

# THESSALONIKI, GREECE

With over sixty inhabited islands and a territory that stretches from the south Aegean Sea to the middle of the Balkan peninsula, Greece offers enough to fill months of travel. The historic sites span four millennia, encompassing both the legendary and the obscure, where a visit can still seem like a personal discovery. Beaches are parcelled out along a convoluted coastline equal to France's in length, and islands range from backwaters where the boat calls twice a week to resorts as cosmopolitan as any in the Mediterranean.



## Economy

GDP (2010): €227 billion (about \$312 billion).

Per capita GDP (2010): \$27,875.

Growth rate (2010): -3.5%.

Unemployment rate (annual average, 2010): 12.5%.

Natural resources: Bauxite, lignite, magnesite, oil, marble.

Greece adopted the euro (€) as its currency in January 2002. The adoption of the euro provided Greece (formerly a high inflation risk country under the drachma) with access to competitive loan rates and also to low rates of the Eurobond market. This led to a dramatic increase in consumer spending, which gave a significant boost to economic growth. Between 1997 and 2007, Greece averaged 4% GDP growth, almost twice the European Union (EU) average. As with other European countries, the financial crisis and resulting slowdown of the real economy have taken their toll on Greece's rate of growth, which slowed to 2.0% in 2008. The economy went into recession in 2009 and contracted by 2.4% as a result of the world financial crisis and its impact on access to credit, world trade, and domestic consumption--the engine of growth in Greece.



## Principal Government Officials

President-Karolos Papoulias

Prime Minister-Antonis Samaras

Foreign Minister-Dimitris Avramopoulos

Minister of Defense-Panos Panagiotopoulos

Finance Minister-Giannis Stournaras

## Government

Type: Parliamentary republic.

Independence: 1830. National Day: March 25 (1821).

Constitution: June 11, 1975, amended March 1986, April 2001, May 2008.

Branches: *Executive*--president (head of state), prime minister (head of government). *Legislative*--300-seat unicameral Vouli (parliament). *Judicial*--Supreme Court, Council of State.

Greece is a parliamentary republic and last amended its constitution in May 2008. There are three branches of government. The executive includes the president, who is head of state, and the prime minister, who is head of government. There is a 300-seat unicameral "Vouli" (legislature). The judicial branch includes a Supreme Court. Greece is implementing a program ("Kallikratis") that reorganized and consolidated its system of local governments into 13 regional districts and 325 municipalities. Suffrage is universal at 18.

## Geography

Area: 131,957 sq. km. (51,146 sq. mi.; roughly the size of Alabama).

Major cities: *Capital*--Athens. Greater Athens (pop. 3,566,060), municipality of Athens (772,072), Greater Thessaloniki (1,057,825), municipality of Thessaloniki (363,987), Piraeus (175,697), Greater Piraeus (466,065), Patras (171,616), Iraklion (137,711), Larissa (126,076).

Terrain: Mountainous interior with coastal plains; 1,400-plus islands.

## People

Population (2010 est.): 11,295,002.

Population growth rate (2010 estimated): 0.1%.

Languages: Greek (official). English is the predominant second language.

Religions: Greek Orthodox (approximately 98% of citizens), with Muslim, Jewish, Catholic, Protestant, and other religious communities.

Greece was inhabited as early as the Paleolithic period and by 3000 BC had become home, in the Cycladic Islands, to a culture whose art remains among the most evocative in world history. In the second millennium BC, the island of Crete nurtured the maritime empire of the Minoans, whose trade reached from Egypt to Sicily. The Minoans were supplanted by the Mycenaeans of the Greek mainland, who spoke a dialect of ancient Greek. During the Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman Empires (1st-19th centuries), Greece's ethnic composition became more diverse. The roots of Greek language and culture date back at least 3,500 years, and modern Greek preserves many elements of its classical predecessor.



