EXPLORING VOTERS' SWITCHING BEHAVIOUR WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF A FINANCIAL CRISIS

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Abstract

Voting is perceived as a behaviour that determines the direction a society takes and therefore impacts the everyday life of citizens. The complexity of voting behaviour has made an adequate number of studies to try and decode it by following various perspectives. Within the various factors that can impact the voting behaviour of individuals, the age of the voter is considered as being an important one. The high importance of age is based on the cohort, life-cycle and individual ageing effects. Where cohorts of voters live under the context of a financial crisis the latter is argued to have an impact on the voting behaviour of that cohort, which can lead to a switching vote decision.

There are many researcher studies that have studied voting behaviour and the factors that have an impact on it. Moreover, the impact of financial crisis situation has also been studied. However, most researches that study voting behaviour either focus on younger generation. From the researches that focus on older voters most of them highlight the formers' higher relative voting stability. Though, in situations of financial crisis switch of vote occurs also for older aged voters. The researches that discuss switch of vote focus on the reasons that can lead to that. The group of older voters that decide to switch their vote is practically neglected by the literature. Therefore, a theoretical gap is revealed, which is about the understanding of the voting behaviour of older voters who switched their vote under the context of financial crisis. This is where this research study will focus.

To address this gap this study aims to explore the switching voting behaviour of older generation under the context of financial crisis. To meet this aim a qualitative methodology was designed to provide an insider's perspective on the reasons that Greek older aged voters have decided to switch their vote under the context of financial crisis to SYRIZA and the impact of the latter (financial crisis) to this decision. Twenty seven interviews were conducted with voters who switched their vote to SYRIZA in general elections that were held

under the context of financial crisis. It was revealed that the crisis has a substantial impact on the voting decision making of switching voters and that the meaning they assign to leader's traits can give a deeper understanding of their voting behaviour.

This study makes four major contributions to knowledge. Regarding the field of switching voting behaviour, the research contributes by identifying the main factors that can influence it and by identifying the reasons that older voters decide to switch their vote under the context of financial crisis. It also contributes to the field of political marketing by identifying the voters' clusters and the new political perceptual map. Finally, it contributes to the field of financial crisis by identifying the impact that it has on the voting behaviour of the individuals. A number of implications for practice, as well as emerging areas of future research are drawn.

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List of Abbreviations

ND New Democracy

PASOK Panhellenic Socialistic Movement

SYRIZA Coalition of the Radical Left

DIMAR Democratic Left

WWII Second World War

IMF International Monetary Fund

EU European Union

EC European Commission

ECB European Central Bank

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1. Introduction

"We believe that we are going through an epoch-making for the country process; we are in a period that PhD theses will be written, sociologists will write about what is happening in our country, political analysts will write...."

(A. Tsipras in interview, 2012)

1.1 Rationale

Voting behaviour is considered as a behaviour that has many implications to the life of a person (Visser, 1994) as the action of voting can determine the direction that a society takes and therefore has an impact on the everyday life of citizens (Sasu and Danga, 2015). The study of voting behaviour has become increasingly complex in the recent years (Alotaibi, 2013). There have been many studies that have tried to 'decode' the behaviour of voters, following various perspectives (Visser, 1998). Those studies have identified various factors that can impact the voting decision making process. Age is considered as being one of the most important factors. The importance of age is based on the cohorts, life-cycles and individual ageing effects (Blains et al, 2004; Becker, 2002). The period of time that a cohort comes to a political age (15-30) is considered important (Goerres, 2007) and therefore different cohorts might consider different values as being important (Tilley, 2005). Other important factors that can have an impact in voting behaviour are the education level (Karp and Milazzo (2015), the income (Karp and Milazzo, 2015), the emotions of an individual (Martin, 2000) together with his level of partisanship (Campbell, 1960) and ideological beliefs (Yates, 2012). Moreover, the influence of social groups such as family and friends on the voting behaviour of people may also be important (Lazarsfeld et al, 1954; Harder and Krosnick, 2008). In addition, important factors that can impact voting behaviour are the

issues orientation (Antunes, 2010) and the personality traits of the leader (Hermann, 1999; Walker et al, 1998; Schumann and Schoen, 2005).

Due to the complexity of voting behaviour a number of authors sought to create models that partially explain voting behaviour and include factors that are considered as being important. The main frameworks created were the sociological and the individual rationality (Clarke et al, 2004). The models related to the sociological framework give emphasis to the social characteristics, social contexts and social psychology. On the other hand the models related to individual rationality propose that logical coherence can explain voting behaviour (Clarke et al, 2004). In the first category, the Columbian or sociological model, which relied on "social interaction and social identification in order to explain the communication and mobilisation successes and failures of parties and other political organisations" (Clarke et al, 2004, p. 18); and the Michigan or psychological model, which focuses on three factors that motivate people to vote: those are party identification (or partisanship), issue orientation and candidate orientation (Antunes, 2010; Rosema, 2004), with the former being the central concept (Stokes 1969 cited in Clarke et al, 2004).

Another important model is the cognitive theory of voting behaviour. It examines the way voters respond to political schemas (e.g. symbols, candidates and issues) in order to make their voting decision (Marcus et al, 2000). In that theory heuristics are used by the voters in order to make their decision. Heuristics argue that a cognitive reduction of the information used in the decision making process may explain why the rational choice model fails to explain real life decision making process (Lefevere, 2011). As heuristics can be considered the appeal of the personality of a candidate, the endorsement of an individual's social circle, the government and the opposition, magnitude (the parties' share of vote), issue orientation, ideology, partisanship (Lefevere, 2011) and emotion (Marcus et al, 2000; Bond et al, 2012).

In regard to the individual rationality framework, the supporters of it argued that voting has value for the voters only if its benefits exceed its costs (Antunes, 2010). The first one who expressed this theory was Downs (1957). The general idea behind it is that "Positions on the ideological continuum are determined by preferences for different amounts of government-provided goods and services" Clarke et al (2004, p. 22). Also, it is argued another way of maximizing political utility is in terms of economic rewards and losses (Downs, 1957). Stokes (1964) focused mostly on the idea of positive and negative values (and therefore judgement about performance) attached to goals shared by almost everybody. In addition, Key (1968) created the reward-punishment model based on the idea of attributing blame or reward to incumbent party for the state of the economy or other issues.

1.1.1 Financial crisis and voting behaviour

A global financial crisis is defined as "a series of shocks to the global economy" by Turcu and Chautor (2015). A crisis can affect the voting behaviour of people by having an impact on some of the factors that are discussed above and are suggested to influence the behaviour of voters. Firstly, a financial crisis has impact on the income of citizens (Sanchez Vitores, 2013; Turcu and Chaytor, 2015). It is argued that during bad economic situations, when income is shrinking, the turnout rate increases which is regarded as mobilization of discontented voters to punish the incumbent's perceived poor performance (Font and Rico, 2005; Rico, 2012). Their evaluation is argued to be mostly based on emotion as Wagner (2014) suggested that a crisis generates anger and that leads voters to attempt to remove the source of harm. On the other hand voters that feel fear are expected to follow risk-aversion behaviour (Wagner, 2014). Therefore crisis brings instability, uncertainty and anxiety (Chalari, 2012) which then leads to changes in the voting behaviour of people. For example, it is found that the importance of the personality traits of the leader on determining voting behaviour is positively linear with anxiety (Marcus et al, 2000) and negatively linear with the degree of partisanship (Camatarri and Cavataio, 2015; Eisend and Blais, 2014).

Therefore, it is not a surprise that crises are associated with the emergence of charismatic leaders into power (Weber, 1978; Madsen and Snow, 1991; Willner, 1984; Pillai and Meindl, 1998; Bligh et al, 2004; House et al, 1991; Lord and Maher, 1991).

1.1.2 Switch of vote

The change on the voting decision making process leads to a possible switch of vote, it is claimed that the existence of moderate levels of vote switching (electoral volatility) is crucial as some fluctuation in the electorate is considered important in order to keep balance (Blondel, 1968 cited in Dejaeghere and Dassonneville, 2015). On the other hand high levels of electoral volatility are argued to lead to a risk of instability (Mainwaring and Zocco, 2007). However, the discussion on electoral volatility has thus far focused on the consequences it has on party systems and politics rather than the issue of direction (Dalton et al, 2011). There are different types of electoral volatility depending on the period of time that the voter uses to make his voting decision (Lachat, 2004; 2007) and on the closeness of the ideologies of the two parties from which and to which the individual switches their vote (Lachat, 2004). There is much research that focuses on the factors that explain volatility (Dassonneville and Hooghe, 2011). The institutional and political variables considered to be linked with electoral volatility Dalton et al (2011) distinguished them in terms of three groups: the party system, the electoral system and the political system. This is linked to the number of the political parties (Bartolini and Mair, 1990; Tavits, 2005; Dassonneville et al, 2015), the average distance between them (Dejaeghere and Dassonneville, 2015; Tavits, 2005) and the polarization in the system (Roberts and Wibbels, 1999; Dejaeghere and Dassonneville, 2015). The economic situation is another factor that affects vote switching behaviour (Roberts and Wibbels, 1999) as are the emotions of voters linked with economic situations Zelle (1995). In addition strategic voting is considered as another factor that affects electoral volatility (Willocq, 2016).

In regard to personal factors the level of political sophistication is considered as important with a debate on what level leads to higher electoral volatility (Lachat, 2004; Willocq, 2016; Dassonneville and Dejaeghere, 2014; Dassonneville and Hooghe, 2014). Another important personal factors that can have an impact in electoral volatility is the age of the voters with older voters having a lower probability of switching their vote (Zelle, 1995; Lachat, 2004; Walgrave, 2009). That is argued to be the case because as people grow older they tend to stabilize their political attitudes (Alwin and Krosnick, 1991) and therefore are more loyal to political parties.

1.2 Statement of the problem

As the above discussion reveals, voting behaviour has been extensively researched and the factors that affect it have been identified and analysed (Alotaibi, 2013; Visser, 1998). Moreover, the impact of financial crisis situations on the factors that can influence the voting behaviour of people have also been discussed within literature (Sanchez Vitores, 2013; Turcu and Chaytor, 2015). However, the trend in research of voting behaviour is to focus on younger generations. Most of research that is focusing on older voters highlights their higher relative voting stability (Zelle, 1995; Lachat, 2004; Walgrave, 2009). Though, in situations of financial crisis a switch of vote occurs also for older voters (Chalari, 2012). The researches that discuss switch of vote focus on the reasons that can lead to that. The group of older voters that decide to switch their vote is practically neglected by the literature, potentially because it may not be considered a common phenomenon. However, the fact that they are considered as the voters with the highest relative stability makes them an interesting group to focus on exploring the reasons they decide to switch their vote. Therefore, a theoretical gap is revealed, which is the understanding of the voting behaviour of older voters who switched their vote under the context of a financial crisis. This is where this research study will focus.

1.3 Why Greece?

In order to do undertake the research in this context, a situation of financial crisis with high levels of vote switching needed to be identified. Greece is the country that was hit most by the current financial crisis. It has been argued that no country has undergone such pain in the last fifty years or more (Featherstone, 2014). It is argued that the policies implemented in order to tackle the crisis induced a situation in the economy and within social lives that is comparable only to the 1929 recession in the United States (Stavrakakis, 2015), with the middle class being impacted the most (Tsekeris et al, 2015). In the elections that took place under the context of crisis (May 2012, June 2012, January 2015 and September 2015) high levels of switching votes occurred and that changed the political system as it was known until then (Spyropoulou, 2013). That switch was across all of the demographics of the electorate, with almost half of the electorate switching its vote. The two traditional main parties (PASOK and New Democracy) were between 1981 and 2009 elections receiving a cumulative percentage of votes of above 80%, which fell to a percentage close to 35% in the crisis elections. On the other hand the party of SYRIZA (extreme left) grew its percentage from 4% in 2009 to 36% in both the 2015 elections while its leader received popularity of more than 80% in the first month of his term in office from 8% in 2009 and 26% in April 2012, before the double elections of that year. Moreover, Greece was coming from a period of high polarization and clientelism in the political system, after the restoration of democracy in 1974 (Malkoutzis, 2012; Tsekeris et al, 2015). All of the above makes the political environment in Greece the best one for conducting the research.

1.4 Research aim

The main aim of this research study is to gain an in depth understanding of the voting behaviour of voters who switched their voted to the party of SYRIZA for first time in a general election that took place under the context of crisis.

1.4.1 Research Objectives

Having discussed all the above, a number of research objectives have emerged. There are the following:

- To explore the reasons that the voters have decided to switch their vote under the context of financial crisis
- To gain an in depth understanding of the impact of financial crisis on the voting behaviour of switching voters.
- To gain an understanding of the reasons that voters have decided to switch their vote to the party of SYRIZA.
- To gain an understanding of the contribution of the understanding of the meaning of traits that switching voters require from a political leader to have under the context of crisis to the understanding of their voting behaviour.

In order to fulfil those objectives, a qualitative approach and an inductive exploratory research design are considered as being appropriate. In depth, semi-structured interviews will be used for data collections and the sample will be members of the Greek electorate who switched their vote to the party of SYRIZA for first time in the general elections during the period of crisis (double general elections of 2012 or double general elections of 2015). The age of the sample will be 53+. The reason for that is firstly because they are the older voters on which this research is focused. The reason for choosing the specific age range is because people of that age reached their political age either during the period of dictatorship (1967-1974) or during the polarization period (and before the elections of 1981). Therefore, they have experience prior to crisis period which might provide insights to the study.

It is expected that the findings of this research study will bring value to the following areas:

- Make a theoretical contribution to the discipline of voting behaviour by providing an
 insight of the behaviour of voters in a period of crisis and by exploring the factors that
 influence it when the action of voting is taken under the context of financial crisis.
- To help political communicators and political parties operate more effectively. This will be done in two ways. By providing the various voting profiles of switching voters and by providing an insight of the traits, and the actual meaning of those, that they need to focus when they wish to position themselves and to impact the voting behaviour of the different profiles in an uncertain environment.

1.5 Outline of thesis

This thesis is organized into 7 chapters. The introduction chapter which introduced the thesis has been discussed and led to the central questions of this research study. The remaining chapters of the research thesis are as follows.

Chapter two (Literature Review) explores the literature surrounding voting behaviour. It discusses the factors that may impact on the behaviour of voters and the various models of voting behaviour. Moreover, the concept of crisis and the behaviour of voters under the specific context of financial crisis will be discussed as it is considered very important for this research study due to the nature of it. After that, light will be shed on the context of the specific financial crisis and therefore the reasons that led Greece into crisis, the impact of the latter on the behaviour of Greek voters and the positioning of SYRIZA in the elections will be discussed. This will be done in order to provide an understanding of the full context under which this research is taking place and of the sample of it.

Chapter three (Methodology) discusses the epistemology, ontology and methodology of the study. Moreover, the data collection and analysis methods are discussed.

Chapter four (Findings) presents the findings from the interviews that were conducted.

Among others, the respondents' the factors that may have an impact on voting behaviour, the impact of crisis on the latter and the reasons that voters decided to switch their vote and vote for SYRIZA will be discussed.

Chapter five (Discussion) discusses the key themes and findings in relation to the previous literature. It discusses the agreements and disagreements between the findings and the literature by providing arguments for those. It also discusses how this research covers the identified gap in the literature.

Chapter six (Conclusion) concludes with the key findings and how this supports or challenges previous findings in the fields of voting behaviour and crisis. Moreover, this chapter contains the answers to the objectives of the research study. The final chapter discusses the implications that the results of this research study have for communicators and political parties as well as for the disciplines of voting behaviour and political marketing. Suggestions for further research in the field are also included.

2. Literature review

2.1 Voting behaviour

Behaviour is a phenomenon characterized by continuity (Visser, 1998). People always behave on issues one way or the other (Visser, 1998). It is argued that "of all possible behaviours a person emits in the course of his life, few may have as many implications as the behaviour of voting for a party in an election" (Visser, 1994, p. 23). That is because voting may determine the direction that a society takes and therefore affects the everyday life of the citizens (Sasu and Danga, 2015). The voting decision is linked to society's economic growth, social policies, decisions on income distribution and much more (Visser, 1998; Leigh, 2005; Sasu and Danga, 2015). In addition, the voting decisions that people make and the reasons behind those decisions are important for politicians and the political parties who try to win the votes of the public (O'Cass, 2002a). An understanding of the reasons that influence the decision making process, the needs and wants of the voters, may provide political parties with an advantage over their competitors and increase their possibility of winning elections (O'Cass, 2002a).

Based on the above, the process by which a voter makes his voting decision is regarded with high importance in political research (Akhter and Sheikh, 2014; Sasu and Danga, 2015). Understanding voting behaviour is dealing with "the ways in which people tend to vote in public elections and the reasons why they vote as they do" (Plana and Riggs cited in Akhter and Sheikh, 2014, p. 104). In the past it was a common belief that parties' political manifestos determine the voting behaviour of people in elections, however through the years, the study of voting behaviour has become increasingly complex (Alotaibi, 2013).

2.1.1 Voting decision making

In order for a decision to be reached, a voter needs to know his options and have the information required (Gigerenzer and Goldstein, 1996) at which point he can come to a decision based on decision mechanisms. The decision mechanism has a high impact on the outcome of the vote (Gigerenzer and Goldstein, 1996). The steps the voter will follow constitute his decision making process (Lefevere, 2011). In order to understand voting decision making, not only if voters are changing their preferences needs to be explored but also when and in what direction (Hillygus and Jackman, 2003). There have been many studies that have tried to 'decode' the behaviour of voters, following various perspectives (Visser, 1998). However, most of those studies discuss in general about voters with no focus on switchers, as this study attempts to. Various factors that influence the voting decision making process have been identified by those. Those factors are presented below.

2.2 Internal and external factors that influence voting behaviour

The factors that influence voting behaviour can be divided into two categories: Internal and external. The internal factors are those relate to the individual person, including age, gender, income and occupation while the external factors relate to environmental effects on the individual, such as candidate's traits, negative campaigning and competitivity in elections (Timbancaya, 2014).

2.2.1 Internal factors and their influence on voting behaviour

2.2.1.1 Age and its influence on voting behaviour

Age is an important factor influencing voting behaviour. It is more likely for people to vote more as they get older (Leigh, 2005; Lopez, 2013). This is argued to be because people as

they get older they tend to perceive voting as civic duty (Verba and Nie, 1972) and increase their political knowledge and experience (Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993). This is argued to decrease the information costs that are associated with voting decision making (Harder and Krosnick, 2008; Lopez, 2013). Furthermore, it is claimed that as people age they tend to be more closely affiliated with a specific political party (Anduiza, 1994) and therefore become more loyal to political parties. Finally, and for all the above mentioned, older people tend to have higher voting turnout than younger ones and therefore affect more the election result (Blains, 2000).

Recent studies on the relationship between age and political participation have concentrated on the difference between cohort, life-cycle and individual ageing effects (e.g. Blais et al, 2004; Becker, 2002). It is important to mention that those studies have taken place in individual countries (Germany, Canada, Britain and United States) and therefore their results (in terms of the way that the above impact on voting behaviour) cannot be generalized across more than one nation (Goerres, 2007). Therefore the explanation for the same effect (e.g. life-cycle) can be different between various countries.

The cohort effect is a shared experience by a group that was born during a certain period of time and has two subtypes. The first one is the socialization as a 'political generation'. The period of time that the cohort came to its political age is important (Goerres, 2007). It is argued that people are more open to political influences between the ages of 15 to 30. Attitudes acquired at that age are usually maintained, although later personal experiences might change them (Alwin et al, 1991), therefore the period that a cohort has come to political age is regarded as being crucial. Different cohorts might consider different values as being important. This can lead to different political interests and different political behaviour. An example provided by Tilley (2005) is that British elderly people are more authoritarian than the younger ones as they have socialized before the changes towards libertarianism in the 1970s occurred. Another example, regarding intentions to vote is that of British voters

who came to political age during the Thatcher era and represent a cohort that is less likely to vote (Clarke et al, 2004). The effect that a period has on the voting behaviour of people who have lived during it is called the period effect (Harder and Krosnick, 2008). It is very important to note that not only periods of time but specific historical events that occurred when a particular generation of people was at a particular age can affect their future voting behaviour. These types of events are argued to shape them for the rest of their lives (Miller, 1992a; Miller and Shanks, 1996; Lyons and Alexander, 2000). The second subtype of cohort effect "stems from the varying probabilities of attaining certain social characteristics between cohorts" (Goerres, 2006, p.29). The most important case of a social characteristic cohort effect is education, where people who grew up in modern times have higher probabilities of having higher education levels than people who grew up in previous times, as it is also mentioned above in the discussion of political sophistication (Goerres, 2006).

Life cycle effects come from the changes that occur on people's social situation over their life course (Goerres, 2006). Life cycles can be separated into different stages of life (youth, adolescence, middle and old). People in each of those stages have different demands, for example, younger people may focus more on their professional lives while older ones may focus more on health issues. The differences in the needs and wants based on the life cycle can create different political interests and therefore different political behaviour (Goerres, 2007). Moreover, it is argued that young people have fewer reasons to participate in politics due to their lifecycle stage (for example they do not have children, a house or even a stable residence) in contrast with older people (Qulitelier, 2007). Another example of the effect that life cycle has on voting behaviour is that married people tend to vote more (Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980; Barreiro, 2001). It is claimed that living with a partner decreases the cost of information associated with voting, as there is a higher rate of information exchange (Anduiza, 1999). On the other hand divorcees tend to make women poorer and to therefore vote more for left wing parties as these are perceived as more compassionate (Edlund and Pande, 2001; Weston and Smyth, 2000).

The third effect, as it is mentioned above, is the 'individual ageing' effect. It is argued that there are two universal human features which increase the likelihood of voting (Goerres, 2007). The first one is past experiences with voting influencing the future probability of voting (Martikainen et al, 2005). That is claimed to be because the repetition of the same behaviour usually leads on to performing the same behaviour again (Ajzen, 2002). It is suggested that party preference is another element where older and younger voters differ. As it is found that older people have higher levels of party affiliation and they are more inclined to vote for large governmental parties (Barnes, 1989; Goerres, 2008) and therefore to support the status quo as they want to minimize insecurity of any potential changes (Williamson et al, 1982). On the other hand, it is argued that there is growing generational preference for small parties by the young generation (Goerres, 2008). In addition, it is supported that when people grow older they become more economically conservative and vote for parties that favour policies that will benefit them (Campbell, 2003b; Goerres, 2008). Taking an example mentioned above, older people might want higher taxes in order to fund welfare programmes that benefit them. However, older people tend to not only become economically conservative but also in the sense of new ideas or values that they did not possess when they grew up (Glenn, 1974; Goerres, 2006). There is the argument that political generations are more important when the political system is characterized by dealignment (Goerres, 2008). Finally, it is important to highlight again that a cohort in a country has different political experiences than the same type of cohort in another country. The period effects are different as well. Therefore, this has to be looked on a country by country basis as generalization cannot be made (Goerres, 2008).

2.2.1.2 Gender and influence on voting behaviour

Gender is argued to be another factor that influences voting behaviour, as different issues are seen as having different levels of importance (Brians, 2005). Moreover, women seem to

be less loyal to political parties and more liberal than men (Brians, 2005). Despite the fact that women tend to vote as much as men, they seem less convinced of the importance of their vote in solving everyday issues (Pantelidou and Maloutas, 2006).

2.2.1.3 Education level and influence on voting behaviour

According to Karp and Milazzo (2015), a higher level of education leads to a better understanding of politics and the electoral process and therefore, higher engagement with it. Moreover, it is argued that more educated people have a higher sense of social responsibility and believe that their vote can make a difference (Bernstein et al, 2001). In addition, it is suggested that a higher level of education reduces the costs associated with voting and the decision making process (Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980). That means that higher education levels are associated with higher voting turnout. Moreover, education seems to also have an influence on the direction in which people vote. An example of that is in the United Kingdom where people with lower and higher education levels tend to vote for the Labour party, while people 'in the between' tend to vote for Conservatives (Alfonso, 2015). Finally, differences also occur between the different subjects on the same level of education. As Harder and Krosnick (2008) suggest, people who have education in social sciences seem to have a greater feeling of civic duty when compared to people who had the same level of education in different sciences.

2.2.1.4 Income and its influence on voting behaviour

Personal wealth is considered as another important determinant of voting behaviour with wealthier people tending to be more engaged with the political process (Karp and Milazzo, 2015). It is argued that this is because they have time to search for information in order to make a decision (Harder and Krosnick, 2008) and for becoming involved into politics (Wolfinger and Roserstone, 1980). Also, it is suggested that people who have fewer

resources lack the means to engage in elections (Verba et al, 1995). Moreover, wealthier people tend to hold a stronger belief that their vote matters (Lopez, 2013). The same occurs with people who have higher occupational status (Brown, 2009). In terms of what they vote for, high income is associated with voting for right wing parties, while people with lower income tend to vote more for left wing parties (Leigh, 2005). This is possibly because those parties are perceived as being more compassioned, as research by Hayes (2005) in the United States on people's opinions on the Democratic candidates suggests. It is argued that the wealthiest age group is those aged over 55 years old (Bruenig, 2014), therefore the above discussed older generation.

2.2.1.5 Emotion's influence on voting behaviour

Although emotion has an important role in voting behaviour, traditional literature overlooked the potential contribution of it in influencing it (Yates, 2012) and only recently researches focus on it (Martin, 2000). The main theory on emotion in politics is the Affective Intelligence theory (AI), which suggests that there are two emotional systems: Disposition, which controls excitement and enthusiasm; and surveillance, which controls the emotions of anxiety, stress and fear. The first reinforces political choices, where the second causes big changes on the political thinking of people. Enthusiasm and anger are argued to increase political participation, while anxiety to increase political interest (Huddy and Mason, 2008). Voters that are anxious are argued to "interrupt their habitual behaviour and engage in more effortful information processing" (Marcus et al, 2000, p. 56). Therefore, when they vote they rely more on the personal characteristics of a candidate and his position on issues rather than party identification (Marcus et al, 2000).

Another model, the Affect Transfer argues that when somebody generates the emotion of anxiety to another person, the latter tends to like the former less. On the other hand when somebody makes you feel enthusiastic, you like him more (Ladd and Lenz, 2008). A third

theory on emotions, called endogenous affect, suggests that candidates whom somebody dislikes are more likely to make him anxious, while candidates that he likes are more likely to make him enthusiastic (Ladd and Lenz, 2008). Finally, it is argued that anticipated emotions are even more powerful than currently experienced emotions (Baumeister et al, 2007). As feedback theory suggests "anticipated affect many be more important in guiding behaviour than actual, felt emotion and affect" (Baumeister et al, 2007, p. 190). On the other hand when there is no emotional arousal, habit is argued to dominate the voting decision (Lefevere, 2011), as voting is considered as being a habitual behaviour, meaning that voting once increases the likelihood of voting again (Gerber et al, 2003; Plutzer, 2002).

2.2.1.6 Ideology and influence on voting behaviour

Ideology is another factor that is argued to have an impact on voting behaviour (Downs, 1957). It is defined as "a means for the reduction of complexity, which serves primarily as an orientation function for individuals and a communication function for the political system" (Fuchs and Klingemann, 1990, p. 205). In other words "ideologies help [the voter] focus attention on the differences between parties; therefore they can be used as samples of all the differentiating stands" (Downs, 1957, p. 98). As Yates (2012) stated ideology is a political summary that usually refers to a political continuum (for example left to right). Therefore ideology has close links to partisanship.

2.2.1.7 Partisanship and influence on voting behaviour

Partisanship is the psychological sympathy with a political party which is developed through socialization that strengthens throughout life with repeated voting (Campbell, 1960). High levels of partisanship provide a better understanding of the electoral process, reduce the costs associated with voting and causes to be seen as a civic duty (Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993). The partisan voter votes for a party in order to show his support to it (Rose

and McAllister, 1986). Those who are affiliated with a party also tend to be more interested in politics (Verba et al, 1978). A strong correlation between partisanship and salient political opinions (Campbell, 1960; Miller, 1991; Bartels, 2002), preferences for biased political opinion (Redlawsk, 2002) and the persistence over time of partisan affiliations (Niemi and Kennings, 1991) has been identified. That is because the support of loyal voters to the party is unconditional and they perceive their party as being the best "on all issues, at all times and during all elections" (Keulder, 1998). Campbell et al (1960) claimed that party identification is very difficult to change and it can only be the outcome of events that have great impact to the individual. Those events can either be individually based (for example change –or loss- of job, marriage etc) or broader (such as the entry of the country to the European Union, or the end of Soviet Union) (Antunes, 2010).

2.2.1.8 Civic duty and voting behaviour

Civic duty is argued to have an influence on voting behaviour because people who feel a personal sense of civic duty believe they have a moral obligation to participate in politics and are especially likely to vote in elections (Harder ad Krosnick, 2008).

2.2.1.9 Efficacy and influence on voting behaviour

Another important individual factor that influences voting behaviour is political efficacy. Political efficacy is defined as "the feeling that individual political action does have, or can have, an impact upon the political process...the feeling that political and social change is possible, and that the individual citizen can play a part in bringing about this change" (Campbell et al, 1954, p. 187). In other words citizens affect the political process through participation and in turn political actors are expected to respond positively to the interests of the citizens and to implement effective policies (Schneider, 2006). This notion has two components, the internal and the external (Mannarini et al, 2008; Gastil & Xenos, 2010;

Schulz, 2005; Schneider, 2006; Sullivan and Riedel, 2001; Sheerin, 2007; Seligson, 1980). Internal efficacy is defined as "the confidence of the individual in his or her own abilities to understand politics and to act politically, whereas external efficacy constitutes the individual's belief in the responsiveness of the political system" (Schulz, 2005). Voting turnout and political participation are linked with high levels of internal and external efficacy (Campbell et al, 1954; Almond and Verba, 1963; Craig, 1979; Craig and Maggiotto, 1982; Abramson and Aldrich, 1982; Verba et al, 1995; Southwell and Everest, 1998; Miller and Rahn, 2002; Russell et al, 2002; Kenski and Jomini, 2004; Vecchione and Caprara, 2009).

2.2.2 External factors and influence on voting behaviour

Alongside the internal factors there are also other factors that deal with the environment surrounding the voter that can influence his voting behaviour (Timbancaya, 2014). Some of those factors are based on interactions with social groups while others on the political system and the campaigning (Antunes, 2010). The external factors that are based on social interactions are discussed below.

2.2.2.1 Social groups and influence on voting behaviour

2.2.2.1.1 Family

Family is considered as having an important role in determining the voting behaviour of individuals as it is argued that people tend to inherit the voting preferences from their parents (Lazarsfeld et al, 1954). For example it is argued that parents having higher socioeconomic status tend to pass voting preferences to their children based on the advantages they gain as an outcome of the social class they belong to (Plutzer, 2002).

2.2.2.1.2 Friends

As well as the family there are also interactions with other social groups that can determine a person's voting behaviour. Those social groups can be friends with whom people have close relationships or even co-workers (Lewis-Beck et al, 2012) and online friendships (Bond et al, 2012). People with more contacts (socialize more) tend to have higher knowledge of the candidates and political topics (Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993) which again, reduces the costs associated with information gathering and hence voting.

2.2.2.1.3 Residence

The place that somebody lives is a factor that can have an effect on his voting behaviour (Harder and Krosnick, 2008). The reason for that may be the fact that people tend to compare themselves with the others in the neighbourhood, which leads to the formation of a belief regarding the level of qualification for voting. This is particularly the case when the political preferences of oneself are different from everyone else in the neighbourhood (Harder and Krosnick, 2008).

2.2.2.1.4 Religion

Religion is another factor argued to have an impact on voting behaviour. The link between religion and voting behaviour comes from the belonging to a religious community, which can lead to practice of civic skills (Verba et al, 1995). This increases the probability of seeing voting as a civic duty and therefore the probability of voting (Lopez, 2013). However, Santana - Leitner (2008) argued that there might be contradictions between the preferred political choice for religious reasons and the preferred political choice for other reasons.

2.2.2.1.5 Civic organization membership

Furthermore, belonging to a civic organization, another social group, is also a factor that affects the voting behaviour of an individual as it reduces the cost of voting (Uhlaner, 1989) and regards voting as a civic duty (Lopez, 2013). That occurs because the different organisations tend to take political stance and to inform their members about political issues and candidates (Uhlaner, 1989). Therefore, people become motivated to vote (Timbancaya, 2014).

2.2.2.1.6 Social pressure and voting behaviour

The above discussed external factors, identified as important in determining the voting behaviour of people, are linked with social interaction. The reasons that an individual can be influenced by social groups vary. For example, feelings of accountability can be induced by leading people to believe they could be called upon to justify their behaviour to others after making a judgment, decision, or performing an action (Lerner and Tetlok, 1993). Also, when people are aware that their behaviour will be publicly known they become more likely to behave in ways that are consistent with how they believe others think they should behave (Rind and Benjamin, 1994). In addition, the basic need for belonging can influence people to behave in ways that are consistent with how they expect others to behave. This expectation is called descriptive social norms (Harder and Krosnick, 2008). Finally, people are motivated to behave in ways that are consistent with behaviour of in-groups with which they most strongly identify in an effort to express their identity (Tajfel, 1982). The effect of social pressure and the social groups that are important on the switch of a vote in crisis are unclear and will be explored in this research study.

The preceding section explored internal factors and external factors relate to social group interaction and influence voting behaviour. The following will discuss the effects of political system, elections and campaign characteristics on voting behaviour.

2.2.2.2 Electoral system and its influence on voting behaviour

The electoral system is argued to have an effect on voting behaviour and it is claimed that the more proportional a system is the higher is the probability for an individual to decide to vote for the party that he prefers, as proportionality eliminates the problem of the 'lost' vote (Lijphart, 1997). Moreover, early voting registration deadlines may deter people from voting while motivation for voting increases as the Election Day approaches (Timbancaya, 2014).

2.2.2.3 Issues Orientation and influence on voting behaviour

Orientation on issues is another factor regarded as having a possible effect on voting behaviour. It is concerned with the agreement or disagreement of the voters with the policies implemented by the party that is in power and it is likely to affect the overall stand of the voter towards the political party (Antunes, 2010). The importance of different issues varies according to the voters' characteristics.

2.2.2.4 Candidate's personality traits and influence on voting behavour

The appeal of a candidate to voters is based on his personality traits is another factor that can impact on voting behaviour (Funk, 1996; Mondak, 1995), especially when those traits belong to a leader (George and George, 1998; Hermann, 1999; Walker et al, 1998; Schumann and Schoen, 2005). The importance of traits is context dependent – meaning that it may change across contexts (for example dominance may be considered as important by voters in war times but have low levels of importance in peace) (Little et al, 2007; Mui, 2002).

By using social cognition theory Miller et al (1986) have identified five different performance related schemas that are important for voters in order to evaluate candidates. Those are: competence, integrity, reliability, charisma or personal appeal and other personal characteristics. Competence refers to experience and ability, integrity to candidate honesty and sincerity, reliability includes the traits dependable, stable, decisive and strong. Charisma is linked with ability to communicate with others, inspiring, dignity, humility and patriotism. Finally, personal characteristics include age, health, religion, wealth and past occupation (Funk, 1994). This research has taken place in the United States; however it was also applied to countries with parliamentary systems, such as Canada (Brown et al, 1988 cited in Funk, 1994).

Using another technique, that of trait rating, Kinder (1986) identified the following traits: competence, leadership, integrity and empathy. Competence refers to hard working, knowledgeable and intelligent; leadership to inspiring, strong leadership and respectful; integrity to decent, moral and setting a good example and empathy to compassionate, kind and 'cares about people like me'. In another study Funk (1999) brought the context into discussion by arguing that the situation under which a candidate is evaluated is very important, however she argues that there are traits that can be universally used to evaluate candidates. She argued that competence and leadership are universal traits, while integrity and empathy can vary between candidates.

Williams et al (1991) argued that voters expect politicians to be friendly, loyal, responsible, reliable, self-confident, understanding, dependable and honest, while Leary (1995) study on leader's image identified five different traits that are of crucial importance. Those are: competent, knowledgeable, moral, powerful, and in specific moments intimidating.

Furthermore, Theakston (2010) argued that policy vision, emotional intelligence and

communicative competence are required for a politician in order to be perceived in a positive way.

2.2.2.5 Competitivity of elections and voting behaviour

Election competitiveness may influence voting behaviour and can potentially lead to higher levels of participation (Franklin, 2004; Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993; Indridason, 2008). That is argued to occur when there is uncertainty of the final result, then the individual has a higher belief that his vote may have an influence and at the same time political parties tend to try harder to convince voters to vote (Lopez, 2013). However, Lopez's research focuses on voters in general. The situation for switchers is unclear and will be explored in this research study.

2.2.2.6 Media coverage and voting behaviour

There is a debate within the literature regarding the effect that media has on viewers' attitudes and voting behaviour (Trystan et al, 2003). There is an argument that the media has minimal effect on voting behaviour because the messages that people receive from media are filtered through an individual's interactions (Alotaibi, 2013) and because people choose to receive information that reinforces existing views (Bergan et al, 2006). However, there is also the argument that media impacts the voting behaviour of people not only through the way they present a specific report but also through the choice of the stories to cover (Bergan et al, 2006). Dimitrova et al (2011) argued that there are many researches that have identified positive relationships between the use of digital media and participation in politics, especially during election campaigns (Bachmann et al, 2010; Kenski and Stroud, 2006; Boulianne, 2009). Nevertheless, those researches have not focused on switching voters which is the focus of this research study. This relationship between social media and politics is argued to be rooted in the desire for change (Biswas et al, 2014). The influence of

the media might be stronger on people that have low party affiliation, political interest and knowledge, and therefore low involvement, as they are less loyal to political parties and those who search for information during the last days before the election in order to make their decision (Lau and Redlawsk, 2001).

2.2.2.7 Negative Campaigning and voting behaviour

Another factor that can have an impact on the voting behaviour of people is negative campaigning (Martin, 2004). Negative campaigning is linked with emotions as it creates anxiety about the attacked candidates; it makes people think that the result is uncertain and therefore may create motivation in people (Martin, 2004). At the same time it might create uncertainty of a candidate and lower the individual's self-efficacy, meaning as aforementioned, the confidence that an individual has on his ability to understand politics (Schulz, 2005) and therefore can potentially lead to absence of voting (Martin, 2004).

2.3 Models of voting behaviour

As seen from previous discussion, there are many factors that can influence voting behaviour. Due to the complexity of voting behaviour a number of authors have sought to create models that partially explain voting behaviour and include the factors discussed above. The main frameworks that have informed the selection and specification on the voting behaviour models are the following two: The sociological and the individual rationality frameworks (Clarke et al, 2004). The models related to the sociological framework give emphasis on the social characteristics, social contexts and social psychology. On the other hand the models related to individual rationality promise that logical coherence can explain voting behaviour (Clarke et al, 2004). Below the most important models of both approaches will be discussed.

2.3.1 Models of the sociological framework

Clarke et al (2004) argued that since the early research on voting behaviour was conducted by sociologists it is not surprising that the emphasis is based on the contexts of social groups and community.

2.3.1.1 The Columbian or sociological model

The name of this model was taken from the University to which researchers were associated. The research of Paul Lazarsfeld and his colleagues was published in 1944. The Columbian model relied on "social interaction and social identification in order to explain the communication and mobilisation successes and failures of parties and other political organisations" (Clarke et al. 2004, p. 18). It identified social characteristics such as class, gender, ethnicity and race to influence political preferences. The main social characteristics identified to predict the choice of the voters are socioeconomic class and religious affiliation (Bartels, 2008). Social characteristics are identified as important for voting behaviour for three reasons: The first one is social differentiation and it means that people are part of groups that have different types of interests, the second is transmission and it means that people inherit from their families political preferences and the third one is physical proximity and means that people have usually and frequent contact with other people who belong at the same social groups (Antunes, 2010; Rosema, 2004; Timbancaya, 2014). The main findings of the Columbian model were that the social groups that people belong to determine their vote (Antunes, 2010; Timbancaya, 2014). That is argued to happen because as Green et al (2002, p.4) said "when people feel a sense of belonging to a given social group, they absorb the doctrinal positions that the group advocates". It is understood, since those social characteristics change slowly, that the change on political preferences is expected to follow the same path (Clarke et al, 2004). However, the Columbian model presumes that all voters make their voting choice prior to election campaigns. Therefore it does not take into account

the undecided voters who make their choice in the last days before Election Day (Antunes, 2010), and does not discuss the process of influence of the sociological factors to the voting behaviour of voters. The psychological model comes to provide answers to that (Rosema, 2004).

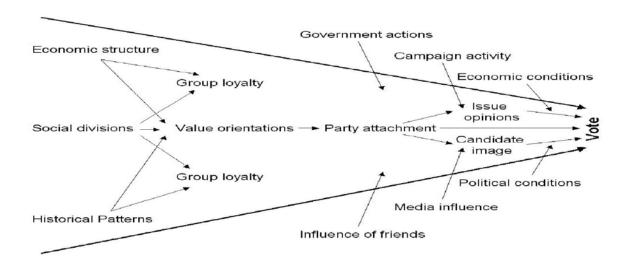
2.3.1.2 The psychological or Michigan model

The next important model in elections studies was presented by Angus Campbell and Robert Kahn of the school of Michigan in 1948. However, the most important landmark on that approach to voting behaviour was published in a book called the American Voter - Campbell et al, 1960 - (Timbancaya, 2014). This model has been used as a primary data collection tool National sample surveys and the motivational or socio-psychological explanations replaced the demographic characteristics and community contexts in explaining a voter's choice (Rossi, 1959 cited in Clarke et al, 2004). The social psychology explanation is guided by "the philosophy that the immediate determinants of an individual's behaviour lie more clearly in his attitudes and his perceptual organisation of his environment than in either his social position or other 'objective' situational factors (Rossi, 1959 cited in Clarke et al, 2004, p. 19). The Michigan model focuses on three factors that motivate people to vote: those are the above discussed party identification (or partisanship), issue orientation and candidate orientation (Antunes, 2010; Rosema, 2004), with the former being the central concept (Stokes 1969 cited in Clarke et al, 2004). Also mentioned above, party identification is acquired at a young age through socialisation experiences with family and other social groups, and once acquired tends to be stable (Campbell et al, 1960).

As discussed, the Columbian model has failed to explain the changes that occurred in voting behaviour despite the stable sociological factors of the voters (Bartles, 2009), whereas the school of Michigan provided answers for that. As it is seen, the school of Michigan did not see the two approaches as being independent but as a chain of events that has a

contribution to the voting behaviour of people (Antunes, 2010). That was metaphorically termed the "funnel of causality" which can be seen in figure 2.1.

Figure 2-1 - Funnel of Causality



The funnel of causality includes temporal and causal forces which are intimately linked. The events "follow each other in a converging sequence of causal chains, moving from the mouth to the stem of the funnel" (Campbell et al, 1960, p. 25). Therefore, the sociological aspects influence a person, which determines the party identification of the person voting and this in its turn affects the stance of the person towards issues, candidates, campaigns and discussions with family and friends, which directs him to take into account specific information and reject or ignore other. This biased information processing and receiving in the end is argued to determine the voting behaviour of that person (Antunes, 2010; Timbancaya, 2014). For example evaluations of the party's leader might be explained, in a sense, by party affiliation. The funnel of causality has received criticism over the years and many researchers have tried to "transform it" (for example Goldberg, 1996 and Jackson, 1975). Jackson (1975) argued that the most important element of the "funnel of causality" has little direct influence on the voting behaviour of people. Moreover, those elements did not have the same role in European countries, mainly because the differences in the party

and electoral systems changes the way voters relate to political parties (Visser, 1998).

Another perspective, offered by Goren (2005) argued that partisanship affects voting behaviour but is not affected by the core values of voters. In addition Miller and Shanks (1982) produced another model putting most of the factors that previous researchers identified as influencing voting behaviour in seven distinct categories. In their study they show direct and indirect impacts of each of the factors to the vote. There are more researches which try to identify and show the causal relationship between the various factors and their impact on the voting behaviour of people (Visser, 1998). The most important criticism of the Michigan model was based on the beliefs surrounding the amount of cognitive constraint that the public puts in their political thinking is limited (Converse, 1975) as the context can make a big difference to the attitudes and behaviours are related (Visser, 1998). In an attempt to 'refurbish' a Michigan-style concept schema theory in cognitive psychology was involved (Clarke et al, 2004).

2.3.1.3 The cognitive theory of voting behaviour

Schemas are "cognitive structures that receive process and retrieve information for decision-making purposes" (Clarke et al, 2004, p. 20). The theories of cognition examine the way voters respond to political schemas (e.g. symbols, candidates and issues) in order to make their voting decision (Marcus et al, 2000). The benefits of a cognitive model are twofold: the first one is that it is general and flexible. That means that although a voters has many schemata available for representing political situations, those that are activated depend on the perception that the voter has on the context of the stimuli (Marcus et al, 2000). The second is the fact that different context or stimuli can engage different schemata and therefore result in different judgment (Bennett, 1981). This highlights that certain communications that are designed to trigger certain schemata are likely to influence an overall judgment.

The cognitive model focuses on the way that the voters gather process and organize the information available to them (Kinder, 1983). The important schema here is that prior knowledge, acquired through experience guides new information processing and retrieves information that is stored (Miller et al, 1986; Lodge and Hamill, 1986). What is important in cognitive theory is the identification of heuristics to be used as cognitive shortcuts in order to influence voting decision (Lau et al, 2008). Those cognitive shortcuts are decision mechanisms that limit the amount of information taken into account (Lau et al, 2008). They are used by people all the time, even to the point where they are almost unavoidable (Tversky and Kahneman, 1973), in all aspects of their life (Lau et al, 2008). Heuristics allow voters to reach a decision without using all the information, if they had to do so they would never reach a decision as the cognitive load would be too high (Lau and Redlawsk, 2007). Heuristics argue that a cognitive reduction of the information used in the decision making process and may explain why the rational choice model fails to explain real life decision making process (Lefevere, 2011). As heuristics can be considered the below discussed: Firstly, the appeal of the personality of the candidate. In order to evaluate the personality voters tend to rely on the previous interactions with the candidate in order to evaluate his personality and form an opinion of him and make their voting decision (Alvarez, 1997; Arbour, 2007; Vesser, 1998; Erdem and Swait, 2004). That is a non-costly way of easily obtainable information gathering (Stigler, 1961 cited in Salonen and Wilberg, 1987; Snyder and Ting, 2002; Schneider, 2004) which helps voters to evaluate candidates (Page, 1976 cited in Alvarez, 1997) and to form a perception about them (Salonen and Wiberg, 1987; Sobel, 1985). As Von Weizsacker (1980, p.72) says "by observing others' behaviour in the past, one can fairly confidently predict their behaviour in the future without incurring future costs".

Another heuristic is the endorsements from an individual's social circle. People tend to vote for the party other people say that they should vote for (Rosema, 2004, p. 84); Group interests, where people vote for the party that defends the interests of a group in society

(Rosema, 2004). General societal groups are traditionally defended by left and right wing parties and many voters associate parties with certain groups in society (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967). Traditional parties are benefit from this left-right cleavage while newer parties may have emerged on other basis (Lefevere, 2011). Another heuristic is the government and the opposition, where a voter focuses the decision for voting either in performance of government or on who they would like to see in power (Rosema, 2004). That can be prospectively, where the voters focus on promises or retrospectively, where the voters base their decision on the incumbent party's performance (Kiewiet and Rivers, 1984). Habit is considered another heuristic as in absence of emotional arousal, habit dominates the voting decision (Lefevere, 2011). Magnitude can be also used as heuristic and focuses on the parties' perceived electorate share, since voters may want to vote for a large or small party (Lefevere, 2011). Issue orientation is another heuristic and as such voters using issues for their voting decision making, base their vote on the policy stance of the parties on one or more issues (Lefevere, 2011). Issue ownership is the fact that specific political parties are identified by the public at large with specific policy issue (Lefevere, 2011). Ideology is another heuristic and it regarded as a simple way to achieve cognitive reduction. Voters that base their vote on ideology do not need to know specific policy stances of a party (Lau and Redlawsk, 2007). Partisanship is another identified heuristic that eliminates the required information for making a voting decision (Lefevere, 2011; Timbancaya, 2014). It is described as "a cognitive structure that contains citizens' knowledge, beliefs and expectations about [political] parties" (Rahn, 1993, p. 474). Loyal voters tend to evaluate message through partisan lenses. That means that voters do not analyse the message but they rely on heuristics, such as their evaluation of the source of it, in order to evaluate it (Mondak, 1993). The party schema was argued to be the most effective in structuring political information (Lau, 1986). Another heuristic that was recently identified as having an impact on voting behaviour is emotion (Marcus et al, 2000; Bond et al, 2012; Yates, 2012). It is argued that the emotions depend on cues of the environment (Zajonic, 1980) and therefore the political context is important when considering the importance of voters' emotion on their voting

choices (Yates, 2012). For example, there were several scholars who argued that personal economic situations have emotional reactions and that affects the way that people process relevant information (Conover and Feldman, 1986; Marcus et al, 2000). It is suggested that the three heuristics considered to be the most important ones are party identification, ideology and personality of candidate (Visser, 1998). Those heuristics are discussed above as internal and external factors that may have an impact on voting behaviour.

In order for heuristics to be activated in evaluation processes the presence of cues is required. Those cues need to result from variations in the context in terms of issues, candidates and campaign effects. Other cues can activate other heuristics, depending of the political context of that time (Conover and Feldman, 1989). The perceived disadvantage of heuristics is that they may lead to biased decisions (Lefevere, 2011). However, as it is seen the cognitive model integrates the previous research in terms of cognitive economy, where voters can rely to cues related to ideology and economic performance (rational theory), party cues (Michigan school) or social and group cues (Columbia school) (Conover and Feldman, 1984; Lodge et al, 1989; Popkin, 1994).

2.3.1.4 Psychodynamic theory of voting behaviour

A theory that also bases voting behaviour on socio-psychological factors is the psychodynamic one. This was created in Western Europe at the end of 19th and beginning of the 20th century, due to industrialization and modernization, the working class was overwhelming the lower middle class. The latter class, which consisted of shop owners, artisans, craftsmen etc., and was usually in support of the liberal parties, have turned to right extremism (Visser, 1998). That led to sociologists developing a voting theory based on the gradual social, economic and cultural marginalization of a social group. It was argued that insecurity together with low sophistication levels increases the receptivity of extreme right propaganda (Lipset, 1981). The psychodynamic theory has added to the literature of voting

behaviour. Although it uses variables that exist in Columbian and Michigan schools (such as opinion, attitudes and perceptions) it brought to light the concept of need. Needs are regarded in psychology as "largely unconscious forces, pressing for gratification while controlled by the person's adaptation to reality (Ego) and his moral inhibitions (Superego)" (Visser, 1998, p. 67). They are perceived as determinants of the intervening variables of opinion, perception and attitude and therefore as affecting voting behaviour (Visser, 1998).

2.3.2 The individual rationality framework

The supporters of the theory of rational voting behaviour argue that voting has value for the voters only if its benefits exceed its costs (Antunes, 2010). The first one who expressed this theory was Downs (1957). The origins of this model are in economic theories which tried to explain the location decisions made by corporations (Clarke et al, 2004). The general idea behind it is simple as Clarke et al (2004, p. 22) explained: "Positions on the ideological continuum are determined by preferences for different amounts of government-provided goods and services". The importance of ideology lies in the fact that a rational voter votes for the party that can provide him with 'maximum subjective utility' and since voters act under situation of uncertainty (as the information on costs and benefits of the parties' policies is no complete) they use ideology as a shortcut to make their decisions (Downs, 1957).

Alternatively it is argued that political utility can be maximized in terms of economic rewards and losses (Downs, 1957). The cost of voting includes among others the time spent in the queue to vote and the money and time spent obtaining and filling in documents that are required for voting (Timbancaya, 2014). An important element of the cost associated with voting is the time, money and effort spent in gathering and processing information about the candidates in order to select the one to vote for (Grey, 2006; Timbancaya, 2014). Literature suggests that there are two broad ways to maximise utility through economy depending on the objectives of the individual (Chadou, 2013). The people who votes for a party that they

believe would provide them with more economic benefits that any other, given their personal financial situation, are called pocket book voters (Chadou, 2013). On the other hand those who vote for a party considering the national economic situation, will therefore vote for the party that they believe will make the conditions better in the country's economy, are called sociotropic voters (Chadou, 2013). Moreover, and in regard with the past and future economic evaluations Downs argued that between past performance and future promises rational individuals will reply on the former, when judging the economy (Clarke et al, 2004).

Downs and other supporters of this theory recognise that it is difficult to compare expectations of future performance of parties should they form a government. In order for a voter to avoid this difficulty he can use ideology (as mentioned above) or parties over time performance ratings (Clarke et al, 2004). The model suggested by Downs has received criticism. One of the critics was Stoke who emphasized the so called 'valence issues'. He argued that the spatial model relied on "four questionable assumptions of undimensionality, fixed structure, ordered dimensions and common reference" while politics has "multiple dimensions, variable issue content, positive or negative values and spaces of competition that are perceived differently by politicians and voters" (Stokes, 1963 cited in Clarke et al, 2004, p. 23). Stoke's valence model focuses mostly on the idea of positive and negative values (and therefore judgement about performance) attached to goals that are shared by almost everybody, in areas on which public opinion is heavily skewed (Clarke et al, 2004).

As it is seen both of the models (Downs and Stokes) focus attention on the performance of and responsibility to the incumbent. This idea of attributing blame or reward to incumbent for the state of the economy or other issues, has led Key (1968) to create the reward-punishment model. In contrast to the latter another model created (issue-priority) argues that negative outcomes do not necessarily lead to punishment in elections. That is because voters decide based on both current conditions and the perceptions they have on the issue-priorities of the parties that are competing for office (Clarke et al, 2004).

To sum up while the Downsian spatial model argues that politics take place on a unidimensional left-right cleavage and voters choose the party that is closest to their beliefs in the continuum (ideology important), the valence model argues that the issues of highest importance are those where public opinion is heavily skewed. Therefore, parties are judged based on their ability to produce 'good' perceived outcomes on those issues. Hence, the incumbent is rewarded or punished based on their perceived performance. Finally, the issue-priority model argues that an incumbent party can survive 'bad evaluations' if there is no alternative on dealing better with an important issue (Clarke et al, 2004).

The above discussion contains the factors that affect voting behaviour and the suggested models that provide explanation for the process of voting decision making. Therefore when there is an alteration in the factors considered as being important in the process of voting decision making might alter and that can lead to a different outcome (vote). Crises are considered as events that can affect the above discussed factors (Duch and Sagarzazu, 2014; Stubager, 2011; Scotto, 2012; Nedau et al, 2013; Williams et al, 2009). Below the concept of crisis and its impact on factors that have an impact on voting behaviour will be discussed.

