesina, A. and Glaeser E. L. (2004). *Fighting poverty in the US and Europe: A world of difference.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Alesina, A., Stantcheva, S. and Teso E. (2018). Intergenerational mobility and preferences for redistribution. *American Economic Review,* 108 (2), pp. 521-554.

Ashok, V., Kuziemko, I. and Washington, E. (2015). *Support for redistribution in an age of rising inequality: New stylized facts and some tentative explanations.* National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) Working Paper No. 21529.

Autor, D. H. (2014). Skills, education, and the rise of earnings inequality among the 'other 99 percent'. *Science*, 344 (6186), pp. 843-851.

Benabu, R. and Ok, A. E. (2001). Social mobility and the demand for redistribution: The POUM hypothesis. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics,* 116 (2), pp. 447-487.

Benabu, R. and Tirole, J. (2006). Belief in a just world and redistributive politics. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics,* 121 (2), pp. 699-746.

Boeri, T. and van Ours, J. (2013). *The economics of imperfect labor markets* (second edition). Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Bublitz, E. (2016). *Misperceptions of income distributions: Cross-country evidence from a randomized survey experiment*. Paper 178, Hamburg Institute of International Economics, Germany.

Campbell, D. T. (1957). Factors relevant to the validity of experiments in social settings, *Psychological Bulletin*, 54 (4), pp. 297-312.

Cappelen, A. W., Konow, J., Sørensen, E. Ø. and Tungodden, B. (2013). Just luck: An experimental study of risk-taking and fairness. *American Economic Review,* 103 (4), pp. 1398-1413.

Cruces, G., Truglia, R-P. and Tetaz, M. (2013). Biased perceptions of income distribution and preferences for redistribution: Evidence from a survey experiment. *Journal of Public Economics,* 98, pp. 100-112.

Dallinger, U. (2010). Public support for redistribution: What explains cross-national differences?. *Journal of European Social Policy,* 20 (4), pp. 333-349.

Durante, R., Putterman, L. and van der Weele, J. (2014). Preferences for redistribution and perception of fairness: An experimental study. *Journal of the European Economic Association,* 12 (4), 1059-1086.

Esping-Andersen, G. (1990). *The three worlds of welfare capitalism.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Farrokhi, F. and Mahmoudi-Hamidabad, A. (2012). Rethinking convenience sampling: Defining quality criteria. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 2 (4), pp. 784-792.

Feldman, S. and Zaller, J. (1992). The political culture of ambivalence: Ideological responses to the welfare state. *American Journal of Political Science,* 36 (1), pp. 268-307.

Fotoniata, E. and Moutos, T. (2009). Minimum wages in Greece, available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=2001375.

Gosnell, H. F. (1926). An experiment in the stimulation of voting. *The American Political Science Review,* 20 (4), pp. 869-874.

Hemerijck, A. (Ed.) (2017). *The uses of social investment.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jacoby, W. (1994). Public attitudes toward Government Spending, *American Journal of Political Science,* 38 (2), pp. 336-361.

Jaime-Castillo, A. M and Sáez-Lozano, J. L. (2016). Preferences for tax schemes in OECD countries, self-interest and ideology. *International Political Science Review,* 37 (1), pp. 81-98.

Karageorgiou, L. (2004). The impact of minimum wage on youth and teenage employment in Greece. *Spoudai,* 54 (4), pp. 39-67.

Karakitsios, A. (2018). *Essays on minimum wages.* Unpublished Ph.D dissertation. Athens: University of Economics and Business.

Kenworthy, L. and McCall, L. (2008). Inequality, public opinion and redistribution. *Socio-Economic Review,* 6 (1), pp. 35-68.

Kittel, B., Kanitsar, G. and Traub, S. (2017). Knowledge, power, and self-interest. *Journal of Public Economics,* 150 (June), pp. 39-52.

Kuziemko, I., Norton, M. I., Saez, E. and Stantcheva, S. (2015). How elastic are preferences for redistribution? Evidence from randomized survey experiments. *American Economic Review,* 105 (4), pp.1478-1508.

Meltzer, A. H. and Richard, S. F. (1981). A rational theory of the size of Government. *Journal of Political Economy,* 89 (5), pp. 914-927.