## **Thessaloniki, Greece**

**Hotel:** **Hotel Electra Palace**  
9, Aristotelous Square  
T: +30 2310294000  
[www.electra-hotels.gr](http://www.electra-hotels.gr)

**Coordinator:** **Elizabeth Phocas,**  
Deputy Director,  
The Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP)  
[www.eliamep.gr/en](http://www.eliamep.gr/en)  
T: +306948043490

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### **Monday, July 2**

**Arrival** **Arrival in Thessaloniki**  
*(you should get a taxi from the airport to the hotel – approximate cost 25 euro)*

#### **Hotel check in**

**6:15 pm** **Program Briefing**  
Location: Hotel lobby

**7:00 pm** **Cycle Tour of Thessaloniki**

*Discover the city's highlights on a relaxing cycle ride and see the places that most tourist buses do not visit. The Thessaloniki cycle ride gives you a pleasant introduction to the city, its impressive monuments and especially its secret corners that are usually missed by visitors. Your escort will take you through the city to view the sites and will paint a vivid picture of bygone days, creating an atmosphere with stories and events that actually occurred in the city. Join a cycle ride through the long and fascinating 3000 years of the city's history right up to modern times.*

*On our cycle ride through the historical centre of the city we will view some of its monuments and sites, but also areas which were the "mahalades" or the neighborhoods formerly inhabited by the various communities, Jews, Turks and western Europeans.*

**9:00 pm** **Dinner at *Panellinion* restaurant with Greek MMF**

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## **Tuesday, July 3**

**9:30-10:30 am**

### **Briefing on the Economic, Political and Social Crisis in Greece**

Location: Electra Palace hotel – *Olympiada conference room 1<sup>st</sup> floor*

***Speakers:***

**Mr. Nikos Efthymiadis, Chairman, Redestos-Efthymiadis Agrotechnology Group, Thessaloniki**

**Dr. Yannis Constantinidis, Ass. Prof. of Political Sciences, University of Macedonia**

**10:30-11:30 AM**

### **Eight stories on the Crisis by Thessaloniki migrants**

We will watch the stories and discuss with the producers

**Moderator: Ms. Despoina Syrri**

Location: Electra Palace hotel – *Olympiada conference room 1<sup>st</sup> floor*

*Eight stories about migrants and the crisis in Greece are broadcast on the Thessaloniki municipality TV channel serving the whole of Greece, following a TV & radio team production training course on migration and diversity, organised jointly by Symbiosis and the Media Diversity Institute, in partnership with the municipality media, between 14 – 23 May 2012. During the 10 day training course, 8 migrants were taught how to produce TV & radio news programmes, and were mentored by journalists. This learning by doing training for migrants and journalists gave the participants the opportunity to exchange experiences, work together and get to understand diversity through practicing it. The stories can be viewed at [www.youtube.com/TVSymbiosis](http://www.youtube.com/TVSymbiosis), subtitled in English. The objective of the Symbiosis initiative, titled "Migrant Voices", was to foster a better understanding of immigrant integration processes at a time when social cohesion and integration policies are put to the test by an acute economic, social and political crisis in Greece. "Migrant Voices" enabled members of migrant communities whose voices are not usually heard, to express their views on the issues affecting their lives, and to address the public, challenging the imbalance in the way migrants are represented across large parts of the media in Greece.*

Link to the discussion fellows had with representatives of Symbiosis NGO sent by Despoina Syrri after the meeting,

<http://www.symbiosis.org.gr/en/news/156-symbiosis-team-presentation-of-migrants-voices-initiative-to-the-american-marshall-memorial-fellows>