2.4 The concept of crisis

It is argued that all societies face challenges, which can be periodic and extreme (Hindmoor and McConnell, 2015). Some of those challenges are significant enough to be termed crises. Crisis is a word that originated from the Greek word krisis, which means judgement, choice or decision (Preble, 1997). Throughout history there are numerous cases of a crisis relating to a country, the economy, a war or even actions of one single person. A few crises that have occurred during the last few years include the Syrian war, the terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels, the Japanese tsunami and nuclear meltdown, the refugee crisis and the global

financial crisis. All of those events are described as crises; however their strength, importance and effect on people vary. Crisis is defined by Pearson and Clair (1998, p.60) as follows: "a low-probability, high impact event that threatens the viability of the organization and is characterized by ambiguity of cause, effect, and means of resolution, as well as by a belief that decisions must be made swiftly". On another, definition, which takes into account the element of publicity of the event but fails to incorporate the urgency of decision making. Bundy and Pfarrer (2015) describe crisis as "an unexpected, publicly known and harmful event that has high levels of initial uncertainty, interferes with the normal operations of an organization and generated widespread, intuitive and negative perceptions among evaluators". The effects on people involved vary, as it is seen crisis has two specific characteristics. The first is that it is an unexpected event and therefore it can be claimed that it surprises the involved members, takes them out of their routine as Panas (2013) stated, and the second is that it requires decisions to be taken. Since crisis changes the routine and therefore changes rapidly the previous know context, the individuals by trying to understand and take control of the new environment, they develop causal explanations for the crisis event (Martinko, 1995). This causal explanation that is developed has an effect on the individual's perceptions and behaviours (Bundy and Pfarrer, 2015; Martinko, 1995; Weiner, 1986). The behaviour of individuals in this type of case can be unpredictable (Panas, 2013). The more direct (Kosicka-Gebska and Gebski, 2013) and the deeper somebody is affected by crisis the stronger the change to his/her behaviour (Grosjean et al, 2011). Moreover, different levels of effect from a crisis create different reactions. The reaction to a crisis depends also on the context in which the crisis occurs, for example, when a political crisis occurs in a democratic country, people become less supportive to democracy and the democratic institutions. The depth of rejection depends on the prior beliefs of the person towards the institutions. On the other hand, when a crisis occurs in countries which have an authoritarian system the support of democracy increases (Grosjean et al, 2011), therefore a crisis can lead to social change. Social change is described as "relatively lasting transformations of social features, such as structures and institutions, norms, values, cultural products and symbols" (Calhoun, 1992 cited in Silbereisen et al, 2007, p. 73). This can "result of sudden and dramatic transformations of political, social and economic institutions as was the case with the breakdown of the communist system in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union" (Pinquart and Silbereisen, 2004, p. 289). That can therefore explain the turn to capitalism and in some cases liberalism of the countries that were under the Soviet Union when it collapsed. Although there are numerous types of crises, this research study focuses on financial crises.

2.4.1 Financial Crises

The global financial crisis is defined by Turcu and Chaytor (2015) as 'a series of shocks to the global economy'. It was triggered by the 'housing bubble' in the United States and it is considered by economists as the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression in the 1930s which led to WWII (Karp and Milazzo, 2015). The first victim of the crisis was Lehman Borthers, a failure that proved that no bank was 'too big to fail' (Karp and Milazzo, 2015). Although the crisis started on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, it triggered a domino effect around the world and it affected Europe (Rudneva, 2011), where it travelled fast and had an impact on both banks and debts (Bellucci et al, 2012). The domino effect hit hard the countries of the Eurozone and it developed a sovereign debt crisis which impacted mostly the southern countries of Europe, the so called PIGS (Portugal – Ireland – Greece – Spain) (Sanchez Vitores, 2013). The economies of those countries were not in a good condition even before crisis occurred and therefore the results of it have been very salient (Serricchio et al, 2013). Those countries were forced into cuts in state expenditure and bailout programmes in order to respond to the crisis (Bellucci, et al 2012).

2.4.2 Crisis effect on voting behaviour

A crisis can affect the voting behaviour of people by having an impact on some of the factors that are discussed above and are suggested to influence the behaviour of voters. Firstly, a financial crisis has impact on the income of citizens (Sanchez Vitores, 2013; Turcu and Chaytor, 2015). One of the main characteristic outcomes of a financial crisis is the increase of unemployment (Chalari, 2014; Hedley et al, 2012). It is argued that during bad economic situations, when income is shrinking, the turnout rate increases which is regarded as mobilization of discontent voters to punish the incumbent's perceived poor performance (Font and Rico, 2005; Rico, 2012). Nezi (2012) argued that when the economy is at its worst the incumbent should expect the support only from loyal voters and therefore should not have any hope of winning elections. However it is only voters who blame the government for the economic issues that are likely to vote according to their economic evaluations (Vis, 2009; Hellwig and Coffey, 2011; Giger and Nelson, 2011; Karyotis and Rudig, 2013), as the voters evaluate the situation, identify who is to blame and vote accordingly (Duch and Stevenson, 2008). Their evaluation is argued to be mostly based on emotion as Wagner (2014) suggested that a crisis generates anger and that leads voters to attempt to remove the source of harm. On the other hand voters that feel fear are expected to follow riskaversion behaviour (Wagner, 2014). Therefore crisis brings instability, uncertainty and anxiety (Chalari, 2012). It is argued that right wing governments are punished more heavily than left wing ones on an increase of unemployment, while the opposite occurs in an increase of inflation (Goulas et al, 2015). Moreover, it is argued that such traumatic experiences as crises can make generations become radicalized, and that those radicalizations can transform societies (Chalari, 2012). Based on the above, it is not a surprise that crises are associated with a decline in partisanship (Blais and Labbe St-Vincent, 2011). As Campbell (1960) suggested partisanship can only be changed due to outcomes of events that have a great impact to individuals, and financial crises are regarded as such events (Antunes, 2010). Moreover, it is argued that in crises the importance of the

leader's personal characteristics increases (Abrour, 2007). It is found that the importance of the personality traits of the leader on determining voting behaviour is positively linear with anxiety (Marcus et al, 2000) and negatively linear with the degree of partisanship (Camatarri and Cavataio, 2015; Eisend and Blais, 2014; Schnee, 2014) to which the crises are associated. Therefore, the lower the party loyalty, the higher the leader's expected impact on the voters (Blais, 2011; Markus, 1982, Rahn et al, 1990 cited in Funk, 1996).

The importance of the context on the perception of leaders is highlighted by a number of researchers (Williams et al, 2009). It is argued that crisis situations create the conditions under which a political leader can be perceived as being charismatic (Schnee, 2014). There are many authors who have argued that times of crisis can help charismatic leaders to emerge (e.g. Weber, 1978; Madsen and Snow, 1991; Willner, 1984; Pillai and Meindl, 1998; Bligh et al, 2004; House et al, 1991; Lord and Maher, 1991). History has many examples of this, for example, Bolivar was helped in order to form his wars of liberation by the takeover of the Iberian Peninsula by Napoleon, in the early 1800s. Peron took advantage of the economic crisis in order to fight for the "shirtless ones" (Fraser and Navarro, 1996).

Moreover, the rise of Che Guevara is directly linked with the Cold War and the context under which the relations of the United States with Latin America (Gerdes, 2003). Another example is Winston Churchill, who in the 1930's was perceived as a liability for the Conservative party. However, his actions were very successful as a response to WWII (Hunt et al, 1999).

Crises are the times when basic values are questioned and charisma is linked with the creation of something new in replacement of the old (Weber, 1964) which is strongly linked with the transformational idea of the charismatic leader and the vision for the creation of a new world different from the one before (Boal and Bryson, 1988). As Conger and Kanngo (1987) said, in order for a charismatic leader to be generated, a situation of unhappiness with the status quo needs to occur. Therefore a charismatic leader needs to provide a solution for a situation and to be different from the status quo (Yukl, 2010). Therefore,

charismatic leaders transform old values and replace traditional rules with a new faith (Weber, 1978). Conger et al (2000) stated "charismatic leaders engage followers in radical change". Foil et al (1999) agreed by arguing that charismatic leaders have the ability to pass radical or innovative ideas as more socially conventional ones.

The characteristics of crises that lead to an increased importance of the leader are loss of control (Bass, 1990), uncertainty (Pearson and Clair, 1998), fear and anxiety about the future (Yukl, 2010), a sense of helplessness (Kets de Vries, 1988), a need for directed guidance to the follower which leads to the emergence of charismatic leaders (Kets de Vries, 1988). Under the above discussed conditions people tend to 'invite to power' people who have some personality traits that will help them to 'deal with the situation' (Pearson and Clair, 1998), as they are more likely to accept and rely on a charismatic leader's interpretation of the crisis and believe that he can solve the issues that the country is facing (Bligh and Kohles, 2009). Hence as Tucker (1978, p.388) said the leader "who comes forward in a distressful situation and present himself or herself in a convincing way to the sufferers as one who can lead them out of their distress by virtue of special personal characteristics or formula for salvation may arouse their intense loyalty and enthusiastic willingness to take the path the leader is pointing out". Hence, the mechanism by which charismatic leaders emerge in a crisis situation is the following: crises create destruction of old institutions, and also bring uncertainty and fear about the future; in this type of institutional vacuums the incumbents are unable to provide solutions (Pappas, 2011). Then individuals whose credentials and past political achievements or other actions make them appear qualified for resolving the crisis (Shamir and Howell, 1999) are invited into power (mainly by old leaders, with the approval of the people (Pappas, 2011). Therefore it can be argued that the charismatic leader is a savior who appears in times of great distress (Pillai and Meindl, 1998) and that the "legitimacy of charisma" is based on the perceptions of the followers rather than on the actual quality of the leader (Takala, 2005).

Conger and Kanungo (1998) argue that charismatic leaders have vision, are sensitive to the environment/followers, admired, trustworthy, articulate and unconventional. Vision and trustworthiness as also perceived as being important for charismatic leaders in Avolio and Bass (1988) research study, together with the leader's ability to inspire. House (1977) argued that they have a strong need for power, high self-confidence and very strong convictions. Other behaviours that are perceived as being key for charismatic leaders are the ability to communicate high expectations, to express confidence in the ability of their followers, to articulate and appealing vision. Confidence is an important element for a charismatic leader identified by Yukl (2010) too, together with the generation of trust with the followers and integrity. The latter is perceived as being a key trait and it is established by demonstrating honesty and consistency between values and actions (Yukl, 2010). Honesty is an important trait also for Cronin (2008), who argued that people in crisis situations expect leaders to be honest, be able to lead effectively during a crisis, exercise good judgment, and remind people of their natural obligations, shared beliefs, ties and traditions. Burns (1978) argued that charisma on political leaders means that they have trais that are linked with confidence, wilful obedience, emotional investment, style-inspire trust, garner higher performance from the followers and affection for the leader. In addition, there are some researches (e.g. Shenkman, 2000; Simon, 2007; Zaccaro, 2007; Yukl, 2002) who argued that decisiveness is an extremely important trait for a leader to have during crisis situations. That is argued to be because "crises provide leaders with the opportunities to take bold purposeful action" (Pillai and Meindl, 1998, p.647). Shamir and Howell (1999) argued that aside from decisiveness, risk-taking and achievement orientation approach are also characteristics required for a leader to have under the context of a crisis. Conger (1989) is another researcher who identified risk taking as an important element of a charismatic leader, together with vision, being radical, unconventional, entrepreneurial and exemplar. Need for achievement, together with proactive behaviour and empathy are the traits that Pillai et al (2003) related with charismatic leadership. In addition, characteristics that according to Robbins (1992, p.151) differentiate charismatic leaders from non-charismatic

are "self-confidence, complete confidence in their judgement and ability, a vision, idealized role that proposes a future better than the status quo, strong convictions in that vision, willingness to take high risks and engage in self-sacrifice to achieve their vision, behaviour out of the ordinary as well as radical change taking instead of caretakers of status quo". Moreover, it is argued that leaders should have rhetoric (Bryman, 1993), be energetic (House and Howell, 1992) and creative (Shils, 1965). Based on the above it is argued that charismatic leaders present themselves as being caring, understandable, as representing 'us' as well as hope for the future (Williams et al, 2008) - something new, different and honest (Cronin, 2008).

Symbols, icons (Cronin, 2008), symbolic language, labels, slogans and metaphors (Conger, 1991) are used as communication tactics. Metaphors are perceived as being important for creating emotional connection between the leader or the topic and the followers (Mio et al, 2005). The language and imagery that they use is rooted in the shared values they want to portray (Bligh and Kohles, 2009). There are seven propositions in regard with the content of speech suggested by Shamir et al (2004). Those are: more references to collective history and to the continuity between past and present; more references to the collective and collective identity and fewer references to individual self-interest; more positive references to followers' worth and efficacy as individuals and as a collective; more references to leader's similarity to followers and identification with followers; more references to values and moral justifications, and fewer references to tangible outcomes and instrumental justifications; more references to distal goals and the distant future, and fewer references to proximal goals and the near future; more references to hope and faith (Bligh and Kohles, 2009, p. 485-486). Once achieved their goal it is claimed that charismatic leaders tend to receive high levels of trust (House et al, 1991) and personal loyalty from their followers (Williams et al, 2009). However, as it is mentioned above, the views of the traits of charismatic leaders depend on the context under which they are viewed.

The research studies that deal with leader's traits in crisis use mostly cross-sectional surveys with convenience samples and do not try to determine if the results are influenced by unmeasured situational variables (Yukl, 2010). This research study takes into account the situation and uses qualitative research in order to gain an in depth understanding of the meaning that the respondents assign to the traits under the specific context of a crisis in an effort to better understand their voting behaviour.

Based on the above discussion crisis can lead to a change in the importance of the factors that affect voting behaviour and this can lead to a switch of vote or else electoral volatility. The electoral volatility means that people decide to vote for parties other than the one they have voted for in previous elections. However, it is important to note what literature suggests that the factors that lead to electoral volatility are, the different ways of vote switching and which parts of the electorate are more inclined to switch their vote, and those that are less inclined to do so. A discussion on the voters who decide to switch their vote is made below.

2.5 Switchers and swingers

Before a deeper discussion on switching voters is made it is important to clarify the difference between switching and swinging in voting. The switching voter is the voter that decides to vote for another party other than the one that he was voting before while swing voters, according to Mayer (2007, p. 359) are those who "are not solidly committed to one candidate or the other and make all efforts of persuasion futile" or in other words a swing voter is the one that whose ballot is "up for grabs" for any of the political parties (Weghorst and Lindberg, 2013). Therefore, the main difference is that the voter that switches his vote may have been a partisan voter before or may not switch his vote again, while a swing voter is 'available' in every election for parties.

2.5.1 Switch of vote – 'Electoral volatility'

As it is seen there is a decline in partisanship during the recent decades, a trend evident even before the financial crisis occured. That has been labelled by some authors as 'electoral dealignment'. It is suggested that the reason for this is modernisation through the cognitive mobilization process that will be discussed below, the decreased salience of traditional cleavages and the transformation of the characteristics of election campaigns, has led to the concept of 'electoral dealignment' (Lachat, 2004; Franklin et al, 2009; Dalton et al, 2000). As Dalton stated "the dealignment thesis holds that party ties were generally eroding as a consequence of social and political modernization, and thus most advanced industrial societies should experience a dealignment trend" (Dalton, 2000, p. 22). It is argued that the economic growth and increase in education levels have created a more homogenized lifestyle and therefore made the separation of classes not so strong (Dalton et al, 1984; Roberts and Willberg, 1999; Bartolini and Mair, 1990).

The consequences of the phenomenon of electoral dealignment are a decline on party membership (Hoogle and Kern, 2015), a decrease in turnout (Franklin, 2004), electoral volatility, late voting decision making and split ticket voting – which means that voters support different parties in elections for different offices - (Dalton et al, 2000). All of those consequences are related to increased uncertainty from the voters' perspective regarding their final voting decision and with increased electoral volatility (switch of voter between elections) (Lachat, 2004; 2007). It is argued in many research studies that in recent years, and especially during the period of financial crisis, a larger proportion of voters decide to switch their vote from one party to another (Willocq, 2016; Bos and De Vreese, 2013).

It is claimed that the existence of moderate levels of vote switching (electoral volatility) is crucial as some fluctuation in the electorate is considered important in order to keep balance (Blondel, 1968 cited in Dejaeghere and Dassonneville, 2015). On the other hand high levels

of electoral volatility are argued to lead to a risk of instability (Mainwaring and Zocco, 2007). The first scholar that discussed electoral volatility was Pedersen in 1979. Since his work many researchers have dealt with that issue (e.g. Bartolini and Mair, 1985; Dalton, 1984; Dalton et al, 2000; Mair et al, 2004; Dassonneville and Hooghe, 2011). That is the case especially after an increase of electoral instability was identified during the decade of 00s (Mair, 2005; Dassoneville and Hooghe, 2011) and especially after the current global financial crisis (Dassonneville, 2015). However, in recent years the discussion on electoral volatility has mainly focused on the consequences that it has on party systems and politics rather than the issue of direction (Dalton et al, 2011) that is the topic of examination by this research study.

There are different types of electoral volatility, a separation that until recently has been neglected by the literature (Dassonneville, 2014). The first separation is based on the period of time that the voter uses to make his voting decision (Lachat, 2004; 2007) and it is between the so called inter and intra volatility. Inter election volatility refers to a voter who decides to switch his vote between two consecutive elections, and campaign, or else intra volatility, refers to a voter who changes his voting decision during an election campaign (Crewe, 1985; Lachat, 2004; Dassonneville, 2012; 2014). The former is argued to be based on "deep-rooted trends of structural change with altering socialization patterns, increased levels of education and silent values shifts" (Walgrave, 2009, p. 2). It is argued that both of these types of switching voters have low levels of external efficacy (Dassonneville, 2012). A second separation of switch voters is between those who switch their vote to parties belonging to the same ideological group (intra block) and those who decode to vote parties from different ideological block (inter-block) (Lachat, 2004).

There is much research on the factors that cause and explain volatility (Dassonneville and Hooghe, 2011). As explanatory volatility factors institutional and political variables are identified by different authors (Bartolini and Mair, 1990; Dalton et al, 2000; Lachat, 2007).

The above discussed economic voting is another factor regarded as affecting volatility (Roberts and Wibbels, 1999) together with socio-cultural and personal variables (Dalton et al, 2000; Lachat, 2007). In addition there are various identified trends by many authors that can lead to switch of vote (Dalton et al, 1984; Dalton and Wattenberg, 2000; Schnell and Kohler, 1995) which relate to "sociocultural basis of traditional political cleavages, the emergence of new political issues and of new values and a weakening of the relationship between parties and citizens" (Lachat, 2004, p. 1).

In regard to the institutional and political variables considered as linked with electoral volatility Dalton et al (2011) distinguished them in terms of three groups: the party system, the electoral system and the political system. Regarding the first one, it is argued that the amount of parties that exist within a political system affects electoral volatility. Specifically it is claimed that the more options a voter has, the more he will be inclined to switch his vote (Bartolini and Mair, 1990; Tavits, 2005; Dassonneville et al, 2015). That is because as the number of parties grow, the average distance between the parties becomes smaller and the ability of voters to distinguish themselves from others in terms of ideology and programme decreases (Dejaeghere and Dassonneville, 2015; Tavits, 2005). Therefore, it becomes easier for voters to switch their vote to another party that is ideologically close to the one they have voted for in the previous elections (Pedersen, 1983 cited in Epperly, 2011; Dejaeghere and Dassonneville, 2015).

In addition, polarization in the political system is argued to be another element that can lead to switch of voting (Roberts and Wibbels, 1999; Dejaeghere and Dassonneville, 2015).

There are research studies which argued that high polarization makes the switch of vote less likely (Hazan, 1997) as "in highly polarized systems, parties are more likely to be organized around specific cleavages that are the basis of polarization itself" (Mair, 1995). On the other hand other studies argued that polarization of the party system increases the likelihood that voters switch their vote between elections (Dejaeghere and Dassonneville, 2015). Moreover,

when the turnout in an election is high also non-partisan voters are expected to participate in the elections. On the other hand in elections with low turnout only the strong partisans are expected to participate and therefore volatility will be low (Birch, 1993). In regard with the electoral and political system, more proportional systems tend to be more volatile as they are more open to entry of new parties (and therefore provide more options to the voter) (Bartolini and Mair, 1990). Furthermore, it is claimed that the longer the period between two consecutive elections electoral volatility increases and the voters have more time to decide to switch to another party (Birch, 1993; Bischoff, 2013).

As it is mentioned above the level of electoral volatility is linked with economy by many studies (Roberts and Wibbels, 1999). When the economy is not going well (either on a personal or national level), then voters tend to punish the incumbent party and to vote it out of office and it is linked with emotions created by the decrease in income (Chalari, 2012). On the other hand when the performance of the country's economy is better, then lower volatility should be expected as voters will prefer to maintain the status quo (Roberts and Wibbels, 1999 cited in Dassoneville and Hooghes, 2011). That means that voters tend to reward or punish the incumbent party on the basis of the economic performance (Lewis-Beck, 2012). That is the definition of economic voting theory and one of the main reasons for switching a vote during a financial crisis, as voters become dissatisfied with the performance of the incumbent party (Duch and Sagarzazu, 2014; Stubager, 2011; Scotto, 2012; Lewis-Beck et al, 2012; Williams et al, 2009). Zelle (1992) has described the voters who decide to punish a government based on the latter's performance as 'frustrated floating voters' and links a switch of vote with expressions of a protest mood. By switching vote the dissatisfied voter sends a signal to the previously voted party not only by punishing it but also by strengthening its competitors (Kselam and Niou, 2010 cited in Dassonneville et al, 2015). It is argued that the relationship between downturn in the economy and punishment by a switch of vote is stronger than that of economic development and reward (Roberts and Wibbels, 1999).

Frustration is also linked by Zelle (1995) with the trust that voters show not only in political parties but the political system in general too. As he said, floating voters are "somewhat less satisfied with the political system, less trusting in parties and less happy about their favourite party" (Zelle, 1995, p. 340). Nevertheless, most researchers separate the dissatisfaction towards political parties and the political system as the former does not necessarily lead to the latter (Soderlund, 2008). That means that there might be a switch of vote because of frustration on the performance of the incumbent party without the voter being dissatisfied with the political system (Dassonneville, 2015; Dassonneville et al, 2015). If a voter is dissatisfied with both the parties and the political system then it is argued that abstention is more probable than a switch of vote (Dassonneville et al, 2015).

There are some research studies that argued that the economic effect on switch of voting is limited (Mainwaring and Zoco, 2007 cited in Dassonneville and Hooghe, 2015). However, the financial crisis that started in 2008 has heavily impacted voters. Hence it has led to a further shrink of partisanship (Kayser and Wlezien, 2011). Therefore, a strong link between frustration on economic downturn, and therefore emotions generated by it, and switch of vote can be found at this period of time (Dassonneville and Hooghe, 2015). Frustration however is not the only reason for economic voting. Voters can switch their vote because they want a policy change (Tavits, 2005), or the condition of the economy can make voters switch their vote to new and emerging parties which offer an alternative route (Roberts and Wibbels, 1999; Dassonneville and Hooghe, 2015). No matter the reason though, and based on the above, when there are many parties in the political system and a large proportion of the electorate is dissatisfied by the government performance the levels of switch voting is greater (Sanz, 2011; Dassonneville et al, 2015). Another type of voting may also be responsible for electoral volatility: The strategic or tactical voting (Willocq, 2016). This happens when voters vote for a party that is not their favourite choice in order to influence the outcome of an election and prevent their least-liked party of winning (Blais et al, 2001).

As Catt (1996, p. 46) says "a tactical vote is cast for a party that is your second (or third of fourth) preference, because you think they have the chance of defeating a strongly disliked party".

Regarding the socio-cultural and personal factors that can have an impact on electoral volatility it is argued that age is important as younger voters are more likely to switch their vote (Zelle, 1995; Lachat, 2004; Walgrave, 2009). That is because, as mentioned above, as people grow older they tend to stabilize their political attitudes (Alwin and Krosnick, 1991) and therefore be more loyal to political parties. Moreover, occupation also appears to be another important determinant of electoral volatility as unemployed voters have higher probabilities of switching their vote (Roberts and Wibbels, 1999). Another personal factor that can be determinant of a voting switch is the voter's ideological profile (Willocq, 2016). It is argued that ideological extremism reduces the probability of a switch of vote as those voters tend to have high partisan attachments (Dassoneville, 2012; Van Der Meer et al, 2015). On the other hand voters with a moderate ideology (who do not have party affiliation) are more inclined to switch their vote especially when, as it is mentioned above, there are many political parties to choose from ((Dassoneville, 2012; Lisi, 2010; Van Der Meer et al, 2015).

A personal factor considered as having crucial importance on the switch of vote is the level of the voter's political sophistication (Lachat, 2004; Willocq, 2016; Dassonneville and Dejaeghere, 2014; Dassonneville and Hooghe, 2014). Zeller (1992, p. 21) has argued that "political awareness denotes intellectual or cognitive engagement with public affairs as against emotional or affective engagement or no engagement at all". The main question is whether it was high or low sophistication that leads to switch of vote (Dassonneville and Hoogle, 2014). The view of the researchers supporting the Columbian model of voting behaviour was that the 'floating voters' had a lack of political information and little interest in politics (Dassoneville, 2014; Willocq, 2016). As Berelson (1963, p.20) said "stability in vote is

characteristic of those interested in politics and instability of those not particularly interested". Based on that, changes in the election results and the positions of the parties were driven by the less politically sophisticated voters (Dassonneville, 2014). With that agree many studies, which have also been discussed above and which show that party affiliated voters are more informed about politics and have a higher interest in it (Albright, 2009). However, on the other hand there were researchers (after the decade of 1980s) who have questioned that by arguing the current electorate (both in the US and Europe) has changed and it was not the same as some decades ago (Dalton, 2012; Dassonneville, 2014). Those researchers claim that voters nowadays have higher education level and the cost of information is much lower than in the 1950s (Dalton and Wahler, 2003). This is the so called the 'cognitive mobilization process'. That concept means that "citizens possess the level of political skills and resources necessary to become self-sufficient in politics" (Dalton, 1988, p. 18). Therefore, the theory suggests the emergence of a growing group of sophisticated voters who decide who to vote for independently and who use factors such as issues, candidates and past performances in order to decide their vote (Willocq, 2016). As it is seen, while the traditional Columbian perspective of switching voters is that they are apathetic, the cognitive mobilization theory sees them as more rational ones (Willocq, 2016). An increase in education levels in combination with the decreased costs on receiving political information has led to this development (Dalton, 1984). That caused partisanship to weaken (Dassonneville, 2014) and leads to unpredictable election results, "larger seat change in the parliament than was in the past and the rise of new parties" (Dassonneville, 2012, p.2).

It is argued that voters have differences based on their levels of political sophistication. Voters having high levels of political sophistication tend to vote for a party with a similar ideology (intra-block). Therefore, the higher the voter's level of political sophistication, the more ideologically constrained the choice of vote (Dassonneville and Dejaeghere, 2014). It is argued that voters having low and high political sophistication differ also on the time when they decide to switch their vote. For the first group this occurs during the election campaign,

while the latter is more likely to make the decision before the campaigning begins (Budge et al, 2010). It is argued in literature that this type of voter tends to be different from the traditional partisan ones in two aspects. Firstly they tend to base their voting choice on political issues and secondly they have a higher level of variability in their partisan preferences and hence to switch their vote from one election to the next (Lachat, 2004). There are research studies which support that the idea that the more sophisticated voters are more volatile than the voters with low political sophistication (Dalton, 2007). However, there are other research studies that argue the probability of switching votes is higher among voters with moderate level of political sophistication (Dassonneville and Dejaeghere, 2014; Lachat, 2007; Van Der Meer et al, 2015).

2.5.2 Age and switch of vote

As it is seen age is a personal factor that can have an impact on electoral volatility with older voters having less probability of switching their vote (Zelle, 1995; Lachat, 2004; Walgrave, 2009) for reasons that are mentioned above. It is important then to discuss the reasons that make people of an older age switch their vote in cases. In other words since it is more difficult for older people to change their vote it is important to explore what can influence this switching behaviour to another party when this occurs. This research will attempt to understand the reasons as it is something that it is neglected by the existing literature which is mostly focused on the younger generations. Since each election is different, the context under which this switch has been made is important and needs to be taken into account as Lyons and Linek (2010) suggested. For the purpose of this study the researcher focuses on the country of Greece, this is because this country has all the 'ingredients' needed. It is under the context of crisis and a big switch of vote has occurred in the last two general elections where a party and its leader have emerged. In addition, older people were among those that have switched their vote.

2.6 Voting behaviour in Greece

As it is mentioned above there are many factors that can affect the behaviour of voters. Two of the most important ones in Greece are the influence of family and that of age. That is mostly based, as it is discussed below, on the effect that the periods in which the cohorts lived.

2.6.1 Family influence on voting behaviour: Greece

In Greece, the parents of those aged 53 and above had first-hand experience of the Civil War and of the period prior to junta (Dimitras, 1990). With t WWII and the civil war that followed it past, the right wing parties that were in government, the decades of 1950 and 1960 denied the Greekness to many Greeks because of their left political origins and alleged involvement with the Communist side in the Civil War (Diamantopoulos, 1991 cited in Kalyvas, 1997). Those periods have enhanced a right – left cleavage that lasted at least since 1936 and the period of Ioannis Metaxas, if not taken back to the period of the Balkan wars and the cleavage between liberals and right political poles. (This cleavage is also called 'national schism', started in 1915 and is about the conflict between the then Prime Minister, Eleytherios Venizelos, and the King of Greece, Konstantinos I (Kalyvas, 1997). The conflict was based on the different opinions held by the two men on the position of Greece in WWI with the King wanting to be responsible for the foreign policy of the country (Nikitidis, 1992)). It is important to mention that the right –left cleavage of Greek politics is not based on classes (Tsoucalas, 1987 cited in Kalyvas, 1997). Class has never been a predictor of voting behaviour in the country (Pappas, 1999) because Greece has a small industrial base and therefore a small industrial class (Tsoukalas, 1987 cited in Kalyvas, 1997). The polarization and the right-left cleavage was based on "conflicting collective identities, deeply anchored in past conflicts" (Kalyvas, 1997, p. 98-99). All of the above mentioned events have shaped strong collective political identities to people and a sense of belongingness to 'political

camps' (Kalyvas, 1997). The influence that these events had on their parents of the vote of those aged 53 years old and above who switched their vote during the financial crisis is unclear, and it is something that this research study aims to explore.

2.6.2 Age: living under the junta and the effect on voting behaviour

There are two historical events that can be argued as having an influence on older voters because of their age. Two years before the junta came to power (1965) it was the time when the traditional Greek cleavage (public versus monarchy) has awakened. What has awakened the 'national schism' in 1965 was a clash between the King Konstantinos II and the Prime Minister George Papandreou, mainly on who was going to have the 'upper hand' in the armed forces. That led to a political crisis, which led the electorate of Centre Union (the governmental coalition) to develop anti-right and anti-monarch feelings, as they were seeing the palace as blocking the centre from getting power (Kalyvas, 1997). The second historical event, which followed the first one, is the period of the junta government (1967-1974) and the fall of it after the national tragedy of Cyprus occurred (Turkish invasion and occupation of 1/3 of the island). This fact, in combination with the realisation that the dictators followed the corrupted nature of the politicians and that the economy was in crisis made the junta a scapegoat and therefore everything it stood for was guestioned, critiqued and attacked (Dimitras, 1990). Hence, it is argued that the period of junta has played a role on the future behaviour of the young generation of that time (Dimitras, 1990). Anticommunism, a dominant view after the civil war (1945-1949) was not accepted anymore, commitment to the Western Alliance (which helped the junta come and stay to power) was challenged, the armed forces lost their post war heroic status, capitalism and private enterprise became forbidden thoughts (Loulis, 1986). A new attitude was on the rise, mostly popular among the young generation (those that 'matured' politically after 1967 or at most after 1960). This was an anti-traditional, anti-capitalist, anti-western, anti-right attitude (Dimitras, 1990). It is evident that the event of dictatorship was crucial, especially for the

young generation of the time, and created left-wing values to them (Dimitras, 1990). Those voters are now aged above 53 years old. These events might be of importance in understanding the switch in vote.

2.6.3 Age and the period effect of Metapolitefsi

The period between the restoration of democracy, in 1974 and the recent financial crisis was characterised by polarization, especially until 1985 (Kalyvas, 1997) and by clientelistic practices until the crisis hit the door of the country (Teperoglou and Tsatsanis, 2013). This is the period in which most Greeks have lived most of their adult lives and it was the period of PASOK (PanHellenic Socialistic Movement) dominance. The PASOK party was created in 1974 by Andreas Papandreou, the son of the last prime minister before the dictatorship and gained power in 1981 and ruled the country for 22 years (1981-1989, 1993-2004, and 2009-2011). The party is argued to be at its genesis a radical socialist formation (Nikolakakis, 2013), mixture of Keynesian reformism and populist radicalism (Spourdalakis, 2013). Despite the moderated political strategy that followed when in government (Tsebelis, 1984), PASOK preferred polarization, a type of party system "with features such as ideological extremism, lack of compromise, and "politics of outbidding", where parties "overpromise" in order to bid support away from each other" (Kalyvas, 1997, p. 85). New Democracy followed on from polarization and the political life in Greece had (again) been divided into two fields. PASOK claimed that New Democracy was "authoritarian", supported the oligarchy and foreign interests. They considered New Democracy as the 'old', the 'past' that had to be thrown in the "dustbin of history", while the leader of PASOK talked about the regeneration of the left (Kalyvas, 1997). As it can be seen for PASOK the enemies were the 'privileged' and the 'establishment'. On the other hand New Democracy argued that PASOK was trying to undermine the democratic regime and was calling the government 'the junta of PASOK' (Kalyvas, 1997). Despite the polarized political climate it is claimed that the post dictatorship period, democracy was characterized by economic growth, with the middle class of the

country seeing an increase in their economic and social power (Tsekeris et al, 2015). Since the mid-1990s Greece's economy has been growing at very good rates (4.5% per year) having only Ireland surpassing it, from the countries of the European Union. By the year 2000 the inflation rate was down and budget deficit was within the limits of Maastricht (from double digits in the 1980s). In addition by the same year Greece was a net capital exporter focusing on the sectors of banking, energy and telecommunications. Moreover, a slow but steady shift to green energy and modern technologies was evident. Unemployment rates were in decline; a business class was developing with the levels of wealth to increase exponetially (Monastiriotis et al, 2013). The period between the dictatorship and the financial crisis crisis is the period that the sample of this study has lived its adult life in Greece. Hence, according to the period effect theory is argued to have an impact on their voting behaviour. How the political, social, economic history has informed voting decision making amongst those that have experienced these events is unclear. To explore voters that have experienced these events, realistically they will need to be above the age of 53, which is the youngest age that has first-hand experience of them.

2.6.4 Clientelism and voting behaviour

It is argued that clientelistic practices were existent among Greeks even before the dictatorship (Kalyvas, 1997). As Lefeber (1990, p. 36) argued, when PASOK was elected to the government a 'problem' they inherited was the Greeks themselves. He describes them as having "strong sense of ethnic belonging, and a loyalty to some abstract concept of 'Greekness', which also permeates the diaspora. Nonetheless, in their daily existence they seem to be guided by an individualism that dominates social concern. And even though the Greeks in their private dealings are as honorable as any other people, when it comes to citizenship, be it citizen's obligation to the state or public service, relations are often corrupt". Clientelism, a characteristic of the Greek political system (Koliopoulos, 1997; Mouzelis, 1996; Lyrintzis, 1987) was used by politicians to win the votes of people. That has led to a

'dynasty factor' with many politicians being relatives of older politicians (Alexandrou, 2007). For example the name Varvitsiotis has been in the Greek parliament for more than 100 years while the elections of 2015 stopped the presence of the name Papandreou in the Greek parliament after 92 years (mixanitouxronou.gr)

Clientelism is called the situation where individual micro-motives, party centreed political interests defined as a "social network of patronage, self-servicing dealings and protective client-oriented relationships, reflexivity led to social inertia, institutional suffering and counterproductive macro-behaviours (e.g. populism, cynicism, corruption, bureaucratic client state, informal economy)" (Tsekeris et al, 2015, p. 5). This means official authorization of unfair and illegal practices including under-qualified public sector appointments (Xenakis and Cheliotis, 2015). Clientelism is linked by Greeks with the word volema (meaning to get into to remain in a position that works exclusively for one's own personal benefit without considering others) (Tsekeris et al, 2015). It is a practice that appears more in less developed countries (Linz, 1990). There, the party in power controls the majority of the "economic activity and the networks within which public resources can be privatizes and channelled in exchange for political support" (Lindberg and Weghorst, 2010). There are a number of researchers that attribute clientelism to poverty. That means that the short-term benefit takes priority over the long term policy changes that can solve problems, as the latter are subject to other conditions and therefore there is uncertainty of the final result (Stokes, 2005). Clientelism is perceived as a strategy by politicians to gain repute which they may otherwise lack (Lindbeck and Weibull, 1987).

However, and despite the fact that PASOK inherited the problem of clientelism, when the party came into government in 1981, instead of changing the inherited practices embedded itself into the old clientelism of the Greek state (Spourdalakis, 1988). It is characteristic that when PASOK came to power, state activities expanded greatly mainly because of the influx of European Union (then EEC) subsidies that followed the adhesion of Greece. PASOK did

not only embed itself to old clientelism. It exceled it. It "continued, developed, formalized, systematized and rationalized existing clientelistic practices under a system of 'bureaucratic clientelism', achieving an unprecedented degree of control over the state bureaucracy" (Papadopoulos, 1989, p. 65). For example, public expenditure in the period 1982-1988 increased by 40%. Another example is the increase of the payroll of the wider public sector from 500,000 in 1980 to 900,000 employees in 1989 (Kalyvas, 1997). A last example is that the 89% of the members of PASOK who joined the party after 1981 – 70% of the total members – were public sector employees in 1986 (Pridham and Verney, 1991). Clientelism was a very common practice of PASOK in order to gain voters. That new model of gaining votes was followed by New Democracy. Therefore clientelism as a phenomenon which dominated political life during the period of Metapolitefsi (Tsekeris et al, 2015) and civic responsibility was not developed by Greeks (Lebefer, 1990). This modernised version of a clientelistic system was based on the two parallel political blocks, the left and the right one and was based more on the personal level (Teperoglou and Tsatsanis, 2014). To that the open list electoral system that Greece has helped voters as they could choose between candidates for MPs from the party they have decide to vote for and clientelism helped with this.

The clientelism practises of that period were focused on public sector and a clientelistic relationship between the parties and the voters, either individually or as professional groups and unions (Malkoutzis, 2012). In addition to offering work positions in the public sector social benefits and public procurements grew steadily since PASOK came into power in 1981 and they formed the basis for interaction between politicians and the public. New Democracy followed this practice too. Legislative interventions (the goal of which was to favour specific groups) increased this relationship. This has benefited many professions who gained income by doing work with the public sector (Malkoutzis, 2012). That has made Theodoros Pagkalos (2010 Greece's Deputy Prime Minister) to say 'we ate it all together'. He used this statement to highlight all levels of Greek society benefited from clientelism,

party corruption and tax evasion (Xenakis and Cheliotis, 2015), as it was a common element of Greek politicians' campaign strategies.

The two parties were trying to win votes through direct exchange in the voters' economic status and their professional advancement (Teperoglou and Tsatsanis, 2014). The swing of power between those two parties allowed the establishment of a bureaucratic state. In every election the winning party was appointing loyal voters to the public sector before (if it was the incumbent) and after (if it was the winning party) (Teperoglou and Tsatsanis, 2014). Based on the above, it is not a surprise that until 2009 the incumbent party was expected to offer to its supporters job openings (long term, fixed term or project based ones) (Teperoglou and Tsatsanis, 2014).

Markaki and Apospori (2008, p.3) describe well the situation in Greece prior to the years of crisis by saying that the bureaucratic system of the Greek state "combined with clientelistic relationships between the state and the citizens, turned political elections – national as well as local – to political parties' tools to manipulate people's choices to a large extent. This means that voters formed and used their voting choices according to the possibility that political parties gave them to satisfy personal needs such as employment in the public or private sector, good health care or better education for their children. Until recently most of the Greek voters used to make their choices not on the basis of what is good for the society in general, but on the basis of what they believed was good for them personally and on the basis of their family's political tradition".

2.6.5 The results of clientelism

Seeing clientelism from a voter's perspective Lygeros argued that voters were willing to "turn a blind eye to corruption in the public sector and broader inefficiencies, such as tax evasion, in the private sector as long as the politicians responsible rewarded them with civil service

jobs, public procurement contracts or social benefits or by leaving alone the profitable enclaves created by some professional groups" (cited in Malkoutzis, 2012, p. 4). Taking into account the constitutional constraints on the removal of existing civic servants, it is not surprising that the practice of clientelism has led to a large and inefficient public sector (Teperoglou and Tsatsanis, 2014) and systemic resistance from organized interest groups (Kalyvas et al, 2012) which have made Greece particularly exposed to the financial crisis. The following table (2.1) illustrates the evolution of the number of public sector employees from 1974 until the agreement of the first memorandum (2010). Painted in green letters are the years that the elections are won from PASOK and in blue those that elections are won form the party of New Democracy.

Table 2-1 - The evolution of public sector employees (1974-2010)

Year	Public Sector employees (N)	Year	Public Sector employees (N)
1974	112,896	1993	255,113
1975	114,950	1994	247,746
1976	118,935	1995	256,466
1977	126,722	1996	260,063
1978	129,071	1997	293,281
1979	133,980	1998	300,509
1980	139,966	1999	386,144
1981	121,789	2000	245,702
1982	208,531	2001	450,259
1983	217,666	2002	453,269
1984	221,396	2003	456,462
1985	233,654	2004	447,520
1986	238,276	2005	477,286

1987	241,455	2006	486,580
1988	240,748	2007	503,170
1989	262,560	2008	506,680
1990	255,438	2009	511,913
1991	259,159	2010	768,009
1992	243,911		

2.6.6 From clientelism to crisis

The PASOK party won the snap elections of September 2nd 2009 with 43.9% of the total vote (Nezi, 2012) which gave the party a majority of 10 seats in the parliament (160/300 seats). Weeks later Greece for first time made the world headlines. The newly elected government estimated the public deficit and found it to be 15.6% instead of 3.7% that the previous government (ND - Kostas Karamanlis) had announced (Nezi, 2012). Also, the public debt appeared to be 129.4% of the country's GDP compared to the 99.6% that was publically known (Matsaganis, 2013). At the same time, the weak Greek economy could not devaluate the currency in order to compensate, as it is a member of the Eurozone. All of the above led to extremely high interest rates (10%) due to the country's low ranking by the rating agencies (Matsaganis, 2013). Therefore, the cost of borrowing became prohibitive and the fiscal crisis of the country turned into a sovereign debt crisis, which soon turned into a recession (Matsaganis, 2013). The performance of the Greek economy was in such bad shape that a bailout programme accompanied by austerity measures could not have been avoided (Matsaganis, 2013). Hence, the context which was used by parties to influence the voting behaviour of voters did not exist anymore and was replaced by another one, that of crisis and of an environment dominated by austerity measures and the discussed impact that those had to people. Nobody was surprised when in Many 2010 George Papandreou asked for financial assistance from the Eurozone partners and the IMF. The cost that Greece would pay in the next few years for the implementation of austerity measures would be high

(Spyropoulou, 2013). The first Memorandum of Agreement between the government of PASOK and Troika (European Central Bank (ECB), European Commission (EC) and International Monetary Fund (IMF)) was passed by the Greek parliament on May 5th 2010. The parties that voted in favour of it were the governmental party of PASOK and the extreme right party of LAOS, with New Democracy opposing it. It can be argued that the new PASOK government decided, or were forced to decide, provide realistic solution to the crisis something that, as it will be also discussed later, comes in conflict with the clientelistic practices that the party used to follow in order to gain votes. On the other hand New Democracy did not follow that road at the beginning and opposed the memorandum. That was the beginning of the establishment of the anti-Memorandum camp (Spyropoulou, 2013).

The Papandreou government was short lived. It resigned in November of 2011 and a coalition government was formed between PASOK, New Democracy and the extreme right party of LAOS Lukas Papademos, the ex-vice chairman of ECB served as Prime Minister (Spyropoulou, 2013). It was the first coalition government as since 1974 Greece had been governed by single party governments (Matakos and Xefteris, 2013) (with the only exception being the short lived coalition government of 1989). The decision of New Democracy to participate in the coalition government, and therefore the abandonment of the previous antimemorandum strategy they had followed, made many voters find little separation between the two main parties (Malkoutzis, 2012). The government of Papademos came to a second bailout agreement in February 2012. Seven months after Papademos came into office the elections of May 2012 were announced. Those were the beginning of the end of the era that started with the fall of the junta and was called 'Metapolitefsi' (Dimitrakopoulos, 2012).

2.6.7 Financial crisis and the impact on income

As it is discussed above, in order for Greece to respond to the financial crisis it was forced into cuts in state expenditure and bailout programmes (Bellucci, et al 2012). Therefore the

crisis had an impact on the income of the citizens (Sanchez Vitores, 2013). The majority of people in Greece have suffered from it. That was especially true for the middle classes (Tsekeris et al. 2015). The outcomes of the measures taken to the economy were severe in economic and social terms, comparable only to the 1929 recession in the United States (Stavrakakis, 2015). For example, 10% of the Greek population received food from charities (Spourdalakis, 2013). The Church of Greece fed up to 250,000 people every day (Malkoutzis, 2012). Moreover, 60% of the population have drastically cut their food budgets, the number of homeless people doubled in Athens (Spourdalakis, 2013), while the number of homeless people in the country as a whole saw an increase of 25%. Almost 1 out of 3 Greeks was living below the poverty line (30%) (Spourdalakis, 2013) and it is argued that as the recession deepens the rise of inequality rates became bigger (Matsaganis, 2013). This can mean for those people that have experienced decades of Greek politics it is likely they have children or relatives suffering. However, no literature currently explores this. Families that are in poverty usually receive help from relatives and friends, sell assets, spend past savings or go into debt (Matsaganis, 2013). Moreover, suicides rose by 40% in a country with the lowest suicide rate in Europe (Malkoutzis, 2012). One of the main characteristic outcomes of a crisis is an increase in unemployment (Chalari, 2014). The unemployment rate in April 2012 reached 26.9% (Eurostat, 2013) with youth unemployment reaching 60% (Stavrakakis, 2015). In actual numbers, by the end of 2013 the private sector employment in Greece, including self-employed, has fell to 2.78 million compared to 3.74 million at the beginning of the crisis (HELSTAT, 2013). That means almost one million extra people were unemployed in the private sector in 5 years, in a country of 11 million people (Global Economics, 2015). Since unemployment rates are not expected to drop in the foreseeable future, the new phenomenon in Greek families is jobless households (Matsaganis, 2013). The basic salary has dropped from 780 to 562 euros, the average pension to 425 euros per calendar month and VAT has increased from 17% to 23% (Chalari, 2014), - and to 24% from July 2016 (Nikas and Hatzinikolaou, 2016). Pensions have seen an average decrease by 38% since 2009 (Shuster, 2015). Another consequence of the crisis is net emigration per

1,000 inhabitants increased by 23.5 times from 0.2 to 4.7, with 10% of university graduates having migrated (Chalari, 2014). Moreover, each winter brings an increase of deaths from fire and respiratory diseases because people burn woods instead of oil to heat their homes (as the former is a cheaper option) (Trilling, 2015). At the end Greece still had to pay an outstanding debt of 317.5billion euros (Global Economics, 2015).

2.6.8 Impacts of financial crisis on emotions

Asside from the impact that financial crises have on economic and social life of people (Turcu and Chaytor, 2015), they also cause emotions to emerge (Chalari, 2014). Tsoukalis (2013, p. 36-37) argued that in Greece the pain of people felt from crisis "has been much stronger than initially anticipated, the suffering has lasted longer and the fairness of its distribution has left much to be desired. As income kept falling and more jobs were cut, fewer Greeks continues to believe (or hope) that the particular therapy could cure them. They tended to see themselves as guinea pigs in a nasty experiment". As a result the common emotions amongst Greeks are perceived to be those of: "disappointment, pessimism, insecurity, fear, anger, despair, depression, anxiety, dissatisfaction and lack of trust about the present situation and fear insecurity and uncertainty about the future" (Chalari, 2014, p. 105).

The election outcomes while those emotions were high were nothing like anything the voters had seen in their lives before. In the elections that took place under the context of crisis (May 2012, June 2012, January 2015 and September 2015) a deep switch of vote occurred and that changed the political system as it was known until then (Spyropoulou, 2013). The elections of May 2012, in particular, were described as the most volatile elections in a European democracy (Megalhaes, 2014). Behind this deep switch of vote on Greek voters, it is argued that among others (e.g. decline of satisfaction with democracy and trust in parliament and a sharp divide between people regarding their views on the austerity

programme) there is also a decline in party identification, (Teperoglou and Tsatsanis, 2014). This is more than evident when considering that the two traditional main parties (PASOK and New Democracy) were receiving from 1981 to 2009 elections a cumulative percentage of voting of above 80%. In crisis elections their percentage is close to 35%. On the other hand the party of SYRIZA grew its percentage from 4% in 2009 to 36% in both the 2015 elections and the neo-Nazi party of Golden Dawn gathered a steady 7% from less than 1% in 2009. The way that the Greek financial crisis has influenced the partisanship of voters and made them switch their vote remains unclear and will be explored by this research study.

The consequences of the austerity measures were so severe that governing parties could not promise 'better days' to people and it is claimed that voters turned their back to the two main parties due to the austerity measures they had to implement, they could not uphold their end of the game of political clientelism (Mylonas and Georgakellos, 2012). The measures the PASOK government were forced to take included cuts in public spending and therefore a halt on the appointments based on clientelism (Sotiropoulos, 2012). Teperoglou and Tsatsanis (2014, p.6) argued that "this failure broke faith with the 'clientelist social contract' that had legitimized and reproduced two-party rule in modern democratic Greece since its foundation and led to a fracturing of the duopoly". As Stavros Lygeros says, crisis has shattered the social contract between politicians and voters. Hence, politicians did not have any more their traditional tools for making policies (Malkoutzis, 2012). On the other hand Spourdalakis (2013, p.106) argued that although people already knew about the deep involvement of politicians in corruption cases, the reason for them 'turning their back' on politicians is because "they now saw them as undermining basic national dignity by acceding to the destructive conditions of the Memoranda and elevating the task force committee (the 'Troika') to the status of the real government". Therefore, it can be argued that the two main political parties used clientelistic practices to gain the vote of voters which brought Greece into crisis. Due to the crisis they were forced to implement measures that were coming against the practices upon which they used in order to win the votes of the electorate.

Therefore, it can be argued that the success of SYRIZA and Alexis Tsipras is heavily based on the political bankruptcy of the two main parties of Greece, PASOK and New Democracy (Tamvaklis, 2013; Spourdalakis, 2013). It is unclear what effect clientelistic practices had on switch voters' perceptions that then affected their voting behaviour. This will be explored in this research study. What will be discussed in the last part of literature review is the party of SYRIZA and its positioning, in order to gain a better understanding of what this party stood for in the 2012 and 2015 elections and therefore on how it tried to impact the voting behaviour of the Greek electorate.

2.7 Where SYRIZA came from

In order to understand the positioning of SYRIZA, and therefore the way it tried to gain the votes of the electorate it is important to take its story from the beginning. The important year for what we now know as SYRIZA is 1968. While junta was celebrating its first year, the Soviets invaded Czechoslovakia. This action resulted in a crisis of the, illegal then, KKE (Communistic party) and the creation of KKE Essoterikou (Interior KKE) (Nikolakakis, 2013) as happened to many western countries. That is how Eurocommunism was created (Dunphy, 2004). The Eurocommunist parties accepted liberal democratic values, which led to the 'third way' between Stalinism and social democracy (Nikolakakis, 2013). The name of the KKE Essoterikou was changed in 1986 to Greek Left (EA). That is argued to be because the policies of PASOK had started to be closer to the centre which left more space on the left side of the political spectrum (Moschonas, 2001). Then the Greek Left wanted to position itself as a post-communist formation able to represent voters from the both of communism and social democracy (Nikolakakis, 2013). In 1988 Greek Left and KKE formed a coalition under the name of Synaspismos (Coalition). However, in 1992 this coalition was no longer existent and Synaspismos became an autonomous political formation representing postcommunism (Nikolakakis, 2013). That is because Aleka Papariga, an orthodox Marxist-Leninist, was elected as secretary of the party of KKE. The leader of the new formation of

Synaspismos was Maria Damanaki, a woman who played protagonist role at the night of 17th November 1973 and the rise of the students at the Polytechnic school against the junta. However, Synaspismos did not manage to pass the 3% threshold in the elections of October 1993 (2.94% of the total votes). That led to the resignation of Damanaki and the election of Constantopoulos who managed to maintain a low but stable vote share for a decade (Nikolakakis, 2013). The metastrophe of PASOK from a radical left to a centre left party was much more evident in 1996, where under the leadership of Kostas Simitis PASOK had adopted a much more modernized orientation, similar to the one of Tony Blair's 'New Labour' (Spourdalakis, 2013), a positioning closer to the centre and away from its radical past. That has led to a number of leftist organisations and independent activists to explore their possibilities of cooperation between them in 2000 (Eleftheriou, 2009) and filling the gap in the left side of the political continuum.

2.7.1 The birth of SYRIZA

By 2003, the year that Synaspismos changed its formal name from Coalition of Left and Progress to Coalition of the Left of Movements and Ecology, the aforementioned initiative was prospering (Mpalafas, 2012). In January 2004, the Coalition of the Radical Left (SYRIZA) was born. In the 2004 general elections SYRIZA gained 3.26% of the vote (Hellenic Ministry of Interior, 2004) with all the MPs coming from the biggest party of the coalition, from Synaspismos. In December 2004 the congress of SYRIZA elected a new leader, Alekos Alavanos who was supported by the Left Platform, a radical fraction of SYRIZA (Mpalafas, 2012) (this is the fraction that separated from SYRIZA in September of 2015 prior to the elections, disagreeing with the signage of the new (third) memorandum). In 2007 Alavanos introduced the idea of promoting young members to key positions within the party (Mpalafas, 2012). In 2008 Alexis Tsipras was elected leader of Synaspismos, the biggest part of SYRIZA at the very young age of 34 for a Greek politician. Prior to that he

was candidate for mayor of Athens in 2006 just four years after graduating from university where he was a member of the youth of the Communistic Party.