Moene, K. O. and Wallerstein, M. (2003). Earnings inequality and welfare spending: A disaggregated analysis. *World Politics,* 55 (July), pp. 485-516.

Mullinix, K. J., Leeper, T. J., Druckman, J. N. and Freese, J. (2015). The generalizability of survey experiments. *Journal of Experimental Political Science,* 2 (2), pp. 109-38. doi:10.1017/XPS.2015.19.

Niehues, J. (2014). *Subjective perceptions of inequality and redistributive preferences: An international comparison.* Cologne Institute for Economic Research Discussion Paper.

Owens, L. A. and Pedulla, D. S. (2014). Material welfare and changing political preferences: The case of support for redistributive social policies. *Social Forces,* 92 (3), pp. 1087-1113.

Petmesidou, M. and Glatzer, M. (2015). The crisis imperative, reform dynamics and rescaling in Greece and Portugal. *European Journal of Social Security,* 17 (2), pp. 158-181.

Piketty, T. (1995). Social mobility and redistributive politics. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics,* 110 (3), pp. 551-584.

Piketty, T. (2014). *Capital in the twenty-first century*. Cambridge/Mass. and London: The Belknap Press/Harvard University Press.

Piketty, T. and Saez, E. (2003). Income inequality in the United States, 1913-1998. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics,* 118 (1), pp. 1-41.

Pontusson, J. and Rueda, D. (2010). The politics of inequality: Voter mobilization and left parties in advanced industrial states. *Comparative Political Studies*, 43 (6), pp. 675-705.

Saez, E., Matsaganis, M. and Tsakloglou, P. (2012). Earnings determination and taxes: Evidence from a cohort-based payroll tax reform in Greece. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics,* 127 (1), pp. 493-533.

Siedler, T. and Sonnenberg, B. (2012). *Intergenerational earnings mobility and preferences for redistribution.* Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA) Discussion Paper No. 6981.

Sniderman, P. M. and Grob, D. (1996). Innovations in experimental design in attitude surveys. *Annual Review of Sociology,* 22, pp. 377-399.

Starmans, C., Sheskin, M. and Bloom, P. (2017). Why people prefer unequal societies. *Nature Human Behaviour* 1, 0082, doi:10.1038/s41562-017-0082, https://www.nature.com/nathumbehav/

Stoker L. (1995). Understanding whites' re- sistance to affirmative action: the role of principled commitments and racial prejudice In J. Hurwitz and M. Peffley (Ed.), *Perception and Prejudice: Race and Politics in the United States*. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press

Svallfors, S. (1997). Worlds of welfare and attitudes to redistribution: A comparison of eight western nations. *European Sociological Review,* 13 (3), pp. 233-304.

Tabachnick, B. D. and Fidell, L. S. (2013). *Using multivariate statistics* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

APPENDIX

Table A1 Contents of experimental treatments

Information provided	Treatment
Income distribution in Greece 2014 (in deciles and quartiles)	A+B
Income inequalities in Greece 2005-2014 (how many times is the income of the richest 20% bigger than the income of the poorest 20%). Data tabulated by age-group: up to 65 years old, more than 65 years old.	A+B
Property worth distribution in Greece 2012, in deciles.	A+B
Poverty line, Greece, 2005-2014 (measured as 60% of the median income). Presented both for an individual and for a family with two adults and two children.	A+B
Percentage of people in poverty, 2008 & 2014 (people having income below the poverty line).	A+B
Percentage of short-term (less than 1 year) unemployed people who receive benefits, 2010 & 2013, in Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Germany.	A+B
Percentage of long-term (more than 1 year) unemployed people who receive benefits, 2010 & 2013, in Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Germany.	A+B
Public spending in social protection as GDP percentage, 2012, in Greece, Bulgaria, Ireland, France, Spain and Portugal.	A+B
Minimum wage (in Euros), 2008, 2014, 2015, 2008-2015 change, in Greece, Belgium, Bulgaria, France, United Kingdom, Ireland, Spain, Holland and Portugal.	A+B
Income tax rates with an example for a €30,000 annual income.	A+B
Solidarity tax rates.	A+B
Property tax rate, along with calculation example.	A+B
Social class classification presentation, according to occupation and education.	B only
Probabilities of social mobility in Greece, according to parents' social class.	B only