**11:30-12:00PM**

### **Walk through the commercial centre of Thessaloniki and the fruit and vegetable market**

**12:00-1:00PM**

### **Visit to the Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki**

Ms. Erika Perahia, Head of the Museum

13, Agiou Mina Str. – Tel.: +30 2310 250406-7

*For more than twenty centuries, Thessaloniki was the shelter for the persecuted Jews of Europe. Uprooted throughout their long history from other historical centers of the Diaspora, they were transplanted in this city, creating a large and vibrant Jewish Community, one of the most important ones in the world, especially during the period 1492-1943. Precise indications about the chronology of the first settlement of Jews in Thessaloniki are lacking. They may have first arrived from Alexandria, Egypt, around 140 BC. However, we do not possess any hard evidence that would have allowed us to nail down with certainty this event, that remains, to this day, an unsolved historical question. The ancient Jewish Community of Thessaloniki constituted a typical example of a Judaic community in a Mediterranean urban center of the Hellenistic and Roman eras. Its members were called Romaniotes. They adopted the Greek language, while retaining several elements of Hebrew and Aramaic, as well as the Hebrew script. It is well known that of the 50,000 Jews of pre-war Thessaloniki less than 2,000 were saved. Soon after the liberation of the city from the Nazis (October 1944), the Jews that had joined the Resistance Forces turned up. They gathered at the Synagogue of the Monasteriotes, the only one that had been saved from destruction, and elected a Governing committee. This Committee managed to take back the Community's property and organized some sort of Community life with the help of organizations such as American Joint Distribution Committee and HIAS. After May 1945 some of those who survived the death camps gradually returned in Thessaloniki.*

- 1:30 –3:00 PM**                    **Lunch at ‘B’ restaurant at the Byzantine museum** - Guest speaker **Prof. Eleni Hondolidou**, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki – **Informal Discussion on the project on Education of the Muslim Minority Children in Thrace**
- 3:30-6:30 PM**                    **Professional appointments**
- 3:30-4.30 PM**                    **Roland McReynolds** - *The potato movement*- Meet Prof. Emeritus of Agricultural Economics **Christos Kamenidis**, , Aristotle University of Thessaloniki  
*Location: Faculty of Agriculture, Department of Agriculture Economics, 3rd floor tel. (+30) 2310998800, (+30) 6970 853585*
- 5.00-6.00 PM**                    Meet **Mr. Alex Michaelides**, President and CEO of Leaf Tobacco A. Michailides S.A(as per your request by e-mail) TBC  
*Location: 43 October 26th Street, 54627 Thessaloniki, tel. (+30) 2310-524644*
- 3.30-4.30 PM**                    **Danielle North**- *Reviving a city with financial concerns* - Meet **Mr. Vassilis Kappas**, Special Advisor to the Mayor of Thessaloniki  
*Location : City Hall, 1A, Vas. Georgiou, Office Number 306, 3rd floor; tel. (+30) 6979471671*
- 3.30-4.30 PM**                    **Alma Salazar** – *effects of economic crisis to regional labor and workforce*- Meet **Prof. Lois Lambrianidis**, Economic Geographer, Regional Development and Policy Research Unit (RDPRU), Dept. of Economic Sciences, University of Macedonia  
*Location: Office 212, Building of the Dept. of Economic Sciences, University of Macedonia, 156 Egnatia St. 540 06 Thessaloniki, tel. (+30) 2310 891795, (+30)6972860462*
- 3.30-4.30 PM**                    **John Marshall** – Higher education in Greece- Meet **Prof. Vasiliki Manthou**, Department of Applied Informatics, University of Macedonia  
*Location : University of Macedonia, 156 Egnatias Ave., 2<sup>nd</sup> floor; office 232 tel. (+30) 2310-891893*
- 3.30-4.30 PM**                    **Danya Trent** *Cycling culture in Thessaloniki* Meet **Mr. Kimis Krionas**, Secretary Bike Respect  
*Location : Electra Palace hotel,9, Aristotelous Square (tbc)*
- 5.00-6.00 PM**                    *Greek debt crisis* Meet **Associate Prof. Nikos Varsakelis**, General Economic Theory and Policy, Department of Economic Sciences, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki  
*Location : Hotel Electra Palace, 9, Aristotelous Square*
- 8:00 PM**                            **View Thessaloniki from the sea: Drinks on a boat**

### **Wednesday, July 4**

- 9:00 – 10:30 AM**                    **Visit to the Museum of Macedonian Struggle and Briefing on the Macedonian issue**  
**Speakers:**                            **Prof. Vassilis Gounaris**, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki  
                                                 **Dr. Vlasis Vlassidis**, University of Western Macedonia, Florina