In the elections of 2009 SYRIZA received the 4.7% of the vote, which was considered a failure. Before that election Alavanos had withdrawn his support for Tsipras and the SYRIZA coalition (Tsatsis, 2009). As a result, Tsipras, who was elected in the parliament, became the leader of the parliamentary group of SYRIZA. In 2010 (a month after the Papandreou government signed the first memorandum) the congress of Synaspismos was held. The stance against the austerity policies divided Synaspismos (Nikolakakis, 2013). Tsipras was against the policies while his main opponent Kouvelis had a more moderate stance. The majority of the congressmen supported Tsipras and that made Kouvelis (who had been defeated by Tsipras in the 2008 race for leadership of Synaspismos) to decide to form a new party, closer to the centre-left than SYRIZA, the Democratic Left (DEMAR) and positioning the party as the 'Responsible Left'. This movement was made in order to replace PASOK in that part of the political spectrum (Spourdalakis, 2013). Therefore, it could be argued that the congress of SYRIZA had decided at that time to keep a radical position. The impact of this position to the decision making of switch voters is unclear.

2.7.2 SYRIZA and 'gain vote' strategy

SYRIZA as a coalition stands in the Marxist theoretical tradition, but it also has roots in social movements (Perry, 2015). It is argued to be a "hybrid party, a synthesis party, with one foot in the tradition of the Greek Communist movement and its other foot in the novel form of radicalism that have emerged in this new period" (Kouvelakis and Budgen, 2015). Therefore, the members of SYRIZA included activists who have Leninist background, with experience in organizing (Spourdalakis, 2013). Moreover, the party's decision to be energetically involved to the activities of social movements brought to it social movement activists who offered their field of experience (Spourdalakis, 2013). Therefore, it can be argued that the two pillars of

the SYRIZA party appealed to different types of voters. The latter, the activists of SYRIZA, have been present in every movement during the Memoranda period, or even before that, however without using party banners in those movements (Spourdalakis, 2013). Hence, the party is strongly related to the social movements that have emerged in the last decade. It participated mostly on anti-racism and anti-globalisation campaigns. SYRIZA also participated in the movement of "Aganaktismenoi" who occupied the Syntagma Square in front of the Greek parliament, influenced by Spanish occupations of Puerta Del Sol in Madrid. SYRIZA activists also participated in building solidarity (Perry, 2015). They have encountered first hand interactions with those activists. The support that SYRIZA has given to social movements is a reason for the growth of the party (Perry, 2015). The coalition of old and new struggles is pictured on their flag (Perry, 2015). SYRIZA's logo is made up of three flags on a white background: One red flag, representing the socialistic beliefs of the movement; one purple flag, representing the social movements and the alternative way of doing politics; and a green flag, representing the ecological organizations of the coalition (Spourdalakis, 2013).

SYRIZA's position as a coalition is to "bridge the gap between reform and revolution and to define the radical transformation of capitalist society as a process of structural reforms directly connected to everyday struggles" (Spourdalakis, 2013, p. 108). In their programme where they present their ideological coordinates, SYRIZA argued that has the vision of the 'society of needs' against the today's 'society of profits' (www.syn.gr). That means that since 2009 SYRIZA has created a vision for alternative governmental policies for the country (Spourdalakis, 2013; Stavrakakis, 2015). This vision is close to the vision of PASOK before it was firstly elected in power, in 1981 (Spourdalakis, 2013). As it is aforementioned this period was experienced by people aged over 53 years old. How the vision of SYRIZA has affected the voting decision making of older switch voters is unclear and will be explored by this study. In their June 2012 election programme SYRIZA included the exit of Greece from the multilateral crisis, "return to security and hope for a better future among the Greeks,

restructuring of the Greek development model, social control of the banks, protection of the working class, the unemployed and the poor, more taxes for the rich, protection of small, enterprises, of the self-occupied, the farmers and the new producers, freezing the privatizations and ecological mutation of the economy" (The program of SYRIZA cited in Spyropoulou, 2013, p 17).

2.7.3 SYRIZA and Alexis Tsipras – positioning in elections of 2012 and 2015

The chasm that was created between the parties that implemented the memoranda measures and the parties that opposed it has formed the two main camps the pro and the anti-Memorandum parties (Dimitrakopoulos, 2012). That is argued to have altered the cleavage from the traditional left and right to the pro and anti-Memorandum (Malkoutzis, 2012; Balabanidis and Lamprinou, 2013), which highlights a change in the political map. It is then argued that voters saw SYRIZA as the only possible hope for an alternative way of exiting the crisis (Spourdalakis, 2013).

The anti-memorandum camp had SYRIZA as the dominant political party, accompanied by ANEL (Independent Greeks) (Spyropoulou, 2013) – the extreme right party Golden Down (Chrysi Aygi) was also anti-memorandum but it stood on its own -. In positioning terms, SYRIZA and ANEL are argued to place themselves as representative of the middle and working classes that suffered from the financial crisis (Spyropoulou, 2013). From the beginning of the crisis SYRIZA took the stance that it was not a Greek issue. It rejected the responsibility of the Greek people and chose to stand next to the 'victimisation' of them by international and internal interests (Balabanidis and Lamprinou, 2013). As it can be seen, the positioning of the party of SYRIZA has more similarities with that of PASOK of the period 1974-1985. For example, SYRIZA asked for an end to the austerity measures as PASOK members were asking for the withdrawal of Greece from NATO and the halt of the process of joining the European Economic Community (EEC) when they were in opposition

(Spyropoulou, 2013). The polarization that SYRIZA tried to bring to the political environment of the country is evident by the messages of their election campaigns. This mentioning of needs may be linked with the aforementioned psychodynamic theory of voting behaviour. The effect that these messages and positioning of SYRIZA had on switching voters is unclear.

2.7.4 2012 general elections and SYRIZA positioning

In the elections of 2012 SYRIZA put forward a threefold call: firstly, the elimination of austerity measures and therefore the abandonment of Memoranda, secondly the call to end the 'bipartisanism' and to 'leave behind' the political system and whatever it represented and finally the call for preservation of people's dignity (Spourdalakis, 2013). The first call was standing in the between New Democracy's position for renegotiation and the non-popular KKE's position for withdrawal from the Eurozone and the European Union. The second call was really effective as the 'old' parties were considered as being responsible for corruption practices and the mismanagement of the political system which led the country into crisis. Finally the third call could be broken down into two issues: The first is the aggressiveness of the austerity measures and the second that the austerity measures were perceived to be imposed directly by Troika, which was seen as insult by people to their 'national independence' (Spourdalakis, 2013).

The strategy of the 2012 elections was to "empower the powerless" having as pre-election slogan: "they decided without us. We move without them". This separates "us" (those who oppose memoranda) and "them" (the old parties and those who supported memoranda) (Spourdalakis, 2013). Based on the same logic of separation they have used the motto and "us or them. Together we can tumble them". Moreover, the reference to "the people" has become central in the campaign of 2012, where it was not mentioned much in the campaigns of 2004, 2007 and 2009 (Stavrakakis and Katsembekis, 2014). They were also

using the populist schema "patriots" (meaning those who opposed the memoranda) against the "traitors" (the Troika and those who supported the memoranda). Tsipras had many times used those terms in his speeches. In fact, on his last pre-electoral speech in May 2012 he had used the words "People of Athens, People of Greece" forty times, calling them to oppose "the "establishment", the "foreign interests", the "sellout to Troika", the "political party of Memorandum" and the "few and rich people"" (Pantazopoulos, 2013, p.150). Therefore, SYRIZA positioned the party close to the people, as caring for them, and against those that support the measures that have severely impacted the lives of people.

Hence, in the elections of May 2012 the main policies communicated by SYRIZA were the cancelation of the memorandum, abolishment of the loan agreement and suspension of the debt payments, as they considered it unfair. The messages "unfair debt" and "not even one euro to the creditors" were characteristic (Papaioannou, 2014). In the June 2012 elections the main message of SYRIZA was "we open road to hope – we make memoranda past". Again, Tsipras was asking for the cancelation of the memoranda and the suspension of the debt, using the same expressions. However, at this time SYRIZA did not ask for abolishment of the loan agreement as they did in May but for renegotiation of it (Papaioannou, 2014). The importance of those propositions on the decision making of the voters who switched their vote to SYRIZA is unclear and will be explored by this research study.

Tsipras in his communication attacks the "two parties of power". His communication strategy was based on the provocation of the emotions of the voters. He tried to provoke the negative feelings of anxiety, fear and anger and turn them against the two main parties of that time (PASOK and New Democracy). One way of doing that was by using words such a "nightmare" and "catastrophe" (Papaioannou, 2014). The effect of the above on the decision making of the switch voters is unclear and will be explored. The above was probably done because anger leads to a more simplistic decision making process prejudiced in favour of emotionally converged information that support more choices of "war" politics (Sirin et al,

2011). On the other hand, the emotional situation that he portrayed for himself is described by optimism and assurance of the future of the country (Papaioannou, 2014). As it is aforementioned, the emotions of enthusiasm anger, fear, and anxiety affect the political behaviour of voters. In the end, 2012 SYRIZA voters said that they had supported the party because "it expresses the demand for change and hope, that it is new, fresh and not corrupted" (Mavris, 2012a, p.101). On the other hand Pappas (2014, p. 114) said that people "chose the probability of a serious political impasse over the sure economic loss caused by austerity and reformism".

2.7.5 2015 general elections and SYRIZA positioning

In addition to the three calls, which have remained unchanged, in the elections of 2015 SYRIZA demanded a renegotiation of the debt and promised to control corruption and tax evasion by the wealthy, while at the same time keeping Greece in the Eurozone (Stavrakakis, 2015). This consistency of message and the importance of it in regard to voting decision making have not been explored. From a psychosocial point of view SYRIZA in 2015 is perceived as the party that was closer to the suffering casued by the austerity measures by the working and middle classes and it was considered as the voice of 'the people' (Stavrakakis, 2015). Therefore it can be argued that in 2015 SYRIZA promised to restore people's dignity by representing their interests against the creditors in order to end the crisis and return to 'normal life' (Stavrakakis, 2015). The effect of this positioning to the decision making of switch voters will be explored, as it is unclear. SYRIZA kept the separation of the social space between "them" (the establishment) and "us" (the people), the elite and the nonprivileged, the power and the underdog again in the January 2015 elections. This came against to the TINA (There Is No Alternative) dogma of the dominant technocratic discourse (Stavrakakis, 2015). The main slogan of SYRIZA in the January 2015 elections was "Hope is coming. Greece is moving forward. Europe is changing" The use of the word "Hope" was extensive in that campaign. Hope was linked with the coming of SYRIZA and the dignity that

Greeks had lost and they could get back with their vote. The communications from SYRIZA had given again emphasis on the emotional contrast (disappointment against optimism) and was trying to create expectation of the 'new' that was coming as it was dramatizing the long crisis situation (Kassaveti and Papathanassopoulos, 2015). Therefore SYRIZA tried to associate themselves with the above discussed disposition emotional system and the traditionally main parties with the surveillance one. Moreover, as separator worked the use of the motto "At 25th we vote. At 26th they are leaving" asking with that for a protest vote against the government. However, Tsipras stated that he did not want a protest vote but a governmental one, trying to get the positive votes of people. The slogan "First time Left" was also used heavily in 2015 January elections, they were asking people to vote for the first time for an alternative way of politics that was never tried before. On the other hand New Democracy was promoting stability, and was creating fear in the event that SYRIZA got elected into government. So the election of SYRIZA would be a disaster, while the election of New Democracy would bring stability. All in all, SYRIZA's message in January 2015 centred on a new, full of hope, optimistic day. This was evident in all their television communication campaigns. Moreover, as in 2012 SYRIZA was promoting the party by trying to promote a velvet revolution ("enough!", "I want to live with dignity", "hope is coming") in contrast with New Democracy that was promoting the leader of the party, Antonis Samaras (Kassaveti and Papathanasopoulos, 2015).

For the last of this election series (September 2015), the SYRIZA's slogan was "We finish with the old. We win the future" which again works as a separator between the two groups "us" and "them". At that time the radical Left Platform separated from SYRIZA with many of the previous cabinet members leaving the party. Therefore, the slogan applied to both the old two party system (vote for us in order to finish with them for good) and to the Left Platform and their ideas. On the messages of those elections SYRIZA was focused only on Tsipras, mainly because of the fact that the party split less than a month previously, and on the PM focused political system of the country (Kassaveti and Papathanassopoulos, 2015).

2.7.6 SYRIZA's message and use of media

Regarding the media that SYRIZA used to promote their message, it is argued that despite the fact that social media usage in Greece has increased, in the elections of 2015 it was television that was the main tool of communication (Kassaveti and Papathanasopoulos, 2015). In terms of social media usage in the January 2015 elections (when SYRIZA was elected into government) the main social media tools utilised were Twitter and Facebook, with Tsipras using more Twitter than Facebook. However, SYRIZA used both of those media channels mainly for political marketing (one way communication) and less for dialogue or for mobilization. SYRIZA chose to focus more on pictures than issues when using Facebook, while on Twitter they focused equally in both of them. It also had diaspora on the issues that was discussed in social media as they were targeting different social groups. The main issues that were promoted by SYRIZA were the abolition of ENFIA (property tax) and the abandonment of the memorandum. Finally, SYRIZA's messages on social media were in accordance with the television and print ones focusing more on the party by showing Tsipras using plural "we" while Samaras was using "I" (Ksenofontos and Daga, 2016).

2.8 Conclusion

In this chapter the factors that can have an impact on the voting behaviour of people were discussed, together with the impact that a financial crisis can have on those factors.

Moreover, the various models researchers have used in order to explain the complexity of voting behaviour were analysed and the behaviour of the switching voters and their main characteristics according to literature were mentioned. In addition, the Greek situation was discussed with special focus given to age, family and the periods that they were living in, all important elements that appear to affect the behaviour of Greeks voters. The financial crisis and the impact it had on the life and voting behaviour of Greek voters was also analysed.

Finally, the party of SYRIZA, its positioning and ways of trying to affect the voting intentions of the electorate were discussed.

From the discussion of this chapter and the exploration of the key conceptual framework and related influences a significant number of gaps emerge. These are:

- Impact of crisis on the switch of the partisans' vote
- What influence older people to switch their vote under the context of crisis
- How political history informs decision making
- The effect of loss of income to voting behaviour of switching voters
- The importance of emotions in voting behaviour of switching voters
- The impact of crisis on partisanship
- The impact of family events on voting behaviour of switching voters
- The impact of social groups on the voting behaviour of switching voters
- The impact of the electoral system on the voting behaviour of switching voters
- The importance of issues on the voting decision making of switching voters
- The importance of the political leader on the voting behaviour of the switching voter
- The importance of the austerity measures in the voting decision making of switching voters
- The impact of clientelism on the switch of the vote
- The effect of SYRIZA's positioning on the voting decision making of switching voters
- The impact of leader's traits on voting decision making

The above shortfalls will be addressed through the research study. The following chapter discusses the methodology that was used in order to meet the research objectives that were set in the introduction chapter.

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Based on the aim of the research, the objectives and the research questions this chapter discusses the available options and provides justification for the methodological decisions that the researcher has taken.

The methodology chapter discusses the philosophical assumptions and research paradigm relating to the research. It continues with the discussion and selection of the relevant research approach for this study and therefore it explores the qualitative approach in relation with the study's nature. Furthermore, in this chapter the rationale for the decision to follow a qualitative approach and to use in-depth semi structured interviews will be provided and the selection of this research strategy and design will be justified based on the chosen research philosophy. Moreover, a justification of the samples used for the study with an evaluation of the validity and reliability of the data will be provided. Finally, data processing through coding, and thematic analysis will be discussed.

3.2 Research topic and aim

Silverman (2001) suggests that the question 'what you are trying to find out' is the most important one to be considered when deciding the most appropriate methodology for a research study.

As it is mentioned above, the main contribution of this research study is in understanding the voting behaviour of the voters who have decided to switch their vote under the context of the financial crisis. Moreover, the contribution of the meaning voters assign to the traits they

require from a leader under the context of crisis on the deeper understanding of their voting behaviour will be analysed. Therefore, the main research issue of the study is as follows:

The main aim of this research study is to gain an in-depth understanding of the voting behaviour of voters who switched their vote to the party of SYRIZA for first time in a general election that took place under the context of crisis.

Following the identification of the research aim, the following objectives have been formulated:

- To explore the reasons that the voters have decided to switch their vote under the context of financial crisis
- To gain an in-depth understanding of the impact of the financial crisis on the voting behaviour of switching voters.
- To gain an understanding of the reasons that voters have decided to switch their vote to the party of SYRIZA.
- To gain an understanding of the contribution of the meaning of traits that switching voters require from a political leader to have under the context of crisis to the understanding of their voting behaviour.

To achieve the objectives, the following research questions have been formulated.

- What are the reasons that made voters to switch their vote under the context of financial crisis?
- In what way, if any, has the crisis had an impact on the voting behaviour of voters who switched their vote under the context of crisis?
- What are the reasons that led voters to switch their vote to SYRIZA?

 Can the meaning of the leader's traits be used to increase understanding of voting behaviour?

An interpretivist, qualitative approach has been taken since it was regarded as the most appropriate for the research study and the ontology and epistemology of the researcher which is discussed in details below. The following section will provide an overview of the methodological decision taken in order to explore the questions of the research study and the arguments that justify those decisions.

3.3 Research paradigms

An understanding of the philosophy of research is a requirement in order to conduct research. It provides information on the different philosophical approaches and provide help on the identification of the philosophy to be adopted and influence decisions on the strategy and methods to be adopted in the research study (Guba, 1990). A paradigm is perceived as a "general orientation about the world and the nature of research that a researcher holds" (Creswell, 2009, p.6). In a more detailed explanation of what paradigm is Kuhn (1962) perceives it as "a set of basic beliefs that deals with ultimate or first principles. It represents a worldview that defines, for its holder, the nature of the world, the individual's place in it, and the range of possible relationships to that world and its parts" (Guba and Lincoln, 1998, p. 200). A number of different paradigms exist in the academic literature (Guba and Lincoln, 2005; Sarantakos, 2005; Creswell, 2009). Saunders et al (2012) identify research paradigms which lie in a continuum between the positivist and the phenomenological approaches. For them, the continuum is populated by three paradigms: positivism, realism and interpretivism.

Positivistic paradigm is defined as 'the view that all true knowledge is scientific in the sense of describing the co-existence of observable phenomena' (Bullock and Trombley, 2000, p.669). Therefore, positivism implies that the knowledge in science is provided only by direct

experience (Robson, 2002). For positivists, in other words the world exists independently of the perception of the individual meaning that they see a specific, true view of the world (Hudson et al, 1988). That means that positivism sees the researcher as being independent from the object of the study in order to avoid bias and to achieve objective findings (Sarantakos, 2005). Therefore, positivism sees the social world as based on objective measures rather than being subjective and so it gives emphasis to numerical values on testing existing theories and relationships between variables by following a quantitative methodology where hypotheses are set prior to research and tested by it (Sarantakos, 1998). Hence, the main goal of positivism is to explain reality and if possible to predict what is likely to occur (Marshden and Littler, 1996).

On the other hand, interpretivism argues that there is no one single and true reality, independent from the researcher but multiple realities of 'truth' (Ford, 1975). Therefore for interpretivists each one constructs his/her own meaning (Saunders et al, 2012). Hence, while positivism deals with the discovery of the meaning, interpretivism deals with the construction of it (Gray, 2009). In other words, the objective of interpretivists is to understand behaviour (Hudson and Ozanne, 1998). The constructive understanding and meaning creation that the interpretivist paradigm is linked is made through the individuals that are involved (Gray, 2009). By giving emphasis to the individual, the interpretivist paradigm includes methodological beliefs about the individual's knowledge of the world and more specifically on how to get knowledge of it (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). In order to do that a qualitative methodology is followed (Sarantakos, 1998). The creation of meaning can be considered as an interactive process between the researcher and the objects of study (Snape and Spencer, 2003). Hence, a detachment of the researcher and the object of study is not required. This relationship between the object of the study and the researcher is considered as being an indicator of the ontological assumptions that acts as the research basis (Johnson and Duberley, 2000). A discussion on research strategies that can be followed will provide justification for the selected approach by the researcher.

3.3.1 Objectivist or Subjectivist Ontology

Ontology is 'the branch of metaphysis dealing with the nature of being' (Oxford Dictionary, 2013). The spectrum of this branch of metaphysis ranges from the highly subjective to the highly objective (Morgan and Smircich, 1980). An objectivist point of view sees reality as a concrete structure (Lloyd-Evans, 2006). Therefore, adopting the objectivist ontology means adaptation of positivist epistemology. On the other hand, those who take a subjectivist perspective, and therefore view reality as a social construction, tend to focus on interpretative epistemology (Johnson and Duberley, 2000). The definition of epistemology, given by the Oxford Dictionary (2013) is that it is 'the theory of knowledge with regards to its method and validation'. The difference between the two epistemological approaches, interpretivism and positivism, is that the former takes into account various philosophical and social thought in order to try and provide an explanation to the social world from an actor's perspective (Schwandt, 2000), while the later takes a more passive approach (Matthews, 2007) and builds knowledge by exploring the objective world. Table 3.1 illustrates the difference within the ontological spectrum.

Table 3-1 - The Objective/Subjective Ontological Spectrum

Subjectivist			→ Objectivist			
Core	Reality as a	Reality as a	Reality as	Reality as a	Reality	Reality as
Ontological	projection of	social	a realm of	contextual	as a	a concrete
Assumptions	human	construction	symbolic	field of	concrete	structure
	imagination		discourse	information	process	

(Adapted from Morgan and Smircich, 1980, p. 492)

It is argued that since the early 1980s the interest in interpretivist epistemology has grown, while previously positivism was the main research approach (Belk, 1995). That was in an

effort to better understand the complex, and unpredictable nature of the behaviour of the consumers. Therefore, researches focused on understanding the attitudes and values of those (Holbrook, 1995). Therefore, the phenomenological perspective of interpretivism indicates that the world is not an object which is separate from the subject and the researcher but is a realm of possibilities in which the subject is a part of (Shankar and Goulding, 2001). So the world (lifeworld of experience) is relative to the subject's interpretation of it (Shankar and Goulding, 2001). Therefore, a subject that closely interacts with the world cannot be viewed the same way as objects which are considered as 'separate' from the world in which it exists (Churchill and Wertz, 1985). That means that phenomenological approach focuses on subjective features of the activity of humans and therefore deals with developing the meaning rather than measuring social phenomena (Amaratunga et al, 2002; Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2009). As Sanders et al (2012) stated, the challenge is to enter in the world of the subjects and to understand it from their point of view. Easterby-Smith et al (2004) in an attempt to summarise the differences between the two approaches (positivism and phenomenology) suggested the following table (3.2):

Table 3-2 - Differences between positivist and phenomenological approaches

Factor	Positivism	Phenomenology
To observe	Must be independent	Is part of what is being observed
Human interest	Should be irrelevant	Are the main drivers of science
Explanation	Must demonstrate causality	Aim to increase general understanding of the situations
Research progress through	Hypotheses and deductions	Gathering rich data from which ideas are induced
Concepts	Need to be operationalized so that they can be measured	Should incorporate stakeholder perspectives
Units of analysis	Should be reduced to simplest terms	May include the complexity of whole situations
Generalisation through Sampling requires	Statistical probability Large numbers selected randomly	Theoretical abstractions Small numbers of cases chosen for specific reasons

It should be noted that the two philosophical approaches (positivism and phenomenological) have strengths and weaknesses. The positivist approach is argued to provide a wide coverage of a range of situations, opportunity to collect data in a quick and economical way and is suitable for statistical analysis. On the contrary, the phenomenological approach allows for meaning to be established, it contributes to the development of theory and the method of collection of data is considered as more natural. In terms of weaknesses, the positivistic approach is regarded as having inflexible methods of data collection; they are not helpful in theory generation and in understanding the meaning that is given to actions by people. Phenomenological methods are regarded as being difficult to analyse data, a method that requires more resources and as a method with difficulty to control the process, pace and end point of the research.

3.3.2 Research approaches

There are a number of researchers that separate the approaches into acquiring new knowledge in the deductive and the inductive ones (Saunders et al, 2012). The first one is used in order to test theories. That means that the research questions and themes are based on the existing literature. Therefore literature helps the researcher to create hypotheses, based on what is known, and then test it through research (Bryman, 2008). It is argued that this approach is characterised by scientific principles, independent researcher and objects of research, structured approach taken, explanation of relationships between variables, use of quantitative data, moving from data to theory and a sample that needs to be of sufficient size in order for conclusions to be created (Saunders, 2012). The focus of the deductive approach then is on identifying and explaining cause-effect relationships. On the other hand the goal of the inductive approach is to understand the complexity of a situation (Saunders, 2012). It aims for gaining an understanding of the meaning, use of qualitative data collection, flexible structure of research, perceives the researcher as being part of the research process and the generation of a conclusion is not of much importance. Therefore,

theory is built as the research progresses (Saunders, 2012). This is considered as a key difference between the deductive and inductive approaches. In contrast to the inductive approach, the deductive approach views secondary data as being important for the establishment of a theoretical framework that the research considers and tests. Therefore, positivism usually uses the deductive approach, where clear hypotheses are created based on theory and are tested by the researcher (Cameron and Price, 2009). This requires quantitative methods of research where relationships between variables are analysed (Hunt, 1991). On the other hand, interpretivism in most cases uses the inductive approach where theory is developed though and after research is conducted. The above indicates that inductive research always precedes deductive research (Cameron and Price, 2009).

3.3.3 Postmodernism and Relativism

The root of relativism is on the belief that there are no absolutes. Relativism, from an epistemological perspective, argues that what is considered a warranted truth or knowledge is always relative to a historical era, cultural context and place (Johnson and Duberley, 2000). Therefore in a relativistic perspective there are no independent criteria for judging knowledge or claims of truth as there is no possible separation between the self and the socio historical concept (Johnson and Duberley, 2000). Therefore, truth is relative to the social reality of a community (Johnson and Duberley, 2000). However, a limitation of relativism is that every single claim of truth by a community that is like minded should be counted as being valid (Johnson and Duberley, 2000).

3.4 Towards the selection of a research paradigm

The question that rises is if the research paradigm is a matter of choice. It is argued that the researcher's beliefs provide different answers to the ontology, epistemology and methodology that each paradigm addresses (Guba and Lincoln, 1998). Therefore, it is

suggested by Goulding (1999) that the choice of an appropriate research paradigm should be a personal, reflective and time consuming process which requires self-evaluation in terms of convictions, beliefs and interests. In agreement, Stern (1994) argues the choice of method is quite personal, as people are different in thinking and in finding ways in achieving the 'truth'. Therefore, it is of high importance to have the right fit between the method and the person, their style of working, who they are and how they think (Goulding, 1999). The choice of a specific paradigm is linked with the choice of method and research design (Sarantakos, 2005), however it is suggested that "both qualitative and quantitative methods may be used appropriately with any research paradigm" (Guba and Lincoln, 1998, p.195).

Jennings (2005, p. 214) has argued that "the issue is not which paradigm is better, but rather which best serves the research purposes and the current worlds context". Silverman's (2001, p.25) in agreement states that statement, that methodology "should depend upon what you are trying to find out". Based on the above discussion, the researcher has selected an interpretative orientation. As the intention of this research study is to explore a phenomenon and therefore gain understanding of respondents' experiences and the meaning of their action of switching their vote (why did they do it). An approach that has its focus on observable phenomena was not considered as being appropriate. In contrast, vital to this research study are the underlying reasons for the actions of the switching voters, which would lead to gaining an understanding of their voting behaviou and of the impact of crisis on it. This focus on the 'lived experience' of the voters justifies the choice of a qualitative research approach, which comes in accordance with the interpretative phenomenological approach. This interpretative approach allows elements of postmodernism to be incorporated. The idea that each individual has a specific view of reality (Johnson and Duberley, 2000), which is vital idea of postmodernism, is important in getting an understanding of the perception of voters, the reasons and meaning of their action (why did they do what they say they did) and therefore their voting behaviour.

3.4.1 Research strategy

Having selected an interpretive research approach it is important to define an appropriate research strategy. It is suggested by Yin (2003) that the factors to be taken into account when design of the research strategy are the following: the type of research questions, the degree of focus (historical or contemporary events), the level of control an investigation has over behavioural events. Based on those three factors, the research strategies that are suggested by Yin (2009) are: experiment, survey, action research, case study, history and archival research. As it is said the nature of this study is exploratory as it focuses on establishing a meaning and understanding of the behaviour of voters who switched their vote to the party of SYRIZA for first time in elections under the context of crisis, the impact of crisis on this behaviour and the contribution of the meaning assigned by voters to the leader's traits on a deeper understanding of their voting behaviour. Therefore it deals with 'real life'. The exploratory focus and the desire to get an understanding of real life indicates that the case study strategy is regarded as the most appropriate for this research study (Yin, 2009). Moreover, case studies produce context dependent knowledge (Flyvbjerg, 2006) which is important for this study.

3.4.2 Research design

As Shankar and Goulding (2001, p.8) argued 'the choice of interpretive technique will guide the entire research process from research...through to data collection, analysis and finally interpretation'. An interpretive approach is strongly linked with qualitative research methods. Qualitative research is defined as "a form of social enquiry that focuses on the way people make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live [...] to explore the behaviour, feelings and experiences of people and what lies to the core of their lives" (Holloway and Wheeler, 2010, p.3). In agreement Mariampolksi (2001, p.7) argued that qualitative research methods are those that 'seek the meanings and motivations behind

behaviour as well as a thorough account of behavioural facts and implications via a researcher's own encounter with people's own actions, words and ideas'. Hence, this type of research method can give an insight on meanings and motivations that can explain a particular behaviour, which is the goal of this research study.

3.5 Data Collection methods

The words 'understanding', 'exploring', 'describing' and 'searching' are frequently used when discussing the goals of a research associated with the use of qualitative research methods (Mariampolski, 2001). Based on the variety of research goals that exist, there are also various research methods that can achieve the goals. Qualitative data consists of observations, documents and interviews (Patton, 2002). By using interviews quotations are provided which give access to respondents' opinions, feelings, perceptions and experiences. Observations give notes that provide access to behaviours, activities, interactions and processes, while documentation (in the form of texts, photos and objects) gives access to information that cannot be neither observed nor told. Therefore in qualitative research there are four data collection methods. Individual interviews, focus groups, observation and review of documents (Marshall and Rossman, 2006), with in-depth individual interviews and focus groups being the most common techniques (Mariampolski, 2001).

Voss et al (2002) argued that when there is a single case studied there is a need for interviews with the people involved in order to ensure depth of observation. Moreover, Yin (2009) agreed by arguing that the most important source for case study information is interviewing as it helps in the collection of data where a theoretical and methodological framework is not yet established. Also, the selected research approach is an exploratory study. The chosen approach fits well with the epistemological and ontological conclusions discussed above. Since an exploratory study is the exploration of the unknown, it gives freedom to adapt to any changes that requires alteration of the original design (Pope and

Lampard, 2002; Saunders et al, 2012). Furthermore, exploratory study allows the researcher to go in-depth on the opinion of the voters by using in-depth interviews and to understand the reason behind their actions. Therefore, for the purpose of this research study, an indepth interview approach was considered as being the most appropriate as it offers flexibility, the opportunity for significant probing of respondents and a high degree of 'psychological depth'. It is defined by Mariampolski (2001) as the "investigation of motivations, associations and explanations behind product preference". Although focus groups have benefits too, due to the nature of the research topic, politics, it was decided not to follow them. That was because by using in-depth interviews the probability of conflict between respondents and the 'spiral of silence' can be minimized (Davis and Silver, 2003). The latter refers to the danger that respondents who see that their view are shared by the group will voice their opinions, while the respondents with the least accepted opinions will tend to remain silent (Glynn and McLeod, 1984).

Interviews are a very common technique in studies with an exploratory approach, which aim to gain an in-depth understanding of what is happening and the type variables' relationships (Gray, 2009). Hence, the role that the researcher has is an important piece of the interview process. The researcher carries their own feelings and motives, which shows that they are not neutral (Scheurich, 1995) however, he can also increase the trust of the respondent by interacting with him (Dougla, 1985).

The most common interview technique used in qualitative research studies is the in-depth interview (Mariampolski, 2001). That is because it offers loose structure and the respondents having the convenience to answer at the time and place that they feel more comfortable (Bradley et al, 2007). In in-depth interviews the researcher is trying to explore thoughts and to 'bring to light' underlying meanings, motivations, feelings and attitudes (Bradley et al, 2007).

According to Robson (2002) there are three types of interview structure: fully structured, semi-structured and unstructured. Semi structured interviews provides enough freedom and opportunity for an open ended conversation and the respondent to share their knowledge and experiences (Schnell et al, 2005). On the other hand, an unstructured interview is more extensive but it takes much longer (Fontana and Frey, 1997). The latter is regarded as an unstable process that varies from respondent to respondent (Scheurich, 1997). In a semi structured in-depth interview the direction of the interview is determined by the answer the respondent gives to the opening question 'tell me about yourself' and the researcher is responsible for ensuring that the interview is enough in-depth in order to gain an understanding of the topic studied (Malhotra, 2010). Therefore for this research study the semi structured in-depth interviews have been chosen as a data collection method.

3.5.1 Prior to interviews' conduction

There are more elements that a researcher needs to take into account before the conduction of research. This includes establishing an appropriate environment. This is important for ensuring respondents feel comfortable so that the discussion will go into more depth and they can 'reveal' hidden motivations that shape their behaviour (Reynolds and Gutman, 1985). Barbour and Kitzinger (1999) argued that the location of an interview should be accessible, comfortable, and free from interruptions and protected from observations. For that reason, the interviews were conducted at the homes of the respondents, at an agreed time that nobody else from their family would be present. Moreover, the telephone devices were switched off during the interview time in an effort to keep 'noise' to a minimum.

In addition it is argued that the respondents need to be informed of the purpose of the research at the beginning of the process (Reynolds and Gutman, 1985) in order to familiarize themselves with it. For that reason, an information sheet was sent to the respondents either via email or hand delivered with dual purpose. The purpose of that was

double fold. Firstly, to provide the respondent with the information about the study and to answer any potential questions they might have. The second aim of the information sheet was to provide assurance on the protection of their anonymity and confidentiality. That would help them to express their opinions as freely as possible. Therefore, the respondents were informed of the researcher's requirements prior to the interview day. The information sheet was structured in a question – answer format. The following ten questions were included as suggested by Fotis (2015, p. 183-184).

- 1. What is the purpose of this study?
- 2. Why have I been invited to participate?
- 3. Are there any requirements I need to fulfil to enable me to participate?
- 4. What is the interview about?
- 5. Do I have to take part?
- 6. Will what I say in this interview be kept confidential?
- 7. What will happen to the results of the research project?
- 8. Who is organising and funding the research?
- 9. Who has reviewed this study?
- 10. Whom can I contact for further information?
- 11. How can I take part in an interview?

Another important element that has to be taken into account for ensuring successful exploration is that the researcher needs to maintain control of the interview, which can be done by the use of 'why do you consider it important' question (Reynolds and Gutman, 1985). Therefore, the researcher created an interview guide, the purpose of which was to help him direct the discussion, to encourage conversation around the topic of crisis, voting behaviour and leader's traits and to assist in collecting all the key information (Dilorio et al, 1994). The interview guide was tested in pilot interviews, as discussed below. In addition, and taking into account the interest and expertise levels of each of the respondents the

interviews was customized. In order to help the respondent feel more comfortable, so the conversation would go more in-depth, the order of questions changed accordingly, as Lamnek (1995) suggested. Finally, new information that the researcher was getting from each interview was used in order to evolve the question guidelines for the following interviews as Schnell (2005) suggested.

3.5.2 Pilot interviews

A pilot study's purpose is to help improve the understanding of the interview questions and therefore to assist the researcher improve the data collection model, procedures for data analysis and the method of presenting the findings (Yin, 2003). Based on that, the researcher has conducted pilot studies with members of the sample group. Specifically, 5 individuals who voted SYRIZA for the first time in the 2012 or 2015 general elections were involved in the pilot study. Based on the pilot study conducted changes to some of the questions were made because they were perceived as confusing and therefore the wording of them has been simplified.

3.6 Validity and reliability in qualitative research

Validity is regarded as a very important aspect in every research study. Saunders et al (2012, p.603) argued that validity is "the extent to which data collection method or methods accurately measure what they intended to measure and the research findings are really about what they profess to be about". Saunders et al (2012) argued that there are two types of validity; internal and external. Internal validity refers to credibility, a process that checks the confidence that the researcher has on the findings of the research study. External validity refers to transferability and checks whether the findings of the research study can be applied to contexts and populations others than the one studied by the research study. In terms of validity in qualitative research, Shankar and Goulding (2001) argued that in contrast to

positivists, interpretivists do not look for validity. Their goal is hermeneutic understanding (Johnson and Duberley, 2000). In terms of the external validity of a research study, transferability, it is clearly argued that qualitative research studies do not make claims of generalizability of their findings (Bryman, 1999) as they are focused on gaining an in-depth understanding of specific situations (Gray, 2009) and therefore any alteration on key variables of the situation would possibly weaken the credibility of the study. Therefore, it is argued that qualitative research looks only for internal validity (credibility) (Hill and Stamey, 1990).

Researchers suggested different ways of increasing the credibility of a qualitative research. For example Arksley and Knight (1999) argue that creation of trust between the researcher and the interview respondent is a key criterion for the increase of validity of the interviews' finding. Another criterion to increase the credibility of the research findings is that the researcher should allocate sufficient time to the respondents in order to be able to go in indepth and explore their thoughts and arguments. For the same reason the researcher should probe the respondent to go further in his analysis after the initial statement is made.

Especially for semi-structured interviews, which is the interview type of this specific research study, the content of the questions need to clearly linked with the objectives of the research (Gray, 2009).

On the other hand, reliability is "concerned with the findings of the research; if research findings are repeated then they are considered as reliable" (Collis and Hussey, 2009, p. 58). Another definition given by Saunders et al (2012, p. 128) argued that reliability is "the extent to which data collection methods and analysis procedures will produce consistent findings". Therefore reliability in a qualitative research study relates to bias of the researcher when collecting data from different respondents and in different interview settings. There are various causes that can lead to bias in interviews (Oppenheim, 1992) and Gray (2009) suggests that a way to secure reliability is by using standardized procedures and questions

in the interviews. In agreement Yin (2003) argued that when the interview is more structured, interview bias is reduced.

3.7 Selecting the sample

A sample is defined as a subgroup of elements of a population selected for taking part in a specific study (Malhotra and Birks, 1999). Yin (2003) argued that engaging with the informants who can give an insight of the research topic is a key element to the success of the research study. When selecting a sample, it is important to consider the paradigm under the umbrella of which the specific research is conducted. Interpretive paradigms require a research sampling design that goes beyond probability sampling and representative samples and it is better linked with the exploration of socially subjective constructs such as the voting behaviour (Mason, 2002), therefore they tend to use non probability samples. Moreover, the respondents needed to be familiar with the theme on which they would be interviewed (Schnell, 2005) and the emphasis of respondents' selection should be based on specific characteristics, it is vital for the aim and the objectives of the study, in order to help the researcher obtain rich data from respondents (Patton 2002; Ritchie et al, 2003). Therefore, and since this research uses a specific case study to explore the phenomenon of voting behaviour of individuals who have switched their vote to SYRIZA in elections that were held under the context of crisis (2012 or 2015), the respondents were selected based on the time they switched their vote to the party of SYRIZA.

Moreover, this research study also focuses on people who have lived through the junta period and have experienced the way politics worked for most of the time between the restoration of democracy in 1974 until the generation of crisis in 2009. Therefore, the sample needed to be of a certain age. As it is mentioned in the introduction chapter, the minimum age was put at 53 years because these individuals would have been 15-30 years old, a politically sensitive age during the junta and the period of polarization and clientelism. The

respondents of this research study are aged between 53 and 72 years old, which means that they are close to the 'junta generation' that was discussed in the literature review.

3.7.1 Choice of sampling method

The non-probability sampling methods are the following: quota, purposive, snowballing, self-selecting and convenience (Saunders et al, 2012). For the purpose of this research study snowball sampling method was chosen. Snowball, or else chain sampling was first introduced by Coleman (1958), it "...identifies cases of interest from people who know what cases are information-rich" (cited in Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 28). In others words snowball sampling starts by identifying one individual that meets the study's criteria who then recommends others who also meet the criteria. The use of this method is suggested when populations that are difficult to access or hard to find are sought (Collis and Hussey, 2009). There are two reasons for choosing this selection sampling method for this study: the first is that although first time SYRIZA voters represent a high proportion of the Greek electorate the researcher did not have access to a large number of first time SYRIZA voters aged over 53 years old. The second reason is due to the politically polarized period of time in Greece the researcher found it difficult to identify by himself SYRIZA voters who were keen to take part in the interviews.

Therefore, SYRIZA voters were sought through connections. The initial sample included people that fit the criteria of this research study, which are people over 53 years of age who have switched their vote for first time to the party of SYRIZA in the 2012 or 2015 general elections. Through the snowball sampling technique, more SYRIZA voters were included in the final sample as in the interviews the researcher asked the respondents to provide names of other people who shared the common characteristic as Schnell et al (2005) suggested.

3.7.2 Sample size and saturation

Although in a sample within the qualitative research paradigm there is no specific rules about the size, there is the requirement to conduct interviews sufficient in order to gain an understanding of the researched topic, in other words a researcher stops when he gets consistent responses by the respondents, which according to Glaser and Strauss (1976) point of saturation. Dick (1990) argued that 12 respondents are required in order to create stability on the views; however Carson et al (2001) and Riege (2003) argued that this can happen before the 12th interview. On the other hand, Glaser and Strauss (1976) leave it broader and suggest that a researcher may reach the point of saturation somewhere between the 8th and the 24th interview. Green and Thorogood (2009, p. 120) argue that "...the experience of most qualitative researchers is that in interview studies little that is 'new' comes out of transcripts after you have interviewed 20 or so people". The saturation point of this research study was reached at the 27th interview, as at that point the responses that the researcher was getting were consistent and repetitive and there was nothing 'new' added after a number of interviews.

3.7.3 The study sample

The study's sample consists of 27 individuals. Of those 13 were male and 14 were female. The youngest respondent was 53 years old and the eldest was 72 with the majority of those being in the age bracket of 60-69 years old. Finally, the respondents were from a range of professions (Doctors, Lawyers, Public Sector employees, Pharmacists, Private Sector employees, Pensioners and Home keepers). The interviews took place in Greece between January and March 2016. Table 3.3 provides as overview of each of the respondents and their unique code.

Table 3-3 - Profile overview of first time SYRIZA voters

Re	Age	Gender	Education	Occupation	Pol.	Income	Unique Code
					Ideology		
1	64	Male	University	Self employed	Centre Left	35k+	1,64,M,U,SE,CL
2	62	Female	University	Pensioner	Left	-20k	2,62,F,U,P,L
3	64	Male	Masters	Self employed	Left	35k+	3,64,M,M,SE,L
4	53	Female	University	Public sector	Left	15k+	4,53,F,U,PS,L
5	66	Male	Masters	Self employed	Liberal	45k+	5,66,M,M,SE,Lib
6	62	Male	University	Pensioner	Left	-20k	6,62,M,U,P,L
7	60	Female	University	Pensioner	Left	15k+	7,60,F,U,P,L
8	68	Female	Low level	Pensioner	Centre left	10k+	8,68,F,L,P,CL
9	72	Male	Low level	Pensioner	Centre	10k+	9,72,M,L,P,C
10	53	Male	Low level	Self employed	Centre left	20k+	10,53,M,L,SE,CL
11	67	Male	Low level	Self employed	Centre left	20k+	11,67,M,L,SE,CL
12	60	Female	University	Pensioner	Centre left	15k+	12,60,F,U,P,CL
13	57	Female	Low level	Home keeper	Centre left	0	13,57,F,L,HK,CL
14	65	Male	Masters	Self employed	Centre left	45k+	14,65,M,M,SE,CL
15	58	Female	University	Home keeper	Left	0	15,58,F,U,HK,L
16	51	Female	University	Private sector	Centre left	15k+	16,54,F,U,Pr,CL
17	61	Male	University	Self employed	Centre left	25k+	17,61,M,U,SE,CL
18	57	Female	University	Public sector	Left	-20k	18,57,F,U,PS,L
19	54	Female	University	Public sector	Left	-20k	19,54,F,U,PS,L
20	70	Female	Low level	Pensioner	Centre	-15k	20,70,F,L,P,C
21	55	Male	Masters	Self employed	Liberal	20k+	21,55,M,M,SE,Lib
22	65	Male	University	Pensioner	Centre left	-20k	22,65,M,U,P,CL
23	64	Female	Masters	Pensioner	Centre left	-20k	23,64,F,M,P,CL
24	62	Female	Low level	Home keeper	Centre left	0	24,62,F,L,HK,CL
25	55	Female	University	Private sector	Left	15k+	25,55,F,U,Pr,L
26	58	Male	University	Self employed	Centre right	25k+	26,58,M,U,SE,CR

27	59	Male	Low level	Self employed	Centre left	-30k	27,59,M,L,SE,CL

3.8 Respondent Code Key

In order to ensure anonymity each voter is referred to using their respondent code which consists of the first number being the respondent number and the second number being their age following by gender (F = female, M = male), educational background (Low level = L, University = U, Masters = M), Occupation (Home keeper = HK, Self-employed = SE, Public sector employee = PS, Private sector employee = Pr, Pensioner = P), their political ideology (L = left, CL = Centre Left, C = Centre, CR = Centre Right, Lib = Liberal). For example the first respondent's identifying code would be as follows (1,64,M,U,SE,CL).

3.9 The interviews

The procedure that was followed in the interview conduction was based on Morgan and Spanish's (1984) suggestions. Prior to the opening of the discussion the researcher introduced himself to the respondent and discussed any questions related with the information provided in the information sheet and with the topic of study. After that a consent form was given to them asking for their agreement to participate in the interview, their consent to be recorded and to use their quotes (anonymous) in academic publications (Creswell, 1998). After finishing with the above, the interview started. The first part of the interview was focused on the profile of the respondents asking them to provide demographic characteristics (e.g. profession and age) but also discussing their interests and activities in life. That was designed so the respondents would talk right from the start of the discussion. The respondents were then briefly introduced to the topic of the discussion. The introduction was on purpose very general using the form "we are here today to discuss about politics".

The researcher did not want to influence the respondents with anything related to crisis from the beginning of the discussion, waiting for them to mention it. During this stage respondents were asked to discuss their political ideology, the way that they have formed it, their interest in politics, their voting habits, voting decision making and their perception on voting.

At this stage the current situation of Greece was discussed with the respondents. The crisis and its impact to their lives from various perspectives were discussed. Then the discussion came on the reasons that led Greece to crisis and the assigned responsibility for it.

Moreover, a conversation on the timing and reasons that they have decided to switch their vote was made. Also, the reasons that led them to switch their vote to the party of SYRIZA were discussed. On the next stage a discussion was made on the traits that they consider important for a political leader to have under the context of financial crisis. Moreover, the respondents were asked to discuss the meaning that they assign to those traits. The final stage of the interviews was a summary and covering any points that the researcher identified as needed further exploration.

During the interviews the researcher frequently referred back to earlier mentions of crisis and leader's traits. That was done in order to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of the comment and the meaning the respondents give to the latter. The researcher used open ended questions to allow the respondent to provide answers without having any presented or implied choices. For example the question "How do you receive political information?" was used instead of asking for example "In which television channel do you watch the news?" Moreover, the use of the word why has been limited in order not to imply that a right answer exists. For example the question "Where do you base this opinion on politicians?" was used instead of "Why do you have this opinion on politicians?" Moreover, throughout the interviews the researcher was introducing a topic and then giving the respondents space to provide information they thought was important for the topic, as Bernard (1995) suggested. However, whenever the researcher felt probing questions were necessary these were used.

Different forms of probing techniques were used, however the most commonly used techniques in the interviews were the uh-huh and the echo probe techniques. For example the phrase "tell me about it" was used quite a few times by the researcher. In addition the researcher has tried not to move to a new section of the interview without having explored in satisfactory depth the respondents' perceptions. As mentioned above, the interviews took place in early 2016 in Greece. Each interview took around 85 minutes on average. The interviews were recorded using an IPhone 6, with backup recording using a traditional tape recorder as a precautionary measure.

3.10 Basis for data analysis

In terms of basis for data analysis of interviews there are four options: transcript based, tape based, memory based and note based (Krueger and Casey, 2000). In the research of social science the method that is considered as being time-intensive and rigorous is the transcript method (Onwuegbuzie et al, 2009a), which is the method applied to this research study. The names of the respondents were replaced by numbers, in order to keep their anonymity and confidentiality.

3.10.1 Method of data analysis

The method of the data analysis is important to match "what the researcher wants to know" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 80) meaning it should match the research study's aim and objectives. Therefore, for this research study it was important the method of data analysis would be able to provide patterns for organising: a) the impact of crisis on voting behaviour b) the role of the meaning that voters give to leader's traits in order to better understand their voting behaviour. The identified patterns would assist in the organisation of the phenomenon of the study.

There are numerous methods of data analysis in qualitative research that can provide patterns' identification. Those are conversation analysis, interpretative phenomenological analysis, ground theory, discourse analysis, narrative analysis and thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Bryman, 2008). Most of the above mentioned methods are tied to specific traditions of epistemology and theory. However, thematic analysis is the method which is regarded as being flexible and independent from theory and epistemology and therefore "it can be applied across a range of theoretical and epistemological approaches (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.78). In agreement Holloway and Todres (2003) and Boyatzis (1998) argued that thematic analysis is not a method on its own but a technique used across different methods. That may be the reason that Bryman (2008, p. 554) described thematic analysis as "one of the most common approaches to qualitative data analysis". Based on the above, it was decided that thematic analysis would be used for the analysis of the data of this research study.

Thematic analysis is defined by Braun and Clarke (2006, p.78) as "a method of identifying, analysis and reporting patterns (themes) within data", however the core meaning of thematic analysis is provided by Boyatzis (1998, p. vi-vii) who argues that "thematic analysis is a process of encoding qualitative information. The encoding requires an explicit 'code'. This may be a list of themes; a complex model of themes, indicators and qualifications that are causally related; or something in between these two forms" and he continues by describing what a theme is: "a theme is a pattern found in the information that at the minimum describes and organizes possible observations or at the maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon. A theme may be identified at the manifest level (directly observable in the information) or at the latent level (underlying the phenomenon). The themes may be initially generated inductively from the raw information or generated deductively from theory and prior research".

The above quote refers to the two categories of themes: the first is called the structural approach and is involves the application of labels (categories) that are based on prior research and theoretical perspectives. The second is the category of emergent themes from discussions with respondents (Guest et al, 2012). Moreover, themes can be identified into two levels of thematic analysis. The first one is called semantic or explicit. In that level themes are identified within the surface meaning. The second level looks for nuances beyond what the respondent has said (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

One of the criticisms to thematic analysis is that it may miss some of the nuanced data (Guest et al, 2012). Another criticism is that the lack of rules can result in a system where 'anything goes' (Antaki et al, 2002). Countering the criticism Braun and Clarke (2004) by proposing a six stage approach to thematic analysis. This approach, which is presented in table 3.4, served as the basis for the analysis process in this research study.

Table 3-4 - Six stages in using thematic analysis

Stage	Activity	Description of the process
1	Familiarizing yourself with your data	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas
2	Generating initial codes	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code
3	Selecting the themes	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme
4	Reviewing themes	Checking of the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (phase 1) and the entire data set (phase 2) generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis
5	Defining and naming themes	On-going analysis to refine the specifics of each theme and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names of each theme.
6	Producing the report	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected abstracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

Source: Braun and Clarke (2004, p. 87)

Braun and Clarke (2004) argued that the use of this approach gives the opportunity for researchers to use thematic analysis in at least one of the three following ways. It can be

used to report experiences and meaning of the individual from a critical realism perspective; for examining how one factor, experience or meaning impacts another variable (this is from a constructionist perspective); and finally, from a contextualized perspective which takes into account the way meanings are developed by the individual and the reflection of society to those meanings. In this research study thematic analysis involved all three of these aspects. It sought to establish the meanings that individuals assigned to crisis, how this has affected factors in the political environment and their voting behaviour and finally to gain an understanding of the role of the meaning of leader's traits in gaining a deeper understanding of the latter. The following section provides a description on how the above presented framework was used in the process of data analysis of the present research study.

3.10.2 The analysis process

Although Braun and Clarke (2004) suggest that the above six steps are separate from each other, this does not actually happen in practice. The researcher has gone back and forth in the phases of the analysis process. The following section of this chapter discusses how the above mentioned phases have been implemented for the purpose of this research study.

3.10.2.1 Familiarisation with the data

After conducting each interview the researcher listened to the audio file and took notes on specific quotes that were relevant to the objectives of the research study. After that, the discussion was transcribed by listening to the audio files and typing the conversation into a Microsoft Word file. After transcription was completed each transcribed interview was read again. Highlighters were used in order to mark specific quotes which seemed relevant to the objectives of the study. The researcher decided that the analysis should be computer assisted. Since NVivo software has features that are offered also by Microsoft Excel, and since the researcher has experience in using Excel it was decided to use that in order to do

the coding and sorting in a faster and more effective way. The use of excel was not related to any of its numerical and calculative characteristics but just on its data management capabilities. Therefore word files were imported into an MS Excel spread sheet. Each sentence of each interview was imported on a different row and therefore this resulted in a numerical code for the sentences. On different columns the characteristics of the respondents and thematic codes were inserted.

3.10.2.2 Generation of initial codes

Coding is defined as a method for organising and grouping "similarly coded data into categories or families because they share some characteristic-the beginning of a pattern" (Saldana, 2009, p8). Coding is seen as a two cycle process. During the initial coding it was required to manage the data well so that to facilitate further data analysis. Attribute coding was initially used in order to help the researcher get the essential information for future management and reference (Saldana, 2009). Gender, age, occupation, perceived political ideology and income were coded. After that process, structural coding was applied in order to categorise the data into different segments. The researcher has focused on the segments created in order to gain an understanding of the common ideas. Moreover, descriptive coding was used in order to identify the topic of passage as Saldana (2009) suggested. The second coding cycle was conducted by using pattern coding. This is a method which is used for generating important themes and creating theoretical constructs (Saldana, 2009).

Therefore the first cycle codes were reviewed in order to assess their meaning and to identify commonalities. After that pattern codes were used to create statements that describe important themes (Saldana, 2009).

3.10.2.3 Searching for themes

It is argued by Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 82) that searching for themes starts when all data have been coded. They argue that a theme is "something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set". The identification of themes can happen on two levels, semantic and latent (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The first focuses on things that have been said, in other words what is visible from the data. The latter (latent level) focuses on hidden ideas. It is an attempt to given meaning to the phenomenon that is studied. It is argued by Braun and Clarke (2006) that thematic analysis usually focuses on one level. However, the researcher has tried to provide themes from both levels. In that effort Excel was a very helpful tool as codes were grouped together in a continuous process. Based on that and after a lot effort and grouping of codes the themes were formed. The next step was to review them.