*The Museum is located in Thessaloniki, the capital of Macedonia, Greece. It was inaugurated in 1981 in a Neoclassical building that was built (financed by the national benefactor Andreas Syngros) in the center of Thessaloniki at the end of the 19th century and designed by Ernst Ziller. The building housed the Greek consulate general from 1893 to 1912. The museum is run by the Foundation of the Museum for the Macedonian Struggle.*

*The most important exhibits are the weaponry, the uniforms, the memorabilia, and the personal effects of the leaders of the Macedonian Struggle (1904–8), numerous other uniforms, and a collection of 1,350 contemporary photographs. There are also explanatory maps, books, newspapers, and paintings of the Macedonian landscape in the late 19th and early 20th century. The exhibits occupy seven rooms and are grouped as follows: Macedonia before the outbreak of the Struggle; the struggle in western Macedonia; the consulate and the organization of Thessaloniki; the office of the consul Lambros Koromilas; the role of the people of Macedonia in the Struggle; the Struggle in central and eastern Macedonia; the Struggle in the Yannitsa marshes; and the events in Macedonia after the end of the Struggle and the Young Turks' revolution.*

**11:00 AM – 12:00 PM**      **Discussion on “Thessaloniki at the Crossroads of the Balkans and the Black Sea Region” with Mr. Antonis Kamaras, Special Adviser to the Mayor of Thessaloniki Mr. Yannis Boutaris**  
Location: City Hall of Thessaloniki

**12:00 – 1:30 PM**      **Lunch**

**1:30 – 2:30 PM**      **Visit PRAKSIS Thessaloniki Polyclinic NGO**  
1 Arkadioupoleos Str. & Ag. Dimitriou Str., 54 632 Thessaloniki –Tel. : +30 2310 55 61 45

*PRAKSIS is an independent, non-governmental organisation, aiming principally at the creation, application and implementation of humanitarian and medical action programs. PRAKSIS is an independent, Non Governmental Organisation, aiming principally at the creation, application and implementation of humanitarian and medical action programs. PRAKSIS' programmes did not start from scratch as they constitute the day after of the within the country actions which until October 2004 were run by the Greek Chapter of Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF, Doctors Without Borders). Based on two Polyclinics in Athens and Thessaloniki, these programmes have offered for 12 years now: immediate and free medicar and pharmaceutical care, psychological support, social support (complementary supportive services), legal aid, shelter, career advice.*

*Without Exclusions - No Discrimination*

*We offer our services to any socially excluded group, which hasn't got access to health services and/or social and legal support, such as: the poor; the homeless; the uninsured; street children; refugees/ asylum seekers; economic immigrants; single-parent families; ROMA; victims of trafficking; ex-prisoners.*

*PRAKSIS people: doctors, nursing staff, social scientists (social workers, sociologists, social anthropologists), psychologists, work counselors, various specialties (managers, teachers etc) but also people who offer their time to support the administration of the organization. Everyone participating in PRAKSIS deals everyday with the needs of our fellow-beings who hope to improve their living standards, with professionalism and altruism.*

*Mission statement: PRAKSIS ensures*

- Free supply of social and medical services. Treatment, prevention, education, health infrastructure etc.*
- Promotion of solidarity and volunteering. Volunteer training in how to combat social and economic exclusion.*
- Cooperation with other Non-Governmental Organizations with the objective of establishing a dialogue with the community and government bodies.*
- Cooperation with local authorities as well as the creation of Networks, FORA and consortiums dealing with the needs of PRAKSIS and helping to achieve its objectives.*
- Collecting and using social and medical data with the aim to promote research on socially vulnerable groups and on social and economic exclusion in general.*
- Bearing witness to (and when necessary denouncing) the conditions of social groups at risk and to the corruption or injustice we uncover through our actions by informing Greek and international political, financial, and social organizations; the authorities; Greek and international public opinions.*
- The above applies to individuals and groups regardless of skin colour; race, religion, age, nationality, ideology or political beliefs.*

**6:00 pm**      **Dinner hosted by Sofia Papadopoulou MMF 2011 at her home village Yannitsa**

*Giannitsa is the largest town and a former municipality in Pella regional unit, Greece. Since the 2011 local government reform it is part of the municipality Pella, of which it is the capital. Its chief importance is as an agricultural centre - especially since it is 40 km from Thessaloniki. The former shallow, swampy, and variable-sized Giannitsa Lake or Loudias Lake (classical), south of the*



town, was drained in 1928-1932 by the New York Foundation Company. It or the surrounding marshland are sometimes called Borboros 'slime' or Borboros Limen. Not far from the city are the ruins of ancient Pella, birthplace and capital of Alexander the Great. Giannitsa (then called Yenije) was an important center in the Ottoman period, and several important monuments survive: the tombs of Gazi Evrenos (a 19th-century substitute for the original) and Gazi Ahmed Bey, the Great Mosque, the Army Mosque, the hammam of Evrenos, and the clocktower, which have been declared historical monuments by the Greek Archaeological Service. The town is home to 26,296 people (2001 census).

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#### **Thursday, July 5**

**8:30 am**                      **Departure to Halkidiki**  
Free time for swimming

**1:00 pm**                      **Discussion on current trends and future prospects of the Greek Tourism over lunch at Sani Resort hosted by Mr. Stavros Andreadis, President, Sani S.A., Thessaloniki**

*Sani resort is a special place where nature and man exist in harmony. A family-owned ecological reserve stretching across 1,000 acres, with endless golden beaches enchantingly framed by the crystal clear waters of the Aegean and the magnificent pine forests of the Kassandra peninsula. Sani Resort will exceed your expectations in every way. A serene setting where one can enjoy nature and relish luxury and comfort. And where there's always something new to enjoy.*

**3:30 – 4:30 pm**              **The world of wine and viticulture at Gerovassiliou Winery**  
Short walk around the vineyard, a guided tour in the wine-production, bottling and ageing areas, and in the Wine Museum. Wine tasting (Epanomi)

*At Domaine Gerovassiliou, the vineyard is cultivated with great care and enthusiasm that leads Gerovassiliou to constantly researching and experimenting with Greek and foreign varieties, both well and less known ones. New technological advances blend well with tradition throughout vine growing and vinification processes. The aim is to produce high quality wines from grapes cultivated exclusively in privately-owned vineyard; wines that carry all distinct characteristics of the specific microclimate (terroir) in Epanomi. The creation of the Wine Museum itself in combination with the various activities organized - visits, wine tastings, educational programs, seminars, publications- contribute to the diffusion of wine-growing culture.*

**5:00 – 6:00 pm**              **Visit to the American Farm School (AFS) of Thessaloniki**  
**Host and Speaker:**              **Professor Anastasios Gertsis, Perrotis College, AFS, Thessaloniki**

*The mission of the Thessalonica Agricultural and Industrial Institute, also known as the American Farm School, is to educate youth and adults to become professionally accomplished in the latest aspects of agriculture, ecology and the life sciences, and to make Greece and its neighbors a better place.*

#### *Vision Statement*

*Building on more than a century-long tradition of developing stewards of the land, the Thessalonica Agricultural and Industrial Institute, also known as the American Farm School, is engaged in a transformative process to strengthen its position as a highly respected regional educational institution preparing leaders and managers who add value to the food and agriculture sector, through:*

- *Production, processing, and marketing of food, feed, fiber, and fuel*
- *Wise use of natural resources*
- *Preservation of the environment*
- *Application of life sciences to solving problems*
- *Utilization of information technology*

*Our programs will capitalize on opportunities created by the convergence of these areas, as well as by the School's location in southeastern Europe. True to the core values of the institution, they will honor our heritage and also respond to the rapidly changing social, agricultural, and educational landscape.*

*The School's holistic programs educate students to use their heads, hands, and hearts, and to think creatively, act with integrity, and work both cooperatively and independently to become leaders in their communities. The School's learn-by-doing environment promotes the application of theory to practice and remains the hallmark of our educational philosophy.*

*The School promotes healthy, sustainable, economically viable, and socially responsible food and agriculture systems. Our program offerings help to improve the career prospects and well being of citizens of Greece and the neighboring region, and of others beyond this reach. The School enjoys strong links to both the U.S. and Greece and will continue to perpetuate the best values of each.*