3.10.2.4 Reviewing themes

It is suggested that the phase of reviewing themes starts after all initial themes have been formed (Braun and Clarke, 2006). At the beginning the inspection of themes takes place in order to identify internal homogeneity. In order to do that all the coded data assigned to each theme needed to be extracted. For external homogeneity an examination of existence or adequate differentiation among themes was required (Patton, 2002). In order to manage internal homogeneity a number of data extracts were disregarded from the analysis or moved to other themes. In order to ensure that every change positively contributed to the formation of clear patterns within each theme a move between transcripts, audio and Excel files was required. In order to ensure external homogeneity the data was read many times. Moreover, some data initially left out from coding needed to be coded and fit into themes. The researcher took into account the advice of Braun and Clarke (2006) that there is danger

of non-ending coding and theme generation and decided to proceed to defining and naming themes when the thematic map appeared to be satisfactory.

3.10.2.5 Defining and naming themes

Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 92) suggested that "by define and refine we mean identifying the essence of what each theme is about (as well as the themes overall), and determining what aspect of the data each theme captures". The researcher analysed the data of each theme in order to identify the existence of potential sub-themes. Braun and Clarke (2006) suggested that sub-themes give a structure to themes that are complex and large and hierarchy of meaning to the data. In this study themes that contribute both to the concept and themes related to the Greek situation derived from the data. In regard to the former, the impact of financial crisis in voting behaviour and the reasons that voters decided to switch their vote in elections under crisis were themes that emerged. Both of those contributed to the conceptual framework. Regarding the context of Greece the reasons that switchers have decided to vote for the party of SYRIZA and the traits they voters want in a leader in the context of crisis and the meaning they assign to them emerged. Sub-themes were identified in all of the themes mentioned. In terms of naming the themes, the researcher created titles from the working titles that were developed during the previous phases. The titles were given to each of the themes after taking into account that they should 'show' clearly what the theme talks about.

3.10.2.6 Producing the report

The report's aim is to "tell the complicated story of your data in a way which convinces the reader of the merit and validity of your analysis" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 93). The report produced provides a detailed description of each of the themes and sub-themes. It also includes the required data to justify their existence.

3.10.3 Other consideration in analysis

Extra attention was given by the researcher to the tone and intensity of the respondents' oral speech. The researcher achieved that by listening to the audio files several times during the analysis process. In addition frequency, extensiveness and intensity of comments were considered. Frequency relates to the amount of times that somebody says something. Extensiveness is related to the number of respondents that talked about a specific issue. Finally intensity is related to the passions of feelings as expressed by respondents about a specific issue.

3.11 Clustering

Cluster analysis was employed to help the researcher answer research question 4. It is a class of techniques that is used for object classification, competitors analysis etc. Clusters are groups of individuals who share specific characteristics but are different from other groups (Malhotra, 2010). Therefore, the objects (in our case people) that belong to the same cluster tend to be homogeneous. For the purpose of this research study the distant measure will be the variances on traits. Although it has been suggested that in ideal cluster situations clustering has no overlapping areas, in reality the boundaries of clusters are not clear cut. Knowledge of the cluster for each of the objects is not required prior to the conduction of the research (Malhotra, 2010). Therefore the groups of clusters are suggested by the data that emerged (Malhotra, 2010). In the field of marketing cluster analysis has been used for various reasons (for example for understanding the behaviour of buyers through identifying homogenous groups of buyers). There are numerous steps that are involved in a cluster analysis. Those steps include:

- 1) Formulation of the problem and definition of variables that form the basis of the clustering. In this research study the problem is if they can be clustered and if so, how best to cluster switching voters and the variable on which to attempt to cluster them is perceived as important leader's traits.
- 2) Selection of a distance measure. For this research study the distant measure is the perceptions of switching voters on the traits that a political leader should have under the context of financial crisis.
- 3) Selection of a clustering procedure that can take a number of different approaches. The procedure that fits with the aim of this research study is the divisive clustering.
- 4) Decision on the number of clusters based on logical judgement (perception on importance of attributes and differences) by the researcher.
- 5) Profiling of the clusters.
- 6) Assessing the validity of clustering.

The above steps are more specific where data is quantifiable and therefore relevant in quantitative research approach. The application of those steps to qualitative research, which is the method of this study, requires careful interpretation; however the main themes from the steps still apply. From an interpretivist phenomenological perspective the identification of traits with deep meaning can improve the clustering basis.

3.12 Ethical considerations

There is a specific protocol that needs to be followed in interviews, especially when the discussion surrounds personal and sensitive information. This protocol starts from providing the respondents with information on the topic and nature of the research study and gaining their permission to continue with the interview after that. Moreover the respondents have the right to protect their identity (Fontana and Frey, 2005). Also, permission is required for the use of recording devices. Taking the above and also the sensitive nature of the research

(expressing voting decisions, political opinions and attitudes) into consideration a number of measures were employed by the researcher. The first one is that confidentiality and anonymity were discussed and ensured prior to the interview. The guarantee of anonymity was important for this research study as politics is a sensitive topic especially in the polarized political environment that Greece found itself in during the crisis. Secondly, the researcher reminded the respondents that they do not have to answer every question. In fact they were told that they could withdraw their participation at any time and that they could answer only the questions they wished.

3.13 Limitations

In this chapter the researcher has tried to explain the research methodology that was followed in order to meet standards of good practice (King et al, 1994). However, he acknowledges that as in every research study there are limitations. There are a number of limitations in regard to the sample, the type of the research method, the duration of the interviews etc.

3.13.1 The research itself

As it is discussed above, since this research study is a case study and therefore relates to the specific context of the study and therefore the results cannot be generalized. Moreover, the interpretivist approach, the positivistic criteria of external validity, reliability (from a quantitative perspective) apply to it only to a limited degree. The small sample of the study can show that there is a lack of generalizability of the findings. In regard to the sample, the focus was voters over 53 years old who switched their vote to SYRIZA for the first time in elections during the period of crisis. Therefore their perceptions may not be generalized to voters in general. Moreover, the researcher intended to interview more than the final number of 27, however the consistency of the answers indicated that the saturation point had been

met with this number of interviews and therefore there would have been little benefit in conducting more interviews.

In addition, due to the fast pace of political life in Greece and the austerity measures taken by the government during the time that the interviews were conducted, the answers of the subjects of the research might have been influenced. This is especially important since as Creswell (2003) said the researcher may give unconscious signals that can guide respondent to give answers expected by the researcher. The respondents can also engage in impression management techniques while being interviewed, with the researcher perceived as a person to be impressed (Kvale, 1996).

The context was also another important limitation of the study. Since the context is that of a financial crisis the results cannot be generalized for contexts that are characterized by normalcy. In addition, the results cannot be generalized even for contexts that are characterized by other types of crises or other financial crises as they are specific on the context of crisis under which Greece as a country was.

Moreover, the interviews' duration was below the suggested norm of 2 hours for in-depth interviews. That was partially attributed by the researcher to the high level of involvement that is attached to the political context by the respondents. This had as a result reduced the length of interview due to the level of understanding in regards to the political environment that the respondents held. Moreover, the nature of this research study and the personal ontology and epistemological stance of the researcher had an impact on the interpretation of the answers which is based on the researcher's understanding of the world.

Finally, if the research was to be done again interviews would be conducted both prior to and after the elections, so as to capture the views of the respondents at the time of voting, which

could have given a better insight in their views and reasons provided for their action to switch their vote.

3.13.2 Self-declaration of meeting the requirements of criterion sampling

As it is discussed above the criteria for participating in the sample were a) to have switched the vote to SYRIZA for first time in elections during crisis, b) to be over 53 years old. The researcher relied to self-declaration by the respondents that they fulfil those criteria as it was not possible to check (for the first criterion) the truthfulness of their statement. That could have also undermined the trust between the researcher and the respondents. However, the fact that respondents self-declared satisfaction of the two criteria is a limitation of the study.

3.13.3 Language

The interviews were conducted in the Greek language. Therefore, the transcripts required a translation into English. Given the fact that the researcher is not a trained translator the translation may have resulted in data distortion, which is a limitation of the present study. However, the topic discussed (politics) did not involve any technical terms in the language. Therefore, the probabilities of data distortion are reduced and the limitation of the research study minimized.

3.14 Conclusion on methodology

The aim of this study is to explore the voting behaviour of voter s who switched their vote to SYRIZA in the 2012 or 2015 elections and to understand the impact of crisis on it. Therefore the knowledge being sought was internal and subjective. For that reason an interpretive, phenomenological, qualitative approach was acquired and semi-structured in-depth interviews were used as the data collection tool. Whilst no research method is claimed to be

perfect, the identified weaknesses in the method used to collect, analyse data and identify sample have been balanced against the benefits that accrue from them. The following chapter presents the findings of this research study.

4. Research findings

4.1 Introduction

This section presents the findings of the research study including the initial exploratory findings. The exploratory research was conducted for two reasons. The first to validate the methodology chosen and the second give direction and help develop the questions for the interviews, as suggested by Creswell (1998). Therefore, the results of the exploratory research have informed the framework of the research study and confirmed the validation of the methodology chosen. Five exploratory interviews were conducted during the exploratory phase. The themes identified from this phase were consistent with those found in the main study (22 interviews), coming to a total of 27 interviews. There were several themes that were found as being important enough to include in the main research interviews. The main themes were their political behaviour prior to crisis, the influence of crisis to their lives and their voting behaviour, the reasons they decided to switch their vote, the reasons they decided to vote for SYRIZA and finally the meaning of the traits the voters want in a leader to have under the context of crisis and the links between those and the identified 'needs' of the voters.

Therefore, after discussing demographics the first section of the findings discusses their political ideology and way of political thinking. The second part presents the findings on their voting behaviour and their engagement with politics prior to the crisis Questions on their voting criteria and how they were used to vote and why were discussed. The third part of the chapter deals with the crisis and its impact on the personal lives of the respondents and on their voting behaviour. The fourth section deals with the reasons that lead individuals to switch their vote. The next discusses the reasons that led them to vote for the party of SYRIZA for first time under the context of crisis. The last (seventh) part of this chapter deals with the traits that respondents consider a political leader should have under the context of

crisis and the deeper meaning of those traits. Moreover, the traits that the voters assign to Tsipras, their meaning are discussed. The following sections explore the demographic and background themes that emerged from the interviews.

4.2 Profile of first time SYRIZA voters

4.2.1 Gender and Age

13 of the respondents were male with 14 being female. The age of the respondents, as discussed above, is 53 years of age or older. 11 of the respondents are aged 53-59 (of which 6 are female), 14 are aged 60-69 (with 6 of them being female) and only 2 of them are aged 70+ (of which one was female).

4.2.2 Education

The findings show that 8 of the respondents had lower levels of education (with half of them being female). At the undergraduate university degree level are 14 of the respondents (with 9 of them being female) and at Master's degree level (or above) are 5 of the respondents (with 1 being female).

4.2.3 Occupation

The respondents' occupation is broken down into three categories. 9 of the respondents were pensioners (6 of them female), with 3 of them having worked before in the private sector, while the rest in the public sector. Most of those still work as self-employed (10, no females). Others are employed in the public sector (3, all female) and others in the private sector (2, both female). Finally, some of the respondents are home keepers (2, both female) which means that they do not bring any employment income to their home.

4.3 Beliefs - The people and the establishment

4.3.1 Lower-Middle social class

An interesting finding of this research study, which will help to explain many of the respondents' answers, was the fact that all of them, despite their level of income and education, consider themselves as belonging to the low-middle socio economic class of the country. The following quotes are a sample of their answers.

"Where do I belong? To the lower-middle class of the society" (2,62,F,U,P,L)

"I may make more money than others but I am not a millionaire. I am part of the lower-middle class" (14,65,M,M,SE,CL)

"There is the upper class and the rest. I belong to the second part of people" (27,59,M,L,SE,CL)

The following quotes reveal what the respondents mean by saying lower-middle class.

"The everyday people like us. We are not factory owners or something like that" (4,53,F,U,PS,L)

"What is lower-middle class...the people of the society. Those that work every day to feed their family" (19,54,F,U,PS,L)

The above quotes indicate that even those who, according to the Hellenic Statistical

Authority (HELSTAT), are considered as being upper class (or upper middle class) perceives

themselves as belonging to the lower-middle social class of Greek society and try to separate 'them', the 'people' from the upper class that they consider as being something different from themselves.

4.3.2 The importance of the state

What was evident in the findings was that the majority of the respondents consider the role of the state as being important in their life and in politics. These include working in public sector and the non-working respondents (pensioners, home keepers) and some of the self-employed respondents. The respondents identified as having a politically left ideology showed stronger views in their answers. The quotes below are characteristic.

"The state should care of people. When they are in need to help them" (1,64,M,U,SE,CL)

"It {state} should provide to people what is necessary in order to have a normal life. Everybody should have free education and health" (19,54,F,U,PS,L)

"Of course state should help people. The government has to care. That is why they govern, isn't it?" (18,57,F,U,PS,L)

"The state is not a supermarket. It is mandatory for the state to help people by providing benefits" (15,58,F,U,HK,L)

The above quotes reveal a perception of the majority of respondents which fits with their left and centre left ideology. The perception that it is a responsibility of the state to help people (them included). Again, the respondents were asked who those people are. The below quotes are a sample of their answers.

"Everyday people Apostolos. State should help all people according to their need so that everybody can have the minimums of a real life...food, a home" (3,64,M,M,SE,L)

"I do not mean the rich ones. The middle level people" (23,64,F,M,P,CL)

"The people of the country.... The majority of the population. Those that live normal lives. The lower-middle class" (24,62,F,L,HK,CL)

The above quotes make evident the separation between people and the upper class.

Moreover, it also indicates that respondents perceive themselves as part of the people that the state has a responsibility for helping. The respondents then were asked why the state should help. The following quotes are a sample of their answers.

"If not the state then who? A person cannot be left alone in the world" (24,62,F,L,HK,CL)

"We pay our taxes and we want something in return of that. What do we have now? You need to pay 5 euros to go to hospital" (16,54,F,U,Pr,CL)

"We are the citizens of the country. State should help citizens when they are in need" (4,53,F,U,PS,L)

"The State is important to be able to help people when they have a need. That can take the uncertainty of people of what can happen if they lose a job for example. Now we live the exact opposite" (6,62,M,U,P,L)

The last quotes indicate frustration with the current situation which will become more evident later on. Finally, there were a few respondents who argued that the state is important however, they identify a different role for it, not interfering much with the lives of people. This view is coming from self-employed people who consider themselves as liberal or centre-right politically oriented. The following quote is an example of their answers.

"Yes, the state is important. But I quite see it as a referee. Its job is to make businesses keep the law. Not to invest. And to help people when it can of course" (26,58,M,U,SE,CR)

4.3.3 Historical events and period effects

The findings indicate that the historical period under which the respondents and their family had lived played a crucial role in forming their political ideology and in the end on influencing their voting decisions. This is mostly the case for respondents having left ideology and some with centre left ideology, who are also more influenced by family's opinions. The below quotes indicate the link between family influence and left ideology.

"My parents had socialistic beliefs. Also, some of my relatives were haunted by the junta. So for me and my brothers it was difficult after having experienced all these to follow another route in politics" (24,62,F,L,HK,CL)

"My father was an ideologist. He never tried to influence us though. He never told us what we should vote for. However, I believe that even only be listening to him speaking to others we were influenced" (18,57,F,U,PS,L)

"We were a very close family. Not only the five of us, the whole family. So it was not my parents but an uncle of mine who was in this ideology that influenced me. He told

me the stories of civil war, the stories of the 'government of the mountain' when I was young. And then it was also the junta" (15,58,F,U,HK,L)

"When I was working during the junta I could see outside my beauty salon, policemen dragging and beating people...also even before junta if you were considered by the government as a believer of the left ideology you were excluded from jobs in public sector. I still have memories of that" (8,68,F,L,P,CL)

"I would never be able to vote for a right party. I would prefer not to cast my vote. I still remember that they got my cousin out of university even though he passed the exams" (12,60,F,U,P,CL)

"I try to find party to associate myself within the left part of the political spectrum. I don't know if I could vote for New Democracy for example. It is an excess for me. Even today where everything is liquid because of the crisis I can't do it" (22,65,M,U,P,CL)

The above quotes reveal a strong link between family influence and formation of left and centre left ideology. A link is also revealed between the latter and the periods of the dictatorship primarily (as first hand interactions) and the civil war secondarily (second hand interactions – from family-). Moreover, the quotes indicate a distance from right parties because of the above historic events. So a split in the mind of the respondents is revealed between them and the right parties. They consider right parties as supporting the "upper class" – "the others" while left parties as supporting the lower-middle class, and since they consider themselves as belonging to that class, "the people" and therefore them. Therefore, the above quotes indicate that the influence on political ideology was not only based on family experiences but also on the effect of period that they have lived. Hence, family and

period effect had a much higher impact on left orientated voters rather than on the rest of them.

4.4 Political interest

4.4.1 Interest in politics

The respondents were also asked to state their interest in politics. The majority of those seem to be interested in politics with only a few not being interested. All the educated respondents but one have high interest in politics, while all the respondents having low level educated have low or no interest. The following quotes are a sample of their answer.

"I am interested in politics. I always was. I need to know what is going on in the country in order to vote" (3,64,M,M,SE,L)

"I am interested in the future of the country. Yes, I follow politics" (5,66,M,M,SE,Lib)

"Yes I do. I think everybody should. In ancient times the one who was not interested in politics was called idiotis (where the word idiot comes from) because he did not care about the country" (19,54,F,U,PS,L)

The above quotes show that the respondents highlight a care for what happens in the country and for the future of it as a reason for their interest in politics. The importance of the direction the country takes in the future is revealed. As it will be mentioned later, this opinion is heightened because of the crisis. The following quotes are example answers of the few people who argued that they are not interested or have little interest in politics:

"No I am not interested. I do not follow it. I don't understand most of what they say, if what they say is truth or not, so I don't follow" (9,72,M,L,P,C)

"I cannot say that I am not at all interested in it. But I am also not a fun of politics to follow regularly what is going on" (16,54,F,U,Pr,CL)

4.4.2 Political ideology

Since political ideology is regarded as an important factor for determining the voting behaviour of people, respondents were asked to discuss and describe their ideology and the reasons they believe in it. The majority of respondents identified themselves as being on the left or centre left ideology. Supporters of left and a part of centre left ideology are mostly female, respondents working in public sector and pensioners. On the other hand self-employed respondents tend to be centre right or centre left. The following quotes reveal their answers.

"I am a leftist. I want people to govern as much as possible. And to think of the 'common good'. I want that the state will help the society to prosper" (25,55,F,U,Pr,L)

"I belong to the progressive area of the political spectrum. The centre left. I believe in a society that people will not harm each other in order to overpass them, but will help each other in order for the whole society to progress" (14,65,M,M,SE,CL)

"I am a Social Democrat, the centre left as we call it here in Greece. As I said I believe that everybody should be equal against the law...the right ideology has not the person in the centre but the profit" (16,54,F,U,Pr,CL)

"I am mostly to the centre and a bit to the left side of it, if I can say it that way. I believe in politics that can help the biggest part of the society, those who are in need" (22,65,M,U,P,CL)

"I always believed that left people are more democratic than the right ones" (11,67,M,L,SE,CL)

A few other respondents argued that they see themselves closer to the centre-right part of the political spectrum. The following quote is a sample of their responses.

"My beliefs are those of economic liberalism. So I suppose I can consider myself as a centre right person" (5,66,M,M,SE,Lib)

Since the researcher identified that the respondents used the words 'society' and 'most of the people' often he asked the respondents to explain what they mean by that. The following quotes are a sample of their answers.

"By saying people I mean the most of people, the society, the everyday people, not the rich ones" (12,60,F,U,P,CL)

"Us. Me and you. The lower-middle class that I have mentioned before" (15,58,F,U,HK,L)

The quotes of respondents who see themselves in the left side of the political spectrum indicate something that also appeared in the findings in relation to the question about the socioeconomic class they perceive that they personally belong to. On first reading it could be argued that respondents care for the benefit of the whole society. However, after a second more in-depth reading it is revealed that the saying that left ideology has the person in mind

("most of the people") means that they perceive left ideology as helping "the people" and since they perceive that they are part of "the people" left ideology helps them too. In addition, they perceive the right ideology as caring for profit and helping the upper class and not caring of the majority of people. Therefore a separation between "us" and "them" is revealed in their answers. The above is something that as the discussion on findings deepens will become more transparent.

4.5 Political information gathering

4.5.1 Media

It is important to identify which media sources the respondents used to obtain political information. This is because the messages they receive may depend on the differences between sources. The general consensus was that most of the respondents get political information from a variety of television programmes (news and political talk shows) and newspapers (mostly national rather than the local ones), some more frequent than others, depending on their level of involvement. As aforementioned the respondents with low education levels also have lower levels of political interest and political involvement and therefore lower frequency of receiving political information. Some of the respondents aged below 60 also use the internet for getting political information, but not in the same frequency. The following quotes are a sample of their answers and reveal the pluralism of information sources.

"I do not have a specific channel that I follow. I follow the news everyday though. I need to know what is happening in the country" (17,61,M,U,SE,CL)

"I watch in television the news and whenever I am at home the political talk shows. I was always doing that. How will you express an opinion if you do not follow what is

happening? I also read the newspapers, however I do that only during weekends with a bit of tsipouro" (22,65,M,U,P,CL)

A link between the level of involvement and the frequency of information seeking is revealed by these respondents. The following quotes indicate a limited use of technology (computers and internet) for information gathering. However, that can be explained by the fact that most of them have mentioned that they do not use the internet often because they do not know how to use computers well.

"What I hear in TV and what I read in news. Sometimes I also check what websites write. But only when there is a specific issue that is important (for example the referendum last summer)" (14,65,M,M,SE,CL)

"Pfff...I cannot say that I search for information. Whatever television has. There is so much information even there that in the end you do not know what to believe.....I use the computer only to speak in Skype with my daughter" (11,67,M,L,SE,CL)

"I check the internet sites for news because they are faster. Of course television and newspapers too" (4,53,F,U,PS,L)

From the above quotes, three groups of respondents are created in terms of media usage and information gathering. Those that have high involvement in politics and mostly follow television and newspapers in high frequency (the majority of respondents); those having high political involvement and usage of internet together with television and newspapers (the younger age group –below 60- of the respondents); those having low political involvement and follow television news and rarely newspapers (respondents with low education and low interest in politics).

4.5.2 Friends and family

Another way that respondents receive political information is through discussions with their friends and family. All of the respondents discuss politics with their friends, family or both of them, with those having a lower interest in politics and lower education levels discussing mostly with family and less with friends. The following quotes are a sample of their answers.

"(I discuss) Mostly with friends. It is important for me. But only with those that can listen and make a decent conversation. You exchange opinions and you also sometimes learn facts you did not know. They may also persuade you to change opinion about something" (4,53,F,U,PS,L)

"Of course I discuss politics with my friends. Whenever we go out. What else to discuss about?" (3,64,M,M,SE,L)

"I always discuss politics with my friends when we go out. It is one of our main topics.

And with my son when he visits me. My daughter is not into that" (25,55,F,U,Pr,L)

"I do not discuss much. Only with family. I mean I do not understand much of it so I do not have something to say. With the family is different...easier" (8,68,F,L,P,CL)

The quotes highlight the importance that discussing politics with friends and family has for most of the respondents. For some of them, political discussions appear to be part of their social life. The quotes also indicate a potential impact of political discussion on opinion formation. The following quotes reveal that the reason for discussing politics is because they want to be informed about the political situation and the direction of the country.

"I am also part of this society, so I discuss in order to become more informed from people that know more of what is going on in the country" (10,53,M,L,SE,CL)

"So, I discuss my ideas on the future of the country and the policies that are suggested by government and rest of parties and on how they can affect it" (6,62,M,U,P,L)

Based on the presented findings, the sources of political information are mostly traditional mass media as well as friends and family. Hence, their perception on politicians and political parties are based on what they receive from those sources. The influence of crisis on information sources will be discussed below. However it appears that for some of the respondents, family and their experiences play a much more significant role that for others.

4.6 Respondents and voting

The respondents were asked if they generally vote in order for the researcher to gain an insight of their participation in politics. They have all answered that they have never missed a single election since they were eligible to vote. The following quotes are a sample of their answers.

"[I] Always [vote]. There is no chance that I would not vote even in local elections" (24,62,F,L,HK,CL)

"Always. In every election" (27,59,M,L,SE,CL)

"Always" (8,68,F,L,P,CL)

The word "always" reveals their determination and willingness to vote. Then, the respondents were asked to provide the reasons that they vote. The majority of those argued that they see voting as a way of expressing their opinion on the route the country takes. The following quotes are a sample of their responses.

"(It is) My right as a citizen to state my opinion on whom I want to govern me. From the moment that I believe that a party represents me better I want it to govern me" (12,60,F,U,P,CL)

"If I want to be called citizen of Greece I cannot say that I am interested in politics but when the time comes for voting not to vote. My vote is my honesty to me and to my fellow co-citizens. It is my right to express my opinion on the route that I want my country to follow. It is very important to me" (16,54,F,U,Pr,CL)

"It is an I. I am also present. If you do not vote...I do not consider it as good not to vote. It is something that the state gives to you. Your right to say your opinion for the future of the country" (9,72,M,L,P,C)

The above quotes reveal the importance for the respondents of casting their opinion in elections.

The following quotes indicate other reasons for voting.

"It is more like a habit for me. I am used to vote so I always go. I all the time say next time I will not go but I always end up going" (15,58,F,U,HK,L)

"I go with the family. It is like a nice Sunday, when we do our right. My children are coming with the grandchildren, we go to vote, and we then have a meal" (8,68,F,L,P,CL)

"Everybody should have a word. Governing a country has consequences in our lives.

You cannot be absent from that decision. I don't know...I don't find it right"

(18,57,F,U,PS,L)

Those quotes indicate that a small part of respondents see voting as a habitual process or as a duty. Although those respondents were a minority, they were all female respondents.

4.6.1 The importance of voting

Most of the respondents argued that voting is important, with only a few arguing that they do not find importance in voting although they vote. The importance of voting is clustered in three different groups. The first one regards voting as being important because it affects the final result; the second because of equality and representation and the third one because of casting one's opinion. The following quotes reveal the link between the action of voting and the effect that the respondents argue that it has on the election results.

"Vote is not lost in the crowd of votes. It affects the final result. Even if you vote for a party that did not win the election, it still affects the result. Because it affects the percentages that parties get and so their seats in the parliament and therefore their power after the elections" (17,61,M,U,SE,CL)

"The results are based on the votes. So my vote affects the results of elections as much as any other vote. Non-voting is also important. It gives more power to the

opinion of people who actually go to vote. This is what most people do not understand" (6,62,M,U,P,L)

"Of course voting is important. We do not have the American system where your vote might not been taken in account. Every vote counts" (16,54,F,U,Pr,CL)

The opinion that voting is important because it affects the final result is shared among all the groups of respondents (mostly voters of PASOK and respondents who swing their vote between governmental parties). It is also an indication of the importance of the electoral system on the voting decision making of those respondents. The following quotes show the importance of voting in terms of democratic representation.

"My vote may be one in the millions but every vote is equal. That's democracy" (25,55,F,U,Pr,L)

"It is what we have fought for. By saying we I mean our ancestors. To vote in order to be represented, to have a say" (13,57,F,L,HK,CL)

The quotes show opinions that are shared mostly between female and left orientated respondents. The following quotes highlight further the importance of voting but from another perspective, the one of casting it, which is also mostly shared between left oriented respondents.

"It is our only way of saying what we want for our future. Now, if politicians take our opinion into account that is a different issue but for me it is important to say it"

(2,62,F,U,P,L)

"I am not sure if one vote can change things. More important for me is to say my opinion. I feel that I did my part when I do it. The rest is for the elected government" (22,65,M,U,P,CL)

"For me it is important to express democratically my views on the issues" (3,64,M,M,SE,L)

The fact that voting is important, either for affecting the result, for being represented or only for casting an opinion, especially the latter, although it seems altruistic, it can be interpreted as they want to cast their vote because it is important for them to try and get the outcome they want. The following quote is representative of the respondents who argue that voting is not important for them, a very small part of the respondents.

"I told you that for me is more like a habit that I can not cut, not that I have tried to cut it. It will not make any difference to me if I will not vote" (15,58,F,U,HK,L)

4.6.2 Reasons that other people vote

When the respondents were asked to identify the reason that other people vote, the consensus was that people vote because of the benefits they would gain as an exchange of their vote (clientelism). The following quotes reveal the strong beliefs of the respondents to that effect.

"People vote based on their short term personal benefit. They exchange their vote for something that they want the politician to do for them" (1,64,M,U,SE,CL)

"He (average voter) goes to whichever party gives him the most in the election period. He has no ideology" (12,60,F,U,P,CL)

It is evident, by the straightness of their answers, that their perception of other voters is specific and very strong. The final quote indicates a link between the action of exchange and the psychological feelings of the weakness average voter.

"Frivolous and drifted. He has short sight in politics. I mean he expects politicians to find a job for his children and then he votes for the politician who does it. No ideology" (3,64,M,M,SE,L)

The above quotes reveal a strong negative position on the behaviour of "other people" in voting the exchange. The fact that they mention "no ideology" for criticizing other voters for clientelism is an indicator that they believe that they actually are ideologists. However, the fact that they argue that everybody else votes based on clientelistic criteria is a strong indication that, although it was not admitted in the interviews, clientelism is also the reason, or at least a reason, that the respondents vote.

4.7 Factors considering when voting

When the respondents were asked about the factors that influence their voting behaviour three factors were mentioned. Those are ideology, party leadership and the performance of the government.

4.7.1 Ideology

Ideology is identified as an important determinant of the respondents' vote. Although ideology was considered as being important for the majority of respondents those in the left side of the political spectrum appear to give higher attention to it. A sample of the answers of

respondents that believe ideology is an important determinant of their vote is presented below:

"I base my vote on what I see about the parties in the television. Which party I find as being fairer and closer to me. Of course who is leading the party is important too" (27,59,M,L,SE,CL)

"I vote based on my wants. What I want for my country. Based on my values. I chose the party that is closer to me" (13,57,F,L,HK,CL)

"I vote in every election the party that is closer to my beliefs. As I told you I can vote any party except those that are on the edges of the political spectrum" (3,64,M,M,SE,L)

The quotes indicate that the meaning respondents give to ideology is to be governed by somebody who is 'closer' to them and to what they want for themselves and the country.

4.7.2 Party leader

The following quotes are a sample of the answers of the respondents that consider the leader of the party as being important for their voting decision making. There is a mixture in terms of the respondents that consider the leader of the party as being important.

"The leader of the party is important. There is no boat without a captain" (14,65,M,M,SE,CL)

"The leader is very important. If he is good he will pull the party to his direction. His head needs to be half above the others' heads. So that he can see the future" (3,64,M,M,SE,L)

"A good leader that can generate trust for his abilities is important for a party. In the end there is only one that makes the final decision" (5,66,M,M,SE,Lib)

The quotes indicate not only the importance of the leader as the decision maker but also a link with the notion of trust and with the 'future' as they have it in their mind. The quotes also provide a description of the leader's traits that are required by the respondents. A detailed analysis of those traits will be discussed in a separate section of this chapter.

4.7.3 Performance of incumbent

For some of the respondents the performance of incumbent seems important. This is mostly dominant between the self-employed people, the PASOK voters and the voters who use to swing their vote between the two traditionally main parties. Below are some characteristic quotes as a sample of their answers.

"What they have done in the years that they were making decisions. I check that and then I decide if I will vote for them (the incumbent party) or not" (9,72,M,L,P,C)

"If the economy is fine it means they did a good job. If not then it means they are not good as government and they have to be replaced" (5,66,M,M,SE,Lib)

"I suppose that for me the most important thing is if the previous government has done things well" (20,70,F,L,P,C)

The quotes reveal the importance of the government's performance for voting and indicate an economic voting orientation. Moreover, it indicates a more pragmatic way of decision making compared with the above discussed ideological one. The following quotes reveal clientelistic relationships, and what they consider to be important for the party in government is to keep its promises. This answer was mentioned among all groups of respondents.

"For me it is important that their program is a continuation of what they promised to implement prior to the elections" (21,55,M,M,SE,Lib)

"If they did what they have promised. That is what I look. Have they implemented their promises or not. And if not why was that? Did they lie or something happened and they couldn't?" (27,59,M,L,SE,CL)

It is evident that for those respondents' promises and implementation are the driving forces behind their vote. Consistency is linked with the above mentioned economic voting. When they were asked whose economic benefit they are interested in their answers produced the following quotes.

"Of the society. Those people that need more, such as an increase on their salaries" (25,55,F,U,Pr,L)

"Of the people. You know sometimes numbers seem to show an increase of the total money of the country but this does not go to the people. No. I want that the government would benefit the people" (9,72,M,L,P,C)

The above shows again a link between voting and the benefits of 'the people'. This indicates economic voting, which could be argued is 'pocket book voting', since they consider themselves as being part of 'the people'.

4.8 How do they use to vote?

The respondents are grouped together into three different ways with regard to the way they used to vote prior to the election that they switched their vote. The first group consists of those who were voting for the same party in every election (the partisans); the second, of those who are swung their vote between parties on the left side of the political spectrum (left swingers); the third group consists of those voters who used to swing their vote between governmental parties (governmental swinger) meaning for parties that have probabilities of being elected into government (PASOK and New Democracy until May 2012). The following quotes are a sample of their responses.

4.8.1 Voting always for the same party

"I do not hide it, since I started voting, I have always been voting for the same party, for PASOK" (27,59,M,L,SE,CL)

"Same party, PASOK" (4,53,F,U,PS,L)

"When I was young I was also trying to persuade people to vote for it. I was voting for PASOK since it was created until 2012" (14,65,M,M,SE,CL)

"I am pretty sure that there was not any election that I haven't voted for them (PASOK)" (11,67,M,L,SE,CL)

The quotes indicate that those who were used to voting for the same party have been voting for PASOK. Those voters are mostly people having centre left orientation. There is a mixture in terms of their occupation between self-employed, pensioners and people working in the

public sector. The below quotes indicate that the reason they were voting for PASOK was the fact that, directly and/or indirectly, benefited by that party.

"PASOK took the economy very high. Changed the society. Cared and help the middle class people" (22,65,M,U,P,CL)

"Before they came to power most of people were struggling. Only the rich had money. PASOK created jobs for people. Greece was much different after that. But...they also made a lot of 'black money'" (8,68,F,L,P,CL)

4.8.2 Swinging between left parties

The following quotes are a sample of the answers of the respondents who have stated that they used to vote mostly for left parties. The respondents who vote for left parties are those with a left ideology, mostly women, pensioners and public sector employees.

"I have never voted for the communistic party. They are Paleolithic in mind. I support adaptability. But I was always keen to support a left government in Greece. The third road" (19,54,F,U,PS,L)

"I have always been on the left side of the political spectrum. So I vote only parties that represent this side. It doesn't feel right to vote anything else" (15,58,F,U,HK,L)

"I vote for left parties. I do not even check the rest" (2,62,F,U,P,L)

The reasons that they vote for left parties are the same with the reasons that they have mentioned on their ideology as the following quotes reveal. A division between 'the people' and 'the rich' is also evident here.

"It is based on their ideology. They are closer to the individual. They care about people, not profits. They are more democratic" (2,62,F,U,P,L)

"Left parties are different that the right ones. Their policies have people in mind" (19,54,F,U,PS,L)

4.8.3 Swinging between governmental parties

The following quotes are a sample of the answers of people who argued that they swing their vote between governmental parties. Those are mostly self-employed people, having centre-left to centre right political ideology.

"I have voted for different parties. As I have told you, my thinking is that if the government has done well its job, then I vote again for it. If not then I vote for the other big party" (5,66,M,M,SE,Lib)

"It does not make sense to me to vote for a small party. If it is not to govern, then why should I vote for it? With just being in the parliament it doesn't change anything" (21,55,M,M,SE,Lib)

"I consider the two main parties as being for governing and the rest as expressing opinions in the parliament and trying to influence the way they can the policies. Every one of them has its importance but I want somebody to govern me" (26,58,M,U,SE,CR)

The quotes indicate that there is a need for those respondents to vote for parties that have a higher probability of governing. The quotes below reveal the reasons why they choose to vote for governmental parties, which are their promises which can possibly link to benefits.

"For me Apostolos it is quite simple. If the government has done what they have promised then I vote for them. If not then I vote for the party that can replace them" (27,59,M,L,SE,CL)

"What have they said before elections about what they are going to do. This is important for me" (13,57,F,L,HK,CL)

"If the economy has gone well, That is my criterion" (20,70,F,L,P,C)

That again shows that promises and their implementation are of crucial importance for the respondents. By taking into account the clientelistic political system in Greece and their answers to previous questions it is evident that respondents want the promises to be implemented because they will have personal benefit from these.

4.9 The influence of crisis

4.9.1 The impact of crisis on living standards

As it is shown in the table of respondents in the methodology chapter some respondents have a higher income level than others. However, the level of living standards of all the respondents, despite their income level, is one of the factors that have been impacted by the crisis as the below quotes indicate, and this is considered as important for their change of behaviour and attitudes towards politics and politicians.

"After the cuts in salaries and pensions people are much tighter than before. That makes them not going to the doctors so often. So also our income is much lower than before. I am not saying it as a complaint, I am in a much better situation than most of the people but it is a fact" (14,65M,M,SE,CL)

"I have reprioritized my spending. For example, I am not going for shopping so often.

Or I buy gifts with less money than before. I could not do differently since my pension went from 1800 to less than 1200" (23,64,F,M,P,CL)

"I spend less money now. I don't buy so many clothes; I buy cheaper things in supermarket. I have started to check the prices more" (17,61,M,U,SE,CL)

"The places that I go out are different now. For example I go to eat souvlakia instead of going to an actual restaurant" (14,65,M,M,SE,CL)

The quotes indicate a decrease on the income of the respondents. Moreover, it shows an impact of crisis on their behaviour as consumers. The following quotes reveal a link with a decrease of living standards not only directly, with loss of income, but also with uncertainty and the fear of that.

"Life is different than before. I don't say that it has entirely changed but it is not the same. Mostly psychologically. I think more on what I spend now" (4,53,F,U,PS,L)

"Thank God we as family are ok. None of us has lost their jobs or anything like that.

But seeing people you know struggle, it makes you become tighter with money. Who guarantees that you will not be next?" (12,60,F,U,P,CL)

The following quote indicates an indirect decrease of income, not only due to the cuts but also due to helping family members.

"My brother lost his job last year. Since then he is working periodically in any job he can find. I also help him as much as I can" (10,53,M,L,SE,CL)

The above quotes show a direct impact of crisis on the respondents' living standards.

Moreover, all of the above quotes indicate a link between the decrease on standards of living and the emergence of the emotions of uncertainty, anxiety and fear about their personal future. As it will be shown later in this chapter, those emotions were neither the only ones nor the strongest that emerged during crisis.

4.9.2 Crisis, living standards and the emerge of emotions (Insecurity – Anxiety – Uncertainty)

As it is seen in part of the above discussion, respondents argue that insecurity, anxiety, fear and uncertainty are emotions that have emerged during the crisis. The below quotes are examples of the respondents' answers which reveal strong emotions towards the situation and suggest a possible link between those emotions and the vote for SYRIZA.

"I am afraid of the future. I have never been before. We are bombarded every day for years with bad news. I am scared, I really am" (2,62,F,U,P,L)

"Will I have a job in the future? I don't know. Will my salary stay the same? No idea. 6 years now we cannot plan even holidays. It is too much" (4,53,F,U,PS,L)

"I had a stable life, stable job, my family...living a normal life. Until one day everything changed. And after that I step, we all stepped actually, in non-solid

ground. We need somebody to give us a date of coming out of all of this. A date of freedom" (13,57,F,L,HK,CL)

The above quotes indicate a high level of insecurity, fear and uncertainty of the future due to crisis and its impact to the respondents' lives. Although this was the case for all the respondents it was more evidenced on the female ones. Moreover, they reveal that the reason for the emergence of those emotions is that they are afraid of losing more than they have already lost, since crisis occurred. What they want is somebody to take them out of the situation (standards of living continue dropping) that they are in. Moreover, the quotes reveal a feeling that the situation (crisis) has taken longer than they were anticipating. This is further explanation (together with income loss) of the frustration and anger they have, as it will be shown in the next part of this chapter.

4.9.3 Crisis impact on political interest

The below quotes indicate an increased level of interest in politics and an increased level of involvement in it due to crisis.

"The last two years I have watched as much politics in television and news as I have never watched in my whole life" (2,62,F,U,P,L)

"I watch more television, I have started searching in internet for news. Especially the last year with the negotiations I was all the time on news, I was almost having nightmares" (5,66,M,M,SE,Lib)

"I find myself following politics on a regular basis. This is something that I do not remember of doing before" (9,72,M,L,P,C)

The above quotes show an increased level of interest in politics but also an increase level of anxiety and fear about the situation of the country. In addition they indicate increase in frequency of receiving information. The reasons that their interest has increased is based on the fact that they want to collect information in order to reduce their uncertainty for their personal future as the below quotes reveal.

"Everything changes so fast so you have to follow the news every day in order to keep on track with what is happening in the country" (1,64,M,U,SE,CL)

"I care about my country and now that the situation is difficult I check more regularly what is going on" (25,55,F,U,Pr,L)

Those results were produced by the vast majority of the respondents. There were some respondents whose interest did not increase in crisis. Those were mostly respondents with low initial interest in politics.

"No I wouldn't say that crisis has increased my interest in politics. I am not running to watch the news or something like that. What is to happen will happen. I cannot change it" (24,62,F,L,HK,CL)

The above quote indicates a level of despair of the above mentioned respondents in regard to crisis.

4.9.4 Crisis impact on the use of media

Crisis appeared to have an impact on the media usage of the respondents. The vast majority of the respondents have said that they have reduced the frequency of buying newspapers,

both national and local ones with the latter being mostly affected. The below quotes are a sample of the respondents' answers.

"I used to buy everyday a newspaper. Now I buy twice a week and during weekend.

On the other side, now I have started watching more talk shows in television"

(2,62,F,U,P,L)

"I have stopped reading the local newspaper. Even if it costs 50 cents a day. I value money differently now. I do not think that I lose much on information though since internet exists" (5,66,M,M,SE,Lib)

The above quotes reveal a direct link between the decision to stop buying newspapers and the cost of them and therefore the above discussed decrease in the income of the respondents. Moreover, they indicate a link between the decrease of information taking from print media and the increase of information taking through television. The following quote highlights a different type of relationship, between decision not to buy newspapers and the fast pace of the news because of the crisis.

"Every Sunday I was buying 3-4 different newspapers and I was reading during the whole week. Now things move so fast that it does not make sense to buy newspaper on a Sunday and read it after three days. The news that you read will probably be too old" (18,57,F,U,PS,L)

In addition crisis has led to the decrease of journalists' trustworthiness as an information source. The following quotes are characteristic.

"They (journalists) all support different sides. When you follow them you know which journalist supports which party and which politician. I always double check what they say on news. Especially now" (22,65,M,U,P,CL)

"Journalists are part of the political game. They have always been but now they show it more, it becomes clearer. You know which journalist supports which political party" (6,62,M,U,P,L)

"They (journalists) have responsibility for the situation. They are very close to politicians. I am sure they knew what was happening" (13,57,F,L,HK,CL)

The above quotes reveal a negative feeling towards journalists, an increased distrust to them based on the way they portray the news. The increase of the voters' distrust is due to crisis situation as they assign to journalists part of the blame for it. They also indicate a need for reducing uncertainty as they seek information from more than one source. The following quotes indicate a higher level of trust to the information received by family members and friends than the information received from media. Moreover, they reveal a feeling of anger towards journalists.

"Journalists can lie to you because they want to serve their interests. Why a family member would lie to you about politics?" (11,67,M,L,SE,CL)

"Where were they when the politicians were destroying the economy of the country to inform us about it? I prefer to discuss with my friends and family and get information from them. At least I know that they do not pass lies on purpose to me" (26,58,M,U,SE,CR)

As it is mentioned, all of the above quotes reveal that respondents regard journalists as having part of the blame for the situation of the country. They show that the voters' 'defense' to journalists is to receive information from multiple sources and more from friends and family, indicating that they tend to receive information from sources that reinforce their pre-existing opinion. That is another impact of crisis to the sources of political information and their importance. The above perceptions are spread among all groups of respondents.

4.9.5 The impact of crisis on the importance of ideology and party leader

It was evident by the respondents' answers that for some of them the importance of ideology and of party's leaders has changed due to crisis. A sample of their answers is provided on the following quotes.

"I always had ideology in mind when voting and I believe that I will have it in the future, but not now. Other things are important now. We need managers to get us out of crisis, not ideologists." (17,61,M,U,SE,CL)

"Ideology in periods of crisis is put on the side to a degree. Everyday problems need to be solved so management capability is more important" (26,58,M,U,SE,CR)

"Well, I am not saying that I forgot what I stand for but... It is just that...at that time you need somebody that will provide solutions. If you disagree with him on some issues, it is not as important" (1,64,M,U,SE,CL)

The perception that ideology's importance has decreased is mostly shared between the respondents that position themselves to the centre left side of the political spectrum.

Therefore, because of crisis, they could 'move' in the political spectrum, as it has happened

by voting a radical left party. However, the left oriented respondents argued that ideology's importance remains high. The following quote is a sample of their answers.

"I would say ideology importance remains high. If not increasing. It does not drop for sure. In this crisis we need alternative policies together with someone to implement them" (2,62,F,U,P,L)

The following quotes link the increase of importance of the leader with the current personal and the country's situation.

"The situation is what we are going through. Every six months our income is reduced. This needs to be solved" (10,53,M,L,SE,CL)

"Somebody needs to sort out the mess that the previous governments have left in the country" (20,70,F,L,P,C)

"We need somebody to take us out of where we are at the moment. Of this non ending crisis" (8,68,F,L,P,CL)

It is clear that the respondents want a political leader to take over the situation and help them get out of crisis and the implications it has to their lives. The quotes show an urgency of going out of crisis which is in line with their feelings of anxiety, uncertainty and fear and indicates a tiredness of the length of crisis. The importance of the leader has increased among all the groups of respondents. However there were also respondents who have argued that leader's importance was already very high. Those were mostly men, self-employed people who consider themselves as centre-right and liberal and a few centre-left ones. The following quote is an example of their answer.

"Yes of course the leader is important in that situation. We need somebody to sort out what has been done. But... a leader was always important. Not only now" (26,58,M,U,SE,CR)

"A leader is always important. In every occasion. He is the one that makes the final decision" (5,66,M,M,SE,Lib)

"Look...it is not only in government; in any organization the leader is important. It was, it is and it will always be" (21,55,M,M,SE,Lib)

4.9.6 Crisis and the impact on the voting decision making process

Another element that appears to have been affected by the crisis is the amount of thought that the respondents put into their decision making process. Some of the respondents argue that due to the crisis they tend to put more thought into their voting decision making than they used to do before. The following quotes are a sample of their responses.

"In the last elections I read the manifestos of two parties in order to decide what to vote for. I do not know if my choice was the correct one now but before I was not thinking much of it" (10,53,M,L,SE,CL)

"I was voting for the same party all the time as I told you. So not much to consider. From the moment that I have decided to 'abandon the ship' I had to think what I will vote for. Coming to SYRIZA was not an easy choice for me" (9,72,M,L,P,C)

"Now I am more...how to say it...more alert not to make mistake. I find myself double checking it. Thinking am I correct, am I sure of that. Those are thoughts that I was not having before" (3,64,M,M,SE,L)

The quotes indicate an increased amount of thought during the voting decision making process. They also reveal an increased uncertainty and anxiety to the respondents on their choices and the impacts of those. In addition they highlight the reason for them to put more thought into voting is because they want to be sure they made the right choice. However, it also shows that before the crisis occurred they were voting without putting much thinking behind it.

The following quotes reveal that for some other respondents the reason for the higher level of thought in the voting decision making process is because they do not want to vote (again) for politicians who will not fulfil their promises. This is mostly evident for PASOK voters and respondents swinging their vote between governmental parties.

"I need to be sure that they will do what they say. So I think more, I check more" (4,53,F,U,PS,L)

"I have been let down quite a few times. I do not want it to happen again" (21,55,M,M,SE,Lib)

4.9.7 Crisis and ease of switching a vote

Another element of the political environment regarded as having been impacted by the crisis is the degree of partisanship, respondents argue that crisis increases the ease of switching their vote over to another party. This is based on the evaluation of the previous parties' performance when they were in government. The following quotes are a sample of their answers.

"Look, the politicians have done so much harm to the country in the last 30 years that I really now don't care. I can vote anything except the old ones. Some years ago I would not even thing of changing the party that I vote for" (17,61,M,U,SE,CL)

"I went to SYRIZA after much thought. I went because the others messed it up. If they mess it up I will not think twice" (1,64,M,U,SE,CL)

The quotes reveal a feeling of disappointment with the parties that the respondents were voting for before the crisis. Those findings also link with the decreased importance of ideology that was previously discussed. The respondents' evaluation on the incumbent's performance is negative and therefore they have decided to "abandon them". That means that the incumbent's performance as a factor of influencing their voting decision making increases due to the crisis. This was evident in PASOK voters and swingers between governmental parties (especially in the former group). The above quotes also reveal that those respondents are not going to have the same level of 'patience' with SYRIZA as they had with the previous parties.

4.10 Decision to switch their vote

4.10.1 When did they decide to switch their vote?

Regarding the time the respondents decided to switch their vote can be divided between those who have voted for the first time for SYRIZA in the 2012 elections and in the September 2015 and those who voted for SYRIZA for the first time in January 2015. The vast majority of the former group have decided to switch their vote during the election campaign period. The following quotes are characteristic examples:

"It was I believe a few weeks before the elections. It was itching me. But I couldn't vote for them again I knew it. So I have decided to vote for another party" (7,60,F,U,P,L)

"I think the final and decisive moment was at the polling day, having the ballot paper in my hands. You know, it is difficult to switch. But it couldn't happen differently" (9,72,M,L,P,C)

"After Alexis announced the snap elections I think. And when the extreme left split from the party" (4,53,F,U,P,L)

On the other hand example quotes of the respondents who have switched their vote in January 2015 are the below:

"Way before January (2015). When I saw that nothing good was happening with the Samaras' government. Maybe even a year before elections" (20,70,F,L,P,C)

"ohh I do not remember. I think it was close to September 2014, when Samaras reshuffled the cabinet. I think it was then" (5,66,M,M,SE,Lib)

4.10.2 Why they have switched their vote (Disappointment-anger-blame)

When the respondents were asked to state the reason that led them to switch their vote, the vast majority of them instantly mentioned that it was because of the other parties and of the situation in the country. That includes PASOK voters, voters who were swinging between governmental parties and some of the left swingers (mostly those that voted for DIMAR in previous elections, but also those who have voted for the Communistic Party). The following quotes are a sample of the answers.

"The truth is that it was the previous governments that helped my decision. They were corrupted, had created a clientelistic relationship with the voters. They made me say it's enough. I could not stand it anymore. So they made me to look somewhere else. And SYRIZA was on my way." (5,66,M,M,SE,Lib)

"They were supposed to care about people. That's what they were saying. If they would care this wouldn't have happened" (9,72,M,L,P,C)

"My son is abroad, my daughter is unemployed. I give her money from my pension in order for her to be able to live normally. She has tried many times to find a job on her field but there was nothing. She is thinking of leaving abroad too. What will I do here alone? Who is responsible for that?" (16,54,F,U,Pr,CL)

"I have two unemployed kids. One 25 and the other 29. What are they going to do with their lives in this country? The only jobs they can find are waiters with 400 euros a month. How are they going to survive? What dreams to make for the future if your salary is less than the pocket money you get from your parents?" (8,68,F,L,P,CL)

All of the above quotes reveal disappointment, frustration and anger towards politicians for the fact that they and their families are having financial problems due to the crisis. The above is evidence that the actual reason for being angry at politicians is not their practices but the fact that their practices led to them (the respondents) being in a worse situation than they were before. Finally, the following quote indicates frustration with the positioning of the Communistic Party.

"It was evident to me that KKE did not want to govern. Left was waiting many years for an opportunity and KKE was not even looking at it. So I have decided not to vote for them" (15,58,F,U,HK,L)

Their disengagement with the status quo is evident when they discuss more in depth the reasons that they are frustrated with it. The different groups provide different opinions on why they feel disengaged with the status quo.

Some of the respondents perceived the EU as having part of the blame for the situation of the country. Those are mostly respondents with left orientation in politics (a few centre left too). The following quotes are sample of their answers.

"Don't tell me they (EU) did not know what was happening in Greece? They knew that we fixed the numbers in order to enter Eurozone" (19,54,F,U,PS,L)

"They did it on purpose. They left us to bankrupt in order to take our national wealth on a very low price" (15,58,F,U,HK,L)

"How convenient for them that we bankrupt and they take all the decisions that affect the people of the country like they are our government" (24,62,F,L,HK,CL)

"Of course they (European Union) knew everything. Now they pretend they didn't but come one....I mean if we knew at some level what was going on they should have known everything" (3,64,M,M,SE,L)

The blame ton the European Union is based on three factors. Firstly, that they knew "what was going on" and did nothing to stop it (same with the politicians as it will be discussed below). This view is shared by the majority of respondents who consider the European Union

as having part of the blame for the situation in Greece, and mostly by women. The second reason is that the respondents believe that the European Union brought on purpose a crisis to Greece, which indicates that they perceive the crisis problem as 'imported'. Thirdly, at the same time all of the respondents complain for the European Union is taking decisions and not the Greek government. That shows their belief that Greece as a country cannot control its own destiny. The below quotes are indicative.

"I do not like that the decisions are made in Brussels. It annoys me. It really does. Are we a state with power or not?" (10,53,M,L,SE,CL)

"If Europeans decide about us then what do we need politicians here" (25,55,F,U,Pr,L)

"They (Troika) are coming here to tell us what to do and they leave. The technocrats are telling us what to do and we just do it. Is that democracy?" (7,60,F,U,P,L)

However, the biggest part of the responsibility for the crisis situation is given to the politicians of the country. They consider the politicians as being corrupt, pursuing clientelistic relationships with voters, being incompetent, lying to them, not caring of political cost and taking orders. The following quotes are a sample of their responses.

"Corruption led to the economic collapse of the country. We reached the economic crisis because of that. I can't say that I was not hearing about corruption cases. But I did not expect that they would bankrupt the country" (7,60,F,U,P,L)

"Corruption, corruption, corruption. You could see it everywhere. We were living in a bubble. When this bubble exploded then everything became clear. It is unbelievable how much money they 'ate'. They have to go to justice for that" (6,62,M,U,P,L)

The quotes reveal a feeling of anger towards politicians for the level of corruption and for them not stopping it before it led to the financial crisis. The opinion that politicians are corrupt is shared by the vast majority of the respondents. The respondents blame politicians for their practices after facing the consequences of it despite the fact that they were aware of politicians' corruption practices before the crisis occurred and negatively affected their personal life. The below quotes suggest that clientelism is regarded as another strong reason that led Greece to crisis.