*We believe that a focus on management of the Greek and southeastern European food and agriculture sector gives us a strong competitive advantage for the near- and medium-term future. Instruction at the secondary, higher, and adult education levels – with particular attention to skills such as proficiency in English and information technology – will foster the competencies needed to compete in a global economy. In the longer term, a focus on applied life sciences and advanced technology will guide our initiatives at all levels.*

*The School will develop according to a strategic plan designed to advance our educational programs and support environmentally friendly, education-oriented, value-added activities such as, but not limited to:*

- *Dairy, poultry, and other food processing*
- *Livestock management*
- *Contract research*
- *Bioscience quality control and certification laboratories*
- *Production of healthy food supplements and natural products*
- *Production of fruit, vegetables, wine, and olive oil*
- *Sustainable agrotourism*

*We envision alliances with the most modern farms, enterprises, and institutes within our reach, and with domestic and international research and development organizations. These alliances will ensure high-quality internship placements for students, funding of collaborative research and technology projects, professional development opportunities for staff, and a steady stream of advice and counsel on emerging areas of science and technology driving the food and agriculture sector of the future.*

**8:30 pm**

**Farewell Dinner**

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**Friday, July 6**

**Departure**

*Please refer to your flight manifests*

**US Consulate in Thessaloniki: +30 2310 242905, 212030**

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**PLEASE COMPLETE THE ONLINE EVALUATION FOR THIS CITY!**

*Do you want to write about your experience for the MMF newsletter?*

*Send your contribution to: [mmfinfo@gmfus.org](mailto:mmfinfo@gmfus.org)*

## Introduction to Greece

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### General Information

- [U.S. State Department Background Note on Greece](#)
- [Britannica on Greece](#)
- [Wikipedia on Greece](#)
- [Rough Guide on Greece](#)
- [Lonely Planet on Greece](#)

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### News

- [Athens News](#)
- [Ekathimerini](#)

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### History

- Clogg, Richard. [A Concise History of Greece](#)
- Couloumbis, Theodore. [Greek Junta Phenomenon](#)
- Mazower, Mark. [After the War Was Over](#)
- Kolliopoulos, John and Veremis, Thanos. [Modern Greece: A History Since 1821](#)

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### Host City

- Mazower, Mark. [Salonica, City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims and Jews 1430-1950](#) (On Kindle)
- Sciaky, Leon. [Farewell to Salonica: City at the Crossroads](#) (On Kindle)

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### Biographies

- Draenos, Stan. [Andreas Papandreou: The Making of a Greek Democrat and Political Maverick](#)
- Freeman, Philip. [Alexander the Great](#) (On Kindle)
- Huffington, Arianna. [Maria Callas: The Woman behind the Legend](#)
- Beaton, Roderick. [George Seferis: Waiting for the Angel, A Biography](#)

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### Classic Novels

- Homer. [The Iliad](#) and [Odyssey](#) (On Kindle)
  - Kazantzakis, Nikos. [Zorba the Greek](#)
  - Giorgos Seferis. [Giorgos Seferis: Collected Poems](#)
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### Contemporary Novels

- Ioannou George, Good Friday Vigil, Kedros, 1995
- Kokantzis Nikos, Giokonda, Kedros 1997
- Karapanou, Margarita. [Kassandra and the Wolf](#)
- Michalopoulou, Amanda. [I'd Like](#)
- Stamatis, Alexis. [Bar Flaubert](#)

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### Classic Feature Films

- Costas Ferris. [Rembetiko](#)
- Costa-Gavras. [Z](#)
- Michalis Kakoyannis. [Stella](#)

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### Contemporary Feature Films

- Philippos Tsitos. [Plato's Academy](#)
- Theodoros Angelopoulos. [Eternity and a Day](#)
- Paolo Poloni, Salonica – Thessaloniki Stories, [www.salonica.ch/en](http://www.salonica.ch/en)
- Yorgos Lanthimos. [Dogtooth](#)

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**The recommendations above are not endorsements of the German Marshall Fund, but rather a representation of popular culture.**

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