"Corruption and clientelism brought us here. People were exchanging their vote for something that they wanted from politicians to do for them. Then politicians did not want to transform the country so that the transformations would not hurt their clients. Not only one and two. All of the politicians. That is the way the system was working. Totally irresponsible. And they keep doing it now after all these we have been through." (6,62,M,U,P,L)

"How do you think that all of those people with no degree went into the public sector? And they make more money than doctors while doing stupid jobs. Vote for a job. That was Greece in the last 30 years. No wonder why we are in this debt now. I am sure that the public sector has too many useless people that they are getting paid from my taxes" (27,59,M,L,SE,CL)

The opinion that the politicians' clientelistic practices have part of the blame for the crisis is shared by the vast majority of the respondents. The self-employed respondents and those working in the private sector associate clientelism mostly with unfair appointments of employees to the public sector. On the other hand, most pensioners and public sector employees do not mention a specific practice to associate clientelism with. Except the anger and frustration that the above quotes reveal towards politicians, they also indicate that

respondents were aware of clientelistic practices prior to crisis. Again, they blame politicians only after the crisis has occurred. The prior knowledge to this situation is revealed also when their answers to that question are taken into account together with their answers on the behaviour of the 'average voter' that is discussed above. Also it is revealed by the fact that the respondents have knowledge of details on clientelistic cases.

Another reason identified by a few respondents (between those that voted for the same party and those that swing their vote between the two traditionally main parties) as important for the situation of the country is the incompetence of the politicians that were leading the country. The following quotes are a sample of their answers.

"I cannot believe that they knew we were going to fall and they were not 'turning the ship'. I cannot believe that they do not care even a bit. They just could not do the job" (26,58,M,U,SE,CR)

"Those people haven't managed even a kiosk. And they took the keys of the country.

I am so angry on them for the mess they have created..." (16,54,F,U,Pr,CL)

The quotes indicate a belief that politicians that have governed the country were not fit for the jobs, because the job of politicians requires skills that the respondents perceive that politicians not possess. Moreover they reveal a feeling of anger towards them. They are judged as incompetent based both on creating the situation and on not being able to reverse it. The first quote also indicates knowledge of the situation but surprise of the result of it.

The following quote, demonstrates that some respondents consider politicians as liars, an opinion shared mostly by respondents with low education levels, indicate that they believe that politicians lie, since they do not fulfil the promises they make. That is another indication of the importance of fulfilled promises for the respondents.

"They lie to get elected. Then they play with you by keeping lying and findings excuses why they have not done what they have promised. I believe that in the end they believe their own lies so they actually think that they do not lie if you get what I mean" (23,64,F,M,P,CL)

The following quotes reveal a link between the event of crisis and the increased perception that politicians care of political cost.

"We are in this situation for how many....6 years now? And they still have done nothing. They only care about themselves, not the people. Only not to lose their voters" (1,64,M,U,SE,CL)

"They operate like businesses who do not want to lose their clients. It is not the country, it is not the people. It is about them. Them and the people around them" (21,55M,M,SE,Lib)

The perception that politicians care of the political cost is shared by the vast majority of the respondents. The above quotes indicate a high level of anger and blame towards politicians. Political cost is closely linked with clientelism. However, as it is said above, the fact that the respondents knew that this was happening before crisis but were not complaining indicates that the blame is linked not with the practice itself but with the impacts this has on their personal lives and possibly with the fact that they are not benefiting anymore, while other people are.

Another reason for blaming politicians, and therefore for disengaging from them, is because they are considered as taking orders from the creditors. The following quotes are a sample of their answers.

"The average Greek politicians never escaped from the 'tzakia' [meaning the big political families of Greece]. They have always been marionettes (meaning puppets). Why should they change now? It is just that the orders now are given from abroad" (3,64,M,M,SE,L)

"They have no voice. Troika says to do something and they do it. It is as simple as that" (19,54,F,U,PS,L)

The above quotes reveal a belief that politicians have no power or idependent voice, which is mostly a post crisis belief. This is shared mainly by respondents who used to vote for PASOK and who were swinging their vote between left parties. Although this view could be argued to neutralize politicians' actions as it is seen that respondents blame politicians for the situation. The quotes also reveal the respondents annoyance with the fact that decisions are made abroad and not in the country, as it is also seen when discussing the respondents opinion on the European Union. Therefore, they are annoyed because of loss of control, as it is also mentioned above. This indicates that what they want is someone who would stand against the creditors, and therefore in favour of the respondents' interests (increase their living standards instead of providing real solution for the situation). The respondents were then asked if they believe that people have to take part of the responsibility for the situation. The following quotes are a sample of their answers.

"I personally cannot blame the people. They ask because politicians give to them. If politicians were not giving they would have stopped asking" (7,60,F,U,P,L)

"To blame people for what? It is politicians that opened the door to the whole thing because they wanted to make them their political clients" (6,62,M,U,P,L)

"I hear that argument from some people. Let me ask you. Would this happen if politicians would not allow it? Not only they allowed it but they promoted it" (23,64,F,M,P,CL)

"Yes ok people might have part of the blame. But you can not blame equally somebody who took a piece with somebody who ate the whole cake" (17,61,M,U,SE,CL)

It is evident from the above, that clientelism not only is known by the respondents but it is also considered as being normality. It is something part of the everyday life of people. The above quotes also indicate that the respondents try to include in their answers the politicians as having most of the blame although they were asked about people who are involved in those practices. That is an indication that they were trying to redirect the answer. Self-employed respondents accept that people have a small part of the blame compared to politicians, while the rest argue that people have no blame at all. Moreover, the following quotes reveal anger not with the action of corruption or clientelism but with the extent of it. They also reveal partial acceptance of those practices. However, this is not shared by the majority of respondent but by some of PASOK voters.

"We didn't say not to take anything in the pocket. But they took everything and left the country bankrupt" (14,65,M,M,SE,CL)

"I was seeing the scandals but because there was the policy that we do not keep everything for us but we take also care of the lower people, er... I overlooked some things. I can say that up to a point I accept that politicians will be corrupted. In the whole world it is like this. But not to the point where you destroy the country. They will get some (money) ok, but they have also to take care of the people" (12,60,F,U,P,CL)

Those quotes reveal that those practices were acceptable for as long as the politicians were taking care of 'the people' and therefore of themselves too. When the outcomes of those practices affected them they became angry and started blaming everybody involved except from the end consumer of clientelism. Themselves. All of the above indicate the high level of disengagement of respondents with the mainstream parties and politicians.

4.10.3 Why SYRIZA?

The respondents were also asked to reveal the reason they decided to vote for the party of SYRIZA after they decided to switch their vote.

4.10.3.1 SYRIZA - The only alternative

The following quotes are a sample of the answers of the respondents who perceived SYRIZA as being the only alternative for them to vote for.

"We have tried for years the same recipe. It failed. Miserably failed. When something fails you either fix it or you throw it if it can't be fixed. What to fix from those parties that are corrupted until their bones? We needed a different philosophy of government. The only party that could offer that was SYRIZA" (3,64,M,M,SE,L)

"We gave our vote to them. Again and again. And what they did to us? Bankruptcy and IMF. No! we needed a different direction. And only SYRIZA offered that. I mean a democratic one...because Golden Dawn (neo-Nazi) and KKE (Communistic) offer different direction but not democratic ones" (23,64,F,M,P,CL)

The above quotes indicate a link between the disappointment and frustration that the respondents feel with other parties and the vote for SYRIZA. This party is perceived as the only option for alternative policy. This opinion is mostly shared between respondents of left political orientation and some of central left. All of the other centre and centre left oriented parties were in favour of memoranda and implementing a type of austerity measures. Only SYRIZA (together with the extreme right party of ANEL that they formed government and the fascist party of Golden Dawn) was promising exit from austerity measures by abandoning them and following an "alternative" road out of crisis, which is what those respondents have chosen. An alternative way out of austerity measures and a stop to the losses of their income and to the downside of their lives. The following quotes enhance that argument.

"Who to vote for? Potami? They do not even know what they represent. Or Dimar that went in the government with the other two parties that brought us here?" (15,58,F,U,HK,L)

"There was no one else. All the rest parties were also old. For example Potami. What are they? The same as PASOK and ND. A mix of them" (4,53,F,U,P,L)

Finally for some of the respondents, the people that voted SYRIZA in May 2012 and they were not voting left parties before it seems that their vote was a protest vote as the following quote indicates.

"I wanted them (the two main parties) out. So my vote was a vote against them" (22,65,M,U,P,CL)

The last quotes give a different meaning to the phrase only alternative, as the only way that the 'old' parties could 'go' and shows a frustration towards them too. This is shared within respondents who were swinging their vote between the two main parties and some of those

who were voting for PASOK. Those respondents switched their vote to SYRIZA either in June 2012 or in January 2015 (mostly the latter).

"They (PASOK and New Democracy) made me turn my back to them. With their behaviour. Totally incompetent, caring only about themselves. So I did not have any other option I guess. The only party that had possibilities of governing was SYRIZA. So I voted for him. Not for him actually but against the others" (11,67,M,L,SE,CL)

4.10.3.2 SYRIZA - Ideological affiliation

The following quotes give illustrations of the answers given by the respondents who consider ideological affiliation with the party as an important determinant of their decision to vote for SYRIZA (mostly left orientated respondents who swing their vote between left parties and a few with centre left orientation who used to vote for PASOK).

"I did that (vote) because I could see that they would do things for me. They would fight to protect my rights. And since then I vote for SYRIZA" (6,62,M,U,P,L)

"Being a left party would at least pass some measures in favor of people. It would take the measure that the creditors want but it would at least give something back to the people" (19,54,F,U,PS,L)

"Left parties care more for people than the right ones. I am also not keen with violence and protests so I cannot vote for example ANTARSYA (an extreme left small party). So, yes I believe SYRIZA was closer to my beliefs" (2,62,F,U,P,L)

The above quotes, although respondents refer to ideology, reveal something that was also mentioned earlier in this chapter. That the respondents wanted SYRIZA to support their

personal interests against the creditors and the austerity measures. This is evidence which reveals that the specific respondents have a more individualistic thinking than the one they want to show. Therefore, believing that they are in the part of the population that is supported by left parties, they vote for left parties. The following quotes reveal another reason for voting for SYRIZA, linked with 'ideology', which is related with the promises of the party.

"The party got separated from Lafazanis and 'landed to reality'. I did not want that they would be in the opposition again and saying that they wanted to do things but people did not let them by voting them out" (1,64,M,U,SE,CL)

"I did not want them to have an excuse [for not implementing their promises]. They threw out of the party Lafazanis, Konstantopoulou and the rest extreme left, which was good. They became in a sense logical, serious. I thought that they would see things from a different perspective, a more mainstream one" (4,53,F,U,PS,L)

Although those respondents mention ideology, it is revealed that the reason for respondents voting for SYRIZA is the fact that they wanted to see the party implementing its promises, which were the quick abandonment of memoranda and austerity measures and a possible come back to the prior crisis situation. That is shared by the respondents who voted for SYRIZA for the first time in September 2015. They were all voting for PASOK prior to that.

4.10.3.3 SYRIZA - Alexis Tsipras - hope

The following quotes are an example of the answers from the vast majority of the respondents who argued that SYRIZA, its leader and the emotions he created in the respondents was an important factor that impacted their decision to switch their vote. The importance was expressed among all groups of voters.

"They cut my pension, I did not say anything. They put more taxes, I paid. They put ENFIA (property tax) I paid. Now I do not have money to pay anymore and I do not see any light at the end of the tunnel. I was hopeless and SYRIZA gave me hope. To believe in better days again" (9,72,M,L,P,C)

"We are struggling. We really are. It is difficult to live in Greece now. Taxes, taxes, taxes. And then SYRIZA comes that says that there is a different solution" (16,54,F,U,Pr,CL)

The quote indicates a link between the voters' despair and frustration with the previous politicians and the fact that SYRIZA triggered the feeling of hope to people. This was evident mostly for the lower income respondents. This message decoded means 'hope for a future away from the crisis situation and the austerity measures' which was the positioning of SYRIZA in both the 2012 and 2015 elections and it is another indication that people voted for SYRIZA because they wanted a 'shortcut' out of crisis. This is something that will be analysed in the following part of this chapter. The following quotes indicate the importance of Alexis Tsipras on triggering the emotion of hope in the respondents.

"For me there is no SYRIZA. It is only Tsipras. I believe in him. I am not keen with the party of SYRIZA and what they support in some issues" (3,64,M,M,SE,L)

"A party without a good leader is like a team of goof players without a good coach.

And SYRIZA is not a good team. It is Alexis that inspires trust to the people"

(14,65,M,M,SE,CL)

"I like Tsipras. He adds something extra to SYRIZA. Something different than the rest. I do not believe they could become government without him" (4,53,F,U,PS,L)

"Tsipras, Tsipras, Tsipras, this guy made me vote for my first time a left party" (21,55,M,M,SE,Lib)

The quotes reveal the importance of Alexis Tsipras on the voting decision making of the respondents. They also reveal feelings of admiration towards him. The reasons for that are revealed in the following quotes where the respondents associate again the word hope mostly with the leader of SYRIZA.

"He (Tsipras) made me believe again that better days were coming" (13,57,F,L,HK,CL)

"I was almost depressed with the whole situation, bad news were coming from everywhere, a government that was putting only taxes...when I noticed him speaking I thought 'yes, there might be another way" (12,60,F,U,P,CL)

"When he became leader of SYRIZA, I did not give much importance to him. I thought who this young guy is? They could not find somebody else? But in the last two years, I don't know what it was, his power in speech, the fact that he showed he believed in his plan to take us out of this mess, his determination to implement it...I also believed him" (5,66,M,M,SE,Lib)

"He brought me hope that a different direction of the country was possible" (25,55,F,U,Pr,L)

It is evident from the above quotes that SYRIZA and mostly Tsipras gave hope to most of the respondents for three reasons. The first one is related to the above discussed alternative policy, which is mostly linked with the left oriented respondents. The second is linked with the alternative route too, but mostly with the fact that this route is with no memoranda and austerity measures, supported mostly by self-employed people. The third one is linked with the promises that Tsipras has given, which is more linked with giving back to them things that crisis took from them. This is spread among all groups of respondents. Therefore, as it is seen and although the word 'promises' was not mentioned by the voters, Tsipras's importance is associated with the trigger of hope in the respondents for the implementation of the 'promises' that the position of SYRIZA offered to them. Hence, the importance of Tsipras is based on his ability to persuade people that the promises will be implemented.

4.10.4 Other people and SYRIZA

The main perception of respondents is that 'average voters' voted for SYRIZA because they wanted to get rid of the other parties since they considered them as responsible for the crisis; that SYRIZA was the only alternative and because of the leader of the party. Those are answers that were also mentioned above as their reasons for voting for SYRIZA and their actual meaning has been discussed. Those reasons are spread through all the respondent groups. Finally, they have also mentioned another reason which is the promises made by Tsipras and the party. This opinion is mostly shared between self-employed respondents. The following quotes are a sample of the respondents' answers on that.

"People were fed up by corruption. You could see it. They wanted the politicians that 'ate' everything to leave" (6,62,M,U,P,L)

"The indignation. People did not want the old parties anymore and voted for the one who was promising something to them. They were disappointed from the old parties and followed the promises" (13,57,F,L,HK,CL)

"There was no other alternative for people. It cannot be that all people have turned to left ideology. It was the only way out of the old system. They wanted oxygen" (16,54,F,U,Pr,CL)

"People became indignant with what they were seeing around them. They could not stand this situation any more. Corruption was everywhere. I really mean it. And they wanted to put in power an uncorrupted person. He promised that he would transformed the country" (14,65,M,M,SE,CL)

"It was Tsipras. He persuaded them. They believed his promises and they voted him without searching about him. Who he was, if he has ever worked at his life. Including me." (27,59,M,L,SE,CL)

The quotes are evidence for the argument that the respondents voted for SYRIZA because they wanted austerity to stop (Tsipras's main promise) and to return to the life they had before the crisis. In the following quotes the importance of Tsipras's promises for the people is illustrated.

"People believed the promises that Tsipras has made. I didn't. But I know people that have believed him. He was promising everything while at the same time the previous government was cutting salaries and pensions. It was impossible for him to lose" (7,60,F,U,P,L)

"He promised too many things. Something for everybody. So eventually he got the votes. People believed him" (4,53,F,U,PS,L)

4.11 Leader's most wanted traits under the context of financial crisis

For the purpose of this research study it was important to identify the traits that the respondents consider as being important for a political leader to have under the context of the specific crisis and to gain an understanding of the actual meaning of those traits. That will help the research to fulfil the fourth objective of this research study (to use the meaning of the important traits in order to increase the understanding of the respondents' voting behaviour). The respondents were asked about the traits that they wanted in a political leader to have under the context of crisis. The vast majority included in their answers the following traits: caring, decisive, perspicacious, honest, persuasive, not caring about political cost, consistent, dynamic and uncorrupted. The following part of this chapter examines those traits one by one in order to gain an understanding of the meaning that the respondents associate with them. The following quotes are a sample of their responses.

4.11.1 Caring – about people

"I want somebody to care about people. About those people that struggle to pass the month.

Those that are hit from crisis the most" (7,60,F,U,P,L)

"A leader who cares of the citizens. Of the simple citizens of the country not those with the big money. I think that is very important. To care. It is a very big word. I believe everything starts from there. Because if you do not care, you do not do things" (16,54,F,U,Pr,CL)

"He [the leader] should care about people, about us. Among others of course, but yes...he should care. Because only by caring about something will find a solution. It is as simple as that I believe" (18,57,F,U,PS,L)

The respondents indirectly blame the previous leader for not caring about them. It is evident in the above quotes the association that respondents have in their mind between themselves and the average citizen of the country. Therefore, by saying that they want somebody to care about the 'normal people' they also say to care about them as they include themselves in this category, which is an indication of clientelism.

4.11.2 Caring – about the country

"Well I believe a political leader should put his country first. This will eventually lead to prosperity of people, therefore I consider it as of crucial importance. If for example in the negotiations with Troika he sees that something is not good for his country he should not accept it" (15,58,F,U,HK,L)

"A political leader....many things I suppose....but the most important I think....yes I think the most important one is to fight for the country. I am not saying that this is the only one. But if you care then you will provide help, if you do not then you will focus on things that you care, isn't it like that?" (8,68,F,L,CL)

By the words they use it is evident that those respondents want a leader to care about their interests and to fight for them against Troika and try to pass their policies, which are in favour of the respondents. Therefore by saying interest of 'the country' they also mean the interests of people (and therefore of themselves). Caring is a trait that is considered as important mostly by PASOK partisan respondents and by respondents who were swinging between left parties. Moreover, female respondents, public employees and non-working ones (pension, home keepers) require leaders to have this trait in a crisis. All of the left-swingers that perceive caring as being an important attribute for a leader switched their vote to SYRIZA in the 2012 elections, while all the PASOK partisans switched their vote in the 2015 elections.

4.11.3 Decisive – not undecided

Decisiveness is linked by respondents with quick decision making or else with not being undecided. The following quotes are a sample of their responses.

"When something is for the interest of people he (leader) needs to be able to stand to do it. I am so fed up with theories that I hear and never see them implemented. If you think something is good do it. And then you will be judged based on your actions" (11,67,M,L,SE,CL)

"I do not like politicians like Karamanlis (Kostas) who think and think and think and in the end they do nothing. I want the political leader to act. That is why he is in this position. Not to look at the walls and think. I am not saying to act without thinking. But to put a limit. Think but please act after that. Especially in a crisis where events run fast" (21,55,M,M,SE,Lib)

"You know what the problem is in Greece? We think too much. And then we do nothing. We take a project, think around it, making plans and then we leave it for x reasons. Then we take another project and so on...don't think that politicians are different. But in a crisis somebody needs to take the lead and make things happen" (17,61,M,U,SE,CL)

The quotes reveal the importance of making decisions and getting things to action in an event of crisis. All of the quotes about the trait decisive talk about action that needs to be taken and have a feeling of urgency. That can be linked with the fact that respondents feel tired of the crisis. Therefore, they want somebody decisive to take them out of it.

4.11.4 Decisive - Dynamic

The following quotes are a sample of responses which indicate the importance of the traits decisive and dynamic and the common meaning the respondents give to them.

"I do not want somebody soft. He has to have shine in his eyes to be determined to do things. A politician like that is missing from Greece. That is what is needed in crisis. Somebody to take the country to his shoulders" (16,54,F,U,Pr,CL)

"You know Apostolos, it is not that I believe in parties that are governed by only one leader. As I told you I believe in more democratic decision making. But when crisis comes, you want somebody to take decisions. And this somebody needs to take those decisions and not look back. That required quite of strength. Not everybody can do that" (1,64,M,U,SE,CL)

"If a leader is not a dynamic person then crisis will 'eat' him. He will not stand the pressure. He needs to have a strong stomach not only because time is running differently under crisis but also because you own party will try to stop you do things" (26,58,M,U,SE,CR)

The trait decisive here has the meaning of being dynamic. They want a leader to take decisions and implement them. When they were asked what types of decisions they mentioned again in accordance with the interest of the country (having the same meaning that is discussed above). The fact that they want dynamic politicians (which they say are missing from Greece) is an indication that this trait is the respondents' answer to the fact that they perceive politicians as having no power and therefore is linked with the fact that decisions are made in Brussels and not in Greece. Therefore, they want a leader that is decisive and say no to austerity measures and implement his policies, which will be in favour

of the respondents. Therefore, it is again shown that the importance is not tied to the leader per se but the policies that the voters require to be implemented. Decisiveness is the trait mentioned by most of the respondents as being important for a leader and it is dominant in self-employed respondents. PASOK partisans and respondents who swung their vote between governmental parties perceive decisiveness as an important trait. The vast majority of those who perceive the attribute decisive as important switched their vote to SYRIZA in the 2015 elections.

4.11.5 Not caring of political cost

'Not caring of political cost' was another trait identified as being important for a leader by the respondents. The following quotes are a sample of the respondents' answers.

"...it should be somebody (the political leader) who will not act for his personal benefit. That he will not just act in a way that he will not lose his chair" (9,72,M,L,P,C)

"You cannot lead a country and have in your mind how you are going to be elected. It is as simple as that. You need to have a specific plan and apply it" (1,64,M,U,SE,CL)

"Not to give a damn about his chair. That is what I want. Not to think, ooo if I will do this then I will lose those voters. No. He has to do what is right for the country. End of story" (23,64,F,M,P,CL)

The practice of clientelism that is blamed for being a reason that led Greece into crisis is mentioned. Respondents continue blaming politicians and being angry at them however it is worth mentioning again that this has happened only after the crisis affected their personal lives, which is another indication that what is important is the implementation of the policies that are in favour of the voters and to the leader per se. The policies for 'the right or good of

the country' are mentioned again. The respondents that were PASOK voters prior to crisis are mostly those who believe that a leader should not care about the political cost.

4.11.6 Persuasive – voters and party

"He needs to be able to persuade his own people that his plan is the right one for the country. That it will bring prosperity in Greece. If he can persuade them, it is easier for him to pass it through the parliament. But also to be able to pass it to the voters. Because if he can not then it might come to his mind the political cost. And then he may not do it" (12,60,F,U,P,CL)

"Persuasion works as a mechanism of reducing conflicts so I believe that for a leader, especially in a crisis situation it is important. Mostly for communicating effectively measures to the society and making them believe that they are for their own good" (21,55,M,M,SE,Lib)

"A leader needs to have rhetoric. If he doesn't then how he is going to communicate his ideas for the future of the country?" (23,64,F,M,P,CL)

Here again, the respondents mention the benefit of the country, which is the benefit of the 'people' and therefore of themselves.

4.11.7 Persuasive - negotiations

Persuading the voters and party members is not the only meaning that respondents give to the trait persuasive. The following quotes indicate that they believe that a leader should also be persuasive in negotiations with Troika.

"He needs to be able to hold ground with the creditors. And this can happen only if he has solid arguments. Those people are professionals; they are not Greek civil servants. So in order to win them you need to have arguments and to express them in a way that they will agree with you" (5,66,M,M,SE,Lib)

"I understand that every meeting in Europe is a war. A leader can not let the foreigners (meaning Troika) do whatever they want because they will pass whatever measures they want to our country and the people" (11,67,M,L,SE,CL)

"Don't you see what was happening the last years? They (ex-prime ministers) were going to Merkel, she was giving the measures to them and they were coming back and passing them in the parliament. What was this? We need somebody who will go and will say to them 'look, the things are like this...people cannot pay anymore', in a way that they will agree with him" (18,57,F,U,PS,L)

These quotes are very important as they also reveal a distinct feeling of frustration with previous political leaders because they perceive them as not negotiating with the creditors, but accepting their will. This is exactly the opposite of what the respondents actually want. The quotes reveal their annoyance that the decisions are made abroad. In addition they show that what the respondents actually want from a political leader is to be able to stand (decisive) against the creditors and persuade them not to take the measures they promote but those that he has in mind, which should be according to 'the right for the country and its people' (another indication of what is important for the voters). The trait persuasive was considered as being important by respondents who either were PASOK loyal voters or swinging their vote between governmental parties prior to their switch of vote to the party of SYRIZA. From the rest of respondents only one argued that persuasiveness is an important trait for a leader.

4.11.8 Perspicacious – danger avoidance

Perspicacious is another trait that was found in the discussion with the respondents. The following quotes are a sample of the answers of the respondents that perceive perspicacious as an important attribute for a leader.

"If he cannot see further than the others he is not a leader. Now I see it. Previous prime ministers were not leaders. They did not see crisis coming. Or they saw it and they did not avoid it. Either way they did not do their job" (22,65,M,U,P,CL)

"I need the leader to be a shoulder above the others. So that he can see further and see what is coming and try to avoid it" (19,54,F,U,PS,L)

"A leader needs to see things that are not visible to other politicians and to the people. He needs to be able to do things in order to escape situations that if another politician was leading there would be unavoidable" (3,64,M,M,SE,L)

These quotes indicate that the reason respondents want the leader to be perspicacious is in order to avoid 'bad things happening'. That reveals the impact of crisis in their thoughts and the blame they assign to the previous Prime Ministers for not being able to avoid crisis or to exit from it. Evidence suggest that they blame them for not doing anything to avoid it rather than not seeing coming since the discussion in an earlier part of the chapter indicates that their practices brought crisis to the country. The following quotes link the trait perspicacious not only with avoidance of events but also identification of prospects in the future.

4.11.9 Perspicacious – vision of future

"Karamanlis was seeing in the future. He took us from the hand back in 1980 and put us in the European Union (then EEC) without even a third of the population knowing what European Union is. And he did it for the benefit of the people. That is the type of leader that I want. To see the future and go to it even when people think that it is madness" (22,65,M,U,P,CL)

"To see things that other people cannot. And to go to them in order to benefit from them. That is the definition of the leader for me" (4,53,F,U,PS,L)

"It is very important for a political leader, a leader in general, to be able to predict in a sense the future. When you have this ability you have more information in order to make your decision. And your decision is probably more accurate" (2,62,F,U,P,L)

The above quotes indicate a more future oriented meaning of the trait perspicacious. They also reveal a vision for the future that the leader should have and lead people to. They want a person to guide them to a better future. Respondents mention again the benefit of 'the people' and therefore their personal one. Again, blame to current political leaders is indicated. The trait perspicacious is considered as being important by respondents who have been influenced by family in forming their ideology and are left oriented. They all have high education levels and the vast majority of those switched their vote to SYRIZA in the 2012 elections.

4.11.10 Honest

Honesty is another trait respondents want a leader to have under the context of financial crisis. The following quotes are a sample of their answers.

"You know what? So many years now we are in the dark. We will bankrupt, we will not bankrupt, we will go to drachma, we will stay in Euro, we are in the crisis, we are going out of crisis. Nobody has told us the truth until now. What is going on in the country? Don't you think that it is important to inform the citizens about the situation? I think it is very important for a leader to do that" (7,60,F,U,P,L)

"I want the leader to say the truth. To say to people the situation is like this. We need to do those specific things in order to overcome it. Simple things so that we know what we are facing. So that we can put a program in our lives" (4,53,F,U,PS,L)

"The truth. In everything. In how negotiations are going, on if the economy is recovering, on what we need to do next. Yes....I want somebody who is honest too. I have not seen that until now" (6,62,M,U,P,L)

As in most of the traits discussed in this chapter honesty, blame assigned to politicians for the crisis situation appears when discussing the trait honesty. By saying honesty respondents mean that they want somebody who would not lie to them, which means that he would believe the promises that he makes (which promises should be according to the respondents' interests). The latter is more evident in the below discussed trait, consistency. The trait honesty is considered as being important mostly among female respondents (only one of the respondents who consider the attribute as important is male), left oriented and therefore those who were used to swing their vote between left parties. Moreover, all the respondents who consider this trait as being important are either working in public sector or non-working (pensioners or home keepers). Finally, almost all of the respondents have been influenced by their family to form their political ideology and have switched their vote to SYRIZA in the elections of 2012.

4.11.11 Consistent

Consistency is another trait regarded as important for a leader to have. The following quotes are a sample of their answers.

"He needs (the leader) to mean what he says and to do it. I am tired of politicians who give promises before elections and then like nothing happened they implement a completely different program than the one they were voted to implement. I am really tired of that" (21,55,M,M,SE,Lib)

"To know that he will do what he will say and not something else. You know they all find excuses 'we did not know the actual economy's situations, not now we said we will do that in four years etc' who do they think that they make fun of? A leader needs to do exactly what he says prior to the elections" (4,53,F,U,PS,L)

"Most politicians Apostolos say things that can be understood from different perspectives. That way they can argue that they have never lied. That we understood it differently than the way he meant to say it. Bullshit. Can someone say in a straight language what he will do and then do it? That's a leader, not those who hide behind different meanings of their sayings" (14,65,M,M,SE,CL)

Again respondents show anger towards politicians for not following their pre-election promises when they are elected. That is another indication that promised polices are important to them. Therefore, they want a political leader who will implement the pre-election promises that have been made. This trait was considered as important by respondents who either voted for PASOK or were swinging their vote between governmental parties.

4.11.12 Uncorrupted

The last identified important trait, which was mentioned by a mixture of respondents, is uncorrupted. The following quotes are sample of their responses.

"As I told you before I am sick of corruption in this country. Everywhere you see black money. Corruption brought as in this miserable place. It needs to stop. Only if someone who is totally out of that gets elected as prime minister it can happen" (25,55,F,U,Pr,L)

"Uncorrupted. A very big word. You see people go into politics and becoming rich in a few years. How did this happen? By making 5000 a month as an MP you cannot buy 30 houses. Something else happens. I want this to stop. As we see it doesn't. That is why the leader needs to be also somebody who is sick of corruption. In order to stop it" (16,54,F,U,Pr,CL)

The above quotes show a feeling of frustration with the practices of the politicians throughout the previous years which was also evident in previous sections of this chapter. However, it is again evident that the respondents were well aware of the situation of the country and of the politicians' corruption practices. This trait was identified as important for a leader by respondents who were voting for PASOK or swinging their vote between left parties.

4.12 'The right decision'

As it is evident above the respondents mentioned may times the phrase 'the right decision'. Therefore, they were asked to explain what they mean by that. The following quotes are a sample of their responses.

"What do I mean by right decisions....the decisions that will take us out of the crisis and will make the country prosper again" (26,58,M,U,SE,CR)

"Right decision, right choices, you can say it as you want, are the decisions that bring development to the country by having in mind its people. Not selling everything to the rich. A bottom up approach" (9,72,M,L,P,C)

The quotes indicate that when the respondents say the 'right decision' they mean that it has to support the interests of the 'people' and therefore their personal interests. It can be considered as a selfish statement, which, as it is seen, repeats throughout the findings. They consider themselves as being part of 'the people' and support it.

4.13 Traits of Tsipras

In regard with the leader of SYRIZA, Alexis Tsipras, the respondents were asked to describe and explain the traits that they believed that he possessed when they voted for him for the first time (either in the 2012 or 2015 elections). The traits that came in the respondents' answers were the following: rhetoric, non-professional politician, young, dynamic and honest. However, it is important to understand the meaning of those traits and how they link with the situation they are in.

4.13.1 Rhetoric

The following quotes are a sample of the answers of the respondents regarding the trait rhetoric that they associate with Tsipras.

"I have good opinion about him. He has good intention. And the way he speaks is human not using political clichés. He makes you feel that he cares for you" (19,54,F,U,PS,L)

"He brought hope. When I was seeing him speaking in television, he reminded me of Andreas Papandreou. Ok, I might be exaggerating a bit, Andreas was in my youth and I still remember his speeches....they were magical. Tsipras was not like that to me, maybe because I got older I am not fascinated so easily, but he reminded it to me. He knows how to speak to people" (4,53,F,U,PS,L)

"The way he speaks is different than the rest of leaders that we got used to.

More....how to say it....more human. Like you speak in your everyday life. That was good" (26,58,M,U,SE,CR)

"I believe him. I believe that he will do what he says. I believe it because the way he speaks shows passion. That was missing from other politicians. He shows that he believes what he says" (24,62,F,L,HK,CL)

The above quotes reveal that Tsipras's rhetoric ability makes him persuasive. Therefore it can be argued that a reason that respondents voted for him is because he persuaded them that he cared for them, that he believed in the promises he made and therefore had good intentions to implement them. Again, and although the promised policies were not mentioned directly, they appear as something very important for the respondents. The attribute rhetoric was the one mostly associated with Tsipras by all the groups of respondents.

4.13.2 Non-professional politician

Nonprofessional politician is another trait common in the respondents' answers associated with Tsipras. The following quotes indicate that the meaning of non-professional politician is close to the uncorrupted trait that they want from a leader to have.

"He does not have the pathogenesis of the old political system. He is not corrupted for example. Or he does not have somebody behind him to move his arms and use him as a puppet" (6,62,M,U,P,L)

"He has white political criminal record (laughs). Nobody can say to him that he stole money or I don't know what else. He was not a politician before. That is a very big privilege that I think was important for him in winning the elections. People were tired from traditional politicians" (23,64,F,M,P,CL)

"He is not like the rest. He did not grow up into politics. He hasn't played this dirty game. He is clean" (7,60,F,U,P,L)

The trait 'nonprofessional politician' is associated with Tsipras by respondents who are mostly left oriented and are pensioners or public sector employees. The above quotes indicate that respondents believe that somebody who is new into politics is perceived as being uncorrupted and not having "masters" therefore he has his own voice and "stands on his legs". Hence, this trait separates Tsipras from the rest of the political leaders who are perceived as being part of the political system: those who are deemed as having a big part of the responsibility for the crisis situation and its impact to the respondents. Again, this is an indication that they wanted somebody who does not have prior clientelistic relationships, who would support them and who would 'not bend' on the negotiations as 'traditional' politicians did.

4.13.3 Young

The word young is another trait associated with Tsipras by the majority of the respondents.

The following quotes are a sample of their answers.

"He is young. Having fresh ideas, new way of thinking. We have the tradition in Greece to elect older people. The last decade it has started to change but having a 40 year old for prime minister means that he will bring new ethos in the political life and new way of government" (20,70,F,L,P,C)

"We need to give a chance to the young generation. Yes I believe the fact that he is young will work to the benefit of the country. He will do things differently" (3,64,M,M,SE,L)

"He thinks differently. Maybe it is because of his age. He has different mentality than other politicians" (7,60,F,U,P,L)

The quotes reveal a link between the word young and a different way of thinking from the previous politicians. That is another trait that separates Tsipras from them in the mind of the respondents. The quotes make clear that the respondents want different policies (compared to the existing ones) implemented and therefore 'new way of thinking' is linked with the alternative road out of crisis (following the promises made). Moreover, young also means nonprofessional into politics. The final quote reveals a link between youth and passion. Moreover, persuasion is also indicated.

"It is not the age that matters. He is young in spirit. When he speaks you see sparkles in his eyes. The other politicians speak a 'wooden' language, he speaks the language of passion, as every young person" (9,72,M,L,P,C)

This quote reveals also the way that older people, the sample, see a political leader of 40 years old. It is important to mention that the age of Samaras (his main opponent in both the 2012 and January 2015 elections) was over 60. The trait young is perceived as important by a mixture of the respondents, however only one self-employed associated this trait with Tsipras. The more educated respondents link the trait young with a new way of thinking, while the least educated with passion.

4.13.4 Dynamic – rise

Dynamic is another trait that the respondents associated with Tsipras. The following quotes are a sample of their answers.

"Have you seen any other leader taking a party at 4% and bringing it to 36%? A left party. For first time in history. And all of this by himself. If a part of SYRIZA members were like him then the percentage would have been much higher" (17,61,M,U,SE,CL)

"He took a party that was in and out of parliament and put it in the government. This seems almost impossible. Only Andreas Papandreou has done something similar" (5,66,M,M,SE,Lib)

"When he was elected leader of SYRIZA he was 34 years old. He had to be very dynamic in order to take at this young age all the right decisions that brought him to the prime ministers position. I mean, he has done a historical thing, an amazing achievement" (26,58,M,U,SE,CR)

The quotes indicate that respondents admire Tsipras for the 'road' that he has followed until his election to the PM's position. There is also an association with Andreas Papandreou. The link of dynamism of Tsipras with the rise of the party of SYRIZA is shared mostly among male, self-employed respondents and those who were either voting for PASOK or swinging their vote between governmental parties. The following quotes reveal a link between dynamism and the way that Tsipras has negotiated with Troika, and therefore indirectly with the policies he was trying to pass.

4.13.5 Dynamism – negotiations

"For eight months he negotiated like any other prime minister before him. He tried to do the best for the country. He did not put his ears down an accepted all of what they (Troika) were saying to him. He fought for his country. He fought to the end" (18,57,F,U,PS,L)

"I still remember watching Eurogroups and the negotiations during last summer. It was something amazing. Everything was on a thin line. That is negotiation. Not what Samaras was doing. Pretending to negotiate but accepting everything" (20,70,F,L,P,C)

"He did the best he could for the country. And he was not even scared to go to a referendum when everybody was threatening that we would be out of euro and the EU. He said he would fight and he did it" (14,65,M,M,SE,CL)

In the quotes the blame to the previous political leaders for not negotiating is evident.

Moreover, an admiration of Tsipras is revealed based on the fact that he is perceived as having fought against the creditors, as he has promised, as represented and supported 'the

country' and therefore the respondents' interests against them. This is something that was a major requirement for a leader to have by the respondents, as it is seen above. Moreover, it is extra evidence to the fact that they actually wanted somebody to protect their interests against Troika. The attribution of dynamism in negotiations with Tsipras was made by a mixture of respondents, with the females being the majority. However, there was a minority of respondents (the centre right and liberal ones) that find the dynamism he has shown in negotiations being negative. A characteristic example is the following quote.

"He should have done it differently at that point. He showed dynamism but seeing the result now...I don't know. Maybe he could have negotiated differently" (21,55,M,M,SE,Lib)

4.13.6 Honest

The last trait that some of the respondents associate with Alexis Tsipras is honesty. The following quotes are a sample of their answers.

"You can see that he believes what he says. He doesn't speak like the others. He has it in his heart. He means what he says and I believe that when he was saying those things he believed that he could deliver" (13,57,F,L,HK,CL)

"He promised so many things that I could not believe that he believed them. I was thinking that he was just promising to be elected. But then watching him speaking....I don't know....he was creating more and more to me the impression that you know what? I think he believes what he says. Maybe we are prejudiced because of the behaviour of the rest of politicians...let's give him a chance he might do them. That's what I thought. I think most of people thought that way" (4,53,F,U,PS,L)

"I believed him when I met him. You know when SYRIZA was in 4% and in every speech there were maximum 100-150 people...e I went to see him. And I spoke with him in person. He seemed an ok guy to me. An honest one. And since 2012 I vote for him" (6,62,M,U,P,L)

The trait honesty is associated with Tsipras mostly by female respondents. This is also associated by those respondents who have left and some centre left political orientation and who used either to vote for PASOK or to swing their vote between left wing parties. The above quotes reveal a link between the honesty that they perceive Tsipras as having and his ability to persuade, based on his rhetoric ability, as it is mentioned above. This is clear evidence that the respondents link honesty with the promises he made about policies and that they were persuaded that he believed what he was promising and that he would implement them. That appears to be important for the above mentioned respondents in order to vote for him. To some respondents that have argued that they did not believe the promises he has made (mostly left oriented voters) the researcher has asked how they believe that he is honest if they did not believe his promises. The following answers are a sample of their responses.

"I did not say that he lied. I did not believe that all the promises could be implemented. He may believed it" (4,53,F,U,PS,L)

"He had a plan to make things happen. I was not sure if he could do all of those or just some. That is what I meant" (12,60,F,U,P,CL)

"Maybe it was his youth and passion that he wanted to do everything. I did not believe that he could. That does not mean that he lied" (19,54,F,U,PS,L)

The quotes indicate that those respondents try to excuse Tsipras and/or their answer when they were asked if they believed his pre-election promises. It also reveals something else, which is the fact that they admit (indirectly) that they have also believed some of the promises, or that they hoped that he could implement them. What they actually say is that they did not believe that he would implement all of his promises but that they were hoping and would be happy if he could implement even part of those. Below the findings on the identified clusters of the respondents is presented.

4.14 Leader's traits and understanding of voting behaviour - Cluster

RQ4 – Can the understanding of the meaning of the traits that switching voters want a political leader to have under the concept of financial crisis be used to increase understanding of voting behaviour?

Switchers that voted for the party of SYRIZA for the first time under the context of crisis have been clustered by leader's traits as the meaningful distance measure. The findings indicated quite of few combinations of traits; however a closer examination of those showed that four were the main traits that appeared in all combinations, while the rest were additional ones. Therefore the four main traits are included in the trait map which will be presented in the next chapter. The respondents that appear in the corners have not chosen only that trait (for example caring) but also traits from the additional ones (for example caring and uncorrupted). Moreover, one respondent had mentioned all the attributes and was appearing in every cluster so it was eliminated from the map. As the trait map (4.1) shows the respondents can be classified in three clusters, with some of them belonging only in one cluster while others belonging in two of those. The largest cluster is based on the trait decisiveness, which means that for the participants of this cluster the most important, is for the political leader to be able to stand and represent the respondents' will, against the will of Troika.

Figure 4-1- Trait Map of switchers' leader's traits orientation clusters

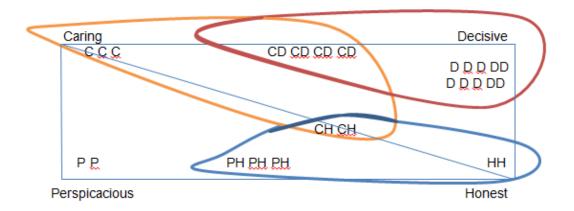


Table (4.1) presents the profiles of the clusters that were created. Communication can be developed to appeal to address (RQ4).

Table 4-1 - Switchers' clusters

Group A (Protect me) Decisiveness+ Participants: 5,11,21,23,17,10,14, 20,26,27,1,15,16,25 More male than female (9/14) and self-employed people (9/14). The income of most of them (9/14) was 20k+. In terms of political ideology (12/14) are centre left to liberal. 11/14 of them are not influenced by family in order to form their ideology. 12/14 were PASOK voters or swinging between PASOK and New Democracy. Finally, most of them (12/14) have switched their vote to SYRIZA in 2015 elections.

Group B (help me) Caring+ Participants: 8,9,12,1,15,16,25,7,18

Female dominant (7/9) with 8/9 of them being employed by someone (private or public sector) or in non-working population. Most of them have income under 20k (8/9). 6/9 have been influenced by family to form their ideology, and they were voters of either PASOK or left parties' swingers. A mix of left and centre left ideologically and a mix of switching their vote to SYRIZA in 2012 and 2015.

Group C (don't lie to me) Honesty + Participants: 6,13,2,4,19,7,18

Female dominant (6/7). Most of the educated to a degree level (6/7) and all of them earning less than 20k annually. They either work in public sector or belong to the non-working population. Most of the have been influence by family to form their ideology and are of left ideology (6/7). Also, most of them were swinging between left parties (6/7) and switched their vote to SYRIZA in 2012 (6/7).

4.15 Research Findings conclusion

This chapter has presented the findings of the study. The most significant findings of this study include the effect of crisis on different factors that influence the voting behaviour of the respondents. Moreover, the timing of their decision to switch their vote and the reasons for it are revealed. Also, the reasons they have voted for the party of SYRIZA are discussed. Finally, a deeper understanding of the respondents' voting behaviour is gained by revealing the meaning of the traits that the respondents want a leader to have under the context of financial crisis. The following chapter aims to discuss the findings and synthesize with the literature review in order to gain a further understanding the voting behaviour of the respondents under the context of financial crisis. Finally, the clusters and the more demographic findings are discussed.

5. Discussion

5.1 Structure of chapter

The findings of the research have provided important insights into crisis and voting behaviour of voters who have switched their vote to the party of SYRIZA for first time in the elections of 2012 or 2015. Due to the lack of research in regards to the voting behaviour under the context of financial crisis it was perceived that there were two key dimensions fundamental to aiding understanding and therefore to structuring the chapter. These are: the important elements of voting behaviour and the changes to the political environment that the financial crisis has triggered. The key findings of this research study are the impacts of crisis to the political environment and consequently to the voting behaviour of switching voters, the actual reason that people have switched their vote; the reasons they decided to vote for SYRIZA and the exploration of the meaning of the traits that a leader is required to have under the specific context of crisis. By the latter an enhanced understanding of switching voters' voting behaviour is revealed and will be discussed. The chapter structure is reflective of the contribution of this thesis and begins with the recurring perception of respondents about the voting behaviour and the important factors that have an impact on it; the financial crisis and its influence on voting behaviour; the reasons behind an individual's decision to switch their vote and the reasons they have voted for the party of SYRIZA. Moreover, the traits that the voters require a political leader to have under the context of crisis are also analysed, from a perspective which focuses on a deeper understanding of voting behaviour. Finally, the traits that the respondents perceive Tsipras to have, and their deeper meaning are analysed. The findings of this study illuminate the impact of financial crisis on the voting behaviour of switching voters and the importance of a leader's traits in gaining a deeper understanding of the voting behaviour of switching voters. Moreover, the theories of selfconcept and naturalization are discussed in order to explain parts of the respondents'

behaviour. Finally, differences in behaviour based on trait clusters and the more demographic findings of the study are discussed.

The conclusions suggest that the impact of the financial crisis on voting behaviour (RQ2) is mostly based on the decrease of living standards and the emotions that were generated from that. The emotions identified by all the respondents were anxiety, uncertainty, fear about the future and anger on those that they considered as responsible for the crisis situation. The importance of ideology as a factor influencing voting behaviour has decreased during the crisis for all the respondents except from the left identifying with left wing parties, for which it remains high. On the other hand, the importance of the party leader has increased for everybody, while at the same time the importance of the performance of the incumbent increases for the PASOK voters and governmental swingers, who appear to be less tolerant with politicians and it is much easier for them to swing their vote. The general political interest of the majority of respondents (mostly educated ones) has increased due to the crisis and therefore they search for more information. Moreover, their opinion on the status quo (mainstream politicians, European Union, journalists) has become negative to a high degree.

In addition the reasons behind respondents' decisions in order to firstly switch their vote (RQ1) and secondly to decide to vote for the party of SYRIZA (RQ3) differ among the groups of respondents. The respondents were dissatisfied with the environment created by the crisis situation in the country and they had strong negative feelings towards mainstream politicians, considering them responsible for it. However, not all of them took the decision to switch their vote at the same time, as some of them voted for SYRIZA in 2012 and some in 2015. Those who switched their vote in 2012 have decided to do so during the election campaign, while those who switched their vote in the 2015 elections (mostly in January) decided to switch their vote way before the announcement of the snap elections. In terms of the reasons that led them to vote for the party of SYRIZA, the politically more left orientated

switched their vote to the party of SYRIZA for two interconnected reasons. The first one is their ideological affiliation with the party and the second because they saw SYRIZA as the only party that could offer an alternative policy close to their ideology that could be implemented. Moreover, they saw the party as a credible compared with the other main political parties. The deeper meaning of those two reasons is that fact that they want the social group they belong to, to benefit. Important role on their decision was Tsipras, who was promising the alternative policy.

On the other hand PASOK partisans and swingers between governmental parties switched their vote to the party of SYRIZA mostly in 2015 when it was clear that it was the only party that could overthrow the other two parties who were being blamed for the crisis. Those respondents have mostly voted for SYRIZA because of the promises that Tsipras was making for providing a solution to the problem of crisis which included a halt of austerity measures. Promises seemed to play an important part for the once loyal PASOK loyal voters. The main issue for all the respondents was that they wanted to 'escape' from austerity measures and to stop the 'haemorrhage' of their personal income. In a sense they wanted to return as close as possible to their way of life prior to the crisis.

The traits considered important for a leader to have are relevant to the specific context of crisis and increase the understanding of the respondents' voting behaviour (RQ4), as they indicate that the respondents wanted to put a leader into government that would work for their interests against the Troika, which they perceive as being the 'enemy'. The most important ones are honest (for female and ideologically left oriented respondents, who are either public sector employees or belong to the non-working population); caring (for female, employed or non-working respondents who used to be PASOK partisans or to swung their vote between left parties); and decisive (for male, self-employed respondents who earn more income than the rest and were used to either be PASOK partisans or swung their vote between governmental-swingers).

5.2 Voters prior to the crisis

Findings indicate that prior to the crisis and the decision to switch their vote respondents could be segmented into two main types of voters; the partisans (loyal PASOK voters) and the swingers. The swingers could again be clustered in two groups of voters; those who used to swing their vote between left parties and those who swung their vote between the two main parties (PASOK and New Democracy). The findings reveal that the reason that the first group of voters, who perceive themselves as having centre left orientation in politics, were PASOK loyal voters is because they were benefited by the party on a personal level. From the two swingers' groups those who were used to swing their vote between governmental parties, centre-left to centre right oriented politically, base their vote on the promises that the main parties made each time prior to the elections. For this group of voters, who are mainly self-employed people, the probability that the party they vote for will govern is very important as the implementation of the promises is based on that. According to literature both of the aforementioned groups of voters can be considered as economic pocket-book voters, meaning that they vote for the party under which government they believe would be better of economically (Chadou, 2013). Finally, the other group of swing voters, those who swung their vote between the left parties, seems to have a different view on politics and vote not in order for somebody to manage the situation but for the one who would change it. Therefore, while the former seem to have a more pragmatic view on politics, the latter seem to have a more ideological one.

Although all respondents believe in the schism of "us" versus "the others", in the minds of those who swung their vote between left parties that schism is stronger, as discussed below. Those people are mostly females, pensioners and public sector employees who were influenced by their family to their ideology formation. That means that they are people that their income is directly dependent on the state and therefore the decision of the government.

The fact that they vote for the party that mostly represents the group they believe they belong to ("the people") can be considered as evidence that they do not care about the prosperity of the society as a whole but only of the social group they belong. As it is said, they do not vote for receiving direct benefits but for getting benefited (together with the group they belong) by the changes to society that a left party can bring once in government. The above discussed findings about all groups reinforce the arguments of Markaki and Apospori (2008, p. 3) who stated that "most Greek voters used to make their choices not on the basis of what is good for the society in general, but on the basis of what they believed was good form them personally and on the basis of their family's tradition". Below, the factors considered by the respondents as having an influence on their voting behaviour are discussed.

5.2.1 Factors influencing voting behaviour

5.2.1.1 Age, period and cohort effect (Junta – PASOK – polarisation)

The age of the respondents is a very important factor that influences their vote, not only because it determines their needs but because of the political periods in which they have lived. The Junta and its fall appeared to have a big influence on the perceptions of the respondents about politics and therefore to have an impact on their voting behaviour. The beginning of that story, of which the respondents have first-hand experience, goes before Junta, in 1965 and another conflict between a prime minister and the former King of Greece which deepens the schism even more. That has made voters for the party of Centres Union to form anti-right and anti-monarch feelings, as they were seeing the palace as blocking the centre from getting power (Kalyvas, 1997). However, it was the fall of Junta that made everything it stood for to be questioned, critiqued and attacked (Dimitras, 1990). The findings of this research study reveal that the anti-traditional, anti-capitalistic, anti-western, anti-right attitudes that was created in the young people of the country (those who matured politically

after 1967 and at most after 1960 – the sample of this research study) after the fall of Junta (Dimitras, 1990) is still alive and strong, especially among the left-oriented voters and some of centre left orientation. Therefore this can be considered as a historical event which affected the voting behaviour of a specific generation of people and shaped their behaviour for the rest of their lives as research suggests that important events do (Miller, 1992a; Miller and Shanks, 1996; Lyons and Alexander, 2000). This can be because the Junta occurred when most of the cohort of the respondents was between the ages of 15 and 30 which is considered as very crucial (Goerres, 2007) as attitudes acquired at that age usually maintained (Alwin et al, 1991). Moreover, the findings cannot confirm the argument by Anduiza (1994) that older people are closely affiliated with a specific political party, as no comparison with other age groups was made.

The affiliation of a large number of the respondents with PASOK when they were younger is understood as the party was asking for change of the old status quo (Lefeber, 1990) (the dominance of the right) and claimed to represent the "political and social groups whose legitimate representation had been thwarted in the past" (Kalyvas, 1997, p. 83). The PASOK positioning was built based on the battle between "the people" and "the privileged" (Kalyvas, 1997), which is a factor showing the strong feeling of schism at that time, which seems to have influenced not only the PASOK loyal voters but also other respondents as they all perceive themselves as being part of the lower-middle socioeconomic group. That is another effect based on the period in which PASOK ruled the country. It was evident by the respondents' answers that they perceive the upper class as being something different and distant from them. This common theme (the separation between "the people" and "the rich") in the respondents' answers has an impact on the way they view politics and therefore on their voting behaviour. Based on the above, and in political ideology terms, most of the respondents perceive themselves as belonging to the left and centre left side of the political spectrum, which is perceived to care for "society" and "most of people". An interesting finding is that even those respondents who argued that they are liberal and centre-right perceive

themselves as belonging to "the people". That is an indication of the hegemony of the left ideology in the years after the restoration of democracy in 1974. Those closely affiliated to left part of the political spectrum perceive the right ideology as caring about profit and therefore about "the rich". Hence, a gap between themselves and right parties was identified. Based on their argument for supporting left ideology they believe in the involvement of state in life, by helping "people according to their needs". This is mostly consistent among female respondents who belong to the 'help me' and 'don't lie to me' clusters discussed in the previous chapter and who use to take actions on helping people in need as findings indicate.

The polarisation between the two main political parties after the collapse of Junta and especially until 1985 (Kalyvas, 1997) has helped that. Literature suggests that after 1985, and especially after 1993, polarisation seemed to have weakened, nevertheless, the respondents have lived the first 25-45 years (at least) of their lives in an environment where the country was divided in two political camps. That can explain the fact that the schism still exists in their minds and the fact that they perceive themselves as belonging to the left ideology even though statistics indicate that some of them actually belong to the upper socioeconomic class. The fact that all respondents consider themselves as belonging to a specific class despite their big differences in education, financial status and occupation enhances the arguments of Kalyvas (1997, p. 98-99) that the left-right cleavage and polarisation in Greece is not based on class but on "conflicting collective identities, deeply anchored in past conflicts" which according to the Columbian school of voting is very important as "when people feel a sense of belonging to a given social group, they absorb the doctrinal positions that the group advocates" Green et al (2002, p.4) and therefore their belonging to that group impacts their vote. This is mostly evident for the left oriented respondents. The findings indicate that the schism that was created in 1915 between Venizelos and King Konstantinos I (Kalyvas, 1997) may has taken other forms but is still alive.

This above discussed polarisation between the two main parties in the first decade after the fall of the Junta has led to the creation of the phenomenon of partitocrazia (Lyrintzis, 2011) which means a party system with clientelistic patronages and linkages (Koliopoulos, 1997; Mouzelis, 1996; Lyrintzis, 1987). Although clientelism was a common practice even before the dictatorship (Kalyvas, 1997) it was after the election of PASOK in 1981 that clientelistic practices were continued, developed, formalized systematized and rationalized under a system of 'bureaucratic clientelism' (Papadopoulos, 1989, p. 65) and dominated the political life during the period of Metapolitefsi (Tsekeris et al, 2015). Clientelism was based on the two parallel political blocs, the left and the right one (Teperoglou and Tsatsanis, 2014). The model was based on public sector appointments and a clientelistic relationship between the parties and the voters, either individually or as professional groups and unions (Maloutzis, 2012). Public sector appointments are regarded as an important part of clientelism by the self-employed respondents of the study. The fact that respondents (especially PASOK partisans and governmental swingers) used to vote based on their personal interests, without admitting it or assigning any blame to people for the situation of clientelism that led to the crisis, as they and literature argue (Teperoglou and Tsatsanis, 2014), indicated the influence that the period where clientelism was dominant in the political system in Greece had on voters and their behaviour towards voting.

The respondents not only argued that they were aware of clientelism in the political life of the country but their views echoed the arguments of Tsekeris et al (2015) that this practice was dominating the political life of the country. Moreover, the respondents agree with Teperoglou and Tsatsanis (2014) that clientelism was one, if not the biggest reason, that brought the country to crisis. They argued that most of the people, not them included, based their votes on promises for personal benefits. Moreover, they blame politicians for this practice and they have feelings of anger and frustration towards them about it. However, the interesting thing

is the combination of denying any involvement in those practices without blaming the people who were involved, or blaming them to a much lesser degree than politicians and trying to excuse them for being involved. In other words, they identify clientelism as a reason for the crisis; they blame the politicians for it but not the other end of the exchange game. That is a serious indication that they have taken part and benefited from clientelistic practices but did not want to admit it to the researcher. This fact becomes more evident by the detailed knowledge the respondents have of practices of clientelism.

Another finding which supports the argument that the respondents benefited from clientelism is that although they were aware of the level of the practice and of politicians' corruption, they reacted and became angry towards the politicians only after the crisis impacted their personal lives (as it will be also discussed later). That agrees with the statement of Lygeros (cited in Malkoutzis, 2014, p. 4) which said that Greek voters were willing to "turn a blind eye to corruption in the public sector and broader inefficiencies, such as tax evasion, in the private sector as long as the politicians responsible rewarded them with civil service jobs, public procurement contracts or social benefits or by leaving alone the profitable enclaves created by some professional groups".

All of the above are evidence that justifies the argument that respondents have in mind their personal interest when voting. Since clientelism was one of the main factors leading to the economic crisis, the findings agree with Knight (2012a) who argued that the economic crisis in Greece is rooted, among others, in social and cultural practice.

5.2.1.3 Left oriented respondents, family and historical events

Family appears to be an important factor that influences the voting decision making of respondents as they appear to be the most trustworthy source of political information. For left oriented respondents, and some with centre left orientation, (therefore those belonging to

the 'don't lie to me' and 'help me' clusters) family appeared to also be important in influencing their ideology formation. This is called social transmission according to the sociological theory of voting behaviour (Antunes, 2010). The parents of those respondents were the generation of the civil war who has lived in a period of right government with public attitude that was mostly anti-communistic and committed to the West (Dimitras, 1990). That was also a period where people of left origin were treated unequally by the governments. The right parties in government denied the Greekness to many Greeks because of their left political origins and alleged involvement with the Communist side in the Civil War (Diamantopoulos, 1991). They "opted for a continuous prosecution and practical exclusion from public life of the vanquished" (Dimitras, 1990, p. 95). Therefore, as Junta was a historical event that shaped the behaviour of the respondents the Greek civil war can be considered as an important historical even of the parents of that generation.

The findings regarding the left oriented voters agree to a degree with the Columbian school of voting behaviour and Lazarsfeld et al (1954) who argue that people tend to inherit the voting preferences from their parents, as some of the respondents were influenced by their family in forming their political ideology, an indication of an indirect influence of the civil war and the period of the 'bad treatment' of right government to left orientated people to the respondents. On the other hand, the findings agree neither with Plutzer (2002) who argued that parents having higher socioeconomic status tend to pass voting preferences to their children based on the advantages they gain as an outcome of the social class they belong to, nor with Leigh (2005) who argued that wealthy people tend to vote more for right parties as some of the respondents were considered as being wealthy but used to vote for left or centre left parties. It can be claimed that the findings of this research study, in regard with their parents and with the shape of attitudes and behaviour after the period of inequality, support the psychodynamic theory of voting behaviour which argued that gradual social, economic and cultural marginalization of a social group affects its voting behaviour (Visser, 1998).

5.2.1.4 The effects and the sample

As it can be seen the sequence of the above described historical events and periods have heavily influenced the voting behaviour of the sample of this research study by shaping strong collective political identities to people and a sense of belonging to 'political camps' (Kalyvas, 1997). The civil war and the behaviour of the right governments to left oriented people has created strong anti-right feelings and an "us" and "them" way of thinking in the parents of some of the respondents who passed on to the latter. The Junta period seems to be the one that had the most significant impact on all the respondents as it has created antiright feelings also to the rest of the respondents. The polarisation period of the PASOK government was the first that 'gave the power' to "us" by taking it from "them" in the mind of the respondents. The clientelistic period that followed is a battle of power between the two political groups. Therefore, that can explain the deep schism that exists in their mind between "the people" and "the rich" and their strong feeling of belonging to the former. Hence, it can be argued that mostly the left oriented people use group interest as heuristic, as the cognitive theory of voting behaviour suggests Rosema (2004), and vote in order to defend the interests of this group, and therefore their personal ones. Therefore, they 'see the world' though the lenses of their social group, which means that they are more likely to have biased political opinions (Redlawsk, 2002). Therefore, as it is seen those effects have shaped the voting behaviour of the respondents.

5.2.1.5 Occupation and voting behaviour

Occupation is another factor that influences the voting behaviour of the respondents, and which 'belongs' to the sociological model of voting behaviour (Antunes, 2010). It appears that there is a split between self-employed voters and those who are pensioners or form part of the non-working population; however findings agree with Sobel (1983) who argued that

working in a high status job does not also mean also higher involvement in politics. The former group tends to believe that the party and the performance of the incumbent are very important factors that influence their voting decisions even in non-crisis situations. That is because, as mentioned above, for governmental swingers that most of them are, promises and implementation are important, mostly having in mind a solution to the current situation. On the other hand pensioners and public sector employees are closer to the left ideology as they consider more the state as being important. It is crucial to highlight that these people are directly dependent on the government's decisions (since they get their income directly from the state). Bennet and Orzechowski (1983) argued that government employees have a clear personal interest in the outcome of elections; however it did not appear in this research study that their interest is higher than the rest of the occupation groups.

5.2.1.6 Education level and voting behaviour

The level of education held by the respondents also seems to be important in terms of the level of their political interest and their discussions with friends and family. Those respondents who have higher education levels are more interested in politics and discuss more politics with their friends and family, whilst those having lower education levels to discuss only with family and not with friends. That is because they argue that they do not understand and do not know much about politics and therefore they do not open discussions with friends but they prefer to listen to others opinions. That comes in accordance with Karp and Milazzo (2015) who argued that people with a high level of education have better understanding of politics and therefore a higher engagement with it. However, education does not seem to be influencing either the turnout of elections as Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980) suggested or the way the respondents vote, something that Alfonso (2015) has argued.

5.2.1.7 Habitual voting behaviour

There were just a few respondents who argued that voting is a habit for them and the findings agree with those of Gerber et al (2003) and Plutzer (2002) who argued that habitual behaviour increases the likelihood of voting. Therefore, those few respondents used habit as a heuristic in order to make their voting decision, as the cognitive theory of voting behaviour suggests (Lefevere, 2011). Moreover, the findings agree with Lefevere (2011) on the basis that habit is important only when emotional arousal is absent. The arousal of emotions due to the crisis and its impact on voting behaviour will be discussed below.

5.2.1.8 Ideology and voting behaviour

Ideology is an important factor for impacting the voting behaviour of most of the respondents but mostly for the left oriented ones who belong to the 'don't lie to me' cluster. For the respondents of this cluster ideology remains important even after the events of the crisis. Ideology is regarded as a political summary that usually refers to a political continuum (Yates, 2012) and helps [the voter] focus attention on the differences between parties; therefore they can be used as samples of all the differentiating stands" (Downs, 1957, p. 98). It can be argued then that mostly left oriented voters use ideology as a heuristic to decide which party to vote for (as they tend to swing their vote between left oriented parties).

5.2.1.9 Partisanship and voting behaviour

Partisanship, the psychological sympathy with a political party which is developed through socialization that strengthens throughout life with repeated voting (Campbell, 1960) is another identified heuristic, based on the cognitive theory of voting behaviour, which eliminates the required information for making a voting decision (Lefevere, 2011) and has an impact on voting behaviour. It is one of the important elements of the psychological model of

voting behaviour (Campbell, 1960). It has high impact on the voting behaviour of the group respondents who were PASOK partisans until they decided to switch their vote. Part of this group belongs to the 'protect me' cluster and another part to the 'help me' cluster, since the interest in politics was common between the groups of respondents. However, the findings of the study do not agree with those of Verba et al (1978) who argued that partisans tend to be more interested in politics as the once PASOK loyalists' level of interest is not higher than that of the rest groups of respondents. Therefore the funnel of causality (Campbell et al, 1960) seems to be able to partially explain the vote of those respondents until the time they have switched their vote.

5.2.1.10 Friends and voting behaviour

As is discussed above family is important in influencing the voting behaviour of the respondents because they are perceived as the most trustworthy source of political information. Another social group that influences the behaviour of voters, mostly those with higher education and a higher interest in politics, is their friends. The findings of this study agree with (Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993) who argued that people who socialize more tend to have higher knowledge of the candidates and political topics.

5.2.1.11 Electoral system and voting behaviour

The electoral system of the country (proportional representation) appears to have an impact on the voting behaviour of respondents as it affects their views on the importance of their vote. This is based on the fact that 'votes are not lost' since they give more seats and therefore more power to the parties in the parliament. That can explain the prior crisis swing of people between small left parties. Benefits are not coming only from the winner of the elections. The above comes in agreement with Lijphart (1997) who said that the more proportional a system is, the higher the probability for an individual to decide to vote for the

party that he prefers, as proportionality eliminates the problem of the 'lost' vote (Lijphart, 1997). Therefore, the Greek electoral system eliminates tactical voting.

The findings revealed that the electoral system had a second role on the voting behaviour of the respondents. The specific knowledge of clientelism practices by the respondents is an indication that the electoral system helps clientelism since they reveal that clientelistic practices are not obtained only by the parties at national level but also by local MPs.

Therefore the findings agree with the argument of Teperoglou and Tsatsanis (2014) that clientelism has passed to a more personalized level. This is not surprising, since the open list proportional representation system allows competition between candidates from the same party.

5.2.1.12 Issue orientation and voting behaviour

Issue orientation, another heuristic and the second important factor of the psychological model of voting behaviour (Antunes, 2010) had an impact on the voting behaviour of the respondents before the crisis, especially of those belonging to the 'don't lie to me' cluster, since the orientation of parties on issues were important to them. Therefore, orientation on issues works as a heuristic impacting the voting decision making of respondents, as it is suggested by the cognitive theory of voting behaviour (Lefevere, 2011). After the crisis the importance of issue orientation has highly increased regarding the solution provided by the various parties for the crisis, findings which agree with Teperoglou and Tsatsanisn (2014), where issue ownership had an important role in their voting decision making (Lefevere, 2011). The impact of crisis on that will be discussed later on this chapter.

5.2.1.13 Media and voting behaviour

All the respondents of this research study follow the media in order to gather political information. However, the findings of the study that all groups of voters check the information they receive from media with their friends agree with Alotaibi (2013) who argued that the messages voters receive from media are filtered through individual's interactions and therefore the media does not have a direct high effect on their voting behaviour.

5.2.1.14 Leader's personality traits and voting behaviour

The leader of the party appears to have a high influence on the voting behaviour of all the respondents which is based on the traits that he has. The importance of this heuristic prior to the crisis was very high for the 'protect me' cluster of voters because they have a more managerial approach of government and they search for a leader to manage the situation.

5.3 Crisis and voting behaviour

5.3.1 Crisis, impact on living standards and emerge of emotions

The findings reveal that the living standards of all the clusters have been negatively impacted by the crisis and the austerity measures that followed. That comes in agreement with Tsekeris et al (2015) who said that the financial crisis has had a direct impact on the vast majority of the Greek population and with Sanchez Vitores (2013) who claimed that due to the crisis the standards of living for Greeks has significantly dropped. The impact that the crisis and austerity measures had on their living standards of all the respondents has created the emotions of uncertainty, anxiety, insecurity and fear about their future together with disappointment, angriness and frustration for those that they consider responsible for the crisis. Emotions are considered by literature as heuristics influencing voting behaviour

(Marcus et al, 2000; Settle, 2012; Yates, 2012) and this research study echoes this argument. The findings agree with Chalari (2014, p. 105) who argued that the most common feelings among Greeks were "disappointment, pessimism, insecurity, fear, anger, despair, depression, anxiety and uncertainty of the future", as most of the emotions she suggests were identified. What is important to mention is that the feelings of insecurity and anxiety were generated by their uncertainty for the future based on fear for further cuts on their income. Moreover, those emotions (including frustration and anger) seem to have been increased steadily over time and they reached highest levels close to the January 2015 elections. This is because, as findings suggest, none of the respondents expected that the crisis will last for so long and they showed signs of tiredness about it. The findings support Panaritis (2012) who argued that the Greek people were tired of the years of austerity and Tsoukalis (2013, p. 37) who claimed that "the suffering has lasted much longer than people had anticipated". The emotions that emerged to all respondents, but were stronger for the 'protect me' and 'caring' clusters, are regarded by theory as 'belonging' to the surveillance emotion system (Marcus et al, 2000) and have an impact on the political behaviour of people (Yates, 2012). The findings agree (especially for the respondents who were loyal PASOK voters prior to crisis and for those who used to swing their vote between governmental parties) with the statement of Wagner (2014) that the anger that crisis generates to voters leads them to attempt to remove the source of harm. However, the findings cannot agree with the argument that voters that feel fear are expected to follow risk-aversion behaviour (Wagner, 2014). Their fear of the future under specific policies gave place to 'hope' with the positioning of SYRIZA as is discussed below.

5.3.2 Crisis and impact on information gathering

As it is aforementioned, the findings indicate that the sources from which the respondents receive political information are the traditional media of television and newspapers and discussions with friends and families, with the younger respondents also using the internet

for receiving information, but not social media. Moreover, the information gathering increased during the crisis in an effort to decrease their uncertainty. However, the crisis has changed the importance of those information sources. Firstly due to the respondents' personal financial conditions the frequency of newspaper readership has decreased. On the other hand, the frequency of watching television has increased. The increase of time in watching television is positively linked with the decrease of the newspaper readership as it works as a substitute. However, the fact that, especially since the generation of the crisis, none of the respondents appear to trust journalists, but consider them as having part of the blame for the situation of the country (especially those belonging to the 'help me' and 'don't lie to me' clusters) made them rely more on the opinions of friends and family (which they consider as trustworthy information sources) in order to form their own opinion and therefore the importance of the latter on their voting decision making has increased. The untrustworthiness of traditional media is based on the opinion that journalists support different political sides and pass their line through media. Therefore, they seem more as propagandists rather than news communicators. The perception of untrustworthiness is enhanced by the opinion that journalists did not inform them that the crisis was coming, although they knew it was (according to respondents' views). That comes in agreement with the sociological model of Lazarsfeld et al (1954) who argued that the influence of family and social groups in determining the voting behaviour of people is high.

Although the literature suggests that digital media and political participation are positively related (Bachmann et al, 2010) this did not come across in this study as the sample does not use digital media for receiving political information, and therefore first hand interactions with politicians through social media are not established. This agrees with Kathimerini (2014) where it is argued that Greek people over 50s are not much involved in social media. Based on the above, it can be argued that in order for the respondents to evaluate a candidate and form a perception of him they rely on information they receive through traditional media, on which their view is sceptical as they do not trust journalists, and on discussions with friends

and family, which they considered as the most trustworthy sources of information. Therefore, media are either ignored or respondents go even against media opinions. The above findings agree with Bergan et al (2006) who argued that people choose to receive information that reinforces existing views.

5.3.3 The impact of crisis impact on perceptions of politicians

As discussed, together with the emotions of anxiety, uncertainty and fear crisis has also triggered the emotions of anger and frustration in respondents. Those were towards those that they perceived as being responsible for the crisis and for the decrease in their living standards. The findings suggest that those are journalists, the European Union and the politicians of the country, in other words the status quo, with the highest responsibility assigned to the politicians.

The European Union as an institution is regarded as having part of the blame for the crisis but only by the 'don't lie to me' cluster of voters. This is because they argue that the European Union was aware of the corruption practices and did not do anything to stop it. However, the main reason for which they are angry at the European Union, and this applies to more than the left oriented respondents, is that the decisions for the austerity measures are perceived to be taken in Brussels and not in Greece and they see that as a reason for stricter measures passed and implemented. Therefore, they see the European Union as deciding the measures that affected their lives. This is another very important finding that adds to the explanation of the voting behaviour of the respondents as it will be discussed later in this chapter. Moreover, as membership of the European Union is the status quo it could be argued that the respondents, although not clearly, start to question it.

Nevertheless, the highest amount of anger, frustration and blame is aimed at the people the respondents consider to be responsible for the crisis, the politicians of the country, and

more specifically against the politicians of the two main parties that governed Greece for more than forty years. That is a finding for all clusters of this study and shows the level of disengagement with those politicians. The respondents provided several reasons for justifying their view that politicians were responsible for the crisis and for having the right to be angry at them. Firstly, all respondents considered politicians as being corrupt and especially as having followed clientelistic practices, which according to them is the main reason for the country's bankruptcy. This is an argument supported by the literature (Teperoglou and Tsatsanis, 2014). However, different groups of respondents are angry at politicians for different clientelistic practices based on their occupation. Self-employed and private sector employees because of the over appointment of public sector employees, while pensioners and public sector employees were more generic on their answers. The former agrees with Teperoglou and Tsatsanis (2014) who argued that clientelism has led to a large and inefficient public sector. It also shows that each group is angry on practices that have allowed others to benefit while they did not. What the findings reveal for both groups is that they are angry at politicians, not because of the practices themselves but because of the level of corruption and of the fact that they did not stop corrupted practices in order to avoid the crisis. The clusters appear not to be angry on the practice of corruption and clientelism but on the fact that these led to crisis, which resulted in a decrease of their living standards. In other words, although they deny it, the findings indicate that if corruption would not lead to crisis and to their personal loss of income, the respondents would not be angry at politicians for following those practices. That is also the case with the respondents blaming politicians as caring for political cost, which again is shared by all the respondents. When those practices did not 'touch' the respondents, they did not complain about it. However, when the austerity measures impacted them and halted the majority of clientelistic practices, the same practices made them angry.

In addition to that, a number of respondents considers politicians as being incompetent.

Those were the previous PASOK partisans and the governmental swingers who are mostly

part of the 'protect me' cluster. Those respondents perceive politicians as being incompetent for two reasons: For creating the crisis and for not being able to avoid it. The latter is another indication that if the crisis did not occur, their attitude towards politicians and their practices would have been different. Moreover, the least educated respondents, most of them belonging to the 'protect me' and 'help me' clusters, perceive politicians as being liars because they did not implement their pre-election promises. Pre-election promises in the period before the crisis had mostly centred on benefits that the parties were promising to the electorate, as Markaki and Apospori (2008) suggested, and therefore they accuse politicians of being liars because they did not deliver the promised benefits, which means they did not uphold their end of the game of political clientelism (Mylonas and Georgakellos, 2012), a fact that broke the 'clientelist social contract' that has led to the political duopoly (Tsatsanis, 2014). This is another important element for explaining voting behaviour. Finally, some respondents in all clusters consider politicians as taking orders, which findings indicate that it means that they perceive them as not having control of the country and not protecting them from the decisions of Troika, who they consider as being in charge. Spourdalakis (2013, p. 106) suggested that this is a reason for people turning their backs to politicians however the study's findings go deeper from the reason that he provides. He says that it is because "they (people) saw them (politicians) as undermining basic national dignity by acceding to the destructive conditions of the Memoranda and elevating the task force committee 'Troika' to the status of the real government". However, the findings of the research reveal that their real problem is not the undermining of the government itself but the fact that they believe that a Greek government deciding by itself would implement less strict measures than those that Troika suggested and therefore the impact these measures had on their lives would not be so severe. They are angry at politicians for not being able to stand against Troika and the austerity measures which impacted their lives and was the reason 'for the contract to break', something that come is agreement with Mylonas and Georgakellos (2012).

However, the findings agree neither with Panaritis (2012) who argued that because people were tired with the austerity measures (since the crisis took much longer that they anticipated) were beginning to question if they were getting the right medicine to the problem of the crisis, nor with Tsoukalis (2013) who stated that fewer Greeks continued to believe (or hope) that the particular therapy could cure them since they became tired of the measures. It was not that the respondents saw the measures taken as a bad solution to a problem, for the 'protect me' and 'help me' clusters it was that part of those measures had stopped them from receiving their personal benefits. For the 'don't lie to me cluster' it was that the austerity measures was not allowing for policies that could help the group they consider themselves as belonging, "the people". Therefore, it was not that they were questioning the medicine as literature suggests but that they did not like the medicine because it was curing the disease, of which they were part. Therefore, they saw the medicine as being the actual problem. That is also important for explaining their voting decisions as they have voted not for the party that would replace the 'medicine' with another recipe, but the one who would abolish the problem (the measures).

In addition, most of the respondents do not consider 'the people' as having part of the blame for the current situation within the country. Only a few of them who belong to the 'protect me' cluster believe that 'the people' have a small part of the responsibility. It is evident in the answers that respondents perceive themselves as being the victims of the situation with everybody else being the abusers. That supports the research of Tsoukalis (2015, p. 37) who said that Greeks with the passage of time started "to see themselves as guinea pigs in a nasty experiment" and it also agrees with the stance of SYRIZA since the beginning of the crisis, that of the 'victimisation' of them from international and internal interests (Balabanidis and Lamprinou, 2013). That is a strong indication that the respondents were not ready to face reality at the time of voting.

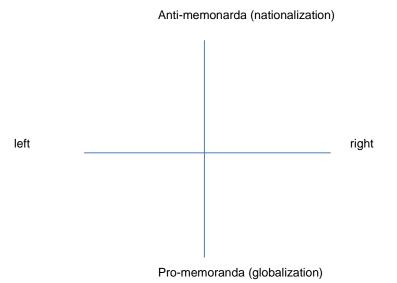
As it can be seen the findings of the study support the statement that Greek voters consider the previous governments as being responsible for the crisis and the austerity measures all the previous governments (Malkoutzis, 2012; Dianeosis, 2016). That explains the drop in partisanship for PASOK and the switch of vote from them and the governmental swingers. Hence, it is clear that the funnel of causality, in the form given by Campbell et al (1960) cannot be applied in order to explain voting behaviour. Moreover, the fact that the financial crisis in Greece had impacted party affiliation means that it is an event that has strongly affected the individual (Antunes, 2010), as partisanship can change only under these types of events (Campbell, 1960). The findings also echo the arguments that given negative economic shocks voters tend to punish the incumbent, associating them with the downturn of the economy (e.g. Lewis-Beck et al, 2012) and the austerity measures that follow it (Karyotis and Rudig, 2013). There is also agreement with Wagner (2014) who claimed that the emotion of anger leads to remove the source of harm, as is mentioned above. Anger is regarded as a negative emotion that increases political participation (Huddy and Mason, 2008) however, since all the respondents used to vote before the crisis and most of them do not follow other ways of participation after crisis, this can be neither supported nor rejected by the findings. Theory of economic voting suggests, voters evaluate the situation, identify who is to blame for it and vote accordingly (Duch and Stevenson, 2008). Emotions have played a role in the evaluation of the situation by the respondents, who assign responsibility to all previous politicians and decided not to vote for them. Hence, they started to look for an alternative, as Spourdalakis (2013) said, but having different criteria in mind as it is shown below.

5.3.4 Crisis impact on importance of ideology

The research findings suggest that the crisis had two impacts on ideology. The first is that for respondents who do not have a left political orientation ('protect me' cluster and part of the 'help me' cluster) the importance of ideology in the voting decision making decreases as

they consider voting for somebody that can take them out of crisis to be more important. The second is that a new cleavage was created based on the camps formed by the voters' reactions to memorandums and the austerity measures, the pro and anti-memorandum groups, as literature suggests (Dimitrakopoulos, 2012; Malkoutzis, 2012; Balabanidis and Lamprinou, 2013). The study's respondents support the anti-memorandum camp. However, as findings reveal, the left – right cleavage is still very important to them. Therefore, it was not that the left – right cleavage has been replaced by the pro and anti-Memorandum cleavage that literature suggests, but that the latter one has been added to the political map for them. Therefore the respondents' political map had two axes. The x axis, where the left – right cleavage exists and the y axis where the pro – anti Memorandum cleavage lies, which is actually a division between nationalised and global politics, as it is shown in the below perceptual map (5.1). The new cleavage between nationalisation and globalisation will be clearer in the discussion on the meaning that the respondents give to the traits of leader.

Figure 5-1 - Respondents' perceptual map of Greek politics



5.3.5 Crisis impact on importance of leader's personality traits

Findings suggest that the importance of the leader increased for all groups of respondents during the period of crisis. Therefore, it can be said that the leaders traits, another heuristic according to the cognitive theory of voting behaviour (Lefevere, 2011), were considered as important by all the respondents. The importance of the traits of the leader on voting behaviour comes in agreement with (George and George, 1998; Hermann, 1999; Walker et al, 1999; Schumman and Schoen, 2005) who argue that traits of a candidate are important, especially if they belong to a leader. The importance of specific traits and the meaning that respondents assign to them will be discussed later in this chapter.

5.3.6 Crisis and search for an alternative

As it is seen, the 'protect me' and 'help me' clusters have turned their back on the status quo and the 'don't lie to me' cluster has decided to abandon the previous left party they had voted for previously. Moreover, the future of all the respondents was at stake due to the crisis, therefore, their political interest has increased as a result, hence they seek more political information than before, in an effort to reduce their uncertainty about their personal futures. That was the case for the more educated people and for people who already had a level of interest in politics, the interest of the least educated people did not increase during the crisis. The findings suggest partial agreement with Huddy and Mason (2008) who argued that anxiety increases political interest and search for information. Marcus et al (2000, p. 56) say anxious voters "interrupt their habitual behaviour and engage in more effortful information processing". However, the findings did not identify different levels of anxiety in the respondents that their interest in politics increased.

The crisis has made respondents who belong to the cluster 'protect me' and most of those of the 'help me' cluster (except from those being in the left end of the political spectrum) to question the importance of ideology in their voting decision making. Again, superficially it could be argued they have abandoned the centrist and centre right ideology in order to try a different political approach. However, the truth is much different, for almost forty year those respondents were either voting for the same party (PASOK) or swinging between the two governmental parties and therefore for them it was the centre left and centre right 'ideology' that was providing them with personal benefits. When the austerity measures the governments were forced to take halted practices of clientelism (Sotiropoulos, 2012) and therefore politicians could not promise them 'better days' anymore (Mylonas and Georgakellos, 2012) the respondents decided that they could vote for something different, that is was not closely tied to their ideologically since there was nothing to gain from the 'ideology' that has served them for so many years. Therefore they were actually looking not for an 'alternative' road but for a partner to continue the exchange game as the previous ones could not continue doing so.

In addition, the fact that the same respondents ('protect me' and 'help me' clusters) believe the importance of the incumbent's performance on their voting decision making has increased during the crisis, indicates that for them is more important in crisis for the incumbent party to keep its promises, implement them and deliver the benefits as they are in a difficult position since their living standards have dropped. It also reveals, since they evaluate the incumbent based on their personal economy that, if the incumbent does not deliver on promises and if the respondents do not see improvements in their economic situation, they will vote for another party.

The above discussion explains the once loyal PASOK respondents' argument that the crisis has made it easier for them to switch their vote to another party and the fact that the crisis has led to a decrease in partisanship among them. Since they have decided not to vote for the same party they had previously been voting, but at the same time they decided to vote and not to abstain, it is evident that they would spend more time in their voting decision

making process, as they argue they do, in order to identify the new party that would take the place of the previous in the exchange game and in order to decrease, as far as possible their uncertainty on the new intentions of the party to deliver its promises.

Furthermore, what is evident in the research findings is that for all the respondents a leader to take the country (and therefore them) out of crisis is important. What they mean by that is to stop the haemorrhaging of their personal income and therefore to stop the measures that create the haemorrhage and 'lead' them to a better future. That evidence supports the argument that the respondents are tired of the lengthy period of crisis and it is an indication of agreement with various authors who argued that crises help charismatic leaders to emerge (e.g. Weber, 1978; Willner, 1984; Bligh et al, 2004).

As it is said in the literature such traumatic experiences make generations become radicalized, and those radicalizations can transform societies (Chalari, 2012). It is true that in 2012 Greek society had started being transformed and became more critical to established mentalities (Chalari, 2012), something that findings also support. It is clear that the respondents of this study have been heavily impacted by the crisis, which has affected their voting behaviour. They had started to question the status quo and the previous regimes. The discussion on this part of the chapter reveals that the findings agree with Teperoglou and Tsatsanis (2014) who argue that the deep switch of vote is linked with decline in party identification and trust in parliament. Findings support the arguments made by Tamvaklis (2013) that the success of SYRIZA is heavily based on the political bankruptcy of the two traditionally main parties.

5.4 Deciding to switch the vote

As it is discussed above, in the years of crisis a new cleavage was created, that between the pro and the anti-memorandum camps. The switch of vote that the findings indicate occurred

during the elections of 2012 and 2015 supports the argument of scholars that the decrease salience of traditional cleavages lead to 'electoral dealignment' (Lachat, 2004; Franklin et al, 2009; Dalton et al, 2000). The findings indicate that the 'Greek case' has all the consequences that literature suggests the phenomenon of electoral dealignment has. That is a decrease in partisanship and also as literature indicates a decrease in turnout too (Franklin, 2004), although the respondents of this research study have all voted. Moreover, late voting decision making has been identified among the respondents, mostly among those who have switched their vote to the party of SYRIZA in the 2012 elections.

Based on the latter it can be claimed that there is a separation in the time taken to make a voting decision between the groups of the respondents that have switched their vote to the party of SYRIZA in 2012 and those that have switched in 2015. The voting behaviour of the former group is characterized by intra volatility and of the latter by inter volatility as literature suggests (Crewe, 1985; Lachat, 2004; Dassonneville, 2012; 2014). However most of the respondent's behaviour in terms of the party they have chosen to switch their vote to can be called intra block, as they have chosen to vote for a party that belongs to the same ideological group as the party for which they were previously voting (Lachat, 2004). Although literature suggests that the more options (in terms of parties in the political system) a voter has, the more he will be inclined to switch his vote (Bartolini and Mair, 1990; Tavits, 2005; Dassonneville et al, 2015), and despite the fact that more parties were created in Greece during the crisis period, this did not appear to be the case on the voting behaviour of the respondents as they switched their vote to an already existent party for specific reasons which will be discussed later on this chapter.

Moreover, the findings of the study do not echo the argument made by Pedersen (1979), that as ideological distance decreases switch of vote increases, as there were respondents that have moved from liberalism or from centre left to a voting an extreme left party. On the other hand the findings support the argument that polarisation in the political system

increases the likelihood of vote switching (Dejaeghere and Dassonneville, 2015). That comes in contrast to researchers who argued that polarisation leads to a lower likelihood of vote switching, such as Hazan (1997) and Mair (1995). In addition, the findings of the study agree with a number of researchers (Robert and Wibbels, 1999; Duch and Sagarzazu, 2014; Stubager, 2011, Scotto, 2012) who argued that when an economy is not going well then emotions are generated, the phenomenon of 'frustrated floating voters' occurs and therefore the volatility is expected to be higher. As discussed, that is mostly evident for the respondents who were voting for the two traditionally main parties before the crisis and decided to 'punish' them by switching their vote. Moreover, the findings support Robbert and Wibbels (1999) and Dassonneville and Hoogle (2015) who stated that voters in an economic downturn might switch their vote to new and emerging parties which offer alternative routes. The respondents have voted for an existing party, however it was one that was 'offering' an alternative route for the country, a major contributor to the switch of the vote as it will be discussed below.

In a sense and up to a point the respondents' switch of vote of the respondents (mostly of those who were voting for PASOK or New Democracy until the elections of 2012 or 2015) could be considered as tactical, as switching their vote was in order to 'get rid' of the 'old' parties. Those findings support Willocq (2016) and Blais et al (2001). However, the findings of the research study cannot support the argument by Budge et al (2010) that higher sophisticated people tend to switch their vote before the campaign and lower sophisticated during the campaign as there was a mixture of respondents that switched their vote in both times of period. However, the findings support the cognitive mobilization theory as the vast majority of the respondents cannot be considered as apathetic, as the Columbian perspective suggests, but rather rational as suggested by Willcoq (2016).

5.5. The SYRIZA vote

5.5.1 The positioning of SYRIZA and voting behaviour

The positioning of the party of SYRIZA, especially since 2012, indicates that it tried to polarize the political climate (as PASOK did when the respondents were young), to deepen the schism between "the people" and "the privileged" and to position itself as representing "the people" in the political arena. As literature suggests SYRIZA since 2009 had created a vision for alternative policies for the country (Spourdalakis, 2013; Stavrakakis, 2015). Their vision was the 'society of the needs' against the today's 'society of profits' (www.syn.gr). Therefore, it is clear that they have tried to gain the vote of "the people" by positioning themselves as their representative.

Behind that message the schism between "the people" and "the privileged" reveals, as seen in the findings, is important in the minds of all people but especially for the left oriented ones (the 'don't lie to me' cluster). The reference to "the people" was central in the campaigns of 2012 (Stavrakakis and Katsembekis, 2014) and of 2015, which is what the respondents of the study associate themselves with. Therefore, SYRIZA positioned itself as the party that will do a velvet revolution (Kassaveti and Papathanasopoulos, 2015) in favour of the people who suffer from austerity measures, therefore the low and middle classes (Stavrakakis, 2015). That means that SYRIZA had the right positioning for all the respondents of the study, especially for the left oriented ones who are felt bonded with that group and sees the right parties as representatives of "the establishment". At the same time SYRIZA was using words to characterize the opposite camp (pro-memorandum) — such as "establishment", "sellout to Troika", "few and rich", "political party of memorandum" (Pantazopoulos, 2013) that would make people get distance from them. As it is discussed the respondents of this study are 'opposing' those words, as they blame politicians for losing control to Troika. SYRIZA also linked the 'international' with 'internal' interests, and therefore the pro-memorandum camp

with Troika, in order to deepen the schism between 'us' and 'them' (the anti and the promemorandum camps).

Moreover, from the beginning of the crisis SYRIZA took the stance that this crisis was not a Greek issue, rejected the responsibility of the Greek people and chose to stand next to the 'victimisation' of them from international and internal interests (Balabanis and Lamprinou, 2013). This comes in agreement with the belief of the majority of the respondents that people have no blame for the situation. All respondents deny any involvement with corrupted practices and they blame those who make the decisions in regards to austerity measures and the politicians for not 'protecting them' from those measures, among other reasons. However, as it is discussed above different types of personal benefits played important roles in the voting decision making of respondents and especially of the 'protect me' and the 'help me' clusters, which indicate participation in clientelistic practices. The reason the respondents tried to portray themselves as not participating in clientelism will be discussed later in the chapter.

SYRIZA was the only party that tried to position itself so close to the mind-set of the respondents regarding crisis, which includes the fact that they consider themselves as victims of the situation and that they do not want the measures to be decided abroad for the above mentioned reasons. Moreover, the findings indicate that the threefold call that SYRIZA put forward from the elections of 2012 until the party was elected into government (elimination of austerity measures, end of 'bipartisanism' and preservation of dignity (Spourdalakis, 2013) was based exactly on what the respondents of this research study wanted. They wanted the previous politicians to leave (clusters 'protect me' and 'help me') because they considered them responsible for the crisis and they were disappointed and angry at them, while the 'don't lie to me' cluster, because they considered them as responsible for the crisis and because the parties did not follow the route the cluster wanted for the country's future. Most of the respondents, mainly those of the 'protect me' cluster and

part of the 'help me' cluster, wanted somebody to stand strong and protect their interests against the creditors, as they believed that the previous incumbents were just accepting everything. This is based on the fact that they wanted the austerity measures to stop, as they all thought that recovering from the crisis has taken too long. Therefore, with that positioning SYRIZA was promising to the different groups of respondents what they wanted to hear. The party messages in all the four elections that took place under the context of crisis also reveal the effort to deepen the schism, to position itself as representing "the people" and to be identified as the party that provided an alternative, unconventional road out of crisis, totally different to the one that other parties suggested. Table 5.1 shows the messages in all the elections.

Table 5-1 - Elections and SYRIZA messages

Election	Messages
May 2012	They decided without us. We move without them
June 2012	We open road to hope. We make memoranda past
January 2015	Hope is coming. Greece is moving forward
	First time left
	At 25 th we vote. At 26 th they are leaving
September 2015	We finish with the old. We win the future

As it can be seen, each of those messages appeal to part of the respondents of this study. The first message (May 2012) appeals to the schism that exists in the mind of the respondents, and especially to those belonging to the 'don't lie to me' and some of the 'help me' clusters, between "us" and "them". SYRIZA argued that the rest of politicians have decided without the agreement of the people and they say to the latter to move together 'leaving behind' the old politicians. Therefore, it is not a surprise that in the May 2012 elections those who voted for SYRIZA were respondents from those two clusters. The second message promises to the respondents something they want (halt in austerity measures since they promise abandonment of memoranda). They also promised 'hope', meaning a promise for better future, something that the other parties could not do due to the implementation of austerity measures. This again separates SYRIZA from the other parties,

positions them clearly in anti-memorandum camp and positions the party as the holder of the only alternative road.

When it came to elections in January 2015 SYRIZA (the elections that saw the party win for the first time) had everything. The 'push' to people for a punishment vote against the other main parties, when their anger was high and the majority of respondents decided to 'abandon' the parties they were previously voted for ('protect me' and part of 'help me' clusters) and in favour of SYRIZA as it was the only party that could be elected into government, and make them leave; the promise for an alternative road that Greece and its people have never taken before, a road that is considered as very close to the mindset of the left oriented respondents (mostly 'don't lie to me cluster' and part of the 'help me'); and finally a promise for better days in the near future (hope is coming). This worked mostly for the 'protect me' and 'help me' clusters. Especially for the 'protect me' cluster the important role played in 2015 by SYRIZA was that they were considered as having a high probability of being elected into government. Hope is coming, also links with the motto '[we will abolish memoranda] with one law and one article' which indicated the speed that the new alternative route would be taken. This also applied to the fact that respondents were tired of the crisis and therefore eager for change. In one sentence the message of SYRIZA in the January 2015 elections was: 'Stop what you were doing for so many years, because it has let you down and it is not working, leave it behind and follow me on to a new path which will bring very soon better days for you'. They tried to associate optimism and assurance of the future of the country with SYRIZA and negative feelings against the two traditionally main parties (Papaioannou, 2014). In other words they tried to associate SYRIZA with the disposition emotional system (positive emotions) and the traditional main parties with the surveillance emotional system (negative emotions) as suggested by the Affective Intelligence theory (Marcus et al, 2000). Moreover, they have tried to associate SYRIZA with anticipated emotions, which are argued to have stronger impact than the currently experienced emotions (Baumeister et al, 2007). SYRIZA communicated to the respondents what they

wanted to hear at the point where they were tired of crisis and the impact of it, as Chalari (2012) also suggests, and it promised that would implement them as soon as they are in government. Moreover, the messages 'enough' and 'I want to live with dignity' which were promoted in that campaign also appeal to the respondents. The first one appeals to their want for the austerity measures and the crisis to come to an end. The second has three meanings: It also refers to the aggressiveness of the austerity measures, but it is also a promise for representation and protection of their interests in the negotiations with creditors (requested mostly by PASOK partisans and governmental swingers), which means strong negotiations and therefore accepting the measures that the latter would propose. This comes in agreement with Spourdalakis (2013) who argues that 'dignity' refers to the aggressive measures and the perception that they are endorsed by Troika. The last meaning is the promise to give back to the people what they have lost from the crisis so that they can live as they used to live before the crisis: 'In dignity', having no anxiety or fear for the future. This is applicable to all respondents but mostly to female ones who expressed a slightly higher level of anxiety, and therefore mostly in the 'don't lie to me' and 'help me' clusters. Finally, the message of September 2015, was again positioned on the schism between "we" and "the others" and asked voters to finish one for all with the old regime, meaning do not allow them to come back because they will continue what they were doing before, which is what made you angry at them'. Moreover, it works as a separator between young Tsipras and old Meimarakis (the leader of New Democracy at those elections) and what the latter represents (old mainstream politicians responsible for crisis who said that there was no alternative to the policies that were imposed by the memoranda). All the messages of SYRIZA were dramatising the crisis situation, which was discussed worked well with the respondents of this study, and tried to promote the new that was coming as Kassaveti and Papatanassopoulos (2015) argued, which also applies to the study's respondents as it will be shown later in this chapter.

5.5.2 The choice of the SYRIZA vote

The above discussion indicates the well places positioning of SYRIZA in the electoral map, giving various reasons for the respondents to vote for it. However, different reasons are perceived as being important by different clusters of respondents and as will be discussed below the increased importance of the leader is based on specific 'needs' of the voters.

5.5.3 The only alternative – a new, different future

The first reason that was identified (and which is important for the 'don't lie to me' and the left oriented respondents of the 'help me' clusters) is that they perceived the party of SYRIZA as being the only alternative, focusing on the issue of the financial crisis and SYRIZA's response to it. They argue that most of the parties are similar to the two traditionally main ones and that for them it was only SYRIZA that was promising alternative policies. What they mean by that is the following: Most of the parties were in favour of memoranda and of implementing austerity measures, which mean a continuity of the above discussed emotions and possibly even lower living standards. The only left party (except the Communists) that was against memoranda and was promising an alternative road out of crisis, a road that had nothing to do with the one suggested by the mainstream parties and the European Union (therefore the questioned status quo) was SYRIZA. The alternative road was faster, much less painful and gave hope for a different future, with the 'needs of the people' and not 'the profit of the rich' in the centre of decision making. Therefore, those clusters, which are female dominant and mostly public sector employees or non-working, have switched their vote to the party of SYRIZA in 2012 from the previous left party that they had voted because they were persuaded that SYRIZA could bring through its alternative policies and a different future. Those respondents did not actually want better management of the situation but to change the rules of how the world operates. The reason is that, as it is seen above, they have a strong feeling of belonging to the social group of 'the people' therefore they vote in

order for this group to prosper, an economic pocket book voting, since it does not include the whole society, despite that they perceive themselves as sociotropic voters. That comes in agreement with Harder and Krosnick (2008) who argued that the need for belonging can influence the behaviour of people.

5.5.4 The only alternative - 'get rid of old parties'

For the non-left oriented respondents who switched their vote to the party of SYRIZA in June 2012 and some in January 2015 (they belong to the 'help me' and 'protect me' clusters) the words 'only alternative' have a different meaning. One reason for them voting for SYRIZA is that they perceived the party as the only one that they could vote for in order to 'throw' from the government the two main parties that they considered as having high responsibility for the crisis and their feelings of anger, frustration and disappointment towards them. As it is mentioned those findings agree with the arguments that in negative economic shocks voters tend to punish the incumbent, associating them with the downturn of economy (e.g. Lewis-Beck et al, 2012) and the austerity measures that follow it (Karyotis and Rudig, 2013). Therefore, the vote type that those respondents (part of 'help me' cluster) have followed is a combination of a tactical and protest vote. They have voted against the incumbent by choosing to vote for the party that could replace it. However, it was also an economic vote as the above mentioned respondents have voted against the incumbent because of the personal loss of income due to austerity measures.

5.5.5 Ideological affiliation

The second reason that some of the respondents mentioned as being important in influencing them to vote for SYRIZA is the ideological affiliation with the party. Those were mostly the 'don't lie to me' cluster and a small part of the 'help me' cluster (those who have switched their vote to SYRIZA in September 2015). However, the meanings that the two

groups give to ideology are different. The 'don't lie to me' cluster argues that the party that was closer to them, meaning that they have voted for a left party in order for the group that they perceive themselves as belonging to be benefited. This is very closely linked with their belief that SYRIZA is the only alternative for left policies once in government and therefore for proving help for their social group. That comes in agreement both with Harder and Krosnick (2008) who as it is seen above argued that the need for belonging affects the behaviour of people. On the other hand, the September 2015 switchers mention ideology but it is obvious by their answers that what they mean is the implementation of the promises made by SYRIZA and which were positioned to help "the people". That means that those respondents switched their vote to SYRIZA in September 2015 in order that the party would continue being in government and implement the promises made which would lead to the exit of the austerity measures and therefore the halt of their personal income drop and the decrease of their anxiety, fear and uncertainty of the future. That is an economic pocket book voting approach as suggested by Lewis-Beck (1985). It is also an issue oriented as they perceive the party as the only one that has a solution they approve for the specific issue of the crisis.

5.5.6 Alexis Tsipras – hope

As it is said, the most cited reason the respondents gave for switching their vote was the leader of the party, Alexis Tsipras. This is mentioned by all the respondents as being important, but it was especially important for the self-employed, the PASOK loyal voters and the governmental swingers that switched their vote to SYRIZA in both the 2015 elections, therefore for the 'protect me' and a big part of 'help me' clusters. They have argued that they have been persuaded by Tsipras to vote for SYRIZA and that he gave them hope for a rapid solution to the situation, abandonment of austerity measures and halt of income losses. That is another indication that the above mentioned respondents did not see the austerity measures as the medicine but as the problem itself. Moreover, it reveals that Tsipras and its

persuasion acted as a 'reassurance' that the wishes of voters would be implemented by a SYRIZA government. This will be discussed below in detail.

5.5.7 SYRIZA promises and respondents

It is important to mention that although most of the respondents have argued that the rest of the people believed the promises of SYRIZA and Tsipras and have voted because of those (as they perceive them as voting for getting benefits), they denied it for themselves.

Nevertheless, the findings suggest that they believed and hoped that SYRIZA would implement at least some of the promises they made in the pre-election period. That is another indication that the respondents either wanted to present themselves to the researcher as something different than what they actually are or that they truly believe that they had not believed the promises (although they actually did). This is the same type of case as the above discussed with clientelism and the researcher will try to explain it in a later part of this chapter.

5.5.8 SYRIZA and issue orientation (the crisis issue)

The positioning of SYRIZA and the orientation on issues played a role on the respondents' voting behaviour. What was important is the positioning the party took on the issue of the crisis, as it was the issue that dominated the situation in the country. The positioning becomes more important when compared with that of the main parties ('There Is No Alternative'), as Spourdalakis (2013) said and the findings agree, since all the respondents identify the rest of the centre left parties as being 'the same' as the two traditionally main parties. As Antunes (2010) said the motivation factor of issue orientation is concerned with agreement or disagreement with the policies implemented by the party that is in power. The respondents disagreed with those policies of the incumbent but agreed with the policies promised by Tsipras and SYRIZA. That, together with the opinion that Tsipras was

important, supports Marcus et al (2000) who argued that one of the elements that anxious voters rely on is the personal characteristics of a candidate and on his position in issues. The combination of that is important, as it will be shown below the personality of SYRIZA's leader worked as a reassurance for the policies that were to be implemented based on the party's positioning. Based on the above the switch of the respondents to SYRIZA was based on a combination of factors. This is illustrated in table 5.2.

Table 5-2 - Elections and first time voters

Elections	Type of firs time Voters	Reasons
May 2012	'Don't lie to me', part of 'help me' and very small part of 'protect me' cluster. Mostly female, Left oriented, left swingers	Alternative policy, helping "the people" (social group) = ideological affiliation
June 2012	Small part of 'help me' cluster. Few PASOK loyal voters	Get rid of previous parties
January 2015	Biggest part of 'help me' and 'protect me' clusters. PASOK loyal, governmental swingers, self- employed, mostly male	Get rid of previous parties in order to bring an end to austerity measures (psychodynamic approach) and SYRIZA promises implementation (issues orientation)
September 2015	Small part of 'help me' cluster. PASOK loyal voters	Ideological affiliation = SYRIZA promises implementation

To conclude the above mentioned respondents who switched their vote to SYRIZA in May 2012 did do so because they believed in an alternative policy that would help their social group. Therefore the sociological model appears to have high importance for the voting behaviour of those respondents. They argue that want the whole society to prosper because they consider "the people" as being the whole society, however the schism created in their

minds between their social group and "the establishment" reveals that their way of thinking and voting is not sociotropic but pocket book voting, as their benefit comes through the help of the government to the social group they belong to. The aforementioned respondents who switched their vote to the party of SYRIZA in the June 2012 elections followed a tactical voting approach as have voted for that party in order to get rid of the parties that they considered as being responsible for the crisis. The vote of those respondents vote was a protest vote too. The same occurs for the respondents who switched their vote to SYRIZA in the January 2015 elections (biggest parts of 'protect me' and 'help me' clusters), however the difference is that in this group of respondents is not only the emotion against the incumbent that were important but the fact that they wanted the austerity measures to stop as they were tired of them. This indicates that the main reason the January 2015 switchers voted against the parties is a 'need' for the austerity measures to stop, which is based on the psychodynamic approach to voting behaviour, as Visser (1998) suggested. This need for something different seems to be the reason for deciding to vote for the party of SYRIZA.

The findings are closer to Pappas (2014, p. 114) who stated that people "chose the probability of a serious political impasse over the sure economic loss caused by austerity and reformism". However, this study argues that people did not see, or did not want to see that possible outcome and their need for something different than what they were living led them to vote for SYRIZA. As it is said, the emotions that the austerity measures have generated played a significant role in that. Finally, the September 2015 voters switched their vote to SYRIZA because they wanted to see the party implementing its promises (which were not implemented during the period of January – September 2015). Therefore, economic pocket booking voting is revealed. Therefore, it can be claimed that all the respondents were pragmatic on their voting decision despite the indication that the May 2012 SYRIZA voters at the beginning, seem to be more idealistic.

The findings of this research study seem to support Teperoglou and Tsatsanis (2014) who argued that the fragmentation of the party system in Greece after the crisis is an intense shift in the politics of the country and therefore in order to explain the electoral outcomes someone has to go beyond economic voting explanations. As this study suggests the voters who switched their vote to SYRIZA in each of the 2012 and 2015 general elections had various economic and non-economic reasons.

The research findings support Weber (1964) who argued that in crisis people search for something new to replace the old. It is clear that the respondents were against the status quo, both in terms of political parties' power and in terms of created environment, (the left oriented voters because of 'perceived' ideology while the rest because of the outcomes of the crisis) and were looking for something new, a new alternative out of crisis and that was offered by SYRIZA. The above discussion explains the actual reasons behind the respondents switching their vote to the party of SYRIZA. The campaigns of SYRIZA were successful as the positioning of the party created anticipated emotions (hope) for ending the period that they were living and entering a new better future. Finally, the findings of this research study indicate that the reason that Mavris (2012, p. 101) argued that the 2012 voters of SYRIZA claimed for voting for the party is just the surface for the respondents of this study: "It expressed the demand of the change and hope, that it is new, fresh and not corrupted". The reasons were more complicated than that and are not the same for all of them as it has been discussed above.

5.6 Traits, crisis and voting behaviour

5.6.1 Traits of ideal leader in crisis and voting behaviour

As it is mentioned above, it is argued that voters who are anxious when they vote rely more on the personal characteristics of a candidate and his position in issues rather than party

identification (Marcus et al, 2000). The findings support this as the importance of the issue of the financial crisis and the suggested by parties political response to it together with the leader's characteristics have become important in all the respondents' minds during the crisis period. The personality of the leader is considered an important factor that influences the vote of the respondents. The following traits were identified as important for a political leader to have under the context of crisis from the respondents' answers: caring, honest, consistent, decisive, perspicacious, uncorrupted, persuasive and not caring of political cost, however, not all respondents want the same traits from a political leader.

Caring is a trait wanted mostly from previous PASOK loyal voters (who switched their vote to SYRIZA in 2015 and belong to the 'help me' cluster) and those who were swinging their vote between left parties (who switched their vote to SYRIZA in 2012 and belong to the 'don't lie to me cluster'). The above respondents are mostly female, public sector employees or belonging to the non-working population. This supports Kinder (1986) who has identified this trait as important for a political leader to have. The respondents associate it with a leader who shows he cares about the people and the country. What they actually mean is that they want somebody to take care of the social group they belong to and therefore of themselves too. They also want the political leader to protect their interests against Troika's will. That shows that those people, having a very close relation with 'the state' based on their profession (current or previous), still want somebody to take care of them feeling insecure when 'the state' is not present to support their interests. This is linked with the above presented cleavage between politics that are taken on a national level and those taken on a global level (decided by the Troika in that case).

Honesty is another important trait identified by a portion of the respondents. It is regarded as important by female and left oriented respondents who are either public sector employees or belonging to the non-working population and who switched their vote to SYRIZA in the 2012 elections. Those respondents belong to the 'don't lie to me' cluster. By the word honest they

mean that the leader should not lie to them and that he should believe his own promises (which should help the interests of the social group the specific respondents belong to and therefore their personal interests). Cronin (2008) identified honesty as being a trait of a charismatic leader. That is because they have experienced politicians that promised to them benefits which were never delivered.

Another trait that a number of the respondents of the 'don't lie to me' cluster want from a leader is the trait perspicacious. The first reason that they want the leader to be perspicacious is in order to be able to see in the future and to avoid the dangers (such as crisis), which shows the deep impact that crisis had on those respondents, and for identifying opportunities. The second reason is because they want him to be focused on the future. This reveals that they want a political leader who has a vision for the future. The vision should be in accordance with the interests of 'the people', which is the social group the respondents perceive themselves as belonging, and therefore their personal interests. They want a leader to take them out of the crisis and lead them to a better, alternative future which will put the needs of the individual person, not profit, at the centre of decision making. A vision is something identified by many researchers as having crucial importance for a leader in order to be perceived as being charismatic (Conger and Kanungo, 1998; Avolio and Bass, 1988). Moreover, being radical and unconventional are two more traits that the above mentioned respondents seem to want from a leader (as they want him to follow an 'alternative road' different than the mainstream). Those are considered as traits possessed by charismatic leaders (Conger, 1989). All of the three above traits regarded as important by those respondents who switched their vote to SYRIZA in the 2012 elections hide a blame for the 'old' politicians for not possessing them. That means that at the time of interview those respondents were ready to follow anything but a mainstream road out of crisis (linked with globalization of politics), which was the promise of SYRIZA.

Another trait considered as being important is consistency. The respondents who want the political leader to be consistent in a crisis period are part of the PASOK loyal voters and of those who swung their vote between governmental parties prior to voting for the party of SYRIZA. Those respondents belong to the 'protect me' and the 'help me' clusters. By saying consistent those respondents mean that the leader should implement the promises that he has made and was voted for. This is evidence that those respondents value highly the promises made and voted based on them, an indication of economic voting. Therefore, those respondents want a consistent leader in order that they will receive benefits. Literature suggests that honesty and consistency are linked together as it is seen in literature and create integrity which is identified by Yukl (2010) as a trait of charismatic leaders.

Another important trait that the respondents think a political leader should have under crisis is decisiveness. This trait was identified by most of the respondents of the study, however for the self-employed respondents this was especially important as well as the once loyal PASOK voters and governmental swingers who have switched their vote to the party of SYRIZA in the 2015 elections. Those respondents belong to the 'protect me' and 'help me' clusters. Decisiveness is also identified as a charismatic leader's trait by many researchers (Pillai and Meindl, 1998; Yukl, 2002). The above respondents want the political leader to be able to make firm decisions in a crisis situation under crisis and to be able to implement them. What is important here is that they link the attribute decisive with the stance of the leader against Troika and its programme for the country, which shows their need to get out of the austerity measures. They want the leader to be decisive in order to implement the party's programme instead of the Troika's one, believing that the consequences of that would be milder for them. The meaning that the respondents assign to this trait is also linked with the aforementioned new cleavage into politics (axis y in figure 5.1).

Based on the above, it is not a surprise that another trait that the same respondents consider as important for a political leader is to be persuasive. They want political leader to be

persuasive in order to be able to stand against Troika and persuade them about the policies that he wants to pass, which would be better for the respondents than the programme of Troika. The meaning assigned to this trait, which has not been identified by literature, is an indication that the respondents were desperate for a change of the way that they were living during the crisis years.

The final two traits considered important for a political leader to have under the context of financial crisis are uncorrupted and not caring of political cost. Both of these traits were identified by the once loyal PASOK voters, while the trait uncorrupted was also identified by the left swingers. Therefore the respondents who consider the trait uncorrupted as important belong to the 'help me' cluster, while those who want a political leader not to take note of political cost is to the 'don't lie to me' and 'help me' clusters. Those two traits are directly linked with the practices (corruption - clientelism) that they considered as pursued by the 'old' politicians and being responsible for the crisis. Moreover all the respondents' anger towards politicians is based on those practices and their role in generating the crisis. However it should be noted that this emotion (anger) towards politicians was created after crisis impacted the personal lives of all the respondents, which is a clear indication that the respondents did not disapprove those actions until they had an impact on their personal lives. The reason that previous PASOK partisans want the leader not to care about the political cost is mainly because they do not benefited anymore from the 'exchange game' and therefore they have stopped gaining from that and therefore they do not want anybody else to benefit from it either. The reason the above mentioned respondents want the leader to be uncorrupted is because they want somebody who is considered as being out of the game to put an end to the clientelistic practices and corruption and they believe than only a leader who is out of politics and not having prior commitments can do it. As it can be seen the traits that the respondents want the political leader to have can be grouped in three categories as it is shown in table 5.3. The first relates has to the policies that respondents want the leader to implement; the second with his stance towards Troika and the austerity

measures; and the third with clientelistic practices and corruption. The discussed meaning they give to each of those traits is presented. Moreover, in brackets are the election years in which the respondents who perceive the traits as being important switched their vote to the party of SYRIZA.

Table 5-3- Important traits and their meaning

Group 1		Group 2		Group 3	
Trait	Meaning	Trait	Meaning	Trait	Meaning
Caring (2012)	Bring policies in favour of my social group "the people"	Decisive (2015)	'fight' for me against Troika	Uncorrupted (2012) & 2015)	You do not have 'ties'. End corruption and clientelism
Honest (2012)	Believe what you say and promise	Persuasive (2015)	Persuade Troika	Not caring of pol. Cost (2015)	I am out of the game, nobody
Consistent (2015)	Implement what you promise				should be in
Perspicacious (2012)	Lead me to your new, unconvention al future				

As it is seen the traits required by a leader under the context of the crisis are linked with the traits associated with candidates (e.g. Kinder, 1986; Miller, 1986), perceived as being charismatic leaders and are dependent on the context of the specific crisis. The exploration of the meaning of those traits considered as important creates a better understanding of the voting behaviour of the respondents. That in the end the importance of the leader was based on the fact that in the minds of the respondents the leader would work for their interests against the 'Troika'. Each of the traits that were discussed as important highlights that. Therefore, what is really important is the promises that SYRIZA made to the respondents and their 'match' with the respondents 'needs'. The respondents wanted specific things to happen and they were willing to vote for the person that they saw as being 'on the same page' with them. They wanted somebody to 'solve' their problems. That is a clear link between required traits from a leader and the context. That means that different contexts

require different leader qualities. It is important to highlight that those traits considered as important are not contradictory to each other. That means that a political leader can present him as having all of those traits and therefore attract different groups of respondents without alienating the others. That is a key finding that contributed to the success of SYRIZA and Tsipras as it is discussed below.

5.6.2 Tsipras: traits and charisma under the context of crisis

As it is presented in the findings' chapter, the respondents of the study found the leader of SYRIZA and current prime minister of Greece as having specific traits. Those are: rhetoric, honesty, dynamic (decisive), young and non-professional politician. Of course, not all respondents perceive Tsipras as having the same traits but there was at least one mentioned by all of them. They all consider Tsipras as having rhetoric. They link his rhetoric ability with persuasiveness. Rhetoric is considered as a trait associated with charismatic leaders (Bryman, 1993). Tsipras by using his rhetoric ability has persuaded the respondents that he cares about them and that he believes and he will implement the promises he made and that he will follow his vision for alternative policies out of the crisis and the austerity measures. The messages that he was delivering, as discussed above, applied to each of the groups of respondents separately.

Moreover, mostly female respondents (mainly left oriented and left swingers or PASOK partisans who belong to the 'don't lie to me' and the 'help me' clusters) saw Tsipras as being honest. Since he was new into politics and he did not have any track record, the perception of honesty was based on his rhetoric ability. Therefore his rhetoric ability persuaded respondents that he has four other traits that are associated with charismatic leaders: empathy (Pillai, 2003) inspirational (Conger and Kanungo, 1998), integrity (Yukl, 2010) and conviction to his vision (Robbins, 1992). That highlights the high importance of the rhetoric trait. The findings reveal that the respondents who perceive honesty as being important link

it with the belief in the promises that the policies would be implemented and it is another indication that promised policies are an important determinant for the respondents' vote, especially when those who want a leader to be honest perceive Tsipras as being honest.

Dynamic is another trait associated with Tsipras. The respondents that argue that Tsipras is dynamic are PASOK partisans and governmental swingers. Most of them belong to the 'protect me' cluster and some to the 'help me' cluster. Those are the respondents who argued that they wanted a leader to be decisive. The meaning that they provide for the trait dynamic for Tsipras is close to the meaning they gave to decisiveness. PASOK partisans based their perception on the fact that he took a small left party in 2009 and led it to the government, and in the passion of his rhetoric. On the other hand, governmental swingers argued that Tsipras is dynamic because of the stance he kept in the negotiations with the creditors. Although for most of the respondents that was a perception realised after voting for him for the first time, it reveals the importance for them of seeing a leader 'fighting' to protect their interests against the will of the Troika and enhances the argument that this was of crucial importance for the respondents.

Also, the majority of the respondents associate Tsipras with the trait young. Only the self-employed respondents did not see him as such. However, the meaning the respondents give to the trait differs based on their education level. The educated respondents associate young with a new way of thinking which links with the 'need' of the respondents; and the positioning of SYRIZA and Tsipras for an alternative, not mainstream way out of the crisis, which is a more rational approach based on what Tsipras said and promised. The respondents with lower education levels link the trait young with the passion that Tsipras showed with his speeches, charismatic leadership traits according to Shamir (1999).

The last trait, nonprofessional politician, which is attributed to Tsipras by left oriented voters and some pensioners and public sector employees, reveals that they perceive him as being

uncorrupted, as having non clientelistic relationships and no 'masters' to tell him what to do.

The findings indicate that the interpretation of that is the above respondents perceive Tsipras as somebody who has no ties and clientelistic relationships with anybody and at the same time he promises to them an alternative road out of the crisis.

Both of the last two traits work as a separator between Tsipras and the rest of the politicians. This is in favour of Tsipras bearing in mind the perception of the respondents on the rest of the politicians. It also enhances the schism between "us" and "them" and indicates the influence that the positioning of SYRIZA had on them. The traits that the different respondents perceive Tsipras as having and the meaning of those are summarised in table 5.4.

Table 5-4 - Tsipras's traits and types of respondents

Trait	Meaning	Type of voters
Rhetoric	Knows how to speak,	All
	peruasive	
Honest	Believes what he	Female, left oriented, left swingers and a
	says	few PASOK partisans ('don't like to me'
		cluster)
Dynamic	Based on rise of party	PASOK partisans and governmental
		swingers ('protect me' and part of 'help
		me' cluster)
Dynamic	Negotiations	Mixture of respondents
Young	New way of thinking	Educated respondents (non self-
		employed)
Young	Passion of speech	Least educated
	(links with rhetoric)	
Nonprofessional	Not taken part in	Left oriented respondents, pensioners or
politician	'dirty' politics	public sector employees ('don't lie to me'
		and part of 'help me' cluster)

What is important, and is where the success of Tsipras as a leader lies is on the link between the traits that respondents want in a leader to have and those that they perceived Tsipras as having as the following table shows. In other words Tsipras promised to each of the segments of the respondents what they actually wanted to hear.

Table 5-5 - Idea leader vs Tsipras and types of voters

Crisis impact	Ideal trait	Type of voters	Tsipras trait	Type of voters
People suffered from crisis and austerity measures	Caring	Female, public sector employees or non- working, PASOK partisans (2015) and left swingers (2012)	Rhetoric	All
Politicians make false promises	Honest	Female, left oriented, left swingers, public sector, non-working	Honest	Female, left oriented (some centre left), left swingers, PASOK partisans
Politicians did not see it coming / measures make a difficult future	Perspicacious	Left oriented, switched in 2012	Young (Unconventional road)	All educated (except self- employed)
Uncertainty slow decision making / politicians 'take orders'	Decisive	Self-employed, PASOK partisan and governmental swingers (switched in 2015)	Dynamic	(rise): PASOK partisans and governmental swingers (negotiations): mixture
			Young (passion)	Least educated
	Persuasive	PASOK partisans and governmental swingers	Rhetoric	All
Politicians do not implement their promises	Consistent	PASOK partisans and governmental swingers	-	
Corruption is a reason for crisis	Uncorrupted	PASOK partisans and left swingers	Nonprofessional politician	Left oriented, pension and public sector
Clientelism is a reason for crisis	Not caring of political cost	PASOK partisans	Nonprofessional politician	Left oriented, pension and public sector

As it can be seen from the table all the respondents perceive Tsipras as having traits that they require a political leader to have under the context of crisis, with the most important of those being the traits dynamic, rhetoric, and honest. That indicates the success of the strategy of SYRIZA on its positioning and acceptance of the party's specific messages by the different groups of respondents. His rhetoric ability, decisiveness and young age, together with the context of crisis and the positioning of the party, and his personality, have helped Tsipras to emerge as a leader. SYRIZA has promised to each voters' segment what they wanted to hear. The ability of its leader to persuade was crucial for the respondents to

believe that he possessed all of the traits as he did not have any previous political record in office. The positioning of the party and Tsipras was the exact positioning that charismatic leaders should use as suggested by Williams et al (2009) and Cronin (2008) that charismatic leaders position themselves, as a caring (policies in favour of their interests), understandable (the fact that they perceive the Greek people as the victims of the situation), as representing 'us' as well as hope for the future (which is evident from what is discussed above) and something new, different (which is the alternative, unconventional proposed way out of crisis) and honest (which is the perception that the 'don't lie to me' cluster have created based on Tsipras rhetoric, persuasiveness and the fact that he was promising what they wanted to hear).

5.6.3 Importance of the context of crisis on the rise of SYRIZA and Tsipras

The findings suggest that the context of crisis is a situation which can help charismatic leaders to emerge as various researchers suggests (Weber, 1978; Pillai and Meindhl, 1998) and they also support with Conger and Kanngo (1987) who argued that in order for a charismatic leader to be generated, a situation of unhappiness with the status quo needs to occur. Crisis has affected the economic situation of the respondents and that has created a domino effect on their behaviour with the appearance of emotions as an important factor in their decision making process. SYRIZA and its leader based their campaign messages on that and suggested an alternative way out of crisis when the respondents were feeling tired of the impact of crisis.

Hence, crisis was an important element that helped the rise of Tsipras. As Yukl (2010) argued, that attribution of charismatic traits to a leader by the followers is determined not only by the behaviour of the leader but also by aspects of the situation. For example the Tsipras's young age might have been considered as a disadvantage in a non-crisis period, since the emotion of anger towards other politicians would not have been generated, and

Tsipras may have been perceived as inexperienced. Furthermore, his rhetoric ability could have passed unnoticed if the 'gap' in the political market had not been created by the austerity measures. Therefore, the findings support the view of Winter (2004) who said that "the electorate's appreciation of a candidate's qualities evolves in accordance with the situational context". As Bennett (1981) said that different contexts or stimuli can engage different schemata and therefore can result in different judgments and that is evident in the findings of this research study. Tsipras was perceived by the respondents as a savior at a time of distress as Pillai and Meindl (1998) argued that many charismatic leaders do. The findings of the study partially support Shamir and Howell (1999) who argued that charisma is influenced by the previous performance of the leader. This is true for PASOK partisans and governmental swingers ('protect me' and part of 'help me' clusters) who identified Tsipras as dynamic based on the rise of his party as a leader. However, positive perceptions of Tsipras's were also generated, not because of his record but because of the fact that he did not have a political record (and therefore he was not involved in 'dirty' politics and he was considered as something fresh). The findings therefore, do not support Pappas (2011) who stated that charismatic people have long and successful political records. However, the findings echo Williams et al's (2008) argument that crisis is positively linked with charisma attributed to the challenger rather than the incumbent. Therefore, the findings of the study also echo Samir (1999) who argued that "situational realities existent at the time are those that contribute or detract from the attribute of charisma". Therefore, since the 'demand' would be for different traits that Tsipras wouldn't have, he would be as successful as he became. That means that for Tsipras and SYRIZA, and once demand and perception on Tsipras's traits remain the same, it is in his benefit not to change the context of crisis.

5.7 Explaining the inconsistencies in the respondents' answers

As discussed, the respondents provided inconsistent answers in their interviews with the researcher. The following are the identified inconsistencies: All respondents, especially the

female and left oriented ones ('don't lie to me' and part of 'help me' clusters), say that they support a future with 'the people' in the centre, a collectivistic approach, but they include themselves in this social group (even if some of them do not 'belong' there based on their actual status). Therefore the aforementioned respondents mean that the 'the people' can be in the centre as long as they are also included in that group, which is an individualistic approach; They were all aware of practices of clientelism, they all argued that other voters voted based on gaining personal benefits, they became angry at politicians for pursuing those practices after the crisis impacted on their personal lives, but they do not blame (or even give a small portion of the blame) to the people that took part in those practices. In a few words, everybody is corrupt except them. All of these are answers show gaps between something that the various groups of respondents believe that it is good to be or do and their actual practices. Those inconsistencies can be explained by combining two theories: The theory of self-concept and the theory of neutralization.

5.7.1 Actual and Ideal self

The actual self is based on the perceived reality of oneself (meaning of who and what I think I am now). On the other hand the ideal self is based on a personal vision or image of what a person would like to be and therefore it is created by imagination of ideals and goals (Malar et al, 2011). In this study, the ideal self of all respondents is that they are sociotropic voters caring about the whole society. However, the actual self for some of them is that they care about themselves (mainly those who have switched their vote to SYRIZA in September 2015), while some others (mostly female, left oriented voters who belong to the 'don't lie to me' and 'help me' clusters) care only for the prosperity of the social group to which they belong. Moreover, those who switched their vote in January 2015 (bigger part of 'protect me' and 'help me' clusters) did so out of a need to stop the loss of their personal standards of living too. All the aforementioned groups of respondents have tried to portray their ideal self

in the interviews, although their answers revealed their actual self, which is different to the ideal one.

It is argued that people tend to act in a way that their actual self will reach their ideal self (Higgins, 1987 cited in Choi and Riffon, 2012). That is because discrepancies between actual and ideal self have as a result unique emotional behaviour consequences (Boldero and Francis, 1999 cited in Boyatzis and Akrivou, 2006). Those are feelings of unpleasantness and tension (Mallar et al, 2011). However, the respondents have discrepancies between their actual and ideal self and they do not do anything to reach their ideal self without having any emotional behaviour consequences as literature suggests. How does this happen? The theory of neutralization provides the answer.

5.7.2 Neutralisation theory

It is argued that the fact that people say one thing and do another has long tradition in research. For decades, social psychology has focused on the inconsistency between stated attitudes and actual behaviour (Kaiser et al, 2010 cited in Gruber and Schlegelmich, 2013). Neutralisation theory is introduced by Sykes and Matza (1957) in order to justify this attitudinal incongruent behaviour or else to bridge the attitude behaviour gap. It is a mechanism that is used in order to 'justify' or 'neutralise' the unethical actions of a person (Munoz and Mallin, 2013). Bouville (2008) says that neutralization is a call of bad faith — "knowing the right, doing the wrong". For example many consumers are sympathetic to the goals of fair trade movement but few of them translate that attitude to actual purchase behaviour (Brunner, 2014).

The theory of neutralization suggests that delinquents have a set of techniques (justifications) that help them to "insulate them from self-blame and blame of others.

Society's norms are still valid for these individuals, only they are handled somewhat more

flexibly, depending on time, space, person and social setting" (Brunner, 2014, p. 201). Davy et al (2007, p. 285) said that "...those who neutralize profess to support a societal norm but rationalize to permit them to violate that norm". This is the case with the respondents of this study, where some of them (left oriented ones, 'don't lie to me' and part of 'help me' clusters) argue that they support the society of people in need and they care for the country's future, but they actually care only of the prosperity of the social group to which they consider themselves as belonging. Also, all of the respondents argue that they have not participated in clientelistic practices but they consider that everybody else has.

Sykes and Matza (1957) identified five original techniques of neutralization. Each one of them has a motive that can insulate feelings of blame for a non-conforming behaviour (Gruber and Schlegelmich, 2013). The five techniques are the following and are taken by Gruber and Schlegelmich (2013); Munoz and Mallin (2013); Brunner (2014); Li and Wu (2012) and Lanier and Henry (2004):

- Denial of Responsibility (DR) "I didn't mean to do it": the individual believes that he is not responsible for the violation of societal norms. He feels that external factors outside of his control led him to act in a specific way.
- 2. Denial of Injury (DI) "I didn't really hurt anybody": the individual argues that his behaviour is bearable because nobody was injured by it. Therefore, the attention is on the harm involved. There is no denial of behaviour but the wrongfulness of it strongly depends on if someone got injured by that.
- 3. Denial of Victim (DV) "They had it coming": The individual claims that there is no victim in the act. Acknowledges the responsibility for the action and the injury caused but argues that it was the victim that had done something wrong and the injury is a deserved punishment.
- 4. Condemning the Condemners (CC) "Everybody is picking on me": The individual represses the wrongfulness of the behaviour by attacking others. By doing that he

- tries to take attention away from his actions by critiquing those who initially critiqued him so that his behaviour will be repressed or lost to view.
- 5. Appeal to Higher Loyalties (AL) "I didn't do it for myself": the individual tries to justify his behaviour by saying that he did it for a higher cause than himself (for the social groups to which he belongs). Therefore, he is willing to sacrifice demands of society for the benefit of this group.

In addition to the five traditional techniques there are more suggested in literature. Lanier and Henry (2004) presented them:

- Metaphor of the ledger: the individual presents himself to be in the balance of his life more moral than immoral.
- Claim of normality: the individual argues that since everyone is involved, then the acts are not deviant and therefore they he is wrong.
- 3. Denial of negative intent: the individual accepts responsibility but denies the negative impact was intended
- Claim of relative acceptability: the individual compares the behaviour and its injury to more serious ones and can go so far to be moral

Moreover, Li (2008) has categorized the five traditional techniques suggested by Sykes and Matza (1957) in three new forms. Those were:

- Denial of risk and harm: the individual recognizes the risk and injury associated with the act but argues that the probability of this to happening is low
- 2. Denial of responsibility: individuals claim that the action was beyond their control and therefore they should not be accountable for it
- Condemnation of others: individuals blame others for putting them up to taking the action that caused injury

All of those techniques could be used either after the act, in order to seek to reduce blame or before the act, in order to seek self-conscious approval that it is acceptable to do it (Lanier and Henry, 2004). By using neutralization techniques individuals who are committed to norms remove any negative impact or exempt themselves from the inappropriate behaviour by neutralizing their thought and behaviour (Hunt and Vittel, 1986 cited in Munoz and Mallin, 2013).

Different individuals, in different circumstances may reveal different techniques in order to 'justify' their actions. What was evident in the findings of this research study is that the respondents have used the techniques of 'claim of relative acceptability' and 'condemnation of others'. The first one was used by self-employed respondents when they were asked about the responsibility of the people for the crisis and they have given them only partial responsibility. For the rest of the respondents there was 'zero acceptance of the responsibility'. The latter was used by all the respondents on the same case, where they have 'turned' the discussion to the blame of politicians which they considered as being higher than the one of people, and which if they did not follow this practice the people also would not do it. The left oriented respondents ('don't lie to me' cluster) have used the appeal to higher loyalties technique, as they argue that they voted for SYRIZA not because of their own personal benefit but because of the group to which they belong. The few PASOK partisans that perceived clientelism as acceptable under the condition that "the people" will be also helped have used that technique too. Finally the 'condemnation of others' has also been used by the rest of the respondents who argued that they have not participated in clientelistic practices but all the rest of people did. As it can be seen, neutralization theory, in combination with the theory of self-concept, explains to a high degree the inconsistencies of the respondents' answers with the latter also giving deeper insight into the reasons that people switched their vote to the party of SYRIZA.

5.8 The clusters

The switching voters' findings pertaining to traits add to a body of literature related voting behaviour. To that add the traits for different groups of respondents, the most important of which have been identified and the meanings assigned to them has been explored. As such the opportunity exists to develop a set of clusters based on previous research and the findings of this research study. However, where much of the previous research on a leader's traits has taken a quantitative approach (e.g. Kinder, 1986; Miller et al, 1986; Funk, 1999) the identification of traits as a label attached to a particular voting behaviour offers no real insight into the schematic structure that determine a particular orientation. The latter is offered through a qualitative approach. The chosen methodology provides a context from which to frame the findings on switching voters and the real life utility of this research study, in addition to capturing the voting decision making process at the time of Greek the crisis.

5.8.1 Clusters Based on important Leader's Traits

From the 8 important traits that are identified, four are those that appear to be the most recurring in the answers of the respondents as all answers include at least one of these traits. All of them belong to the first two groups of traits that relate to promises and the 'alternative way' and with the effort to halt the austerity measures. That indicates the high importance of those two elements. The four traits identified result in three meaningful switching voter clusters ('protect me', 'help me' and 'don't lie to me') which demonstrate a very consistent and clear basis for the role of the traits in gaining a deeper understanding of the voting behaviour of switching voters. Those who belong only to the 'Protect me' cluster care mostly for a solution to the crisis situation, which will include the abandonment of the austerity measures. On the other hand those belonging to the 'Help me' cluster are those who mostly want to be looked after, by policies that cover their personal interests. Finally, those belonging to the cluster 'don't lie to me' are those that want to see that the leader

believes the promises he makes and want to see him implementing them and leading them to his vision, a better future with policies that support the needs of "the people". Therefore, the threefold SYRIZA's message (elimination of austerity measures, end of bipartisanism and preservation of dignity) appealed to all of them and as it is mentioned above they have achieved self and/ or actual congruence (Malar et al, 2011) with the party and its leader. Therefore, as it can be seen the clusters required different traits from a leader because their motivations for voting (switching their vote) are different. Each of the respondents was influenced by the part of message that they felt more associated with. To those who 'belong' in more than one cluster the message appealed in multiple ways. The nature of this study and the findings herein support that an understanding of the meaning of leader's personality traits plays an important role in helping to gain a greater understanding of the voting behaviour of voters who decide to switch their vote and that the traits that are important vary depending on the context of each situation.

Focusing on the details which differentiate the switching voters from each other allows for rich insight into the various clusters that exists and provides a basis for understanding the different trait orientations that exist on this field. The clustering method allowed for specific causes of the importance of the traits to be mapped against specific clusters that are likely to result in a degree of congruence. This leads to a deeper understanding of their voting decision making and indicates an increase in the effectiveness of the message that political leaders communicate in relation to particular causes.

The findings of this research study suggest that most of the traits considered as being important are centred on the context under which the political environment was in Greece at the time they switched their vote. That means that an examination of the context each time (as this research study has done and as it is suggested by literature), is very important in order to understand the meaning of the important traits for a political leader. That means that

the meaning and importance of traits can change depending on the context, as it is suggested by literature (Alvarez and Glasgow, 2000; Funk, 1999; Yukl, 2002; Shamir and Howell, 1999). That can help the political communicators on managing effectively their campaigns.

5.8.2 The demographics of the switching voters

In addition to various context factors and the above mentioned traits there is a range of demographic factors that can impact on the voting behaviour of respondents. A number of factors were explored such as income, occupation, gender and education.

5.8.3 Gender and its influence on clusters

The gender variable seems to have some importance for separating the switching voters' clusters. The majority of male respondents identify decisiveness as the most important trait for a political leader to have under the context of crisis. Therefore, what they mostly want from a political leader is to protect their interests in the negotiations with Troika and that shows an agony for their future. On the other hand female respondents argue that caring and honesty are the most important traits of a political leader and therefore belong to the clusters 'help me' and 'don't lie to me' or both. Therefore, they want from a political leader to promise policies that can help them personally and/or to follow the alternative road out of crisis in a future with the needs to the individual at the centre. The difference can be because different issues are important for the two genders Kaufmann (2000). Moreover, the findings support Pantelidou and Maloutas (2006) who argued that women are more left orientated than men.

5.8.4 Income and its influence on clusters

Income is also something that separates the clusters, with the wealthier people (who are also male) to perceive decisiveness as being the most important trait for a political leader under crisis, while those earning less than 20k to perceive caring and honesty as the most important traits. However, since all respondents stated that voting is important the findings do not support the argument of Lopez (2013) that wealthier people tend to believe to a greater extent that their vote matters.

5.8.5 Occupation and its influence on clusters

Occupation is another variable that is important in separating the clusters. Those who are self-employed perceive the trait decisiveness as the most important one for a political leader to have under crisis. On the other hand, the non-working population and the public sector employees perceive caring and honesty to be the most important ones and therefore the request from the leader to promise and implement policies that help them personally. That can be explained by the fact that those groups of people (non-working and working in public sector) are directly dependent on the government's decisions as they receive their income from the state. Finally, the findings suggested by Brown (2009), that those with higher occupation status believe to a greater extent that their vote matters, did not appear in this research study.

5.8.6 Education and its influence on clusters

Education did not seem as an important variable in separating the clusters. However the findings of this research study support those of Karp and Milazzo (2015) who argue that people with higher education levels also have high engagement with politics. On the other hand, and since voting is considered as important for all the respondents, the findings do not

support Bernstein et al (2001) who argued that high education means greater feelings that voting matters.

5.8.7 Political Ideology and its influence on clusters

Ideology appears to be a very important variable in separating the voter's clusters. Those who argue that they belong to left ideology believe that the most important traits are honesty and then caring. Those who consider themselves as belonging to the centre left ideology perceive the trait caring as the most important one and then the trait decisive. Finally those who perceive themselves as being in the centre and centre right of the political spectrum believe that the trait decisiveness is the one with the most importance. Therefore, the importance of honesty decreases and the importance of the trait decisiveness increases by moving from the left of the political spectrum to the centre right of it and vice versa. The trait caring seems to be important mostly for the respondents who belong to the 'centre left' ideology.

5.9 Conclusion of discussion

This chapter has discussed the findings incorporating the theory that derived from the literature in order to provide a greater understanding of the voting behaviour of switch voters. The clusters based on traits and demographics of the respondents were also discussed. The following chapter contains the answers to the research questions, the theoretical and practical implications of the study, its recommendations for further research.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter focuses on the core contributions of this study. It was set out to gain an understanding of the voting behaviour of the voters who decided to switch their vote to the party of SYRIZA in the 2012 or 2015 elections. A qualitative research method was employed in order to explore the voting behaviour of the sample. The study has also sought to understand the effect financial crisis on the voting decision making process of those voters switching to SYRIZA and to gain a better understanding of their voting behaviour. The general theoretical literature on this subject and specifically in the context of crisis is inconclusive on several vital questions within voting behaviour of switching voters under the context of financial crisis.

6.1 Answering the research questions

The study sought to answer four of research questions:

- In what way, if any, has the crisis had an impact on the voting behaviour of voters
 who switched their vote under the context of crisis?
- Which are the reasons that made voters to switch their vote under the context of financial crisis?
- What are the reasons that led people to switch their vote to SYRIZA?
- Can the meaning of the leader's traits be used to increase understanding of voting behaviour?
- 1) In what way, if any, has the crisis had an impact on the voting behaviour of voters who switched their vote under the context of crisis?

It is evident from the study that crisis had an impact on the personal income of the respondents. In addition, some of the measures that accompanied the financial crisis halted clientelistic practices and therefore the benefits that some of the respondents were gaining or they were hoping for. Those were mostly PASOK partisans and governmental swingers who belong to the 'help me' and 'protect me' clusters. Due to the income loss and the lengthy time period associated with the crisis, emotions have emerged in all of the respondents. Therefore the crisis has increased the level and depth of emotions' and income's loss on influencing the voting behaviour of the respondents. The emotions that were developed were anger, frustration and disappointment for those considered as responsible for the crisis, and fear, anxiety and uncertainty for their future. The anger the PASOK partisans felt for the previous governments broke their affiliation with the party and therefore made it easier for them to swing their vote. In addition, the anxiety, fear and uncertainty created a need in the respondents for the crisis to stop. Therefore, the effect of the period of crisis in which the respondents and their families have lived played a crucial role on the need creation. The anxiety of the respondents led to an increase in the importance of the leader in voting behaviour, mainly because they were searching for someone that could stop their personal financial haemorrhage due to the crisis and memoranda that followed it. The political interest of the respondents increased as a result of the crisis; however the importance of ideology decreased for the non-left oriented respondents (those belonging to the 'don't lie to me' cluster and part of the 'help me' cluster). This is said to be because they perceive that the ability to manage the situation is more important than ideological affiliation with a party. However, the reason for abandoning their ideology was that the party having the 'ideology' they were supporting could not offer them 'better days' anymore. Also, due to the crisis the respondents (mostly self-employed, PASOK partisans and governmental swingers – belonging mostly to the 'protect me' cluster) became less tolerant with the incumbent (since they have been let down by previous governments) and therefore the latter's performance increases as a factor that influences their voting behaviour. As it can be seen, financial crisis has triggered changes in the

individuals which in their turn influenced their voting decision making mechanism and therefore their voting behaviour.

2) Which are the reasons that made voters to switch their vote under the context of financial crisis?

The 'protect me' and 'help me' clusters turned their back to the status quo and the 'don't lie to me' cluster decided to abandon the previous left party they had voted for. The decrease of partisanship and of the importance of ideology for different groups of the respondents made the switch of vote an easier decision. Crisis led the respondents to form very negative opinions on the status quo, mainly on the mainstream politicians. They regarded them as the main factor responsible for the situation they were living in and therefore for the consequences of the financial crisis and the memoranda that followed which changed their lives. Mostly the respondents who prior to crisis were voting for PASOK or New Democracy decided to 'punish' the previous government (coalition of the two parties) based on the bad condition of the economy. The polarization between the two created political camps (anti and pro memorandum) played a significant role on the decision to switch their vote. The respondents, not accepting the mainstream idea that status quo was supporting (that of the only alternative), decided to abandon the parties they were supporting, to follow others that could offer an alternative route out of the crisis. However, there are differences between the groups of voters in regard to timing they have decided to switch their vote. The voters who switched their vote in 2012 made their voting decision during the election campaign and switched their vote to an intra block party (meaning a party having similar ideology with the party they used to vote for), while those that switched their vote in January of 2015 made their decision prior to the election campaign. There was no cohesion regarding the ideology of the party that they voted for compared with the ideology of the parties they used to vote

for. That means that for some of them (previous PASOK partisans) SYRIZA was an intra block party, while for some others (mostly governmental swingers) it was an inter block one.

3) What are the reasons that led people to switch their vote to SYRIZA?

This research found that there are various reasons that made respondents to vote for the party of SYRIZA. Firstly, the left oriented respondents have voted for the party in the May 2012 elections because they regarded it as the only alternative that had realistic chances of being elected in government and implement policies that are in favour 'of the needs of people' instead of 'the profit of the rich'. That actually means that they have voted for SYRIZA because they wanted a future different from the status quo where the social group they perceive themselves as belonging to would be benefited, mainly indirectly by the promised policies to be implemented. Therefore, somebody could argue that 'ideological affiliation' played a crucial role for left oriented respondents and some centre left ones, therefore for the 'don't lie to me' and part of the 'help me' clusters. The few respondents that have voted for SYRIZA in June 2012 did so because they saw the party as the only possible alternative to the previous main parties that were in the coalition government at the time and wanted to 'get rid' of them. Therefore it can be claimed that the June 2012 first time SYRIZA voters followed a strategic voting against those that voted and implemented policies that have stopped the exchange game. Tsipras and the hope that brought to the January 2015 voters for a solution to the crisis that would include a halt on austerity measures and a future out of crisis situation were the important reason for those respondents to vote for the party of SYRIZA. The promise of rapid exit from crisis played important role on the voting decision making, as the respondents were tired of it. Finally, those few respondents who switched their vote to SYRIZA in September 2015 did so because they wanted to see the party implementing the promises they made during the past years and especially prior to the

January 2015 elections. Therefore, they were asking for the direct 'benefits' they have been promised.

For all that to happen the positioning of SYRIZA and its leader played a crucial role to the vote of the respondents. SYRIZA had positioned itself as representing 'the people' against 'the establishment', right on the spot of the schism (Stavrakakis and Katsembekis, 2014). That was attractive for all respondents and mostly for the left oriented ones. Moreover, it promised to stop, once elected, the memoranda and therefore the austerity measures that affected the respondents' income, and to give back at least part of the benefits that people had lost during the financial crisis (Spourdalakis, 2013). That again was appealing to all the respondents, as they all have income losses, but was crucial for those who switched their vote to the party of SYRIZA in January 2015 as they had the need to find a 'shortcut' out of crisis.

4) Can the meaning of leader's traits be used to increase understanding of voting behaviour?

The findings of this study suggest that the role of the leader's personality traits on gaining a more in depth and clear understanding of the voting behaviour of switching voters is considered important for the respondents of the study and therefore supports the literature (e.g. Schumman and Schoen, 2005). Respondents believe that in crisis situations a priority must be the emergence of a political leader that will take them out of the situation, something that other studies have suggested too (e.g. Kets and Vries, 1988). However, every crisis has its own context and therefore the requirements from the leader are different (Williams et al, 2009). That means that different crises contexts can lead to the emergence of different important traits.

For this research study the meaning that respondents assigned to the traits considered as most important provide a greater understanding of their voting behaviour, as they are directly linked with the personal goals of the respondents (alternative policies, a stop to the austerity measures, exit from crisis). The trait caring is required by female respondents, public sector employees and those who belong to the non-working populations. They are either left oriented people who switched their vote to SYRIZA in May 2012 or PASOK partisans who did the same in the 2015 elections. Those are the people that perceive the state as being important for helping 'the people' in need, thus want the leader to care about the people and therefore about themselves too. That comes in agreement with the reasons they voted for the party of SYRIZA (future based on needs of the people and a stop to the austerity measures and therefore a halt to the income haemorrhage). For the left oriented respondents perspicacious is also a very important trait. That is linked with a vision for a better future (based on the needs of the people). The trait honesty is important for the respondents who also perceive caring as important (except from the PASOK partisans). That means that they not only want the leader to promise them a vision for an alternative, better future but also to believe in it.

Decisiveness is another important trait for different type of respondents. It is important for males, for the self-employed, PASOK partisans and governmental swingers who switched their vote to SYRIZA in 2015. Taking into account that those respondents voted for SYRIZA because of their need to come out of the crisis, they wanted the leader to be decisive since they understand the difficulty of their request and they wanted a leader that would promote their interests to Troika and would decisively support them against Troika's wills. The same respondents, and for the same reason ('passing' their interests through Troika), want the political leader to be persuasive under the context of crisis. Those respondents also want a political leader to have consistency between promises and actions, which means that they wanted him to implement the promises of ending the austerity. Finally PASOK partisans and left swingers wanted a political leader to be uncorrupted. They argued that this is because it

is their belief that only an uncorrupted person could bring an end to the clientelism of the political system. However, especially for PASOK partisans who also wanted political leaders not to care of political cost, the actual reason is that since implemented measures imposed by the agreed memoranda had halted clientelistic practices and they are not in the 'exchange game' anymore, they do not want anybody else to take part to that. All the above traits also show the distance between the respondents and previous politicians.

6.2 Switching voters' clusters

A very important outcome from this research was the formation of the voters' clusters. There were three specific voters' clusters (Protect me, Help me, don't lie to me) that were identified based on the traits the respondents considered as important for a political leader to have under the specific context of crisis. Those traits and the meaning that respondents assigned to those, as seen above, addressed RQ4 regarding whether the understanding of the meaning of the required traits from a leader can provide a meaningful understanding of the behaviour of switch voters. The clustering approach has been successfully applied to the context of switching voters. This enabled an understanding of the effectiveness of SYRIZA's and its leader Tsipras's campaigns in approaching their target market, the ways that their message appealed to them and finally the reasons for voters deciding to vote for them. It also allowed a deeper understanding of the voting behaviour of each of the clusters. The further clustering of different types of switch voters can provide a rich insight in the psychographic differences that exist among voters.

6.3 Contribution to knowledge

This study has explored the voting behaviour of the voters who switched their vote to SYRIZA for first time in the elections that were held under the concext of crisis. As a result the researcher identified a number of contributions that the research produced.

Firstly, the research offers a contribution to the literature of voting behaviour. That is done in numerous ways. Contributions have been made to the field of the voting behaviour of older voters, as the sample was over the age of 53, and on switching voters. In more details this research has identified the main factors that can influence the behaviour of voters over the age of 53. Moreover, the identification of motivations that lead the older age voters, even partisan ones, to switch their vote in periods of financial crisis was another contribution as it was the identified motivations that lead switching voters to vote for a populistic party under the context of a financial crisis. The identification of the new political cleavage and its impact on voting behaviour contributes to that field too. Finally, the use of the meaning of leader's personality traits in order to gain a deeper understanding of the behaviour of switching voters (and the identification of the three clusters of voters) is another contribution the study makes to the literature of voting behaviour. The latter's importance lies on the segmentation of the switching voters and on the identification of patterns of switching their vote. What was quite surprising was the way that the political views of older voters can be shaped by their 'history', meaning of events that occurred during the periods they have lived in. The most surprising however was the strength of the beliefs those individuals have on their shaped by history views, which is another contributor of this thesis.

Secondly, this research study contributes to the literature regarding the context of crisis under which it took place in relation to voting behaviour. That is done by confirming the influence of the financial crisis on the lives of people and to their voting behaviour. As mentioned above, this research study sheds light on the way that the context of crisis impacts the voting behaviour of voters, on the reasons that lead them to switch their vote in addition to the factors that influenced their voting decision making process.

Thirdly, this research contributes to the field of leadership by identifying the importance of the leader for the voters and the personality traits that are considered by the different clusters of voters as crucial for the leader to have in order to vote for him.

The research also makes contribution to the literature of political marketing in various ways. By identifying the motivations behind individuals' decision to switch their vote and the reasons they decided to vote for a populistic party under the context of financial crisis and therefore, the exploration of the way that a populist party can emerge in financial crisis. Moreover, the three identified clusters (Protect me, Help me, Don't lie to me), which were based on the leader's traits identified as important and leads to different motives for changing their vote, were an outcome of this research which enables specific communications to be created. Finally, the identification of creation of a new cleavage under the context of the financial crisis is a key contribution to the literature of political marketing. The new cleavage between nationalized and globalized politics if taken to other contexts may provide explanation for the switch of vote between far left and far right parties as has happened in recent years.

Based on the above mentioned contributions there are two target audiences for this research study. The first one is the politicians and political strategists that can take information on the way that politicians can position themselves in periods of crisis. The second audience of the research study is the voters. The thesis offers them valuable information on the way that a crisis impacts their voting behaviour and the way that a party can position itself in order to take advantage of that and gain their vote under the context of crisis.

6.4 Implications

6.4.1 Implications for politics

This research has implications for politics as it reveals the behaviour of voters, especially under the context of a financial crisis. That shows the circumstances under which voters can become vulnerable and decide to switch their vote. The deeper understanding of voting behaviour that was gained through the use of the meaning of leader's reputation indicates the way that voters think under the context of a financial crisis.

6.4.2 Implications for political marketing

The study has implications also for political marketing as it has explored the behaviour of switching voters under the context of a financial crisis and has identified the factors that can have an impact on their voting behaviour and motives for voting/changing their vote. Some of those factors are common; however some are different among the voters' groups. Therefore, the political marketers should focus their positioning in a way that will influence the factors considered as being important for the segment of voters they have chosen to target. Therefore the identification of the segments was an important contribution also for the fields as Phillips et al (2004) argued that segmentation of voters utilizing a decision making process can help in the formation of political communications strategy, including theme and message development. In relation to the communications messages under the specific crisis context, due to the high distrust for journalists, there is a need for political marketers to identify and use sources that are regarded as trustworthy in order to pass the message to voters. Therefore, the technique of endorsement is applicable. In addition, political marketers should take into account the new cleavage between nationalization and globalization. This may provide insight on the analysis and understanding of the voting behaviour of parts of the electorate.

The identification of the importance of a charismatic leader in a crisis was another element that stood out in this research and is something that political marketers will have to take into account. In addition, the importance of the meaning of the required leader's traits under the context of crisis in gaining a deeper understanding of voting behaviour of switching voters shows the political parties and marketers a way of gaining knowledge of actual voters' needs and focus their positioning and strategy accordingly. In other words, this research study provides them with the tools that can be used in order to do the first step in the process of positioning identification. Moreover, the importance of the context under which the research is conducted is considered as crucial and the researcher suggests to political marketers to always take it into account when developing a communications campaign plan.

In terms of the specific financial crisis, and the fluid political environment of Greece, the political parties need to position themselves clearly and uniquely in the mind of prospective voters of that age in line with the particular homogeneous voters group that are clustered on the basis of the similar trait orientations, as the findings of this study and the creation of the three clusters of 'Protect me, Help me, Don't lie to me'. This will need to be communicated in order to promote the traits that are considered as important from the desired target audience and therefore to initiate behaviour to vote and position the party to be congruent with the wants and needs of the target audience. This may require further configuration of the political party in line with the particular proposition's detailed.

6.4.3 Implications for marketing

This research has successfully applied the personality traits in order to understand voting behaviour. This offers an approach beyond that of understanding the behaviour of voters to that of the domain of voters as consumers of politics. Therefore, domains of political

consumption, such as food and clothes industries can utilize this approach in order to aid understanding of the behaviour of consumers.

6.5 Recommendations for further research

This study has explored the voting behaviour of switching voters and a number of important outcomes from this research study have been identified which have implications for future research. The identification of the important traits of a leader and the understanding of voting behaviour in this study was via a qualitative, interpretive, phenomenological approach.

Moreover, application of this type of research can be made in other countries that face the consequences of the crisis and rise of the electoral power of extreme politicians/parties (a good example is the USA and the election of Trump to the presidency) in order to identify and explain differences and similarities with the case of Greece. This is also an intention of the researcher.

In addition, research can be conducted in other countries were populistic parties or candidates grow in power in order to explore to what extent the cleavage between nationalization and globalization that this research study has identified can be applied to those countries.

Furthermore, periodical research with the same sample can be conducted as the level of crisis and the fluid political environment changes in order to explore any potential changes in their attitudes, behaviour and traits that they require from a political leader.

In addition, research could be done to explore the opinion that voters who switched their vote to SYRIZA have on the party and on Tsipras 2 years into government.

Finally, qualitative research of people who consider themselves as belonging to the 'promemorandum' camp could be conducted in order to explore their views on the crisis, the impacts of it on their voting behaviour and their requirements from a political leader during the context of crisis.

6.6 Conclusion of the conclusion

The period that began in 2010 and is still ongoing in Greece is characterized by many as 'history in the making'. It is the period that those who live through it will recite to their grandchildren. It is a period that will impact the country for decades. As the protagonist of it has said "We believe that we are through an epoch-making for the country process; we are in a period that PhD theses will be written, sociologists will write about what is happening in our country, political analysts will write...." (A. Tsipras in interview, 2012).

Based on the research on this period of time in Greece, there are lessons that voters can derive from it. This research study shows the way that a crisis can influence the voting behaviour of voters and contribute to the outcome of a switch in vote. In addition, it highlights the way that an extreme populistic party can take advantage of crisis situations in order to increase its voting percentages having as an ultimate goal to rise into power. Those type of parties 'step' on the 'vulnerabilities' that the crisis creates in the voters and creates a polarized environment based on those. In the financial crises those vulnerabilities are mainly associated with the created emotions against the previous politicians and the 'need' for a (non-painful) exit out of crisis which increases as crisis deepens. The depth of the crisis during the time and the emotions that it creates are the perfect 'food' for the extreme parties, as they grow where crises are not quickly solved, as happened in Greece. Therefore, a recommendation to voters when voting under the context of crisis would be to vote for the

party that promises a realistic way out of crisis (and therefore not a rapid one) and which focuses its strategy on logical and not emotional arguments.

The length and depth of the crisis feeds the extreme parties as they provide arguments that appear to the desperate voters who want to 'see the light' at the end of the tunnel as being satisfactory. Based on the above, the future of politics in Greece does not seem to be able to become bright soon. The government of the extremes (SYRIZA and ANEL) is already two years in power and the economy according to official statistics (HELSTAT) is in a worse condition than it was at the time they were elected and a fourth memorandum seems closer than ever. The percentages of those parties have shrunk, however that does not mean that populism is defeated in the country. Two possibilities can lead to that. Either changes in the environment (macro and/or micro) will match the personal benefits of the electorate with the benefits of the country as a whole (for example the crisis might continue and salaries may drop in such a low level that the vast majority of voters will demand foreign investments to come into the country – something that a large part of the electorate now opposes-), or a critical mass of the Greek electorate is required to change the way they decide which party to vote for and to realise that 'Rome was not built in a day'. Until then, the political life in the country will continue depending on the direct and indirect 'special relationships' between voters and politicians and the promises of the latter to the former. In such a political climate populist politicians will always find a way to approach a large part of the electorate and gain their votes.

7. References

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8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix I Sample semi structured interview

Introduction

No right or wrong answers – purpose to help understand – you are the expert – many questions may seem obvious.

Q: Tell me about yourself/ Interests etc. Q: What is your occupation?

Q: Do you have any political ideology?

Q: How important is your family to you? Q: Do you feel like to belonging to any

socioeconomic class?

Politics Specific

Q: Are you interested in politics? Q: How do you get informed about politics? Q: Do you discuss politics? Q: Do you vote? Q: What is voting for you? Q: How do you decide whom to vote for? Q: What were you voting before deciding to switch your vote to SYRIZA?

Q: how do you think the average voter decided whom to vote for? Q: Do you participate in politics in any other way?

Crisis specific

- Q: Has anything changed in Greece during the last years?
 - Q: Why do you think that has happened?
- Q: How do you live it?
 - Q: How do you think that this happened?
- Q: How do you see people living it? Q: Has anything changed for you?
- Q: How can the issues be solved?

Switch of vote specific

- Q: When have you decided that you would switch your vote?
 - Q: Why have you do it at this specific time? Q: how did you come to that decision?
 - Q: Anything else that contributed to that?

SYRIZA specific

- Q: When did you first heard about SYRIZA?
- Q: What was your opinion about the party at the time? Q: Has anything change since Q: When have you voted SYRIZA for first time?

then?

- Q: Why SYRIZA and not any other party? Q: Why have you vote for SYRIZA?
- Q: How did SYRIZA appeal to you? Q: Why do you think people voted for SYRIZA?

Leader's traits specific

- Q: How important is the leader of the party for you?
- Q: Can you describe the ideal political leader under crisis?
 - Q: Why do you think that?
 - Q: Is there something else you consider as being important?
- Q: When did you first hear about Tsipras?
 - Q: What are his characteristics?
 - Q: Why do you have this opinion?

Example of Probing questions

Q: You said that <i>/</i>	/ is important for you – Can you elaborate?
Q: O.K. Tell me about	/ Why is that important to you?

8.2 Appendix II: Transcript of interviews

Transcript interview A

I = Interviewer

R = Respondent

I: Thank you for allowing me to come to your house for taking the interview and thank you for willing to participate in my research.

R: No problem at all, my pleasure. I am interested in those things so I think I will enjoy it (laughs)

I: Before we start with the interview do you have any questions that you want me to answer about the topic of it? Was what I have sent you clear?

R: I think I am ok with that. My name will not be announced, is that correct?

I: Yes it is. None of the names of the participants to the interviews will be announced to anybody. You will all be coded with a unique code that people will see. They will not know who is behind the code.

R: Ok then. It is not that I care but just out of curiosity. And you will use it for your PhD.

I: Yes it is part of my PhD thesis.

R: We became a case study worldwide e? (laughs)

I: Well, I hope that you will tell me more details about it. So just to say it one more time, the purpose of this study is to help me understand why people have switched their vote to SYRIZA and the importance of the leader on that. There are no right or wrong answer, its designed for me to understand completely where you are coming from, and so on you, I guess you are the expert. Many questions may seem obvious and they may seem repetitive, but what they are designed to do is help me understand what you mean when you say something. Shall we start?

R: Yes, I am ready.

I: Could you tell me a few things about yourself?

R: You mean who I am and these things?

I: Yes, a background of yourself.

R: Well, I was born in a village, I came to the city since I was 6 years old before at that time the villages did not have schools, this is the period of emigration in 60s, when villages emptied and cities became packed full of people. My parents wanted that we will go to gymnasium in order to get educated. From the three children I was the one who got involved more in education. I studied philology and I worked immediately. There were the good times when a degree was guaranteeing you a job. Now it is not the same. It is much different. I worked for 32 years and now I am in pension.

I: You are in pension?

R: Yes I retired. Since 2012 I am in pension

I: How old were you at that point?

R: 56. I could have stayed 3 more years but hearing that the new pensions would lose money, the pensions would be calculated with a different system and those things about

crisis in the news that the retirement age will go to 67 I got scared. So I decided to retire.

I: Any interests that you have now?

R: Eee I am reading books. I was always doing it but I do not have specific activities that I

do. I am mostly caring about my family.

I: Your family?

R: yes, my children are here, they live with us at home. My son has a microbiological laboratory and my daughter is in the second degree in dietology. And she is graduating this year. Because with the first degree that she has (biology) she did not have much work opportunities. And she will try to go into the private sector.

I: As an employee or self employed?

R: Self employed. She will open her dietologist office.

I: Could you describe a typical day of your life?

R: I do works at home. Cleaning, ironing, these type of things. I also go out for a coffee with friends. But not in everyday basis. Whenever I feel the need to do it. Usually it is 2-3 times a week.

I: In your life, the way you live it, what is important for you?

R: with the others, not my family, I try to have good relationships. I am a patient person and with patience and optimism I see life. Patience is the most important characteristic of a person because she shouldn't reach the limits even if others provoke you. You have to control yourself so that you will not create tense situations. Of course you can not do all the time. These situations will occur especially within family where you have more freedom of movement than with people out of family. I do not want to insult people with something I will say and I will regret it later. It doesn't mean that I am not honest. I will say what I want with calm pace. I am calmer than other members of the family.

I: do you have any political ideology?

R: Yes. I was in the 'area' of PASOK for years. By saying PASOK I mean centre. Centre left. That is the political area that the party was covering. Ideas as they were said then that would help the largest part of the population, the people as we say, would serve its interests and would increase the level of the many. It was against plutocracy.

I: So, is PASOK your ideology?

R: Not PASOK as a party. But what PASOK stands for, what it represents, or used to represent until it transformed to something else.

I: what did it represent?

R: Equality, social justice, power to people, true democracy. All of those. Those are the things that we were demonstrating for in our youth. And many of those PASOK did them.

I: Are those words you have mentioned what you consider as your ideology?

R: Yes. Pretty much

I: I hear you saying 'represent the people' power to the people. Can I ask you to explain to me who 'the people' are?

R: By saying people I mean the most of people, the society, the everyday people, not the rich ones the. Mid and low social classes. I cannot say that the upper middle class belongs to the people. And I believe that it would serve the interests of those people. Of the lower-middle and low classes. I believed that a lot. I believed it for many years. I was seeing the scandals but because there was the policy that we do not keep everything for us but we take also care of the lower people, e I overlooked some things. I can say that up to a point I accept that politicians will be corrupted. In the whole world it is like this. But not to the point where you destroy the country. They will get some (money) ok, but they have also to take care of the people.

I: So you accept corruption?

R: Not corruption as practice. I accept, or better I understand that some politicians will try to steal money. This is how the global system of politics works. What I am saying is that they should also take care of people. Not to be in politics only for selfish reasons.

I: What do you think that politicians should do?

R: they should give motives in order for the for the lower middle class to develop. To tax them correctly, to have good health care. I say that no matter that members of my family are in the private sector. The lower middle class needs to be helped.

I: How do you mean the lower middle class? Based on what do you consider somebody

belonging on that class?

R: based on the income. Because in the last decades everybody was educated, all of them

got a degree. Maybe it was the frustration of the previous generation who could not be

educated. It was given the opportunity through the increase of the living standards for those

people to be educated. If you have good enough living standards you can send your children

to study. To consider it as important. It can be that the studies you will do will not be used in

your life but I am in favour of education. So yes income. Because a lot are educated

nowadays. But there are educated people that earn very little money.

I: What do you consider yourself?

R: As part of the lower-middle class.

I: So, somebody can say that you want politicians to help this class for personal interest.

R: I am of the opinion that if most of people around me are well I will also be. If I only have

the wealth and the people around me are miserable I do not like it. I believe that the

individual goes up together with the whole society. Not by themselves.

I: was that always your view?

R: Yes. And now and before crisis.

I: You say we are in crisis....

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R: Yes we are. It is obvious. We have a problem. Economic that drifted values. Of course

there is the debate. That with crisis more humanistic emotions came in the surface that

people did not have before.

I: How did this happen?

R: I heard that. I have not seen it. Because many are in need some people thought of

helping them in many ways.

I: But you have also said that economic crisis brought fall of values...

R: yes. Because some, not all there are people that care for their around people...everybody

cares first for himself. Firstly to grow financially and now to manage to save what he has.

And if someone he knows is in economic difficulty I do not know if he will help him because

he knows that if he gives help to a friend who does not work for example at some point he

will have to stop because he will start falling economically too. Not giving help is a defense in

order to save himself.

I: So you say crisis brings a decrease of solidarity.

R: It brings a lot, among other also that.

I: You said that the crisis is an economic one...

R: That is what I live.

I: How do you live it? What has crisis brought to you?

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R: Well...Thank God we as family are ok. None of us has lost their jobs or anything like that. But seeing people you know to struggle it makes you become tighter with money. Who guarantees that you will not be next? This thought eats you really. Compared with others we are much better, but of course we have also lost much. Psychologically I want... I try to be optimist. I do not want to see the negative side. I hope that at some point this story will end. But inside the family there are pessimistic voices.

I: who influences whom?

R: when my husband comes with broken because heart his job did not go well, because new measure will be taken that will have negative consequences I am affected. But on the other side I say what can happen? We will try to confront also this one. I cannot find any other solution than to confront it with optimism and to accept it, part of it. The crisis. It can't be done differently. What else can I do? From discussing with other what else can I do to solve the issue of Greece, which I have to tell you that I do not consider it being easy.

I: you had accepted it from the beginning or with the passage of time?

R: At the beginning I did not believe it much. I was still working at the school and the first cuts in salaries came. At the beginning they were mostly small cuts and I was saying ok it will stop, it will not go further. And then more cuts came. More severe that time. Then the situation stabilized a bit and we thought ok it is until here. It stopped. But now that I am in pension again money are lost but now from what I hear I say please stop where it is. I do not want to think the worst scenario that we will all reach 300 euros that other people say. I do not want to think of it at all. I want to believe that something will happen. Something will happen and this whole thing will end.

I: Something from whom?

R: from the politicians in first level. Now maybe mainly from the foreigners. I do not have much faith and trust on them though. I want to understand what their target is. 6 years now I haven't understood... Do they want to save us or to destroy us? I haven't understood it yet.

I: Before you were expecting it from Greek politicians mostly?

R: yes. Even though from the beginning people were saying to me that there is no way that solution can come from those politicians that created the problem. In order for solution to come somebody else needs to do it, not those who are responsible for it. I was not accepting that at the beginning.

I: So now you have accepted that PASOK and ND created the crisis?

R: Yes I have. Unless if there is brain washing and all the information that give us through media are lies. But I believe that they are not. Of course there is some level of propaganda but in the end it is their fault. That is why I went to another party. I was not seeing solution with them. From them. I said that maybe with Tsipras something different will come.

Something will change. Maybe he will manage...

I: To manage what?

R: to stop the downfall, what else. And to solve the issues of the country.

I: How can the issues be solved?

R: I really don't know. What else can happen? I can not imagine of anything else to happen. Salaries and pensions are down, taxation increased. I can not imagine what else can bring.

What other measures? We pay all the time. How much more money to give to the state? People gave them at the beginning without being frustrated because they had money at the side. Now they are coming to an end and for most of them have already finished. We thought that by paying some money this situation would come to an end. Now you see that we pay all the time and the end is not coming. So I am thinking... if the creditors want to do a haircut in a big part of the debt....

I: Is that important?

R: yes, because we will pay smaller doses so some money will be left to be given in the country. To health, to education, to open jobs. The state could create jobs by itself.

I: I hear you mention state. Do you think it is important?

R: yes it needs to take part in the economy with parallel support of the private sector. I am not in favour of the total statism but also not on the privatization of everything. A mix of both. Because when state puts limits then private sector works better but when it intervenes much then it can become inhibitor for the development of the private sector.

I: Why is state so important for you?

R: Because it is a security for people. or it should be like that. So that they will not fear of losing their job or their home. Psychologically I mean. State should be a safety net for people. Not to give everything but at least the minimum. That is why. But I think this is a dream at the moment, there are other thins important to happen, easier. And there are no money for that too.

I: what is that you think should happen in the country?

R: The most important for me is a fair tax system. To pay depending on how much you earn. The one who gets 500 euros pension to pay less percentage. And depending on the amount you earn the taxation to go higher. In order for everyone to pay. But not to have the person that earns 40k and 50k to pay 50% for tax. That is not fair. And to catch people who do not pay taxes. This is also important. People who are employees or pensioners pay the taxes for those who cheat on the tax system. This has to stop at some point.

I: would you vote a party that supports that?

R: no, not only for that. There are also other factors. Because my whole life I was in the side of centre left, and from family influences, I would never be able to vote for a right party. I would prefer not to cast my vote. I still remember for example that they had my cousin out of university even though he passed the exams. There are things that you can not forget. Ideologically I can not. The area from centre to the left represents more the low-middle class. I can vote for something else.

I: is there something else that you consider as important?

R: Up to now those things. The ideology with which I grew up and when I saw that PASOK was not what I was voting for and supported I turned to Syriza. Of course I went to Syriza before 2015 because I did not have where else to go.

I: What do you mean by that?

R: Syriza was for me the only possible choice. The only party that was saying something different. All the rest were following the two main parties. So they did not leave me much choice.

I: What was the different that it was saying?

R: Something optimistic, that we can do things in a different way, that we will go out of this

thing that we are living. That he will offer to people something.

I: And there were not other parties promising that? I mean, was Syriza the only party?

R: They were. But there were also two other things. Syriza was the only left party that was

doing it. And even if there was another left the way that Syriza was promising.... They had a

real plan for action. An alternative one.

I: Did they?

R: well I do not know. I can not answer now with certainty, but when they were speaking you

could see that they had one. Now if they were so persuasive and in the end they had nothing

what can I say... But I believe they had, and they tried to do it. They tried to implement it. We

all remember the negotiations with Troika last year.

I: What about them?

R: Tsipras tried to pass his alternative road through them. He tried hard I have to admit. He

gave us again the impression that somebody actually wants to do things, that he promised

and delivered. It didn't succeed though.

I: Hm.. are you interested in politics?

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R: Yes. Maybe because of my profession because I studied history, I am interested in all of these that are happening in the country. I was interested since I studied history and taught it. Until then it was mostly the influence of my family because my father was involved in the politics of the village. We were always discussing politics at home but since I have started teaching history I understand more what is happening around me. And that everything starts from history. So, my interest in politics has always been high. Some people became interested now that crisis came but not me. I had the political 'microbe' way before that.

I: how do you get informed about politics?

R: television, and newspapers mostly. What else? I do not know how to use technology so I do not use the internet. .

I: What do you watch in television? I mean related to politics.

R: Mainly news and talk shows. Any channel. I am annoyed by some journalists that you can see that they support different sides so I try to get information from different sources. Of course my political stance stays. It doesn't change. I just try to have open the eyes and trying to think that also others may say truth, they may have right in some things. I wasn't accepting that before. Now that everything changed in the country and it was revealed that the political system works for itself... I accept it.

I: So television and newspapers...

R: I have stopped buying many newspapers now due to crisis so most of information comes from the television.

I: Is it because of the cost of those?

R: Yes. It is not much but it is an unnecessary cost so we decided to do it. It is a cost that if

you cut it, it doesn't affect your life.

I: Do you discuss politics?

R: yes. At noon at the table with the family and when we go out with friends. A lot. In politics

I express myself freely with friends. I just don't want to create conflicts. Just in politics I

express my identity. I will not argue with somebody. I respect every opinion, I will say mine

and want mine to be respected too. Everyone is trying to pass his opinion because he thinks

the other is stupid and does not know what is going on. I want that when somebody

discusses to discuss with justified arguments. Actually, most people talk and they do not

listen.

I: Then if people are just trying to pass their opinions why is discussing important?

R: because you might hear a view you haven't thought about. And somebody may give you

information you didn't have. It is a necessity for me to discuss politics. Maybe also because

of my parents. We were always discussing. Maybe I am influenced by that.

I: do you vote?

R: Always

I: You have not missed any election?

R: Not as I remember, no.

I: what is voting for you?

R: Voting is my right as a citizen to state my opinion on whom I want to govern me. From the

moment that I believe that a party represents me better I want it to govern me

I: why is so important for you to be governed by parties that represent you?

R: Because I want the country to be in the direction that I have in mind. Isn't that the

meaning of voting? Saying your opinion on where you want the country to go?

I: What do you mean by saying direction?

R: What I want the government to do. For example, what I have told you before, I want

government to help the majority of people. If I do not vote then the right party might win and

will follow completely different policies.

I: What is voting for the average voter? What are the voting criteria that he has?

R: He goes to whichever party gives him the most in the election period. He has no ideology

I: What do you mean?

R: he doesn't believe in anything. He votes for the party that offers him the most

I: offers him?

R: Benefits. The party that he thinks will benefit him the most. That is how he votes.

I: Where parties offering promises?

R: you don't expect to learn it from me I suppose...That was how politics was done. For

many people, not all of course

I: ok let's go back to you. You said that you voted Syriza even before 2015...

R: Yes because I did not have where to go. PASOK did not represent me anymore. Most of

people before crisis were PASOK or ND. When what you had in mind started collapsing for

one of the two main parties and I got disappointed it was logical to go to a party that at the

time was not in power but the other would not stay in power with my vote. I would not

legitimize the two main parties by giving them my vote. I actually disapproved the two other

parties and went to a smaller one. Which eventually got bigger.

I: Do I understand correctly that until 2012 you were voting for the same party?

R: Yes in 2012 I turned to Syriza.

I: Why were you voting for PASOK all of your life?

R: Because PASOK took the economy and made the country prosper. It gave money to

people. before PASOK people had big difficulties. The gap between rich and poor was much

bigger. PASOK created the middle class. The economy was going well... Or at least that is

what I was thinking because everything was going well until crisis. Well...you understand

what I mean, more money to people so I though the economy is in good shape. Until we

crushed on the iceberg...

I: How do you decide what to vote for? Based on what?

R: Ideology.

I: Meaning?

R: I said it. The party that is closer to me, to my beliefs, my wants. The party that represents

me.

I: but you said you were voting for PASOK because it grew the economy.

R: Yes but it did it through the people, not through the rich ones. That was the important

thing that PASOK did. That is ideology.

I: would you change party based on the candidates?

R: No, I do not care of the local candidates. I never did.

I: because of the leader?

R: Look. I did not like Simitis. But because he was in PASOK I voted for him. Then I was

thinking that the party is more important than the leader. Now everything has changed. Now

I don't care if the party is not doing well. The ablactation occured (laughs). No. I will vote for

the party that I believe will do the best, despite if I like more the leader of another party.

I: The best...?

R: The best. For the people. For the society to develop.

I: you mean that there is also possibility to vote for a right party?

R: no. I would prefer not to cast my vote. I am still in centre and to the left side. But allow me

to tell you something. If a friend, because I have friends from all parties – I will not put party

above friends, if a friend was going candidate with ND I would vote for him.

I: Why is that?

R: because I believe that personal relationships are above parties.

I: do you participate in politics in any other way?

R: No.

I: What is your opinion on politicians?

R: Now it has changed much...I believe they work for themselves and their own people. For

their team. They care for people only in words. In actions I do not see it. I was believing that

the centre left parties wanted to take people up. Now it is all blurred. They do everything to

stay in power. And that annoys me a lot. That I see that they care of power and not to save

Greece. How can I explain the fact that all the countries which had economic problems are

prospering now and only Greece is still at the bottom of the barrel? Politicians do not want to

touch their voters. It is so simple. Because if they touch them they know that they might not

be reelected. They were doing it before but the fact that now people are in difficult situation

and they continue doing it is outrageous.

I: Before crisis you mean?

R: Yes. That has brought us here
I: So you identify those practices as the reason for crisis?
R: Yes, of course. What else can it be?
I: But you have said that up to a point you accepted it
R: Up to a point that there is no harm and as long as people are also helped
I: By those practices?
R: No no no, by the policies. I just said to you before that I overlook something if they do their job right, that's all. Not that I approve corruption and clientelism. Of course not
I: Where do people stand on the situation?
R: I didn't understand
I: Sorry, I mean, you said that politicians and their practices brought crisis
R: Yes
I: Do people have any part of the blame?
R: Well, I don't think so. They are suffering now not the politicians. The politicians haven't
understood anything by crisis. They have money. So even if people had a small part of the

blame, which I do not believe they have, the amount of pain they are going through is disproportionate to that.

I: Aha, ok. Can you describe your ideal political leader under crisis?

R: One that cares for the lower middle class of the country. For the many of the country. I want somebody to take this country and upgrade it. That he would not care of staying in power for getting money but for helping people.

I: Is that enough?

R: Yes it is because if he cares it means that he has the power to do it, to help people.

I: So, you want a leader to care because then it means that his policies would be according to that?

R: not only that. Yes his policies will be consistent with his beliefs. But also if he cares, truly cares not pretending to do so, he will fight for passing those policies. If he doesn't then he will not do it with strength. When the first or second obstacle will come he will stop.

I: is that what you also want in a crisis situation? To care of people and not of their 'friends' and to fight for that?

R: especially in crisis where people are in higher need. He needs to care and to have policies that help the people. Also, he needs to be able to persuade his own people that his plan is the right one for the country. That it will bring prosperity to Greece. If he can persuade them, it is easier for him to pass it through the parliament. But also to be able to

pass it to the voters. Because if he can not then it might come to his mind the political cost.

And then he may not do it.

I: What do you mean by the right plan? What is the right direction?

R: The one that helps the many. Not the rich ones. Those in need.

I: Again you go to people against the rich. Why is that so important to you?

R: Those are different worlds Apostolos. They do not live the same lives. There are different

worlds. We want people to prosper. They want the rich to prosper. If the numbers are ok

then everything is ok for them. But those numbers may not represent growth of people but

only of the businesses of the rich people. What to do the growth that is based on the rich? I

do not care about it. But they want that.

I: They? Who are they?

R: By they I mean the right parties, especially ND. The mainstream politicians, the Troika,

them, not the real people.

I: You say that people should be helped, but you do not participate in any activities to help

people. Is that correct?

R: No, I do not. Why I don't do it when I say that I want people to be helped?

I: Yes...

R: Isn't it a responsibility of the country? Or the state? Why should I volunteer for something that the state should have solved it? What I can do is to demonstrate in order to force the government do it. I don't believe that people should run to help those in need. Everybody should have a plate of food and a home.

I: is there anything else that the average Greek politician is?

R: Theories. Non practical. And no power. The MPs follow the line of the leaders and the leaders the plan of the interests. I want freedom of choice in politics but I don't see that it exists. I don't like that they want to stay in power in any case. They have mania with power.

I: Favourite leader?

R: Andreas Papandreou. He has of course part of the blame for the crisis but all of those slogans about national independence and a proud nation sounded nice to our ears, even though in history is proven that we were always under the flags of a big power. They sounded like a revolution of the people.

I: what were the characteristics of Andreas?

R: He had persuasion. As Tsipras has. Just then we were young and out of a dictatorship, we had not lived free politics. All of those made us believe that he would do everything of what he was promising. Of course he gave money, increased salaries etc but after a point he started to calm down. He had also health problems. Tsipras is similar to Andreas. He is very persuasive.

I: How Tsipras is transmitting persuasion?

R: By promising to people things that they like and make them believe that he believes them. of course I, because of age, did not believe that he would do all of those things. It was impossible. He could not do them. Now I am not easily persuaded, I have experience.

I: Is the party leader important for you?

R: of course. Because he puts his political stamp. His beliefs. He has always been important.

I: But you said that you vote for the party that is closer to you...

R: yes, but leader is important too. He needs to be consistent with the party's values. And to try to pass them to people. How every leader does it is his personal stamp. Of course he is important.

I: When did you first hear of Syriza?

R: it became Syriza from Synaspismos, I don't remember when I always knew then. And always I was sorry when they were not passing the 3% threshold to go into the parliament.

I: What was your opinion on them?

R: I did not know them much. Good I suppose, they were fighting for social justice and solidarity, which I also believe a lot. As Syriza until 2015 I believe it was the same. My opinion changed in summer of 2015.

I: What has changed?

R: didn't it split? Those who were saying not to say yes in everything left and the rest stayed.

It is a bit blurred now. If you were saying to me now what I would vote in a referendum I

would say that I am in favour of Europe. I do not want to go out of Europe.

I: What have you voted?

R: I voted no. But I can explain. I voted no to an agreement that was struggling the country

imposed by foreigners, not our government.

I: So, in favour of Europe but also national independence...

R: Yes, not to be subservient. That is what I would like but I do not see it happening.

I: When you have voted Syriza for first time did you expect it to go to power?

R: no. but I voted it because I did not want the rest. And when they said that they want to

govern I said ok lets try it to see what they can do. Maybe the situation can get better. You

know, I was almost depressed with the whole situation, bad news were coming from

everywhere, a government that was putting only taxes...when I noticed him speaking I

thought 'yes, there might be another way.

I: By saying him you mean...

R: Tsipras.

I: Why Syriza and not the rest of parties?

R: I told you, I did not like DIMAR. I believed it was very hypotonic. And I do not like Potami. It does not have something clear. What does it represent? ND is clearer than Potami. I am tired in the opposition that they all the time complain without suggesting something.

I: How did Syriza appeal to you?

R: I was thinking of them like being light left. I would not vote for KKE for example because I consider full statism as a type of dictatorship. I want it up to a point.

I: How did the party went from 4% to 36%?

R: Because people got disappointed from the other 2 parties. Syriza took them because they believed that something can change.

I: How did they believe that?

R: they wanted to believe it I think. Because they are in a situation for some years now and wanted something new to come. They had never seen them before in power. And syriza got people with persuasion on what they were saying.

I: What were they saying?

R: That will take care of people. That there is another way go out of crisis, that will stop austerity measures, haircut on debt...all of those things

I: But you did not believe them...

R: They promised everything to everybody. No I didn't. If they could do some of those that's another story.

I: So is promises the reason people voted for Syriza?

R: Not promises alone...hope to be implemented. Promises and desperation. Or better desperation, angriness and then hope on promises. If the other two did not exist promises would do nothing by themselves would not bring hope.

I: You voted for Syriza in 2012 and since then all the times?

R: Yes, since June 2012

I: When did you first heard of Tsipras?

R: When he was candidate for mayor of Athens.

I: What was your opinion of him?

R: I didn't pay much attention to him. I started paying attention after 2010 when I got disappointed from PASOK. I started seeing a dynamic politician, who was in favour of justice and meritocracy and he was willing to fight for the interests of the country.

I: is that what you described before about your ideal leader?

R: Yes, I believe Tsipras was close to that.

I: what made you believe that?

R: I wanted a politician like that to exist. And always I want to exist. And to also exist in the future. I: Am I correct by saying that you consider him a substantial leader? R: I have not seen a leader like him since my youth. Since the era of Papandreou. So persuasive he is. Or was. I: You said for example he is dynamic. How did that opinion developed? R: By the way he was speaking I suppose. Look he also took a party of 4% and polls and increased in by a huge amount. This also shows his dynamism. The fact that he was also young played a role I think. I: Why is that? R: I think because young people have different way of thinking. Things that the old ones say that can not happen, they find a way to do them. I: Things like the negotiations with Troika? R: Yes and that. I: What else?

R: The whole directions of his policies was how to say it...it was different, interesting, reviving. The whole world has profit in mind not people. I thought Tsipras could change that. That is why I said he supports social justice.

I: how did he persuade you and not another leader from another party?

R: I told you there is also family influences. I did not go to the right side. I went to the left.

There is also the borderline for me. He was the left person who said that he wanted to govern. I wanted all these years to see a left party in government. To see what they can do.

So it was not very difficult for me I guess.

I: How do you believe that he persuaded people?

R: By what he was saying that he would do. He was saying that he would conflict in Europe because the foreigners are pressing us economically and politically. This statement that I will fight for you made a lot of people to vote for him. Because the previous ones did nothing for that. They believe that he would bring a better deal, a deal where we stand on our legs and not that the creditors step on our neck. That the cuts in salaries and pensions would stop. He persuaded them, he seems that he was believing what he was saying. He seemed honest.

I: But you did not believe that he would do it what he was promising. Did he believe them?

R: He had a plan to make things happen. I was not sure if he could do all of those or just some. That is what I meant

I: So he promised to give back things to people. Things that crisis took...

R: Yes

I: And to fight with Europe...

R: Yes

I: did people want to go out of Europe?

R: As it was proven no. I don't know if we are only in words as people here in Greece.

Because most of people may have voted no in the referendum but did not want to leave Europe for economic reasons.

I: Isn't that a bit inconsistent?

R: Yes of course. Do you see that as people we know what we actually want? That we keep our beliefs in action?

I: So based on what people believed him?

R: on their desperation and disappointment. Even people who did not believe he would do what he had promised hoped that he would do 2-3 of those things. That he would give something to people. He persuaded that better days would come. People wanted two things. The downfall to stop here, justice in the tax system and meritocracy. He had the profile of the leader. To be able to take the masses with his speech. I believe this is important for a leader. To be able to persuade. If it was not for him I don't know if Syriza would be able to go to government.

I: What is your opinion now on Tsipras?

R: e, I am not the same enthusiastic as I was before. I cannot be. I do not know what he wants. If he was blurred mind, if he can not do what he promised. Because when a leader speaks and the economic situation of the country is good, then everything is ok. And if he has money to move the system as he would wish is fine. But if he doesn't then he is considered as 'little' for the role. Now, I do not know if the fault and blame that this situation is not finishing lies with the creditors. I do not know that. Or if he is undecided. But we reached July to make an agreement. I do not know if his vision is just theory and in reality it can not be delivered. I still cannot say that he was phony or he is very good. He is all the time with a question mark in my mind. I want that he will prove that hecan do what he visualized, which drifted people. He has not proven it yet to me.

I: Are you willing to wait more?

R: I do not have any other choice. If elections happen now I do not know if I will vote for him. I will see how the situation will be until them. after crisis I think I turn easier my back to a party. It was the polarization more intense kai Greece was split in two before. ND and PASOK. Now all of those parties that appeared I consider them parties of crisis. They will disappear.

I: Including Syriza?

R: it is very possible. To go back to its old percentages. Very possible. People now do not stand anything. That is what I see. There will always be a percentage of people who do not move in all the parties. But those who move between parties are much more than before.

I: Why do you think is that?

R: they are disappointed from what they were voting before and want to find something to represent them. That fits with them. Syriza appeared to be. I don't know now. It is like getting out of a long term relationship and trying to find another one for me. When you go out of the relationship you need time to think before you decide to choose the next one. And then you always question, is it the right one? Was my choice correct or I will be fooled again? We will see.

I: Fooled? What do you mean?

R: The others did the opposite of what they were supposed to do. I hope Tsipras will keep his word. But I have doubts...big doubts about it now.

I: we are approaching the end...just one last question. Are you religious?

R: Yes, but not much. I mean I believe but not going to church every Sunday

I: But you have voted for an atheist

R: (laughs) Yes, it is not the best that he is atheist, but on the situation that we are now I don't think that plays a role, not that is was playing for me before. But it is a good point.

I: before closing do you have anything else to add?

R: (silent) no I do not think so

I: I stop now the recorder, send you a copy of the transcription to get your approval to work with it, is that ok?

R: Yes

Transcript interview B

I = Interviewer R = Respondent I: Thank you for accepting to take part to the interview and for letting me come at your place to do it. I know your time is precious. R: If I can be of any help I will help. I: Are you over 50 and voted for Syriza for first time in the elections of 2012 or 2015? R: Yes I am. I: Then you can help R: Then I will (laughs) I: before starting is there anything what you want to discuss? Was what I have sent to you clear? R: Yes it was, you want to know why I have voted for Syriza. I: Among others...as I wrote to you, the purpose of this study is to help me understand why

people have switched their vote to SYRIZA and the importance of the leader on that. There

are no right or wrong answer, its designed for me to understand completely where you are

coming from, and so on you, I guess you are the expert. Many questions may seem obvious

and they may seem repetitive, but what they are designed to do is help me understand what you mean when you say something.

R: Ok. Let's start?

I: Ok. Could you tell me a few things about yourself?

R: About myself?

I: Yes, who you are, where are you from, what have you studied...

R: Well, I grew up in a village, went to gymnasium in a small town because the villages did not have schools then, and then I studied medicine in Italy and became a doctor. I am a pathologist.

I: Why medicine?

R: it was a topic that I believe was one of the most prestigious sciences. I wanted to have to do with the human body. I believe that health is the supreme good and I wanted to serve it.

But it is also a profession that had perspective, which was also important for me. Financial perspective and social status.

I: do you consider those two as being important? Financial perspective and serving the supreme good?

R: Yes because I believe that we have to offer to society. And also it was financial security for me. A combination of both. I come not from a rich family, as most of people at that time, and wanted to do something to like but also to be financially secured.

I: I see, and you are still active.
R: Yes I am. For a few years more. Until my children will follow their road and will be well on
that.
I: How old are you?
R: 65
I: Do you have any activities that you follow?
R: Activities? Such as running and these kind of stuff?
I: Yes, any type of activities.
R: No I wouldn't say that. I can't actually. I spend too much time at work so my only interest,
if I can call it an interest, is going out with friends.
I: AhaYou are a doctorwhat is your relationship with religion?
R: We all believe in something. But I only go to church for social events. I mean I believe in a
spirit, in God but on my own way. So yesChristmas, Easter week and that's all. Only on
social events.
I: So you go to church in social events and you also like to go out with friends
R: Yes

I: Is sociability important to you?

R: Yes, it is in the sphere of relations and communication. You create relationships,

sometimes even without actually wanting to do that, and you have to show your presence

somewhere. You cannot be distant from events. And because of my profession and because

of my character, it is a combination of both I suppose.

I: What do you mean?

R: I am self-employed. Why people should come to me and not to the dozens of other

pathologists? When you are in the private sector you need to build good relationships. But I

like it too so it is not something that I do with cold heart.

I: Can you describe a typical day of yours?

R: I prepare myself in the morning, breakfast at home, going to work at 9. I work until 2 and if

any unexpected appointment doesn't come I go at home around 2 3. I eat, I sleep a bit to get

rest, then I go to work again at 6 until around 9:30 at night. Then I go home again. That is my

daily program. And at least once a week I will go out at night. And maybe more times if it

happens. But there is no routine in entertainment so I do not have a specific day that I go

out.

I: Do you have family?

R: Yes, two children. One is working abroad in the banking sector and the other is following

my profession here in Greece.

I: Your wife?

R: My wife is a lawyer. She will go to pension this year.

I: Is family important to you?

R: The first. It is not the family then what is? We are Mediterranean people, we invest in family. We want our wife, children and relatives to be next to us and to be well.

I: You said you invest in family. What do you mean by that?

R: Look...investment how everyone means it. I mean to take care that your children will grow up in a smooth environment, to give to them what you can so that they will get the education they need to, to go in a university course of their choice and after that to help them in pursuing their professional career. I believe that this is what every Greek person has inside him. Each one in bigger or smaller degree of course.

I: do you apply also those things in your life in general?

R: (silence) I think that the life of people should be based on dignity. A right presense. Not to disturb anybody but also not to be disturbed by anybody. To offer to the society what you can to offer. But also to ask. To ask from the society and from the state...

I: Can you explain that a bit more? To ask what? And why?

R: You ask to make things easier for you in some things. To offer to you things.

I: What things?

R: You ask from the state to have structures so that the society can prosper. That is I believe the role of the state. To put the basics so that the society can develop. You understand how I mean it...

I: Could you clarify more?

R: I want the state to offer help to people when they need it and not to make their life difficult with bureaucracy. So that they will be able to live in dignity and to offer to the society. And we ask the state to facilitate on those two things.

I: Why the state should offer help to people?

R: In order for everybody to have the minimum requirements for living in dignity. A home, food, education, health care. Without the state people will live in the streets. Especially now in crisis. You saw what happened in States where the state is non existent in social care when the economy collapsed in 2008. Homeless people were everywhere.

I: Does that represent your thinking also in political life?

R: Yes I belong to the progressive political area.

I: What is the progressive area?

R: Well, I belong to the progressive area of the political spectrum, right? The centre left. I believe in a society that people will not harm each other in order to overpass them, but will help each other in order for the whole society to progress

I: Can you elaborate more on that?

R: Yes, I believe that each one is benefited when the whole society prospers. From which society the best one comes first based not on the disadvantage of the others but based on meritocracy.

I: Has family played a role on your political thinking?

R: You mean my family now?

I: I mean your parents when you were young, has anything influenced you?

R: No I wouldn't think so. My parents were not into politics. They were village people trying to make a living to study their children. They were not discussing politics at home.

I: What about your family now?

R: Of course you are influenced if you discuss about politics. I discuss with my wife and children. So I believe I am influenced to a degree. But I also influence I suppose.

I: Is anybody in the family that has changed vote because of the influence of another member?

R: We voted for the same party with my wife so no one had to change all of those years. No children is a different story...they can vote everything.

I: Ok, you said that are in the progressive area and you explained what it is...

R: Hm

I: Tell me something, do you believe that there are areas that are not progressive?

R: This now...it is a misunderstanding that one in Greece about it. I believe that if we take out of the equation the extremes you can find progressive people in all the political parties and areas. But when I say I belong to the progressive area, I mean that the majority of people would have that thinking. I do not believe that to what we call today conservative part of the society there are not progressive people but they are the minority in percentages in their political area.

I: OK, I see. And this progressive thinking for you represents the equality in society...

R: Yes, equality, meritocracy and social justice. Nobody to be in need for the basics. The country to help the society to prosper, all of those things.

I: Can I ask you what is the society for you?

R: The people of the country. Well, the majority of them not the rich ones. They are also part of the society but they do not need any help. The right ideology helps the capital and at best ignores people. That's how I see it. The state has to take care of those people. The medium and lower classes of the population of Greece.

I: What is Greece for you?

R: My country, my birthplace. The place that I live and I serve. But the things now socioeconomically are not good. They are difficult. The economic environment affects the society.

I: In what way?

R: Economy always affects the society. Our society of course is influenced since development is influenced by the situation.

I: What development is for you?

R: What this place produces. The economic activities in the country so that we can see that this place can earn. This is affected by crisis. There is no development anywhere. Everything collapses, day by day.

I: You believe then that we are in crisis...

R: Aren't we? The society has come upside down. I mean we see things that we were only reading in books and we thought that existed only in history.

I: How crisis influences the society?

R: But...there are no money. And that leads to misery and tabefacation. I see from my profession that there is a real issue with the provisions of the state to people. That has made the Greeks to review many things of their lives. First of all the value of money. They were spending, all of us, a lot. Taking loans, did not do correct calculations because money also were coming very easily to their pocket. With any type that you can imagine. Either because there were jobs and they were working or because banks were giving very easily loans. That does not exist anymore. Salaries have gone 30% - 40% down, banks do not give money anymore. The whole Greek economy shrunk. After the cuts in salaries and pensions people are much tighter than before. That makes them not going to the doctors so often. So also our income is much lower than before. I am not saying it as a complain, I am in a much better situation than most of the people but it is a fact. So I adapted to it. For example the places

that I go out are different now. For example I go to eat souvlakia instead of going to an actual restaurant. I mean, I also go to restaurants but I consider going for souvlakia sometimes, something that I was not doing before. But I have to say also that the priorities that Greeks put nowadays are wrong. They do not take care of themselves. They do not give a small part of their income for their health, which were doing to a high degree before crisis. They prefer either to put the money on the side or to spend them elsewhere. But it can not be that you do not give 20 euros to go to the doctor and at the same time to drink a coffee with 5 euros in a good cafeteria. You can not complain that you do not have money then.

I: Has this changed anything else?

R: For me?

I: For you and for people.

R: For me not much. I am in a much different situation that I was before of course. For first time after more than 30 years I think of money, of how not to spend because you do not know what future will bring. Everything is unknown. You live by the week here now. In two weeks' time you may go to drachma for example. This insecurity kills you. The fact that you can not plan anything. Personally and professionally. I try not to think it but sometimes you can not help it. Now for people...very difficult. Most of people are in difficult situation and things seem to become worse. I don't know how this is going to end.

I: How are the problems of the country going to be solved?

R: Difficult...We need to have decisive people on the wheel of the country. That will know what needs to be done. And to have the will to do it. And the people to be ready to help on

that. I do not believe that there is a state that not everybody contributes. It is not good when a few contribute. That requires conflict. Now only the people contribute....

I: The people? Are they the same with the society we discussed?

R: Yes, what I have told you. The low-middle class and below. The high incomes do not contribute. We all have to give money in this machine that is called state in order to take them and change the structures, starting from the basic fields of health and education.

I: You, as an individual, where do you consider yourself as belonging?

R: Politically I told you in the progressive area.

I: Socioeconomically?

R: well...I am also part of the society, of the people. I can not associate myself with the rich ones. I am not one of them.

I: But somebody can say, you are a doctor in the private sector, how can you be the same with a pensioner for example, or a waiter.

R: I understand that. I may make more money than others but I am not a millionaire. I am part of the lower-middle class. I am much closer to the pensioner that the millionaires. I live a life much closer to his and I also contribute. Those who are above me do not.

I: You also said that before. What do you mean?

R: I mean...it can not be that somebody who earns 10000 per year pays 2000 in taxes and someone who earns a million pays 10000 in tax. That is not logical. It is not fair. That is what

I mean by saying that they do not contribute. It is disproportionate.

I: What is the ideal situation of the country for you?

R: People to have jobs. Not to have the anxiety of finding a job. We are not lazy as people,

as at the beginning of the crisis the Germans were saying about us. We want to work but we

also want the reward for that. Nobody works for free. There should be work places, easy to

be approached by everybody, to be productive and the state to have incomes which will give

to the people such a degree that will create social justice. Not the money to go for military

purposes for example. I am in favour of low taxation and hunting of tax evasion. This is

where I would concentrate if I was minister of economics. Lower taxes in order to be

considered as competitive. So smaller state. There is no problem with smaller state. The

size of it is not important, what it does is.

I: Would you vote for a party like that?

R: Yes I would

I: Are you interested in politics?

R: Yes of course. I do not follow daily though. Not from morning to night to follow the political

updates. I get informed 2-3 times a week at least from television and newpapers. Mostly, I

get informed from what I hear in TV and what I read in newspapers. Sometimes I also check

what websites write. But only when there is a specific issue that is important, for example the

referendum last summer.

I: why are you interested in politics?

R: E because, how can you not be? Especially now? You need to know what is going on in

the country. I told you everything is uncertain so you may wake up one day and have

nothing. You saw what happened in Cyprus.

I: Do you mean the haircut in deposits?

R: Yes. Scary. Can you imagine it happening here? That is why I follow the news when I

can. To see what is happening in the country.

I: Do you mostly follow the news? Is something else that you follow?

R: News mostly yes, rarely a talk show. But rarely. And newspapers every Sunday. That is

my hobby that you asked about. Reading newspapers on Sunday. But yes in terms of what I

mostly follow is the news. In various channels because journalists are also...

I: What are they?

R: e they support political parties for their interests so they are not to be trusted.

I: And how do you overcome that?

R: What?

I: That you are getting informed from untrustworthy people.

 $R\colon You\ try\ to\ understand\ where\ the\ truth\ is\ I\ suppose.\ I\ also\ discuss\ with\ friends\ so\ I\ get$

their opinion too.

I: So you discuss politics with friends?

R: of course. With my friends and with anybody...I don't have any issue to discuss

something

I: Is it important for you to discuss politics?

R: Of course it is

I: Why is that?

R: Because I want to express my opinion but also to hear other people's opinions about

issues. Maybe they will have something interesting to say, maybe they are more informed

than me. Because when you watch news for one hour for example, it can not be that you will

have a clear opinion on what is happening. From television you learn the basics and you

discuss them with your friend where somebody can have more information about a topic and

you can also become more informed

I: does your interest in politics remain the same as before crisis?

R: (silence) No, I think it has changed. I follow more often now. The events are moving faster

so I have to keep up to see what is going on in the country.

I: do you vote?

R: Always.

I: what is voting for you?

R: It is an expression of course. Of my belief. Of what I want in today's circumstances. In the circumstances that voting takes place. In time. What I want today can be different with what I wanted 5 years ago. I am not stucked in one way of thinking. I try to adapt my beliefs to the circumstances. Voting has always been important not only now. But I was voting for the same party. When I was young I was also trying to persuade people to vote for it. I was voting for PASOK since it was switched until 2012

I: why is it important to express your beliefs?

R: Or you are a citizen of the country or you are not. If you are then you need to say your opinion on where you want the country to go. Otherwise you are not considered as citizen if you don't care.

I: What do you mean?

R: I mean that you need to have a say about the policies to be implemented, about who is going to implement then and in what direction. You decide. It is important

I: What do you mean by direction of policies?

R: for example if a right party is in government they will pass policies that will help rich people, businessmen. I do not want that. So I will go to vote in order that a centre of left party, now with Syriza, will come to government to pass other policies, closer to what I want.

I: But somebody can say you are also a businessman...

R: I am not a businessman. I am a self employed doctor. I mean rich people with factories

and these kind of stuff

I: Why have you switched your vote?

R: Because PASOK has transformed to something different than what it has started. I was

not satisfied of what I was seeing. PASOK had governed for many years and has blame for

the crisis. So I did not vote for them in 2012. But I stayed in the progressive area of Greek

politics.

I: Why you were not satisfied?

R: they started by saying other things and ended up serving other interests. It was not what it

used to be anymore. It started as radical left party, something close to Syriza when went in

government. It ended up being a light right party. They forgot where they come from, who

made them government and kept them there.

I: I see, and you decided to switch your vote to Syriza?

R: No I voted for another small left party, for DIMAR in 2012. That is the time that I left from

PASOK.

I: Why you did not go to the centre right party?

R: For me it ishow to say it. It is difficult to go there. Not that I am stuck in one place. I

can differentiate within the left side of political spectrum. I do not want to be part of the mass

that swings and changes governments. The progressive area of politics has a different mentality that the right one. I am represented by the expressed by the progressive area and I belong there. Otherwise you become opportunist. You have neither ideology nor direction. If you are placed in the wrong side of political spectrum you do not understand it in my age. I should have understood it 30 40 years ago.

I: how do you choose a party to vote for?

R: the programs of parties are not implemented anymore. You try to see who is the one that says the least lies to you. Which leader lies the least.

I: why do you say the programmes are not implemented?

R: Because nobody does it. They produce a program that you know they are not going to follow. So you try to see who will at least do part it.

I: Why is following the program important?

R: But...you need to know what they are going to do, no? based on that you are supposed to vote them.

I: is the leader of the party important?

R: Of course the leader of the party is important. There is no boat without a captain. I would vote for a party with a leader closer to me easier than the same party with a leader not so close to me. But the leader needs to have some standards.

I: Which are those standards?

R: he needs to be uncorrupted, if he can. To be dynamic, and to be able to implement what he says. Someone who wants to do things without thinking of political cost. To have the willingness to do it, not to be only in words. In Greece we are full of promises from every political side. Promises and lies for many years. The leader needs to have consistency on

his promises. But most importantly to be decisive to take the country to the right direction.

I: The right direction?

R: As I told you, the one that people will be helped and not pressed for more profit. To want to do that. It is difficult. Interests will not let him.

I: Interests?

R: The big interests that move the economy not only of Greece, of the whole world.

I: How do you define dynamism?

R: Dynamism....hm...good question...by the willingness and persistence on doing something. For example in football when you are out of breath and you do a sprint to catch the ball. Dynamism is...not to give up, to give everything in order to happen what you want. What you have in mind.

I: And Tsipras was dynamic?

R: Yes

I: Why is that important?

R: Because no matter what you have in mind if in the first difficulty you give up then then ideas have no meaning. They stay ideas. You need to fight in order to implement them. That is the different thing. The generation of good ideas is the easy one.

I: What about political cost?

R: This is important. Because if he is tied by political contracts...then we should forget everything. That brought us here.

I: Was this your opinion on the leader you want the same also before crisis?

R: Before crisis...not so strong opinion I guess. Yes dynamic was important too but also to get advice. To listen. Now I want him to do things. And the political cost... It is more important than before. Maybe because things need to change now...maybe because it was too much what politicians were doing before

I: You said that you want the leader to be uncorrupted if he can...

R: yes, at that moment we are We reached a point where Greece was governed for almost 35 years by 2 parties. With different leaders each one. We saw what they have implemented, the results of their actions. The result was high levels of corruption. If something is characteristic of that period is the increased corruption of the system in general. Corruption and clientelism. Politicians and non politicians but close to them that were fed by the political system. Now they are trying to find where the money have gone. Only stupid people do not know where the money have gone. Every day the find out new lists of people with money abroad. Switzerland, off shore and I don't know what else. Corruption brought us here. We didn't say not to take anything in the pocket. But they took

everything and left the country bankrupt. I am not annoyed by corruption itself. I am annoyed that they did not look a bit lower. Eat (meaning steal) but do something for the people. To create development. What Greece has: sun, sea and land. They could give compass to develop based on those competitive advantages of the country. But who would do that when their mind was only to steal money, or when investments maybe would touch their political clients.

I: What about clientelism?

R: MPs were like the people for all the jobs. From finding a job, even in private sector, to changing the military campus that someone is serving to anything you can imagine from the biggest to the smallest. A sick situation.

I: Are all the political parties corrupt?

R: to some degree yes. Those who governed especially. Now for Syriza I don't know we will see how it goes. Of course they can not program development in an environment like this. I don't know what they would do if they were in government for 20 years. I can not assign to them responsibility that they do not program something because the environment is very tight, very difficult.

I: you say about politicians who are corrupt but you knew it and you voted for them...

R: In elections you do not vote for the one you think is the best because the ideal doesn't exist. That is why it is called ideal. You vote for the least worst on the ballot paper. The other option was not to cast my vote. I don't find it right. I want to express my opinion.

I: you mean because everybody is corrupt?

R: exactly. Since everyone, well almost everyone, is corrupted to a degree, you choose the one who is the 'least bad'.

I: How do you think that the average voter votes? What criteria he has?

R: (smiles) Personal economic interests. People vote for the one who would bid the most. I remember in 2000 PASOK won the elections because offered pension 2000 drachmas (approximately 7 euros) more than New Democracy. Crazy no? But that is how Greeks are.

I: Why are they like that?

R: I don't know. The easy way for making money I guess. Or the only way for some of them. But you will have to ask them.

I: what is your opinion on politicians?

R: They brought us here. I think this period we evaluate them with more strict criteria than before crisis. When money are less you are more strict. And this has changed the way I vote. I am tougher now. It is much easier for me to turn my back to a party. For example if there are elections in 2016 I will not go to vote. For first time in my life. There is constitution in this country. You cannot do elections every 5 months. Not going is something that I would never think 10 years ago. Greek politicians in general are liars. I don't want to say something harder than that. They lie. Most politicians Apostolos say things that can be understood from different perspectives. That way they can argue that they have never lied. That we understood it differently than the way he meant to say it. Bullshit. Can someone say in a straight language what he will do and then do it? That's a leader, not those who hide behind different meanings of their sayings. They promise and do not deliver and they say no I didn't

mean it that way. They think we are stupid. I don't think that they care for the public interest but for the personal one.

I: why is the implementation of promises important for you?

R: you vote somebody based on what he says and on if he is capable of doing it. If he has the guts to do it. Or if he wants to. If he does not implement it means that he is a liar and he was not decisive enough of doing it from the beginning. Or he was just a liar with no intentions of doing it.

I: favourite politician?

R: Andreas Papandreou for sure. He had heavy personality. On his speech and expressions. As the old Karamanlis had.

I: What did they had that made you like them?

R: Karamanlis was a person that when he was speaking nobody was moving. He had his line and that was it he was implementing it. That is important especially in foreign policy, and it is important also now. He was not expressing my way of seeing things but he was a leader. On the other hand Andreas was an exceptional public speaker. He was doing magic to the heart of all of us, really when you were listening to him your hair was going to leave your skin. He was also dynamic. But both of them are responsible for the huge public sector that they left behind. When other countries in the decade of 70s were going to IT we were left behind. They oversided the public sector because it was helping them to get the votes.

I: When did you vote first time for Syriza?

R: In January of 2015. In 2012 I had already left from the governmental party that I was voting before though, as I said I voted for DIMAR in both 2012 elections.

I: When did you hear about Syriza for first time?

R: (silence) look it is complicated. It passed through various stages. From Interior KKE, to Synaspimsos....I don't know when it transformed to Syriza. But I know them since Interior KKE. Most of them are the same people since then.

I: What was your opinion of Synaspismos?

R: A party that existed only to exist.

I: Meaning?

R: Nothing special. Nothing interesting to offer.

I: Has your opinion changed?

R: Well, if I have voted for it (laughs)

I: When did that happen?

R: It was the period that I was very disappointed by the governmental party that I was voting. I was looking for something else, I voted for DIMAR they went in coalition government with PASOK and ND, they followed the same road....so I wanted something different from that.

I: And why Syriza and not something else?

R: having followed the two main governmental parties for 35 years and knowing their actions you see that they have created and they have made Greece full of crooked people. Because they created a state like that that did not have any relation with what I wanted and what every politically healthy person wants that respects himself and his person next to him. They created a state that had nothing to do with social justice. Corruption until the deepest end. I said this can not continue. I can not stay in a place like that. I have to do something.

I: And why not any other party?

R: Which one? They all follow the same policies. DIMAR I voted they went in government. What else is left in the centre left?

I: Did you understand corruption in 2010?

R: It had also started before than but this was the time when I said that is it. I can not stand it anymore. And you go to the political area that you think is uncorrupt. Because the biggest issue in Greece is corruption, and bureaucracy. Without those two issues we would have a much different state. Corruption played an important role for me voting for the party of Syriza. because it is a party that at that time it didn't show signs of corruption.

I: Why in 2010 it was the time you said enough?

R: It was the time that I said enough as you said. Because their actions led us to bankruptcy. That is why. They led country and its people to Troika's hands.

I: Are the Troika's hands bad?

R: You are kidding right? The lives of people became hell since they came and have started messing with the government. Actually wanting to govern I would say. They actually govern us now since they decide for everything.

I: You say that you want a small state but you vote for Syriza which has in its program big state....

R: Maybe at that time for me was more important to vote for somebody who is determined to do things differently and who is uncorrupted. Smaller and bigger state is not only determined by will but also by the circumstances

I: Rhere was not another party like this?

R: Maybe it was but none with governmental perspectives. Syriza was the only governmental party that was saying that would do things differently and that was uncorrupted.

I: Can you explain what do you mean by the word differently?

R: an alternative way. To go out of crisis without having to pay all this debt. I mean, people are really struggling now. A different way of doing politics.

I: And why you believe that they were uncorrupted?

R: because until then they were 'virgin' in politics. They had clean criminal record. Nobody could say anything bad about them.

I: How did Syriza come from 4% to 36%?

R: People became indignant with what they were seeing around them. They could not stand this situation any more. Corruption was everywhere. I really mean it. And they wanted to put in power an uncorrupted person. He promised that he would transformed the country.

I: Transform in what sense?

R: What I have told you before. To move away from the old way of politics. In a way that the individual would be at the centre of politics. Now we have Troika to tell us what to do. We needed to leave from that.

I: when did Syriza started for you becoming governmental party?

R: It became after May 2012. But even from before you could see the turn of people in the discussions. It might be that people before 2012 elections they were not saying that they would vote Syriza but they were saying that they would not vote for PASOK, whose ex voters are the main part of Syriza voters. Then it might have been a protest vote. After that when people realized that they can govern, they said 'why not trying also them since the others tools the ship to the rocks. How much worse can they be'?

I: you personally voted for them in January and in September 2015?

R: Yes. In September I was definite that I would vote too. I wasn't even discussing for not voting syriza. they should have signed the agreement before though. Maybe it was inexperience maybe it was planned by the global system, and syriza being into the system. I can not say that they were incapable. Inexperience yes. Incapability no. the agreement should have been signed before August. But despite that it was out of question me not voting for them in September. This period I was following much closer what was happening. I

saw that no party, including syriza wanted to govern. But they could not say it in public that they could not govern. They had not passed until then any measure in the parliament, they were like saying to people 'bring us down'. I said no sir. You have promised me 10 things, I want to see if you can implement them. you will not tell me the next day that you wanted to implement them but people did not let you do it. You took my vote in January because I believe that you would do a state fair, less bureaucratic, uncorrupt, you promised me something different than what we have at the moment. Take my vote again and implement the promises. I want you to implement your programme and to also give me a vision, prospect. Those things I didn't see until today. I am disappointed actually. If I will be forced to go and vote, if elections happen, I will not vote for Syriza.

I: Did Tsipras have a role on Syriza's victory?

R: Unquestionably yes. I believe that he is one of the leader figures of the era globally not only in Greece. You know, a party without a good leader is like a team of goof players without a good coach. And Syriza is not a good team. Most of them are inexperienced in government. It is Alexis that inspires trust to the people. Without him they could maybe get 15%. No more than that. People did not become bored of the other parties because they stayed long in power. People were disappointed on them and vote to Syriza was not a protest vote but a vote to govern. They wanted an uncorrupted person to take Greece to a different direction.

I: what characteristics does he have?

R: he is persuasive first of all. The way he was speaking, what he was saying, his face expression. He persuades you that he believes what he is saying. He is a modern leader. I believe. He is also uncorrupt. He is not professional in politics, he did not have time even if he wanted to become corrupted. They accused him that he has not worked before going into

politics but which in the modern political world has worked? I can not go deeper. I believe he had dynamic to control his party. A leader has to be able to impose his opinions. Inside the country and outside of it. Tsipras persuaded you. Especially face to face. Because before voting for him I saw his speaking in a square. I did not feel what I was feeling with Papandreou but this is probably because now I am more experience, I am not persuaded easily now by anybody. Nobody can make me excited. Despite all that Tsipras persuaded me.

I: you said he was dynamic. How did you understand that?

R: Firstly it was the way he was speaking. It showed passion. A sparkle. Then it was confirmed by his way of negotiation with Troika. He had a plan in his mind and was fighting to implement it. It didn't work? It didn't work. But nobody can say that he did not try it. He did the best he could for the country. He represented the country standing on his legs. And he was not even scared to go to a referendum when everybody was threatening that we would be out of euro and the EU. He said he would fight and he did it. Even though now I can see mistakes on his approach, as I said he should have signed sooner, I can't say that he didn't try. Maybe the system is too strong and he was too alone to beat it.

I: and the fact that he wasn't professional politician makes him uncorrupt?

R: It does not making him Saint. I didn't say that. It just highlights the fact that he is not corrupt. He isn't. He wasn't there, he is a new person, a new face that came to do things differently. People when go into politics they change. So when they reach the top they are already transformed to what the system wants them. He came from out of it. He doesn't owe anything to anybody so he doesn't have strings. If anybody can change things he has to be out of system and he was.

I: What about his persuasiveness. How do you know that he says truth?

R: you don't. but by the way somebody speaks you can understand not if he is lying...you can understand when somebody is not lying. And his passion, the way he spoke showed to me that he believed what he was saying.

I: When did you first hear of him?

R: When he was candidate for mayor of Athens. How many?... 10 years ago? I could not imagine him that he would become the Prime Minister.

I: You didn't see those characteristics that you mentioned above?

R: No. Well, maybe I didn't notice them. Maybe he was trained after that. Maybe also the circumstances were different then. I don't know. I just could not imagine him as the prime minister of the country.

I: What are your thoughts on him now?

R: (silence) I can not express a specific opinion now. I am confused.

I: Has it changed?

R: (silence) A lot are said. From different people. I am disappointed to a degree. He has to do big things in order to persuade me that he could not behave in a different way during all that period. Especially after the referendum. I would not vote for him now. He may in then end also be the system's child.

I: The system's...?

R: Yes the global system that puts prime ministers in countries. Those that create the global

economic policies. Tsipras might be one of them.

I: Ok, we are approaching the end of the discussion. Just two more questions. We discussed

about the politicians and their part of the blame for the country. Is there anybody else who

you consider as responsible for the crisis.

R: The foreigners are responsible too.

I: The foreigners?

R: The European Union.

I: Can you analyse it a bit?

R: Yes, they knew where the thing was going and they let it. Maybe because they wanted us

to bankrupt in order to sell our land to them. And now they put measures that are impossible

for people to cope. Maybe they do it because of that. That we will say we can not do it

anymore and sell everything to them. I really don't know....

I: what about the people? Do they have part of the blame? For participating in the situation.

R: Some people yes. Not only politicians were crooked there were people who made huge

amount of money working with politicians. Now if you ask me if I consider as responsible for

the crisis the person that goes to a politician to 'erase' his parking fine, no I do not think he

was the problem of the country. Even people that went to ask for job to politicians I don't

blame. The system was working like that what you were expecting them to do? They needed to survive. But the system was made like that by the politicians. They are responsible for it.

I: Thank you. Anything else you would like to add?

R: No it's ok. (smiles) how did you find me?

I: It was an interesting interview. Thank you very much for doing it.

R: Anytime

I: I will transcribe it and send you a copy so that you can read and agree with what is written.

If you want me to make any amendments you let me know.

R: Yes no problem.